

formance, style and tightness of ship to the Blakeney NDP regime in Saskatchewan.

6. Persky concludes that ICBC, after an admittedly rough startup period, has justified itself and is now sacrosanct (pp. 114-16). His positive evaluation seems to be based on a rather narrow consumer-oriented assessment of advantages and disadvantages. If, however, the picture is broadened to include the initial and ongoing impact of ICBC on the political system, then a positive evaluation does not so readily emerge. Such an evaluation would include the trauma of annual rate-setting, the intermittent political intervention by the government of the day, the inevitable exploitation of ICBC problems by the opposition, the search for favouritism for themselves, their constituents and their friends by MLAs, the loss of valuable cabinet time which could be devoted to more important issues, and the political crisis of strikes in a government monopoly. The ICBC has contributed to the insecurity of governments since its introduction in 1973. Future historians may see its major effect as speeding up the turnover of governments. In terms of its overall impact on provincial public life the addition of a functional equivalent of a Post Office to the public sector is not an unequivocal step forward.

7. When will anthropologists, worried about their disappearing subject matter, realize the virgin fields awaiting the deployment of their disciplinary expertise in the Legislative Assembly and cabinet chambers in Victoria?

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*Radical Heritage: Labor, Socialism and Reform in Washington and British Columbia, 1885-1917*, by Carlos A. Schwantes. Vancouver: Douglas and McIntyre, 1979. Pp. 288.

In 1973, for the first time ever, the Governor of Washington and the Premier of British Columbia exchanged official visits. The American state was represented by a "straight arrow" engineer, the conservative Daniel Evans; the Canadian province by the "earthy social worker," the Socialist Dave Barrett. To many historians, including Carlos Schwantes, these two men symbolized the communities they governed. It is to explain the divergent histories of this economic and social unit, "The Pacific Northwest" — one part of which could produce an Evans, the other, a Barrett — that Schwantes has devoted his book. (Fortunately for Schwantes and his thesis, this visit did not take place a couple of years later when

British Columbia would have been represented by the ineffable Bill Bennett.) Given their similarities in culture, economy and geography, Schwantes wonders why the political histories of the state and the province were so different. Why would British Columbia embrace the socialism its southern neighbour rejected out of hand? Why did Canadian unions ally with radical and socialist parties while their American counterparts in Washington remained loyal to the capitalist parties in their state? Since their problems, goals, concerns and enemies were identical, why did the workers of British Columbia opt for independent political action while those of Washington chose the Gompers route of pressure politics, of working within rather than outside the system?

To deal with this conundrum would require a study that goes far beyond the ambits of traditional labour history. *Radical Heritage* is such a book. Professor Schwantes has delineated for himself a formidable task and he attacks it with gusto. In an approach which is wide-ranging, incisive and provocative, Schwantes traces the origin of the paradox to the different ways in which British Columbia and Washington responded to the encroachments of industrialism. He examines the variety of responses on a political, cultural, economic and social level. But he does far more than that. His concern is comparative, and he spends a considerable part of the book contrasting the reactions of the Canadian and American sections of the Pacific Northwest to the encroachments of industrial capitalism.

Until the 1890s, Schwantes argues, the labour movement on the Pacific differed little from the other parts of the continent. It was only with the creation of large-scale extractive industries in the mines and forests of the area, and with the increasing isolation of workers from the main centres of union activity in the east, that the Pacific Northwest began to develop its own unique labour tradition. Yet this tradition differed markedly across the 49th parallel. Because of its British and parliamentary system, its "collectivist" mentality, a strong class consciousness and the impact of left-wing British immigrants British Columbia went its own way. In the state of Washington the credo of individualism, he argues, triumphed over collectivism, the tenets of capitalism over those of socialism. The end result was a Barrett in British Columbia and an Evans in Washington.

Though there are some dubious propositions and strained comparisons in this book, Schwantes has produced an imaginative study which deserves a far larger audience than it will likely have.