

government's failure to introduce remedial legislation. Yet the political opportunism of an admittedly weak administration deserves comment, as does James E.P. Prendergast's successful candidacy *as a Liberal* in two successive Manitoba elections after having resigned his cabinet post in protest against the high-handed legislation of the very same Liberal government. It is good to have the views of contemporaries, with which the book abounds, but it is equally useful to have an assessment of political strategy by the historian closest to the subject today.

Even so, Paul Crunican's book is the model monograph. It pursues its topic relentlessly through private papers, public documents, newspapers, theses, and numerous published works. The use of ecclesiastical archives, especially in Quebec, is particularly outstanding, though the frequent use of French may impede some readers and slow up others.

In the end, a few mysteries also remain. Although mentioned (p. 50), no further light is thrown on the origins of the controversial "Fourth Bill of Rights," so influential in drawing up the Manitoba Act in 1870. Equally uncertain are Laurier's true intentions. Was an investigation really as imperative as he kept insisting it was? Was the Remedial Bill really as defective as he kept saying it was? After all, did the much-heralded Laurier-Greenway agreement really give the Catholic minority all that much more? And in this light, who, then, in the end, hurt the Catholic cause most: determined, inflexible, even obdurate men like Archbishop Langevin and Bishop Lafleche who held ecclesiastical power, or pragmatic, 'understanding' men like Wilfred Laurier and Israel Tarte who preached 'sunny ways' to win political power? Perhaps Paul Crunican's book is not the last word on the Manitoba school question in 1896, but in view of his prodigious research it does seem that subsequent works on the subject will be more in the nature of historical essays than history itself.

M.R. Lupul
The University of Alberta

George Martell (editor), *The Politics of the Canadian Public School*. Toronto: James, Lewis & Samuel, 1974. Pp. 257. \$4.95.

It is a myth to believe that schools are neutral, that they only communicate techniques and objective knowledge The rules and sanctions at school strongly resemble those which await the future workers at the factory or in the office The capitalist system depends on the exploitation of a majority class by a minority class. The school, like other pieces of state apparatus, contributes to maintaining and reproducing these social relations: domination and exploitation.

* * * * *

A teachers' union in Ontario, or elsewhere, if it's to be strong, must be solidly linked to a broader Canadian labour movement. In practice, this means that teachers must expand their collective agreements to include demands they have in common with office and factory workers and their children. Right now, the primary demand in which they must include a broader working-class perspective is the demand for more security (and money).

The first quote is taken from different parts of a Quebec Teachers' Union (the Corporation de Enseignants du Quebec) White Paper. The second quote appears in George Martell's essay "The Path to Teacher Unionism." These two statements constitute the major theses in this collection of articles and essays. The first statement presents an analysis of the role of the school in capitalist society while the following one recommends a particular course of action to change that role.

Most of the material in this collection was taken from various issues of *This Magazine is About Schools*. During the heyday of alternative schooling in the 1960's,

this Canadian magazine enjoyed a high reputation as one of the best periodicals which consistently challenged the established, bureaucratic school systems in North America. It is interesting to note that recently the magazine's title was changed to just *This Magazine*. The change in title implied a change in approach as well. Like many erstwhile educational reformers, the editors of *This Magazine* came to the conclusion that in order to bring about basic changes in the educational system, they ought to participate in efforts to bring about fundamental changes in the economic and political system also.

Why? The perspective adopted in the analysis of school systems which appears in many articles in this book gives us the answer. That perspective was succinctly stated by Karl Marx:

In the social production of their life, men enter into definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their will The sum total of these relations of production constitute the economic structure of society, the real foundation on which rises a legal and political super-structure and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness.¹

According to this view, the state in capitalist society must serve capitalism.² Educational institutions run by the state therefore, of necessity, must serve capitalism.

Two articles in *The Politics of the Canadian Public School* explicitly put forth such a point of view: "The Schools, the State and the Corporations" by George Martell and "Our Schools Serve the Ruling Class" by the Quebec Teacher's Union. Several other contributions take the subservience of the school system to the corporate state as the basis and point of departure for their analysis. Four excellent articles in this genre are: "Downtown Kids Aren't Dumb: They Need a Better Program" by the Park School Community Council; "Drug Control in the Classroom" by Satu Repo; "Schools and the Illusion of Choice: The Middle Class and the Open Classroom" by Eleanor Smollett and "New Canadianism: Melting the Ethnics in Toronto Schools" by Loren Lind.

Until very recently, only a few North American scholars had devoted serious attention to the decisive importance of the dominant operative mode of the economic system, for the school system.³ As a rule, analyses of school systems have either ignored or accepted as desirable the corporate, capitalist politico-economic system within which schools operated. We may cite as an example Frank Mackinnon's study about the politics of education.⁴ Mackinnon describes and analyses the visible, formal political institutions affecting Canadian schools, namely, the legislatures, cabinets, municipal councils and school boards. As a result of ignoring the economic dimensions of political activity and the informal, often submerged, processes related to that dimension he tends to make astoundingly naive assertions such as "Educational Administrators have by far the most power among civil servants in general . . ."⁵ Several contributions in *The Politics of the Canadian*

¹Karl Marx "Preface," *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* (1859). Cited in Howard Selsam et al., editors, *Dynamics of Social Change: A Reader in Marxist Social Science* (New York: International Publishers, 1970), p. 52.

²"The executive of the modern state is but a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie." Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *The Communist Manifesto* (1848). Cited in Selsam et al., *ibid.*, p. 44.

³An exception was Raymond Callahan, *Education and the Cult of Efficiency* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1962).

⁴Frank Mackinnon, *The Politics of Education: A Study of the Political Administration of the Public Schools* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1960).

⁵*Ibid.*, p. 29.

Public School call attention to the broadly co-operative relationship between private economic institutions, governments and schools. In doing so, the contributors raise disturbing and significant questions. Let's take Satu Repo's "Drug Control in the Classroom" as an illustration. We are all aware of the legitimate concern many responsible adults feel about the widespread use of narcotic drugs among our youth. Such concern finds vocal expression in the mass media and lecture halls. Yet, why is there no similar vocal concern about drugs pushed by manufacturers and often indiscriminately prescribed by doctors to calm down "hyperkinetic" children despite the fact that the long-range effects of such drugs are not known? Does the widespread use of such drugs deflect the attention of people away from real social problems in capitalist society? What are the social and moral implications of drug therapy? Repo deals with these questions. Rarely do we see such analyses in the media and scholarly journals. Although they tend occasionally to simplify and generalize too much, articles such as "Drug Control in the Classroom" ought to receive more attention than they have so far received.

It is only fair to add, however, that the contributions cited above are not the sterile products of doctrinaire or dogmatic Marxism. For the most part, they are vibrant and vital.

One might also add parenthetically that several contributions are not concerned with the Marxian perspective at all. In "Canadian Literature: The Necessary Revolution," Robin Matthews makes an impassioned plea to school teachers to teach Canadian literature with enthusiastic conviction. The essays about the political behaviour of B.C. teachers by Satu Repo and a "B.C. correspondent" as well as Jules LeBlanc's discussion about the growth of the Quebec Teachers' Union are good analyses in a journalistic vein.

If the school systems in Canada are subservient instruments of a state which primarily serves a fundamentally immoral profit-seeking corporate system, what should be done to change matters? There is no unanimity of views on this question. The Park School Brief openly asks for band-aids . . . but "real band-aids, not trivial ones" so that the children of the working class can have a better chance to succeed in the existing Metropolitan Toronto School System. Loren Lind's comments about a successful bilingual program in a Toronto separate school clearly suggests that children whose mother-tongue is not English should have the option of starting school in their mother-tongue. Says the Italian teacher in this program: "[The children] are convinced in their own minds they must learn English; it's just a matter of doing it gradually."

Repo's review of the history of Canadian school textbooks ("From Pilgrim's Progress to Sesame Street: 125 Years of Colonial Readers") suggests guidelines for producing new Canadian textbooks:

Any genuine consciousness of this country has to begin with a recognition that we are an urban, industrial country, where people from various ethnic backgrounds work and live both together and in deep isolation from each other. It has to come to terms with the fact that we are a class society, that some people live off the backs of other men and women. It will involve producing material that will uncover many unpleasant as well as pleasant facts about this country.

Paulo Freire produced such materials for his educational experiments in north-eastern Brazil.⁶ It is of course possible to produce materials for a "working class curriculum" in Canada. Indeed, an enterprising capitalist publisher might even publish and promote the syllabus for such a curriculum as a suggested alternative

⁶One of the most readable descriptions of Freire's experiment is Thomas G. Sanders, "The Paulo Freire Method: Literacy Training and Conscientization," *American Universities Field Staff Reports*, West Coast South America Series, vol. xv, No. 1, 1968 (Chile), pp. 1-17.

for some schools or school districts. But how many school boards will adopt them? How many teachers will use them? Even if the materials are adopted and used by some boards and some teachers, will there be a significant impact? (There is one way to answer that question. Let's assume that the volume reviewed here would be used as a required or optional text in a number of courses in departments, schools or faculties of education in Canada. The political consequences are not likely to be very noticeable.)

The development of such curricular materials would be a step in the right direction. But the effects, let's repeat, are not likely to be profound. Indeed, ironically, the main effect probably will be reinforcement of what Eleanor Smollett refers to as the illusion of choice! Effective implementation of fundamental curriculum change usually only follows in the wake of a political revolution supported by large segments of the population.⁷

Martell recognizes this fact. His recommendation therefore is that teachers ought to align themselves with the labour movement to begin the work for revolutionary social change. Teachers as a group? Most of them consider themselves — quite erroneously, to be sure — to be professionals and would not be associated with members of labour unions. They also view themselves, with some justification, as members of an intermediate class who — to extrapolate the words of the Quebec Teachers' Union White Paper — “are better placed than many others in [an] unequal hierarchy, have better salaries, a clean work environment, and little physical exertion.” Even in British Columbia, the alliance between teachers and other workers was limited in intention (the defeat of the Bennett government) and duration.

It is also necessary to note that large segments of politically active teachers do not view the government as an instrument of corporate capitalism. Martell mentions this in his end-piece “OSSTF: The Path to Teacher Unionism”:

... the [Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation Educational Finance] Committee doesn't see their governments operating primarily in the interests of the corporations. Rather, government's are viewed as much more independent. They respond to pressures, yes, but basically they do what *they* think is for the “public” good, including, of course, the good of the business community and their own political survival. (Italics in the original).

So long as governments respond — as they usually do — to pressures from teachers by providing marginal improvements in salaries and working conditions, it would be just about impossible to change such a perception.

The last sentence in the second quote cited in the beginning of this review also points to another problem. Labour unions in Canada have become willing partners in the maintenance of the existing political and economic system as Jules LeBlanc recognizes in references to “business unionism” in his article on developments in the Quebec Teachers' Union. Demands for more security and money have always been cardinal features of union activity in Canada. It would be unrealistic to think that such demands will pave the way to the radicalization of teachers. Teachers, like most other people, are likely to become even more conservative and reform-minded when their demands are more or less conceded. Only continual denial of such demands will create the necessary conditions for radicalization. In a system based on electoral politics, how likely is such continual denial?

⁷In this connection see Richard R. Fagen, *Cuba: The Political Content of Adult Education* (Stanford: The Hoover Institution on War, Revolution and Peace, 1964) and Charles Price Ridley *et al.*, *The Making of a Model Citizen in Communist China* (Stanford: The Hoover Institution Press, 1971).

One infers that the editor chose to include only articles by residents of Canada about mainly Canadian educational issues. Rigid adherence to such a criterion was inappropriate, if indeed that was the case. For instance, "The I.Q. Ideology" by Samuel Bowles and Herbert Gintis was one of the best articles published by *This Magazine*.⁸ Its omission from this collection was unfortunate.

A word about style. Most of the contributions are very readable. Satu Repo's articles, in my judgment, are particularly well-researched and well-written. In terms of readability, it is unfortunate that the reader has to contend with Martell's somewhat laboured writing style in the first and last essays.

Many readers will not agree with the perspective adopted by most contributors to *The Politics of the Canadian Public School*. However, they too should find the book stimulating and challenging.

Mathew Zachariah
The University of Calgary

⁸Volume 6 (Winter, 1972-73), pp. 47-62.

W.G. Fleming, *Educational Opportunity: The Pursuit of Equality*, Scarborough, Ontario: Prentice-Hall of Canada, 1974. Pp. 127.

"You can't tell a book by its cover," so the old saw goes, and it was never more true in the case of W.G. Fleming's *Educational Opportunity, The Pursuit of Equality*. Professor Fleming's book is part of Prentice-Hall's "Critical Issues in Canadian Education" series, and one would expect, by both the book and series' titles, to find an analysis of equality of educational opportunity in Canada between its covers. But not exactly. The book is more the "pursuit of opportunity" by an author and a publisher to place a commodity in market where they have no real competitors than any kind of genuine examination of equality of educational opportunity in Canada.

In seven chapters and a conclusion Professor Fleming offers his general, *very general*, survey of the present state of Canadian education. (He spends one page listing by province all the Canadian universities.) Much of the book is a recitation of the different provinces' educational programs and policies and their evolution to their present status over the last decade or two. Throughout the book the reader, with disconcerting frequency, encounters succeeding paragraphs beginning with sentences like "Saskatchewan offers . . .", "Manitoba has initiated . . .", and "Among Canadian provinces, Quebec offers . . ." This survey disguised as analysis, then, is never more than the most superficial recounting of what is done in Canada, Professor Fleming claims, in the name of equality of educational opportunity. One learns, for example, that the University of Alberta started an intercultural teacher training course and that Brandon University has a teacher training program for Indian and Metis students. But nowhere in the book does one learn of the actual success or failure of the seemingly infinite number of programs the author lists as examples of the Canadian governments' attempts to provide equality of educational opportunity for its citizens. Ultimately, then, the reader is left with no more than a catalog of good intentions, with no information on their payoff.

Paralleling the criticism of Professor Fleming's book as being little more than a superficial survey of Canadian educational policies is an objection to the book's