

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

about major policy issues—for example, pronounced nonegalitarianism, low benefit levels, absence of fair hearings—or about administrative structure and personnel. In short, it is impossible, by any stretch of the imagination, to agree with Professor Navarro that he has “analyzed some of the different forces that determined the highly centralized nature of the Soviet state and described their implications in the areas of *social security* and medicine” (p. 105; emphasis added).

The author ignores altogether the four million unpaid activists of trade unions, who participate in administering medical benefits—for sickness, pregnancy and maternity, and passes to health facilities—and seek measures to lower morbidity and improve workers' health. Consequently, he cannot disprove the government's claim that unions represent what he describes as “the collectivity of newly-conscious individuals which decides and produces the conditions for both collective and individual health” (p. 112).

Nevertheless, the book does contain a considerable amount of important information about Soviet medicine related to the country's material conditions in different time periods. Although data on incomes and salaries (pp. 67 and 73) are outdated, Professor Navarro's discussion of the medical establishment indicates that its great achievements have failed to change the individual from a passive consumer of services—as is true in bourgeois medicine, he claims—into an effective member of the collective described above.

The book would gain if its author avoided jargon. “Deprofessionalization,” “feminization,” “hierarchicalization,” “class-ization,” “technologization,” “depoliticization,” “white-collarization,” “Flexnerialization,” “declassification,” “politicization,” “despecialization,” and so forth transform some sentences into veritable porcupines.

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MANIPULATING SOVIET POPULATION RESOURCES. By *Jeff Chinn*. New York: Holmes & Meier, 1977. viii, 163 pp. Tables. \$22.50.

The author's objective is to examine Soviet population policy under the assumption that, in a planned economy, population growth and distribution are elements of public policy and hence are subsumed within the overall framework of national economic planning. His focus is on two aspects of population policy, specifically, population growth (with emphasis upon the implications for the labor force) and population distribution (with emphasis upon the rural/urban balance). The method utilized is “a rather unsophisticated form of cost-benefit analysis.” The materials are primarily those generated by Soviet researchers in their own analysis of Soviet population questions. The author concludes that Soviet decisionmakers have achieved mixed results in attempting to control population variables: limited success in some areas (such as restricting city growth) and less success in other areas (such as raising fertility).

This study will be of interest to anyone working in the general area of Soviet population. The strength of the book lies in its survey of Soviet research on population, the volume and importance of which have grown significantly in recent years. But the author has limited the study to the extent that it is not really a full-blown treatment of the basic hypothesis in question, namely, that planners have been able to manipulate population variables with success.

There are two weaknesses in this study. First, the author unnecessarily restricts himself when he says that “We are thus forced by the nature of the available material to rely heavily upon the Soviet framework.” Of three major sources, namely, Soviet research of various types, Soviet statistical materials, and Western research on the Soviet economy, the author relies most heavily upon the first. This is certainly a very important source, and the work of well-known Soviet scholars such as Perevedentsev, Khorev, Arutiunian, Uralnis, Zaslavskaja, and others are elaborated, both from their