

or can be located only with great difficulty. (Another version of no. 71 appeared as no. 264 in volume 13 of the eighth series of Italian diplomatic documents.)

The collection is a useful introduction to the available material on an important subject; it is especially interesting for its documentation of the extent to which the Soviet Union gave Hitler political and propaganda support. The separation of the titles and sources of the documents from each other and from the texts needlessly complicates using the book. The editing is not always sufficiently careful.

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DELO VSEI ZHIZNI. By *A. M. Vasilevsky*. Moscow: Politizdat, 1974. 539 pp. 1.64 rubles.

GENERAL'NYI SHTAB V GODY VOINY. Vol. 2. By *S. M. Shtemenko*. Moscow: Voenizdat, 1973. 1.45 rubles.

Marshal Vasilevsky's memoirs are the last of three remarkable books by men who were present at the highest level of command during the period of the Great Patriotic War. Army General Shtemenko, who served during the war in the General Staff and was head of the operations section during 1944–45, was first with his memoirs in 1968. The memoirs of Marshal Zhukov, who had been the chief of staff in the early months of the war, were published in 1969, and now we have the autobiography of Marshal Vasilevsky who served as chief of staff from May 1942 to February 1945. Unless somewhere there exist unpublished memoirs by the late Marshal B. M. Shaposhnikov and Army General A. I. Antonov, the memoirs mentioned should remain for some time to come the most detailed Soviet view of the high command and the purely military conduct of the war.

Parts of Vasilevsky's memoirs, particularly those dealing with the war years, have already been published in various journals and anthologies. Vasilevsky was a junior officer in the tsarist army who went over to the Reds and served in the Civil War. Between 1927 and 1940 he held various staff positions and attended various military schools. Like almost all wartime high-ranking military leaders, his rise was due to the devastation of the high command through purges—many of the victims were colleagues and close friends. The thirties, however, as seen through these memoirs, were merely exciting times of no unusual significance. The memoirs of Vasilevsky are one more clear example of the sad state of historical writings under the Brezhnev-Kosygin regime in which the cover-up of heinous crimes has now been combined with "positive" tributes to the late dictators. There is indeed a contrast in this regard between the writings of Vasilevsky and those of colleagues such as L. M. Sandalov, S. S. Biriuzov, and A. T. Stuchenko. In June 1939 Vasilevsky was appointed to the operations section of the General Staff. At the start of the war his superiors, Zhukov, Vatutin, and Malandin, were sent to various fronts to shore up the inexperienced and incompetent commanders. Vasilevsky soon became head of the operations section and on May 8, 1942, replaced the ailing Shaposhnikov as chief of staff, a position he held until February 18, 1945. During the war, Vasilevsky and Zhukov were the most important men in the Red Army. Stalin, who never completely trusted his front commanders, used both men frequently as the representatives of the Supreme Command to the most critical areas of the front, such as Stalingrad and Kursk.

Throughout the book the figure of Stalin dominates everything, and Vasilevsky devotes several pages (pp. 127–30) to Stalin as a military leader, giving him credit for a good knowledge of strategy and political factors and to a lesser degree for being a tactician, a picture similar to that given by Zhukov and Shtemenko. He also points out some of the less pleasant aspects of Stalin's personality, such as his refusal to visit the front, his stubbornness, and his sharp tongue—exemplified in his remark during the summer of 1942, "We have no Hindenburgs." Vasilevsky is also kind to his colleagues and devotes the last pages of his book to mollifying those with whom he had clashed in the past. Vasilevsky remained an important military figure in the postwar period, but despite the title of the book he unfortunately says little about this aspect of his career.

The second volume of Shtemenko's memoirs covers the period 1943–45 and the operations of the General Staff during the great offensive campaigns of the Red Army. Unlike Vasilevsky, who was away from Moscow for long periods of time and actually received a front command in February 1945, Shtemenko was present at Moscow and with A. I. Antonov ran the General Staff. The second volume is not as informative as the first but sheds some light on the coordination of offensive operations as well as Stalin's political and strategic thinking. Shtemenko goes beyond pure military matters and discusses such questions as Soviet policy in Eastern Europe as well as diplomatic relations with the Western allies. Both books add to our knowledge of Stalin and the Soviet Union, but both suffer from the distortions and exaggerated discretion that seem to be the hallmarks of recent Soviet historical writings.

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THE SOVIET COLONIZATION OF ESTONIA. By *William Tomingas*. New York: Kultur Publishing House, 1973. 312 pp.

In the introduction the author declares his intention to offer a "detailed review of the events that led to the loss of independence of Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania." However, the reader seeking new information and analysis about the incorporation of the Baltic states into the Soviet Union will be disappointed. Latvia and Lithuania are only occasionally mentioned, and the Estonian case is handled in a largely unscholarly manner. In fact, the book is not a scholarly inquiry but simply a demonstration of Soviet injustice in dealing with Estonia.

The book does have the virtue of including documents from the Estonian side in the September 1939 negotiations on Soviet military bases, but these have appeared previously in English. Beyond this, the author relies on a few basic sources, and the material presented is generally well known. The book is not well written, and it contains numerous errors, such as confusing Old and New Style dates and describing the Russian Constituent Assembly elections as taking place on January 21/22, 1918 (pp. 29–30). In several places the book slips into a personal memoir not supported by other evidence. The concluding chapter on the first year of Soviet rule tends to be journalistic and anecdotal.

More important, the book suffers from an extremely narrow conceptual scope and a tendency to view the Estonian situation in a vacuum. There is little treatment of pre-1939 Estonian foreign policy or of the attitudes and roles of other European states in the two crisis periods of September 1939 and summer 1940. The author