

maries of the social and political costs of the Stalinist system, of Stalin's legacy in domestic and foreign affairs, and of the ideological and policy orientations of both the Khrushchev and Brezhnev regimes.

But Nove's efforts to compress a vast amount of interpretation and information into one small volume has produced a number of problems. The study does not include a unified discussion of political institutions. Consequently, the analysis of the relationships between various party and governmental bodies, which is scattered throughout the text, is probably not fully comprehensible to the non-specialist. Furthermore, the treatment of particular periods and problems, such as the debates over economic policy in the 1920s, the intellectual and social developments in the 1945–53 period, and the unfolding of the USSR's foreign policy (in particular the USSR's intervention in Hungary), is probably too compressed for those with little historical knowledge of the USSR.

Some of the author's judgments will be challenged. It is extremely debatable that Stalin's economic policies could be regarded as "rational" in any terms, that the 1961 Berlin crisis was "not in itself very acute or dangerous," or that Kosygin's position as chairman of the Council of Ministers is largely a "formal" check on Brezhnev's power over his colleagues on the Politburo. The text includes some historical inaccuracies: the U-2 incident did not happen in the midst of a summit conference; and the Leningrad poet Brodsky was charged and tried as a "parasite" under the reign of N. S. Khrushchev, not under his successors.

JONATHAN HARRIS
University of Pittsburgh

**POLITICAL UNDERCURRENTS IN SOVIET ECONOMIC DEBATES:
FROM BUKHARIN TO THE MODERN REFORMERS.** By *Moshe Lewin*.
Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974. xix, 373 pp. \$16.50.

This book is focused on the political aspects and ideas of the Soviet economic debates of the 1920s and of the 1960s. The author attempts to show the similarity (if not the identity) of certain themes developed in the earlier period, notably by Bukharin, with those developed in the later period by the most representative modern Soviet economic reformers. The reformers' vision of socialism is at sharp variance with the coercive, monolithic, "civil-war model" which Stalin used for shaping the Soviet economy and society.

The book falls into three parts. Part 1 presents a cursory discussion of the preindustrialization debates of the 1920s—with special emphasis on the role and contributions of Bukharin—as well as a broadly-sketched analysis of the Soviet historical phases from 1917 to the present, namely, "the First Eight Months," War Communism, NEP, and the Stalin thoroughgoing "planning" era. These phases are viewed as a succession of socioeconomic "models in history."

Part 2 scrutinizes the achievements and failures of the so-called Soviet "command economy" in the 1950s and the 1960s, when various Soviet economists began to voice a number of unusually bold criticisms concerning the established dogmas on value, pricing, planning, and the underlying assumptions of the socioeconomic model as a whole. According to Lewin, these critics pointed out that market categories were not alien, but rather inherent, to socialism. Therefore, new relations had to be found between the central plan and market mechanisms. Some slight corrections were indeed made eventually concerning various aspects of the

economic mechanism, but the supporters of full use of “economic methods” (Nemchinov and others) were finally unable to overcome the prevailing official inertia and the entrenched conservative positions.

After a lengthy digression about the party and the “contradiction” between its function and purpose as a controlling mechanism and the role and attitudes of its rank and file (who are more an “agent of the environment inside the party” rather than the “party’s agent outside” [p. 298]), part 3 presents a comparison of the opinions and programs of the 1920s with those of the 1960s. It is suggested that, consciously or not, the modern critics were repeating (at some forty years of distance) many of the basic “Bukharinist” admonitions against “super-tempos” of growth, “voluntaristic,” arbitrary, mass-coercive planning, and the immutable priorities of industry and of heavy industry, while at the same time restressing the “Bukharinist” concepts and emphases concerning a more moderate pace of growth, flexible combinations between planning and markets, balanced growth, and a more judicious correlation between investment and consumption.

Lewin is, I believe, fully justified in: (a) seeing the Soviet historical phases as a succession of socioeconomic “models”; (b) noting that through both the earlier and the later debates, substantively different conceptions were put forward concerning the role of the market; (c) underlining the basic similarity between certain critical positions of the mid-1920s and of the mid-1960s. Unfortunately, his attempt at analysis seems far less cogent than the overall framework he establishes for the discussion.

Lewin does not provide us with an operational definition of a socialist “model,” that is, of a socialist economic mechanism. He describes the successive models in question in terms of disparate socioeconomic *cum* political characteristics, for example, degrees of equalitarianism, of coercive methods, of debates and oppositions, and so forth. The net result of this examination (chapters 2–4) is the rather simplistic generalization that “the historical stages display not only variety but also some common traits, which allow us to group the four periods into two alternating blueprints: a ‘mixed economy’ displaced by a ‘command economy,’ replaced once more by a ‘mixed economy,’ which was finally ousted by another type of a ‘command economy’” (p. 123). Alas, at this level of generalization one cannot see the specific changes, from model to model, of the control structures, of the rules, requirements, or objectives of control—in other words, the key issues in the debate.

Lewin disregards the fact that some of the essential features and underlying assumptions of Stalin’s model—the treatment of the whole economy as a single firm, the conception of the eventual transformation of commodities into simple products, and the ensuing disappearance of value and money—stem from Marx and Engels’s vision of socialism, a vision also shared by Bukharin. Much of the Soviet debate hinges on the timing of this “eventual” rather than on the “inherent” or “alien” characters of markets under (fully developed) socialism.

Lewin undoubtedly knows that the debates of the mid-1960s present a broader spectrum of ideas and a wider geographical source than he has proposed. Soviet would-be reformers of the mid-1960s were deeply influenced not only by some positions of the 1920s but also by the actual or attempted experiments of East European regimes—notably in Yugoslavia, Hungary, and Poland—which, in many respects (for example, structures of control) owed little, if anything, to Bukharin’s earlier ideas. To ignore these influences is to miss some essential parts of the overall picture.

Lewin, who leans sympathetically toward an abstract socialism, concludes that "democratization" would eventually "clarify the real political potential of Soviet society" (?), allow it to overcome the crippling consequences of its "war model," permit it to "enter an age of political reason," and finally end its "seemingly fatal" swinging between the "mixed" and "command" models (pp. 354–55). All this is well and good, provided one is told what "democratization" could mean in the framework of an economy which, *by definition*, is to be run as an integrated firm by a single all-powerful party—with or without some help from market mechanisms.

One should note, however, that the book is challenging, well written, and of interest for all scholars in the "Soviet field."

NICOLAS SPULBER
Indiana University

SOVIET INDUSTRIAL IMPORT PRIORITIES: WITH MARKETING CONSIDERATIONS FOR EXPORTING TO THE USSR. By *Christopher E. Stowell*, assisted by *Neal Weigel*, with chapters by *Edward Maguire* and *Erast Borisoff*. New York: Praeger Publishers, 1975. xxxii, 508 pp. Tables. Charts. Appendixes.

The sudden expansion of Soviet-American trade in the early 1970s not only caught the U.S. Commerce Department unprepared, but found only a handful of American companies capable of in-depth understanding of the Soviet market. Thus, to most American businessmen, the Soviet system represented an unfamiliar and complex business frontier. Certainly, one of the most common complaints has concerned the lack of readily available market information on the Soviet Union. As specialists know, a great variety of direct and indirect data is available concerning the motivation and mechanics of Soviet foreign trade policy and practice. The real problem is how to "translate" this information into a form that is both accessible and useful to the U.S. businessman. It is safe to say that most American scholars do not intentionally write articles directed to the needs of U.S. businessmen. Likewise, it is equally safe to say that most U.S. businessmen do not read scholarly journals.

How then does the information get transmitted? Some of it surely does, and U.S. business is best served in this regard by works like the one presently under review. The authors are all associated with WJS, Inc., a well-known export management and consulting firm dealing primarily in Soviet and Chinese markets. None of these men is a professional academic scholar, and it is clear from the outset that this volume is directed at one principal public only—U.S. businessmen interested in the Soviet market. Nonetheless, there is a considerable amount of information here for scholars as well.

The title of the book implies a promise of perhaps more than is delivered. Initially, scholars may be inclined to dismiss this volume as little more than a practical handbook or guide to doing business in the Soviet Union. It is a great deal more than that, however. Naturally, the idea of being able to predict what will be on a Soviet bid list next year, or in the next five years, is most attractive to American businessmen anxious to plan their production with the Soviet market in mind; and, undoubtedly, this had something to do with the construction of the title. But although the authors understandably fall short of that goal, they have done an outstanding job of packaging information available through Soviet and American sources, as well as from their own commercial experience. The interpretation of the data has resulted in a compendium of pertinent information which can provide