

Basic problems of small countries

When I asked Professor Karl Deutsch what were the basic problems of small countries, he presented me with five themes for expansion and comment. The main problems of small countries, in Professor Deutsch's opinion, are:

1. Quality and Competence
2. Coordination with large corporations and countries
3. Overcoming their own excessive ambitions
4. Growing or dying (but growth need not be territorial)
5. Defense against the aggressions and fear of neighboring countries

Concerning the last point, it is necessary to have enough soldiers to defend one's country, but not be so aggressive as to frighten one's neighboring countries.

Karl Deutsch asserts that governments and officials in large countries have little time for people. But it is very important that the administration has great interest and concern for people, listens to them and worries about them. Thus speaks the great humanist!

A small country has more limited means, fewer specialists, and is never sure of having enough people with specifically needed knowledge, as for example in medicine, and may have to depend on external sources for the less common specialties.

Karl Deutsch believes that small countries should be productive, but that it is not necessary for them to be rich to be productive. Success is not a matter of only individual effort, because in a happy and successful country people can help each other in many ways.

Karl Deutsch has been distinguished by his many works and publications on the problems of nationalism. We considered whether there was now a new wave of small country nationalism emerging, particularly in Eastern Europe.