

majority" (p. 238). He calls instead for a new national policy and a new economic strategy for national development. "Canada . . . needs serious economic planning and active government intervention at federal and provincial levels in order to achieve regional justice and balance" (p. 240). This proposal may not seem to differ very much in substance from the rhetoric of the established parties, but it does address with greater frankness the nostalgic yearnings of western Canadians for a world in which not only political parties but even most of the machinery of government would wither away.

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Russian Shadows on the British Northwest Coast of North America, 1810-1890: A Study of Rejection of Defence Responsibilities, by Glynn Barratt. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1983. Illustrations; notes; bibliography; index. Pp. xvii, 196. Cloth, \$26.00.

Although there were Russian influences upon the history of the Northwest Coast and British Columbia from the eighteenth through the nineteenth centuries, it is easy to forget their presence and to focus totally on the much more obvious impact of the United States. The overwhelming strength of American military and naval power in the latter nineteenth century made investments in British Columbia militias and coastal defences appear almost pointless. Lack of population and of a British commitment to risk conflict for territories so far isolated from major markets and commercial routes made defence planning a permanent nightmare. When there were scares of Russian raids, privateering activities or even invasions, the British and Canadian authorities could not agree about the responsibility for funding coastal artillery or paying the costs of an adequate defence program.

Barratt's study of the shadowy Russian presence hinges upon perceived dangers, the international relations of Britain and Russia, and Anglo-American relations. Following the War of 1812, Britain did not press the case for sovereignty over the Oregon territory. Fur traders of the North West Company and, after amalgamation, the Hudson's Bay Company feared Russian-American collaboration to freeze out or severely limit the British presence. From the 1820s through the 1840s, the fur company agents were much more committed to Northwest Coast claims than was the British government. Occasional clashes with the Russians such as the

Stikine River Incident (1834) caused concerns but did not threaten a major rupture. Neither Britain nor Russia were strong enough in the North Pacific to make it the source of conflict. Indeed, as the two nations approached the Crimean War, both sides agreed to declare their Pacific outposts as neutral.

The Crimean War underscored the defensive weaknesses of the Vancouver Island colony. Though a few Royal Navy vessels visited Esquimalt harbour, Governor James Douglas fretted about shortages of manpower and arms to repel a Russian attack. The colony came closest to the fighting in the autumn of 1854 when naval vessels carrying wounded men put in at Esquimalt after the disastrous Anglo-French raid on Petropavlovsk. It was at this time that the well-known Crimea huts were built to serve as hospitals. There were also fears that the Russians might take advantage of American friendship to arm privateers in San Francisco for raids on the British Columbia coast.

The Crimean War did not end Anglo-Russian rivalries. From time to time, war scares in Europe focused attention upon British Columbia. The ports of Victoria and Esquimalt and the valuable coaling station of Nanaimo were seen by some observers to be obvious targets for Russian attackers. The possibility of a Russian-American alliance or entente remained as a chronic worry to Vancouver Island colonists as well as to some British and Canadian leaders. However, the Russian sale of Alaska to the United States came as a blow to the supporters of British Columbia who predicted an American effort to extend their control over the entire coast. Moreover, the removal of the Russians from immediate proximity did not end the perceived threats posed by their Pacific naval squadron. While the first Russian visitors aboard the corvette *Kalevala*, arriving at Esquimalt in September 1862, presented little danger to Vancouver Island, the Russian effort to construct a strong ocean-going navy from the 1860s to the 1880s kept alive fears of raids. The existence of a Russian Pacific squadron posed at least theoretical dangers — particularly since the British squadron was spread between Chile and Vancouver Island. South American interests and conflicts drew the attention of warships also assigned to protect British Columbia.

For British Columbia residents, each incident between Britain and Russia renewed concerns about a naval raid. The refusal of Britain or Canada to spend sufficient funds for defence or drydock facilities left the province exposed. Reports published by a Russophobic British and local press deepened concerns about undefended Esquimalt, Victoria and other settlements. Efforts to raise militiamen to operate obsolete artillery

batteries depleted other militia units and illustrated continuing weaknesses. In 1878, during a period of apprehension caused by threatened British intervention in the Russo-Turkish conflict, the Russian screw corvette *Kreiser* under Captain P. Nazimov arrived at Esquimalt. While the exact cause of the visit never has been clarified, it seems that spying was a major factor. Even with incentives such as this, Britain and Canada refused to spend enough money to prepare adequate defences. Through the 1880s, Britain pressed Canada to offer financial assistance to defend Esquimalt naval base, while the Ottawa authorities chose to view the port as an imperial rather than national base. Despite perceptions of a Russian menace to British Columbia, Canadian politicians evaded their responsibilities and depended upon the presence of Royal Navy warships.

Barratt is a little ambivalent about the real threats posed by the Russian Pacific naval squadron. Given the power of the United States after 1865, one can understand Canadian fatalism and unwillingness to invest in defences that could deter only a secondary opponent such as the Russians. Despite good relations with the Russians, the United States would not have accepted significant intervention in British Columbia. After the Alaska purchase, a Russian naval adventure at Esquimalt might well have precipitated a permanent American occupation. Following the Civil War, the United States presented the French interventionists in Mexico with a clear ultimatum that they must depart. Barratt places Russian activities into context and illustrates the political difficulties with the defence of British Columbia. The book is a most useful addition to the history of British Columbia and to Pacific affairs through the nineteenth century.

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Sliammon Life, Sliammon Lands, by Randy Bouchard and Dorothy Kennedy. Vancouver: Talonbooks, 1983.

Sliammon Life, Sliammon Lands is an ethnographic and ethnohistorical account of Coast Salish people of the northern Gulf of Georgia region on the coast of British Columbia. The book is directed to the general reader with little or no knowledge of Northwest Coast Indians or of anthropology. The presentation is well organized, highly readable, and covers a region which has been neglected in the ethnographic literature of this area.