Comparative Politics and Area Studies

R.Beer and J. F. Jacob (eds), Language Policy and National Unity (Tottowa, N.J.: Dowman and Allanheld, 1985), x + 244 pp., $34.50 ISBN 0 86958 056 8.

Editors assert that 'the nature of state policy concerning language use is crucial to...how new states maintain their internal cohesion'. Their objective is to explore the issues under which government policies are effective (or otherwise) in managing the actual or potential defiance of language. This is done through the application of seven key variables or table-clusters to some 21 case studies in North America, Western Europe, and the Middle East.

By and large, the contributors follow the outline laid down by the editors: the historical background, the contemporary linguistic situation, the nature of language policy and reactions to it, and some speculation on the future. The conclusion evaluates some theories on language and states, and suggests some hypotheses which are tested against evidence from the case studies. The book is well structured, therefore, with a reasonable degree of integration. However, there are up to 100 case studies for any to be developed in sufficient depth: though clearly and clearly written, they do not cut towards being summary reports rather than detailed analyses. On the other hand, the book does stress an element of linguistic politics which has often been overlooked; it is a useful introduction to the topic.

DEREK W. URWIN, University of Warwick


is a very useful collection of essays by Percy Sober, Edward Clay, Florence McCarthy, then Beggs, Martin Evans, Diana Hunt, Raymond Akrich and the editors. The theme—literally illustrated in the chapters—is that policy can achieve things and that different policies make differences. But, as is often the case, there is a great gulf between stated policy intention and policy outcome. Each chapter contributes to our understanding of why this is the case. What becomes clear is that the late Bernard Schaffer shares in his concluding chapter that the police process is tactical and always will be, there is no point in pretending it is technical, or that it can be divided into two parts, policy-making and implementation. And reform is about recognising '...where restraints are placed, lines of opposition are drawn, the pain and guilt felt and hidden' (p. 138).

are chapters on the inadequacy of data to assess policies; on special planning units and how can be by-passed or marginalized by 'bureaucrats' (that is, bureaucratic politics); on the effect of using 'target groups' in rural development (for example, women in Bangladesh) which are excluded from developmental processes; on the failure to use social action research institutions; on the politics of the Asian Development Bank and how this influenced its policy lending; on the political factors that influence project choice and design in IFAD and on the impact of development policy which influence design and strategy. All the essays illustrate how effort is for those involved in policy to take responsibility and avoid using bureaucratic red hatches by putting the blame elsewhere. More self-awareness is called for and an ability to select alternative policies is required. These limitations in the book is the rather dull style and one of the writing. A pity from a teaching point of view, when the substantive tests are so important.

ADRIAN LEFFIWICH, University of York


is a most useful volume, part introductory on the role of economic analysis in science and policy making, part subtle but perceptive critique of the failings of related contemporary economic thinking. It is based on lectures given to undergraduates at the Sussex Science Policy Unit and, being eminently clear in its exposition, will certainly prove invaluable for those approaching this area for the first time. It is also likely to be in demand amongst those who have long been engaged in some part of this field but who have never fully appreciated the field as a whole. A political perspective on science and technology policy would naturally look different, but it would be useful to critics for failing to deliver something the author has not promised, and certainly not when the latter is in a somewhat modest and as anachronistic of economic analysis as he. The treatment of economic theory and technological change, and of science and technology in development, seemed particularly carefully done, and it was instructive to find 'another reflective analyst making his way towards biological metaphors.'

ROGER WILLIAMS, University of Manchester


Davis and Scase have written a not very helpful introduction to western capitalism and state socialism. It is an uneven mixture of an introduction to Marxist political economy and an introduction to the sociology of stratification, with some loose empirical illustrations. The two systems are compared and contrasted by means of their historical development, types of stratification, national variations and characteristics crises. The section on state socialism is the weakest. The Soviet Union was in no sense 'less arbitrary' (p. 70) than the Jacobin Terror. Stalin's successes in post-war Eastern Europe were more than 'undoubtedly helped' by the presence of the Red Army (p. 82). The GNP data cited on p. 86 are examples of meaningless statistics. The analysis of stratification under state socialism too often appears as an exercise in re-educating an SWP voucherholder. There is little reference to some undocumented 'perversion' (p. 75) and 'no'. It is not advisable to assert on p. 99 that it is difficult to obtain reliable data on income inequalities in state socialism systems and assert on p. 100 that there is 'no doubt' that such systems have redistributed incomes more than any other socialist democracy governed capitalism. Apparently contradictory statements are made on state socialist accumulation rates (p. 85 and 155). Davis and Scase's state socialist classes are Weberian classes, despite much puffing over social relations of production.

It is asserted that crises in western capitalism are economic, whereas those of state socialism are political. The material alluded to in Chapters 7 and 9 frequently reflects the utility of the distinction. The authors are not economists to judge by their willingness to take seriously Ernst Mandel's status as an economist, and the thesis that rising organic compositions of capital 'explain' falling profit rates. The last chapter is less than 17 pages on green threats of one kind; new technology, unemployment, environment. However, the internationalisation of the global Cold War and the 1983 riots in Britain all get a link in Chapter 5. The question mark is the state's future and the chapter ends. Both authors have written good books before, but their introduction to important questions is a disappointment.

BRENDAN O'LEARY, London School of Economics


This is a stimulating book. Rather than write yet another target tome on economic theory, Arjo Klamer decided to conduct and reproduce a series of conversations with a number of American economists. These were primarily concerned with the development and preoccupations and weaknesses of the new classical macroeconomics. But they also touched on other matters, such as why these interviews first studied economics, who, or what, influenced their intellectual development, their relations with other economists and with other social scientists. The economics reviewed were all modelled and included, for example, Lucas, Sargent, Townsend, Tobin, Mofgalimi, Brunner, Gordon and Rapping.

A number of points arising from the book deserve special attention. First, the incredibly important impact of the rational expectations hypothesis on American economics, especially for the younger economists. Secondly, the significant divisions generated in the discipline by this