Labour/Le Travailleur

Reviews / Comptes Rendus

Volume 6, 1980

URI: https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/llt6rv01

See table of contents

Publisher(s)

Canadian Committee on Labour History

ISSN

0700-3862 (print)
1911-4842 (digital)

Explore this journal

Cite this review

(1980). Review of [Reviews / Comptes Rendus]. *Labour/Le Travailleur*, *6*, 215–264.

REVIEWS/COMPTES RENDUS

Donald Avery, *'Dangerous Foreigners:' European Immigrant Workers and Labour Radicalism in Canada, 1896-1932* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart 1979).

THE GOVERNMENT'S recent willingness to sponsor multiculturalism, coupled with an increasing number of scholarly articles in ethnic studies, have made it difficult for historians to continue to ignore the role of the foreign worker in Canadian society. Donald Avery's *'Dangerous Foreigners'* is the first serious attempt to interpret immigrant radicalism within the Canadian context. The book, however, is not about European immigrant workers and labour radicalism as the title suggests, but about the attitudes and policies of the Dominion authorities toward the immigrants.

Avery gives an admirable exposition of the working conditions and the exploitation of the immigrants and shows that an important aspect of the government's immigration policy was systematically to recruit cheap labour. In the first two chapters the author demonstrates how the Canadian immigration policy between 1896-1914 served above all else "the dictates of the capitalist labour market." Immigrant radicalism is seen by Avery as a countervailing force to their alienation and exploitation. The remainder of the book discusses the changing attitudes toward the immigrants beginning with the enemy alien hysteria of World War I and culminating in the "Red Scare" of 1931-32.

The author is the first to admit that his English language sources give a sometimes distorted view and further suggests that "the bias can be partly offset by reference to the record left behind radicals themselves." A closer examination of the Finnish radicals (who play a major role in Avery's book) indicates that the author has not followed his own advice for studying the ethnic record. To illustrate, the Finnish Canadian newspaper given as a source of Finnish Radicalism, *Vapaus*, translated by Avery as "Worker" or "Truth" instead of "Freedom," is directly cited only once, and even then incorrectly. (The paper is given a date that it did not publish and a page number 650 which it never reached.)

In addition to Finns the only other radical foreigners discussed in any depth are the Ukrainians. The book gives only scanty treatment to the Italians and almost totally neglects the Jews, Hungarians, Poles, Croatians, Slovaks, and Czechs. The role of immigrant women in Canadian labour radicalism has once again been ignored. Instead, the book offers generalizations; diverse ethnic groups are lumped together as a grey mass with no cultural differences. Avery quotes the following description of Russian workers' protest movement and states that it would *probably* apply equally to their Italian, Austro-Hungarian, and Finnish counterparts: "[they represented] a relatively undifferentiated mass of frightfully exploited, illiterate labourers, cut off from the world. . . ." This guesswork is contradicted by Avery who later explains that the Finns had a "higher level of literacy" (in fact, they were 98 per cent literate). Furthermore Avery concludes that "despite their limited world view, such people might constitute the suitable raw material for a militant working class," and later contradicts this by pointing out that the Italians were a group "which appeared relatively immune to Communist influence."

Avery does not acknowledge the use of translators and seems to have had problems with his primary ethnic sources resulting in irritating factual errors. Although these do not necessarily detract from his major arguments they do raise questions about the sources used. For example, A.T. Hill, who, the author says, was an organizer of Finnish Socialist locals in Canada between 1908-1911, was in fact 11 years old in 1908 and still living in Finland (he did not immigrate until 1913). Numerous other Finns who supposedly influenced Finnish Canadian radicalism, never came to Canada.

More serious, perhaps, than the factual errors and generalizations, is Avery's acceptance of the view that the foreigners

were indeed dangerous and that they possessed inherent traits of violence which set them apart from the rest of the society. An examination of the Socialist Party of Canada reveals that its immigrant membership, mainly composed of Finns, Ukrainians, Italians, and Jews supported parliamentary democracy and reformism, leaving the "dangerous" English language locals alone with their dogmatic revolutionary ideology. Further study might reveal that many of the violent incidents on picket lines or street demonstrations were in fact reactions to police provocation or to the intimidation of company-hired thugs. Violence was surely not the exclusive domain of the immigrant workers.

'Dangerous Foreigners' remains a pioneering effort in understanding government attitudes to foreign workers and in providing a framework for the study of immigrant labour radicalism. The problems that Avery experiences with ethnic sources will only be rectified by more studies and translations of foreign language sources, thus opening the field to all historians. Until such studies are published, writers like Avery, are forced to rely on the available sources and run the risk of perpetuating the bias of the early twentieth-century authorities, but at least the immigrant's role in Canadian labour history is no longer excluded.

Varpu Lindstrom-Best
Multicultural History
Society of Ontario

J. Donald Wilson and Jorgen Dahlie, eds., *Ethnic Radicals* [Special issue of *Canadian Ethnic Studies*, 10 (1978)].

THE SPECIAL ISSUE OF *Canadian Ethnic Studies* on "Ethnic Radicals" is both informative and disappointing. Special editors, Don Wilson and Jorgen Dahlie, rightly note the insufficient study of immigrants and offer this collection of articles as an "attempt to bring to life the exploits of a group of radical Canadians who lived in the first half of the twentieth century." Matti Kurikka, A.B. Makela, Pavlo Krat, Sam Scarlett, Ole Hjelt, and Tomo Cacic are not likely to be known by most students of Canadian society, although Arthur Puttee will be familiar to some. The collection does succeed in introducing immigrant radicals who were active in Canada but have been ignored to date. Unfortunately, most of the articles are little more than expanded biographies of the sort found in *Who's Who*. Each subject is presented from birth to death, noting key events in the intervening years. The accounts are simply descriptive with, at most, a half-hearted attempt to relate the subject to the social context in which his life took place.

The major exception is Ross McCormack's article on Arthur Puttee. McCormack uses the example of Puttee to explore how the immigrants' lives were shaped by experiences prior to emigration and by life in the society to which they came. He shows the importance of various mechanisms (sojourning, visiting home, receiving travelling leaders) for keeping alive the immigrants' old world radicalism. Residential segregation facilitated by chain migration and the welfare function of radical parties also helped keep their former political traditions alive in Canada. McCormack shows in the case of Puttee, the pattern of expressing "political aspirations through parties" "like they 'ave at 'ome." He attributes this practice of British workers to the fact that they "were as much 'immigrants' as Jews or Poles and consequently developed various institutions to reduce their dislocation and to facilitate their adaptation." He adds, without documenting, that Puttee's labourite parties also developed because they were relevant to Canadian society — "that reformism was most viable in Canada's social order and political culture." As in his *Reformers, Rebels and Revolutionaries*, McCormack's claim for the unique suitability of reformism is indicative of his own ideological preference as much as of Canadian life in the early part of this century. Still, McCormack's piece is the best in the issue and deserves attention.

Donald Avery presents a rich portrait of Sam Scarlett — IWW organizer and later Communist Party of Canada activist. Hampered by the lack of personal diaries or extended recollections about his subject, Avery, nonetheless, shows some of Scarlett's formative influences and gives us the flavour of life as a Wobbly leader in Canada and the United States. Unfortunately, Avery sheds little light on Scarlett's abandonment of the IWW in favour of the CPC. This pattern, common to a number of notable Wobblies, deserves closer scrutiny. Avery draws out attention again to the British domination of the leadership of the CPC as with other left organizations and ponders the question as to why British skilled workers, like Scarlett, "rejected the lure of middle class respectability." Unfortunately Avery has little to say on either issue.

The remaining four articles while providing material heretofore unavailable in English, are less adequate. Donald Wilson's portraits of Matti Kurrika and A.B. Makela, are interesting personal histories of a Finnish utopian socialist and a noted Finnish Marxist. Although Wilson begins by noting the preponderance of Finns in Canadian labour and left organizations, he fails to use the biographical material to help us understand the Finnish-Canadian left and its exclusion from leadership of the organizations for which it provided the largest number of members.

Nadia Kazymyra's paper on Ukrainian socialist Pavlo Krat fails to locate Krat adequately in the context of the Ukrainian left in Canada. She does not fully consider the implications of the West Ukrainian origin of the great majority of Ukrainian immigrants; how their rural background and the socialism of Mikhail Drahomonov shaped their response to Canada and to socialism of Ukrainians like Krat who came from the quite different background in the East Ukraine.

Both Jorgen Dahlie's account of Norwegian radical, Ole Hjelt, and Anthony Rasporich's study of Croatian socialist, Tomo Cacic, similarly are interesting narratives that fail to inform the reader about the subjects' respective communities in Canada and the extent and nature of their ties to these communities.

All students of Canadian society will profit from reading each of the articles in this collection; for they present details on leading left-wing immigrants who have been systematically ignored. But biographies are not a substitute for good analytic histories of the various ethnic communities, the radicals in those communities, and their contribution to the left in Canada. One hopes that these articles will make Canadian social scientists more sensitive to the work that remains to be done.

Jim Turk
University of Toronto

Ivan Avakumovic, *Socialism in Canada: A Study of the CCF-NDP in Federal and Provincial Politics* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart 1978).

IN *Socialism in Canada* Ivan Avakumovic attempts to give the CCF-NDP the same "once over lightly" his *Communism in Canada* gave the Communist Party. Although *Communism in Canada* was flawed by the author's low opinion of his subject, the book filled an historiographical void and served the additional purpose of providing a reactionary counterpoint to the uncritical party-line histories of Tim Buck and his colleagues. But even though *Socialism in Canada* takes Canadian social democracy from its "Pioneering Days" to the present and the future, this new book satisfies no such need. In Avakumovic's own words the CCF-NDP is "the most thoroughly investigated party in Canada," and he has added nothing to this investigation that could not be found in the work of others.

Although the "Acknowledgements" pay tribute to a lengthy list of archivists, librarians, and former social democratic luminaries, the book is not based on any new material and suggests no alterations to existing interpretations. Since there is nothing in *Socialism in Canada* which has

not been written by someone else, the book will seem to those who teach courses on twentieth-century Canada like a lengthy undergraduate essay, thoroughly based on McCormack, McNaught, Lipset, Young, Zakuta, Caplan, and Morton and extended to 1978 with clippings from the *Globe*, the *Free Press*, and the *Vancouver Sun*. There can be justification for this sort of a book. If it is well-written, effectively organized, and clearly documented it may serve to make a large body of secondary literature accessible and comprehensive to students and general readers.

Socialism in Canada is unfortunately none of these things. Avakumovic's prose style labours along on short sentences which state the obvious. In chapter four, a description of the "Prophets, Militants and Supporters" of the CCF, we learn for example that

> People prominent in the provincial party organizations were often delegates to the national CCF conventions. These were held in different cities. Location had something to do with attendance.

Avakumovic's vocabulary is as tedious as his sentence structure. His favourite adjective is "fair" and its variations and his use of these words demonstrates both his statistical and grammatical imprecision. In the space of three pages we are told that "a fair number" of union organizers were socialists, that "a fair number" of East Europeans worked in extractive industries, and that "a fair number" of British immigrants supported the Independent Labour Party. In one paragraph we discover that social democrats presented their programme in "fairly fine detail" and published "fairly detailed proposals" outlining it. Nouns and pronouns agree and disagree haphazardly, as the CCF becomes "they" and "their" rather than "it" or "its."

Avakumovic has organized the 11 chapters of *Socialism in Canada* by combining the chronological and thematic techniques in a manner which accentuates the difficulties of both. The chronological sections become wearisome narratives while the discussions on various themes often repeat themselves, sometimes in the same words. In chapter seven, for example, Avakumovic explains that the NDP radicals of the late 1960s "owed much of their strength to the vast expansion of educational facilities," while in chapter eight we again learn that "the New Left" fringe of the NDP "owed much of its strength to the expansion of post-secondary education." Chapters do not always follow one another in logical sequence. No sooner has the CCF suffered a "Decline and Demise" in the 1958 general election than it wins the 1944 provincial election which starts the "Saskatoon Story."

To Avakumovic's credit, *Socialism in Canada* contains a useful selected bibliography. As an earlier reviewer has noted, however, Gerald Caplan's *Dilemma of Canadian Socialism*, an oft-cited source, becomes the *Decline of Canadian Socialism*. The end notes are sloppy and imprecise. Nelson Wiseman is renamed Norman, and titles of scholarly articles are rarely given. The most serious problem, however, is that references to manuscript collections, some of which have pagination, include nothing more than volume or box numbers. This imprecision is carried over to the book's tables. More than half are without titles and some lack even column headings.

These multiple technical problems — awkward prose, poor organization, and poor documentation — limit the usefulness of *Socialism in Canada* as a general survey of the development of the CCF-NDP. When one adds to these faults the total lack of originality, it is difficult to wish this book anything but speedy oblivion.

John Herd Thompson
McGill University

John English and J.O. Stubbs (eds.), *Mackenzie King: Widening the Debate*, (Toronto: Macmillan 1977) and Victor Levant, *Capital and Labour: Partners?* (Toronto: Steel Rail 1977).

THE HEART of kings is unsearchable, says the proverb: be that as it may, enquiries

into the plumbing of Canada's tenth prime minister add up to one of the most vigorous of academic growth industries. Such antic scrabbling after the nugget of true insight, of course, is bound to be accompanied by the production of much dross, and we have been presented with several Kings manufactured out of dust, ranging from the Mandevillean — all private vice and public virtue — to the Machiavellian, in the space of a very short while. Each of the books reviewed here is in its own way a product of that industry: one has buried within it a few gleams of the true gold, while the other is almost unadulterated slag.

One must admire the *chutzpah* of editors who can subtitle their collection "Widening the Debate," and then open it with essays by Blair Neatby and Jack Pickersgill. One's first impression is that their enterprise involves not so much widening the debate as restating the clichés, and there is indeed far too much of that sort of thing in English and Stubbs' *Mackenzie King*. All sorts of uncomfortable questions come to mind: What precisely do they think the debate is about? What is wrong with its present limits? How are its terms to be broadened? The editors' two page introduction provides few answers. We are told, however, that the germ of the book was sown at the University of Waterloo's Mackenzie King Colloquium, held on the centenary of his birth, and this last fact seems to point to an explanation. What we have here is not so much a purposive attempt to focus the recent King literature and portray its strengths and shortcomings, as a sort of belated *Festschrift* for Berlin's most successful Old Boy. This might help to explain, too, why only four of the eleven articles collected here were actually presented at the colloquium: three are "reminiscences of King by prominent public figures who knew him well," while the others were commissioned for the book. The standard *Festschrift* format is followed right down to the provision of a bibliography. (King's writings are oddly arranged by alphabetical order of title, rather than by date; odd when one realizes that a standard title is "Statement to the House of Commons, Ottawa, January 31, 1944.")

All of this is not to say that there are no good things in *Mackenzie King et cetera*. There are some, and we shall get to them, but it may be a bit of a wait. One has first to encounter Blair Neatby's restrained petulance over the fact that his own view of King is not universally accepted by historians past and present, Jack Pickersgill's passable imitation of Little Dog Pat, all face-licking devotion, and the elder-statesmen anecdotage of Paul Martin and Malcolm J. MacDonald whose contributions are for the most part of the sort so brilliantly parodied in the Lloyd George segment of Tom Stoppard's *Newfoundland*.

Then come the academic papers. John Courtney's work with the King diaries in search of "Prime-Ministerial Character," within the framework of Barber's *The Presidential Character*, demonstrates the unhappy truth that when subtle empirical insights are married to a crude and inappropriate theoretical schema Gresham's Law applies. Keith Cassidy, in what must rank as one of the most perverse products of the entire King industry, grapples with the problem of why King does not thoroughly resemble the American Progressives without ever seeming to grasp the fact that King was, after all, not an American but a Canadian, and that this might have had something to do with it. A better example of what might be gained from Canadian-American comparisons in understanding the nature of reform occurs in William McAndrew's contribution, "Mackenzie King, Roosevelt, and the New Deal," which argues that "although King thought he saw his earlier prescriptions reflected in the New Deal this was a distorted perception at best."

Three papers provide highly competent and at times illuminating analyses of particular passages in King's career, although without "widening the debate" in the sense of proposing a general reinterpretation of the man. Norman Hillmer makes extensive use of the diaries to fill in some gaps in our knowledge of King's role in the 1937 Imperial Conference and to

correct some misleading impressions left by earlier writers who did not have access to this source. Jack Granatstein contributes a useful study of King's relations with his Cabinet during the Second World War, stressing the prime minister's mature self-confidence as "the central factor in Canadian politics" in the period. Robert Bothwell's "The Health of the Common People," while it is only peripherally concerned with King, provides a masterly analysis of the failure to achieve a national health insurance policy in the 1940s.

The most exciting of the papers in this volume is Stephen Scheinberg's "Rockefeller and King: The Capitalist and the Reformer." Scheinberg gives a thoroughly revisionist interpretation of King's work for the Rockefeller Foundation, one that really does broaden the horizons of the current debate. He approaches the problem of the social reformer *via* Gramsci's analysis of the intellectual's role, and for once some unfamiliar light is shed on the subject of this collection. Scheinberg's conclusion is worth quoting as an index of the article's approach:

> King was available to fulfill the role of ruling-class intellectual. He worked within the limits of the system, supplying ideas and criticism, making it more functional in a changing social context, resulting in the exercise of corporate power becoming more generally acceptable. For his part the reformer received financial sustenance, a measure of power, and satisfaction that his chosen work had been well done.

One has finally to ask what purpose this book serves. The four papers really worth having — those by Hillmer, Granatstein and Bothwell for their solid analysis, and Scheinberg's for its novel approach — could certainly all have found ready acceptance in the scholarly journals where they would have been every bit as accessible to King aficionados as they are here. As for most of the other contributions, one can only agree with the sentiments expressed by English and Stubbs in their introduction: "The interpretations advanced in these essays may not be sustained by a future generation of Canadian historians and this is as it should be."

Victor Levant's *Capital and Labour: Partners?* is not really a book about King, but it is unlikely that it would have been written were it not for the King industry. One of the first material artifacts of the revived interest in King was the republication of *Industry and Humanity*, and a lengthy string of quotations from that book constitutes one entire chapter of this one. Levant advances the unexceptionable thesis that it is in the interest of capital to maintain that employers and workers are joined by bonds of mutual dependence, while it is in the interest of the working class to repudiate this view. He provides a rather undigested survey of some familiar episodes in Canadian and United States labour history to support his argument and concludes that business unionism fosters capital's ideological penetration of the labour movement. Unfortunately, the job of working out the concrete historical implications of this is not at all well done. Connoisseurs of the rhetorical question, and those who wish to make a gesture in support of Levant's thesis without much caring what he makes of it, will want to buy this book. There is, however, a long appendix on contemporary company unionism as expressed in the Canadian Federation of Independent Associations that workers in this field might find interesting. It appears that Levant set out with the intention of writing an exposé of the Federation: it is a shame he got sidetracked.

Paul Craven
York University

Tom Traves, *The State and Enterprise: Canadian Manufacturers and the Federal Government 1917-1931* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1979); Alvin Finkel, *Business and Social Reform in the Thirties* (Toronto: James Lorimer and Company 1979).

THERE IS A POINT AT WHICH revisionist scholarship assumes the status of a new

orthodoxy. This point has recently been reached in the study of the business community's relationship to the modern capitalist state. In recent years historians in both Canada and the United States have rejected the traditional liberal assumption that the reform of industrial capitalism represented what Arthur Schlesinger Jr. once called the efforts "of the rest of society, under the leadership of 'liberals,' to check the political ambitions of business." The work of historians such as Samuel P. Hays, Robert Wiebe, Gabriel Kolko, James Weinstein, H.V. Nelles, and Alan Artibise, to name but a few, demonstrates instead that businessmen were active in the reform process, working with government to encourage reforms which would ameliorate some of the unfortunate effects of rapid industrialization without fundamentally changing the structure of power. These two books by Tom Traves and Alvin Finkel outline the efforts of Canadian businessmen in the interwar period to erect a regulatory apparatus which would maintain stability in the capitalist system and preserve the hegemony of the business class in the socio-economic order.

Traves' book is a particularly subtle treatment of the relationship of the Canadian manufacturing community to the Federal Government between 1917 and 1931. Beset by problems of excess output and resultant economic uncertainty, many of Canada's manufacturers at the end of World War I were convinced that political regulation of the economy was preferable to the vagaries of the market, and advocated the extension of wartime controls into the postwar period. The regulatory impulse of the immediate postwar years was evident in the establishment of the Board of Commerce and in the work of the Canadian Reconstruction Association which like the National Civic Federation in the United States represented the desire of leading industrialists to promote the stability of the capitalist system through reform. But, Traves argues, the postwar commitment to regulation was frustrated by competing interest groups and intra-class conflict. Not only did consumers, working people, and hinterland interests attack the hegemony of a business class dominated by central Canada, but the business community was itself divided on the question of regulation. For example, while sugar refiners saw regulation as an antidote to excessive competition, export-oriented resource industries like the newsprint industry regarded regulation as a threat to potential gains in the international marketplace. By 1921 conflicts of this sort brought a temporary end to the regulatory movement.

The collapse of the regulatory movement leads Traves to conclude that Canadian businessmen were rather more hesitant in putting regulatory provisions into effect than may have been the case elsewhere. After 1921 manufacturers attempted to achieve "security without regulation" by returning to the traditional devices of increased tariff protection, industrial consolidation, and the reduction of labour costs. But in two chapters involving the operations of the Tariff Advisory Board, Traves reveals that the resort to these informal devices often failed to achieve the desired results. Although the Tariff Board had been set up to take tariffs out of the unstable political arena, it nonetheless allowed for the continual jockeying for advantage between business, labour, farmer, and consumer groups. Unfortunately Traves chose to deal only with the automobile and steel tariff. But what of the extensive deliberations before the Tariff Board involving other industries such as the textile manufacturers or the book and magazine publishers? In the latter case in particular one finds a graphic illustration of the inter-regional and intra-class divisions that Traves wants to portray. In addition the activities of R.J. Deachman and the Consumer's League provide a particularly articulate expression of consumer opposition to business opinion.

Whatever the reason for this omission, the collapse of the regulatory movement and the manufacturers' reliance on a strat-

egy involving tariff protection allows Traves to present a relatively sophisticated description of the relationship of businessmen and government in the modern capitalist state. Drawing heavily on the work of Ralph Miliband, Nicos Poulantzas, and Franz Schurmann, Traves shows how businessmen regarded the state as an instrument that could provide for the long-term stability of the capitalist economy. At the same time, the state demanded a measure of autonomy in order that it might set aside the short-range interests of individual manufacturers if necessary. But this does not mean that the state responded only to the interests of the business class, or that reform was easily accomplished. Traves' real contribution lies in showing how the particular configuration of Canadian regional and class conflict made the road to regulation perilous and uncertain. In so doing he captures the ambivalence and complexity of the relationship of the manufacturers to the Canadian state.

Alvin Finkel's study of social reform during the Great Depression picks up the story where Traves leaves off. Unlike Traves, however, Finkel is much more intent upon establishing direct links between the business community and the state, emphasizing the business affiliations of cabinet ministers and their appointees. This close affiliation, he argues, explains the favourable attitude of the state towards the business community. Because the state "was dominated by the personnel and ideology of monopoly capital" and because "no serious anti-monopoly coalition was possible," the Canadian economy came to be dominated by corporate monopolies. The existence of this business-government consensus meant that reform in marketing, social insurance, construction, banking, and finance came at the behest of or with the approval of businessmen. During the 1930s the state became an agency for smoothing out the business cycle in the interests of the business class.

Finkel argues that because businessmen were in the vanguard of the movement for federal regulation, social welfarism, and constitutional change, the reforms instituted during the 1930s reflected the limited objectives of the business community rather than the aims of those who urged more radical alternatives. Rather than adopting legislation that would heavily tax the corporations, break up monopolies, or bring about a significant expansion of the money supply, governments in the 1930s concentrated on those reforms which would stimulate the private sector. Furthermore, because businessmen were heavily represented on the various regulatory agencies established during the depression, those bodies generally inclined to the businessman's conception of reform. For example, while the development of the Wheat Board and other natural products marketing boards helped to stabilize agricultural prices, Finkel shows how government regulation operated to protect the monopolistic interests of processors and distributors. Similarly, because government programs to stabilize the construction industry, to provide mortgage assistance, and to establish a Bank of Canada emerged from a desire to stimulate rather than replace private enterprise, few businessmen opposed the reform program of the depression years. Businessmen even saw advantage in social insurance schemes such as unemployment insurance and old age pensions. Unemployment insurance would decrease the wasteful burden of relief and by providing purchasing power to the unemployed reduce the likelihood of another depression. Old age pensions would remove older workers from the work force, thereby opening jobs to the younger and potentially more radical workingman. In the end the result of reform in marketing, banking, construction, and social welfare was the same: it stabilized the existing system and secured the hegemony of the business class *without bringing about a significant redistribution* of the nation's wealth.

At times the reforms advocated by the business community and the working class coincided. Although Finkel usually

regards this as little more than happy coincidence, he also recognizes that reform helped to avert a serious radical challenge to the capitalist order. My disagreement with Finkel arises in connection with his treatment of the reform ideology of the business class. "Businessmen pressed for reforms not because they wished to remove injustices that existed within the capitalist system," he writes, "but because they recognized that the system could not survive without some structural reforms." But if businessmen were so transparently self-interested and manipulative how does one explain the widespread dominance of modern welfare liberalism? To answer this question we need a more extensive analysis of the relationship of the reform ideology of businessmen to the maintenance of capitalist hegemony. To Finkel, ideology has no real purpose other than to mask self-interest. Ideology, he tells us at one point, "gave way to pragmatism." Unfortunately, this denial of the importance of ideology (reminiscent of the 1950s liberalism of Daniel Bell) diverts Finkel's attention from the issue of class hegemony to the domination of society by a powerful interest group. Is it not more convincing to argue that businessmen and reformers revealed both a desire to secure existing capitalist social relations and a genuine sense of social or public responsibility? This sense of responsibility, circumscribed as it was by class interest and paternalistic though it may have been, helps explain the ability of businessmen, reform politicians, professionals, and other components of the ruling class to maintain their influence over the rest of society. Not merely a rationale for self-interest, the businessman's reform ideology was an essential component of the authority of the capitalist ruling class.

All of this aside, Traves and Finkel both make an important contribution to our understanding of the emergence of the modern regulatory state. Much more yet remains to be done. Among other things we badly need a comprehensive analysis of the origins of social legislation in Canada. Hopefully these two books will encourage others to investigate the influence that professionals, consumers, and working people exerted upon the changing face of capitalism in these years.

Colin D. Howell
Saint Mary's University

David Alexander, *The Decay of Trade*, Newfoundland Social and Economic Studies No. 19. (St. John's: Institute of Social and Economic Research, Memorial University of Newfoundland 1977).

THE *Decay of Trade* is the most impressive work by the late David Alexander, the Atlantic region's foremost economic historian. As an economic history of the rise and fall of Newfoundland's traditional saltfish trade, it is a detailed account of the merits and shortcomings of the Newfoundland Associated Fish Exporters Limited (NAFEL) in the post-World II era. Alexander's analysis addresses the same central problem which was the focus of the ARDA study by Hedlin and Menzies in 1964: why 15,000 inshore cod fishermen lost their saltfish markets and livelihoods; why so many rural communities in Newfoundland faced possible extinction; and why Newfoundland did not develop the full potential of its fisheries following Confederation in 1949. Alexander's central thesis is that inadequate postwar marketing strategies and organization, framed within an unsympathetic and sometimes destructive national trade policy, generated a thoroughly "demoralized" climate in the Newfoundland saltfish industry. In a world of uncertainty, weak currencies, exchange controls, protectionism, and a rejuvenated European fishery, three years of disastrous trade between 1947 and 1950 emasculated NAFEL, which, at the time, was the foremost cooperative saltfish marketing organization in the region. At such a crucial juncture, federal policy failed to help NAFEL consolidate its position. This insensitivity precipitated a vicious circle of

decline whereby it lost ground in marketing, failed to revolutionize production, and therefore fell victim to the age-old problems of quality control and inefficient production which in turn undercut further its marketing strategies. Ultimately, the inadequacies of a fishery development policy based on a growth sector model confirmed the death of the saltfish trade: overdeveloping the frozen fish industry and underdeveloping the saltfish industry. The problems faced by the fishery in the 1970s are primarily a legacy of this.

The chief merits of this book are twofold: the structural analysis of the underdevelopment of the saltfish industry and the central importance given to economic cooperation. While Alexander takes pain to mention that his work is primarily concerned with the question of markets and not production — and this is certainly very important and a welcome contribution to political economy in the region — it does offer numerous insights into the complex nature of underdevelopment at the level of production. The decline of the saltfish trade is not simply the result of an unfortunate foreign exchange position or foreign competition in distant markets, it is also the result of years and years of archaic production methods and inadequate quality controls, of consignment selling, of cutthroat competition among merchants and of the peculiar demand and supply functions of the fish trade. Underdevelopment of the saltfish industry was as much a consequence of inadequate marketing and government policy as it was a consequence of divisive class interests in Newfoundland. While cooperative efforts in marketing were made by merchants as early as the 1920s, these efforts were limited and undercut by opposing mercantile, financial, and government interests. Consequently the very nature of underdevelopment posed fundamental problems for the viability of a cooperative economic strategy; even if it was confined to marketing.

This relationship raises some fundamental questions: how realistic was it to consider the merchant class — or any fraction of it — as the natural steward of a cooperative economic strategy? Could the short-term private interests of merchants ever be reconciled with the long-term social interests of the people of Newfoundland? Alexander is torn between a theoretical perspective which forces him to answer yes to these questions, and empirical evidence — conscientiously presented — which tends to contradict this position.

Alexander's theoretical perspective is presented as a revision of the neo-classical position that low income and low labour productivity can be overcome through a reallocation of labour from backward to modern sectors of production, and the modernization of the backward sector. In Newfoundland the alternative employment opportunities which this model assumes did not exist. Further, the mechanization of the modern fishing sector did not increase incomes, and it proved politically and socially impossible to implement such a policy completely, in the face of this shortcoming. Alexander argues that the low productivity of labour in the saltfish industry could only be improved through *balanced* market development which would generate greater levels of investment in both the traditional *and* the modern sectors. In other words, market development would be the sufficient condition to unify mercantile interests and the sufficient condition to resolve the contradictions between their private interests and the social interests of rural Newfoundland.

Considerable historical evidence seems to call this theory into question. First, the general issue: could merchants ever be relied upon to revolutionize production on a voluntary and cooperative basis? That is, would the benefits of improved markets automatically generate technological innovation and with it higher rural incomes. In 1955 the membership of NAFEL defeated a proposal for a cooperative production effort. Alexander comments "In opposing the proposal they affirmed their traditional role as traders

pure and simple, and chose a conservative path that was to lead them to virtual extinction." (132) So they found it hard to cooperate. Could they be counted on at least to innovate new production techniques under optimal conditions? It seems not. In discussing the quality control problem of Labrador cured saltfish, Alexander concludes: "Probably, the only way to eliminate the problem was through machine-drying; but in Newfoundland, during these years, merchants relied on cheap labour rather than machines to do the job." (74)

Lastly could the business class be relied upon, if forced to innovate under optimal market conditions, to pass along the benefits of increased productivity to the people of their communities. Again it was unlikely. Merchants were notorious for making fishermen and their families bear the burden of market and price uncertainties. In fact in 1947 the Government of Newfoundland forced NAFEL to guarantee that the benefits of currency reserves made available to it would be passed on to fishermen. Cooperative marketing, even as far back as Coaker's policy in 1920, assumed that benefits to exporters would find their way down to fishermen. Alexander noted that "... fishermen who were heard or reported disputed that this interpretation of organized marketing was sufficient, or that any of the gains that come from it found their way into the producer's pocket." (20)

It would seem therefore that an equally plausible alternative interpretation of the decline of saltfish could be made: one which stresses the close relationship between social and political conditions, forms of production, and marketing problems; one which is based on the central proposition that production methods tend to vary spatially, in accordance with social and political factors as much as purely economic factors such as levels of competition in similar or related branches of production. The old adage that "capital has to be dragged, kicking and screaming, into the twentieth century" may be as appropriate for the salt fishery as elsewhere. The unorganized and cheap labour of inshore fishermen and their families in outport Newfoundland provided the social and political milieu of this "handicraft" industry. The form of production only revolutionized in small degrees in response to exogenous pressures such as market competition, government policy, exchange problems, and labour shortages. On the whole capital fled the industry rather than develop it: sacrificing the long-term social needs of the communities in favour of its short-run interest. Ultimately Alexander's term "the demoralization of the Newfoundland fishery" is only a euphemism for the private "nonprofitability" of the Newfoundland salt fishery for capital.

L. Gene Barrett
Saint Mary's University

John Richards and Larry Pratt, *Prairie Capitalism: Power and Influence in the New West* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart 1979).

No part of Canada has more to gain from the adoption of a policy of adequate protection than Alberta.... Alberta is naturally well-adapted for the development of manufacturing industries.... Edmonton, which seems destined to be one of the great manufacturing ... cities of the Canadian Northwest has coal right at its doors. Imagine what Ontario would give for Alberta's coal!

Industrial Canada (July 1903)

CANADA'S prairie west has not been particularly well-served by the Canadian political economy tradition. The quite large volume of work on the region has stressed its "quasi-colonial" status as an agricultural hinterland, but has also obscured much of the complexity of the historical development of its economy and polity, and left us ill-prepared to understand the dynamic quality of the modern west. The student left unsatisfied by the usual drab portrait will thus find much of

interest in Richards and Pratt's path-breaking study.

The theme of the book is that of "province building" over the last 40 years in Alberta and Saskatchewan. The "broad pattern of development" in these two jurisdictions since World War II, the authors conclude "can be summarized as a movement away from dependent regional capitalism." (237) This has occurred through diversification of the agricultural base by way of the exploitation on increasingly favourable terms of mineral staples under the direction of local elites, and particularly, local state structures. Oil, gas and potash are used as case studies, to which list might be added coal, Saskatchewan's "heavy oils," and uranium, which are not discussed in any detail.

Work around this main theme touches upon a good deal of hitherto neglected ground. Aside from material on the logistics of petroleum and potash, there is also a useful historical critique of C.B. MacPherson's famous theory of the "single class" nature of pre-World War II Alberta society, and a discussion of the quirks (some might say opportunist errors) of the early CCF in that province, which do much to explain its absence from the political mainstream. The placing of both the CCF and Social Credit in an ideological and cultural context of "populism" is hardly original, but it is done with a greater degree of sensitivity to both the history of populism and the broad range of political options available under that rubric than is usually encountered. The chapters on Saskatchewan government and politics since 1944 are especially rich and rewarding, although, as the authors admit, a good deal of the credit must rest with the officialdom of that province, who, in sharp contrast to their Alberta counterparts, allowed Richards and Pratt free access to the relevant archives.

What may engage readers of this journal who have otherwise only a tangential interest in the subject matter is the degree of political commitment the authors bring to their task. This accounts for their concern with a host of subsidiary issues such as the thought of the League for Social Reconstruction (its uncritical admiration for "forced industrialization under Stalin," [95] offers an insight into the 1930s intellectual milieu often missed in anti-communist polemics), or the "tragic fiasco" (255) of the Waffle movement. Indeed, at several points in the narrative, the authors engage in sustained debate with the ghost of the Waffle, the "left-nationalist" political perspective which it embodied, and the broader, but intimately related, issues of dependency theory. Richards and Pratt are not merely local patriots offering a celebration of the "New West" or a brief for provincial rights. Rather, they are attempting to make a theoretical contribution by rejecting the static model of core-periphery relations and natural resource development. Thus, their observations about the changing terms of trade in oil, gas, and potash, and their insistence on the "relative autonomy" of local state structures in relation to the multi-national corporation, present a challenge of a profound character to the "left-nationalist" tradition. The analysis, incidently, sets the authors apart quite sharply from the radical mainstream in Alberta. Those currently engaged in the fight against the Lougheed regime will probably find *Prairie Capitalism* a disturbing book, because Alberta's workers and farmers need hardly be told that "their" fraction of the bourgeoisie *is* somehow deserving of support.

Richards and Pratt are clearly impatient with the "image of the provinces as the captive dependencies or instruments of international capital," (8) which they see as inappropriate to either social-democratic Saskatchewan or free-enterprise Alberta. In the latter case, they argue that the state has abandoned its traditionally passive "rentier" role, in favour of an activist stance under the direction of an "essentially new" class formation: the

"arriviste bourgeoisie," child of the oil boom, which has, since the Conservative triumph of 1971, been reshaping Alberta society in its own image. This new class (personified best, perhaps, by Bob Blair of Alberta Gas Trunk, a sincere nationalist and also a leading figure in the province's peculiar brand of state-capitalism) is seen as pursuing a strategy oriented towards not only maximizing resource production and the garnering of "rents" therefrom, but of actually building an indigenous industrial-capitalism within Alberta's borders. The authors note Peter Lougheed's "near obsession with prairie economic diversification" (155) and put forward the claim that "under Tory hegemony... much of the surplus (from oil) will be used to create the infrastructure for an industrial economy." (242)

This is undoubtedly the most controversial hypothesis put forward in the book, and this reviewer remains skeptical. The authors seem unaware that the rhetoric of industrialism is some of the oldest political currency in Alberta, as suggested, for example by the passage from *Industrial Canada* (the organ of the Canadian Manufacturers Association, part of the unholy alliance of "eastern" interests which allegedly imposed the wheat staple upon the prairies) cited above. Albertans, like one of many legislators who addressed his colleagues on the subject (in 1908), were "lost in contemplation" of the "useful commodities of trade" which could be made with the hand of man in the province. And why not? The pioneers knew about Alberta's "coal... natural gas and oil," her "bitumen" and iron ore. And they saw, in the early years, the embryo of an industrial society, not only in a mighty development of collieries, but in the fields of iron-working (particularly mine machinery), cement, glass, and brick-making, smelting, sugar-refining, boot and shoe-making, and even textiles. Despite all this, however, Alberta manifestly failed to "take off."

There are many reasons for this. Some are well-known, others not. The history of the Medicine Hat Woolen Mill Co. Ltd. provides a case study in the failure of local entrepreneurship, which falls in the latter category. "We were unable to secure... sufficient capital to run the business," a spokesman told a reporter for the *Lethbridge Herald* (12 July 1906), "every individual who had $500 to invest was making a strong endeavour to corner the real estate market." If the story is apocryphal, could modern dreams of an industrial revolution in Alberta founder on what Richards and Pratt, in a more sober moment, call "the negative effects [of the resource boom] due to the crowding out of potential manufacturing investment by the demands for resource industries for available capital and labour?" (187) One has a sneaking suspicion that under "Tory hegemony," capital will continue to seek, and to find, the easiest and quickest outlets for its own reproduction, and that these will be found mainly in the lucrative resource sector, "real estate," road-building, and so forth.

Meanwhile, "Tory hegemony" will continue, greased by the systematic bribery of the electorate with the oil revenues, and made more palatable to the intellectuals by continued minting of the old rhetorical coin. The Alberta of 1980 *is* a much different place than the Alberta of 1930 or 1950, but, as Richards and Pratt admit, "little diversification of the province's economy has occurred as yet." (235) The question, "can the Tories plan?" remains unanswered.

The case of Saskatchewan is different, as witnessed by the title of a recent popular journalistic celebration, "Socialism Pays Off" (*Canadian Weekend*, 23 February 1980). The fact that the province offers, for the careful analyst, a context in which the theorizing which has absorbed the left wing of the Canadian political economy tradition may be supplemented by a concrete case study of "socialist" and "free enterprise" developmental strategies should make Richards and Pratt's discus-

sion of its experience useful reading for all concerned scholars. While situated along the broad continuum described above, the theme of "two roads" is central to this experience. As the authors correctly point out, in contrast to the "quasi-corporatist" political culture in Alberta, there have been, and continue to exist "well-entrenched ideological and class antagonisms *within Saskatchewan*," marked out by the CCF/NDP on the one hand, and the forces traditionally aligned with the Liberals (now wrapped in more fashionable Tory garb) on the other. This point is stressed because it is often lost on Toronto-centred observers inclined to write off the social-democratic tradition as a "petit-bourgeois" protest embodying the aspirations of the *whole* of Saskatchewan society.

In this context, the Saskatchewan bourgeoisie occupies a problematic position. The historical weakness of this class, relative to Alberta's, which is noted by the authors, explains much of the strength of the social-democratic tradition, and in a perverse sense, the two themes have been mutually re-inforcing. Save for the interlude of Liberal rule (1964-71), Saskatchewan's businessmen have tended, since 1944, to view the local state as a kind of enemy, and throughout the period under discussion have perhaps been blind to its potentialities as a vehicle of capital accumulation. Though the local businessmen are probably deserving of more attention than is accorded them in this account, it is true that most of the developmental initiatives in Saskatchewan have come directly from the state.

Richards and Pratt see the early period of CCF rule as unfulfilled "years of promise." They criticize the government's initial experiments in "going into business," which were mainly in the manufacturing field, because they allegedly ignored the "fundamental cost disadvantages" (116) involved in such ventures. This picture is over-drawn. The authors cite instances of economic sabotage by the business community in the case of the CCF's shoe manufactory, and, in the case of the box factory, the absence of the necessary raw materials to adapt to changing market demand (from wood to paper containers). In any event, the lack of stunning successes in these fields, coupled with the rolling-back of the socialist movement as a whole in the Cold War period, caused the advocates of public ownership to retreat at a critical juncture: the granting of concessions to the oil monopolies. This was done over the protests of the CCF rank-and-file in the province, but with the full blessing of national figures such as Frank Scott. This set the precedent for the granting of even more favourable concessions to the mainly-American potash companies towards the end of the CCF's regime. The fact that one of the first acts of Ross Thatcher's Liberal government was to "marginally increase taxation of the (potash) industry" (195) suggests that free-enterprise regimes are really better equipped to do this sort of thing than socialist ones.

Thatcher's government, though an active promoter of economic development (it fathered the province's first pulp and paper mill for example), was, however, a kind of archetype of the "captive" provincial state. So deeply enmeshed in the affairs of the potash companies did it become that in the end, it was manoeuvred into acting as a crucial accessory to a scheme of "rationalization" which "forced the province to accept the status of a residual supplier (of a product in the possession of which it held front-rank) without any (compensating) advantage in terms of royalties." (210)

In this context, the partial nationalization of Saskatchewan potash (1975) represents a break from the traditional policies of both parties. The authors see this act as part of the same dynamic as represented by the aggressive oil policies of the Alberta Conservatives, but here, of course, the main motor of policy is not the businessman's government, but a bureau-

cratic elite, aligned with the social-democrats, which experienced a rebirth of its residual "Fabianism" in the 1970s.

The authors are less sanguine in their interpretation of this phenomenon than the analagous developments in Alberta. Indeed, they seem worried lest the mantle of economic leadership in Saskatchewan should pass out of the hands of the province's present governors. Their most telling point is that "social change effected by a bureaucratic and political elite with little attention paid to the cultivation of popular participation and support is fragile and tenuous." (274) It is not clear to what degree the authors see the decline of the radical political culture of Saskatchewan as a function of structural change in agriculture (which has transformed a large segment of the farm community into *bona fide* businessmen), or of the limitations of the social-democratic vision of the NDP, but there is perhaps room for criticism on this latter score. Subscribers to *Labour/Le Travailleur* will probably be saddened to read that "pressure for some measure of control . . . over the management of our plants [by] rank-and-file employees . . . who have been exposed in CCF circles to much loose thinking on this subject" was regarded as just "another of the problems with which we are faced" by a leading government advisor as early as 1947. (141) It might have been helpful if the authors had provided some background on the contemporary relations between the Saskatchewan Potash Corporation and the steel and mine workers of the province.

From the working-class perspective, *Prairie Capitalism* poses, but does not answer the question, what is to be done? Richards and Pratt implore us to abandon "centralism." But one wonders how much meaningful political content would be found on a platform of "regionalism." The thoughtful observer will applaud the phenomenon of the "New West," insofar as it tends to undermine the uneven development of the national economy, which has, among other things, allowed regional elites to play battledore-and-shuttlecock with a regionally fragmented working class. The workingmen, of course, have always stood for fair play. However, the old game is still being played, and probably with increased gusto. Back in 1923, a group of coal miners in Drumheller, Alberta organized a seminar on "political economy." They concluded that "the Montreal dictatorship must be displaced by a proletarian dictatorship." This language may seem anachronistic today, but perhaps the miners stumbled on a grain of truth. Canada — including Sir Wilfrid Laurier's two stepchildren, who are not as scrawny as they used to be — still needs "a plan," and the kind of political movement which can put it into practice.

Allen Seager
Simon Fraser University

L. Kavic and G. Nixon, *The 1200 Days — Dave Barrett and the N.D.P., 1972-75* (Coquitlam, B.C.: Kaen Publishers 1979) and S. Persky, *Son of Socred* (Vancouver: New Star Books 1979).

DESPITE THE APPEARANCE of the two books under review, the world of B.C. politics remains *terra incognita*. Certainly there is a dearth of the theoretically informed literature which has deepened our recent understanding of Prairie and Quebec provincial politics. This is unfortunate because the acute polarization of contemporary political life is exciting and distinctive enough to warrant something more than even the most sophisticated book-length journalism.

As Martin Robin argued in *The Company Province*, class conflict and class consciousness are themes which are central rather than incidental to B.C.'s political history. The bitter class struggle of a capital intensive resource frontier polarized the province along enduring and, for Canada, exceptional lines from an early period. Yet

the contemporary political culture is something more, and something less, than pure class politics. Social Credit historically expressed the disaffections of small business and the northern and interior hinterlands and its right-populist past was not entirely submerged in the party's reincarnation as a corporate dominated coalition of the right. For its part, the NDP has grown well beyond the resource-proletarian base of the CCF. Under Barrett, never the most avid believer in organized labour's cause, social democracy has gained a disparate incremental following among professionals, small business, farmers, environmentalists, and others. We now find two broad coalitions engaged in a bitter conflict between "free enterprise" and "socialism," but the precise content of this symbolic dialectic is not easily discovered.

The signal weakness of *The 1200 Days* is that it offers no theoretical frame within which to interpret the NDP's brief tenure of power. A hasty collation of press clippings thrown together to pour maximum discredit upon the Barrett Government, the work is so devoid of any guiding theme that the only lasting impression is one of socialist disarray and incompetence. This dovetails well with the Social Credit depiction of misguided idealists throwing money at social problems while allowing the economy to collapse, but the question of what broader aims and purposes were articulated and pursued is almost totally ignored.

To take one example, government management of the crucial forestry sector is discussed in ten pages which fail to develop an analysis of the structure of the industry or NDP response to it. The topic deserves better treatment in view of the fact that Resources Minister Bob Williams, easily the most influential Cabinet Minister other than Barrett and certainly the most capable, developed an innovative and coherent strategy which tells us a great deal about West Coast social democracy.

Over many years the industrial unions and the CCF-NDP had advocated socialization to gain control of Crown-owned resources which had been all but alienated to a handful of integrated corporations. As might have been expected, public ownership was to be confined to failing concerns, but Williams did act as a public entrepreneur, albeit one outside the Fabian mould. In essence he argued that maximization of economic rents and labour-intensive industrial development were dependent upon creating a competitive environment beneath the watchful eye of the provincial state. Intervention was to take the form of temporary state resource ownership at various stages to break up the integrated companies, bid up stumpage values via competition, and direct resources to the most efficient users. While never brought to fruition, this policy incorporated an innovative stress upon integrated resource management at the local level and it envisaged various forms of community involvement. Williams' strategy was a clear attempt to develop an indigenous socialism which would break the "statist" mould. Indeed vociferous union and traditional left critics found more of Rousseau than Marx in the Minister who was characterized as the Allende of the North.

Nixon and Kavic neglect these subtleties while detailing the eclectic range of NDP initiatives and to that limited extent their work is a useful chronicle of events. The achievements of three short years — car insurance, Pharmacare for the aged, increased welfare spending, preservation of agricultural land, rent controls, creation of the B.C. Petroleum Corporation, pioneering labour legislation — were, as they argue, traditional social democratic policies which were in this instance marred by inadequate planning and, on occasion, sheer incompetence. Yet their reading of events is unduly myopic. To understand the NDP in power one must appreciate the impact of the unreconstructed "free enterprise" creed of W.A.C. Bennett upon the province and the B.C. left. Confined to perpetual and unavailing opposition for more than 40 years, the NDP and its constituency experienced 1972 as an event

analagous to Quebec's Quiet Revolution. With the assumption of power, a deluge of demands and criticisms broke forth from the labour movement, teachers, social workers, native people, women, and a host of hitherto powerless and virtually disenfranchised groups. Some of the resulting policies were genuinely innovative but the government did fail to impose clear priorities and this sustained the charge of incompetency levelled from the right while antagonising the left.

As noted by Nixon and Kavic, Barrett's personal management of the economy left much to be desired and deteriorating relations with the labour movement climaxed in back to work legislation which would have made Social Credit blush. Other left constituencies, most notably the teachers, felt cheated and resentful and party disaffection was to play an important role in the fall of the government.

Far more crucial, however, was the construction of a new right-wing coalition around the corpse of Social Credit. Kavic and Nixon wholly ignore the acute class polarization which underlay this realignment because they portray government defeat as the inevitable product of disarray and incompetence. Certainly Stan Persky does not make the same mistake in his lively account of the debacle of the NDP and the counter-revolution of Bill Bennett. *Son of Socred* is a masterpiece of populist invective. Biting, witty and, less often, theoretically focussed, this muckraking *tour de force* lays into Social Credit with a will while offering a balanced assessment of the NDP.

As Persky acidly comments, the thesis that social democracy is the best vehicle of bourgeois rule finds few believers among that favoured class. For all its hesitations and mistakes, the NDP stampeded B.C. business *en masse* into Bennett's "car dealer" coalition because it posed a fundamental challenge to the stability and growth of a singularly exploitative form of resource capitalism. Unwilling to live with a government which took its nominal resource ownership seriously, big business abandoned the hapless federal parties and bankrolled the discredited party of the *ancien régime*.

Son of Socred was a major success for a local left-wing publishing house and its acerbic tone captures the mood of those who are now willing to give their critical support to the NDP. Certainly Persky, the *enfant terrible* of B.C.'s now defunct "new left," offers a reasoned statement of why the NDP is the only show in town for its former critics. Yet his depiction of Social Credit as the B.C. counterpart of Lyon's drastic counter-revolution in Manitoba is a shade too simple. The contemporary amalgam of managerial technocrats and small capitalists has sufficient political acumen to avoid a total relapse into W.A.C. Bennett's version of frontier capitalism. It is disappointing that Persky gives us little insight into the internal dynamics of what remains an unstable coalition. Hopefully his work will stimulate others to examine this question and to chart what we continue to lack, an appropriate socialist response.

Andrew Jackson
University of British Columbia

G.J. Wherrett, *The Miracle of the Empty Beds: A History of Tuberculosis in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1977).

IN JULY 1932 Norman Bethune argued that "The treatment of pulmonary tuberculosis involves . . . infected individual, regarded as a whole, acting and reacting in his social and physical environment." George Jasper Wherrett's book unfortunately does not reflect Bethune's thinking. What Wherrett has given us is the type of history book we read back in grade six, a list of names and dates, and almost no analysis. His second chapter is on the development of the Canadian Tuberculosis Association, with the list of its founder, benefactors, presidents, and lecturers and all their travels and speeches. The names of Governor-Generals, professors, senators

and doctors are prominent, but nowhere does Wherrett comment on the class composition of the Association and what that might have meant about its various activities. Nor does Wherrett say anything about the fact that when talking about T.B. the Association seems to have been singularly silent about any need to change social and economic conditions leading to T.B.

The rest of Wherrett's book is in the same vein; an institutional history that does not acknowledge that any influences outside of the Tuberculosis Association or the health care professionals had anything to do with the fight against T.B. So we have chapters on such topics as "The BCG Vaccine in Canada," "Tuberculosis Nursing," and the international anti-tuberculosis groups. The last 12 chapters basically just list the tuberculosis programmes in the provinces and territories. Even in his chapter on "Tuberculosis in Native Races," Wherrett cannot see beyond his narrow institutional focus.

A class analysis of the public health movement shows why their activities concentrated on education and detection of tuberculosis. As the germ theory of disease gained wide acceptance in the late nineteenth century, the middle and upper classes became increasingly aware of how easily disease could be transmitted to them and their children. These people identified the protection of their own self-interest with notions of social progress and became the leaders in the public health movement. Even in such unlikely areas as dentistry there was the fear of the spread of disease from the poor to the rich. Dr. J.G. Adami, an early twentieth-century dental reformer in Toronto, put it bluntly and vividly: "From a selfish point of view... [the wealthy could not] afford to neglect the children of the poor" and still let their own youngsters "sit in the same room, side by side, with these neglected children and inhale the vile gases, constantly emanating from them, caused by their rotten teeth" or "drink out of the same cup these children have fouled with the poisonous pus" which exuded "from the gums around their abscessed teeth and roots."[1]

There also existed among prominent members of the public health movement a great fear for the purity of the race; to be countered presumably by preventing the procreation of those people most susceptible to disease, including T.B. In 1912, Mrs. Adam Shortt of the executive committee of the National Council of Women wrote a revealing article entitled "Some social aspects of tuberculosis."[2] In it she commented at great length on the "well known medical fact" that "degenerates" and "feeble-minded" people develop tuberculosis to a much greater degree than other people, and went on to argue for a programme of eugenics. These views of hers were echoed by Dr. Helen MacMurchy, the Ontario inspector for the feeble-minded, and Dr. C.K. Clarke, the dean of medicine at the University of Toronto. Later Mrs. Shortt divided humanity into three great groups: "1st, that lower strata, that great weltering mass of people whose lives are merely enlarged expressions of their two primary biological instincts of reproduction and self-preservation.... It is from this group that our social problems mainly spring, as well as dangers that threaten our race and country."[3] Her other two groups were a selfish class who refused to see and believe that there were social problems which affected them and finally the group of men and women who were to be the saviours of the others. In this latter group, Mrs. Shortt included herself and others of similar persuasion.

Another major factor behind the public health movement was the growing industrialization of Canadian society. As more workers were gathered in larger factories, the conditions for the quick spread of contagious diseases such as T.B. were magnified. It became in the best interests of employers to try and control these diseases in order to maintain production. Wherrett comes close to making this point when he says that "the well-being of the populace was the key to the growth of Canada

because it was on the shoulders of the masses that the political and economic structures would rest," (8) but he fails to carry his analysis any further.

Chapter 5 is devoted to "Medical Education in Tuberculosis." Wherrett's primary concern is that medical students be taught to diagnose T.B. properly and he never mentions that medical education is notorious for ignoring the occupational and environmental factors behind disease. In fact, Wherrett's book makes very few references to occupational factors associated with T.B. He has almost ten pages on drug therapy, which is enough to bore even a doctor, and there is an equally turgid chapter on bovine tuberculosis, but the word "occupation" is not even in the index.

Wherrett has written a book which focuses on how tuberculosis was detected and treated and so we have the story of educational programmes, pamphlets, X-rays, and drugs. The alternative would have been a book on how tuberculosis could have been prevented, a book that would have considered the social and economic factors behind tuberculosis.

Joel Lexchin, M.D.
Halifax, N.S.

References

[1] "School-Children's Teeth — Their Universally Unhealthy and Neglected Condition," *Dental Register*, 50 (1896), 484-5, quoted in Neil Sutherland, *Children in English-Canadian Society* (Toronto 1976), 19.
[2] Mrs. Adam Shortt, "Some Social Aspects of Tuberculosis," *Public Health Journal*, 3 (June 1912), 307-12.
[3] *Ibid.*, 311.

Gary B. Nash, *The Urban Crucible: Social Change, Political Consciousness, and the Origins of the American Revolution* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press 1979).

THIS IS A BOOK about class relationships: the material contexts of these relationships, their changing character, the conflicts that were rooted in class relationships, and the various changes — informed (in part) by class identities — that can be detected in people's social and political consciousness. "I have tried to discover," writes Gary Nash, "how people worked, lived, and perceived the changes going on about them, how class relations shifted, and how political consciousness grew, especially among the laboring classes." He is concerned almost exclusively with the precociously commercial societies of the three main American seaboard cities, Boston, New York, and Philadelphia, whose comparative social histories and changing political cultures he carefully reconstructs for the (roughly) 90 years up to the American Revolution. Nash sees these cities as "the cutting edge of economic, social, and political change," and as the source of "almost all the alterations that are associated with the advent of capitalist society." His book, then, is essentially an enquiry into the culture of urban capitalism in colonial America. And one of its main objectives, as he says — an objective that dominates much of his discussion — "is to show that many urban Americans, living amidst historical forces that were transforming the social landscape, came to perceive antagonistic divisions based on economic and social position; that they began to struggle around these conflicting interests; and that through these struggles they developed a consciousness of class." (This manner of approaching past experiences will have a familiar ring for those who recall the perspectives of E.P. Thompson's *The Making of the English Working Class*.)

The Urban Crucible opens with a skilful reconstruction of urban society in the late seventeenth century. Although wealth was certainly unequally distributed and social privilege already well established, labouring people were undoubtedly better off in the New World than they would have been in any European city. There was little desperate poverty, most people could enjoy a "decent compe-

tence," political rights were (by European standards) widely enjoyed, and the social gap between rich and poor was not yet felt (from below) to be especially oppressive. While there is some evidence from these early years of popular discontent and social dissension, class consciousness and class antagonisms were not much developed, and ideas that stressed the virtues of an ordered social hierarchy and service for the "commonweal" were still widely accepted. With time, however, and the widening of social divisions (both great wealth and permanent poverty increased in prominence), social conflict became much more pronounced in urban America, and Nash is especially concerned to explain these conflicts, and to chart their ups and downs, for the first three-quarters of the eighteenth century. He is consistently careful to situate these conflicts within a broad material context: a context that attends closely to the pressures (for some) and opportunities (for others) of warfare (which were present so much of the time, particularly for Boston), the fluctuations in trade and employment cycles, and the changing configurations of property ownership. And what he is always working towards through these contextual reconstructions is a better understanding of political consciousness, especially the political consciousness and political discontents of the labouring people — their views of established authority, their ideas of political legitimacy, their skepticism of certain ideologies of privilege, their (intermittent) resistance to mercantile and oligarchical power. The politics of Boston are particularly prominent throughout much of this discussion, largely because of the almost chronic economic malaise of the Massachusetts city (which gave rise to considerable popular protest against the city's élite), in contrast to the generally more buoyant and dynamic economies of New York and Philadelphia. By the 1760s traditions of collective popular action, organization, and agitation were well established on the urban seaboard. The book concludes with an account of the convergence between these local traditions of political conflict and the unfolding struggles prior to 1776 over the new and unpalatable assertions of British imperial power.

Nash's work does a good job of making sense of the popular political culture of these colonial cities. He discusses, fruitfully and generally persuasively, the limits to deference; the reasons for periods of political quiescence; the tradition of independent, self-initiated popular political action (claims about the importance of patron-client dependencies and upper-class manipulations of crowd actions must be seriously qualified); and the resistance of labouring people to parts of the ideology of capitalism (its acquisitiveness, its atomistic individualism), and their preference for communitarian and egalitarian commitments (not shared, of course, by most men of wealth). One chapter includes an excellent account of the Great Awakening and the political implications of evangelicalism; another analyzes well the various popular responses to the Stamp Act of 1765. The book as a whole benefits from Nash's familiarity with the literature of English social history, which has clearly influenced the framing of his questions and the manner of his approach to an understanding of social relations. *The Urban Crucible* is an impressive achievement: authoritative, carefully constructed, informed by wide reading, rich in detail, and intelligently sensitive to the importance of class relationships — relationships as seen from both sides — in eighteenth-century experience.

Robert W. Malcolmson
Queen's University

Diane Lindstrom, *Economic Development in the Philadelphia Region, 1810-1850* (New York: Columbia University Press 1978).

PHILADELPHIA was the leading British North American port and city in 1775. As

late as 1800 to 1810 its share of direct American imports was from 18 to 20 per cent and its share of exports was 16 to 18 per cent. By the 1850s, the former proportion had fallen to less than seven per cent and the latter to between two and four per cent. Yet the population of the city and county of Philadelphia grew from 111,000 to 1810 to 258,000 by 1840 and 409,000 in 1850. In the same years, the city's economic and industrial structure underwent a major transformation, as the city (already a considerable centre of crafts and manufacturing even in 1810) developed a large textile industry and major industries in machinery; drugs, medicines, paints, and dyes; and precious metals. This industrialization was well advanced in the 1830s. Lindstrom wishes to explain the processes underlying this transition; to do so, she focuses on demand for Philadelphia's goods and services.

She first looks at the staples model, as applied to American intersectional trade by authors such as Callender and North, in which western wheat and southern cotton are viewed as the engines driving the antebellum economy forward, providing the basis for economic interchange among the sections and for eastern urban and industrial growth. She then considers the "eastern demand" model, which sees growing specialization and exchange within the east as more crucial to its growth in her period; this would explain Philadelphia's growth by its patterns of trade with the other leading eastern ports. Neither approach can be supported by Lindstrom's data. The city's transformation went on in face of stagnant or declining foreign and southern trade, and nearly all of the growth in its exports within the east occurred only in the 1840s, after the city's economic transformation was well under way. Thus, she finds no empirical or logical basis to explain Philadelphia's growth before 1840 in terms of extra-regional demand for the city's goods.

Lindstrom therefore looks to processes of change within the Philadelphia region, a 46-county area of Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware. She finds that it was developments here that explained the city's growth, in an "essentially self-contained" process. Over the period from 1810-15 to 1836-40 the economics of both the city and its hinterland were reorganized in a process of core-periphery interaction and specialization that yielded cumulative and mutually supporting growth. Crucial to the process were transport improvements, chiefly canals, which sharply reduced transport costs within the region. Cheaper transport enabled the extractive economy of the hinterland, based on coal and iron (the former still largely for domestic heating, not industrial use), to grow rapidly. Spurred by market opportunities provided by the city's growth and the rise of coal and iron output in the hinterland, agriculture changed strikingly to produce a more diversified agricultural sector, rather than a completely wheat-focused one. Farming became a more specialized occupation, and household production of manufactured goods fell sharply. Lindstrom argues that the growth in intra-regional demand was enough to account for all of Philadelphia's increased manufacturing output in the years before 1840.

This argument is, *prime facie*, very convincing, and it is sustained by evidence that is abundant, if in various ways incomplete or difficult to manipulate. Lindstrom explains thoroughly and fairly her data and assumptions and the limitations she sees in them. Numerous footnotes and three appendices explain crucial segments of the data for coastal and inland trades and the commodity breakdowns of these. It is perhaps unfortunate that she has had to rely so much on data from 1837, because it was a panic year, but the problems arising are well-handled.

Both directly and by implication, the book has much to say about patterns of American growth in general, although Lindstrom is careful not to overstep her data. She wonders, for example, what data on "national" growth actually mean in the light of the quite particular experience

that her region underwent. She has much to say regarding the rise of New York, in order to explain what was happening in the foreign and coastal trades. In doing so, she convincingly rebuts Albion's well-known arguments on the entrepreneurial and institutional causes for the rise of New York as the United States' main import-export centre. She is also critical of Allan Pred's analyses of urban growth in the era of the "mercantile" or "commercial" city; even by the 1820s, she contends, Philadelphia's economic health and growth very largely depended on industry, not commerce.

As an approach to regional economic history, this book has a good deal to teach Canadians, notably on the need to express models of regional or national development in ways that permit them to be subject to empirical verification. It is striking that Philadelphia could grow so markedly (though, as the author reminds us, its growth was not exceptional in terms of American rates for the years before the 1840s), despite its declining position in staple trades. The shift from a commercial to a complex industrial economy could be made within a metropolitan region without the need to rely throughout on a staple export. Coming into the process later, of course, Canadian cities faced different circumstances, but we may well need to re-examine the roles of the home market more closely: certainly Toronto and Montreal's growth between 1860 and 1900 would bear closer examination in these terms.

It must also be said that Lindstrom is able to draw not only on much quantitative data but also on a great deal of directly relevant secondary literature. Philadelphia was an important city early in American history and it has been much studied since. Lindstrom can, for example, rely on the fine Bezanson two-volume study of wholesale prices at Philadelphia from 1784 to 1861; this permits quite confident handling of complex questions raised by changing prices. By comparison with her period, often called the American "statistical dark age," the Canadian picture for the early and mid-nineteenth century is black indeed.

Readers of *Labour/Le Travailleur* may find the book's rather orthodox economic framework somewhat annoying or disappointing — labour is simply a factor of production, and population movements are simply desirable responses to economic stimuli. When the "benefits of specialization" are considered, these are viewed in terms of area, not class. Yet the book does offer a good deal of data on income originating in differing sectors and on per capita incomes in city and hinterland. In all, it is a most impressive and thorough argument regarding the processes of nineteenth-century industrial development in a major American city and its region.

Douglas McCalla
Trent University

Thomas Dublin, *Women at Work: The Transformation of Work and Community in Lowell, Massachusetts, 1826-1860* (New York: Columbia University Press 1979).

DUBLIN CALLS THIS "unashamedly a case study," but it does what the best case studies must — it clarifies issues of general importance beyond the case at hand. *Women at Work* contributes to larger questions of preconditions for worker action, the uniqueness of the experiences of women workers, and the effects of a change in population on labour activity.

The Lowell mill girls and the "Waltham system" under which they carded, spun, and wove cotton have a long history of scrutiny, praise, criticism, and documentation. The women themselves tried to clarify — for themselves and for the public — the meaning of their working lives. Contemporary debates in the press flared and subsided over the virtues of the boardinghouse system vs. the danger of reproducing a Lancaster in New England. Visiting dignitaries, official investigating committees, and the simply curious took note of Lowell and the girls as a phenomenon apart.

Scholars since then have produced much work on Lowell, from many points of view. There have been economic, architectural, technological, and biographical studies of the mills and the owners, and labour and women's history treatments of the work force. Dublin's thorough bibliography will send the interested to these pieces. Labour historians concentrated on the uniqueness of the Lowell mill girls; they were as fascinated as were contemporaries by their articulate vigour, self-confidence, and sense of well-being. The apparently scanty and short-lived organized labour resistance tended to be explained by the paternalism of the system, and the supposed marginal nature of the factory experience to the young women. Often, the Lowell story ends with the driving down of wages and the hiring of Irish immigrants in the 1850s.

Dublin, in a truly impressive work, corrects many of the conclusions of previous scholars, and describes more fully the demography and households of the Irish. He has brought to bear on the Lowell experience three tools which predecessors did not have: the methodology and electronic technology of record linkage; the theoretical work of the new labour history; and the feminist notions of "sisterhood" and family responsibility. He synthesizes theories and methodologies to place the "unique" Lowell mill girls in the context of the formation of industrial workers from pre-industrial farm people. Like scores of other populations in Europe and the United States at the dawning of the Industrial Revolution, these women left farm work to tend machines with others like themselves in strange work environments. As with other worker populations, we have needed to know who came and what they left, what values and customs they brought with them, what their work was like, whether they remained rural people, how and why they responded as they did to this new life.

To answer these questions, Dublin used payroll records from the Hamilton Company, linking samples of workers to other company records, Lowell city directories, federal manuscript censuses, and published vital records of three New Hampshire towns which sent many of its daughters to the mills. Four clearly written appendices explain in detail his method; they can be used as a handbook for work in similar sources. Since he took three samples — in 1836, 1850, and 1860 — his quantitative data illuminate the residential and economic effects on the Lowell community as the industry and the city matured.

The community which the Yankee farm girls and the Boston Associates built was one of close ties and cultural continuities for the young women. Diaries and the quantitative data show that first- and second-born sisters often went to Lowell, living together in the same boardinghouse and working in the same room. Networks like this extended to cousins and to hometown friends, who taught one another how to dress, speak, and deport oneself properly in town. There was frequent visiting back and forth between village and city, and letter-writing. The forty-mile journey and two-year stay caused a change, however. Although the girls stayed close to their families, they worked primarily on their own account, and became more independent of village ways than they had been. Though perhaps most returned to the country, they tended not to marry farmers, but village craftsmen.

Inside the spinning or carding or weaving room, the closeness of village life and the town boardinghouse was continued. Worktime was just as shared as off-time. Company policy placed new hands with experienced operatives for weeks of training; operatives tended one another's machines; overseers were expected not to see the games and conversation with which the girls amused one another as the machines hummed along.

In the early decades the girls were generally satisfied with urban mill life, but twice in the 1830s sections of the workforce walked out over wage cuts and rent hikes. Using traditional sources like newspapers and a set of informative company

treasurer's books, Dublin recounts how the girls considered the company's actions as insults to daughters of "Patriotic Ancestors who preferred privation to bondage." In the second turn-out, internal leaders gave a pre-arranged signal to start the strike, staged turnout raids on a room-by-room basis, and organized a Factory Girl's Association. Building on his analysis of closely shared work and home life, Dublin shows how the terms of paternalism, and the girls' short career in the mills, were actually preconditions for concerted action, rather than barriers to it. Here Dublin highlights the sense of sisterhood and feminist content of the strikes and of the Ten-Hour agitations of the Lowell Female Labor Reform Association of the 1840s. The FLRA, a thoroughly labour association, nevertheless addressed the operatives as women, and saw that part of *their debility came from the social and cultural* handicaps of their gender.

Dublin sees the subsequent decline in labour activism as a transitional phase between the breaking up of the Yankee farm girl community and the formation of an Irish community inside and outside the factories. We know much more about the new Irish operatives from *Women at Work* than we did before — how they went to work younger and lived at home longer than their brothers, how they bore a greater share of increased productivity than the Yankees, how much more economic family responsibility they carried than their predecessors in the mills had. Unfortunately we do not have the richness of sources on the Irish to answer so many of the questions which Dublin answered for the Yankee girls. At present, Irish letters, diaries, and reminiscences have not surfaced, and may never do so. The time is long gone for oral histories of people who worked in the 1860s and 1870s like the remembrances which Tamara Hareven has collected for the French Canadians in Manchester, New Hampshire for a later period. Perhaps church and school records, parish and local newspapers, and work on Irish-American genealogies will help future scholars fill out the experience of the entry of the Irish into the mills. Ten years ago, historians said that women could not be traced in census records; but here Dublin has traced them from farm, to factory, to family after marriage. But more than that, he has produced an important contribution to the study of rural-industrial work transition, and the particular experience of women workers in that process.

Florence Bartoshesky
Baker Library
Harvard University

Melton Alonza McLaurin, *The Knights of Labor in the South* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press 1978).

"MUCH depends," as Melton McLaurin reminds us, in referring to the Knights of Labor's racial policies and practices, "on whether the viewer sees the bottle as half full or half empty." Thus, on the one hand, the Knights argued that black and white workers had the same economic interests, and by recruiting black members and giving them positions of authority they showed that the colour line could be broken. On the other hand, these liberal racial positions were more often taken by the leadership than by the rank and file. In fact, racial co-operation in some quarters helped drive skilled whites out of the order and turn it into an organization for rural blacks only. Should we therefore be impressed by the Knights' performance or not? "Both sides," McLaurin tells us, "can be substantiated:" so take your pick. If intellectually a bit frustrating, it is an honest enough assessment.

Unfortunately, the author of *The Knights of Labor in the South* is unwilling to admit that the half full/half empty option can be applied not only to our assessment of the Knights in racial matters, but also to our evaluation of the place of the Knights in the entire range of American labour history. On this broader question, McLaurin has no doubts. With no qualifications he

espouses the view that the Knights of Labor were merely the final product of a long tradition of reformism, a backward-looking organization that failed to provide "any immediate concrete benefits" for America's increasingly industrialized work force. It was an interesting relic of the past and bound soon to pass.

Within these narrow limits, McLaurin writes an eminently sensible, if rather plodding, account of the Knights in the South. Two chapters survey the Southern economy and labour force. Here are displayed the peculiarities of the Southern industrial scene, in particular, the patriotic and paternalistic image of management which intensified hostility toward labour unions as Yankee incursions. The Southern labour force was also more rural, less educated, and, since Blacks still played a significant role in industry apart from the Alabama textile factories, more divided on ethnic lines than its Northern counterpart. (The North before 1890 had not yet received the full impact of the new immigration.) All this added up to a very bleak picture for the prospects of any labour organization in the South and consequently, according to McLaurin, the accomplishments of the Southern Knights appear all the greater.

Yet as we advance through subsequent chapters on organization, strikes and boycotts, politics, education and co-operation, ethnic relations, and internal dissension, what becomes abundantly clear is the hopelessness of the cause. Thus, strikes and boycotts were largely emotional responses which could not deliver the immediate benefits that the rank and file really sought. So with the several co-operative ventures described by McLaurin — largely dreams of the national leadership and having little relevance to the needs of most workers. Political efforts were marginally more promising since at least the southern establishment was challenged and since some foundations were laid "on which the Progressives would build;" but again the final result was "disillusionment" at least on the part of the more advanced workers. The general picture the reader is left with is one of a brief flourishing in 1886, followed by inevitable decline as the more advanced white and urban workers abandoned the order and left it to the more backward and largely black workers in the rural workers — an organization now more ridiculed than feared.

The thesis of this work can therefore be summed up as follows. First, the overall record of the Knights in the South shows that southern workers were far from docile (a point that McLaurin makes in his previous work, *Paternalism and Protest*), and that they contributed as much to the order as did Northern workers. Second, the effort was largely futile since the Knights of Labor, in terms of both organization and ideology, belonged to the past. Its relative success in the South, in fact, is merely witness to the fact that the pre-industrial reformist tradition lingered there longer. But clearly it had little to offer modern workers. In expressing such views McLaurin is scarcely treading new ground. The same thesis was applied to the Knights of Labor by John Commons and his school and it was reiterated even more forcefully by Gerald N. Grob in his *Workers and Utopia: A Study of Ideological Conflict in the American Labor Movement* (1961), a work to which McLaurin admits his indebtedness.

But it is precisely this long prevalent model that the "new labour historians" have sought to challenge in recent years. Inspired by the English Marxists E.P. Thompson and E.J. Hobsbawm, the new school insists that instead of recounting the history of particular institutions — usually a dismal exercise — we should observe the activities of the American working class as a whole. What we then observe is a consistent pattern of protest manifested in a myriad of late nineteenth-century political parties and labour movements of which the Knights of Labor was only one example, even if a very important one. Admittedly,

in making their protest, American workers used the experiences of the past — and in that sense were "backward looking" — but they were also consciously driving in the direction of an alternative moral order, very different from that being created by American capitalism. If the working class ultimately failed, this is a measure of the strength of their opposition, not of their lack of resolve nor of their obsession with "practical" benefits. The much vaunted "pure and simple" unionism claimed to be so characteristic of American workers, belongs to the twentieth century.

It is an interesting comment on the state of labour history that much of the detail in McLaurin's work could be used by the "new labour historians" in their counter-thesis. It is significant, for instance, that Melvyn Dubofsky's discussion of the period in *Industrialism and the American Worker 1865-1920* (1975) specifically cites McLaurin's previous book as an argument against the Grob thesis! Unfortunately, the new school has not yet produced an overall synthesis of the period, so McLaurin can scarcely be faulted for any glaring omission in his secondary sources. *Still, David Montgomery pointed the way* in his *Beyond Equality: Labor and the Radical Republicans 1862-1872* (1967), and suggestions for the alternative view of Gilded Age labour history have appeared in many articles since then. The alternative scheme was the theme of last year's Chicago conference devoted to the history of the Knights. Perhaps the safest thing a reviewer can say is to repeat the point made at the beginning of this review that all depends upon the eye of the beholder. What we see depends upon the values we bring to the study. Thus McLaurin is perfectly entitled to his views. But he would have written a more exciting book had he at least seemed aware that there was another argument.

W.M. Dick
Scarborough College

James R. Green, *Grass-Roots Socialism: Radical Movements in the Southwest, 1895-1943* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press 1978).

FOR 13 SUMMERS after 1904, 1000s of East Texas dirt farmers crowded the shady groves of Progress Park in Grand Saline to attend the grand-daddy of all socialist encampments. Combining recreation and education, these radical revival meetings constituted the southwestern movement's principal propaganda vehicle. In part because agitators such as "Red Tom" Hickey retained the forms, and often the content, of evangelical preaching, sharecroppers, lumberjacks, and miners took hope in a new gospel of salvation — socialism. In 1910 the Oklahoma party had a larger membership than that in the state of New York, and in 1912 it gave Eugene Debs his most numerous vote.

In his discussion of the encampments, James Green captures the rural and agrarian character of this socialist tendency because he recognizes that, despite the impact of rapid industrialization, traditional values and attitudes persisted among the men and women of the southern plains. The book focuses on progressive politics in the southwest between the populist revolt and the Great Depression, but Green firmly locates the movement in its social and cultural context. The result is a gritty realism that goes far beyond conventional *political history. Green's achievement* results primarily from impressive research in a broad range of manuscript collections and dozens of local newspapers. This combined with a sophisticated Marxist perspective makes his analysis of the movement sensitive and sympathetic. Green pays southern socialists the compliment of treating their movement as a popular and genuine expression of agrarian discontent and for that reason, he argues, a viable political force.

Socialism took root in the southwest in part, Green believes, because its advocates were "organic intellectuals" who used traditional forms to propagate the new

doctrine, and he perceptively devotes a good deal of attention to the style and substance of propaganda. His description of "salesmen-soldiers" — only 21 per cent, for instance, had belonged to earlier radical organizations — constitutes a unique profile of the rank-and-file activists who provide the dynamism in all parties. These "hustlers," 6,000 strong by 1912, sold subscriptions to Julius Wayland's *Appeal to Reason* which stirred rebel hearts from the Rio Grande to the Canadian prairies. Sensational and moralistic, the *Appeal* became "a school for Socialists" because it reached the isolated farmers of the southwest in a way that more conventional forms of propaganda could not. Green uses his discussion of propaganda to emphasize the socialist movement's roots and vitality among the natives of America's rural heartland.

Clearly socialism inspired the lumberjacks and mill hands, black and white, who had to be disciplined to capitalist work habits in the Louisiana-Texas piney woods. In 1910 they established a radical industrial union, the Brotherhood of Timber Workers. To guard against repression by ruthless employers, the union adopted the mythical and secret rites which the Knights of Labor had employed. More important, in Green's view, the BTW borrowed the Knights' interracial structures. Integration was consolidated when the IWW gave the union's radicalism a harder edge.

The Brotherhood of Timber Workers and the Renters' Union were certainly significant manifestations of socialist influence. But did they represent the proletarian solidarity which Green posits, perhaps considers politically essential? Not all historians would place a similar construction on the evidence. Garin Burbank has reached different conclusions on, for instance, the collapse of the movement. Does the assertion that "wartime repression and patriotic coercion killed the Socialist party in the Southwest," constitute an adequate explanation for what was after all only one dimension of a continent-wide phenomenon? Apparently Green himself does not really think so. After offering the pat answer he goes on to admit that the farmers of the southwest never abandoned their "frontier individualism." He should have made this more sophisticated formulation explicit. But as much as anything this criticism reflects a difference in perspective which should do nothing to detract from an admirable piece of scholarship.

A. Ross McCormack
University of Winnipeg

Millard L. Gieske, *Minnesota Farmer-Laborism: The Third-Party Alternative* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press 1979).

ANY OBSERVER OF THE United States will ask sooner or later why that country has produced no labour party. What better place is there to begin an answer to that question than Minnesota? The Farmer-Labor Party of that state functioned for 22 years, was organized on the basis of dues-paying membership (rather than candidates and campaign staffs), developed a platform calling for public ownership of industry and transportation and replacing of the profit system by "production for use," and at its apogee (1936) selected five of the state's nine Congressmen and garnered 58 per cent of the vote for its gubernatorial candidate. Yet two presidential elections later the party had disappeared, and Minnesotans were left with the alternatives of Democratic or Republican administrations of post-New Deal capitalism.

Millard Gieske's view of the FLP is that of a political scientist who assumes that a "third party" is an anomaly, destined ultimately to fuse with either the Republicans or the Democrats, and that the only realistic and meaningful purpose of political activity is to seek office by astutely trimming one's program to the prevailing winds of the "popular mood." (96) A programme committed to fundamental social change strikes him only as an obstacle to

that goal, and revolutionaries in a party's midst are an embarrassment at best, a Trojan horse at worst. Even the support labour gave the Farmer-Labor Party, Gieske argues, "carried a considerable price and occasionally [during strikes] was in danger of becoming a net liability." (95) In fact, he concludes, the "movement's major cultural contribution was not its third-partyism, nor its sometimes uniquely different economic theories, but rather the fact that during the turbulent mid-1930s, a crucial period of time, it preserved and carried forward the tradition of effective leadership." (172)

Given this perspective, it is not surprising that Gieske offers only the most meager glimpses of Minnesota's social history and of the reasons why some 100,000 people paid hard-earned money for subscriptions to the *Minnesota Leader*. Although he makes passing references to the conservatism of the German Catholic or Scandinavian countryside and to the rigidly Irish quality of the Democratic Party in St. Paul, he betrays little sensitivity to the immigrant character of the ethnic mosaic found in both rural and urban Minnesota. His chronicle simply moves from party convention to primary election to general election and back to the next convention, in the traditional manner of American political historiography.

Nevertheless, this book has three virtues which make it well worth reading. First, the story of the FLP not only ranks among the most exciting chapters in the history of American labour, but also sheds important light on the political character of the period between the two world wars. Second, Gieske has made excellent use of the papers of various friends and foes of the movement, most of which have only recently become available to scholars. Third (a most unexpected reward) the book's discussion of the activities of Communists and Trotskyists within the FLP during the 1930s supplies considerable information which official and sympathetic histories of *both* those groups have studiously avoided. For example, the Trotskyists, who gained a local influence unique in the United States through their able leadership of Minneapolis' truckers, mobilized AFL forces within the FLP for a red-baiting crusade to expel communists and neutralize the CIO during 1937 and 1938. Neither Farrell Dobbs, *Teamster Power*, nor Art Preis, *Labor's Giant Step*, as much as mentions the role of the Minneapolis teamsters inside the FLP. Similarly, Gieske's evidence reveals that the state-wide vote of the Communists (in this state which ranked among the CP's strongholds) never exceeded one per cent of the total from the 1920s through the 1940s. It was their role in the CIO that made them the dominant group on the Left after 1935. Prior to that time the most influential advocates of socialism within the FLP were associated with the Socialist Party and the League for Independent Political Action (chaired by John Dewey).

The story of the FLP, however, begins with the farmers. In the decade of World War I they were more numerous than ever before or since in Minnesota's history, locked in desperate economic battle with the grain millers and dealers of Minneapolis, and increasingly well organized through their own co-operative exchanges. Their struggles produced rural legislators, co-operative officials, and small-town editors (who could challenge the rabidly Republican press of the Twin Cities), at the same time that worker-based Socialists briefly won control of Minneapolis, and the Nonpartisan League swept into power in North Dakota. Enthusiastic experiments with Nonpartisan League activity in Minnesota's Republican primaries during the war met with such severe repression that NPL meetings were outlawed in 19 counties and two top NPL leaders were jailed, while headlines of the *Minneapolis Tribune* advised the electorate: "Vote in Minnesota the Way the Boys Shoot in France." (43)

Although the NPL victories of 1918 and 1920 were almost all rural, it was the labour wing of the movement that linked it to efforts to form a national labour party, injected the demand for public ownership

of industry, and transformed an alliance of nonpartisan leagues into a political party in time for the elections of 1922. In that depression year the new FLP established itself as the *second* party of the state with almost 40 per cent of the vote and sent Henrik Shipstead off to the U.S. Senate. Although William Mahoney, Robley Cramer, and their progressive associates from the unions were subsequently able to create the Farmer-Labor Association, based on dues-paying members of ward clubs and affiliated organizations, the defeat of unionism in basic industries after 1921 and Mahoney's and Cramer's conflicts with both the national leaders of the AFL and the Workers (Communist) Party in 1923 and 1924 killed off the national movement, isolating Minnesota's FLP, and shifted the party's centre of gravity back to the countryside for the rest of the decade.

Between 1928 and 1934, however, the FLP gained a new lease on life. The economic crisis not only produced massive desertions from the Republican column, but also aggravated divisions within the Democratic Party to the point that, although their party gained votes, it could not capture the coveted second place. Intellectuals and trade unionists within the orbit of the Socialist Party revived nation-wide efforts for a labour party, using Minnesota as a model. Militant popular struggles, like the farm holiday movement, the teamsters' strike, and the people's lobby of 1934 (left unmentioned by Gieske, who does berate the less successful lobby of 1937), roused city and country alike. Amidst this activity Floyd Olson was three times elected governor on the FLP ticket, but also with the covert aid of influential New Deal Democrats and the overt aid of the All-Party Volunteer Committee for Olson, headed by people with important business connections.

In Gieske's view the Farmer-Labor Association, with its "disciplined democratic centralism" [!] (84) and its convention demands for "production for use" (a phrase which became the 1930s counterpart of "the cooperative commonwealth") were but obstacles to Olson's capable but beleaguered administration. Strikes and demonstrations whittled away at his electoral majorities, and the radical FLP convention of 1934 was "a political disaster." (185) But the party's urban strength grew as its support among farmers dwindled (especially in the more prosperous southern part of the state). In 1936 with Olson recently dead, the intransigent champion of public ownership Elmer Benson won 58 per cent of the votes, beating even Olson's 1930 record, while Franklin Roosevelt took 60 per cent of the presidential ballot, where he faced no FLP opposition.

Organized labour was now the solid base of the movement, but labour itself divided bitterly with the splits of both the American union movement and the Third International. As Communist activists and their allies in the new industrial unions fought to make the FLP the political agency of a popular front, AFL leaders (among them the Trotskyists) bitterly opposed the effort. At the 1937 Minneapolis convention, writes Gieske, "speaker after speaker arose with a laundry list of Red charges which made the campaign oratory of Republicans [in 1918 and 1920] . . .seem almost restrained. Yet these were Farmer-Laborites declaring that members of their own party were Communists or Communist sympathizers!" (246) The red-baiting begun there was picked up by Hjalmar Peterson in his two-year campaign to displace Benson as the FLP's gubernatorial candidate, and mixed with increasingly virulent anti-Semitism. By the elections of 1938 both the FLP primaries and the general election occasioned orgies of anti-Semitic propaganda, featuring great billboards with Jewish-looking FLP Reds riding roughshod over the assorted nationalities of Minnesota and Ray Chase's infamous pamphlet about the FLP, *Are They Communists or Catspaws?* While the White House studiously ignored the FLP's pleas for help, Martin Dies' Committee on UnAmerican Activities came to Minnesota to investigate its governing party. Harold Stassen

promised the voters a Republican administration supportive of the New Deal and a bulwark against Communism in any form. In November his party swept the FLP from office.

The FLP survived only six more years. So bitter were the movement's internal divisions that in 1942, when Hjalmar Peterson finally won the FLP's nomination for governor, the state CIO endorsed Stassen. Meanwhile, discussions of possible mergers between the FLP and the Democrats had become commonplace, while all talk of a national third party was jettisoned in favour of a third, then a fourth, term for Roosevelt. Between 1939 and 1942 fusion proposals came mainly from the FLP's right wing, and were coupled with efforts to expell "Communists." After 1942, however, (and especially after Teheran) the party's left took the initiative, leading to the ultimate merger of 1944, thus securing leading offices for its own adherents. At the inaugural celebration of the new Democratic-Farmer-Labor Party the master of ceremonies was a rising young star of the Democrats, Hubert H. Humphrey. Four years later, in the setting of the Cold War, he was to preside over the purging of those leftists from leadership and the dissolution of what remained of the Farmer-Labor Association. The anti-Communism of 1938 and 1948 provided the ideological environment in which New Deal Democrats and Republicans could restore Minnesota's political game to what Gieske considers its proper rules.

David Montgomery
Yale University

Neil Betten, *Catholic Activism and the Industrial Worker* (Gainesville: University Presses of Florida 1976).

THIS INTERESTING book is a history of the involvement of Catholics in the labour movement of the USA. It is written by a labour historian who, while not a Catholic, is sympathetic to Catholic action on behalf of labour. The reader gets the impression that the author hoped to unearth more radicalism than he actually found, but that he is quite willing to praise the Catholic participation in the labour struggles of the early years. The author does not interpret the support given by the Catholic Church to the moderate wing of the labour movement as part of an ideological policy to defend the interests of the ruling class. He takes the Catholic spokesmen at their word.

The book first examines the position adopted by the Catholic bishops from the mid-nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century. When the industrialization of America began Catholics were to a large extent working-class immigrants and constituted about half of the labour force in the country. The American Catholic bishops supported the labour movement and the creation of trade unions long before this was done by the Protestant Churches, the government, and local authorities. The bishops' support of unions even preceded Pope Leo XIII's 1893 encyclical, *Rerum novarum*. From the beginning, therefore, there was a strong Catholic presence in the labour movement, especially in the American Federation of Labor. This Catholic participation helped the labour movement; at the same time it kept it within moderate lines and opposed any socialist ideas. The Catholic workers, following their church's teaching, were opposed to class war. They entertained a cooperative image of society; they wanted class cooperation and a fair share of the wealth produced by them.

In the chapter on Catholics and the CIO, the author shows that Catholics were more divided in the 1930s. Yet outspoken leaders, priests as well as bishops, defended the new labour organization, demanded Catholic support, and opposed the socialist ideas emerging in the CIO. Catholics, though largely working class and exposed to bigotry, were not radicals. The book examines the careers of the so-called labour priests in the 1930s. While they were radical personalities, they followed the church's official teaching and

repudiated socialism. A special chapter deals with the notorious Father Coughlin, who began as a labour priest and ended up as a populist with fascist leanings.

The only radical response to capitalism, beyond the church's teaching, was the Catholic Worker movement, which the book treats in a special chapter. The Catholic Worker vehemently rejected the capitalist system. Yet despite Dorothy Day's socialist past, the Catholic Worker did not favour socialism. Its radicalism was derived from Christian anarchist ideas, mediated by Peter Morin, the co-founder of the movement. The Catholic Worker mistrusted all big organizations, including a socialist party or a centralized planning of the economy. Hope for them was only in small communities, working together, following the simple life, and siding with the poor in their social struggle. Radical Catholics gathered around the Catholic Worker. Thanks to this radical interpretation of the religious tradition, they felt that they could remain in the Catholic Church. The author claims that the Catholic Worker was the training ground for the Catholic radicals of the 1960s.

This is a very useful book. It provides a bibliography of the research done in the area. There exists no equivalent study for the Catholics in Canada.

Gregory Baum
University of Toronto

Cedric Belfrage and James Aronson, *Something to Guard. The Stormy Life of the National Guardian, 1948-1967* (New York: Columbia University Press 1978).

THIS BREEZILY-WRITTEN memoir by two of the founding editors of the American radical weekly, the *National Guardian*, is only somewhat less cryptic than the paper itself about its real relationship to the Communist Party of the United States. They do say that from the outset they envisaged it as "fellow-travelling" with the CPUSA, but emphasize a number of points at which it differed from the Party.

However close the paper was to the Party, to travel with it at all was, for most of the *Guardian*'s days, an act of great heroism. The *Guardian* fought for many of the most unpopular causes in the country, defending those who were persecuted, imprisoned, fired, and, in the case of the Rosenbergs, executed, in the many years when McCarthyism ran roughshod over America. It was one of the few voices in the media which consistently questioned American policy in the Cold War and denounced the Warfare State at home. Naturally, the paper's staff, contributors, and subscribers were hounded incessantly by the FBI and congressional committees.

Cedric Belfrage, its British born co-founder, was deported. It often seemed that no sooner had it become clear that the Guardian was simply a voice of the CP, than it would depart from that mould. The aftermath of Khruschev's revelations of Stalin's crimes left it as confused and hesitant about following the CP leadership as much of its readership, who deserted the Party in droves. The Sino-Soviet split also threw it for a loop and the paper resolved to present both sides of that story, rather than simply siding with the Moscow-line CPUSA. The authors try to make too much of these differences, though, such as when they emphasize their having taken up the cudgels for the Rosenberg defence in the face of CP indifference. (The CP was mesmerized, at first, by the simultaneous prosecution of its entire leadership under the Smith Act.)

The *ex post facto* emphasis on their differences with the CP make it difficult for the authors to explain perhaps the most significant aspect of the *Guardian*'s "stormy" life: its collapse amidst the New Left upsurge of the mid-1960s. Aronson's brief description of the conflict with the new generation of staffers and their allies which led him and Belfrage to abandon the

paper is interesting as far as it goes, centering, as he sees it, on the kind of demands that everyone on the left climb aboard the latest hobbyhorses of the "counterculture" that split so many enterprises of the time. Yet it ignores one of the central reasons for the failure of the *Guardian* to enlarge its readership among the new Left: that, despite the number of ex- and crypto-Communists among them, most "Movement" activists were something the *Guardian* never was: resolutely anti-Soviet. The New Left love affair with the Cuban Revolution, for example, was based on a much different premise than that of the *Guardian:* that is, on the hope that Cuba was moving in an entirely different direction than the Soviet Union. Both the Soviet and American models were regarded as repulsive. (Whether equally so remained a matter of debate but not much interest.) The *Guardian*, identified so closely with the pro-Soviet apologias of the "Old Left" could never develop a following among the New Left despite the fact that much of its reporting in the early and mid-1960s provided invaluable ammunition for radical battles.

Harvey Levenstein,
McMaster University, *and*
Centre for the Study of Social History,
University of Warwick.

Raymond Williams, *Marxism and Literature*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1977).

APPEARING IN THE Oxford University Press series entitled "Marxist Introductions," this book, no mere introduction in the expected sense, is the fruit of Raymond Williams' recent thinking. The product of a life-long dialogue with Marxism, it offers a theory of "cultural materialism" developed in three parts. Part I is a history of four "basic concepts" of modern thought: "culture," "language," "literature," and "ideology." Part II is a critique and an extension of the elements of Marxist cultural theory. Part III applies cultural materialist theory to the field of literature. Thus the book pulls together the concerns of both social historians and literary theorists, who may, depending on their generosity of mind, differ over which of the book's two concerns has more value.

Labour and social historians at least will find value in both. By demonstrating what a complete, "constitutive" social theory should look like, Williams reminds us of the central place literature must have in such a theory. What social historians have recently tried to do for law, technology, ideology, and other not strictly economic aspects of the social process, Williams here does for literature — that is, to reconceptualize it, or better, to deconceptualize it in order to reveal it as a form of material social production, and then to show what this means regarding authorship, aesthetics, kinds of writing, signs and notations, and a host of other elements of literary theory. It is forbidding territory, but it may be comforting to discover that many problems associated with social history are also confronted by literary and linguistic theory in different though not totally unintelligible ways.

If social historians will have lost their literary virginity, it is doubtful that the introduction will lead to marriage or will convince them to abandon their traditional interests. The analysis of "basic concepts" and of Marxist cultural theory in Parts I and II is another matter, for here is a more lasting, if not more novel, contribution: the most complete and timely theoretical exploration of the relationship of society and culture available, and one of the most compressed examples of what a Marxist social theory should contain but has never achieved.

The contribution here is twofold. First, it satisfies what has always been the most pressing need of Marxist theory — a decisive clarification of the entire question of culture and society. Williams shows that, taken as a whole tradition of thinking, the Marxist contribution to the understanding of culture, language, literature, and ideol-

ogy is best characterized as uneven, indecisive, even unidentifiable, and finally misunderstood. The source of both its persuasiveness and its rejection, its complexities and simplifications, these are the characteristics that go unnoticed by the intellectually disaffected (Marxist or not), though they may be the source of Marxism's contemporary vitality. Marxism has been inconclusive, wavering between a conception of culture as a material and passive reflection of social and economic "reality," or as an immaterial force actively shaping, more often actively not shaping, that "reality." In either case it has retreated from its original, radical recognition of culture as a fully social and material process. Having pursued this indecision for many years, Williams clarifies and settles it in the direction of materialism: his is, he writes, decidedly "a Marxist theory." Far from being a "culturalist," then, Williams establishes himself as one of the few Marxists to have shown us what materialism means. Who else speaks so effortlessly and revealingly of language as a means of production, or (as in a recent article) of the fact that a renewed sense of possibility will have to be "produced?"

The second contribution goes beyond the particular requirements of Marxist cultural theory to a more important task without which these requirements would appear inconsequential. For it reminds us what Marxism is, what the "central thinking of Marxism" is all about — not the mechanical and simplistic formulations with which it is usually associated, but the crisis of human self-understanding into which, as "the most important intellectual advance in all modern social thought," it originally intervened. While Marxist terminology has been in turn absorbed and abused, the central challenge of historical materialism has been evaded: that men not only make their own history (Vico and Herder), but that they make it in material ways; in short that they make themselves. Marxism is nothing if not a challenge to man to recognize himself and his world as his own creation. Yet what has been attended to about Marxism is everything but what it is about. That Marxism has itself contributed to this evasion is at once the theme of the book, the most consequential irony in Marxist thought, and the occasion for Williams' theory of "cultural materialism."

Williams' theory differs from existing theories of cultural materialism — such as that of the anthropologist Marvin Harris — in its emphasis on culture as "social material process" rather than as a reflection of some prior or basic or material cause. For Williams culture is not reducible to society but is constituted in it. Demanding "the specification of material cultural and literary production within historical materialism," his theory is rigorous yet inclusive. While insisting on the variability of literature (its forms, its multiplicity of writing), he also insists on the materiality of literary — of all cultural — production. This requires the radical recognition that what we have known as "literature," "language," "ideology," and "culture" are in fact limiting, specialized categories, pure abstractions, which should be seen rather as "problems," "historical movements." Only then can they be reconstituted in a theory of society that neither decomposes into the empiricist excuse for evading the wholeness of social life, nor sacrifices specificity to "confused projective generalisation."

A brilliant, illuminating analysis, this is also an important Marxist theoretical achievement. For while it is a materialist theory, it finally overcomes the ironic devaluation of culture — and of man — often implied, in different and opposite ways, in both materialist and idealist, Marxist and non-Marxist social theory. Cast not as a defence but as a critique, it recovers the original challenge of Marx's materialism. This recovery, however, requires either an abandonment or an extension of the formulations upon which materialism has traditionally depended, especially that of "a determining base and a determined superstructure." It demands a refinement

of "determination," an expanded definition of "productive forces," a rejection of the dualism that separates the "social order" from "culture," and a recognition of the worthlessness of "reflection" and "mediation" theories which these self-defeating formulas have required.

The point is that most of the received concepts of Marxism are at odds with the initial emphasis on the wholeness of history, on the understanding of society as an interrelated and man-made process. Hence the development of a truly constitutive social theory has been at once one of the special tasks and central failures of Marxism. To be sure, it is questionable whether "alternatives to Marxism" can be said to have failed in this task since they never reached so far as to try. Nor does Williams fail to acknowledge and build upon significant Marxist theoretical work, especially in linguistics, that has gone far to overcome the difficulty. Still, with William Blake, Marx might well have longed for enemies for friendship's sake. Having set out to rectify the failure of idealism to recognize society and culture as the material creations of man, Marx, but especially Marxism, almost immediately separated culture from material social life and displaced it in a superstructure, thus reproducing "the very tendency in idealist cultural thought" Marx had sought to overcome. It then required the confusions and abstractions of "Marxism" to clarify the original proposition, which receded the more these were pursued. The intellectual advance that made it possible for the first time to recognize what appeared to be natural as, in fact, man-made and historical, perpetuated concepts which allowed the product of conscious human intervention in history to appear "natural."

How and why Marxism drifted from the thrust of its intervention constitutes a central theme of the book and a compelling intellectual history. At times this was inadvertent: the revisionists's unwitting legitimation of the orthodoxy he seeks to supplant is a common enough historiographical risk. At times it was inescapable, as when (63) Marx sought to exploit the real progress "scientific rationality" was making — a rationality which, however, persisted in the abstraction of "man" and his "world" as given and natural. At times it was an intellectual and ideological evasion, an expedient, as when Engels appealed to critical knowledge in the name of the very scientism and empiricism he was supposed to have been challenging. Finally, Marxism, with so much else, often enough collapsed under the pressure of capitalist materialism, as in the concept of "productive forces" where culture, again, was allowed to be displaced from an economic "base."

What Williams is suggesting about the historical development of Marxist thought is not new. What is different about Williams is the completeness of his insistence upon the irreducible importance of historical materialism, and his equally complete sensitivity to the urgency of its failures. Marxism, he argues, has endured a history of abstractions away from life as "social material process." It has been neither critical enough of its adversaries, nor, paradoxically, insistent enough on its own materialist understanding of culture. This is not a critique born of disaffection from the Marxist tradition.

On the contrary, Williams' appreciation of the enormous cost of Marxism's ironic contribution to idealist thought may be his most telling Marxist trait, the surest sign of his materialism. Marxism, he shows, has driven artists to the safety of bourgeois individualism, in full flight from the collectivist cultural nightmare. It has allowed itself to place much of history and culture, especially contemporary literature and art, beneath importance — in Williams' typically non-polemical terms, "theoretically inaccessible." More costly yet, it has encouraged the theoretical vacuum "alternatives to Marxism" have sought to fill, without, however, having to confront the central challenge of Marx. All of this, Williams argues, has served a

hegemonic function. Since the failure to develop a truly constitutive social theory has always served the interests of existing society, readers of Williams' book will feel a certain urgency in getting on with their work.

In the last analysis this may be the book's lasting importance. Once again it asks us to overcome the remarkable alienation by which we perceive our own creation as "natural" and our best effort to call it our own as a slur upon our humanity. We are back to the original intervention. More than twenty years ago, as one who was "not a Marxist," Williams asserted that "the human crisis is always a crisis of self-understanding." Does it not suggest something about Marxism that Williams, pursuing the same problem, now feels "at home" with Marx.

Richard Twomey
St. Mary's University

Louise A. Tilly and Joan W. Scott, *Women, Work and Family* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston 1978).

Women, Work and Family is one of the growing number of books that have been appearing over the last decade on the history of the family. Some have stressed the analysis of family structure, avoiding explanation and a sense of time and place (Peter Laslett). Others have assigned primacy to ideas as the major force bringing about change in the nature of the family (Goode, Shorter, Stone). Most, in one way or another continue to be influenced by the functionalist heritage that informed the early writing of family history (Smelser). Parsonian functionalism bequeathed to the study of the family three major tenets. Firstly, industrialization was viewed as the important explanation of family change. What industrialization meant, however, was never made clear. Secondly, families were believed to have changed from extended to nuclear, from somewhat diffuse to very private institutions with industrialization. Thirdly, industrialization was seen as bringing about a split between the home and the workplace. Along with these tenets went a refusal to deal with class differences and a tendency to view change as an agentless process.

Subsequent historical studies have shed some of this heritage only too evident in works such as those of Smelser, Goode, and Shorter. Demographers, especially Peter Laslett and his colleagues, have questioned whether families were in fact ever predominantly extended. Shorter, Stone, Trumback and others have stressed ideas over economics and especially the importance of the rise of individualism. The heritage of functionalism has been exposed and questioned by Vogel, Pleck and others. Some steps have been taken toward a marxist feminist approach to family history.[1]

Tilly and Scott's work first appeared largely as a criticism of the stress on ideas made by Goode and later Shorter. Their 1975 and 1976 articles stressed not the acquisition of new ideas but the importance of the retention of old familial traditions in explaining women's work in a changing economic context.[2] Both their articles and the book transcend some aspects of the functionalist heritage, while retaining others. The categories of family economy which they develop suggest that family form adapts in a semi-automatic way to economic change, despite their insistence on the continuance of old ways. The central question remains "the impact of industrialization on women's work." It is not an unimportant question. Yet it can and does, as Lise Vogel has pointed out, lead to confusion between the origins of capitalism and the onset of industrialization.

In *Women, Work and Family*, Scott and Tilly examine the "economic, demographic and familial influences on women's work in England and France between approximately 1700 and 1950. Their focus is on the "working of popular classes," the groups from which the majority of women involved in productive activ-

ity were drawn. They argue that the "level and character" of industrial development determine the demand for women as workers, reproducers, and childbearers. They aim "to set straight the historical record on women's work and to analyze the interrelationships among changes in the economy, in women's work, and in the organization and structure of working-class family life." There is no simple or single answer to the question of the impact of industrialization on women's work, they sensibly insist. And yet, their analysis could lead to a simple answer. The book is organized around the identification of three different family types, within which women's experience is located. The first they call the family economy, or "household mode of production." It was, they argue, typical of the pre-industrial economy — of the landed peasant or the city artisan. All family members were involved in productive tasks. Married women who worked in the home or on the farm could balance productive and domestic activities because work was at home and children were not given much special attention. Unmarried women worked either with their family of origin or in someone else's family.

The industrial mode of production was accompanied, they argue, by a new kind of family economy which they term the "family wage economy." Men's jobs increasingly took them away from the home. While the type of work women did, did not change, the pattern did. Because more women's work took place outside the home, it was harder for mothers to balance productive and reproductive activities.

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century this family economy was replaced by the family consumer economy. Women were more likely to go out to work, not purely out of necessity, but to provide small luxuries for the family, as male's wages had risen. Concomittantly, greater stress was placed on the mothering role. Women had fewer children, spent less of their lives raising them, but tried to do much more for them. After World War II, both the stress on children and the likelihood of women working for wages increased further as the reproductive period of a woman's life contracted and the desire for consumer items increased. The expansion of the tertiary sector opened up a vast new area of women's work. Thus, over the period covered, married womens' involvement in productive work followed a "U-shaped pattern... relatively high in the pre-industrial household economy,... lower... in industrial economies... higher... with the development of the modern tertiary sector." (229)

Women, Work and Family makes important contributions both to family and women's history. Scott and Tilly have integrated women into the family in their analysis much more successfully than previous historians of the family. Furthermore, they have integrated demographic changes carefully into their explanations of changes in women's lives and work. Demography in this book becomes part of lived experience and not an abstract pattern or series of dry rates. Sensibly they have put aside the whole debate about whether the family changed from extended to nuclear, and their treatment of the split between home and workplace shows that this was a much more subtle and slow process than previous writers had suggested. Finally, they attempt to deal with the working class, to show what proletarianization meant to women and their families. Despite never defining class rigorously, they do give a picture of working-class women's lives which is especially strong when they deal with the twentieth century.

The book essentially follows the programme set out in their earlier articles. They have filled in the gaps in their and our knowledge. Their tracing of the involvement of women in wage labour over time is especially valuable. The book is based largely on recent and contemporary secondary literature, but draws also on their own research in several cities. The persistence of pre-industrial values are still stressed as a key to understanding families'

and women's behaviour. "Values, behaviour, and strategies shaped under one mode of production continued to influence behaviour as the economy changed.... The family continued to influence the productive activities of its members." (232) The book is thus a continuation of and an advance on their previous work in terms of the information collected and the breadth and coherence of its presentation. There is, however, little change in the explanations offered, little sophistication of the theory or explanation.

It is at the level of theory and explanation that the book is disappointing. Like the functionalist writers, Scott and Tilly fail to explain how or why change is occurring. The agents of change, the direction of causality, and the place of the family therein is missing. Thus the family wage economy is described, but not the processes that created it. The property-holding peasant family is viewed as essentially the same as those families involved in rural industry because all work and live in the same space — the home. Yet the works of Braun, Medick, Mendels and others have made it clear that the diffusion of putting out into the countryside had *important* implications not only for family fertility and family control of production, but also for the very way in which industrial capital ran, organized and re-organized industry.[3] This kind of dynamic analysis is missing.

Similarly, the "consumer wage economy" appears to be the result of women's desire to provide luxuries for their families. There is no consideration given to the changing nature of capital, or to the role of advertising in instilling the idea that families need to consume ever novel commodities. This lack of consideration of the agents of change means that the working-class families exist in a political vacuum. It also leads to a kind of economic determinism. The growing role of the state in areas such as regulation of child and female labour, the promotion of schooling, and the regulation of family life is not considered. Nor is the idea that families could form a base for class struggle. John Foster's work, for instance, suggests that families were crucial in transmitting working-class values and consciousness.[4] Jane Humphries has argued that the very maintenance of the working-class family in a period of proletarianization reflects labour's realization that the family was one institution they could control themselves and through which they could influence their material well-being and the labour supply.[5] Such issues are perhaps outside the boundaries of such a book. Yet, a more dynamic conception of the role of the family and of change might have improved their analysis.

Moreover, their stress on the continuance of old values appears to have led them to downplay the importance of new ones. They come close to implying that the family itself is a pre-industrial value. Their families exist without any apparent influence or control over their lives. They respond to change by lowering their birth rate, by sending children or wives out to work. But they are not involved in communal or class struggles, either at home or in the workplace.

These reservations apart, this is an important book. Scott and Tilly have drawn together vital aspects of women's lives and work in the context of the family. They have done so intelligently and with good sense. Their contrast of the French and English experience is useful for it cautions against simplistic, overall explanations. The different involvement of women in wage labour in the two countries, in conjunction with their stress on regional differences highlights the importance of understanding the very varied nature of capitalist development. However, their categorization of family types downplays the importance of such differences. Hopefully it will not be simplified by others into an evolutionary model. They are also to be commended on co-authoring a book that reads as if it were written by one person. It is written for an undergraduate audience and is clear and coherent, although slightly condescending at times. For instance,

"We will begin by defining women." Necessary? Women are defined, yet more complex ideas are not. "Mode of production" is used in a manner which is never explained and which is peculiarly their own.

The book is ambitious. It collects a lot of important information into a coherent and readable whole. It should be of interest to the general public as well as to women's, family, and labour historians. The question of the impact of industrialization on women's work has not yet been answered. It has, however, been clarified.

Bettina Bradbury
Concordia University

[1] Lise Vogel, "The Contested Domain: The Family, Early Capitalism and Industrialization," *Marxist Perspectives*, 1 (1978); Elizabeth Pleck, "Two Worlds in One: Work and Family," *Journal of Social History*, 10 (1976).

[2] Joan W. Scott and Louise A. Tilly, "Women's Work and the Family in Nineteenth Century Europe," in Charles E. Rosenberg, ed., *The Family in History* (Pennsylvania 1975), Scott and Tilly, "Women's Work and European Fertility Patterns," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* (1976).

[3] Rudolph Braun, "The Impact of Cottage Industry on an Agricultural Population," in David Landes, ed., *The Rise of Capitalism*, (New York 1966). Hans Medick, "The proto-industrial family economy: the structural function of household and family during the transition from peasant society to industrial capitalism," *Social History*, 3 (1976). F. Mendels, "Proto-industrialization, The First Phase of the Industrialization Process," *Journal of Economic History*, 32 (1972).

[4] John Foster, *Class Struggle and the Industrial Revolution. Early Industrial Capitalism in Three English Towns* (London 1974).

[5] Jane Humphries, "Class Struggle and the Persistence of the Working Class Family," *Cambridge Journal of Economics* (1977, 1).

Laura S. Strumingher, *Women and the Making of the Working Class: Lyon 1830-1870* (Montreal: Eden Press 1979).

WHAT PREVENTED workers from uniting to throw off their chains of bondage in nineteenth-century capitalist Europe? This is the question that Laura S. Strumingher addresses in her monograph in women's studies — a series edited by Sherri Clarkson. The book concentrates on France's major centre of silk textiles production during the period 1830-70. Wage-earners, she hypothesizes, did not acquire the requisite "proletarian consciousness," due to a divergence in the way males and females viewed each other and their respective positions as workers. As capitalist industrialization shattered the family workshop and separated economic activities from household life, women became vulnerable to excessive exploitation in both the workplace and the family. Within the working class, men denied women membership in protective associations, opposed equal pay, and even their right to work. In society at large, women fell subject to bourgeois propaganda and socializing institutions, reinforced by sympathetic intellectuals and public authorities. While feminists advised sisterhood, socialists advocated sexual equality and equal pay, yet they still upheld the patriarchal family. The Catholic Church adopted a strategy of labour organization in the form of mercantile-backed convent-factories, only to hasten the demise of the family workshop and the secularizing of the labouring poor. Clerical and public schools used a "carrot and stick" pedagogy, promising upward mobility to the self-disciplined and destitution to the disorderly, while instilling resignation in all. For women in particular, these agents of reform and philanthropy reiterated the same message: females are temporary employees, naturally destined for motherhood and dutiful service in the family where husband reigns supreme as the acknowledged breadwinner. The author

concludes that Lyonese workers generally yielded to a dual integration into capitalist society. On the one hand, *embourgeoisement* co-opted those who survived factory competition, forming a conservative labouring élite who dissuaded collective action subversive to the *status quo*. On the other hand, those who failed suffered *proletarianization* that inhibited revolt in an institutional context of triumphant bourgeois ideology, which perpetuated sex-biased prejudices against the *canutes*, and which generally convinced the working class to accept subordination.

This attempt to explain why Marx's call for class solidarity went unheard in Lyon depends on the author's view of master weavers as essentially wage-earners to be comprehended in the same class category as factory personnel. The independent weaver, however, was notably a small-scale *entrepreneur-employeur* (called "mon bourgeois" by his own workers) who was a proprietor of the means of production. The slanted emphasis that results throughout the study raises the problem whether the author has not misconstrued the lack of inter-class alliances (like masters failing to espouse *canutes'* demands for higher wages in a manoeuvre to raise the price of silk) and the presence of inter-class conflicts (like masters opposing industrialist monopolization of the market, evident in their complaints in *L'Echo de la Fabrique*), as indicative of dissensions within the working class. The thesis of dual integration seems questionable too. Why should the petty bourgeois weaver succumb to an ideology he already embodied? As for the neutralization of the proletarianized, sexually-biased by bourgeois conditioning, little is said about hostilities between female and male factory workers. Nonetheless, this is a worthy and revealing study of conditions women confronted in an industrializing capitalist society.

Arthur Borghese
Toronto

H.E. Meller, *Leisure and the Changing City, 1870-1914* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul 1976) and Peter Bailey, *Leisure and Class in Victorian England: Rational Recreation and the Contest for Control, 1830-1885* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul 1978).

THE NINETEENTH-CENTURY bourgeoisie sought to extend its sway, as Marx and Engels were among the first to note, as much by its monopolization of "culture" as by its control of production. The *Communist Manifesto* accordingly carried an attack upon,

> . . . the economists, philanthropists, humanitarians, improvers of the condition of the working class, organizers of charity, members of societies for the prevention of cruelty to animals, temperance fanatics, hole and corner reformers of every imaginable kind . . . [who] want all the advantages of modern social conditions without the struggles and dangers necessarily resulting therefrom.

In the last decade a growing number of English social historians have followed up on this insight in turning their attention from the working conditions to the leisure-time activities of nineteenth-century labourers. The question posed by Gareth Stedman Jones, Richard Price, Stephen Yeo, and others is how was the late nineteenth-century working class politically pacified. Was it perhaps "embourgeoised" or at least domesticated in accepting via the medium of temperance or the YMCA the values of middle class culture? In the main the answer arrived at is that though working-class culture was indeed remade in the 1880s and 1890s this transformation did not signify a capitulation of the masses to the cultural dictates of the upper classes. Workers were clearly not immune to the ideological pressures of press and pulpit but in giving up many of their traditional leisure pursuits they succeeded in reformulating conventional views on sport and recreation to match their own beliefs and attitudes.

It is this attempt by the middle classes to bring a liberal culture to the masses and the latter's response which is the central concern of the books by Meller and Bailey. These case studies of the leisure debate in

two towns in the 1860s and 1870s — Meller chose Bristol and Bailey, Bolton — nicely complement each other. Meller's main focus is on the response of the civic élite to the challenge of providing a culture or style of leisure which would unite all the citizens of a modernizing city; Bailey's sympathies lie with the workers' efforts to turn such interests to their own ends. Both studies accept as their initial premise the arguments of E.P. Thompson and R.W. Malcolmson that in pre-industrial society there was no leisure "problem" because work and play were not sharply segregated; likewise there continued to be no "problem" in the 1830s and 1840s Dark Age of the Industrial Revolution after rituals and festivals had fallen victim to enclosures, entrepreneurs, and Evangelicalism because there was little time or money for working-class play. Only in the *latter half of the nineteenth century did a* reduced and relocated block of free time re-emerge for labour and along with it the question posed by the middle class: for what purposes would it be employed?

The chief characters in Meller's study are those civic worthies of Bristol who self-consciously wrestled with the issue. Bristol, the second city of England in the early eighteenth century was to fall to seventh place by 1901 but still provided sufficient wealth to ensure the prosperity of the Fry (chocolate) and Wills (tobacco) dynasties. These and other philanthropic families — in the main Liberal and Nonconformist — founded libraries, art galleries, and museums with the intention of establishing, in Meller's words, a "civilizing process" which would bridge social barriers. Success was at least achieved in integrating the middling classes: the problem of reaching the workers for whom a franchise was promised in 1867 and an education in 1870 remained an intractable problem. In any event municipal provision for the masses came earliest in cities such as Manchester and Birmingham where social conditions were worse; in Bristol little of material advantage was offered by the city council until late in the century to give some substance to the boast that Bristol's poor enjoyed "social citizenship." Meller is at her best in her narrative of the socio-religious provisions by which Bristol's élite attempted to civilize the poor. While stressing the originality of the YMCA, the Missions, and the Temperance Movement, she also points out the ways in which such endeavours had to adjust to the demands for entertainment made by their clientele. The YMCA, for example, which began in the 1840s as a religious organization had, by the turn of the century, to provide gymnastic equipment to ensure its popularity. The Churches, to hold the attention of children, had likewise to offer bribes of Boys' Brigades complete with band equipment and uniforms. Meller is also effective in noting the impact that technological change had on recreation. Constraints imposed by building developments, working conditions, and civic regulation hemmed in old spontaneous play, but industry at the same time produced the bicycle, the roller skate, the vulcanized golf and tennis ball. Such equipment was, of course, far too expensive both for the poor and the working-class school; *working-class sportsmen would long* depend on union, factory, church, or pub sponsorship. The main weakness in Meller's study is that so little is said about the response of the working classes to such developments. Only one of her nine chapters has much information on the workers; the other eight are primarily concerned with the concept of "social citizenship" which underlay the interest in providing healthy forms of leisure-time activity. As a result one looking for information on leisure in the nineteenth-century will find a *rather curious picture presented of it by* Meller; her book has an enormous amount of detail on Temperance but little on pubs, a good deal of information on the Churches but only a word or two on the music hall.

Bailey also devotes a large portion of his study to documenting the middle class' effort to provide the masses with outlets for rational recreation but complements it with chapters on the music hall, the Working Men's Club Movement, and sport. Like Meller he sees the middle class as first working out the issues of the legitimacy of its own leisure. For the aristocracy and the working class no problem was posed by

free time, but it was viewed with ambiguity if not guilt by a class which based its assertion of moral superiority on devotion to work. A way round the issue was found by presenting "recreation" as complementary, not antithetical, to productivity inasmuch as the former made one more fit for labour. As far as the middle class' view of the masses' leisure is concerned, Bailey portrays it as shifting from a grudging acceptance of the booze-up or blow-out as a social safety-valve to a growing conviction of the necessity of indoctrinating them with a disciplining recreation. The author is especially successful in showing how such concerns were turned by the workers to their own purposes. The Working Men's Club Movement, for example, was founded by the Rev. Henry Solly and other paternalists in the 1860s to lure workers from pubs and provide a forum in which contact could be made with their social superiors. Solly was pro-temperance but if the men were to come beer had to be provided; ironically enough, understanding philanthropists such as Solly found that the revenue earned by such sales allowed the workers by the 1880s to take over the direction of their own clubs and free themselves of middle class patronage. The clubs did not turn into the forums of radical discussion as some feared; they did become a liberated arena in which workers were their own masters. The middle class preaching of the values of the new athleticism suffered much the same fate. Sport has been used effectively to discipline and instil conformity amongst public school boys at mid-century; by the 1870s Muscular Christians were suggesting that the working class be subjected to the same moralizing program. The churches played an important role in sponsoring teams; Aston Villa Football Club was initially backed by a Wesleyan chapel and Tottenham Hotspurs by the YMCA. What Bailey stresses, however, is that the surge of interest in sport was not simply the doing of the middle class. Workers sought access to athletics and if it was necessary to play the role of deferentials to obtain equipment and pitches, so they did. Once football became popular enough to be a paying affair class differentials resurfaced and northern teams freed themselves from middle class amateur and clerical control. Professionalism could lead to a distancing within the working class itself. The music hall provided a case in point. Singing saloons evolved under the interested eyes of publicans to become by the 1880s 1500 seat halls with troupes of "stars." The Temperance Movement attempted to respond in kind to the demand for music with Coffee Music Halls but large diagrams on stage of the diseased livers of drunkards appeared to put some off. Economic considerations led music hall entrepreneurs to "discipline" the music of the masses — spontaneity was replaced by professionalism — but even with the star system the songs were still sung and written by members of the working class.

Bailey's conclusions, though more clearly articulated than Meller's, are not too different. Middle class attempts to mould the manners of labour were doomed from the start. First, because of their contradictory nature. Alive to the danger of idleness and dissipation they sought to enforce their own social economy on the masses while promising that such an effort could result in the unification of all classes. But at the same time the middle class attempted to protect itself from social contagion, lectured the workers on the dangers of excessive expectations, and withdrew to the privacy of the suburbs. The second reason for the failure of the propagandistic efforts of the middle class was the simple fact, which it too often ignored, that the workers were far from passive and actively sought to develop their own leisure culture.

Bailey has uncovered a wealth of interesting information and could have produced an even better study if he had subjected his data to closer scrutiny. The omission of any discussion of the lives of working-class women is especially striking. About all we are told is that they were not allowed entry to the Working Men's Clubs. Meller does have some insightful things to say about middle-class women's role in recreation, but one suspects that if

one were to include working-class women in the discussion it would have to be concluded that leisure still did not exist for the masses in the late nineteenth century. One also wonders if Bailey would include as "middle class" reformers the many Owenite and socialist writers whose views on recreation were scarcely different from those of the philanthropists. Certainly many were as given to temperance, sermonizing, and self-help. And a final cavil. In two books devoted to the subject of leisure one is disappointed to come away from a reading with so little feeling of what it meant to have fun in the last century. It could be that Meller's sober, slightly convoluted prose accurately conveys the spirit of Liberal Non-conformists at play; what one misses in Bailey's otherwise excellent study is some sense of the boozey memory of a Bank Holiday blow-out, the contagious fervour felt on a football terrace, the maudlin companionship engendered by a music hall chorus.

Angus McLaren
University of Victoria

Bela K. Kiraly and Paul Jonas, eds. *The Hungarian Revolution of 1956 in Retrospect* (New York: Columbia University Press 1978).

IT HAS BEEN almost a quarter of a century since the outbreak of the Hungarian Revolution of 1956. What started off as an apparently spontaneous demonstration of solidarity with Poland, quickly turned into armed revolt against the Soviet occupation of Hungary. For a few dizzying and triumphant days in late October and early November, armed citizens took possession of the streets of Budapest, and under the leadership of Imre Nagy, declared their country a free, multi-party, and neutral state. This unexpected, and briefly successful defiance of the Soviet Union, took hold of the imaginations of Western observers as few events since World War II have. Sympathy for the beleaguered Hungarians was intense and widespread, spanning all ideological positions. For Western communists, the Hungarian revolt posed a serious *crise de conscience* and in many cases brought about a genuine reassessment of attitudes toward the Soviet Union. For non-communists, the Hungarian events simply confirmed deeply-held opinions and feelings validating the politics and ideology of the western world.

In a sense, Western reactions to Hungary in 1956 recapitulated, under different historical circumstances, the responses of an earlier European age to an equally unsuccessful Hungarian revolution; that of 1848, when Hungarians were defeated by overwhelming military odds wielded by reactionary Austria and Russia. Thus, the image of Hungary as the heroic standard-bearer of freedom against unlawful invasion and foreign oppression has deep historic roots in the European consciousness. It is not at all surprising that the events of October and November 1956 rekindled this long-lost historical myth or image and that Hungary was once again seen as the champion of human liberty and national autonomy against alien domination.

The problem with such historical myths or images, however, is that though they are not necessarily false, they do not correspond to the complexity and ambiguity of the actual historical events. Of the great many accounts, articles, and books written about the Hungarian Revolution during the past two and a half decades, most have been cast within the emotional framework of the "heroic myth"; few have been able to transcend the limitations of the eye-witness account and the apologist. Unfortunately, this latest book on the Hungarian Revolution does not even begin to accomplish the urgently needed task of historical synthesis and evaluation. The book consists of a collection of essays, the larger part of which was written by actual political participants in the events of 1956; and a smaller part by historians who outline the reactions to the events in Hungary among the socialist countries and in the West. At their best, these essays provide invaluable

detail about the particular aspects of the October events, recounted by participants who had first-hand knowledge of them. The pieces by Bela Kiraly on military events and by George Heltai on International events, are particularly valuable and illuminating. The weakness of these essays is that they do not deal in a systematic and self-conscious way with some of the fundamental problems of interpretation and evaluation of the events recounted.

And yet, the actual problems that need to be addressed and eventually clarified are raised by the contributors of the book themselves. One of the most obvious questions concerns the general ideological orientation of 1956. Was it a "predominantly emotional, unprogrammatic and indeed, almost unideological movement," as Tamas Aczel suggests in the conclusion of his essay, or was it a well-planned, realistic political and economic movement which attempted to create a humanized national socialism on the pattern of Yugoslavia, as others argue. We have passionate assertions, usually supporting the latter position, but very little reasoned argument or proof.

One of the most disquieting aspects of this whole question is the problem of anti-Semitism which is raised and then quickly dismissed as vicious Soviet propaganda by a number of the contributors. G.H.N. Seton-Watson categorically denies all such insinuations:

> What I do insist on rebutting is the suggestion, endlessly repeated by more or less well-meaning Western "progressives" ever since 1956, that the revolution was marked by a kind of irresponsible, uncontrollable chauvinism. Quite the contrary is true.... It is also quite untrue to suggest that anti-Semitism flared up. It might have been expected, in view of the anti-Semitic passions released by the last pro-Nazi governments of Hungary and in view of the prominence of Hungarian Jews in the communist party. But in fact there was hardly any sign of it — perhaps largely because there were still more Jews among the supporters of Nagy than among the Stalinist rearguard. The attempt to blacken the reputation of the Revolution by insinuations of fascist-type chauvinism and anti-Semitism understandably pursued by the champions of Soviet policy but unfortunately accepted by honorable Western democrats who should know better, must be resolutely rejected. (3-4)

Unfortunately, this kind of argumentation, which opposes insinuation by counter-insinuation raises more questions than it settles. It does not even begin to deal with the fundamental historical truth of falseness of these questions.

Another question that is raised tentatively and then dropped is the relationship of the intellectuals to the mass movement that was unleashed in the course of October. How widely supported were the demands of the writers and intellectuals, who were these supporters, how did their goals coincide with, or differ from, those of the leadership? These questions, again, are merely raised in the reader's mind without being dealt with in any systematic way. That there were some tensions between the leadership and the masses is implicit in Paul Jonas' article on economic realities. "Our main shortcoming," he writes, "was obviously that we regarded ourselves as the nation's natural elites. Our elitist approach must have offended many non-intellectuals, creating some anti-elitist feelings and a certain amount of anti-Semitism." (p. 36)

Finally, the question of the long-range results and accomplishments of the Revolution needs to be tackled. To maintain, as Anna Kethy and others do, that the revolution was ultimately successful since it achieved the destruction of the old Stalinist-style leadership and political practices, is faulty, since the process of de-Stalinization had started before the revolution and was determined by factors outside Hungary. In fact, one could plausibly argue that the events of 1956 were themselves a result of the increased liberalization of Hungarian society, begun a few years earlier, rather than the cause of the relative liberalization of recent years. In any case, the relationship of Kadar's

highly successful "goulash socialism" to the traumatic events of 1956 is still not clear.

The essays of this volume, valuable though they are for factual, eye-witness information, have not dealt adequately with these, and other large questions relating to 1956. The need for a dispassionate scholarly investigation, delving into a broad range of issues, some of which might be disquieting or contrary to popularly held opinions, remains. Having stated this, I must go on to admit that the difficulties in the path of such an undertaking are almost insurmountable. All primary documents — memoranda, letters, diaries, minutes of meetings — that might supply the basis of a genuine, historical study of 1956, are without exception classified material, inaccessible to researchers. Without such documents, however, modern East European studies must remain a somewhat incomplete discipline, dangerously open to the ideological conflicts that have wracked this unfortunate area in the recent past.

Mary Gluck
Brown University

Gerson S. Sher, *Praxis: Marxist Criticism and Dissent in Socialist Yugoslavia* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press 1977).

IN YUGOSLAVIA'S turbulent and often unpredictable post-war political history, the *Praxis* intellectuals played an indisputable significant role. Self-described as critical Marxists, this group of philosophers established the journal *Praxis* and for approximately ten years expressed through its pages their views on topics ranging from the theoretical continuities between the early and later writings of Karl Marx to the potentials of industrial self-management for freeing man from alienation. A forum for increasingly critical and controversial debate, the journal reached a point where it could no longer be tolerated by Yugoslav political authorities, and was forced to cease publication in 1975. Now, after some years of reflection on the fate of these and other intellectuals associated with the *Praxis* journal, we have a thorough history and evaluation of the *Praxis* phenomenon in Gerson Sher's study.

Sher's work will be of wide interest not only to scholars concerned with Yugoslavia, for it places the *Praxis* circle of Marxists firmly within the context of European schools of Marxist thought and the growth of critical Marxist philosophy. The discovery of Marx's early manuscripts and the re-evaluation of Stalinism were two important events leading to a remarkable revitalization of Marxist thought, as philosophers — especially in Eastern Europe — came to reject the tenets of dialectical materialism as mechanical, impersonal, and inflexible laws of historical development, replacing them with an activist philosophy that was, in the words of one *Praxis* philosopher, "the total, rational, and critical consciousness of man about the world in which he lives and the basic goals of his activity."

Yugoslav intellectuals were perhaps more enthusiastic than their other European confreres in the drive to re-think Marxism because their government had severed ties with the Soviet Union in the Cominform dispute of 1948, thus signalling an officially sanctioned rejection of Stalinism. The League of Communists, over the course of the next decade, implemented a wide series of measures designed to decentralize the economy and to democratize the work place. The new system of self-management, hailed by progressive Marxists as the solution to the problem of alienation and reviled by Stalinists as revisionism, filled Yugoslav intellectuals with great optimism, and attracted the attention of Marxists everywhere. The "socialist experiment" was viewed as a return to the "real" Marx, and a rejection of Stalinist deformities. One of the leading philosophers of the *Praxis* group remarked, "The 'Yugoslav path to socialism' constitutes above all a rehabilitation of the category of community (with workers' self-management and social

self-government) and of the category of the personality (with the freedom of scientific and artistic creation)."

The *Praxis* philosophers, however, soon became a thorn in the side of the Yugoslav political authorities. As Sher notes in his analysis of the tensions between the Party and Praxis, the *Praxis* intellectuals were compelled to be critical of Yugoslav policy on the grounds that criticism, in their view, was an important component of any type of social organisation and that without his critical faculties man could not function as an integrated (i.e., unalienated) member of society. This was precisely the problem they found, for example, with the system of self-management as it eventually came to be worked out in Yugoslav society. Expecting to see a genuine withering away of the state in the true Marxist sense, they argued that the institutions of self-management had in fact penetrated only the lower levels of the state and the economy, and that the upper levels of the political structure remained untouched by any efforts at democratization. Moreover, the *Praxis* writers contended, self-management had in itself become a bureaucratic doctrine, an ideology, subject to the stagnating influence that results when a revolutionary movement becomes institutionalized. In such a situation, no man may be critical, and alienation therefore becomes a self-perpetuating condition of modern life. Thus, every aspect of Yugoslav society was put to a critical test by the *Praxis* authors, and when their scrutiny led to a questioning of major Party policy and in fact to a criticism of Party organisation itself, they incurred the wrath of those who had previously been tolerant of their brand of healthy criticism, and paved the way to their eventual destruction.

Sher presents the *Praxis* story within the broader framework of intellectual criticism, although he avoids drawing strong parallels between the *Praxis* group and the fate of other intellectual movements elsewhere. Instead, he focuses on the *Praxis* group's own views of itself as somehow removed from the everyday political world and constituting the humanistic — but always theoretical — conscience of Yugoslav society. Ironically, this self-identity of the group of intellectuals associated with *Praxis* turned out to be one of the causes for its downfall. Isolated from the everyday political scene, wary of setting forth distinctively political solutions to the problems debated in the pages of their journal, and forming a virtual intellectual enclave, the *Praxis* Marxists could perhaps blame nobody but themselves for the prediction made in 1974 by Stane Dolanc, a top-ranking Party leader, when he said, "They [the *Praxis* philosophers] will fall by the wayside of themselves for the simple reason that their concept has nothing in common with the broadest political and ideological concept that has been adopted by the vast majority of our working people." Indeed, the very central question of the role of the intellectual in a mass-based, worker-oriented socialist society was never adequately dealt with by the *Praxis* group in practical terms, and why that was so is a question Sher might have discussed in more detail in his post-mortem of the *Praxis* group.

In what seems to be a certain destiny of dissident groups, however, the Party did eventually adopt in moderated form some of the ideas of the *Praxis* group after silencing their original proponents. It is quite apparent, for example, that the *Praxis* group anticipated the economic excesses and their attendant social problems brought about by the economic reforms of 1965, urging — at the risk of being labelled pro-centrists or Cominformists — that the Party take action to curb the uncontrolled "fetishization of the market principle." Only later did the Party come to the conclusion that a return to some kind of rational planning mechanism would be necessary to overcome the sometimes anarchic functioning of the market economy under conditions of self-management. Sher gives further evidence

to argue the point that a number of ideas in the constitutional amendments of 1970-71 may be traced to *Praxis* spokesmen. And Edvard Kardelj, in the year or so preceding his death, was beginning to use the terms "pluralism" and "plural interests" in his various treatises on socialist democracy, giving signs of an unacknowledged intellectual debt to the *Praxis* philosophers. Moreover, it is important to point out that, unlike their contemporaries Milovan Djilas and Mihajlo Mihajlov, the *Praxis* group, a vocal but loyal opposition, remained committed to the perpetuation of the one-party system and to the basic theoretical foundations of Yugoslav socialism.

Having said all this, one must look more closely for reasons why the *Praxis* group came to be viewed as a substantial enough threat to bring about its eventual suppression. Sher's analysis concentrates on the internal weaknesses of the *Praxis* group and disagreements with Party theoreticians; he devotes relatively little space to the practical political questions of the day, which perhaps go further in explaining why the *Praxis* group could not survive. During the late 1960s and early 1970s, Yugoslavia was faced with a wide variety of internal difficulties, all of which threatened to disturb the fragile stability developed over a period of 25 years. The adoption of an independent road to socialism was not a universally popular choice and Party leaders were not always willing to be questioned whether it was the right one. Nationalist rivalries, a centuries-old problem for the south Slavs, reached a fever-pitch during this period, threatening to undo completely the years of work put into the creation of a federal framework for the Yugoslav state. The Party thus had to take up once more the "leading role" it had apparently relinquished in the 1960s, and prevent the scope of criticism from becoming unmanageable. In such circumstances, it is not difficult to understand why the Party developed an exaggerated view of the *Praxis* group as a potentially powerful opposition group. Under constant pressure to handle criticism within its own ranks, the Party had little patience left to deal with it on the outside.

Odd as it may seem to readers of Sher's study, Yugoslavs do not long remember their discredited intellectuals, preferring instead to regard them as having overstepped the thin line between criticism and arrogance. Getting on with the real business at hand — preparing for life after Tito through a further stabilisation of a self-managed economy and a decentralised political structure — apparently poses more urgent questions than the issues of academic freedom. The ability of the Party, in the future, to develop workable mechanisms for debate and criticism will perhaps give us some indication of how well these questions will have been answered. Sher's study of the *Praxis* case is a valuable source for examining how they have been answered in the past.

Edith S. Klein
University of Toronto

Gail Lee Bernstein, *Japanese Marxist: A Portrait of Kawakami Hajime, 1879-1946* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press 1976).

EVER SINCE the tragic death in 1956 of Canadian diplomat E. Herbert Norman, Western scholarship on Japan has been dominated by an anti-Marxist outlook. Norman's most influential successor, Harvard's Edwin O. Reischauer spoke for a generation of scholars at a 1958 conference about the blurred vision of Asia as seen through "Marxist glasses" which for many Asians "distorted their picture of themselves and their problems." In consequence, English language publications on Japan have emphasized Japanese success in assimilating Western democracy and promoting capitalist economic growth (so-called modernization) while the history of the Japanese left and working class has been largely ignored.

By contrast with the West, Marxism is firmly established amongst Japanese historians and intellectuals as the dominant science of society and is the ideological touchstone of all organized groups on the left. For Japanese Marxists one of the most important figures in their common history is Kawakami Hajime, the subject of several biographies in Japanese and whose autobiography and mass of writings are still widely read today. Gail Lee Bernstein has offered the first book-length treatment in English of Kawakami's life. Drawn to Kawakami by his struggle to reconcile "the Japanese side of his being with what he felt to be the scientific truth of Marxism," Bernstein concludes that the effort was "ultimately tragic." In arguing that Kawakami's altruistic ethics, his humanism, his deepest spiritual needs were incapable of being satisfied by Marxism, Bernstein places herself, in spite of her subject, squarely in the dominant Western rather than Japanese tradition of historical scholarship.

Bernstein divides her work chronologically into three parts: Meiji Nationalist, Academic Marxist, Communist Revolutionary. Part One is by far the longest and most useful. It chronicles Kawakami's development from childhood in an ex-samurai family in western Honshu, to his insecurities as a brilliant student and young economics teacher at Tokyo Imperial University, to his emotional and religious crisis of 1905 brought on by what he saw as the failure of either the government or the young socialist movement to reform the ills of Meiji society. Kawakami resigned his position as college lecturer to dedicate himself to teaching the poor. But by 1908, Kawakami had withdrawn from the sect, turned full-time to journalism, and became famous for his expositions on the government as a moral agent reconciling conflicting economic interests. These nationalist-tinged views helped earn Kawakami an appointment to the prestigious economics faculty at Kyoto Imperial University where he remained for the next 20 years.

A two-year stay in Europe just prior to World War I precipitated Kawakami's shift to Marxism, according to Bernstein. Expecting to be dazzled by the opulence of the world's most civilized nations, Kawakami was shocked by the large numbers of exceedingly poor people he saw. The hedonistic principles of the capitalist marketplace, he concluded, did not work for the good of the whole society but served to concentrate wealth in the hands of a few. At first Kawakami thought that Japan could avoid Europe's problem of poverty under industrial capitalism if the rich voluntarily constrained their consumption and produced necessities for the poor. But the sharp criticism of these views by a small group of Marxist scholars, many of them his former students, and the impact of such great events as the Russian Revolution and the Rice Riots of 1918, pushed Kawakami to slowly give up his "radical spiritualist" position. By 1927 he had fought his way to a deep and sophisticated understanding of the materialist and dialectical foundations of Marxist thought. For the next five years he poured forth critiques of bourgeois ideology in his own magazine, *Research in Social Problems*, wrote the "Basic Theory of Marxist Political Economy," and plunged into a translation of "Capital."

Despite the pleadings of family and close friends, Kawakami could not suppress his impulse to join the struggle against the rising tide of Japanese fascism. When the draconian Peace Preservation Law was first used at Kyoto University in 1926 to arrest radical students, Kawakami spoke up in their defense. Two years later he went to Tokyo to stump for a friend in the leftist Labour-Farmer Party. The modest success of the LFP led police authorities to round up thousands of its supporters. The President of Kyoto University, on orders from the central government, purged Kawakami and other leftists from the faculty. Undaunted by the sudden end to his academic career, Kawakami turned his energies not only to his writing

but to rebuilding the LFP and eventually delivering its adherents to the Japan Communist Party, then a small band of underground revolutionaries whose position grew increasingly precarious. During the summer of 1932 the Central Committee of the JCP asked Kawakami to translate the new *Theses* of the Comintern which recommended a reversion to the strategy of support for bourgeios democratic revolution. Kawakami agreed and shortly thereafter he joined the JCP, to become editor of *Red Flag*, the party newspaper. Pursued from one hideout to the next by the police and betrayed by an informer high in the party ranks, Kawakami was arrested in January 1933 under the Peace Preservation Law. At his trial and for the five years of his imprisonment, Kawakami refused to win a shorter sentence in exchange for renouncing Marxism.

Kawakami emerges in Bernstein's portrait as a sensitive, talented, recognizable human being. But reflecting her disdain for Marxism, Bernstein loses interest in Kawakami's intellectual and political development just when he becomes most rigorously Marxist and revolutionary. Less than half the book is devoted to Kawakami's post-World War I radical career. Some of Kawakami's important scholarly works in the last phase of his life are not evaluated. In a recent review essay for the *Japan Interpreter*, Herbert Bix pointedly noted that "Bernstein's attention to Kawakami's actual Marxist discourse falls off precipitously as his grasp of historical materialism deepens . . . And the more he succeeds in combining Marxist theory with revolutionary practice . . . the more she emphasizes the futility, inauthenticity and tragedy of his career."

One comes away from Bernstein's book ambivalent. Her rendering of Kawakami's personality, his family life, and his struggles along many ideological paths before reaching the Marxist road is lucid and informative. But by failing to stress and fully appreciate Kawakami's Marxism and the police state conditions which turned him to political activism Bernstein's book fails to transcend the constrictions of the prevailing ideology of Western scholarship on Japan.

Howard Schonberger
University of Maine at Orono