

1962

Soviet Society: a Book of Readings

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Kent Geiger

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BOOKS

Mecham, J. Lloyd. *The United States and the Inter-American Security, 1889-1960*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1961. 514 p.

This book may well become a landmark for scholars in inter-American affairs. The writer has produced an exhaustive analysis of the background and the instruments of the so-called inter-American system, tracing the evolution and growing significance of the meetings of Foreign Ministers, beginning with the initial reunion following the outbreak of World War II up through the sixth and seventh meetings at San José, Costa Rica in August 1960. The author does not sidestep United States shortcomings, but neither does he don a hair shirt. He proclaims his faith in the OAS, but calls for "rational understanding, tolerance, and mutual concessions between Anglo-America and Latin America." The OAS's greatest problem, says the author, is to free itself of the false stigma of being under United States domination. The United States and Latin America are in need of each other and should live united "without domination, exploitation or injustices." Of Washington, Dr. Mecham says, "it should seek to command respect, for leadership is dependent on respect, not friendship . . . power is lost by default . . . retention is dependent on its exercise."

Inkeles, Alex and Geiger, Kent, eds. *Soviet Society: a Book of Readings*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1961. 703 p.

Editors Alex Inkeles and Kent Geiger have succeeded in compiling an excellent volume of essays and short monographs on nearly every aspect of Soviet society. The book fulfills a requirement for a single volume in which the student or general reader can find a thorough and reliable picture of Soviet society and the chief institutional features of the Soviet system.