

## LETTERS

### TO THE EDITOR:

In his review of my book *The Geopolitics of Leninism* [*Slavic Review*, 42, no. 2 (Summer 1983): 284], Henry Krisch writes: "Page claims that Lenin's views centered on Russia until 1914, focused on Germany in the period from 1914 to 1919, and on Asia after 1919."

Yes, I do make that claim, nor should that come as a surprise since I made that same claim, pretty much, in my *Lenin and World Revolution* (1959) to considerable critical approval. My current book fleshes out the claim with mountains of proof which, admittedly, a generation ago I was not knowledgeable enough to perceive. I am now older and, I hope, wiser.

Krisch goes on: "The chief evidence [for Page's claim] is Lenin's move to Zurich in 1914, where his perspectives broadened as he moved from his peripheral position into the European inner circle — this about a man who had previously lived in Geneva and Paris!"

Lenin was in exile for almost ten years until 1917, so that where exactly he lived has nothing at all to do with the case. However, Switzerland was of importance to Lenin because of World War I in a way that no other location had been to him previously. European revolution, he firmly believed, had become imminent, and Switzerland was the site of the most crucial conferences leading from the Second to the Third International, such as Zimmerwald and Kienthal, in addition to being located adjacent to the German crucible of European revolution.

But entirely aside from the physical site of any location in which Lenin happened to reside was the special way in which Lenin chose to identify himself with one or another region as that region related to the rest of the world. Such identification determined for Lenin, or helped to determine, whether he was leading a Russian revolution or a European revolution or a Russian-led European revolution or, finally, a Russian-led Asian revolution. What Lenin decided about his best chances to lead the world revolution determined his emotional identification which shaped and reshaped his geopolitically-based theorizing. It is this rather subtle concept which my reviewer failed to grasp.

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### PROFESSOR KRISCH REPLIES:

Professor Page's letter repeats some of the main contentions of his book, which, despite its subtlety, I think I did understand. Still lacking, in my possibly fallible judgment, is a convincing substantiation of his arguments.