

THE ECONOMICS AND POLITICS OF EAST-WEST TRADE. By *Jozef Wilczynski*. New York and Washington: Praeger Publishers, 1969. 416 pp. \$12.50.

This book is a very competent introduction to East-West trade. It is divided into three parts: (1) historical survey, (2) background on ideology, organization, exchange rates, and integration with central planning, and (3) analysis of trade issues—discrimination, dumping, bilateralism and settlements, gains from trade, and others. The last is the analytical heart of the book, and occupies 70 percent of the volume. Wilczynski analyzes the political and economic forces in trade since 1945 and finds trade increasingly conditioned by economic self-interest. The East is defined as COMECON (including the four Asian observer nations but excluding Yugoslavia) and the West as the advanced capitalist world, including Japan, Australia, and New Zealand.

The author covers a tremendous amount of ground, relying mostly on primary East European sources (as well as Chinese in translation) for his extensive tabulations of trade patterns, behavior, and institutions. For example, he has catalogued fifteen foreign trade criteria which have been put forward by bloc writers. (These are all partial criteria, of course, and still leave the economy short of a general equilibrium formulation to integrate trade decisions with planning; although, as Harry Johnson reminds us in the foreword, the multifarious distortions in Western prices should disabuse Westerners of any condescension in this regard.) His analysis of dumping and its portent as a political weapon in the growing volume of East-West trade (he sees it as not a disruptive threat) is based largely on a valuable enumeration of the main details attending major instances of Soviet dumping in 1957–68.

On the other hand, Wilczynski's insistent reliance on primary sources sometimes results in unnecessary duplication of effort (e.g., the 1965 Fulbright background report contains a detailed European bloc diplomatic relations table which could have been extended to cover the four Asian nations to yield Wilczynski's table 27), and sometimes denies the reader some useful information that he would have reason to expect in a general survey of this kind. For example, more than a footnote citation (p. 26) to Pryor's analysis of shortfalls from trade potential would be appropriate in a discussion of bloc autarky. And rather than start all trade series from 1938, Wilczynski could have made use of Baykov to provide historical information in part 1, if only for the USSR during the NEP and the First Plan.

A redirection of effort might have expanded the analysis of Soviet exploitation of bloc nations, in which Wilczynski now (p. 337) seems to misunderstand Holzman's argument, which is essentially that every bloc nation will be observed to discriminate on some goods against its fellow members—a conclusion, incidentally, which is buttressed by Wilczynski's own Polish data (p. 168). The trade statistics would be more useful if they were less aggregated—it is somewhat artificial to consolidate the Asian and European nations, and many purposes would be better served by considering the two blocs separately. An analysis of the pre-World War II period would have provided a useful perspective on the question of politics versus economics in this critical period.

The most important of my minor doubts concern Wilczynski's failure to recognize (p. 255) that many U.S. assistance loans, although made in dollars, are repayable in inflated currencies (in Brazil, for example), and his use of "marginal" for "limiting" in his treatment of investment criteria (pp. 323–24).

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