

THE RUSSIAN DILEMMA: A POLITICAL AND GEOPOLITICAL VIEW.

By *Robert G. Wesson*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1974. xi, 228 pp. \$12.50.

Although the author claims his purpose is "to relate Russia's development more closely to the geographic situation" than presumably others have, his geographical theme is barely stated (and crudely at that) when he abandons it for the cliché of "dual Russia" caught between East and West, Europe and Asia, Westernizers and Slavophiles, and so forth. For Wesson, then, Russian history is little more than a blend of authoritarianism and messianism. Rushing through five hundred years in sixty-odd pages, he concentrates on the Soviet period. Yet everywhere the treatment is superficial, tedious, and crammed with questionable judgments. Perhaps the worst examples of muddled thinking appear at the outset. We are told on page 12 that "hugeness legitimated the political order," only to be reminded on page 15 that "the good of the state was for many almost a religious value." Taken separately such statements are meaningless. Together they are illogical and contradictory. In order to buttress these views, Wesson interlards the narrative with quotations, most of them painfully familiar and taken out of context, from leading intellectuals who in fact had little to do with the way the country was run up to 1917. In the postrevolutionary section Wesson has little to say about social structure, economic growth, or even the changing nature of the party. His use of the secondary literature is arbitrary and haphazard. The level of narrative often falls below that acceptable in a popular magazine article. After more than fifty years of substantial American scholarship on Russia and the Soviet Union, the general public deserves better than this. As for the specialist, the book possesses no merits at all.

ALFRED J. RIEBER
University of Pennsylvania

POLITICHESKAIA AGITATSIIA: NAUCHNYE OSNOVY I PRAKTIKA.

By *E. M. Kuznetsov*. Moscow: "Mysl'," 1974. 318 pp. 1.25 rubles.

This book is not a scholarly contribution, but rather a presentation of the authoritative Soviet view of a particular form of persuasive communication. Although repetitive and often familiar, the book reveals several interesting directions in the official doctrine.

In the first third, Kuznetsov summarizes, with abundant quotations from Lenin's works, the history of political agitation from 1882 to the present. However, Lenin and Brezhnev are the only Soviet rulers mentioned by name. It is in the next third of the book, entitled "Basic Content of Political Agitation," that Stalin's name appears, associated with the 1956 Central Committee resolution on the cult of personality, which is evaluated by Kuznetsov as a necessary corrective to Stalin's "serious errors . . . in the last period of life" (p. 172). Strong defense of the leader follows, emphasizing his role in rooting out anti-Leninist "currents," building socialism, defeating Nazism, and contributing to Marxist-Leninist theory. Khrushchev—never named—is judged negatively for his "subjectivism" and unfortunate administrative reforms, the results of which Kuznetsov sees as nurturing (possibly widespread) pessimistic conclusions regarding the future of socialism.

Both the role of the Communist Party, treated in the final third, and the target

of agitation have changed significantly over time. Kuznetsov cites the 1922 census data showing that over 93 percent of the CPSU members had eight or fewer grades of schooling; thus the party itself provided the audience for the agitator (p. 82). Now, with rising educational levels, each member of party, government, and public organizations is expected to function as agitator, with the primary party organization exerting coordinating responsibility. Agitation is to be specialized, differentiated by occupational and educational characteristics of audiences, and less narrowly production-oriented (Khrushchev's error). Obviously referring to *détente*, Kuznetsov asserts that the more frequent contacts with capitalist countries are opening new channels of communication, new sources of hostile propaganda. It will be the task of agitation to counteract this "ideological subversion," which seeks to promote nationalism, neutralism, and the "de-ideologization of public life" (p. 178). Agitation is to be directed also toward those who "in one way or another escape the influence" of other forms of political communication (p. 248), a statement that supports recent findings of Soviet sociologists relating to the uneven saturation of the mass media in the Soviet Union.

ELLEN MICKIEWICZ
Michigan State University

THE SOVIET INTELLIGENTSIA: AN ESSAY ON THE SOCIAL STRUCTURE AND ROLES OF SOVIET INTELLECTUALS DURING THE 1960s. By *L. G. Churchward*. London and Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1973. xiv, 204 pp. \$10.00.

This small volume makes a welcome contribution to an important and much misunderstood topic. There are three major prevailing Western misconceptions about the characteristics and role of Soviet intellectuals. One is the persisting image of the prerevolutionary Russian intelligentsia which is sometimes transferred to the Soviet intelligentsia who survived the purges and the new generations which have matured since. Another attitude imposes the Western model of intellectuals on the Soviet setting. The third makes generalizations about Soviet intellectuals on the basis of its tiny fraction engaged assertively in political dissent, as frequently reported in the Western mass media. The work reviewed here is free of these misconceptions and provides a sensible and well-informed account of the characteristics of contemporary Soviet intellectuals and their various subtypes.

Many of the disputes concerning the functions and attributes of Soviet intellectuals hinge on our definition of the intellectual. If, as is frequently done in the West, we define intellectuals as critical, marginal, dissatisfied, and poorly integrated, then we may conclude that there is no intelligentsia in the Soviet Union, only hordes of technicians and a few malcontents. The author's definition is simple and unambiguous: "I regard the intelligentsia as consisting of persons with a tertiary education (whether employed or not), tertiary students, and persons lacking formal tertiary qualification but who are professionally employed in jobs which normally require a tertiary qualification" (p. 6). To overcome the limitations of such a definition he also provides a typology of contemporary Soviet intellectuals based on their political attitudes, in an increasing order of alienation from the system. Thus he classifies them as careerist professionals (estimated at three quarters of the total), humanist intelligentsia, open oppositionists, and the lost intelligentsia (pp. 136-39).