

in the world that were worse off than Kosovo at the time.” Despite endless humanitarian rhetoric, the West seemed inclined to act only when white Europeans were at risk, their deaths were reported on CNN, and their killers represented an unimportant state, in this case Serbia.

Despite the U.N.’s unending failures and only occasional, limited successes, Shawcross remains hopeful of international action “to make the world a little less horrible.” His book offers no policy prescriptions, but only experiences—experiences that should chasten anyone with grandiose ambitions about mounting global humanitarian crusades. His conclusion should be imprinted on the minds of U.S. policymakers: “humility is important. Not everything can be achieved, not every wrong can be righted simply because the international community desires it. We cannot suddenly rebuild failed states or failing territories into our own image; Bosnia will not become Michigan, nor Sierra Leone the Netherlands, just because we would like to see visions of harmony on our television screens.” □

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From Subsistence to Exchange and Other Essays

by Peter Bauer

Princeton University Press • 2000 • 168 pages
• \$19.95

Reviewed by Craig A. Depken II

Recent protests at the World Trade Organization meetings in Seattle, the International Monetary Fund in Washington, D.C., and the Republican and Democratic national conventions, seem to have reinvigorated the critics of globalization. Are economists at a loss to answer those protests?

Sadly, Lord Bauer has not been included in the recent debates over globalization. He offers cogent arguments to temper the anti-Western guilt that permeates the anti-globalization movement. Many economists

agree with Bauer as to what promotes economic growth, even if they are reluctant to admit such agreement in public.

This collection of Bauer’s essays gives us his explanation of the primary causes of economic growth. His writings are intellectually significant but likely to be ignored by the general press and anti-Western mouthpieces because what they suppose is the “disease” is actually the “cure”—economic development. The general debate over globalization is really a debate over trade and economic growth in the less-developed countries, and Bauer provides ample evidence and convincing logic showing why trade is good and why economic growth occurs for all the reasons anti-globalists claim it cannot.

Bauer observes that economic growth in the international arena occurs after domestic exchange has been established. Indeed, how are people in one country to establish trade relations with others if they cannot or do not trade amongst themselves? Further, he emphasizes the valuable mechanisms and mores that market exchange provides a society. The anti-globalists never grasp the importance of voluntary exchange, but Bauer shows it to be crucial.

Then Bauer reminds us of the obvious: that the developed countries of today were once underdeveloped. The surplus of resources available to the indigenous people of pre-Columbian North America did not guarantee economic growth. Likewise, the relative lack of natural resources did not impede Great Britain or the Asian Tigers from becoming developed. Rather, the innovative development of relatively free, stable, and resilient market exchange combined with contacts with other similar systems ensured that the lesser-developed and developing countries of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries are today developed. Today’s lesser-developed countries can attain prosperity in exactly the same manner.

The implicit warning Bauer gives is that obtaining the sacred title of “developed” will not and cannot occur overnight or even within a few years. Rather, the path to development may take generations; another point anti-globalists seem eager to dismiss.

Bauer contends that the coincidence of domestic markets and contact with the developed countries enable growth and development. Trade with the developed world expands choices, but it also increases local knowledge and institutionalizes the market structures that are necessary for growth. Rather than accuse the West of exporting hegemony, Bauer contends that contacts with Western societies motivate and facilitate development, regardless of location on the world map.

Conclusion: market economies offer the quickest route to sustained, environmentally friendly, and equal-opportunity growth. Bauer argues convincingly that assumed and directed guilt has made the West afraid to accept the ramifications of its success. Rather than apologize for their economic success, those who enjoy the benefits of relatively free economies should argue that the path to sustained, eco-friendly growth is to have more contacts with the West and to adopt laissez-faire policies.

Why read this collection? If one questions that what has been good for the West is also good for the rest of the world, Bauer offers argument and evidence to end your confusion: what has been good for the West, and the East, is good for *all* developing countries. If you bridle against Western "hegemony" and wish that economic growth would occur instantaneously, or only after massive wealth transfers from the West, Bauer offers a strong case for economic freedom. His ideas deserve a seat at the debate over globalization. □

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The Tyranny of Good Intentions

by Paul Craig Roberts and
Lawrence M. Stratton

Forum • 2000 • 242 pages • \$24.95

Reviewed by George C. Leef

How safe are people from the encroachments of government into their lives? That has varied from place to place and time to time. In Stalin's Soviet Union, for example, people had no security whatever. The rulers could do with them as they pleased because the concept of a sphere of personal freedom protected by the rule of law was unknown. Even the wealthy and powerful could be done away with when their superiors thought it expedient.

Contrast the situation of a high Soviet official like Nikolai Bukharin (who was summarily tried and executed in one of Stalin's purges) with that of an unemployed British coal miner at the same time. The lowly coal miner's life, liberty, and property were protected against government incursion as strongly as the crown jewels. "The Rights of Englishmen" was a revered notion that kept government in check.

Under our constitution and common-law heritage, Americans too enjoyed "the Rights of Englishmen," but as economist Paul Craig Roberts and legal scholar Lawrence M. Stratton demonstrate in *The Tyranny of Good Intentions*, we are losing the legal protections that our ancestors took for granted. The authors write, "America's reputation as the 'land of the free' is rooted in its Anglo Saxon legal and political tradition. As the twenty-first century begins, there is evidence that much of this tradition has been lost." They proceed to prove that the laws which once shielded Americans from grasping, self-promoting officials have been so weakened in recent decades that we are now at the mercy of politicians, bureaucrats, and especially rogue law-enforcement agents.

The examples Roberts and Stratton provide are numerous and frightening. One of the greatest of the holes in the rule of law has come from asset-forfeiture provisions, which