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*Was It Luck
or Genius?*

"The Napoleonic Myth" by Correlli Barnett, in *The Illustrated London News* (May 1978), British Publications Inc., 11-03 46th Ave., Long Island City, N.Y. 11101.

Napoleon Bonaparte, Emperor of France, was a master of modern public relations who brilliantly portrayed himself as a national hero and military genius. In reality, argues Barnett, author of the new biography *Bonaparte*, Napoleon "was not a heroic genius or a master of war at all, but an overconfident gambler pursuing a fundamentally unsound system of war and statecraft."

Many of Bonaparte's costly campaigns were launched to further his personal political interests—to consolidate his shaky regime (France was bankrupt in 1795 after six years of war and revolutionary turmoil)—rather than to enhance the security or well-being of France. He is credited with instituting a new era of warfare—abandoning complex supply systems in favor of fast maneuvers and quick, decisive battles. But his method of providing money and food for his army by stripping the enemy countryside led to popular uprisings, notably in Italy, that forced him to disperse his troops to protect his own lines of communication.

The battlefield victories—from Montenotte in 1796 to Ligny in 1815—that gave Bonaparte his military fame, says Barnett, were "the product of quick-witted opportunism and fast, hard punching, of sheer energy and ruthless will to win, together with an army to match. They were victories of sheer pugilistic skill over ponderous, slow-reacting, conventionally minded opponents."

Bonaparte's technique of advancing without adequate supplies or transport worked well as long as his opponents failed to recognize his precarious position and his critical need for rapid victory. By avoiding decisive battle and conducting a protracted war (a strategy the Russians developed by accident in 1812), Bonaparte's enemies could have destroyed him long before Waterloo.

*Decelerating
Eurocommunism*

"Eurocommunism: Who's in Charge?" by Don Cook, in *The Atlantic Monthly* (June 1978), Box 1857, Greenwich, Ct. 06830.

There is strong evidence to suggest that (on instructions from Moscow) the French Communist Party under Georges Marchais intentionally shattered its alliance with the Socialists in order to destroy any chance of a leftist victory in the French parliamentary elections late last year. The behavior of the French Communists has exposed the myth of

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Eurocommunism, writes Cook, Paris correspondent for the *Los Angeles Times*.

The Russians had reason to fear that if the French Communists came to power with the Socialists, a Communist victory in Italy would inevitably have followed, thereby producing an end to détente and a return to the Cold War. Détente, contends Cook, permits the Russians to pursue other world ventures without risk and encourages the Western trade and credits essential to the economic well-being of Eastern Europe.

Since the election defeat, Cook writes, "Marchais has dropped all the cosmetics and returned to his true Stalinist colors—to the irritation and bitterness of comrades who really believed in Eurocommunism. . . ." The French Communist Party remains the most Moscow-oriented of all the parties in Western Europe.

The Italian Communists now seem to be as close to power as party leader Enrico Berlinguer and the Kremlin want them to be. And in Spain, Communist leader Santiago Carrillo continues to keep his distance from Moscow while building a party structure that can assure central control while gathering electoral support "among the wary, newly democratized Spaniards."

The "self-inflicted defeat" of the Left in the French election, says Cook, "has abruptly checked the concept of cooperative Eurocommunism cresting in some European wave of the future." The French political situation is frozen at least until the 1981 presidential election and perhaps until the National Assembly elections in 1983. Disillusionment with communism among leftist intellectuals, especially in France, is "complete," says Cook. In neither France nor Italy "does the Left seem to be going anywhere at all."

Loosening Ties

"COMECON Blues" by Nora Beloff, in *Foreign Policy* (Summer 1978), P.O. Box 984, Farmingdale, N.Y. 11737.

While members of the European Common Market move fitfully toward greater economic and political integration, the East European counterpart that calls itself COMECON (Council for Mutual Economic Assistance), with headquarters in Moscow, remains a group of six East European states (plus Cuba, Mongolia, and Vietnam) whose economic ties are so loose that the bloc cannot collectively negotiate on equal terms with the West.

COMECON countries, writes Beloff, former political correspondent for *The Observer* of London, remain so weakly integrated after almost 30 years (Joseph Stalin set up COMECON in 1949) that they will sell each other products for which there is an international market "only if payment is in convertible exchange." (As much as 10 percent of internal COMECON trade is settled in U.S. dollars.)

Today, recession in the West is promoting COMECON integration by