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Montgomery & Smithies: Public Policy

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PUBLIC POLICY. Volume XIV. Edited by *John D. Montgomery* and *Arthur Smithies*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press. 1965. Pp. 455. \$7.

This is one of a series of volumes, sponsored by the Graduate School of Public Administration (now the John Fitzgerald Kennedy School of Government) at Harvard University, devoted to a scholarly examination of problems of "public policy." The present volume contains a number of articles on significant issues which warrant brief or at least summary mention. This review also provides an opportunity to raise some questions regarding the appropriateness of the focus and format of the *Public Policy* series as a whole.

I

Volume XIV includes six essays on federalism, in which the authors draw upon experience in about a dozen federal nations as well as several related institutions (the British Commonwealth, the French Union and its successor, and the European Community). A second major section is devoted to problems in foreign policy, with five of these essays concerned with foreign aid. The remaining six papers consider education policy, civil rights, cost-benefit analysis, and Pierre Mendes-France as a political strategist.

Federalism basically involves the problem of distributing power between a central government and constituent governments. The legal structure in a federal state provides a degree of protection or autonomy for the constituent governments, but the nature of a federal system, as it evolves in practice, frequently differs considerably from the original formal structure. Some of these differences are well illustrated by R. L. Watts' study of India, Pakistan, Nyasaland, and other newer Commonwealth nations. "The creators of these federations," Watts notes, "usually started with declarations of the federal principle which echoed or even cited the traditional view of dualistic federalism in which each level of government was sovereign and independent of the other within its prescribed fields."¹ The pressures for rapid economic development, however, have necessitated central government control over financial policy, and the regional governments have become largely dependent on the central government for their financial resources. At the same time, political pressures have required the central governments to rely heavily on the regional units in such major functional areas as agriculture and social services. The result has been the development of a large number of councils, commissions, and other arrangements which facilitate negotiation and compromise among the various governments

1. Watts, *Recent Trends in Federal Economic Policy and Finance in the Commonwealth*, in PUBLIC POLICY (xiv) 380, 401 (Montgomery & Smithies eds. 1965).

in the development of general economic policy, and which permit joint action on specific projects.

Experience with federalism in the older nations is most directly considered in Charles Aikin's essay.² Although Aikin is concerned with developing a general interpretation of federalism, his main emphasis is on experience in the United States. Unfortunately, his analysis is weakened by a tendency to focus on legal form rather than political reality. For example, Aikin argues that "acceptance of grants of money [by the states] from the central government for the development of local welfare programs does in no way modify the structure of federal power"³ Later he amplifies this point, noting that

the nation may not supervise a state's construction of airports or highways or guide its public planning . . . , or its slum clearance . . . other than through making grants to states for these purposes, grants that individual states may elect to accept.⁴

Actually, governors and state legislatures find themselves under considerable political pressure to obtain for their states a share of federal highway funds and to take part in other federal programs; a decision not to participate would frequently be a political liability for elected officials, particularly those in urbanized states. Aikin hints at these implications, but does not explore them. His discussion of the role of the cities in the American federal system is similarly hampered. He notes, quite properly, that in the United States the cities do not have a degree of independence comparable to that of the states; constitutionally, the cities are entirely dependent units of the states. Having noted this constitutional fact, Aikin then disregards the city entirely. As a consequence, he omits any discussion of one of the major aspects of American federalism in practice: the development of direct relationships between the national government and the metropolis in urban renewal and other program areas, and the impact that this development has had on state policies.⁵

2. Aikin, *The Structure of Power in Federal Nations*, in *id.* at 323.

3. *Id.* at 326.

4. *Id.* at 348-49.

5. A footnote on style. Probably the editors as well as the author should be taken to task for permitting the obfuscation that occasionally brings the reader of Aikin's essay up short. For example:

If, as the late Professor V. O. Key has written, pressure groups operating in a federal nation seem, in the long run, to be able to protect themselves better in dealing with state legislatures than with the national legislature and the national bureaucracy, the reason may be that, contrary to a widely held view, the real locations of power in a large, strong unitary nation are so diffused among the infinite complexities of the executive branch that neither party leaders nor lobbyists can always locate them.

Id. at 337.

The other four essays on federalism must be treated briefly. Taylor Cole writes on federalism in the Commonwealth, concentrating on the relations between the United Kingdom and the other states of the association, and on the distribution of power within two of these states, Canada and Nigeria. Leslie Lipson analyzes the Brazilian case. *Inter alia*, both authors conclude that the pressures for economic development have sharply increased the power of the central governments, especially in Nigeria and Brazil. Marcel Merle contributes a paper on France and its former colonies, and Dusan Sidjanski considers federal aspects of the European Community.

In their present form, these papers are generally useful contributions to our understanding of federalism; but perhaps the writers could have gone further. All of the papers developed out of a conference, and one of the papers refers to a general report containing research hypotheses which apparently was available to the six authors before they prepared their individual papers. Perhaps it would have been helpful had those hypotheses been included in this volume. Similarly, it would have been helpful to the reader if the authors had explicitly related their concepts of federalism and their findings to those of their colleagues.

II

In the section on foreign policies, Milton J. Esman has contributed an interesting essay on the common aid efforts of the non-communist industrialized nations, which focuses on the work of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. The articles by Alfred O. Hero, Jr. and Robert B. Charlick are concerned with the foreign aid policies of the United States and France. Randall B. Ripley and Leroy N. Reiselbach consider the role of Congress in foreign policy, with Ripley concentrating on the relationships among four congressional committees as they reviewed the economic aid program for India during the period 1951-1962, and Reiselbach on the extent of ideological cleavage among members of the House of Representatives on foreign policy issues.

One of the most interesting papers in the volume is Abraham F. Lowenthal's analysis of the use of foreign aid to achieve identifiable political effects within the recipient country. In an intensive analysis of United States aid efforts in the Dominican Republic during the period between the death of Rafael Trujillo in 1961 and the overthrow of Juan Bosch in 1963, Lowenthal shows how the United States used negotiations over aid and announcements of strategically-located new public works projects to help establish political order after Trujillo's assassination, to bolster the interim regime, and to

help prepare for a democratic election. He then describes the reduction in influence of American aid policy after the election of the Bosch regime, and analyzes the several reasons that produced this change.

The final six papers in the volume include discussions of education policy by Lord Robbins, Andre Daniere, and Seymour E. Harris, an analysis of the political skill of Mendes-France by Peter Gourevitch, an application of cost-benefit analysis to the issue of municipal garages in Boston by George Berkley, and an essay on Negro political activity in the northern United States by George D. Blackwood.

III

This volume and the *Public Policy* series generally raise two broader issues deserving comment: the question of restricted authorship and the problem of low visibility. Since the series began in 1940, it has largely been limited to contributions related to the work of the Graduate School of Public Administration at Harvard, including papers by students, faculty members, and visiting government officials. Due in part, I would guess, to this restricted source, the quality of the articles within individual volumes has varied widely. Some of the contributions are very narrowly focused, largely descriptive essays. Others have been of considerable significance—for example, Carl J. Friedrich's essay on administrative responsibility in the 1940 volume, Don K. Price's "Creativity in the Public Service" (1959), and James Q. Wilson's thoughtful analysis of police organization (1963).

While restricted authorship has tended to affect quality, the format of the volume—issuance as a yearbook with a large number of articles on different subjects—has unduly limited the audience. Persons concerned with the issues discussed in a volume may not learn of the existence of relevant articles until some years later. While this may be appropriate for the articles of mediocre quality, the more important essays in these volumes should not be closeted away in a yearbook which is circulated to few, inadequately advertised, and excluded from the standard periodical indexes.

My own tentative conclusion is that the School should actively encourage outside contributions, advertise the volume and its contents more extensively, and consider replacing the yearbook with a quarterly journal of the same name. The result, in all probability, would be increased visibility and timeliness of the contributions and consequently increased attractiveness of *Public Policy* as a place to publish significant work. A journal of this kind, soliciting contributions widely from those concerned with public policy, might be a significant step in helping to overcome the present tradition

in which individual scholars and practitioners address primarily those in their own separate disciplines through separate journals of political science, economics, sociology, and law.

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