

reaction against them, was the young director of the Justice Department's Radical Division, J. Edgar Hoover, who would long figure prominently in anticommunist causes.

Indeed, as Powers demonstrates, there came to be a variety of anticommunist causes. As internationalists eventually recognized both the foreign and domestic implications of communism, some among them, such as guild and craft unions within organized labor and the Catholic Church within organized religion, became actively resistant to communist ideology and its advocates. Similarly, isolationists would divide ranks, some espousing antisemitism in their opposition to communism, some proclaiming highly implausible conspiracy theories that irresponsibly implicated statesman, scholars, and clergyman as communists, and some attempted to warn of the threat at home without entangling themselves with the more disreputable practitioners of the anticommunists creed.

Powers' account is thorough and balanced: anticommunist leaders, organizations, and publications all along the left-right spectrum of American politics are identified and discussed. The author does not shy away from making evaluations of and rendering judgments about those included in his narrative. For example, he deems the Liberty Lobby "even wackier than the John Birch Society" (p. 356). He concludes with the resurgence of the internationalists during the Reagan administration. The primary vehicle was the Committee on the Present Danger; the cause was re-establishment of American economic and military capacity adequate to assure peace with security; the principal objectives were increased armament for the United States, restricting Soviet access to Western capital and technology, limiting Soviet influence over the nonaligned nations, and containing and isolating China. The success of this effort contributed to the collapse of the Soviet Union, and the end of the history of American anticommunism.

However, in recounting the history of the movement, Powers may not have fulfilled part of his responsibility as a historian. Arguably, anticommunism may be only one manifestation of some larger or deeper underlying phenomenon in our history. Nativist fears of a domestic conspiracy or foreign threat have swept the nation, in whole or in large part, on various occasions in our past, resulting in reactive movements, organizations, and publications. Although Powers, unfortunately, makes no mention of this background in his account, the history of this larger nativist reaction appears to continue. With the disappearance of the Soviet Union, Americans who once attributed objectionable public policy developments to the presence of "communists in our government" have lately made simply "government" their new scapegoat.

Politics and the American Public Library: Creating Political Support for Library Goals. By Edwin Beckerman. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 1996. 169 pages. \$37.50 (cloth). ISBN 0-8108-3115-5. LC 95-50135.

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Public library administrators face a variety of challenges in promoting their institutions' interests. These include dealing with elected and appointed municipal government officials, friends groups, library boards, challenges to collection holdings by ideologically

diverse individuals and groups, not to mention just meeting the information needs of their respective communities. *Politics and the American Public Library* offers some possible solutions from a former New Jersey public library director, and discusses how to advance library interests effectively in a continually changing political and economic environment.

Beckerman addresses topics such as the public library serving as a local government agency, libraries and local political environments, determining what public libraries are and what they want, stimulating community awareness of library needs, Special Library Districts, and the myriad diversity of American local government administration and politics. Maxims that Beckerman believes are essential for effectual operation in local political structures include knowing the library's principal goals and objectives, local community circumstances, the basic policy emphasis of local government administration, knowing local government municipal rules and regulations, presenting defensible budgets to governing authorities, providing accurate information and responses to local policy makers, cultivating public support for library aims, and having an acute sense of political timing.

Beckerman's treatise is a pragmatic guide to the political process that should be useful to all library directors. His emphasis on the importance of flexibly adapting library political advocacy to local needs and resources is particularly salient. However, the book could have been strengthened further by making the argument to municipal policy makers on the roles that appropriate library personnel and resources could play in meeting official information requirements in areas ranging from policy analysis to economic development. This ought to include clearer guidelines that advocate a gateway role for libraries and librarians in facilitating public access to emerging national and international information infrastructures.

This work should, nevertheless, prompt all librarians to recognize the need for pragmatic political behavior and prudent strategy in advocating what we consider to be vital institutional and professional interests.

The Presidential Papers on CD-ROM: Messages and Papers of the Presidents, Washington-Taft. Provo, UT: CDEX Information Group, 1995. Washington-Taft CD, \$1,000.00; Presidential Papers II CD, \$4,000.00. For use with Windows.

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The CDEX Information Group offers researchers a window to the past by producing *The Presidential Papers on CD-ROM*. By bringing together two remarkably rich sets of documents, CDEX has taken a significant step forward in the effort to provide easy access to primary historical resources. The winning combination of unique and important information, along with flexible, user friendly software, would make this compilation a considerable asset to any research library collection.

The Presidential Papers on CD-ROM is a compilation of the *Messages and Papers of the Presidents, Washington-Taft*, and the *Public Papers of the Presidents, Hoover-Bush* (FDR is not included). The paper compilation of this 7,900 page, 10-volume set was authorized by the congressional Joint Committee on Printing (JCP) in 1894. James D. Richardson,