Roy Vogt, *Whose Property? The Deepening Conflict between Private Property and Democracy in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999).

Published posthumously through the efforts of family and colleagues, Roy Vogt's 1997 manuscript, and now book, attempts to reclaim the idea of property and to put it to work for those whose interests have been excluded from the privileged protection accorded that which is deemed "property."

Writing out of a tradition of political economy that seeks to understand economic phenomena in their social and political context, Vogt offers an attractive social democratic vision of property as a socially constructed phenomenon. He is committed to the market and its productive possibilities, but also to an equitable (though not necessarily equal) distribution of Canada's wealth and resources. Such a distribution is best achieved, he argues, in democratically accountable societies that recognize property rights not only in objects and land, but also in employment, education, and health care, and that expand property rights in ways that secure a healthy environment.

Vogt begins with an analysis of the proper balance between state and private property, and between state and private enterprise. He defends the state's role both to provide services and to regulate private industry against what he sees as an incipient attack on government which emerged in the 1980s, led by the political right in the UK and the US. "Canadian history," argues Vogt, "attests to the fact that strong but not overly intrusive governments can combine with a vigorous private sector to produce a prosperous and relatively fair and free society," (63) and he seeks to maintain such a balance.

In the book's second part, however, Vogt acknowledges that in important areas the Canadian record is wanting. In a chapter devoted to family law and the restrictions on women's property, he recognizes that important changes governing the division of property on marriage breakdown are largely the product of the last thirty years. Similarly, the unresolved questions of Native title in some parts of the country and the continuing failure of governments to honour existing treaties with First Nations represents a significant challenge to Canadian conceptions of property and fairness. Vogt also devotes most of a chapter to the rights of Canadians, as citizens, to a healthy environment, something for which the market as currently constructed pays insufficient attention.

Vogt's principal contribution comes in Part 3 where he considers "new property," particularly as it relates to the workplace. The problem, he argues, is the separation of property and labour: "shareholders have the property rights without directly engaging in any of the corporation's work, while employees who are undertaking the work have virtually no property rights." (146) What has emerged, as a result, is a confrontational class struggle between unions and management, and "little real sharing of property rights." (150) Vogt suggests the answer lies in greater democracy in the workplace, and he chides govern-

ments, managers and union leaders for their inability to share property and hence power: "there is not strong or general commitment by Canadian government or firms, or for that matter by labour unions, to increased participation by workers in matters traditionally considered the prerogatives of managers." (167)

In his final chapter, Vogt argues that property rights protection should attach to the new forms of property upon which Canadians depend. First among these is job security, but he also includes access to health care, education, and a minimum income, services that are largely funded out of general tax revenue by the various levels of government.

This book is directed towards an interested and informed public rather than an academic audience, but even for its intended readership the analysis is thin. In each of his chapters, Vogt picks too sparingly from a vast secondary literature. This is neither a comprehensive review, nor a study from one intimately familiar with a particular time and place and set of human relationships. The result is an account that is less focussed than it might be, and one that misses some basic issues involving property and democracy.

In his chapter on Aboriginal rights, for example, Vogt does not confront the difficult question of how to protect the property rights of minorities in a democracy. There are a number of ways to get at this question, but Vogt might have started with the basic observation that the democratically elected governments of Canadian settler societies have minimized and in some cases ignored the property rights of First Nations. Natives, as a result, have turned to the courts, with some success, in their struggle to prod governments towards just settlements. In one short paragraph Vogt mentions the constitutional protection for Aboriginal and treaty rights, but he provides no analysis of the judicial interpretation and whether it offers an appropriate balance between competing interests.

Native self-government raises other questions. How does one devolve effective self-government to First Nations while at the same time protecting the democratic and property rights of non-Natives living within a self-governing territory? Do the Nisga Treaty or the new Nunavut Territory (both of which Vogt mentions in passing) strike an appropriate balance? These are some of the questions that Vogt needed to address in a chapter on Aboriginal rights, in a book on property and democracy.

Vogt is also prone to unsubstantiated generalization about Canadian public opinion, and much of his analysis does not take into account academic work of the last decade. This is particularly true of the chapters on family law and Aboriginal rights where his sources and analysis end in the late 1980s.

More seriously, apart from a brief paragraph on page 45 Vogt does not discuss the growing impact of international business and international government. He uses a few European and American examples of democracy in the

workplace, but otherwise his analysis does not stray beyond Canadian borders. The demands of increasingly mobile capital and the pressures on domestic governments, however, increasingly come from abroad, and Vogt's prescriptive analysis of property and democracy needs to address the phenomenon of globilization, its dangers and its possibilities.

Although Vogt suggests a potentially attractive vision of enhanced property rights, the analysis is too fleeting to satisfy the specialist, and not engaging enough to capture a larger imagination. This is too bad because Vogt's efforts to reclaim the idea of property and to put it to work for those whose claims have not been accorded such privileged protection is long overdue.

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Michael Torigian, *Every Factory a Fortress: The French Labor Movement in the Age of Ford and Hitler* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1999).

Following the 1936 electoral victory of the Popular Front coalition, the French Third Republic faced the biggest wave of labour unrest in its history, with over 1.8 million workers on strike during June of that year alone. Given the heady atmosphere extant in the wake of an historic left-wing triumph, one might think that Marceau Pivert, leader of the pro-revolutionary faction of the French Socialist Party, captured the spirit of the time when he entitled one of his newspaper editorials "Everything Is Possible." But in fact, the situation was far less straightforward. *L'Humanité*, the organ of the French Communist Party (PCF), immediately countered that "Everything Is Not Possible." This encapsulated the new, "pragmatic" approach the party had adopted as a leading architect of the Popular Front, in stark contrast to its hardline revolutionary stance of only a few years earlier. Moreover, even Pivert's concrete demands were more limited than his rhetoric implied, concentrating upon wage increases and the election of workers' delegates.[1]

Insofar as the working class was concerned, then, there was a sharp contrast between the tremendous expectations aroused by the Popular Front, and the limited changes wrought by the government of the Socialist leader Léon Blum. To be sure, the Matignon Accords – hurriedly signed so as to end the strike wave – ushered in the 40-hour work week and significant wage increases for some. But by 1938, most historians of contemporary France agree, they had been undermined by continuing economic problems, a growing pressure to increase armaments output, a vigorous (and, many would add, vindictive) employer counter-offensive, and bitter political conflict.