

Stave, Bruce M., editor. *Socialism and the Cities*. Port Washington, N.Y.: Kennikat Press, 1975. Pp. ix, 212. \$13.50

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rather than diminished the sense of local community membership, and enlarged rather than reduced the spheres of collective social action.

Generalizing from the specific findings of this study, the author concludes that the rapid growth of national and regional institutions during the age of Jacksonian democracy did more than expand the consciousness and activities of previously insular American farmers. By creating large and small urban centers, it produced as well a countercurrent of parochial identity and increased the significance of towns within the emerging national society. [A.F.J. Artibise, University of Victoria].

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Stave, Bruce M., editor. Socialism and the Cities. Port Washington, N.Y.: Kennikat Press, 1975. Pp. ix, 212. \$13.50.

This is a book about some of the rare successes of twentieth century American socialism and, paradoxically, about the failures inherent in that success. It is a study of municipal socialism, or more accurately, of six urban parties or governments that called themselves socialist. For the common theme of these collected essays is that the purveyors of socialism at the local level could sell their product only by adulterating it - they could establish socialist governments only by ceasing to be socialist.

As Walter Lippmann concluded in 1913, after his own disillusioning experience as administrative assistant to the socialist mayor of Schenectady, the basic reason for this defeat in victory was that socialist governments in America were voted into office by an essentially non-socialist electorate. Anxious to win power and then to successfully exercise and retain it, socialists moderated their radical rhetoric and jettisoned the parts of their program that demanded heavy taxation of business or personal property. As socialists championed open, honest government, tighter regulation of business, an eight-hour day for municipal employees, or even public ownership of streetcars and waterworks, it was difficult to distinguish socialism from advanced

progressivism. And when socialists emphasized the need for cost accounting, central purchasing, and maintaining good credit ratings, it was difficult to distinguish socialism from the orthodoxy of the local Rotary Club. In the 1920's, Mayor Dan Hoan, of Milwaukee, was dubiously complimented for being "one-tenth socialist and nine-tenths businessman".

The essays in Stave's volume describe the electoral triumphs and the performance in office of socialist governments in Milwaukee, Bridgeport, Reading, and Schenectady. The authors indicate that all of these governments rode to power on the back of public dissatisfaction with usually scandal-ridden incumbent regimes. The socialists generally won support from skilled labour, reformers, and some older stock ethnic voters (particularly Germans), but such support proved tenuous as organized labour pursued its own narrowly conceived economic interest, as reformers drifted away, and as ethnic voters became increasingly acculturated. Unable or unwilling to offer an appealing radical program to newer ethnic voters (including Afro-Americans) and torn by the same dissensions that wracked the national party, socialists struggled to retain their popular appeal. When they succeeded, they inevitably did so at the expense of doctrinal purity.

Other essays in the book deal with unsuccessful socialist parties in Oklahoma City and Passaic, New Jersey. These articles are of lesser value, and, combined with a long (albeit interesting) collective biography of the rank-and-file socialist agitators who sold subscriptions to the Appeal to Reason, distract the reader from the book's basic themes. As with so many other edited collections, what is gained in diversity of subject and approach is lost through the sacrifice of overall unity and coherence.

At a time when most historical attention is focused on the Socialist party at the national level, this volume offers some useful microscopic views of local party activities - of socialists actually in power. These views, in turn, provide at least some evidence for and against various theories as to why socialism failed to prosper nationally. The book does, in a minor way, achieve its essential purpose: "to help provide the detailed studies necessary for scholars

to formulate a coherent critical theory for the investigation of American socialism". [Wesley T. Wooley, University of Victoria].

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Callow, Alexander B., ed. The City Boss in America: An Interpretive Reader. Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1976, Pp. xi, 335. \$6.95.

In the middle of the nineteenth century a major transformation took place in American life, and the agrarian society which had been dominant was replaced by a modern, urban and industrialized society, a society which created an American original - the city boss. This anthology covers the history of the city boss, from the middle of the nineteenth century to the present. Six sections containing twenty-seven articles cover critical features of machine politics: the rise of the boss, the running of the machine, the boss and the immigrant, corruption, the boss and the reformer, and the modern machine. Each is preceded by a commentary by the editor which supplements the selections. The selections themselves are interpretive rather than descriptive, and are taken from the works of specialists in urban studies, ranging from historians, political scientists, and sociologists to journalists and politicians. Together the essays provide a solid background for understanding urban politics by describing the role and functions of the old-fashioned machine, its response to modern urbanization, and the ways in which it has evolved and changed through time.

The City Boss in America also contains a short but useful select bibliography. [A.F.J. Artibise, University of Victoria].

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Schwartz, Barry, ed. The Changing Face of the Suburbs. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1976. Pp. ix, 355. \$16.00.

During the 1960's, when the problems of the cities commanded so much attention, city populations in the United States were for the