

Reviews

PROBLEMS OF THE CANADIAN NORTH

NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT: THE CANADIAN DILEMMA. Page, R. 1986. Toronto, McClelland and Stewart. 361 p, illustrated, soft cover. ISBN 0-7710-6927-8. Can\$15.95.

Canada, a country of enormous size, great potentiality and many problems, has provided a focus, these last 15 years or so, for most of the issues that are associated with the phrase 'northern development'. Should this huge and profoundly impressive piece of the earth's surface be 'developed' at all? Should it be preserved or protected, even when 99% of the population both will never see it, and are eager to benefit from its presumed mineral wealth? And what about the people whose homeland it is; do they have a view, and if it is different from that of southern Canadians, which should prevail? These sorts of questions have been worrying many Canadians, for one must realize that 'the north' has a kind of mythical significance in Canada, constituting a very special strand in the national consciousness, and one of the few on which all have thus far appeared to agree.

Professor Page's book examines in some detail the major events of these years as they affect the north. Oil had been found in northern Alaska, and there was every likelihood that the structure extended also into Arctic Canada, where a rather unsuccessful search had already been going on for a decade, at a relatively low level of intensity. This situation was instrumental in the setting up of two highly important public enquiries, one (presided over by Judge T. R. Berger) to inquire into the terms and conditions for granting a pipeline right-of-way up the Mackenzie valley, the other, hearings before the National Energy Board. Both lasted many months; each did things which had never before been done in Canada, and each had a very considerable public impact. Page was closely associated with both. Woven into these two public hearings were many related issues. The Berger Commission put particular emphasis on rights of native peoples and on conservation matters; the National Energy Board on economic questions and, by extension, on foreign relations, especially with the USA. All of them were points of great interest for Canada as a whole, for they touched on fundamentals, but in a context which was remote from most people's experience and therefore easier to have an opinion about.

Page describes and analyses with admirable clarity and balance, but he is by no means a dispassionate observer, hiding his own views. He is concerned to tell us that there is indeed a dilemma, and a very serious one, which can only be overcome if Canadians 'exhibit a will and a flexibility they have not exhibited in the past'. His book is well written, well produced, and with very few typographical errors. It deserves to be widely read. One tiny note of criticism, probably of the publisher rather than the author: running heads are helpful to those—surely the majority—who do not read the book at a single sitting. (Terence Armstrong, Scott Polar Research Institute, Lensfield Road, Cambridge CB2 1ER.)

WHALING IN THE WESTERN ARCTIC

WHALES, ICE AND MEN: THE HISTORY OF WHALING IN THE WESTERN ARCTIC. Bockstoce, J. R. 1986. Seattle, University of Washington. 394p, illustrated, hard cover. ISBN 0-295-96318-2. US\$29.95.

Bockstoce presents a historical account of American bowhead whaling in the vicinity of Bering Strait, from the arrival of *Superior* of Sag Harbour, New York, in 1848 to the