'The Gramophone Mind'

New Statesman & Society (Aug. 18, 1995) recently reprinted a forgotten essay by George Orwell. He wrote it in 1944 as a preface to *Animal Farm* after the novel had been rejected on political grounds by at least two large publishing houses.

The sinister fact about literary censorship is that it is largely voluntary. Unpopular ideas can be silenced, and inconvenient facts kept dark, without the need for any official ban. . . .

At this moment what is demanded by the prevailing orthodoxy is an uncritical admiration of Soviet Russia. Everyone knows this, nearly everyone acts on it. Any serious criticism of the Soviet regime, any disclosure of facts which the Soviet government would prefer to keep hidden, is next door to unprintable. And this nation-wide conspiracy to flatter our ally takes place, curiously enough, against a background of genuine intellectual tolerance. For though you are not allowed to criticize the Soviet government, at least you are reasonably free to criticize our own. Hardly anyone will print an attack on Stalin, but it is quite safe to attack Churchill, at any rate in books and periodicals. . . .

For all I know, by the time this book is published my view of the Soviet regime may be the generally accepted one. But what use would that be in itself? To exchange one orthodoxy for another is not necessarily an advance. The enemy is the gramophone mind, whether or not one agrees with the record that is being played at the moment.

diminished after the Cold War, friction with the West over trade and human rights increased. Russia, too, once felt obliged "to talk frankly with Beijing" about human rights, Ferdinand says. It no longer does.

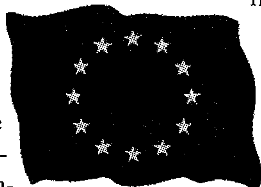
Russia and China "began to see an interest . . . in building up each other's general international status," Ferdinand says. "In this way, they could weaken the West's hegemony and create more opportunities for themselves." At the UN Human Rights Commission in Geneva last March, Russia, to the surprise of the West, voted against a motion to condemn China for human rights abuses, providing Beijing's margin of victory. Beijing has voiced implicit support for Moscow's military campaign in Chechnya; in return, Moscow has opposed Taiwan's entry into the UN.

But the developing Russian-Chinese "partnership," Ferdinand concludes, is not like the extremely close Sino-Soviet relationship of the 1950s. Moscow today, he says, simply wants "a partnership rather than an alliance, a counterbalance of equal weight to the West, to gain greater room for diplomatic maneuvering."

Europe's Missing Ingredient

"Democracy or Technocracy? European Integration and the Problem of Popular Consent" by William Wallace and Julie Smith, in *West European Politics* (July 1995), Frank Cass and Co. Ltd., 900 Eastern Ave., London IG2 7HH, England.

After World War II, Jean Monnet and the other founding fathers of what is now the European Union took what might be called a *Field of Dreams* approach: "If we build it, they will come." Once new European institutions were established, they believed, popular support for political integration would grow as the public came to appreciate the economic benefits of a united Europe. That shift has yet to happen—and further enlargement of the European Union will make it even less likely, contend Wallace, a professor of international studies at the Central European University in Prague, and Smith, a lecturer in politics at Oxford University.



The technocratic approach informed both the 1951 Treaty of Paris, which created the European Coal and Steel Community, and the 1957 Treaties of Rome, which gave birth to the

Common Market. When French president Charles de Gaulle attacked the pretensions of the unelected European Commission in 1960 and called for a European referendum to legitimize the new structure, the Common Market countries decided instead to transform the European Parliament into a directly elected body. Yet with four elections held since 1979, Wallace and Smith observe, the 626-member parliament, based in Strasbourg, France, still has only weakly engaged the allegiance of the European public.

Signs of popular discontent began appearing with the rejection of the Maastricht Treaty on European Union by the Danes in 1992. Reactions elsewhere were "only slightly more positive," the authors note.

As the 12-member European Union expands, moving toward a "community" of as many as 25 member states, Wallace and Smith say, fostering "a sufficiently strong sense of community to provide popular consent" for a more integrated union will become increasingly difficult. Also, the prods of American leadership and the need to unite against the Soviet threat are gone. If popular consent for further integration is to be obtained, Wallace and Smith believe, the directly elected European Parliament will have to be given "both greater visibility and greater authority."

Above the Fray

Every country requires its politicians to clothe their ambitions in different garb. The French requirements, writes Adam Gopnik in the *New Yorker* (November 13, 1995), are characteristically stylish.

Like all ambitious French politicians, [Prime Minister Alain] Juppé chooses to present himself as a literary man. He has actually written a book of reflections entitled La Tentation de Venise—*"The Venetian Temptation." Juppé's Venetian temptation was to retire to a house there, where he could escape from political life, admire Giorgione's "Tempestà," drink Bellinis in the twilight, and think long, deep thoughts.* La Tentation *was regarded as a fighting campaign manifesto, since it is . . . necessary for an ambitious French politician to write a book explaining why he never likes to think of politics. . . . Juppé, ahead of the pack, had written a book asserting not only that he would rather be doing something else but that he would like to be doing it in a completely different country. . . . Among French politicians, in fact, ostentatious displays of detachment are something of a competitive sport. After being succeeded as president by [Jacques] Chirac, François Mitterrand gave an interview to Christine Ockrent, the editor of* L'Express, *simply to announce that he was now taking long walks in Paris and looking at the sky. It was understood as his way of keeping his hand in. Not long ago, the former prime minister, Édouard Balladur, who had been so busy looking detached from politics that he forgot to campaign for the presidency this time around, sneaked an item into* L'Express *announcing that he, too, was taking walks and looking at the sky. It was the start of his comeback.*

A New German Exceptionalism?

"Historians and Nation-Building in Germany after Reunification" by Stefan Berger, in *Past and Present* (Aug. 1995), 175 Banbury Rd., Oxford OX2 7AW, England.

Since reunification in 1990, the world of left-liberal German historians has been in upheaval. Having written off the German nation-state as an aberration and a source of evil, they are now confronted with an uncomfortable reality. Berger, a historian at the University of Wales, fears that his German colleagues may be returning to "the narrow concern with 'national history' and 'national identity' " that long characterized German history writing.

During Germany's only previous existence as a unified nation-state, between 1870 and 1945, history writing was, in the words of the Swiss historian Jakob Burckhardt, "imbued with German tri-