

designed not only to increase vocational skill preparation but also to facilitate the acquisition of knowledge in the sciences and mathematics. The end results of this effort cannot be adequately assessed as yet in qualitative terms, though the further intensification of the science-technical content of Soviet training programs is already obvious.

*Soviet Education Programs* blends official Soviet information on school curricula and course contents with an analysis of the instruction process and on-the-spot observations of teaching methods. The report makes a sensible net assessment, that "the Soviet school's curriculum in mathematics-science seems comparatively stronger than its social studies-humanities curriculum, with the probable exception of Russian language education and training in the arts" (p. 205). Such a judgment has long been bestowed upon Soviet schools, though the new data and personal impressions gathered by the team of American educators make the report well worth reading, particularly as a valuable source aid.

*Administration of Teaching in Social Sciences in the U.S.S.R.* is the first complete English translation of syllabi of the three political indoctrination courses required of every student in Soviet higher education. Unlike *Soviet Education Programs*, it is mainly nonanalytical, a translation of the Soviet indoctrination courses called "social sciences"—dialectical and historical materialism, political economy, and the history of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. In addition to a thought-provoking introduction, the report presents political course syllabi for what they are—dull "one-sided stereotypes," "heavily slanted" ideological gobbledygook designed for the brainwashing of every Soviet student. These syllabi are but a part of the story. For many years a lively debate concerning the teaching of these subjects has raged in Soviet higher education: how to overcome the "senseless memorizing and formalistic acceptance" of the "classics" of Marxism-Leninism, and instill instead a "conscious understanding" of Communist dogma. One would hardly disagree that these syllabi by themselves are "highly significant documents"; yet the reader is disappointed by the lack of appraisal of the end result of this indoctrination effort upon the average Soviet student.

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## LETTERS

### TO THE EDITOR:

I have read with interest the review article by George F. Kennan of Herbert Feis, *Between War and Peace: The Potsdam Conference*, in the *American Slavic and East European Review*, XX (April, 1961), 289-94.

Mr. Kennan states (p. 292): "Powerful evidence suggests that as early as 1943 he [Stalin] was already resolved to exploit a German defeat, if at all possible, for the purpose of expelling the British and Americans from Europe and assuring the early communization of the continent."

Mr. Kennan can make a major contribution to our knowledge of the

history of World War II, and assist us in our political evaluation of American leadership at the time, if he will set forth this “powerful evidence” for the readers of the ASEER. If such evidence exists, was it known in 1943 (or in 1944, or in 1945 at Yalta and Potsdam) by Western statesmen? If not, when did it become known?

If such evidence exists, it will lead the readers of this journal to conclude that Stalin was even more devious than we already know him to have been. But it will raise important and relatively original historical questions about the wisdom and effectiveness of Stalin’s policy decisions and diplomacy. If his aim was quick and total control over “Europe”—not just control over Central-Eastern Europe—it was surely a great mistake on his part to call for a second front that would lead to Anglo-American control at the end of the war over France, the Low Countries, Italy, the industrial heart of Europe in Western Germany, the Baltic Sea’s access to the Atlantic Ocean, and thus Scandinavia. It was also a colossal blunder on his part to recognize the Italian monarchy, the Western-imposed DeGaulle regime in France, and Greece as part of the British sphere of influence.

If Mr. Kennan cannot describe the “powerful evidence” to which he refers, some readers may conclude that he himself has fallen victim to that tendency to stereotype (and in this case to back-date) our image of the present enemy to which he refers in speaking of American attitudes toward Germany in World War II (p. 290).

If Mr. Kennan can describe the evidence to which he alludes, and can show that it was in 1943-1944 known to Western leaders who chose to ignore it, I stand ready to join him in his conclusion that Western policy of those years seems to have been marked by “an appalling, almost willful, naiveté. . . .” (p. 292). Until I see such evidence, I shall persist in the relatively positive evaluation of Western leadership that I have set forth in two volumes on the diplomacy of World War II.

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AMBASSADOR KENNAN REPLIES:

Professor Snell is quite right in raising the question he does. He might find part of his answer in those of my lectures that have recently been published under the title *Russia and the West under Lenin and Stalin*. However, I think more is due than has yet been written in substantiation of the statement to which he refers.

Present preoccupations make it impossible for me to attempt to meet this obligation at the present time. I can only acknowledge it as a debt which I owe to Professor Snell and to the scholarly world in general, and say that I shall hold it in mind for the time when I can resume a scholar’s life.