

government negotiator . . . may have a militia unit with him, in full dress uniform (lots of red). . .” (pp. 97-98). One might ask what arrangement the author might have found more acceptable, given the period of which he was writing. However, *Our Land* does provide a short account that may help some to begin to understand a complex Canadian problem.

L.C. Green
Political Science
University of Alberta

Indian Education in Canada Volume 2: The Challenge edited by Jean Barman, Yvonne Hébert and Don McCaskill. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1987. Pp. 256.

This book is the second of a two-volume series dealing with the education experiences of Indian peoples in Canada. Whereas the first volume focusses on the history of Indian education, the present volume represents a collection of twelve essays relating to recent attempts by Indian people to control their own educational institutions in keeping with the general goal of Indian self-government. The content of the papers ranges from general surveys to specific case studies and statements of principle, and among other things, includes discussions of Mi'kmaq literary, Indian cultural survival schools, the Cree educational system stemming from the James Bay Agreement, and the Sacred Circle Project in Edmonton. As the preface declares, “Almost all of the essays are original, appearing in print for the first time; and, as a group, they take an activist stance favouring Indian control of Indian education.”

What is important about the book is that it offers insight into what has been happening in the field of education since 1972 when First Nations initially began to articulate publicly their demand for some say in the education of their children. Its specific contribution is that it goes beyond what is generally known about the advent of Indian control of Indian education and details some of the ferment and diversity of educational experimentation that has taken place over the past fifteen years. A recurring theme is the similarity of experiences which gave rise to educational reform in certain segments of the Indian community: the willful neglect of education by Indian Affairs, the abiding determination of Indian parents to take control of their own educational institutions, and the birth of new and often radical departures from mainstream education. Commonly, the goal of these departures is a bicultural education through which Indian children, steeped in their own language and traditions and yet trained to participate fully in the larger Canadian community, can enjoy the best of what Indian and Canadian societies have to offer. For that reason, many of the educational schemes under Indian control have a significant cross-cultural component targeted not only at Indian students but at non-Native society as well.

One criticism of the book is that it occasionally lapses into questionable interpretations, especially of the historic context of the discussion. The assertion by one writer, for instance, that “until the nineteenth century . . . Europeans generally did not directly interfere in the lives of Indian communities” (p. 27) is hardly supported by the experience of the French in Huronia or of the Puritans along the Atlantic seaboard two centuries earlier. Also, because of the eclectic nature of the volume, it is not always evident whether the particular case study is representative of developments elsewhere or is merely an isolated occurrence. The Mount Currie Lil’wat Programme in British Columbia, for example, is the subject of the only paper on post-secondary education, but for those unfamiliar with teacher education programmes, it would be difficult to determine the extent to which this particular programme was reflective of the other sixteen teacher education programmes across Canada.

In addition, for those who are skeptical about the whole notion of Indian self-determination in the field of education, there are features of this book that are not reassuring. The problem in part stems from the indelible impression that most of the writers — in keeping with the activist stance favouring Indian control of Indian education — are unduly sympathetic and tend to gloss over or ignore serious problems. Certainly some of the papers are introspective and do identify structural problems and shortcomings in Indian-controlled schools. But there is often a tendency to attribute failure to external factors, especially to the control and financial strictures imposed by Indian Affairs and the provinces, and to measure the success of Indian-controlled schools against the benchmark of the old school system, rather than of the extent to which such schools are turning out well-trained bicultural students. There is also little in the book that will dispell the lingering suspicion that survival schools, teacher education programmes, and band-operated schools have compromised academic standards in order to accommodate their special interests. Nor is there a thoroughgoing analysis of the nature and implications of the content that is being communicated. Although a great deal is said and assumed about the benefits of Indian control and about the importance of culturally relevant forms of learning, including the use of canoe trips, culture camps and Indian ceremonies, there is little substantive comment on whether the content is uniquely Indian or merely an alternate form of mainstream education.

In fairness, it must be said that such concerns are beyond the scope of this book. The fact is that there is a great deal about Indian-controlled schools and special programmes that has yet to be studied, and if the content of *Indian Education* has an air of tentativeness about it, it is precisely for this reason. What the book does do is give an impression of the vitality and diversity of new approaches to Indian education. That it fails to answer

all the questions concerning Indian control of Indian education is freely admitted by the editors and to be expected.

F. Laurie Barron
Native Studies
University of Saskatchewan

The Métis in the Canadian West by Marcel Giraud, translated by George Woodcock. Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 1986; *Guide to the Holdings of the Archives of the Ecclesiastical Province and Diocese of Rupert's Land* by Wilma MacDonald. Winnipeg: St. John's College Press, 1986.

Giraud's incredible ten-year labour is now available forty years after its first appearance to the unilingual anglophone. Was the effort at translation and reprinting worthwhile? The answer will depend upon whether the translation was effective, whether the introduction places the book within recent historiography, and whether the book still offers unique critical insight.

The translation is extremely faithful, to the point of being too literal. I would have preferred to see *Soeurs Grises* translated as Grey Nuns rather than Grey sisters, a translation which conjures up images of wan females not necessarily in holy orders. While Woodcock has not corrected problems with prose, he has corrected some errors in the spelling of names and places — Hendeys is now Hendays, and Kevenys now Kevenys. Unfortunately Woodcock should have continued to correct, and then Schulz (John Christian) would have become Schultz. Some errors also exist in the proofing; for example, on page 120, Reverend is Reverand.

Woodcock has decided not to comment on errors in fact. On page 224, for example, Giraud argues that Adam Thom could not speak French. Thom could, but chose not to. On page 119 Giraud has La Vérendrye at "the foothills of the Rocky Mountains." Most scholars agreed even in the 1940s that he never got there. To specialists these errors will be unimportant; to the uninitiated they could be dangerous.

Woodcock's introduction, a translator's introduction, should have been much more concerned with the text and its place in western Canadian and Métis historiography. First, annotations could have been provided to the text to indicate where Giraud's facts are incorrect. More important the work, which can be interpreted as racist, although Giraud himself declares he never intended it as such, should have been placed solidly in its historiographical and methodological context. Giraud's interpretation is undertaken within the general civilization/savagism dichotomy which has been rejected by today's anthropologists and historians. Woodcock argues that Giraud did not infer racial inferiority. Giraud himself states that

native society is, in its conception or organization, (not) inferior to white society. The two are in opposition because of their differences of structure, which we are not called upon to judge in terms of inferiority or superiority.