



SECULAR SOCIALISTS: THE CCF/NDP IN ONTARIO, A BIOGRAPHY, by J. T. Morley, Kingston and Montreal, McGill-Queens University Press, 1984, 265 p.

If the CCF-NDP enjoyed the same advantage over the Liberals and Conservatives in votes that it does in academic attention, it would be a very successful party indeed. This is the third book exclusively devoted to the CCF-NDP in Ontario — which is three more than have been published on the province's Grits and Tories. By comparison with its two predecessors, written by Gerry Caplan and by Leo Zakuta, Morley's book not only carries the story forward historically but offers greater breadth of enquiry.

Prospective buyers should be aware that the publisher has been delinquent in making clear that the book covers only the CCF-NDP's development until 1972. A scant 8 page afterword brings the story into the 1980s. The point is not to dispute the author's choice of an end-point for his study, but to suggest that 'truth in advertising' requires a book labelled a party biography and published in 1984 to carry some indication (in its title or back-page blurb) that the analysis ends in 1972.

Morley organizes his work around the analogy between the physical and psychological growth of human beings and of political parties. Thus his biography of the CCF-NDP stresses its behaviour at stages of growth, its coming to terms with the world about it, its identity crises, degrees of maturity and the like. The extended metaphor of party as person does bring life to the analysis and also suggests some questions worth pursuing, but on occasion seems forced and pointless. Moreover, the explication of a party in terms of birth, growth, identity crises and maturity into a "consistent and integrated personality" cannot

help but encourage the reader to wonder when the party may be expected to enter its dotage and eventually pass on to the great election campaign in the sky.

The book opens with a rather unsatisfying chapter which rushes a general discussion of the concept of political culture to a potted political history of Ontario to an analysis of Ontario's political culture as 'liberal-colonial' with a 'union class sub-culture'. Non-academic readers will probably find large segments of this chapter hard to follow and of uncertain relevance to the balance of the book. Academics will be familiar with the introductory material, and disappointed that Morley's somewhat unconventional view of Ontario society as less 'red tory' or 'progressive conservative' than liberal-colonial is simply stated rather than demonstrated.

Morley is on more solid ground in his treatment of the party's structure and ideology in a section entitled 'The Maturing Party: Acquiring Stability' and in his discussion of party discipline, party democracy, the role of the party caucus and the nature of the party's leadership in a section styled "The Mature Party: Adapting to Change".

Aside from a thorough, if somewhat familiar, review of the CCF's triumphs and disasters in the 1930s, 40s and 50s and the formation and progress of the NDP in the 1960s, the most noteworthy aspect of the first section lies in Morley's attack on what he calls the 'myth of rightward drift'. By analysing the party's principal ideological statements, and its stances on the issues of the day, he finds the CCF-NDP to have been highly consistent in its fundamental social and economic policy from the 1930s to the 1970s. He suggests that its varying positions on such symbolic issues as prohibition, NATO and abortion are responsible for the widespread view that the party has sub-

stantially moderated its ideology over the years. Morley's arguments are convincing, though they fail to deal adequately with the significant shift of mainstream Ontario political discourse towards the positions espoused by the CCF-NDP. The party's fundamental tenets of belief may have remained constant, but were, by the 1970s far less radical in comparison with those of the Conservative and Liberals than had been the case during the Depression and the immediate post-war era. Still, issues of ideological substance were easily confused with questions of style and approach, and as Morley explains, in the latter sphere, the party clearly became 'secularized', leaving behind its initial sectarianism.

Morley is particularly good in dealing with the informal, internal processes so crucial to any party. He examines the links — and the tensions — between the party caucus and the party apparatus, finding by times one ascendent over the other until the late 1960s when the caucus came to dominate the party. The treatment of party democracy focuses on identifying and describing the small groups of party chieftains who, in effect, ran the party. This party oligarchy remained over the years, remarkably constant in terms of both the longevity of key officials and its social composition: overwhelmingly middle-class professionals. Leadership campaigns are singled out as especially important episodes for the expression of party democracy, and are insightfully analysed for the factional divisions underlying the candidacies of various party notables. Finally, the chapter on party discipline is primarily given over to the trauma of the party's expulsion of the Waffle in 1972.

The book is well written and largely jargon-free; save the first two chapters. The narrative and the analysis move along

quickly. It is a tribute to Morley's style that at the end of each chapter, the reader finds himself wishing for more detail rather than less.

Morley's personal involvement in the processes he describes and his knowledge of the key participants has served him well in putting together a lively, analytical chronicle of the Ontario CCF-NDP to 1972.

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CANADA . . . NOTWITHSTANDING by Roy Romanow, John Whyte and Howard Leeson, Toronto, Carswell/Methuen, 1984, p. 286.

Does it seem odd that the opening section of Canada's recently proclaimed *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* begins by setting out the limitations of our constitutionally entrenched liberties? Canadians, so it seems, are to have their fundamental rights and freedoms guaranteed only to the extent that any infringement cannot be demonstrably justified in a free and democratic society — hardly an auspicious beginning for a document that purports to protect the individual against any capricious behaviour of the state. Yet, as *Canada . . . Notwithstanding* demonstrates, it is a very Canadian beginning and perhaps, not such a bad one at all.

This book takes the reader through the six long years of constitutional debate which began in 1976 and ended (temporarily at least) with the *Constitution Act, 1981*, including the Charter, being proclaimed into force April 17, 1982. Since rumours have begun to circulate that Premier Levesque is anxious to enter into a constitutional accord with Prime Minister Mulroney, the publication of this book is propitious. It reviews how the present accord was reached and how that agreement failed to include Quebec.

The authors of *Canada . . . Notwithstanding* are certainly well qualified to recount the events in question. Roy Romanow, as Attorney General for Saskatchewan, was a highly visible player throughout the discussions. He is particularly

remembered by most Canadians for his role in the so-called "kitchen cabinet" whose informal deliberations broke the impasse between the two camps — the federal government together with Ontario and New Brunswick on the one side and the eight remaining provinces ("the gang of eight") on the other. He is joined in this account by constitutional law professor John Whyte and political scientist Howard Leeson, both of whom acted as senior advisers to the Government of Saskatchewan during these crucial proceedings.

As might be expected, this work provides a detailed account of the various constitutional conferences, proposals and crises that resulted ultimately in the 1981 accord. What is perhaps surprising, but certainly rewarding, is the inclusion of a short, but thoughtful analysis of each of the various issues which faced the participants in the discussions. This feature, combined with a detailed table of contents and complete index makes *Canada . . . Notwithstanding* a valuable tool in researching recent Canadian constitutional developments.

The book focuses on the process of constitution-making; its concern is with the "raw bargaining" which took place during that period. Indeed, as the book documents, it is remarkable that a politically mature, bicultural and bilingual federal state composed of a strong central government and ten regionally diverse, politically disparate provincial governments was able to reach a compromise that satisfied all participants but one, Quebec. This process was not made any easier by the injection into the debate of the concept of entrenched guarantees of individual rights and freedoms. Nevertheless, as the authors show, the historical compromise was the product of a great deal of political effort and its significance should not be diminished merely because it lacks the rhetorical flourish of constitutional documents born under more dramatic (and usually more violent) circumstances. It remains to be seen whether the balancing of individual rights and freedoms against the reasonable limits of a free and democratic society diminishes the basic liberties of individual Canadians.

Quebec's failure to sign the agreement and Premier Levesque's accusations

of betrayal must be considered by any study of the 1981 constitutional agreement. To the authors' credit they address this major issue directly. This is done in two ways. First, it is their hypothesis that while Quebec was prepared to fight a constitutional war, it was never prepared to accept constitutional peace. According to this thesis, Quebec's political miscalculation was in failing to recognize the desire for a constitutional compromise which was shared by all the participants, including the gang of eight who opposed Prime Minister Trudeau at that final conference. But, so they argue, Quebec was not betrayed by its allies. The common front of opposition at the final conference was broken when Quebec agreed with a federal government proposal concerning the use of a referendum to resolve constitutional impasses; it was only after this initial breach over the referendum that a compromise was found. The second way that the authors address the issue is that they are explicit in acknowledging that the exclusion of Quebec, "presents a constitutional challenge that has not been met."

The book is not without its weaknesses. When discussing the participation of one of its authors, it employs very formal language which detracts from the narrative. Similarly, the failure of the authors to give any human dimension to the discussion is frustrating. Surely interpersonal relationships played some part in the dynamic of the bargaining process. It may be that the authors made a conscious decision to ignore interpersonal relationships which are often the focus of media reports in order to emphasize the importance of the policy debate.

Canada . . . Notwithstanding is a valuable book from many perspectives: it provides a summary of the major constitutional events of the period; it analyses the issues in question; and it documents how the historical compromise was reached. Most importantly perhaps, *Canada . . . Notwithstanding* reminds us that the 1981 constitutional accord was only a beginning to that uniquely cautious, Canadian approach to constitutional reform.

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