

somewhat overstated because of his heavy reliance on sources from the traditionally conservative sector of black life—educators, newspapermen, and businessmen. Also, his contention that blacks were in the mainstream of the Progressive movement is based on a rather broad interpretation of progressivism. This movement was a basic questioning of the fundamental nature of the emerging corporate society in America. As Lamon shows, blacks did not question the racist underpinnings of the Progressive movement. The ameliorative reforms they sought during the Progressive era were those that blacks had always sought and cannot be considered part of the new progressivism.

These few criticisms in no way detract from the value of Lamon's study. This book is well conceived and the research reveals a knowledge of extensive primary sources. It is a book that should be read by anyone interested in black history and American race relations.

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Ballots before Bullets: The War Referendum Approach to Peace in America, 1914-1941. By Ernest C. Bolt, Jr. (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1977. Pp. xvii, 207. Notes, bibliography, index. \$15.00.)

The movement to require a referendum on declaration of a foreign war is a misunderstood and neglected aspect of the American search for peace. Ernest C. Bolt, Jr., has attempted to correct historical and popular misconceptions by tracing the history of the war referendum approach to peace in the twentieth century and placing it in the broader context of the American peace movement. His well-researched study is based on the personal papers of the major proponents of war referendum legislation and of the peace organizations which supported such proposals. A considerable portion of the book (thirty-four pages) deals with the pre-World War II congressional activities of Representative Louis L. Ludlow of Indiana in attempting to secure passage and adoption of a constitutional amendment requiring a referendum before entry into any war except in the event of attack or invasion by a foreign power.

Bolt's limited subject is an important one in the history of American efforts to avert war through the use of democratic legal processes. He has succeeded in his attempt to correct

those historians who have dismissed or attacked the referendum approach, especially Ludlow's proposed amendment, as a dangerously simplistic move backed by a few fanatic isolationists. As he points out, many of its critics during the 1930s and since, have discredited the Ludlow amendment by overlooking its exception of defensive wars. Bolt demonstrates the close relation of the war referendum approach to principal strands in the American peace movement—anti-imperialism, internationalism, domestic progressivism, and neutrality. He indicates that there was widespread popular support for the war referendum approach throughout the interwar period and that at one time or another nearly every major figure in the peace movements of the early twentieth century advocated its adoption. William Jennings Bryan, Robert La Follette, Norman Thomas, Jane Addams, and Charles Evans Hughes all endorsed it, and the 1924 platforms of both the Democratic and Progressive parties called for introduction of a constitutional amendment similar to the one Ludlow proposed in 1935. Failure of the proposal lay in its proponents' shortsighted adherence to "limited-power isolationism," a belief that the United States should use its military might only for national self-defense, at a time when events in Europe and the Far East had made such a belief untenable. A significant feature of the referendum proposal was its advocates' effort to prevent executive usurpation of the war power, a feature poignantly recalled in congressional debates during the Indochinese conflict.

Bolt's account of this significant movement, failure that it was, has intrinsic merit, and it is unfortunate that his style is frequently awkward and prosaic. Footnotes are distractingly numerous and lengthy and contain information which, incorporated into the text, would produce a livelier, clearer account. Bolt has narrowed his topic too much for the reader unfamiliar with the history of American pacifism; information is tantalizingly incomplete. After discussing in detail several proposals submitted for the Bok Peace Contest in 1922, he fails to mention what or whose entry won and whether it incorporated the war referendum suggestion of so many contestants. Despite such shortcomings, Bolt's volume is a useful addition to the growing number of fine studies of the American peace movement.

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