

rangement of these facts in itself encourages additional thinking on the part of the reader.

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*Roosevelt and World War II.* By Robert A. Divine. (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1969. Pp. x, 107. Frontispiece, notes, index. \$5.95.)

In this brief, overpriced volume Robert Divine offers four carefully reasoned essays in which he attempts "to reappraise Roosevelt's policy in regard to World War II" (p. x). This material was originally presented as the Albert Shaw Lectures in Diplomatic History at the Johns Hopkins University in April of 1968.

Divine differs sharply with the standard interpretation of Franklin Roosevelt as a Wilsonian internationalist who was forced to play a semiisolationist role in the 1930s in order to appease a vociferous isolationist majority. Not so at all says Divine; Roosevelt really was an isolationist, not out of political expediency but out of "genuine conviction" (p. 7). Not until the end of 1938, in the aftermath of the Munich crisis, did Roosevelt move in the direction of internationalism.

As for Roosevelt's alleged belief in Wilsonian notions of collective security, the author contends that Roosevelt steadily shifted away from the collective security beliefs he had professed up to 1920. Thus, Divine sees Roosevelt's disavowal of the League of Nations in 1932 not so much as an expedient surrender to the demands of William Randolph Hearst but as "the culmination of Roosevelt's gradual disenchantment" with the League (p. 56). Disillusioned by the League's failure to act effectively in the 1930s, Roosevelt envisioned that the United States, Britain, Russia, and China would be the policemen of the postwar world. In light of the failure of the United Nations to keep the peace in the postwar years it is increasingly difficult to fault Roosevelt's judgment.

Neither right nor left—old or new versions—will like Divine's interpretation of Roosevelt's wartime relations with the Soviet Union. In the author's view, FDR was not a naive egotistical American politician who thought he could charm Joseph Stalin into submission but a calculating pragmatist who throughout the war fought valiantly to preserve allied unity for the peace that was to come. Admittedly, Roosevelt failed to achieve this, but Divine maintains that Roosevelt's efforts "threw the onus for the Cold War squarely upon Stalin" (p. 98).

This reviewer finds Divine least persuasive when he says that Roosevelt was an isolationist in the 1930s. Even a cursory reading

of Edgar Nixon's three volumes, *Franklin D. Roosevelt and Foreign Affairs* (1969), reveals that Roosevelt had a very deep interest in foreign affairs even in the earliest years of the New Deal and that as early as 1934 he was greatly troubled by the growing belligerence of Germany. His replies to the alarm filled letters of Ambassador William E. Dodd indicate that he felt helplessly stymied by the great isolationist strength in America. Roosevelt's letters reveal a curious mixture of reluctant isolationism and timid internationalism. The evidence is far from conclusive, and one can still make a very strong case à la Basil Rauch that Roosevelt was a most reluctant isolationist. On balance, this interpretation continues to be more plausible to this reviewer. Nevertheless, this is a stimulating little book that can be read with much profit by both Roosevelt's admirers and his detractors.

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*The Life and Decline of the American Railroad.* By John F. Stover. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970. Pp. xi, 324. Maps, illustrations, selected bibliography, index. \$7.50.)

This is a disappointing book, primarily because the author has attempted the difficult, if not impossible, task of combining detailed historical narrative with a description and analysis of the current plight of the American railroads. Roughly one half the book is a chronological account of the geographical diffusion of the railroad in the United States from the time the first track was laid to the present. The remainder is concerned with the two main problems facing the railroads: diminishing demand for passenger service (Chapters 7 and 8) and vigorous competition for freight traffic (Chapter 9). The author reserves the final chapter to speculate on the future of the railway industry. There is not likely to be any quarrel with his conclusion: "American railroads are still viable today. Tomorrow's America will still have many transportation chores which can most efficiently be performed by railroads" (p. 293).

John Stover, who is professor of history at Purdue University, is more successful in setting out the historical narrative than he is in diagnosing and prescribing for the chronically sick railroads. The critical weakness of his diagnosis of current railway ills is the lack of any framework of economic analysis within which to place these problems and by which to evaluate their significance. He recites all of the reasons that have been put forward to explain the disappearance of the railroad passenger coach in the sixties: featherbedding practices of labor, competition from road and air transport, bungling administration by the regulatory agencies, but he gives no hint how