

of the Orthodox Church (and the considerable Roman Catholic minority) is treated haphazardly. Some generalizations about the purge of the Belorussian party apparatus are made, but there is no analysis (the materials are readily available) of the extent of turnover in, for example, the central committee compared with turnover in other republics.

In sum, this book provides a meager introduction. Let us hope that Professor Lubachko, or others who can use the rich Belorussian sources, will not delay long in providing us with truly sophisticated monographs.

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LENINGRAD DIARY. By *Vera Inber*. Translated by *Serge M. Wolff* and *Rachel Grieve*. Introduction by *Edward Crankshaw*. Foreword by *Harrison Salisbury*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1971. iv, 207 pp. \$6.95.

The publication of yet another diary of a survivor of the 900-day siege of Leningrad during World War II may appear, at first glance, not worthy of much notice. Of course, there is the fascination with one of the great epics of modern history. However, much has already been published about the horrors and privations of that siege, which, in the winter of 1941–42, resulted in the death by starvation, disease, freezing, and German bombardment of over one-third of Leningrad's population.

But this diary has other points to recommend it. Vera Inber was a poet, best known for her wartime poem "Pulkovo Meridian." She and her husband, Professor I. S. Strashun, who was appointed chief of one of the city's hospitals in August 1941, were members of the Soviet intellectual elite. Thus the diary reflects both the keen powers of observation and the sensitivity of a gifted poet and provides a view of events from the vantage point of that elite. It is also noteworthy that *Leningrad Diary* was first published in the Soviet Union in 1948, at a time when many Leningrad writers had come under attack by Zhdanov, among other reasons for their treatment of the siege in too gloomy, frightening, or demoralizing a manner. Vera Inber fared better, for her diary reflects her fears and despair as well as her faith and hopes, and her descriptions of the siege are graphic enough. Perhaps the fact that she laced her diary with bits of stories and communiqués which seem to have been copied from Soviet broadcasts and the *Leningrad Pravda* caused the censors to relent.

Leningrad Diary is a very human document of fortitude and courage in the face of incredible odds. As such, it has a timeliness which should make the reader welcome its publication.

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THE STRANGE NEUTRALITY: SOVIET-JAPANESE RELATIONS DURING THE SECOND WORLD WAR, 1941–1945. By *George Alexander Lensen*. Tallahassee: The Diplomatic Press, 1972. x, 332 pp. \$15.00.

This is one of a series of volumes in which the author is engaged in tracing Soviet-Japanese relations since the First World War. It parallels the *Istoriia sovetsko-*