

THE SOVIET VOLUNTEERS: MODERNIZATION AND BUREAUCRACY IN A PUBLIC MASS ORGANIZATION. By *William E. Odom*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973. xv, 360 pp. \$14.50.

Regimes with ambitious goals and limited resources must stretch what they have, and innovate to find more, if they are to succeed. The problem is all the more pressing when the regime is revolutionary, and the attainment of its goals are assumed to be critical to the revolution's survival. This is the context within which the *Osoaviakhim*—the “Society of Friends of Defense and Aviation-Chemical Construction,” and the predecessor to today's DOSAAF—emerged in the USSR in 1927. In his detailed analysis of its organizational history, performance, and failures, Odom has provided the reader with a scholarly, informative, and altogether valuable work.

Osoaviakhim aimed at an effective mobilization of human and material resources primarily for future military potential. The organization made attempts at mass recruitment of members with (free) labor and dues-paying capacity, and, through its central mission of providing basic military training without removing workers and peasants from their civilian-economy jobs, hoped to instill “modern” disciplined attitudes and behaviors in the *muzhik* and in his not-too-distant cousin, the industrial worker. Furthermore, members undergoing the de-traditionalizing experience were expected to become aware of new technology and its relevance to the coming war, which the leadership wanted the masses to believe was inevitable.

How well (or poorly) did it work? Odom's answers are given on two levels: factual description and, as the subtitle suggests, theoretical analysis combining elements of the theories of modernization, bureaucracy, and organizational behavior. On the first level, the verdict is mixed. While the organization's mass, “voluntary” nature caused it at times to resemble a blunt, rather than a well-honed instrument, it *did* mobilize resources, *did* provide basic military training economically to millions, and in the later prewar years probably did succeed to some degree in spreading awareness of the nature of and risks inherent in modern warfare. Its relative effectiveness in these areas is not really a point at issue—there were (given political decisions and economic realities which decreed that the masses would remain at work and not be cycled through the “expensive university” of the Red Army in peacetime) *no* alternatives to an *Osoaviakhim*-type organization.

But a bureaucratically-structured mass organization has its costs. As Odom's argument—based finally on an adoption of Crozier's characterization of bureaucracy as “an organization that cannot correct its behavior by learning from its errors”—reveals, it is as likely to be *subverted* by traditional attitudes and behaviors as it is to change them. The central hierarchy set goals which were impossible to attain by approved procedures because of resource constraints at the periphery; the latter responded either by using disapproved procedures or by simulating compliance, calling forth yet greater demands for goal attainment simultaneous with demands for elimination of “abuses”—the bureaucratic “vicious circle” in which the periphery, since it cannot carry out the center's orders, deceives the center. It did not always work. As Odom notes, the center was cognizant of the “operational realities,” but its critical problem was “a lack of administrative capacity to act effectively on the information it possessed.” Such is “muddling through”—which

is what this useful book, in much the same manner as Berliner's *Factory and Manager in the USSR*, is about. It deserves thoughtful attention.

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THE SOVIET TREATMENT OF JEWS. By *Harry G. Shaffer*. Praeger Special Studies in International Politics and Government. New York, Washington, London: Praeger Publishers, 1974. xvii, 232 pp. \$13.50.

THE SOVIET CAGE: ANTI-SEMITISM IN RUSSIA. By *William Korey*. New York: The Viking Press, 1973. xiii, 369 pp. \$12.50.

The unhappy impression left by Professor Shaffer's book is of a collection of snippets. It tries to do too much—to be both an account of the situation of Russian Jewry and a source book of documents relating to that situation. (Despite the all-embracing nature of the title, a mere ten pages are thought sufficient to describe the position of Soviet Jewry up to 1950.) The book does offer a commendably objective analysis of the facts presented, concentrating on the Brezhnev-Kosygin era. Professor Shaffer deals with such topics as the identity of anti-Semitism and anti-Zionism, the treatment of Judaism as a religion, discrimination in educational and employment facilities, and the right to emigrate. Readings follow, which, according to the author's foreword "are intended to familiarize the reader with the whole spectrum of positions," ranging from that of the militantly anti-Soviet Jewish Defense League to that of the pro-Soviet Communist Party of the United States. In between, few positions are left unoccupied (official Israeli position, official USSR position, and so forth). Unfortunately, this is all predictable. The reader is constrained to ask: Where are the people most directly concerned, the Soviet Jews themselves? They do not appear until the last few pages, and here, for the most part, there is an authentic human voice.

Mr. Korey's work consists largely of a number of articles published or presented to various scholarly bodies over the last few years. The articles have been updated by the inclusion of additional material. At the heart of the book is the author's account of the 1970 Leningrad trial for the attempted hijacking of a Soviet plane, and the subsequent, related trials in Kishinev and Riga. These marked the zenith of the official Soviet attempt to crush the renaissance of Jewish national feeling in the USSR. But the trials had unwelcome repercussions and intensified the movement to such a degree that only a complete return to Stalinist repression could have stopped it. For example, the humanistic Russian intelligentsia, which in the past had frequently made the cause of Russian Jewry its own, became more active than ever in defending Jewish militants and thus challenged the authorities as the true voice of Marxist ideology on the Jewish question. In addition, international public opinion, prompted by the concern of world Jewry, brought pressure on the policies of the Soviet Union, a pressure that could be translated into economic terms.

An important point, appropriately emphasized by Korey, is the way in which tactics developed by the Russian dissident intelligentsia became a model for the Jewish national movement. This includes the tactics of protest initiated in 1966 through petitions and letters to Soviet leaders, and the subsequent internationalization of protest through the use of the United Nations as a recipient of petitions.