this chapter, a series of graphs and tables is provided at the back of the text along with a very poor map of the West Siberian oil and gas fields. The graphs and tables would have been more helpful if they had been integrated into the text. A map of the whole USSR is needed to provide a geographic context for the West Siberian region.

The internal situation having been examined, chapter 2 turns to Soviet oil and gas exports to the OECD. A comprehensive set of statistics is included, again at the back of the text. Since they are drawn from a number of different sources, one should take care when comparing tables. Together the text and tables provide an excellent synopsis of Soviet energy exports to Western Europe. After this review of the Soviet energy sector and its role in East-West trade, chapter 3 evaluates the issues surrounding such trade, in particular, relations with OPEC and security of supply. Stern suggests that while the Soviet Union clearly benefited from the actions of OPEC during the 1970s, it contributed to the weakness in the market which led to the recent fall in prices. Therefore, the oil-importing nations of OECD Europe may actually have benefited from the presence of the Soviet Union in the oil market. Contractual arrangements and the current supply situation make natural gas exports a very different proposition from oil exports with the Soviet Union having to accept reductions in the volume and price of deliveries because of slack demand. Stern concludes that because of the importance of oil and gas exports in Soviet trade and the competitiveness of the energy markets, the Soviet Union is anxious to maintain its reputation as a secure supplier and therefore is unlikely to interrupt exports for political reasons.

Chapter 4 ends the study by assessing the impact of the fall in oil prices and the future of oil and gas exports on the West. Stern concludes that the role of oil in Soviet foreign trade is likely to decline, first because of the fall in oil prices, and second because of domestic production problems. As the role of oil declines so natural gas will become more important, both in the domestic economy and in foreign trade. However, because of market conditions natural gas will not be able to compensate totally for the reduction in oil revenues. As a consequence the Soviet Union will experience a reduction in the total value of hard currency exports and hence in its ability to purchase Western technology.

What, then, of the question posed in the title of the study: are oil and gas imports from the Soviet Union a commercial transaction or a security threat? Stern provides no explicit answer; it is clear, however, from the manner in which the facts are presented and the arguments against trade dismissed that Stern believes trade to be a worthwhile commercial transaction and the Soviet Union a reliable partner. This is really no surprise, because those who disagree with East-West trade do so not because the facts suggest that it is a security threat, but because they have a fundamental distrust of the Soviet Union. For those who view trade as a positive factor, Stern's study provides a valuable insight into the complex issues surrounding Soviet oil and gas imports and is recommended reading for anyone interested in Soviet energy policy or East-West trade.

Michael J. Bradshaw


There are several excellent reasons why Western sovietologists should profit by reading this narrowly focused but thoroughly researched case-study of recent Soviet policymaking. Basing his study on an extensive reading of Soviet published sources, Dr. Chung has documented one of the most openly publicized
policy conflicts over the past two decades in the Soviet Union. It is a conflict over energy policy previously analyzed by others like Thane Gustafson but here reinterpreted in Chung's quite different framework of analysis. In this framework, the conflict illustrates how regional interests and policy coalitions influence the formation of national economic policies. In this particular case, overcoming the opposition of traditional energy ministries and Gosplan officials, and without any initial support from central Party officials, an identifiable group of Party-state officials and academics from Western Siberia altered national energy decisions after 1977 to divert a sizable proportion of national investment and energy development for oil and gas production to their own immediate region. In changing national energy policy, the pro-West Siberians interacted as a policy coalition. Not only did they alter economic priorities to benefit their own region, but they achieved long-term political influence by the promotion of their identifiable members to high national offices by the 1980s. Many of these early regional advocates of big oil and gas for West Siberian—including individuals like Batalin, Shcherbina, Aganbegian, Zaslavskaja, and Ligachev—have now become quite familiar to Western sovietologists as the new dominant reformist group on the national level advising and supporting Gorbachev by 1987. To understand the issue that first catapulted them to national prominence, it is incumbent for us to trace their origins in the politics of West Siberian oil and gas of the 1970s. To understand their policy views by 1986-87 in which they have encouraged open debate over national issues and reforms, it is incumbent for us to reexamine the 1970s when they openly criticized ministries and viewpoints opposed to West Siberian energy development.

By focusing on the "territorial dimension" in Soviet policy formation, Chung has provided clear evidence of Soviet regionalism defining the lines of conflict over national policies and of policy coalitions influencing central officials. The Soviet system seems much less monolithic than still presumed by some Western sovietologists. Brezhnev, who finally endorsed extensive investment and development for Western Siberia after 1977, committed himself only after the pro-West Siberians had already mobilized support through conferences and sympathetic newspapers like Pravda and Ekonomicheskaia gazeta and had already key advocates originating from Western Siberia in Moscow. According to Chung, Brezhnev's endorsement, which was crucial to the success of the pro-West Siberians, responded to their political initiatives and to the alarm in the Politburo stirred by a C. I. A. report in 1977 predicting drastic declines of output from old Soviet oilfields by 1980. Brezhnev's decision to support the initiatives of the pro-West Siberian coalition also resulted from a congruence of self-interests. Not only did he need to maintain the momentum of detente in 1977-79 through barter exchanges of gas for industrial technology with Western Europe and the export of highly priced oil to pay for grain imports from the United States, but a significant expansion of West Siberian gas and oil coincided with his own political calculations. The pro-West Siberians used Brezhnev's endorsement to make themselves into a majority coalition on Soviet energy policy against the "pro-European oil" and "pro-coal" interests identified with the more balanced energy programs of Premier Kosygin, who constituted the majority as late as 1976-77.

Given the high financial stakes involved in the massive shift of Soviet national investment to Western Siberia, the pro-West Siberians further legitimated a reality in which regional interests oppose and support national policies based on local calculations of benefit. The decision in August 1985 to rescind the diversion of Siberian rivers to Central Asia may reflect less the new "public openness" and "democratization" of policy debate under Gorbachev than this long-term clash of regional economic interests and policy coalitions over national policies as the normal pattern in Soviet politics. As river diversion was strongly advocated by and would have benefitted Central Asian interests, the