

## BOOK REVIEWS

---

**Constitutional Government and Democracy: Theory and Practice in Europe and America.** By Carl J. Friedrich.\* Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1941. Pp. xix, 695. \$4.00.

**Politics and Law in the United States.** By D. W. Brogan.† Cambridge: University Press; New York: Macmillan Co., 1941. Pp. x, 127. \$1.25.

"This book is written," says Carl Friedrich in his preface, "for those who are puzzled about the future of constitutional government and democracy. It tries to show the present disturbances in proper perspective by setting them off against the ground swell of long-range secular trends. In these days of profound crisis when the international civil war has once more come out into the open, it is undoubtedly an act of faith, for both the writer and the publisher, to bring out a new edition of *Constitutional Government*."

At a time when acts of faith are needed above all else if the way of freedom is to survive, all serious students of democracy will welcome this new contribution from the pen of an outstanding liberal and a distinguished political scientist. Dr. Friedrich's volume is an almost completely rewritten version of his pre-Munich *Constitutional Government and Politics*. It is an encyclopaedia of factual data and incisive observations (with 75 pages of notes and bibliography at the back) on the origins, structure and functioning of constitutional regimes in America, Britain, the Dominions, Switzerland, Scandinavia, pre-Vichy France, pre-Hitler Germany, and other lands. The material is ordered not by countries but by "problems" or "functions," with the twenty-four crowded chapters ranging from bureaucracy, the military establishment, foreign affairs and the judicial function to electoral systems, political parties, cabinet systems, parliaments, press and radio, interest groups and referenda—with intermediate chapters thrown in for good measure on constitution-making, separation of powers, federalism and judicial review. The work is truly monumental and will be regarded by many as a masterpiece of political science.

And yet a few inquiring readers, or at least a few inquiring reviewers, may wonder whether such a descriptive and comparative study as this, however well done, represents in any sense a significant advance in man's never-ending effort to understand man. Dr. Friedrich has a burning faith in the values of democracy and has time and again expressed his faith in works. He has a good pen and a keen mind, well-trained in a peculiarly Teutonic technique of fact-gathering and generalization. But more than this is needed for a genuine "political science." What is lacking here, and in many other descriptive treatises on government and law, is a capacity to see the human adventure as a whole, a willingness to grapple with social and political dynamics, and a gift for illuminating the static forms and procedures of community action by reference to the universals of human behavior.

\* Professor of Government, Harvard University.

† Professor of Political Science, Cambridge University.

Dr. Friedrich's forest can scarcely be seen because of the trees. His twenty-fifth chapter on methodology, far from bringing the forest into perspective, suggests why he (and the reader) always sees it as through a glass darkly. He regards "science" merely as "ordered knowledge" and amassed "fact," capable of verification through the use of generally accepted methods of observation. The social sciences, he feels certain, cannot benefit from applying the methods of the natural sciences because the "materials" are different. Psychology, he concedes, is "of very great importance." Yet he cannot bring himself to study human beings as political animals but envisages the units of his study as institutional forms or as ideologies or as such timid abstractions as "consent" and "constraint." He repudiates Charles Edward Merriam's efforts to develop a realistic science of power "because the underlying concept of a science of social phenomena, regardless of objectives, purposes, ends, is misleading." As if social phenomena were something other than the behavior of human beings pursuing their purposes in a variety of contexts of symbols and habits, faced with a variety of environmental dangers and opportunities! Dr. Friedrich's political science thus becomes, by his own admission, no more than "a critical examination of common-sense notions concerning the working of political institutions and procedures." His "constitutionalism" is simply the division of political power among many rather than its concentration in one or in a few. The reader is as puzzled about its future at the end of the book as at the beginning.

Like many another student of politics and law, Dr. Friedrich does not vindicate traditional constitutionalism nor justify his optimism over its future because he does not see why it is in decay. He is preoccupied with forms and practices and is reluctant to analyze the political process in terms of the major sources of frustration in the modern world and in terms of the ways in which frustrated people almost invariably behave. Such defects as these lend weight to President Hutchins' most sweeping accusations against the social sciences. The same criticism is warranted for D. W. Brogan's little book which is part of the Cambridge Series on Current Problems, edited by Ernest Barker. Brogan gracefully and knowingly surveys the American Constitution, the party system, the President and Congress, and the political role of the Supreme Court. Yet his conventional description, like Friedrich's, is barren because it largely ignores the dictum which was once the core of the liberal's faith—that governments are made for men and not men for governments.

Democracy has lost the peace and lost Europe and is losing the war because too many democrats cannot or will not see that no set of values and no system of government can survive if it does not provide for the basic economic and psychological needs of men. These needs in our time cannot be served by the division of authority but only by the concentration of effective authority for the planning of plenty and the building of peace between classes and between nations. These needs cannot be met by old safeguards (nor by new ones) against abuses of power but only by new devices for the effective and democratic use of power on a scale commensurate with a world economy and a world society. The invention and use of such devices are prerequisites of survival for free men. Recognition of this fact is the prerequisite of a socially significant science of politics and law in the twentieth century.

FREDERICK L. SCHUMAN†

† Woodrow Wilson Professor of Government, Williams College.