

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC INEQUALITY IN THE SOVIET UNION: SIX STUDIES. By *Murray Yanowitch*. White Plains, N.Y.: M. E. Sharpe, 1977. xvii, 197 pp. Tables. \$15.00.

Recognizing the importance of reliable information for its "scientific management" of social processes, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union has given strong impetus to sociological research during the past decade and a half. In this succinct volume, Murray Yanowitch, an economist who is well acquainted with recent research, brings together findings which illuminate many facets of social inequality in the USSR. After first reviewing changes in Soviet conceptions of the social structure, Yanowitch examines income differentials, the inequality of access to education, patterns of social mobility, authority relations in the work place, and aspects of sexual inequality.

While each chapter may be read as a self-contained essay, a reading of the entire book provides a fuller understanding of the interconnections between official ideology, research, and social policies. Yanowitch points out, for example, that the rapid expansion of secondary education has been accompanied by a rise in young people's social aspirations. The demand for more creative work and higher status, translated into increased efforts to enter the intelligentsia, has sparked debate over the inequality of access to higher education—a controversy fueled in no small measure by the many studies showing that working-class and peasant children are at a disadvantage in comparison to the intelligentsia's offspring. The need to draw more young people into workers' trades appears in part responsible for the government's decision to narrow wage differentials between engineering-technical personnel and the rank and file. And, in turn, the more demanding work force has called for a new "human relations" approach to management.

Occasionally, Yanowitch speculates about the political implications of debates over social policies, for example, whether the government should "regulate" admissions to colleges to help the disadvantaged, or to what degree workers should participate in management. Yet, as he observes, Soviet social science does not go far in elucidating politics. With few exceptions, Soviet scholars accept the nature of the political process and the distribution of power as given, rather than viewing them as problems to be studied.

Although some topics have been omitted (most notably, the complex set of issues surrounding Soviet nationalities), and no attempt has been made to provide an overall interpretation or "model" of Soviet society, *Social and Economic Inequality in the USSR* is a welcome contribution to the literature. Extensively documented and lucidly written, the book will be of interest to many Russian area specialists and to social scientists concerned with these problems. In view of its breadth of coverage and non-technical language, its suitability as a supplementary text for undergraduate or graduate courses on Soviet society, social stratification, or social policy should not be overlooked.

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SOCIAL SECURITY AND MEDICINE IN THE USSR: A MARXIST CRITIQUE. By *Vicente Navarro*. Lexington, Mass. and Toronto: Lexington Books, D. C. Heath, 1977. xxii, 149 pp. Figures. Tables. \$15.00.

In 1976, the USSR was paying benefits to more than forty-five million pensioners—18 percent of the population, which consumed 6.8 percent of the national income. The author devotes *eight* of his one hundred eighteen pages of text to this program, bestowing three lines on the 1956 Social Security Act and less than a page to developments between 1956 and 1969; more recent events are not discussed. Nothing is said