

mishap that would trigger a Russo-American war.

The author finds that the accident-prevention records of the present nuclear powers have been creditable; safeguards, at least in the United States, Russia, Britain, and France, are reasonably reliable. He notes that no atomic or hydrogen weapon has "detonated accidentally or inadvertently produced a chain reaction." His main concern is that the proliferation of nuclear weapons, which he regards as inevitable, will bring into the picture states without sophisticated safety systems.

With these fears for the future in mind, Professor Larus advocates in his final chapter an international conference of states with a nuclear capability for the purpose of exchanging "detailed information about the physical and administrative safeguards that can limit nuclear weapons accidents." It might be wiser to have the conference convened by the United Nations, which is experienced in conference preparations and procedures and is equipped to express world opinion, rather than by Russia and the United States, as he suggests. Without intending cynicism, we believe that the enemies of such a conference will be the indifference and lethargy of peoples and governments preoccupied with a multitude of interests far less vital to their future than the prevention of nuclear accidents.

Professor Larus has presented his subject thoughtfully and clearly. His book deserves a good audience.

NORMAN HILL

Visiting Professor of Political Science
University of Tennessee

RICHARD W. COTTAM. *Competitive Interference and Twentieth Century Diplomacy*. Pp. 243. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1967. \$5.95.

In this book, the author argues that American diplomacy is characterized by an *ad hoc* style, that policy consists generally of a series of individual responses to local challenges. He further maintains that American decision-makers typically choose policies involving gross interference in the affairs of other states when the exigencies of crises make this necessary; but once the

crises have passed, they will withdraw from all but the mildest forms of interference. A policy of continuing interference, which Professor Cottam asserts is what twentieth-century conditions require, is not adopted, he feels, because of ill-founded ethical inhibitions or habituation with traditional diplomatic procedures.

According to Professor Cottam, the first step in evolving more appropriate and effective policies would be the elaboration of operational situational analyses, which he maintains have not been made up to this point. The concept of leverage—"those means not involving direct action by which one government can exercise some influence over the policies of another government at any particular time" (p. 82)—would be central to those analyses. Tactics to implement the strategies based on these analyses would be tested by clever use of diplomatic probes.

To move in the direction he suggests, Professor Cottam thinks that the Central Intelligence Agency ought to be fully integrated into the process of forming and executing policy and that the country-team concept should be strengthened by increasing the authority and responsibility of the chief and deputy chief of mission. He also sees academic and nonacademic area specialists playing a major role by providing the bases "for testing the situational assumptions of the official policy-makers" (p. 234).

Whatever the reader's taste, he will find things to criticize in this book. It is pretentious. Definitions are poorly drafted, and the logic is often faulty. Assertions are frequently made about empirical matters with slight if any supporting evidence. The heralded solutions turn out to be rather commonplace.

Professor Cottam served as an American foreign service officer in Iran, and he is an established academic authority on that country. The vignettes on American policy concerning that country, interspersed throughout the book, are among its better features. Given his wide experience, though, Professor Cottam should know that the predictive capacity of social science is far too weak and decision-makers and citi-

zens of other states are far too untractable to sustain his prescriptions.

HAROLD KARAN JACOBSON

Professor of Political Science
University of Michigan

BERNARD A. RAMUNDO. *Peaceful Co-existence: International Law in the Building of Communism*. Pp. x, 262. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, in co-operation with the Institute for Sino-Soviet Studies, George Washington University, 1967. \$6.95.

In the present uneasy *détente* between the East and the West, it is extremely important to understand, if possible, the present Soviet attitude toward international law. For today the Russians are making a strong effort to convince us that whatever may have been their views prior to Stalin's death, they now espouse the cause of a universal law of nations. Both their legal scholars and their public representatives—and, unlike the situation in the West, these two groups speak with the same voice—claim to be champions of the "new" international law, whose basic concept is the doctrine of "peaceful coexistence." "The purpose of present-day international law," Koshevnikov writes, "is to promote peaceful coexistence and cooperation between all States regardless of their social system."

This "new" Soviet view of international law, with all its vagaries and inconsistencies, is admirably analyzed in this monograph by a United States Army Lieutenant Colonel serving with the Department of Defense and teaching at George Washington University. Based on a careful study of original Russian sources, of which numerous citations and footnotes are provided, this is the latest analysis of the law of nations as represented in Soviet legal literature and foreign policy.

The writer demonstrates that the famous Soviet concept of peaceful coexistence is too illusive and self-serving to afford the basis for peaceful relations between the nations. Advanced by Soviet scholars on every possible occasion, particularly at scientific meetings and specialized conferences of the United Nations, the concept, it is true, favors universal rules of law in prin-

ciple and calls for their codification. But the transparency of this attitude is evident. For while professing to outlaw the use of force and aggression, the Soviets carefully exempt wars of liberation and action in self-defense, neither of which is defined. Each state, under a strict application of the concept of state sovereignty, is to remain judge of the meaning of these terms, without any provision for international adjudication or any other form of objective interpretation. Furthermore, the Soviet scholars and diplomats, invoking the same doctrine of exclusive sovereignty, oppose the present World Court, favor a very restrictive role for the United Nations, and strongly resist any suggestion of world government or world rule of law. But all of this is not surprising in a regime for whom law is definitely a means, not an end, since all rules are mainly judged by their capacity to serve the interests of communism or Soviet foreign policy.

Those interested in international law and world politics may gain valuable information from this scholarly study, and while it will not enhance our hopes for permanent peace, we may derive some encouragement from this demonstration that in espousing international law in principle, Moscow has come a long way from the "mini-law" concepts of Vyshinsky or Stalin.

JOHN B. WHITTON

Professor Emeritus of Politics
Princeton University

BYRON DEXTER. *The Years of Opportunity: The League of Nations, 1920-1926*. Pp. xxiii, 264. New York: Viking Press, 1967. \$8.50.

Pity the poor League of Nations: a deteriorating political order and war obscured its promising beginnings and its subsequent moments of glory. Like shards of a past civilization in the foundations of a modern city, the League's vitality now lies beneath the construction of the United Nations. Some students even seem to think of the League as subject matter for antiquarians.

In this book, Byron Dexter laudably tries to recreate the excitement and freshness of the early years of the League. In polished