

actions and leaders. For example, there is a great deal of detail presented about the siege and surrender of Port Arthur. While taking account of many positive aspects of Japanese intelligence, the authors assert that it was remiss in estimating the ability of the Russians to hold out at Port Arthur and that its evaluations may have been unduly influenced by the experience of the previous decade with the Chinese armies. In listing the Japanese military advantages the Warners properly include not only strategy and weapons but a good sense of opportunity and a strong will to fight. In reference to the battle of Liaoyang, General Kuropatkin's own reasons for falling back are cited—the superiority of the Japanese in numbers; the fact that they were younger, carried lighter loads and were more accustomed to hills and hot weather; and their greater patriotism and military spirit. Finally, the authors bring out the point that, quite apart from the renowned battle of Tsushima, the Russian naval war was carried on with less determination and effectiveness than the Japanese.

The authors succeed in the matter of observing fairness to both sides—if one allows for a tendency to see the winners in a fairer light. While there is sympathy for Admiral Makarov, because he was a sympathetic figure and because of his early death, there is no doubt that Admiral Togo comes out as a genuine hero, which, of course, he was and is to the Japanese people. At the same time, however, the heroic efforts of the officers and men of the Russian Baltic fleet do receive attention as they live out the difficult months on the coal-laden decks of their ships bound for the Pacific.

The book is well published from a technical point of view. The maps of the individual battles are helpful and the pictures are well selected.

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DIE OKTOBRISTEN (1905–1913): ZIELVORSTELLUNGEN UND STRUKTUR: EIN BEITRAG ZUR RUSSISCHEN PARTEIENGESCHICHTE.

By *Ernst BIRTH*. Kieler Historische Studien, vol. 19. Stuttgart: Ernst Klett Verlag, 1974. 203 pp. DM 39.50, paper.

THE OCTOBRISTS IN THE THIRD DUMA, 1907–1912. By *Ben-Cion Pinchuk*. Publications on Russia and Eastern Europe of the Institute for Comparative and Foreign Area Studies, no. 4. Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 1974. ix, 232 pp. \$10.50.

It is a pity these two authors did not get together to write one book on the Octobrists. There has long been a need for a monographic study of the party which supported the most serious attempt of the tsarist government to work with society in the interests of reform. Neither of these books on its own quite fits the bill. Both are based on doctoral dissertations which dealt with aspects of the Union of October 17, and neither has been broadened sufficiently to serve as a general study. The student anxious for a full account will thus be put to some expense but in fact the two books taken together complement each other well. Birth concentrates on the Union's aims, social structure, and its relationships with other political groups, while Pinchuk describes only its work in the Third Duma, but their conclusions are similar. The Octobrists were an alliance between haute bourgeoisie and landowners, who had a common interest in ensuring the restoration of law and order and also in the pursuance of reform that would prevent a repetition of

the upheavals of 1905–7. They were *étatiste* and patriotic—their patriotism sometimes moved them to criticize strongly a government which seemed to be making light of its responsibilities to the people (Pinchuk brings this out very strongly), but their *étatisme* always kept them within decorous and acceptable bounds. They were conservative rather than liberal, and when faced with determined opposition from the court, the State Council or the United Nobility, the Octobrists would retreat in dismay (Guchkov giving a brilliant solo display of indignation) rather than use all the parliamentary weapons at their command. In this way they lost the government's respect without gaining support among the electorate. They were always an alliance of heterogeneous elements and their split in 1913 was a logical consequence of this. By the outbreak of war (when their "national liberalism" might have come into its own) they no longer possessed any independent influence.

Of these two works, Birth's contains more new material and is, I think, more sensitive to the general historical problems raised by the Octobrists' experience. He emphasizes more than Pinchuk the deliberate woolliness of the Union's organization, established by people who were suspicious of party politics of whatever kind. In many areas, Octobrists preferred not to have a local organization, but simply some "sympathizers." Birth's survey of these provincial arrangements is one of the best parts of his book. In his description of the social structure of the Union, however, I feel that Birth overestimates the importance of the commercial and industrial bourgeoisie, though in the absence of quantitative data it is difficult to be certain. By the same token, he underestimates the importance of zemstvo experience in the formation of the Octobrists' outlook. From 1906, when many of the most important urban leaders left the party, it was dominated by people who had been or were zemstvo deputies. These deputies generally were drawn from the minority movement of the Zemstvo Congresses or from those who had never been to the Congresses, avoiding them as factional politics. It is no accident that, after the split of 1913, the largest surviving rump called themselves the Zemstvo Octobrists to distinguish themselves from their confreres of right and left. In part, Birth's perspective results from his concentration on the party's formation in 1905–6 (of which he gives a good account), when industrialists and financiers were, indeed, closely involved.

Pinchuk's focus is on the politics of the Third Duma. In a generally sound and clear account, he shows how the Octobrists fell apart because of their heterogeneity and inconsequential leadership. One or two points require comment. His analysis of the Naval Staffs Crisis of 1909 is inaccurate in one important respect. It is not the case that Article 96 of the Fundamental Laws gave the emperor "exclusive jurisdiction" in "all matters concerned with the organization of the military and naval forces": it gave him such jurisdiction only when a new decree or instruction did not affect general (that is, nonmilitary) legislation, and did not require fresh credits from the treasury. In the latter two cases the full legislative procedure had to be followed, going through Duma and State Council. The crux of the Naval Staffs affair was the question of whether the establishment of new staff lists fell in this category. The Octobrists, supported by Stolypin, were on strong legal ground in arguing that it did, since new expenditure was involved. Unless this point is made clear, it appears that the Duma was trying to arrogate to itself powers which it did not possess under the Fundamental Laws. This would have been quite uncharacteristic of the Octobrists.

Pinchuk also fails to understand the importance of the Council of Ministers as an institution. The establishment of a cabinet, with mutual collective responsibility and with a prime minister at its head, was an integral part of making the government "responsible" (a word on which Pinchuk rightly lays much emphasis). Stolypin tried, not always successfully, to continue Witte's practice of having ministers report to the cabinet rather than individually to the emperor, and Guchkov regarded this as important for the consolidation of the new legislative institutions. Because the ministers of war, navy, foreign affairs and the Imperial Court were exempted from cabinet collective responsibility, the Octobrists gave much attention to them and tried to move them in the direction of greater "responsibility." This attempt to establish greater "responsibility" also has a bearing on the Octobrists' attitude toward Finnish affairs. In their offensive on Finnish autonomy the Octobrists were motivated partly by the desire to have the state secretary for Finland, who reported to the emperor alone, replaced by a minister responsible to the cabinet, as well as by their desire to increase the powers of the Duma in Finnish legislation.

Both books deliberately leave open what seems to me the basic question about the Octobrists. Did they fail because their leadership was inept and their organization, both in and outside the Duma, was clearly chaotic (as John Hutchinson concludes in his 1966 London doctoral thesis—still the best single general work on the Octobrists); or were they simply in a hopeless situation, where trying to work with a government that would not abandon arbitrary rule resulted in a steady decline in morale and a loss of public support (as I tend to believe)? Both of these works give us much data with which to attempt an answer.

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LIBERALS IN THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION: THE CONSTITUTIONAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY, 1917–1921. By *William G. Rosenberg*. Studies of the Russian Institute, Columbia University. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974. xiv, 534 pp. \$25.00, cloth. \$9.75, paper.

William Rosenberg has produced in this work an excellent and much-needed contribution to the growing literature on the Russian Revolution and civil war. If there is such a thing as a definitive study for the 1917–21 period, then this is probably it for the Kadets. Rosenberg has apparently used most of the sources available, including recent Soviet studies which indicate some access to the proverbial archives—the possible future opening of which one usually cites as the chief reason for not applying the "definitive" label.

Besides being a major addition to scholarly analysis of the Russian Revolution, this work should also be considered a significant contribution to the study of liberalism in general. The story of the Kadets is a veritable classic case of the "moderates" caught in the whirlwind of revolutionary dynamics and the accompanying polarization of politics into "left" and "right." Further, one of the virtues of Rosenberg's study is that it does not end with the Bolshevik victory but continues through the civil war and the beginning of the emigration. It also gives ample attention to the variety of views, the many personalities in leadership roles, and the regional organization and role of the Kadet party both before and after the Bolshevik seizure of power.