
represented by the nationalist and separatist impulses in Quebec, the rise of the New West, and the mega-constitutional politics from the 1970s to the early 1990s resulting in the Charter, patriation and failed Meech Lake and Charlottetown Accords, has been a keen scholar, advocate and critic of federalism for nearly 50 years.

Indeed, during this period, at a time when the study of Canada seemed to have existential implications, Simeon produced from his perch at Queen's, and then the University of Toronto, a steady stream of important and ground-breaking works, not the least of which were a series of studies for the 1985 Macdonald Royal Commission. Simeon also played a key role in the "comparative turn" in Canadian political science starting in the 1990s, wherein that discipline's scholarship took a much more expansive and global approach in its methodology and focus.

As a collection on federalism, this book is a useful and practical contribution. The introduction is a thoughtful overview of some of the key issues that have shaped Simeon's scholarship and driven the field in recent years: the "chicken and egg" debate over societal values vis-à-vis founding institutions as a key determinant for a federation's causation; the question of the importance of democracy and trust within a polity as a basis for whether or not federalism can root itself successfully; and, of course, federalism's capacity to evolve over time.

Many of these themes are reflected, and expounded, upon in the collection's 10 chapters, all of which are very good. Topics touch upon a broad range of fields and issues, from federalism

and democracy, and theology and identity, to case studies on Cyprus, Spain and comparative Canadian-Australian federalism. A highlight is Alain Noel's forceful argument about the importance of politics, ideology, identities and majority/minority relations within a federation; here, we have a sharp reminder that the often messy politics of a place needs to be "brought back into" studies of the state and federalism, and that the bloodless mechanisms of federalism are often shaped by people. Using the Quebec-Canada example, Noel's chapter acts as a sobering reminder of federalism's limitations.

The global perspective within the collection echoes not only Simeon's academic evolution, but that of the broader Canadian discipline, and speaks to the importance that Canadian scholars and practitioners of federalism, such as Simeon himself, have played in international debates and the evolution of federations around the world. This shift in focus is also present when one thinks of the collection as a *Festschrift*; a very interesting addendum by Simeon himself, "Reflections on a Federalist Life," personalizes some of his thinking as his scholarship (and some of his political views) evolved, and is both provocative and informative. Simeon's comments on "public engagement" and his role in the Meech Lake Accord remind readers that the scholar can be an activist as well. The anecdotes, stories, and, yes, even limericks contained in this addendum reveal a man of humour and commitment, and it is easy to see why so many scholars – both from Canada and abroad – were part of this tribute.

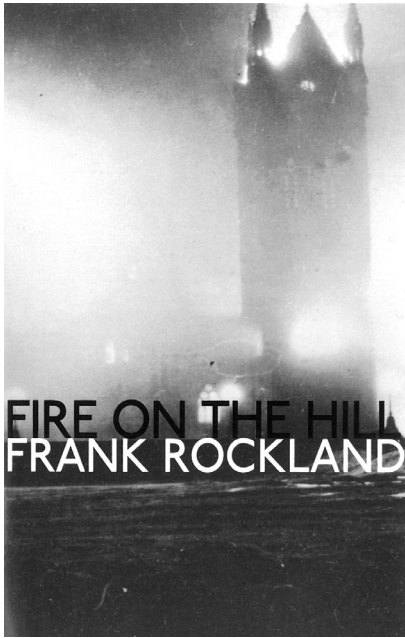
With a shift in so many disciplines in both the social sciences and humanities away from the study of Canada (though not away from Canadian-taxpayer supported funding), larger questions about the policy implications of no longer focusing solely upon Canada are salient. The broader question such a book asks, is: Where to now? Questions around Canadian federalism will continue to remain central to the evolution of this nation state, but with the retirement of so many giants of Canadian political science (along with Simeon, Peter Russell and Alan Cairns come to mind), is the discipline up to the task of exploring not only the global promise of federalism but federalism's ongoing evolution, right here at home? This collection, whose editors and contributors are ably taking up the task, suggests that the discipline, and the study of federalism – in all its forms and spaces – is indeed in good hands.

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Fire on the Hill, by Frank Rockland, Sambaise Books, Ottawa, 2013, 354 pp.

Sitting in the Library of Parliament I am somewhat amazed at how this piece of history survived the tragic fire that consumed the Centre Block of Parliament Hill on February 6, 1916. The quick action of the clerk "Connie" MacCormac, in ordering the closing of the large iron fire doors before evacuating, saved the library and its vital contents for future generations. But what really happened that evening? Was it mere carelessness of a smoker of cigars or was there something more sinister at play? Those are the questions



that Frank Rockland explores in a thrilling fictional tale of conspiracy, politics and spies.

The plot of the novel centres on Inspector Andrew MacNutt and his wife Katherine. As head of the Dominion Secret Police, Inspector MacNutt has been attempting to keep the Canadian border secure against a network of German saboteurs run out of New York by Captains Franz von Papen and Karl Boy-Ed. After the Americans declare von Papen *persona non grata* and order him back to Europe, the Germans send Count Jaggi to replace him via Canada. Operating under the guise of

the Belgian relief effort, Count Jaggi insinuates himself into the Ottawa establishment meeting regularly with Conservative Prime Minister Sir Robert Borden, Leader of the Official Opposition Liberals, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, future Liberal Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King and the Governor General. Jaggi, a womanizer with a particular fondness for those already married, grows closer to Katherine MacNutt in an attempt to learn her husband's plans against the saboteurs. The setting of the novel oscillates between Ottawa and New York and slowly builds towards the fateful night of February 6 where the Inspector, Mrs. MacNutt and the Count are all found in the reading room of the Centre Block where the fire is thought to have begun.

Rockland does an exceptional job of placing the reader in the historical Canadian context of the First World War. The reader will explore elements of the social and political changes that were underway during the period, such as the role of women in the war effort, the great divide between English and French Canadians about possible conscription, and the formation of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. In addition, the writer

does an extraordinary job in portraying the social customs and historical elements of the piece in a thoughtful and informative manner that aficionados of history will find compelling. My only critique of the novel is that the conclusion may leave the reader less than satisfied, as it makes little effort to adequately tie up the loose threads that are spun throughout the preceding 34 chapters. However, it does leave the writer with an opening to continue the development of these characters in a subsequent book.

Overall, *Fire on the Hill* is a weighty contribution for those who are fans of historical fiction, and specifically, those who enjoy speculating about historical events from the perspective of conspiracy. It is a novel that is true to its historical underpinnings and does not sacrifice fact for plot development. The book, which will keep readers engaged chapter after chapter, leaves readers with an urge to learn more about what life was like on the home front and about the key political and social figures at a turning point in Canadian history.

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