BOOK REVIEWS

David Goutor, *Guarding the Gates: The Canadian Labour Movement and Immigration, 1872-1934* (Vancouver, BC: University of British Columbia Press, 2007).

The immigrant workers who built the railroads and dug the coal were not always welcome in industrializing Canada. This is a useful study of the attitudes of organized labour leaders on the issue. In some respects this is a rather narrow study. Goutor does not set out to document the attitudes of the rank and file, the immigrant workers themselves, or, for the most part, radical organizations like the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW). He relies largely on union convention proceedings and the labour press. Within these parameters, the study is well conceived and researched and well situated in the literature on the subject and Canadian labour historiography more generally.

The parallels with the US are apparent, but there are also contrasts. As in the US, the Canadian movement's position on immigration was remarkably consistent over half a century between the 1870s and the 1930s: they were against it. They believed the newcomers would contribute to unemployment, raise the price of land, and reduce wages. But Labour also saw itself as a guardian of Canadian virtue, fearing that some of the immigrants, notably the Chinese, would degrade those famous Canadian morals and contribute to public health problems. In explaining the extreme reaction against the Chinese, Goutor notes that the Canadian workers formed their own impressions and positions in the 1880s at a moment when the US anti-Chinese movement was its height. They were subject not only to their own prejudices but those emanating from the US. The much larger proportion of immigrants in the US served as a constant threat to Canadians.

Employers and the state were equally consistent: they refused to enact measures against immigration, refused to enforce those that were enacted, and facilitated the process in a variety of ways. Their motivation was even more straightforward. Particularly in the era when state and capital were pursuing the trans-Canadian railroad and other vital infrastructural projects, the Chinese and later Italians, Galician Ukrainians, Doukhobors, and other immigrants provided a ready low-wage labour supply. The profits realized from these ventures went a long way toward assuaging any moral concerns. Perhaps the most remarkable aspect of Goutor's story is what little effect organized labour had on immigration legislation and policy: no Asian Exclusion Act, only a head tax on the Chinese, and no effective restrictive legislation until the Great Depression. The severe restriction came a decade later than a series of US laws that increasingly reduced the flow of immigration from 1917 until it was all but extinguished with the 1924 Native Origins Act. The contrast is remarkable and Goutor might have further developed the reasons for Canadian labour's striking failure to achieve any substantial restriction.

One possible part of the explanation is that the Canadian experience was also different with regard to the composition of the immigrant waves. Long after British emigration to the US had receded, Scots, Ulster people, and English workers were still coming in large numbers to Canada. This shaped the relative volatility of the reaction because these immigrants were harder to objectify. While they were certainly not welcome, they looked and acted more like most Canadians and often even had familial relations to them. They still caused unemployment and helped to lower wages, Canadian Labour argued, but they blended in more easily.

Canadian Labour could be quite nasty, but they never seemed to match U.S workers' penchant for anti-immigrant invective and violence. Riots ran the Chinese out of one industrial town and mining camp after another throughout the US West; the only serious Canadian riot caused embarrassment to many. Canadian labour turned a skeptical eye toward Italian and Slavic "new immigrants," but their reaction paled in comparison to that in the US where the newcomers were classed as distinctly inferior "races" and viewed with contempt by native born workers and organizers. As in the US, the so-called "new immigrants" were held to be un-organizable. Instead, they poured into unions and launched many of the revolts in both countries in the First World War era. In the US this caused employers and the government to lose a bit of their enthusiasm for immigration. Canada had its own Red Scare with a close equation between the foreign born and radicalism, but immigration soared in the twenties, even as it plummeted in the US American productivity might also have been significant. While the US economy was expanding throughout the twenties, the proportion of workers in manufacturing was actually shrinking. Canadian industries were relatively more labour-intensive and might have suffered more from any drastic reduction in the supply of unskilled workers.

When Canadian immigration was finally cut off in the early Depression, this had little to do with Labour's efforts and more to do with massive unemployment and increasing social unrest. Again, calls for immigration restriction intensified amidst economic decline. David Goutor's study of the roots of these sentiments reminds us that a great deal remains at stake in the challenge of creating a multi-ethnic labour movement.

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Jules Boykoff, *Beyond Bullets: The Suppression of Dissent in the United States* (Oakland: AK Press, 2007).

Having read extensively on the history of US government repression of political dissent, I received a rude awakening to the thing itself when, protesting the Republican National Convention in Philadelphia in 2000, I saw police round up dozens of demonstrators in the now-famous puppet house. They were put on