

EDITORIAL

The special winter issue of *BC Studies* on the Nisga'a Treaty (no. 120) created a backlog which has led to this enlarged spring issue. We have also wanted, at least for the time being, to leave Aboriginal questions aside. The result is a somewhat sprawling issue, but one that sprawls through intriguing territory.

In the lead article, Debra Salazar and Donald Alper, political scientists at the University of Western Washington, show how poorly the politics of environmental activists fits conventional left/right definitions, and how awkwardly their views intersect with the social democratic agenda of the provincial NDP. The political rhetoric of environmental activities, they suggest, has more to do with lifestyle and with local, consensual democracy than with equality, the redistribution of wealth, and a managerial state. They point to a contemporary British Columbian variant of an age old argument among those who would reform modernity: between those, such as the gentle anarchist Peter Korpotkin, who thought that power for social change must reside in the local community, and others, such as Marx and his followers, who considered the state a necessary instrument of social justice.

The articles by Daniel Hiebert, a geographer at UBC, and Scott Kerwin, historian cum lawyer, are in a sense a pair. Hiebert draws on the recently released 1996 census to show in considerable textual and cartographic detail how the social geography of greater Vancouver is being remade by recent immigration. The "white" suburbs are no more. Some immigrant groups are closely concentrated, others much dispersed. Overall, the predominantly British city that Vancouver recently was is becoming something else. The city is a *mélange* of cultures, all in the process of rapid cultural change. New identities are

being formed, a face of a Canada-yet-to-come. Kerwin's article, dealing with the racism inherent in white British Columbia in the 1920's, places the present in context. That racism is not entirely gone, of course, but a long road has been travelled quickly and Vancouver is now an infinitely more interesting and welcoming city than the expatriate British place it tried to be in the 1920s.

The issue concludes with some twenty book reviews, an exceedingly useful bibliography of internet data bases for the study of BC, compiled by David Mattison at the Provincial Archives, and a double bibliography of writing on BC compiled, as usual, by Melva Dwyer. A sprawling collection, but fascinating and useful.

The editors