

could not possibly have witnessed. Yet it is written as if by a witness, the omniscient novelist of whom no attribution or authentication is required.

Aside from such occasional lapses into novelist's licence, this book reflects none of the inspiration of artist as writer. From the arid detachment of its style, one would never suspect the author of being an artist of the pen; in fact an established poet with many works to his credit, including translation of Russian poetry into English.

Ford's late Brazilian wife, the irrepressible Thereza, provides almost all the book's spice. Never do Ford's many references to her exaggerate her high spirits. She was not your common or garden variety ambassador's wife. But Ford's uxoriousness does appear to have clouded his perception of Russian women — "on the whole not a particularly attractive lot" — to the point of causing him naively to wonder how the KGB was so successful in using them to suborn foreigners to its service. There are other signs of Ford's isolation from the life of the *hoi poloi*, such as his writing that "no social stigma was attached to [abortion]." The intensity of the social stigma is such as to prompt Soviet women to bribe their abortionists not to write "abort" on the *spravka* explaining their absences from work for the operation.

Seen as a Canadian work of record, a glaring fault of this book is its confinement of all mention of any one of us Canadian correspondents, of which there were a baker's dozen throughout Ford's time, to a rather feckless attempt at a lurid tale in referring to Peter Worthington's KGB-connected female secretary's defection in Beirut. And even with that reference, such as it is, he omits the political element, also the most exciting part: Worthington declined Ford's urging him to smuggle himself aboard the RCAF transport which had just happened at that precise time to have brought Paul Martin to Moscow on an official visit, in order to extricate himself from the tight corner he was in with the KGB over the defection. The authorities had been unresponsive to Worthington's application for an exit visa, for which in those days we had to apply each time we wished to leave the country.

Perhaps less vital an omission to everyone else except myself is Ford's failure to mention me even in describing my most picaresque Moscow caper. It was I who, in April 1965, led Richard Nixon and Joey Smallwood on their first foray to the Khrushchev residence, the location of

which Ford had, in fact, vouchsafed to me alone among the correspondents. The unlikely duo went to Ford for further help only after we had been stopped in our quest by the gimlet stare of an old crone seated on a bench in the Khrushchev apartment block lobby. The scene is well described in Smallwood's *I Chose Canada*.

Ford's reference in this book to a predecessor of his in the Moscow posting as having been a Soviet agent of influence threw External Affairs loyalists in Ottawa into a real tizzy. There is no argument that John Watkins, to whom Ford gives the fullest possible credit as a man of great sophistication, was caught in the toils of the KGB which, in its usual charming way, had photographed him having sexual relations with a young man he had met in Muslim Uzbekistan. After a series of Soviet defectors (Golitsin, Krotkov, Nosenko) had fingered Watkins, he confessed to his two RCMP interrogators his earlier KGB subornment. Then, on October 12, 1964, as the lengthy interrogation period had just drawn to a close, he died of a sudden apparent heart attack, his secret, as Ford puts it, dying with him.

The argument is over whether this did or did not make Watkins a Soviet agent. Ford does refer to Watkins as an agent of influence despite the absence of any indication that Watkins ever actually played ball politically with his Soviet blackmailers. On the contrary, both in Moscow and later, Watkins appeared to have successfully fended off their pointed suggestions that he cooperate in making life easier for Soviet diplomats in Canada. However, his secret cannot surely be said to have died with him until the relevant RCMP files become publicly available. And that will not be before October 12, 1994, the 30th anniversary of Watkins's fatal collapse. Perhaps before then we shall have another book from Ford, this one with no holding out on us, full of the personal reminiscences of which his poet's mind must be chock-a-block.

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## Candu eventually

by David G. Haglund

*Nucleus: The History of Atomic Energy of Canada Limited* by Robert Bothwell. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988, 524 pages, \$34.95.

There is something Dickensian about this book. The length, for one thing, begins to approach some of the master's works. (The style, alas, falls short, but then cannot the same be said for all of us?) What really puts me in mind of Charles Dickens, however, is that in *Nucleus*, University of Toronto historian Robert Bothwell has written a tale, it not of two cities, then certainly for two constituencies. This book, like an earlier one Bothwell did for another precinct of Canada's nuclear industry (*Eldorado: Canada's National Uranium Company*), is a commissioned corporate history. As such, its author must be expected to provide an abundance of detail to those who have sponsored the product, Atomic Energy of Canada Ltd. — for detail, while not usually the stuff of legend or scintillation, is indeed the stuff of corporate memory, the furtherance of which constitutes this book's *raison d'être*.

There is another constituency for the book as well: it is the community of readers who have developed an interest in one of

