

volontiers trouvé une comparaison entre l'action de M^{sr} Laffèche et celle d'un autre évêque de l'époque, Charles La Rocque, de Saint-Hyacinthe, qui, de 1866 à 1875, réussit sans opposition sérieuse, à éteindre complètement une dette de \$44 000. À Trois-Rivières la dette de l'évêché passa de \$94 290.77 en 1862 à \$44 155.07 en 1869 (p. 93). Résultat heureux bien sûr, mais qu'advint-il après 1869 du résidu de cette dette ?

Ces lacunes ne ternissent en rien l'excellence de l'ouvrage. L'auteur taille efficacement dans une abondante documentation qui l'a conduit de Sainte-Anne-de-la-Pérade jusqu'à Rome. Les citations sont nombreuses mais si habilement intégrées au texte que le volume est d'une lecture tout à fait agréable. Au vu de ce premier tome, nous ne pouvons que souhaiter que Nive Voisine ne tarde pas à déposer le second tome.

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ERNEST R. FORBES. — *The Maritime Rights Movement, 1919-1927: A Study in Canadian Regionalism*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1979. Pp. x, 246.

In Canada, as in other countries, to cite the editor of a recent issue of *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, "regionalism is often treated with gentle indifference as if it were a form of senility". Yet the presence within the nation of tensions that are often and easily described as "regional dissent" is also undeniable. In *The Maritime Rights Movement*, we have a convincing explanation of how the term and the tension can develop. Professor Forbes has written a concise, carefully constructed study marked by clarity of argument and simplicity of style.

The innovative thesis of the work is that the dismantling of the Macdonald and Laurier versions of the National Policy created a Maritime protest movement which expressed a widely held concern about the region's relative decline in influence within Confederation. The movement was led by business and professional people, a fact which merely reflected the "social realities" of the community, and found its most important expression in politics because it was within the national parties and the House of Commons that the battles over Maritime status were fought. Having sought help in the Progressive movement in 1919-20 and the Liberal Party in 1921-22, and been satisfied by neither, the dissenters launched a national crusade based upon the boards of trade and eventually settled upon the Conservative Party as their spokesman in the 1925 federal election. Despite yet another disappointment at the hands of a federal party, they allowed themselves to be bought off by Mackenzie King's promise of a Royal Commission on Maritime claims (the so-called Duncan Commission) in 1926. Though this was followed by yet another Royal Commission (fisheries), by a Tariff Board hearing (coal and steel), and a Board of Railway Commissioners case (ocean ports), no permanent solutions to Maritime problems were forthcoming. Thus, despite the "most intensive expression of regionalism" in their history, their protest left Maritimers with only a stronger sense of regional injustice and a weak faith in the value of unity in the face of adversity.

The book makes some additional contributions which deserve notice. It is a delight, for example, to read an extended discussion of the Maritime perspective upon modern Canadian political and economic issues. Thus, the Robb budget of 1924, which lowered farm machinery tariffs to appease Westerners and lowered tariffs on raw materials used in the implement factories to appease central Canadians, appears in Forbes' work as yet another blow to Maritime coal and steel interests at a critical time in their history. And the quarrel over federal grants to the provinces, traditionally a tale of western grievance when told in the West, becomes a painful lesson in federal evasion and prairie arrogance when seen from the shores of the Atlantic.

Forbes also places the Maritime protests of the 1920s in a new light. His Maritime Rights movement is no utopian cry for a pre-Confederation "golden age" nor is it continentalist escapism. Rather, in Forbes' view, many of these defenders of the region were protectionists who wished to return to the economic arrangements of pre-1914 Canada when tariff and railway policy actually supported the development of the Maritime manufacturing interests. Only when their appeals failed did they turn in the 1930s to a low-tariff stance.

Finally, Forbes argues convincingly that the customary historical image of the Maritimes as politically and socially conservative is nonsense. He claims, indeed, that the protest movement of the 1920s was an expression of a "vigorous Maritimes progressivism" and that local politicians were driven before it rather than its creators. In the process, Forbes supplements our view of the national Progressive movement by making T. A. Crerar and even the Maritimer, George Chipman, appear as empire-builders who were insensitive to the Maritime perspective. These are important contributions and we are indebted to Professor Forbes in each case.

Despite its many strengths, Forbes' study suffers from a central problem which is immediately recognizable to any student of regionalism: how does one provide convincing evidence that regions affect the course of Canadian history and that national history can be fruitfully investigated within the framework of regional communities? Forbes does not evade the issue by treating the Maritime Rights movement as just an event in provincial and national politics. Rather, as the subtitle suggests and the index makes plain, he has tried to deal with it as a regional phenomenon and has consistently used the region as a descriptive and analytical concept.

But were the people of the area ever united behind a particular cause or bound by a common viewpoint? Forbes notes that Cape Breton miners rarely saw eye to eye with the Halifax Board of Trade. He admits that Prince Edward Island political leaders are difficult to fit into his schema because the Islanders have alternately supported and rejected alliances with Nova Scotia and New Brunswick for many years. And the illustrations which he employs are heavily weighted toward the metropolitan journals, the boards of trade and the leading figures in the old-line parties, spokesmen who tend to reflect the views of the business and professional community. Forbes recognizes the problems, indeed, but he still argues that he is examining a "regional" phenomenon.

What Forbes means by this characterization is never entirely clear. The heart of the problem lies in the second chapter, "The Birth of a Region", where Forbes asks the reader to accept that representation in the House of Commons and the federal cabinet, federal-provincial subsidy negotiations, administration of the Intercolonial Railway and a variety of social reform movements — these latter discussed in only three pages — were sufficient to arouse "aspirations of a politi-

cal, economic, social, and cultural nature” and to sustain a movement that expressed “the deepest concerns and aspirations” of the people. Such a sweeping claim is not sustained in the following pages. Instead, Forbes has provided a thorough analysis of an economic and political protest movement, united where general issues spring from region-wide problems, divided where class and other special interests predominate. This is a movement based largely in two rather than three Maritime provinces, a movement fuelled by business and farm dissatisfaction with economic conditions rather than by intellectual or artistic expressions. But Forbes’ achievement is an important one. He has created an excellent introduction to twentieth-century Maritime history and a valuable corrective to western and central Canadian perspectives upon the national experience.

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JACQUES ROUILLARD. — *Les Syndicats nationaux au Québec de 1900 à 1930.* Québec: Les Presses de l’Université Laval, 1979. Pp. 342.

Jacques Rouillard has written a major work on the first thirty years of “national” trade unionism in Quebec. The book, a revision of his doctoral dissertation, is based on an exhaustive study of primary sources and is painstakingly documented. There are 1,140 footnotes in just over 300 pages of text.

Rouillard’s objective is simply stated as “une meilleure connaissance du syndicalisme et de la société québécoise en général” (p. 12) and the book reflects this general search-for-information approach. We learn a great deal about a number of hitherto obscure or unknown events but we are not always able to see why the events are significant or how they relate to each other. All aspects of trade unionism which can be designated national rather than international are gathered into the story and thematic unity is achieved simply by chapter organization.

There are really two books under review here. The first is Rouillard’s study of the fragmented Quebec labour movement of the pre-war years; the second is a detailed account of the origins and early development of the Confédération des travailleurs catholiques du Canada. But what connection is there between the bewildering variety of non-international union activity, much of it inspired by personality differences and purely local issues, and the emergence of the Confédération des travailleurs catholiques du Canada? Is it correct to suggest that the current of nationalism in Quebec is the common thread? Might not the greater number of national *syndicats* in Quebec have been due to the language barrier? This point needs stressing because it seems that the rise of the CTCC had far more to do with the general crisis of Quebec society in the years after 1916 than with the Berlin Convention of 1902 or with most of the other incidents described in the first three chapters. Rouillard does discuss the nationalism of the late war and post-war years briefly, but argues that “c’est avant tout pour des motifs religieux que les syndicats catholiques ont été fondés et nullement pour des questions ethniques” (p. 226). The confessional idea had been around for years; what was new was the conscription crisis and the profound animosities which it created. Conscription was a fundamental event in the social as well as the political history of Quebec and requires closer scrutiny.