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In Memoriam: Sidney Heitman, 1924-93

Sidney Heitman was a Jew from Missouri whose parents were born in Bukovina; a left-leaning liberal when he did graduate work at Columbia University during the height of the Cold War; an urbane and increasingly politically disillusioned intellectual who spent most of his academic years at a small university in high plains country; a man of decency, compassion and honour in an era when those characteristics often seem antiquated. Sid, in short, was a prototypical "marginal man." He exemplified the person who lives in two worlds, not feeling entirely comfortable in either, but able to use his peripheral social location as a vantage point for peering insightfully into both.

Sid's sense of marginality was evident in his choice of the two scholarly topics to which he devoted his academic life. Approximately from the time of his graduate work at Columbia until 1970, he devoted most of his time to studying and writing about Nikolai Bukharin, Lenin's designated successor and principal victim of Stalin. Bukharin argued strenuously in the 1920s for a gradualist

approach to Soviet economic development. His accession to power would certainly have allowed the Soviet Union to avoid Stalin's worst crimes. Sid understood well the immense horror of Stalinism. But rather than falling blindly

into the Cold-Warriorism of many of his contemporaries, Sid was able to envisage other historical possibilities. As a result, he edited and wrote introductions to the English editions of some of Bukharin's main works, notably *The*

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