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A Narrow Vision: Duncan Campbell Scott and the Administration of Indian Affairs in Canada. By E. Brian Titley

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problems that they and their people confronted. In the end, the work tells us as much about perceptions of American Indian intellectuals as it does about the themes of cultural adaptations that they chose to discuss. American Indians and American Indian intellectuals can be better understood through a perusal of this collection of essays. It is an ideal book to assign in an undergraduate course in American Indian Studies and some Indian history courses. It will provoke discussion and enhance understanding on both the abstract and experiential levels.

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A Narrow Vision: Duncan Campbell Scott and the Administration of Indian Affairs in Canada. By E. Brian Titley. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1986. 245 pp. \$29.95 Cloth.

There is a story, probably apocryphal, about the minimalist composer Philip Glass that is relevant to the biography of Duncan Campbell Scott. After a premiere performance of one of Glass's compositions at a New York concert hall, a society matron enters a cab and, upon noticing the identification licence of the driver, says, "Young man, do you know you have the same name as a famous musician?" Like Glass, Scott was an artist. Like Glass, Scott found it necessary to engage in other work to maintain a comfortable life-style. However, unlike Glass, Scott's "other work" was to have greater impact on more people over a longer period of time than did his poetry.

E. Brian Titley has chosen to concentrate on Scott's activities as an employee of the Indian Department between the years 1880 and 1932 rather than attempt to produce a definitive biography of the poet/civil servant. Wisely, he has not attempted to integrate Scott's poetry and his policy making. Titley argues convincingly that Scott kept his artistic and administrative activities separate and that there is sufficient information from Departmental sources to ascertain his attitudes about Indians and how to deal with them. Given the length of Scott's tenure in the Department, the book serves as an examination of the Department's operation for a half century.

Titley's review of Scott's career is not strictly chronological; but one leaves the book with a clear picture of Scott's rise to prominence within the Department and his skillful ability to remain in favour with the Government of the day at a time when patronage appointments in the civil service were unfettered. This is accomplished by Titley setting the stage with three background chapters. The first is concerned with a brief presentation of the origins of Indian Administration in Canada. The second introduces Scott as a poet and suggests that there was clear compartmentalization of his art and government service. The third is a general description of extant policies and their execution when Scott entered the Department.

He follows these with accounts of seven reasonably well-bounded events which facilitate our understanding of how they affected Scott's career or how Scott's actions and attitudes affected the development of Canadian Indian policy. The events described concern Scott's role in influencing the terms of treaties, his administration of schools, his opposition to the formation of independent native associations, his confrontation with Six Nations' traditional leaders, his role in the negotiation of land claims in British Columbia, his attitudes about indigenous culture, and his confrontation with colleagues over the control of the Department.

The portrait that Titley paints of Duncan Campbell Scott is of an individual who entered the Indian Affairs civil service with a full set of anti-native biases and prejudices which remained intact despite a half-century of dealing with native issues. He viewed indigenous societies as anachronistic and native cultures as barbarous. Consequently, the traditional societies had to be eliminated and individuals had to become fully acculturated into an undifferentiated North American working class culture. Therefore, any activity which advocated either self-determination for native societies or a revitalization of traditional cultures was to be discouraged. This was to be done by legal and fair means if possible, but by any means if necessary. The preference for fair means appears to have been motivated by a concern to protect the reputation of the incumbent government rather than from any sense of ethical or moral propriety.

His willingness to place the interests of government over the interests of party or the native people coupled with his willing-

ness to serve the interests of timber, mining, and hydro power corporations at the expense of native people most likely explains his rise in the Department. It also helps explain why he was immune to strictly patronal political attempts to unseat him; he served his masters well, regardless of who they were. Since there was consistency in Departmental policy and its execution throughout Scott's tenure, this means that there was no difference in the Indian policies of any of the parties which formed governments during this time. From the native perspective, it really did not make any difference which party was in power. The implication is that, for native people, the individuals in senior Indian Department positions have greater impact on them than do the members who sit in Parliament. Therefore, an understanding of how individuals rise to power in the Department is an important dimension to understanding Canada's Indian policies.

One aspect of Scott's administration that endeared him to the various Ministers of the Crown under whom he served was his ability to keep the budget from expanding. Titley best illustrates this by reference to the administration of schools for native youth. By contracting with Christian religious denominations to provide teachers for native schools, Scott avoided the payment of salaries for teachers; the Indian Department had to provide for a structure and its maintenance. At the best of times, minimal standards of health and safety were maintained. Frequently, when inspectors suggested improvements it was the inspectors who were changed rather than the facilities. However, Scott was sufficiently careful not to alienate resource exploiters by suggesting that the Department develop resources on the reserves for the benefit of native communities; he consistently acted in the best interests of rapacious individuals and corporations. Consequently, he was conservative in his estimates of community requirements for land when negotiating treaties or when engaged in land claims.

Similarly, his opposition to expressive aspects of native culture can be interpreted in a similar fashion. Any demonstration of distinctiveness between peoples can become a symbol of societal integrity and may give rise to notions of group interests different from those who govern the national society. These expressions, then, are to be suppressed. It was during Scott's tenure as

deputy superintendent that the most oppressive of the "potlatch laws" (and related legislation) were incorporated into the Indian Act.

Yet, Titley presents Scott not as a bigoted Indian hater but rather as a misguided and prejudiced individual who genuinely thought that his actions were in the best interests of the native people and Canada. He could not fathom why someone should want to be an Indian once they were acquainted with the advantages of a superior Euro-Canadian alternative. Consequently, he worked to bring about the complete assimilation of indigenous people. If they objected, it was because they were either ignorant or unscrupulous charlatans out to take advantage of the ignorant. Part of Scott's job was to protect his wards from such individuals. A corollary of this opinion is that wealthy industrialists represent the apex of the social order and therefore their interests are, or should be, those of the nation as a whole. Scott, having done his duty at the office to transform the savage into worker, could spend his well-earned leisure time entertaining the wealthy with his largely forgettable poems.

The weakest section of Titley's book is his first chapter concerning the origin of Indian Affairs in Canada. This is largely due to a misrepresentation of colonial administration of Indian matters in the Maritime Provinces. However, there are few readily available sources for writers outside the region to draw upon. A minor complaint is that at least one of the items listed as "Unpublished Materials" has appeared in print (Sally Weaver's study of politics among the Grand River Iroquois was published by the National Museum in 1972). On the whole, the book is well produced.

E. Brian Titley's *A Narrow Vision* is an extremely important book for an understanding of the development of Indian policy in Canada. It is a well-written and thought-provoking book. A must read.

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Notes From Indian Country. By Tim Giago. Pierre, SD: State Publishing Company, 1984. 423 pp.