

and other Czech nationalists, the constitution of 1920 did not proclaim Czechoslovakia to be a national state. Beneš was opposed to such a statement for the, perhaps opportunistic, reason that it would have created insuperable difficulties for him in the League of Nations because the minority treaty signed by Czechoslovakia and incorporated into the constitution insisted on the equality of all citizens or inhabitants. In his message for the tenth anniversary of the founding of the state in 1928 Masaryk tried to stop further controversies about this point by stating that “we are a nationally and linguistically mixed state.”

Gregory Campbell’s statement that the “national minorities in Czechoslovakia fared better than those in other countries of Central and Eastern Europe” is correct, but the same cannot be said about his condemnation of the “mindless intransigence of the Sudeten Germans” (p. 29) many of whom remained faithful to Masaryk’s enlightened views of justice for everyone until the end of the first republic or even longer. Czechoslovakia between 1918 and 1938 was neither the hell on earth proclaimed by Joseph Goebbels’s propaganda nor the paradise on earth depicted in the nostalgic memories of the older Czech generation. It was an honest attempt to build up a modern, progressive, and democratic state, but it was a state for good weather only, flourishing as long as the system of Versailles prevailed in Europe. There was no national or other suppression but there were no systematic efforts to win over the loyalties of the German and Hungarian populations for the state or any government plans or ideas for settling existing grievances.

The question, however, is not whether it was right or wrong to set up the successor state to the Habsburg Monarchy, as had been done in 1918–1919, because nobody can know what other solution was then possible or feasible. Yes, “Czech democracy failed because Europe failed” (Stokes, p. 19), but this is no excuse for missing many opportunities.

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TO THE EDITOR:

Regarding *Diary of the Twentieth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union* by Vittorio Vidali, reviewed in *Slavic Review*, Summer 1985, pp. 331–32: What this diary does not tell is that “Vidali” was born *Enea Sormenti* and was a member of the United States Communist party in New York. He was recruited for the KGB by one of the KGB agents, a person called “Peter.” In New York City Carlo Tresca, an Italian anarchist, published an anarchist weekly called *Il Martello* [The hammer] and he kept attacking the Bolsheviks for what they were doing to the Russian people. He published the newspaper in the New York Socialists’ headquarters at the Rand School on West 15th Street, near 6th Avenue. When he walked out of this building one afternoon, Sormenti had arranged his murder. After the killing Sormenti left New York.

He surfaced again under the new name “Carlos” and became Stalin’s finger man during the Civil War in Spain. Anyone not in agreement with Stalin’s policy there ended with a bullet in the back of the brain. Working with “Carlos” in Spain was a young Italian photographer, Tina Modotti of Mexico City. When she discovered the kind of skullduggery “Carlos” was engaged in, she broke with him and returned to Mexico.

When the Civil War in Spain was over, he followed Tina to Mexico and told her he was giving a farewell party for her. He poisoned her at the party and my friend Martin Temple of Mexico City rushed her to the hospital. Tina died in the taxi on the way. The Mexican newspapers *El Excelsior* and *El Universal* carried the story on their front pages. After this, “Carlos” returned to Europe, went to Trieste, became active in the Communist

party in Trieste, and was elected senator to Rome where he represented the party until he died in 1984.

From the review of his *Diary* in the *Slavic Review*, who would suspect that "Vidali" was this unsavory character? What a way to write history! I'm placing this note in the Bertram Wolfe papers at the Hoover Library at the Hoover Institution to set the record straight.

ELLA WOLFE
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PROFESSOR MCNEAL REPLIES:

No doubt it would have been more interesting if Vidali had written a memoir of his life as a whole. Concerning his memoir of the Twentieth Party Congress, it is not clear to me how Mrs. Wolfe disagrees with my evaluation.

TO THE EDITOR:

In the course of an otherwise favorable review (*Slavic Review*, Summer 1985, pp. 336–37) of my *Soviet-East European Relations* Sarah Terry faults the book for the "rather bald statement that the changes of the 1970s resulted in a 'more equitable distribution of power and influence' " between the Soviet Union and its East European allies. This is not quite fair. Leaving aside the omission of the qualifier "somewhat," it is worth noting that the passage appears less than halfway through the book and refers to the immediate consequences of the Warsaw Pact and Comecon organizational changes of 1969–1971. My assessment of those changes in the longer perspective is made quite clear in the latter half of the book, as in this passage from the conclusion: "The cumulative effect of these measures was to improve the nominal access of the East European junior allies to the levers of decision making, while at the same time strengthening Soviet control and supervision through a tighter alliance infrastructure. . . . Neither these measures nor their associated integration schemes offered any solution to the pressing challenges facing Eastern Europe in the late 1970s: severe economic deterioration, ideological erosion and political malaise, and the widening gulf between the East European regimes and their disaffected populaces."

ROBERT L. HUTCHINGS
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TO THE EDITOR:

In the Summer 1985 issue of the *Slavic Review* Daniel C. Waugh wrote an extremely critical and, in my opinion, to a large extent unjustified review of *The Nikonian Chronicle, Volume One: From the Beginning to 1132*, edited by me and translated by Betty Jean Zenkovsky and me (Kingston Press, 1984). As editor and translator of this volume, I would like to respond to his criticism.

1. The reviewer begins with a didactic and very condescending discourse about "the method of textual criticism" to be used in editing and translating medieval Russian chronicles. Further, he claims that the editor of the English edition of *The Nikonian Chronicle* "does not appear to understand the difference between *text* and *copy*." I am afraid, however, that the reviewer, himself, has rather an insufficient acquaintance with Russian