

# From the Bookshelf

Traditions in Transition . . . . . By Robert Loring Allen

**The Emerging Nations: Their Growth and United States Policy.** Edited by Max F. Millikan and Donald L. M. Blackmer. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. 171 pp. Cloth, \$4.50; paper, \$2.50.

This book is a useful tract for the times as well as a genuine contribution to understanding the contemporary world and America's role in it. It concerns the economic and political processes by which tradition-bound societies emerge into political maturity and self-sustained economic growth.

The book has no single author since it results from a seminar among some of the best scholars at MIT's Center for International Studies. Max Millikan, director of the Center, and his assistant, Donald Blackmer, are the editors. Fellow seminararians were Francis Bator, Richard Eckaus, Everett Hagan, Daniel Lerner, Ithiel de Sola Pool, Lucian Pye, Paul Rosenstein-Rodan, and Walt Rostow. The book is an amalgam of their thinking.

The authors argue that America's policy toward the emerging nations should make possible their continued independence, particularly from any power hostile to the United States, and encourage pacific settlement of all international disputes. In addition, the United States should foster the maintenance of effective government without recourse to totalitarian practices and encourage the development of an open and flexible society.

Worthy of note is the absence of any basic specific goal related to combatting communism or the Soviet Union. The danger of communism is only one subcategory of three choices available to countries emerging from traditional societies.

One choice is to resist change steadfastly, to preserve the traditional society, to maintain an existing oligarchy by repression if necessary, and to obstruct all measures and movements which might jeopardize the status quo.

A second choice is the radical destruction, by extremist measures and perhaps violently, of the economic, political, and social framework of the traditional society and replacing it with something entirely different. Communism is but one path the modernizer may choose. It is of great significance, however, because of the power and the example of the Soviet state.

A third choice is available and United States policy should stimulate and promote this choice. This is the gradual transformation of the traditional society into a modern one, economically and politically. It can be accomplished by gradual modifications in structure, institutions, and practices while retaining some of the cohesive elements of tradition. It is not possible to restrain the forces for modernization indefinitely, but the exercise of restraint, both by the enlightened traditionalist and the responsible modernizer, can effect the change in an orderly and beneficial way.

The authors are thus led to purpose that the United States assist the modernizing process through economic assistance and political support for the moderate elements. There is no cheerful optimism in their analysis, however. Even the most intelligent and farsighted American participation in the process may go awry. Emerging states may opt for the first or second choice, including communism. But the chances for the third choice are greater with America playing a leading role. If America turns its back on the problem or is inept or unwise in its policy, countries will not have the material, technical, or intellectual facilities for undertaking the transition.

Scholars can quibble with some of the analysis, proponents and opponents of foreign aid should find much to argue about, public officials may blanch at the awesome responsibilities of this country, and ordinary citizens can learn much of America's role in the modern world from this book. There is reason for them all to read it.

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