

\$5,000 and assigned the leadership to Purdue University. The trustees created a committee consisting of the president of the university, the director of the experiment station, and the professor of agriculture, William C. Latta. They named Latta the superintendent of institutes. Under his supervision the program grew until it was reaching farmers in every county. Purdue University maintained overall supervision and furnished many of the speakers and material for demonstrations at the various institutes.

As a result of the success of the institutes and of similar work by a number of railroads, it became apparent that the land grant colleges needed to develop new approaches. After attempts to reach farmers by such devices as demonstration farms, the county agent system developed. While the author gives Seaman A. Knapp credit for the system, he points out that it was not entirely original with Knapp, and that it was surrounded by major controversy. Subsequently, the county agent system became a joint project of the state colleges and the United States Department of Agriculture as spelled out in the Smith-Lever Act of 1914.

Scott bases his account upon source materials and lists most of the important secondary materials in his bibliography. He has done well the difficult task of summarizing the experiences of most states with institutes without getting trapped in monotonous detail. The book is well indexed—something this reviewer counts on in University of Illinois Press volumes.

The importance of the book lies in the fact that the diffusion of technology and the spread of knowledge among farmers is a key to increased agricultural productivity. The problem, as Scott points out, is not limited to the United States. Indeed, it is of even greater interest to those charged with agricultural improvement in the less developed nations. This volume should be read by economists and others concerned with problems of overseas development.

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*The Legitimacy of the Business Corporation in the Law of the United States, 1780-1970.* By James Willard Hurst. (Charlottesville: The University Press of Virginia, 1970. Pp. xiii, 191. Notes, bibliography, index. \$6.50.)

James Willard Hurst, Vilas Professor of Law at the University of Wisconsin, is the leader of a group of historians whose subject is the social history of law. Hurst believes that law grows out of man's

social experience and that examination of a people's history will uncover aspects of a legal system that logical analysis of the law alone will not reveal. The study of the interaction of society and law in the United States is Hurst's lifework, the fruit of which is a continuing list of books and articles, including *The Growth of American Law: The Law Makers* (Boston, 1950) and "Legal Elements in United States History," in Donald Fleming and Bernard Bailyn, editors, *Law in American History* (Cambridge, Mass., 1971).

*The Legitimacy of the Business Corporation in the Law of the United States* originated in a series of lectures that Hurst delivered at the University of Virginia in 1969. "Legitimacy," as used here, "means that no . . . power recognized in law should be treated as an end in itself or as autonomous. An institution must be legitimated by its utility to some chosen end other than its own perpetuation. . . . [and] must be accountable for its purposes and its performance by criteria not wholly in the control of the institution itself" (p. 58). In short, the tenet of legitimacy holds that business corporations be both useful and responsible to society. It is with that utility and responsibility in historical context that Hurst deals.

The first of the book's three major essays traces the history of public policy toward business corporations from the early days of the Republic, when the creation of each corporation required a special legislative act, to about 1890, by which time general incorporation laws in all the states permitted business associations ready access to corporate status. The second essay concerns itself with questions of corporate legitimacy between 1890 and the present. Until the 1930s the law stressed utility rather than responsibility. That was a period in which the American people, in the interest of economic growth and not without protest, to be sure, were willing to respond favorably to businessmen's desire for freedom of action. The general disillusionment with business during the 1930s shifted emphasis to responsibility as the criterion of corporate legitimacy and inaugurated an era of public demand that the law compel that responsibility. The book's third essay evaluates the role of the various law making agencies—state and federal constitutions, judicial interpretation, executive and legislative action—in the development of public policy toward corporations. Hurst argues that legislative action was clearly most important, despite a significant corpus of "judge-made" law and the development of new administrative processes (for instance, regulatory agencies) in the twentieth century. In a final short chapter, Hurst concludes that, given its history, American society must continue to look to the legislative branch of government for the satisfaction of the continuing, insistent demand "to legitimize corporate power by its responsibility as well as its utility" (p. 164).

This synopsis by no means does justice to the profundity of Hurst's ideas, and their nuances. *The Legitimacy of the Business Corporation in American Law* is a brilliant little work. The book must be read with the closest attention, for the argument is so tightly reasoned that to miss a sentence is to miss something important. The bibliography, alas, is unannotated; the index is adequate; the format is pleasing, if unexceptional.

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*Launching Social Security: A Capture-and-Record Account, 1935-1937.* By Charles McKinley and Robert W. Frase. (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1970. Pp. xxiv, 519. Notes, tables, chart, index. \$12.95.)

This two man odyssey into bureaucracy is an involved analysis of the Social Security administration during its first seventeen months. McKinley, a political scientist, and Frase, an original member of the Social Security staff, attended administrative meetings, reviewed notes and memoranda, and interviewed early participants in the new agency. The results of their work are generally rewarding but not intended for the uninitiated reader.

The complexity of Social Security forced the authors to cover much ground lightly, and the book's organization reflects the hopelessness of capturing, let alone recording, all of it. Major emphasis goes to budget and staff framework; grants for the aged, dependent children, and blind; unemployment compensation, and general management. Almost indispensable for distinguishing the personnel is the appended list of names, without which even New Deal aficionados would get lost in the charts and corridors.

McKinley and Frase offer no surprises and usually concur with the account given by Arthur Altmeyer in his *Formative Years of Social Security* (Madison, Wis., 1966). They offer greater detail and objectivity, however, than the former chairman of the Social Security Board. There is much here to please friends of Social Security despite the scarcity of heroes and idealism. These administrators were not Rexford Tugwells rolling up their sleeves to remake society; they were, in large part, anonymous bureaucrats who haggled over semantics, fought with congressmen and the Civil Service Commission for field offices and personnel, manipulated state legislatures into conforming with federal standards, campaigned against Alf Landon in the 1936 election, and succeeded in establishing a network of unprecedented services.