

SOVIET AGRICULTURE: AN ASSESSMENT OF ITS CONTRIBUTION TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. Edited by *Harry G. Shaffer*. New York and London: Praeger Publishers, 1977. xviii, 167 pp. Tables.

This book comprises four pieces on Soviet agriculture by authors using widely differing ideological and analytical frames of reference. The objective, according to the editor, is to offer readers a wide spectrum of views on Soviet agriculture based upon the reasonable supposition that Soviet agriculture is both important and controversial.

The study begins with a lengthy and critical survey of Soviet agriculture by M. Gardner Clark. The thrust of his case is that Soviet agriculture has generally not met the goals established for it in large part because of the ineffectiveness of the prevailing organizational arrangements. Harry G. Shaffer examines a wide array of both the successes and the failures of Soviet agriculture. He argues, however, that the overall success of Soviet economic development implies that, on balance, the achievements of Soviet agriculture must have outweighed the failures. Victor Perlo analyzes Soviet (and socialist) agriculture in a Marxist-Leninist framework set against the historical experience of agriculture in capitalist countries. Finally, a very brief survey of Soviet agricultural arrangements, contributed by the Novosti Press Agency, provides a summary of the history and institutions of the system in a vein similar to that provided by Soviet textbooks on the subject.

The editor has succeeded in assembling a collection of diverse views on Soviet agriculture. An assessment of the value of the outcome will probably vary proportionately, depending upon the expectations of the reader. Thus, judged simply as a presentation of existing and opposing views, the motive of the book is laudatory and the outcome is generally successful. Judged as a contribution to achieving a better and more fundamental understanding of the role of agriculture in Soviet economic development, however, the results are less impressive. There is nothing in the volume that is not already available in the contributors' (or others') writings. In addition, some earlier confusions, thought to be laid to rest by in-depth research, have been reborn here along with simplistic and confusing analyses and a host of typographical errors. For example, in assessing the agricultural surplus controversy, Clark states that "Millar has put in doubt my long-standing impression that agriculture did provide a net surplus to the industrial sector" (p. 2). But, in a subsequent discussion of collective farms (or collective "barns" as they are described in the text), the reader is told that "these enterprises were successful in extracting the agricultural surplus to support rapid industrialization . . ." (p. 13). The distinction may rest upon the meaning and measurement of the surplus, but for many readers the discussion will be confusing. On the other hand, Clark's treatment of agricultural organization and supervision is interesting, though this reviewer would question the assertion that "the increase in the size and reduction of the number of collectives made Party control of each collective easier than before" (p. 23).

Perlo, while appropriately drawing attention to such problems as migrant labor and consumption inequalities in a country as rich as the United States, nevertheless contributes some dubious comparisons. He argues (quite correctly), for example, that Soviet farm workers are covered by the same minimum wage and other benefits as Soviet workers in general, while in the United States only 43 percent of farm workers are covered by minimum wage legislation. Even in the absence of appropriate historical time lags, to be fair, the reader should be told explicitly, when the comparison is made, that the category "worker," as opposed to "workers and peasants," has been a relatively small component of the total labor force engaged in Soviet agriculture. As such, the direct comparison with the entire U.S. agricultural labor force is misleading. Indeed, a comparison including a discussion of the benefits enjoyed by peasants in the Soviet Union would yield a different picture.

In spite of the substantial amount of research that has been done on Soviet agriculture, we still have only a limited perspective on the role of agriculture in the Soviet development effort. James R. Millar's pioneering attempt to analyze the agricultural surplus focused upon a limited time span, and no in-depth analysis of labor flows exists. Although the editor deserves credit for pointing out that substantial progress has been made in Soviet agriculture and for his emphasis upon balance in examining the record, the volume does not contribute substantially to our knowledge of Soviet agriculture and its role in Soviet economic development.

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INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNDER COMMUNISM—POLITICS AND ECONOMICS. By *Franklyn D. Holzman*. New York: Basic Books, 1976. xvi, 239 pp. \$10.00.

If I were asked to recommend one book on the foreign trade of the member countries of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA), this would be the one. In little more than two hundred pages Holzman achieves an intellectual tour de force. His arguments are so lucid, his explanations of institutional, political, and economic interactions so simple yet so complete that the complexities surrounding the CMEA are made accessible to the layman. The book, however, is not simply a successful popularization. Holzman's scholarship is evident throughout, and the specialist in East European economics and politics will be amply rewarded both by Holzman's framework for the analysis of CMEA trade and by the insights he derives from this framework.

The first two chapters examine the organization and operation of the domestic economies and the foreign trade sectors of CMEA member countries. Not only do these chapters present the background material necessary for an understanding of CMEA trade, but they can also serve as a concise introduction to East European economies in any course where such background is required. Chapters 3, 4, and 5 deal with intra-CMEA trade, East-West trade, and CMEA trade with developing countries, respectively. Intra-CMEA trade is analyzed by using three models: a taxonomic model of economic and political power, the traditional Western analysis of international economic integration, and a model of economic warfare. The first model is used to describe the evolution of relations between the Soviet Union and other members of the CMEA, with Soviet policy changing from economic exploitation of its partners to the sacrifice of Soviet economic gains in order to maintain the desired level of control over Eastern Europe. The economic integration framework is used to evaluate the potential benefits and costs of the CMEA and the impact of the distribution of these gains on intra-CMEA relations. The economic warfare model is used to examine Soviet efforts to use trade against Albania, China, and Yugoslavia. The third model is carried over to the next chapter, in which Holzman chronicles the evolution of Western policy from the Cold War to détente. The centrifugal effects of East-West trade on both the West's efforts to control trade with the Soviet bloc and on CMEA integration are clearly spelled out, as are issues of national security and the linkage of economic and political goals. CMEA trade with and aid to developing countries are viewed in terms of both economic factors and the political payoffs to the Soviet bloc. The book concludes with a rather cursory review of future issues, including CMEA integration, East European debts to the West, and the need to incorporate East-West issues into the broader context of international economic relations.