

## *The Historical Society of Southern California*

California, unlike Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, and Georgia before 1860, the Federal Government was at times as important as the state in determining policy. Federal policies and controls are not neglected, but they receive less attention, and with justification, for to do both would have been an interminable task. Yet, at times the slighter treatment of Federal policy leaves unanswered questions. State water policy, for example, is not altogether meaningful because the background of Federal and state interacting forces, interpretations, and decisions is not given. In the absence of a discussion of Federal land policies, it is not clear either how California came to have such large areas of land to sell, lease, or retain or how the great concentration of ownership of agricultural land was achieved. The author has accepted the judgment of R. H. Allen that the Spanish and Mexican grants had little effect on the later pattern of ownership and agricultural use, which may be true of the Salinas Valley with which Allen seemed most familiar, but there have been and are great areas elsewhere that do not "dispel this myth." Many of the 122 farms of more than 70,000 acres each, which existed in 1870 or 1880, were not solely the product of dummy entrymen employed by large capitalists, but partly originated in the Mexican grants. General John B. Frisbie's large purchase of 90,000 acres from his father-in-law was the Suscol claim which the Supreme Court had rejected, and Frisbie and buyers of his claim were attempting, and successfully, to gain pre-emption rights on the land which they maintained they had improved. The well-known firm of Mullan & Hyde and California's chief grain dealer and influential land speculator, Isaac Friedlander, appear with unconventional and scarcely recognizable names. These quibbles must not obscure the merit of this excellent book. It should be in every public library in California, and from it should spring a variety of studies.

*Professor Paul W. Gates, Cornell University, former president of the Mississippi Valley Historical Association (now renamed the Organization of American Historians), is well known for his many contributions to the economic history of the American West, with particular emphasis on land and agricultural developments.*

**TWO PATHS TO UTOPIA: THE HUTTERITES AND THE LLANO COLONY.** By Paul K. Conkin. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1964. 212 pp. \$5.00.)  
Reviewed by Roger Daniels.

It is usually argued that Americans are worshippers at the shrine of the bitch-goddess Success. Despite, or perhaps because of this, American historians have paid a great deal of attention to one of the most dismal of American failures—Socialism. In recent years Kipnis, Quint, and Shannon have examined various aspects of socialist politics; Bestor and Hine have treated socialist communities, and Egbert and Persons have edited a volume on the influence of socialism in American life, with a thick bibliographical volume appended. These writers having traced the main channels of the movement in America, it is now time for some of the shoals and eddies to be explored. Paul Conkin, previously the author of an excellent study of New Deal resettlement communities, has given us two sympa-

## Book Reviews

thetic essays on very different Utopian communities—the religious Hutterites of the northern Great Plains and the secular socialists of Llano del Rio in California and Louisiana.

The Hutterites are a Moravian offshoot of sixteenth-century Anabaptism who migrated across central Europe to Russia and then, in 1874, to America. They “developed the most complete, nonmonastic community life in the Western world” and thrive in almost 150 prosperous and expanding communities. Dedicated to the simple life, they have compromised with the twentieth century at least to the extent of using some of the fruits of its technology: trucks, for farm work, are in; automobiles, a luxury, are out. They try to do without doctors, but when seriously ill go to the Mayo Clinic! The most peaceful of people, they have neither crime nor police, but are constantly at war with their very environment which threatens to seduce their youth from the ways of the fathers.

Contrasted to them are the colonists of Llano del Rio. Atheistic Marxian Socialists under the leadership of Job Harriman—the man who was almost elected Los Angeles’ mayor on a socialist ticket in 1911—they first assembled in Antelope Valley in 1914. Four years later some of the colonists moved Llano to Louisiana, where it staggered on, largely unnoticed, until 1939. Often split by squabbles, first over principles, then over property, always on the edge of financial disaster, it contained a mere thousand colonists in its heyday, yet its quarter-century existence marks it, chronologically at least, as the most successful American attempt at secular communitarianism. Founded by men who were sure that capitalism contained the seeds of its own destruction, by the early thirties its leaders were indignant that the Reconstruction Finance Corporation wouldn’t loan them any money. Nevertheless, a 1935 straw vote taken in the colony gave Roosevelt 79 votes, Norman Thomas 28 votes, William Z. Foster 2 votes, and Huey Long 38 votes!

Conkin, who writes well, has fashioned two realistic portrayals of the problems of communitarian existence in a non- or anti-communitarian setting. He caps his essays with a ten-page epilogue whose *obiter dicta* will not find universal agreement, but which does come to grips with some of the larger questions about the nature of reform and utopias.

*Roger Daniels, Assistant Professor in the University of California, Los Angeles, is the author of The Politics of Prejudice.*

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA METROPOLIS. By Winston W. Crouch and Beatrice Dinerman. (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1963. 443 pp. \$7.50.) Reviewed by Samuel P. Hays.

This book is another example of literature about reform in municipal government which has appeared in the United States since the modern city began to have “problems.” Now, of course, the emphasis is not on the machine “boss” and the ward system of representation, but on the need for metropolitan government. As with earlier works, this book is a plea for a more centralized system of government covering larger geographical areas. But also, as with earlier works, it makes the same analysis of urban political life, has the same shortcomings, and makes the same pleas for unity, ra-