

deal of valuable material previously buried in little read government reports and similar sources available in a readable form.

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A. ROSS McCORMACK. — *Reformers, Rebels, and Revolutionaries: The Western Canadian Radical Movement, 1899-1919*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1977. Pp. xx, 228.

Professor McCormack's title is aptly chosen, and his book is an admirably clear exposition and analysis of the developments which made the Winnipeg General Strike of 1919 predictable. It is not about that strike, except in passing: it is an impressively detailed chronicle of other events, and the men, organized into variety of unions, factions and parties, who took part in them. They fought not only employers in particular and capitalism in general, but each other, the main dividing line being between those who believed "the system" merely needed some changes, and those who thought the only possible change was its abolition.

An introductory chapter sets the stage, describing how the "boom mentality" that accompanied the rapid opening of the West did not produce "a congenial environment for trade unions"⁵. When the demands of industrial capitalism brought to the West a labour force whose members ranged from articulate men with backgrounds in British trade unions to other Europeans and Asiatics who were commonly unable at first to speak English, and then concentrated the men on sites where appalling living conditions were too often the norm, protests were inevitable. The only uncertainty was over what form the protests should take, and the story was different in each area. And despite the efforts of the protesters, "economists now generally agree that between 1900 and 1920 real wages in Canada declined" (pp. 11-12).

Chapter 2 opens with the arresting statement that "Canadian socialism came of age in British Columbia" (p. 18). The author portrays in two chapters how and why the labour movement in the province turned firmly left, to the point where locals openly rebelled against the eastern-dominated Trades and Labor Congress "because it was 'an appendage of a capitalist party [rather than a body devoted to the advancement of the interests of the working people of Canada]'" (p. 43). British Columbian workers, then as now, were closer to their American fellows than to colleagues in Ontario, and the location of mines on both sides of the border gave them a community of interest that encouraged belief in an international solution to labour problems.

The tale leads, logically, to "The ascendancy of the Socialist Party of Canada", the title of chapter 4. The SPC, which became so successful that its candidates several times won election to the British Columbian legislature, is shown, finally, as becoming "a prisoner, and then a victim, of its experience in British Columbia" (p. 75). Chapter 5 takes up the contemporary chronicle in Manitoba, where "Winnipeg's dominant radical tendency was the less militant doctrine which was part of the British trade unionists' cultural baggage." Winnipeg, "not threatened by incoming waves of Asiatics" [nor] "influenced by a revolutionary power base, the miners", was also less involved with "western American socialism" (p. 77), and thus saw the rise of a tradition unlike British Columbia's. Dr.

McCormack's chronicle suggests that one might have expected the great strike of 1919 to occur on the west coast rather than in Winnipeg, but he explains why it took place where it did.

A sympathetic description of the rise of the Industrial Workers of the World, the legendary "Wobblies", follows, and its history "demonstrated the ease with which men and ideas moved back and forth across the forty-ninth parallel in the years before 1914" (p. 98). The Great War injected into the western labour movement two divisive issues which it hardly needed, pacifism and anti-militarism, and the author devotes two chapters to that part of his story, showing how it was that the militants prevailed. He concludes that 1917 was the climactic year in which key leaders were forced to abandon conciliatory approaches in favour of the general strike: "the tremendous solidarity which had been developing among workers since the end of 1917," he writes in an epilogue, "caused thousands to rally in support of their Winnipeg comrades" (p. 165). He takes no side in the strike, asserting, after a calm appraisal of western radical movements over twenty years, that the fears of labour's opponents were nonetheless understandable.

This is by any standards a solid, readable book, holding much promise of fine future work from Dr. McCormack. Like any thoughtful book, it raises questions. The author's thesis leads him to concentrate on particular areas (especially the larger cities) and unions, to the neglect of others. The book is silent on the rural left-wing. So much attention is paid to British Columbia and Manitoba that Alberta and Saskatchewan, although referred to several times, receive so casual a treatment that neither province makes it to the index. The index itself is, to put it mildly, eccentric: of ten important figures mentioned in a sentence on page 157, for example, only one is cited as appearing there, while six are cited but not for page 157, and three are not mentioned at all. The author has an interesting aversion to a word commonly used to introduce quotations: his characters variously sniffed, stormed, exploded, declared and lectured, and at least six of them sneered, but few of them seem to have simply said something. And surely it is singular that when Samuel Gompers, who was not an MP, outraged left-wing leaders in 1918 by "delivering a rousing win-the-war speech to Parliament," (p. 148) his unprecedented appearance left no trace in the several indexes of the journals and debates of both Houses; the left-wing leaders, that is, were aroused by an address which, according to the parliamentary records, was never made.

These cavils aside, *Reformers, Rebels, and Revolutionaries* can be recommended. It is the sort of book about which a reviewer hesitates to go into too much detail lest he spoil the plot for other readers.

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YVES ROBY. — *Les Québécois et les investissements américains (1918-1929)*, Québec. Les Presses de l'Université Laval, 1976. Pp. 250.

One of the striking features of French Canadian historiography over the last decade is the emphasis on ideology. Fernand Dumont, Jean Hamelin *et al.* have edited two volumes of research essays on the topic, and there are volumes by Richard Jones, Susan Trofimenkoff, André Belanger, and Denis Monière, as