

*After Native Claims? The Implications of Comprehensive Claims Settlements for Natural Resources in British Columbia*, by Frank Cassidy and Norman Dale, Lantzville, B.C. and Halifax, N.S.: co-published by Oolichan Books and the Institute for Research on Public Policy. Pp. 232. \$14.95, paper.

The authors of this book state that their goal is to

picture what might happen to natural resources and management in the province as the result of comprehensive claims settlements.\* It is not so much a study of comprehensive claims as it is the study of how a resolution of the issues that give rise to and result from such claims might affect the economic, political, and environmental dimensions of natural resource-centred activities. The aim of the study is to address and to clarify the underlying issues which surround the comprehensive claims question so there will be greater certainty about what is at stake and a greater insight into how Native claims might be resolved.

Three distinct "scenarios" of what may happen if land claims agreements are reached are described and used as an "organizing framework" for the book. Current First Nations initiatives and proposals are described and presented as examples of the scenarios which might exist or evolve as a result of land claims agreements. Finally the authors provide conclusions as to the factors which will be common to any future agreements.

The general conclusions are that natives and non-natives have proven that in many instances they can work together to establish mutually beneficial relations, that concerned groups will interact on the basis of "a complex and mutually influenced variety of economic and political strategies," and that the diversity in the character of resource development and management which currently exists will continue and possibly even intensify under land claims agreements.

While these and the other, more specific conclusions which close the book are still so general as to be less than satisfying, *After Native Claims?* does not purport to be a visionary work. Notwithstanding the book's sub-title, Cassidy and Dale make it clear that their aim is to provide not a crystal ball, but rather a description of alternative approaches to natural resource development which current activities and proposals suggest *might* come about. As such, it constitutes a catalogue of more or less feasible arrangements that are currently under way or on the drawing board. To those who are working in any area of resource development or management in

\* While the authors consistently use the term "comprehensive claims settlements," since 1983 the correct terminology, stipulated by section 35(3) of the *Constitution Act*, is "land claims agreements."

the province, the work is well worth having as a reference guide to the current state of First Nations involvement in the resource industry, if for no other reason.

But *After Native Claims?* performs a far more important function than merely a catalogue. By positing and describing the three scenarios, Cassidy and Dale have articulated the very hard choices which presently lie ahead of First Nations, government, and industry as they work out their relationships for the next century.

Cassidy and Dale stress that the scenarios should not be taken as forecasts. Rather, each is "self-contained in the sense that it logically depicts a feasible future. Moreover," they say, "the future would most likely involve a mixture of approaches which would reflect aspects of each of the scenarios as well as others not described." They stress that a mixture of approaches taken from all three scenarios is most likely.

While this cautious approach is consistent with the goal and context in which the book was written, I feel that to the general readership it may be the source of some frustration. The initial promise of prediction is so burdened with qualifications as to leave the reader with little on which to evaluate or integrate the alternative approaches for the purpose of decision making.

Of greater concern to me as I reread *After Native Claims?* was the realization that the very names of the scenarios depart from the non-normative approach taken in the descriptive text.

The first scenario is called "Partners in Development," in which there would be "a strong emphasis on profitable, consistent and business-like relationships and partnerships between native peoples and non-native commercial interests." Under this scenario, development as it has been generally pursued in British Columbia would be the primary feature of the agreements. Economic imperatives would determine the pace and direction of development "to the greatest extent possible."

The arrangements which characterize the second scenario, "Allies and Adversaries," would be far more political and bureaucratic; indeed, "bureaucracies and intergovernmental coordinating authorities would proliferate." The emphasis would be placed upon political means to accomplish economic and environmental goals with ongoing disputes constantly being the subject of regulatory decision-making through some sort of joint tribunals, consultative mechanisms, or advisory bodies.

Finally, "Homeland and Hinterland" describes a future in which First Nations would exercise well defined jurisdictions on expanded land bases in various parts of British Columbia. First Nations' governments would

exercise wide powers to preserve and enhance their "homelands" and to counter efforts to further transform them into "hinterlands." This scenario is said to be closest to that which would maximize the current wishes of many native peoples throughout the province.

My complaint with these scenarios is with the names chosen for each. "Partners in Development," with its implicit promise of co-operation and mutual benefit from growth, could be an advertising slogan. "Allies and Adversaries" seems to promise an institutionalization of the disputes which have led British Columbians to seek an alternative, and "Homeland and Hinterland" evokes South African homelands and continuing disparity.

Describing economic assimilation in more positive terms than approaches which seek to preserve First Nations sovereign decision-making with respect to their natural resources biases the debate.

One could as easily describe the scenarios as "imposition of free market theories," "continued bureaucracy," or "recognition of First Nations' identities."

The book also fails adequately to come to terms with the issues surrounding why various First Nations have opted for certain approaches at the present time, while making different proposals for the future. It does not clearly present the way in which factors such as nationalism, culture, community interest, and political dynamics shape the feasibility of one approach compared to another.

In my experience the leadership of most First Nations in British Columbia are simply trying to do the best for their people with the means made available to them. The point of land claims agreements is not necessarily to carry on these activities, but rather to change the rules of the game, to enable First Nations to pursue economic prosperity within their traditional territories, while preserving and strengthening their indigenous cultures and bodies politic.

These observations are meant not to denigrate Cassidy and Dale's work, but rather to identify the task which remains to be undertaken. It is surely the responsibility of First Nations and their supporters to articulate the approaches which they intend to pursue, the reasons why, and their visions of their place in Canada. This work is under way and accelerating in all parts of the province.

Only the decision of the provincial government, together with renewed results by Ottawa to finally deal with the issues, will enable the answers to evolve with detail and certainty. In the meantime, *After Native Claims?* informs the debate and in its first two chapters especially provides invaluable

able background information on the Indian land question in British Columbia.

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*Skyscrapers Hide the Heavens: A History of Indian-White Relations in Canada*, by J. R. Miller. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989. Pp. xi, 329; illus.; maps.

Only in the last two or three decades have academic writers begun to regard the native peoples of Canada as having respectable histories of their own, after as well as before contact, and to assume that the various peoples were inherently as capable as any others in responding to new circumstances. Among the more influential in establishing the new directions have been Bruce Trigger, Arthur Ray, and Robin Fisher, each of whom has published major regional works dealing with particular periods.

Miller, a University of Saskatchewan historian, builds upon such previous works to provide a general history of Indian-White relations across Canada and from contact to present day. His title comes from an evocative poem by the Micmac Rita Joe. If his treatment of British Columbia is any indication (the province receives one whole chapter and parts of several others), Miller makes effective use of the historical literature. There are, however, several minor mapping errors: the Cowichan and Shuswap are divorced from their Salish groupings (12) and the Tlingit are omitted from British Columbia (138). Despite its title, the book focuses upon status Indians and ignores the role of non-status Indians, which has been especially important in recent decades. The deficiencies of the book, indeed, are largely in its treatment of current issues.

Miller identifies four major periods. Initially "Europeans came to Canada for fish, fur, exploration, and evangelization" (268). Relations were harmonious, despite the effects of disease and alcohol. In this first period, Indians were the dominant partners. In the eighteenth century "the era of alliance" emerged as the English, French, and Americans made Indians into allies or enemies in their imperial struggles. Indians were now equal partners. On the Pacific coast the first two periods were compressed into a century, commencing in the 1770s, but without the military element.

Beginning in the nineteenth century, in varying decades across the continent, as settlers came in ever-increasing numbers to cut down the forests and cut up the soil, Indians became an impediment to white pro-