

Book Reviews

Strange Empire: Louis Riel and the Metis People
by Joseph Hard, James Lewis and Samuel,
600 pages, \$5.95

Joseph Howard was a journalist from Montana who devoted many years of his life to arduously researching this brilliant history of the Metis people and their conflict with the advancing Western industrial society. First published in 1952, his book has been unjustly forgotten since then and James, Lewis and Samuel are to be commended for republishing it.

Howard writes with deep sympathy for the Metis people and their traditional way of life. His balanced assessment of the personality and actions of the enigmatic Louis Riel is simply the best ever done of this most controversial figure in Canadian history. In addition there are many informative portraits of less well known historical actors.

As Martin Dubin points out in his introduction to *Strange Empire*, most accounts of the causes and events of the rebellions of 1869-70 and 1885 are passionately partisan and obsessed with the military aspects of the conflict. Howard's book has the merit of putting the rebellions in a social, economic and international political context. The actions of the British and American governments are carefully examined, as well as those of the

Canadian government.

It has often been alleged that Canadian history is dull and boring. *Strange Empire*, written by neither a Canadian nor a professional historian, makes extremely exciting reading. Anyone the least interest in our national history will derive great enjoyment from this fascinating book.

ALLEN DOPPELT

The Cronos Complex I by Michael Bradley
165 p., \$3.95

Bradley's thesis, briefly, is that man is a territorial creature no less in space than in time. What is characteristic of man, above all, is this very fact of staking out a territory in time, and the story of human evolution is the history of the kind of different claims human cultures have made in different ages.

He traces this evolution from the origin of the time concept, the beginning of religion in the river cultures of the middle east, in which past and future formed a present-less continuum, to a culture like ours, which is all present-tense oriented, with no concern for the past and the future. This has resulted in the environmental/pollution/overpopulation pickle we are in now. His solution for man is to gradually withdraw from the monster of modern technology.

While the book is quite entertaining, and contains many ideas no member of "the bastion of academia" would dare touch, there are many examples of faulty logic. There is a preponderant use of proof-by-analogy, which is a sort of intellectual sleight of hand. Moreover, once shed of its magical-mystical allures, I do not feel that Bradley's claim stands up to the light; it is perhaps useful to translate into operational form the term 'intelligence', since the concept of time is an integral part of intelligence, still it does not constitute a proof of his case.

There are some curious attempts to placate pressure groups in the book; for example, while Bradley concedes that women have been liberated by technology, in the same paragraph he claims that in the new way of life he sees the world regressing to one where "women will have to supply sexual stimulation, and the identity — satisfaction of sexual ownership," and "sex will have to be used as an expedient."

I feel that because of a cavalier treatment of a serious topic, this book will not favour the author in the eyes of rigorous thinkers, and will perhaps even damage the cause he works for by promoting a poor image of the environmentally aware person.

AGNES KRUCHIO

Emergency meeting

Students try to resolve issues

HAMILTON (CUP) — For the second week in a row, 3,000 people packed the gym at McMaster to attempt to resolve the issue of student parity, campus security and the trouble-plagued French department.

The March 28 emergency open Senate meeting was demanded by the McMaster Student Union in their ultimatum to the university administration, in the face of a general strike threat by the students, and the impending resignation of the four undergraduate student senators. The emergency meeting was called within the specified time period of one week.

At the meeting little was done except discuss the matters, but few students actually expected any action to be taken, rather it was a move to force the Senate to begin

to move on the issues.

The mediator in the French student dispute, Dr. C.B. Mueller, of engineering, presented a report to the Senate dealing with the issues involved, and the progress of the negotiations.

At present the French student union (FSU) has accepted the representation offer made to them, on the condition that acceptable contracts be given to the three francophone members they want hired.

After the French students spoke of their complaints and vowed to continue their fight for representation and good profs, the meeting moved on to the university-wide issue of parity, specifically student parity on the senate.

Dr. D. M. Winch, chairman of the committee for the restructuring of

the senate spoke on the difficulties of pleasing all groups, and of the necessity of an act of the Ontario legislature to change student representation. Which gave no indication as to whether parity would be in the committee's recommendations.

Student senator Ted McMeeking contradicted Winch on the necessity of parliamentary legislature to change senate structure. The board of governors, he said, has the power to appoint 18 senators and there is no stipulation in the university act that forbids them from being students.

In a discussion of recent anti-student editorials in the Hamilton Spectator, calling for students to leave McMaster if they didn't like what was going on, McMeeking asked the senate if what they wanted was "a mass exodus of students".

"It is our McMaster community" he said, and the administration must take up action to allow students a say in their education.

Dr. S. J. Frankel, dean of the faculty of social science, spoke out in favour of increased student representation, but not parity. Quality not quantity is what is required, he said.

Students also protested the presence of some 10 to 12 campus security officers in uniform at the meeting.

University president A. N. Bourn said security measures are taken with the approval of MSU president Steibing. Steibing denied this saying it was his understanding that the officers were there at the request of several members of the senate.

U.S. Justice

WASHINGTON (CUPI/CPS) — The U.S. Justice Department, which is expected to conclude its federal grand jury probe of the 1970 Kent State shootings within the next few weeks, has itself become the target of a Congressional investigation.

A House judiciary subcommittee plans to hold hearings to find out why the grand jury was not impaneled over three years ago.

The subcommittee, which is chaired by congressman Don Edwards (Democrat-California) has been studying since last June, a 1971 decision by former Attorney General John Mitchell not to call the grand jury.

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