Books Received

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Despite the pre-eminent position accorded to energy in domestic politics, the United States has been unable to develop a comprehensive national energy policy. The authors of this book suggest four reasons for this failure: (1) disagreement (and perhaps widespread ignorance) about fundamental economic and environmental facts; (2) uncertainty about the results commonly suggested energy policies would produce; (3) difficulty in choosing between short-term and long-term objectives; (4) lack of a clear national consensus as to long-term goals. They address all four of these policy barriers in a comprehensive, refreshing, and understandable approach to the “energy problem.” While analyzing available alternatives and strategies to guide the country to a realistic energy policy, the authors neither take a “doomsday” approach nor gloss over areas of controversy and uncertainty. Nor do they pretend to have all the answers.


The publication is the second in a series in American Enterprise Institute’s project, “A Decade of Study of the Constitution.” This volume explores the relationship between a free, democratic government and a capitalistic, economic system by examining the Constitution in its historical, political, and economic contexts. Contributors to the volume present arguments for and against the idea that capitalism provides the foundation for a constitutional, democratic society. As the editors explain, where one stands on that controversy has an important bearing on the way we decide to adjust the relationship between government and the economy today. That is, should we preserve an economic market free of all but minimum political control or should the government exert control over the economy so that inequalities are diminished and the democratic promise is fulfilled.


Intended as an educational tool, this book introduces the intermediate-level student to contemporary social and political theory. The first part of the book deals with conceptual problems involved in the explanation of social institutions such as rules, laws, and society. The second part of the book focuses on values, particularly analyzing such concepts as justice, equality, liberty, democracy, and human rights. The author provides an interesting slant to these contemporary problems in political theory through his “liberal-rationalist” ap-
proach. His concern, as a “liberal-rationalist,” is to examine the consequences
of accepting certain principles in lieu of advancing party or class interests. In
his examination he critically evaluates Marxist and other socialist approaches.
Thus, the book is a worthwhile overview of contemporary political theory
even to those students who reject his “liberal-rationalist” approach.

POLITICAL REALITIES: ISSUES IN BRITISH POLITICS SINCE 1945. By L.J. Mac-
notes, index. $6.95 paper.

As part of a series of books aimed at breaking from the traditional ap-
proach to presenting British civics, this book attempts to show how and why
various concerns have become issues of political controversy. Beginning with
a look at the nature of political issues, the author gives his readers a compre-
hensive overview of the social, economic, and external issues, as well as issues
of principle which have arisen in British politics since World War II. Despite
the brief treatment of broad topics, the author provides a method of political
analysis and numerous notes and references to guide young readers in further
research.

PROPOSED REVISIONS OF THE FOREIGN CORRUPT PRACTICE ACT. Washington

Discovery by the Securities and Exchange Commission that several United
States corporations had used their corporate funds to influence foreign officials
in conducting business affairs, prodded the 94th Congress to enact the Foreign
Corrupt Practice Act (F.C.P.A.). The F.C.P.A. imposes bookkeeping and ac-
counting controls on certain firms, and bans bribery of foreign officials and
candidates for office by United States corporate officials. The unique nature
of the F.C.P.A. has created controversy and criticism. In a brief and pointed
review, the American Enterprise Institute explains the events that led to the
enactment of the F.C.P.A., the provisions of the Act as they currently stand,
the proposed amendments to the F.C.P.A., and the arguments for and against
the proposed amendments.

THE U.S. STEEL INDUSTRY IN RECURRING CRISIS: POLICY OPTIONS IN A
Brookings Institute, 1981. Pp. xiii, 184, appendix, index. $19.95 cloth, $7.95
paper.

The United States steel industry has faced a recurrent crisis since the late
1950's, while the Japanese industry has witnessed spectacular growth. In this
controversial book, Crandell traces the post World War II decline in the
American steel industry, analyzes the “national security” argument for trade
protectionism, and asserts that trade protectionism not only failed to stop the
downward spiral of the steel industry but exacted a high cost from American
consumers. The United States cannot regain its predominant position in the
steel industry unless American consumers are willing to pay a high premium
for products made from steel. Nevertheless, Crandell believes that if competi-
tive forces are allowed to operate, a smaller, more efficient industry located in
the Great Lakes region may emerge to battle with the Japanese and others for
the United States steel market.

While crime commands a great deal of public attention, victims of crime often remain ignored. Recognizing the plight of the victim, the Victim Witness Assistance Project presents four areas of reform: reforms which provide financial assistance, reforms which recognize victim/witness rights, "special victim" legislation, and legislation institutionalizing and funding victim/witness services. In a well-organized format, the Project analyzes the advantages and disadvantages of various approaches that have been taken in these four areas. Additionally, the book provides sample provisions to guide legislators in achieving these reforms.


In a search for non-governmental solutions to juvenile crime and delinquency in urban areas, the American Enterprise Institute established a youth forum composed of nine neighborhood-based organizations who had successfully countered juvenile crime in their neighborhoods. Each forum member tells how each organization formed, established its goals, found funding, and ultimately succeeded in redirecting energies of former gang members. Built on the belief that "communities themselves must be in charge of their own revitalization efforts," this forum illustrates that grass roots efforts to stem the tide of juvenile crime can be fruitful.

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