

TO THE EDITOR:

The June 1976 issue of your magazine carried a "review" of my book, *The Education of Lev Navrozov*. I will mail to anyone interested the responses to my book of periodicals like the *New Yorker* or the *Washington Post*, of intellectuals and writers like Sidney Hook and Saul Bellow, as well as of academic and free-lance experts in Russian studies. (Home address: 3419 Irwin Avenue, Riverdale, New York).

A review in Phi Beta Kappa's *Key Reporter* said: "more relevant and significant in its human message than Solzhenitsyn's" (perhaps a naïve yet well-meant yardstick!). A review in *Midstream* said: "the single most important work of literature to have come out of the Soviet Union in almost sixty years" and "one of the three or four major works of the literary imagination that has been produced in the twentieth century."

I would say that your reviewer honestly understood nothing in my book if several of his statements did not show that he is simply vicious (probably because I am a new émigré without any academic or other influence to defend myself against his malice).

My index, he scoffs, "ranges from *Capone, Alphonse* ('Scarface Al') to *Shakespeare, William*." Actually, my index "ranges" from *Abel* to *Zinoviev*, from A to Z: the reviewer's viciousness is, indeed, farcical.

Similarly, the reviewer scoffs at the style of my book which I wrote in English in Russia: "a chatty serial in a clever, superficial style." Even the crudest Soviet official knows that no Russian or American who learned a foreign language at his college age has ever been able to write works of literature in this language inside Russia or America respectively. The reviewer has only malicious scorn even for what the crudest Soviet official treated with generous respect.

LEV NAVROZOV
Riverdale, New York

MR. PETHYBRIDGE REPLIES:

I have noted the letter to you from Mr. Navrozov. I am afraid that it does not alter my opinion of this book. All that I would like to add is that I would have written the same review of the book irrespective of the status of the author concerned.

TO THE EDITOR:

I would like to take issue with several of the assertions made by Alvin Rubinstein in his review of my book, *Soviet Policy Toward the Middle East Since 1970* (*Slavic Review*, September 1976). Dr. Rubinstein questions the validity of "certain points" which I raised, as follows:

First, that Nasser gave up "a considerable amount of Egyptian sovereignty in an effort to get revenge for his humiliation" (p. 43). In fact, as a result both of his defeat in 1967 and his inability to halt the Israeli deep penetration raids against Egypt in 1969 and 1970, Nasser was forced to give the Russians control over a number of Egyptian air and naval bases in order to get their assistance. This, in my opinion, substantiates the assertion that he gave up Egyptian sovereignty.

Second, Rubinstein disagrees with my assertion, "the presence at Nasser's funeral of a senior American official, Elliott Richardson, was a matter of concern for the Russian leadership" (p. 43). While Rubinstein contends that the Egyptians did not consider Richardson a senior U.S. official, the issue is not what the Egyptians thought but what the Russians perceived. Indeed, the article by Yuri Glukhov in

Pravda (October 17, 1970) is clearly indicative of their concern as he discussed Western efforts to "drive a wedge between the USSR and its friends, etc.," as it seemed to be a signal from the Nixon Administration of the desire for improved Egyptian-American relations.

Third, Rubinstein raises questions with my assertion that the murder of Israeli athletes by Palestinian terrorists set off a chain of events that greatly upset the pattern of Egyptian diplomacy (p. 89) and helped to bring about an improvement in Soviet-Egyptian relations. The terrorist action precipitated Israeli raids against terrorist bases in Lebanon and Syria, which, in itself, had two effects. In the first place, the Egyptians, who had hoped for a quid pro quo from the West for ousting the Russians, now found their diplomatic offensive aborted, particularly in the United States, as Israel received extensive Western support in the United Nations and elsewhere following the Munich events. Second, while Israeli planes roamed at will in Lebanon and Syria, Egypt came under considerable pressure to take action against Israel, but was militarily and politically still unable to do so. As a result of these events, the polemics between Egypt and the Soviet Union, which had become very hot, quickly ended and Sadat made several gestures to improve Soviet-Egyptian relations, and these resulted in a resumption of Soviet weapons shipments to Egypt.

Finally, Professor Rubinstein asserts that I have "bandied the term 'influence' about indiscriminantly." As a matter of fact, in the first chapter of the book, I drew the distinction between influence as behavior modification and influence as behavior reinforcement, and I concluded, at the end of the book, that the USSR has been very unsuccessful in modifying the behavior of its client states, but it has been rather more successful in reinforcing the behavior of its clients where their goals matched those of the USSR (for example, Iraq's nationalization of the Iraq Petroleum Company in 1972).

ROBERT O. FREEDMAN
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Professor Rubinstein does not feel that a response is necessary.

TO THE EDITOR:

Since I am presently a visiting professor at the University of Vienna, Austria, the March 1976 issue which includes a review of my *History of the Habsburg Empire 1526-1918* by Professor Keith Hitchins came to my attention only very recently. Thus I can only at this point make a few comments.

Professor Hitchins who qualifies unquestionably as an expert on the history of the Rumanians in the Habsburg Empire charges that, contrary to my statement, "there were translations of the Scriptures into Rumanian well before Tordassi's." Here is what I actually said: "Luther's fundamental work of translating the Testaments into German was paralleled . . . by that of Jan Blahoslav among Czechs, of Primož Trubar and Jurij Dalmatin . . . among the Slovenes, of Gaspar Heltai among the Magyars, and of Michael Tordassi, who translated Heltai's version into Roumanian." From this context it should be quite clear that I am comparing the impact of translations into vernacular languages. I am not listing first translations. Whether the Magyar national university of Kolozsvár (Cluj) at the end of the sixteenth century could have become a Rumanian national university may be conjectural. My remark in this respect is, however, very cautious.

I am perfectly aware that Alexander Odobescu was not a Transylvanian by birth. Yet, as stated clearly in my book, I have not made the discussion of personalities in