

dramatic given the number of variables that influence unemployment rates. It is striking, for example, that high-unemployment England experienced a 0.7 percent annual growth of service-sector employment from 1975 to 1982, while high-employment Norway experienced a 3.6 annual rate of service-sector growth. Since Therborn also shows that for all fifteen countries, the number of manufacturing employees had dropped an average of 12 percent from 1975 to 1983, there is good reason to understand the unemployment of the 1980s as connected to the transition from industrial to postindustrial society.

This avoidance of the issue of postindustrialism is linked to a third problem—the tenuous connections between the empirical analysis and Therborn's political conclusions. Therborn's argument is that the successes of the low-unemployment countries can be copied if a revitalized labor movement mobilizes for full employment. Even though he recognizes that reforms that create an institutionalized commitment to full employment fall far short of socialism, he suggests that these reforms could bring socialism closer. He writes: "As long as a large part of the [potential] working class is unemployed and marginalized, no further advances are likely. People on the dole will not bring about socialism." Although the first sentence is a perfectly reasonable defense of reformism, the second is an attack on political currents in Holland, West Germany, and elsewhere in Europe that favor struggles for a citizen's wage as a response to the crisis of unemployment.

These Greenish currents have developed sophisticated arguments as to why a system of guaranteed income is a strategy preferable to the left's traditional emphasis on full employment. They emphasize, in particular, the potential that a citizen's wage has for subsidizing a dramatic expansion of voluntary, community-oriented activities. But Therborn does not engage these arguments; he relies instead on an unexamined piece of Marxist dogma—that only employed workers are capable of struggling for socialism. His hostility to the citizen's wage idea is inconsistent with his own data, which show that in developed capitalist societies a reasonable standard of living can be achieved for everyone even when a large percentage of adults are not engaged in wage labor. Moreover, his own comparative research highlights the range of choices as to how work and leisure can be organized and distributed. This emphasis cuts against his advocacy of full employment as the one correct political strategy in all developed capitalist countries. □

David J. Garrow

## Hoover's FBI

SECRECY AND POWER: THE LIFE OF J. EDGAR HOOVER, by Richard Gid Powers. New York: The Free Press. 624 pp. \$27.95.

Richard Powers's valuable and well-balanced biography of Federal Bureau of Investigation Director J. Edgar Hoover reminds us of the two foremost themes that any analysis of the FBI's role in twentieth-century American politics must confront: how the Bureau's biases generally reflected the opinions and preferences of many Americans, and how the Bureau regularly acted, even in its worst abuses of power, not as an independent "rogue elephant," but as a direct agent of various presidents.

Much of the historical and legal commentary on Hoover's FBI has sought to ignore those two facts. Perhaps analysts hoped that picturing the FBI's political crusades and dirty tricks as the quasi-covert actions of a small, semiconspiratorial band centered around the idiosyncratic Hoover would make that legacy far less troubling than if Hoover's close ties with his political superiors and great popularity with many Americans were fully remembered. Indeed, only a frank recounting of the extent to which American popular opinion hated Hoover's chosen enemies will allow for a history that *explains* Hoover's powerful forty-eight-year reign.

Powers's book is forthrightly explanatory rather than denunciatory, and does not shy from praising Hoover's organizational skills during his first two decades as director of the FBI. Although Hoover's role as a young Justice Department attorney assisting Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer with the 1919-1920 antiradical raids has been revealed previously, Powers does an excellent job describing how the twenty-five-year-old Hoover, given administrative charge of the anti-red drive almost by happenstance, became in a few months "one of the more powerful men in Washington," someone who with a stroke of the pen could determine which alien leftists would be deported and which would not.

Powers appreciates the mixture of lessons Hoover drew from his heady role. Most important of all was a lesson of caution: antiradical initiatives could

not successfully be expanded beyond whatever limits the popular consensus would support. Once the excesses of many of Palmer's over-eager local or vigilante collaborators were revealed, enthusiasm for him and his raids quickly drained away. A fortunate Hoover, saved from the political backlash by his relatively low-profile role, stayed on to become head of the Bureau of Investigation's General Intelligence Division as the Harding administration took office.

Just as he learned from and survived the Palmer era, Hoover also benefited from the scandals that rocked Harding's Justice Department. When, in May 1924, newly installed Attorney General Harlan Fiske Stone needed a trustworthy department veteran to take charge of the heavily troubled Bureau, Hoover again was there. Convinced that serious professionalism and scientific means of crime-solving could succeed where partisan amateurs had failed, Hoover set about a reconstruction of the Justice Department's investigatory arm. He molded the Bureau of Investigation into a first-rate, professional criminal-justice organization which largely eschewed the ideologically motivated investigations of the pre-1924 era.

Then, in 1935-1936, there occurred the two most significant developments in FBI history. The first and most important was America's newfound fascination with, on the one hand, criminals and crime-fighting, the Dillingers and Al Capones, and, on the other hand, what Powers, in an excellent previous book (*G-Men: Hoover's FBI in American Popular Culture*), termed "the cult of the detective hero." One result of that cult was a new popular-culture celebration of the Bureau's work. Press coverage made Hoover into "a major celebrity, a media star," and James Cagney's *G-Men* movie, Powers reports, "turned Hoover and his Bureau into American legends. . . . After *G-Men*, the popular image of the FBI changed from a conventional government agency . . . to a direct expression of the public's wrath against its enemies."

THE NEW POPULAR CELEBRATION of the FBI men as heroic defenders of American social virtue gave Hoover a public fame totally unlike that enjoyed by any other federal bureaucrat, then or since. The other source of Hoover's greatly expanded mandate was President Franklin D. Roosevelt, who convinced Hoover that the FBI not only should target American enemies, but could also provide more personal and political information to the president himself.

Between 1936 and 1940 Roosevelt put Hoover and the FBI back into the ideologically based

"domestic intelligence" work that had largely been forsaken in 1924, and on a scale that quickly exceeded that of the Palmer-Harding years. From a staff of 391 agents in 1933, Hoover's FBI grew to 898 in 1940 and 4,886 in 1944 as the Bureau turned its energies against suspected German sympathizers and potential Nazi saboteurs. More important, Hoover grew personally and politically close to FDR, and transformed the FBI into an arm of the presidency in a way that had dramatic consequences for American politics and constitutional liberties.

Hoover's vastly expanded intelligence portfolio covered the left as well as the right, and "was precisely what Roosevelt intended," Powers stresses. "It is FDR . . . who has to bear the final responsibility for removing all effective restraints from Hoover's surveillance of the American political scene." Not only had the FBI become "a political police force operating at the beck and call of the president," but "the personal relationship between Hoover and Roosevelt erased any limit set by law or custom to the requests the president might make of the FBI director." Hoover, Powers concludes, was "Roosevelt's effective, loyal, and indispensable agent."

THROUGHOUT THE POST-1945 YEARS, and especially in the period after 1961, when William C. Sullivan became assistant director in charge of the Bureau's domestic intelligence division, internal security and "subversive control" dominated the FBI's work. For Hoover personally, the following years witnessed not only a continuing willingness to serve the president of the moment (interrupted only by a serious estrangement from Harry Truman and minor strains with John Kennedy), but also an increasingly explicit articulation of how the FBI's mission went beyond crime, politics, and ideology to "higher" considerations of morality. As Powers puts it, there were always two sides to "Hoover's public role: the domestic-security professional . . . and the moralist who was always prone to turn his operations into dramatizations of right and wrong." Hoover's moralizing came out most visibly in the Bureau's ideological crusades and COINTELPRO dirty tricks of the 1956-1972 period.

Powers stresses a birth-to-death emphasis on Hoover's cultural roots as the major organizing theme of this book. Until the age of 43, in 1938, when his mother died, Hoover lived in the house in which he was born. He always retained "a turn-of-the-century vision of America as a small community of like-minded neighbors" and understood himself as "an aggressive defender of traditional

values and customs," someone who saw police officials as "guardians of civilization" and who increasingly viewed crime and political dissent as threats to the nation's moral order.

Thus for Hoover, and for many of the men who worked for him, the FBI became not simply a law enforcement agency, but both a political and a moral guardian of society's "traditional" values. It is in this light that Hoover's lifelong obsession with communism, even after the political demise of the Communist party, needs to be understood. As Powers puts it, "For Hoover, the specter of communism was more than the shadow of the real-life Communist. . . . Anticommunism had a positive value as a defense of American values whether or not there still were any Communists."

While Powers accurately portrays the cultural roots of Hoover's biases, he also points out how the Bureau's worst abuses of political freedoms, individual liberties, and even personal safety were targeted against those whom the wider society despised. The FBI's most heinous crimes, he rightfully notes, "were merely part of very highly publicized campaigns in pursuit of goals supported by the overwhelming majority of the public, the legal establishment, and the governing elite." Powers concludes, with no little irony, that "the critical achievements of Hoover's career . . . were not secret at all."

David Rosner

## Safety on the Job

*LIBERALISM AT WORK: THE RISE AND FALL OF OSHA*, by Charles Noble. Philadelphia: Temple University Press. 292 pp.

**D**uring the waning years of the nineteenth century, American workers experienced changes in production methods that proved disastrous to their lives and health. The growth of the factory system and mass production, combined with a nearly total lack of regulation and control, created extremely unhealthy and dangerous work sites. Millions of workers were injured, poisoned, killed on the job as new factories brought workers into contact with a

host of dangerous processes. Railroad, construction and steel workers, and miners were the most endangered, experiencing death rates often twice and three times those of their European counterparts. In New York, for example, it was estimated that one man lost his life for every floor built in the various skyscrapers put up between 1890 and 1920.

Workers had little legal protection from the hazards of the workplace. First, if a worker was injured, the legal system limited his ability to gain compensation under the doctrines of fellow-servant, contributory negligence, and assumed risk. The first two doctrines put the burden upon the worker to prove that the employer was at fault and that neither the worker himself nor another employee could be held culpable. The doctrine of assumed risk posited that even if the employee could show that the employer had maintained a dangerous workplace, employees were not automatically entitled to compensation if they had knowingly and freely "assumed the risks" by taking the job in the first place. Catch-22.

In the early part of the twentieth century, the workmen's (now workers') compensation program, a state-organized system of insurance for injuries on the job, developed out of a growing alliance among progressive reformers, some business interests, and even the work force. Workmen's compensation allowed business to be freed from the unpredictability of the jury system as injured workers began to win large settlements. For the laborer, it guaranteed payment for injuries on the job without the danger of losing a jury trial and the legal costs associated with the liability system. At the same time, the only method of protecting workers was a haphazard system of factory inspection carried on by state departments of labor.

In the years after the Progressive era, management began the first of a number of attempts to regain control over the reform effort. Through such agencies as the National Safety Council, the radical elements in the earlier coalition were sidetracked as safety standards and control passed on to industry spokespeople and academics who did their bidding. Government itself was relatively quiet during the 1920s. Only later and briefly did it become more involved in protecting the work force through programs organized by Frances Perkins, secretary of labor during the New Deal. Organized labor, especially in the cold war years, allowed its goals to become narrowly focused on bread-and-butter issues as accords were reached that conceded workplace control to management in return for higher wages and shorter hours.

It was not until the late 1960s that the tentative accords reached between government, manage-