

Soviet elite perspectives on international relations. On this level, Spechler's book is rich with insight and provides a methodological and substantive basis for important future research — both academic and governmental.

Unfortunately, and for reasons that are not readily apparent, Spechler made exaggerated claims for her findings, generalizing them beyond the evidence at hand. That is, she simply asserted (without demonstration) that the newspapers served as outlets for the expression of given institutional interests and Politburo spokesmen. Professor Petrov has properly taken her to task for this. What he has failed to do, however, is alert the reader to the fact that these claims were very much a secondary (or tertiary) component of the book. Indeed, they were largely a sidelight. As a result, readers of *Slavic Review* were denied the opportunity to learn what the book was really about.

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PROFESSOR PETROV REPLIES:

I am happy for Professor Breslauer that he found Spechler's book "rich with insight" and representing a "methodological and substantive basis for important future research." I am sorry I did not. I detect many more than four "tendencies" among "Soviet elite perspectives" on international relations but am unable to demonstrate that these reflect domestic influences upon policy rather than minor exceptions from it, more by individuals than by institutionalized interest groups. Although she wisely focused on a single case, Spechler, in my view, has failed in her approach. Her method may or may not have been sound, but method is no substitute for knowledge, less so for perception. Domestic inputs in Soviet foreign policy formulation remain a badly understudied subject of great importance.

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