

Obituary / Nécrologie: H.C. (Clare) Pentland

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H.C. (Clare) Pentland (1914-1978)

OBITUARY/NÉCROLOGIE:

H.C. (Clare) Pentland (1914-1978)

VERY FEW Canadian scholars have had such a profound impact upon the contemporary generation of political economists and labour historians as has Clare Pentland. It is a tribute to this influence that not only is this issue of *Labour/Le Travailleur* dedicated to his memory, but also the concurrent issue of the *Canadian Journal of Social and Political Theory* and the first issue of the new journal *Studies in Political Economy*. This is a rare tribute to a man who never published a book in his career and whose widely known and circulated published articles are relatively few in number. The reasons are several.

Although never published, his Ph.D. thesis, *Labour and the Development of Industrial Capitalism in Canada*, which has circulated widely in manuscript form, remains one of the seminal contributions in Canadian political economy. Much the same can be said of his unpublished study for the Task Force on Canadian Industrial Relations. His major articles ("The Lachine Strike of 1843," "The Role of Capital in Canadian Economic Development before 1875" and "The Development of a Capitalist Labour Market in Canada") are intellectual watersheds in the study of the evolution of Canadian capitalism. All of these, and his numerous other but lesser known writings, bear the imprint of an original and independent mind, a mind that bucked the restrictive intellectual orthodoxy of the cold-war years to bring a radical perspective that incorporated the best of the European Marxist critical tradition to the analysis of Canadian history.

But Clare Pentland's influence was not restricted to his writings. First and foremost in his mind was his devotion to teaching and to maintaining the university as a community of independent scholars. He loved teaching. This was manifested in his meticulous preparation of classes and in the many extra hours he spent with students, even after his illness robbed him of the strength to carry on the heavy load he habitually carried. Nevertheless, they were hours that he felt were necessary to bring students to the high standards he expected. And he could, on occasion be a very demanding critic, both of students and colleagues. He was equally dedicated to his university, spending untold hours on committees, on Senate, on the Board of Governors and on faculty association and CAUT business. But he could never be accused of hiding in the ivory tower. He chaired numerous labour arbitration boards, broadcast widely on labour issues, and contributed continuously to government and community reports and enquiries.

But in the final analysis, whether one knew him as teacher, colleague, scholar or friend, what Clare will be remembered for above all else was his dedication to principle, to intellectual integrity and to human welfare.

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