

Marxist jargon and dogmatic schematism. Singularly well translated and introduced by an outstanding British scholar, Sir Cecil Parrott, it is a welcome contribution to the field of Slavic studies.

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CZECHOSLOVAKIA: THE BUREAUCRATIC ECONOMY. By *Ota Šik*.
White Plains, N.Y.: International Arts and Sciences Press, 1972. vii, 138 pp.
\$10.00.

For the greater part, this book is an English translation of the 1968 Czech telecasts by the author, then a member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, the deputy premier, and the head of the Commission for Economic Reform in Czechoslovakia.

Šik, who is now a professor at the St. Gallen Institute for Economics and Social Sciences in Switzerland, severely criticizes Czechoslovakia's economic performance under rigid central planning. He argues that the growth rate, rather high in the early postwar years but later rapidly declining, was brought about merely by the mobilization of labor and a high capital accumulation. The concomitant aspects of this "extensive," inefficient growth were a wrong economic structure, a misallocation of resources, a lagging technology, and an unduly low rate of consumption. Since the telecasts were addressed to a general audience, some of the intercountry comparisons in support of this critique are not rigorously reduced to a truly comparable basis, and provide an oversimplified picture. For instance, the argument that West German workers need a much shorter time than their Czechoslovak counterparts to earn certain gratuitously selected consumer goods is not a reliable measure of the comparative living standard. But on the whole, Šik's criticism of overcentralized planning, especially in a highly industrial country which is heavily dependent on foreign trade, is justified. One should add that other East European and Soviet economists, and even party officials, have also argued against an unduly rigid planning system, though perhaps less bluntly.

Yet the cure prescribed by Šik is much more radical than the economic reforms in other Comecon countries. He recommends a far-reaching reliance on market mechanism, with limited macro guidance and with prices "reflecting the value relations in the world market," as well as a decentralized political system. To facilitate the transition to such an open socialist market economy, he advocates a cooperation between Czechoslovak enterprises and West European nonsocialist firms, as well as taking a Western credit of 300–500 million dollars.

What is new in the book is the "Introduction to the American Edition." Most of it is a political castigation of the present leadership of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, but two points are worth mentioning from the economic standpoint. First, the author rebuts claims by opponents of his reform that he favored a controlled inflation. Several Western students of the Czechoslovak economy feel that some of the aspects of the 1968 reform may indeed have added, though no doubt unintentionally, some fuel to inflationary pressures in Czechoslovakia: the "two-channel" (cost-plus) prices of 1968, a sizable increase in money supply, and the substitution of "gross income" (a loose analogy of value added) for profit as a basis for bonuses for management and workers. Second, the author predicts a general return to highly centralized Stalinist planning in the Comecon countries. In

this reviewer's opinion, despite an obvious recentralization in Czechoslovakia, until now none of the Communist countries in Europe has fully reverted to the direct planning, mostly in physical terms, of Stalin's era; all these countries pay some attention to economic variables in money terms, such as cost and the return to the factors of production. In fact, Hungary continues to develop economic reforms in the direction of a substantially decentralized economic decision-making process, coordinated by market forces.

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THE JUDGE IN A COMMUNIST STATE: A VIEW FROM WITHIN. By Otto Ulč. [Athens:] Ohio University Press, 1972. xiv, 307 pp. \$8.75.

The author, a Czech expatriate, served as an assistant criminal judge in Pilsen (Plzeň) and as a district judge in a small rural town (Stříbro) for a total of six years, after graduating from the law school in Prague in 1953 at the age of twenty-three. The book is his "view from within" thirteen years later and a continent over. The first one-third of the story deals with "what the judge is and how he is made," and the rest is concerned with the "adjudication proper" (p. xii). The preface promises no "scholarly treatise." It warns that documentation has been "kept to a minimum" and that the book is "almost footnote free." The author explains that an "anecdotal episode seemed . . . more relevant and more revealing than the esoteric jargon likely to be of interest only to the initiated" (p. x).

After such disclaimers, the reader does not expect much from Professor Ulč; nor does he get much. A good part of the episodic material seems inane. The frequent sexual vignettes may have rocked the Stalinist fifties, but they sound corny in the seventies of Woody Allen humor. Luckily the anecdote is not the author's sole literary vehicle. He can and does write seriously and reflectively as well. For example, the chapters "Lay Assessors: The Role of Theoretical Majority" and "Judge, the Competitor and Producer" are informative and insightful. On the whole, however, the "informal and easy-going" narrative (p. x) is characterized by a failure to demarcate the areas of personal experience from hearsay and belief and is punctuated by dubious cross-systemic generalizations. It is also marred by a mocking overuse of socialist clichés (like "toiling masses") as a stylistic device.

The volume is technically pleasing except for a few slip-ups, such as the running head on page 161 and the chapter number on page 175. There is no index.

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IGNAZ SEIPEL: CHRISTIAN STATESMAN IN A TIME OF CRISIS. By *Klemens von Klemperer*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972. xvi, 468 pp. \$17.50.

In his day, Prelate Ignaz Seipel was an important figure in the political scene of Europe, and a dominating one in that of his own country. Rising with meteoric suddenness at the age of only thirty-eight to a leading position in the Austrian Christian Social (consistently miscalled here Socialist) Party, he held ministerial