

Letters

TO THE EDITOR:

I am wondering whether or not you might be interested in the point of view of a Soviet historian regarding the bibliography *Soviet Foreign Relations and World Communism*, edited by Thomas J. Hammond (Princeton, 1965).

Many books on the Soviet Union and the world Communist movement have been published in recent years in the United States. This fact testifies that there is a growing interest among Americans in problems of socialism and communism. On the other hand, it is quite clear to Soviet historians that the majority of these publications are designed to defend the capitalist way of life and to blacken the socialist system in the Soviet Union and in the People's Democracies. That is why we consider that such literature is a weapon in the ideological struggle of capitalism against socialism and communism.

American bibliography also serves this end, as the publication of Hammond's book proves. I would like to show that this big and heavy volume is rather tendentious.

First of all, the compiler combined two different themes in the book. One is Soviet foreign relations, and the second is world communism. Each of these themes is large enough to be considered separately. This does not mean that there is no connection between the Soviet Union and world communism. The Communist Party of the Soviet Union is a part of the international Communist movement, and all Marxist-Leninist parties have the same ideology, common aims, and common principles in their policies toward world imperialism. The coincidence of Soviet foreign policy with that of the other Communist parties is a result of the common aims and common interests of Communists all over the world. In this respect one can, of course, analyze Soviet foreign policy and the international Communist movement. However, the particular stress in Hammond's book has nothing to do with this. The bibliography tries to prove an old anti-Communist propaganda thesis: namely, that world communism is an instrument of Soviet foreign policy. No truly objective researcher can agree with such a point of view.

One can find in Hammond's bibliography a number of publications issued in the Soviet Union and in the People's Democracies. Among them there are some documents and other materials of Communist parties and international Communist and other progressive organizations. However, these books are in a minority in comparison with the large quantity of anti-Communist literature selected here, which is rather strange. If one truly wants to study Soviet foreign relations and world communism, one has to study first of all Soviet and Communist documents. Yet in some chapters of the book one cannot even find any mention of Communist literature on many of these problems. For example, a reader will not find in this bibliography such important materials as the resolutions and other documents of congresses of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. There is no mention of world-famous declarations adopted at the international meetings of the Communist parties in 1957 and 1960. But it is impossible to have a real understanding of the present problems of world communism, its attitude toward peace, democracy, national freedom, and the struggle for socialism if one does not know its program documents approved by all

the Communist parties of the world. One may look further through the list of books in the chapter "Communist Strategy and Tactics" (pages 922–28), in which not a single book by a writer from a socialist country or by a Communist writer from a nonsocialist country is listed. Thus, a reader can judge Communist strategy and tactics only from books written by opponents of communism whose analyses are very far from the truth. Is this a scholarly or objective attitude? I think not.

If one fails to find some important Communist documents here, the result will be that one is reading a number of books written by enemies of the Soviet Union (defectors from socialist countries, spies, and renegades from the Communist movement), all those who have a savage hatred toward socialism and communism and whose books must be regarded not as serious scholarly sources but more or less as detective stories. To be objective I must say that in some places the compilers state that one book or another cannot serve as a good source or cannot be regarded as a truthful story. However, there is no reasonable explanation as to why such books were included at all in the bibliography. Thus, the collection of publications listed in Hammond's book also testifies to the anti-Communist, anti-Soviet trend of this work. It is not objective.

Let us now consider the annotations. Of course, an annotated bibliography is always better than one without annotations. Annotations should help the reader to obtain a general idea of a book mentioned. Again, the annotations in this book are written in a very tendentious manner. Some of them are simply of poor quality. Then, if the compilers recommend anti-Communist books, as a rule they give a rather detailed annotation, stressing the positive importance of the book, praising the author, and so on. If, on the contrary, a book was written by a Communist or progressive author, the compilers make some precautionary remarks, criticizing the author and the book, pointing out its "subversive" character, and so forth. Sometimes they simply mention such books without giving any annotation. So here we see the same anti-Communist trend. The annotations in the book failed to be objective.

Finally, it is not a good method to list all kinds of publications only in alphabetical order. Usually serious researchers organize bibliographical materials according to such divisions as documents and other primary sources, memoirs, monographs, and periodicals. Yet Hammond's book is organized only by subject, and the books are listed in a simple alphabetical order. This makes its use difficult. Then, for a bibliography of this kind it would be very useful to divide all the books from the point of view of whether they were written by Communist or progressive authors or by opponents of communism (some divisions are necessary within this group also). It is not done in the book reviewed, but if it were done, one could once more easily observe that the majority of books here are of an anti-Communist character and that the bibliography is very far from being objective.

Thus, the bibliography has been edited and compiled in the spirit characteristic of present times in capitalist countries. The book is one-sided and not scholarly. It is designed to promote the ideological struggle against socialism and communism whether the authors wish it or not. Nevertheless, Soviet scholars should know the book and use it in their scholarly work because Hammond's book contains one of the most complete bibliographies of anti-Communist literature in the capitalist world. Those who want to understand the methods of anti-communism would find the necessary material here.

Indiana University
November 3, 1965

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