

Of twenty-two possible sites studied by the Programming Board, the most likely lies entirely in Nova Scotian waters and would require construction of a five-mile dam across the mouth of Cobequid Bay in the Minas Basin. Mr. Kirkpatrick says talks on private financing have gotten to a "deadly serious stage" with private firms including the Rothschild banking group which financed the huge Churchill Falls hydroelectric project in Newfoundland.

Premier Regan considers the Fundy tides a "horizontal Churchill Falls," and despite the Programming Board's assessment, he confidently predicts their successful harnessing which will "dramatically alter the economy of our province." If it becomes as competitive as is hoped, the Bay of Fundy could provide cheap power for eastern Canada and much of New England.

## That Magazine About Schools

[AN AUTHORITY-TRASHING JOURNAL]



*This Magazine is About Schools* (also known as *This Magazine*, or sometimes *This*) is about growing up and teaching people while they are growing up.

By some standards — not necessarily the editors — it is one of Canada's most successful magazines. Though its circulation is only about 10,000, it is "much talked about": copies are passed from hand to hand and its circulation has grown almost entirely by word of mouth. Half of its readers are in the United States, where *This Magazine* probably has received as much as or more attention in the press, such as the *Saturday Review* and points left, than any other Canadian periodical. Furthermore, it's breaking even — no modest statement in the rather shaky economics of Canadian magazines.

It's being talked about and breaking even for about the same reasons. A quarterly (\$4 a year in the U.S.), it's one of the few consistently published periodicals of its type in North America (it would be fair to call it unique). It also reads like it is done by people who would rather do their thing than get rich, which is a reason for the financial solvency. Only two of the nine staff people and none of the contributing writers (including such known names as Edgar Friedenber, John Holt and Bob Davis) are paid; and the magazine while fat — issues often run 160 pages or more — is produced on a shoestring.

It was started five years ago by a group of

teachers and social workers who were having problems working in established school systems and wanted to communicate with people like themselves. They thought they would explore theory, new methods, and that sort of thing, and thought the magazine would be written mostly for and by teachers. But they soon found that most teachers are not confident as writers and too scared for their jobs to try. They also found the magazine was being read by a much wider audience, and they began to take a very broad view of education. "As long as it's about or by children, and especially if it's about peoples' own lives, we'll consider it," says Sarah Spinks, the managing editor.

The editing is loose, aimed more at stimulating dialogues than stamping out typos, which are rather gleefully left in. Readers become writers. One complains that the editors have no standards and will print practically anything; another answers right on, it's nice to have a magazine like that. "Professionals," parents, and, sometimes, children join in.

Articles seem to fall in several categories: practical aspects of surviving in and subverting the system, if you are not exactly in tune with it; reports on the progress and lessons of alternative solutions; and — some of the most powerful articles — reminders of what it is like to be a child.

A collection of articles from 1966 to 1969 was edited by Satu Repo, one of the founders, and published by Pantheon Books. It is called *This Book is About Schools*.

"Mostly we think of education as an organic thing," Sarah Spinks says, "a way to relate things you teach to kid's own lives. We also try to talk about the concepts kids get taught in all sorts of subtle ways — teaching that prepares them for life as consumers in a capitalistic society and that nourishes the destructive things in nuclear families. We want them to learn about alternatives, and to get the feeling that their reactions and instincts are OK.

"One of our real failings is that we have been too busy to follow up on our articles, like getting the magazine to the kids and doing more to help them organize their own situations."

But the editors have plans, and the future of the magazine seems dependent only on their continued wit and interest. Unlike most magazines, *This* is relatively safe from the vagaries of profit: there is sufficient advertising and sales revenue to support it in the style to which it has become accustomed, and if money gets tight Sarah Spinks says, "We'll produce it cheaper and cut our salaries down or off."

**For more information** write *This Magazine*, 56 Esplanade Street East, Toronto 215, Canada.