Giuseppe Petrilli

L'ETAT ENTREPRENEUR

(The State as an Enterpriser)

Paris, The Robert Laffont Publishing House, 1971, 247 pages

The work was published in a first edition in Bologna (Italy), in 1967 and it has more a monographic character, having as an object the economic preoccupations of the Italian state, especially after the second world war, and the solving of economic problems through the Institute for Industrial Reconstruction-I.I.R. Comments, opinions and view revealing the author's point of view on problems, such as the justification of the public enterprises, the correctness of the "I.I.R formula" for the Italian state, regional policy, etc. often appear in the work. The work is, in fact, a synthesis brought up to date of some of the author's reflections and opinions published in the 1961—1966 period, on "the state as an enterpriser". For a better understanding of the author's stand, we should not neglect the fact that Giuseppe Petrilli was Italy's representative at the European Economic Community in the 1958—1960 period and since 1960 he is chairman of the I.I.R.

The first part of the work is devoted to "the ethics of public enterprises", in which the author is trying to substantiate the necessity for state intervention in economy. The author considers that the three ways of intervention about they speak, namely „the guiding economy" (économie dirigeante), "guided economy" (économie dirigée) and "mixed economy" (économie mixte) are, in essence, only two, because the first are similar. As a criterion of appreciation of the way of penetration of the state in economy, the author considers the frequency and intensity of the interventions of "public power" in economy(!). He defines mixed economy as "a series of occasional interventions of public power" (page 31) or "the stratification of political data achieved under the pressure of circumstances and linked to varied preoccupations (page 32)." The author realistically dwels on the necessity for the state to intervene in economy and, from the way in which he dwels on it, it results that one of its most important causes, generated by the capitalist society, is "social lack of balance" (page 40), manifested in cyclic crises, unemployment and social misery. Moreover, he considers wrongly that this social lack of balance may be brought to a normal state through the intervention of the state, especially through industrialization of a capitalist type (page 42).

The second part of the work has as an object the state as an enterpriser, in which after presenting the role and place of the state in the Italian economy, the author is making a comprehensive monograph of the Institute for Industrial Reconstruction. Having a capital

of 4.8 thousand million dollars (the third place among the non-American ones) and 320,000 employees, the Institute for Industrial Reconstruction is, in keeping with its statute, a "financial institute of public law" (page 216), but, in reality, an institute for the administration of the state participants in economy, and having 150 companies with most varied preoccupations subordinated to it: highroad building, public, industrial and shipbuilding works, the endorsement of banks, and of air and maritime lines, the turning out of most various products, television programmes, etc.

In the chapter "The I.I.R Formula" in the second part of the work, the author presents in detail the economic structure of the group. It obviously results from it that through its structure, the I.I.R is a "parapublic holding" (see also page 11) and through its preoccupations, a guide of the state's economic policy (see also pages 92 and 93).

In the chapter "I.I.R., Planning and Socialization", the author is trying to present I.I.R as a group of "a new type". To this purpose, he uses the well known arguments of concilliation between the trade-unions and the state, of the association of social partners, of the attraction of workers into the leadership of the group through the system of participants, etc. Setting out from here, the author returns to the very topical problem, of the state's intervention in economy, considering that this problem "appears alone today" (page 96) and "identifies itself with the interventions within the general framework of economic programming (ibidem). The author further considers that the state's intervention in economy is of a nature to facilitate co-ordination between the activities of various administration organisms, in other words, the wellknown and unrealizable desideratum of co-ordination through the state of the diametrically opposed of the various capitalists and groups of capitalists. On this basis, the author is trying, in conclusion of the second part and later, in the fifth part of the work, to substantiate European integration.

In the third part of the work, the author makes an interesting analysis of some of the most important problems of Italian economy: the place and role of the central zone in Italian economy, the place and role of the southern zone in Italian economy, urbanism and its effects, the dimensioning of the enterprises, etc. This part ends with and interesting attempt at making a prognosis of Italian economy, in the first years of the 70th decade.

Finally, the fourth part of the work dwells on special problems, such as the state's regional policy, intervention in the under-developed zones, professional training and technical assistance to the developing countries.

The work ends with several appendages worth mentioning among which are "The community public sector" (a comprehensive presentation of the state sector in the Common Market countries) and "The Enterprises and the I.I.R. Organs".

Radu Stroe