

policy in the 1990s."<sup>16</sup>

11. To follow the preceding logic, traditional comparative politics has to be suspected of lesser utility than the newly offered methodologies. The comparative politics' traditional approach is usually characterized by its configurative descriptive, formal-legalist, parochial, conservative, nontheoretical and methodological insensitive focus.<sup>17</sup> The traditional approach is theoretically reductionist, but at the same time clearly suitable to acquire intrapolitics knowledge (even if this knowledge may be irrelevant or ethnocentrically biased) of individual countries in a normatively based policy environment. However, if the policy planner has to attain a balance of priorities in a determined context characterized by the interdependence of individual countries, the traditional approach will fail him in many respects. First, the insufficient knowledge of political processes will misconstrue an already probable complex reality. Secondly, the assumption "that all political systems [are] inexorably and inevitably evolving in the direction of liberal democracy"<sup>18</sup> will distort the cost/benefit analysis necessary to establish a credible balance of priorities. Thirdly, the difficulty to act on interde-

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<sup>16</sup> External Affairs and International Trade Canada, Policy Planning Staff, Foreign Policy Themes and Priorities 1991-92 Update (Ottawa: EAITC, December 1991), page 2.

<sup>17</sup> For a detailed exposé and critique of the traditional approach, see James A. Bill and Robert L. Hardgrave, Jr, Comparative Politics: The Quest for Theory (Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill, 1973), pages 1-12.

<sup>18</sup> Bill and Hardgrave, Comparative Politics [...], page 6.