

it would be most disheartening to have to conclude that everything of substance in the Ministry's archives for 1936 - 1941 has been presented here.

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Thomas G. Paterson, *Soviet - American Confrontation. Postwar Reconstruction and the Origins of the Cold War*, Baltimore, Md., Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973, pp. 275.

The current controversy over «detente» has in no way diminished scholarly interest in the causes of the conflict which since 1945 has divided most of the world into blocs dominated by the United States and the Soviet Union. In fact, it can be argued that a genuine relaxation of Soviet - American tensions depends in some measure on a thorough understanding of the issues which gave rise to the postwar power struggle. In turn, such an understanding can only result from extensive and detailed research into a great variety of circumstances, perceptions and policies which motivated the major states in the 1940's and 1950's. *Soviet - American Confrontation: Postwar Reconstruction and the Origins of the Cold War* represents a significant contribution to this endeavor.

While focusing on economic aspects of early postwar rifts in Soviet - American relations, Paterson, a remarkably productive young scholar who teaches history at the University of Connecticut, does not attempt to offer an economic-deterministic interpretation of the Cold War. Indeed in this as in his other publications he is fully aware of the great variety of non-economic factors which need to be evaluated. He states the central theme of this book in carefully chosen words: «The failure to create a world of peace and prosperity derived from the Soviet - American confrontation, which . . . sprang in considerable measure from the determination of the United States to use its massive power to reconstruct the world its way. By the spring of 1948 the antagonists were in control of their restrictive spheres of influence, and, indeed, the world seemed to be following the scenario Americans had wanted so much to avoid» (p. 29). Moreover, in assessing to the United States major responsibility for the Cold War Paterson readily and repeatedly acknowledges that all research into these issues suffers from a fundamental imbalance: while the American side of the confrontation can be studied on the basis of nearly endless documentary and other primary source materials, one can only speculate about Soviet perceptions, motivations and objectives. Ultimately this imbalance in historical evidence and the resulting wide margin of unverifiable interpretations means that the controversy surrounding the origins of the Cold War is destined to continue unresolved as long as scholars care to debate the issues. Nevertheless, Paterson's fair-minded and painstaking examination of the available diplomatic records has produced conclusions which are effectively argued and convincing.

In the Introduction Paterson provides a brief but useful survey of the gradually unfolding Soviet - American power struggle. He argues that at the war's end the United States was not only physically unscathed but possessed tremendous economic strength which it was prepared to employ as its principal instrument in molding a new international order based upon American ideals and interests. While Soviet actions contributing to the deteriorating relationship are not ignored, they are portrayed essentially as reactions to American initiatives rather than as manifestations of Soviet aggression. The next five chapters are devoted to the issues which

affected the Soviet Union immediately and directly: «Diplomatic Weapon: the Abortive Loan to Russia», «Cold War Casualty: Trade with Russia», «The Dilemma of Power: United States Relief and UNRRA», «Threats and Fears: the Open Door in Eastern Europe», «The Diplomacy of the Dollar: Loans, Independence, and the Soviet Sphere». These chapters—as well as the entire study—offer convincing proof that to a very significant extent the Soviet - American confrontation was precipitated by clashing interests in Eastern Europe and the Balkans.

Tracing the history of the American response to the Soviet request for a large postwar loan Paterson shows Harriman as a leading figure in the decision to refuse such a loan without previous Soviet concessions. He concludes: «The hesitancy to grant a loan and the use of aid as a diplomatic weapon while Washington was granting Great Britain a handsome loan at an interest rate of less than 2 percent, Chiang Kai-shek was denying Soviet requests for joint companies in Manchuria, a Russian oil concession in Iran was refused, General Lucius Clay had halted German reparations shipments from the American zone of Germany to Russia, and France and Italy were receiving considerable aid—all fed Soviet fears that the United States was creating an international bloc and replaying the events which took place after World War I». As for the principles involved in the situation: «The diplomatic use of economic power by any nation possessing it is to be expected and may be helpful in achieving fruitful and mutually beneficial negotiations. But if that power thwarts negotiations or is employed to buttress demands which alone are held to be the *sine qua non* for peaceful settlement, the result is schism and conflict» (p. 56). Similarly the possibilities for trade with the Soviet Union, which some influential Americans had considered promising, all but disappeared with the imposition of export controls by the United States in response to mounting tensions. Paterson quotes Gunnar Myrdal to argue that the American denial of trade to the Soviet Union was to prove counterproductive: Stalin's regime became more self-sufficient and centralized, while its military strength was not seriously undermined. The Truman Administration's attitude toward UNRRA—and all other international organizations not effectively under American influence—emerges as cool and suspicious; coupled with congressional nepotism it soon led to the elimination of the international agency and its replacement by direct American aid. «The tragedy of UNRRA», Paterson concludes, «was that the United States was bent on using its economic power to shape its desired postwar world» (p. 98).

Much of this study deals with the Soviet penetration and control of Eastern and Southeastern Europe. This process is depicted as slow, unplanned, and above all, defensive, designed to frustrate an apparent capitalist encirclement concealed under the much-touted American doctrine of the «open door». Paterson finds Soviet fears understandable and essentially justified: «American leaders believed that the conspicuous Soviet presence in the area threatened their avowed goals of peace, political democracy, prosperity, open trade, and security, and that the fate of eastern Europe directly affected the national interest». The resulting «active, noisy, and offensive foreign policy» on the part of the United States «not only failed to change the arrangement of power but tended to exacerbate Soviet fears and led to a further tightening of the Soviet grip». Nor was Washington motivated by business and economic considerations alone: «The Truman administration sought the economic open door for much the same reasons it sought free elections: both were traditional American ideals, and their fulfillment in eastern Europe would reduce Soviet in-

fluence and augment that of the United States in the postwar international competition called the Cold War» (p. 99). As a result, Eastern Europe served both as a principal cause of and battlefield in the Soviet - American confrontation.

The book's second half (chapters 7-11) concentrates on the policies and geographic regions in which the United States had a decisive advantage: international economic agencies (International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, International Monetary Fund, etc.), loans to Britain, the Truman Doctrine, Marshall Plan and the rebuilding of West Germany. Once again, American economic power is shown as the principal tool in constructing and operating an anti-Soviet bloc. Reviewing the Iranian crisis Paterson challenges traditional accounts and concludes that rather than the product of Soviet expansionism, it represented a «classic case of competition for spheres of influence» in which the Soviet Union, Britain and the United States played equally disruptive roles. He demonstrates the absence of a Soviet responsibility for or involvement in the Greek civil war and finds little evidence that Soviet relations with Turkey in 1945-46 were a prelude to aggressive action. Instead American involvement in all three «crises» was produced by faulty perception, self-induced fears and misrepresentation of Soviet policies in the eastern Mediterranean. In all instances, the result was counterproductive: «In exaggerating the Soviet threat against Iran and Turkey and in misinterpreting the Greek civil war, the United States exerted its economic power in such a way as to further divide the world.» (p. 206). The Soviet response to the policy of containment was the tightening of control and the elimination of all centers of opposition in that portion of eastern Europe in which the western bloc could not apply effective countermeasures.

Discussing the much-debated question whether the Marshall Plan represented a genuine offer of economic assistance to Soviet-bloc countries Paterson surveys the published recollections of Acheson, Bohlen and Kennan and reaches a negative conclusion: «It was agreed that the plan should be presented in such a way as not to exclude the eastern European countries, but to let them exclude themselves» (p. 212). And after examining the tortuous record of postwar policies toward Germany he finds that American fears that Moscow intended to absorb Germany into its orbit were matched by Soviet fears that Washington was seeking to rebuild Germany as the nucleus of an anti-Soviet bloc on the continent. Once again, however, he maintains that, on balance, Soviet actions represented responses, not initiatives. In the final chapter Paterson reiterates his earlier theme that in its dealings with the Soviet Union the United States «was maneuvering from an uncommonly powerful position and on a global scale, its foreign policy often was haughty, expansionist, and uncompromising. Washington attempted to exploit Europe's weaknesses for its advantage and must share a substantial responsibility for the division of the world into competing blocs» (p. 260). The result was the very opposite of what Americans had desired.

A study of so many controversial and interwoven issues, whose painful repercussions are powerfully felt to this day, and for which the historical evidence is hardly complete, is bound to have its critics. Virtually all conclusions contained in this volume could be challenged by ascribing different weight to the evidence than the author has chosen to do. The scholar is called upon to pass judgment not merely upon the actions of decision-makers but upon their perceptions as well, while trying all along to keep his own perception from straying beyond what is supportable by the available record. Thus there will always be room for different emphases and in-

interpretations. It could also be argued that in seeking the origins of the Cold War within the scope of the Soviet - American power struggle Paterson has tended to oversimplify a condition in which *both* states were the victims. Nevertheless, his principal contention, which he has based on massive evidence, emerges incontrovertible: of all the actors in the postwar international arena, the United States was by far the most powerful and thus far more capable of influencing the course of events. To that extent, the Cold War may be viewed as the consequence of the failure of the United States to apply its strength — economic, political and moral — constructively and effectively, while also averting a head-on collision of global proportions with its principal competitor.

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Odysseus Elytis, *The Sovereign Sun: Selected Poems*, Translated with an Introduction and Notes by Kimon Friar, Philadelphia, Temple University Press, 1974, pp. 200.

and

Odysseus Elytis, *The Axion Esti*, An International Poetry Forum Selection, Translated by Edmund Keeley and George Savidis, Pittsburgh, University of Pittsburgh Press, 1974, pp. xv + 159.

The poetry of Odysseus Elytis is not unknown to the Greekless reader of modern verse, for its first translations into French, English, German, Italian, Spanish and other languages — in book form as well as in literary periodicals — started appearing right after the Second World War. The simultaneous publication of the above two volumes will, no doubt, generate more interest in his work. Moreover, the quality of the translations and the calibre of scholarship and savvy that went into the making of these beautiful books, may well result in earning for this Greek poet a place on the modern international Parnassus right next to those occupied by Cavafy, Kazantzakis, and Seferis — the only modern Greek poets who are well known in the English-speaking world.

My statement implies no attempt at evaluating Elytis's work by means of comparing, or contrasting, it to the poetry of any of the other three. Odysseus Alepoudhélis — Elytis is his pen name — was born in Crete, in 1911. When he got his first poems published in an issue of *Nea Ghrammata* (1935), Cavafy had already been dead for two years, Seferis was publishing his third book of verse since 1931, and Kazantzakis was a well-known (though always controversial) literary figure.

Like George Seferis, Elytis in his youth became acquainted with the work of the French poets of the modern tradition and especially the surrealists. Unlike Seferis, he was never attracted by the irony of Laforgue, the malaise of Baudelaire and the other «damned» poets, or the nebulous symbolism of Mallarmé — elements which probably account for Seferis's later change of course toward the direction of T. S. Eliot. Initially influenced by Paul Eluard (whose poems he has translated into Greek), because he preferred his delicate handling of surrealist expression and imagery to André Breton's rougher automatic writing, Elytis eventually developed a poetic style and idiom uniquely his own.

In terms of thematic preoccupations and concerns as well Elytis was averse to the prevalent poetic modes in his youth: he had no use for the morbid pessimism