

is made abundantly clear in the August 1915 report to the tsar by the War-Navy Commission of the State Duma, as well as in other sources.

The author obviously has studied carefully the debates on foreign policy that took place in the Duma between December 18, 1912, and March 9, 1917. Her reporting of these is useful per se and also indicates some of the thoughts and feelings of the elements of Russian society represented in the Fourth Duma.

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THE RUSSIAN SEARCH FOR PEACE: FEBRUARY–OCTOBER 1917. By  
*Rex A. Wade*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1969. vii, 196 pp. \$6.50.

The tragic story Professor Wade recounts has been told before, but never with such lucidity. Hewing admirably to his central theme—"the leadership of the Petrograd Soviet after the February revolution and the leaders' struggle to evolve a peace program, to get it accepted as government policy and to implement it internationally"—he narrates dispassionately the sad tale of hope and frustration, idealism and naïveté that transpired. Rejecting the solution of a separate peace, the Soviet elaborated a program for a general negotiated peace. But Russia's Allies and Imperial Germany were by 1917 resolved to continue the war to a decisive military victory. The commitment of the Provisional Government to the Soviet formula after the formation of the First Coalition in May was vacillating. Even the Allied Socialists wavered in their support of Russian Revolutionary Defensism, variously unwilling to accept wholeheartedly the Soviet proposals or unable to force their governments to consider the revision of war aims. The call to convene an international conference of socialists at Stockholm was abortive. Nor were the Soviet leaders vouchsafed the benefit of time to advance their cause at home or abroad. The Russian people's overwhelming desire for peace would tolerate no delay. Meanwhile the Bolsheviks, capitalizing on the paralysis of their opponents' efforts to end the war and on the popular impatience for immediate domestic reform, seized upon each successive internal crisis to build their following and undermine confidence in the government.

Whether or not the moderate socialists could have held the line against Lenin without the complication of the war issue will, of course, never be known. But with it their cause was doomed. In their fateful struggle were all the elements of high tragedy.

Wade's documentation is impressive, and his summation is judicious. A series of remarkably fine sketches of the revolutionary leaders made by Iu. K. Artsybushev at the Moscow State Conference in August 1917 adds to the appeal of this small but authoritative volume.

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KRONSTADT 1921. By *Paul Avrigh*. Studies of the Russian Institute, Columbia University. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970. 271 pp. \$8.50.

In March 1921 the years of revolution, civil war, and foreign intervention in Russia came to a close. The rationalizations for the Bolshevik monopoly of power in wartime no longer applied, and oppositional elements agitated for restoration of the Soviet democracy of 1917. In his clear and energetic narrative Paul Avrigh de-

scribes the most tragic attempt to proclaim a republic of free soviets: the rebellion of the Kronstadt sailors.

This subject has been unusually controversial owing to Soviet sensitivity about the revolt in the very bastion of the revolution. The Kronstadt Soviet in 1917 had been Bolshevized earlier than the Petrograd Soviet, and in May of that year declared itself the sole power in the city. But by 1921 Kronstadt rose up in opposition to the Bolshevik government. Avrigh makes the point that it was not Kronstadt's position which had altered but the nature of the soviets. Kronstadt was not a "white Guardist mutiny," as some Soviet writers claim, nor was it "engineered by any single party or group" (p. 170). While he carefully explores the relations between the anti-Bolshevik emigration and the rebels, Avrigh concludes that the rebellion was spontaneous in its inception, "anarcho-populist" in its program, and doomed, like the Paris Commune, because of its lack of aggressiveness. On the first two points Avrigh's scholarship is laudable. He makes use of archival materials available in the United States, and demonstrates through a close study of the rebels' motivations their fundamental idealism and disillusion with Bolshevik rule.

The strength and weakness of the book stem from the same source, its treatment of the social background of the rebellion. Avrigh examines Kronstadt in the context of Russia's transition from civil war and "war communism" to peacetime and the NEP concessions to the peasants. Discontent was widespread in late 1920 and early 1921 and was reflected in massive peasant uprisings: "In February 1921 an open breach occurred between the Bolshevik regime and its principal mainstay of support, the working class" (p. 35). The sailors of Kronstadt suffered from scurvy and shortages of fuel and food, and were upset by the re-establishment of command relationships in the armed forces. The rebellion began in sympathy with a workers' strike in Petrograd, but once it moved from simple economic frustration to overt political expression, Kronstadt became intolerable to the Communists. Avrigh believes that the Kronstadt program—re-elections to the soviets and the restoration of full political and civil rights—"echoed the discontents not only of the Baltic fleet but of the mass of Russians in towns and villages throughout the country" (p. 75).

This assertion is nowhere proven in the book. Yet it is central to the author's estimation that had the Kronstadt rebels been more aggressive and advanced against the mainland, "units of the Red Army, and perhaps civilians as well, would have rallied to their standard" (p. 219). Despite his data on the economic discontent engendered by "war communism," Avrigh does not provide sufficient evidence to demonstrate that widespread alienation from the Bolshevik political order existed. At Kronstadt alone economic frustration was transformed into a political program, not only by intellectuals but by thousands of simple sailors. Elsewhere political agitation was carried on by isolated Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries. The distinction between economic and political discontent in 1921 is not made clearly enough. After Kronstadt was suppressed, Lenin was able to defuse the economic crisis through the New Economic Policy and to preserve his regime without political concessions. Given the lack of widespread political opposition to the Bolsheviks, Avrigh's estimation of the chances of the Kronstadt rebels seems too optimistic. Nevertheless, his analysis of the rebellion adds greatly to our understanding of this final challenge to the Bolshevik monopoly of power.

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