

Pandora's box opened by Khrushchev's speech in 1956, no other sort is tenable. Yet Ulam has no patience with the kind of one-dimensional anti-Stalinism still fashionable in the West (and originally nourished by the facile pen of Leon Trotsky) that depicts Stalin as a political hack whose fortuitous strangle hold on the party machinery brought him the ultimate prize. On the contrary, he was by the mid-1920s a "superb" politician whose extraordinary gifts, though tarnished by major blunders (especially collectivization), were not to desert him until the pronounced mental and physical decline of his last years. Nor is Ulam sympathetic to those detractors (notably Smith, *The Young Stalin*, 1967) who see him as a police agent during tsarist times. Central to any serious consideration of the man is the question of his mental health, and there are numerous if rather gingerly references to the state of his psyche. No one has suggested that he was literally a madman, but to dismiss his abnormal behavior as manifestations of a "morbid suspiciousness" or a "pathological fear of betrayal" is neither original nor very enlightening. In this regard, Tucker's *Stalin as Revolutionary* (1973), though it terminates with the year 1929, probes more deeply and more thoroughly.

Perhaps the author grew weary at the end of a long book. Once the details of the "doctors' plot" have been tidied up and the "monstrous tyrant" is safely in his grave, the Stalinist legacy is given short shrift. To be reminded that he was "corrupted by absolute power" is permissible if excessively anticlimactic. But one misses any extended discussion of Stalin's changing image in the Soviet Union. More serious is the absence of any final assessment of the man, his achievements, or his place in Russian and world history. In general he is awarded high marks for his skill as a diplomat, and low (or at least lower) marks for his domestic policy, a judgment that is certainly debatable. That his regime was brutal and his rule despotic is obvious enough, but what of his contributions to industrialization, education, social welfare, full employment, sex equality, and social mobility? Were they negligible, or do they entitle him to some consideration as a social reformer, either as a "Stalinist" or a practitioner of Marxism-Leninism? Flaws notwithstanding (and what book is without them?), this is a fascinating biography written with grace, authority, and rare discernment.

ROBERT D. WARTH
University of Kentucky

TROTSKYISM IN LATIN AMERICA. By *Robert J. Alexander*. Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1973. xi, 303 pp. \$10.00.

This book, the most complete and objective examination of international Trotskyism yet available on any area of the world, breaks new ground in the study of Marxism-Leninism in Latin America. It deals mainly with the ideas and activities of the most significant and long-lived Latin American affiliates of the Fourth International—those in Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia, Chile, Cuba, Mexico, Peru, and Uruguay—and places them in national political perspective.

According to Alexander, Trotskyist parties in Latin America have always been small, primarily urban, of working-class origin "to a surprisingly large degree" (p. 43), undisciplined, and prone to dissension and factionalism. They have been a "relatively minor element" on the left (p. 35), particularly since the emergence of pro-Chinese and Castroite groups in the 1960s. Only the Bolivian Revolutionary Workers' Party (POR), in the early 1950s, was ever in any sense a "serious competitor of power" (p. 249). Substantial influence on organized labor occurred

only in Chile and Cuba, in the 1930s, and in Bolivia. The country-by-country analyses which make up the bulk of this work are based in large part on the author's interviews and correspondence dating back to 1946 with leaders and former leaders of Trotskyist groups in the hemisphere and reflect Alexander's unexcelled familiarity with the Marxist-Leninist left in Latin America.

Two background chapters—on the rise and development of international Trotskyism and on the Fourth International and its factions in Latin America—place the later chapters in international historical perspective, though they fail to deal adequately with the relation between Trotsky's own ideas and those of his disputatious followers. (Trotsky's activities in Mexico during the late 1930s are discussed.) Generalizations are usually instructive, though on occasion, as in several comments on Trotskyists and guerrilla warfare (pp. 36, 43), they are potentially misleading or unnecessarily imprecise.

Though other studies will increase our knowledge of individual Trotskyist movements in Latin America, such as John W. F. Dulles's *Anarchists and Communists in Brazil* (1973) has already done, Alexander's book is certain to remain an essential research tool in this field for years to come.

WILLIAM E. RATLIFF
The Hoover Institution

THE UNITED STATES AND THE ORIGINS OF THE COLD WAR. 1941–1947. By *John Lewis Gaddis*. Contemporary American History Series. New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1972. xiii, 396 pp. \$12.50, cloth. \$3.95, paper.

John Lewis Gaddis has provided us with one of the most interesting scholarly works on the origins of the cold war. The strength of the book, for which he was awarded the Bancroft Prize, lies in the careful research, superb organization, and the uniformly good writing. The book offers both student and layman a wealth of clearly presented information. Furthermore, Gaddis has refrained from the prevalent self-righteousness which we have so far witnessed in the heated debate over this period.

This strong commendation would seem to indicate that at last detachment has brought us to the point of balanced scholarship. However, a closer examination of Gaddis's assumptions and claims is necessary, for the book attempts to go beyond "revisionist" historiography. Although Gaddis acknowledges the revisionist contribution to this crucial historical period, he criticizes this same contribution for overemphasizing the economic motivations of American policy-makers. He purports to differ by asserting that economics played only a minimal role in American-Soviet relations, and he virtually ignores economic factors in his own analysis.

The forces on which Gaddis concentrates are domestic politics, bureaucratic inertia, quirks of personality, and perceptions—accurate or inaccurate—of Soviet intentions as the major influences on Washington officialdom. Gaddis claims that American public opinion was the key determinant in American policy toward the Soviets. He uses public opinion polls as a barometer of *the* national sentiment, but fails to consider that public opinion may have been a direct consequence of the pressures exerted by the Truman administration, and previous government policy, on American thought through the mass media.