

## Book Reviews

*The Earnest Men: Republicans of the Civil War Senate*, by Allan G. Bogue. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1981. pp. 341. Appendixes, index. \$28.50.

In previous articles, chapters, and scholarly papers, Allan G. Bogue, professor of history at the University of Wisconsin, has whetted our appetite for this book. More than a decade in coming, it lives up to expectations.

The historiographical origins of this study reach back at least to the publication by the late T. Harry Williams of a provocative book, *Lincoln and the Radicals*. Williams asserted that the wartime Republican party contained a substantial bloc of Radicals, opposed to Lincoln and his conservative program. Unified as a group, revolutionary in outlook, intent on ushering in industrial capitalism, they forced emancipation upon a reluctant president, pushed through the use of Negro soldiers and confiscation laws, and defeated the president's Reconstruction policy. Ultimately, Lincoln surrendered to the Radicals. Williams' interpretation was buttressed with earlier studies by Charles A. Beard and Howard K. Beale.

Levelling their guns at Williams, Beard, and Beale, a number of historians questioned the unity of the Radicals and the arguments that they were conscious forerunners of industrial capitalism, sharply differed with Lincoln, and conquered the president. They were, rather, "Devils Facing Zionwards" and "Vanguards for Racial Justice."

Bogue's book, as his subtitle states, concentrates on the Republicans only in the upper chamber. Unlike Williams, who leaned heavily upon quotations of rhetoric, Bogue makes sophisticated use of roll-call analysis procedures, especially the cluster-bloc technique and the Guttman scale. At the same time he has examined the scholarly literature, especially biography, and apparently every senatorial sentence in the *Congressional Globe*. The result is an impressive piece of scholarship, admirable in its mastery of methodology, thorough in its research, and thoughtful in its conclusions. Preliminary to his study Bogue analyzes the socioeconomic characteristics of the

senators, committee leadership, committee rules, and personal and political connections with one another. Radical Republicans were set off from moderates by a continuum of antislavery and southern issues.

There follow four chapters examining specific issues—"the substance of disagreement"—beginning with slaves, soldiers, and taxes. In the first chapter he inquires into Radical-moderate splits over freeing slaves in the District of Columbia, a provision of the Militia Act enrolling blacks as soldiers, and a proposal concerning the Internal Revenue Bill of 1862. The differences between Radicals and moderates, here and elsewhere in the opinion of this reviewer, were not over the major thrusts of the legislation; in these instances the divisions were over colonizing blacks freed in the District, various questions dealing with enrolling slaves of loyal (but not rebel) masters, and an amendment that would tax slaves.

In a chapter on emancipation and "human rights" the emancipation measures concern West Virginia and Missouri. The question about West Virginia was not the constitutional one of whether to admit a state wrung from another state, nor whether to require emancipation, but whether emancipation in the new state was to be gradual or immediate. Similarly, the question about Missouri was not one of making a congressional pledge to render assistance to states voluntarily abolishing slavery, but over the exact date and cost of emancipation. In debate over repeal of the fugitive slave laws, differences arose over inclusion of the law of 1793 along with the infamous measure of 1850.

"Human rights" issues included an amendment to a judiciary bill that would prohibit excluding blacks as witnesses (passed); an amendment to a bill incorporating a street railroad in the District of Columbia that would prohibit excluding blacks from any car (passed); and amendments to bills for the Territory of Montana and the District of Columbia that would extend suffrage to blacks (both failed). A bill to create a freedmen's bureau and a resolution to initiate the Thirteenth Amendment did not occasion significant factional disagreement.

In a chapter on punishment and rehabilitation the author observes that confiscation occupied more of the time of the 37th Congress (1861-63) than any other subject, dividing Republican senators, straining relations between the Congress and the president, and influencing Lincoln in proclaiming emancipation. One of Bogue's more striking assertions is over the importance of reconstruction (rehabilitation) measures in the first three years of the war. Countering the claims of Herman Belz that reconstruction was a significant issue from

the war's start, Bogue asserts it gained little attention in the 37th Congress. As to the notorious Wade-Davis Bill by which Congress challenged the president's reconstruction program, Bogue notes that debate was concentrated in the last five days of the session, unlike the extended great debate over confiscation, and that the Wade-Davis Manifesto attracted more attention than the bill which fell afoul of a pocket veto.

A chapter on courts, border states, and governance and self-control of the Senate results in pointing to only a modicum of disagreement among Republican senators.

Having concluded his survey of "the substance of disagreement," Bogue proceeds to reflect upon motives and purposes. He finds Radicals more punitive than the moderates, more confident of the Negro potential than the moderates, and more willing to strain constitutional limits than the moderates. Indeed, in trying to ascertain the line of division between the factions he suggests that differences in interpreting the Constitution explain much and the Beard/Beale dwelling on the economic dimension is of less importance. The Constitution and racial attitudes opened diverging avenues to Radicals and moderates as they considered Southern and racial issues. Perhaps above all, their earnestness in vigorously prosecuting the war gave Radicals their unity.

Having elaborately argued that Republican senators were significantly divided during the war, Bogue apparently sees no contradiction in his observation that during the war the Republicans enacted a far-reaching program, making "massive progress" in achieving reform and enacting enduring legislation. Nor does he assert that Republican senatorial dissension impeded the war effort. Republican senators voted as Republicans on the great measures to raise an army, finance the war, and free the slaves of rebels. Had they split on these issues, the outcome of the war might have been changed. He acknowledges that party cohesion is increased when the party majority is small; in this case the Republicans held overwhelming control of the Senate and perhaps could afford to have their differences. Bogue is virtually silent on the matter of relations between the Radicals and Lincoln.

The author, who owes something of this book to his former Iowa association, is to be saluted for his achievement in producing this meticulous and thoughtful study. Whether or not he will end the great historiographical debate over the Radicals is speculative.

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