

JOHN D. MONTGOMERY, *The Politics of Foreign Aid: American Experience in Southeast Asia*, New York, Frederick A. Praeger, 1962, 336 p.

Ever since the inception of the American foreign aid programme, hundreds and thousands of words have been written and spoken about how foreign aid can be utilized effectively as a tool of American diplomacy and how its objectives can best be realized. Periodically, the President appoints a special study committee to come up with better ideas to implement the objectives, or Congress sends out an investigatory team to see how foreign aid is being administered in the field. The last committee that submitted a report on foreign aid was the Clay Committee. In the past, the foreign aid programme has never been popular in Congress, which takes a special delight in hacking away a substantial chunk from the amount of money the President recommends. Furthermore, foreign aid is misunderstood by an American public that tends to regard the programme as a "give-away" in return for purchasing an ally. Americans become frustrated and angered when their expected return does not materialize.

The book under review seeks to answer questions raised by the critics of the foreign aid programme; it gives attention to "politics of giving and receiving aid" and to systematic analysis of the political dimensions of foreign aid. Professor Montgomery, currently teaching at Boston University, is well qualified to undertake such a task. As a member of the Michigan State University Advisory Group (1957-1959), he observed the American aid programme in Viet-Nam at first hand. In appraising how the aid programme has worked in Washington and in the field, and how the internal politics of each sovereign nation has affected its performance, Professor Montgomery concentrates upon four Asian nations—Viet-Nam, China (Taiwan), Thailand, and Burma. He examines the complex and always cross-current objectives of the U.S. foreign aid programme, the practical problems of mutual aid between sovereign nations, the administration of foreign aid in Washington and in the field, and the political rationale involved in administering foreign aid to less-developed countries.

The author singles out the deceptive quality of mutuality in foreign aid as being the largest area of difficulty. In this area, even the basic concepts of "security" and "economic development" that develop out of common interest between the donor and the recipient not infrequently create administrative and political friction that hampers the mutual aid programme in underdeveloped countries. The result is that each side blames the other for, as an example, rigidity in application insisted on by American technicians and rigidity in adaptation on the part of the recipient. Problems of mutuality also arise out of different views of the desirability of private capital as a means to industrialization, as the American economic philosophy often creates a hostile attitude that is clearly based on a profound suspicion of capitalism. This leaders of underdeveloped nations equate with aid. Professor Montgo-

mery laments the slowness of decision-making in the administrative apparatus of both sides, and he finds that "common objectives will not automatically eliminate frictions and tensions in the execution of mutual aid programme... The main question was, and is, how to keep inevitable friction at a level tolerable to both sides."

Another class of difficulties is found in the attempt of the aid-giving nation to impose unilateral policies, i.e., strings, on the recipient nation. It is, in the reviewer's opinion, less than candid to say that foreign aid does not have any "strings." All foreign aid programmes do have "strings" attached to the extent that they are administered by officials of the donor nation and they serve the national interest of that nation. The question is, do such "strings" coincide with political requirements of the host nation? In order to use U.S. aid as the leverage of diplomacy, the United States must state its "political preference clearly and firmly and at the same time it must be matched by great flexibility."

In Chapter IV (*The Politics of Proliferation: Organizing Foreign Aid*), the author discusses the problem of co-ordination and liaison among the ever-growing number of aid operating agencies in their manifold activities, both in Washington and in the field. To improve and rectify defects in U.S. foreign aid programmes, Professor Montgomery suggests: (1) "aid must be offered with equal respect for requirements of economic development and for the politics of sovereignty" of the recipient nation and, (2) the United States should present not only needs and priorities but also the definition of her coherent position.

Few legislative bills have been subjected to greater political vicissitudes and vagaries than the foreign aid bill (President Johnson's "barebone" aid bill survived with the smallest cut in its history this year). The unpopularity of the foreign aid bill among Congressional members is partly due to the fact that it does not have national constituency (the voting record of a Congressman on foreign aid bill does not deliver votes to him at election time) and that it does not have national political consensus. Under the circumstances, the continuity and survivability of a foreign aid programme depends upon a resolution and a steadfastness of planning and purpose involving the highest potentialities of political leadership on the part of Congress and the Executive branch from the President down to field officers.

The author points out the weakness in the conventional doctrine of non-intervention in foreign aid policy and urges search for a "rationale for the legitimate and inevitable involvement that occurs in foreign aid relationship" and "an understanding of both the opportunities and the limitations of such involvement." Until now the most compelling rationale for foreign aid has been national security or the survival of the giving nation, but Professor Montgomery stresses the need for dealing with the realities of involvement in other than the Cold War context. He finds such a new rationale in the "community of purpose between U.S. foreign policy and domestic aspirations of the underdeveloped world," i.e., economic growth and political maturation.

The reviewer, however, hastens to add that the new rationale such as he expounds is not new. The author himself points this out elsewhere in the book, quoting other sources. "The community of purpose" and "aspirations of the underdeveloped world" are not new concepts but they are just as old as the history of foreign aid itself, beginning with the Point Four Programme. His other recommendations include (1) the need for legitimizing foreign aid by the formal recognition of the concept of foreign aid—continuous reaffirmation by Congress that foreign aid is an integral and permanent component of U.S. foreign policy; (2) the need for a new foreign aid ideology to blunt the political effects of the intrusion of Communist bloc aid; (3) need for the creation of national consensus, bipartisan support adequate to withstand the threats of destruction to which the programme is periodically subjected; and (4) a Congressional review of basic aid policies. Here again, unfortunately, the recommendations are nothing unique but a reiteration and re-emphasis of what has been said about foreign aid in and out of the Government.

This reviewer wishes that the author could have explored the attitude of American citizens and the politics of pressure groups and their relations with Congress. After all, the politics of foreign aid in Congress are the reflection of the constituencies of Congressmen and Senators. Nevertheless, the book is illuminating and informative on the politics of foreign aid both at home and in the field, especially so as Professor Montgomery draws upon his own experience in the foreign aid programme in Southeast Asia and upon official publications. Chapter V, American Politics and Foreign Aid, is particularly of interest for those who want to get an insight and inside view of Congressional politics on foreign aid.

This reviewer's last criticism of the book is that the subtitle of the book is somewhat misleading since the book, which is saturated with Viet-nameese examples in U.S. foreign aid programme, can almost be considered as an interpretive case study of American aid in Viet-Nam. Its regional flavour is only maintained by two cases of aid problems in Burma, two cases in Taiwan (strictly speaking, Taiwan is geographically outside of Southeast Asia), and one Thai example against over one dozen cases in Viet-Nam.

In short, recommendations or conclusions Professor Montgomery draws are not new and unique, but the approach he uses to the problem of foreign aid is a fresh one, throwing a new light on the political dimensions of foreign aid whose study thus far has been confined to an appraisal of how the aid programme has worked or has not worked. Notwithstanding my disappointment in his conclusions, the book is recommended to all who are interested in foreign aid programmes, both friends and foes, and Professor Montgomery is to be congratulated for having succeeded in clarifying the intricacy of the politics of foreign aid at home. A selected bibliography attached ought to be helpful for a non-specialist who wants to study further the problem of foreign aid. (*Yōji Akashi*)