

From the Editor:

Slavic Review publishes letters to the editor with educational or research merit. Where the letter concerns a publication in *Slavic Review*, the author of the publication will be offered an opportunity to respond. Space limitations dictate that comment regarding a book review should be limited to one paragraph; comment on an article should not exceed 750 to 1,000 words. The editor encourages writers to refrain from ad hominem discourse.

D.P.K.

To the Editor:

Thomas Cushman is to be congratulated for his balanced, insightful review of Robert M. Hayden's *Blueprints for a House Divided* (*Slavic Review*, vol. 60, no. 1) and for showing the ways in which academic work may become harnessed to political agendas. Hayden's book has also come in for telling criticism in Europe, where Christian Boulanger has criticized Hayden for allowing empirical and normative theories to become entangled and for adopting the logic of nationalism as his own (posted at userpage.fu-berlin.de/~boulanger/texte/RezHayden.htm; see also the review of Hayden's book in *Suedost Europa*, November–December 2000). Hayden imagines that he has made some big discoveries in identifying the role of the federal structure, the pernicious impact of the concept of the "national state," and the importance of the role played by certain leaders, in driving forward and framing the breakup of Yugoslavia, but these ideas, usually associated with some attention to economic deterioration, are commonplace in the literature. These ideas have been previously argued, in whole or in part, in my *Balkan Babel* (1992), Viktor Meier, *Wie Jugoslawien verspielt wurde* (1996), Laura Silber and Allan Little, *The Death of Yugoslavia* (1995), Nebojsa Popov, ed., *Srpska strana rata* (1996), and Reneo Lukic and Allen Lynch, *Europe from the Balkans to the Urals* (1996). Hayden's bibliography, however, shows many gaps in his reading; had he paid more attention to the literature, he would have found these ideas already in circulation. At the same time, Hayden's stress on Slovene "guilt" is surely misplaced, while his lame endeavor to equate a characterization of Yugoslav state dynamics with idiocies about ancient hatreds makes one wonder if he has fully grasped that Yugoslavia was founded only in 1918.

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To the Editor:

First of all, I would like to thank Michael Ellman for his review essay concerning my father's book, *Tak bylo: Razmyshleniia o minuvshem* (*Slavic Review*, vol. 60, no. 1). For the most part, I found the description of the book itself and Ellman's thoughts about the book and its contents objective and fair. Nevertheless, I feel it necessary to point out where my view differs from Ellman's.

Ellman writes: "In some cases one has the suspicion that what is written reflects the views of the editor at least as much as those of his late father. Did Mikoian really dictate or write the final paragraph of the book or did the editor add it to make the book more palatable to modern readers?" (141). This suspicion arises because the author is no longer alive. I feel obliged to state, however, that I did not "correct" my father's stories. This should be clear from the numerous instances of views presented in the book that were not terribly complimentary to my father's image, many of which are cited by Ellman (for example, Mikoian's continued support for the Non-Aggression Pact with Germany, even as he was dictating his memoirs). And Ellman writes, "Mikoian does honestly state, however, that in

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1922–36 . . . he fully supported both Stalin's policies and his methods and tactics" (148). He also makes note of my father's "vivid description of the 1942 procurement campaign" (141) and of the decision to trade grain to Great Britain in 1947 when part of the population of the USSR was starving, and of other things that are not complimentary to Mikoian's image or place in history, such as "his support for Stalin's method of decision making during the war" (148). Even in connection with Sergei Kirov's murder, I stopped short of adding that in private my father expressed no doubt about Iosif Stalin's guilt—especially after Ol'ga Shatunovskaia told him about the vote against Stalin and in favor of Kirov at the Seventeenth Congress and about the group led by Boris Sheboldaev asking for Kirov's agreement to put forward his name as the future general secretary of the party.

As far as the final paragraph of the book is concerned, it is in full accordance with the thoughts my father expressed at home in the last years of his life (my elder brothers Stepan and Ivan, as well as our children can testify to this). Moreover, Ellman did not pay enough attention to the wording of my father's understanding of democratization (without any doubt that is what Ellman questions). Of course, my father could not have meant today's state of affairs in Russia. Still, in chapter 41 (typed in the Kremlin in the 1960s and registered in the Russian State Archive of Social-Political History in the 1990s), my father writes: "All my hopes for democratization gradually evaporated" (516), and "democracy did not reemerge even in the party" (517). He continued this line of thought in chapter 49 (same origin): "The rights of the republics were violated [in Khrushchev's times!]" (601), and "in the text of the project for the new Constitution a phrase was included about 'constant growth of the Party's [leading] role' . . . If the normal development of society is occurring, why must the party play the leading role?" (613).

Ellman writes: "Stalin justified removing [Nikolai] Voznesenskii . . . on the grounds that he was a great power chauvinist" (147). That is not correct. Mikoian tells the story about Lavrentii Beriia's revealing to Stalin certain statistical data that was unfavorable to Voznesenskii and that Voznesenskii had consequently attempted to conceal from Stalin (559–61). After his deception was discovered, Voznesenskii was relieved of his duties and Beriia and Viktor Abakumov started to lay the groundwork for the criminal case. Stalin's words about Voznesenskii's chauvinism were spoken much earlier and had no relation to the story. Nevertheless, the MGB investigators implied chauvinism as a part of the Leningrad group's "crimes."

Ellman's desire to verify the details "of particular incidents against other sources" (148) is quite understandable and absolutely correct. I am doing just that sort of checking in my work on my father's foreign assignments at present. But it is important to take into account that Nikita Khrushchev's memoirs are frequently inaccurate. In relation to Mikoian they are often false and unfair as well. I had a chance to explain the nature of their relations, and Khrushchev's attitude toward my father after 1964, partly in my foreword and more explicitly in some Russian-language articles. I can provide photocopies to anyone who is interested.

Ellman's assumption that my father's speech at the October Plenum (1952) was never actually delivered is hard for me to accept. His memory was still excellent. He hated any form of lying even in his own defense. And when he was recalling this speech, it was not a matter of his life or death. If the transcripts of the plenum exist, I hope they will someday be published; then we shall see who was right: Ellman or my father.

Until I can lay my own eyes on the letter to Nikolai Ezhov that my father is alleged to have written in July 1937, my strong doubts about its content will persist. My acquaintance with Soviet/Russian ways of treating data and documents keeps me from believing the allegations Ellman reports without further proof.

I am amazed that Ellman can compare "Mikoian's political perspective" with that of Aleksandr Iakovlev "three decades later" (148–49). At the time my father was dictating his memoirs, Iakovlev was still an ardent supporter of Mikhail Suslov's dogmatic ideological line (and he remained so for more than a decade). Too many victims, eyewitnesses, and records exist for Suslov to refute this, even with the volumes of self-glorifying writings he has composed since perestroika. Several journalists and writers within my own acquaintance were destroyed professionally by the pitiless leader of agitprop, namely Aleksandr Iakovlev (they could not publish anything within the Soviet empire or even within "brotherly" eastern Europe). One needs to have known Iakovlev for decades, as I have, to un-

derstand his inclination toward malicious vengeance against those who found themselves out of favor.

I feel almost insulted by Ellman's assumption that Iakovlev became my father's successor at the Politburo committee on rehabilitations. Mikoian actually and promptly liberated people from the gulag and the prisons, giving them back their right to a normal life at home. By contrast, Iakovlev has been exploiting his position and the names of victims who passed away long ago for his own benefit. He does not favor with a reply the former prisoners (I know the people) who have appealed to him concerning the privileges granted them by law but ignored by the Russian bureaucracy.

The entire excerpt that Ellman includes from the archives on the Iakovlev commission's findings concerning my father's role in the repressions exhibits significant questionable elements. Just one example: "Mikoian made analogous proposals [for repressions] with respect to a number of organizations of the People's Commissariat for Foreign Trade" (149). This is simply not true. No man or woman working for that commissariat was arrested or harassed between 1938 and 1948. Nobody, not even Iakovlev's men, can name a single person. And, if one of the assertions made by the Iakovlev commission is a lie, why should we believe the others? I am going to start my own investigation into other allegations in the hope of gaining access to the archives myself. This will not be an easy task, given the strict control over the Politburo archives. Why are the archives still open only to the commission and not to interested people including researchers and relatives? Why has glasnost not yet come to Iakovlev's domain?

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Professor Ellman replies:

I am pleased that Sergo A. Mikoyan saw my review essay and considers it "mostly objective and fair."

With regard to the final paragraph of the book, I accept Mikoyan's argument that this formulation truly expressed the point of view of his late father and was not his reworking. Mikoyan's evidence is supported by the fact that even Dmitrii Shepilov, the editor of *Pravda* in the late Stalin period, advocated democracy in his memoirs (written in the late 1960s after he had lost power; Shepilov, *Nepriimknuvshii*, 2001, 174–75). Mikoyan provides the clue to understanding how faithful servants of an extreme dictatorship could advocate democracy in their memoirs: by "democracy" former Soviet leaders "could not have meant today's state of affairs in Russia."

I quoted Iosif Stalin's evaluation of Nikolai Voznesenskii because of its relevance for Soviet nationalities policy in the late Stalin period. In view of what is often written, it is interesting to see that even toward the end of his life Stalin regarded "great power chauvinism" as a pejorative expression that could be used to condemn a Soviet politician. As for the actual cause of Voznesenskii's fall, I did not discuss this complex matter.

Let us turn to Mikoian's speech at the October Plenum (1952). In addition to Mikoian's account, I am aware of eight published eyewitness accounts of this plenum (there may be others I have missed). Four of these eight (Nikita Khrushchev, Georgii Malenkov, Nikolai Kuznetsov, and Boris Ponomarev) say nothing about the content of Mikoian's speech. Another (Konstantin Simonov) provides a very brief summary of the speeches of Viacheslav Molotov and Mikoian and describes them as having the same content, quite unlike Mikoian's own account (Simonov, *Glazami cheloveka moego pokoleniia*, 1990, 212–13). Of the remaining three, Shepilov agrees with Mikoian's account that Mikoian defended himself from Stalin's absurd accusations but remembers also that the speech "did not fail to kick Molotov, who constantly associated with Voznesenskii, who was by then a major criminal himself." The very serious (by the standards of the time) accusation that Molotov had constantly associated with Voznesenskii, is not in Mikoian's version. Shepilov also states that at the October Plenum (1952), Stalin expressed his lack of confidence not only in Molotov and Mikoian but also in Klimentii Voroshilov, something Mikoian does not mention (Shepilov, *Nepriimknuvshii*, 227). Nuriddin Mukhitdinov reports a quite different speech from the one in Mikoian's memoirs. He does not remember