

WHY TIME'S ON OUR HANDS

By PAUL STUEWE

ON JANUARY 17, 1961, the Royal Commission on Publications was in a feisty mood. Its hearing had already revealed that the Canadian magazine industry was just barely treading water, and the appearance of *Time* publisher Henry Luce before it as a witness offered a rare opportunity

to interrogate the powerful and probe the workings of American cultural imperialism. Stung by the sharp questioning of Chairman Gratian O'Leary, the white-haired Luce, his jowls quivering, momentarily let slip the mask of *Time*'s corporate visage: "I may be in some disagreement with my colleagues. But you said, Sir, you want me to be very plain. I do not consider *Time* a Canadian magazine."

This is but one of the more dramatic moments in that long-running saga of misery and heartbreak, "The Plight of the Canadian Periodical Press," whose historical dimensions have now been conveniently summarized for us in *Cultural Sovereignty: The Time and Reader's Digest Case in Canada* (Bums & MacEachran, 140 pages, \$15.00 cloth). Authors Isaiah Litvak and Christopher Maule, both professors at Carleton University, have carefully reviewed the curious circumstances through which these two American-owned publications have come to control the Canadian magazine industry, and have written a thoughtful and well-researched book that quietly indicts the negligence of generations of governments in failing to reverse this ignominious situation.

Not the least of *Cultural Sovereignty's* virtues is its documentation of the assertion that "debate over foreign periodicals has been a part of the Canadian scene since Confederation." Beginning with late-Victorian protests over the immorality of imported "pulp" fiction,

continuing with a series of ineffective taxes and tariffs on foreign magazines in the 1920s and 1930s, and culminating with the compromise measures finally enacted by the Pearson Cabinet in 1965, Canadians have long sought some method of stemming the flood of alien publications and stimulating an indigenous periodical press. As Litvak and Maule conclusively demonstrate, however, the net effect of all this effort has been to confirm the dominant position of the so-called "Canadian Editions" of *Time* and *Reader's Digest*.

This was explicitly recognized by the O'Leary Commission, whose 1961 report articulated a succinct definition of the situation. Canadian magazines, it reasoned, were a potentially vital instrument for the forging of a Canadian culture, and therefore it was clearly the duty of the federal government to nurture and protect them. Regardless of their good, bad or indifferent quality, Canadian periodicals

were certainly an endangered species if unrestrained foreign competition was allowed to continue; and as a consequence the commission recommended a number of legislative changes, the two most important being an end to allowing tax deductions for advertising in foreign-owned magazines and the



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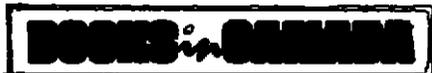
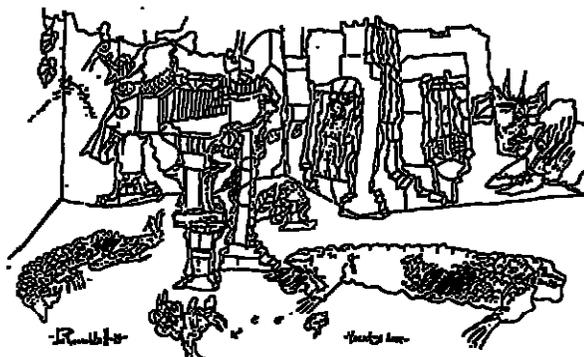
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Vol. 3 No. 6 October, 1974

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Books in Canada is published twelve times per annum, with the assistance of the Canada Council and the Ontario Arts Council, by the Canadian Review of Books Limited, 501 Yonge St., Toronto, Ont. M4Y 1Y4. Phone: (416) 921-4466. Subscription rates: \$9.95 a year (\$15 overseas). Back issues available on microfilm from McLaren Micropublishing, P.O. Box 972, Station F, Toronto M4Y 2N9. Second Class Mail — Registration No. 2593. Contents © 1974. Canadian Review of Books Ltd. Printed by Heritage Press Co. Ltd.

Canadian magazines are in trouble. The industry may not be dying, but it is certainly not growing. There are very few Canadian-owned consumer magazines that can claim, with any degree of certainty, that their survival is assured.

The Davey Report

exclusion of any imported periodical containing advertising aimed at the domestic market.

The ruling conservative government, perhaps spurred on by *Time's* increasingly critical coverage of the Diefenbaker administration, moved to implement these proposals with only minor modifications. American reaction was both swift and massive, with the U.S. State Department threatening retaliatory measures against Canadian imports if the O'Leary recommendations became law. For the time being, however, this serious threat to the hegemony of *Time* and *Reader's Digest* was postponed by the defeat of the Conservatives in 1963, when the Liberals were returned to power and the question of some form of protection for Canadian magazines again became a moot point in a generally unstable political situation.

The new cabinet was deeply split over the O'Leary Report, and in keeping with Lester Pearson's worship of consensus solutions the Liberals finally passed a bill that did little to affect the status quo. *Time* and *Reader's Digest* were both exempted from the O'Leary Commission's recommendations regarding advertising deductions and imported domestic advertising, and their status as Canadian publications was actually confirmed in law. As J. A. Daly, president of Southam Business Publications Ltd., aptly characterized it, the new legislation was the equivalent of "locking the door after the horse was stolen," and left *Time* and *Reader's Digest* the undisputed kings of the hill in the Canadian magazine industry.

The failure of either years of government dithering or intensive lobbying by major Canadian publishers to accomplish anything seemed to hold a clear message for the latter: if we can't beat *Time* and *Reader's Digest*, we'd better join them. Led by the powerful Maclean-Hunter interests, several national magazines combined with *Time* and *Reader's Digest* to form the Magazine Association of Canada* (formerly the Magazine Advertising Bureau of Canada) in an effort to survive rather than conquer.

The success of the MAC, which has made its members more attractive to advertisers through high-powered salesmanship and the types of sophisticated demographic studies employed by competing media, helps to explain the polar shift in attitude by these same Canadian publications when the next major examination of the industry, The Senate Committee Report on the Mass Media or "The Davey Report," was tabled in 1970. Whereas most of them had supported the recommendations of the O'Leary Commission in 1961, the economic advantages deriving from the MAC were sufficient to convince them that *Time* and *Reader's Digest* now deserved their special status, and they argued for it vigorously in their submissions to the Davey Committee. Having found a way to live with the two American-controlled giants, Canadian members of the Magazine Association were understandably opposed to any further changes that might jeopardize their precarious stability;

* Currently composed of *Châteleine*, *Miss Châteleine*, *Country Guide*, *Legion*, *Maclean's*, *Le Maclean*, *The Observer*, *Reader's Digest*, *Sélection du Reader's Digest*, *Saturday Night*, *Time*, *Toronto Life* and *TV Hebdo*.

and thus the Davey Report, which strongly reiterated the proposals of the O'Leary Commission, provoked even less public concern than its predecessor-although it was equally uncompromising in calling for a strong and protective national policy.

FOLLOWING THEIR traversal of this less-than-edifying history, Litvak and Maule outline three general policy approaches available to a federal government with the will to take on *Time* and *Reader's Digest*: "No Change," "Removal of the Tax Exempt Status" and "Canadianization." While "No Change" is, as one might expect, rejected because of the overriding importance of a healthy periodical press in a healthy national culture, the authors of *Cultural Sovereignty* are also skeptical about the possibility of removing the tax exemptions; and not because this would not be effective, but rather because "... for various political reasons, it is unlikely to be implemented." Thus they are left with what they call "Canadianization," a compromise involving percentages of Canadian content, members of boards of directors and share ownership, or in other words a scheme that would require that *Time* and *Reader's Digest* achieve that "good corporate citizenship" which they already claim to exemplify. But I think that we should seriously examine the question of whether we want *Time* and *Reader's Digest* here at all, and at least part of the reason for that is hinted at in the preceding quotation from *Cultural Sovereignty* concerning the feasibility of removing their tax exemptions.

If Litvak and Maule hesitate to speculate about these "various political reasons" for treading lightly where *Time* and *Reader's Digest* are concerned, they do at least take note of several sources, ranging from Walter Gordon to Peter C. Newman to the U.S. State Department, who have made it perfectly clear that the Americans are ready to take any action short of a pre-emptive nuclear strike in order to preserve the most-favoured status of these two magazines.

Surely the Digest's 19-year record in Canada should render it wholly immune ... from discriminatory legislation.

E. P. Zimmerman, president of the Reader's Digest Association (Canada) Ltd., 1961

But why is this the case? What secret powers do *Time* and *Reader's Digest* possess that make them the darlings of the Yankee political establishment?

First of all, one must be cognizant of the numerous connections between *Time* and *Reader's Digest* and the movers and shakers in American political life. This is most evident in the case of *Time's* late publisher, the previously introduced Henry Luce, who was one of President Eisenhower's closest associates and a major contributor to the Republican party; and it is also discernible in Melvin Laird's move to a senior position at *Reader's Digest* from the Nixon Administration. Walter Gordon recounts how the State Department intervened on *Time's* behalf when the Pearson cabinet was considering implementing the O'Leary Report in 1965: "It was submitted that Mr. Luce had great power in the U.S. through his magazines ... [and that] the results could be most damaging both to Canada and to the U.S. administration." Irrespective of other considerations, it seems obvious that both magazines have influential political

ties that can easily be manipulated to intimidate a Canadian government saddled with "the worlds longest undefended border."

But even more significant in terms of mobilizing U.S. backing for Time and *Reader's Digest* is American cultural imperialism. Through agencies such as the U.S. Information Service and the Voice of America, pro-American sentiments are disseminated throughout the world; and while it is fashionable in many putatively sophisticated circles to deride this as inept and obvious propaganda, both the sine and the duration of the effort indicate that it must yield some dividends.

Increasing the foreign circulation of U.S. magazines is one more logical tactic in the drive to spread American viewpoints throughout the world. And in this case the message may be even more insidiously conveyed: although editorial and feature material may be rejected, by foreign readers as obviously self-serving, advertisements demonstrating the wide range of luxuries available to the U.S. consumer may be subliminally effective in convincing them of the superiority of the American way of life. Thus publications such as *Time* and *Reader's Digest* are readily available in U.S. Information Service branches around the globe, and the U.S. Post Office assists by reducing postal rates for magazines mailed abroad. In Canada, of course, we have graciously made all this unnecessary by subsidizing *Time* and *Reader's Digest* and unselfishly forgoing a national periodical press of our own.

The debate over removing "the special privileges of *Time* and *Reader's Digest*" has been such a complicated and muddled affair, particularly since the formation of the MAC made it in the interest of some Canadian magazines to preserve the status quo, that many observers have opted for an across-the-board application of the Canadian-ownership criterion as a simple and equitable solution. Since this does, however, ignore the claim of both *Time* and *Reader's Digest* to make a distinctive contribution to our national life, fairness demands that we consider whether these contributions are so valuable that they merit a continuing exemption from the ground rules governing all other Canadian- and foreign-owned periodicals. What, in other words, do we receive in

I find it incomprehensible that two American magazines should be allowed, with government sanction, to pass off what are almost entirely American publications . . . as Canadian magazines.

Peter C. Newman, 1971

return for our preferential and discriminatory treatment of *Time* and *Reader's Digest*?

In the case of the Canadian edition of *Time*, the answer can only be "not much." The four to six pages of Canadian news consist almost exclusively of either national political items (the obvious) or various "human interest" stories (the trivial), and largely avoid anything resembling editorial or interpretive comment; and this is not because of any principled avoidance of editorializing by the Parent U.S. edition. As *Saturday Night* editor Robert Fulford observes: "I've always known what *Time* thought of the Vietnam War, but I have never been able to figure out what they thought of the War Measures Act." Of course this may just be their notion

of "good corporate citizenship," but if so it negates the contention that *Time* makes a distinctive contribution to Canadian life; we already have "wafflers" of every size, weight and description in embarrassing profusion, thank you.

Even in terms of professional competence *Time's* "Canada" section is manifestly inferior to the remainder of the magazine. Walter Stewart, a respected and by no means xenophobic journalist, describes the frustrations of its Parliamentary correspondents in *Shrug: Trudeau in Power*: "The *Time* Ottawa bureau is manned by uniformly competent reporters whose copy appears in the magazine as uniformly bad; the secret is that their stories are so doctored by editors as to be virtually unrecognizable." The recent controversy over the absence of Richard Rohmer's *Ultimatum* from *Time's* "Best-Sellers" list, which *Time* countered by amending it to "Best Sellers (U.S.)," also fails to inspire confidence in its eventual ability to publish a magazine containing substantial and worthwhile Canadian content. It certainly does not do so now.

Reader's Digest has a somewhat better record with regard to providing useful and interesting information about Canada, although much of what passes for its "Canadian content" is in fact merely an adaptation of material that originally appeared in the American edition. Having worked on three such adaptations myself, I would have to conclude that substituting Canadian names and facts in articles written for U.S. readers is not a uniformly good thing. My first two adaptations concerned (a) coin collecting and (b) saving money on household energy bills, and there were no problems in finding comparable Canadian material; but the third was an article on the growing popularity of car pools, and I could find little evidence that anything like this was occurring in Canada. The information I did collect, however, went into an article extolling car pools as the wave of the future.

Another salient characteristic of the *Digest* is its peculiarly American brand of visceral anti-Communism. This political bias is reflected in innumerable stories about the evils of life in Communist nations, far outnumbering those on closer-to-home phenomena such as Canadian regional strains, let alone Watergate. There is also a strong anti-hippie attitude evident in many articles: one Canadian writer who had always considered himself too liberal for the *Digest* found himself being courted by them when he wrote a piece mildly critical of the youth culture. While there is no question that many Canadians find such opinions attractive, this hardly constitutes an argument for their subsidization; and when this overt ideologizing for "Middle America" is added to the dubious nature of much of *Reader's Digest's* "Canadian content," it leads me to conclude that after 30 years of operation the *Digest* has still not earned the right to be considered a Canadian publication.

Whatever their deficiencies as Canadian magazines, however, and regardless of the fact that they are the greatest single obstacle to a viable national periodical press, putting an end to the special status of *Time* and *Reader's Digest* will still require some pretty massive agitation by the Canadian public. But the climate does seem to be right for just such an effort: the U.S. has been preoccupied with domestic strife and the Trudeau administration has just been returned with a solid majority. Now is the time to act decisively by removing the *Time* and *Reader's Digest* tax exemptions, and thereby wipe clean this disgraceful history of perpetual equivocation and compromise. Cultural Sovereignty, yes! □

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AVALANCHE OVER THE TRANSOM

By P.S. BURTON

TO THE LAYMAN they are known as first readers, and in the trade they are called Manuscript Editors; in either case they are the only people with whom most would-be authors come in contact when approaching a publisher with an **unsolicited-manuscript**. These **readers** are a **strange** collection of people, who quickly become hardened by the thousands of mediocre **manuscripts** that flood publishing **firms** annually. Their lives as **first readers** tend to be very short, the **exigencies** of the task, by **general** consensus, **making** it one of the worst jobs in publishing. I've been a Manuscript Editor for eight months with one of Canada's largest publishing **houses** and I know.

The company for which I work is receiving an increasing number of unsolicited ("**over the transom**") manuscripts each **year**; last year it was more **than** 4,000. Other **publishers** report figures ranging **from** this **figure** down to **several** hundred. Because no one knew exactly how many and what **kinds** of manuscripts we received a year (and **therefore** how much it was costing us), the **firm** began to **keep** a **record** of such **material**. We broke the **manuscripts** down **into** five categories: **fiction**; **verse**; **juvenile**; **academic**; and non-fiction (anything not covered by the **first** four categories, **mainly** biographies, **autobiographies**, regional **histories** and cookbooks). We also recorded the sex and geographic location of each **writer**.

Not surprisingly, we found that **fiction** accounts for about 25% of the manuscripts. Poetry accounts for an equal number. (Both of these **figures** rise slightly in **autumn**, **presumably** because the summer is more conducive to the **labours** of would-be **writers**.) **Children's** literature makes up approximately **10%**, **academic material** between 8% and **10%**, and **non-fiction** **20%**.

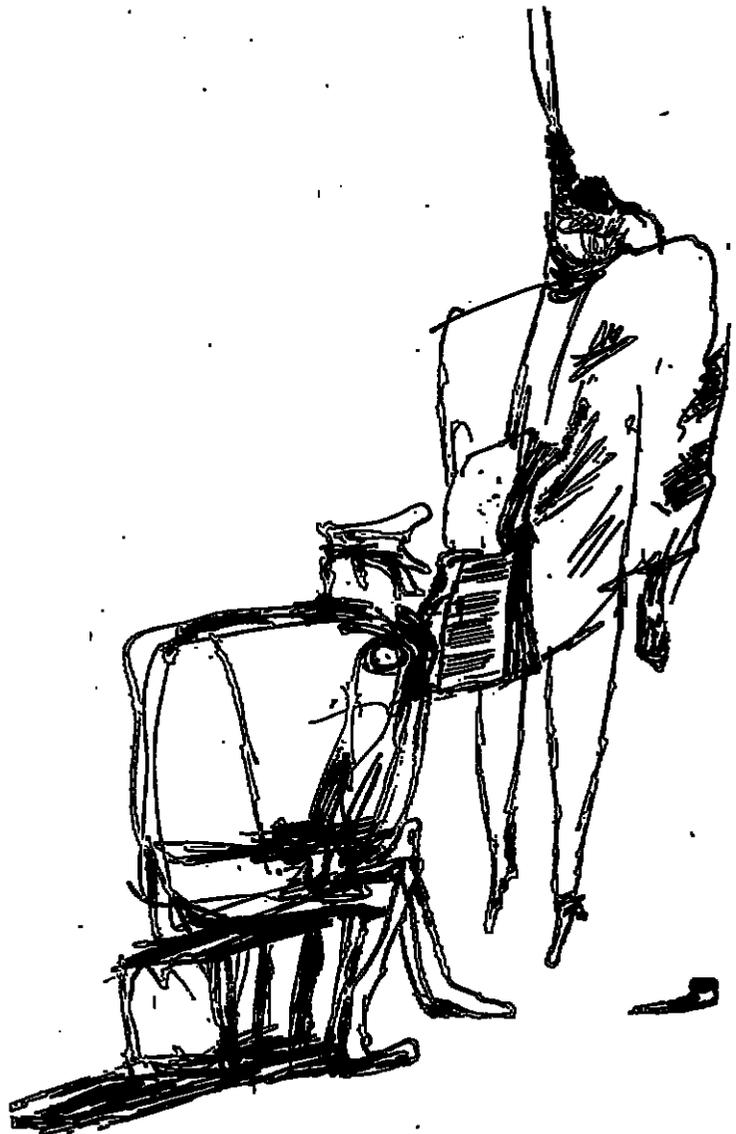
Women account **for** about 35% of our **verse**. **20%** of our **fiction**, **75%** of the **children's** literature, less than 10% of the **academic material**, and **20%** of the **non-fiction** — mostly cookbooks. (These figures **raise** all kinds of interesting questions. Why do women write **so** many **fewer novels than men**? We know that they buy **more** novels **than men**. Why are there so few **academic submissions** by women? **Surely** their disproportionate numbers among **the professorial** population **can account for only a part of the discrepancy**. And why don't women **write** autobiographies or regional histories in anywhere near the same numbers as men do?)

Within the past year, the Maritime provinces accounted for less than two per **cent** of our total. We received not one manuscript from **Prince Edward Island**. Possibly because we **are an English-language publisher**, we received **little material** from Quebec, and **that** entirely from **Montreal**. Some 60% of our submissions came from **Ontario**. The **Prairie provinces** accounted for **just under one quarter of our year's receipt**, and **British Columbia** for about 13%.

Each author in **his** or her letter accompanying the **manuscript proclaims its uniqueness**, its **worthiness of publication**, and its **sure-fire** potential for **making the** best-seller lists. Some go on for **several pages**, **telling** of the accolades **their** work has received **from fiends**. **C**e man's **covering** letter was longer than his **poetry submission**. What becomes **apparent to a Manuscript Editor after just a few weeks is that the bulk** of the manuscripts are **distressingly** and depressingly **similar**.

The poetry is almost all of the "I love you/The sky is blue" variety. The novels show a little **more discipline** (probably because it **requires more** effort to finish a novel than to write 30 **poems**), but they tend to be thrillers, nurse-and-doctor **romances**, bad imitations of **Kerouac**, or religious **sermons** disguised as fiction. The **biographies** are all too **frequently** of some obscure **pioneer** distantly **related** to the author, the autobiographies of some retired officer of the armed **forces**. The **children's literature** seems almost totally **ignorant** of today's children.

What may surprise **Books in Canada** readers is that publishers accept **unsolicited material** not in the hope of finding a major talent (though **this** is a consideration), but **primarily because they find it makes for** good public relations. **Unlike** publishers in the United States, who for the **most** part now **return** unsolicited manuscripts unopened unless they **are** handled by an agent, with a **note** saying **thanks** but **no thanks**, Canadian publishers still read the works and **return** them



MC

politely with a letter. The major exception to this rule is Macmillan, which, according to Doug Gibson, an editorial executive with the firm will no longer accept unsolicited material after Jan. 1 1975. "We still invite queries by letter," says Gibson, "but no manuscripts."

The complaint is often voiced that publishers should tell writers the real reasons for their rejection, rather than employing that old standby: "Principally for marketing reasons we cannot publish your work at this time. . . ." What isn't understood is that paying a full-time reader, typing rejection letters, and returning the letters with the manuscripts by registered mail, can now cost a company as much as \$25,000 a year. To increase this figure by hiring additional staff to write personal letters to each writer outlining the faults of his or her manuscript would be prohibitively expensive. Occasionally one is forced to tell the truth, however. After one writer convinced of his genius submitted the same terrible novel 26 times, with only minor revisions on each occasion, we suggested to him that he "quit writing and try another career, possibly plumbing."

Reactions to rejection letters are varied. One writer was so irate that he drove out to our suburban offices, barged past the receptionist after finding out the location of the Manuscript Editor, and was about to attack her physically when he was ushered out of the building screaming, "No goddam Jew is going to reject my novel!" Suicide threats are relatively common. One middle-aged woman stated that her novel had been rejected by 14 other publishers, and that if we did not publish it she was going to take an overdose of pills. Another woman threatened to kill herself if we didn't publish her account of how the phone company was put to get her. Two Manuscript Editors I know of have actually received murder threats because of rejection letters they signed. One was frightened enough to call the police. He was awakened in the early hours of the morning by a telephone call; a whispering voice told him that if he heard a noise that night he would know that a particular rejected author was there to kill him, and that his "time was up." Nothing came of it.

There is a vast ignorance among the general public of the mechanics of publishing. Every editor can tell you of telephone calls he or she has received from people who sincerely believed that once they submitted their works the publisher could provide finished books and nation-wide distribution within a month. A number of writers do not know the proper procedure for submitting a manuscript. Some forget to include their names and return addresses: others submit handwritten material; still others submit three or four pages and ask us to gauge their talent and make a publishing offer on this basis. One poet sent a single page, and asked us to publish the poem in our next anthology and send "the royalty cheque to the above address."

And there are the writers who ask for help far outside the confines of our job. One woman phoned to ask whether she should write one book or four, "because I have so much to write about." I suggested one at a time. Then she asked if it should be fiction or autobiography. I suggested a novel. She replied, "Great. But how many pages should it be?" I suggested 250. She said, "Thanks. And, by the way, how many chapters should it have?" I suggested, "Several." and hung up.

Still, it's a fascinating job, one that, for the hardy, leads to a full editor's post. And it's hard not to be deeply affected by the dreams of literary glory of so, many people. □

Editor's note: For obvious reasons, P.S. 'Burton is a pseudonym.

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BLOOD. SWEAT AND LOAM TRUTHS

We're starting to dig up our working-class history, but in overalls cut on a Lib-Lab bias

Winnipeg Strike 1919, by Kenneth McNaught and David J. Bercuson, Longman Canada, 140 pages, \$3.95 cloth.

The Asbestos Strike, edited by Pierre Elliott Trudeau, translated by James Boake, James Lorimer & Company, 382 pages, \$5.95 paper.

On Strike: Six Key Labour Struggles in Canada 1919-1949, edited by Irving Abella, James Lorimer & Company, 196 pages, \$4.95 paper.

Studies in Canadian Social History, edited by Michiel Horn and Ronald Sabourin, McClelland & Stewart, 480 pages, \$6.95 paper.

By BOB DAVIS

THE HISTORY OF Canadian working people has been doubly buried. It is bidden first in the sense that all Canadian history has been buried. Ours is supposedly a dull and even story — in no way as stirring as the history of Europe or the United States. But working-class history has also been bidden beneath that extra layer that buries the history of ordinary people in all capitalist countries. Allowing for differences in countries more class-conscious than ours, the general role still applies: working-class history is allowed to surface as romanticized folkways and customs, rarely as oppression and fighting back. Thus, for example, we are taught about Prairie farmers building sod huts and suffering from drought and pestilence, but not about the exploitation that led to the formation of co-operatives and farmer's parties.

But things are changing. Canadian nationalism has now spawned a compulsory Canadian Studies program for Ontario schools. Although this is along way from courses on the Canadian working class, there has been a steady stream of books and reprints on labour history from Canadian publishers.

So far, nearly all of these books are of high quality. Their number is still small enough that all are pretty well essential reading for people trying to piece together a neglected area of Canadian life. But the fact that labour history as a whole is so buried must not bide a basic division within labour history and interpretations of it. This division should be announced to readers loudly and clearly: labour history — especially union history and labour politics — is invariably presented from one of two quite different points of view. The moderate labour view is represented today by the leadership of the Canadian Labour Congress, the New Democratic Party and the scholars and writers who reflect their ideas. The militant labour view has no single organizational centre. Traditionally, it has been represented on many points by the Communist unions and on others by national groups such as the Confederation of Canadian Unions, the Confederation of National Trade Unions in Quebec and the Waffle. But the view is increasingly held by pockets of labour people throughout the country who feel the CLC and the NDP have become too cozy and co-operative with capital.

This split is an inevitable result of the frustrations and ferocity of labour battles. When each side talks about the other, however, it is often difficult to sort out who should be supported. Also, when we set out to understand these two strands of labour history, we must constantly bear in mind that in certain key showdowns, the corporations and the elite have attached moderates and militants with equal passion and fear.

How do moderates and militants divide about Canadian labour history?

The moderate CLC-NDP view pictures labour fighting for a legitimate and legislatively guaranteed place within a free-enterprise economy or within a British-style parliamentary social democracy. As in Britain, labour has its own party. The moderates consider the Canadian tie-in with the American labour movement essential and mostly good. (The key organizing drives and battles, according to this interpretation, were the craft-union organizing before 1900 and the industrial-union organizing in the late 1930s and 1940s.) While most exponents of this position would still call the right to strike a cornerstone of labour's status in this society, there has been a tendency since the 1950s for such leaders to downplay the strike as a weapon and to remind journalists repeatedly how most negotiations are settled without strikes.

At this point in Canadian labour history, the moderates have won out over the militants. And since moderates control the labour movement and the NDP, it is the moderate interpretation that we find in almost all the books that are published. Of the four books I am reviewing, three are on Canadian labour topics and all three are "moderate." The fourth is, an anthology of Canadian social history. To the extent that its articles are about labour, it is also the product of moderates.

Since the moderate position already receives good coverage (not forgetting that management's positions are given the best coverage of all), it is necessary to lay out the many ways in which this view distorts the story of Canadian labour.

There is first the stark truth that for all labour's triumphs over the last 100 years, only one third of the Canadian labour force is organized. Second, despite decisive gains in the standard of living for many of those organized workers, the gulf between the rich and the working class as a whole is still as great as it was at the beginning of the century. Another factor is the extent to which entrenched labour bureaucracies sap the initiative of rank-and-file workers — and are encouraged to do so by legislation since, between contracts, the union is expected by law to make its members behave themselves. Also, one of the worst distortions by the moderates is the combination of slamming and underplaying the role of the Communist Party. All the organizing in Canada between 1930 and 1935 — a period sloughed over in standard texts — was done under the Workers' Unity League by the Communist Party; most of the organizers in the CIO drives of the late 1930s and 1940s were Communists. Before the purge a decade later, they were a

leading force in central and eastern Canada and the dominant force in British Columbia. And my reading of why the Communists were purged is that they wanted to fight tougher than their social democratic counterparts. Finally, there is the allegiance of the moderates to the American union cause, a loyalty that in many periods of our history (but especially today) has helped, not the working people, but American and Canadian corporations.

All four of these books, although of high quality, sham some or all of these distortions. *On Strike*, edited by Irving Abella (author of *Nationalism, Communism and Canadian Labour*), is the least formidable of the four and a good introduction to Canadian labour history. It is the story of six famous strikes from the Winnipeg General Strike in 1919 to the Asbestos Strike in 1949. One excellent feature of the book is the inclusion of two strikes of the early 1930s, both organized by Workers' Unity League unions. One is the Estevan Strike of 1931, presented by S. D. Hanson, University of Saskatchewan archivist. References to Hanson's thesis have been popping up in other studies, so it's good to see it published. The other is the Stratford Strike of 1933, described by Desmond Morton, a strike of furniture workers and chicken pluckers that is distinguished by being the last occasion in peacetime before October, 1970, that Canadian troops were used to maintain civil law and order.

The best essay in the book is the only one not written by an academic, David Moulton's discussion of the Ford Windsor strike of 1945. Moulton avoids one horrible pitfall of moderate academics: they spend so much time trying to be precise and fair and accurate that they often start weighing the two sides in a strike as if resources on each side were equal. Fraser Isbester's weighing of police and worker violence in the Asbestos Strike is the worst example in the book of this kind of fake objectivity. Nobody, however, can beat Abella himself for this puffed-up version of the moderates' view of the 1950s: "Yet [the labour movement] emerged in the 1950s, triumphant and successful, its mettle tested, its survival insured, for the first time a powerful political and economic force strong enough to challenge industry and government." From my reading of the 1950s, what this must mean is that the Communists had been expelled or put in their place, the craft and industrial unions had combined to form the CLC (1956), and labour leadership was now prepared to join in forming the NDP (1961).

People who mad Canadian labour history sometimes say that there are too many books coming out on the Winnipeg General Strike. On the contrary, McNaught and Bercuson's *Winnipeg Strike* 1919 is the first readable, coherent modern-day account. It has the advantage of being thorough without being long and ponderous. Another recent book, the highlight of Winnipeg Strike publishing, is Norman Penner's reissue of the strikers' own handbook (*Winnipeg 1919*). But that book cannot substitute for a modern look at the strike such as McNaught and Bercuson's. (Bercuson also has his own essay on this event in *On Strike*, an essay I've found valuable in teaching teachers about the strike.)

Since the authors include such a complete section on the history of interpretations of the strike, their own weakness must be noted. They end up not with an explicit interpretation of their own but with a claim that past interpretations were limited by seeing the general strike as a political event. Future studies, they argue, should be on the economic relations between labour and capital. But how Can a general strike that lasts for six weeks, that sends strong waves throughout the country, that affects it deeply for many years and that ties up the Ministers of Justice and Labour



IF WE WERE BOLSHEVISTS.
A 1919 cartoon from A Saturday Night Scrapbook

full-time for months — how can this kind of event not be treated centrally as a political event?

There's another problem with McNaught and Bercuson's presentation of this view. Their own book is not a good, example of what they recommend. Despite the opening chapter on the history of labour-management relations in Winnipeg, and despite the fine detail throughout about precise negotiations and grievances, the book follows the social democratic line on the strike. This means that the authors' interpretive energy is devoted to showing that the strikers did not intend this strike to be the first stage of a Canadian revolution but merely as a showdown on workers rights to legal bargaining power and decent wages. This makes it hard for them to explain why Winnipeg labour's opposition, i.e. business, government and central Canadian labour leadership, acted so viciously and vindictively. The ruling elites appear hysterical and irrational. Unfortunately, (or fortunately, depending on whose side you're on) the ruling elites understand serious threats to their position much better than the social democratic and liberal historians who write about them. Much of what seems to social democrats and liberals a hysterical reaction to a misconstrued problem is often a perfectly rational decision that if the uppity natives aren't taught a lesson now, they might later get the idea they can take over. (The same problems of interpretation exist for historians of the FLQ crisis. Denis Smith, for example, cogently argues that the Liberal explanation of what was happening at that time, was a phony sales pitch. What he doesn't explain is why it seemed perfectly reasonable to the Liberals to invent the sales pitch. It was needed to justify the repressive measures they felt they had to take: These measures were designed not for an apprehended insurrection at the time, but for the possible future extension of French working-class power.)

WESTERN LABOR NEWS

FREEDOM OF SPEECH

URGED BY COMMISSION

STRIKE DEMANDS ARE UPHELD

Authors Commission Report: PASTE THIS IN YOUR HAT The Great Winnipeg Strike

The authors of this report are the members of the Commission on the Freedom of Speech, which was set up by the Government of Canada in 1956. The Commission's report is a landmark document in the history of Canadian labour relations. It is a document that should be read by every Canadian who is interested in the rights of workers to speak freely and to organize for their own interests.

The Commission's report is a landmark document in the history of Canadian labour relations. It is a document that should be read by every Canadian who is interested in the rights of workers to speak freely and to organize for their own interests.

During the Winnipeg General Strike, workers published their own paper. Good news—as above—was rare.

One final weakness of *The Winnipeg General Strike*. Why do we once again have a publication about the strike without a single mention of the schools and the teachers? Do the authors consider what 75,000 children were doing during those six weeks to be irrelevant? You can be sore it mattered a great deal to the strikers and their wives and husbands. As it happened, the schools functioned as usual, only one teacher in the entire city was on strike. But even if this business-as-usual attitude is the authors' excuse for not mentioning the schools, today's developing militancy of teachers in Quebec, B.C. and Ontario should have led them to mention that the Manitoba Teachers' Federation (now Society) began in Winnipeg just one month before the General Strike. In fact, teachers' federations across the country all started around this time for the same reason that labour had struck so decisively. The authors show a smiii lack of imagination in failing to develop their sections on the role of other key public employee groups such as postal workers, telephone operators, railway workers, firemen and police in the light of the increased militance of these groups today.

It is a sign of how little English Canadians wish to understand about Quebec that *The Asbestos Strike*, edited by Pierre Elliott Trudeau and published in Quebec in 1956, has only now been translated into English. The publishing of the first English edition is one of many recent commendable contributions to Canadian labour history by James Lorimer & Company, formerly James Lewis & Samuel.

One of the interesting things about this book is obviously what Trudeau had to say about the strike. His cabinet colleagues Marchand and Pelletier were even more actively connected with the strike than Trudeau. Marchand as secretary of the Canadian and Catholic Confederation of Labour and Pelletier as the CCCL's director of public relations. Trudeau, as the authors' list states, was a "lawyer, an economist, and the co-editor [with Pelletier] of the review *Cité Libre*." One can see Trudeau's familiar irony and narcissism in a contemporary note he includes under the list of authors: "Almost all the joint authors of *The Asbestos Strike* now have different jobs, but we felt it would be useful to give here the positions they held when the first edition of this book appeared in 1956."

It has been fashionable if rather pathetic for the IA to juxtapose Trudeau quotations from this earlier era with recent quotations to show what a conservative he has become. From-examining this book, especially Trudeau's own long opening essay, "Quebec at the Time of the Strike." I reach the opposite conclusion. Par from having changed radically over the years, Trudeau's present pragmatic liberalism has its foundations in this earlier book. The hope that the Asbes-

tos Strike held out for Trudeau was that Quebec might no longer separate itself from the rest of the Western industrialized world, that it might begin to develop hard-nosed realism, that it might start to act and think like any other modern, industrialized, technologized part of North America. He considers □ ationalism primarily a reactionary force and, although he advocates socialism, 'it is a half-hearted CCF version he favours. Nowhere does his advocacy of socialism rival his belief in a pragmatic, realistic place for Quebec within the capitalist system.

Social science for Trudeau, as for all the other authors, is to be the intellectual tool for modernized Quebec. His essay runneth over with statistics, lists of names and books and dates. Science is what has presumably shown him that nationalism is a dated phenomenon.

The book is a thorough source book on the Asbestos Strike and on Quebec at the time. Valuable appendices include trial and strike report information and also "A Reader's Guide to the Asbestos Strike" by the translator, James Boake.

Studies in Canadian Social History, edited by Michlel Horn and Ronald Sabourin, is a fat anthology bringing together a goodly number of articles until now burled away in periodicals. Three of the writers we have already mentioned am here -Morton, McNaught and Bercuson. For me the book's attraction is mostly for its parts rather than for the theme of the whole. A much more tough-minded conception of the overlapping of sociology and history in Canadian studies would have produced a better book. It would also have led the editors to include many important articles unknown to most students, such e's H. C. Pentland's "The Lachine Canal Strike of 1843," Peter Warrian's "The Winnipeg General Strike" or essays by Jack Scott, West Coast author of the recent history of nineteenth-century Canadii labour, *Sweat and Struggle*.

Scott is one of the few popular exponents of the militant view of labour. Readers might like to read his book in conjunction with some of the titles I have discussed in these pages. □

*Your body has slopes that open infinity to me
there where we would seal the sun in our eyes
and deep in the blood the silence of fresh water
holds the old gossip of a stream among the leaves
when the steadiest forks stir with moss
and from an open heart like the beginning of a sea
flow islands of words by the thousands*

*Thus the moon in us blossoms every night
at the instant of light where the tides form
and our breath sinks to the bottom of our stomach—
so burdened with replies even in the reddest crevices
we follow toward the south a distant conversation
still everything outside ourselves falls into exile*

(From *The Alchemy of the Body*, by Juan Garcia, translated by Marc Plourde, Fiddlehead, 33 pages.)



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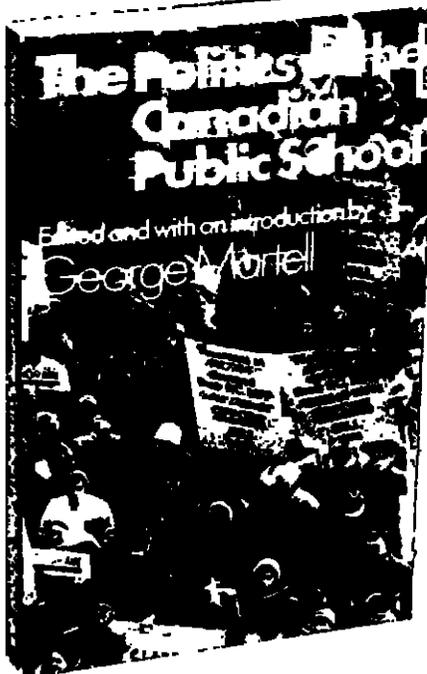
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Schools



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Aurora bunglealis

A History of the Original Peoples of Northern Canada, by Keith J. Crowe, McGill-Queen's University Press, 226 pages, \$4 paper.

The Genocide Machine in Canada: The Pacification of the North, by Robert Davis and Mark Zannis, Black Rose Books, 198 pages, \$10.95 cloth and \$3.95 paper.

By JIM LOTZ

DESPITE THE VAST outpourings of books, articles and news stories about the Canadian North in recent years, this part of Canada still remains an enigma to most Canadians. Northern development is usually seen as a series of problems, to be solved by technology. How do we educate the Eskimos? How do we build the Mackenzie Valley pipe line? How do we get the iron ore on Baffin Island to European markets?

In truth, Northern development is not a problem. It's a mystery, in the religious sense. We'll only understand the North when we understand the nation and ourselves. These two books will advance the process of understanding the North by several light years, because they are both basically concerned with how southern Canadians have looked upon the North in the past. One book is gentle, wise, and written by an Eskimo-speaking civil servant. The other is rash and radical, and was written by two research journalists.

In *The Genocide Machine in Canada*, Robert Davis and Mark Zannis claim that Canadians are behaving in the North in the same way as the Americans behaved in Viet Nam. We are laying waste the land and the people in the name of progress and profit. They show, through published sources, that the official approach to Northern development is colonialist in intent and action. The Northern peoples are assumed to be incompetent, and so must be helped. "Helping the natives" has become a major industry north of sixty.

Davis and Zannis use a shotgun approach to prove their case, and they come up with some devastating information. They deal in detail with the way in which the private and public propaganda mills equate development with the exploitation of natural re-

sources; the lack of employment for native peoples; the question of land ownership; the efforts to turn Inuit and Indians into museum pieces; the antics of groups such as the Defence Research Board and the Arctic Institute of North America; U.S.-Canadian co-operation in the North; and the education, health, welfare, justice and population-control systems in the Northwest Territories. They often let their ideology and their outrage trip them up.

Keith Crowe's book takes another tack, but reaches essentially the same conclusions. This book is written from the inside, by Crowe, who was helped by a team of Northern natives. The heroic deeds and adventures of southerners finally appear for what they were — blunders based on a lack of understanding of the people and the land. Those who went north to help the natives showed only too often how helpless they were in this harsh, barren, difficult land. The names of notable Northerners finally emerge from the mists of history — Chief Tooma, Akaitcho, Matonabee, Albert One-Eye, Ipilvik and Tukolerktuk. These men and women were not "arctic expert" or "northern heroes." They were full human beings, who looked after their own people, helped explorers, and endured incredible hardships. The native peoples always lived on the edge of starvation and uncertainty; Crowe concludes that development efforts have "swamped" native life.

Both books stress that Canadian society has to start sorting itself out, and that southern Canadians will have to have the courage to give way and to back off, and to cease being experts in the lives of the people of the North. □



From *A History of the Original Peoples of Northern Canada*

Porterhouse stakes

The Vertical Mosaic Reviewed and Re-examined, edited by James L. Heap, Burns & MacEachern, 178 pages, \$3.75 paper.

Canada: A Socio-Political Report, by Ronald Manzer, McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 349 pages, \$8.95 cloth and \$5.95 paper.

By **CLIVE COCKING**

YOU KNOW WHAT they say about sociologists. A sociologist is a man who needs a Ford Foundation grant to find his way to the whorehouse. In a purely Canadian context, it would seem that he's a man who needs a Canada Council grant to discover poverty, discrimination, inequality and elitism.

Even John Porter's *Vertical Mosaic* (the subject of one of these books) is ultimately a detailed recitation of common knowledge: that Canada has a long way to go to become an open, egalitarian, fully democratic society. Sociologists do tend to be belated chroniclers and analysts of social phenomena long experienced (or suffered) by ordinary people. So it's not surprising that one doesn't find much that's new in these two books.

Still, not to be too hard on these statistics-loving, diligent academics, they have produced two works that nicely complement Porter's magnum opus and which should be of value, if not to laymen, at least to serious students of Canadian society.

Everybody's Canada consists of six scholarly reviews of Porter's *Vertical Mosaic* and a long critical essay on the book by Prof. James Heap, a University of Toronto political sociologist. Although Porter's findings are generally accepted by the contributors, each tends to find certain aspects more important than the others. In an impressive review, for example, Prof. Gad Horowitz argues for more discussion of Porter's argument "that Canada could develop a more democratic way of life but is prevented from doing so by the absence of a 'creative politics,' i.e., a democratic class struggle, a left-right polarization." It is a theme worth more examination.

In his essay, Prof. Heap presents a closely reasoned argument that *The Vertical Mosaic* is scientifically un-

sound owing to Porter's confused, inconsistent use of the concepts of "class," "power," and "democracy." At the same time he develops the criticism (made by several reviewers) of Porter's "muted radicalism" — that he failed to draw the radical conclusions end raise the questions warranted by the data he presented. Prof. Heap points out that the thrust of *The Vertical Mosaic* points to the corporate elite being the dominant, controlling elite in Canada, but Porter, adopting a non-controversial "strategy of respectability," backs away from such an explicit conclusion. "What is the structure of power in Canada?" is left unanswered." Prof. Heap maintains. "Confusion reigns, with the result being that respectable pluralism seems to prevail."

Prof. Ronald Manner, a U of T political economist, is only slightly more outspoken than Porter in dealing with the implications of his findings in *Canada: A Socio-Political Report*. But while he has taken a different approach his findings are not greatly different from those of *The Vertical Mosaic*. While Porter has analyzed the structure of social class and power, Prof. Manzer has examined the Canadian political system's ability to serve basic human needs of welfare (housing, nutrition, etc.), security, fraternity, equality and liberty.

Prof. Manzer has produced a profile of Canada very similar to that of Porter: inequality of educational opportunity continues, occupational mobility is still limited, the upper-middle-class elite continues to dominate politics, people of British and Jewish background are still overly represented in upper-class occupations while Indians, Eskimos, Italians and French dominate lower-class occupations, and the rich still get richer.

Students will likely find Prof. Manzer's book particularly useful, for the approach he takes and for the voluminous data he presents (notably on the position of Indians, Eskimos and women in our society). Like Porter, he has clearly defined some of the major problems we face as a society. *Canada: A Socio-Political Report* will make a good textbook for politicians as well as students. □

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Quartering the body politic

Political Parties and Ideologies in Canada, by William Christian and Colin Campbell, McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 213 pages, \$4.75 paper.

By P. L. BURETTE

ALTHOUGH EVIDENTLY designed for political science students, *Political Parties and Ideologies in Canada* is worth the time of anyone interested in Canadian politics. With the exception of the polemical introduction, it is well written and free of unnecessary jargon. Unhappily, it is not so free from typographical errors.

The book's major thesis is that, contrary to the prevailing view, ideology has played and continues to play a crucial if not decisive role in Canadian politics. The authors trace the history of four ideological strains: liberalism, conservatism, socialism, and nationalism. They argue that the overwhelming dominance of liberalism in

English Canada has led political scientists to suppose that there is an ideological uniformity in Canada as in the United States. But conservatism, made up of Tory collectivism and tolerance of privilege (along with a hostility to rapid change), has maintained a large number of adherents in English Canada throughout our history, and has been dominant in Quebec. It is largely because of the collectivism of this conservative tradition, they argue, that socialism has been more acceptable in Canada than in the U.S., for socialism is essentially collectivist — although it is also egalitarian. But both conservatism and socialism in Canada are up against the North American orthodoxy of liberals, which the authors define as individualist and libertarian.

The Liberal Party is free of collectivism and therefore has a broader ideological appeal than any of the other parties. At the same time, it is better able to tolerate the French fact, which is a refusal of French Canadians to assimilate to the greater Canadian collectivity, even though Quebecers themselves are collectivist in ideology. Because both the Conservative and CCF/NDP parties must somehow come to terms with individualist and liber-

tarian principles, they find themselves ideologically confused and frequently divided as they are drawn towards, or recoil from the dominant individualist and libertarian views of liberalism. The strength of these parties, however, is that their collectivism enables them to exploit nationalist sentiment much more effectively than the Liberals.

There is much sense in this ideological reading of Canadian politics — inspired in no small part by the writings of George Grant. Certainly the notion of "brokerage politics," which assumes ideological homogeneity, applies much less well to Canadian than to American politics. However, one would like to see the analysis extended to include provincial politics, which might be caught rather less easily in the authors' fourfold ideological net.

Robert Stanfield and David Lewis might well have benefitted from a reading of this book before the recent electoral triumph of liberalism. Robert Stanfield campaigned on the collectivist platform of decisive government action in the economic sphere and was rejected. David Lewis offered only a greater compassion to counter the Liberal platform of faith in the free play of autonomous economic forces. □

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The Backbencher: Trials and Tribulations of a Member of Parliament, by Garden Aiken, McClelland & Stewart, 190 pages, \$8.95 cloth.

By DOUGLAS MARSHALL

JUST AS IT'S the Opposition's duty to oppose, so it's a backbencher's duty to sit back. Attention-grabbing rebels receive short shrift in Canada's Parliament; condemnation by the party leadership is followed frequently - although fortunately for the pale flame of representative democracy, not invariably - by political extinction at the next election.

The acceptable function of backbenchers, Gordon Aiken makes clear, is to flap, bark and vote Eke "trained seals" - an epithet first tossed out by George Drew during the 1956 pipeline debate and now a parliamentary cliché throughout the English-speaking world. As a contribution to international rhetoric, the phrase lacks the gut thrust of, say, Bevan's skewer for Anthony Eden - "a sheep in wolf's clothing" - delivered about the same time. But the revelation that Ottawa, where the Hill can hardly be said to glitter with verbal gems, has made any contribution at all is one of the rewards of this book.

There are plenty of others. Aiken, elected in 1957 as the Tory MP for Parry Sound-Muskoka, was a masonably obedient seal for 15 years before a heart strain brought about his prudent retirement in 1972. (Coronaries map a grim harvest during every session.) I don't know how well he served his constituents or his party during that period, but in gathering this material together he has certainly served his country with distinction. Seldom have the inner workings of Canadian politics been explained with such informed objectivity. Never has there been a clearer or more readable account of what it's like to be a modern Member of Parliament.

Any reader expecting juicy tidbits of scandal or gossip from Aiken will be disappointed. This is not the self-serving memoir of a former cabinet minister reliving his power trip. Nor is it the alleged exposé of what really went on compiled by some arras-haunting parliamentary journalist. Rather, it's

one backbencher's highly anecdotal, well-documented perception of a party system that squanders talent even more rashly than governments waste money.

Aiken notes Trudeau's snide remark that when an MP moves 50 yards from Parliament he becomes a nobody. Trudeau, who has not always been right, was never more wrong. In their local ridings, where they are increasingly required to act as social workers and ombudsmen. MPs are honoured as distinguished celebrities. As delegates to conferences abroad, one of the occasional perquisites for which backbenchers are pathetically grateful, they are welcomed as international dignitaries. But in their own House backbenchers are treated by their political masters with about as much respect as one normally accords the delivery boy.

Powerless to influence law-making, reduced to servile loyalty in caucus ("Get in there and vote with your party," snarled Diefenbaker when Aiken once voiced a dissenting opinion), the average backbencher spends his days arguing with his conscience, plugging away at his job, and treasuring those rare moments of recognition - a line in the newspaper, a nod from a minister. Eventually, even the best-trained-seal rebels. For Aiken that moment came when he joined two other Tories in breaking party ranks and voting against the substitute legislation for the War Measures Act:

The moment of voting is a Member's solitary decision. The welfare of the country, the special needs of his constituency, or his own conscience sometimes overcome the strong compulsion to vote with his colleagues. But not often.

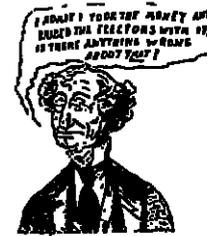
Despite the vicious pressures for abject conformity, Aiken thinks the party system is necessary - particularly in Canada - because it forces "a national consensus rather than a series of regional approaches." However, he has some eloquent ideas about how the House rules should be changed to give private MPs more dignity and freedom. Presumably he would heartily approve of Trudeau's recent decision to follow the British practice of a guid hierarchy and frequent cabinet shuffles. Once it becomes commonplace in Canada for MPs to be promoted from, and ministers demoted to, the back benches, we'll begin to have parliaments that realize their MI potential rather than pools of preprogrammed Pinnipedia.

By rights, Aiken should be a frustrated and bitter man. Instead he writes with grace, warmth and humour. From

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experience, I had anticipated the sort of coy, partisan ego ramble that too many Ceodii publishers are conned into commissioning or accepting. Instead I found myself enjoying the book that every Canadian old enough to vote should read and any Canadian contemplating a career in federal politics should learn by heart. When all is said and done, there's no denying Canadians have a certain parliamentary style:

On one occasion, Drummond Clancy was being raked over by another Member. After taking it for a while, he finally got to his feet.

"Mr. Speaker," he asked, properly addressing the Chair, "would it be out of order if I called the honourable Member a son-of-a-bitch?"

The speaker nodded his head.

"I thought so," said Clancy, resuming his seat.

Justice and new Rielities

The Queen v. Louis Riel, with an introduction by Desmond Morton, U of T Press, 383 pages, \$6.95 cloth.

To Louis from your sister who loves you Sara Riel, edited and translated by Mary Jordan, Griffin House, 172 pages, \$8.95 cloth.

By PHIL LANTHIER

CANADA'S GREATEST political trial opened in a small, hot Regina courtroom with an ornate six-point indictment charging one Louis Riel with high treason. Having been, it proclaimed, "moved and seduced by the instigation of the devil as a false traitor against our said Lady the Queen," Louis Riel, "armed and arrayed in war-like manner, that is to say with guns, rifles, pistols, bayonets and other weapons," set out to "subvert and destroy the constitution and government of the realm" at such places as Deck Lake, Fish Creek and Batoche.

In the days that followed, the defence tried to prove that, inspired by the devil or not, Louis Riel was insane. For the leader of the successful Red River uprising and the hope of the Métis people in the Northwest Territories, this was humiliating and frustrating beyond measure. Riel disagreed openly in court with his three Quebec lawyers. He tried to take over the cross-examination of Charles Nolin, his former associate and now key crown witness, when he ob-

served that his defence was not adequately challenging testimony. But he was forced into silence.

When his time came, the French-speaking Riel struggled in English to muster a last appeal to the jury, one that would at least make clear the urgency and justice of his mission. But he was rambling and diffuse. He prayed aloud, called the Northwest his mother, claimed to be the prophet of the New World, accused the white pioneers of sowing contention among the Indians, insisted he was not insane. At the end, after having been found guilty, Riel ironically voiced his relief. "I suppose," he said, "that after having been condemned, I will cease to be called a fool." His final speech was woefully anti-climactic. His audience, notes Desmond Morton, was bored and over-heated in the Regina courtroom. "Riel, as exhausted and drained as any of his listeners, sensed the futility of his efforts, slowed, and stopped." Implacably, Magistrate Richardson condemned him to hang by the neck until dead.

Now that the University of Toronto Press has made the complete transcript of the trial available, together with a succinct and helpful introduction by Desmond Morton, the general reader will be able to examine for himself whether the trial was fair, the defence adequate, the verdict just. Certainly the question of Métis rights did not quite receive the adequate dramatization for which Riel hoped. Crown and Beech alike blocked most defence attempts to hold accountable the Government of Canada for its indifference towards real grievances. And most of us will be disturbed at the perfunctory treatment rendered the insanity question. Attempts to account for Riel's conduct as a product of megalomania were a far cry from such fancy modern analyses as that of Dr. B. R. Markson, which suggests that Riel suffered from a masochistic identification with his mother, a narcissistic identification with his father, and a susceptibility to bizarre paranoid constructions. In any event, the jury thought he was sane enough. As one of them subsequently said, "Riel may not have been absolutely insane, but he was a very decided crank."

Less valuable, but offering nonetheless a curious sidelight on Riel, is Mary Jordan's *To Louis from your sister who loves you Sam Riel*. It reprints in French and translates with commentary a number of letters written to Louis Riel by his sister Sam. As Sister Marguerite-Marie of the Grey Nuns, Sara

was **effusively** and elaborately devout in her letters, and dedicated in an on-questioning way to the **Métis** cause. Mary Jordan's **rather disjointed** and on-focused commentary insists upon, but does **not** establish, a vital relationship **between brother** and sister. To the extent that they shared the same **religious** convictions, and that their lives were shaped by patterns of sacrifice, the connection holds **up** — though it is not surprising or **useful**. Sam's simplicity was really a **stark counterpoint** to **Riel's complexities** and **ambiguities**. Her way of dealing with the erratic **mystagogue** who was her brother was to **fill her** letters with prayers and piety: As an historical figure, Sam lacks importance. Yet she may well **find herself** in the next **film**, opera, play or poem **inspired** by the Riel **legend**. □

From a child's cracker barrel

Tribal Justice, by Clark Blaise, Doubleday, 240 pages, \$6.95 cloth.

By ALDEN NOWLAN

CLARKE BLAISE HAS written some of the best short stories I've ever read. Unlike many of his contemporaries, he obeys what I regard as the artist's first commandment: "Thou shalt not bon? the **arse** off thine readers." One reads him for pleasure rather than from a sense of duty to one's country or to one's profession. I've **admired** him since I read his memorable **contributions** to the 1968 Clarke, Irwin anthology *New Canadian Writing*.

His work reminds me of the magic realist painters, especially Alex Colville. Much of it possesses a **dream-like** quality. I'm **thinking particularly** of those dreams in which we perceive reality more clearly than during most of our waking moments, because there are fewer distractions.

One of my favourite stories in this new collection is "Notes Beyond a History." It affects me in the same way as Edgar Allan Poe: "An ocean of **alligators**, the breeder of chilling fevers ... Black sisters walked in loose black robes ... **Swarms** of children, the colour of **dirty sand**, and **darker adults** screaming down at me, '**Morte! Morte!**' and others '**Kill! Kill!**' " But the **terror** is **utterly real**, which is what **makes** the story so powerful. It isn't

just a very clever trick, like Shirley Jackson's "The Lottery." "Notes Beyond a History" sent cold shivers down my spine the first time I read it, and when I **re-read it** for this review it sent cold shivers down my spine again.

Another story that sticks in my mind is "How I Became a Jew," a study of **culture shock**, an obsessive theme with Blaise. It's a sad, touching, **beautiful story** about a **little boy** from the **southern United States** who suddenly finds himself in a Cincinnati school where everything that he has been taught to respect is despised, and everything he **learns** separates him farther from his roots.

In this age of narrowness, Blaise can write about many different types and classes of people, Québécois, Canadian and American. But I think he writes best about the lower middle class and its children. The terrifyingly self-sufficient poor white child in "Broward Dowdy," for example, doesn't seem altogether real to me. Blaise's imagination seems most at home with people who run small hardware stores, or more particularly the children of people who run small hardware stores. That comment shouldn't be taken too literally. But when the background of a character in a Blaise story is not supplied by the author, I always assume that it is lower middle class, that the father runs a subsistence business, probably in Montreal or Florida.

The longest story in the collection, "The March," deals with Pierre-Hector Desjardins' struggle to decide whether he is a Canadian or an American, ending with the decision that "America wasn't perfect, but it was the best show on the continent. . . . There was something insidious in the simplicity of Canada." There are powerful moments in the story, notably the description of sadistic southern deputy sheriffs torturing a black civil-rights worker and his white female companion. The effect is weakened by the fact that the story is set in 1963. That was so long ago. In a curious sense, 1963 — the Martin Luther King 1963 of Blaise's story — is more remote than the Depression or the Second World War. Reading "The March" is like reading a story set in 1898. I'm not certain why that should be so. □

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Pinocchio of the North

Inook and the Sun, by Henry Beissel
& Playwrights' Co-op, 80 pages,
56.95 cloth end \$2.95 paper.

By PAT BARCLAY

READING A PLAY is always a challenge to the imagination. For unless we make a genuine effort to visualize the stage settings and the action as the playwright describes them, we can never be sure that the level of appreciation we arrive at is valid. A play has to justify itself as a piece of theatre first of all. The reader who ignores this fact would be better off spending his time doing something practical, like learning how to fold up a roadmap.

Anything a playwright can tell us about how he wants his work staged is likely to be of value, then, to the serious reader. This is especially true of Henry Beissel's introduction to *Inook and the Sun*.

Inook and the Sun, Beissel tells us, was first performed at Stratford in 1973, where it was staged much as its author originally envisaged it. This was as an adaptation of Japanese Bunraku puppetry, in which "the manipulators are onstage, all dressed and hooded in black so as to obliterate themselves in the drama of the puppets." In Beissel's version of Bunraku, Eskimo characters are played by puppets but a number of supernatural characters — spirit figures who inhabit the Eskimo's imaginative landscape — are played by the puppeteers themselves, wearing masks.

It's an exciting idea and I only wish that the art of puppetry were sufficiently advanced in Canada to enable more of us to see it in action. There's always television, of course. *Inook* could conceivably do very well, both domestically and as an export item, around Christmastime.

The play is a fanciful yarn about a young Eskimo boy who understands the power of positive thinking. Together he and his father set out on a desperate hunt to save the family from starvation. (It is winter, and all the animals have left to follow the sun.) At last they meet a polar bear and the father is killed. Inook kills the bear, regains his strength, and sets out to bring back the sun. Various spirits aid, scold, menace and admire him. A chorus of giggling seals provides comic

relief, and Inook's journey under the sea is intriguingly described as taking place under black light. Our hero solves three riddles, keeps his promises, and conveniently marries the sun. A brief epilogue reminds us that although all life on earth must change, the rhythms of the seasons continue forever.

Like most serious plays which can be enjoyed by children, *Inook and the Sun* contains a measure of universal truths that will appeal to all ages: a resourceful man does not have to settle for life as a pawn of fate; a man of courage and understanding can see beauty in all things; life is full of contradictions. So positive thinkers have more joy.

Beissel himself points out that the Eskimo culture is an ideal vehicle for illustrating "fundamental patterns of life and death and quest ... that are buried in our urban civilization." It's quite true; issues stand out better against a stark background and a clear statement of them is always of value. But a play such as *Inook and the Sun* is successful mainly as entertainment; the truths that can move us most are the ones that lie buried and have to be dug for, amid the debris of "urban civilization." □

Jumping naked into the front

Women Reading in Bath: Poems
by Anne Szumigalski, Doubleday, 88
pages, \$4.95 cloth end \$2.50 paper.

By LINDA ROGERS

THIS IS Anne Szumigalski's first book of poems, but it is by no means a waver- ing record of first uncertain flight. Szumigalski found her voice long ago and has been teasing readers of poetry with fragments of herself in little magazines and literary journals for some time. Never having met the poet in the flesh, trapped whole between two covers, I had satisfied myself with the fiction that Anne Szumigalski was actually the phantom other half of Andy Suknaski, another Prairie poet with whom she has published and who shares her gift for storytelling. That fantasy has been smashed by *Woman Reading in Bath*, the sad, comic, historic and contemporary coming-of-age of a woman.

The poems are a fusion of ancient and modern mythology, joined in the hot language of the pavement. The poet

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in
Canadian Politics

by
Alphonse de Valk

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lies on her back staring at the universe.' It is a **reverse bird's-eye** view of the cosmos. She is aware at once of the **earth** beneath **her** and the sky above. Past the age of innocence, she jumps **full grown** and naked into the baptismal font.

The three sections of *Woman Reading in Bath*. "Crabseeds," "Ribgrass," and "Nettles," spin through **bi**, copulation and death, **from innocence** to-experience and back to that **final** innocence that is senility and death:

*sleep sleep she whispered under the flannel
come as an ambush no one wants to hear
the last cry of a wounded creature*

The poems follow the development of **everywoman** from genesis and original sin — "she told me how it was when I was born" — through **apprenticeship** in experience — learning "how to knit **graveclothes** for the innocent" — to the New Testament **miracle**, a daughter who can walk **on water** for dollars:

*Damn right Dad it's a good trick for gains
but hell on the feet
There are so many thorns in the sand*

The way to the **transcendental** in *Woman Reading in Bath* is sexual. In "Man From Toledo," the story of a **very ordinary** faith healer, she ex-

amines the earthy, sensual **sources** of religion:

*his love flowed over milky from the cup
and he decided to lay his hands
on every one of them*

Sexual love is religious worship and abortion is the **metaphor** for the blind violence of the **atomic** age.

Modern **technology** interrupts the natural order of gestation and **birth**; instead of flowering, the spring fields sprout atomic mushrooms. **Man** has loved the machine that corrupts and destroys. The telephone **breaks** down and the characters in **Szumigalski's** play **cannot communicate**. They have **worshipped Strangelove** and **communicated** not with the cosmos but with the bomb. The **only** weapon against the arsenal of scientists who kill human beings with bombs and sex with deodorants is the **fragile power of love**:

*and between you and me my love
some sort of truce
to prevent murder*

Anne **Szumigalski** has learned the language of **advertising** and turned it on itself ("now I know **creation** is a **half-hour** drama"). In a world where **only** the mad am sane, she **translates** the **mysteries** into the ephemeral jargon of our time, making some sense out of the jumble. □

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The God Tree, by James Demers, Musson, 171 pages, \$6.95 cloth.

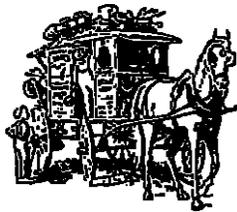
By LEN GASPARI

THE TITLE OF James Demers' first novel, *The God Tree*, may sound curiously esoteric to some readers, but it is the symbolic footing on which the protagonist's character is developed and established. The author refers to this stately, godlike cedar tree as a "magic sky-thing," and through young Jeremy's eyes we see how his small, seemingly idyllic world revolves around it.

The novel's locale is Black Bridge, a postwar boomtown nestled amid the lush scenery of the Ottawa Valley. The inhabitants of Black Bridge are a quaint and superstitious lot, vaguely reminiscent of the personae in Shirley Jackson's *The Lottery*. The town itself appears *outré* rural, and life there is matter-of-fact. When a tree topples beside Jeremy's house during a storm, the whole town shows up to look at it the next day. Even death is an event. "Death in Black Bridge was considered an achievement by a people who practised at being uneventful all their lives."

James Demers' prose is woven with the natural imagery of swamps, hills and meadows. The dialogue effectively syncopates the syntactic flow of the narrative, and the plot is somewhat padded to prolong the suspense. Aside from the town's characters, the reader is teased by the dubious past of Aunt Alice, the strange "old orange woman," and Gene, the tormented, mute homicidal maniac. The author has a way of investing an idiosyncrasy with lyrical grace: "She was the only woman I knew who wore dresses so long they scraped her shadow when she walked."

The God Tree has some streaks of cruelty. There's the day when strangers come to town and axe a live turtle to death for the fun of it. And then is the deliberate drowning of a sick boy. But for all that, Demers' novel strikes a cheerful tone as he describes the imagination and wonder of boyhood. A wistful nostalgia, inevitably autobiographical, pervades the chapters. And it is refreshing to read about bows and arrows, snakes, and children's games.



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Perhaps the only flaw in this interesting novel is the **strained, confessional ending** when the "old orange woman" spills the **beans**. This **method** of revealing the **final** outcome of the plot is too **conventional** and weakens **the impact**.

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Retrieval for the layman

The Poems of **Archibald Lampman**, by Archibald Lampman, **University of Toronto Press**, **585** pages, \$6.50 paper.

By RICHARD BIRCH

TWO YEARS have passed since the University of Toronto Press began publishing the series entitled *Literature of Canada: Poetry and Prose in Reprint*. The volumes now available number 12 with 18 more **projected** during the next three years. The authors **represented** range from the known to the relatively **unknown** — Archibald Lampman and Charles **G.D. Roberts** sharing print with Charles **Mair**, **Frank Parker Day**, and Isabella **Valancy Crawford**.

The volumes published so far are **indeed reprints**. Each has been **photographically reproduced** from the best available editions. Even the original apparatus has **been retained** — **title pages**, **tables of contents**, **introductions**, **and dedications**. That they are not scholarly editions will disappoint only the **scholar**. We of **more humble ambition** should welcome the opportunity to mad the makers of **our literary heritage** as they initially were **published**. A **surprising** number of **these** poets, novelists, and essayists have been **out of print** far too long.

The Poems of Archibald Lampman, the 12th book in the series, is in effect **two books**. It **contains the collection** of 237 poems **published** in 1900 and edited by **Duncan Campbell Scott**, and also the 1943 edition of *At the Long Sault and Other New Poems*.

Margaret Coulby Whitridge introduces this **new edition intelligently** and sparingly enough **that the reader** welcomes her biographical and critical journey **through Lampman's brief but intense** life. For the **serious reader** she provides a select bibliography and a short publishing history of the poetry.

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The Toronto Star

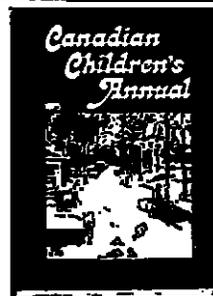
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Of particular interest is the memoir by Duncan Campbell Scott, reprinted from the 1900 edition. Scott was a fellow member of the Confederation poets and Lampman's closest friend during those few productive years at the end of the nineteenth century.

This latest addition to the series compares favourably to the others in all aspects. Neither the introductions nor the design nor the format of the series will intimidate the general reader as so many academic editions, complete with footnotes, indices, appendices, and incomprehensible introductions (usually longer than the text itself), tend to do. The series also includes novels by Robert Barr, Robert Stead, and Lane Conan, the poetry of Alexander McLachlan, Charles Sangster, and Joseph Howe, and the prose of Edward William Thomson.

While the books themselves will appeal to the general reader, the price of the paperbacks will not. Unfortunately they compare all too favourably with those of the university press scholarly editions. As the general public and CanLit teachers catch on to the series, this problem may disappear. Until then it is the only game in town, and to many will be well worth the price of admission. □



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An old honky trail blazer

Old Man Savarin Stories: Tales of Canada and Canadians, by E. W. Thomson, introduction by Linda Sheshko, U of T Press, 344 pages, \$4.50 paper.

By **MICHAEL SMITH**

EVER SINCE *Old Man Savarin* appeared — ever since Canadian writers started writing — Canadians have been trying to prove to themselves and to Americans that Canadian talent is real. Back in 1895, when the first edition was published, it was hailed as "a matter of peculiar interest" by Archibald Lampman, who went on to say that Canada is "rich in material for fiction . . . and we are waiting for some of our own countrymen to develop the talent and energy to take hold of it." Now it has been reissued by University of Toronto Press to demonstrate yet again that a Canadian culture does, in fact, exist.

This is a reprinting of the later version of E.W. Thomson's collection, published in 1917, and includes 12 of the stories that appeared in 1895. It is part of the Literature of Canada series. Thomson, who died in 1924, was an editorial writer for the *Tomato Globe*, worked 10 years for *Youth's Companion* in Boston, and later as Ottawa correspondent for the Boston *Evening Transcript*. He spent a lot of time interpreting Canadians and Americans to each other, and it's clear that he produced this book with much the same aim.

He opens with a truly dreadful poem, full of honking geese and woods ablaze with leaves of crimson and gold, with "rosy-cheek maiden and hazel-hue boy." His stories have plenty of stock characters — half-breeds, French woodsmen, Scots settlers — and there is even a footnote to explain, presumably to Americans, the initials DEL. Perhaps his strongest talent is frequent first-person narrative as stories are recounted casually instead of rendered in stricter literary form. But on the basis of his transcriptions of Scots- and French-Canadian dialect (some of which sound ridiculously blackface) he would almost certainly be accused of tokenism were he writing today.

Despite the title, there is only one story about Old Man Savarin, which

reflects the conflict of wills and triumph of natural justice that form a recurring theme. In this it is similar to "Privilege of the Limits" in which a canny Scots farmer outfoxes his creditor and the law. In "John Bedell, U.E. Loyalist" an old man yields his political fervor — and ultimately, his life — to satisfy his daughter's love. There are also a trilogy of Civil War stories (Thomson served with the North) and others about the Boer War and a veteran of Wankloo.

Like many modern writers, Thomson favoured realistic treatment of common people; Linda Sheshko says his view of contemporary writing was "fresh, shrewd and utterly unpretentious." Nevertheless, as Raymond Knister put it, some of Thomson's stories of redemption in the face of poverty — "Little Baptiste," for one, and "McGrath's Bad Night," for another — might seem "viciously sentimental" had they been written in more modern times. Sheshko also describes him as "keeping alive the humorous strain in Canadian fiction between its initiation by Haliburton and its revival by Leacock." Except for the final story, a burlesque on his years with *Youth's Companion*, that is a generous compliment indeed. □

Making it, circa 1500

The Correspondence of Erasmus, Letters 1 to 141 (1484 to 1500), translated by R.A.B. Mynore and D.F.S. Thomson, annotated by Wallace K. Ferguson, U of T Press, 368 pages, \$25 cloth.

By **MARSHALL MATSON**

THIS IS THE first volume of about 45 that will constitute the collected works of Erasmus in English, to be published two a year for the next 20 years or so. About half the edition will consist of more than 3,100 letters, most of them written by Erasmus, and some by such correspondents as Sir Thomas More and Martin Luther.

Erasmus was the greatest of the humanists who, through the cultivation of elegant classical Latin and the study of Greek, attempted a reformation of the Church based on the textual purification of the scriptural and patristic sources of theology. His correspondence alone, it is said, is the greatest single source for the intellectual history



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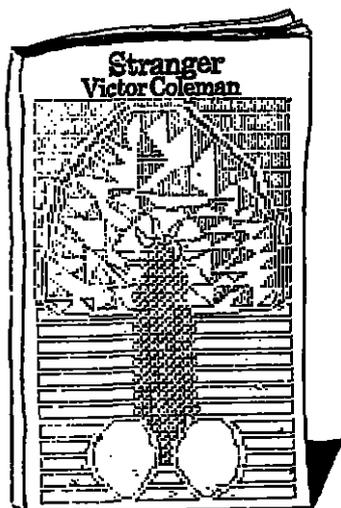
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A characteristic note of the letters is praise, the paying of elaborate compliments, modified occasionally by criticism or jest. On the one hand this praise is an expression of the humanist valuing of life, and on the other it stimulates the praised person (who is sometimes ironically the writer himself) to live up to what he has been praised as being. It is also of course a way of winning friends and influencing patrons. Near the end of the volume Erasmus tells a friend how to get him money from a rich lady:

Please explain to her how much greater is the glory she can acquire from me, by my literary works, than from other theologians in her patronage. . . . When you have elaborated all this, and put in a good deal about my character, and my promise, and my feelings of affection for her, and my modest reserve, then you can add that I have written to say I must have at least 200 francs as an advance on next year's salary.

Despite the &id descriptions of a journey in an ice storm or of a strong-armed robbery by the watch in Paris, and despite the brilliant argumentation of his debate with Colet. what is most striking about the early correspondence of Erasmus is the force of his pagan drive to win fame and defeat time by the writing of *belles lettres*. •7

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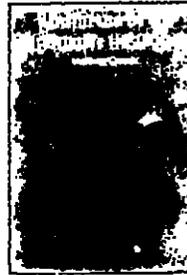
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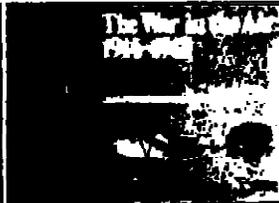
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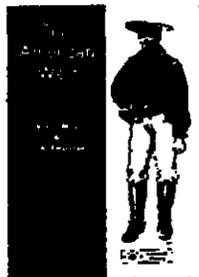
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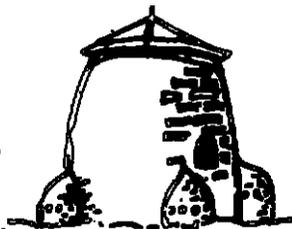
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MW

GIVEN THE RATE of inflation, many people are no doubt looking for ways to supplement their incomes. To the rescue comes James Walsh's 300 *Ways to Make Extra Money* (Pagurian, \$6.95). My favourite suggestion is titled "Letters from Santa Claus." It works this

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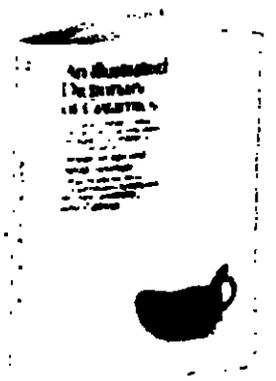
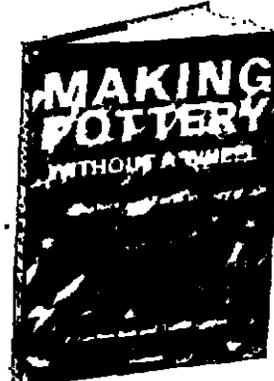
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way. One gets hired by a department store to send "a make believe letter from Santa Claus to any one or all [of a] customer's children... The letter is personally addressed to the child or children designated by the customer and of course, this absolutely delights youngsters, especially when the letter is from someone they know so well." The author suggests making the idea into a year-round business. "You could have the letter sent from other characters familiar to all youngsters such as: The Sand Ma" [sic]. The Tooth Fairy, Jack Frost, The Easter Rabbit."

MW

GERALD PRATLEY'S latest sycophantic study of a film director is *The Cinema of David Lean* (A. S. Barnes and Company, \$12.50). Pratley is a CBC film commentator and director of the Ontario Film Theatre. He has previously written glowing and uncritical accounts of the work of John Frankenheimer and Otto Preminger, but is, if anything, even more carried away in this study. David Lean, he tells us, "is to the cinema what Dickens is to literature, Gainsborough to painting and Vaughan Williams to music." Even if applied only to Lean's early good work — *In Which We Serve*, *Brief En-*

counter and *Great Expectations* — that comparison seems excessive. When applied to such tedious clinkers as *Doctor Zhivago* ("an entrancing and poetic work — the visual and living embodiment of what poetry meant to Zhivago himself") one can only shake one's head. Lean refuses to have anything to do with professional critics; presumably that's why he co-operated with Gerald Pratley in the production of this volume.

MW

PAGURIAN PRESS has recently issued a revised edition of F.R. Chapman's *Everything You Should Know About Law & Marriage* (\$3.95), which first appeared in 1972. It's a clear and useful summary of the laws of Canada relating to marriage, from engagement to death duties or divorce. It also "lakes for entertaining reading: "The husband," we're told at one point, "is under an obligation to his wife to let hex sham his habitation with him. He is not entitled, as of yore, to hold her imprisoned them."

CW

GERALD J. BLACK'S *Canada Goes Metric* (Doubleday, \$2.95) would be mom useful if it were half its present

length. The first 80 of its 148 pages are given over to convincing us that until the metric system made its appearance, weighing and measuring was a messy business. We're swamped with charts of the weights and measures of ancient Egypt, Israel, Greece and Rome. As well, Mr. Black seems to assume that his readers lack even the rudiments of skill in measurement; for example, he finds it necessary to spell out at least twice how one calculates area. But when one finally gets to it, the inform-tio" 0" the metric system is clear and helpful. The section on the impact the changeover is likely to have on various aspects of North American life is interesting, though skimpy.

CW

BILL BISSETT'S latest collection, *Living with th vishyun* (New Star Books, \$3.93) shows that the West Coast's leading anti-capitalist poet still has the same problems and powers in writing. At one point in *vishyun* Bissett quotes Margaret Avison for the sake of contrast. Her work is slow, tightly hit and literary; Bissett's pieces seem shot off the typewriter and are as vernacular as he can make them. Avison treats the book page as the exact frame of her work; Bissett's chants, collages and

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concrete **often** try to jump out at the audience. **Indded**, one has **the impres-** sion that **Bissett** is happiest (and **comes across best**) in live readings. He can **then** give expressions such as "far out," "heavy" and "get my shit together" the inflection they need, on the page they often just spread a grassy vagueness. When Bissett's power flows, as it does in such *vishyun* poems as "th lions den." "white feather" and the title poem, no editors need apply. **Unfortunately, that's rare.** Nobody Owns *Th Earth* remains a more **successful** collection, **thanks** to the editing of Margaret Atwood and Dennis Lee. **Bissett's powers** continue to need concentration.

JO

WILLIAM OTTER was born of English settlers in Ontario in 1843, and lived long **enough** to see the Canadian army change, largely through his own **efforts**, from several haphazard groups of militia; badly trained, poorly **equipped** and almost **completely undisciplined**, to a body of **men worthy** to be called soldii. His father Alfred, the second son of an **English bishop**, went rapidly down in the world **after** coming to Canada, **and** it was partly to vindicate the family name that William Otter

made his determined and **single-** minded bid to rise in **the militia**. "No- where, Otter **must have concluded**, **were order and regularity more pleas-** antly **combined** with social standing than in the militia." Thus **writes Desmond Morton in his biography** *The Canadian General: Sir William Otter* (A.M. Hakkert, \$12.95). Although according to Morton "Otter **inherited** all of his father's desperate **concern** for status," **William Otter was** a soldier, **first**, last and always, as revealed by **accounts of his involvement** in such varied **engagements** as the **ill-fated Ridgeway** affair of 1866, the encounter with **Poundmaker** at **Cut Knife Hill**, right on **through the Boer War** and the internment operations of 1913-1918.

HP

PERIODICALLY SPEAKING

THE CURRENT issue of *Repository*, a literary quarterly that has **been** published in *Seven Persons*, Alberta, **bears** out some of what Heather **Robertson has** to say in *Grass Roots*. It **announces**: "It's time to be moving on. *Seven Persons* is a dying Prairie town.

Last summer a new stretch of highway was built from **Medicine Hat** to **Lethbridge**, and it bypassed **Seven Persons**. **Glassco's** Cafe was the **first** to close. Then the L&L General Store at the end of **March**. Then the Post **Office** cut back its operating hours. . . . **There's rumours of the train** elevator shutting down. . . . **And this** is the last issue of **the Repository** to come out of **Seven Persons**."

THE CASE OF Northern Journey vs Margaret Atwood and the Writers' Union of Canada continues. An **editorial** in the **current issue of Northern Journey** (Box 4073, Ottawa) declares: "We **find** no need to apologize for liberty of expression when it is, in this **case**, **further** safeguarded by accuracy. We cannot apologize for, but rather **affirm**, the **right** of an author to use actual incidents in his work."

ANYONE WHO **attempts** to follow the decisions taken by a regulatory body such as the CRTC knows how complicated the politics of **communications in this country** have become. Out of the **Communications Law course** at the University of Toronto's Faculty of Law comes a new periodical, *Canadian*

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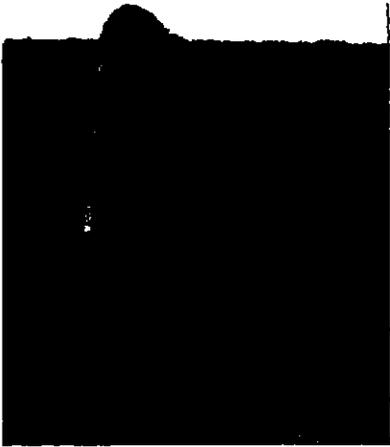
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Communications Law Review, under the editorship of Peter Grant. Many of the articles suffer because they read like the student papers they are. Noaetbe. less, the journal is a valuable source of information for anyone who wants to try keeping up.

THE PREVIEW ISSUE of a new magazine on Canadian urban affairs, *City Magazine* (35 Britain St., Toronto) has recently appeared. The magazine's politics are conservative — i.e., anti-development. My only complaint about the issue, which is readable and informative throughout, is that for a periodical that purports to be national, *City Magazine* is excessively concerned with urban affairs in Ontario.

A NEW QUARTERLY for the review and criticism of Canadian books for children, *Canadian Children's Literature* (Box 335, Guelph, Ontario), will publish its first issue in the spring of 1975. The magazine's editor is John Sorfleest. The only other periodical I know of devoted solely to Canadian children's books is *In Review*, a quarterly published by the Provincial Library Service of the Ontario government. Also, from Guelph comes the news that beginning this fall *Alive: Independent Canadian Literature and Culture* (Box 1283, Guelph, Ontario), perhaps the most eclectic magazine in the country, will begin a weekly publishing schedule. *Alive*, which recently adopted a tabloid format, says that it will be "Canada's first weekly literary magazine."

GIVEN THE Toronto *Star's* strong editorials in support of cultural nationalism, one would expect that newspaper's own entertainment pages to reflect at least some of those concerns. Not so. The *Star's* movie reviewer, Clyde Gilmour, has virtually no interest in Canadian film. There hasn't been a knowledgeable art critic at the *Star* in years. The newspaper is looking for its third book columnist in six months; the editors don't seem to know what the book column and Saturday book page of Canada's largest newspaper should be. Drama columnist Urjo Kareda is the only regular contributor (apart from Robert Fulford on Saturdays) who seems genuinely concerned and knowledgeable about things Canadian; Kareda's column is, not surprisingly, frequently relegated to the bottom of the page. The most prominent space usually goes to articles on visiting American entertainers. □

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