

primarily as repression, ignoring broader policy issues, and making no effort at all to penetrate the ideology of reaction as a positive political force. Considering the importance of this issue for Europe generally, and its particular significance for Russia's nineteenth-century development, its absence here greatly reduces the volume's value. Finally, the author's attempt to show Russia's comparability with Europe can be termed at best unproved. Drawing on familiar secondary sources, he describes population growth, increase in the number of factories, the enlargement of trade, and changes in agriculture. The data are presented uncritically; sheer magnitudes carry the argument; and, leaving the validity of the material cited aside, which in itself is a major problem, the absence of any comparative or structural analysis means that there is no demonstrated basis for the author's conclusions. In sum, despite points of interest, the book is disappointing. The scholarship is dated and often superficial; critical points are either undeveloped or are developed unsuccessfully; and, in the end, our understanding of either Russia or the revolutionary period is not much advanced.

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KREST'IANSKII VOPROS V PRAVITEL'STVENNOI POLITIKE ROSSII  
(60–70 GODY XIX V.). By V. G. Chernukha. Leningrad: "Nauka," 1972.  
226 pp. 74 kopeks.

In recent years Soviet and Western scholars have shown a growing interest in the evolution of tsarist government policies and institutions prior to 1917. In this book V. G. Chernukha traces state attempts to resolve important administrative and fiscal problems remaining after the 1861 emancipation. The author uses new archival materials to analyze the history of the "peace mediators" (*mirovye posredniki*), government tax policy, and the vigorous though unresolved debate over the efficacy of the peasant commune as a cornerstone of the state's attempt to secure its administrative and financial interests in the 1860s and 1870s.

After 1861 the Ministries of Internal Affairs and Finance continually tried to strengthen the government's administrative hold on the countryside and to insure prompt and full receipt of the confusing multitude of taxes, obligations, and redemption payments upon which the state treasury depended. Unfortunately, poor harvests and peasant arrears were chronic, and such administrative actions as tax advantages or the sale of the debtor's movable property provided no solution. A peasant without tools or livestock could only remain a debtor. Ministers and other high advisers understood the need for comprehensive change, and the whole complex of agricultural policy was referred in 1872 to a new commission headed by P. A. Valuev.

The author successfully argues that there was general support in high bureaucratic circles as well as among landowners and "liberal" economists for elimination of the communal forms of land tenure and responsibility. The internal government debates reveal both varying shades of *conservative* bureaucratic thinking and the interesting fact that on the question of the commune, habitual bureaucratic disunity was replaced by general agreement. Bariatinsky, Shuvalov, and Timashev could agree with Valuev and Reutern on the advantage of private peasant enterprise—though of course for different reasons. Why did the attempts to abolish the commune and to institute comprehensive tax reforms fail? The answer must be sought first

in the surprisingly rigid opposition of Konstantin Nikolaevich, the chairman of the Main Committee on Peasant Affairs which had overall responsibility in legislative matters in this area until its abolition in 1882. The "progressive" grand duke defended the structure of the 1861 settlement as if it were sacred. But Chernukha's material allows us to postulate a more far-reaching explanation for the government's failure to act decisively and quickly—namely, the nature of the Russian legislative process itself. The machinery of change was slow, cumbersome, and designed to produce half measures. Ministers had both administrative and legislative responsibilities. Reports and commentaries were passed to and fro among institutions and commissions. Shuvalov fell out of favor. Bariatinsky returned to private life, and Timashev lacked initiative. The military reforms of Dmitrii Miliutin and the Eastern Crisis drew attention away from important internal policy debates, and when Loris-Melikov, Greig, and Abaza returned to them, new crises and Konstantin Nikolaevich again interfered.

The policies of Alexander III and Dmitrii Tolstoy removed the possibility of decisive action against the commune, and as Chernukha points out, it was only under Stolypin that the plans of an earlier generation of Russian officials were realized.

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LENIN: GENESIS AND DEVELOPMENT OF A REVOLUTIONARY. By Rolf H. W. Theen. Edited with a preface by Walter Kaufmann. Philadelphia and New York: J. B. Lippincott, 1973. 194 pp. \$6.95.

As the subtitle indicates, the book focuses on Vladimir Ulianov's childhood and youth, in order to give a clue to Lenin's future development. The author brings together the scanty evidence about his ancestral background. He stresses the deep impression of Chernyshevsky's elitist message on the young student—its praise of the "New Man," the *deiatel'* as an individual, "condescension, if not contempt, for the masses." Vladimir Ulianov had been in close contact with Russian Jacobins and former Narodovoltsy at least two years before he became acquainted with Marx and Marxism. Though I feel that his indebtedness to such Russian revolutionary ideas as those of Pestel and Petrashevsky, which Lenin could not have known at the time, is doubtful, the author's thesis about Lenin's close relation to the Russian radical tradition is valid. It serves well its purpose to explain the deep crisis in his thought when he became acquainted with Bernstein's ideas. In fact, Social Democracy, although it continued to preach Marx's creed, became revisionist, and thus "Bolshevism" seemed the legitimate answer to those Marxists who had no chance to take part in a process of step-by-step parliamentarization. The author's concept of "Lenin's voluntarism" narrows the vision, for he does not attempt to answer the question whether, for instance, Menshevism was a valid alternative in the given Russian situation. "Utopianism" is not the best of all possible labels for *State and Revolution* either. When read against the background of Bukharin's essay (where he stated that in the age of imperialism the state turns out to be the worst exploiter), it sounds like a rather clumsy attempt to solve the dilemmas of a revolutionary elite in power. For Lenin the transition to "socialism"—whatever that might have meant besides the nationalization of the means of production—had to be linked with the world revolution. As this prospect faded away he proved