

Book Reviews

Foreign Aid: Theory and Practice in Southern Asia. Charles Wolf, Jr. Princeton University Press, Princeton, N.J., 1960. xix + 442 pp. \$7.50

This is an important book—and a controversial one. It attempts to devise more rational criteria for allocating aid between programs and among countries. It develops new concepts designed to evolve proximate, quantitative expressions for political characteristics. If it were judged by its success in achieving this all but unattainable aim, the book would be rated lower than if one appreciates its pioneering quality. A reviewer who is on record as favoring attempts to introduce more quantitative concepts into the border lands of social science ["Quality into Quantity?," in *The Comparative Study of Economic Growth and Structure* (National Bureau of Economic Research, New York, 1959)], no matter how tentative the result, cannot fail to applaud the tantalizing effort Wolf has undertaken and pay homage to his boldness, ingenuity, and dogged determination.

Inevitably, this volume will be compared with another recent work on foreign aid, George Liska's *The New Statecraft* (University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1960). No two books on the same subject could be more dissimilar. The political scientist, undeterred by the inherent indeterminacy of concepts, terms, and policy alternatives, uses a broad brush. Wolf, the economist, looks to the record for guidance to the assumptions that seem to be implied in past policy decisions on allocations. The historical and statistical detail contained in the first six chapters is an invaluable contribution in its own right; it will be appreciated by anyone who has been driven to distraction by the inconsistencies induced by changing objectives and by the perennial tug-of-war between the Administration and Congress. And the lavish documentation is

a prime guide to hopelessly scattered source material.

But for Wolf this is only the beginning. He wants to supplement the hit-and-miss method of allocating the total amount of available foreign aid. Even if one does not fully accept the confining view that "the problem of increasing the effectiveness of the Mutual Security Program is . . . synonymous with the problem of improving the allocation of aid funds" (page 412), it is certainly true that the method of allocation is an elusive one. And "it is indeed hard to avoid the mistakes or repeat the successes of past decisions if the grounds for having made them cannot be ascertained" (page 68). Hence, Wolf sets out to analyze the tortuous course of past aid allocations in South Asia, the region he knows so well from personal experience. He attempts to circumscribe the objectives of foreign aid, with a view to maximizing the political or military returns from given aid inputs. It is a trenchant analysis, logical almost to a fault, which dots more *i*'s than certain readers may care for; but those who follow the author closely will be rewarded by a clearer insight, along with many shrewd observations, even if they are not willing to accept every detail of Wolf's proprietary method of dissection.

It is indeed a subjective approach, perhaps more so than the author himself is able to perceive. But he remains scrupulously honest in his exposition and in discussing the limitations of the models to which his analysis leads him. He attempts to quantify the "productivity" of aid and its ability to achieve certain objectives, specifically to minimize the political vulnerability of the recipients or to maximize their collective military capability. What cannot be measured directly has to be approximated by something that can, and a disconcerting chain of further simplifications proved necessary in the single test provided. The author has few il-

lusions about the empirical usefulness of his models in guiding the policy maker toward better allocations. In fact, frustration awaits any reader who might be tempted to look for practical application. The unique value of the exercise is the insight that is gained by thinking harder and clearer than customary. As in all theory—and no general theory is attempted by the author—the real gain is proportional to the intellectual investment in rigorous analysis; this is not negligible even though, as Jacob Viner pointed out, "for policy . . . conclusions are vital, and often are all that is vital" [*The Long View and the Short*, (Free Press, Glencoe, Ill., 1958)]. In this sense, the last six chapters of the book do not deal with policy, but with the theory of policy, and in a highly original manner.

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Radiation. Use and control in industrial application. Charles Wesley Shilling. Grune and Stratton, New York, 1960. viii + 223 pp. Illus. \$6.75.

Atomic energy has brought a new factor into man's environment: nuclear radiation. Applications and uses of radioactive isotopes in industrial processes, in the development and operation of power plants, in the manufacture of radioactive preparations, and in instrumentation grow continuously. Paralleling this increase in the use of isotopes is an increase in the possibility of harmful exposure. Sooner or later all who are concerned with practical medicine have to give intelligent answers to questions, worries, and fears about the real and the imagined dangers that result from atomic radiations. Moreover, the industrial physician, obliged to follow modern technical developments in industrial methods with their imminent dangers for life and health, has to cope with and to help in possible radiation emergency cases.

The present monograph, Number 5 in the series "Modern Monographs in Industrial Medicine," gives the needed information about the real facts and dangers involved in work with isotopes. Five sections and an appendix are devoted to discussions of the physical and biological fundamentals of radia-