

Leaving aside the difficulty in understanding when and how the socialist relations of production under Lenin were abandoned by Stalin, the reader is puzzled by Gurley's apparent belief that all this accords with the theory of historical materialism. Apparently nothing can disprove it. Not only is he here ascribing to personalities like Lenin and Stalin a heroic role, a type of role which Marx and Engels emphatically deny, he is asserting that a new social formation or system—neither socialist nor one based on the production of commodities for a free market—has come into existence. Like the rise of fascism and the emergence of the welfare state in England and the United States, this "new kind" of capitalism falls completely outside the Marxist schema. What Marx predicted about socialist revolution did not take place, and what did take place he did not predict. And as if to compound the reader's confusion, Gurley then goes on to characterize Mao's theories and practices as being in the direct line of succession to Marxism and Leninism and faithful to their doctrines. But Mao regarded himself as an authentic follower of Stalin's program of building socialism in one country and was fiercely critical of Stalin's successors who have somewhat moderated the systematic terror deemed by Stalin to be necessary to that end.

For one who is properly alarmed at even the mildest threats to intellectual and academic freedom in the Western world, the author seems singularly insensitive to the prolonged and pervasive oppression of the workers and peasants in the societies heralded as viable alternatives to capitalism. And, although his derogatory references to Stalin suggest that he is somewhat queasy about that regime, he seems unaware that under Mao the pitch and extent of the political and cultural terror was greater than in the Soviet Union under Lenin, and with less excuse. Gurley's inability to understand the differences between Marx's "challenges" and the "challenges" of Lenin and Mao may be rooted in his failure to appreciate the difference between Marx's concept of "the dictatorship of the proletariat"—interpreted as a workers' democracy on the assumption that the workers constituted the overwhelming majority of the population—and the Leninist view of the dictatorship of a minority party over the proletariat and all others.

In a book devoted to challenges to capitalism, the author is under a scholarly obligation to analyze the historical development of capitalism and the rise of the welfare state in consequence of the influence of the democratic political process on the economy. Had he considered the reciprocal challenges of the democratic welfare state, on the one hand, and the socialist economies of Russia and China, on the other, his account would probably have been less naïve and more balanced.

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THE SUPREME SOVIET: POLITICS AND THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS IN THE SOVIET POLITICAL SYSTEM. By *Peter Vanneman*. Publications of the Consortium for Comparative Legislative Studies. Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1977. xii, 256 pp. \$11.75.

The question, Whither Russia?, is about as old as it is interesting. Professor Vanneman's study of developments and trends in one institution, the Supreme Soviet, attempts to answer part of the question. The results are mixed: good research coupled with certain infelicities.

The book falls into two parts: the introduction and chapter 10, which contain the major theses (also found in miniature in chapter 5); and nine chapters of useful descriptive material on the Supreme Soviet. The results of his research, found in chapters 1–9, are as extensive as any available on the Supreme Soviet (even though the book is based on a 1972 dissertation whose sources end about 1970). Part of chapter 2, on

legal enactments, was valuable enough to merit separate publication; chapter 6, on commissions of the Supreme Soviet, is thorough; chapter 8 reviews Soviet discussion of the legal standing of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet and is interesting in relation to the 1977 Constitution. Criticism of other aspects of the book will not detract from the contributions of Vanneman's research.

The author's principal finding is that the Supreme Soviet is extending its influence over state and mass organs (p. 101) and power relations are shifting, which *may* signal development toward democracy and the rule of law (pp. 5, 6, 233). But the argument is flawed in several ways: (1) The author is perhaps too close to his subject; consequently, the discussion of trends in the Supreme Soviet is not balanced by consideration of other institutions (this is somewhat like projecting the course of a battleship from an intricate study of the enlisted men's mess). (2) Sources are, for the most part, Soviet publications, leading to the error of taking the printed word as description of fact. (3) An argument based on tradition is used to support the conclusion, but it actually weakens it. The Russian tradition, according to the author, is one of weak law and of extirpation of assemblies, from *veche* to *duma*; thus, to argue that the Russian tradition figures in the growth of democracy is to display both imagination and sanguineness. (4) Comparative categories are used without sufficient care; for example, soviets are called legislatures (pp. 11, 150, 204), but initiation of legislation is either weakly treated (pp. 206-7), or the party is acknowledged as initiator (pp. 131 and 187). The deputy is described as a type of ombudsman (pp. 4 and 234), and in several cases critically important distinctions are not drawn. At the same time, when Vanneman states that the party has orchestrated the growth of Supreme Soviet activity and initiates its legislation, he fails to note that his conclusions are thereby vitiated. His best case for the "burgeoning" influence of the Supreme Soviet centers on its drafting of laws. But would he then argue that the Department of Justice and the Offices of Legislative Counsel, because they do most technical drafting of laws in the United States and Canada, have acquired the functions of Congress or Parliament?

Some of the flaws may be traced to the conceptual framework used. The author says little about this, but he somewhat elliptically employs the vocabulary and approach of systems analysis, which imposes its categories on the materials under study and which requires predictions for completion of the analysis. In addition, a comparative government text by Aspaturian et al.—whose approach is that of structural-functionalism searching "scientifically" for "universal patterns" in government—is cited in seven of eleven chapters and is presumably Professor Vanneman's guide. Perhaps this is why the word "politics" is found in the title (because it is included in the definition of "system") when there is no justificatory discussion in the text; why there are references to universal patterns which do not fit Soviet institutions; and why we may infer (or predict) growth in the USSR toward a rule of law. The book suggests that such a framework may be a hindrance to understanding Soviet government.

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THE SOCIALIST INDUSTRIAL STATE: TOWARDS A POLITICAL SOCIOLOGY OF STATE SOCIALISM. By *David Lane*. Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1976. 230 pp. Tables. \$18.50.

To say that this volume fills a serious gap in the literature on comparative communism would be a gross understatement. In fact, such literature scarcely exists, least of all in sociology, despite the considerable potential market in the form of numerous university and college programs in this important subdiscipline. Be that as it may, Lane's *Socialist Industrial State* is a remarkable contribution. The author is known to specialists