

The author has reviewed the existing literature on National Socialist Germany and the war in order to present Hitler's fateful decision in the contexts of the general conflict between Teuton and Slav and the specific evolution of Hitler's policies. There is a perceptive view of Hitler's troubled choices in the summer of 1940, his preference for a move eastward, and the evolution of military, economic, and political plans for the attack. Cecil has traced the major elements in this series of decisions, distinguishing between the more and the less trustworthy clues in the evidence on Hitler's views.

Especially impressive is the author's analysis of the relationship between Hitler and his military advisers. The evidence that Hitler knew of the planned Italian attack on Greece beforehand, and that the postponement of the attack on Russia until June 22 was largely independent of the Balkan operation is read correctly, as are Hitler's subsequent references to these events as excuses for failure. The account of the role of Molotov's visit is also convincing, as is the emphasis on the Fuehrer's desire that Japan move south, not west.

On some points, however, the author's interpretation is questionable. Cecil relies heavily on Andreas Hillgruber's *Hitlers Strategie* (Frankfurt/Main, 1968), and, like Hillgruber, he has missed Hitler's July 31, 1940 discussion of a guaranty to Rumania. He has also failed to note that German attempts to bring the Soviet Union and Japan together were made in response to Soviet requests, not on German initiative. The stress on German military weakness and Soviet military strength in 1941 misses the critical point that it was the hold Stalin retained on the *domestic front* which proved decisive; on the military front the Germans won greater victories in six months of 1941 than in three years of World War I. Similarly, while Cecil correctly recognizes Hitler's disinterest in the Mediterranean (Hitler viewed this area as Italy's sphere, where German commitment should be minimal), he fails to appreciate fully that Hitler's preoccupation with Russia resulted from the Fuehrer's desire for territorial conquests there. In Hitler's eyes, the Bolshevik Revolution was a stroke of good fortune for Germany because it enfeebled the government which controlled land he hoped to seize. Cecil fails to recognize that Hitler, had he not hoped to enslave or exterminate the local population, would never have attacked Russia in the first place.

But such criticisms should not obscure the merits of a very useful book. The author provides the most cogent brief analysis of German strategy in the first two years of World War II currently available. He covers important events and complex problems with a sure touch and a clear comprehension of the literature. Unfortunately, both the author and the editors were asleep when the only map in the book was inserted.

GERHARD L. WEINBERG

University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

AMERICAN OPINION AND THE RUSSIAN ALLIANCE, 1939-1945. By *Ralph B. Levering*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1976. xvi, 262 pp. Illus. \$17.95.

This is a story which has often been told, but which repays retelling, especially at the present time. Our wartime alliance with the Soviet Union has been written about from every conceivable point of view. Above all, the concern of most writers has centered on its sudden demise following the end of the war. Was it something which was inevitable? Was it the Soviet Union's or America's fault? Were the American people naïve in expecting that the United States and the USSR could continue to collaborate when no longer faced by a common enemy? Was our government, and in particular FDR, naïve in holding out such great expectations for a joint endeavor on behalf of

peace before the American people? Should the latter have known better? And why these alternations in the public mood toward the Russians?

The author concentrates on the last question. His answer is that "most people's attitudes changed less as a result of specific events than according to the way opinion makers interpreted events and personalities for the public." This is not a very convincing analysis. Certainly, no matter what Walter Lippmann, Robert McCormick, and others wrote, or even what our government leaders proclaimed, two specific events had the decisive influence on American public opinion: first, both countries finding themselves as of December 1941 in a joint war effort, and, second, the Soviet Union's imperialist and repressive policies in Eastern Europe which the American public began to perceive as early as 1944, but which became fully and undeniably evident in 1945-46. The author evidently believes that what is known as "Cold War" need not have come "if Presidents Roosevelt and Truman and their secretaries could have told the American people throughout 1945 of America's and Russia's new power and of the new realities of the international order." But this is hardly realistic: no amount of presidential "public opinion leadership" could have persuaded the American people that they should not be indignant about what the USSR was doing in Poland, Rumania, and other East European countries. The writer also begs the question, and doubly so. The "new realities of the international order" did not necessarily mean that the United States had no option but to acquiesce in the Soviet policies in Eastern Europe. On the contrary, those realities, that is, America's enormous strength and Russia's relative weakness, should have urged that alert and tenacious American diplomacy could have secured for most Eastern European states at least some approximation of independence insofar as their internal affairs were concerned. In the second place, the Cold War did not result solely, or even mostly, from the Soviets being mad at us because we said unkind things about what they were doing in Poland and elsewhere. It also came because, with the war over, the Soviet Union for internal reasons sought to put a distance between itself and the West. Witness Stalin's refusal to participate in and draw benefits from the Marshall Plan.

The book is informative and valuable as long as it deals with factual material. It falters when the author shifts into another gear and attempts to philosophize.

ADAM B. ULAM
Harvard University

SPECIAL ENVOY TO CHURCHILL AND STALIN, 1941-1946. By *W. Averell Harriman and Elie Abel*. New York: Random House, 1975. xii, 595 pp. + 16 pp. photographs. \$15.00.

This is a well-written, familiar story of Big Three relationships during World War II, told from Averell Harriman's angle of vision. His collaboration with a professor of journalism and his decision to use the third person in referring to himself gives the book the air of a history rather than a formal memoir; and, in fact, the authors do draw quite extensively on sources other than Harriman's own recollections and dispatches to set the stage for matters in which he took a personal part. Robert Sherwood's *Roosevelt and Hopkins* was the bellwether for this sort of beefed-up memoir of World War II, and Harriman and Abel's contribution to the genre will stand comparison with any of its predecessors for general interest and readability.

The subject matter is, of course, familiar to anyone who has read about the Allied diplomacy of World War II. What is new is the insight into Harriman's own character and the tart judgments he makes of the men with whom he worked. He presents himself as a vigorous man of action and sound judgment, skilled in diplomacy.