

political communications. It also contains a wealth of factual information. I find the following comment by Mr. Hoffmann particularly puzzling: "Most important, the author has not placed her personal stamp on the materials gathered. Her book is largely a pastiche of Soviet and Western research findings and assertions. . . ." It makes one wonder whether he has read the book at all. The first chapter (as can be seen by merely glancing at the table of contents) is the only effort in print to date at placing post-Stalin developments in public political communications in the context of broader changes in the Soviet system, particularly the regime's efforts at political socialization. Indeed, it is one of the few works in print at all to tackle the role of mass media in political socialization. His assertion that I have made "virtually no effort to analyze the various *purposes*" of the mass media and propaganda apparatus is absurd. Not only does the study devote a great deal of space to analyzing the purposes of the system with regard to public political communication but it also examines the changing relationships among the various media, and between them and the agitation-propaganda apparatus.

Finally, it is curious that Mr. Hoffmann characterizes the view presented of the political and ideological goals of the system as "static," since the entire book is devoted to documenting and analyzing changes in public political communication during the post-Stalin period. That the conclusion at the close of a careful study is "Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose" (one that is shared by Alex Inkeles and others who are knowledgeable about Soviet political communications) may not be to Mr. Hoffmann's liking is another matter. The post-Khrushchev resurgence in repressive policies concerning the media and interpersonal communication, especially that among dissenters (see "Political Communications and Dissent in the Soviet Union" in Rudolf L. Tokes, ed., *The Politics and Ideologies of Dissent*, forthcoming), would seem to bear me out.

Mr. Hoffmann's comments on sources that he thinks have not been used betrays that he has not read his footnotes carefully, nor has he taken into account the cut-off date for research.

All academics are busy, and when they are sent books to review that are not in their own specialized field, often tend to glance over them, setting up straw men to knock over; that is the easiest way to write a review and make oneself look good. It is not, however, a very responsible way to give prospective readers an idea of what a book contains and what to expect from it. I suggest that we all learn from Mr. Hoffmann's example and take care in reviewing our colleagues' scholarly products. If we are less knowledgeable in a field than we should be, or do not have the time to take pains to go over it thoroughly, we should either decline to review it or find the time to expand our background.

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PROFESSOR HOFFMANN REPLIES:

I am sorry that Professor Hollander felt compelled to write her letter. Although its tone surprises me, its substance gives me no reason to change my earlier evaluation. The author performs a useful service in bringing the findings of Soviet media research to a larger audience. But overall her book *is* a pastiche, and it *is* an inadequately researched, sketchy, repetitious, and none too insightful treatment of some

very important subjects. Let the careful reader decide for himself whether I am correct, and whether my review or the author's letter provides the more judicious and balanced view of the "shortcomings and strengths" of the book.

I welcome differences of viewpoint, such as Mrs. Hollander expresses in the third paragraph of her letter. She might have raised other questions of interpretation. But I find unfortunate the demonstrably false contention that this was a hasty review written by a person not knowledgeable about developments and sources in the field. Why, if the reviewer is not considered knowledgeable, does the author cite some of the reviewer's pertinent research (a doctoral dissertation on the "agitation-propaganda apparatus") and report parts of its contents with virtually no additional analysis for almost two pages (pp. 146-47, footnotes 3-9 consecutively)? In short, why belatedly contend that a scholar is not knowledgeable when one has relied on his work in an important section of one's own book?

TO THE EDITOR:

As an additional note to the admirable review of books on the Soviet secret police by Professor Slusser in the December 1973 issue of your publication, written apparently before the appearance of the latest book by Solzhenitsyn, I should like to add the following books in Russian on the subject which await their translation into English if Professor Slusser's message is to be heeded.

The first is A. Sinevirsky (real name: M. Mondich), *SMERSh, God v stane vraga*. This little book published by Possev in the fifties, and now nearly forgotten, was really the first firsthand account on SMERSh, by a young Carpatho-Ruthenian engineer who, under the instructions of a Russian émigré group, stayed behind the lines in Eastern Slovakia, joined SMERSh, and worked for it for a year, whereupon he broke down and was helped by another SMERSh officer to escape to the West. He died a few years ago of cancer in Munich where he had worked in the Central Research Department of Radio Liberty. The book is a kind of diary and certainly deserves to be translated into English.

Some interesting observations on the Soviet secret police, the behavior of its investigators and officials, and their psychology and methods are to be found in two other recently published books by former inmates of Soviet camps: D. Panin, *Zapiski Sologdina* (Possev, 1973), and A. Shifrin, *Chetvertoe izmerenie* (Possev, 1973). Both books suffer, unfortunately, from much too much didacticism and moralization and should be considerably edited and abbreviated in translation. Mr. Shifrin could also be suspected of some exaggerations and of reporting unverified rumors as facts. Nevertheless, the essence of these books should reach the English-speaking reader. Panin, of course, was the prototype for Sologdin in Solzhenitsyn's *First Circle*, and he is now living in Paris.

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