

coast and making extended and risky trips up to the heads of Toba, Bute and Knight Inlet, always recording the fascinating range of characters: the Klein Brothers of Pender Harbour; the heroic, moving spirit of the Columbia Coast Mission, the Reverend John Antle; J. F. Macdonald of Princess Louisa Inlet; Ned Breeze and his wife of Marina Island; and the Stantons, Jim and Laurette, settled for a lifetime in the mountain fastness at the head of Knight Inlet, where the grizzlies grazed like cattle and playfully wrestled in the early morning stillness at their door. All these, and the impressions of that far-off vanished society are evoked by Barrow's journal and by Beth Hill's skilful interpolations. This is a wonderfully entertaining and moving book for all who loved the old society of the coast and mourn its passing.

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*Tough Guy: Bill Bennett and the Taking of British Columbia*, by Allan Garr. Toronto: Key Porter Books, 1985. Pp. 190.

This book is a journalist's account of the restraint program begun in B.C. in February 1982 and intensified with the legislative package presented in July 1983. It is a book about personalities and day by day events, not social and political forces or historical context. The focus is on Bill Bennett as the pivotal personality in the scenario of restraint, and the perspective is unabashedly partisan. Mr. Garr writes as an opponent of the restraint program and the neoconservative philosophy it embodies.

After a prologue which sets the tone of the book with a portrayal of the firings of a number of Human Rights personnel, the narrative begins with a sketchy account of W. A. C. Bennett and the Social Credit Party which preceded the leadership of William Bennett junior. This is followed by a brief description of Bennett junior's personal background and political career before restraint. For political history this is thin stuff, although the theme of continuity in political style is appropriate. As Garr observes, the threat of the "socialist hordes" as a rallying mechanism has been a mainstay for father and son. The other theme in these early chapters is pure pop-psychology: a father-son relationship which leaves the son "running from his father's shadow." Fortunately this theme plays little role in the rest of the story.

Garr's account of the beginnings of restraint in 1982 focuses on the marketing people. He accepts the claim by Patrick Kinsella, the chief

politico in the Premier's office at the time, that restraint was a marketing strategy, albeit one that fit with the Premier's politics. To sell a politician whose image was less friendly and less likeable than his competitor's, it was necessary to portray him as a "tough guy" who could deal with tough economic times. Restraint was therefore the policy that was needed. Garr never considers the question of whether restraint, part one, would have taken place regardless of the image people.

At stage two in restraint, after the successful 1983 election campaign, the Premier is more clearly at the helm. He is seen as orchestrating the program and setting the tone in accord with a neo-conservative philosophy he developed under the tutelage of his policy adviser, Norman Spector.

The strength of the book is its account of the Solidarity movement that developed in response to the July package. Garr provides a good chronology of Solidarity's development and does not hesitate to portray the conflicts which plagued the coalition from the outset. His focus remains one of personalities, but the different interests, styles and priorities of the groups involved are clearly illustrated.

Although the Solidarity response is well covered, there is little analysis of popular reaction to the government's policies, and the author draws no general conclusions about this period in B.C. history. The book merely continues its narrative of events with a final dispatch from the war zone.

The style of the book is unfortunate. Obviously writing to be "controversial, witty and shocking," the author has indulged in hyperbole and "one-liners" to an extreme degree. His narrative is constantly interrupted by digression into personal histories which distract the reader from the topic at hand. His portrayal of the personalities involved on the restraint side is so uniformly negative that credibility is strained. For these reasons, *Tough Guy* cannot be taken as serious political journalism. The hyperbole and personal gossip pervading it undermine the positive aspects of the book.