

PROFESSOR ROSENTHAL REPLIES:

May I reply as follows to Professor Moser:

(1) Tyrmand writes that his book has no publicistic pretensions. I agree. If the book has literary merits, I leave it to Professor Moser to describe them.

(2) I agree that truths are contained in Tyrmand's stories. I disagree with Tyrmand's belief that an objective study of communism could not uncover these truths. Moreover, I disagree with Professor Moser's implication that "it takes one to know one." I do not agree that only a Black from Watts can accurately describe Watts, nor do I agree that only a Polish intellectual can accurately describe Poland. Yet, if Professor Moser does believe that "it takes one to know one," he faces three problems in his defense of Tyrmand's book. First, what exactly did Tyrmand describe that he or I could not describe? Professor Moser should be specific in answering this question. Second, what did Tyrmand describe that tens of thousands of people who yearly leave the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe have not described? Professor Moser makes Tyrmand sound like a Marco Polo who somehow left Eastern Europe. Third, if you have to be there to describe contemporary life in Poland, how accurately could Tyrmand still do this several years after he left Poland? Or does Professor Moser contend that life in Poland never changes in any way?

(3) Professor Moser is inaccurate in stating that Tyrmand's book gives an impression of how the "ordinary person" survives under communism. Tyrmand writes of how the Polish *intellectual* survives under communism: I doubt if a sociologist could gain any insights into how a Polish peasant copes with Communist society.

(4) For what audience is this book intended? I doubt, in the current state of American public opinion, that there would be a great response to Tyrmand's book outside academia. Within academia, or at least at my institution, students are increasingly skeptical of the "establishment," usual life-styles, and anticommunism, as well as other things. Those who would read a book on Eastern Europe would be too skeptical of professional anticommunism to pay much heed to Tyrmand's book which boasts of the author's hatred of communism and his disdain for an objective study of communism. In fact, Tyrmand's book, by increasing their skepticism, would injure the efforts of those of us who want to increase students' understanding of communism. For what audience, then, is this book intended? Or is it a 1950 book published in 1973?

CORRECTION

In the first line of the review of Sulimirski's *Sarmatians* by Dr. K. F. Smirnov, published on page 876 of the December 1972 issue, the phrase "Polish historian" should have read "Polish-born historian."