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Book Review. The Springtime of Freedom by William McCord

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of the woman? Should the shadow of criminal conviction, jail and dishonor continue to fall on the sexual activities of adult homosexuals, even though there is no possibility of changing sex drives by law? Should the narcotic addict continue to be treated as a criminal, because he is in the grip of an affliction which requires him to have a daily dose of opiates in order to be able to function as a human being? These are some of the questions raised by Professor Schur's book.

It is obvious where Professor Schur's sympathies lie. The role of the criminal law in these areas should be narrowed considerably. The nature of the behavior and the ineffectiveness of law enforcement in dealing with these types of behavior require this. But there is the added factor that the maintenance of broad prohibitions in these areas might lead to considerable corruption and degradation of law enforcement.

This is not to say that *all* penal prohibitions must be eliminated in the areas of abortion, homosexuality and narcotic addiction. Even if the abortion law is broadened, as suggested by Professor Schur, to permit many more legal abortions, sanctions must still be retained against illegitimate and incompetent operators. Similarly, all penal sanctions cannot be eliminated in connection with homosexual activities. If the crime of adult consensual homosexuality is struck from the penal law, we must still enforce criminal prohibitions against homosexuals who seduce youngsters, who use force and violence to compel deviant sex acts or who operate as prostitutes. There is also a place for the penal law in dealing with narcotic addiction, even if confirmed addicts are provided drugs by legitimate means. But the black market operator and pusher attempting to sell illegitimate drugs will remain, and must be subject to criminal sanctions.

The basic thesis of Professor Schur's book is that the criminal law must be confined to more realistic limits in the areas of abortions, homosexuality and narcotic addiction. With this thesis, we cannot disagree.

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THE SPRINGTIME OF FREEDOM. By William McCord. New York: Oxford University Press, 1965. Pp. 330. \$6.00.

The new nations can achieve modernization without political and economic authoritarianism. If they follow the alternative route of pluralism, their emerging economies can bud and flower in a new

"Springtime of Freedom." For the reader who views with rising concern contemporary developments in Africa, Asia or Latin America, there is enormous appeal in this optimistic thesis of Professor McCord's study.

The author examines realistically the traditional village where most "transitional men" now live. Characterized by social isolation, rigidly hierarchical social relations, and a profound fatalism, the traditional village seems to turn its time-worn face squarely against the winds of change. Not surprisingly, the more daring or desperate of men abandon the villages for the cities in whose swelling, undigested mass they face disappointment, disillusion, and not infrequently starvation. Since the growing cities do not and cannot support the promise they appear to hold out, it is in the villages that transitional man in the main, must reshape his destiny. Despite its traditional handicaps, Professor McCord believes that the village and its people offer a basis for change and for hope. The actual claims and demands of transitional man are relatively limited; he is unwilling to trade his cultural heritage for the promise of luxury. While cautious and unwilling to gamble the meagre stake separating him from starvation, the peasant is rational and subject to persuasion on the merits of innovation. Finally, despite the hierarchical village structure, its people do cherish ancient notions of justice, limited official power, and democratic participation in government.

In supporting his thesis, the author examines much of the data on contemporary emerging societies; he also considers three historic models: Europe of the 18th and 19th centuries, the Soviet Union, and Japan under the Meiji rulers since about 1870. Of these, Professor McCord regards the Japanese as the most attractive model for new nations, since the Meiji achieved an agricultural revolution, industrialization and a market economy while experiencing little social disruption and strengthening or at least retaining their traditional culture.

The economic program favored by Professor McCord and the implementing means proposed contain a number of points well worth his emphasis: (1) the primacy of an agricultural revolution to remove the familiar spectre of starvation and to provide a part of the capital needed for development; (2) the importance for most countries of focusing on light, decentralized, consumer-oriented industries; (3) the necessary expenditure on education, particularly in selective secondary schools, technical institutes, and universities to produce the elite required for development; and (4) the requirement of greater saving and productive re-investment by both the private and public sectors of the economy. The author argues persuasively for a greater

contribution to these efforts by both enlightened private investors and foreign governments.

The real core of the problem and of the author's argument, however, lies in this question: Can steps such as these be taken and self-sustaining growth achieved in a liberal polity or do they require a centralized government wielding dictatorial powers? On the basis of his answer to this pivotal question the success of the author must be gauged.

China, Ghana and Indonesia provide the authoritarian models examined by the author. These, it is argued, suggest that the authoritarian approach involves grave dangers to economic development. A government that monopolizes all productive resources and suppresses criticism can spend and waste as it wishes; as government moves toward totalitarianism, its sources of information become less reliable and realistic; dictatorship drains the initiative of the people, stifles the spirit of innovation and may lead to economic sabotage. Regrettably, evidence of increasing authoritarianism and of official corruption, of waste and popular disillusionment is plentiful, and Professor McCord takes full advantage of it.

At crucial points, however, the author's case is singularly unpersuasive. The Chinese experience provides the principal challenge to his thesis. He deals fairly with the enormous economic strides taken by China during the 1950's, the set-backs of the early sixties and the current re-strengthening of the economy. Admittedly, the Chinese economic record fares well when compared with that of democratic India. Beside China, the relatively relaxed and inefficient repressions of Ghana and Indonesia are dwarfed; yet they provide most of the evidence of economic failures of the totalitarian model, while China documents its successes. The author suggests a partial explanation of this paradox by pointing out that China has no heritage of traditional democracy with which the current repressions collide and, unlike Ghana and Indonesia, has the great advantage of an ethnically unified population.

The primary explanation of the Chinese success offered by the author, however, is exclusively economic. He points out that China followed wise economic policies in accelerating the pace of investment, marshalling and educating its human resources, using its idle labor by putting more money in agriculture and small industry, co-ordinating its planning and development with the Soviet economy, and remaining pragmatic and flexible in its entire economic policy. With some plausibility Professor McCord contends that almost the same policies could profitably be adopted by a democratic society. Yet, one may ask, is it in the *policies* of the kind treated by Professor McCord that

China differs from India and the other developing nations that have tried to maintain a liberal polity, or does the difference lie in the instrumental measures adopted by China to execute those policies. I am inclined to suspect that the latter marks the difference. Professor McCord recognizes that rational economic decisions of India's planners have been frustrated by the politically potent demands of regions, castes, and linguistic groups. The advantage of the totalitarians does not arise from wiser economic policies, but from the willingness and ability to ride rough-shod over the political barriers to their implementation.

Another aspect of Professor McCord's treatment of the totalitarian models raises intriguing questions, though it provides no answers. In dealing with Ghana and Indonesia and later generalizing on the economic hazards of the totalitarian approach, Professor McCord assigns a prominent place to official graft and corruption and to the waste of resources on projects contributing only to the supposed prestige of the nation or its leaders. Yet in the discussion of China, such evidence is singularly lacking. Even in his discussion of Indonesian official venality, Professor McCord includes a provocative footnote:

Only the Communist party seemed above suspicion. As one person told me in 1962, "Just the Communist members of parliament give up the big cars, the Mercedes and Cadillacs. They drive through the streets on bicycles and motor scooters. The people see this. The Communists will win."¹

Obviously the author is not writing a Communist *apologia*; his rejection of Communist oppression is clear. Consequently, he focuses attention on critical questions: how can we explain the apparent absence of official corruption in the one Communist state examined? Why, among the Indonesian parties, are only the Communists above the suspicion of venality? Such questions merit careful consideration. The beginning of strength is thorough knowledge of one's adversary.

In the development of liberal polities, Professor McCord regards economic causes as fundamental. After examining the historic development of Danish, Dutch and Swiss democracy, he concludes that three countries experienced economic pluralization before the advent of liberal democracy. Free peasant farmers in Denmark, Dutch merchants, and a Swiss urban middle class and artisans developed economic strength and sufficient independence to enforce their claims for political and legal privileges commensurate with their economic status. When they achieved power, it was not directed solely to advancing their own interests, but rather to the further dispersal of power and privilege throughout the society. Thus developed a number of classes

1. McCORD, *THE SPRINGTIME OF FREEDOM* 258 (1965).

or interest groups which checked each other so as to re-enforce a liberal democracy.

If this account be accepted and its full range of implications offered to the leaders of the new nations today, few firm guidelines are provided. What precipitated the advent of economic pluralization in Europe? Are the same or similar causal factors operative in the new nations today? If newly-advantaged interest groups acquire power in the new states, how can their support of further pluralization be encouraged? What assurance can be offered that the seedlings of a liberal polity will not be uprooted as they were in Germany and Italy during Europe's "Springtime of Freedom"?

As Professor McCord recognizes, the European development of pluralistic, liberal societies provides few generalizations, if any, clearly relevant to the developing countries today. Some guidelines suggested involve delicate balance points between rejected extremes: while a total onslaught on traditional cultures is not required or even defensible, "feudal ruling groups" dedicated to the preservation of the old order must be undermined. The vision of individual and social transformation, the planning of economic development, much of the accumulation of investment capital, and the actual provision of unprofitable social overhead facilities must come from government; yet room must be left for a vigorous private sector of the economy. The elite must inform and persuade, and not depend on coercion. Yet the public peace must be maintained and the integrity of the government preserved against divisive sub-national forces. To identify the appropriate middle course between doctrinaire socialism and equally rigid devotion to a free market, between elitism and popular democracy, between the carrot and the stick will challenge more than one generation of leaders in the new nations.

Professor McCord confesses the cardinal academic sins of "oversimplification, overgeneralization, and the propounding of 'value laden statements.'" These disturb me less than some unconfessed delinquencies. Insofar as his own investigations in the Third World form the basis for the study, Professor McCord's method appears to have been impressionistic, sometimes to an extreme. It seems doubtful that the short-term visitor can penetrate the mind of the urban Ghanaian through one conversation with a Tema dock porter, or even several. In aid of his own investigations, Professor McCord surveys a large mass of the current literature on the developing nations and draws freely from economic, sociological, anthropological and political studies. His general grasp of the data is impressive, but, at numerous points familiar to me, careless errors of facts mar the study. For example, if an independent judiciary ever existed in Ghana, it had

not been crushed by 1961. The crushing, if such it was, did not occur in response to judicial "quibbling" over the legality of the Preventive Detention Act, but rather as a result of the acquittal in December 1964, of three prominent politicians charged with treason. While I felt great affection for the late J. B. Danquah and respected his courage, I am doubtful that he deserved the "progressive" label the author puts on him. The investigation of the alleged attempt on Nkrumah's life in 1958 (not 1959) was not conducted by a British team but by a Special Commission appointed by the Ghana government (Granville Sharp Commission). The Regional Assemblies were abolished in 1958, not 1960, and even during their brief life did nothing to merit their description as one of the "few genuine sprouts of local democracy in contemporary Ghana." This list could be extended. Perhaps without justification, this looseness on some of the facts raises nagging doubts over the reliability of the remainder.

This is not, nor does it pretend to be, a scholarly work in the usual sense. It is essentially a tract designed to arouse and to warn, to advise and persuade. It does not add significantly to the available data but makes its contribution largely as a synthesis of insights collected from several disciplines. While I share much of Professor McCord's value perspective, I remain much less optimistic than he over the shorter-range prospects for either self-sustaining economic growth or liberal polities in most of the underdeveloped world. Yet the questions he has raised are significant and await well-considered answers. He gives persuasive warnings that authoritarianism is not a safe course toward either economic development or new "democratic" forms. And the economic policies he recommends could succeed, if enough selfless men could be found to implement them. Despite its limitations and occasional defects, Professor McCord's book deserves the thoughtful attention of all who ask with growing disquiet, "What is the season of freedom?"

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