

*Maclean's* is Canada's second oldest magazine—it is in its 76th year—but it totally changed its cover and content several years ago.

It had been a generalized monthly, and it became a bi-weekly newsmagazine in 1976 and a weekly in 1978.

"We were a pre-TV phenomenon," Peter Newman, its editor says, "one of the few east-west links, but it was clear that the time had come to get out of general coverage."

*Maclean's* had a strong incentive to change: Parliament had recently revised its tax laws so that Canadian companies could no longer write off the costs of advertising in magazines published in the United States and circulated in Canada. As a result, *Time* magazine stopped publishing its special Canadian edition and *Maclean's* decided to fill the void. The void never quite materialized (*Time* still sells 315,000 copies a week in Canada) but *Maclean's* has created its own news audience. It carries a great deal more Canadian news than *Time* ever did, and it now sells 635,000 a week (33 million a year), which gives it a greater penetration into the Canadian market than *Time* has in the United States.

Still, it is as difficult for a magazine to change its nature as it is for a camel to thread a needle, and the switch-over was painful. The new magazine began as a bi-weekly, and it was impossible to stay on top of fast-breaking stories. The twelve-person staff that put out the broad-featured monthly had to be expanded rapidly, and that was difficult. The newcomers were young (it was like "leading a children's crusade," Newman says) and inexperienced (Canada had no tradition of writing for news magazines). The change was also expensive—the first and basic investment was in a \$10 million press.

The staff was built with speedy care—*Maclean's* now has eighty full-time and forty part-time writers and editors—and though it clearly fits within the newsmagazine definition, it does not follow the ordinary format of newsmagazines, and its on-the-spot reporters do not send bulky "files" to headquarters to be recast, boiled down and polished.

"We allow people to write in their own style," Newman says, and some stories have better turned phrases than others.

The efforts have paid off—the grosses have gone from \$2 million in 1971 to \$30 million in 1980, and this year the magazine will be in the black.

One reason for its relatively swift success has been the succession of dramatic political Canadian news events since the mid-1970s.

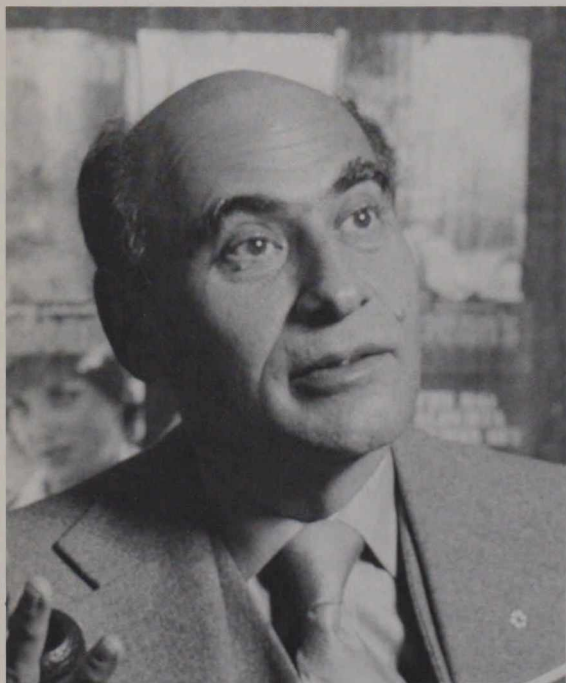
"We have lots of news for Canadians," Newman says, and next year they will have even more when a new press that will produce sixty-four pages at a roll is installed. That will double the magazine's present capacity and permit greatly expanded last-minute coverage.

Each week *Maclean's* opens and closes with sharply worded, pungent essays. The one on page 3 is an editorial written by Peter Newman.

Mr. Newman frequently does not approve of the person or institution he is writing about, but he is seldom simply unkind.

When Ian David "Big Julie" Sinclair resigned as head of Canadian Pacific Ltd., Newman noted:

"His [Sinclair's] pursuit of bottom-line profits was unrelenting, even when it meant building ships in Japan and operating them through a Bermuda-based subsidiary. What he accomplished during his long and fruitful stewardship was to turn CP Ltd. from a hidebound transporta-



Peter Newman



Allan Fotheringham