

PROFESSOR FISCHER-GALATI REPLIES:

Professor Fisher is entirely correct in assuming that it was not my intention to "discourage students from undertaking Ottoman language study." Nor was it my intention to criticize Professor Kortepeter's study because of his being "primarily a linguist." I am fully aware of the facts stated by Professor Fisher with respect to both teaching and research in Ottoman history and am also in full sympathy with his views on these subjects. The thrust of my statements was directed at the inevitable methodological problems arising from the study of Ottoman sources, which, as a rule, preclude the writing of interpretative history in the even less than grand manner to which we are accustomed in other areas of historical scholarship.

TO THE EDITOR:

In his review of Stephen E. Palmer, Jr.'s and Robert R. King's book *Yugoslav Communism and the Macedonian Question* (September 1973, pp. 652–53) Professor Ivan Avakumović rejects certain of the authors' claims about the attitudes of the CPY's leadership on the question of the Macedonian ethnic identity. In his words, "The Yugoslav Communist leaders in 1919–20 did not take the position that Macedonians 'were Serbs' (p. 21)."

Professor Avakumović is absolutely correct in rejecting this undocumented claim. But on what basis does he reject it? He continues, "They [i.e., the CPY leaders] argued that no single nationality had an absolute majority in Macedonia." This formulation, however, is to be found in "The Resolution About the Macedonian and the Thracian Question," adopted by the CPY's Third National Conference in December 1923—that is, *more than three years after* the period under discussion! In fact, the CPY had no Macedonian policy in 1919–20.

Nevertheless, although Palmer and King are wrong when they state that at this time the CPY leadership defined the population of Macedonia as Serbian, it is true that a certain residue of precisely such thinking, with its roots in the ideas of the Serbian Social Democracy, continued to exert steady influence in sections of the CPY's Serbian organization. For example, in an internal CPY document reporting on the meeting of the Regional Secretariat for Macedonia, which convened on March 16, 1924 (approximately three months *after* the Third National Conference and a little more than three months before the publication of Kosta Novaković's pamphlet "Macedonia to the Macedonians! . . ."), the language spoken in Macedonia is called *popularni srpski jezik*! [Source: Arhiv Instituta za historiju radničkog pokreta Hrvatske (Zagreb)—Arhiv Kominterne II/52].

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PROFESSOR AVAKUMOVIC REPLIES:

Mr. Banac is not on strong ground when he attributes my statement to a party document adopted in December 1923. Is he unaware that: (1) On August 10, 1915, two future members of the central committee of the CPY in 1919, Triša Kaclerović