

To sum up: this study convincingly demonstrates the various limitations of an economic and one-dimensional approach to a very complex topic. Thus, it provides a "scientific" foundation to the myth that after the take-over of political power by the People's Action Party in 1959 a sort of success-story began despite the fact that not all problems (like full employment as the author claims) could be solved at once. Soon after 1969, where this study terminates, Singapore certainly became an "employer's dream" with the extinction of a genuine trade-union movement and decreasing real wages despite extended working hours. But the island-state also turned into an "employee's nightmare" quite close to other frightening examples like Hongkong, Taiwan and South Korea. It is regrettable that the author also did not care to touch on these consequences of world market-oriented industrialization policies. In order to balance the view a bit, the interested reader should have a close look at Wilhelm Holtgrave's study: *Gesellschaftliche Auswirkungen export-orientierter Industrialisierungsprozesse am Beispiel von Singapore und Hongkong* (Diplomarbeit, Marburg 1979), where the other side of the coin has been aptly described.

Hans U. Luther

THEODOR BERGMANN/DIETER EITEL: *Promotion of the Poorer Sections of the Indian Rural Population*. Saarbrücken: Breitenbach, 1976. 107 pages, DM 9. -

As in many 'developing countries', the majority of the poor people in India live in rural areas. Technocratic strategies to promote agricultural production - like the 'Green Revolution' - have helped the owner-cultivators of large and medium farms, but not the ones that most needed support. To promote the rural poor two agencies were created in India in 1970:

- the Small Farmers Development Agency (SFDA) and
- the Agency for Marginal Farmers and Landless Labourers (MFAL).

The target group of the SFDA were farmers with potentially viable holdings of 2.5-7.5 acres. These farmers benefitted from the scheme mostly by improved irrigation facilities financed by supervised credit. The MFAL target groups were farmers with holdings of up to 2.5 acres and landless agricultural labourers. The marginal farmers received mainly subsidized credit to improve their cultivation technique, while the landless could use the credit to raise livestock. Additionally the MFAL initiated new Rural Works Programmes to increase the employment opportunities for the landless.

During nine weeks in summer 1975 Theodor Bergmann collected data on the performance of the SFDA and MFAL in six of the 23 federal states of India (Haryana, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala). The activities of the agencies are presented respectively statewise, the different agricultural situations being taken into consideration.

The data are - as the authors admit - only exploratory: they give more a first impression of the performance of the new institutions (as far as statistics and reports were available) than a detailed review of their actual achievements. Nevertheless, the excellent historical analysis of Indian politics and economics justifies the interpretation of even the limited data. So the study will be of particular interest to those who wish to get a short, but concise picture of the problems that arise with any strategy to overcome rural poverty in India as well as in other 'developing countries' with similar social structures.

The newly created agencies face the same difficulties and barriers as the older extension services. Consequently, not only small but even medium farmers have benefitted more by it than the marginal ones, and the landless have again been left at the bottom level. Without real agricultural reforms or a political mobilization of the rural poor any rural development strategy will serve the rich more than the poor. However, within the framework of the existing social structure of rural India, successful agricultural reforms as well as an effective mobilization of the rural poor have proved to be illusory.

But "conscious of the gigantic task facing Indian farm policies we hesitate to decide whether even the smallest progress would be more laudable than the most justified criticism" (p. 68 f.).

Klaus Klennert