

an insightful explanation of the basis of economic policy formation in BC, is Professor Black's "The Politics of Exploitation." If, as he argues, BC is politically preoccupied with economic growth based on rapid resource exploitation, it is incumbent upon BC economists to provide information and analysis to the public and to other social scientists upon which a national appraisal is possible. Despite its weaknesses, *Exploiting our economic potential* is a significant first step. One can only hope that it encourages further efforts.

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Guests never leave hungry: The autobiography of James Sewid, a Kwakiutl Indian, edited by James P. Spradley. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1969. 310 pp. \$10.00.

The title of this book is misleading. It seems to imply that the book was intended to be a folksy best-seller, when in fact it is the case history of someone who kept the key values of his native culture while absorbing the progressive views and technology of twentieth-century Western culture. "Guests never leave hungry" is a Kwakiutl epithet, one of a number given the author at a potlatch held for him by his uncle before he was a year old. These epithets form the titles of the nine chapters in the book and are appropriate to actions recorded in each: "A very high ranking man," "Always giving away wealth," etc. In other words these chapter headings confirm the editor's contention that James Sewid lived up to the values expected of someone of his heritage. But he did more:

... he actively pursued the goals of both cultures in spite of the contradictions in these two ways of life. Although he was more Western-oriented and participated in Western institutions more than most other Kwakiutl, at the same time he was more committed to the traditional culture and social institutions than many of his peers. His way of adapting to the conflict was to become *bicultural* (p. 277).

He insisted on combining the two cultures, bringing Western living conditions, work patterns, and religion to his people while at the same time fighting for Indian rights through contact with the federal and provincial governments. He also tried to bring Indian and whites together in the town of Alert Bay, where he was born in 1913 and where he settled with his own family in 1945.

Most of the book is simply an orderly transcription of "tape-recorded . . . unstructured interviews" with James Sewid, giving it the appealing flavour of an oral autobiography. It contains the life history of a public-spirited man who records his contact with the two cultures without much introspection. He showed an acute intuitive sense in solving cultural conflicts, but most readers will feel that they understand more of what happened than the author did. This feeling can be tested at the end of the book when the editor devotes thirty pages to an analysis of the author in the circumstances narrated in the previous 250 pages. Since this anthropological analysis is relatively free of jargon, it will be of interest to the average reader. The notion of separating narrative from analysis allows, among other virtues, the reader to develop the editor's insights further than thirty pages will allow.

Religion, for instance, is one of the most obvious areas of cultural conflict, and here the editor stresses Sewid's biculturalism: "Although he had a deep commitment to his Anglican faith . . . he also held some traditional Kwakiutl religious beliefs. His indoctrination into both religions was simultaneous and began early . . . his confirmation in the church took place at about the same time that he went through the extended hamatsa initiation" (pp. 280-1).

The hamatsa initiation makes for ten of the most interesting pages in the book. As a hamatsa, or cannibal, Sewid had to live in the woods, wearing only hemlock branches and taking cold baths and fasting. He was seeking "the supernatural power of the Cannibal Spirit," becoming a "wild man," while those in the village were singing, drumming and dancing, "trying to bring [him] back to civilization." The high point of the ceremony for Sewid was when he entered the communal house through its roof:

I lowered myself halfway into the house and showed half of my body to the crowd. I was making the hamatsa noise and I could see all the people standing up and swaying their hands. . . . The people were all down there chanting and about thirty or forty people were beating the drums and sticks. It was out of this world what they were doing and I can't express how I felt. It made me feel funny, made me feel out of this world (p. 87).¹

In contrast is the Anglican confirmation ceremony which he had gone through only a little earlier. "We went up to the altar two at a time and

¹ Sewid's feelings here may well go back to his childhood. Fatherless himself, he was moved by the myths connected with Mink. In the one he retells, Mink goes to heaven where his absent father lives. He is gladly received by his father (and put to work; later he is thrown back to earth).

the Bishop laid his hands on us and we were confirmed. I didn't feel anything special and I can't remember too much that went on, but it was then that I began to feel that I should have more responsibility for the work of the church" (p. 77). He did become more involved and obviously believes in the Christian god. But the quality of his feeling in the two ceremonies was quite different, perhaps largely because the Kwakiutl ritual was both religious and social, integrating him into the life of his people. Psychologically, it was clearly a more active, emotional experience than the Anglican one. Indeed, as an enforcer of Western values, Christianity would appeal to a progressive Indian to the extent that it is "middle class," fits into a work week, or stabilizes emotions. This value emerges also when Sewid gives his reaction to the lower-class Pentecostal religion. "They used to have services in different homes every night and it was just like somebody died in there. They would be yelling and jumping around and shouting. . . . it wasn't long until the teacher went to the chief councillor and told him that a lot of kids were sleeping on their desks during school. . . . So they wrote a letter not to have those meetings on the Indian reserve any longer." The "yelling and jumping around and shouting" which appealed to Sewid as part of the hamatsa ceremony does not appeal when connected with Christianity.

It has to be admitted, however, that Sewid finally lost sympathy with lengthy potlachs because they took Indians away for a week to ten days, either disrupting things for their fellow workers or causing the loss of livelihood for their families. Yet in 1951, when the potlatch was finally made legal again, Sewid realized that it should be revived and shown to the whites. But instead of the principals in the ceremony giving away gifts, admission would be charged for a worthy cause. But other influential Kwakiutls resisted this notion because, as Spradley notes, "to show one's masks and other privileges *without* distributing wealth was to do it for *nothing* and traditionally would have been a reason to be ashamed. If an individual showed his masks and then gave away money he validated his status, receiving recognition, praise, and an increase in self-esteem" (p. 283). Sewid did triumph over this resistance, however, and fifteen years later he found an even more satisfactory way of reconciling Western and Indian customs. For the day before Christmas, he decided to organize something "for my people and for the non-Indians as well. I talked to some of the older people and some of the younger people to see if we could put on a play potlatch since it was Christmas time and everybody was happy together" (p. 259). This play potlatch, or *gwomiass*, was an old Kwakiutl custom, "more or less like a social gathering of friends." In the

course of the one Sewid organized, girls and boys gave away candy to the audience. In other words, he saw correctly that the spirit of Father Christmas and of *gwomiass* would blend nicely.

The tolerant pragmatism of Sewid can be seen in his comment on expensive funerals, which were a Kwakiutl tradition: "I always compared our custom to the Egyptians who used to do that to the very noble people. . . . That was what some of the ministers in our church wanted to change. I felt it was wrong for a person who came and stayed among us for a couple of years to want to change those kind of things. It would be all right to change it if he was going to stay with us for life" (p. 213). In the cultural relativism of his reference to the Egyptians and in his shrewd appraisal of ministers, Sewid shows an appealing balance between the demands of tolerance and responsibility.

In this instance, as in many others in the book, James Sewid's life provides what the editor justly concludes is a good "corrective to the widely held idea that the effect of culture conflict is primarily negative" (p. 271). Looking at what Sewid did and what he gained, the reader has to agree. But looking at the shift from *hamatsa* to *gwomiass*, this reader is struck also by what he lost. The latter may be more than we deserve from the Kwakiutl (having banned its serious counterpart, the potlatch, for thirty years), but the *hamatsa* ritual was obviously a deeper and more integrating experience than any section of our culture can offer today.

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The Seaforth Highlanders of Canada, 1919-1965, by R. H. Roy. Vancouver: History Committee, Seaforth Highlanders of Canada, 1969. 559 pp. \$12.50.

During the reorganization of the British Army in the early 1960s, the proud title, Seaforth Highlanders, disappeared from the infantry regiments of the time, a victim of the same process of amalgamation which had created it just over two centuries before.¹ But it says much for the durability of the British regiment as an institution that the name should

¹ In 1778 the 72nd Regiment of Foot, the Ross-shire Buffs, was combined with the 78th Regiment of Foot, the Duke of Albany's, to form the Seaforth Highlanders. In 1960 the Seaforths were combined with the Cameron Highlanders to become the Queen's Own Highlanders.