

## LETTERS

## TO THE EDITOR:

In your September, 1963, issue Professor Liliana Archibald complains: "Albert Parry scolds me for not having used the 1958 edition of Vasili Kliuchevsky's *Peter the Great* for my translation. Since Professor Parry devotes nearly half his review (March, 1963) to this point, I feel that I should say that had he read the foreword he would have seen that I had finished translating in 1957. It must therefore be obvious that the 1958 edition was not yet available."

But did she read my review carefully enough? I wrote: "The Soviet editors' comment and footnotes appended to the 1958 book would have been an interesting addition to Professor Archibald's translation, since they so clearly reveal the dichotomy in the latter-day Moscow attitude toward Kliuchevsky and his subject."

Of course I knew that she finished her translation of the Soviet edition of 1937 in 1957 when the 1958 edition was not as yet available. But the 1958 edition was available by 1959 when her 1957 translation was printed. Surely the addition about which I wrote could have been made in her text between the time her translation was done (1957) and the time it went to press (1959).

ALBERT PARRY  
*Colgate University*

## TO THE EDITOR:

I should like to raise a question relating to the discussion of Professors Sugar, Kohn, and Fischer-Galati on "The Nature of the Non-Germanic Societies under Habsburg Rule" in the March, 1963, issue. As the fourth point of his comment on Professor Sugar's analysis, Professor Kohn (p. 41) asserts that Austria-Hungary should have pursued a neutralist foreign policy. Here I feel his otherwise valid analysis and equally valid analogy to Switzerland breaks down. How could such a policy have been pursued in view of Russian expansionism in the Balkans? It was a combination of Russian ambitions in the Balkans and Austro-Hungarian fears concerning those ambitions that explains so much of the seemingly turgid Habsburg foreign policy of the post-*Ausgleich* period. No great power had designs on territory claimed by Switzerland; not even the wildest of Italian irredentists had a plan to "liberate" the Ticino, for example. But the Russian menace was a real one, and in the minds of public men in Vienna and Budapest it loomed large—perhaps even larger than it really was, but it is men's impressions of situations, at least as much as the actual situations, that galvanize them into action.

This brings us to Professor Kohn's further assertion that the occupation of Bosnia-Herzegovina in 1878 was "a step in the wrong direction." Professor Sugar, in his reply, states (p. 44) that Bosnia-Herzegovina determined Habsburg foreign policy for forty years, adding that the Magyars accepted the occupation as the lesser of two evils. The latter part of that statement is undeniably true, but the first part places the cart before the horse. Gyula Andrassy and other Magyar leaders were motivated by antipathy toward

Russia; if Austria-Hungary did not occupy the area, it would in all probability come under Russian control. Thus the occupation should be undertaken even though it brought more Slavs into the Habsburg orbit at a time when the Magyars felt it already had too many Slavs for its own safety. But the occupation did not determine Habsburg foreign policy; rather it was merely a talisman of the fears and defensive measures that determined the Ballplatz to undertake it. Moreover, it was the Russian menace that triggered the Congress of Berlin in the first place. I refer the readers to Otakar Odložilík's article "Russia and Czech National Aspirations" (*Journal of Central European Affairs*, Vol. XXII, No. 4, January, 1963, pp. 407-39) for further exposition of the implication of Russian policies for Austria-Hungary.

Russia seemed to be at the bottom of Austria's woes during the whole period. My own recent research concerning the Sanjak Railway Crisis of 1908 brings to bear several facts in this regard. The scheme was first announced by Aehrenthal to the Hungarian Delegation (January 27, 1908), whose anti-Russian animosity was well known, and was thus calculated to rally the Monarchy as a whole to the plan. It was Izvolsky, rather than anyone else, whose warlike posturings almost singlehandedly turned a basically sound program on the part of Aehrenthal into a reckless act of brinkmanship in the eyes of other powers and produced a war scare, which subsided only when Germany presented counterthreats to Russian threats and when Stolypin managed to convince Izvolsky that Russia was in no position to fight Austria and Germany. With the single exception of Serbia, no other country expressed alarm until after Izvolsky raised the issue. Britain's principal objection was that the crisis seemed to undermine the Mürzsteg program of reforms in Turkish Macedonia—an impression carefully planted in the mind of Sir Charles Hardinge by Izvolsky during the Reval Conference, which was held a few months after the Sanjak scheme was announced.

In view of the continuous Russian intrigue in Southeast Europe—either directly through the Russian Foreign Office or indirectly through the Pan-Slavist press—I cannot conceive how Austria-Hungary could possibly have pursued any course of action radically different from the one she took after 1867. That that policy was often misdirected no one can deny, but the alternatives were these: passivity in watching idly as the entire Ottoman Empire in Europe was drawn into the Russian sphere and Austria-Hungary was weakened at home by Pan Slav propaganda, headlong adventures against Serbia and Italy along lines suggested by such men as Conrad von Hötzendorf, or a policy of attempting to preserve and carry out the Bismarckian compromise plan of retaining the Western Balkans as an Austro-Hungarian, rather than a Russian, sphere of influence. The first course of action recalls the statements of Palacký and Andrassy about Europe's need for the Habsburg Monarchy; it would have left all of Central Europe at the mercy of Russian Pan-Slavists and Italian irredentists, cooperation between whom was by no means impossible, as the Racconigi Agreement of 1909 was to demonstrate. The second course would have involved risks which would have proved wholly unacceptable to Berlin—and Austria-Hungary was in no position to "go it alone." Only the third course of action remained, and it was that alternative which was ultimately followed.

Austro-Hungarian foreign policy after 1867 was increasingly determined in St. Petersburg and not in Vienna or Budapest—and certainly not in Mostar or Sarajevo, at least not until June 28, 1914. In view of these considerations, I do not see how the Ballplatz could conceivably have pursued a neutralist foreign policy no matter how much the internal instability of the country seemed to dictate such a policy.

ERIC T. STEVENS  
*Rosary College*

EDITOR'S NOTE: Professors Kohn and Sugar do not wish to reply.

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