
and what is not, news, the symbiosis between the executive branch and the "Fourth Estate" is apparent. Most Presidents have decried their treatment by the press. (Lyndon Johnson once accused Dan Rather and CBS of being "out to get us any way Bill Paley can.") But the authors' examination of 25 years of presidential news coverage by the *New York Times* and *Time* magazine, as well as 10 years of CBS broadcasts, reveals a "consistent pattern of favorable coverage of the President," with sympathetic stories outnumbering critical pieces by two to one. An interesting statistic—although unlikely to stop the complaints.

—James Deakin ('80)

LONG ENGAGEMENTS:
Maturity in Modern Japan

by David W. Plath
 Stanford, 1980
 235 pp. \$17.50

More sophisticated in approach than the best-selling *Passages* (1977) by Gail Sheehy, this analysis of how the Japanese adjust to middle age covers strikingly similar terrain. Plath, an anthropologist at the University of Illinois, mixes four oral autobiographies of middle-aged Japanese men and women with stories from four contemporary novels and with short essays bearing on Japanese society. Shoji, a former "suicide cadet," talks resignedly of the changes in his life. Separated, after World War II, from the Army and the martial ethos he so highly valued, he tried politics and then teaching. "Of course," he reflects, "an educator may have to deal with messy human relations, but he does not need to betray himself with professional cunning and trickery." Ironically, he ends up selling real estate, a job he once would have scorned as fostering materialism and spiritual decline. Adjusting to the stresses of a changing society while preserving "the core images of self that hold together a person's portfolio of identities" is a problem faced by all four narrators. They are sustained by "long engagements"—their relationships with friends, co-workers, and relatives. Plath's book ranks with Ronald Dore's *Shinohata* (1980) as a readable and persuasive portrayal of contemporary life in Japan's dynamic society. But

one's dominant impression is of the variety of ways in which people preserve meaning and individuality as they age—even in a culture so often perceived as group-dominated and conformist.

—John Creighton Campbell ('81)

THE FOURTH AND RICHEST REICH

by Edwin Hartrich
Macmillan, 1980
302 pp. \$12.95

With the economy a top priority of the current U.S. administration, foreign remedies for curing the "American disease" are attracting a large audience. One of the most dramatic of these is the rubble-to-riches course engineered by West Germany after World War II. More important than demilitarization, denazification, and democratization of the Reich was the U.S. gamble on a little-known German professor, Ludwig Erhard, as chief of the recovery. Erhard's "social market economy" medicine was at first distasteful to a long-regimented people, but the resulting economic "miracle" (*Wirtschaftswunder*) cemented the democratic institutions of the Federal Republic. Instead of socialist nationalization of industry and full employment, Erhard favored capitalist competition, cushioned by a generous welfare system. His goal was full production, supported by tax breaks and other incentives for industry. It was accepted by labor, which exhibited unusual restraint in wage negotiations and a willingness to work hard in exchange for job security and a say in company management. Government also abetted the recovery and subsequent boom with its strictly balanced, noninflationary budgets. Hartrich, a journalist and economic consultant, makes a compelling story of Germany's passage from its tragic prewar "geopolitical" preoccupations to more benign and successful "ecopolitical" ventures. Conservatives will find, in the success of West Germany's unabashed capitalism, affirmation of their faith; but liberals would not be wrong in pointing out that this was, as well, "capitalism with a conscience."

—Konrad H. Jarausch ('80)