

Munich, 24 November 1967 (CAA) -- In its November 15 issue the Zagreb weekly Vjesnik u srijedu published an article under the title "Why Has Dr. Kostic's Textbook 'International Relations and International Law' Aroused Serious Criticism of Soviet Periodical 'Voprosi Istorii' and Interest of Foreign Papers."

Right of the truth

It is known that newspaper sensations, if they are discovered in shopwindows of bookstores, chiefly originate from new books on technological or medical discoveries or memoirs of former politicians who describe unknown diplomatic details and vicissitudes. But, a Yugoslav author has aroused with his book numerous foreign papers without having had any pretension whatsoever to offer the world an important scientific innovation. The Zagreb university professor, Dr Stanisa Kostic, has published the text-book "International relations and international law" and has all of a sudden riveted the attention of foreign correspondents and commentators to this book. How has it happened that the foreign press discusses, makes combinations and conjectures concerning a book which has been quite unknown to our public at large?

The book of Stanisa Kostic, professor of the High Administrative School in Zagreb would have probably not attracted the attention of the foreign press had it not been first seriously criticized by the Soviet scientist, N. Jakovljevic in the periodical Voprosi Istorii No 9, 1967. Naturally the people in big newspaper trusts have hurried to describe some of Kostic's evidently wrong evaluations of events from the recent past as a hint of the state or party leadership, or rather as a sign that something is changing in our attitude towards the USSR. In our opinion--to be quite sincere--Professor Jakovljevic has contributed to this. He has written the criticism of the book "International relations and international law" in the style of an excessively sensitive and nonplussed man who ascribes to the author some bad intentions and stresses that his views would not even be adopted by "experts for psychological warfare in the United States."

Something absurd has thus occurred. Because a book is bad and scientifically incomplete, it is ascribed to the entire nation while the wrong judgments of its author are described as indications of changes of our political course. And it is true only that this book is indeed problematic in the scientific sense and that it has therefore been negatively evaluated.

What does Professor Jakovljevic criticize

All this compels us to turn towards ourselves and to inquire: why are newsprint and ink spent on such products in our country? Let us see first, what has

provoked in this book the indignation of Professor Jakovljević. In the most succinct form this criticism can be reduced to several points in which the scientific basis of Kostić's book is denied.

In the description of events just before World War II Kostić fails to say that the governments of Western countries at that time had contributed to Hitler's consolidation by the fact that they have not opposed him but have directed him against the USSR in order to be able to dictate later to the parties at war their conditions for peace. This fact is not even denied by Western historians and Jakovljević refers to certain American scientists. Professor Beyli said in his text-book that in Western countries "it had been said in an unprincipled fashion that it was necessary to cause Hitler to turn against Stalin in order that they should bleed in Russian territory and that Democratic states should be safe." The historian Snell stresses that the British Conservatives had feared communism "to such an extent that they did not mind the restoration of Germany's might." Jakovljević then cites Chamberlain ("Germany is a powerful stronghold against Russia") and the present U.S. President, Johnson (who had said in Congress in 1947: "America, Great Britain and France could not have allowed the defeat of Poland had a common determination to halt aggression existed.")

But, this is not all. Kostić not only evaluates wrongly international relations on the eve of the war and side-steps historical facts about the attitude of Western countries but even lays the blame on the USSR for the setbacks in Anglo-French-Soviet negotiations. In this Jakovljević soon reaches the dramatic conclusion: the Yugoslav professor seeks to lay all the blame for the breaking out of the world conflict on the Soviet Union.

Professor Jakovljević stresses that Kostić's version of events preceding the non-aggression pact between Hitler and Stalin is unacceptable because it does not correspond to true facts. The author of the book in question refers to American scientists who have established that "the USSR had been the first to suggest negotiations with Germany." Today--says Jakovljević--no serious scientist in the world maintains that this deplorable agreement had started in this way. What Kostić maintains has been drawn from a propagandist book of the U.S. government published in 1948, in the full swing of the cold war. In order to prove that this publication can serve no one who is engaged in scientific work, Jakovljević quotes the words of Walter Lippmann who has commented on this as follows: "This publication is a classic example of ugly propaganda which will represent a boomerang and will bring more harm to us and to our friends than to the Russians against whom it is written. It is evident at first glance that it is the work of propagandists and not of scientists."

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In order to prove that in these and other allegations Kostic "is more on the right than many bourgeois historians" Jakovljević says: "What he is describing in 1966 as the last achievement of his personal analysis of history has been reviewed by Western historians a long time ago and they have reached quite different conclusions." Among the allegations which disqualify the author, Jakovljević includes the one according to which Great Britain had insisted after the war upon the legalization of the Polish government in exile because it considered that it would otherwise betray the ally for whom it had entered the war on September 3, 1939. It is also true that the British government had not been helping the Polish emigrants owing to moral preoccupations and pledge, but because it had desired to maintain its influence and the old social system in the Baltic.

Kostic's description of events and of the situation in East European countries in 1944 is also one-sided and propagandist. Jakovljević says word for word: "If we stick to elementary logic it appears that the author of this text-book is the champion of systems which peoples of socialist countries, including the peoples of Yugoslavia have rejected. Consequently, he denies the legality of the socialist revolution which has encompassed the countries of East and South East Europe thanks to the disruption of fascism and liquidation of the rule of exploiters."

And so forth.

In a short newspaper article it is impossible to list all the objections made by Professor Jakovljević which have filled fifty or so typewritten pages. One must bear in mind the fact that Kostic's book is big and that it does not include solely such miscalculated allegations, but what has been analyzed and quoted by Jakovljević is enough to illustrate numerous failures of the author. As he has not been critical concerning material, and perhaps even awkward in formulations, Kostic has written absolutely absurd evaluations in many places in his text-book.

That Professor Kostic's book is scientifically problematic is proved also by criticisms written immediately after its appearance. We are stressing this because Professor Jakovljević's article has the under-current of a reproach. As a matter of fact, he argues with the concept of the author to such an extent as if nobody ^{here} has nor will pay attention to his evident miscalculations. It is a fact that the book "International relations and international law" has been extremely negatively evaluated.

In the magazine Gledista (No. 10-11, 1966) Dr Velibor Gavranov called into question the author's attempt to connect two scientific disciplines (diplomatic history and international public law). The author has succeeded no more --says Gavranov-- then putting them into the same book. Allegations on the ratio between "quantity and quality in international relations" are then placed under a critical magnifying glass and paragraphs are quoted in which it is maintained that the USSR had brought pressure to bear on Rumania in February 1945 without consulting the allies and had formed a government according to its desire and taste and had forcibly included Czechoslovakia in the socialist bloc. Gavranov wonders what is inducing the author to deny the accomplishments of the working class in Rumania and in Czechoslovakia and he says in part:

"It is certain that it would be a special contribution to science were Stanisa Kostic to explain to us which is the "classic science in international relations"... It would be impossible on this occasion, and this is also not necessary, to refer to all the allegations of the author which, the least said, are debatable. However, it is impossible to disregard a place in the book which shows the author's idea of attitude towards history. On page 268 he has written word for word: "For this reason Stalin has prevented France, Britain and the United States from going along the Danube to the Black Sea proclaiming them simply countries which have no shores on the Danube and not inviting them to the conference held in Belgrade in June 1948 exclusively with Danubian states." Every allegation in this paragraph is simple nonsense and rude falsification of history! Representatives of France, Great Britain and the United States have not only been invited to the conference but have even taken part in its work from beginning to end."

We will not list further but will say that Gavranov has made numerous objections concerning the book and has concluded that its entire comprehensive text is built on flimsy foundations. Since the author of the book has failed scientifically to analyze and define Stalinism he has been listing or better said collecting details and episodes from most diverse sources and all this makes an unpleasant impression. Gavranov concludes the criticisms of this book with the following characteristic observation:

"It is in fact stupefying that the book has been accepted as text-book on the part of the Council of Zagreb University which is fortunate enough to have the expert of world repute, Professor Juraj Andrassy who is working conscientiously and indefatigably and who, at least as far as I know, has given to the university in Zagreb and to our public the post-war text-book of international law through which have been formed the post-war generations of jurists in all Yugoslav universities."

Who has put on green light?

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This Gavranov's observation arouses the extremely important question: why has the author of this book been permitted to print this incomplete work which for this reason is detrimental to him, to science and in a certain sense also causes greater negative consequences? Why has there been no necessary analysis before the book has been printed? Feeling sure that he is giving something new to science the author has written in the foreword that he dedicated his work to students and socio-political workers. He has thus let it be known to every reader of this book that he pretends extreme seriousness and that he considers his judgements to be a useful contribution to the contemporary scientific thought.

But, pretensions are one thing while achievements are something else. Why has ^{not} the absolutely necessary minimum scientific impartiality been requested from the author? The reply to this is given by the anatomy of the publishing procedure. The publisher is Skolska Knjiga or rather its library "Manualia Universitatis studiorum zagrebiensis" (Text-books of Zagreb University). The first part of the publisher's name can be absolutely omitted in this case because the enterprise "Skolska Knjiga" has its professional staff and editors solely for text books intended for secondary schools. When it is a question of books for university instruction the enterprise is only rendering printing services because the Council of the University is concerned with the scientific value of the manuscripts.

This is written also on the last page of Kostic's book: "Approved by the commission for text-books and mimeographed lectures of the Council of Zagreb University No. 08-508/9-1965 on July 2, 1965. Printing completed in February 1966." But, this same forum had met early in November 1967 and had concluded: Kostic's text-book must be suspended because all criticisms, both in the country and abroad, have been negative. (Mention has been made of Kostic's book in three issues of Gledista, in the Yugoslav Review for International Law and in the periodical Voprosi Istorii.) Would it not have been better had the commission met several times before the book was printed as long as it would not show the author that he must promote the book to a necessary scientific level? It is difficult now to discover everything and to explain the overture to this case but one thing is clear: we are sure that it will become evident this time again that the policy of not wanting to incur other people's displeasure has paved the way to Kostic's book. We have been told this by one of the editors, Professor Dr Ferdo Culinovic, who has stated word for word:

- A few years ago I have been officially asked to write about the manuscript of Professor Dr Stanisa Kostic "International relations and international law" which the High Administrative School in Zagreb had sent to the University to be published as the text-book for that school. University Professor Dr Branimir Jankovic as the professor of that subject matter had already favourably assessed this manuscript.

Having reviewed the manuscript I established that Kostic's work as a whole can be used for the above-mentioned purpose provided that certain passages are omitted and others thoroughly redone. I have explicitly told this to Professor Kostic and he has fully agreed with me promising that he would omit the passages mentioned or rather that he would in fact revise the manuscript before printing it, in the sense of our agreement. I have described in writing my objections and in my report sent to the university commission of Zagreb University I have stressed that the author had promised that he would carry out the revision.

- Had professor Kostic fulfilled his promise the book would have been a good one--says Culinovic. But--as I have established only after the publication of the book--he has unfortunately failed to do so. I have seen that this book contains passages which Professor N. Jakovljević (in No 9 of the Moscow periodical Voprosi Istorii) has pointed out, as well as some other passages which I could have never approved of, adopted or failed to see. Thus, for example, Kostic's allegation (on page 257) on the so-called "indirect USSR aggression" on Rumania and Czechoslovakia, etc. In the treatment of inter-state relations and events in socialist countries one must certainly bear in mind historical facts but in their interpretation one must also bear in mind their dialectical connection, as well as the general interests of the socialist development of the world.

I had no reason to doubt the promise made by Professor Kostic and I do not know why certain ideas in this book have nonetheless been printed while others have probably been subsequently added (after my revision).

Upon my return from abroad the other day I heard that Professor Dr St. Kostic had published another book recently (under the title "International Relations") in which he has stated--without being authorized to do so--that I have revised that book as well, even though I have seen it only after it had been printed.

What should be said about all this? That the case is more than instructive and it is absolutely not necessary.

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to stress that the Commission for text-books and mimio-graphed lectures of the Council of Zagreb University must think about it. It is also quite visible that it is a question of this time of an excessively self-confident author. But, it does not concern the public and science how many times a commission meets and whether the author of a work is naturally responsive or not--they are only interested in the finished product. In this case the procedure with a scientific product has been such that carelessness have left a vital mark on it. Thus has something been published which now interests very much people outside scientific circles. Finally, just for the sake of impartiality and truth it is avsiable to ask why has Professor Jakovljević with his criticisms informed the Soviet readers about Kostic's failure and has not concurrently informed them about the criticisms made in our country?

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