

factor: discretion, a shining virtue in a diplomat, is hardly so in a writer of memoirs.

With all those self-imposed handicaps, *Witness to History* is still an important book. We do get glimpses of the author's gift as raconteur; and his modesty (also not entirely desirable in autobiographical writing) cannot obscure the fact that beyond being a brilliant diplomat he was at various crucial points in recent history a sagacious counselor to our policy makers. It is concerning this last point that the reader must experience a sense of sadness and of lost opportunities. Mr. Bohlen and his friend George Kennan were not only among the most brilliant members of the diplomatic service of their time, but were also—in the true sense of this often abused word—experts on Russia. Having read the book, one sees that on many occasions their advice was sought by their superiors and occasionally acted upon. But the main impression must remain that they were given little opportunity to do what they were so superbly equipped for: to *educate* the American policy makers in the true dimensions and complexities of the problems of Russia and communism (the two are far from being synonymous). Whether under Roosevelt or John Foster Dulles, that breezy pragmatism—excessive alertness to the internal political needs of the hour, the “practical man's” impatience with the “buts” and “ifs” of the expert—was allowed to dominate our official attitude toward the Soviet Union. Bohlen is characteristically self-effacing when he argues that a more realistic assessment of the Soviet Union by our policy makers, such as urged by himself and Kennan, could not have made a great deal of difference whether in 1944–45 or in the late fifties. Yet the reader might well disagree. It also speaks for itself that with the Soviet Union by far the No. 1 problem of our foreign policy, Bohlen was assigned during some crucial periods in Soviet-American relations to Manila and Paris, post: which he occupied with distinction but where he could hardly be as useful as in Washington or Moscow. And so in addition to throwing new light on many great historical moments of the last thirty years, this book holds some lessons for today.

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THE POLITICS OF SOVIET AGRICULTURE, 1960–1970. By *Werner G. Hahn*. Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1972. xix, 311 pp. \$12.50.

Hahn's study is one that should prove of considerable interest to students of both Soviet politics and Soviet agriculture. It is a work whose objective, the author states in the preface, “is to examine the agricultural issues over which Soviet leaders have been divided during the decade 1960–1970. It does not encompass all agricultural policies or problems—only those which have given rise to disputes among prominent Soviet politicians. Nor does it encompass all political disputes—primarily only those involving agriculture” (p. xi). Hahn, therefore, provides one of the most informative and readable accounts available in Western literature of the unfolding of some of the more important agricultural problems of the decade and the role played therein by certain leading Soviet officials either in complicating the problems or in attempting to resolve them.

Hahn traces Khrushchev's career from the agricultural failures of 1959 and the opposition that emerged in 1960 to his fall from power in 1964 and the subse-

quent reaction to many of his agricultural policies. Of special interest, at least to this reviewer, is Hahn's discussion and analysis of the virgin land program, the conflicts within the party that emerged over specific agricultural policies, the events that led up to the crop disaster of 1963, and the solutions proposed at the March 1965 plenum.

Khrushchev's advocacy of policies detrimental to the preservation of soil fertility in northern Kazakhstan—policies that Western observers had long recognized as dangerous, such as those pertaining to the neglect or reduction of clean fallowing and the insistence on the intertilled system—contributed to the worsening conditions of grain production in the Eastern regions. Fall moldboard plowing, which cut deeply into the fragile, lighter soils of the Kazakh steppe, led to desiccation and serious problems of erosion. Moreover, as Hahn observes, "Lysenko's 1960 early sowing program had greatly compounded the already troublesome weed problem. To counter weeds, more frequent plowing was urged by Nalivayko in 1962. The more frequent plowing compounded the damage to the soil already caused by the plowing methods used since the start of the virgin land cultivation" (p. 111).

The March plenum, following Khrushchev's fall, brought a number of reforms to Soviet agriculture. Among the recommendations were requirements for an expansion of clean fallowing, a short fallow-grain crop rotation, the abandonment of the repeated tilling of the soil by moldboard plows, and the exclusive use of horizontal moldboardless implements. These reforms have undoubtedly brought improvements to virgin land farming. Hahn's account, however, does not carry us beyond Brezhnev's rise in 1971. A careful assessment of agricultural politics in the early 1970s has yet to be made.

The text is supported by appendixes and a useful index, but what gives Hahn's study its authenticity is the well-documented and careful research that has gone into its preparation.

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TROTSKY AND THE JEWS. By *Joseph Nedava*. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1972. 299 pp. \$6.00.

JEWS, WARS, AND COMMUNISM, vol. 1: THE ATTITUDE OF AMERICAN JEWS TO WORLD WAR I, THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTIONS OF 1917, AND COMMUNISM (1914–1945). By *Zosa Szajkowski*. New York: KTAV Publishing House, 1972. xxvii, 714 pp. \$20.00.

JEWISH NATIONALITY AND SOVIET POLITICS: THE JEWISH SECTIONS OF THE CPSU, 1917–1930. By *Zvi Y. Gitelman*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972. xii, 573 pp. \$20.00.

In the first of these three volumes dealing with Jews and Russian communism Joseph Nedava, an Israeli journalist and academic, examines Trotsky's attitude toward the Jewish problem. The author distinguishes four periods: up to 1914, when Trotsky was concerned with the Jewish Bund on the one hand and such anti-Jewish activities as the pogroms and the famous Beilis case on the other; from 1914 to 1926, when he experienced "complete alienation" from the issue; from 1926 to 1932, when doubts about a Soviet Marxist and especially a Stalinist solution