

owed their survival to geography and climate rather than to their own endeavors.

Regarding Stalin, Seaton concludes, "like Hitler, he had no sense of what was practicable, and for this his lack of military education and experience was responsible." Yet his overall judgment is more positive: "The Soviet High Command did make errors, some of them grievous ones . . . , and many of these were probably due to Stalin's dominance of the *Stavka*. Yet . . . the war direction of the GKO and the *Stavka* was in many ways superior to that of the German OKW and OKH." More specifically he says that "Soviet war leadership in 1941 and 1942 was generally better than the German at the top, but deteriorated rapidly through the lower echelons of command" (pp. 84–85).

By contrast with his military analysis, some of Colonel Seaton's comments about peoples and politics strike this reader as both flawed and superfluous. They also reveal some of his likes and dislikes (notably Winston Churchill among the latter). His account is punctuated with rather primitive anticommunism, crude ethnic stereotypes, and even an occasional assertion that Hitler "understood Bolshevism better than did the Anglo-American leaders" and that his "estimate of Soviet intentions was correct" (pp. 34–35, 53). Perhaps because of the nature of available sources, his reconstruction is generally more convincing for the German than for the Soviet side.

The few factual slips (e.g., in identifying the NKO and the *Stavka*) are distinctly minor. Regrettably, the author does not appear to have used all the available sources (e.g., Khrushchev or Kuznetsov on Stalin's attitudes at the time of the German attack, Nekrich for the most "anti-Stalinist" Soviet account, and Bialer, Erickson, and Garthoff on Soviet civil-military relations). But he has done a valuable job in sifting the mountains of confusing evidence on the military aspects of the German-Soviet war.

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SIEGE AND SURVIVAL: THE ODYSSEY OF A LENINGRADER. By *Elena Skrjabina*. Translated and edited by *Norman Luxenburg*. Foreword by *Harrison E. Salisbury*. Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, 1971. xi, 174 pp. \$4.95.

In the annals of World War II, and indeed of modern wars, the 900-day siege of Leningrad holds a special place in the long catalogue of disasters, horrors, and fortitude in the face of seemingly impossible odds. The struggle for survival of the city's over three million inhabitants and refugees, under conditions of a military siege, in the midst of the extraordinarily severe winter of 1941–42, without electricity, water, transportation, or fuel, and with hardly any food, has become an epic in recent history. If heroism is measured in terms of losses, privation, and suffering, then Leningrad, having paid the price with over one million civilian dead from hunger, cold, disease, and bombardment without surrendering, no doubt deserves its Soviet title of Hero City.

Leningraders seem to have a sense of history, and a great many of them from all walks of life kept diaries during those trying years. Many of these diaries have been published in the Soviet Union and abroad. Mrs. Skrjabina's contribution is mainly that of a young housewife and mother and a member of the "intelligentsia" caught in the disaster. The diary covers her experiences in Leningrad from the

beginning of the war on June 22, 1941, to her departure from the city in February 1942 and her odyssey as a refugee in wartime Soviet Russia until the capture of Piatigorsk, the town in the Caucasus where she eventually took refuge, by the Germans on August 9, 1942.

Essentially it is a diary of hunger and death as they affected a Leningrad family, its friends, and neighbors, and of their personal struggle to survive. The general picture of the city and the actions of its administrators, workers, and defenders have to be deduced by the reader from these accounts of personal experiences. Despite an afterword by the translator, who attempts to place the story in its broader setting of the war, the lack of explanatory footnotes will make it difficult for the American reader to understand the significance of various events mentioned in the book or the social-administrative system within which Mrs. Skrjabina and her family fought their battle for survival.

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SAKHALIN: A HISTORY. By *John J. Stephan*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971. xiv, 240 pp. \$12.00.

John J. Stephan's account of Japanese and Russian involvement in the Sakhalin region reaches us at a most opportune time. For the past quarter of a century, unresolved territorial issues separating Japan and the USSR have prevented the conclusion of a peace treaty between the two former belligerents. However, at this writing, it is reported that the two governments have finally agreed to seek a full normalization of their relations. The southern portion of the island of Sakhalin was once held by the Japanese but was integrated into the USSR after Japan's defeat in World War II. So far, the Japanese government has been reluctant to give legal recognition to this situation. As negotiations for a peace treaty get under way, the boundary question will inevitably form the principal obstacle to their success.

Until the appearance of Stephan's book, studies of Sakhalin tended to be one-sided analyses based on historical facts selected to buttress either the Soviet or the Japanese territorial claims. Such a manifestation of nationalist bias is not surprising considering that Sakhalin has been the object of Russo-Japanese rivalry for three centuries. Moreover, the few Russian or Japanese scholars having a command of both languages were unable to study the wealth of materials available in both countries. Stephan, who knows both Russian and Japanese, was fortunate to be allowed to do his historical research in Soviet as well as Japanese collections. As a result, his is the first comprehensive account of the external and internal development of the strategic and resource-rich island.

This study is an impressive accomplishment of historical scholarship. The author has conscientiously examined the available evidence in the libraries and archival collections of Japan, the USSR, and Western Europe. He has successfully digested these voluminous materials, and presents a concise, coherent, lucid, and impartial account of Russian and Japanese policies and activities in an important part of the Far East. Though Stephan provides a wealth of detail, the reader is never in danger of losing the thread of the interesting story.

The opening chapter introduces us to the geographic setting and early history of the island. The author then discusses the little-known but important role of China