For those of us who had the rare privilege of listening to his original Harvard lectures delivered in the spring of 1960, George Kennan's new book is both a personal and professional delight. In this masterful re-creation of the political atmosphere of Soviet Russia throughout the first forty years of its post-revolutionary development, the distinguished author succeeds in combining the best of two worlds. In the scope and perspective of its scholarship, *Russia and the West* fully measures up to earlier Kennan works on American diplomacy or on the massive evolution of Soviet-American relations. At the same time the distinct university-lecture flavor of the original manuscript is deftly preserved: frequently recurring scintillating asides and colorful personal recollections convincingly draw upon and, in turn, reflect Ambassador Kennan's rich diplomatic service from Washington to Moscow via Berlin and Prague.

Indeed, the reader will be struck by the built-in and acrobatically manipulated dichotomy of this valuable book. A sizeable sector of it is built around scholarly inquiries into the nature and limits of Soviet totalitarian government under Lenin and Stalin as projected into the complex domestic and foreign relations of the Russian state. Another façade, however, reflects a series of lively profiles of the leading figures of the last four decades of world politics. As the dramatic narrative progresses from one of these historic vignettes to the next, the absorbed reader is reminded of the vividness in detail of William L. Shirer's *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich* although Kennan—writing from a more sophisticated and less popular perspective—manages to avoid some of the pitfalls and key methodological misconceptions of Shirer. Not only are Lenin and Stalin exceptionally well portrayed, but such almost equally important components of the dictatorship as public opinion, the types of popular support and/or resistance are subtly brought into the limelight and carefully evaluated by the author.*

The book is divided into twenty-five chapters, or more appropriately, into a series of twenty-five loosely and leisurely organized lectures, each of which is narrowly focusing on a central theme while miracu-

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*Shirer's monumental best-seller has been rightly criticized for ignoring or underplaying the roles of German support and German resistance movements to the Nazis. Yet these critical political and psychological phenomena emerge with particular relevance in a Nazi Germany or Soviet Russia since, as Professor Klaus Epstein recently pointed out, "The term 'support' involves a gamut of very heterogeneous attitudes under a totalitarian regime, including complicity in crimes, vicarious enthusiasm, knowing acquiescence, and unpoltical apathy" while "'resistance' against a totalitarian state is likewise a variegated phenomenon ranging from active conspiracy to nonparticipation to 'inner emigration.'" See "Shirer's History of Nazi Germany," *The Review of Politics*, April 1961, p. 242.
lously also reflecting some broad, contemporary world political or historical issues. The author’s intent is to present the 1917 to 1945 period of Soviet development. The first fifteen chapters concentrate on the Leninist period clearly revealing the “rubbery consistency” of its major doctrines, particularly in the storm-tossed area of the new regime’s often hesitant and always controversial foreign policies. The sixteenth chapter, a sophisticated essay on the permanent and most relevant of all “Soviet targets”: Great Britain, serves as a transition—a link between Lenin and his self-appointed and dangerous successor, while the next eight chapters offer a panoramic view of the political structure and operational details of Stalin’s regime.

The final lecture (“Keeping a World Intact”) is a genuine puzzler in terms of briefly—and confusingly—opening a secret door into the drastically changed world of George Kennan. Here the previously cautious historian suddenly sheds his reserve and reappears as an uninhibited meteorological expert freely forecasting future weather-trends in the Cold War. Throughout his lectures Ambassador Kennan firmly stressed his inner conviction that despite their multiple acts of recognition, business talks and endless political conservations, the leaders of the Soviet Union were firmly and inflexibly devoted to the total ultimate destruction of the capitalist world and to the final and complete victory of Communism. Yet here we are suddenly reminded that what the author has patiently described in previous chapters was merely “the eras of Lenin and Stalin, and not that of Khrushchev” (p. 394), and that the differences between these periods of Russian history are both relevant and fundamental. Suddenly, and for no obvious reason, the Soviet regime’s basic assumptions and strategic expectations seem to have altered with major consequences for American diplomacy and for our national posture. We must give up our previous, Stalin-based preconceptions and prejudices vis-à-vis today’s Soviet Union and compare instead our present relationship to the Soviet leadership with “the national level of recalcitrance, of sheer orneriness and unreasonableness, which we encounter in the behavior of states anywhere.” (Italics mine. P. 393.) While this conclusion might be tenable in the context of a different type of analytical treatment, it is unacceptable as a prescription for conflict-resolution after the systematic and lengthy theorizing to-the-contrary in the previous twenty-four chapters (or lectures).

In the long run this controversial concluding sermon will not detract from the over-all merit and distinction of Russia and the West Under Lenin and Stalin. Our Anglo-American literature on Soviet government, ideology and foreign policy is currently plagued by two prevailing trends. At one end of the spectrum there emerges the super-professional, more-than-postgraduate type of voluminous dissertation, the ivory-tower academician’s sheer delight untouchable by the less initiated who—in this case—happens to be the public-at-large. At the other extreme are the journalistic quickies, the inside glimpses behind the Iron Curtain—interesting, popular, but ephemeral and frequently misleading. George Kennan has capably projected his latest work into the happy middle zone of this broad spectrum. Scholarly but informal, historically rich but disarmingly modest, ambitious in scope yet uncomplicated in narrative and uncluttered by technical details, panoramic yet sufficiently fragmented, Western-oriented yet concerned with the murky and mysterious aspects of the Sino-Soviet relationship, Russia and the West is bound to please the professional student and the interested public alike.

Reviewed by Andrew Gyorgy