

of the Orthodox Church (and the considerable Roman Catholic minority) is treated haphazardly. Some generalizations about the purge of the Belorussian party apparatus are made, but there is no analysis (the materials are readily available) of the extent of turnover in, for example, the central committee compared with turnover in other republics.

In sum, this book provides a meager introduction. Let us hope that Professor Lubachko, or others who can use the rich Belorussian sources, will not delay long in providing us with truly sophisticated monographs.

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LENINGRAD DIARY. By *Vera Inber*. Translated by *Serge M. Wolff* and *Rachel Grieve*. Introduction by *Edward Crankshaw*. Foreword by *Harrison Salisbury*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1971. iv, 207 pp. \$6.95.

The publication of yet another diary of a survivor of the 900-day siege of Leningrad during World War II may appear, at first glance, not worthy of much notice. Of course, there is the fascination with one of the great epics of modern history. However, much has already been published about the horrors and privations of that siege, which, in the winter of 1941–42, resulted in the death by starvation, disease, freezing, and German bombardment of over one-third of Leningrad's population.

But this diary has other points to recommend it. Vera Inber was a poet, best known for her wartime poem "Pulkovo Meridian." She and her husband, Professor I. S. Strashun, who was appointed chief of one of the city's hospitals in August 1941, were members of the Soviet intellectual elite. Thus the diary reflects both the keen powers of observation and the sensitivity of a gifted poet and provides a view of events from the vantage point of that elite. It is also noteworthy that *Leningrad Diary* was first published in the Soviet Union in 1948, at a time when many Leningrad writers had come under attack by Zhdanov, among other reasons for their treatment of the siege in too gloomy, frightening, or demoralizing a manner. Vera Inber fared better, for her diary reflects her fears and despair as well as her faith and hopes, and her descriptions of the siege are graphic enough. Perhaps the fact that she laced her diary with bits of stories and communiqués which seem to have been copied from Soviet broadcasts and the *Leningrad Pravda* caused the censors to relent.

Leningrad Diary is a very human document of fortitude and courage in the face of incredible odds. As such, it has a timeliness which should make the reader welcome its publication.

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THE STRANGE NEUTRALITY: SOVIET-JAPANESE RELATIONS DURING THE SECOND WORLD WAR, 1941–1945. By *George Alexander Lensen*. Tallahassee: The Diplomatic Press, 1972. x, 332 pp. \$15.00.

This is one of a series of volumes in which the author is engaged in tracing Soviet-Japanese relations since the First World War. It parallels the *Istoriia sovetsko-*

iaponskikh diplomaticheskikh otnoshenii published a decade ago by L. N. Kutakov, whose English-language *Japanese Foreign Policy on the Eve of the Pacific War* has also been published by the Diplomatic Press and seems to fit into this series. A further volume dealing with the years 1929–37 is scheduled for publication in 1973. The present book deals with the subject during the years covered by the neutrality pact of 1941.

The positive element in Professor Lensen's book is his faithfulness to the documentary foundation on which it rests. His use of both the principal languages of his subject and his fondness for finding new sources have not heretofore been shown to better advantage. His search has been so thorough that he has been able to include sources not yet available for general circulation, which the Japanese Foreign Office has permitted him to use without specific citation and which, therefore, appear in the footnotes only as "classified." The author has also used a number of more generally accessible sources. The narrative is, to a great extent, an analysis of these sources, reinforced by a variety of secondary accounts.

These characteristics have in fact, though by no means inevitably, left as a concomitant feature a rather narrow concentration on the specific though—it must be emphasized—very significant items in the narrative. An occasional reference assures the reader that the broader aspects of the subject are clear to the author. His final chapter, in fact, breaks with the otherwise severely chronological format to provide under the heading of "Reflections" some general views on various aspects of Soviet-Japanese relations, as well as some even more far-ranging features of the subject. Although many will agree with the views he expresses there, and none will dispute his right to express them, they are somewhat detached from the main theme of the book and tend to seem a bit like a soliloquy masquerading as an epilogue.

One of the many questions that emerge from this book is whether the neutrality pact of 1941 is an adequate framework for discussing the crowded, dynamic, and fateful years and events of the Second World War in the Far East, even in the precise context of Soviet-Japanese relations of that period. Did it provide anything comparable to the long-lasting benefits or loyalties that characterized the Anglo-Japanese alliance in even its least effective years or to the usefulness of the series of Russo-Japanese understandings from the Portsmouth treaty to the agreement of 1916? Or was it much more a matter of convenience which lived on, largely because neither side was self-confident enough to discard it until the victory of one of the parties began to appear irreversible. Although the available evidence suggests the latter, it may be that the presence in the background of the anemic and shadowy form of the neutrality pact helps to cast in bolder relief the robust maneuverings that marked the stages and directions of the wartime victories and defeats. These and other matters are dealt with by the author with rare and commendable fairness with respect to both international and internal events. All in all, the book is a fine addition to the series and to our understanding of the period.

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