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all-embracing overview of nineteenth-century shipping in Atlantic Canada be met. The prospects for discovery are exciting: we can only regret that Wallace is not here to share in the work of his successors.

DAVID A. SUTHERLAND

The Maritimes and Canadian Political Culture

One of the most enduring descriptions of the Maritimes characterizes the region as innately conservative, insufficiently innovative, and unnecessarily tradition-bound. In the historiography of Canadian politics the Maritimes often comes off a shabby second-best, for political analysts have found that the conservative stereotype provides a pleasant counter-melody to the broad theme of twentieth-century political modernization. In the light of the gradual triumph of efficient bureaucracy over the politics of personal favoritism, it is convenient to emphasize the pork-barrel politics and traditional partyism of the Maritimes, while neglecting its progressive accomplishments or instances of political volatility. The point here is not that Maritime political conservatism is a myth, or even that progressive liberalism is a virtue, but that the character of Maritime politics is imperfectly understood. What is called the innate political conservatism of the Maritimes is at once a product of and a reaction against the centralizing character of Canada's economic and political system, and might more appropriately be termed political cynicism.

In the United States, the political and economic centralization implicit in the progressive reform impulse has received considerable attention in recent years. Samuel Hays, James Weinstein, Robert Wiebe and others have demonstrated that rapid industrialization and national economic integration occasioned a systematic attempt to create a more orderly, efficient, and cohesive political culture.[1] The result was the erosion of a traditional, grass-roots, patronage-style politics based upon the principle of local representation. In *The Decline of Politics: The Conservatives and the Party System 1901 - 1920* (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1977), John English places Robert Borden firmly within this progressive tradition, demonstrating how Borden's sense of "public responsibility" affected the Conservative party from the time of his selection as party leader in 1901 to the collapse of Union

1 Samuel P. Hays, *The Response to Industrialism, 1885 - 1914* (Chicago, 1957); Gabriel Kolko, *The Triumph of American Conservatism. A Reinterpretation of American History, 1900 - 1916* (Chicago, 1962); Robert H. Weibe, *The Search for Order, 1877 - 1920* (New York, 1967) and *Businessmen and Reform* (Cambridge, 1962); James Weinstein, *The Corporate Ideal in the Liberal State: 1900 - 1918* (Boston, 1968); and Louis Galambos, with Barbara Barrow Spence, *The Public Image of Big Business in America, 1880 - 1940. A Quantitative Study in Social Change* (Baltimore, 1975).

government after World War One. An opponent of constituency-based partyism and the politics of "ins and outs", Borden cultivated the support of a number of "pressure groups" — farmers, labour, urban reformers, feminists, businessmen, and French Canadian *nationalistes* — whose view of society transcended local self-interest, and would, Borden believed, promote a recognition that "the interest of the East is the interest of the West, the interest of Nova Scotia is and always must be the interest of British Columbia" (p. 50). Unfortunately, English does not fully appreciate the destructive implications of Borden's progressivism. Seen from a Maritime perspective, the promotion of "national considerations" and the rejection of "local prejudice" implied the abandonment of the regional sensitivity necessary to make Confederation work. At the very time that Borden was calling for a new national spirit, for example, the banking system of the Maritimes was being absorbed into a national banking nexus which would make investment capital less accessible to the region's entrepreneurs. To make matters worse, after 1911 Borden's government presided over tariff and transportation policies which further contributed to the collapse of Maritime industry.

The failure of Borden's politics of "public responsibility" ensured the triumph of Mackenzie King's more cynical brokerage liberalism. Two recent books, John English's *Robert Borden* and Jack Granatstein's *Mackenzie King,*[2] accentuate (more by accident than design) the contrasting political styles of King and Borden. Both books are gracefully written and excellently illustrated. English's portrait of Borden, etched against the backdrop of industrial modernization and rapid social change, reveals a calm, rational, and moderate conservative, whose personal integrity provided a steady anchor in a sea of change. "He feared extremes in an age of immoderation", writes English, "and he brought calmness, common sense and . . . rationality to a fanatic period" (pp. 206 - 9). Politics for Borden involved questions of principle. If one hoped to regulate the turbulence of modernization and industrial change it was essential to maintain the principles of duty, public service, and devotion to the Empire. Mackenzie King's political style was different. King, Granatstein tells us, was the consummate politician, able to balance the competing claims of different regions and interest groups in order to establish consensus and preserve national unity. This favourable treatment of King has a rather saccharine taste. Nevertheless, by transcending sterile reiterations of King's obfuscatory political behaviour or titillating exposure of his personal eccentricities, Granatstein does prepare the ground

2 These books, published in Toronto in 1977, are companion volumes in McGraw-Hill Ryerson's *His Life and World* series under the general editorship of W. Kaye Lamb. The series also includes P. B. Waite's *Macdonald.*

for a more fruitful discussion of King's liberalism.

I am not suggesting that one accept Granatstein's sympathetic conclusions at face value. Indeed, while the author is able to demonstrate the plausibility, if not genius, of King's brokerage politics, he is less able to see King's limitations, especially as they relate to the Maritimes. When seen from a Maritime point of view, the effects of Borden's politics of principle and King's politics of consensus were equally dismal. If Borden's nationalism resulted in policies inimical to the interests of the Maritime provinces, King's concern for restoring consensus after World War I resulted in his preoccupation with Quebec and Western alienation. For the Maritimes consensual politics essentially meant neglect, a neglect that contributed to the further consolidation of Central Canadian economic power. If King ignored the Maritimes, moreover, so does Granatstein. In his chapters on the 1920s for example, there is no mention of the Maritime Rights movement, of the bitter unrest in Nova Scotia's coalfields, or of the desperate conditions that spawned these protests. Instead we are told that "postwar Canadians believed it to be a good time to be alive", and that "everything was for the best in the best of all possible worlds" (p. 52).

It occurs to me that a more profitable approach to Borden and King would derive from addressing the assumptions they had in common. Both King and Borden disliked the destructive individualism inherent in the laissez-faire assumptions of Darwinian liberalism. Both wished to see society develop within the framework of a "socially responsible" liberal capitalism. And both were motivated by a paternalistic sense of social obligation. King, whose early diaries suggest an understanding of class antagonism more fully developed than Borden's, considered it important to mediate class relations in order to remove much of the heat of class conflict. Borden likewise considered narrow class interest a destructive force in politics and society and was attracted to socially-concerned businessmen like J. W. Flavelle, Herbert Ames, and B. E. Walker, who seemed to transcend the limitations of mere self-interest. Yet because Borden failed to recognize that social responsibility among businessmen represented not an abandonment of class interest, but a recognition of how those interests could best be served, his politics failed to extend beyond the interest group liberalism that he wished to repudiate. In the long run, the difference between King and Borden lay in their different understanding of interest group politics. If King tried to harmonize these conflicting interests, Borden failed to recognize and accept them for what they were.

Ultimately, the brokerage liberalism of King and his Liberal successors assured the Liberal party's subsequent domination of Canadian politics. In *The Government Party: Organizing and Financing the Liberal Party of Canada, 1930 - 58* (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1977), Reginald Whitaker outlines the way in which this dominant Liberal party increasingly

became the party of government. Reminiscent of the work of Samuel L. Beer and Robert T. McKenzie on party ideology and party organization in Great Britain,[3] Whitaker's book investigates the development of modern Liberal party organization, the mechanisms of party financing and publicity, and the impact these had upon the parliamentary party. Whitaker also addresses federal-provincial intra-party relations, from the perspective of Quebec, Ontario, the West and the Maritimes. While somewhat greater attention is given to Quebec and Ontario than to the Maritimes and the West, nonetheless this is one of the finest works on Canadian politics to appear in some years.

Beginning with Samuel Hays' point that reformers preaching centralization and efficiency gradually displaced those who defended local perogatives, Whitaker inserts into his analysis two mechanisms of political organization: the traditional patronage-client system and the modern bureaucratic party organization. The history of the Liberal party between 1930 and 1958 then unfolds in the context of a declining patronage-client system and the concomitant emergence of a bureaucratic party organization, largely indistinguishable from the state. Increasingly, he argues, the extra-parliamentary party organization articulated a new liberalism based upon a "corporate" alliance between government, business, labour, and the consumer, which promoted welfare liberalism as an alternative to socialism. Unfortunately, the concrete connections between corporate capitalism, party organization and policy formation need to be more clearly identified than they are here. As Whitaker himself admits, greater attention must still be paid to "the overlapping identities of interests and outlook of government and business . . . , if one is to make any real sense of the behaviour of politicians with respect to private economic power" (p. 69).

At the provincial level, Whitaker emphasizes the uneven rate of political modernization. Since the Second World War, he argues, the provinces (with the exception of Quebec and British Columbia) have generally resisted new party alternatives. Recent provincial political life thus reflects the "petrification" of political alignments that existed during the 1930s. Those parts of the country congenial to third-party politics remain so, but "areas like the Maritimes which remained impervious then remain impervious now" (p. xiv). To Whitaker Maritime politics thus reflects the region's timidity, deference, and conservatism. The continuation of patronage-client politics, the fidelity to the two-party system, and the smooth integration of federal and provincial party organizations has resulted in the absence of dynamic schemes of

3 Robert T. McKenzie, *British Political Parties: The Distribution of Power Within the Conservative and Liberal Parties* (London, 1955; 2nd ed., 1963); Samuel Beer, *British Politics in the Collectivist Age* (New York, 1955).

modernization or of genuine political innovation.

Unfortunately, to look at Maritime political culture in this way is to tear it out of its own historical context. Few would disagree that the response of Maritime politicians to the depression of the 1930s was unimaginative. But to take the 1930s as the point of departure, and to generalize backwards and forwards from that point in time, is to provide an incomplete and in some ways distorted analysis of Maritime political culture. The tradition of protest evident in the Anti-Confederate movement of the 1860s, in Premier W. S. Fielding's attempts to create a bi-partisan movement for secession in the 1880s, and in the Maritime Rights movement of the 1920s, for example, hardly suggests a passive political culture. Nor was Maritime protest confined to liberal modes of expression. David Frank and Nolan Reilly have recently documented a lively tradition of Maritime radicalism in the first two decades of the twentieth century, a tradition which culminated in the Amherst General Strike of 1919 and the political successes of the Farmer-Labour movement in Nova Scotia in 1920.[4]

The 1930s on the other hand was a period of political conservatism in the Maritimes. Although we still know too little about the depression years to draw firm conclusions, it appears that the collapse of the Maritime Rights crusade in the thirties left most Maritimers disillusioned with indigenous reform activity of either the liberal or radical variety.[5] Regional protest increasingly gave way to an acceptance of regional dependency. The collapse into the arms of a Federal Government offering support for social services (evident in both the Nova Scotian and New Brunswick submissions to the Rowell-Sirois Commission) implied that the region had lost control over its future development. The result was a diminished regional self-confidence which left the Maritimes vulnerable to the "get-rich-quick" schemes of Malcolm Bricklin, John Shaheen, and the numerous other smaller promoters drawn to the region by tax concessions and lower labour costs but who would be quick to leave when other opportunities arose.

4 David Frank and Nolan Reilly, "The Emergence of the Socialist Movement in the Maritimes, 1899 - 1916" (paper presented to the Third Atlantic Canada Studies Conference, Fredericton, 1978); J. Nolan Reilly, "The Origins of the Amherst General Strike, 1890 - 1918" (paper presented to the Canadian Historical Association Annual Meeting, Fredericton, 1977).

5 One exception, of course, is the emergence of the cooperative movement. In this regard see James Sacouman, "Underdevelopment and the Structural Origins of Antigonish Movement Co-operatives in Eastern Nova Scotia", *Acadiensis*, VII (Autumn, 1977), pp. 66-85; Ian MacPherson, "Patterns in the Maritime Co-operative Movement 1900 - 1945", *Acadiensis*, V (Autumn, 1975), pp. 67 - 83.

In order to demonstrate the conservative political behaviour of the Maritimes during the depression decade, one need only compare the broad support for Maritime Rights during the 1920s to the limited support for third-party alternatives such as H. H. Stevens' Reconstruction Party during the 1930s. The Reconstruction Party was the most successful third-party movement in the Maritimes during the depression, capturing 14% of the popular vote in Nova Scotia in the election of 1935. Drawing largely upon the support of small entrepreneurs, Protestant clergymen, and disaffected consumers, the party also benefitted from the failure of the C.C.F. to run candidates in the Maritimes in 1935. As Carman Carroll has demonstrated, some supporters of the Reconstruction Party, like labour sympathizers Clarie Gillis and Mayor Dan Willie Morrison of Glace Bay, considered it a halfway house between the old-line parties and more radical alternatives.[6] On the whole, however, support for the Reconstruction Party did not run deep. Offering no long-range solution to the disabilities of the Maritimes, it appealed to most voters as a way to protest the failures of the Bennett government without casting a vote for Mackenzie King.

Although Richard Wilbur's little volume in the Canadian Biographical Studies series, *H. H. Stevens* (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1977), tells us virtually nothing about the activities of the Reconstruction Party in the Maritimes, it does provide an excellent analysis of Harry Stevens' political life and his commitment to reform. By no means a socialist, Stevens was at various times a stagecoach driver, railway stoker, soldier, municipal reformer, and Methodist lay preacher whose Christian conscience occasioned in him a sense of social responsibility common to most progressives and social-democrats. Always critical of the 'big interests', Stevens was convinced that the larger corporations and their supporters in government were acting against the public interest. At the same time he upheld the basic features of the capitalist system, especially free-enterprise capitalism. In short, Stevens was more a populist than a social-democrat.

In Wilbur's opinion populism and social democracy — embodied in reformers like Stevens and J. S. Woodsworth — represent two separate components of the Canadian conservative tradition. If they had only been united, he argues, the Conservative party would have become an attractive alternative to the Liberals under King and St. Laurent. But I have doubts about this. Even if a marriage between the C.C.F. and the Conservatives had taken place, would the end product have differed significantly from the "new liberalism" of the modern Liberal party? The Red Toryism of the Conservatives, the new liberalism of the Liberal party, and the social-democracy of the

6 Carman V. Carroll, "The Influence of H. H. Stevens and the Reconstruction Party in Nova Scotia, 1934 - 1935" (unpublished M.A. thesis, University of New Brunswick, 1972).

C.C.F.-N.D.P. may differ in emphasis, but each maintains an essential commitment to welfare liberalism. Indeed, since Conservatives, Liberals, and NDPers alike accept the general tenets of the welfare state, differences in party affiliation do not usually affect the level of social services in the provinces. Even in the Maritimes, where fidelity to the two-party system is the rule, the region's orthodox political behaviour has not resulted in serious deficiencies in educational, health, and other social services. In fact, hospital and medical services without premiums came to the Maritimes well in advance of both Ontario and British Columbia.

All of this suggests the need for a theory of modern politics which avoids easy distinctions between regions made on the basis of party affiliation. Fortunately, the rudiments of such an analysis can be found in Leo Panitch, ed., *The Canadian State: Political Economy and Political Power* (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1977), a collection of essays which analyzes the Canadian state from a Marxist perspective. The most impressive thing about this book is the way in which contributors blend Marxist theory with an appreciation of historical particularity, and avoid using history merely to validate Marx. Panitch's opening essay, while essentially theoretical, for example, emphasizes the need to demonstrate concretely and empirically the state's function in a capitalist environment. The other contributors attempt to outline more explicitly the accumulating, legitimizing, and coercive activities of the state in Canada. In so doing they touch upon a variety of subjects: economic and social policy, ideology and social control, capitalism and federalism, and the relationship of class and state power.

Of all the contributions, those of Reginald Whitaker, Alvin Finkel, Garth Stevenson, and Larry Pratt are most relevant to a discussion of the contemporary Maritimes and Canadian political culture. They also raise important questions about the future of the Maritimes within Confederation. Whitaker's essay is an especially fine piece. Arguing that Toryism in Canada played "a more important role as a legitimizing ideology of capitalist development than it ever did in its English homeland" (p. 34), he shows how the Tory notion of "private profit at public expense" remains operative in twentieth century liberalism. In this context state welfarism has emerged as the essential component of modern capitalist development, legitimizing the existing order and making capital accumulation easier and less contentious. Alvin Finkel's study of the origins of the welfare state provides a useful account of the attitudes of Canadian businessmen towards the creation of the welfare state edifice between 1930 and 1945. In addition, he draws upon the insights contained in James O'Connor's *The Fiscal Crisis of the State* to argue that the Canadian state will soon be unable to perform its legitimizing role as effectively as it has in the past. If Finkel is right, and we face fewer state benefits in the future, this development not only bodes ill for the Maritime region but could very well render the traditional notion of Maritime conserva-

tism suddenly inoperative.

Garth Stevenson and Larry Pratt address other questions. After analyzing the class basis of federal-provincial conflict, Stevenson concludes that provincial power has increased in Canada since 1867 largely because of the absence of "a dominant national bourgeoisie whose common purposes require a centralized Canadian state as their instrument" (p. 94). Pratt makes the same point in his analysis of the Lougheed government's development strategy for Alberta. Lougheed's province-building, he argues, promotes the aims of the provincial bourgeoisie in Alberta just as John A. Macdonald's nineteenth-century nation-building provided favorable conditions for Canada's emerging industrial and manufacturing sector. This also has important implications for the Maritimes. If federalism's most important value rests in its ability to mediate disputes between frustrated provincial elites and the national authority, then it is unlikely that federalism as we now know it will be of any great assistance to the Maritimes in its struggle for equitable advantage within Confederation. Given the apparently fragile nature of modern welfare liberalism, and the apparent disutility of federal institutions to those regions bereft of resources or an aggressive provincial bourgeoisie to develop them, the future of a "conservative" Maritimes within Confederation may not either be as tranquil or secure as most people presently assume.

COLIN D. HOWELL

The Mythical Commercial Revolution

According to the mythology of Canadian nationality, the nineteenth-century departure from colonialism accelerated rapidly in the 1840s. Political autonomy overwhelmed the best people and the "powers of self-government which followed" were even "more ample" than reformers themselves had demanded.[1] In the 1930s historians who could agree on little else agreed that nothing less than a revolution had taken place. The British move toward free trade not only cleared away any obstacle to the concession of responsible government, but the loss of imperial preference was also supposed to have completely re-oriented the thought and actions of commercial elites. Before considering *The River Barons: Montreal Businessmen and the Growth of Industry and Transportation, 1837 - 1853* by Gerald J. J. Tulchinsky (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1977), a book which casts considerable doubt — almost inadvertently — upon the second supposed change, it would be well to re-examine those classics which no one will be able to read again with the same undisputed reverence.

1 Robert Baldwin, quoted in C. D. Allin and G. M. Jones, *Annexation, Preferential Trade and Reciprocity* (Toronto, no date), p. 144.