Here is a thorough treatment of every important aspect of minority affairs during the Truman administration. The authors trace the significant developments in the quest for minority rights from 1945 to 1953, show the interrelatedness to the struggle waged by America’s racial minorities, and assess the role of the Truman administration in that struggle.

The quest of minority peoples for civil rights was a scattered, meager movement until the beginning of the Second World War. Minority group members were segregated, intimidated, poverty-ridden, and undernourished, and their struggle suffered from these weaknesses. This situation changed to an unprecedented extent during the years between 1945 and 1953.

Under President Harry S. Truman, the executive branch of the federal government listened to minority groups as never before and often responded to their entreaties and pressures. Civil rights’ victories were won in the courts. Education levels rose and employment opportunities increased. Legal segregation began to crumble, and the campaign for better housing inched forward. Alliances were forged among racial minorities, Jews, organized labor, and political and religious liberals.

Sizable elements among the minority group ranks developed a modicum of economic power and political influence for the first time during the Truman administration. This rudimentary power was among the bases for civil rights’ and racial developments after 1953.

Although the civil rights’ story of the Truman administration is one relating mainly to blacks, this study deals with other minority groups, including Native Americans, Mexican Americans, Puerto Ricans, Japanese and Chinese Americans, and Jews. Based on extensive research in primary source materials, it is a balanced, in-depth analysis of the power of minorities in eliciting change. It is a valuable addition to the study of social and political history.

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