

Book Reviews

the required 199 others had been signed up and paid their dues.

He believed in "education" of all kinds and at all levels, but he was among the first to insist against bitter opposition that it was not enough to "educate" Farm Bureau members to be better corn producers and better livestock producers—production was not the problem. The Farm Bureau had to take the lead in acquiring better marketing methods and facilities, and it must assist in creating a better life for its members. Yet James R. Howard was never a "do-gooder" and, for whatever it is worth in the debate of the 1980s, he was never a believer in the idea that "government" could or should solve the farmers' problems for them. He was never mistaken for a special pleader for agriculture at the nation's expense. He was not a supporter of McNary-Haugenism, for example, when it would have been much easier to ride along on that wave; he simply did not believe that it would "work" and he said so. He was much nearer to the philosophy of the true Herbert Hoover (not the caricature of H. R. Gross's Farmers Union days) than that of Henry A. Wallace. Being the sort of man he was, he was not a frenzied crusader against McNary-Haugenism; in his quiet honest manner he simply pointed out the reasons why that system would not work, and suggested alternatives for farmers to try in their own behalf. If Herbert Hoover placed his main reliance on farmer cooperatives, the same could be said for James R. Howard. Where and how he would line up among farm leaders of the 1980s no one can be sure, but one can well believe that his principles of the 1920s would not have changed one iota.

UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA

LELAND L. SAGE, EMERITUS

Menominee Drums: Tribal Termination and Restoration, 1954-1974, by Nicholas C. Peroff. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1982. pp. xiii, 275. Photographs, appendix, references, index. \$19.95.

Recently scholars from a variety of academic disciplines have produced narrative and analytical works on Indian policy of the last half century. Commissioner John Collier and the "Indian New Deal" are being reevaluated, Eisenhower administration policy surveyed, and modern tribal histories using oral interviews published. Nicholas C. Peroff, associate professor of public affairs at the University of Missouri-Kansas City, continues that trend with a study of congressional policy relating to a specific group, the Menominee of northeastern Wisconsin.

In 1854 the Menominee accepted a reservation west of Green Bay but retained ownership of valuable timber resources. They initiated

sustained-yield forest management and with the aid of the Bureau of Indian Affairs constructed a sawmill that became the principal source of employment. By 1951, within the terms of Indian-government relations, they were among the most self-sufficient tribes in the nation. Seeking to establish a new policy that would eliminate federal responsibility toward Indian people, Congress wanted to start with those seeming to be most prosperous and most easily integrated. With little serious investigation or debate, the Menominee were terminated May 1, 1961—an action described by the author as “one of the most ill-considered Congressional experiments in the history of national Indian policy.”

Utah Republican senator Arthur V. Watkins was a leading force behind the new initiative. Although he saw the natives as unwanted federal burdens, many others related termination to the civil rights legislation of the 1950s and 1960s. Although several alternatives existed, the former reservation became Wisconsin's seventy-second county, a decision favored by some because it would enhance tribal self-reliance, forestall liquidation of assets, preserve a “homeland,” and hopefully avoid discrimination by whites in adjoining counties. But the new county became “an instant pocket of poverty.” The tax base was inadequate to support needed government services; the economy lacked diversity and depended on a fluctuating market for forest products; leaders had limited experience in nonreservation politics or business management. Despite protests from Wisconsin officials who did not want to assume a financial obligation, tribal consent was not required; the standard of living in every significant category was among the lowest in the state.

Menominee people opposed termination, but they were so deeply divided that effective protest failed to materialize immediately. The tribe was split into various opposing factions: elites who controlled political power and nonelites, non-Christians and Catholics, reservation residents and nonresidents, interfamily feuds between “real,” “half breeds,” and “squaw men” (whites who married Indian women). By 1970, however, opposition began to build; DRUMS was organized in Milwaukee and Chicago. Jim White provided flamboyant leadership to maintain tribal enthusiasm and journalistic interest; Ada Deer lobbied effectively among private interest groups, state officials, and key federal personnel. Rather than attack termination directly they sought to overthrow elites in county government and Menominee Enterprises Incorporated. MEI had been formed to control tribal assets and its board majority of whites working through the First Wisconsin Trust Company generated great resentment. Vocal demonstrations protested the development of recreational sites—Legend Lake—by

Book Reviews

N. E. Isaacson and Associates. Within three years DRUMS controlled MEI and tribal affairs and instilled a sense of pride and self-confidence. With support from Richard Nixon, the first president to speak out strongly against termination, and a more sympathetic political climate, on December 22, 1973, Congress restored federal recognition and protection and reestablished most of the former reservation. DRUMS succeeded through strong determination, political sophistication, the "politics of conscience," growing Indian militancy, and a belief that termination had impeded rather than helped self sufficiency.

The author intelligently pieces together the story of policy development over two decades. Five sections of photographs enhance the narrative and an appendix contains copies of the principal legislation. It is, however, a rather cold policy-oriented history; the diverse personalities involved in the struggle are not sufficiently developed. The author tries to place the Menominee within an anthropology, sociology, and public policy framework. The text often refers to personal interviews, and although individuals are thanked in the acknowledgements, they are not properly documented. The first chapter contains a cursory outline of assimilation policy with very dated sources. The entire book seems to have been written more than six years before publication; nothing is said about the impact of restoration, now a decade old. Very few sources are cited after 1974, even the same publisher's tribal history by Patricia K. Ourada is not included. Despite these concerns, this is a well written study and does enhance our growing knowledge of recent federal Indian policy.

UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA

DAVID A. WALKER

Tribalism in Crisis: Federal Indian Policy, 1953-1961, by Larry W. Burt. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1982. pp. x, 180. Notes, bibliography, index. \$17.50 cloth.

The policy of termination in the 1950s marked a major phase in the history of United States Indian policy. To Indian leaders it was a frightening development, and the term still brings an immediate and negative reaction. It was a policy that was implemented at a time when Indian leaders had become increasingly sophisticated and had formed the National Congress of American Indians to defend Indian interests. That organization printed the first study of termination by Gary Orfield; now seventeen years later two books on the topic have appeared within the space of just a few months: *Menominee Drums*, by Nicholas Peroff, is the study of the impact of termination on one tribe, while Larry W. Burt of Northern Montana College seeks to

Copyright of Annals of Iowa is the property of State of Iowa, by & through the State Historical Society of Iowa and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.