

Simonis, Udo E.

Book Review

[Rezension] Otto Matzke, Hermann Priebe:
Entwicklungspolitik ohne Illusionen : Mobilisierung der
Eigenkräfte. Stuttgart [u.a.]: Kohlhammer, 1973

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Otto Matzke, Hermann Priebe, *Entwicklungspolitik ohne Illusionen. Mobilisierung der Eigenkräfte*. Stuttgart, Berlin, Köln, Mainz: Verlag W. Kohlhammer, 1973. 105 pages, DM 8,-.

The great hope of development aid in the sixties has turned out to be a great illusion: the underdeveloped countries did not fully participate in the benefits of international trade,

the welfare gap between the North and the South has widened, social, economic and technical dualism within the underdeveloped countries have not been overcome. Based on this experience, doubts are rapidly growing in the industrialized countries as to whether the aims and means of development aid are adequate to solve the basic problems of underdevelopment. The present book calls our attention to two such problems: the situation in the rural areas and growing unemployment and underemployment.

In the first part of the book, Hermann Priebe pleads for "development from below" and especially for "development from the rural basis". He examines the basic facts of traditionalism and dualism, describes certain signs of the beginning of a process of rethinking, and then puts forward several guiding principles for a development policy from the basis: incremental steps to mobilize the know-how of the traditional agricultural population, actively using the oft denounced watering-can principle, decentralized development activities and a combination of agricultural and industrial strategies are thought to be of the utmost importance in reconciling economic and social aspects of development.

In the second part, Otto Matzke deepens this approach by investigating the possibilities of labour mobilization. First he stresses the special responsibility (*Eigenverantwortung*) of the developing countries themselves in looking for other goals than growth of the GNP, and in taking the initiative in the introduction of appropriate technologies and population control. "Development via employment", not "employment via development" should be the slogan, and social marginal productivity should be the decisive criterion for investment decisions. Only in a supplementary way and under very specific conditions is traditional development aid thought to be of real help. Structural adjustment in the industrialized countries and reduction of their protectionism, on the other hand, are held to be the real issues of development aid.

Probably, the critical reader will consent to all or nearly all the analysis given and the proposals made in this small book, but since no way is shown as to how structural adjustment and reduced protectionism could be reached in the world of reality, he may well reach the conclusion: "I got the message but I can't believe it" – or as the Germans say: "Die Nachricht hört ich wohl – allein mir fehlt der Glaube!"

Udo Ernst Simonis