

constraint. In referring to this as a basic problem I have in mind a passage in Mr. W.W. Rostow's book on "The Stages of Economic Growth" in which he puts the point as follows:

"If we and our children are to live in a setting where something like the democratic creed is the basis of organization for most societies, including our own, the problems of the transition from traditional to modern status in Asia, the Middle East, and Africa .... must be solved by means which leave open the possibility of .... a humane, balanced evolution."

And he goes on to say that

"It will take an act of creative imagination to understand what is going forward in these decisive parts of the world; and to decide what it is that we can and should do to play a useful part in those distant processes."

These, then, are some of the political implications of foreign aid as I see them. But I do not want to be misunderstood. I do not conceive of foreign aid as a means of imposing our political views and attitudes on the developing countries. That, to my mind, would be a self-defeating objective. It would create suspicion and hostility instead of confidence which is the only sound basis on which an effective foreign aid programme can be conducted. Not only would a foreign aid programme with political strings be self-defeating but it would be unrealistic. We cannot, with the best will in the world, expect to promote the establishment of parliamentary democracies on the Westminster model all over the world. Many of the new countries bring traditions of their own to the political evolution upon which they are embarking and they will in due course evolve their own patterns of government and social organization. But what we can do -- and what I think it is legitimate for us to do -- is to enable these countries, at their own option, to develop -- to quote Barbara Ward once again -- "open societies in an open world".

In the light of what I have just said the question may be asked whether there are really no circumstances in which it would be permissible -- and perhaps even right -- to attach conditions to the provision of foreign aid. It is a question which I do not wish to avoid although it is a complex one and one which does not lend itself to dogmatic pronouncements. We do have to remember, I think, that the countries with which we are dealing are in many cases young countries, jealous of their independence and sensitive to anything that might be construed as circumscribing that independence. We also have to remember that there is no ready distinction to be drawn between different sets of conditions. Any condition is apt to be interpreted as being political in nature and design. This having been said, I think there is one condition which we have a right to attach to our aid and that is that it should be put to effective use. We can legitimately argue, I think, that the resources we allocate to foreign aid are intended to serve one overriding objective, which is to supplement the resources the developing countries themselves can manage to mobilize for their economic development. Where there is no sound indigenous development effort, foreign aid is unlikely to accomplish its objective.