extreme right-wing (and possibly fascistic) authoritarianism, or "a form of liberal authoritarianism, like the bourgeois regimes of nineteenth-century Western Europe" (pp. 303-04). Jowitt clearly finds the latter alternative preferable, though he does not precisely explain the meaning of "liberal authoritarianism" or suggest how the experience of pluralistic competition among ideas and parties but highly restricted popular participation in politics, which would seem to have been the prevailing pattern in Western Europe in the period of early industrialization, could be imitated in Eastern Europe at present, where the manner of undermining and toppling Communist party rule resulted in the rapid expansion of popular participation in politics. Such issues aside, Jowitt's concluding essay shows a strong feel for the atmosphere of politics in post-communist states, and we are all in his debt for the boldness and originality of the ideas which he offers.

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In his study, Stephan Kux notes that "the Soviet federation is heading toward its most serious crisis of confidence and performance since the creation of the USSR in 1922." His aims were to identify the problems in the then existing federal arrangement, to assess the center-periphery conflict, to examine Gorbachev's agenda for revamping the federation, to suggest possible solutions, and to show the potential of a federalist restructuring of the USSR for reconciling the divergent interests of the center and the republics. From the post-USSR perspective, Kux's study offers a valuable, detailed historical record of the Soviet debate on the subject spanning 1989-September 1990.

The very basis, though, of his comparative perspective is flawed. On page 1 he asserts: "Like Switzerland or the United States, the USSR is constituted as a union of sovereign member-states bound together in a voluntary federation." (Cf. also pp. 27, 32) In fact, the voluntariness of the USSR is a myth created by the propaganda apparatus of the RCP(B)/CPSU. True, Kux adds that "the provisions of the Soviet constitution are largely hypothetical — they have never been fully implemented" (pp. 1-2), but this he seems to regard as a lapse from the pre-existing ideal.

The facts are that in 1918-20 non-Russian seceding borderlands did not accept Bolshevik armed reconquest and sovietization voluntarily; for, as the 1917 Constituent Assembly showed, only a fraction of their populations supported the Bolsheviks. (Kux notes the non-voluntariness of annexations of the Baltic states, Georgia, and Tannu Tuva only.) Moreover — and less generally known — these imposed Soviet governments of the non-Russian republics, although Bolshevik, soon began to take their, albeit limited, independence seriously, and demanded that Moscow observe their constitutions to the letter.
But the greatest "blank spot" connected with "the real processes in the development of interethnic relations in the USSR" (it was the September 1989 CPSU Nationalities Platform that expressed the need for the full truth about them) are the following, hardly known facts regarding the "voluntariness" of the USSR. In August 1922 the Moscow Politburo established a commission to study the status of the independent Soviet republics. Stalin who headed it proposed their incorporation into the RSFSR, Lenin amending this to "a formal joining together with the RSFSR, in a Union of Soviet Republics of Europe and Asia." The Central Committee (CC) of the RCP(B) adopted this proposal as its official directive. It could not simply be sent to the republics' governments, telling them to surrender their independence; for, stemming from the Moscow CC, it would have smacked of naked imperialism. Therefore, Stalin added a rider that the directive was not to be published but to be sent to the republics' CC's for adoption at their governmental level, whereupon their governments' plenipotentiaries were to bring this directive back to the All-Russia Congress of Soviets convening in Moscow in December where it "shall be declared as the wish of those republics." The Stalin commission's top secret minutes enjoined that even its members were to receive copies of their decision without the "strictly secret" rider. Thought most republics' CC's failed to approve Stalin's proposal, once adopted by the all-powerful CC RCP(B) the iron party discipline made dissent impossible; and the "voluntariness" charade had to be played out on the Bolshoi stage, where the Union treaty was signed on 30 December 1922.

This game of conspiracy, subterfuge, and duress alone invalidates all pretensions to the Union's voluntariness, and it was compounded by the well-known (though readily overlooked) fact that there were no referenda. Gorbachev has always believed the voluntariness myth, yet insisting that nothing could replace the CPSU as an integrating force in the Union.

Kux rightly characterizes the USSR as a "highly centralized, unitary state with a measure of administrative devolution" (p. 2), and "a party state" where "the party stood above or outside the law" (p. 94); predictably, as he compares each facet of state life in various federations and in the USSR, he regularly finds the latter failing to fit the federation norms. It is therefore not unexpected that, when considering future options (writing in October 1990), Kux admits that "federalism goes against the logic of the system it is trying to save," and yet "there is hardly any viable alternative" to federalization, which "is running out of time"; indeed, "the Soviet Union is currently heading in the opposite direction, i. e., . . . the dissolution of an empire," and there seems to be no incentives to join a renewed union, as "the perception of a common threat is evaporating and the traditional role of the union as a security alliance is declining" and "the desire for closer political, legal and economic relations between the center and the peripheries seems to be declining in the USSR," all the more so as "aspirations for national independence, decolonization or secession are driven by idealistic, not materialistic reasoning." Yet Kux concludes, against most of his evidence, that "if the 1990s will be the decade of rebuilding the Soviet federation, they promise to be ten long and difficult years" (pp. 112-15). More likely, in today's terms the