

D.G. CREIGHTON. — *The Forked Road: Canada 1939-1957*. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1976.

Professor Donald Creighton is passionately committed to his country. Over the years he has formed very definite opinions of what is good for Canada. Clearly he wishes to influence its future. In articles¹ written in the fifties he was already warning Canadians that their survival as a separate people was being jeopardized by the American domination of the North American continent. This idea is the main theme of his new book, *The Forked Road*.

The majority of the footnotes of this work refer to secondary sources. There is nothing wrong with depending on the findings of other scholars; still clearly Professor Creighton knew what he wanted to say before he began looking for corroboration; research for a book written in the 1970s had not changed ideas formed in the 1950s. Yet this is a departure in method for Professor Creighton. He has always held that the special gift of history as a literary craft is its ability to present a vivid picture of the past. The historian ought to "soak"² himself in the records of the time so that he could literally reproduce the thoughts, fears and aspirations of men and women of the past. *The Empire of the St. Lawrence*, the Macdonald biographies, *The Road to Confederation* all attest how brilliantly he succeeded in this ambition.

Here Professor Creighton has not done that kind of research. But one consequence is that he has written a book that is different in kind from one like *The Road to Confederation*. Because it was based on such careful documentation the earlier book, by means of a beautiful literary style, was able to evoke the past by recalling a host of concrete details about the way people lived; its tone was often nostalgic and tender. The latter book relies on very few primary materials. It details events that have already been described by others. Its tone is angry and polemical. By rendering harsh value judgements on former politicians and past policies (which however are still with us in the present) in a marvellously biting, ironic style he arouses the emotions of his readers and so helps to mobilize their social energies to resist American encroachment. Thus this book resembles a political treatise in its conscious partisanship.

This is not to say that *The Forked Road* is not a very good or important work. A survey of federal politics during and after the Second Great War, it contains many judgements which all subsequent historians of this era will have to take into account. Professor Creighton contributes to the revision of the Cold War begun by some American historians. While distrustful of the Russians, he condemns the Americans for disguising a big power struggle as a moral conflict. He pictures the United States as aggressive, capricious and arrogant. Nor does he think much of basic Western strategy: "NATO might provoke war just as easily as prevent it" (p. 165). And he is emphatic that Canada's entering a military alliance with the Americans to defend North America cost her a good deal of her sovereignty.

Professor Creighton sees the fifties as the years during which the massive American domination of our economic and cultural life began. C.D. Howe, who

¹ See for instance his articles "Canada and the World," in G.P. GILMOUR, *Canada's Tomorrow* (Toronto, 1954) and "American Pressure and Canadian Individuality," *The Centennial Review*, (February 1957).

² D.G. CREIGHTON, "Out of the Turmoil Comes a New Awareness of Ourselves," *University of Toronto Graduate*, (June 1968), p. 40.

made all the decisions in such matters for the Liberal government, believed in economic growth as an absolute good. He went out of his way to encourage American investment without showing any awareness that this might endanger Canadian independence. Meanwhile, the flow of American pop culture over the border increased in volume and intensity. But Prime Minister St. Laurent remained indifferent although he was warned by the Massey Report that this flood seriously undermined the existence of a separate Canadian identity. He made no effort to aid Canadian writers and artists. In 1957 he was finally persuaded to establish the Canada Council as an election ploy.

The government was able to implement these harmful policies because the Liberal party had no opposition. Canada had become virtually a one party state. Between them, St. Laurent and Howe made policy and imposed it on the country by means of a "submissive" (p. 265) Parliamentary majority. Creighton truly hates the Liberal party because he believes it sees itself as the Canadian "party of government" (p. 270). In his analysis, the ruling elite include the top bureaucrats. Fervently loyal to the Liberals, they were enthusiastic about what the politicians were doing often because they had suggested the measures themselves. So close had high civil servants like Jack Pickersgill and Lester Pearson grown to the Liberals that they acted like officials of that party. However as government employees they were under some restraint; they got around this in the simplest manner — they ran for Parliament in safe Liberal seats and became Cabinet members.

But not all of Professor Creighton's judgements are as sound as these. While showing how King and St. Laurent loosened the British connection, he wildly exaggerates the ability of Great Britain to act as a counterweight to the Americans. The Commonwealth was bound to become more and more feeble because Great Britain, now only a second rate power, had neither the economic nor military resources to create a bloc separate from either the United States or the Soviet Union. Indeed in those years it was to become something of a client state to the United States. Even had the Liberals been willing, Great Britain had not the will or the strength to form an alliance with Canada for the purpose of staying out of the American orbit. Surely one must accept that the Victorian era, when Great Britain was a great power, has now gone forever.

Professor Creighton blames the continentalist policies on a few liberal politicians and their bureaucratic aids but he neglects to tell us that a great many provincial politicians and Canadian businessmen welcomed American investment. The American take-over of existing Canadian enterprises and new Canadian resources was profitable to businessmen in Canada as well as the head offices in the United States. Moreover most Canadians believed that the expansion of great corporations in Canada created jobs. Nor was it easy for them to see how American economic penetration endangered Canadian nationhood. To expect politicians to renounce popular policies for something as vague as "national identity" was to expect a great deal. Even today public opinion is largely indifferent to the continuous growth of the American control of the economy. Twenty years ago the danger was less apparent and the apathy was correspondingly greater. Professor Creighton is right to criticize Howe but he greatly oversimplifies the problem by not mentioning the widespread support for those policies. Indeed he never concedes that ultimately the strength of the Liberals lay less in their petty political manoeuvres than in the undeniable fact that they seemed to fit the times and gave the electorate what they wanted.

The book ends with the arrival of Diefenbaker on the scene. Yet his election, while important for Canadian politics, had little effect on the American take-

over, a process which has continued under the Pearson and Trudeau regimes. It might have been a little more sensible if the book had gone up to 1960 and the victory of the Lesage Liberals in Quebec. In the years covered by this book Quebec was tranquil and calm and very little trouble to Ottawa; this explains why there is so little about that province in the book. But as every one knows the coming to power of Lesage began a new era in Canadian politics. Historians are likely to regard this election as the watershed rather than that of Diefenbaker. For what distinguishes the Pearson and Trudeau eras from those of both St. Laurent and Diefenbaker is not the continued integration of the Canadian economy into that of the continent but the resurgence of Quebec nationalism.

Joseph LEVITT.
University of Ottawa.

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GEORGE A. NADER. — *Cities of Canada*. Vol. II. *Profiles of Fifteen Metropolitan Centres*. Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1976.

If Professor Nader's two volume *Cities of Canada* becomes the standard reference work on Canadian urban development, it will do so because of the absence of competitors, not on its merits. Geographers are doing some of the best work in relating Canada's urban past to the present, but these volumes are not representative of this significant body of literature. The organization of the second volume (vol. I was reviewed in this journal, vol IX, November, 1976) is sensible enough: there are separate chapters on fifteen selected metropolitan centres. Each chapter is divided into five topics: historical development, economic base, urban growth and land-use patterns, city centre, and metropolitan government and planning. But the results at best are a sort of compendium of unrelated information about fifteen different places. There is no attempt at comparison or generalization, no development of any themes. There is nothing, in fact, beyond some rather superficial description.

The sections dealing with historical development and land-use patterns generally contain the most useful information. The author, however, has an extremely narrow conception of what makes cities grow; the role of individuals or even of Boards of Trade and municipal governments is almost totally ignored. A number of obvious factual errors should have been caught by a more careful editor. For example, the author states that Montreal had begun to spread beyond its walls by 1800. The 1758 map reproduced on the dust cover, on the other hand, clearly shows substantial suburbanization about fifty years earlier. In the sections on land-use patterns, changes in the nature of the site are usually effectively described. Some of the major factors in spatial growth, such as changes in internal transportation, are not examined in any serious way. Physical expansion does not make any sense without an explanation of developments including the electrification of the street railway system or the coming of the automobile.

The weakest parts of the book are those concerning metropolitan government and planning. These read like a compilation of publicity briefs prepared by various City Planning Departments, which is what they are, judging by the author's own statement about sources of information. It is difficult to imagine a more sterile account of urban development than is offered in these sections. Conflicts between developers, city councils, and neighborhood organizations do not sully these pages and one gets the impression that politics, ethnicity, and