

figure fell to one-third in wartime. No wonder the peasants sought in every way to expand their private plots: they were necessary for survival. There were many instances of the appropriation of collective land for this purpose—enough to lead to countermeasures in 1946. The author also reports pressure to compel peasants to sell livestock to the collectives, which in the case of Kazakhstan led to a decline in privately owned cattle by half between 1940 and 1943.

Many pages are also—unusually—devoted to an account of German policy in occupied territories, showing the invaders' use of the kolkhoz system to maximize procurements for their needs. There is plenty of evidence of German ruthlessness. But some readers may be struck by the parallel with the Soviet authorities' own procurement methods.

Arutunian provides not only many statistical tables of great importance and interest but also an extensive bibliography, together with a critical review of the literature. His is a fine piece of research, well presented, by a bold and critical mind. Needless to say, it is not "anti-Soviet." The author rightly stresses the appalling difficulties faced by the authorities as well as by the peasants; and the sufferings and sacrifices of the rural population are an important part of the history of wartime Russia. So are their achievements, in unimaginably harsh conditions.

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STALIN: THE MAN AND HIS ERA. By *Adam B. Ulam*. New York: Viking Press, 1973. vii, 760 pp. \$12.95, cloth. \$4.95, paper.

Probably the most prolific academic specialist on the Soviet Union (and its revolutionary antecedents in tsarist times), Adam B. Ulam has added to his laurels with this impressive and monumental life of Stalin. It clearly supersedes the heretofore "standard" biography by Isaac Deutscher. A comprehensive work has long been needed, but the principal investigators in recent years have tended to be either popularizers aiming at a mass market (Robert Payne, H. Montgomery Hyde) or serious scholars whose contributions have been limited chronologically or by subject matter (Edward Ellis Smith, Robert Conquest, Robert C. Tucker). Tucker's work is projected to three volumes and may yet become the definitive biography, insofar as such a feat is possible.

Ulam has approached his formidable task within a rather conventional "life and times" framework, but the finished product is a masterful synthesis that equals or surpasses his highly regarded life of Lenin. The verve and pace of his narrative seldom falter, even though he makes few concessions to the hypothetical "general" reader, who would presumably choose a colorful and dramatic chronicle to an intellectual feast overly rich in analysis and interpretation. And in opinion too—for the deftness and originality with which Stalin's motives and aspirations are so lucidly expounded frequently stray beyond the existing evidence. Can we be so confident, for example, that the Great Purge was brought on by the danger of war instead of the dictator's growing paranoia? And what of the Kirov affair, where the evidence, if not conclusive, tends to implicate Stalin? We are allowed to assume, almost paradoxically, that the murderer, Nikolaev, worked alone (perhaps the Kennedy assassinations induced in the author an overreaction against conspiracy theories).

This is a thoroughly hostile biography of the great tyrant, and in view of the

Pandora's box opened by Khrushchev's speech in 1956, no other sort is tenable. Yet Ulam has no patience with the kind of one-dimensional anti-Stalinism still fashionable in the West (and originally nourished by the facile pen of Leon Trotsky) that depicts Stalin as a political hack whose fortuitous strangle hold on the party machinery brought him the ultimate prize. On the contrary, he was by the mid-1920s a "superb" politician whose extraordinary gifts, though tarnished by major blunders (especially collectivization), were not to desert him until the pronounced mental and physical decline of his last years. Nor is Ulam sympathetic to those detractors (notably Smith, *The Young Stalin*, 1967) who see him as a police agent during tsarist times. Central to any serious consideration of the man is the question of his mental health, and there are numerous if rather gingerly references to the state of his psyche. No one has suggested that he was literally a madman, but to dismiss his abnormal behavior as manifestations of a "morbid suspiciousness" or a "pathological fear of betrayal" is neither original nor very enlightening. In this regard, Tucker's *Stalin as Revolutionary* (1973), though it terminates with the year 1929, probes more deeply and more thoroughly.

Perhaps the author grew weary at the end of a long book. Once the details of the "doctors' plot" have been tidied up and the "monstrous tyrant" is safely in his grave, the Stalinist legacy is given short shrift. To be reminded that he was "corrupted by absolute power" is permissible if excessively anticlimactic. But one misses any extended discussion of Stalin's changing image in the Soviet Union. More serious is the absence of any final assessment of the man, his achievements, or his place in Russian and world history. In general he is awarded high marks for his skill as a diplomat, and low (or at least lower) marks for his domestic policy, a judgment that is certainly debatable. That his regime was brutal and his rule despotic is obvious enough, but what of his contributions to industrialization, education, social welfare, full employment, sex equality, and social mobility? Were they negligible, or do they entitle him to some consideration as a social reformer, either as a "Stalinist" or a practitioner of Marxism-Leninism? Flaws notwithstanding (and what book is without them?), this is a fascinating biography written with grace, authority, and rare discernment.

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TROTSKYISM IN LATIN AMERICA. By *Robert J. Alexander*. Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1973. xi, 303 pp. \$10.00.

This book, the most complete and objective examination of international Trotskyism yet available on any area of the world, breaks new ground in the study of Marxism-Leninism in Latin America. It deals mainly with the ideas and activities of the most significant and long-lived Latin American affiliates of the Fourth International—those in Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia, Chile, Cuba, Mexico, Peru, and Uruguay—and places them in national political perspective.

According to Alexander, Trotskyist parties in Latin America have always been small, primarily urban, of working-class origin "to a surprisingly large degree" (p. 43), undisciplined, and prone to dissension and factionalism. They have been a "relatively minor element" on the left (p. 35), particularly since the emergence of pro-Chinese and Castroite groups in the 1960s. Only the Bolivian Revolutionary Workers' Party (POR), in the early 1950s, was ever in any sense a "serious competitor of power" (p. 249). Substantial influence on organized labor occurred