

The CRCE Newsletter

No. 24 Spring 2006

57 Tufton Street, London SW1P 3QL; tel/fax: (+ 44) 020 7233 1050

email: crce@trident-net.co.uk website: www.crce.org.uk

Book Launch

We belatedly report an event on 20th July last year when Vladimir Mau visited London to talk to an enthusiastic audience about his new book, *From Crisis to Growth*, published by the CRCE. Vladimir has many friends in the UK, and he and his wife, Irina Starodubrovskaya, lived in Oxford for a few months when writing *The Challenge of Revolution: Contemporary Russia in Historical Perspective* (OUP, 2001).

Round Table

Professor Philip Hanson assisted the Centre in arranging an important meeting in November on: 'Russian Economic Prospects: Back on Track after Yukos?'

Our other speakers included Vlad Sobell, Daiwa Institute of Research, and Jonathan Stern, Oxford Institute for Energy Research and the author of *The Future of Russian Gas and Gazprom*. An account of the meeting by CRCE intern Tom Grieder is available.

Outside Meetings

In November Lisl Biggs-Davison attended several interesting meetings. The first was organised by the CPS and Global Britain: 'The Secret Realignment of UK Defence Policy' with Richard North. Together with Sebestyen Gorka and Helen Szamuely he led our Seminar in May – How the East was Won. Richard North's analysis was insightful, if depressing. Readers may be interested to know that he has contributed to a CRCE Briefing based on the seminar. Richard has also written a pamphlet on this topic for the CPS, *The Wrong Side of the Hill*.

The same day Lisl was the guest at a working lunch with Vesna Skare-Ozbolt,

the Croatian Minister of Justice. She was accompanied by Natasa Srdoc and Joel Anand-Samy of the Adriatic Institute. We had some useful discussion on the present state of the judiciary in Croatia and developments in property restitution there.

I was also pleased to give the Minister several publications from the Centre. We were sorry to learn that she resigned her position early in 2006.

Events in 2006

In January the Centre gave an informal lunch for Andrei Piontkovsky of the Centre for Strategic Research in Moscow. His papers on Chechnya are well worth reading, and can be accessed on the Jamestown Foundation's website. The next evening Lisl Biggs-Davison heard him speak at a Foreign Policy Centre meeting.

Lisl Biggs-Davison and Helen Szamuely, a CRCE Research Fellow, attended a debate on Flat Tax organised by the Economist and Stockholm Network with Allister Heath, of the Sunday Business, and Ondrej Schneider of Charles University, Prague.

On 30th January, Professor Philip Hanson of Chatham house and CRCE trustee spoke at the Foreign Policy Centre: 'Launching the G8 Scorecard: Russia in the Spotlight'. Kristin Annexstad represented the CRCE at the meeting.

In February, Oana-Valentina Suciuc from the University of Bucharest gave a most interesting talk on Ethnic Minorities in Romania and how legislation has been affected since the closer ties and influence the EU house on the transition countries.

Franjo Sirc – Industrialist

In January Ljubo Sirc was in Slovenia for the launch of the biography of his father, who did much to bring prosperity to his

country in developing the textile industry from a cottage industry to a manufacturing one with international links.

Kaznovana podjetnost (publisher Nova Revija, Ljubljana) is a best seller in Slovenia and is being serialised in a major daily newspaper. The book, illustrated from the Sirc family archives, vividly describes the developments in not only Slovenia but also Yugoslavia and a large part of Eastern Europe in the 1920's and 1930's. It also describes how the Nazis and the Communists between them managed to stop this advance. An English language summary written by Ljubo and Susan Sirc for the book is available on request.

In March, Ljubo Sirc celebrated the publication of the biography with a talk at the CRCE on the Council of Europe's Condemnation of Communism. We were delighted to welcome Charles Crawford, the British Ambassador in Warsaw to the meeting. Lisl had attended a talk by the Ambassador at Policy Exchange earlier in the week.

Institute for the Economy in Transition

Yegor Gaidar's Institute for the Economy in Transition organised a conference on 'Transition Economies in the Post-Industrial World: Challenges of a Decade' in Moscow in March 2006 to celebrate both a birthday and an anniversary. Philip Hanson attended the meeting bearing congratulations from the CRCE.

Publications

Two new CRCE Briefings are available at £7.50 each: *The Roots of Islamist Ideology* by Robert R. Reilly (February 2006) & *Ethnic Minorities in Romania in the Light of EU Integration* by Oana-Valentina Suciuc (June 2006).

The First Issue of Volume 18 of Post-Communist Economies is now available. Articles include: 'Non-Keynesian Effects of Government Expenditure on Output in Bulgaria', 'Social Networks among Russian Information and Communication Technology Professionals' and 'Regional Decentralisation and Location of Foreign Direct Investment in China'.

Writing for the Journal

Submissions for the Journal are always welcome and should be sent to the CRCE in London. We require two printed copies (double spaced) with the text on a disk or CD. An abstract of the article (100-150 words) should accompany the article. For further details, please access www.tandf.co.uk/journals

Books Received

Tomasz Mickiewicz of UCL has recently published *Economic Transition in Central Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States* (Studies in Economic Transition, Palgrave) in which he quotes Ljubo Sirc. For example, in discussing the old regime the author writes,

"Priority was given to both heavy industry and to the primary sector. In Marxist doctrine, this is referred to as 'the law of the priority development of the production of producer goods'. It assumed (wrongly) that:

The production of consumer goods does not grow parallel to that of the whole economy but that initially producer goods are used to produce other producer goods and that only eventually, if ever, there is a switch to consumer good production. (Sirc 1981)

Nota Bene

We have a new e-mail:
crce@trident-net.co.uk.

And please note the new fax:
+44 (0) 20 7233 1050

The CRCE Newsletter is published by the Centre for Research into Post-Communist Economies.

57 Tufton Street, London SW1P 3QL, United Kingdom.
Tel/Fax: +44 (0) 20 7233 1050