

The Big Nickel

The Big Nickel: Inco at Home and Abroad, Jamie Swift and The Development Education Centre, Between the Lines, 97 Victoria St. N., Kitchener, Ont. N2H 5C1, \$5.00 paper, 173 pp., illus.

Timely in its appearance, given the recent announcement of layoff of workers in Sudbury, this book details the development of Inco, its effect on the national and international economies and its relations with its work force. The corporate history of this Canadian-based resource extracting company, from its beginnings at the close of the 19th century up to the present, is contrasted with the history of the unionization of its Canadian workers.

Unlike other literature in the genre of corporate exposé, this book devotes an entire chapter to the reasons behind the writing of this case study. The authors see Inco as "a microcosm of the larger economic system", and their study puts the winding down of Inco's Canadian enterprises into a global perspective. It details the company's ongoing strategy of acquiring the raw materials of Guatemala, Indonesia and the seabeds of the world's oceans, and points out that this allows the company to shift from one area of the world to another and to acquire a new work force each time it moves. The book also points to the various political forces which aided Inco's development both in Canada and abroad, and there is an analysis of Inco's financial backing, which is largely North American in origin.

Given the amount of pro-Inco publicity in the world's business press, this book serves as a useful

adjunct to the library collection of anyone who attempts to see both sides of the question. Non-rhetorical in nature and clearly and concisely written, it carefully explains the subject in an informative and useful manner.

by Bob Gauthier

Marxist analysis

Imperialism, Nationalism, and Canada: Essays from the Marxist Institute of Toronto, Craig Heron, ed., New Hogtown Press, \$5.95 paper, 206 pp.

Although, as the preface admits, this collection of essays is "to some extent dated", it does provide a for-the-record statement of an impressive series of lectures analyzing Canadian nationalism and its role within the dynamics of a global capitalist system.

The nine papers delve into Canada's dual imperialist-imperialized, dependent-independent nature as it exists on various societal levels. They pay careful attention to the centres of domination (the cities) and the classes (both national and international in orientation) which enable internal national imperialism of the Canadian hinterland to occur.

The essays also look at the role of the Canadian state, in particular the importance of the federal level of government and the interchangeability of its personnel with that of the country's business sector. Also important are two essays about instances of Canada's internal imperialism—the native peoples and Quebec.

Academic in nature, these essays are not meant for a general audience, but they deserve inclusion on university reading lists at least.

by Bob Gauthier



Workers striking against Ben's Bread are demanding better job security, sick leave, and less compulsory overtime. Three picketers have been injured by management trucks crashing the line.

Dal Photo / DeLorey

Mystery maze novel suspends

The Family Arsenal, by Paul Theroux, Ballantine Books, New York, 1976. \$2.25

To anyone who has read Joseph Conrad's **The Secret Agent**, Paul Theroux's new novel, **The Family Arsenal**, appears as a modernized version of Conrad's novel of anarchy and perverse characters intent on destruction. Like Conrad's, Theroux's novel is set in London, exploring the same industrially-blackened districts. Theroux himself honours Conrad by referring to **The Secret Agent** and its plot three times in the book and when the protagonist Hood takes the young Murf to Greenwich he tells him "how the ponderous man in the overcoat had tried to blow up the Observatory, how he had blown his younger brother-in-law to bits." Hood concludes that "it was a simple tale, a shadowy outrage, a bout of madness. It started, it squawked, it was gone; a story of self-destruction." Theroux's novel

is also a tale of outrage. It verifies Conrad's interest in the abnormal delight taken in anarchical destruction and effectively brings the secret agent to the London of the 1970's.

The strange collection of characters in Theroux's novel adds considerably to the maze of the plot. From the ex-American consul Valentine Hood, filled with opium-induced memories of Vietnam (conjuring up Graham Greene's **The Quiet American**), to Mayo, the IRA misguided anarchist, who seals a famous painting from a private house and cuts off pieces of it to send to the newspapers, hoping to incite public outrage, to Lady Arrow, the aristocratic lesbian who directs plays in women's prisons in order to be near the root of violence she so envies, to Brodie and Murf, the young, pot-smoking novitiates in the anarchist home of Mayo and Hood, to Araba Nightwing, the actress who is playing in the West

End production of **Peter Pan** as well as playing at smuggling arms from the Continent for the IRA: all are carefully delineated by Theroux and each seems to contribute to the disruption of even the temporary home and comfort of the anarchists. There is no solidity, in character or in actualities, to ground all these to what may be called comfort and security. All is noticeably temporary; only the self-destructive idiosyncrasies of each remain steadfast, to condemn each to their own purgatory.

Theroux's major achievement in the novel is his characterizations. The slang of London's lower elements is recorded with superb accuracy, as are the sounds, smells, sights and tastes of London. There is a prominent perversity running throughout the book, both in character and in surrounding. Nothing is simple and as the book proceeds it becomes obvious that not even the elemental drive of destruction can be relegated to a particular brand of personality. Hood kills because the local street-sweeper has been insulted. Mayo steals because of a vision held by her IRA sector, and therefore destroys what Theroux accentuates

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