

useful evidence to support the author's thesis of the overriding importance of politics. Of course, this trade was hampered not so much by too little or too much Ostpolitik, but rather by the attempts of the German Democratic Republic to reduce its dependence on West German deliveries out of fear of possible blackmail and disturbances.

Trade with the Soviet Union and other East European countries was much less affected by political dissensions, notwithstanding the embarrassing steel pipe embargo in 1963. After Khrushchev quoted Lenin's recommendation to "learn from the capitalists," the communist countries showed a growing inclination to import machinery and equipment from the West. The establishment of German trade missions and embassies in Eastern Europe in the sixties and the new post-1969 Ostpolitik of the SPD/FDP government, which settled such questions as the Polish western border and the existence of the second German state, have certainly facilitated West German exports to the East.

However, less than 8 percent of West Germany's total foreign trade is carried on with the Soviet bloc (including the German Democratic Republic). The continuing marginal importance of this trade is caused by the communist countries' failure to keep pace with technological progress in the world, their inability to comply with the qualitative and service requirements of Western customers, and, therefore, their extremely poor performance as salesmen of industrial goods. Bilateral balancing imposes de facto trade ceilings reflecting the limited export capacity of the Eastern partners. The ever-growing demand for sophisticated technology from the West increases foreign currency constraints—the cumulative indebtedness to the West has soared to a total of 7 billion dollars—and must lead finally to restrictions on imports.

Only far-reaching economic reforms—substantially decentralizing planning and decision-making, as well as eliminating arbitrary price-fixing—could bring about significant East-West trade expansion. The prospect, however, is dim. The concern of the Communist parties of Eastern Europe with the maintenance of their power and Soviet determination to prevent centrifugal tendencies in the bloc will sooner or later stop any movement toward, for instance, the relatively successful Yugoslav model.

The improvement of political relations between East and West will not, in my opinion, appreciably increase East-West trade without broad economic reforms.

ROLAND SCHÖNFELD  
*Regensburg, West Germany*

SOCIAL CHANGE AND STRATIFICATION IN EASTERN EUROPE: AN INTERPRETIVE ANALYSIS OF POLAND AND HER NEIGHBORS.

By *Alexander Matejko*. New York: Praeger Publishers, 1974. xxvi, 272 pp. \$18.50.

In this volume, Alexander Matejko, currently at the University of Alberta, examines social and economic progress in Eastern Europe, especially Poland, in order to assess whether it has resulted in equality. All chapters but one are revisions of previously published material.

After discussing egalitarianism and elitism, Matejko reviews economic progress in the Eastern European countries. Other chapters analyze classes important in

all industrializing societies: peasant, unskilled labor, factory blue collar, managerial, intelligentsia, and white collar. The main thesis is that the principle of equality is everywhere contradicted by actual inequality—the egalitarianism of Polish society exists mainly in the minds of establishment sociologists. State socialism suffers from Party authoritarianism. The Party rewards loyal managers—competent or not—with special privileges; the resulting clique-ridden bureaucracy can be eradicated by introducing market socialism to replace the authoritarian economic-decision model.

Scholars unfamiliar with Eastern Europe will welcome this book for the freshness of its eyewitness account. But two defects must be pointed out. First, the statistical data in the crucial chapter on economic progress are not presented in readily comparable categories, hence some of the major propositions lack support. For example, the author claims that the distribution of income in Eastern Europe and within the United States has become more equal. Yet Matejko's data fail to show whether it has become more equal or less in Eastern Europe, and American scholars would not agree that income distribution has become more equal in the United States. Second, a number of key terms are defined imprecisely and used inconsistently, hence fruitful cross-national comparisons are difficult, and the causal relation between an authoritarian bureaucracy and any particular degree of income inequality remains undemonstrated.

JOAN HUBER

*University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign*

PROBLEMY LUDNOŚCIOWE KRAJÓW SOCJALISTYCZNYCH. By  
*Andrzej Maryański*. Warsaw: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Ekonomiczne, 1974.  
250 pp. 37 zł., paper.

Population problems of Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union, and China, and especially the rationale behind periodic changes in demographic policies pursued in these countries, have received relatively little attention from sociologists and economists. One could well expect, therefore, that Mr. Maryański's book would contribute considerably to a better understanding of these intricate issues. Unfortunately, it does not. His exposition is excessively long on purely descriptive (and scientifically rather indifferent) narration and woefully short on really meaningful analysis. The only redeeming feature of his book is the painstakingly compiled statistical tables (including several with comparative data), which are extremely useful in a field where reliable statistical data are in such short supply.

The major shortcoming of Mr. Maryański's book is the rather blatant, politically-inspired bias permeating the entire exposition. Even by contemporary East European standards, such a quasi-propagandistic, black and white approach, in what purports to be a scientific study, strikes one as both unnecessary and anachronistic. Yet in Mr. Maryański's book the assorted population policies pursued in the Soviet Union (even those of the Stalinist period) are invariably discussed uncritically and the specific solutions applied by Moscow are, almost by definition, fully justified and correct (although the very same policy may be mildly criticized in the chapter on population problems in the East European countries). In contrast, almost everything which pertains to China (including economic aid provided to Third World countries) is discussed in derogatory terms.