

LETTER

TO THE EDITOR:

That Nikolai Nikolaevich Gimmer-Sukhanov should on the pages of the *Slavic Review* (p. 718, December 1976) in an article by Alan Kimball be transformed into "the émigré Menshevik, Nicholas Sukhanov, who carped at the Revolution from abroad" in his memoirs passes the norms of ordinary belief.

Sukhanov's incomparable eyewitness reportage of the Revolution was written on the spot in Russia although published in the convention of the time in 1922 by the firm of Z. I. Grschebin of "Berlin-Peterburg-Moskva."

Sukhanov, of course, never emigrated although he did work in Berlin in the Soviet Trade Mission for a time in 1924–25. He was arrested July 20, 1930 and convicted in 1931 in the "Trial of the Union Bureau of the Central Committee of the Menshevik Party." Some accounts (Robert Conquest, *The Great Terror*) assert that he cannot be traced after 1934. However, Roy Medvedev (*Let History Judge*) contends he was released after a hunger strike (in which he contended he had carried out his part of a deal with the prosecution by giving false testimony; now they must release him as promised), then rearrested and shot in 1937. Alexander Solzhenitsyn (*The Gulag Archipelago, Part I*) says he died in 1940.

Whether Sukhanov was a Menshevik can be argued. Of course there was no such thing as a "Union Bureau of the Central Committee of the Menshevik Party" and Sukhanov could not have nor would not have belonged to it.

But history will not deny him the role of the sharpest-eyed observer of events present in Petrograd in 1917.

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