

crusade; Muste speaks of labor struggles; Draper dwells on student movements; and Wheeler focuses on his years in the Senate during the New Deal. Hicks confines his remarks to writers of the decade.

The editing of the volume reveals at least three weaknesses. Mrs. Simon has reproduced the lectures as they were presented and has not provided needed explanatory footnotes to illuminate or correct casual or offhand comments by the visitors. Nor do the brief introductions to each talk help readers to place a particular speaker in historical context. In her introductory remarks concerning Smith, for example, the editor curiously omits any mention of Smith's long career as one of America's most rabid anti-semites. Surely his great admiration of Nazi genocide programs is relevant to an understanding of his views on social justice. Finally, the conceptual framework of the book is very loose. Although Mrs. Simon posed some worthwhile questions for her guests, the participants did not consistently use her frame of reference. Indeed, they display a propensity to ramble.

The contribution of this work to an understanding of the 1930's is not profound. With the exception of discussions by Browder and Schachtman the essays tend to be superficial. They add little to what is already known, whether fact or insight. In the vast literature about the New Deal this book will take its place as a collection of brief reminiscences.

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Gerald D. Nash

Below is the author's reply to the review of *History of the United States Rubber Company: A Case Study in Corporation Management* ([Bloomington]: Bureau of Business Research, Indiana University, 1966), found in the December, 1967, issue of the *Indiana Magazine of History*. The reviewer, Jack J. Detzler, Saint Mary's College, was given an opportunity to respond but did not do so.

January 23, 1968

Dear Editor:

On pages 322-23 of the December, 1967, issue of the *Indiana Magazine of History* there is a review of the *History of the United States Rubber Company*. The critical judgments of the reviewer appear to have been formed from the viewpoint of the general reading public. However, as indicated in the Foreword and more specifically in the Introduction, this work was designed as a case study in corporation management, primarily for use in a graduate course in business administration. The assignment to develop such a study determined the choice and organization of the material.

From the general reader's viewpoint, proportion may seem "askew," as it did to the reviewer. For example, much more space has been taken in detailed discussion of financial operations than would be considered advisable in the usual business history. Serious financial problems dominated the

policies and actions approved by the corporation's management during many years. After the First World War almost every other major rubber company underwent either receivership or some other form of financial reversal and reorganization. United States Rubber survived only after massive infusion of capital by the du Ponts, who also supplied sorely needed administrative acumen at a crucial time.

Which treatment of the steps taken by management to meet the various situations would be more helpful to students? A brief statement that certain obligations had been refunded on such a day? or a detailed explanation of the manner in which the operation had been carried out? Members of the faculty of the Graduate School of Business, Indiana University, who were consulted, unhesitatingly chose the more detailed analysis.

There are other instances in the narrative where the needs of the advanced student have dictated what might well be considered disproportionate elaboration of subjects of lesser interest to the general reader. The reviewer deplored the absence of historical perspective. The aim was to present each decision or action by management in the light of such knowledge as the executive may be presumed to have had readily available at the time those decisions or actions occurred. They did not possess the advantage of knowing what has since transpired. Similarly, executives now responsible for decision-making must act without benefit of the hindsight of 1969 or the 1970's, to say nothing of that clarity of perspective which may have become commonplace by the year 2000.

Graduate students for whom this study is designed may be expected, and properly so, to have acquired previously a good working knowledge of the basic elements of our country's industrial growth. Therefore no space has been allotted for relating many aspects of that growth. The discussion of external developments, industrial, economic, technical, political, and so on, has been focused instead on those factors which most significantly influenced the corporation's progress. This highly selective approach made it possible to deal with them in sufficient depth.

The reviewer concluded with the statement that "questions tumble endlessly into the reader's mind." He also indicated that "the 'why' of specific company actions" should have been spelled out. In view of the precise purpose of the history, what he has judged to be shortcomings actually seem to enhance the merit of the work. Since the reviewer had these reactions, participants in a doctoral seminar or other course in business administration may find the account equally provocative.

The author makes no claim for grammatical perfection. He has been grateful for the capable assistance faithfully rendered over a period of several months by the professional editorial staff of the Bureau of Business Research, Graduate School of Business, Indiana University. Its members deserve much credit for the quality of the final production.

Very truly yours,
[Signed] Glenn D. Babcock