

J.O.P., V. 18, N. 2 (May 1956)  
pp. 358-360

quote or mark for attention. Especially striking is a comparison of two great war Presidents: "Where Wilson's moral absolutes had made him incompetent to deal with the art of the possible, Roosevelt's natural aptitude and liking for the art of the possible made him lose sight of the moral absolutes" (p. 381). In line with this view, the author regards the Atlantic Charter as the high point of American wartime foreign policy; and every subsequent modification of it for reasons of military expediency, as at Yalta, as backward steps.

In sum, this reviewer feels that Mr. Warburg has succeeded, particularly in the latter half of his book, in viewing the past from a standpoint which sheds useful light on our problems in the present and future. It is an eminently readable book which commends itself to scholars and interested citizen alike.

JOHN L. CHASE

*Louisiana State University*

*Conservatism in America.* By CLINTON ROSSITER. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1955. Pp. 327, xii. \$4.00.)

The main question concerning Professor Rossiter's book is whether conservatives are going to get nourishment for the spirit from it. Liberal reviewers have already pronounced in its favor, which, to the conservative, is a bad sign. A conservative may adopt two different attitudes toward liberals. He may try to be nice to them, as Rossiter does, on the theory that there is some good in all men; or, he may be consciously articulate about the chasm that exists between conservatives and liberals both in the theory of existence and in practical political programs. It is perhaps a little ironic that Rossiter's book was awarded the Charles Austin Beard Memorial Prize for 1954, for Beard has become the scholarly protagonist of the so-called "ultra" conservatives in foreign policy, and [*l'Eminence grise*] of the liberals and left-wingers when it comes to the proposition that there is no moral issue outside of economics.

There is no question about it: in many ways this is a brilliant work, well-written, imaginative, and withal fiercely polemical in its

shading of American history. Its great defect is that Rossiter has not written about conservatism in a general context, in the light of the European tradition of conservative life. It might have made some difference had the European and Conservative theory of reform been before his eyes as he wrote of conservatives and reformers on the American scene. One might query the frequent use of "motive" as an argument, for it is, indeed, difficult to know the motives of a person when he takes a position; if a psychological position is suggested it proves too much, since the analysis of the writer himself must be introduced in order to understand the argument completely. Where Rossiter insists that certain kinds of conservatives seem to lack integrity, such an issue is most important. He is harsh in his judgments on business men, and in this the left-wingers will take delight. Somehow I feel the author has missed the actual attitudes of business men. He has taken too seriously, I believe, the liberal mythology about Carnegie, for example, and the business men of the great post-Civil War era. Somehow the Congressmen I have known are different from those described in this volume. They seem to determine issues about government function in a way different from that implied in Rossiter. The author has, perhaps, forgotten that *laissez faire* was a protest, even to Sumner, against what government was actually doing. It is easy to question the integrity of a member of management or a Congressman, but it is not easy to prove it. It seems to me fatal to conservatives to let liberals tell them the kind of conservatism America ought to have.

The volume begins with essays in definition, which in general will command more agreement among conservatives than the rest of the book. From this point, Rossiter proceeds to discuss American conservatism from 1607 to 1865, and then from 1865 to 1933. The succeeding chapter considers conservatism in the age of Roosevelt and Eisenhower, while the latter sections of the book are designed to be constructive. There is first "A Hard Look at American Conservatism," then "A Conservative Theory for American Democracy," and finally "A Conservative Program for American Democracy." One can never say that Rossiter has evaded judgments about people, either historical or with us in the flesh. No student of conservatism can, I believe, agree with all of these judgments, and in this sense the work is bound to be both irritating and consoling to the conservative. Any conservative can gather personal material

R as  
anti-business

from this volume, but how much of a conservative program he can build on Rossiter is another question.

One final quotation on the mission of the conservative is suitable: "to prevent reactionaries and standpatters from exploiting the conservative urge in order to block normal progress; to scrutinize, criticize, and often oppose flatly the eager proposals of liberals and radicals; to insist that change represent progress, keep continuity with our past, and be worked by constitutional methods; to keep an eye out for damage to basic institutions and traditions; to remind us courageously of the strengths and weaknesses of the materials—American men and women—with which we are working; and to take command themselves at moments of decision and abrupt transition. It will not be easy . . . but the conservative mission is never easy" (p. 293).

FRANCIS G. WILSON

*The University of Illinois*

*Bill of Rights Readers: Leading Constitutional Cases.* By MILTON R. KONVITZ. (Ithaca: 1954. Pp. xix, 591. \$6.50.)

Professor Konvitz's new volume, the most recent in the Cornell Studies in Civil Liberties, is the best case book on civil rights and civil liberties in existence. Concentrating on recent dramatic developments in the field, it is devoted largely to cases decided during the last two decades; eighty per cent of the decisions were rendered by the Roosevelt and Vinson courts. Unlike C. H. Pritchett's interpretive studies of *The Roosevelt Court* and *Civil Liberties and the Vinson Court*, however, this volume presents the source materials for a close study of one of the persistent problems in human affairs—the crucial issues of freedom and restraint—and invites the reader to weigh for himself the various views of majority, concurring, and dissenting opinions, or, as Konvitz phrases it, to participate in the enlightening experience of overhearing the judicial "dialogue between man and man."

Interpreting the Bill of Rights broadly, the editor includes not only the first ten amendments but the Civil War amendments also, as well as the provisions of the Constitution pertaining to *habeas corpus*, bills of attainder, *ex post facto* laws, trial by jury, and