

Everyone who had a wallet would reach to see whether it was still there."

Mr. Diefenbaker is still a politician, unabashed, eighty-one but unmellow. He has always seen politics not only as a proper calling but as a noble one. A man who sees nobility in his goals—however personally ambitious they may be—has two things going for him: His means reflect his ends and he is apt to be original.

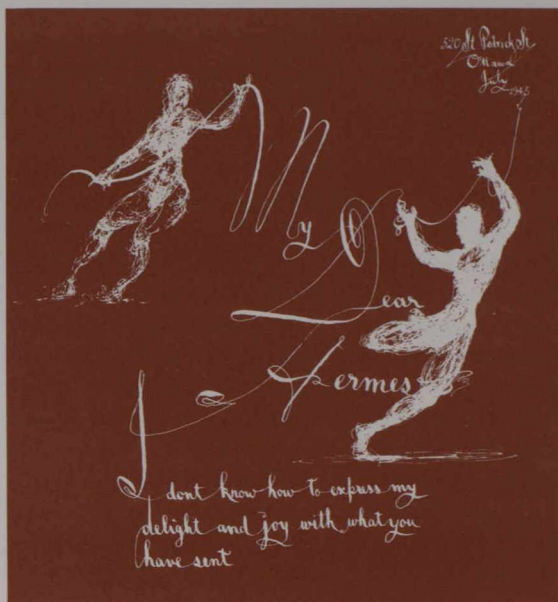
Peter C. Newman, of *Maclean's Magazine*, has said, "This old man never forgets or forgives . . . if you don't understand that, you don't understand Dief." It seems possible that Dief remembers, in vivid black and white, any classmate who did him wrong in kindergarten.

Volume 2 is remarkable. Let us count the ways. It is jammed with detail, interesting more often than not because the author's extraordinary interest in his own life story is contagious. It is filled with opinion and emotional judgments. Phrases like "Their object was to annihilate me" abound, and emotions are more interesting than insights. Mr. Diefenbaker is partisan but not in dispensing the back of his hand, and his measuring sticks are consistent. Consider a few random quotations:

"Personages whom I included in the Cabinet . . . over the years had done everything they could to prevent my becoming Leader. I did not quarrel with their past activities. I believed—wrongly however—that in the Cabinet their plotting would cease."

"I had spent most of a lifetime contending against those less enlightened forces in the Conservative Party who in their blindness actually seemed to find some comfort in defeat at the polls, election after election."

"I was watching the Honourable Jack Pickersgill while Pearson was reading his motion. Jack



was in a state of ecstasy. He was the only Member I've known who could strut sitting down, and that's what he did that day. He was so proud of his contribution to the production, it was obvious he wanted to be singled out as, if not the father, at least the stepfather of it all. . . . I could barely believe my ears. I turned to Donald Fleming, my desk mate, and said, 'This is the complete end of opposition to us.'"

The *Memoirs* are also remarkable as a publishing phenomenon. Canada Council gave the University of Regina a very large grant to get the work under way, and Mr. Diefenbaker received a \$100,000 advance, the largest ever paid in Canada. The investment was sound. The first volume sold sixty-seven thousand hardback copies, and this and the third are expected to sell eighty thousand each.

LADY ORACLE. Margaret Atwood. McClelland and Stewart, 1976.

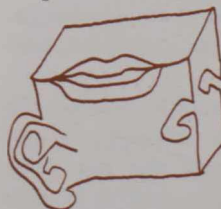
BEAR. Marian Engel. McClelland and Stewart, 1976.

BUTTERFLY WARD. Margaret Gibson Gilboord. Oberon Press, 1976.

HER OWN WOMAN. Myrna Kostash, Melinda McCracken, Valerie Miner, Erna Paris & Heather Robertson. Macmillan of Canada, 1975.

Liberated women writers (if that is a proper phrase) have recently published a variety of remarkable conclusions about the state of the sexes. Two of the four books above seem to suggest that the end result of emancipation is isolation. The third is a triumph of feminine introspection; the men are simply irrelevant. It is reassuring to consider the fourth, a collection of interviews by women of proclaimed raised consciousness, which takes a more sanguine view of the survival of harmonious couples. In the authors' words, they were "all bored with the books coming

out of the women's liberation movement that harped on the theme of woman as victim."



Let us begin with *Lady Oracle*. The woman is Joan. Joan was a very fat girl, with a slim, chic, upwardly mobile, frustrated mother, who wore long white gloves and eventually drank too much.

Joan, in time, cuts her weight in half and develops a double life. She writes (secretly, under an assumed name) popular, gothic romances about