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President Joe Biden has called for a new Civilian Climate Corps, a government program employing thousands of young Americans in the work of climate resilience. Democrats in Congress have rallied around the idea with wide-ranging legislative proposals. Their proposals are modeled, of course, on the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), which President Franklin D. Roosevelt created in 1933 to address staggering unemployment during the Great Depression. President Biden is certainly not the first to turn to the CCC for inspiration over the last eighty-eight years. Indeed, the Peace Corps, AmeriCorps, Student Conservation Association, and dozens of state programs all embody the same spirit: put young Americans to work in public service.

Kenneth W. Baldridge's recent book, *The Civilian Conservation Corps in Utah: Remembering Nine Years of Achievement, 1933-1942*, is therefore timely for historians and politicians alike. Many Americans have heard of the CCC, but Baldridge writes that few adequately appreciate the CCC’s full legacy. Specifically, he argues that people do not fully appreciate what the CCC did for a generation of Americans by giving tens of thousands of young men “wholesome vocational attitudes, the feeling of making a positive contribution, the development of self-esteem and coming to grips with one’s own self, and the establishment of rapport with one’s fellow man and with society in general” (pp. 357-58).

And Baldridge is well positioned to provide a much richer and more complete picture of the CCC in Utah. He submitted an initial draft of *The Civilian Conservation Corps in Utah* as his doctoral dissertation in 1970 but writes that he spent the next forty years gathering additional data from archives, site visits, and interviews. His extensive research is evident through the volume, as are both his passion for the subject and his admiration for the men who served in the CCC.

In thirteen chapters, Baldridge provides a comprehensive account of the CCC in Utah. In the first four chapters, he explains the CCC’s origins and organization, including the pragmatic part-
nership between the Defense Department for overall logistics and technical agencies, such as the National Park Service and the Soil Conservation Service, which directed the CCC's work. The speed with which the CCC mobilized makes its organization and effectiveness all the more impressive. In chapters 5 through 7, Baldridge describes the primary work carried out in Utah, principally erosion control, flood control, and infrastructure construction. He shows that while suspicion of CCC men remained in some quarters, the program won over rural communities by providing employment opportunities and desperately needed services. Public lands ranchers, for example, saw particular benefits in water projects and other range improvements. In chapters 8 through 12, he offers rich accounts of life in and around the CCC camps, including health and safety challenges, natural disasters, and relationships between the camps and their surrounding communities. In chapter 13, he describes the CCC's decline as the United States mobilized for war. In all, Baldridge describes almost a decade of remarkable achievement, with thousands of man-hours of work and hundreds of thousands of federal dollars invested in Utah.

Of particular interest to those who support a new CCC, Baldridge describes the wide-ranging responses that the CCC and its employees faced. Many hailed it as an essential government program that transcended politics. But others, he notes, denounced it as a socialist or fascist project that would undermine CCC enrollees' desire to seek employment. And he highlights some of the regionalist frictions that have continued to evolve. In the 1930s, conservative Utah residents, who were predominantly Mormon, warned that liberal easterners with low morals would corrupt their communities, and he notes particular fear and animus toward CCC enrollees of color. Today these tensions are less regional—West versus East—and more reflective of the urban/rural divide in American culture and politics.

While Baldridge provides valuable insights for contemporary decisions, that certainly is not his primary concern. What animates the book is his tireless effort to acquaint readers with the men of the CCC in Utah. He provides relatively light analysis, filling the chapters with stories and detailed examples rather than contextual reflection. And he invites readers into his own experience of discovery and interpretation by narrating his research and the limits of extant data. The result is a rich and textured account of the CCC in Utah.

The greatest limitation of the book, particularly for classroom use or an audience beyond Utah, is that the sheer weight of examples at times buries Baldridge's historical analysis and argument. Indeed, for these audiences, the book needed more stringent editing to reduce repetition and detail, allowing readers to focus on the broader themes of each chapter. Likewise, it would have been helpful for Baldridge to embed some of the landscape-level appendix material in the body chapters. This is particularly true of the maps in appendix C. If readers do not already have a detailed mental map of Utah and the CCC, they will want to bookmark the maps in order to keep up with Baldridge's sweeping tour of CCC camps and companies scattered throughout the state.

In the end, Baldridge has done a great service for readers, particularly those with ties to Utah and to CCC enrollees. Throughout, readers will sense that without Baldridge's work, an enormous body of information about the CCC in Utah might have been lost. Readers will also appreciate, from Baldridge's narration, that additional knowledge has been lost or must be recovered by other historians. *The Civilian Conservation Corps in Utah* is an invaluable reference for anyone interested in the history of the CCC or interested in the creation of a new, twenty-first-century CCC. Baldridge's detailed account allows readers to move beyond the national pictures of the CCC and consider CCC life and work on the ground.
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