

LETTERS

From the Editor:

Slavic Review publishes letters to the editor with educational or research merit. Where the letter concerns a publication in *Slavic Review*, the author of the publication will be offered an opportunity to respond. Space limitations dictate that comment regarding a book review should be restricted to one paragraph; comment on an article should not exceed 750 to 1,000 words. The editor will not publish ad hominem discourse.

E.D.M.

To the Editor:

While I appreciate his positive comments, Mr. Lebow's criticism of my book, *Surviving the Millennium* (*Slavic Review* 54, no. 3), totally misconstrues my concept of the global system as a dynamic "equipoise of power capabilities, perceived political intent, and international norm" as well as that of "alternative" realism. In no way do I argue that "bipolarity was responsible for stability," but that if major powers correctly perceive each other's political intent (and thereby work *within* international regimes and norms), then the chance for global conflict is minimized, regardless of the number of "poles" in the system. Furthermore, I do not argue that the US had the "interest" to "sustain" the USSR, but that Washington could have sought a *devolution* of Soviet power at earlier stages of the Cold War. And finally, I do justify my argument with facts. The "China Card" for example did help to implode the USSR: The Soviet Far Eastern build-up cost Moscow 2–3 times its build-up in eastern Europe. That Mr. Lebow refers to my last name as "Hall" rather than "Gardner" indicates that he could have read the book more attentively.

HALL GARDNER
American University of Paris

Ned Lebow chooses not to reply.

To the Editor:

In answer to Prof. Ben-Israel's comments on my presentation of Polish Foreign Minister Jozef Beck's policy toward Germany and Czechoslovakia in 1938 (*Slavic Review* 54, no. 2), I wish to inform readers of a key axiom of Polish interwar foreign policy, i.e. that Poland could never be on Germany's side in a European war. In was, therefore, axiomatic that in such a war, Poland would side with her ally France. Close cooperation or alliance with Germany was unacceptable because it would mean ceding to her territory deemed crucial to Polish independence. Furthermore, it was believed that Germany was bound to lose another war against the western powers, just as she had lost the first one. This axiom also applied to Czechoslovakia in 1938. All Polish documents support this axiom, as does US Ambassador Anthony J. Drexel Biddle's report of 19 June 1938.

ANNA M. CIENCIALA
University of Kansas

Hedva Ben-Israel chooses not to reply.

To the Editor:

The Summer 1995 issue (54.2) of *Slavic Review* contained a review of my book *The Origins of Democratization in Poland* by Kieran Williams. Williams' discussion of my application of the concept of legitimation to Poland is misleading. He misses the distinction I draw between illegitimate and nonlegitimate domination. I use "nonlegitimate" to describe the situation where obedience is based on material or coercive measures and "illegitimate" to describe those forms of domination that are tenuous. This distinction helps me to explain why the domination of the Polish party-state, while never successfully legitimated for any great length of time, was able to persist for over forty years. Having missed this, Williams misrepresents my discussion of

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stalinist Poland. While I do discuss a range of reasons why different social groups were obedient, my ultimate judgment on Polish stalinism was that it did not establish legitimacy. From the complaint above it should also be clear that I do not believe that material gain is a basis for legitimate authority, as Williams asserts. I talk about it only as a basis for obedience. Finally, his criticism that a book concerned with the "origins of democratization" does not draw broad theoretical conclusions on democratic consolidation seems misplaced.

MICHAEL BERNHARD
Pennsylvania State University

Kieran Williams replies:

I did not miss Professor Bernhard's definition of non-legitimate and illegitimate domination. If my account gives the impression that he does not provide a definition, I certainly apologize, as it was not my intention. Instead, my point was (and is) that the operational boundaries of these types are unclear, as is the heuristic value of the distinction. Does a regime cease to be non-legitimate and become illegitimate once it fails to fill the shops or coerce the masses into submission? Does it revert to being non-legitimate once the crowds are dispersed and sausage delivered? Is it not a spectrum of illegitimacy or degrees of efficacy that is at issue, rather than two discrete types? The typology is logically neat and interesting, but I think that Jan Pakulski provides a more helpful analytical framework in his 1986 article on conditional tolerance.

Although it is clear that Bernhard argues that Polish stalinism did not establish legitimacy, and that he does not consider material gain a basis for legitimacy (I merely questioned whether he saw it as the source of support among certain groups, which is a separate matter), he does make passing reference to some "followers of the party leadership" obeying "out of a fanatical sense of commitment" under the influence of Stalin's charisma and ideology. He also notes that many intellectuals subscribed to stalinism out of conviction and "self-delusion." I read this as implying that stalinism was indeed legitimate in the eyes of many members of the elite "staff" of post-war Poland. Had Professor Bernhard distinguished more systematically between Poles inspired by true belief in stalinism and those who obeyed out of fear or opportunism, I might have presented his arguments more faithfully. Above all, I make these criticisms of chapter two because it distracts from chapter seven's truly illuminating account of worker disaffection.

KIERAN WILLIAMS
University of London