



Author and journalist, Peter C. Newman.

The Establishment Man

Newman examines our elite

Ian Bailey

Somewhere in the crush of publicity that accompanied the release of the *Establishment Man* the distinction between Conrad Black, the subject of the book, and Peter C. Newman, the author has become hazy.

To the crowd, and to a CBC camera crew filming Newman as he signed copies of his book at the TD Centre, Newman is the real Establishment Man. Newman may not have Conrad Black's wealth, but he has been associated with the corporate elite, since he made celebrities out of its members in his 1975 book, "The Canadian Establishment".

Photo: Gary Fluxgold

Speaking with an *Excalibur* reporter, Newman explained his interest in the people that control Canada's business: "The Canadian Establishment is a shorthand term for the group of people who make the decisions that count in this society. I think the way you study any society is to analyze its decision makers. That's a sociological fact."

Later he notes, "I think it's a legitimate pursuit of vital information. I don't pretend to be doing definitive books or even academically acceptable books, but I believe I'm doing books which people who write about our society in the 70's and the 80's will have to take into account."

The former editor of the *Toronto Star*, and later *Maclean's*, has written several texts on the Establishment. His latest, *The Establishment Man*, is a biography of one of the Establishment's bad boys, Conrad Black who spun an inheritance of \$7 million into control over assets worth \$4 billion.

"In terms of the Establishment he is recognized as somebody who is really different," says Newman, "Whether they hate him or like him and most hate him, they have to respect him because he satisfies most of the major strains in that group."

Newman's next books will also focus on the Establishment. He's been commissioned by Debrett's, a British Organization devoted to chronicling British aristocracy, to write a guide to Canadian royalty tentatively entitled, 'Debretts Guide to the Canadian Establishment.' He is also at work on *The Company of Adventurers*. This two volume analysis of the Hudson's Bay Company will be published in 1985, and some say it is Newman's ticket to the Governor General's Award.

Newman has mixed feelings about the corporate elite's in that other Establishment--the government.

"The Establishment has a hell of a lot of power but I don't think it has the politicians in its pocket...it did at one time."

He agrees the two will likely come closer as the economy sinks further but says their relationship is impossible to quantify.

"On one hand you have the Establishment people who like to believe they can make or break a Prime Minister by withholding decisions or their blessing. What makes or breaks a Prime Minister is votes, not these guys sitting around

the Toronto Club."

In 1970 Newman helped to found the Committee for an Independent Canada. The following year he was appointed the editor of *Maclean's* which he made into Canada's only weekly newsmagazine. He denies that he used *Maclean's* to promote political views.

"I don't think a newsmagazine should have a point of view. I think it should report news. I never used the newspapers for that, but I certainly used my editorials for that point of view and I think that's fine."

Newman, the writer, became prominent with *Renegade of Power* an analysis of the Diefenbaker years and *The Distemper of our Times* about Lester B. Pearson. It has been said that both books created a mold for Canadian political journalism. He never wrote a follow-up on Trudeau, something he attributes to his departure from the Ottawa scene, but speaking with the stamp of the editor whose reign spanned a healthy slice of Trudeau's own term of office, Newman is less than enthusiastic.

"He had a mandate for change and that change was to unite the country. Now you've got these two camps; Quebec ready to get out of Confederation; the English hating the French and visa versa. That's his legacy, not the unification of the country but a nation divided."

Trudeau, notes Newman, had a huge mandate for change in 1968, but threw it away over the years. "That's what makes me mad and sad about Trudeau; not what he did or didn't do, but what he might have done with that magnificent mandate he had."

Newman is also pessimistic about Trudeau's relationship to the media as well as about the media itself.

"He has very little respect for the media--an opinion I share. I don't have any respect for the media, there are some who are very talented and very interesting, but most of them don't see beyond the deadline of that day or night. They don't understand politics as part of the historical process. I admire him for standing up to the media and saying to hell with it."

The former editor pins much of the blame for what he sees as the degeneration of Canadian journalism on the strength of electronic press. "Now you have a whole generation of journalists who think in 60 second clips whether it's radio or TV and their mentality is not on what the person is saying or thinking but how they look on TV."

Rule has serious implications

John Schmied

A long unused university regulation, if implemented unchanged next year, would drastically affect the financial and employment status of some graduate students.

The rule, which has been in existence since 1976 and which limits the number of years during which graduate students are eligible for full-time status, was enforced for the first time this year, but the outcry from students prompted a one year delay in its implementation.

The regulation states that any student entering their third year of the M.A. programme, or the sixth year of their doctorate programme must register as part-time students. Part-time students are ineligible for such benefits as,

teaching assistantships
access to student housing
some income tax deductions
subsidized day care
certain scholarships and bursaries

Don Wallace of the Graduate Students Association has expressed concern over two facets of the rule's enforcement. First, is the issue of the rule's sudden implementation this

past summer, leaving the returning M.A. and Ph. D students to be informed of the change at the time of registration in July and August. This allowed the students no time to plan for the financial and academic changes that might have resulted.

Wallace also questioned the regulation's "realism", stating that although a "time limit (to complete a degree) does have academic validity", there may definitely be just cause for a student to require more than two years to complete an M. A. , or five years for a Ph. D. Wallace points out that the U of T allows three years for an M. A. completion and six years for a Ph. D.

CUEW Chief Steward, Gill Leiman, expressed fears that the regulation would unfairly affect the teaching assistantships of these students. The hiring of full-time students as teaching assistants is not dependent on seniority. Part-time students, however, are placed in a different pool of applicants and must compete with teachers who have seniority.

Since Ph. D.'s are allowed four teaching assistantships by contract

at York, leiman says they could conceivably be cheated out of one or two of them, if their first such job came in their third year of Ph. D study, and then in their sixth year they were moved to the other pool, because of a change in part-time status.

A committee, including representatives from the Canadian Union of Educational Workers and the Graduate Students Association has been struck to examine the ramifications of implementing the regulation, and it will submit a report to David Bell, Dean of Graduate Studies, by November 30th.

Bell told *Excalibur* that the regulation was enforced this year, when his department learned that York's post-graduate completion rate was lower than that of other universities.

Because programme directors were not told of the decision until May, and because affected students could not be informed in time, students were advised to petition the move. With the exception of some over-time Ph. D. students, all of the students had their petitions granted.

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