

AGRARNA KRIZA U JUGOSLAVIJI, 1930–1934. By *Nikola Vučo*. Belgrade: "Prosveta," 1968. 300 pp.

In the early 1930s Yugoslav agriculture—along with the agriculture and indeed the economy of other countries—went through a profound crisis. For Yugoslavia this crisis was the worse because she was caught between the problems of an underdeveloped country and the world-wide slowdown of business activity. Lessons for today's underdeveloped countries might result from thorough research on this subject; unfortunately Dr. Vučo's work lets the reader down in this respect. He tends to put the worst possible interpretation on everything that happened by using a rather unsophisticated Marxism-Leninism as his term of reference. The failure to apply more adequate methods is the more surprising because the book was written in 1968—that is, over twenty years after the Yugoslav Communist Party, a member of which Vučo appears to be, took on the task of resolving every development problem. That the party has not been completely successful in solving these problems should be proof enough for an unbiased observer that economic difficulties are not always a consequence of ill will, corruption, or "capitalist contradictions."

Vučo sees the world crisis itself as having ensued from "unlimited production and limited consumption," which in turn was a consequence of "antagonistic relationships in capitalist distribution." However, in his preface he admits that bourgeois economic science was *at that stage* incapable of solving the crisis. From this admission one would conclude that he knows full well that "bourgeois economists" have found that the basic problem was that governments were unable to manage demand, and this inability plunged the world economy into a deflationary spiral. Today governments err rather in the opposite direction.

Vučo's prescription for coping with the world crisis in the 1930s is that excess production should have been used to feed the hungry masses in China and elsewhere. This is no place to discuss in detail the difficulties of such a solution—it must suffice to say that there has been no rush by Communist governments to distribute huge inventories of overproduced goods among the world's poor. At any rate, the Communist countries do not seem to produce a surplus of food. The Yugoslav Communists, for instance, dealt with their agriculture in such a way that production in 1952 fell to 50 percent of the prewar level.

The agricultural crisis of 1930–34 was a consequence of increased production and efficiency outside Europe during the war. Agricultural prices were brought down. Yugoslav peasants suffered because they could sell their surplus only at low prices. But even here Vučo exaggerates when he claims that the agricultural terms of trade deteriorated in a catastrophic way. An inspection of his figures shows that prices of agricultural and manufactured goods moved down almost in step. The deterioration then is hardly worth mentioning in comparison with what the Yugoslav Communists did. According to Professor Rudolf Bičanić, "taking the world prices as 100, agricultural prices were 55 and industrial prices were 181 in 1952" (in M. K. Haldar and Robin Ghosh, eds., *Problems of Economic Growth*, Delhi, 1960, p. 127).

Again Vučo's prescription is better technology. But increased capital intensity would have driven peasants off the land. Where would they have gone? Yugoslavia was industrializing, but the new industries could not have absorbed all those displaced by new methods. He complains that from 1920 until 1935 seventy-three thousand Yugoslav peasants had to emigrate and that there were one hundred thousand unemployed in the 1930s; but these figures are peanuts compared with about six hundred thousand émigrés in 1965–70 and three hundred thousand jobless.

Vučo accuses prewar Yugoslavia of allowing agricultural prices to be dictated by foreign commodity exchanges. But he says that when the government divorced internal from external prices, it was done at the expense of the consumer. What does he want? The worst problem was the high peasant indebtedness, for debtors always suffer in times of deflation. The government proclaimed a moratorium for peasants, but Vučo claims that this was done for party-political reasons.

Criticizing Vučo's approach does not mean belittling either the magnitude of the problem or the degree of suffering involved. However, the problems are sufficiently important to deserve a more serious treatment.

The book contains a summary in English, but the translation is so bad that some passages are almost incomprehensible.

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DŮRZHAVNO PRAVO NA NARODNA REPUBLIKA BŮLGARIIA. By
Boris Spasov and Angel Angelov. 2nd revised edition. Sofia: Nauka i izkustvo,
1968. 515 pp. 1.87 lv.

Boris Spasov and Angel Angelov, professors of law at the University of Sofia and prolific legal writers, prepared a comprehensive discussion of the law of the state of the People's Republic of Bulgaria as early as 1959, when they first published their work based on university lectures. Three years later they put into print a more serious work on the subject (1962, 498 pp.), and it was translated into Russian. In 1968 the authors revised their study and enlarged it to 515 pages. As they indicate in the preface to this second edition, they intend it to serve as a textbook for law students and government officials, and it reflects the legislation effective June 1, 1967. However, a "Note of the Authors" at the end of the book (p. 515) explains that various changes in the field of "Basic Rights and Duties of Citizens of the P. R. of Bulgaria" have not been considered because they occurred when the book was already at the press.

The material is grouped into thirteen chapters, which deal with the meaning of the term "the Bulgarian law of the state"; the Constitution of the country; the constitutional set-up; the electoral system; the socioeconomic structure; territory, territorial sovereignty, and territorial division; the purpose, kinds, and systems of state organs (agencies); the National Assembly; the Presidium of the National Assembly; central organs of the state administration; local agencies of state power and state administration; courts and the Office of the Government Attorney; and the legal status of citizens.

The authors repeatedly emphasize "the influence of Soviet legal science and experience" in the shaping and development of Bulgarian constitutional law and the constitutional structure of the country. Two topics are of special interest—the adoption of the 1947 Dimitrov Constitution, its changes, and the drafting of a new "socialist constitution," and the role and status of the Bulgarian Communist Party within the legal system and state apparatus.

The authors admit that the various changes in the present Constitution were made improperly and that the Constitution makes no reference to socialism (p. 62). Since 1959 the National Assembly has three times appointed special constitutional commissions to draft a new text, but still without results. Furthermore, great confusion exists regarding the Communist Party, since there is no legislative regulation concerning its status and role. The party imposes its will directly