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1973 *Plains Cree: A Grammatical Study*. Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society.

Peters, Evelyn (Editor): *Aboriginal Self-Government in Urban Areas: Proceedings of a Workshop, May 25 and 26, 1994*. Kingston, Ontario: Institute of Intergovernmental Relations, Queen's University, 1994, ISBN 0-88911-575-3 Paper CDN\$ 20.00.

Aboriginal Studies is a huge enterprise with endlessly proliferating subdivisions, yet, strangely enough, there has been little written on the issue of Aboriginal self-government in an urban setting. The editor of this volume brings together the views of government officials, Elders, academics, and community activists with regard to the issue. Specifically, the authors focus on Aboriginals in an urban context. There are a number of reasons for this interest, one being that nearly forty percent of the Aboriginal population now live in urban centres.

The first half of the book is devoted to the demography of urban Aboriginal people, Aboriginal urban organizations, and models of Aboriginal self-government in urban areas. The first chapter is a thorough demographic review of urban Aboriginals, using official Statistics Canada data. A variety of socio-demographic factors are identified. Information on location, age distributions and educational attainments are presented for major urban areas in Canada. The second chapter focuses on three cities (Edmonton, Toronto and Winnipeg) and discusses the results of a survey carried out in which the researchers tried to obtain information on the activities carried out by a number of Aboriginal organizations in these cities. The authors provide a detailed description of the structure and characteristics of these urban organizations which primarily serve the interests and needs of urban Aboriginal residents. The third paper in part one of the book explores models of self-government which might be employed by Aboriginal peoples. As the authors note, most models of self-government assume a land base and few analysts have looked at the possibilities and pitfalls of self-government in an urban context. The authors do not propose any specific form of self-government but rather outline the options and possibilities along with the limitations and costs each model raises.

Overall, the authors of the first three chapters identify issues which are important and necessary to resolve if Aboriginal self-government is to be meaningfully addressed. Unfortunately, the chapters are incomplete and

lack good analytical summaries of the issues. For example, the demographic data is comparative but only descriptive. The author needs to provide a more critical analysis of the data and how it relates to Aboriginal self-government. The chapter on urban Aboriginal organizations ignores a considerable body of previously published material on the subject matter, including both Canada and the United States. This information would have allowed the authors to assess their own data in a meaningful manner and contribute to a theoretical perspective. With regard to the paper on models, it needs to go further and assess proposed models from both a philosophical and practical perspective. For example, what are the limitations to having all 600 reserves create a separate model of self-government? And, as one might expect from a conference proceedings, the papers lack continuity and integration.

The second half of the book is devoted to short political, ideological, or philosophical statements on the issue of self-government by several Aboriginals (in a variety of administrative positions), community leaders (both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal), government officials, and academics. The value of this section is limited, although political/ideological statements are always useful in trying to interpret policy and programs. Unfortunately, the editor does nothing more than present the statements and in the end the reader is forced to draw his or her own conclusions.

The contents of the book are from a conference held at Queen's University. However, it is unclear if some of the papers or statements were produced independent of the conference and simply added to the edited book since they focused on the issue of urban Aboriginal self-government. These pieces detract from the overall thrust of the conference as they seem uninformed by the other participants and papers.

The book is a "first" in that it examines a thorny yet important issue facing Canadians today. Recent Supreme Court decisions regarding Aboriginal title and self-government reinforce the importance of this issue and underscore the necessity of dealing with the issue. In sum, the book provides an discussion of fundamental problems faced by Canadians in attempting to deal with the issue of Aboriginals and their quest for self-government.

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