

John Fielden And The Politics Of Popular Radicalism, 1832-1847

Reviews of Books

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or regions. An additional ingredient has been Germany's long tradition of scientific and engineering education and vocational training.

The other countries turn out to be also-rans. In "France: the ambitious state," by Patrick Messerlin, "Italy: the weak state," by Pippo Ranci, and "United Kingdom: a resistance to change," by Geoffrey Shepherd, we find out what can go wrong. In France the economy serves as a vehicle to display the grandeur of the state. In Italy political instability has precluded any kind of consistent industrial policy. In Britain a preoccupation with the distribution, rather than the growth, of income has become part of a national disease. While no new theses are developed in these chapters, they are worth reading because they so carefully trace the evolution of four different industrial policies.

David Marsden, in "Collective Bargaining and Industrial Adjustment in Britain, France, Italy and West Germany," examines labor market flexibility in the four countries. He argues that there are basically two types of labor markets—occupational and internal. In occupational labor markets workers typically have well-defined job descriptions, job "territories," or skill levels that are generally not firm or industry specific. Mobility occurs when workers move from firms where their productivity is lower to firms where their productivity is higher (with wage-rate differentials directing the moves). In internal labor markets workers typically learn firm or industry-specific skills on the job and move up a job hierarchy. Marsden emphasizes that each labor market has its own type of flexibility. Occupational labor markets may allow some short-run flexibility (especially between firms or industries with similar, unchanging technologies), but they may not accommodate the kinds of incremental firm-specific technological changes that have been so important in recent years. Moreover, a greater degree of wage rigidity or stricter job-security legislation (clear trends in the countries under consideration) will reduce market-driven flexibility. On the other hand, although internal labor markets enjoy a measure of de facto job security, they also permit job boundaries to be very elastic. It is this ability to change job content at the margin that may well give firms with internal labor markets a competitive edge during periods of rapid technological change.

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1848: *The British State and the Chartist Movement*. By John Saville. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987. Pp. ix, 310. \$44.50.

John Fielden and the Politics of Popular Radicalism, 1832-1847. By Stewart Angus Weaver. New York: Oxford University Press, 1987. Pp. xii, 320. \$62.00.

Both volumes represent important additions to our knowledge of nineteenth-century radicalism. John Saville has rescued the Chartist movement during 1848 from what really does appear to have been the undeserved contempt or neglect of historians; Stewart Angus Weaver has performed a like service for "the most consistent radical reformer of his day," John Fielden. Yet the two books offer conflicting interpretations of the popular movement.

I suspect that Saville's book has been brewing for more than thirty years. In 1953 he published an article in the *Modern Quarterly*, "Chartism in the Year of Revolution (1848)," which argued that the movement did not fizzle out after the demonstration at Kennington Common on 10 April, as historians usually have claimed, but rather grew in militancy until the summer, when a ruthless and self-confident government cut off its head by arresting the most important Chartist leaders. But the present volume does much more than merely flesh out the earlier argument. It is, as Saville writes at the outset, an examination of "the interrelationships between those directing the various organs of state power and those in Britain and Ireland who were regarded as actually or

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