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Canada and the American Presence: The U.S. Interest in an Independent Canada

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The cold war, as Morris Janowitz points out, led to a blurring of the distinction between civilian and military organizations. This "blurring" variously affected the development of American military fiction until the publication between 1957 and 1962 of a small but controversial group of novels: Mark Harris' *Something about a Soldier*, Joseph Heller's *Catch-22*, Kurt Vonnegut's *Mother Night*, and James Jones' *The Thin Red Line*. Mr. Aichinger is at his best when he places these novels within the "tradition" as well as within the pop-art culture and New Frontier optimism of the early sixties.

His intriguing analysis of these novels includes a chapter on the "nonhero," that quintessentially modern man who has the illusion of acting when he is really being acted upon. The nonhero is torn between two conflicting drives. The one, the nonhero's own selfishness; the other, his intense concern for human values. The one, his realization that life is the fundamental condition for significant action; the other, an inherited set of moral values transcending "survival at all costs." But here again the American novelist separates from his European counterpart by believing in the possibility of a "tertium quid," a mode of existence that is neither heroic nor cowardly, an escape from this modern dilemma.

What is the escape? For Captain Stein in *The Thin Red Line* it is the fleshpots of Washington; for Jacob Epp in *Something about a Soldier*, a quiet career as a high school history teacher. For these men paradise is a place outside the dilemma, and the peculiar trait of American "absurd" literature is that each man, if he knows what he is looking for, can find his paradise. "'The territories' still exist for the American nonhero, as they did for Huckleberry Finn."

Mr. Aichinger, however, does not forecast a long life for the literature of the absurd. Already, like a diligent

disciple of his compatriot, the literary critic Northrup Frye, he sees irony striving to turn itself into myth, with James Bond (perhaps) playing Achilles in the new Heroic Age.

This, I am sure, is farther than Mr. Aichinger would wish us to go, but my point is that his ideas are suggestive as well as sound; hence his book is not only ideal, but essential reading for those who love military fiction, want to get the most out of it, but lack some of the requisite conceptual and historical framework.

DAVID HICKS
Briarcliff College

Dickey, John Sloan. *Canada and the American Presence: The U.S. Interest in an Independent Canada*. New York: Council of Foreign Relations, New York University Press, 1975. 202pp.

Twelve years ago, President John Sloan Dickey of Dartmouth College edited an American assembly volume of papers on Canadian-American relations that has become a classic. When he retired a few years later he became a Visiting Senior Fellow of the Council on Foreign Relations to update and extend that work. This new book, written in 1971-72, and apparently brought further up-to-date a few years later by insertions at specific points, is a sympathetic study of recent Canadian nationalism and a convincing discussion of its relevance for the United States. It shows clearly that American-Canadian relations have become more delicate and more difficult since Dickey first surveyed the problem, and it offers guidance for future American attitudes and policies.

American pressures on Canada in the economic, cultural, and defense fields have brought vigorous reactions in Canada in all three spheres. All these developments are objectively examined in detail in this book. Dr. Dickey

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skillfully weaves a cohesive pattern of analysis of complex problems, outlines and documents policies and events, and adds appropriate quotations from contemporary opinions. The final updating, apparently made shortly before publication and easily identifiable in the text, seems to show that Canadian reactions to the American presence have now reached a critical point where Canada is likely to resist further change tenaciously. Much will therefore depend on whether the United States can respond rationally to what often seems to be merely Canadian hypersensitivity but, as Dr. Dickey shows, really has great validity.

Dr. Dickey accepts the "Canadianization" of many aspects of life as a natural phenomenon, a healthy manifestation of a desire for a distinctive identity and for independent Canada. He is not unduly alarmed by the strident cries of many contemporary Canadian nationalists. Instead, he elaborates on the ways in which their aspirations could bring head-on collisions with preconceived American goals and objectives. He agrees that preservation of a strong independent Canada is a prime American interest that can only be guaranteed by relaxation of the effects of the American presence that have become intolerable to Canadians. His underlying pleas, therefore, is for a fuller American understanding of the legitimate concerns and ideals of the neighbor to the north. Failure to achieve that understanding may bring too much American infiltration and domination and this, in President Dickey's view, could lead to the breakup of Canada, an eventuality he regards as undesirable for the future well-being of the United States itself. What he infers is that the Balkanization of Canada would mean a new open front on the north like that in Central and South America. The United States, in Dr. Dickey's view, has a vital need of a strong Canada on the northern

flank, even if it is an independent-minded one.

It is pointed out in the book that the chief obstacle to sound American policymaking to cope with the rising flood of Canadian nationalism is America's lack of knowledge of her northern neighbor, not merely on the part of the officials who have to make decisions, but also in the private sectors of American society. If it reaches the vast mass of the general public in the United States (which is not very likely), this book could help to counter the prevalence of apathy about Canadian affairs. However, what President Dickey did not stress was that at the root of American ignorance of Canada is the fact that not only the media in the United States but also the whole educational system, at all levels, convey virtually nothing about Canada. It is in curricula, if anywhere, that the long-range solution lies. For a better appreciation of the Canadian problem, Canada must become a subject of study in the United States; and the emphasis must be on teaching about Canada itself, and not merely on Canadian-American relations which, without a basic knowledge of the other country, are often unintelligible for Americans.

RICHARD A. PRESTON
Duke University

Erickson, John. *The Road to Stalingrad: Stalin's War with Germany*. New York: Harper & Row, 1975. 595pp.

Professor John Erickson's latest book is the first of a two-volume study of the Soviet Army in World War II. *The Road to Stalingrad* examines a wide range of topics including Soviet prewar planning and doctrine, the course of military operations, Russian command decisions, and Soviet performance in battle.

The introduction and book I provide a clear, lucid account of the Soviet Army's efforts in 1940 and 1941 to prepare for the inevitable conflict with