

THE UNCERTAIN CRUSADE: AMERICA AND THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION OF 1905. By *Arthur W. Thompson* and *Robert A. Hart*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1970. vii, 180 pp. \$6.50.

Did American public opinion renege on an implied promise to aid the Russian revolutionaries of 1905–6? In this study, written by Professor Hart of the University of Massachusetts on the basis of research undertaken by the late Professor Thompson of the University of Florida, the author convincingly answers “yes.” While acknowledging that neither statesmen nor radicals should mistake fervor for policy, Hart nevertheless argues that the enthusiasm of Americans for the Russian Revolution of 1905 in its early stages was a tragically misleading commitment, “a promise that should not have been made.”

At the same time Hart leaves a larger and more puzzling question unanswered. How can one possibly explain the wild swing of American opinion from generous and romantic endorsement of the revolution to indifferent, even hostile, opposition to it, in the course of really only a few months, from the spring to the fall of 1905? Hart notes that a few editors explained their reversal of attitude as stemming from increased fear of Japan, a desire not to oppose Roosevelt’s policies, and a discovery that the revolution was socialistic, not democratic, in its aims and methods. He also reports Senator Beveridge’s wry (and probably astute) comment that Americans had become disenchanted with the revolution, either through boredom or through suspicion. Hart refers to TR’s desire to turn American opinion around and to the publicistic efforts of Witte in America. Finally, he mentions a growing reaction against the dangers of socialism at home and against revolutionary excesses, as well as the desire of some Americans to trade and lend money in Russia. Yet none of these explanations is fully elaborated or analyzed, and one is left to speculate that perhaps two adroit politicians, Witte and Roosevelt, together turned the trick.

A few minor drawbacks also need to be noted. Hart does not set his topic in the context of previous American attitudes toward Russia. His depiction of events in Russia is frequently weak or erroneous, a fault that could easily have been avoided by relying more on available English-language accounts of the period, or on knowledgeable colleagues. Finally, there is little or no use of such important works as an article by Thorson on American opinion and the Portsmouth peace conference, a study of TR by Harbaugh, Dennett’s *Roosevelt and the Russo-Japanese War*, and excellent recent monographs by Esthus and Trani on American-Russian-Japanese relations at the time.

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THE COMMISSARIAT OF ENLIGHTENMENT: SOVIET ORGANIZATION OF EDUCATION AND THE ARTS UNDER LUNACHARSKY, OCTOBER 1917–1921. By *Sheila Fitzpatrick*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1970. xxii, 380 pp. \$13.50.

Lunacharsky once asked, “Were we, as Communist propagandists, ever concerned with anything other than the enlightenment of the people?” In this volume we find that only Lenin, Lunacharsky, and the dedicated staff of the Commissariat of Enlightenment (Narkompros) fought to uphold their “old-fashioned preoccupation with enlightenment.” The “indifference of the Party and government organs, hos-