

## Book Reviews

*The Indiana Third Congressional District: A Political History.* By Paul C. Bartholomew. (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1970. Pp. ix, 238. Notes, tables, appendix, indices. \$6.95.)

Professor of government at the University of Notre Dame and writer of previous books in the field, Bartholomew undertook the difficult assignment of writing a political history of a congressional district from pioneer days in 1831 to 1968. Since such a district changed its boundaries frequently, the author simplified his task a great deal by focusing on the political, congressional history of the four counties that constituted the Third District from 1942 to 1966—St. Joseph, Elkhart, La Porte, and Marshall.

The author states that his approach was “primarily expository rather than analytical” (p. v). Perhaps “narrative” would have been a better word than “expository,” for there is less explanation and interpretation than even the word expository suggests. The work thus becomes pretty much a narration of the campaign struggles between congressional candidates and parties and a listing of election statistics. Each election, including the nomination battles, is reviewed, and valuable charts of election returns give the vote for each candidate in each county and occasionally by townships. An appendix which lists results in the four counties for the entire period shows that up to the political upheaval of 1854-1855 the area was more Democratic than Whig. For several decades following 1854 the area voted Republican, with Schuyler Colfax holding the office from 1855 to 1869, at which time he became vice president under Ulysses S. Grant. From the latter part of the nineteenth century to the present, thanks in part to the present fairly long term of Democrat John Brademas, the party division has been less one sided.

Though the book is narrative and rather encyclopedic in its approach, it contains a number of interesting sidelights and insights. For example, the fact that in the earlier decades Elkhart County was more likely to vote Democratic while St. Joseph County was more likely to vote Whig and Republican shows the sharp contrast with more recent congressional history. Also the fact that Congressman Charles G. Conn, founder of the Elkhart *Daily Truth* and of the famous band instrument factory, could have become a Populist in the 1890s suggests a political coloration which one does not ordinarily associate with Elkhart County businessmen today! Congressional races, says the author, were rarely distinguishable from national ones. “Indeed, the total climate of national elections tended to be reflected in the Congressional races” (p. 201). This would tend to confirm the author’s assessment that the Third District was a represen-

tative cross section of population with characteristics approaching the national averages.

One strength of the work is that it is based largely on primary sources: official records and documents, personal interviews, and, especially, district newspapers. A few books, both primary and secondary, were also used. Since David Turpie, one of Colfax' most illustrious opponents in three campaigns, wrote about these contests at some length, his *Sketches of My Own Times* (1903) could have been added to the list with profit. The author states that "gleanings from the general histories and the biographies proved valuable" (p. v) for his study, but nowhere does he cite the biographies that exist.

This reviewer wonders whether more discussion on the nature of the population that settled in the Third District would not have laid the groundwork for a fuller and livelier discussion of the issues involved in the political struggles. The author concedes, however, that studies in greater depth are still needed, and in the light of his limited purposes he has succeeded in producing a pioneering, worthwhile book.

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*Ohio Canal Era: A Case Study of Government and the Economy, 1820-1861.* By Harry N. Scheiber. (Athens: The Ohio University Press, 1969. Pp. xviii, 430. Maps, notes, tables, chart, appendices, bibliography, index. \$10.00.)

This is a book, the publisher asserts on the dust cover, in which the "standard interpretations of the pre-Civil War revolutions are significantly modified." Notwithstanding one inconclusive hypothesis Professor Scheiber's penetrating study thoroughly justifies the statement. He leaves little doubt of the activist nature of antebellum state transportation policy. Moreover, intervention in the economy by state government during the canal era stimulated industrialization and the growth of Ohio's railroad network in the 1850s—a major formative influence upon national economic growth in the nineteenth century.

Part one treats the impetus for public works and the crucial interplay of politics and ideology on policy making and offers a traditional analysis of canal construction and financing. The obvious politicalization of canal policy, however, leads the author to suggest that egalitarian ideals were primarily responsible for the expansion of the canal system after 1825. The thesis is bold but unconvincing. Egalitarian rhetoric may have "colored" the intellectual milieu of the period (p. 93); but to demonstrate that each locality in the state felt entitled to an improvement is quite different from acknowledging