

LETTERS

TO THE EDITOR:

Would you allow me to add a brief note to Kathryn B. Feuer's excellent review of V. S. Pritchett's book, *The Gentle Barbarian: The Life and Work of Turgenev* (*Slavic Review*, 37, no. 1 [March 1978]).

Pritchett's work is a veritable gold mine of misprints, some of them not only amusing, but also misleading. Take, for instance, the sentence "He even dictated a little story called *The Quail* for Countless Tolstoy's children . . ." (p. 241), instead of "Countess Tolstoy's children." Or "the only contributions Russia had made to civilization were 'the best shoe, the shaft yoke and the knout—and hadn't even invented them . . .'" (p. 179). No encomium is intended by "best," which stands instead of the correct "the bast shoe," the simplest type of shoe made of willow or birch bark. Pritchett has also coined some neologisms, such as "duologue" (for "dialogue," p. 172), and "Bildingsroman" (for "Bildungsroman," p. 88).

FELIX J. OINAS
Indiana University

TO THE EDITOR:

I would like to point out an error that occurred in my review of *East Central and Southeast Europe: A Handbook of Library and Archival Resources in North America*, edited by Paul L. Horecky and David Kraus, appearing on page 146 of the March 1978 issue of the *Slavic Review*. In the first line of my review I made this statement: "This commendable HEW-sponsored reference work. . . ." In fact, it should have been noted that the work was *supported* by HEW, through a contract with the Office of Education, but the *sponsor* was the Joint Committee on Eastern Europe of the American Council of Learned Societies and the Social Science Research Council. These organizational names should have appeared along with the "Joint Committee on Eastern Europe Publication Series" in the heading.

PATRICIA K. GRIMSTED
Harvard University

TO THE EDITOR:

I usually consider rebuttals of book reviews by authors of the books under consideration to be petty. However, I must respond to Esther Kingston-Mann's review of *Peter Arkad'evich Stolypin* (*Slavic Review*, 37, no. 2 [June 1978]: 294–95) because I believe it totally distorts the contents of the book.

First, she makes it appear that the book is a collection of trivial descriptions and anecdotes.

Second, she states that the book should have concentrated upon Stolypin's peasant reforms because in her view these were all-important and it was Stolypin's economic policies (read agrarian) which set him apart from reactionary governmental officials. This view incredibly simplifies the situation in Russia during the late tsarist period and the problems confronting Stolypin. I did not dwell upon the agrarian reforms for several reasons. First, they have been rehashed innumerable times—that is, the policy commonly associated with Stolypin's name by anyone even remotely familiar with Russian history. Second, as with many of the reforms which Stolypin attempted to implement, the agrarian policies were not created by or unique to him, although Richard Hennessy in *The Agrarian Question in Russia, 1905–1907* (Geissen: Wilhelm Schmitz Verlag, 1977) argues convincingly that Stolypin changed the course

of the agrarian reforms which had been discussed for years in government circles. Finally, and most important, I hoped to show in this book that the agrarian problem was only one of many problems demanding the Russian government's attention during Stolypin's administration. Stolypin had to work out his relationship to Nicholas II who was his "boss"; a new parliament had been established and had to be fit into the Russian government structure; national minorities within the empire were restive; local government and the relationship between governmental and self-governmental institutions needed reworking; the central government was plagued with rivalry and friction; education and health care desperately needed to be upgraded. All these issues were as important as the agrarian question and, in my opinion, Stolypin's and the Russian government's grappling with them deserves more attention because this has been neglected. (General economic programs, aside from agrarian, also deserve attention but Stolypin was not immediately connected with them.)

Finally, I resent Ms. Kingston-Mann's implication that I relied solely on Stolypin's daughter's reminiscences and British Foreign Office reports. A review of the sources for the book would indicate that a wide range of materials was used including the records of the Council of Ministers and governmental documents.

MARY SCHAEFFER CONROY
University of Colorado at Denver

Professor Kingston-Mann asks that readers refer to the original review of Professor Conroy's book.

TO THE EDITOR:

O. Anweiler's review of my book, *Contemporary Education and Moral Upbringing in the Soviet Union* (*Slavic Review*, 37, no. 2 [June 1978]: 315), is a classic example of how a review should not be written. It consists of a few generalities, which give the impression of having been very cautiously written after a hasty leafing of the book. What is the purpose of such a review? It is an offense to the author and a disservice to the reader. Writing a review is a responsible and serious assignment. It should be informative. It should give a discussion of the message of the book and its implications, it should give a fair criticism of the shortcomings, and, above all, it should be informative for the reader. No information whatsoever is given in this review. I am therefore forced to carry out the task of the reviewer and give a brief summary of the book, the topic of which is so important for our education and for our society.

The Soviet Union presents a challenge to the West not only by her growing military power and technology but also by her human resources, by the growing education of her people. This is the message of the book.

The main objective of Soviet moral education is to raise a new type of human being and create a harmonious society. This ideal has not materialized. The Soviet society is beset by the same troubles which plague all industrial societies. The book explains why.

This failure to reach the main objective is offset by undeniable successes. The Soviet schools managed to forestall the appearance of a counterculture. Juvenile delinquency exists, but it does not assume the proportions it has reached in the United States. There is no evidence of drug addiction, no vandalism, no attacks on teachers occur, nor is there a necessity of stationing guards in schools. The implications of these facts are self-evident, and our educators and society should be informed about it.

A. KREUSLER
Lynchburg, Virginia