

sity of Iowa library. Perhaps Dr. Reigelman was wise in keeping the final section of "The Literature" to a mere twenty-seven pages. Perhaps the prose is dated, the poetry third-rate. Yet, it is impossible to forget that fall day in 1966 when John Frederick, still burdened with his American Dream, read one of those *Midland* stories by Ruth Suckow to an Iowa University class of eighty graduate students. When he finished, they applauded.

—Brooke Workman
Iowa City

The Politics of American Individualism: Herbert Hoover in Transition, 1918-1921, by Gary Dean Best. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1975. pp. vi, 202. Notes, bibliography, index. \$13.50.

Gary Dean Best has illuminated in this volume a most significant period in Twentieth Century American political history. Recent scholarship of Herbert Hoover identifies him during this period, 1918-1921, with progressivism and internationalism. This author attempts to illustrate how Hoover's progressive and internationalistic actions in this postwar era were really an outgrowth of his public philosophy of American Individualism and did not originate from any particular zeal for either progressivism or internationalism as such. In focusing on Hoover, Best deals extensively with the short-lived, but enthusiastic Hoover "boom" for the presidency; the Industrial "Peace" Conference of 1919-1920; and Hoover's spirited campaign on behalf of ratification of the Treaty of Versailles with reservations. There is also good background information on the former president's European endeavors during the First World War which prepared him for the American political arena.

Herbert Hoover returned to the United States from Europe in September, 1919, as the best known man in the country except for President Woodrow Wilson. As the engineer of the Commission for Relief in Belgium, the domestic Food Administration and the American Relief Administration in Europe, the Iowan developed a large popular following that ultimately became an unusual springboard from which to launch a presidential bid. According to the author, Hoover tried in the immediate postwar years to give adhesion to his political philosophy which became known as American Individualism. Best feels that this philosophy was Hoover's "alternative to the destructive collectivist philosophies he had encountered in postwar Europe."

However, the author has written a more comprehensive political history of the period than he admits. The scramble for the presidential nomination in both parties is fairly well outlined. Hoover was touted for the nomination in both parties much like Dwight Eisenhower in 1952. Largely because of his service in Wilson's "war cabinet" and his support of the Versailles Treaty, Hoover was identified with the Democratic administration of Woodrow Wilson and for a time was the leading contender for that party's nomination. But by April, 1920, he had formally rejected the possibility of a Democratic nomination, and had begun concentrating his efforts in the Republican theatre. Hoover stated throughout his presidential campaign in 1920 that he was more interested in the advancement of issues than in his own political progress. Even after Hoover lost the California primary to Hiram Johnson and subsequently lost the nomination, he continued to influence the Republican party on several issues, particularly the ratification of the peace treaty. Best's style of writing is well-suited for capturing the political flavor of the era and he has done a fine job, however, it would be interesting to see what Hoover's reactions were to a few other political topics of the time, most notably the "red scare" of A. Mitchell Palmer.

All in all, the book was intelligently organized, skillfully written and researched, and well worth doing, but not sound

in its conclusion; the author falls short of his stated purpose. The typing together of Hoover's actions with his philosophy of American Individualism is unconvincing. Even in the book's final chapter entitled "Conclusion," only a paragraph is devoted to this matter, which seems strange given the title and intent of this work. Also, Best could have done a better job of proofreading; a few obvious errors in the bibliography as well as the text detract from an otherwise well-ordered book. Nevertheless, this volume is an indispensable source of information. Students of Hoover will benefit from this, the fullest picture of Hoover during this most crucial period of his political development. The real value of this volume is Best's coverage of the Hoover "boom and campaign" for the presidency. Perhaps a more appropriate title for this book would be *The Political Education of Herbert Hoover, 1918-1921*. A slim volume, the price of \$13.50 is exorbitant.

—Dennis M. Shockley
Kansas State University

Research in the Administration of Public Policy, edited by Frank B. Evans and Harold T. Pinkett. Washington, D.C.: Howard University Press, 1975. pp. xiv, 229. \$9.95.

In 1970 the National Archives and Records Service sponsored a Conference on Research in the Administration of Public Policy, the seventh in a series designed to increase communications between archivists and the scholarly community. The specific purpose of this conference was to stimulate interest in the study of the performance and history of federal government agencies. Five sessions were devoted to bringing together researchers concerned with the subject, to noting how archival resources had been used in the past, and to suggesting ways in which archives could be used more extensively in the future.

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