

Congress in Petrograd for several weeks or months to support the new government in establishing a new political and social order, he immediately sent its members home, after they "legitimized" his power. Evidently, he considered the assemblage quite useless for any constructive work.

The second misunderstanding concerns the Petrograd workers' and soldiers' alleged support for the October coup. Their "behavior" on October 25 is shown very clearly by Melgunov. The bulk of the Petrograd workers remained in the factories doing their usual work, and nearly all soldiers remained in their barracks, doing nothing. The Winter Palace, the site of Kerensky's government, was not a fortress, but merely a huge building guarded by a few hundred military cadets and patriotic young women in soldiers' uniforms. Any one of the many Petrograd regiments was able to take the building easily, but no regiment came. Only a group of some 300 soldiers from the Pavlovsky regiment arrived with the intent of supporting Lenin's plans. Considering that the Petrograd garrison numbered more than 100,000 at that time, the active Leninists were 0.3 percent of the soldiers. The "red guard" groups of workers were small and weak, and so Lenin's armed forces helplessly "besieged" the Winter Palace for a whole day (in spite of Lenin's repeated angry orders to take it) until finally at night a detachment of 3,000 Baltic sailors arriving from Kronstadt completed the "Great October Socialist Revolution." The Bolsheviks won because they met no serious resistance. To use an apocryphal quotation, power was lying in the streets and they picked it up.

The broader issue as to why the resistance was so weak is explicitly beyond the narrowly defined subject of Melgunov's book (p. 3). It is dealt with briefly in the editor's introduction. The chief value of the book is that it introduces essential corrections into the constructs of official Soviet historiography which, unfortunately, continue to be taken at face value by certain Western historians.

SERGEI PUSHKAREV
New Haven, Connecticut

PROFESSOR RABINOWITCH REPLIES:

I regret that Professor Pushkarev concludes that I do not consider Melgunov's study of value. In my brief review, I tried to identify the book's virtues as well as its limitations.

Space does not permit me to comment meaningfully on the many important issues touched on in Professor Pushkarev's letter. However, I cannot but note that the misunderstandings outlined by Mr. Pushkarev seem to me to bear little relation either to what I said in the review or, more fundamentally, to my thinking in regard to the development of the revolution in Petrograd.

TO THE EDITOR:

I cannot help feeling that Professor Nemeč in his enthusiastic review of Jan Ciechanowski, *The Warsaw Rising* (*Slavic Review*, June 1975, pp. 416-17) failed to grasp or at least clearly to convey to the reader the highly controversial nature of this book. Expressions such as "it corrects several previous biased versions" and "can be read with confidence" outweigh the remark that the author "has a

tendency to side with the Russians," which in turn is an oversimplification. Ciechanowski's study cannot be properly appraised unless it is made clear that it is a "revisionist" piece of writing and a book with a strong thesis. Some Polish reviewers suggested that Ciechanowski's approach reflects his own disillusionment with the Warsaw Rising in which he had fought valiantly. True or not, Ciechanowski's passionate involvement with the subject is obvious and should not be glossed over.

Two other important points need stressing. First, the reviewer seems to have uncritically accepted the author's explanation that he had to rely on Polish materials, the Soviet sources being inaccessible. This is true of course for Soviet archives but not for other sources, for instance, the Soviet press and numerous contemporary accounts. The author also ignored numerous archival materials in Washington and at Hyde Park. This imbalance in documentation alone raises some doubt about the author's bold conclusions and sweeping judgments. Second, the original Polish subtitle: "The Political and Diplomatic Background" describes far more accurately the content of the study than does the title of the English version. The book stops short of the Rising itself, and the potential reader should be aware of this fact.

PIOTR S. WANDYCZ
Yale University

Professor Nemeč does not wish to reply.

TO THE EDITOR:

Recent years have seen significant modifications in the collection policies of libraries and archival and manuscript institutions in the United States. One area in which this change has been most pronounced has been in the acquisition of materials pertaining to ethnic groups originating from Central and Eastern Europe, especially the Slavs. A number of university repositories such as the Immigration History Research Center at the University of Minnesota and Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville, have begun to build significant collections. In addition, a number of privately funded and state institutions such as the Balch Institute in Philadelphia and the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission have begun to develop significant holdings of published and unpublished documentation.

Despite these developments, seemingly few Slavists have shown interest in these matters and even fewer have taken an active and guiding role in their implementation. American Slavists have a strong obligation and responsibility to study and guide research in the history of the American Slavs, as well as to survey, register, and preserve the numerous published and unpublished documents that this immigration generated. American Slavists could make a significant contribution to the celebration of the bicentennial by committing themselves to the study of American Slavs and the registration of their manuscript legacy as well as to follow more closely developments in such organizations as the Society of American Archivists and the Organization of American Historians.

EDWARD KASINEC
Librarian, Harvard Ukrainian Research Institute