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The Origins And Extent Of Western Labour Radicalism: 1896-1919

Andrew Ross McCormack

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THE RISING AND EXTENT OF WESTERN LABOUR RADICALISM: 1896-1919

by

Andrew Ross McCormack

Department of History

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Faculty of Graduate Studies

University of Western Ontario

London, Canada

February 1973

Andrew Ross McCormack 1973
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Chapter I

Introduction

In the second half of the last decade of the nineteenth century, there occurred what W. A. Mackintosh has described as a "conjuncture of favourable circumstances" which was the basis for the great economic expansion of western Canada. Capital, American, British, European and Canadian, poured into the West to create a boom of unprecedented proportions. Before the outbreak of war in 1914, well over one million immigrants would go to the "last, best west." Many of these would take up farms and push the prairie agricultural frontier back to its furthest limits. Others would join in the newly increased exploitation of British Columbia's three great staples, fish, minerals, and timber. Still others of these immigrants would build the two new transcontinental railroads which an exuberant and unthinking Canada would throw across its breadth in these years to carry the wheat of the prairies and the products of the mountain province to the markets of Europe. And many of these immigrants would crowd into the sprawling working class quarters of Winnipeg, Calgary, Edmonton and Vancouver to build the new metropolises, to service and drive the great trains and to provide the myriad services essential to towns which had become cities overnight. During this period of frenetic growth and great change many peculiarly western attitudes and institutions emerged. One of these was the western labour movement which was expanded, strengthened and consolidated by the new economic forces.

The same economic forces that fostered the institutional
mining areas convinced party theoreticians that their revolutionary ideology was above criticism, and as a result, the SPC's prospects for expansion were reduced. Certainly the party's doctrines had only limited appeal in Winnipeg, the other important radical centre, where a political labourism on the British model developed. Neither did the extreme doctrines appeal to the eastern European radicals, who split the SPC when they left it to found the Social Democratic Party.

Despite divisions in the movement, the radicals made gains in the years immediately before the war. Unemployment and major defeats caused bitterness among the workers, a reaction which was carried into the war years. The radicals opposed the war on theoretical grounds, and when economic burdens became heavy the workers began to listen to their appeals. To challenge government war policies, the radicals launched their greatest political campaign in 1917. Defeat caused the left wing to begin looking for more direct means to effect changes in society, and by 1918 they had before them the example of the Russian revolution. Industrial unrest exacerbated tensions that had been developing in Canadian society since 1914. Consequently, the federal government became convinced that a revolutionary conspiracy was developing in the West. By the beginning of 1919 western society was polarized, and the stage was set for Canada's largest industrial upheaval.

...This upheaval began when the left-wing launched the West's greatest industrial union crusade and reached its climax in the spectacular series of sympathetic strikes which convulsed the region in the early summer. The federal government's massive response
broke the strikes, and the left wing was discredited. As a result, political labourism emerged triumphant in the twenties to lay the basis of the CCF.
Acknowledgement

A number of people provided valuable assistance in the preparation of this study. In particular I would like to acknowledge the help of Senator Eugene Foysey, Mr. Jay Atherton and the staff of the Public Records Section of the Public Archives of Canada, Mr. J. P. Whitridge, Librarian, Canada Department of Labour, Miss Clem Combaz, Provincial Librarian of Manitoba and Mrs. Sandra Zuk of the University of Winnipeg Library.

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Chapter I

Introduction

In the second half of the last decade of the nineteenth century, there occurred what W. A. Mackintosh has described as a  "conjunction of favourable circumstances" which was the basis for the great economic expansion of western Canada. Capital, American, British, European and Canadian, poured into the West to create a boom of unprecedented proportions. Before the outbreak of war in 1914, well over one million immigrants would go to the "last, best west." Many of these would take up farms and push the prairie agricultural frontier back to its furthest limits. Others would join in the newly increased exploitation of British Columbia's three great staples, fish, minerals and timber. Still others of these immigrants would build the two new transcontinental railroads which an exuberant and unthinking Canada would throw across its breadth in these years to carry the wheat of the prairies and the products of the mountain province to the markets of Europe. And many of these immigrants would crowd into the sprawling working class quarters of Winnipeg, Calgary, Edmonton and Vancouver to build the new metropolises, to service and drive the great trains and to provide the myriad services essential to towns which had become cities overnight. During this period of frenetic growth and great change many peculiarly western attitudes and institutions emerged. One of these was the western labour movement which was expanded, strengthened and consolidated by the new economic forces.

The same economic forces that fostered the institutional
growth of the trade union movement laid the basis for western
Canadian radicalism. Radicalism emerged because conventional craft
union tactics seemed ineffective in the booming, aggressive western
economy. When, at the turn of the century, the new unions attempted
to assert themselves for the first time, they were beaten and, in some
cases, broken by the owner-managerial class, and in subsequent years
that class steadfastly refused labour a larger share of the West's
prosperity or a larger role in the region's social and political life.
Significantly to the workers it seemed that government, mainly through
economic policies, supported the employers in the fight against the
unions. Among the workers there arose a sense of common grievance, if
not class solidarity. Many came to feel alienated from the basic ethic
of the society in which they lived. As a result, the radical ideas,
which many of the immigrants brought with them, took root in the
labour movement, became the creed of some of its most prominent and
dynamic leaders and inspired enough of the rank and file to give it a
special character in the West. Western radicalism had two basic
manifestations, a predilection for independent working class politics
and for militant industrial unionism. In the first two decades of the
twentieth century the West was the centre of the country's socialist
movement, and in subsequent years the region continued as a home for
radical political parties. Similarly after 1900 the West was the
scene of several challenges, more or less serious, to the conservative
craft unionism of eastern Canada; and in 1919 the workers of the
prairies and British Columbia joined in the greatest industrial
upheaval in the nation's history.

This thesis is a study of the various aspects of western
radicalism, its origins and institutional and ideological development, the interaction of the various radical organizations and the impact of those organizations on the larger labour movement. It is the study of an elite, in that only a small proportion of the workers became active in the radical movement. But the radicals were a highly important elite. They played a leading role in the larger labour movement; in times of crisis their influence produced developments of national significance; and in the long-run they made a substantial contribution to the continuing aberrant nature of western politics.

II

By the time the boom began trade union had been in existence in part of the West for thirty years, but they had not achieved any real strength. A bakers' union was operating in Victoria in 1859, and in the prosperous years at the beginning of the following decade the city's printers and shipwrights were organized. During the 1860's the coal miners of Vancouver Island also began their long and frustrating struggle with the operators. But British Columbia's labour movement really only began to grow with the start of construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway. At the centre of this growth were the Knights of Labour who established their first assembly at Nanaimo in 1883. By the time the Knights reached the peak of their strength in the late eighties, there had been at least twelve locals established in the province, and in 1887 six of these convened at New Westminster to form a District Assembly. With the emergence of Vancouver as the terminal of the CPR and the resulting growth of the port, unionism began to grow there in the late 1880's. The first trade to be
organized was the printers, in 1887, and other unions were soon established. The printers took the lead in the formation of the Vancouver trades council late in 1889, and during the nineties the organization was an active, though ineffective, presence in the city. The eighties had also seen an expansion of unionism in Victoria, and in 1890 that city's trades council was established.

Also in 1890, the Nanaimo coal diggers organized the Miners' and Mine Labourers' Protective Association which would gain some benefit for the men during its more than ten years of life. The fleeting promise of these years resulted in the formation of the Provincial Federated Labour Congress at a convention in Nanaimo again in 1890, but the organization was dead within a year.

The economic upswing of the early 1880's also resulted in the emergence of the labour movement in Winnipeg. A rival of the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters and Joiners was established in 1881 by a recently arrived British immigrant who had belonged to that organization in the United Kingdom. Within a short time the printers were organized, and the running trades unions, engineers, firemen and conductors, which were to become an important element in the city's labour movement, arrived from the East. In mid-1884 the Knights of Labour, who were to become "the dominant force" in Winnipeg trade union circles, established a local. The Knights, organized "many hundreds" of workers, and in 1886 a District Assembly composed of five locals was established. The Knights co-operated with the craft unions in the establishment of the West's first trades council during the winter of 1884-85 and the West's first labour journal, the Industrial News. Both were short-lived, however, victims of political intrigues.
and the recession of the late eighties. In 1889 a temporary and local economic upswing resulted in the establishment of a building trades council which was expanded into Winnipeg’s second trades council the following year, but this collapsed during 1892.  

In the late nineties the economic conditions which had forced the fledgling labour movement to remain weak and defensive changed, and the beginning of the West’s great boom created a climate highly favourable to trade union growth. In 1894 less than a dozen craft unions managed to establish Winnipeg’s third trades council, though in the next two or three years many of its affiliates had short or rather uncertain lives. A rapid expansion of the city’s labour movement began, however, in the last years of the nineties. Marked growth occurred in the building and metal trades, which were to be of much importance in the future, and even some unskilled and female workers were organized. In May 1899 The Voice, organ of the trades council, observed, “the past year has been the brightest and most inspiring in the history of organized labor Winnipeg has ever known.” By the following year, when there were twenty-eight functioning union locals in Manitoba’s capital, the Appeal to Reason approvingly described Winnipeg as “a city of unions.”  

After “the hard times” of the mid-nineties, when a number of unions collapsed, a similar expansion occurred in British Columbia. In the summer of 1896 the Vancouver trades council took on a new lease of life, and by the end of 1900 there were thirty-four functioning locals in the city, twenty-four of which had been established in the previous two years. In the words of one historian of labour in British Columbia, unions had become “an accepted part of the life of the city.”
Important new union growth was also underway at this time in the mines of the Kootenays and the Crow's Nest Pass.

These years also witnessed the emergence of the labour movement in the territories. In 1902 Calgary's railway unions took the lead in an organizing drive and the establishment of a trades council. That body had fourteen affiliates, a significant proportion of which were building trades unions but there were also a couple of organizations of unskilled workers. After 1903 several building trades unions were formed in Edmonton and these dominated the trades council which was established in the city late in 1905. There were at this time even some stirrings in what was to become the province of Saskatchewan, though these early unions were short-lived.

With this institutional growth the western labour movement was entering a more mature stage of its development and taking on the characteristics which would distinguish it over the next two decades. Miners, building tradesmen and railway employees emerged as the large, important blocs of organized workers in the West. The British character of the trade union movement was also established during these years. The immigrants from the British Isles, whose skills had become essential to rapid economic development, brought with them a good deal of union experience, and as a result, they quickly came to play a leading role in the western labour movement. For example, in 1899 the president of the Winnipeg trades council observed that, because newly arrived immigrants from the United Kingdom had been joining city unions, the composition of his organization had changed "almost completely" over the previous two years.

The new British leaders were at the head of a movement which,
because of the booming economy and increasing membership, was really confident for the first time. At the turn of the century The Voice demonstrated the new mood when it predicted, "the time is in sight when practically all labor will be ranged within organized ranks." It was a time when trades councils discussed the appointment of permanent officers and the acquisition of labour temples. The labour press emerged to speak for a movement now sufficiently strong to support its own organs. To the westerners the Trades and Labour Congress (TLC) decision to hold its 1898 convention in Winnipeg seemed to indicate that their movement had come of age. But the most significant manifestation of this confidence was the belief that, because of a tight labour market, the unions could gain higher wages and improved working conditions. During the early and middle nineties demands had accumulated, and The B.C. Workman of Victoria believed that it was "natural... that at such times of inflation the workers should ask for a share of this bounty." In the late nineties, a series of strikes intended to make up lost ground began. For a time the unions were able to back up their demands, but in the large, important fights which reached a spectacular climax in 1903, the workers were beaten.

III

Boom conditions produced a boom psychology. Never were the Canadian people more confident, more ebullient. The economic promise of Confederation was to be fulfilled and the twentieth century was to belong to them. Their proprietorship was to bring them wealth; it was, as Kenneth McNaught has so aptly said, "the day of the dollar." Economic expansion came to be regarded as an absolute good by the
people, none more than those in the west. Just as the nation as a whole aimed for the achievement of a "Big Canada" through the National Policy, each province, city and town strove for its own growth. In the heyday of free enterprise such growth could only be promoted by the entrepreneur, and the captain of industry, therefore, became the hero of the age. Any obstacle in the way of his schemes was contrary to the public good; equally, though perhaps paradoxically, any means to foster those schemes could only benefit the people in the long run.

In the late eighties and early nineties, during what Margaret Ormsby has called "the Great Potlach," the British Columbia government, made up of men convinced that the rapid development of the province's transportation system and primary industries must be encouraged at all costs, ceded to capitalists huge stretches of territories. This policy resulted in the growth and consolidation of great economic empires. Not only was this policy offensive to labour-men; it was dangerous because it confronted unions with employers who had substantial political as well as economic power. The greatest of the empires was that which the Duns muirs had been building on Vancouver Island since the 1860's, and James Dunsmuir ruled his mines, steamers and railway in a fashion worthy of any autocrat. In the isolated mining camps of the Island and the interior, class divisions seemed stark indeed, and there were few restraints imposed upon relations between workers and owners. Because they worked under dangerous unhealthy conditions, the miners fought hard to improve their lot, but their efforts were continually blocked. The operators regarded unions as illegitimate, restrictions on their freedom, and did not hesitate to use the most direct means, blacklists, spies,
scabs, thugs, to break the men's organizations. In some cases the men responded in kind, and the mining districts became literally "the battle ground of a civil war between capital and labor." The ruthless tactics of the mine operators, and of employers in other primary and construction industries, resulted in a heritage of hatred and class resentment in all parts of the province.

Although the governments of the prairie provinces were unable to create economic empires by alienating large tracts of land, those governments, and civic administrations, were totally committed to the growth ethic and prepared to do everything in their power to foster economic development. This attitude created a highly favourable climate for the aggressive, new businessmen of the prairies. In Winnipeg, Regina, Calgary, Edmonton and other plains cities, the economies of which were based mainly on forwarding, retailing and service functions rather than manufacturing, the employers had what H. C. Pentland has called a "commercial" outlook. In a way characteristic of merchants, they had "a short time horizon" and were most concerned with immediate profit margins and rapid growth. Anxious to gain their share of the West's new wealth, the owner-managerial class of the prairies struck out at any obstacle which restricted freedom of action in the expanding economy. Frequently inexperienced in the management of large numbers of men and with only a limited interest in long-term stable industrial relations, the commercial employers strenuously opposed the formation of unions and held up the open shop as the exemplary type of enterprise. Winnipeg's business community, for example, was founded upon mercantile principles and composed largely of self-made men who believed that
their own success demonstrated the validity of the prevalent individualism. The industrial world was new to them and though some might treat their employees in a paternalistic manner, these businessmen refused to recognize the men's unions which, they believed, could only undermine their authority in plants built with the sweat of their brows. While such an attitude was by no means peculiar to prairie cities, the prevalent boom psychology and the exuberance of an immature society ensured that an unusual ruthlessness would characterize the western employers' response to the collective demands of their workers. A British trade unionist described the western city as a place "where the scramble for dollars and the lack of any restraints of custom have tended to abnormally develop the wolfish instinct and to eliminate conscientious dealing with the man whose very necessities drive him into the market to sell all he possesses." Long accustomed to the security afforded by organization and orderly collective bargaining, the British workers who constituted the bulk of the western labour movement found the employers' dogmatic and ruthless opposition to unions profoundly disturbing.

Labour's anger increased when it appeared that provincial and in some cases municipal governments were reluctant to provide legislative protection for the workers. Apparently fearful that safety and sanitary regulations, age minima and other such protective devices would discourage investment, local politicians were slow to enact them. For example, a Winnipeg alderman declared it "an outrage" that the city should require contractors to pay a minimum wage. Consequently, despite constant pressure and annual petitions from
organized labour, the western provinces generally lagged behind the east in the passage of labour legislation. When, for example, British Columbia finally passed a Factory act in 1908, Prince Edward Island and Saskatchewan were the only other provinces that did not have similar legislation on the books. With good cause, the Workman could attribute such inertia to "the evil influence of rich men." 19

Significantly, even when labour standards legislation had been passed it was seldom properly enforced. In 1900 the Manitoba government passed an adequate Factory act, but in 1904 Premier Rodmond Roblin, under pressure from Winnipeg's business community, took the extraordinary step of actually reducing the age minima for child labour and increasing the maximum hours of work for women and children. After this time, Winnipeg trade unionists complained regularly and bitterly about the Conservative government's failure to enforce what remained of the law: "To hell with trade, business and profit, life and limb must be protected," stormed The Voice in 1908. As late as 1914 the secretary of the city's trades council could complain that the Factory act was "practically worthless through non-enforcement." 20

In British Columbia and Alberta, the mine owners regularly flouted the safety and sanitary regulations which they had always bitterly opposed, and provincial inspectors were apparently slow to bring them to book. 21 This made for dangerous conditions. Mine disasters occurred with awful frequency in the coal fields of the two provinces. The mines of Alberta and British Columbia were believed to be among the most dangerous in the world, and in 1917 the findings of a University of Alberta research team confirmed the validity of that fearsome reputation. 22 Such conditions outraged all workers; the
Vancouver trades council charged that in its administration of the mining laws the provincial government had displayed "a brutal and callous disregard for the safety of the miners." 

While there were clearly a number of factors which shaped the attitudes of Saskatchewan's workers, the fact that they dealt with a sympathetic provincial government which could not realistically hope for significant industrialization in the province undoubtedly contributed to their relative moderation. In other provinces, particularly Manitoba and British Columbia, workers were confronted with governments which were committed to economic expansion, even seemingly if part of the cost had to be broken bodies and fatherless children. Naturally the workers resented such a set of priorities. The Winnipeg trades council certainly spoke for many westerners when it charged that the whole problem of provincial labour standards legislation demonstrated "proof of class discrimination in the administration of law." 

Most important in breeding dissatisfaction in the western labour movement were the economic policies of the federal government. The operation of the National Policy, the grand expression of the "Big Canada" ethic, adversely affected trade unionists across the West, and at the same time contributed to the dichotomy in the Canadian labour movement. While the eastern trade unionist could recognize the advantages of tariff protection and large-scale immigration, and thus recognize a community of interest with his employer, the westerner could recognize neither. Although most of them were recent immigrants, western trade unionists were disturbed by the continuing influx of new people into the West. Each March, when
the immigrant trains began to deliver their human cargoes, labour leaders were faced with the difficult task of organizing the newcomers in an, at least temporarily, over-stocked job market, and as a result, each year the bargaining power of the unions was for a time reduced. "The unprecedented immigration annually tends to unsettle the stability of the minimum living wages of skilled artisans," complained a prominent Moose Jaw workingman in 1907. Significantly, most seriously injured by the annual influx were the building trades unions, which carried great weight in the urban trades council, and the miners. Consequently, the issue of immigration was always to the fore; for example, immediately after it had adopted a constitution, the founding meeting of the Saskatoon trades council in 1909 demanded that a check be placed on immigration.  

Except in the case of Asiatians, western trade unionists never demanded a total curtailment of immigration. Rather they believed that most of the newcomers should go onto the land. While this was the stated objective of federal policy, it is clear that many immigrants, labour-men believed "the great bulk" crowded into the urban job market. It is equally clear that employers favoured immigration as a means whereby a large labour pool could be created, trade union effectiveness reduced and, thus, wages beaten down. Thomas Shaughnessy, for example, believed that "immigration to this country is necessary to keep the workers disciplined."  

On the prairies a fear quickly developed that eastern European immigrants, generally grouped under the denomination Galicians, constituted a danger to organized workers. In 1899 a leader of the Lethbridge miners' union warned that Clifford Sifton
would destroy trade unions by his policy of introducing "hordes of
half-civilized people who can live on... a crust and an onion."
Soon after the Winnipeg trades council, alarmed by the increased
number of eastern Europeans in the city's labour market, formally
protested to Laurier that the immigrants, because they were
"accustomed to a mode of life which enables them to work cheaply,"
represented "unfair and dangerous competition" for "the Canadian
workman."30 There was, at the same time, an early recognition that
"the best way to protect labor is to protect [the Galicians]." And
in the Alberta coal fields, where there was a large number of eastern
Europeans who were frequently used as strike-breakers, the United Mine
Workers made a special effort to organize the Slavs.31 Such an effort
was unusual, however, and most eastern Europeans remained outside the
ranks of the organized workers. This was partly the result of the
inability of the English-speaking labour movement to communicate
with the Slavs, and partly the result of bigotry. In any case, outside
the unions the Galicians worked for lower wages and, thus, represented
a continuing threat to the union standards.

An even greater threat to the workers of British Columbia
was the Asiatic, and the resentment caused by this threat was
intensified by racism. The Asiatics, accustomed to an abysmally low
standard of living, were prepared to work for extremely meagre wages.
They were made even more attractive to employers by the fact that they
remained unassimilated and therefore virtually impossible to organize.
Opposition to Asiatic importation - British Columbia labour-men never
considered it immigration - had been one of the fundamental drives
in the province's labour movement from the beginning. In the Island
coal fields Chinese coolies were used extensively, and their presence made the maintenance of a viable union virtually impossible. The refusal of the Japanese to stand by the union, prevented the Fraser River salmon fishermen from winning their great strike against the canneries in 1900. And although unionism persisted in the industry after that year, its effectiveness was substantially reduced by tensions between white and Japanese fishermen. By 1910 Hindoos had become a threat to white workers in the third of the province's great staple industries, forestry. The Asiatics were not confined, however, to primary industries; by the turn of the century they were being employed in the urban building trades and secondary manufacturing. For example, the number of journeymen tailors working in Victoria fell from one-hundred and twenty to forty after Chinese were employed in the city's clothing shops. Anger among British Columbia's workers grew with each successive incoming wave of Asiatics, and in 1909 when the Grand Trunk Pacific was demanding new supplies of coolie labour, the Vancouver trades council warned Laurier, "we will not peacefully stand for the proposed further wholesale importation of oriental labor in this province at the behest of merciless profit-seeking railway contractors." Violence frequently flared against the Asiatics; the Vancouver race riots of September, 1907 were only the most spectacular example. Such animosity was not confined to British Columbia. In the last years of the nineties Chinese began appearing in large numbers on the prairies. The Voice called them a "horde of human-framed vermin"—and thereafter the trade unionists of Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba supported the coast workers in their fight against Asiatic importation.
Significantly, however, the westerners believed that the attitude of eastern trade unionists was "one of utter indifference" simply because they did not face the Asiatic threat; this indifference, the Vancouver trades council suggested, could be quickly remedied by shipping the West's Asiatics east. 37

It was not only non-British or non-white immigration that western trade unionists found objectionable. The British-born workers were only slightly less opposed to the unregulated flow of people from the United Kingdom into urban labor markets than they were to the coming of the Galicians and Asians. Many of the British immigrants were committed to the principles of trade unionism and immediately joined the movement in the West, something which labour leaders regularly urged them to do. 38 Other newly arrived trade unionists, however, did not comport themselves in the best traditions of the movement. For example, Yorkshire iron workers, scabbing on Winnipeg machinists during a bitter 1906 strike, established a branch of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers and then audaciously marched in the Labour Day parade. 39 Also it was significant that only a small fraction of the British working class was organized and that organization was concentrated in a few industries. 40 It was highly unlikely that the pauper immigrants, those aided by the Salvation Army for example, would have much trade union experience and, therefore, few compunctions against taking work at low pay. British pauper immigration was a constant concern, and Kier Hardie reported that, in western trade union circles, no Englishman was as unpopular as the Cockney. 41

Western labour-men attempted to discourage British
immigration by the use of several expedients. Their most important
effort was mounted when, in 1907, the Winnipeg trades council
succeeded in having the TLC despatch W. B. Trotter, a Vancouver
typographer, to the United Kingdom to work as an anti-immigration
agent. During his three-year mission Trotter was able to do a
good deal to call into question Canadian immigration propaganda, a
result which delighted western labour men. Indeed so satisfied were
the westerners with Trotter's work that they were quick to charge
that his recall in 1910 by the Congress Executive was yet another
example of callous disregard for western problems by the eastern-
dominated TLC. 42

In the final analysis, however, western Canadian trade
unionists had no doubt as to who was responsible for their plight;
"the immigration policy of the government," said The Independent,
"is rotten." 43 Labour-men consistently denounced the federal programs
of bonused or assisted immigration which in 1908 the secretary of the
Edmonton trades council called, "a deadly peril to [the] country."
It was pernicious that public funds should be used to foster a
condition which resulted in the debasement of Canadians; immigration
must be a "spontaneous and voluntary movement." 44 If the western
trade unionists were angered by the federal government's promotion
of the trans-Atlantic immigrant trade, they were even more incensed by
its refusal to curtail the trans-Pacific trade. For example, the
Treaty of 1908, under which the Japanese government was allowed to
"regulate emigration to Canada," was denounced by the Vancouver trades
council as a "monument of treason to white labor" and brought forth
a storm of protest from across the West. 45 Laurier's government
caused even greater resentment by its policy of disallowing British Columbia's anti-oriental legislation. The analysis that the western labour movement made of the whole immigration issue was highly significant. The Vancouver trades council spoke for the West when it declared, "it is neither the duty nor the function of a government which pretends to represent fairly, all interests and all classes, to interfere in the way it is doing in the matter of labor supply."

The anger of the western workers was intensified by that other fundamental of the National Policy, the tariff. As the turn of the century western trades councils and their eyers consistently condemned Laurier's failure to make any significant tariff reductions. In part this grew out of the British-born trade unionists' belief in the value of free trade. But more important was what the workers regarded as the economic realities of life in western Canada. They believed that the tariff forced them to pay artificially high prices for the necessities of life. "What is the meaning of the tariff ranging from twenty per cent up to fifty or a hundred per cent on nearly everything that the working man has to consume," demanded the Winnipeg trades council indignantly.

Certainly western labour-men, unlike those in the East, believed they derived no benefit whatever from the tariff and the prospect of the elimination of protection, therefore, held no fears for them. Very few worked in the protected manufacturing sector, and most were highly mobile. The great majority of them had crossed the Atlantic in search of work, and once in the West many of them travelled about on both sides of the border looking for higher wages. A Victoria trade unionist remarked, "if I were to leave here and go to Frisco and
Seattle, I have no trouble; I simply take my travelling card."51

But the western workman's anger at the tariff was caused most by his basic sense of outrage at what appeared to be the inequitable, iniquitous nature of federal economic policies. "There was only free trade in labour," that which he had to sell. "The wealthy employer have been aided to buy their labor at the cheapest possible rate and sell their goods dear, while the laborer has been compelled to sell his labor cheap and to buy their [sic] goods dear," stormed the organ of the Winnipeg trades council. The operation of this aspect of the National Policy grossly offended the basic egalitarianism of the labour movement. A Vancouver man sneered, "he who upholds the competitive system by his voice and vote, and goes fearlessly into the field and accepts its consequences without a murmur might pass muster as a man, but he who... gives it his support, goes into the arena and emits baby-squalls for protection from its consequences, should be compelled to suck the sugar-tit of every decent man's contempt."52

Western Canadian workers were not opposed to economic growth per se but to economic growth which appeared to be achieved, in large part, at their expense. Around them the workers could see evidence of the new prosperity - gals, automobiles, stately houses - but it was not a prosperity in which they shared. In 1908 surveying the growth of the West, a Vancouver man wrote, "the fatness of these halcyon years are [sic] not sticking to the ribs of the working class, who produced it. The condition of the working class of Canada is not only relatively but absolutely worse than it was twelve years ago."53 There was at least some truth to this. In the first place it was frequently difficult, both for the new arrival and the resident of
some years, to find work in the immigrant-glittered urban labour markets of mid-summer. As a result it was not unusual for skilled workers to be forced to take menial, low-paid jobs or go to the hated construction camps. And always western labour-men had before them the haunting prospect of unemployment. This resulted in part from the constant inflow of immigrant labour and in part from the cyclical nature of the West’s resource-based economy. Local recessions were frequent, but in 1927 and 1930 and after 1912 the whole region experienced major depressions and concomitant wide-spread unemployment. In 1903 a group of recent British immigrants living in Edmonton complained that they had had "the bitterest experience of our lives—to know the actual want of food and to be unable to earn the money to live independently as men should." In addition, it seems that most workers experienced no increase in their standard of living during the period under review. While more sophisticated analytical techniques may produce different findings, economists generally agree that before 1920 there was "a dismal movement in real wages," a condition produced in large part by the nature and dimensions of immigration. For example, the highly militant miners were actually in a less favourable wage position in 1910 than they had been in 1900. There can be no doubt concerning the workers' perception of the problem; throughout the period under review they clearly believed that their wages were not keeping pace with prices. In 1903 The Bond of Brotherhood observed, "everyone knows that the cost of living has gone up by leaps and bounds and it is with extreme difficulty that working men make ends meet." In 1907 The Voice complained, "the increase in the cost of commodities has not been
offset by an equal increase in wages." In 1912, after considering the "phenomenal and persistent rise in the cost of living," the British Columbia Federationist concluded that the resulting decline in real wages had been "probably the most annoying fact" of the workers' lives in recent years. Their view of provincial and federal economic policies provided the workers with a ready explanation for their failure to participate in the prosperity. "In no place in the world are the responsibilities of modern industrial growth and development being thrust upon the masses as in Western Canada," charged a Vancouver union leader.

By their very presence in the West, the immigrant workingmen demonstrated their sense of hope. They had left their homelands and had come to what they commonly called "a new country" in the belief that they could escape the conditions they had known and thereby improve the quality of their lives. For example, a British immigrant living in Calgary explained that his countrymen came to Canada in the hope that they could "enjoy life free from the demoralizing tendencies of modern civilization, [free] from the long hours of labor for very little pay ... for less than a living wage [and thus] raise the standard of living so that all that is good for men and women shall be within their reach." Most quickly learned, however, that they could not escape the realities of modern industrial society. After three years in Winnipeg a British trade unionist wrote, "the class lines do exist here, even though they are not quite as plainly marked as back home." Their disappointment was made the more keen because they felt cheated. A Victoria man complained that British Columbia was indeed the "land literally flowing with milk and honey" for which he
had hoped, but because the province was "cursed with capitalism, mushroom aristocracy, plutocracy, Asiatic labor, etc.," the workers could not benefit from its riches. 59

Dissatisfaction and disappointment bred conditions favourable to the growth of radicalism. A recurring image in the western labour press was that of the immigrant worker who, having fled from industrialism in the old world only to be exposed to its ravages again in the new, now turned to face and fight his tormentor - capitalism. Men who had crossed the Atlantic only to experience disillusionment and disappointment, but who retained the courage and drive which had caused them to start a new life, more quickly protested against abuses in society. Most were young; most were without family responsibilities; and most were highly mobile. Consequently, some workers felt that they had a relatively slight investment in the constituted order and were inclined to press for changes in it. It was significant that in the West such moderating social institutions as the family and the church were less highly developed than in the older societies from which the workers came.

Consequently, in the same way that employers had few constraints imposed upon them in an immature society, the workers' dissatisfaction was less tempered by customary or institutional restraints. Equally important, radicalism was part of the cultural baggage which many of the immigrants brought with them, whether from eastern Europe, the United States or Britain, and their former experience did much to shape their response to the new environment. Because of the central role that the British immigrants played in the labour movement, their attitudes and experience were most important in the development of
western Canadian radicalism. The major intellectual influence on the 
trade union movement which the British artisan left to go to central 
Canada in the middle of the nineteenth century had been Samuel Smiles, 
but the immigrants who went to the West left a movement in the United 
Kingdom inspired by Robert Blatchford, Kier Hardie and the principles 
of "new unionism." Like many other phenomena in the nation's 
history, western labour radicalism grew out of the impact of British, 
American and European ideas upon the Canadian environment.

Because their unions seemed ineffective in the face of the 
employers' intransigence and because government seemed indifferent or 
hostile, some workers turned to political action. This was a natural 
response. If the unions could not achieve higher wages and shorter 
hours, these objectives could be effected through legislative action. 
Immigration could be similarly regulated. Precisely such reforms 
were demanded by the first workers who entered the political arena and 
continued to be advocated in subsequent years by moderate labour 
politicians, called at the time labourites. A militant and important 
minority of the workers, the socialists, rejected the possibility of 
reforming the present order and called for revolution. But whether 
labourite or socialist, the working class political parties were 
largely British in character. For example, Kier Hardie found it a 
pleasure to address a Winnipeg rally because he was a "to meet again 
the men and women who [have] fought for years in the old country the 
battle of labour's emancipation." There were a few important 
Americans, eastern Canadians and eastern Europeans in the western 
radical movement, but the great majority of the leaders were British. 
The same appears to have been true of the rank and file. Experience
in their homeland made British immigrants, the socialists said, "the very best material to talk to." 60

The other manifestation of western radicalism, militant industrial unionism, was a second response to essentially the same set of circumstances. Indeed, it resulted to some extent from the first response. Crusades for great radical unions took place in the West partly because socialists played an important role in the region's labour movement. The socialists believed that such unions were a necessary and inevitable response to developing capitalism and were the dynamic in every industrial union crusade from that of the Socialist Trades and Labour Alliance to the One Big Union. But more important there were real economic reasons which caused the workers to see hope in larger unions. The alignment of employers and government, which pushed some workers to political action, reduced the effectiveness of craft unions and caused a great many more workers to turn to industrial unionism, because it appeared to be a better weapon. A similar response occurred in the western United States, and it was significant that workers in the primary industries of British Columbia, the birthplace of industrial unionism in the Canadian West, moved freely back and forth across the border carrying ideas. In times of economic crisis western workers looked to industrial unions because they believed that only these would be sufficiently powerful to meet employers backed by the state. This response always represented a challenge to the TLC and the American Federation of Labour, because industrial unions violated the craft principle of the two congresses and, thus, were rebel, or dual, organizations. But the westerners, estranged from their eastern
brethren by the operation of the National Policy, never hesitated to make this challenge in times of crisis.
Notes


2. Labor Day Souvenir (Winnipeg, 1896); The People's Voice, Sept. 1, 1894 and The Voice, Sept. 13, 1907 and May 23, 1913.

3. The People's Voice, June 16, 1894; The Voice, May 19, 1899 and Jan. 5, 1900 and Appeal to Reason, April 28, 1900.


8. The Voice, Jan. 17, 1902.


12. For a detailed discussion of the conditions fostering radicalism in mining see Chap. 3 and 6.

13. The British Columbia Federationist, June 27, 1913.


17. The Voice, Aug. 4, 1911.


20. The Voice, Feb. 5, 1904; June 18, 1909 and Feb. 6, 1914.


25. The Voice, May 9, 1902.

27. The Voice, April 2, 1909.

28. Ibid., March 15, 1907 and April 7, 1911; The Bond of Brotherhood, July 17, 1903 and Donald Avery, "Canadian Immigration Policy and the 'Foreign' Navy," paper read before the convention of the Canadian Historical Association, Montreal, 1972, p. 1.


31. The Voice, June 16, 1899 and McMillan "Trade Unionism in District 18," p. 44. Similarly unions tried to organize White and Asiatic immigrants in the British Columbia mining industry.


33. The Western Wage-earner, May, 1910.

34. The B.C. Workman, May 20, 1899 and Western Socialist, Jan. 24, 1903.

35. PAC, King Papers, MG 26, J1, Vol. 12, Pettipiece to Laurier, Sept. 16, 1909.


38. Reynolds, British Immigrant, p. 163 and British Columbia Federationist, Dec. 9, 1911.


41. The Voice, Oct. 18, 1907.

42. Ibid., March 5, 1909; June 18, 1909 and April 21, 1911 and The Western Wage-earner, April, 1909.

43. The Independent, Jan. 31, 1903.

44. Laurier Papers, Vol. 791K, Burgess to Laurier, Jan. 1, 1907 and The Trade Unionist, March, 1908 and April, 1908.

45. The Trade Unionist, Jan., 1908; The Voice, Jan. 24, 1908 and Laurier Papers, Vol. 592, Abbot to Laurier, Sept. 27, 1907.


47. University of British Columbia, Vancouver Trades and Labour Council Minutes, March 21, 1907 (hereafter cited Vancouver TLC Minutes); The Trade Unionist, Feb., 1908; and The Voice, April 17, 1903.


50. The Bond of Brotherhood, Nov. 14, 1903; The Trade Unionist, April, 1903 and The Voice, Aug. 4, 1899.


53. Western Clarion, Oct. 17, 1905.

54. The Voice, Jan. 17, 1908.


56. The Bond of Brotherhood, June 19, 1903; The Voice, March 8, 1907 and British Columbia Federationist, Nov. 22, 1917.

57. The Voice, June 9, 1911.
58. The Bond of Brotherhood, Jan. 9, 1904.

59. The Voice, Dec. 24, 1897 and Western Socialist, April 10, 1903.

60. The Voice, Aug. 2, 1907 and Western Clarion, July 27, 1912.
Chapter II

The Emergence of Western Canadian Socialism

In the years before 1904 when the Socialist Party of Canada was established, the foundations of western Canadian socialism were laid, and it had its first growth. Under the impact of immigration and as a result of the economic and social realities of life for western Canadian workers, it grew to assume an important place in the West's labour movement. This growth first required an institutional base which was laid initially in British Columbia by eastern Canadian and American socialists, and later with more difficulty in other parts of the West. It also entailed a move beyond the reformism of an earlier time and the assumption of a position distinct from the labour parties in working class politics. By the time the fledgling socialist movement had established a secure and separate organization and had thus reached the take-off stage, the conflict which disrupted western industrial relations in the first years of the century ensured its survival and growth. Maturity came with growth, and the socialists began to evolve a position independent of the American and British parties which had played an important role in the emergence of the western movement. This maturity was most conspicuous in British Columbia, the economy of which provided a climate especially favourable to the growth of radicalism, and the province became the socialist centre of the country. That socialism should first come of age on the coast is important because, as a result of quite remarkable gains, revolutionary doctrines came to be characteristic of the
movement there and these were the doctrines which would be the distinguishing feature of the Socialist Party of Canada.

II

For the radical movements in eastern Canada, the United States and, to a lesser extent, Britain, the decade of the 1890's was one of ideological transition from the reformism which had characterized the 1880's to the socialism which would characterize the new century. Because it had direct and important links to each of these movements, the ideology of the western Canadian radicalism, to the extent that it can be said to have developed an ideology, was changing in the 1890's. When, during the middle years of the 1880's, the Knights of Labour in Winnipeg and Vancouver and Labour parties in other British Columbia cities took independent political action, their platforms were reformist in character. For western radicals, progress away from their early reformism was neither direct nor rapid, and as a result throughout the decade of the nineties, a variety of solutions to society's ills were considered in the West. This gave to western Canadian radicalism an imprecise, ill-defined quality, a quality well illustrated by the eclecticism of the Winnipeg Voice which began publishing in 1894. From the outset the paper, which circulated widely throughout the West, was open to any point of view and published material from a broad spectrum of radical sources, from Bryanite to anarchist. But while it was possible for an observer to say without contradiction in 1895 that "all reformers are socialists," by the last years of the decade such a statement would have been quickly denied by the socialists who,
like their counterparts in the United States and Britain, were
taking up the positions of command in the radical movement.²

Reformism remained an important aspect of radicalism, and
that which was preached during the 1890's had generally as its
components the single tax on land, direct legislation and monetary
reform, all measures which, while they looked to more or less
sweeping changes in society, stopped far short of revolution.

Undoubtedly the most prominent of these reforms was Henry George's
single tax. In Progress and Poverty, published in 1879, George
argued that the value of land was determined by natural and social
causes from which no single individual ought to profit; by
taking all gains from land equal to its full rental value, the
unearned increment, monopoly would be destroyed and the land
thrown open for the use of those who would develop it
productively. George's doctrine enjoyed great popularity in the
United States during the 1880's and became one of the basic planks
in the Populist platform. It enjoyed a similar vogue among some
western Canadian radicals during the 1890's and beyond. The
Winnipeg Voice, a great admirer of George and a stalwart advocate
of his doctrine which it praised as a "modern and broad-minded"
means by which to end the robbery of the people, called upon the
Winnipeg trades council to advocate the land tax. Vancouver had
an active Single Tax Club which held regular propaganda meetings.
Many western reformers agreed with a Winnipeg man when he promised
that the implementation of the single tax would bring an end to
"panics, want, poverty, lack of employment [and] starvation."³

Another important component of the reformers' program was
direct legislation, the initiative, referendum, recall and
proportional representation. The various direct legislation mechanisms were anti-party devices which had special appeal to radicals who faced very real institutional obstacles in their drive to attain independent political representation. The movement for direct legislation assumed sizeable proportions in the United States in the second half of the decade, and the leader of the American movement, Elwood Pomeroy, lectured in western Canada. The Voice, which began publishing a lengthy series on direct legislation in mid-1898, was a persistent advocate of the reform which it promised would amend a "stupid, unfair, inefficient and dishonest" electoral system structured to ensure elitist control. But direct legislation had an even greater appeal to western radicals because it was "the key to all other reforms." In addition, its advocacy allowed for an expression of the populist egalitarianism which was a part of western Canadian radicalism. The initiative and referendum could provide the sober second thought which the "interests" claimed the Senate provided, and therefore, that "very useless adjunct of our governmental system" could be abolished.

Clearly the populism of the American West was an important influence on western Canadian reformism, and this influence was perhaps most dramatically demonstrated by the issue of monetary reform. Even before Bryan fought the election of 1896 on the emotional and sectional issue of free silver, The Voice had been critical of the monetary system; in 1895 a columnist wrote, "in no more hideous shape, or dangerous, does the loathsome reptile of speculative robbery appear than when it takes possession of the earnings of labor, his means of exchange,
his money, and calls itself the National Banking system." But in
1896 western radicals became caught up in the enthusiasm of the
Bryanite campaign. None were more enthusiastic than the members
of the American Railway Union (ARU) founded by Eugene Debs, who
supported Bryan in 1896; the Vancouver local of the ARU called
upon the trades council to advocate the free coinage of silver
while a member of the Winnipeg local suggested that monetary
reform could be achieved simply through an unlimited expansion of
the money supply.5

Reformism, with its important populist base, continued
to appeal to the western Canadian labour movement, but after the
1890's it was largely ignored by the socialists, the radical
vanguard. It was, however, an important aspect of developing
western radicalism; The B.C. Workman of Victoria suggested in
1899 that the socialist movement on the coast was growing out of
the single-tax movement.6 Certainly reformism provided an
ideological base for independent labour politics in the West,
which in turn was important in the development of socialism.

By the middle years of the 1890's a tradition of
independent political action was firmly established among the
workers of Winnipeg and the cities of British Columbia. The
foundation had been laid by the Knights in the mid-1880's and
by 1892 the Vancouver trades council was calling upon the Trades
and Labour Congress (TLC) to launch a national labour party.7
The decade saw the workers in Winnipeg and the coast province
fight major political campaigns, and virtually all of these
were conducted on reformist platforms. One example will suffice;
between 1894 and 1896 a good working relationship between the
Vancouver trades council and a group of local reformers led by
the Reverend George R. Maxwell produced what Phillips has called
"the first really 'permanent' labour-minded party in the
province." Its platform, which The Voice described as "a radical
but a just" one and upon which it elected a Vancouver carpenter,
Robert MacPherson, to the provincial House in 1894 and Maxwell
to the federal House in 1896, contained, in addition to purely
local planks, demands for the single tax, direct legislation and
government ownership of utilities, all as a means of providing
workers the "full product of their toil." Not until the last
years of the decade would the influence of the socialists begin
to push the labour parties away from the purely reformist
position.

Another important force in the western radicalism of
the nineties was Christian socialism. The crusade to achieve the
Kingdom on earth had a significant impact on all aspects of
western Canadian life, as it did on life in eastern Canada; the
United States and Britain. From the outset writers in The Voice
based their criticism of capitalist society on Christian ethics.
In 1894 one regular contributor wrote, "the more the people know
about Christ the more they feel the injustice of their position."
The basic tenet of Christian socialism was that the development
of capitalist society had taken it away from the teachings of
Christ, and it was the intention of the exponents of the doctrine
to reconstitute society by "bringing into active operation the
golden rule." The Voice regularly presented this theme. Society's
condition represented a "most flagrant and practical violation"
of the law of "the Great Social Democrat of Galilee"; competition
was a sin and only through co-operation could a truly Christian society be achieved. The work of American Christian socialists like George D. Herron and Herbert N. Casson, who lectured in Winnipeg in 1898, was regularly published in the paper. Local clergymen also played an important role in the movement. In Winnipeg the Reverend Hugh Pedley, a Methodist who had read Marx, was a regular speaker at labour meetings; he told an audience in 1896 that socialism was the force which "will drive us back to Christ." Clergymen were also active in the radical movement in British Columbia. Maxwell led the fight for labour political representation in the middle of the decade. And in the late 1890's the Rev. Elliott S. Rowe, a Methodist who had been active in reform circles in eastern Canada, preached Christian socialism in Victoria; a prominent radical believed "Mr. Rowe's name will go down in history as one of the moulders of a socialistic government in this province and in America."  

One of the most interesting manifestations of Christian socialism in the West was the communitarian movement. Although developments in Canada had their roots in the Christian reform tradition, the movement was immediately inspired by the last great wave of utopian colonies in the United States during the nineties. In 1895 a group of Manitoba farmers began planning the establishment of a co-operative colony because "the present competitive social system is one of injustice and fraud and directly opposed to the precepts laid down by our Saviour for the guidance of mankind," and by autumn of 1898 the colony of the Harmony Industrial Association was in full operation in the Qu'Appelle River Valley. An even more important community,
because of the role later played by its members in the development of socialism in the West, was that in British Columbia, Ruskin, named for the major American colony in Tennessee. In 1896 a group of radicals inspired by *The Coming Nation*, published at Ruskin, Tennessee, began to plan a colony, and by 1898 the colony, established "for the purpose of spreading the grand truths that were taught by our Lord Jesus Christ," was ready to begin its mission. Yet another colony was projected in southern Alberta by Thomas Farrar of Lethbridge because "co-operation or socialism seek above all things to establish Christ's golden rule, human brotherhood, in all the relations of life, while ... competition and individualism [are] the source of all the hatred, malice and misery in the world." Farrar, who sold salvation for only "one dollar per month or $100 down," was undoubtedly the most colourful and aggressive of the communitarians, but he failed to establish his colony because of Dominion homestead regulations and had to be satisfied with founding a vigorous co-operative movement in southern Alberta. More a means to escape the evils of society than to end them, the colonies were by their very nature utopian. This quality was well illustrated in the writing of Farrar who argued that, because trade unions had proved ineffective, the colony would be "an ark ... in the deluge that certainly must come." Both colonies and Farrar's efforts were associated with the Canadian Co-operative Commonwealth patterned on an American model. The organization whose president was J. C. Spence of London, Ontario, was a Christian socialist association which advocated co-operation and reformism. One of the many locals which the Canadian Co-operative Commonwealth claimed to have
across the country was established in Winnipeg in 1898. Although its efforts to found a colony in Manitoba proved a failure, it carried on an active propaganda campaign which proved a training ground for later socialists. The colonies in British Columbia and the Territories proved a failure and were short-lived. At its height Ruskin was the home for 80 people and Harmona for 60. But problems of personality—the only requirement for membership, in either colony was a commitment to co-operation—and of economics resulted in their collapse by 1900.

From the time it began publishing in 1894, The Voice, and many of those who contributed to it, displayed a knowledge of what might properly be called modern socialism. Reflecting the formative nature of the decade, the Marxist statements which appeared in the paper were tentative and imperfect, but they point to the presence of socialists in the West from the time of the expansion of the labour movement. The concept most often discussed was the Labour value theory—the worker by his labour creates all wealth—which was the centre of the Marxist system. The value theory was ordinarily used by contributors to The Voice without much difficulty, but when they attempted to apply other Marxist theories, like surplus value, the iron law of wages and the law of economic development, their analysis was rather crude.

In addition to this incipient Marxism, The Voice began to publish in December, 1894 a regular socialist column which kept its readers informed of developments in the international movement. In 1897 the first of the classics, Engels' *Socialism, Utopian and Scientific*, appeared in The Voice's book lists which had previously been exclusively reformist. If the early views of western
socialists were crude, they became more sophisticated during the second half of the decade; this was due largely to important British and American influences.

The natural lines of communication and the ease with which workers moved across the border ensured the circulation of American radical propaganda in the Canadian West.\(^{21}\) Newspapers like *The Coming Nation* and *Appeal to Reason* were popular and circulated throughout western Canada.\(^{22}\) In Winnipeg an Equality Club was established late in 1897 to propagate the teachings of the American Edward Bellamy, and for a few months it enjoyed some success.\(^{23}\) From time to time an American socialist lecturer would swing north to visit Canada as when the Marxist theorist, Laurence Gronlund, spoke in Vancouver in the autumn of 1897.\(^{24}\)

But clearly the most important American influence on the western Canadian movement in the second half of the decade was that of Eugene Debs, later the perennial socialist Presidential candidate. He became known in the West as a result of the formation in 1894 of locals of his radical American Railway Union (ARU) in Winnipeg, Revelstoke and Vancouver. The Winnipeg local led by William Small was active in encouraging the city's workers to take political action, and when Roy Goodwin, an officer of the international, visited Winnipeg early in April, 1896, he told his audience that "mere trade unionism is not feared by the capitalist magnates, but they dread the political enlightenment of the masses of workers." Debs himself visited Vancouver at the invitation of the trades council in 1896 and again in 1897. Though the ARU locals in Canada died with the collapse of the organization in the United States, Debs continued to be highly regarded in the West.\(^{25}\)
The Voice regularly published his writings and described him as "a thorough, honest, conscientious, and able leader." In the summer of 1899 it was Debs whom the Vancouver Trades Council invited to dedicate the city's new Labour Temple. After repeated invitations, he lectured in Winnipeg under the auspices of the Labour Party in the autumn of that year and then went on to speak to the Revelstoke Labour and Reform Association.  

But a more important influence, certainly in Winnipeg, was British socialism. Most of the trade unionists in western Canada were recent immigrants from Britain. There they had come into contact with the socialism which was becoming increasingly important in the labour movement and some had been members of the various British radical organizations. It is clear that western workers considered themselves as part of the British labour community; this feeling was well demonstrated by the enthusiastic support which they gave to the British Engineers in their epic strike for the eight-hour day in 1897. This feeling of community made western workers look to the British radical movement. The Voice and its contributors applauded the advance of the vigorous and radical "new unionism" in Britain and the resulting shift to the left by the Trades Union Congress. The new breed of British labour leaders like John Burns, Tom Mann and Kier Hardie became popular in the West. The B.C. Workman carried stories on Burns. And William Small claimed that Mann, if he would go to Winnipeg, "could do more to advance the cause of labor in this country in one night than could be done in any other way in five years." But the British socialist who stood out above all others was Robert Blackford. His moderate and sentimental socialism expressed
first in the weekly Clarion and then in Merrie England, which
eventually sold two million copies, was tremendously popular
among the British working class and was important in the
developing British socialist movement. Blatchford was no less
popular among early radicals in the West. The Voice described him
as "the leading English Socialist of the English school," and
contributors copied his style and adopted his pseudonym, Nunquam.

After 1895 The Voice regularly offered for sale, and sometimes
presented free with subscriptions, Merrie England, "the best book
on socialism ever written," though by the turn of the century the
paper stated that it was no longer necessary to stock the book on
a regular basis, because "all our friends and readers" owned it.

The paper also regularly reprinted material from the Clarion and
in February, 1898 began to publish the full series of letters
which was later published as Blatchford's second book, Britain
for the British.

These influences, British and American, had helped
western Canadian socialism to become reasonably sophisticated by
the end of the decade. The very transitory nature of the 1890's
did not, however, allow for the emergence of a clear-cut Marxism.
The "gas and water socialism" popular in Britain continued to be
promoted. Even a would-be materialist could base his criticism
of capitalism on Christian ethics. The movement remained prepared
to co-operate with reformers. And its propaganda remained more
emotional than cerebral. In the larger labour movement the view
persisted, even among sympathizers, that the workers were not
ready for a socialist party; in 1896 the associate editor of The
Voice warned, "the public mind is terrified by the nightmare crazes
of brainsick German theorists and by impossible projects by desperadoes from France and Italy." Consequently much of the propaganda of the early socialists was aimed at quieting such fears, and by 1898 Charles Bant, president of the Winnipeg Labour Party, was prepared to observe that socialism was becoming respectable."33

Despite doctrinal ambivalence and reservations, by the late nineties some western radicals had taken up a clearly revolutionary position. A competent Marxist who wrote a regular column in The Voice under the pseudonym "Libertas" told his readers, "you are poor because the greater portion of the product of your labor is stolen from you," and offered his solution in stark class terms: "if you do not destroy [capitalism], it will destroy you." A British Columbia socialist, who signed himself "Apropos," predicted, in orthodox Marxist terms, that under the coming order the "instruments of production shall be the common property of the people and shall be used and governed by the people, for the people."34 The socialists also began to take the offensive against the reformers making criticisms of the single tax, Christian ethics and even unions. For example, one socialist charged, "you trade unionists don't see any further than your own organized noses... [Abuses in society] will all remain as they are in spite of trade unionism, if the present commercial system is not changed. Unionists do not try to change the system, but only endeavour to protect themselves."35 The number of socialists in the West was also growing. At the turn of the century C. W. Wrigley observed, "the North-West and Manitoba is [sic] honey-combed with socialists," and a significant number of socialists were active in
After observing western delegates to the 1899 TLC convention, the Montreal Herald observed, "the leaven of socialism has been working among western working men." By the late nineties the period of transition was coming to an end, and more and more of the leaders of the radical movement were turning to socialism. Although reformist doctrines would persist and plague the socialists, the ground was prepared for the emergence of an organized socialist movement. In 1896 The Voice had observed, "the west is of all places the most likely part of Canada for the rapid growth of socialism"; subsequent events were to bear this out.

III

The industrial cities of the central provinces were the birthplace of the organized socialist movement in Canada. In the early nineties a Nationalist Club, inspired by the teachings of Edward Bellamy, and an "Old Canadian Socialist League" were established in Toronto; neither, however, survived long. It was not until the middle of the decade that the Socialist Labour Party (SLP) emerged. And not until the end of the decade that the Canadian Socialist League (CSL) was established. These two organizations, which represented what would become the two dominant schools in Canadian socialism, were the vehicles that carried the organized socialist movement to western Canada.

The Socialist Labour Party was established in New York in 1874 and was in no way remarkable until it was taken over in 1890 by the brilliant Marxist theoretician Daniel De Leon. But though De Leon was one of the most able of American Marxists, he was also
one of the most intolerant and doctrinaire, and his fixation with
doctrinal orthodoxy resulted in major disruptions in the American
labour movement during the nineties.\(^{10}\) An SLP local was established
in December, 1893 at Montreal which became the national
headquarters for Canada, and shortly after locals were established
in Toronto and London. By 1896 the SLP had organized in Ottawa,
and by 1898, which saw the height of party’s development in Canada,
an active national propaganda had resulted in locals being
established in Hamilton, Brantford and Halifax.\(^ {11}\) After the
Montreal local was wrecked in 1899 by one of the doctrinal disputes
which were endemic in the SLP, the Canadian headquarters was moved
to London, and Henry B. Ashplant became national secretary.
Ashplant, a London shoe salesman, was clearly the leading member of
the party in Canada, and his efforts to spread SLP propaganda
across the country were most important to the emergence of
Canadian Marxism. Largely because of Ashplant, the London local
was the most active in Canada. London nominated the first
socialist candidate in the country and elected the first,
David Ross who was returned as an alderman in December, 1899. The
London local had what was probably the largest membership of any
eastern local—approximately sixty in 1898 while others ranged
up to twenty-five.\(^ {12}\) The size of the locals points to their
relative lack of strength. The Canadian SLP never had any real
existence apart from the American parent, and the party was
mainly an educational organization.\(^ {13}\)

When the SLP was established in Canada, it “temporarily
adopted” the platform of the parent party, and its propaganda was
based on that unequivocally revolutionary document. Although they
condemned the "tinkering and patching" of reformists, the Canadians followed the lead of the American party by attaching a list of immediate demands, for example, labour standards legislation, to their platform. The tone and content of the party's propaganda were very well demonstrated by a series of articles by Ashplant, entitled "The History and Policy of the S.L.F.," which began appearing in The Voice in February, 1896. "German Socialism as developed by Karl Marx and Engels and others," he told his readers, "will ensure the thorough and complete emancipation of the working class." The problem facing the workers was painfully obvious: "it is a positive fact that in a manufacturing civilization, if collective ownership and administration of the machinery of production of commodities (which constitute wealth) does not accompany the collective production which the modern era of machinery has inaugurated and will perpetuate, then, without any possibility of avoiding it, the result must be economic chaos, familial confusion and bankruptcy, social strife and consequent domestic misery." With a true Marxist sense of mission, he called upon the workers to take up the class struggle in the SLP, which was "the party of destiny [because] we have the eternal and immutable law of evolutionary development on our side." The new order would be achieved through political action by the workers; an address circulated by the Canadian executive committee stated, "only [through] the strong class-conscious voice of the workers being heard for the establishment of a co-operative commonwealth can wage slavery be abolished and the workers receive the full fruits of their labor."

The SLP's revolutionary doctrines and its emphasis on
political action made it question the value of trade unions; in
1895 Ashplant wrote, trade unionism "is wholly incapable alone of
successfully conquering the capitalist system and making the
working class free." Nonetheless, true to its nature, the
Canadian party was prepared to continue the policy of attempting
to radicalize the trade union movement from within, so long as
De Leon persisted in the same task in the United States.
Consequently at the TLC convention in 1895, Ashplant, with the
active assistance of C. C. Stewart the only western delegate,
overcame strenuous opposition from the Liberal politicians present
and succeeded in having the Congress's constitution amended to
allow for admission of the SLP. But Ashplant's efforts went
for naught. Discouraged by his failure at boring from within,
De Leon in December, 1895 moved to begin smashing from without by
establishing the revolutionary Socialist Trades and Labour
Alliance (STLA). Because the STLA set out to smash AFL unions
and steal their members, the organization became anathema to
Samuel Gompers and his associates. Few incidents illustrate
better than this one how closely the Canadian SLP was tied to the
American party. Ashplant dutifully began attacking the AFL, and
the party, significantly again enjoying western support, was read
out of the TLC. The expulsion and the animosity in the trade
union movement, which it reflected, certainly represented a
set-back for socialism in Canada, but Ashplant, who perfunctorily
condemned the TLC's action as "narrow, stupid and ignorant," and
his associates were satisfied to follow De Leon into splendid
isolation.

From the time the party was established in Canada, the
SLP's propaganda circulated in the West, and Ashplant spoke in Winnipeg in 1896. The SLP had several "members at large" in the city who pressed persistently, though unsuccessfully, for the conversion of the Winnipeg Labour Party into an SLP local.\textsuperscript{52} A more successful effort to plant the De Leonite flag in the West occurred in New Westminster, where in 1896 a local survived for a few months. It even published its own paper, The Pathfinder, for a short while, though as a private venture it was denied party endorsement.\textsuperscript{53}

The only local of any importance in the West was established by Arthur Spencer, a leading member of the Frontford SLP, who, with true missionary zeal, secured a transfer from the CPR and moved to Vancouver to organize for the revolution.\textsuperscript{54} Spencer was appalled by the reformism he encountered on the coast because he perceptively recognized that the nature of British Columbia's society offered great promise for the development of socialism; he wrote, "we have here the highest form of capitalism developing as part of, and side by side with, that of the U.S."\textsuperscript{55} In December, 1898, his efforts brought twenty-two men together to form a local which stood, "firmly on the everpresent [sic] fact of the class struggle and for the complete union of the proletarian forces, for the conquest of the political powers and the socialist reconstruction of society."\textsuperscript{56} In keeping with the De Leonite line, the local emphasized political action, the only means to achieve "complete control by the workers of the means of production and distribution and the complete surrender of the robber class of capitalists who now own the workers through the ownership of the land and the tools with which to work," and told the toilers to
strike on election day, "the one day when the capitalist class is weak and we are strong." Yet, ironically, the SLP was never in a position to afford the proletariat the opportunity to strike; its meagre resources prevented it from fielding candidates. As a result, the party's propaganda came to consist of economics classes, a tried-and-true De Leonite institution, lectures and vigorous meetings during election campaigns. Another important component of SLP propaganda in Vancouver was American speakers. In September, 1898, Thomas A. Hickey, national organizer of the American party, "poured out his vocabulary [sic] and sentiment [on] Pure and simpledom" in Vancouver. But of greater importance were visits from the lecturers of the Washington state organization; the Socialist Labour Party was responsible for establishing the connection between British Columbia and the American west coast, which connection was of basic importance to the development of socialism in the province and the West in general.

Like the eastern party, the Vancouver local was closely tied to De Leon; the best illustration of this was the reaction to the so-called "revolt" in the American party. By 1899 considerable opposition had developed to De Leon's dogmatic and autocratic leadership, and in the summer of that year the SLP was disrupted by the exodus of members, the "Kangaroos," who eventually joined with other radicals to establish the Socialist Party of America. Informed of the split by the loyalist Hickey, when he visited the city in September, the Vancouver local quickly took up De Leon's cause. Spencer wrote in The People that "middle-class and the most contemptible of material interests are back of the action of the slobs." And, in an open letter, he accused A. M. Simons of
Chicago of plotting against De Leon to satisfy "your obscene ambitions." 59

The British Columbia local followed the leader in all things, and De Leon was a master of invective. The Vancouver members of the SLP were willing to smite all enemies of the working class with their vituperative club, but their special target was the "fakirs" of other competing embryonic socialist parties who were leading the workers away from the De Leonite path to salvation. When Debs spoke in the city in the autumn of 1899, Spencer sneered, he "talks to the middle-class." And George Wrigley of the CSL was condemned as one who "clouds the minds of the people." Such abuse antagonized even the resolutely Christian Wrigley who gave up all hope for the SLP when its members chose to remain loyal to the American academicians in 1899. The pugnacious propaganda line even offended members of the party; James Boutil, later one of the founders of the Socialist Party of British Columbia, believed that the "vulgarians should be hid from sight." 60

During 1899 the local tripled in size and became sufficiently optimistic to make some attempts to organize on Vancouver Island and in the interior. A good deal of this growth was the result of the efforts of Will McClain, who had had many years experience in the British socialist movement before he "jumped" ship at Seattle and went to Vancouver. McClain's less dogmatic approach to socialism and his dynamic appeal encouraged many to join the party. But his British experience made it difficult for him to co-operate with the local's ideologues who had become even more rigid since the split in the United States. The party, which suffered a minor disruption in late 1899, was moving toward a
crisis. This came in the spring of 1900 when McClain and others bolted to form the United Socialist Labour Party (USLP). They were formally read out of the SLP by Spencer who told De Leon, "the Kangaroos of Vancouver, unable to keep pace with the steady step of the proletarian Revolution, driven from fakirdom to reaction and back again in their search for 'harmony' have at last made a bluff at organizing.--and in regular Kangaroo style, too." The remnants of the Vancouver local, in an attempt to put the best face on the situation, claimed that now they could only go forward because their doctrinal orthodoxy was assured, but the split ended any hope the SLP might have had of becoming an important force in the province's radical movement.

In 1895 De Leon had decreed that the SLP must have an economic arm and proceeded to found the Socialist Trades and Labour Alliance, an organization in competition with the AFL. In accordance with party policy, Spencer established a local of the STLA in Vancouver in June, 1899, because "the old forms and spirit of labor unions are almost impotent to resist the oppressions of concentrated capital." Organized as a general labourers' union, the local never had more than a handful of members, and though it did make an abortive attempt to organize CPR employees, it seems never to have functioned as a conventional union. It was essentially an educational organization which required prospective members to take an examination in socialist theory. The STLA's main functions were to support the SLP in its political campaigns and to attack the business unionism of the AFL. Its most important propagandist was William Griffiths who later became the leading member of the SLP in Vancouver. The propaganda of the STLA
naturally antagonized the Vancouver members of unions affiliated with the TLC. Nevertheless, the local soon after its formation pressed for membership in the trades council, because "the Council Board of Labor is incomplete while the S.L.P. is not present and in the presiding chair." Surprisingly, it initially appeared that STLA delegates would be seated, and a satisfied Spencer announced, "next week L.A. 250 will have its delegates in the local trades council to fight the fakirs down and out - boring from within as well as without." But the TLC's organizer in Vancouver, J. H. Watson, conjured up the spectre of dual unionism and succeeded in having the socialists barred. Griffiths denounced Watson, not without justification, as a Liberal hack, and dismissed the trades council as "a conglomeration of stone-heads, labor fakirs and subsidized press representatives, with a few sprinklings of 'me too' and 'coming our way' socialists." Relations with the trade unions could be even stormier. When, for example, an STLA speaker told a New Westminster audience, in the charged atmosphere of the fishermen's strike, that successful action by unions was an "impossibility," the meeting broke up in a brawl. Such animosity, a floating membership and the split in the Vancouver SLP resulted in the collapse of the Socialist Trades and Labour Alliance at the end of 1900.

An even less distinguished SLP effort was made in Winnipeg. After some preliminary organizational work, a local of the party with 26 members was established in the city in December, 1899. Despite claims of rapid progress in Winnipeg and throughout the province, the local which drew its main support from the city's German community, was never more than a tiny, if noisy, sect.
An attempt to establish an STLA local proved abortive when the trades council refused to seat the organization's delegates. 69 In addition to the usual difficulties, the SLP in Winnipeg had to contend with the active antagonism of Arthur Puttee who charged that the party because of its hostility to unions often became "the willing tool of capitalistic combinations for the undoing of labor organizations." 70 The weakness of the SLP was well demonstrated by its willingness, despite this antagonism and party policy, to co-operate with the Labour Party in Puttee's election in 1900. Indeed, the latter organization became the refuge for SLP members when the local collapsed in 1901. 71

In Vancouver after 1900 Griffiths and a small band of followers vainly tried to compete with a vigorous new socialist movement. Still the SLP was able to engender the old antagonisms: in 1902 Chris Foley wrote, "were I delegated by divine providence to choose between turning [the province's] government over to the coal barons of Pennsylvania or the socialist labor party I would not hesitate a moment in choosing the former." 72 Still the old stigma of dual unionism could bring forth attacks from trade unionists or worse, indifference. 73 In 1903 the SLP conducted its only political campaign in the province; Griffiths, the candidate, fared badly, despite a general socialist upsurge. 74 The SLP in Vancouver was a tiny "ghost" organization, when, in 1905 it followed De Leon's lead and converted itself into a local of the Industrial Workers of the World. 75

In the final analysis, Bennett's judgement on the Socialist Labour Party, that it "was never more than a sect and a very insignificant one at that," must stand. 76 The party's
unequivocally revolutionary propaganda had little appeal to the workers partly because of the dual union stigma, but more importantly because it was premature. Nonetheless the SLP did make a contribution to western radicalism. For a time it was the only Marxist organization in the West, and as such the party introduced many workers to modern socialism and acted as a training ground for men later active in the socialist movement.

IV

The foundation for the Canadian Socialist League, which was to have a far greater impact on the West than the SLP, was laid in Toronto in 1898 by George Wrigley when he established Citizen and Country. Wrigley had already had extensive experience in labour-reform journalism and, in his son's words, had been "a central figure in every radical movement during the past twenty years."77 Greatly influenced by George D. Herron, the leading American exponent of Christian socialism, whose writing appeared regularly in Citizen and Country, Wrigley believed that "Socialism is the application to daily life of Christ's teachings, and a true Christian cannot help being a Socialist." Like Herron, Wrigley was appalled by a society which violated the fundamentals of Christianity by allowing competition to pauperize and degrade large numbers of its people.78 Wrigley believed that "the multitude of social reformers in Canada . . . are men and women who believe that the church itself was the first Socialist body, that its Head and Founder was the first Socialist, that from Him we receive our inspiration as Social Reformers, and that unless we recognize His teachings and obey the laws of Brotherhood given to us by Him we
cannot be true Socialists and cannot fairly be designated as Socialists. Therefore, in his paper he eschewed the cold, academic formalism of the SLP and based his indictment of capitalism upon a moral indignation at poverty and on a evangelical promise of a better world. That world would be achieved through the introduction of public ownership, direct legislation and the single tax. Although its list of recommended books contained Marx's Capital, Citizen and Country was decidedly more Christian than socialist.

Before 1899 these doctrines were disseminated by the Social Reform League which had branches throughout Ontario. In the summer of that year organizations calling themselves the Canadian Socialist League emerged in Toronto and Montreal, the latter coming about as a result of the breakup of the SLP local. The League spread through Ontario - in many cases branches of the Social Reform League simply became CSL locals - and a loose national federation was established. The CSL as it developed in the East was largely composed of middle class reformers, with a significant number of Protestant clergymen. The manifesto of the Toronto local, which came to be regarded as an unofficial national platform, was anything but a revolutionary document. Although it advocated ultimate public ownership of the means of production, it concentrated on conventional reforms, for example, abolition of the Senate. The Christian socialism of Wrigley, who had taken a leading role in the formation of the League remained the central doctrine; a member wrote, "the first socialist sermon was delivered by a carpenter nearly two thousand years ago, and it is known in history as the 'Sermon on the Mount.'" Given this
orientation the CSL could consistently reject the doctrine of the
class struggle: "one of the deepest notes of socialism is the
natural inherent, inalienable unity of mankind. Humanity knows no
class. . . . A social order based on love and justice can never be
a propaganda of strife and hatred. No matter what he calls himself,
the man who hates his brother is not a Socialist."81

The propaganda of the Canadian Socialist League made rapid
progress in the western-most province. The secretary of the CSL told
a metal miner; "the labor unions are doing well by us especially
those in British Columbia." The Vancouver trades council took a
block of Citizen and Country subscriptions. The B.C. Werkman made
its readers a clubbing offer with the Toronto paper. And Wrigley's
paper was popular in the interior mining camps. Indeed, by early 1900
British Columbia accounted for 15 per cent of Citizen and Country's
total subscriptions.82 But propaganda of a more direct kind was
conducted by former members of the defunct Russian colony. Fort
Moody, the home of these people, had a CSL local by January, 1900
and became "the centre of activity in British Columbia." John M.
Cameron, a one-time Toronto carpenter who had moved to the coast to
join the colony, was named the League's organizer in the province.
Also active in spreading the gospel was Lee Charlton, another former
colony member, who went to Victoria in the summer of 1900 to found a
CSL local there.83 During 1900 Cameron, with the assistance of
Charlton and others, carried on an extensive propaganda campaign,
largely on the lower mainland. The tradition of political action in
the British Columbia labour movement was of great benefit in this
work; it was but a short step from the reformism which was a basic
part of that tradition to the moderate platform of the CSL. This was
demonstrated by the quick conversion of the Revelstoke Reform League into a CSL local.\textsuperscript{84} So enthusiastic was Wrigley with the progress of the movement in the province, that he wrote, "some day [British Columbia workers] are liable to start a land-slide for socialism, and the eastern politicians will have to get under the progressive umbrella or get wet."\textsuperscript{85} The CSL's moderate socialism clearly distinguished it from the SLP in the minds of union men. And the League quickly moved to reinforce this distinction. For example, in line with League policy, Cameron petitioned the Provincial government for labour standards legislation.\textsuperscript{86}

In 1900 there was also new life in the socialist movement in Vancouver. Late in April the insurgents from SLP led by Will McClain established the United Socialist Labor Party (USLP). From the beginning the party adopted a policy of co-operation with the city's unions and the nature of its leadership allowed it to implement this policy without difficulty. McClain, president of the machinists' local, Frank Rodgers, another charter member who was president of the fishermen's union, and other leading socialists were active in the trades council.\textsuperscript{87} This policy represented a major departure from the acrimonious relations which had existed between the SLP and the unions, and pointed to a new direction for Vancouver socialism. When the USLP was established, Spencer told De Leon that it was composed of "the same canaille that the SLP has pushed aside recently.\textsuperscript{88} This perceptive comment says a great deal about socialism in Vancouver in particular, and British Columbia in general. It was no coincidence that the rebellion in the city had occurred after the bolt of the Kangaroos in the United States. Members of the local, dissatisfied with De Leon's dogmatism and
his policy of war upon the AFL, saw the rebellion in the United States, which resulted from these very causes, and followed the American lead. They were Kangaroos. British Columbia socialism, probably more than that in any other province, lived in the shadow of the American movement. But certainly the new direction appeared to be a sound one. The USLP under McClain's able leadership - Wrigley called him "a brilliant and intelligent speaker" - made remarkable gains; by July it had built a hall, formed a brass and string band and enrolled a paper membership of two hundred and fifty. It also made a respectable run in the provincial election of 1900. McClain, the first socialist candidate to be nominated in British Columbia, ran on a platform which, though it struck a revolutionary note, was cluttered with reformist demands. In part because of the tone of his platform, McClain had the active support of the trades council. He also had the active opposition of his former comrades in the SLP. Never of a magnanimous nature, the De Leonites, smarting from the collapse of their party, set out to gain revenge by doing everything possible to disrupt McClain's campaign; one meeting ended in "a grand rough and tumble on the sidewalk in front of the hall" involving twenty men. In the end the socialist candidate polled six hundred and eighty-four votes.

McClain was soon involved in another western socialist "first." At the Ottawa convention of the TLC he co-operated with other westerners in a vain attempt to have the Congress move toward socialism, in this case by allowing the CSL to affiliate. Upon his return he bitterly explained the radicals' failure to a Vancouver audience.

the reason is because the members of the Trades and Labor
Congress are as great ignoramuses as there are in the country at the present time. They didn't know what they were talking about, and didn't know what socialism is. There are men who get into the position of labor leaders and go to Congress for the purpose of voting against such things because they get a great pile of money for it. Fake labor leaders have time and again sold out their cause when he [sic] got a chance to feather his own nest to the detriment of your laboring men and your class. 91

In the future other Vancouver delegates would participate in similar fights.

The year 1900 also saw the beginnings of a socialist press in British Columbia when R. Parmeter Pettipiece, an interant printer from Ontario, established the Eagle in Ferguson. He explained this action to Wrigley: "this province [is] full of discontented people who, like myself, came here to get away from existing circumstances, but it is of no use; we must all go back to the cause." 92 The economic realities of small town journalism never allowed the Eagle to become a clear-cut socialist propaganda sheet, and its front page gave the impression of being that of yet another mining camp newspaper. But in the editorial column and in features, Pettipiece's indictment of capitalism was such as to receive the enthusiastic approval of eastern socialists. 93 Initially Pettipiece, who was instrumental in the establishment of a CSL local in Ferguson in mid-1900, followed closely the line of the League. He emphasized direct legislation, the single tax and government ownership of monopolies; significantly, New Zealand represented for him the ideal society. To Pettipiece, at this early stage in his career, socialism was "running the railroads, the trusts, etc. in the interest of the whole people, with all the people owning them together . . . [and] letting nine-tenths [of the people] have much more than they can get
now, and [letting] the other tenth have as much as they have any real use for." His Wrigleyite orientation would even allow him to say that socialism was "the application of Christian methods to our social, industrial and economic systems." At Ferguson, Pettipiece was to conclude that reforms were not adequate to the problems but he never adopted a distinctly Marxist analysis. Although he came to believe that only a fundamental change in society would help the worker, he took this view, because "it is no part of the plan of creation that the man who works the hardest should always have the least; it is not right." Pettipiece's analysis of society, his highly emotional appeal, the structure of his articles and his emphasis on government ownership all point to the influence of Blatchford. And it is significant that J.A. Wayland, editor of Appeal to Reason, and the leading American socialist most like Blatchford, seems also to have influenced Pettipiece. The Eagle was also a vigorous advocate of independent political action because the editor, who looked to the formation of a province-wide labour party, believed that "the ballot [is] the easiest and best weapon of defense" for the workers. He told his readers, "start in and think, then write and vote, when the whole people own the banks, railways, telephones, telegraphs, steamboat lines, fisheries, mines, smelters, manufactories of every kind ... all these conditions will change."

Socialists were encouraged by developments in the coast province during 1900. Pettipiece predicted, "British Columbia will be the first to feel the chaos" — and so it was, nature that they should respond positively to Wrigley's call for them to establish a provincial organization. There already had been co-operation between the USIP and the CEL when in October delegates from Vancouver,
Nanaimo, Victoria and several interior points met in the terminal city to hold the province's first socialist convention. The red flag flew defiantly over the socialist hall for the duration of the meetings despite police efforts to have it hauled down. Consistent with the new direction of the movement, the convention called upon all socialists "to join the unions of their respective trades, calling and assist in building up and strengthening the trade union movement; to educate your fellow unionists on questions of socialism, and the labor movement on economic and political lines." The delegates decided upon "a union of forces," a provincial federation, with Cameron as organizer, within the GSL and fashioned a platform. While this document was largely reformist in character, it did go beyond the League's Toronto platform in that it made the collectivization of the means of production its basic demand.99 The momentum generated at the convention, however, was not conveyed to the new provincial organization, the first in Canada, and the movement never got off the ground. Cameron soon left the province to take up a position as organizer with the Washington state socialist organization.100

Cameron's appointment indicated the growing influence of American socialism on the British Columbia movement. Debs had long been popular in the province and his name continued to be magic. So it was natural that the USLP should use his writing as the central component of their propaganda.101 Pettitpiece kept his readers fully informed on developments in the movement south of the border. But it was the revolutionary socialist organization in the state of Washington which exercised the most important and immediate influence. J. D. Curtis, editor of the Seattle Socialist
and secretary of the state organization, encouraged by what he saw as the revolutionary potential of the province - "there is no large, political unit on the American continent so favorably situated to win the first Socialist victory as the province of British Columbia, in the Dominion of Canada" - took a great interest in his northern neighbours. He opened the columns of his paper to British Columbia socialists and sent Washington organizers, including himself and Cameron, into the province. But patrons can be patronizing, and Curtis and his associates adopted a decidedly didactic attitude toward the Canadians. British Columbia's socialists were often criticized for not being sufficiently advanced to satisfy their revolutionary neighbours. When socialists in Victoria supported a labour ticket in a provincial by-election, Curtis lamented, "the chief danger of socialism in Canada seems to be an 'Independent Labor Party' movement, one part trade union, one part municipal ownership and one part Christian church." The Seattle editor also set out to save British Columbia from the CSL, mainly because it had "most of its followers in the churches." When Wrigley called upon the province's socialists to reject the revolutionary Washington line and build a broad-based party in co-operation with the unions, Curtis charged that the Toronto editor "stood for capitalistic thought, for compromise [and] for pasturage on both sides of the fence." Curtis' concern for the doctrinal orthodoxy of British Columbia socialism clearly grew out of his view that it was part of the larger American movement. He considered the USLP to be a Kangaroo party. And during a visit to Vancouver he wrote, "socialism knows no national boundaries, ... and this province is so close to the states and its interests so closely
allied to those of the state of Washington, that it will be a natural
and easy step for the Socialists to organize as locals in the great
Socialist movement of America." He went on to suggest that after
the upcoming American unity convention, British Columbia socialists
would probably move to affiliate with the Socialist Party of
America (SPA). There is reason to believe that some socialists in
the province found this idea attractive; after the SPA was founded
at Indianapolis, a Victoria man called upon Canadian socialists
to form "one gigantic body" with their American comrades.104

The impact of the American movement on British Columbia
was most markedly demonstrated by the 1901 provincial convention.
In the summer of that year the Vancouver party began efforts to
breathe new life into the dormant provincial organization. Leading
the effort was a city shop-keeper by the name of Ernest Burns who
had known Emanuèl Marx, the master's daughter and had been a member
of the Social Democratic Federation in England. Burns called an
October convention "to provide for a more thorough organization,
and uniformity of action between the Socialist organizations of
British Columbia."105 The convention, somewhat smaller than that of
the previous year, revived the provincial organization now giving it
the name Socialist Party of British Columbia (SPBC). Also, in line
with the wishes of Ontario socialists, who had collected $150.00
for the purpose, the delegates recalled Cameron from the Washington
party and named him provincial organizer. But most significant,
was the adoption of the clear-cut revolutionary platform of the
Socialist Party of America which had only been hammered out at the
Indianapolis unity convention three months earlier. A delighted
Curtis exclaimed, "this puts them squarely on the basis of the
class struggle. But the adoption of the American document was achieved only after "some very warm discussions," and an executive committee headed by Burns, the provincial secretary, was instructed to draft an additional set of immediate demands which would tend to moderate the platform. The controversy between the advocates of immediate demands, who argued that while the coming of the revolution was assured it was only practical for socialists to work for the relief of the working class under capitalism, and the so-called impossibilists, who countered that reforms were not the province of revolutionaries and indeed could only delay the collapse of capitalism, had begun. It would rack the party for years.

What resulted from the deliberations of the executive committee was "a composite platform which would represent the average ideas of the membership." It had three parts, the preamble of the SPA platform, a set of "general demands" which represented all planks of a national character from the Ontario platform and a set of "provincial demands"; the latter two sections were distinctly reformist in character. In the Eagle, which had become the official organ of the party, Pettigrew appealed to socialists to stay in the party, even if their "pet ideas" did not appear in the platform, and fight for these at the next convention.

An important sidelight to this issue was an exchange between Curtis and Burns. The Seattle editor condemned the expanded platform which "no one would dream that socialists had anything to do with" and called for the "genuine, Revolutionary, Socialist program" best suited to the polarized nature of the province's society. Burns thanked Curtis for his "fatherly interest" but argued that the inclusion of immediate demands in no way
compromised the revolutionary character of the platform. He went on to give his view of socialism. Because he emerged as one of the leading moderates in the party, it seems appropriate to quote at length from this early statement of faith:

My Socialism is of a more elastic quality than that of some ultra-orthodox comrades, who have reduced Socialism from a philosophy to a creed, and regard the slightest questions of their tenets and dogmas as heresy of the most outrageous type. We have now entered upon an era when the principles of Socialism will have to be applied to our daily life. This work is right before us and will not commence—as so many of the comrades imagine—after some industrial catastrophe has occurred in which the economic fabric of capitalism will fall to pieces, leaving the ground free and clear for Socialism; on the contrary, we have to grow into Socialism from present conditions just as Feudalism grew into commercialism clearing away the rubbish of obsolete capitalism on the one hand and laying the foundation for the temple of industrial democracy wherever we can find chance to work. This concurrent process of development and decay takes place in all organic life, not excepting the institutions of society itself.108

Henceforward, Burns would be suspect by the impossibilists:

Within British Columbia the opposition to the addition of immediate demands to the platform was led by the Nanaimo socialists. Conditions in the coal camp, which every day seemed to demonstrate the validity of the doctrine of the class struggle, had already driven some miners to a revolutionary position; when Curtis visited the town in 1901 he observed approvingly, "the Nanaimo crowd are pretty well leavened with Socialism."109 The watering-down of the provincial platform caused the Nanaimo party, which had declared political action to be the only weapon in the class struggle, to re-assess its position in the SPBC and to begin to consider the formation of a separate organization. Before taking this step, however, the miners, prominent among whom were British socialists like James Pritchard and Samuel Mottishaw, felt the need for a
really first-rate propagandist. And in acquiring that propagandist, they took a step of fundamental importance to the development of socialism in the West.

The Nanaimo party called E. T. Kingsley to the Island. Born on an Illinois farm, Kingsley had moved to California and worked on the railway. An industrial accident resulted in the amputation of both his legs, and while in hospital recuperating he read Marx. He joined the SLP and became an active propagandist in Oakland, several times the party's nominee for Congress. In 1899 the state organizer described him as "one of the old standbys" in the party. Kingsley, however, did not gain real prominence in the SLP until the rebellion of the Kangaroos. He remained loyal to De Leon, taking an active role in the purge of insurgents and as a reward was named state organizer. Significantly, De Leon at this time, and as a result of his party's decline, began to move away from his exclusively political orientation and toward the syndicalism which would lead him into the Industrial Workers of the World in 1905. Naturally the party moved with him. But Kingsley was not prepared to make this shift, and after a bitter "face to face" confrontation with De Leon, he left the SLP. The socialism, then, that Kingsley brought with him to British Columbia was that of the pre-1900 Socialist Labour Party. It consisted, in its essentials, of a denial of the utility of economic action through trade-unions, a rejection of palliatives as counter-revolutionary and a reliance on political action as the only viable weapon available to the working class. The Nanaimo socialists originally engaged Kingsley for only a brief propaganda tour, but his impact on the Island was such that they retained him
permanently, "set[ting] him up for a time in a little fish shop" and later as a printer. The Californian delighted those socialists who encountered him; one described an early address as "the cleanest, clearest and fullest exposition of the relations of the capitalist and the laborer that Victorians have ever heard." Kingsley was not responsible for the introduction of ultra-revolutionary socialism to British Columbia; this had its roots in the SLP, the British Socialist Democratic Federation, the Washington state organization and the realities of life in the mining camps. He did, however, provide it with a coherent rationale and a dynamic leadership, and as a result, had a profound influence on the development of western Canadian radicalism.

When the Nanaimo socialists left the SPBC in the spring of 1902 to establish the short-lived Revolutionary Socialist Party of Canada, Kingsley's influence was already apparent. The party's platform, undoubtedly the most revolutionary drafted in Canada up to that time, called simply for the destruction of capitalism and declared, "the pathway leading to our emancipation from the chains of wage slavery is uncompromising political warfare against the capitalist class, with no quarter and no surrender."

By the beginning of 1902 British Columbia socialism had passed beyond its formative stage, and with a province-wide if precarious organization, its own newspaper and an energetic organizer, it was ready for expansion. And conditions in the province during the first years of the century were highly conducive to the expansion of socialism. The prevailing political confusion arising from the transition from personal to party government encouraged workers to take politically innovative action. If the instability of political
conditions encouraged workers to make new departures, social conditions convinced many that a radical solution was the only one. Everything seemed to point to the triumph of capitalism in the province. From June, 1900 to November, 1902, the Island coal baron, James Dunsmuir, the very epitome of repressive capitalism, was premier, and as if to dramatize his position in the province, a large number of miners were killed at his Union collieries during his incumbency. Whatever his motives for assuming office, labour was convinced that his intention was the further debasement of the workers.\textsuperscript{117} Perhaps of even greater significance were several large and violent strikes which rocked the province in 1900 and 1901. In two dramatic confrontations, between the fishermen on the Fraser River and the canneries, and between the Western Federation of Miners and the Rossland owners, all the coercive powers of a repressive capitalist state seemed to be employed in breaking the resistance of a united working class.\textsuperscript{118} The struggle of the fishermen, which caught the imagination of labour in the province, had all the worst features of the most notorious American strikes, armed thugs, Pinkertons, provincial police and, finally and most dramatically, the Militia. Both in 1900 and 1901, the strikes were broken by Japanese.\textsuperscript{119}

Socialists like McClain, Rodgers and Burns were the strike leaders. And socialists exploited the strike for every propaganda advantage, playing the devil in general with the jackeys of the capitalist class." On one occasion a boat-load of socialists who were out distributing literature to the picket boats were stopped and searched for arms, and while the police were conducting the search, the socialists regaled them with speeches and a rendition of "The Marsaine." When the strike was broken, Pettipiece asked ...
workers would. "stand aside and see Japs take the, striking fishermen's places; Chinese/force our daughters to prostitution by taking their already underpaid situations ... and finally force the white working man off the earth." 120. Because socialists were the fishermen's champions and martyrs, the strike gave socialism new strength.

The expansion of the SPBC began when Cameron carried the party's message to the mining camps of the interior. Pettipiece explained that "the first object of the new socialist party will not necessarily be to place candidates in the field but to educate and organize their forces." And the camps were fertile ground for such work, because as the Seattle Socialist observed, "the Miners Unions in all that region seem ripe for Socialism." Cameron met with such success that Pettipiece became convinced the province had reached "the beginning of the final stage of capitalism." By the end of January 1902 the Eagle was able to report officially that the party had fourteen of its eighteen active locals in the metal camps and three of these, Grand Forks, Nelson and Rossland, had over forty members. 121 Some of these locals were clearly mushroom growths, however, and within a year had collapsed. This points to one of the basic problems of British Columbia socialism. It had an important power base among the metal miners but the uncertain and transient nature of their occupation made them something less than the most stable supporters. 122 Part of the campaign in the interior was a tour by Eugene Debs, during the summer, under the joint auspices of the party and the Western Federation of Miners (WFM). Ever popular, there was "scarcely standing room" at his meetings, and his visit did a great deal to give momentum to socialism's advance. He, in turn, believed that the SPBC was "making excellent progress" and its "clear-cut and uncompromising"
doctrines made it the "party of the future."\textsuperscript{123}

Debs' tour took him to Vancouver where a vigorous propaganda campaign was under way. Energetic work in the trades council, where the socialists continued to have some power, and regular educational meetings, created such an interest in socialism in the city that at the end of 1902 the SPEC had to move its Sunday night rallies to greatly expanded quarters.\textsuperscript{124} Similar activity was characteristic of Victoria. Regular propaganda meetings, on such current issues as "the ulcerating sore of rampant Mongolianism," and frequent visits by American lecturers, resulted in what G. Weston Wrigley called "wonderful progress."\textsuperscript{125} And the secretary of the Nanaimo local reported "a steady and gratifying progress" with good cause. On Labour Day, J. H. Hawthornthwaite, the independent labour MLA for Nanaimo, who had been flirting with the socialists for some time, joined the party. Then in November the Nanaimo socialists nominated a tailor by the name of Parker Williams to contest a provincial by-election; though defeated he polled 40 per cent of the vote.\textsuperscript{126}

Such developments caused T. H. Twigg who conducted the labour department in the Victoria Colonist to observe, "the growth of socialism in British Columbia during the past year has been phenomenal." Early in 1903 Burns estimated that 50 per cent of the party's membership had been socialists for less than two years.\textsuperscript{127}

The province's central place in Canadian socialism was given a kind of official recognition in the summer of 1902 by the transfer of Citizen and Country to Vancouver, because the paper's "best" support came from British Columbia. Negotiations between George Wrigley's son, G. Weston Wrigley, who had been active in the Ontario movement, and Pettipiece resulted in the publication in the coast city of the Toronto
paper under the new name Canadian Socialist. The partnership lasted only until September when the economic vagaries of radical journalism, caused Wrigley to sell out to Pettipiece who renamed the paper the Western Socialist. At about the same time a labour-Reform journal named the Clarion was established at Nanaimo. It's founders were responsible for the great irony that the organ of the British Columbia revolutionaries should honor Blatchford whom the latter despised. By the end of 1902 the socialists had gained control of the Clarion, and Kingsley became editor. In the early summer of 1903 the Clarion and the Western Socialist merged to become the Western Clarion in which Pettipiece continued to hold majority stock. Although staunchly committed to the class struggle, the party press, under Pettipiece's management, was always newsy, if only in a parochial way, often emotional and sometimes witty; never was it strident nor doctrinaire, as it would later be.

The new socialist strength was also demonstrated by their ability to cripple the first province-wide labour party established in British Columbia. All socialists could agree on the principle that only their party, or at least a labour party committed to the destruction of capitalism, could lead the working class to emancipation, and any other party claiming the allegiance of the workers could only impede progress. Reflecting the prevalent dissatisfaction of labour, the WFM issued a call for a political convention; and at Kamloops in April 1902 delegates from all over the province established the Provincial Progressive Party (PPP). One third of the approximately sixty delegates were socialists, and these, after caucusing, made a concerted effort to have the convention adopt a revolutionary position. For example, Burns told the delegates that the single tax was "no"
concern of ours," and Kingsley argued that "the class struggle [is] the real issue." But the socialist offensive was beaten back and, in the words of a comrade from the interior, "the result was that every vital issue to labor was either ignored or straddled and, the platform finally adopted was of a weak and indefinite description."\textsuperscript{131} It was clearly understood by trade unionists that the convention had been a contest between the socialists and the labourites, and the reformist platform indicated a socialist defeat.\textsuperscript{132} The latter quickly began a campaign to reverse the decision. Burns repudiated the PPP platform as essentially antagonistic to socialism and the Canadian Socialist viciously attacked the new party.\textsuperscript{133} When Debs arrived in the province, he continued the campaign initiated by the Canadian comrades. He condemned the PPP platform as "a tissue of contradictions...well calculated to confuse and muddle the situation" and called upon the workers the sweep aside this "middle class movement" as an "obstacle in the way" of progress. These efforts and the WFM's move to socialism resulted in the collapse of the Progressive Party by the end of the year.\textsuperscript{134} It would be many years before another labour party could challenge the socialist hegemony of working class politics in British Columbia.

The growth of socialism encouraged the two wings of the movement to hold a unity convention in the autumn of 1902. The implications of this step for the doctrines of western socialism were most important. During the summer and early autumn the moderates, led by Burns, and the impossibilists, prominent among whom was Kingsley, debated the question of the movement's doctrines. At the convention the delegates replaced the previous platform with its American preamble and immediate demands with a document very close to the
clear-cut revolutionary statement of the Nanaimo party. The rejection of immediate demands was clearly a victory for the impossiblists led by Kingsley. Indeed, the Western Socialist observed that the latter had become "a power in the movement" whose work in the province had "had a clarifying effect" on British Columbia socialism.\textsuperscript{135} The convention did not mark, however, the beginning of the ascendancy of Island revolutionary socialism over all lesser doctrines, as party historians would later claim. The delegates re-affirmed their "sympathy and interest" in trade unions, calling upon socialists to join the organization of their craft, and lifted clauses of the re-united-party's constitution verbatim from the Washington state platform.\textsuperscript{136} More important, the methodological controversies which continued to plague the party demonstrated that the moderates remained a force.

The socialists in general agreed on the basic principles of Marxism. They believed that the class struggle was inherent in capitalism and that the eventual overthrow of the present order by the workers was inevitable. They were revolutionaries. For example, the moderate George Dales could say, "there can be no intelligent or logical conception of socialism apart from a revolution."\textsuperscript{137} Once beyond basic Marxist principles and into the field of methodology, however, agreement ceased. "How could the revolution best be achieved? This was the vexing question." It was debated at length in the SPBC, and despite the impossiblist victory at the 1902 convention, both parties to the argument were able to claim some strength throughout the life of the party. For some time the moderates were able to maintain a balance on the provincial executive committee and the newspaper's board of directors. They were even able to achieve an occasional
Victory, for example, they had George Dafoe of Winnipeg, a moderate British socialist and old friend of Burns' named editor. A discussion of two issues will demonstrate the nature of controversy in the party.

The issue of doctrinal orthodoxy was always one which could generate much heat, because upon it hung the question of whether the SFBC was to be an exclusive sect or an inclusive party. Alex Land of Vancouver, who had succeeded Burns as provincial secretary, began an exchange early in 1903 when he argued that it was not necessary, with the growth of socialism, to ensure that persons not fully acquainted with Marxism be barred from the party. The "scientific" nature of the doctrine necessitated the utmost caution: "let those who do not understand the ethics of the class struggle serve their apprenticeship on the outside of the party, by attending propaganda meetings and reading." Only in this way could the revolutionary character of the party be assured. This was too much for Burns. He condemned such "intolerant bigotry, which will not brook the slightest variation from preconceived ideas," because "there is no infallible road to salvation." Socialism could only be considered scientific when we find the leaders of socialist thought in complete agreement as to principle and tactics, in the same manner as mathematicians are agreed upon the multiplication table." And he called comrades, new to the movement, who imagined that "their endless repetition of certain words is the distinguishing mark of the true Socialist."

W. H. Bambury, a leading official of the WFM at Phoenix entered the controversy to observe, "don't you think it is quite possible to over-rate the quality of soundness? The only time that we have a right to denounce a fellow-worker is when we have solid reasons for
suspecting that he is a treacherous and hypocritical enemy." The provincial secretary replied, "the socialist movement is neither a brotherly love concern, a mutual admiration society, nor a Sunday School. If it is heresy-hunting to criticize the opinion of fellow socialists, it is equally the same when we criticize the ideas of non-socialists. The moderates taunted Lang with the charge that he was following the policies of the SLP, a ploy favored by critics of the imposseists. He replied, significantly, that the SLP's concern with doctrinal orthodoxy was valid and only Deacon's "bossism" and "villification" had hurt it. The moderate position, he argued, was strengthened when non-socialists in the labour movement argued that such intolerance was only impeding the progress of socialism by alienating potential supporters. Foley wrote, "We have been a modern manifestation of the same spirit that in bygone days throttled freedom of speech and set the fires of persecution in every civilized country of Europe.

An even more explosive issue, because it affected so many workers intimately, concerned the party's relations with trade unions. As members of the SPEC, socialists were committed primarily, if not exclusively, to political action. In the context of the labour movement, the corollary to this commitment was a necessary criticism of economic action in order to turn the workers to the ballot box. By their very presence in the party, all socialists accepted this policy, but controversy arose over the question of what form this criticism should take. Kingsley was the most prominent anti-union spokesman. And Kingsley, by the beginning of 1903, had become the epitome of impossibility in the minds of the workers. One defined "a revolutionary as a Kingsley socialist." Early in 1903, Kingsley, now the party's
organizer on the Island, spoke to a Victoria meeting about unions. While he admitted that unions provided some workers with relief under capitalism, he denied that they played any role in the class struggle and condemned them as "reactionary products of the present competitive system." He went on to say that the resolutions in support of unions passed at the party's recent convention were "foolish and not worth the paper they were written upon." Weston Wrigley was quick to condemn Kingsley for making such statements in an official capacity, because, he argued, the vast majority of party members disagreed with the Possibilists' position. Joining the controversy, Burns argued that "trade unions, strikes and boycotts are all incidents in the class struggle, [but] whilst they afford transient and partial relief, and moreover furnish a safety-valve for relieving the ever-increasing sense of injustice felt by workers, only as the struggle becomes political will it really become effective for bettering the condition of labor in a substantial way." The Revelstoke local of the party made a formal complaint against Kingsley's statements, and the Victoria local demanded he be relieved of his post as organizer. In this case also the moderate's position was strengthened by those outside the party. A curious twist was that while "few in number are the trade unionists who look upon socialism as a fallacy," the movement would not grow if union men were abused by irresponsible socialists of the Kingsley type. Despite this controversy, the party continued to enjoy good relations with the unions, particularly the radical organizations affiliated with the American Labor Union. Southworthwaite gained the gratitude of organized labor by working sedulously in the provincial House for improved labor legislation. In Vancouver,
through what Pettipiece called a "policy of permeation," socialists continued to play a role in the trades council and succeeded in having the body endorse the Western Clarion when it emerged.

During 1903 a new militancy, growing out of a series of pitched battles with employers and the revolt of the radical dual unions, continued to provide an excellent climate for the expansion of socialism. Early in the year Dales wrote, "everywhere in the Province the workers are discontented with their social and economic conditions; they are ready for the spark of socialist agitation to kindle among them the revolutionary fire which will eventually sweep everything before it." The party continued to grow. The Vancouver Local reported that its membership doubled between April and July. Socialists in the Crow's Nest Pass were able to incorporate the Southeast Kootenay Labour Party into the SPFBC without losing a local.145 The expansion of socialism in British Columbia was such that it became a matter of comment among American socialists. A. M. Simons, editor of the International Socialist Review, called the phenomenon "remarkable." Ben P. Wilson observed, "I have been positively surprised to discover the interest in Socialism among the people; we are accustomed to speak of Canada as being 'slow' and 'Conservative' but it is far from being true in B.C."146 Such progress naturally engendered great confidence in the hearts of the socialists. Pettipiece wrote, "the Co-operative Commonwealth will dawn upon this old world in 1908. An investment with the working class just now is safer than steel bonds."

It was with this sense of confidence that the socialists fought their first province-wide election campaign. The Clarion advised its readers that "election time is near and it is for you..."
the slaves, to unite at the ballot box to throw off your chains for
good, as on election day you are free; one only day in the year you
are not slaves; so see that on election day you make a united effort
to keep free and help throw into the scrap pile the old machine of
private ownership of the means whereby you live, replacing the same
with the new machinery of public ownership." The party conducted
an energetic campaign throughout the province. In the interior
Ben F. Wilson stumped the mining camps. And in Victoria another
American socialist, Irene Smith, was "the heroine of the campaign."
In Vancouver the local relied upon frequent open-air meetings; after
witnessing one such meeting Adam Shortt wrote, "Outside of the
hysterical revivalist, we have nothing that quite equals it in the
east, either for noise, absence of argument, mixture of metaphor
or psychological effect." But the greatest socialist effort was
made in the province's "storm centre," the Island coal fields. There
the arrogant and ruthless tactics of Dunsmuir, Wrigley's words, believed that he had a "saint partnership with God
in operating coal mines," had driven his striking men to socialism.
Aided by a local organization composed of strikers, all the party's
prominent members campaigned in the region. The election early
in October indicated the progress which socialism had made in the
province. The party's ten candidates received 9 per cent of the
poll; in Vancouver the Socialists averaged over 1,100 votes each;
the standard bearer in Greenwood failed of election by only a narrow
margin; and on the Island Nanaimo and Newcastle returned
Havthornthwaite and Parker Williams respectively. The troubled times
had clearly resulted in a socialist triumph. The Clarion which
significantly pointed to "the remarkable uniformity of the vote.
throughout the province" found the results "deeply encouraging." The Socialists were elated with the results, and the chiliasm inherent in their analysis of society was re-enforced and began to emerge as the dominant component of their thought, which it would remain so long as electoral success continued.

The British Columbia election of 1903 was a landmark in the ideological development of western Canadian socialism. The coast socialists, who would provide the movement's leadership, gained, as a result of their impressive showing, an entirely new self-concept. In the years since its formation the party had become strong and confident, but in the minds of its members the development had been more than one to maturity. In recent months their movement had been transformed from a weak client of established socialist parties to the revolutionary vanguard. The most important statement of this new self-concept was an article published by Westod Wrigley in the International Socialist Review. He wrote, "marvelous as has been the growth of the Socialist vote in many of the United States, the most western province in Canada, British Columbia, has by its recent election campaign, taken a foremost place in the American class struggle." Using a complex and dubious set of formulae, he argued that the party's vote represented, in fact, 13 per cent of the total poll, the highest ever gained by socialists in a North American jurisdiction. Now it was the turn of Canadians to be didactic. The gains came, Wrigley explained, because the SPBC platform was "the shortest and most uncompromising statement of the principles of revolutionary socialism that has ever been drafted in any country." As a result of the election, the coast socialists claimed
the leadership of the Canadian movement which, in fact, had been theirs for at least a year. But of much greater significance was their new attitude to the international movement. The impossibilists of British Columbia had always had great reservations about the more emotional socialism characteristic of Britain, not only Blatchford’s but Kier Hardie’s as well. Now they found only the revolutionary message of the isolated Hyndman acceptable. After negotiations had gone on for some months, Kingsley, despite opposition from Burns, succeeded in mid-1904 in having the provincial executive reject the idea of affiliating with the second international, because it was not sufficiently revolutionary. But most instructive was the new attitude toward the SPA. The party which had had such an important influence on the development of the movement in British Columbia was now criticized for being insufficiently revolutionary. Comment began immediately after the election, but it was left to Kingsley to fire the major salvo. When the SPA convention of 1904 incorporated a resolution affirming its faith in trade unions into the platform, he described the document as "grotesque" and went on to observe, "the clear-cut and uncompromising attitude of the Socialist Party of B.C. stands out in striking contrast to the halting or confused attitude of the Socialist Party in the U.S." Burns was quick to criticize "the policy of continually throwing bouquets at ourselves and rotten eggs at the other fellow." He argued that American socialists like Victor Berger, Morris Hillquit, and John Spargo, all members of the party’s so-called right wing, "are quite equal to any B.C. Socialist in knowledge of Socialism and ability to expound its revolutionary message." Nor, he went on, was the provincial platform the excellent document it was
the 3FBC and the SLP were the only parties in the world the platforms of which lacked "a working program, or statement of legislation which socialist representatives would try to enact right here and now." But events were passing Burns by. The majority of party members embraced the new self-concept and its full implications.

The new self-concept clearly had ideological implications in that it entailed a new responsibility for British Columbia socialism. Because the highly developed nature of capitalism in the province had produced the continent's most advanced socialist movement, Pettipiece told his comrades that they must guard their doctrinal purity: "Fate has decreed this position in the world's history to us, and we should prove to the workers of the world that we can rise to the occasion; let us stand firm; keep our organization iron-clad; aye 'narrow' and see that we shy clear of the rocks of danger which have wrecked so many well-meaning movements." In a similar vein, Charlie O'Brien argued that henceforth the representative British-Columbia socialism must be "a student of economics." Such calls, of course, clearly implied a shift to the more doctrinaire position of the impossibilists, and as a result of the election, the party was prepared for this.

The electoral gains had come after the adoption of the revolutionary platform in 1902. And more important, success had been achieved in the very centre of the revolutionary propaganda, the Island coal fields where socialism meant impossibilism. Consequently, the party turned to Kingsley's brand of socialism because it appeared to have been vindicated by events and he emerged as the party's leading theoretician. Former critics, like Weston Wrigley, became his
supporters. The party's 1903 convention adopted one of his basic
doctrines when it explicitly rejected immediate demands as "liable
to retard the achievement of our final aims." But most important
the provincial executive, which had taken over the Clarion from a
bankrupt Pettipiece, named Kingsley as editor. He demonstrated
his strength by immediately instituting an attack on unions in the
columns of the party's organ. "less than skin deep is the socialism
of they who can see any connection whatsoever between trade unionism
and socialism," the new editor wrote; "not a revolutionary breath
does [the trade union] draw; at all times it is the very essence of
reaction, both in premises and conduct." Although the Revelstoke
local criticized Kingsley's analysis as "denial of the principle
of evolution [of] the working class and economic determinism" and
threatened to withdraw its financial support of the Clarion, the
storm of protest, which would surely have come one year earlier,
was not to be heard.

The impossibilists were not yet in complete control of the
party, but their views because they were expressed in the Clarion
and by the party's most energetic spokesmen came to represent
socialism in British Columbia after 1903. More important, this power
in the party would come to be virtually exclusive, and they would
thus be able to make their interpretation of Marxism the ideological
base of the Socialist Party of Canada.

The development of a vigorous socialist party in Winnipeg
was always impeded by, apart from basic economic and social conditions,
the city's independent labour movement led by Arthur Puttee. The
latter, influenced by British labour leaders, believed that only through a broadly based, all inclusive labour party, with a gradualist program, could the working class be politically mobilized so as to effect an improvement in its lot. In the minds of many Winnipeg workers, Puttee's approach was vindicated by the example of British working class political action and, more directly and dramatically, by his own election to the House of Commons in 1900. The slow and difficult birth of the city's first socialist party demonstrated the importance of this constant in Winnipeg and to some extent anticipated the bitter struggle which would develop between Puttee and the socialists in later years.

Puttee took an early and sympathetic interest in the CSL, opening the columns of The Voice to Wrigley, because the League, unlike the SLP, "works in harmony with organized labor and is prepared to take co-operative action with reform bodies." Puttee made a clubbing offer to his readers with Citizen and Country and the Winnipeg Labour Party used CSL literature in its propaganda work. Socialists in the party were in touch with Wrigley soon after the formation of his organization. That they were sympathetic to the League was demonstrated when John T. Mortimer, president of the Winnipeg trades council, and later one of Ringsley's leading Vancouver supporters, led the fight at the 1900 TLC convention for the affiliation of the CSL. For its part the League called upon the Winnipeg party to affiliate; and the socialists, whose numbers were being increased by refugees from the disintegrating SLP, began a year-long struggle to achieve this. They were led by an able young plumber, J. C. Morgan. A self-styled "revolutionary" who had named his son Karl to honour the master, Morgan had been a member of
Hyndman's Social Democratic Federation, Britain's most radical organization, but had left the party when he concluded it was not sufficiently advanced. The socialists argued that the party should declare itself a CSL local "in order that the name might be in harmony with the platform." But there had been a reluctance from the outset in the Winnipeg Labour Party to adopt the name socialist, for fear that by so doing potential support among conservative working men would be alienated.

The CSL took a direct part in this fight when Cameron, after completing his tour in the British Columbia interior, arrived at Winnipeg in March 1902. Leaping barbed wire in "A Loyal Subject" who threatened him with a beating should he deliver seditious talks, he began efforts to weld the city's socialists into a local in order "to vote into effect our demands for the abolition of wage slavery." His message was simple: "Convince [the workers] they are entitled to a full dinner pail and that they can get it, and you have 'em where the bull dog had the trash; that is solid." By the end of March he had succeeded in organizing a "small" CSL local. Inaugurating what was to become a radical institution in Winnipeg, the socialists began holding propaganda meetings on the Market Square, which on warm summer evenings would draw crowds up to five hundred people. During the summer of 1902 a dramatic confrontation between the United Brotherhood of Railway Employees and the Canadian Northern, in which the socialists took a leading part, convulsed the city and provided a favorable climate for socialist propaganda. Cameron observed, "Socialism is becoming popular." The summer's progress resulted in the formation of the Socialist Party of Manitoba (SPM) in November. The platform, which the SPM
would retain until it became part of the Socialist Party of Canada, had as its essential object "the socialization of the means of Production," but at a time when British Columbia socialists had already adopted a clear-cut revolutionary statement, the new manifesto also contained a number of immediate demands.  

If the dominant influence on early British Columbia socialism was the American movement, Winnipeg's was shaped by that of Britain. Morgan had received his Marxist training in the Social Democratic Federation, and though he had broken with the party, he continued to look to Hyndman, whom he quoted regularly in his column, as the leading English-speaking authority on the revolutionary gospel. The other leading member of the party, James T. Stott, was a product of the school at the other pole of British socialism. For a number of years secretary of the Bradford Labour Church, he numbered Kier Hardie and Ramsay MacDonald among his friends and considered Blatchford the active force in British socialism. Stott naturally was a proponent of municipal ownership: "the British workman knows that his comfort and welfare are closely bound up with the extensions of public works."  

Although Morgan dismissed Hardie and MacDonald as "pseudo-socialists" and rejected "gas and water socialism," he and Stott were able to work together in the party. Such tolerance was an important aspect of the CPR and reflects the influence of the British movement which was much less inclined to indulge in the mutual recrimination and heresy-hunting so much a part of American socialism. 

This tolerance, conspicuously lacking in the British Columbia movement particularly after 1903, was a part of the more moderate socialism of the Winnipeg party, a moderation which resulted...
from the British influence, and of more immediate importance, Puttee's labourite propaganda. Like their British mentors, Winnipeg socialists, at this time, believed that socialism should be incorporated into the larger labour movement; one wrote, "we believe that the trade union is an organization necessary and useful on the economic field, we believe that the Socialist Party is the political extension of trade unionism." Even Morgan, who had serious reservations about the utility of economic action, because he could "not remember any important strike that has been won in recent years," was prepared to admit that he saw "no fundamental conflict" between trade unions and socialism. Indeed, he viewed strikes as "an unconscious expression of the class struggle." This attitude in the part of Winnipeg socialists helped them to gain control of the city's trades council by the beginning of 1904. Where the socialists of British Columbia could challenge and defeat a labour party, like the FPP, the members of the SPM realized that if they did not come to terms with Winnipeg's labourites they would be isolated. Consequently, they co-operated with the Labour Representation League in the provincial election of 1903 - a sign of moderation of which the comrades on the coast strenuously disapproved. Even the Winnipeg socialists, however, could anticipate the later chilliness of the movement; when their candidate in the contest fares very badly, Morgan expressed himself as being "rather cheery at the result."170

Although the tactics of the Winnipeg socialists were more moderate than their British Columbia comrades, there can be no doubt about the revolutionary quality of their propaganda, especially that which Morgan presented in a weekly column in The Voice. Morgan, who became a leading theoretician for the Socialist Party of Canada,
preached a very simple doctrine: "There is no remedy short of the abolition of the wage system and this cannot be done until the means of life are owned and controlled by the producers." Morgan was highly regarded by British Columbia socialists for his work in

The Voice - Pettipiece described his writing as "vigorous" - and he was reprinted regularly in the party press on the coast. Indeed, until Kingsley became editor of the Clarion late in 1901, Morgan was probably the most advanced socialist writing in Canada.

Nonetheless, Winnipeg socialists, for their part, were prepared to accept the leadership of the coast party because it was "further advanced and stronger." There was direct contact between the two movements in the persons of George Dales and John T. Wintmer who moved between Winnipeg and Vancouver playing important roles in the socialist parties of both cities. Morgan approved of Kingsley's impossibilist doctrines and frequently reprinted the latter's work in The Voice after 1902. This relationship allowed the CPM to be absorbed by the Socialist Party of Canada and embrace unhesitatingly its platform.

During the period under review, the agricultural nature of the economy and elementary development of labor organizations resulted in, with but one exception, no important socialist developments in the Territories. At the turn of the century former members of the Harmonia Colony established a C.I.L local at Tantallon, and Pettipiece organized one in Banff. Neither of these survived. Nor did those survive which were organized by Cameron on his way to Winnipeg early in 1902. The most vigorous, the Calgary local, began
a propaganda campaign under the direction of A. Parsons, a former member of the CSL in Toronto, but it made little progress and soon collapsed. Until after 1905 there was no organized socialist movement between Manitoba and British Columbia.

The one exception in this situation was The Bond, a self-styled "socialist" paper, which had a short life, characterized by fractured grammar and anti-Semitism. Despite these shortcomings, the editors, who believed in "progress in power on earth,"[1] believed in a "glorious triumph of the peace of the workers," conducted a energetic campaign for socialism.

Pettipiece believed their paper displayed "great and progressive ideas," and Bond presented a program of better conditions for capitalism. "Better food, new ways of the city, more skill than in the children of the workers, better health, better homes than the workers." Although they were not the eventual end of capitalism, workers' movements were the only way they could work to improve their present. "A gamble was taken on the right of the workers to believe in "socialism" as the weapon against the prevailing exploitation in order to replace capitalism. But, the most optimistic people had the same reaction, "a rebellion in the minds of those who will be a menace of strength and power in a country full of exploited people, whether they [be] railroad, factory or farm workers." Ultimately, however, socialism's failure was the only road to organization for the workers. They wrote, "insurrection and riots have passed; the strike and boycotts are passing, a scientific brain..."
clearness of character, conduct and knowledge, based on historical experiences, are the keen weapons which the workers must use to abolish the whip forever." The Bond's one function was education, and Worsley and Palmer pleaded with their readers to take up the fight: "working men strike together, work together, starve together, why should they not vote together." The ballot was the only weapon through which the workers can secure their industrial freedom."179"

The editors claimed to base their analysis on "the irrefutable teachings of Karl Marx" and it is clear that they had some knowledge of Marxist theory. They were capable, for example, of providing as good a description of the concept of wage slavery as ever graced the pages of the Western Clarion: "we are bound to [the capitalist] economically by the fact that he possesses the tools of production and by that very possession still retains that controlling influence over the lives of fellow creatures, that was and is the essential condition of mastership and slavery, viz. - the power of one man over the life of another."180 But generally the editors' handling of Marxist doctrines was imperfect. This seems to have been of little concern to them because their propaganda was more emotional than scientific and reflects the source of their socialism. Although Worsley and Palmer would occasionally reprint material from British sources and from the Western Clarion which they regarded as a "splendid" paper, their inspiration was J. A. Wayland, editor of the Appeal to Reason, whom they regularly reprinted. Not only was Wayland's emotional and uncomplicated approach to socialist propaganda reflected week after week in the Bond but so also were the issues of his agrarian radicalism. The Calgary editors, regularly struck out
against such populist bêtes noires as trusts, which robbed the people
by inflating prices to "an artificial scarcity value," and predatory
eastern manufacturers, who used the tariff as "a class license to
rob the majority of our citizens." 181 Wayland's influence caused
Worsley and Palmer to look upon the platform of the SPA as "the
only scientific solution to the problems of our society." 182

VII

By 1904, then, the institutional foundations of the
socialist movement had been laid in Winnipeg and British Columbia,
which were to be the dynamo centres of western Canadian radicalism.
More important, in the space of a few years there had been important
doctrinal development in the radical movement; the left wing, having
passed beyond reformism, was totally committed to socialism. In
British Columbia the socialists were well advanced on the road to
impossibilism. And the SPEC's pre-eminent position in the movement
ensured that its doctrines would provide the ideological basis of
the Socialist Party of Canada, the party which would dominate western
radicalism for almost a decade.
Notes


2. The People's Voice, Sept. 28, 1895.


5. The People's Voice, April 27, 1895; The Voice, Oct. 16, 1897 and Vancouver TLC Minutes, Oct. 9, 1896.

6. The B.C. Workman, Aug. 12, 1899.


15. The People's Voice, March 27, 1897 and The Voice, June 26, 1897; Oct. 9, 1897 and Nov. 25, 1898.

16. The Voice, June 26, 1897 and Oct. 9, 1897.
17. Citizen and Country, July 8, 1894; and The Voice, April 8, 1898; May 6, 1898 and May 13, 1898.


20. The Voice, May 8, 1897.


23. The Voice, Nov. 22, 1897 and Feb. 25, 1899.

24. Ibid., Oct. 16, 1897.


27. The People's Voice, Nov. 10, 1894.

28. The Voice, Jan. 14, 1898; Vancouver TLC Minutes, Nov. 19, 1897 and Dec. 3, 1897 and Bennett, Builders of British Columbia, p. 29.


33. The Voice, March 26, 1896 and Jan. 14, 1898.

34. Ibid., March 11, 1898 and April 1, 1898 and The B.C. Workman, June 10, 1899.
35. The Voice, Nov. 30, 1898.


37. Quoted in The Voice, Sept. 29, 1899.


41. The People's Voice, March 14, 1896; Wrigley "Socialism in Canada," p. 686 and The People, Oct. 16, 1898 and Feb. 11, 1900. The People, edited by De Leon and published in New York, was the organ of the SLP.

42. State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Socialist Labour Party of American Papers, National Executive, Incoming Correspondence, Ashplant to Kuhn, March 11, 1899 and Kerrigan to Kuhn, April 11, 1899 and The People, Feb. 27, 1898; March 27, 1898; Aug. 6, 1899, and Jan. 11, 1900.

43. SLP Papers National Executive, Incoming Correspondence, Peel to Kuhn, Nov. 1, 1898 and Winchester to Kuhn, Nov. 26, 1898.

44. The People's Voice, Oct. 27, 1894; Dec. 22, 1894 and March 28, 1896. Apparently the Canadian party undertook a revision of the platform in 1898, submitting a draft to the locals; but no copy of the amended document was submitted to the New York headquarters. (SLP Papers, National Executive, Incoming Correspondence, Moore to Kuhn, Sept. 22, 1898 and The People, April 24, 1898).

45. The People's Voice, Feb. 29, 1896; March 28, 1896, and April 1, 1896.

46. Ibid., July 18, 1896.

47. Ibid., Dec. 7, 1895.

48. TLC Proceedings, 1895, pp. 19-21. Robin, apparently confused by a credentials fight, incorrectly states that the SLP was "barred." [Radical Politics, p. 32].


52. Ibid., March 7, 1896; March 14, 1896; Nov. 28, 1896 and March 7, 1897.

53. The People, Nov. 12, 1899.

54. SLP Papers, National Executive, Incoming Correspondence, Moore to Kuhf, Sept. 29, 1898 and Bennett, Builders of British Columbia, p. 135.

55. The People, Jan. 1, 1899 and Nov. 12, 1899.

56. Ibid., April 9, 1899 and Nov. 12, 1899.

57. Ibid., Feb. 19, 1899; May 7, 1899; Nov. 12, 1899 and June 30, 1900 and SLP Papers, Socialist Trades and Labour Alliance, Local No. 250, Vancouver, Minutes, Aug. 9, 1899.

58. SLP Papers, Vancouver STLA, Minutes, Sept. 28, 1899 and Jan. 22, 1900 and The People, Jan. 28, 1900.

59. Quint,Forging American Socialism, pp. 333-8; SLP Papers, Vancouver STLA, Minutes, Sept. 29, 1899 and The People, Sept. 17, 1899 and Oct. 15, 1899. One of the leading insurgents was named "Slobodian", hence "slobs".

60. The People, March 26, 1899; April 9, 1899 and Jan. 28, 1900 and Citizen and Country, Oct. 7; 1899.

61. The People, Nov. 12, 1899; May 20, 1900 and July 14, 1900 and Citizen and Country, Dec. 2, 1899.


63. SLP Papers, Vancouver STLA, Minutes, June 4, 1899 and The People, April 9, 1899.

64. SLP Papers, Vancouver STLA, Minutes, July 26, 1899; Aug. 9, 1899; Aug. 16, 1899 and Sept. 27, 1899.

65. Ibid., Sept. 20, 1899; Sept. 29, 1899 and Oct. 9, 1899 and The People, April 9, 1899; Oct. 15, 1899 and Dec. 21, 1899.

66. SLP Papers, Vancouver STLA, Minutes, Feb. 25, 1900 and The People, March 4, 1900.

67. SLP Papers, Vancouver STLA, Minutes, Dec. 21, 1900.

68. The People, May 1, 1899; Citizen and Country, Jan. 13, 1900 and The Voice, Dec. 21, 1899; Feb. 16, 1900; Feb. 23, 1900 and March 9, 1900. The SLP had a large following among German immigrants in the United States.

69. The Voice, Sept. 7, 1900 and July 12, 1901.
70. Ibid., Jan. 11, 1901.

71. Ibid., Sept. 20, 1900 and Dec. 27, 1901 and The People, April 1, 1900 and March 2, 1901.

72. The Independent, Dec. 27, 1902. For Foley see Chap. 3.

73. Ibid., Sept. 12, 1903 and Vancouver TLC Minutes, Sept. 21, 1905.

74. Western Clarion, Sept. 24, 1903.

75. Ibid., Sept. 23, 1905; Sept. 30, 1905 and Oct. 21, 1905 and Bennett, Builders of British Columbia, p. 40.


80. Ibid., May 8, 1900; LFP Papers, National Executive, Inciting Correspondence, Kerrigan to Kuhn, April 11, 1899; and Western Clarion, Oct. 29, 1902.


85. Ibid., Jan. 13, 1900.


88. The People, May 20, 1900.

89. Citizen and Country, July 13, 1900.

90. Bennett, Builders of British Columbia, p. 138; The Independent, May 26, 1900; The People, July 14, 1900; Citizen and Country.


92. Western Clarion, Nov. 5, 1903 and Citizen and Country, June 13, 1900.


94. Lardeau Eagle, April 25, 1900; May 16, 1900; June 20, 1900 and Aug. 15, 1900.

95. Ibid., Jan. 25, 1901.

96. Ibid., Jan 18, 1901 and Nov. 7, 1901 and Quint, Forging American Socialism, pp. 175-209.

97. Lardeau Eagle, July 11, 1900; Aug. 1, 1900 and Oct. 17, 1900.

98. Ibid., Sept. 19, 1901 and Citizen and Country, June 11, 1900.


100. The Socialist, July 14, 1901.

101. The People, June 30, 1900.

102. The Socialist, July 7, 1901 and Aug. 18, 1901.

103. Ibid., June 30, 1901; July 21, 1901 and Sept. 29, 1901.

104. Ibid., June 30, 1901 and Sept. 8, 1901.

105. Ibid., Sept. 29, 1901; Western Socialist, Feb. 14, 1903; Western Clarion, Jan. 12, 1907; Interview with Pritchard; Aug. 16-18, 1971.


111. The People, Dec. 25, 1898 and June 25, 1899 and SLP Papers, National Executive, Incoming Correspondence, Everett to Ruhn, May 11, 1899.

112. The People, Oct. 8, 1899; Oct. 15, 1899 and Aug. 25, 1900.
113. McKee, "De Leon: A Reappraisal", p. 275; Interview with
Pritchard, Aug. 16-18, 1971; and Pritchard to the author,

114. Lardeau Eagle, March 20, 1902 and Pritchard to the author,

115. Lardeau Eagle, March 27, 1902.

116. The Socialist, May 18, 1902.

117. Ormsby, British Columbia: A History, pp. 331-2 and The
Independent, Nov. 9, 1901.

118. For the Rossland strike see Chap. 3.

119. Ralston, "1900 Strike of Fraser River Salmon Fishermen,

120. The Socialist, Aug. 4, 1901 and Lardeau Eagle, Aug. 1, 1900.

121. Lardeau Eagle, Nov. 21, 1901; Jan. 23, 1902 and Jan. 30, 1902
and The Socialist, Dec. 1, 1901 and Dec. 29, 1901.

122. Western Socialist, April 17, 1903 and American Labor Union
Journal, Nov. 12, 1903.

123. Mining Magazine, Aug., 1902.

124. Vancouver TUC Minutes, April 17, 1902; July 17, 1902 and April
1902; The Independent, April 12, 1902; Canadian Socialist,
July 5, 1902 and Western Socialist, Jan. 17, 1903.

125. The Socialist, Oct. 27, 1901 and Western Socialist, Jan. 3,
1903.

126. Western Socialist, Feb. 21, 1903; Victoria Daily Colonist,
Oct. 19, 1902 and Western Clarion, Jan. 12, 1907.

127. Victoria Daily Colonist, March 2, 1903 and Western Socialist,
Feb. 7, 1903.

128. Canadian Socialist, June 6, 1902 and Western Clarion, July 3,
1903 and Nov. 5, 1903.

Research has brought to light no copies of the Clarion.


131. The Independent, April 19, 1902 and May 10, 1902 and Bennett,
Builders of British Columbia, p. 138.

132. The Independent, April 19, 1902 and Victoria Daily Colonist,
April 20, 1902.

134. Miners' Magazine, Aug., 1902 and Canadian Socialist, July 12; 1902. For the WPM see Chap. 3.

135. Western Socialist, Oct. 11, 1902.

136. Ibid., and The Socialist, Oct. 26, 1902.


138. Western Clarion, Sept. 7, 1903.

139. Western Socialist, Jan. 24, 1903; Jan. 31, 1903 and Feb. 7, 1903 and Western Clarion, May 28, 1903; June 4, 1903 and July 3, 1903.

140. The Independent, Oct. 10, 1903.


142. Western Socialist, Feb. 7, 1903; Feb. 28, 1903; March 27, 1903 and April 24, 1903 and Western Clarion, July 10, 1903.


144. Phillips, No Power Greater, p. 42; Western Socialist, Jan. 24, 1903 and Vancouver TLC Minutes, Feb. 19, 1903 and May 7, 1903. For the AIF see Chap. 3.

145. Western Socialist, Feb. 21, 1903; Western Clarion, July 24, 1903 and American Labor Union Journal, May 14, 1903.


147. Western Clarion, July 3, 1903.

148. Ibid., June 26, 1903.

149. Ibid., July 3, 1903 and Oct. 8, 1903; The Voice, July 3, 1903 and American Labor Union Journal, Sept. 3, 1903.

150. Western Clarion, Oct. 8, 1903 and Oct. 29, 1903.


152. Ibid., p. 401 and Western Clarion, Oct. 8, 1903.
153. Western Clarion, Sept. 17, 1903 and Oct. 8, 1903.

154. Ibid., Dec. 19, 1903 and July 2, 1904.


156. Western Clarion, Oct. 15, 1903 and American Labor Union Journal, Nov. 5, 1903.

157. Wrigley, "Another Red Spot on the Socialist Map," pp. 400-1 and Western Clarion, Sept. 11, 1903; Nov. 28, 1903 and Dec. 12, 1903.

158. Western Clarion, Dec. 5, 1903 and Dec. 26, 1903.

159. For Puttee and his efforts to found an inclusive labour party see Chap. 5.

160. The Voice, Oct. 27, 1899; Dec. 15, 1899; Aug. 2, 1900 and Aug. 17, 1900.


163. The Voice, Nov. 15, 1901 and Dec. 27, 1901.

164. Ibid., March 14, 1902; March 21, 1902 and March 28, 1902 and The Socialist, July 13, 1902.

165. The Voice, May 2, 1902 and May 23, 1902.

166. Ibid., Nov. 14, 1902.

167. Ibid., April 24, 1903; July 29, 1903; Nov. 13, 1903 and Dec. 4, 1903.

168. Ibid., Oct. 9, 1903.

169. Ibid., Oct. 9, 1903 and Nov. 27, 1903 and Manitoba Free Press News Bulletin, Jan. 9, 1904.

170. The Voice, July 3, 1903 and July 24, 1903; Wrigley, "Another Red Spot on the Socialist Map," p. 401, and Western Clarion, July 31, 1903.


172. Western Clarion, Oct. 22, 1903.

173. The Voice, July 10, 1903 and April 15, 1904 and Western Socialist.
March 20, 1903.


175. Larder's Eagle, Feb. 15, 1902 and March 13, 1902; Citizen and Country, May 11, 1900 and The Voice, June 6, 1902.

176. The Bond of Brotherhood, Aug. 14, 1903 and Western Clarion, June 4, 1903.

177. The Bond of Brotherhood, July 24, 1903.

178. Ibid., July 24, 1903 and Aug. 21, 1903. Worsley was a prominent member of the ALU.

179. Ibid., Sept. 26, 1903; Jan. 9, 1904 and March 5, 1904.

180. Ibid., July 3, 1903 and Sept. 4, 1903.


182. The Bond of Brotherhood, May 21, 1904.
Chapter III

Radical Dual Unions and the First Western Revolt

From the time the labour movement emerged in western Canada, the workers there were removed from the influence of the eastern-dominated Trades and Labor Congress, and this was partly a function of distance. The economic and social realities of life in the West, which present the labour movement with special and different challenges, tended to estrange the westerners from their eastern brethren. The same conditions, which were responsible for this basic alienation, provided a context favourable to the growth of radicalism, and this, in turn, caused further alienation, because as more and more western labour leaders moved to the left, they came to regard themselves as superior and progressive. In 1917, for example, The Voice described the typical TLC policy as one of "conservatism and cautiousness." Distance, physical and cerebral, ensured that the Congress would never inspire "any sort of magnetic force over the [western] bodies, a spirit of an organic effort upon a practical working programme."

These distances were greatest in British Columbia. In that province also was the example of the most important challenge to conservative craft domination of the North American labour movement, the Western Federation of Miners. In the first years of the century an industrial crisis rocked the coast province causing the workers to call into question the validity of conventional trade union tactics. At the same time the leadership of the WFM launched a proletarian crusade against capitalism and the American Federation
of labour. The coincidence of these two phenomena provided the occasion for the first western revolt against the TLC.

II

Probably more than any other labour organization, the Western Federation of Miners was a product of the conflict between the aggressive, and often brutal, capitalism of the American frontier and the workers of that region. The convention which established the union in 1893, however, devised what Jensen has called "a mild program." The demands of the fledgling WFM were aimed at achieving higher wages and improved conditions in an unhealthy and dangerous work. But if the union began as a typical job-conscious organization, the realities of industrial life in the metal camps forced it to take up ever more radical positions until finally it formed the base of the IWW. The radicalization of the miners' union grew out of the labour conflicts of the mountain states which seemed to epitomize Marx's doctrine of the class struggle, no holds barred, no quarter given. In these conflicts the WFM could not effectively meet the attacks of the operators, who frequently enjoyed the support of the state judiciary and executive, with conventional trade union tactics, because despite a reputation for strength, the union at the height of its power had only 20 per cent of the industry organized.

Under President Ed Boyce and Secretary Bill Haywood, later the leader of the IWW, the WFM adopted radical weapons to fight the mine owners of the American West. Because the operators refused to allow conventional industrial relations procedures to function, violence was adopted by the WFM as a "bargaining device." The WFM also developed a strong commitment to political action. Initially this
took the form of support for Populism, which was converted into an essentially working class movement in the mountain states. But when the People's Party was absorbed by the Democrats, Boyce, under the influence of Debs, began to lead the WFM toward socialism. These two radical tendencies within the union naturally caused it to reject the conservative business unionism of Samuel Gompers.  

AFL. In 1898, Boyce led the WFM out of the latter organization and became a leading force in the formation of the Western Labour Union. This was a dual labour federation the object of which was to organize "unattached bodies of workmen," especially the unskilled, "irrespective of occupation, nationality, creed or color who are determined that no corporation, trust, syndicate, or injunction shall longer deprive them of their inherent rights." The pattern of development of the radicalism which characterized the WFM in the United States was to be largely reproduced by that union as it grew in British Columbia.

The mineral riches of the rugged, forbidding Kootenays and of the hills of the Boundary District were first exploited by American prospectors, working singly or in small groups, in the 1880's and early 1890's. But profitable mining of refractory ores, gold and silver, and base metals, lead, zinc and copper, required railroads, advanced technology, large milling and smelting facilities, and intensive capitalization. By the turn of the century metal mining in southern British Columbia had become an important and highly capitalized industry. The forty-four producing mines represented an investment of over thirty million dollars and employed a work force of approximately five thousand men. These mines were serviced by large smelter complexes at Trail, Grand Forks
and Greenwood and by Canadian and American railways. Because the Kootenays and the Boundary were "geographically and economically largely tributary to the 'Inland Empire' [of Spokane]," the capital which first developed the region was American. And even after eastern Canadian and British capital became important in British Columbia metal mining in the late nineties, "American influences remained strong." In the words of a mine manager, "natural location has created a mutual industrial dependence which cannot be severed by a political line."8

The early importance of American capital and the essential sameness of mining technology on both sides of the international boundary made American managers a prominent part of the British Columbia metal camps. Even many of the British born managers had had experience in the mountain states.9 Much the same was true of the men who drilled and shovelled the quartz. The hard-rock miners of the western United States and Canada were highly mobile, and the card transfer system of the WPM facilitated this mobility. Consequently, they regularly moved between American and Canadian camps. Despite a vague official desire to reduce the influence of American workers, managers made no effort to hire Canadian or British miners; one observed, "when a man comes to me for work I do not ask him what his religion is or his nationality; I simply wish to know if he is a good miner; if he speaks good English that is all I want." Consequently, at the turn of the century it was estimated that at least 50 per cent of the metal miners in British Columbia were American citizens. In addition, large numbers of the Canadian and British miners in the region had worked in the American West.10

All these factors went to make the metal camps of British
Columbia very much a part of the larger American mining society.

The Fourth of July was an important holiday in the Kootenays and the Boundary. As late as 1903 the Greenwood Miners' Union could petition the "House of Representatives" in Ottawa to revise Laurier's railway policy. But much more significantly, the attitudes and customs of work characteristic of the American industry were transferred north. For example, the ten-hour day had long since been abolished in the mines of the British Empire, but because it was the custom in the American West, British Columbia metal miners initially worked ten hours underground.

Given the nature of the industry in British Columbia, it was natural that the Western Federation of Miners should be established there. The first local was organized in the summer of 1895 at Rossland, where large scale modern production first began. No other locals were formed until 1899 when a number were founded. In addition, the WFM which ordinarily confined itself to metal camps took the unusual step of organizing the coal miners of Fernie and Lethbridge. In December, 1899 thirteen locals met to establish a Canadian district within the WFM, District No. 6. And in 1901 the importance of the Canadians within the Federation was recognized when James Wilkes of Rossland was elected an international vice-president.

By the turn of the century the union had grown to what seemed a position of real strength in the Kootenays and the Boundary District. The giant Rossland local numbered 1300 men and organized 95 per cent of the camp's labour force. Throughout the region, the WFM contained approximately 3000 men which represented 60 per cent of the British Columbia metal miners. R. C. Clute, who investigated the industry in 1900, believed that the Federation was "a very
important factor affecting the question of the supply of labor for
the mines in British Columbia." In addition to this conventional
trade union function, the WFM in British Columbia provided its
members with welfare benefits. The Rossland local operated an
insurance scheme under which members received medical coverage and
sick benefits. Several of the locals maintained hospitals; the
best was that at Sandon which had a permanent staff of two nurses,
contained seven beds and provided out-patient services. Given
such activities, it is not surprising that the metal miners of the
province should declare the objective of their organization to be
no more than "the practice of those virtues that elevate and adorn
society, and remind man of his duty to his fellow man [and] the
elevation of his position and maintenance of the rights of the
miner." But many of the factors which drove the WFM from its
original job-conscious position and radicalized it in the United
States were also present in the British Columbia industry. These
carved the members of the Federation in the province to become
increasingly more radical as the years passed. Probably the most
important factor in this process was the relative physical isolation
and dangerous underground work which have produced group solidarity
and radicalism in mining communities around the world. Despite
romantic legend, the life of the metal miner was sordid and brutal.
The majority of men were single; in some camps the proportion was
as high as 90 per cent. Living in barracks or shoddy boarding
houses, they were deprived of the solace and removed from the
moderating influence of family life. The seven day week was general
in British Columbia metal mines, and before 1899 the men worked ten
hours a day underground. Accidents were a frequent occurrence, mainly as a result of inadequate enforcement of safety legislation. And the men, ascending to the cold mountain air after spending long hours in the intense heat of the drifts, often experienced nausea and dizziness. In an example of monumental understatement, a miner testifying before the Clute commission described his work as "very unhealthy." If anything the work of the smeltermen, also organized by the WFM, was even more unhealthy. An officer of the Federation described the effect the plant's atmosphere had on men who worked at the furnaces in Nelson:

8% of the men employed on an average are in the Hospital or in the Dr. care away from their work with the Poisonous effects the lead dust and fumes has on them; 20% of the oldest hands, when I say old hands it means from 8 months up, have been told by [the] Dr. if they don't quit they will die shortly, as the lead is killing them; in some cases the lead has completely knocked out men that has only worked there two months; ... I actually feel sorry for the poor fellows; they are such a weak unhealthy looking lot of fellows. I have seen strong men go there to work, and you can see them fade away. I have seen them since I have been here fade away like snow before a July Sun.

Yet a Rossland manager could declare, "I do not consider mining... very laborious work, nor have I been able to observe that the miners' occupation in the precious metal mines of the West was productive of bad consequences to their health or longevity."18 Another factor which contributed to the radicalization of the WFM in British Columbia, as it did in the United States, was management's steadfast refusal to recognize the union. Indeed, this attitude was so prominent among the operators that Clute felt obliged to make special reference to it. Time and again the managers testifying before the commission declared that, while they had no objection to unions in principle and would not discriminate against a man because
of membership in the WFM, their only responsibility was to the shareholders, and they would not jeopardize the profit position of their mine by giving over any authority to the union. But some went farther; the superintendent of the Lillooet mine declared that he would employ no members of the WFM, because "there is always trouble wherever I have been where a Miners' Union is." When the mechanisms of collective bargaining failed to function, the Federation in British Columbia moved to a more radical position. The polarized nature of camp society facilitated this move. The nature of the industry created a wide gulf between the few mine managers representing absentee owners and the men. This condition was intensified by the absence of any large, relatively neutral business or professional class to mediate disputes in the camps. There naturally grew out of this experience a strong feeling of group solidarity among the miners. "The ethnic homogeneity of the camps tended to re-enforce this feeling." This sense of solidarity and the realities of their life produced among these men an attitude to the state and society which conformed, if only in a vague way, with the doctrine of the class struggle and allowed them to become an important radical power base in the province.

Clearly the metal mining industry of British Columbia shared in what Jensen has called "the heritage of conflict." The great labour wars of the American West, particularly those fought in the Coeur d'Alene Mountains of Idaho, produced a deep and abiding animosity between the mine owners and the defeated miners. The men driven out of Idaho carried accounts of the struggle across the West, and these became part of the folklore of the camps. "The bitterness engendered by the destruction of the miners unions of the
Coeur d' Alenes [in 1899] was carried in the hearts of men to many mining camps throughout the West... conflict bears bitter seeds. Because Americans played such an important role in the industry there, the animosities bred in these labour wars affected employer-employee relations in British Columbia. Miners from the Coeur d' Alenes were prospecting in the province in 1892, and by 1899 Clute reported that there were "a considerable number" of refugees from the troubled region in the Kootenays and the Boundary. The presence of these men in the camps allowed the British Columbia miners to participate vicariously in what were the most violent confrontations between capital and labour ever to take place in North America. In addition, there was direct participation on the part of the Canadians to the extent that they contributed to the Federation's war chests. This involvement tended to increase the sense of outrage at their own less oppressive, but by no means inconsequential, grievances. The radical Silverton local declared: "We do not consider ourselves any better than the miners of the Coeur d' Alenes" and threatened violent reprisals against employers unless their lot was improved. Such animosity caused, in Clute's words, "a feeling of insecurity" among many operators. The president of the coal company in Lethbridge, whose men were organized by the WFM, believed that the only way to ensure peaceful conduct on the part of the miners was to maintain in the camp, a large WFM contingent to act as "a deterrent upon disturbing influences." A Rossland manager stated the view of some employers very simply: "I have no objection to law-abiding labor organizations; in certain cases they are beneficial, but I certainly object to organizations connected with such institutions as this Western Federation of Miners, which
through its President Mr. Ed Boyce give voice to such utterances, [as] that it was the first duty of every Miners' Union to see that its members were supplied with the best of modern rifles. 223

The clashes between employer and employee growing out of this animosity were never as violent in British Columbia as they were in the American West. This can be ascribed to British Columbia's being less "wild" than the mountain states because of better law enforcement and, more generally, the moderating influence of British traditions. The difference, however, between the clashes in the two countries was not as great as some historians suggest. 224

If the British Columbia operators never indulged in the excesses characteristic of their American counterparts, they certainly made extensive use of blacklisting, spies, thugs and special police. For their part, if the miners were never forced to respond in the fashion of their comrades south of the border, they did engage in practices which were far from being a customary part of contemporary Canadian employer-employee relations.

The peculiarities of labour relations in the metal camps were very well demonstrated in the great Rossland strike of 1901. Late in 1899, the British American Corporation, a British firm, named Bernard McDonald manager of its properties at Rossland, the most important of which were the Le Roi mines. At the same time, the Goederiah Syndicate, also British, named Edmund Kirby manager of the War Eagle and the Centre Star mines in the camp. McDonald, who had gained a reputation as a "union smasher" in the Coeur d'Alenes, and Kirby, who considered members of the WFM "savages," set out to break the Federation in Rossland. Or as Deputy Minister of Labour Mackenzie King blandly reported, they began "seeking to so arrange matters as
to make unnecessary, recognition of the local union; and through it, recognition of the Western Federation of Miners.\textsuperscript{25}

The first step in the campaign was to impose new conditions of work on the union. After closing their mines in February, 1900, McDonald and Kirby succeeded, with the help of the federal and provincial governments, in having their workers accept the contract system of digging and a wage reduction for muckers, the men who loaded the broken ore. Despite an official Federation policy against contract work, the local accepted it and the wage reduction, because many of the miners feared that a strike at this time would imperil a recently passed eight-hour law for metal miners.\textsuperscript{26} Both these devices were intended to weaken union solidarity. The contract system, under which miners tendered for particular jobs, "put men in competition with their fellow workmen." The reduction of muckers' wages, in addition to making the local men resentful, tended to weaken District solidarity by placing the Rossland mines in an unfair competitive position; the District Secretary, Alfred Farr, warned, "something should be done in the case of the Rossland muckers, as the union is losing its prestige among those men who follow mucking in this part of the Kootenays."\textsuperscript{27}

The importation of immigrant labour, begun by McDonald and Kirby early in 1900, was also intended to weaken group solidarity by destroying the ethnic homogeneity of the camp and by filling the mines with low-paid and culturally unassimilated workers. A union member charged that the major mines in Rossland were discriminating against English-speaking miners "with the evident object of reducing the standard of intelligence and creating a Babelish conflict of tongues that will make unity of action for self-protection almost
impossible." James Wilkes told Laurier that "the Mine Owners (unless prevented by the Government) intend to flood this Country with foreigners from the Iron Mining Districts of Minnesota and in this way bring the Labour Unions into a state of subjection." Pettipiece, already a friend of the WFM, warned, "Rossland will soon be the dumping ground for the filth of the United States." Through Ralph Smith, the Liberal-Labour MP for Nanaimo, the Federation unsuccessfully attempted to have the federal government invoke the Alien Labour Law against the operators. 28

More sinister was what Woodside called the "secret warfare" which McDonald and Kirby waged against the union, a warfare the tactics of which were reminiscent of the Coeur d' Alenes. Indeed, in his report to the 1901 convention, President Ed Boyce equated Rossland with that notorious region. 29 The operators began an active blacklisting campaign against prominent union miners. A leading member of the Federation in British Columbia described the practice as the "curse of our unions" and observed, "it is a well-known fact that the best men in every locality are blacklisted." Rossland, naturally, suffered the loss of some of its most active members who were forced to leave the camp because they were unable to find work, and the local also suffered an over-all decline in its numbers. 30 As in the United States, the problem of the labour spy was a real one for the WFM in British Columbia. Both locals and the international union were constantly on the watch for spies and with reason. For example, a detective in the employ of the mine owners rose to become financial secretary of the Morrissey local before giving himself away one night while in his cups. McDonald and Kirby made extensive use of spies against the Rossland local. A miner complained, "Our city,
our streets, our unions, are to-day infested by that Judas Iscariot parasite, too lazy to work, too ignorant to realize their own degradation, known as the 'spotter,' imported here from Idaho." Agents of the operators reported on the union's activities and its prominent members, raised factional disputes, and at one point, in the opinion of the editor of the Miners' Magazine, came close to controlling the local.31 In the best American tradition, the Rossland operators also began, in January, 1900, to assemble a special police force. Twenty-five men were recruited, uniformed, and paid by the City of Rossland and placed under the orders of McDonald. To ensure the proper protection of the properties, the Le Roi manager armed the specials with both repeating shotguns and rifles.32

The British American Corporation, in addition to their holdings in British Columbia owned the smelter at Northport, Washington, a few miles south of the troubled camp, and there Rossland ore was refined. Part of McDonald's scheme was to run the Le Roi mines at full capacity and thus amass a large stock-pile of ore at Northport which would allow him to close his mines at a time opportune to the breaking of the union while not interrupting the company's production of metal. Recognizing the implications of McDonald's efforts to increase production, the miners acted to preclude his use of the Northport club in the fight they knew must come. In March, 1901 James Wilkes organized the smeltermen of the Washington town. In response, the company's resident manager set about to "bust up the union," and late in May the Northport local struck.33 This development demanded action by the Roseland union. To continue work would allow the operators to accumulate even larger stock-piles of ore which would become weapons in the hands of the
owners in their fight against the miners when the smeltermen were beaten. Nor were the Rossland men prepared to see the smeltermen beaten; their commitment to the industrial unionism of the WFM, based as it was on a belief in the proletariat solidarity of the working class, demanded sympathetic action. After reaching an agreement that neither union would settle without the other, the Rossland local declared a strike against all the principal mines in the camp early in July; this action was based upon the owners' harassment of the union the object of which was "to force the laboring element in their employ into industrial slavery" and a belief that the interests of the workers of Rossland and Northport "are bound and interwoven together to an inseparable degree and constitute one and the same struggle."

This confrontation between organized capital, bent on destroying the miners' union and the WFM's largest and most important local, was of critical importance to the Federation; in Nuydix's words, "We must win this fight as it means peace and harmony in the Kootanies." International Vice-President Wilkes requested locals in the District to refrain from any strike action so that all union resources could be committed to the achievement of "a final and satisfactory conclusion" at Rossland. And Ed Boyce wrote, "I am in favor of making a fight to the bitter end and I care not what it takes to win, nor how we win. I am in favor of winning." Consequently, the full resources of the Federation were thrown into the Rossland struggle. The Miners' Magazine and WFM locals throughout the American West advertised conditions in the British Columbia camp and requested miners to stay away. The Federation provided the striking local with legal assistance. But most important was the
financial support which the international union gave to the strikers. The war chest of the WFM had been badly depleted by the labour war in the Coeur d'Alenes two years earlier, and Haywood had to caution Woodside to exercise "as much economy as possible" in the use of strike funds. Nonetheless, the Rossland miners received approximately $20,000.00 from the Federation to aid them in their fight. But all this was to prove ineffective.

The same ruthless tactics, which had characterized the campaign of McDonald and Kirby before July, 1901, were carried over into the strike. The men had barely left the mines when the operators called upon Laurier to send in the militia to provide protection for their property and strike-breakers. When the federal government refused, the owners imported American thugs who "threatened to kill all union men who dare oppose them in their methods." Early in October the companies obtained injunctions so sweeping that they prevented "a union man from taking a full breath within a radius of twenty miles of a company office and from even looking in the direction of the mines." Under these instruments, strikers were quickly jailed for the harassment of scouts. Before a Silverton audience, John O'Neill, editor of the Miners' Magazine, denounced the British Columbia Supreme Court which he charged had bowed "in meek submission to the will of arrogant corporations, whose coffers are filled with the profits of masked piracy and masked brigandage." 40

But the operators intended to make still further use of the courts. The Goodeham Syndicate sued the union for damages, beginning the case which Phillips has called "British Columbia's Taff Vale." When union officers were subpoenaed and ordered to produce their records, Boyce fumed, "It appears to me to be one of the greatest impositions
ever heard of to say that a labor organization shall produce all its
effects in court for the benefit of a corporation." The officers'
refusal to comply with the court order brought contempt charges, but
Woodside assured a friend, "if you hear of me been [sic] in the
cooler don't be uneasy as the strike will go on just the same."[41]
None of these tactics, however, were the operators' principal means
of defeating the union. "The Le-Roi Company began as soon as
possible to fill the places of those on strike, leaving it open to
the strikers to make applications for employment whenever they
desired, and accepting applications from others as well," thus the
Deputy Minister of Labour described the systematic violation of the
Alien Labour Law. Interestingly, McDonald secured most of the
strike-breakers he used from Joplin, Missouri, the main source of
scabs for the mine-owners in the Coeur d'Alenes. Appeals from the
union for federal action to stop this traffic brought from Laurier
and his Justice Minister, David Mills, the response that they had
no jurisdiction. Pettipiece sneered, "the Laurier government is
afraid to enforce the provisions of a law placed in the statutes by
themselves," and importation of miners from the United States
provided the owners with what Kirby described as "an abundant supply
of labour" and resulted in the effective collapse of the strike by
November.[42]

Acting upon the request of the federal government, the
union applied to the Department of Labour for its services in
settling the strike, and Mackenzie King arrived at Rossland early
in November. Conversations with the owners convinced him that they
had an adequate supply of labour to operate the mines and that the
cause of the men was "hopeless." He, therefore, advised the union
leaders to call off the strike, this they refused to do, and Woodside charged that King was "unknowingly playing the companies' hand. King, of course, was really doing no more than seeking to have the strikers face reality. His view of the union was known to the men, however, and this no doubt increased their intransigence. King had gone to Rossland of the opinion that the strikers' cause was a just one, but he quickly changed his mind. He told his friend Albert Harper, "the men are entirely in the wrong." His first encounter with the radical miners left King uneasy. Recognizing that the strike in large measure was a sympathetic one, he condemned it: "the strike of the miners at the Rossland mines was declared really in sympathy with the men at Northport," and the rank and file was forced to take this action "by subterfuge and a great deal of crooked work on the part of the executive committee, who were working with the officers of the District Association, and in close communication with the headquarters at Denver." He had reached the conclusion, he confided to Harper, that "this is clearly and simply an agitators' fight." It would be, therefore, "unrighteous and disastrous," King told his Minister, for the federal government to take any action which might allow the union executive "to profit by its own wrong." He recommended that no investigation of the violations of the Alien Labour Law be made. Indeed, if the WFM were not beaten, "it might be a disastrous thing for the mining interests of this province." King's mission to Rossland was important because there he formed his first, and lasting, impression of the WFM. This impression, which saw the Federation as a group of irresponsible radicals indulging in sympathetic strikes at the behest of a Denver executive, was the basis of the attitude of the Laurier government to the radical
dual unions and shaped the federal response to these unions in 1903.

By the beginning of 1902 the Rossland union was completely beaten. Late in January, after receiving permission from Northport to break the solidarity pact, the strikers came to terms with the Le Roi mines. Woodside apologized: "we got a chance such as it is; I do not like it but then it is the very best conditions [sic] we could get from the company; ... you could not blame the men if they accepted less as we have had to cut them to almost starvation." But even this support was discontinued in mid-February, and the men began attempting to get work in the mines which had not come to terms with the union. Frequently they were unable to get places because of company blacklists, and large numbers of union miners were forced to leave the camp. As late as 1903 some of these men were unable to return. After its crushing defeat, the union began "an almost super-human struggle to regain its standing and prestige," but this was to be unsuccessful. In 1904, the president of the Rossland local reported, "we are clean out of Business."

The largest and most important Federation local in the province had been beaten and broken by illegal means while the authorities looked on; this had a great impact on the metal miners of the province. The WFM in British Columbia was being radicalized in the same way the union had been in the mountain states. The defeat at Rossland convinced a large number of miners that conventional trade union tactics were not adequate to meet the ruthless attacks of the operators. They had failed in the industrial arena; now they would turn to the political. Twigg told his readers that the WFM had become "fed up" with strikes and would, henceforth, mainly
rely on independent political action. As he watched the violation of the Alien Labour Law at Rossland, a Slocan miner wrote, "we must make the laws and administer them; it is time, full time, for it is evident, painfully evident, that they are not made nor administered in the interest of the masses, and will not be until the masses take over the power so infamously misused by those into whose hands it has been entrusted."49

The Federation in British Columbia had a history of political action going back to the provincial election of 1898. Given the nature of the men's lives, such action was natural; "the line seems to be drawn pretty straight between the outsiders and the members of our union," thus a Slocan miner described the political realities of a camp.50 But the initiatives, like those of the WFM in the United States, originally took the form of backing friends of labour, an approach well illustrated by the miners' support of candidates pledged to the eight-hour day in 1898. In the provincial election of 1900 the miners again endorsed party candidates sympathetic to labour; the Rossland local, for example, gave its "hearty support" to Martin's Minister of Mines, Smith Curtis.51 But the operators' offensive against the eight-hour day caused the District executive to think that the miners' interests would be better protected in the legislative halls by one of their own; the union officers wrote, "now is the time for workingmen ... to emulate the example of the capitalists and take possession of [government] by electing their own men to office."52 Probably as a result of this feeling, the miners of the Yale-Cariboo riding nominated Chris Foley in the General Election of 1900. Foley, a working miner, was a former president of the Rossland local and a member of the District
executive. A reformer with Liberal sympathies, who believed that
"we must become a factor as a unit in the arena of politics," he
emphasized labour standards and oriental exclusion in his campaign.
Despite harassment by employers—a Cranbrook unionist, for example,
was threatened with immediate dismissal should he participate in the
campaign—Foley made a respectable run and came to be regarded as
the unofficial political leader of the miners. 53 Foley's campaign
gave additional impetus to the growing interest in independent action
among the miners. Several of the camps had political clubs, and in
May, 1901 the secretary of the Slocan City local stated that the
W. F. N. had become "a very strong factor in B. C. politics." 54

Developing beside, and always encouraging any political
initiatives, was a socialist sentiment in the Federation in British
Columbia. From the time it began publication, Citizen and Country
was popular in the camps, and a miner from Slocan City told
Wrigley, "there are a great many socialists here." 55 As early as
1899 the Silverton local defined its objective as the achievement of
"the co-operative Commonwealth and the establishment of justice and
equality among men." 56 By the turn of the century many socialists
played an important role in the locals, D. B. O'Neal and J. A. Foley,
not to be confused with Chris Foley, at Slocan City, Andy Shilland at
Sandon and John Riordan, later prominent in the IWW in the United
States, at Phoenix. 57 In addition, socialists were becoming
prominent at the District level. One was provincial organizer
James Baker, who, if he did not teach socialism "from an organization
standpoint," certainly took every opportunity to advocate the
doctrine as he travelled among the miners of British Columbia. Even
less restrained was organizer W. J. Walker; he told a Ferguson
audience in 1901, "the time is ripe for the people to rise and with the ballot secure that which is but their own, the product of their toil." These developments in British Columbia were paralleled by similar ones in the Federation south of the border. Since 1897 Boyce had been under the influence of Debs, and in 1900 the Miners' Magazine endorsed the latter's candidacy for President. From this time on the pronouncements of the Federation's leadership and organ became increasingly revolutionary. For example, John O'Neill, editor of the Miners' Magazine, was cheered by a Silvertown audience in September, 1901 when he urged British Columbia miners "to lift the banner of socialism to float at once and forever over the silenced battlements of incorporated greed." These developments naturally had an important influence on the Canadians. Socialists outside the union also encouraged this trend. Pettipiece recognized the potential of the WFM and developed friendly relations with it, helping to organize a local in Ferguson, for example. His efforts were rewarded when Cameron was able to establish SPBC locals in so many of the metal camps in December, 1901.

It was not, however, until after the Rossland disaster that District No. 6 was prepared to take united independent political action. Pettipiece wrote, "such bullheaded men as Macdonald [sic] and Kirby are simply forcing the fight, which will be settled once and for all as soon as the people are sufficiently educated." Again events in the United States facilitated developments in British Columbia. In May, 1901 the international convention of the WFM had passed a resolution advocating independent political action. Late in October, 1901 the CSL local at Slocan City informed the miners' union that there was an "urgent need [for a] political organization
of working men" and suggested that District No. 6 hold a convention of unions and socialist bodies to establish such a party. This suggestion was quickly taken up by socialists within the Slocan City union, and late in November Alfred Farr, District secretary, was requested to convene such a meeting. Initially Farr refused to issue this call; though they had no objection to a political convention, he and Wilkes did object to a socialist presence, taking the position that the latter were excluded from representation by the unions' constitution. Under the pressure of a campaign mounted by the Slocan City local, however, the District secretary was forced to submit the question of socialist representation to a referendum of the locals. Then socialists, both outside and inside the union, began a propaganda campaign to have the District pass the referendum and thus to push the WFM toward class action. Pettigrew described the miners as "intelligent and progressive-thinking men" for giving serious consideration to political action. And J. A. Foley wrote in the Miners' Magazine, "the political revolution must come before the laborers of the earth can get their rights, and the sooner the union man realizes the fact that the past and present policy of most labor organizations will never accomplish the results for which we look and labor, the sooner will they fall in line and cast their ballots for liberty." The referendum resulted in a small majority in favour of socialist representation, and so the call for the Kamloops convention went out.

If the results of the referendum represented a victory for the socialists in the union, the results of the convention, a reformist platform for the Provincial Progressive Party and its executive dominated by Wilkes and Chris Foley, clearly represented a
defeat. But again developments in the United States were to have an impact on British Columbia. One month after the Kamloops meeting, the international convention of the WFM met at Denver. The delegates, under the urging of Boyce and Debs declared for independent political action and recommended the adoption of the SPA's platform. One of the most prominent opponents of the declaration for socialism at the convention, was Wilkes. He argued that the action was premature because too few miners fully understood socialism: "there must be a great deal of education before we are ready for a great change, and I believe it would be a mistake to ally ourselves with the Socialist Party at this time."67 The tension between the socialists and non-socialists in the WFM in British Columbia was duplicated in the United States, and the resolution of the problem was achieved by the same means in both countries, action by the Federation executive. Socialism was now the official policy of the WFM and soon after the convention, the new president, Charles H. Moyer, told the locals, "with the enemy pressing us on every side it behooves us to awaken and by organization, education and independent action secure that which is rightfully ours."68 To bring the province into line, Debs carried the new gospel to British Columbia directly from the Denver convention. He reported to Moyer that he had encountered "some opposition to the progressive policy adopted at the Denver convention, but this was in the main overcome." Then in July, Moyer himself went to British Columbia to advocate the new direction of the union.69 These efforts had a great effect on the rank and file and placed the socialists firmly in control of the District. This control and the general enthusiasm for socialism among British Columbia workers at this time turned the metal miners
away from the PPP, and in increasing numbers they turned toward the
SPBC. Baker told the Hunter Commission that the majority of WFM
members in British Columbia were socialists. And in January, 1903
Pettipiece rhapsodized, "in the Kootenays a miners' union meeting is
converted into a socialist meeting without turning out the lights."70

III

At the same convention which had declared for socialism, the
WFM, again encouraged by Debs, decided to convert the Western Labour
Union into a national federation and challenge Gompers' dominance of the
American labour movement. In the American West, "the WLU," in
Dubofsky's words, "had never amounted to much." The same was true of
western Canada where the centre was able to charter only a handful of
locals in British Columbia. But at Denver in 1902 an aggressive new
organization, officially committed to socialism and with international
ambitions was founded, the American Labour Union (ALU). Like its
predecessor, the ALU had as its objective the industrial organization
of semi-skilled and unskilled workers. 71 Immediately after the
convention District No. 6 began to prepare for the fight against
craft unionism, which the radicals knew must come, by cutting its
ties, which never had been close, with the TLC.72

The socialists also threw themselves whole-heartedly into
the new industrial union movement. That Gompers' business unionism
was essentially reactionary had become an article of faith among
socialists, and from the beginning they gave an active support to the
dual unions viewing them as potentially, vehicles by which the labour
movement could be radicalized. Thomas Farrar of Lethbridge had been a
member of "the Committee of Five" which formulated the constitution
of the WLU at the founding convention in 1898, and he became a member of the organization’s executive, chairing the sub-committee on co-operation. The reconstituted federation, with its declaration for socialism, naturally attracted the socialists even more than the WLU. They also looked with favour upon the ALU’s industrial unionism which, their reading of Marx told them, was “the next evolutionary step.” The socialists regarded larger industrial unions, like those organized by the ALU, as a necessary response to the growing concentration of capital. “Industrial unionism,” said Dales, “is the highest form of unionism and the most effective yet devised.” The Bond of Brotherhood described the ALU as “an economic necessity and . . . a creation of the times.” The socialists also encouraged industrial unionism as a means of increasing class-consciousness among the workers; nor were they concerned about the incipient syndicalism which was subsumed in the ALU’s commitment to proletarian solidarity. One wrote, “the sympathetic strike is a manifestation of the solidarity of labor and must be noted with pleasure by those in the advanced labor movement.”

Socialist support of the ALU in British Columbia resulted in socialist domination; all the federation’s organizers in the province were leading socialists, Cameron and Wrigley in Victoria, Ben Bakes in Vancouver, and Charlie O’Brien in the interior. The growth of the ALU in British Columbia was facilitated by the dynamic leadership provided by the socialists and the general enthusiasm among the workers of the province for socialism. But if the ALU initially derived more benefit from the relationship, by mid-1903 the growth of the SPBC was as much dependent upon the federation as the growth of the ALU was dependent upon the socialists. They had
become parallel and complementary developments. It was easier for workers to join a union, no matter how radical, than the socialist party; but once members of an ALU local, they were encouraged to consider "the best means of delivering themselves from the thraldom of wage-slavery by finding a solution to the labor problem." O'Brien, who told those who attended his organizational meetings in the camps that "in order to be a good union man, they [sic] must become class conscious, politically as well as industrially," was always as ready to establish a socialist as an ALU local. Wrigley readily acknowledged that dual unionism was "a powerful factor" in the rapid expansion of British Columbia socialism.76

Like its predecessor, the ALU was mainly dependent upon the WFM for its strength, funds and membership. So the dual federation's organizational campaign in British Columbia began in the mining camps of the Kootenays. Here there were relatively few craft workers, and the great majority of unskilled labour pursued occupations which were in some way related to the mines. These men naturally identified their interests with the WFM.—many, indeed, were members of the unions—and readily turned to an organization which was so closely linked to the Federation. The WFM made every effort to encourage the growth of the ALU. For example, Moyers recommended to Shilland that "you use your influence in assisting [the Culinary Employees Protective Union] in their efforts to thoroughly organize the cooks and waiters," which the Sandon secretary did.77 Despite its history in British Columbia and the United States, the miners' union had a reputation for strength, and this too undoubtedly facilitated the growth of the ALU in the province.78 Also important to the growth of the dual federation in the interior was the fact that there had
been virtually no AFL-TLC organizational work in the region. Yet industrial growth and inflationary pressures had resulted in the emergence of a significant number of local unions not affiliated with the eastern centres. When J. H. Watson the TLC's organizer in British Columbia reported on this problem to the 1902 convention, he cited carpenters' unions "all over the Kootenays" affiliated with neither the Amalgamated Society nor the United Brotherhood. Such organizations as these formed the base for the federal unions which were established by the ALU in most of the camps. 

By the autumn of 1902 O'Brien was making good progress among cooks, bartenders, general labourers, teamsters and lumbermen, and he was able to establish several locals. Indeed, he was so encouraged that he considered the establishment of an ALU paper in the Kootenays. The dual unions spread even more rapidly in the new year, and the Western Socialist reported with satisfaction that "the spirit of the new industrial unionism is rampant" in the interior. The ALU achieved its greatest success in the mountain strongholds of the WFM, but as the industrial crisis of 1903 intensified, the ALU moved down into the coast cities. There it fired the imagination and inspired the confidence of workers as only a organization of the dispossessed can, and it became the motive force behind a spectacular, if ephemeral, revolt against eastern craft union domination.

The first signs of the revolt were to be seen in the summer of 1902. Ralph Smith, president of the TLC and Liberal-Labour MP, was humiliated by his Nanaimo Miners' and Mine Labourers' Protective
Association when it refused to issue him credentials for the Congress
convention and voted to withdraw from the TLC which Parker Williams,
one of the leading insurgents dismissed as a "Grit machine." Next
the union, with the encouragement of its socialist members,
affiliated with the WFM, an organization which Smith had vigorously
opposed because of its commitment to socialism. Then in September
the Phoenix trades council, dominated by Riordan and another
socialist miner, William Humbry, left the TLC because it was "an
appendage of a capitalistic party [rather] than a body devoted to the
advancement of the interests of the working people of Canada" and
endorsed the SFBC.

More than any other factor, the trials and tribulations
of the United Brotherhood of Railway Employees (UBRE), an ALU
affiliate, contributed to the industrial crisis in western Canada.
A purely local union called the UBRE was established in Winnipeg in
1899; early in 1902, this affiliated with an American organization
of the same name. By the beginning of the following year the union
had locals at all the divisional points of the CPR between Winnipeg
and Vancouver. Among the factors which contributed to the UBRE's
rapid growth in the West was its association, in the minds of many
recent British immigrants, with the Amalgamated Society of Railway
Servants, a highly successful British industrial union. When
George Estes, president of the UBRE, began organizing in Canada, he
was not aware of the importance of this association, but he quickly
learned to take advantage of it, claiming that his organization was
"modelled on the lines of the Amalgamated Society of Railway
Servants of the Mother Country." Estes himself was another important
factor in the rapid rise of the UBRE. A dynamic leader, he quickly
won the respect of western labour, rank and file and leadership alike; Puttee described him as "a labor man from the tip of his toes to the top of his head."  

The U.B.R.E. was an industrial union which had as its object the organization of all railway employees, skilled and unskilled, into one union, making them, said the Canadian organizer in a slap at the aristocratic running trades, "not brothers in name only, but brothers indeed." Only the industrial union, Estes argued, could function effectively in the new industrial order; the U.B.R.E., he told a Winnipeg audience, "has been designed to meet the needs of the hour... it meets concentration and consolidation on the part of capital, with the same policy for labor and nothing short of this will protect you." Estes conducted his campaign for the new unionism in a rough and ready fashion, instructing his Canadian organizer "to develop public sentiment" for the U.B.R.E. - the Industrial Union plan - the A.L.U. and against the reactionary and capitalistic party now temporarily in control of the A.F. of L." Thus it was not surprising that Gompers should inform the T.N. that he considered the dual railway union "inimical to the interests of the working people everywhere."  

Although Estes was not a member of the SPA, he certainly had a socialist outlook. He told his audiences that "labor is entitled to the full product of its labor, and will secure this only when the working class controls the governments" and that political action by unions was, therefore, an "absolute necessity." The U.B.R.E.'s Canadian organizer was under instructions to encourage the growth of socialism in all ways. The union contained a significant number of socialists; the S.P.B.C. had, for example, "the avowed support" of the
Revelstoke local. The union's attitude resulted in a cordial relationship between it and the socialists, even though some British Columbia academicians had reservations about Estes' doctrinal orthodoxy. A Winnipeg socialist described the UBRE as "the only organization on earth of any good to railroaders." 89

In January, 1903 the CPR began efforts to break the UBRE local in its Vancouver freight department. Estes claimed that this offensive grew out of a realization that his union "would be too powerful for them to control . . . as they are able to do with class orders on railways." The fact that the company had earlier recognized a local union of freight handlers does seem to suggest that it was anxious to prevent the growth of the industrial union among its employees. In any case, the road instituted what the Hunter commission called "a kind of secret warfare" against the UBRE, and the extensive use of intimidation, dismissals and spies virtually one in every meeting, soon had the local in a severely weakened condition. 90 This forced the union to strike late in February. The men, emphasized that they had made no demands whatever upon the company but were fighting only to perpetuate their union, nothing else. 91 Estes called out the other CPR lodges at Revelstoke, Nelson, Calgary and Winnipeg. Refusing to handle scab freight, Victoria steamshipmen, Vancouver longshoremen, steamship, teamsters and Calgary teamsters had gone on strike in sympathy with the UBRE men by mid-March. 91 The Western Socialist found this demonstration of working-class solidarity greatly encouraging: "the general strike has been the dream of labor for years here on the C.P.R.," and now it seemed possible. 92

In addition to strike breakers, whom the company had begun
to import even before the dispute began, Canadian Pacific fought
the UBRE with thugs and spies. So prominent a part of the strike did
this practice become that Pettipiece was moved to complain that
"nowhere else in the British Empire would such a condition be
possible, and it has seldom been equalled anywhere in the long and
painful history of the tragedy of labor." The most significant
example of this espionage was the subversion by the Special Service
Department of the CPR, through bribes and intimidation, of the
Canadian organizer of the union, Harold Poore. After having sold
himself to the company, he continued as the union's organizer,
establishing, for example, the important Calgary local, while at the
same time giving all union secrets to his real employers. The
company's use of special police resulted in the death of Frank Rogers,
popular labour and socialist leader, who was shot by company thugs
while on picket duty in Vancouver. This incident and the fact that no
one was convicted for the crime caused a thrill of indignation to
pass through the city's labour movement; Fred Halton, president of
Vancouver's UBRE local, exclaimed, "the blood of Frank Rogers is crying
for justice." In its fight against the UBRE, the company had the active
support of conservative eastern unions. The Brotherhoods steadfastly
refused to heed Estes' appeals for help and kept the trains running.
This ensured that while the strike severely hampered CPR operations it
could never disrupt them totally. Debs, watching the struggle from
the United States, observed that the strikers "have but one hand with
which to fight the corporation, as the other has to be used to keep
the 'brotherhood' knife from cutting their throats." But of even
greater significance was the role that the TLC played in the dispute.
Of the UBRE men who had gone on strike at Revelstoke, some had also been members of the International Association of Machinists and others of the International Union of Boilermakers, both TLC affiliates and both unions with CFR collective agreements. The company paid the travelling expenses of the Machinists' Canadian vice-president to Revelstoke where he ordered his members to return to work. Watson, who had already attempted to supply the CPR with strike-breakers, travelled from Vancouver to order the Boilermakers back to work and then, with company help, organized a union of scab metal trades helpers to replace striking UBRE men. Adopting the attitude that "the action of Mr. Watson cannot be too strongly condemned," the Vancouver trades council expelled him and demanded that his commission as TLC organizer be revoked, a demand with which the Congress secretary, P. M. Draper, refused to comply. 97 The American Labor Union Journal sneered, "such reprehensible and traitorous conduct is in direct keeping with the scab-herding policy of the A.F. of L." 98

The reaction of the Vancouver trades council to Watson's attack upon the UBRE demonstrated the attitude of labour across the West to the strikers. In the words of The Independent, the struggle quickly "passed entirely beyond its original scope and the fight is now upon the part of organized labor ... against the greed and oppression of organized capital." 99 Demonstrations in support of the strikers were held in Victoria, Vancouver, Calgary and Winnipeg, and unions in all western centres contributed funds to the UBRE's war chest. Watching and participating in a struggle between approximately one thousand unskilled workers and a great corporation, raging over half a continent, produced in western workers an extraordinary sense of unity; the Western Clarion, for example, saw "a solidarity and
class consciousness that never existed in Vancouver before."  

In mid-May the Winnipeg trades council began a campaign to have the CPR declared "unfair" across the West. The socialists enthusiastically supported the proposals, and the other councils fell in line. The implications of this move were demonstrated when the Calgary council, in deciding to make the declaration, stated that the company should be considered responsible for "the immense damage" that would result. Had the boycott gone into effect, no union man could have handled any goods that had been carried on the CPR, a state of affairs which would have produced chaos in the western Canadian economy.

But by the beginning of June the CPR's ability to fill the places of the strikers and the assistance of the Brotherhoods had resulted in the collapse of the strike. Despite the UBC's attempt to put the best face on a settlement reached with the company, the outcome was, as The Bond of Brotherhood said, "disastrous."

The centre of the industrial crisis of 1903 was the province of British Columbia, and an important aspect of this condition was a series of coal strikes which occurred during the year. The first of these was fought in the coal mines of the Crow's Nest Pass. The coal camps there were made up of "endless rows of small one-roomed rough-board shacks in which whole families live"; none of these cottages had sanitary facilities, because the company refused to allow incorporation of the municipalities. Morrissey and Michel displayed all the worst features of company towns; the operator owned everything "except the C.P.R., railway track." Each had but one store owned by the company where the men spent their wages. Pettipiece described the lot of coal miners in this region as one of "long hours of almost inhuman toil, at wages which affords [sic] a
care subsistence." And the men worked under highly dangerous conditions; at Fernie in the summer of 1902 an "awful explosion annihilated in a twinkling nearly 150 lives."

The company's approach to labour relations was in keeping with conditions in the camps. When Noyer visited the Pass in 1902, he was dogged by company agents who ordered boarding-house keepers not to provide him with accommodations. So oppressive were conditions at Michel that the men were "compelled to sneak into the woods, like hunted criminals, in order to hold a union meeting."

Early in 1903 the newly-formed District No. 7, a separate British Columbia coal miners division within the WFM, attempted to initiate negotiations with the Crow's Nest Pass Coal Company, and when the general manager refused to recognize the union, the nearly 1500 miners of Coal Creek, Michel and Morrissey struck. The strike, which cut-off the coal supply for the smelters thus disrupting the metal mining industry, was initially effective, and Baker was able to write early in March "everything in the three camps is tied up tight." But when the company's will to resist began to seem unbreakable and when scabs were introduced, the miners became uneasy and violence flared. In the middle of the month a mob of masked men stormed company buildings at Coal Creek and seized some strike-breakers. These were driven through Fernie and a few miles beyond and then "given grave warning never to come back." The Provincial Police arrested a number of union officers, and the Attorney General requested the federal government to send the NWMP into the region to prevent "serious trouble." For its part the WFM condemned the arrests as "a standing disgrace to Fernie and the whole British Empire" and charged that the incident had been engineered by
the company to discredit the union. But even as this affair was taking place, conciliation efforts were under way. These resulted in a settlement at the end of March, but it was one which many strikers accepted only reluctantly. The District officers, however, probably under pressure from the metal locals, the memberships of which were losing work because of the coal strike, agreed to terms which they knew were unsatisfactory to a large number of the men. This naturally caused widespread dissatisfaction among the coal miners. A Michel man wrote, "it seems to us that the heads of the Western Federation of Miners . . . seem to be more interested in the advancement of socialism than unionism, and they don't care a rap what the coal miners have to put up with, so long as the interests of those engaged in quartz mining and the socialist party are promoted." As a result of this feeling, the conviction grew in the coal camps that the men should turn to the United Mine Workers (UMW), a coal union affiliated with the AFL. Pettipiece, anxious to keep the miners in the socialist orbit, urged them to put aside this "retrogressive idea," because "between the spirit of the east and the west there is still a wide difference - progression and strength is [sic] with the western men."

While the strike in the Crow's Nest Pass was still in progress another began at the Extension mines, and then shortly after at Cumberland, on Vancouver Island. The men who dug coal on the Island knew the unsanitary conditions, the dangers and the class-polarized camps familiar to other miners. But the Island miners also had to face the importation of cheap Asiatic labour by the companies. And those who worked at Extension and Cumberland were subjected to the anarchical labour policies of James Dunsmuir. He told the Hunter...
commission, "I object to all unions, federated or local, or any other kind. . . . They simply take the management of the mine. . . . I want the management of my own works, and if I recognize the union, I cannot have that." The coal baron had broken every union his men had attempted to form and had driven the prime movers out through extensive blacklisting. Conditions were such in his camps that "a man could not say union, or if he said union . . . he would not hold his job long."110 Such repressive tactics naturally made the miners of "Dunsmuir" bitter and resentful; a Cumberland clergyman observed that life in the region had "become really pregnant with all that an American or an Englishman dislikes."111 Hence the value of solidarity among all the workers, the value of an industrial union, could be appreciated. Because the WFM had a reputation of strength, the men turned to it.

Early in March the Extension miners formed a local union, and then under urging from the socialists in their ranks, affiliated it with the WFM. The socialists, most prominent among whom were Samuel Mottishaw and James Pritchard, who became president of the union, took a leading part in the organization drive from the beginning. David Halliday, a Cumberland socialist who became treasurer of the local there, preferred the WFM to other unions because "it takes up the whole problem."112 Immediately the Extension union was established, Dunsmuir discharged the executive and posted notices that the mines would be closed. In response, eight hundred men went out on strike on March 11. The pattern was the same at Cumberland. When a Federation local was established there in April, its officers were discharged and the union, numbering five hundred men, struck early in May.113
Dunsmuir's tactics caused indignation throughout the British Columbia labour movement. The Independent condemned his closing of the mines as "the most diabolical piece of tyranny ever perpetrated in Western Canada" and went on to comment, "for years the interests he represents have been the great blight on the otherwise fair prospects of this province." The wide-spread anger at the province's most hated capitalist provided excellent propaganda opportunities for the socialists, which they exploited to the fullest extent. The Western Clarion, which felt obliged to thank "Comrade James Dunsmuir" for his help, observed, "by his present actions he is unconsciously lending considerable assistance in educating the working men of British Columbia to accept the fundamental principle of modern scientific socialism, i.e., the class struggle." The SPBC made special efforts in the strike zone, because, in the words of a local comrade, "when the average wage-slave is on strike he is discontented with present economic conditions and is in a particularly good mood for digesting a lecture on the principles of modern socialism." Leading party members like Kingsley, Burns, and J. C. Watters spoke in the region, this propaganda campaign was most important in the election of Williams and Hawthornthwaite.

The strikers probably listened more attentively to the socialist propaganda because they were fighting a losing battle. Dunsmuir was able to employ his most effective weapon, the pool of Asiatic labour, against the miners. Recognizing at the outset that no strike could be won on the Island unless that labour pool could be controlled, Baker, under orders from Haywood, determined to organize the Chinese at Cumberland. But this, partly because of the
prejudices of the local, was never accomplished. When the walk-out began, large numbers of Chinese strike-breakers were granted mining certificates; in one case the Clarion marvelled sardonically that the board could examine "a Mongolian whose English consisted of a consumptive cough only." The availability of oriental labour allowed Dunsmuir to run the Cumberland mines throughout the strike. Although there were no violent incidents, large provincial police re-enforcements were sent into the strike zone to intimidate the men. And funds began to run low. The Federation's war chests were badly depleted in 1903, and it was not able to give the strikers the financial support they had expected. That which did arrive, Wrigley charged, was delayed in transit on Dunsmuir's railway.

When the coal baron was able to force Cumberland and Ladysmith merchants to adopt a "cash-only" policy, the strike was in jeopardy. The strike at the Extension mines collapsed in July and that at Cumberland in August. The men were totally beaten and their unions broken. Those who were re-employed were compelled to sign individual contracts, and of the strikers who were taken back, most were married men with families whose responsibilities would be a natural disciplining factor. The leaders of the union were driven off the Island through blacklisting; that James Pritchard was even unable to find work in the coal mines of Washington indicated how Dunsmuir pursued those who dared to challenge him.

These strikes resulted in the serious dislocation of British Columbia's economy. Production in its two coal fields was virtually halted for long periods of time. The metal mining industry of the Kootenays was badly disrupted. And, across the West, chaos reigned on the CPR. The Laurier government quickly came under
pressure from the business community to end the industrial crisis; the manager of the Le Roi mines warned the Labour Minister, William Mulock, that unless the troubles were settled they would result in "the complete destruction of mining prospects." Early in April the strikes were debated in the House of Commons. Pointing to "the very serious condition of affairs" existing in British Columbia, Ralph Smith demanded that the Government appoint a royal commission to investigate the industrial crisis. Smith's request was seconded by the member for Burrard who told the House, "we in British Columbia are face to face with many labour troubles which are practically threatening our existence as a province." Mulock acknowledged that the province had been "the special centre of industrial disturbance for some little time" and assured Smith that he would treat his request as "a most urgent matter demanding early consideration." The following day Mulock wrote Laurier that the "especially grave" situation in British Columbia, caused by "interference from the United States," demanded investigation. Industrial peace in the province could never be achieved until this baneful influence was removed; "perhaps it would assist to disillusion [the workers] if an intelligent commission, one in which the working people had confidence, were to point out the injuries that have come to them because of the interference of the American unions." 

The royal commission which was given this task was composed of Chief Justice Gordon Hunter of British Columbia and the Reverend E. S. Rowe, with King as a very active secretary. The commission, however, never enjoyed the confidence of the province's workers. Hunter, who made a practice of advising the Island miners to go back
to work and trust in their employer's beneficence, was described by
the secretary of the Cumberland local as 'a travelling Gramophone of
Mr. Dunsmuir's.' "When we remember the late strike in Rossland,
B.C.," a Fernie man asked, "and the history of McKenzie [sic] King in
connection with that strike, could any sane person knowing his history
in Rossland imagine him assuming the gall to face any labor
organization in British Columbia"? 127 The report of the Commission,
for which King was mainly responsible, clearly reflected the deputy
minister's views of radical dual unions formed two years earlier.
After observing that it was "a singular fact" that all the strikers
of 1903 had involved ALU affiliates, the Report went on to expose an
elaborate conspiracy against the economy of British Columbia directed
by foreign agitators. While the Brotherhoods were described as
"legitimate and responsible unions," the UBRE was credited with
having "latent possibilities of evil," because its industrial
structure and Estes' willingness to resort to sympathetic action
could allow it to cripple the whole transportation system. 128 Then
the commissioners linked the UBRE strike to that of the Island
miners: anxious to stop the CPR's supply of coal, the UMW engineered
the strikes in Dunsmuir's mines. It was clear to Hunter, Rowe and
King that "there was an understanding between the American Labor
Union and both the United Brotherhood of Railway Employees and the
Western Federation of Miners whereby the three were to act in
conjunction in the event of either of the latter requiring the aid of
the other. . . . [The Island strikes] originated in the intrigues of
a few men, who in part consciously, in part unwittingly, allowed
themselves to be used as instruments to serve the desires and ends of
a handful of dictators residing in the United States." 129 Because
such foreign control of the Canadian economy was unacceptable and because the ALU was in reality a secret political organization the aim of which was revolution, the Commission recommended that the radical dual unions ought to be specially declared to be illegal. King's bias against the WFM and the crisis atmosphere in which the Report was prepared prevented the commissioners from identifying the fundamental economic and social causes of the crisis and resulted in the exclusive focus on the conspiracy theory.

It is clear from their testimony that the majority of Island miners wished to affiliate with the Federation, because they believed it to be a strong fighting machine which could defeat Dunsmuir. The men's desire to organize, and the strikes, grew primarily out of economic conditions and the repressive tactics of the coal baron. It is equally clear, however, that the leadership of the ALU unions, Canadians as well as Americans, were prepared to take advantage of the discontent of the Island miners to apply pressure on the CPR. The radicals of the ALU, committed as they were to proletarian solidarity, had no compunctions whatever against the use of sympathetic action; indeed, they regarded it as wholly salutary, because, in their opinion, it tended to increase class consciousness.

The Report did not retard, as it was intended to do, the growth of the radical dual unions; indeed, probably the reverse was true. The western reaction to the Commission's findings was one of almost universal indignation. And the rebellion continued. The ALU remained strongest in the metal mining regions of British Columbia, but the influence of the radical centre was, by the summer of 1903, extensive in the cities of the province, and to some extent beyond its boundaries. When it began organizing in the cities, the ALU
moved into what had been formerly the exclusive preserve of the TLC and thus posed a direct threat to the latter. The workers of the cities of western Canada, particularly those in British Columbia, proved quite responsive to the ALU's radical message. In the three or four years before 1903 there had been a rapid expansion of unions, and of the new organizations, many represented semi-skilled or unskilled workers, freight handlers, laundrymen, teamsters, building labourers and longshoremen. The entrance of these occupational groups into the labour movement tended to radicalize it in two ways. First, they diluted the influence of the conservative craft unions. Second, because their memberships lacked the skills served by the traditional methods of market regulation, the new unions tended to be readier to consider more radical tactics.

Another important factor in the spread of dual unionism in the cities was socialist help; ever-confident that "the incoming tide of the new unionism will sweep aside all rotten barriers in the way of progress," they did everything in their power to promote the development of the ALU. Early in 1903 an organizer in Vancouver reported to the Denver headquarters that the city's workers were rapidly becoming convinced that "the American Labor Union is the only organization that holds any hope for the working class," and in May the Clarion announced with obvious satisfaction that dual unionism was growing "with leaps and bounds" on the coast. After a visit to the province in June Ben Wilson told his American comrades that "the old simple trade unionism of a Samuel Gompers type will practically soon be a thing of the past" in British Columbia. Gompers' Canadian disciples were, however, by no means prepared to watch idly while the ALU made important inroads into the
country's second most industrialized and unionized province. The TLC leadership realized that if their organization was to be a truly national one they must retain British Columbia, and so during 1903 they fought the ALU for control of the coast province.

The commitment of the Vancouver trade council to the TLC was, at best, never more than half-hearted. During the early months of 1903 the council, under the leadership of President George Lamerick, an exponent of radical industrial unionism, moved steadily out of the orbit of the eastern centre. Although the ALU organized some large locals in Vancouver, for example, the civic labourers and factory and wood mill hands, straight dual strength in the council was never sufficient by itself to produce this development. The radicalization resulted mainly from the enthusiasm for the ALU among other delegates to the council. The anti-TLC trend was first manifested in socialist attacks on Watson as a Liberal politician. Then late in March, about the time the Congress representative was enlisting strike-breakers for the CPR, the council instructed the organizing committee to secure all federal charters from the ALU. The actual break with the TLC came early in April when the council endorsed the principle of industrial unionism and refused to pay its per capita tax to the Congress. As a result, Watson, now expelled from the council, denounced the ALU as "an organization formed by the socialist wing of the trade-union movement, for the purpose of scabbing on the American Federation of Labor and disrupting that splendid body" and warned that workers who affiliated with the dual centre would come to be "ashamed" of the connection. Because he believed, with a good deal of justification, that "the socialist element in the unions is causing the trouble,"
the TLC organizer attacked the ALU by attempting to discredit the Marxists: "Fancy these men running a country without a God, without religion, and where free love reigns." Although the Clarion dismissed Watson as a "grit grafter and poltical agent" who in no way represented the Vancouver labour movement, he was not without some support among the conservative craftsmen of the city. Among "a large number of old-time unionists," observed The Independent, "there is at present a great deal of dissatisfaction... and a large amount of talk that many of them intend withdrawing from the Trades and Labor Council if it is to be turned into a socialist institution; they simply won't stand for it." Nonetheless, throughout 1903 the radicals were in control of the most influential central body in British Columbia. In July a depressed Draper told Twigg that the Vancouver council was "doing everything in its power to disrupt the A.F. of L., the Trades and Labor Congress of Canada and the international trade union movement."  

An organization campaign by Cameron and Wrigley resulted in a short, sharp fight between old and new unionism in Victoria in mid-1903. In June the two socialists organized locals for hackmen and millworkers, and these applied to the trade council for affiliation. Twigg, the AFL organizer in the city, immediately announced that the two unions were barred from affiliation by the council's constitution. Nevertheless, the council, "by predesigned arrangement" overrode the constitution, seating the two ALU affiliates, and then proceeded to elect a full slate of socialist officers. The radicals gloated over the victory. And Twigg fumed. The AFL organizer, who made no distinction between the SPBC and the ALU warned that "socialists, under the cloak of what they call industrial"
unionism, are trying to pull the foundations from beneath the old line trade union movement in hopes of making converts to socialism out of the wreckage.\textsuperscript{141} Like Watson in Vancouver, Twigg was able to muster support among the more conservative crafts in the city. The aristocratic attitude of some of the old-line unions was well demonstrated by their reaction to an extraordinary effort by Cameron, his organization of the city's newsboys. Twigg sneered that the ALU organizer was "not misusing any of his talents" in forming "this socialist kindergarten," and the trades council turned down the boys' application for affiliation.\textsuperscript{142} Pressure from the craft unions forced a review of the decision to seat the ALU affiliates, and when Draper was asked for a judgment on the matter, the TLC secretary, acting on direct orders from Gompers, instructed the Victoria council to require the hackmen and millworkers to secure AFL charters.\textsuperscript{143}

By the autumn of 1903 the workers of British Columbia were, in the words of the province's TLC executive "excited and heated" by ALU propaganda. The Victoria Council followed Draper's instructions slowly and half-heartedly. Vancouver was locked in the radical centre's orbit. And "in the mountains," Wrigley boasted, "the A.L.U. and its affiliated bodies are all-powerful."\textsuperscript{144} Ralph Smith issued a warning, which could hardly have been disturbing to his former associates on the coast, that "the stories going from this province regarding labor matters and politics have had a very bad effect on the union movement in the east." Equally effective was the call from TLC president John Flett and Draper for western workers to end the "intolerable lack of unity" and resolve all differences at the Congress convention.\textsuperscript{145} Ernest Craig, the socialist secretary of the Fernie trades council wrote a blistering reply to this
invitation. After dismissing the APL and the TLC as reactionary adjuncts of old-line political parties, he went on:

when you quit sending lobbyists to legislative halls, when you are willing to recognize the class struggle, ... when you admit that the conflicting interests of labor and capital can only be harmonized by doing away with the system that creates the two classes, when you declare for Socialism as the only solution to the labor problem and enter the field for a pure democracy, then and only then, will this Crow's Nest Valley Trades and Labor Council, now holding a charter from the great and progressive A.L.U., around whose flag thousands of wage-slaves are rallying for physical and intellectual liberty, talk affiliation with you, or you with their organization. 146

At the Congress convention, where there were no delegates from west of Winnipeg, Draper reported that during the year fourteen British Columbia unions had returned TLC charters - most of these were picked up by the ALU, and that the Vancouver trades council was "now actively opposed to Congress." Despite opposition from the Winnipeg delegates, the convention condemned all ALU affiliates and gave a qualified approval to the Report of the Hunter Commission. 147

\[ V \]

The impact of the radical doctrines of the ALU on the workers of British Columbia was well demonstrated in the provincial election of 1903, which saw massive socialist gains across the province and the election of Hawthornwaite and Williams in the troubled coal fields. From the outset the SPEC co-operated with the ALU to bring propagandists of the latter organization like, Ben Wilson and Father Thomas J. Hagerty, to the province. 148 The work of such men did a great deal to stimulate the growth of the party. After the dynamic renegade priest lectured in Fernie, an enthusiastic O'Brien reported, "socialism is being discussed everywhere." And Hagerty's
visit to Vancouver produced "dozens" of new socialists in the city. In July Bertha Merrill surveyed the rapid progress of socialism in British Columbia and wrote, "the effect the A.L.U. has had in setting this 'wave' in motion can hardly be estimated; union men, who have long 'shyed' at the word 'Socialism' and have had to be driven with 'blinders' in its direction, have been taught by the A.L.U. to look the dubious sign-post squarely in the face, only to find it pointed out a shortcut to the very Mecca they wished to gain." 149

ALU affiliates played a prominent part in the 1903 campaign. The Vancouver trades council nominated two candidates who were sufficiently radical that the SFBC did not feel compelled to attack them. 150 The official organ of the UBRE observed, "every union man in B.C. should register his vote for Labor's candidates and not allow himself to be bluffled into scabbing on his class on election day," and a leading member of the union, J. W. Bennett, was the socialist candidate in Revelstoke. 151

But of all the ALU affiliates, the Western Federation of Miners was most important in the political battle. Late in June G. F. Dougherty, the socialist secretary of District No. 6, issued a circular calling upon the locals to prepare for the election; he took this step because "it is high time for us to make a move in this matter and by doing so we will remove the necessity of compulsory or any other form of arbitration, and until such time as we do take an active part in the politics of the country we might just as well be resigned to our fate." Campaign enthusiasm quickly spread through the camps; for example, forty Americans at Greenwood secured Canadian citizenship so that they could vote. 152 The socialists
believed that this enthusiasm would result in important gains, and
the SPEC played a leading role in the campaign in the metal camps
where its doctrines had a great hold on many of the miners. Party
leaders, like Kingsley and Pettipiece, lectured in WFM halls
throughout the Kootenays, and socialist miners, Riordan in Grand Forks
and Ernest Mills in Greenwood, carried the party's banner in the
election. The Federation was not prepared, however, to submit
to party discipline. Indeed, the socialist convention which
ominated Riordan was completely controlled by the WFM locals in
constituency. In the Slocan riding the old tension between
socialists and non-socialists re-emerged, and because any designation
"other than the W.F.M. would have a tendency to split the vote."
William Davidson ran as a straight miners' candidate. Davidson,
who soon joined the socialist party, was elected.

VI

In July Draper had observed regarding the ALU, "this sort
of thing may succeed [sic] for a while but any movement that goes up
like a rocket is bound to come down like a stick"; by the end of 1903
developments proved his analysis to be valid. The UBRE was
"completely destroyed in Canada" except for a struggling local in
Winnipeg which soon faded away. In Victoria the crafts regained
control of the trades council and purged the socialists from the
executive. But Vancouver's return to the TLC was to be slower;
indeed, it only re-affiliated with the Congress in 1906 in order to
send a large radical delegation to the Victoria convention of that
year.

The ALU had never enjoyed an existence truly separate from
the WFM, and by the beginning of 1904 the latter organization had entered a period of rapid decline. In Canada the Federation had been driven out of the Island coal field and was in the process of losing the miners of the Crow's Nest Pass to the UMW. But of more importance was the labour war which the WFM fought in Colorado in 1903-4; this great strike, which required its full attention and resources, eventually brought the union to its knees. Without the support of the Federation, the ALU began to collapse. Large assessments for the fight in Colorado drove away members, and the organization faded even in the Kootenays.

Though it was only short-lived, the revolt of the dual unions was important in the development of western Canadian radicalism. The ALU, the leadership of which was important in the establishment of the IWW, helped lay the foundations for that organization in British Columbia. The IWW would seek to mobilize the same unskilled workers whom the ALU had organized. Although the radicalism of the industrial unionists in the province had a conventional political orientation, there is evidence that the syndicalism of the IWW was, to some extent, anticipated: the Phoenix local of the ALU, for example, believed that a general strike would be "of valuable assistance" in achieving the revolution. More important than this vague influence, however, was the example of industrial unionism in action. Even though they had been beaten, the solidarity of two or three thousand workers had disrupted British Columbia's economy and had challenged the capitalists and the state in a unique and novel way. This was not something easily forgotten by men who had few victories. For a time the radical leadership turned away from industrial unionism. And the TLC launched a
campaign, which for a time appeared to be successful, to re-unite the shattered national labour movement and re-establish craft union hegemony in the West. But the basic conditions which had occasioned the revolt remained unchanged. When another industrial crisis developed, western workers would again challenge the TLC and turn to industrial unionism as the best means to deal with their special circumstances.
Notes

1. The Voice, Sept. 23, 1898 and The Bond of Brotherhood, Feb. 27, 1904.


5. Dubofsky, We Shall Be All, pp. 58-64.


35. Mine, Mill Records, Vol. 155-4, Rossland Miners' Union Resolutions, July 3, 1901 and n.d. Muckers' wages were mentioned only as an afterthought.


37. Ibid., Vol. 155-4, Haywood to Woodside, Sept. 6, 1901.

38. Ibid., Vol. 155-4, Haywood to Woodside, Aug. 13, 1901 and circular from Seman et al., April 15, 1903.


41. Phillips, No Power Greater, p. 33; Mine, Mill Records, Vol. 155-4, Boyce to Woodside, Nov. 26, 1901 and Vol. 157, Woodside to Shilland, Nov. 14, 1901. The case dragged through the courts until 1906 when the union, all its avenues of appeal exhausted, was forced to give up its hall to pay damages. For full documentation on the court action see Mine, Mill Records, Vol. 155-4.


44. King Papers, Vol. 3, King to Harper, Nov. 18, 1901 and King to Muckle, Nov. 18, 1901.


47. Miners' Magazine, March, 1903.


52. Miners' Magazine, May, 1900.


54. Miners' Magazine, May, 1901.

55. Citizen and Country, April 6, 1900.

56. Clute, "Report," Appendix D.


60. Larcheau Eagle, April 26, 1901. For Cameron's work see Chap. II.

61. Ibid., Sept. 26, 1901.


64. Ibid., Vol. 156-3, O'Neal to Parr, Dec. 27, 1901 and Wilkes to Parr, Jan. 7, 1902 and Vol. 157, O'Neal et al. to Shilland, Nov. 28, 1901 and Parr to Shilland, Jan. 10, 1902.


66. Mine, Mill Records, Vol. 157, Wilkes to Shilland, March 6, 1902. For the convention see Chap. II.


84. The Voice, Sept. 8, 1899; May 2, 1902 and Feb. 20, 1903.
85. Western Clarion, May 7, 1903.
86. The Voice, June 13, 1902.
89. Western Socialist, April 3, 1903 and April 17, 1903.
92. Western Socialist, April 10, 1903.
93. Ibid., March 27, 1903.
95. Bennett, Builders of British Columbia, pp. 63-64; and Western Clarion, May 12, 1903.
97. Western Socialist, March 27, 1903; The Independent, April 18, 1903 and Vancouver TLC Minutes, March 5, 1903.
98. American Labor Union Journal, April 30, 1903.
99. The Independent, March 14, 1903.
100. Western Clarion, May 14, 1903.
101. Railway Employees' Journal, June 11, 1903; Western Clarion, June 2, 1903; Vancouver TLC Minutes, May 16, 1903 and The Bond of Brotherhood, May 30, 1903.
102. Railway Employees' Journal, July 2, 1903 and The Bond of Brotherhood, July 10, 1903.
103. Miners' Magazine, Aug., 1902 and Oct., 1902; American Labor
Union Journal, Feb. 26, 1903 and Western Clarion, Sept. 11, 1903.


109. The Independent, April 11, 1903 and Western Socialist, May 1, 1903.


111. Ibid., p. 454.

112. Ibid., pp. 47-59 and 914.

113. Labour Gazette, III, p. 302 and IV, p. 35.

114. The Independent, March 31, 1903.

115. Western Clarion, May 3, 1903.

116. Western Socialist, April 19, 1903 and Western Clarion, May 16, 1903 and June 20, 1903.


119. Western Clarion, May 16, 1903.

120. American Labor Union Journal, Sept. 3, 1903; Railway Employees’ Journal, July 9, 1903 and Western Clarion, May 17, 1903.

121. Labour Gazette, IV, pp. 129 and 266-7.


124. The socialists consistently charged that Smith had initiated the investigation to weaken the SPBC and thus regain some of his past political strength. See, for example, Mortimer's letter to The Voice, March 18, 1904.


129. Ibid., pp. 39 and 46.

130. Ibid., pp. 67-8.


133. Ibid., March 19, 1903 and July 9, 1903 and Western Clarion, May 16, 1903.

134. Vancouver TLC Minutes, Aug. 1, 1902.

135. Ibid., Feb. 5, 1903; March 16, 1903 and April 3, 1903 and TLC Proceedings, 1903, p. 32.


137. Western Clarion, June 2, 1903 and The Independent, May 23, 1903 and June 20, 1903.


139. Western Clarion, July 17, 1903 and Victoria Daily Colonist, June 21, 1903.

140. Victoria Daily Colonist, July 12, 1903.


142. Victoria Daily Colonist, July 12, 1903; July 19, 1903; August 9, 1903 and Aug. 23, 1903.

144. TLG Proceedings, 1903, p. 31 and American Labor Union Journal, Sept. 3, 1903.

145. The Independent, July 11, 1903 and Aug. 8, 1903.


147. TLC Proceedings, 1903, pp. 18, 29 and 51 and The Voice, Oct. 16, 1903. Approval was qualified because the recommendations of the report were somewhat ambiguous and could have been taken to include all international unions.


149. American Labor Union Journal, Feb. 26, 1903 and July 30, 1903 and Western Socialist, March 20, 1903.

150. Western Clarion, Oct. 8, 1903.


153. Ibid., Vol. 155, Pettipiece to Shilland, Aug. 11, 1903 and Western Clarion, Aug. 28, 1903.


156. The Bond of Brotherhood, Dec. 19, 1903.


158. Vancouver TLC Minutes, Sept. 5, 1906.


160. Dubofsky, We Shall Be All, p. 75; Victoria Daily Colonist, Feb. 7, 1904 and Mine, Mill Records, Mahoney to Shilland, Dec. 20, 1903.

161. American Labor Union Journal, June 18, 1903.
Chapter IV

The Ascendancy of the Socialist Party of Canada

From the time British Columbia emerged as the country's radical centre, socialists across the Dominion turned to the province in the hope that it would take the lead in the formation of a Canadian socialist party. The SPFM always looked to the coast comrades for direction. And early in 1903 the Ontario League urged the executive of the SPFM to unite the country's several socialist parties into a national organization; this was Ontario's "cherished desire." Initially the British Columbia party responded coolly, but after its electoral gains in the autumn of 1903, the SPFM concluded that it could not escape its manifest destiny. British Columbia was "the Cradle of Socialism in Canada," and therefore, capitalism would be "fought from West to East." The SPFM carried on negotiations with socialists in Winnipeg, Toronto, London and other "comrades scattered throughout the Dominion," and by late 1904 agreement was reached. At the British Columbia party's fourth annual convention in December, the platform and constitution of the SPFM was amended to give it national application and the Socialist Party of Canada was established. The British Columbia socialists harboured no illusions about the task they had taken up. They acknowledged the fight to establish a party such as theirs in a country of "magnificent distances" would be a hard one indeed. But as Marxists they believed that their ultimate victory was assured, because "the curse of capitalism is laid as heavily upon Canada as any other land." Their sense of destiny was well demonstrated by the SPC's first national organizer, Charlie O'Brien, when he told a
Winnipeg audience, "history is now calling upon you to perform a
mission, that mission is to free yourselves from capitalist
exploitation and society from class rule." 4

II

Despite this continental vision, the Socialist Party of
Canada was never able to outgrow its coastal antecedents, and
consequently, the national party reflected and was constrained by the
doctrines and experience of the socialists in British Columbia. These
doctrines and experience, however, grew out of a set of social and
economic conditions which were almost exclusively peculiar to British
Columbia. Pettipiece acknowledged this peculiarity when he told a
Winnipeg audience that the coast province’s economic reliance on
primary industries and the consequences of Asiatic immigration "forced"
the workers there to become socialists. 5 The power base of British
Columbia socialism was the class-polarized mining camps of the Island
and the interior. The coal fields north and south of Nanaimo were
nothing less than an SPC domain; after 1903 the miners in the region
consistently returned two socialist members to the provincial
legislature. So strong was the miners’ commitment to socialism that
members of the party considered their votes "ours till the revolution," and the SPC always looked upon the Island coal fields as their main
source of support. 6 Because social and economic conditions were only
slightly better in the Crow’s Nest Pass, the anthracite miners of the
Kernie district gave important support to the SPC; one party member
recalled that "all [the] union members [were] strong socialists." 7

Despite the international’s brief connection with the IWW, the
British Columbia locals of the WFM also remained sympathetic to the SPC. Shilland wrote, "nominate a Socialist and you may rest assured that the working men of this district will work for him and vote for him with all the power at their command." After John McInnis was returned to the Legislature in the provincial election of 1907, a metal miner boasted, "Phoenix has the distinction of casting a greater number of Socialist votes than any town of its size in America." Significantly the SPC could always rely on the WFM for financial support, and eventually District No. 6 amended its constitution to require support of the party by affiliates. The privations and dangers of the men in the mines had been the basis of the impossibilism of the SFBC, and those doctrines became basic to the SPC. A visiting American socialist characterized the influence well when he wrote "in the mining districts of the Boundary Country I found the essence of the socialist movement in British Columbia; here was the actual living proof of the truth of the Marxian philosophy."

The impossibilist doctrines of the party in British Columbia were directly relevant to the experience of the coal and metal miners, and, given this power base, they had a general relevance throughout a largely proletarian province, experiencing a rapid transition to a capitalist economy. Because the movement seemed to be growing ever stronger, the natural optimism of the socialist became intensified; Harrington remembered, "we didn't see any reason why we wouldn't gain power in British Columbia." Clearly there was much to Kingsley's conviction that "in no province or state of the western hemisphere are the industrial conditions more favorable for the development of a vigorous revolutionary movement of the working class.
than in British Columbia. But for this very reason, the same
tactics which were viable in British Columbia were a detriment to
socialist propaganda in other provinces. The executive of the SPC,
sitting in Vancouver and controlled by the impossibilist local there,
was never able to recognize this, however, and as a result, the
party became a prisoner of British Columbia experience.

The SPC prided itself on being a "scientific" socialist
party, teaching the pure Marxist creed, but so also did every other
socialist party in the world. What made the Canadian party highly
unusual in the North American movement was its impossibilism, that
which emerged triumphant in the SPBC late in 1903. This doctrine
was based on three fundamental propositions: first, that capitalism
could not be reformed and attempts to reform it had no place in the
class struggle; second, that the realities of the labour market
precluded the betterment, through trade union action, of all workers
in the short-run and any workers in the long-run; and third, that
only through class-conscious political action could the proletariat
destroy the wage-system and establish the co-operative commonwealth.

During the years of the SPC's ascendancy, this interpretation of
Marxism, which was mainly the work of a small group of theoreticians
in Vancouver, received the support of party members across western
Canada. This was particularly the case in British Columbia. Letters

to the Clarion from socialists in the Alberta coal fields
and English-speaking comrades in Winnipeg reflect a similar
enthusiastic support.

The doctrines of the SPC were characterized by a striking
continuity over time; these, in W. A. Ritchard's words, changed
"not much," before the party's collapse in the mid-twenties. It was not unusual for Clarion editors to reprint propaganda pieces which had appeared in the paper ten years earlier. Pritchard recalls that, when he arrived in Vancouver in 1911, "the Platform suited me." Over the years that starkly revolutionary document, which demanded simply "the transformation, as rapidly as possible, of capitalist property in the means of wealth production . . . into the collective property of the working class," remained unchanged, except for minor revisions in terminology. This continuity grew out of the faithful's unshakable conviction that the doctrine was, demonstrably, the only one a revolutionary could espouse. Their conception of the problem facing the working class did not change, and, therefore, their solution could not change. J. H. Burrough explained the attitude succinctly: "our understanding of capitalism has not lessened with the years."13 As with other aspects of the SPC, however, the matter of doctrinal continuity has to be qualified somewhat. Although party members refused to acknowledge that change occurred, it is clear that, after the SPC's heyday, the socialists were prepared to make both tactical and minor doctrinal revisions.

The platform of the SPC contained no immediate demands, no reforms by which the lot of the working class could be improved under capitalism; it called only for the destruction of the wage system. By refusing to include immediate demands in its platform the party became unique in the North American socialist movement. Recalls Pritchard, "Socialism, to our party, was not a program of easy step-by-step reform of a system of exploitation which could easily be disposed of by creeping up on it until it had been conquered
by small mouthfuls. The party's theoreticians took the position that the worker was "robbed only at the point of production," and therefore, because he was a victim of the operation of the wage system, the socialists' sole responsibility was to work for the destruction of that system. Kingsley wrote, "slavery is a crime against all that is good and noble in humankind. . . . The race will perish if this fundamental crime of human slavery continues." Party members steadfastly argued that capitalism was fundamentally incapable of reformation, and therefore, "tinkering" with the system was useless. "Do not think that a revolutionary socialist is opposed to reform as such," explained Ed Fulcher of Brandon, because "he would gladly make things better for the working class were it possible; but he knows that nothing short of socialism can benefit the workers." Reforms were nothing more than "powder sprinkled over the festering sores of that organism called human society." To illustrate this contention, members of the SPC frequently cited the experience of the British working class; a Calgary comrade observed, "there are more reforms on the statute books of England than any other country, and at the same time the working class of that land live as close, if not closer, to actual starvation, as those of any other civilized country." But the socialists could cite cases closer to home; labour legislation in all the western provinces was notoriously ill-administered and regularly flouted. Pritchard recalls, "they had the finest . . . coal mine regulation act in this province, [and] it was violated everyday and in every clause in [the Island] mines." John Montimer provided an excellent statement of the impossibilist creed when he wrote, "an impossibilist is a Socialist who, knowing that in Socialism lies the
only hope of the workers, refuses to preach any thing [sic]
else, . . . but the non-impossibilist, being of a practical turn of
mind, spends a quarter of a century and untold energy in getting an
old-age pension at an age when most working people are dead."17

Not only were reforms useless to the working class; they
were, in the opinion of some members of the party, "poison to the
revolution." He who tried to reform the present system interfered
with the onward march of history by advocating "a return to a played
out phase of Capitalism" and was, therefore, "a reactionary of the
reactionaries." Alex Paterson of Winnipeg argued that "to improve
conditions under any system is surely to strengthen that system and
to strengthen a system surely means to prolong its existence."18
The logical extension of this analysis was an extreme position,
indeed, but one which some socialists did not hesitate to adopt.
Kingsley consistently argued that the progressive degradation of the
working class was directly beneficial to the advancement of
socialist propaganda, because "when their miseries become no longer
bearable; . . . the slaves will take the necessary action to strike
the fetters from their limbs."19

Probably the majority of party members, however, adopted the
view that it was simply not the province of revolutionaries to seek
effect changes under capitalism. Pritchard claims that the attitude
of the SPC was one of "indifference" rather than antagonism: "we
don't oppose reforms but we don't work our guts out trying to get them
either."20 While they consistently and vehemently rejected any
suggestion that the platform be expanded to include immediate demands,
most socialists were prepared to accept any reforms of capitalism. A
popular view among party members was that, by adhering strictly to the SPC's impossibilist doctrines and, thus, preparing for the revolution, they could exert sufficient pressure upon the ruling class that it would, as a means of distracting the proletariat from its ultimate purpose, grant some short-term relief to the workers. "If you want palliatives don't go after them," counselled D. G. McKenzie who in 1906 succeeded Kingsley as editor of the Clarion: "pick up the revolutionary club and go after the earth and the first thing you know you will have palliatives galore from the cowardly capitalist tribe fleeing for their lives from the wrath to come."21

For the SPC only one reform, that of the electoral laws, had a place in the class struggle. Kingsley explained the exception:

That which tends to hamper the freedom of political expression is a crime against human society as its tendency is to retard the peaceful and ready adaptation of such principles relating to property as may be necessary to the welfare of society and enable it to move onward and upward in conformity to the developing economic basis upon which it rests.

The ruling class had framed the country's electoral laws, party members believed, in such a way as to prevent the proletariat from voting for its emancipation; consequently, any liberalization represented a step toward the revolution. R. I. Mathews of Winnipeg claimed that "the workers of Canada are discriminated [sic] against in almost every franchise law on the statute book." The socialist found most objectionable the election deposit which Dales described as "a political tax on poverty ... designed to confine your choice to your master."22 In the British Columbia Legislature, Hawthornthwaite
and Parker Williams worked assiduously for electoral reform, and in 1906 they succeeded in having the deposit reduced. Although he achieved no similar success, Charlie O'Brien fought the same fight in the Alberta House. The SPC's finest parliamentary hour involved electoral legislation. In 1909 the McBride government introduced a bill which, if passed, would have disenfranchised large numbers of British Columbia's highly mobile labour force; the socialist MLA's, whose party was already severely handicapped by the existing voter-registration law, set out to defeat the bill. In the so-called "Long Session," they filibustered for twenty-two consecutive hours until the bill was withdrawn.23

The official attitude of the Socialist Party of Canada toward unions was much the same as that toward reforms. Unions were simply products of the capitalist system directing their efforts against "effects which are absolutely inevitable," and for this reason their battles with the capitalists did not constitute part of the class struggle. In addition, there was general agreement among party members that no long-term relief for the workers could result from economic action; the SPC's Manifesto declared, "in the industrial field defeat is inevitable."24 But though on the surface the SPC attitude to unions appeared to be monolithic, the party actually contained a rather broad range of opinion on the subject.

The SPC's official view of trade unions was based on Marx's analysis of labour, or technically labour-power; the master had taught that the price of this commodity, wages, was determined by its cost of production, i.e., what was required to maintain the worker and his family, and by market conditions.25 From the first proposition,
the Vancouver theoreticians concluded that it was impossible for
trade unions to raise the real income of their members, because such
would be "a defiance of economic law." Percy Chew of Winnipeg
wrote, "in this country, it costs, on the average, about two dollars a
day to produce a single commodity of the denomination 'labor power' -
two dollars, then, is the average wage." Because the West's labour
market was frequently over-supplied, however, the socialists tended to
place more emphasis on the secondary, and less important, strand of
Marx's analysis in their critique of unions. Under capitalism there
existed a "reserve army" of unemployed which destroyed the
effectiveness of the unions' market regulation tactics. Certainly
work stoppages were ineffective, because the places of those on
strike would immediately be taken by men looking for jobs. "As cruel
as it may appear," Kingsley lectured, "it nevertheless cannot be
gainsaid that the worker is by no means entitled to a penny in excess
of the amount which the condition of the labor market determines
shall be his wage. He who would lead [the worker] to believe that he
can fix or determine [wages] by going on strike, or by any other
means, is either an ignorant ass or a designing knave." The
official attitude of the party, therefore, was that the trade union
was useless under present conditions and "not without turning the
clock backwards can we raise it again to power." Even union leaders
who were members of the SPC took this view; for example, Frank Sherman,
president of District 18 of the UMW, wrote, "the day of the trade
union has passed; a union is now only useful to grapple with the
petty tyranny of bosses." But if there was agreement within the party that, in the
long run, unions were useless to the working class, there was a difference of opinion on the question whether they could, in the short run, benefit workers, and hence what the SPC's attitude should be toward such organizations. All socialists agreed that their party must be kept absolutely separate from unions, but beyond this common ground, two schools of thought developed. The SPC never adopted the policy that its members could not become officers of unions though an unsuccessful attempt was made to establish such a prohibition at the British Columbia provincial convention in 1906.

George Dailes might say that "only a recruit in the devotee stage" would actually disparage unions, but a large and influential number of socialists, who were hardly neophytes, regularly did. 31

The most prominent critic of unions in the party was Kingsley. The Clarion's editor consistently told trade unionists that their efforts to increase real wages, even if those efforts were heroic, were utterly futile. And he was vexed at their obstinate refusal to accept his advice, complaining, "this union superstition seems as firmly fixed upon its followers, as was the religious superstition of the middle ages upon its devotees." If these "traders' organizations" refused to see the light, those who had seen it could easily ignore their unseemly attempts to raise the workers' standard of living under capitalism. Kingsley sneered, "the ridiculous little squabbles that occur in the economic field over the price of commodities - which, in the case of the worker means wages - have no more relationship to the class struggle than has the quarrel of a couple of Irish women over the price of a half-pint of goat's milk."

Yet despite this disdain which he regularly affected, his attitude
toward unions clearly went beyond indifference. He reasoned that the object of unions was "reactionary" in that any improvement in the lot of workers, even a small number, would tend to prolong capitalism. The purpose of the SPC would best be served by the destruction of all unions, thereby removing any hope of relief for the working class under the present system: "In the labor unions of today are the statesmen of tomorrow. To "smash the unions" is to transform craftsmen into statesmen, and, if need be, into soldiers." 32 Consequently, from the Olympian heights of his basement office, Kingsley gloated over all union setbacks, particularly those close to home, and the Clarion took on a distinctly anti-union tone under his management.

A similar tone, though perhaps somewhat less strident, characterized the paper under McKenzie. The SPC should give no support to unions, McKenzie believed, because "we have no concern with the traffic in labor any more than we have with the trade in turnips." He was scornful of the argument that the labour organizations could strengthen the party: "it is said that the unions will be the backbone of the movement. Well the movement in the Old Country has been using them for a spine and to all appearances, the movement in the Old Country is now in urgent need of corsets." Only when unionists became socialists could they advance the revolutionary movement. 33

Probably the most vitriolic attacks on labour organizations came from John Montiimer. He condemned unions for what he regarded as their hypocrisy. While professing broad humanitarian aims, their true object, to increase the wages of their few, select members, was
narrow and selfish; he charged "the bar association, the medical trade union or the saloon-keepers' league . . . are identical in spirit and character to the bottle washers union or the union amalgamated association of nail clinchers." As products of the present order, the unions had adopted the prevalent value system; theirs were "the ethics of capitalism at once selfish, brutal and ignorant." Rather than contributing to class solidarity, the unions actually increased division by making short-term gains for their members and thus further debasing the great majority of unskilled, and unorganized workers. Not only should the socialists avoid any connection with such counter-revolutionary bodies, they should discourage workers from joining; he wrote, "to encourage workingmen to identify themselves with organizations that can succeed only by discrimination and blackguards conduct against the unemployed victims of capitalist society is worse than foolish; it is positively criminal." The best fields for socialist propaganda, Mortimer believed, were among the unorganized and "the debris of a union" that has just been smashed in a fight with capital.

As was often the case, the experience of the party in British Columbia tended to give weight to the extreme argument. "SPC candidates were regularly returned from one constituency to the Island coal fields where the miners' union had been broken. Similarly the party was able to achieve electoral success in the metal camps of the interior and the coal mining region of Alberta where industrial relations were at best chaotic, and the unions constantly under siege. The party's strength in these regions seemed to give weight to the argument that the operation of strong and effective
unions was actually detrimental to the advance of socialism.

Because Kingsley and then McKenzie gave a prominent place to their views in the Clarion, contemporaries, and historians, came to regard the SPC as solidly anti-union. There was, however, an active and sustained body of opinion within the party that believed unions to be capable of affording some relief to the workers and organizations potentially useful to the SPC. This difference of opinion never resulted in the same kind of bitter controversy which a similar issue had produced earlier in the SPC, because virtually all members of the SPC were agreed on the basic principle that unions were essentially useless and played no role in the class struggle. Pettipiece, the leading pro-unionist, was a respected member of the Vancouver local, the very seat of impossibilism. Prominent among the party members who adopted the pro-union line were men important in the trade union movement. John Lehéney, an official of the CMA who was largely responsible for the first important expansion of the SPC in Alberta, believed that unions were "an absolute necessity on the economic field." Because unions had grown to such an important position, he argued, that socialists must come to terms with them and by education, draw recruits for the revolutionary army from their ranks. Though Pettipiece believed that unions were "founded upon and built within the confines of the wage system," he insisted that they were "the correct plan for defence under the present plan of industry." The trade union and the socialist party had entirely separate functions, and, therefore, the workers who were both a socialist and an unionist had to be "a dual personage." But because members of unions were part of the working class, history ensured
that they would become a part of the revolutionary movement; Pettipiece wrote, "their very lives, everyday experiences, and environment, coupled with the logical course of capital, will ultimately compel them to take sides with the Socialists." It was, therefore, the duty of the SPC to carry on an active propaganda among the unionists; "the possibilities of the members of trades unions," he told his comrades, "are only bounded by their lack of knowledge." And in response to Kingsley's sneers, Pettipiece asked, "what other 'trader's organization' has ever helped to finance the Socialist Party." 

It was not, however, only prominent trade union members who took this position but also leading party intellectuals whose revolutionary credentials were impeccable. J. H. Burrough who became editor of the Clarion in 1913 wrote, "unions are absolutely necessary as long as the labor-power of the worker is a commodity that has to be sold in a competitive market. ... Without the union the position and standard of living of the worker would be absolutely at the mercy of the capitalist." Fritchard, a leading propagandist for the Vancouver local and another Clarion editor, believed that "unions had a place ... in the industrial field; they were necessary for the day to day struggle to maintain their own position [and] try to improve conditions." An active unionist and one of the founders of the lumberworkers' organization in British Columbia, he could "understand and sympathize with" the aims of trade unions.

In 1910 the Dominion Executive Committee of the SPC produced a pamphlet entitled Socialism and Unionism. Given the care with which the executive scrutinized the contents of such publications -
Pritchard recalls they were examined "with a microscope" - this pamphlet can probably be regarded as an official policy statement. It adopted the position of neither of the camps, coming down in a middle ground slightly closer to Kingsley than to the pro-unitists. The tone of the pamphlet was moderate, almost conciliatory, and it began by denying that socialism was "inimical" to unionism. But it adhered strictly to the party's analysis, rehearsing the arguments against achieving long-term relief for the working class under capitalism. The objects of the two movements were different:

With unionism we have nothing in common but a working class membership. They are striving as sellers of wares, for a better price; we are striving, as slaves, for freedom. With the fortitude and tenacity of the working class, they are fighting a losing fight. We are fighting a winning one. The more battles they lose, the more recruits we gain.

Because the two movements were "working on different planes, there is little likelihood of conflict." But they could only work together "when Unionists are Socialists, not before."

In large measure, the socialists' attitude toward unions was based on their conviction that only through class-conscious political action could the emancipation of the proletariat be achieved. The members of the SPC believed it was only the "stupendous assimilation" of the workers which prevented them from making the proper analysis of society and then setting out to destroy capitalism. This obstinacy was to an important degree an outgrowth of the trade union movement which led the worker to believe that it could improve his lot under the present system; so defined, he dealt only with the effects rather than the cause. Every socialist, including those who believed that unions were useful in the short-run, told the workers
that they must take up the fight on the political field. John Siemon, a prominent member of the Winnipeg local, wrote, "when the working men fully understand the iron law of wages, they will not be slow, if given an opportunity, of voting for the abolition of capitalist property."

On the economic field the workers' numbers were a disadvantage, because the effectiveness of strike action could always be destroyed by the unorganized unemployed resuming the interrupted work, but on the political field those same numbers were the means whereby capitalism would be destroyed. The SPC's pamphlet on unionism advised that "only by themselves conquering political power for the purpose of abolishing capitalist ownership of the means of production can the workers ever obtain any easement." To abolish the wage system the proletariat must gain control of the state, the citadel of capitalism. The party's Manifesto made this plain: "by means of the state the workers have been held in subjection, and by means of the state they shall be emancipated. The state it is that guarantees to the master class, ownership in the means of production. . . . The state is the sword of the master class. It lives by the sword and by this sword it shall perish."

Like other Socialist parties, the SPC took the position that in states with a liberal franchise, the ballot was, in Siemon's words, the "nearest and quickest" means by which the revolution could be achieved. That the workers must become politicized was the essential party line, and socialist propagandists never ceased to call upon the proletariat to take the ultimate revolutionary action, striking at the ballot box. "For the love of liberty," pleaded Pettipiece; "join the
rest of your class in an endeavour to put an end to the whole thieving swindle perpetrated [sic] upon them by the consciousless [sic] rule of capital." And a Winnipeg comrade improved on Debs: "It is better to vote for something you want and not get it, than to vote for something you don't want and get it in the neck." But the act of dropping a socialist ballot in a box was not enough; it had to be an act the implications of which the voter was aware. O'Brien wrote, "a political movement on the part of the working men takes on the form of a class struggle only when those engaged in it are conscious of the fact that the control of the machinery of the state means the control of wealth production, (economic power), and when the aim of such a movement has this purpose in view."

The education of the proletariat was, therefore, the ultimate political function, and propaganda became "the prime motive for the existence of the Party." The coming of the co-operative commonwealth must wait on history, but Marx had taught that the initiated could prepare the way. Kingsley promised that "the stubborn, persistent pushing forward of the principles and programme of the revolutionary working class is bound to result in its triumph and the final emancipation of labor from the thraldom of exploitation." One of the best vehicles for the politicization of the proletariat was, of course, the political campaign. During elections, the workers were "particularly receptive to reason," and those who were strayed by socialist propaganda could strike a revolutionary blow. Consequently, the party ran candidates whenever its uncertain finances allowed it to do so. But these election campaigns were conducted primarily for their propaganda value.
Pritchard recalls, "our work was educational - that's the only reason we ran candidates."\(^5\) Given this purpose, socialist political campaigns took on an other-worldly quality. Without immediate demands in the platform, the candidate could only present the party's analysis of capitalism, and as a result, a socialist election meeting resembled more a lecture on Marxist economics than a campaign rally.

A member of the party reported with admiration on Harrington's unsuccessful candidacy in Fernie in the 1909 British Columbia election: "I noted not the slightest attempt to catch votes; it was just straight Socialism, take it or leave it and nothing else."\(^6\)

Despite the purpose of the campaigns, their results were regarded as an indication of the level of socialist awareness, and those results, in British Columbia particularly, the SPC found encouraging.

The nature of the revolution for which the members of the party prepared, demonstrated well the SPC's extreme position and its special place in the revolutionary movement. Theirs was an apocalyptic vision of the revolution. This grew out of the SPC's fundamental rejection of the principle of the rule of law under capitalism, "The state," in Kingsley's words "had its inception in the needs of a ruling class; it was born and has grown to its present maturity as the instrument whereby a ruling class could hold those, over whom it exercised its authority, in subjection."\(^7\) Consequently, under the laws of the state, enacted to protect capitalist ownership of the means of production, the working class had no rights. Indeed, because they had the power, the capitalists were totally justified in using the laws against the workers or flouting those laws. Given this attitude, the socialists were not prepared to believe that the
capitalists would voluntarily relinquish their power when the proletariat voted for its emancipation. History showed that every advance by the workers had been ruthlessly resisted by the ruling class, and nothing less could be expected in the dispossessed's final triumph. Percy Chew of Winnipeg wrote, "the necessary changes are so radical that it is not reasonable to suppose they can effect themselves spontaneously. You do not seriously entertain the opinion that the idle and luxurious rich can be constrained with loving persuasion to relinquish their life of ease, and in the sweat of their face, eat bread." Some members of the party, M'Kerr and Fritschard for example, believed that the violence associated with this resistance could be reduced, perhaps eliminated, if a sufficiently large proportion of the workers were committed to socialism so as to convince the ruling class that opposition would be useless. But many party members seem to have believed that the proletariat would have to drive the capitalist out of power by force of arms, when that class refused to accept the proletariat's will as expressed at the polls. Kingsley described the final battle: "the earth will tremble from the shock as slaves and masters meet in the death grapple. In that supreme hour; . . . there will be a smell of blood in the air, and the torch will light the heavens with the glare of destruction."

Because Marx had taught that the bourgeoisie would not voluntarily yield power, many socialist parties looked to some opposition but what made the SPC highly unusual, in this regard, was its emphasis on the catastrophic nature of the revolution. Ed Fulscher of Brandon wrote, "I am glad . . . to see that many of our members have, like myself, been in the glorious British army."
have had the experience will be useful in organizing the revolutionary army." And Leféaux asked Kingsley, "won't there be some fun when we get a shot at them...? If they escape with whole skins they will be doing extremely well." Mortimer held that it was "absolute folly" to allow the workers to believe that the revolution could be achieved peacefully, and a party primer unhesitatingly set out the SPC's peculiar position. 51

In the last analysis, however, speculation on the nature of the revolution was "utopian"; the socialist knew that history would be the final arbiter. That the revolution was coming there could be no doubt. There was a degree of chiliastic in all socialist parties, but in the SPC, which prided itself on its Marxist orthodoxy, this tendency was more pronounced. Marx had taught that the onward development of capitalism would result in its collapse, and the master's principles were "as absolute in their operation as the laws of gravitation or the laws which govern the growth of trees or icebergs." Knowing that their aim was in tune with the forces of history, the members of the party could ignore setbacks which might discourage the uninitiated, or make the latter re-consider their policy. A Saskatchewan comrade wrote, "We know that forces more powerful and effective than our flimsy efforts, are helping co-operating with us, heaving the way as it were, and levelling everything nice and smooth... We can smilingly look all misfortune and degradation in the face; we can mock heaven and sneer at hell - we are on the way to mastery." 52 But if the chiliastic of the SPC found expression in doctrinal rigidity and, at times, insufferable intellectual arrogance, it never found expression in inaction. The members of the SPC were never guilty of
waiting for the millenium to arrive of its own accord, as critics charged. Marx had also taught that, within certain limits set for them by the conditions of their times, men made their own history and that it was necessary to work for the revolution. McKenzie might believe that "by the hand that first planted corn [capitalism's] doom was written," but he also believed that it was the historical role of the revolutionary to work increasingly until the co-operative commonwealth had been achieved.53

The doctrines of the Socialist Party of Canada, especially the rejection of the utility of unions and the emphasis on political action, resembled those of the ESP in the years before De Leon began to turn to syndicalism. Kier Hardie, a most perceptive student of radicalism, believed that the ESP was "imbued with the De Leon spirit." Pettipiece said of De Leon, "he ranks side by side with Marx and the intellectual giants who have laid the foundations of class-conscious working-class philosophy."55 The similarity in doctrine between the two most radical socialist parties on the North American continent, points to the tremendous impact that E. T. Kingsley, the link between those two parties, had on the development of socialism in western Canada.

It became an article of faith among party members that the "inspiration and life force" of the SPC sprang from Nanaimo. This, of course, pointed to the socio-economic basis of the party's impossibilism, but it also pointed to the major intellectual influence on the SPC. Kingsley had gone to Nanaimo and given the radical tendencies of the miners' direction and a rationale. The doctrinal system which he imposed upon the Revolutionary Socialist Party was in
turn imposed by his followers on the SPBC and then the SFC. Lefaux wrote, "thanks to that old war horse Kingsley . . . the platform of the Socialist Party of Canada is the most clear cut and revolutionary of any Socialist Party of any country of the world." The Winnipeg local considered Kingsley "the best exponent of scientific Socialism on the American continent." And Harrington remembered that he was "the real founder" of the party. 56 This evidence is even more compelling in the light of the SPC's consistent claim that as a democratic party, it recognized no leaders nor heroes. Opponents as well as supporters testified to Kingsley's pre-eminence in the party. Kier Hardie, always at loggerheads with the impossibilists, William Bennett, the Communist historian who had little sympathy for the SPC, and the Social Democrats, all lamented the baneful influence of Kingsley on western Canadian socialism. 57 During the trying times of the Social Democrat's revolt, W. H. Stebbings of Winnipeg reviewed the history of the SPC and made an assessment of Kingsley's influence on the party which was largely valid. He wrote, "the movement today in Canada is the result of one man's Interpretation of Marx." 58

In the years of the SPC's ascendancy, Kingsley, in the words of Alex Patterson, "pretty well ran the Western Clarion [sic] & the Party." 59 To the members of the organization which he dominated, Kingsley was the "Old Man," a title which says much about his status. Until 1908 he was editor of the Clarion, and the paper became, in Hughan's view, the most revolutionary organ on the continent. He was not, however, an especially good writer; too often his material was technical and turgid. Wrigley described it as "a little bit too
heavy." Even after his resignation, Kingsley continued to finance the paper and only discontinued the support, which put him deeply in debt, in 1912.60 One of the party's most popular speakers, Kingsley was at his best on the platform. Possessed of "a dry-ironic sense of humor" and an excellent knowledge of Marxism, he was an extraordinarily effective propagandist. Not of a commanding appearance, a square, squat man whose squareness seemed to be increased by the two sticks he carried, he was, nevertheless, able to inspire and delight audiences across the West. An admirer described his style:

Disclaiming anything like sentiment or emotion, confining himself to fact, figure and logical conclusion, Kingsley yet stirs in his hearers the very emotions he affects to condemn and awakens the sentiment he proposes to banish. Shame, anger, self-contempt and sudden hope chase each other round the diaphragms of the men who listen to his scathing words, and a rising sense of conscious power makes them long to get their hands on the ballot with which they are to 'do for' the system that enslaves them.

Even Puttee, a bitter enemy, was prepared to describe Kingsley as "one of the best lecturers on the American continent."61 The "Old Man's" period of pre-eminence in the party coincided with the SPC's ascendancy; with the decline of the party after the revolt of the Social Democrats, his importance began to diminish. This came as a result of advancing years and the rise of young intellectuals like Pritchard, Lefaux, Harrington and Burrough. Kingsley's influence remained strong, however, and when in 1912 the party was severely weakened by internal strife, it turned to the "Old Man."62

III

The years before 1910 were the golden ones for the Socialist Party of Canada. The SPC continued a significant factor in
British Columbia politics; it made a creditable showing in the

election of 1909, which marked the peak of its electoral strength,
and emerged as the effective opposition to Richard McBride's
Conservative government. In the coast province, the party became a
force in the larger labour movement; especially in Vancouver. It
also made important gains in Alberta. The party began to organize the
immigrant groups, becoming increasingly important in Western Canadian
society. And it spread into the East. These developments gave the
SPC, if only for a brief time, some status as a national party.

Another step forward, in the minds of the leadership at
least, was the purging of reformism from the SPC. In both Winnipeg
and Vancouver the importance of the moderate socialists, who had been
a part of the early parties, began to diminish with the foundation of
the SPC. This trend was most noticeable in the coast city, where the
impossibilist faith was held most devotedly. In 1875 Burns resigned
from the British Columbia provincial executive, and Wyatt, in a
bitter essay, observed with satisfaction, "the confusion which beset
us in the earlier days is becoming dissipate." Incommodable under
the new doctrinaire regime, Burns and his wife, the former Berenice
Merrill, began to move outside the party's orbit, and with a group of
"unattached" radicals initiated a more moderate socialist propagandist
campaign in Vancouver. At the same time, however, he stayed within
the SPC in an attempt to have it adopt a less rigid stance. In his
opinion, the impossibilists were guilty of "tooting down" to Marx; Burns
wrote,

all knowledge is useful, and a general knowledge of
Marxian economics is a great advantage to any of
Socialist principles; nevertheless a man may know his
"Das Kapital [sic] by heart, forward and backwards or any other old way, and if he knows nothing else he will remain an ignoramus regarding the means the working class will need to pursue to achieve its political and industrial emancipation."

But the specific criticisms of party doctrines were of greater significance in the field of legislative initiatives in the U.S. Socialism, propaganda was being effectively challenged by the party's refusal to introduce legislation which implied the

negative policies of the business and the financial ruling clique of the city of the Vancouver Times. When the Vancouver paralysed in the 1907 provincial election fell below the 1904 mark. Believing he saw his fears confirmed, the theory, which had been in the making for a year, occurred. An incident which the Socialists considered was a

speaking produced a final blow in Vancouver and Burns was expelled. For the party, however, was finally caught in the net formerly "pursued" of the theory of capitalism

burned and his wife immediately succeeded in forming a

temporarily party, but it never reached the point of the political party. With a membership of 1000, it was mainly from the in-

stitution and were recruited from many of the women of the

rank.

The "operatives" were also the leaders, and the campaign in which it attempted to cut down to one of the

masses and workers' welfare. In fact, the movement

was in the West, where the anti-ideal practices occurred.

"Two or three years, and the party remained essentially a western

phenomenon. The expansion in Alberta, Saskatchewan, and

interprovincial invention in 1907 was the most remarkable advance

of socialism in the country during recent years." Soon after the
formation of the SPC, a few locals of the party were established in southwestern Alberta by American farmers who had been converted in the Great Plains states. Though some of these locals survived almost as long as the SPC did, they had very little real impact on the region, and the farmer-socialists were of secondary importance to the party. The SPC's most significant support in Alberta came from the coal miners of the province's south-west corner. In this region conditions similar to those characteristic of the metal camps and the Island coal fields prevailed, and the party's impossiblyist doctrines won many adherents. Prominent executive officers of the UMW's District 18, like Frank Sherman and Clem Stubbs, were members of the SPC. Some UMW organizers also carried credentials from the party and promoted its doctrines at every opportunity. That this tendency was not limited to a few leading union members was demonstrated when the District's 1909 convention passed a resolution calling for the collective ownership of the means of production. It was on this support that the SPC based an organization drive in 1908 which resulted in the formation of over twenty new locals and an autonomous provincial executive. The climax of this campaign was O'Brien's election, early in 1909, to the provincial legislature from a coal miners' constituency, a victory all the more sweet because "Charlie never touched on politics at all." The organization in Alberta emerged as second only to that in British Columbia in importance to the SPC. As in the coast province, the party's power in Alberta was based on the radical miners, and because its doctrines had, again as in British Columbia, received the mark of approval at the polls, the socialists in the province were wholly committed to impossiblyism.
Another important aspect of the SPC's growth, during the period under review, was the organization of some of the large numbers of European immigrants in the West. The ethnic heterogeneity of the western Canadian labour force tended to militate against working class solidarity. And it took some time for the immigrant worker to be incorporated into the larger English-speaking labour movement. Even the SPC, with its commitment to the international solidarity of the proletariat, was slow to begin organizing the non-Anglo-Saxon workers. For example, despite the fact that it contained a significant number of Finns and Germans from the time of its formation, the party did not translate any of its literature until 1908. It was only in Winnipeg, the north end, eastern European quarter of which spawned several radical organizations, that a local early proselytized among the non-English speaking immigrants. The socialists here attempted to have the SPC's platform translated into German and held classes in the English language and Canadian history.  

The interest of the Winnipeg local, and that of the party as a whole, was greatly increased when the Russian internal crisis beginning in 1904 resulted in the immigration of several revolutionary intellectuals who provided the emerging eastern European socialist movement with a leadership which promised to make it a force in the immigrant community. Hermann Saltzman, the leader of Jewish socialists in Winnipeg, Jacob Penner, another prominent Marxist in the city's north end, and Peter Ternenko, editor of the first Ukrainian socialist paper in Canada, were all Russian exiles. Like all socialist parties, the SPC was very sympathetic to the Russian revolutionary movement,
and when in 1906 and 1907 men who had been active in that movement became a prominent part of the immigrant socialist groups, members of the party recognized "a common source of inspiration" linking them to the eastern Europeans. The most important result of this new attitude was the contact between the SPC and the Ukrainian Socialist Labour Committee (USLC). Founded in 1907, the Committee was a loose federal organization, with headquarters in Winnipeg, linking a handful of socialist groups across the West; its object, as expressed by its organ Chervony Pryvor, was "to throw down all the black spirits that perpetually try to suck the working men's blood."

In November, 1907 Myron Stechishin, the leading member of the USLC, proposed to the Dominion Executive of the SPC that his organization become an autonomous national unit within the party. The Ukrainian socialist argued that such an approach, which had already been rejected by the Winnipeg local of the SPC, would serve "our special purposes"; he contended that national units existed within the SFA to allow for propaganda in foreign languages. Although the Vancouver leadership was highly encouraged at the prospects of making such an important gain among the eastern Europeans, it was, at the same time, reluctant to jeopardize its commanding position in the party by sanctioning the erection of a potentially parallel power. Apparently the solution to the problem, worked out later in 1907, provided for the chartering of autonomous language locals and financial support for Ukrainian propaganda.

The year 1908 saw the mounting of a major propaganda campaign among non-English speaking immigrant groups. The SPC's platform was translated into Ukrainian, Finnish and Italian. Also the
party endorsed Chervony Prapor as an official organ; the Clarion observed with approval that the paper was pervaded by "the spirit that makes the Revolution in Russia." Chervony Prapor struggled along for only a few months, however, and died as a result of the 1908 depression. Early in the year the SFC commissioned Thomas Tomashavsky as its organizer in Alberta, and he spent most of the year working among the Ukrainians in the province. He was aided by O'Brien who was often forced to adopt the awkward expedient of delivering lectures through an interpreter. Also important in the drive was Mike Susnar, the UMW's eastern European organizer; an impressed Burroughs reported that "Susnar is made of the real stuff; he would rather work for his class interests than eat his dinner." Some gains were made among the immigrant farmers of the province. But a more important response came from the Slavic and German miners, many of whom were socialist "veterans": for example, Frank Poch, one of the founders of the Frank local, had been a member of the German Social Democratic Party for twenty years. A Ukrainian organizer, H. Sliptchenko, was also appointed in Manitoba. He attempted to organize his countrymen who farmed in the south-eastern section of the province but met with no significant success. The power base for the immigrant socialist movement in the province was, and would remain, Winnipeg's north end, what O'Brien called "a truly proletarian part of the city." Even if the British and Canadian socialists would, for a time, retain control of the party, the importance of the north and ensured that the Winnipeg movement's numerical strength, and to a large extent its tone, would be eastern European. For example, an English-speaking comrade remarked on the city's 1908 May Day
demonstration: "it certainly was not Canadian in character, the great bulk of the feeling and sentiment exhibited there had not been born nor was it the outcome of Canadian life and conditions." 79

Another indication of the SPC's expansion during the period under review was the important role it came to play in the larger labour movement, despite its well-known attitude toward unions. The party's theoreticians never regarded that attitude as one of antagonism but rather of candour. And by being perfectly honest with the workers in regard to the severe limitations of their unions, the socialists had won their confidence, at least in British Columbia and to a lesser degree in Alberta. Pettipiece observed that the SPC's "attitude towards the so-called economic organizations of labor has already well-nigh broken down the prejudice and antagonism the trade unionists at one time had for the Socialist movement." 80 Some unions were prepared to look to the most doctrinaire socialists for leadership; for example, John Mortimer, probably the leading critic of economic action, played a prominent role in the tailors' locals in both Winnipeg and Vancouver. A good many members of the party were unionists - estimates ranged from 60 per cent to 90 per cent - and within the unions they sedulously proselytized their comrades. Indeed, Pritchard suggests that opportunities for propaganda were one reason for socialists to join unions: "a person claiming to be a socialist and standing outside the trades union movement with that block of workers inside ... was a misfit; ... the very people you wanted to reach with your message turned a deaf ear from the beginning." 81 The involvement of this small group of dedicated and able men had an important influence on the development of the western Canadian labour movement.
movement, because they provided it with a number of leaders greatly out of proportion to the SPC's size. After a tour of Canada in 1907, Kier Hardie remarked concerning the labour movement in the West, "beyond Winnipeg only Socialists need apply; Winnipeg itself has a fair proposition [sic] of both phases of thought."32

The SPC was never an important political force in Winnipeg, but its members, nonetheless, did play a role in the city's labour movement. If the workers were not prepared to vote for the socialists, they were prepared to elect them to office in their unions. As representatives of a number of organizations, members of the party worked actively, though in most cases unsuccessfully, to promote the interests of the SPC in the Winnipeg trades council. The most prominent of these were George Armstrong, a carpenter, Bill Hoop, a letter carrier, who served as president of the council, and Dick Rigg, a bookbinder, who became the council's first permanent business agent.33

Reference has already been made to the level of socialist support among the miners of Alberta. But members of the SPC also played an important role in the trade union movement in Edmonton and Calgary. Pettipiece reported that "the most active members of organized labor in Calgary are members of the Socialist Party."34 The most striking demonstration of the power that the socialists could wield in Alberta was afforded by the outcome of the convention called, in December, 1907, by the province's TLC executive for the purpose of forming a labour party. TLC Organizer Pettipiece "held the convention spellbound" with stories of socialist successes in British Columbia, and the resolutions committee, which he chaired, submitted
the SPC's platform to the delegates. These men, many of whom were miners, accepted the platform by a two to one majority, and Leheney, a French-Canadian, who had trained for the priesthood before he became active in the UMW, set about organizing SPC locals in the province using TLC funds. The party regarded this endorsement by a trade union convention as most important, and Kingsley declared that Alberta's workers had joined the "front rank in the army of emancipation." The TLC which had looked for the establishment of an inclusive labour party, was much less enthusiastic, however, and Leheney was discharged from his position as a Congress organizer because he had "made himself a member of the Anarchist persuasion." But this did not occur until after he had been able to make an important contribution to the SPC's expansion in Alberta in 1908.

With only some extravagance Pettipiece could boast, "British Columbia belongs to the Socialists." The miners of the province demonstrated their commitment to the SPC by electing its candidates. If the Vancouver labour movement, the most important in British Columbia, never cast sufficient votes for a socialist to send him to the Legislature, that movement was; nonetheless, favourably inclined toward socialism and, to an important extent, led by members of the SPC. In certain unions, the most important of which were the machinists and the longshoremen, support for the SPC was quite strong.

But of more significance was the continuing and important influence which party members had on the Vancouver trades council. Pritchard recalls that while socialists as members of such bodies functioned primarily as trade unionists, their actions were always informed by their beliefs. This was well demonstrated by the
activities of the two socialists who dominated the affairs of the council, James McVety, a machinist who served several terms as
president, and Pettipiece, who also was elected to the presidency and
became the council's first permanent secretary. Their main concern
was to ensure that the unionists recognized that their organizations
had only an economic function and that the council must not indulge
in the heresy of taking political action, which had to be revolutionary
and was, therefore, the province of the SPC. "The minute a trades
union goes into politics, as such, it ceases to be a trades union."
Pettipiece lectured in the council's organ; only the socialist party
provided "a common meeting ground upon which all the workers can
gather and work for a common purpose." From time to time proposals
that the unions take independent political action, and thus cut into
the constituency of the SPC, were made in the council, and Pettipiece
and McVety, aided by other socialists, were able to muster sufficient
votes to kill virtually all these.

The dominant socialist influence was perhaps best
demonstrated in the successive organs of the Vancouver trades council,
first The Trade Unionist, edited by Pettipiece, and The Western Wage-
earner, edited by McVety. Even though ultimate authority for
editorial policies was vested in a committee of council, the papers,
under the direction of the two socialists, became a remarkable
combination of conventional trade union material and SPC propaganda.
Beside articles on labor leagues and the activities of local unions, it
was not unusual to find theoretical pieces by Kingsley or McKenzie and
reprints from the Clarion. Most striking was the editors' frequent
discussions of the commodity nature of labor and thus the ultimate
futility of economic action. Pettipiece could state in a trade union journal that "a 'fair wage' is the market price of labor power, determined by the number of men seeking a job." McVety, in particular, was capable of writing tortuously doctrinaire editorials for the Wage-earner. One such, written in June, 1910, resulted in a motion of censure being brought against him in the trades council, but this was voted down by a two-to-one margin. Although the editors adopted the party line on economic organizations in the columns of the papers, at the same time, they regularly denied that the socialists were antagonistic to the unions in the hope of dispelling the rank and file's reservations concerning the SPC.

To an important extent, the position of the SPC in the larger labour movement reflected the fact that the party's practical policy on current issues was not always wholly consistent with its impossibilist doctrines. And as the SPC became an increasingly important force in the labour movement, especially that of British Columbia, pressures developed which made it even more difficult for the party to remain completely doctrinaire. This reluctant pragmatism was well demonstrated by the socialists' stance on Asiatic immigration, or "importation" in their view, an issue of fundamental importance to all British Columbia workers but especially to the coal miners, who were most affected. Consistent with its commitment to the international solidarity of the working class, the party was regularly critical of the Asiatic Exclusion League and condemned as "disgraceful" the anti-oriental riots of 1907. In addition, some socialists could, at times, dismiss Asiatic immigration as only one more manifestation of the on-going development of capitalism and, because only a symptom, of
no real concern to them. Kingsley predicted that "the cheap labor
will be played against the dearer, Jap against white or vice versa, as
the case may be, until the mass of workers have drained the cup of
poverty and misery to the very dregs." Generally, however, the
attitude of the SPC was one of "sympathy" toward the British Columbia
workers in their fight to exclude Asians. Hawthornthwaite told a
Vancouver audience, "human brotherhood is all right, but . . . there
is not enough hash to go around. It is a question of the stomach. I
am well aware you can't solve the question by hitting a Jap on the
head with a broken bottle. I admit that, but to protect our homes
from this terrible competition it is our duty to solve our own problem
first and theirs afterwards." Even Kingsley would allow that it was
"far better that the workers of every country remain at home and
fight it out with their own ruffians and rulers, than to be kicked
about all over the globe as footballs of capitalist fortune." The
party might deplore racism as a sentiment "virulent and bestial in
the extreme," but some of its members displayed this human failing
in its crudest form. Pettipiece bemoaned the fact that the Chinese
were extensively engaged in the restaurant business, because "there are
no classes of people in the world that are more revoltingly dirty than
an Oriental." Another comrade explained that the Chinese represented
unfair competition in the labour market, because "Chinks can live on a
grain of rice and the inspiration of Confucius." The party's
position on Asiatic immigration was denounced by the Socialist Party of
Great Britain, the only organization with which the Canadian party had
any official contact, but the SPC refused to revise it, reflecting a
concern with the realities of British Columbia labour politics.
Asiatic immigration constituted an important part of the SFC's propaganda, because as an economic phenomenon it seemed to conform so well with the party's analysis of the state. Did not the operation of the National Policy demonstrate that the government was what Marx had said it was, a committee of the capitalists? The socialists repeatedly emphasized that the issue of free trade or protection was essentially irrelevant to the proletariat, because it was robbed through the operation of the wage system. But they also regularly pointed to the apparent inequities of a system which provided capitalists with protection and at the same time provided a surplus labor force to beat down wages. Mortimer summed up the SFC's analysis well: "Let us suppose they were to expend public money and send agents cut all over the world to bring in lumber, iron goods, minerals etc., to compete with the sellers of these commodities ining business in B.C. Would not there be a howl raised? And yet that is what the government is doing with the working class who has only the commodity labor-power to sell." Stebbings sneered, "Laurier forgot to put a tariff on labor-power."97

Another important factor contributing to the SFC's stature in British Columbia was the work of its MLA's. There was much for them to do in the interests of labour in a province controlled by a government committed to rapid industrial expansion. Parker Williams said of McNride's record on labour legislation, "you could take a magnifying glass as big as a merry widow hat but could see no bit of legislation useful to the working class."98 After the 1903 election, the socialist MLA's led by Hawthornthwaite, held the balance of power in the Legislature, and the legislative concessions they were able to
get from McBride gained for them the firm confidence of the province's workers. As the effective opposition, the aggressive socialists acted as something of a check on the government's free-wheeling brand of politics; as Kingsley put it, their presence in the House "made it absolutely impossible for the compradors of capitalist plunder to indulge in their accustomed saturnalia of graft and corruption." But the socialist members made a much more positive contribution. Concentrating on safety and labour standards reform, the legislation for which they were responsible was of great benefit to the workers. Most important were the improvements they were able to effect in the mining industry, including an eight-hour day in coal and in smelters. The socialists also worked for a reduction in the number of Asians employed in British Columbia industries, particularly in the coal mines. This campaign reached its climax in 1908 when Hawthornthwaite, unsuccessfully attempted to have Lieutenant-Governor James Dunsmuir impeached for reserving an Asiatic exclusion bill and for importing Japanese labour.

The most flamboyant of the socialist legislators was O'Brien. Consistently refusing to observe the niceties of parliamentary decorum, he used the Alberta House as a forum for the dissemination of the SPC's brand of impossibilism. This was well demonstrated by his most spectacular defiance of the fitness-of-things, a defiance which became a part of socialist folklore. When in 1910 a resolution of sympathy for Edward VII's widow was introduced in the Legislature, O'Brien moved an amendment extending condolences to the wives of over one hundred miners killed in a recent disaster. The socialist's refusal to withdraw his amendment reduced the House to chaos. O'Brien
being relented with missiles of various kinds and barely avoiding physical assault. But even he was prepared to work for some measure of relief for the working class under capitalism. O'Brien told a Calgary audience, "I alone am the real opposition at the Edmonton cab fest. If you want an issue introduced in opposition to the present industrial and economic system, send down your request to your Uncle Charlie." 104

The work of the socialist MLA's constituted an important part of SPC propaganda. Recognizing the interest of the labour movement in their work, the Clarion regularly published detailed reports of the activities of the British Columbia caucus and O'Brien. SPC lecturers attributed the passage of virtually every piece of legislation, even remotely beneficial to labour, to "the efforts of the socialist members." McKerrow described Hawthornthwaite as "the most able and willing representative of labor in the country." Even Kingsley praised the British Columbia members as "a little band of Ishmaelites," working for "the benefit and advancement of the proletariat." 105 But despite the propaganda value of the work of the socialist MLA's, the party's leadership had an ambivalent attitude toward their achievements. Were the activities of the members reformist in nature? The platform's "rule of conduct" for SPC parliamentary representatives, which made the welfare of the working class the ultimate test for legislation, would seem to have answered this question; but some members of the party were not satisfied. They were embarrassed, particularly under prodding from moderate socialists, by the apparent contradiction of representatives of their party working to improve conditions under capitalism. This embarrassment
produced an interesting rationale. The socialist MLA's were, the theoreticians argued, engaged in an aspect of commodity struggle in which all workers must participate if they were to survive. Fritchard recalls, "they were fighting for their constituents who were workers; they were fighting politically, as far as they could, for those things which the workers were not able to achieve on the industrial field." If the efforts of the members, like the commodity struggles of the unions, could be kept separate from preparation for the revolution, the latter would not be impeded.106

During the years of its ascendancy the Socialist Party of Canada was a small exclusive party the members of which came mainly from the United Kingdom. Like the larger organized labour movement in western Canada, the party was from the beginning composed largely of British immigrants. In 1903 it was estimated that "nine out of ten" of the Clarion's readers had recently arrived from the United Kingdom.107 In later years the British-born continued to dominate the SPC. Old socialists recalled the party as being composed of men born in Britain.108 Only men with Anglo-Saxon names played prominent roles in the regular locals of the party. And the SPC's Vancouver leadership was almost exclusively British. Experience in the United Kingdom's politicized labour movement helped the more radical spirits among the British immigrants to accept the SPC's impossibilism. Those who had been members of the doctrinaire Social Democratic Federation or the Socialist Party of Great Britain much more easily accommodated themselves to the Canadian party.109 Even
when the eastern European immigrants began to join the SPC in important numbers, over-all British domination of the party was never threatened. The composition of the Dominion Executive Committee remained unchanged. Eastern European representation on the Alberta provincial executive did not reflect the numerical importance of that group to the party in the province. Only in Winnipeg, where they constituted the bulk of the party's numbers, did the non-English-speaking immigrants play a significant role. Relations between British and eastern European party members demonstrated that the SPC was never ethnically integrated. In Vancouver Pritchard recalls that the Finnish and Lettish language locals tended "to step into clans," and, therefore, relations with the English local were "cordial" but correct.110 Much the same was true of Alberta. After a tour of the province in 1908, O'Brien reported that the British and eastern European socialists were "strangers to each other," largely because the latter tended to "huddle together in groups, speak the languages and retain the ideals of the place from whence they came."111 In Winnipeg, where the non-Anglo-Saxon immigrants were a power in the SPC, relations between them and members of the English local were neither cordial nor correct. Indeed; tension was so great between the two groups that at times "it almost came to blows."112

The question of the size of the SPC is an extremely difficult one with which to deal. Except for a few reports from the Manitoba executive committee published in 1908 and 1909, the Clarion contained virtually no membership data which could be used systematically. The following remarks, based mainly on oral sources, must, therefore, be considered tentative. The Vancouver English local
was the party's largest with a membership of approximately one hundred and twenty-five. Next in numbers was a group of three locals, Nanaimo, Cumberland, and the Winnipeg English, in the years before 1910; these had a membership of approximately fifty each. Then followed the locals in Calgary, Edmonton and Victoria, each with approximately thirty members. The remaining locals in other smaller centres and mining camps probably had no more than a couple of dozen members each; Pritchard recalls that the "average" local numbered twenty. Similarly, no conclusive evidence is available on the total membership of the SPC, but it probably was, at the party's height and including eastern locals, approximately 3,000. The SPC exercised a much greater influence in the labour movement, however, than its small numbers would suggest.

The small size of the SPC was to an important extent a function of its sectarian nature. Lefèvre recalled: "we were not a mass movement; we wanted members to have real socialist convictions." The triumph of the impossibilists in the SPBC after 1903 ensured that it would be an exclusive rather than an inclusive party. And this policy, which had its expression in an insistence on doctrinal orthodoxy and, hence, an intolerance of "unscientific" socialism, either inside or outside the party, was embraced by the faithful across the West after the formation of the SPC. W. H. Stebbings of Winnipeg defended the party's sectarianism, because "it not only prevents fusion but gives you a platform which is in no danger of collapsing." Because they believed that the socialist's basic function was to educate the proletariat, the SPC's leadership insisted that the party's members be "scientific" socialists. The revolution
would not be achieved by "a wave of enthusiasm stirred up by glib-tongued orators and facile pen pushers appealing to the sentiment, the passion, the prejudice of the mob" but by a thorough understanding of the wage system. To lead the proletariat to this understanding, the socialists, the revolutionary vanguard, had to be fully conversant with the Marxist creed. To ensure the doctrinal orthodoxy of applicants, most locals required them to sit for an oral examination in socialist theory. Pritchard justifies this practice by arguing, "it's from these people you expect to produce your writers and speakers and if they don't know what they're saying, they [are] going to be easy pidgeons . . . for the opposition." Watchfulness did not cease with initiation. In the locals members were continually tested by their comrades on doctrinal points. Pritchard recalls, "we were highly critical one of the other, seeking only 'truth'; there was no quarter asked and none given in our verbal fights." No member of the party, no matter how senior, was immune from this criticism. For example, if the Clarion's editor were to make "a slip even in terminology," he would "hear from some local with a blast." In this continuing process of self-criticism, if a comrade's orthodoxy or his commitment to the party appeared dubious, he was given short shrift. A metal miner boasted that a "reformer" could not survive in the SPC, because "he is so quickly 'sat on' that he promptly 'transforms' himself to the tall timers, and 'bays the moon' in solitude." Similarly, any party member guilty of compromising with other parties was quickly expelled, even one as important to the SPC as Frank Sherman could be purged for this reason. In terms of its conception of a socialist party's function,
the SPC's sectarianism is understandable and should not be regarded as merely quixotic. Indeed, at its best, this exclusiveness gave to the party's propaganda a unique integrity. At its worst, however, it degenerated into pedantry and the intellectual bigotry of the Elect.

One manifestation of the SPC's sectarianism was an attitude similar to what Bell has nicely called "the cult of proletarian chauvinism." The impossibilists believed that a party, the objective of which was the emancipation of the working class, must be representative of and controlled by that class. The party spurned middle class intellectuals and reformers as reactionary elitists who involved themselves in the cause of the workers only to retard the progress of the revolution. Members of the party regularly complained that the bourgeoisie, because they had not shared in the suffering of the workers, failed to understand the mortal nature of the class struggle and, thereby, retarded it. McKenzie charged, "the exact role of the reformer whether he be conscious of it or not, is that of a peacemaker and intercessor between two embattled hosts." And the socialists were further offended by what they regarded as the reformers' motives, that "morbid sentimentalism that determines the action of the Bourgeois [sic] in binding up a dog's broken leg."

History taught that the middle class had betrayed every proletarian movement in which it had participated. Kingsley warned,

for the workers to depend upon the 'intellectuals' in the shape of professors, lawyers, sky pilots, etc., who graciously condescend to come down from high places to lead them out of the economic wilderness is but to lead [sic] still deeper into it and again be betrayed into the hands of the ruling philistines as they always have been by those whom they looked up to for guidance and salvation.
Only the worker, driven by this lash, would be properly motivated to persevere against all opposition and destroy the wage system. Morgan told a Vancouver audience that "the proletarian revolution must be the work of the working class alone." Working class credentials became, therefore, a mark of distinction in the SPC, and the party took great pride in the proletarian character of its lecturers and representatives. For example, after allowing that Parker Williams was "not an orator," Kingsley observed, "more effective and lasting propaganda can be done by the plain common and unpretentious working man who has acquired his knowledge of Labor's needs in the bitter school of experience than by the polished and windy jawsmiths." The party's most prominent politician, Hawthornthwaite, a university graduate and former mining promoter, hardly fitted the proletarian definition, however. In the SPC, "intellectuals" became anathema and one of the customary charges brought against those who broke party discipline was that they had compromised with this low breed. The secretary of the Washington state organization, after a visit to the province, reported that "there is no room for the long-haired tribe in B.C." And Fulcher boasted that the Brandon local had "no bourgeois notions," because "we have no 'intellectuals' - our membership is composed wholly of plugs, dirty faces and all." The SPC's high opinion of the horny handed son of toil never became, however, a fetish as it did with the IWW; indeed, the party regularly said some very harsh things about the worker.

Directly related to SPC's exclusiveness was its self-concept. That which had evolved in the SPBC during 1903 was re-enforced by the Socialist Party of Canada's expansion in the West during the year's
before 1910. Of the SPC's electoral record, Pettipiece boasted, "this is a showing that at least cannot be duplicated upon this western continent, if it can anywhere else in the world." 123 Consequently, the belief grew up and persisted in the SPC that the support the party was able to command in British Columbia, and to a lesser extent in Alberta, demonstrated the primacy in the revolutionary movement of what was sometimes called the "British Columbia school" of socialism. Pritchard believes that Morgan was "the best-posted economist on the North American continent." 125 The Clarion enjoyed a similar position; O'Brien described it as "the clearest exponent of working class economics in the English tongue." Only half-humorously, McKenzie observed that "since Marx died nobody was capable of throwing light on [economic] matters except the editor of the Clarion [sic], whoever we may happen to be." 126 Because of this position of pre-eminence, the SPC believed it could properly stand aloof from virtually all other socialist parties.

The SPC's leadership dismissed the British Labour Party with its trade union and Liberal connections without hesitation. But the impossibilists were no more sympathetic to the socialist Independent Labour Party which was branded as "opportunists" or its leaders. Blatchford, who had had a significant influence on the early western Canadian movement, was condemned, because "he does not understand scientific Socialism." Charles Lestor of Vancouver wrote, "when the time comes that will lay clean and bare the line that divides class from class, when every barrier is swept away save only the barrier of class interests, Robert Blatchford and his gang of clerical followers will be where they have always been – on the side of the enemy." 127
The SPC displayed even greater antagonism to ILP leaders who toured Canada to instruct the colonials in the ways of working class politics. In 1906, after such a visit with her husband, Mrs. Ramsay MacDonald suggested that it was "a pity" that the SPC, which she described as "even harsher than our S.D.F.," should be so doctrinaire, because this could only retard the progress of socialism. A member of the Victoria local replied that such ignorance "goes to point the same old moral, that we need not look abroad for light and leading, but must work out our own salvation in our own way."  

When Kier Hardie toured Canada in 1908 calling upon the country's workers to form an inclusive labour party and denouncing the SPC's doctrines as a "dogmatic, arid, blighting creed of withering materialism," party members were enraged. Mortimer told Hardie that "Canadian Socialism is much too 'modern' for you or any other British labor leader to catch up with." Initially the SPC, like the SPBC, looked with favour upon the Social Democratic Federation, though the Canadian party had no formal relations with Hyndman's organization. Significantly the Socialist Party of Canada did, however, establish a close connection with the Socialist Party of Great Britain, a tiny sect composed of ideologues who had left the Social Democratic Federation because it was not sufficiently revolutionary. This group, the platform of which was "almost identical" with that of the SPC, the latter recognized as "the socialist party in Great Britain."  

The SPC had no higher opinion of the Socialist Party of America. Because it was dominated by "intellectuals and opportunists," the party was moving "in the direction of ever greater confusion." The SPA's retention of its declaration in support of unions caused a
member of the Vancouver local to observe, "I think they might as well have expressed their sympathy for the United States Steel Corporation. . . . The fact that one commodity is labor power and the other is steel does not alter their positions as peddlers, from a Socialist standpoint." Assuming the SPC's usual didactic attitude, Kingsley lectured, "it is about time the movement in the States took on the revolutionary garb and ceased to befoul its skirts with the sloppy reform ditch-water so dear to the palate of those who would patch the present system into a condition of tolerability." The SPA's right wing was simply dismissed as a group of charlatans. But the SPC felt some affinity with the left wing; for example, the Clarion reprinted, from time to time, pieces by Jack London. Also Debs continued to enjoy the high regard of the Canadian revolutionaries. The only development in the American socialist movement which had a noticeable impact upon the SPC was the publication of Upton Sinclair's The Jungle. The book, which Siemon described as "a tremendous indictment of the capitalist system," became a standard propaganda item for the party, and Hawthornthwaite took up the fight for wholesome meat in the British Columbia Legislature. Though speakers from south of the border had been important in the early years of the movement, their use by the Canadians declined steadily after the formation of the SPC, because the party "was satisfied to stand on its own feet." Consequently, the only continuing contact between the two organizations, apart from the purchase of Charles H. Kerr Limited publications, which constituted bulk of the SPC's literature sales, were the visits of speakers from the radical state organizations in Washington and California. The most important of these was
J. B. Osborne, a blind orator from Oakland and an old friend of Kingsley's, 134 despite the Canadian party's aloofness, members of the SPA's left wing had a high regard for the SPC. Deb was described the Clarion as "a rattling good paper," and Simons respected Kingsley's work, though he believed the British Columbia leader to be "best suited to the Pacific Coast." 135

The members of the Socialist Party of Canada considered themselves "a part of the great world-wide movement for the workers freedom from capital." For example, they displayed real sympathy for the Russian revolutionaries in 1905 and 1906; though the SPC regarded the crisis as only a bourgeois revolution, the Clarion observed that the Russian worker had "no peer" in the proletariat's fight for emancipation. The party's internationalism was probably best demonstrated by its ritual observance each year of the anniversary of the Paris Commune, the glories of which constituted one of the principal myths of the international socialist movement. Though the SPC did not regard the Commune as a truly revolutionary event, its memory was "sacred." 136 Even after Kingsley had been able to prevent affiliation in 1904, the SPC continued to have informal contacts with the Second International. In a report to the 1907 congress at Stuttgart, Morgan assured the members of the organization, "Le Canada est en communauté d'idées avec le mouvement universel et il n'entend pas faire défaut dans la lutte internationale contre le capitalisme." 137 The party, however, never affiliated. Initially it claimed that precarious finances prevented it from doing so. But as pressure for affiliation from the newly organized eastern Europeans mounted, the SPC's leadership reverted to its earlier position. The
International was a "reformist" organization which contained "certain non-Socialist bodies, particularly the British Labour Party," and, therefore, the SPC could not consider affiliation. After 1910 no more calls were heard for affiliation with the International, and the Socialist Party of Canada remained in splendid isolation. With good cause Pritchard can say, "we were the Ishmaelites."  

At the beginning of 1909 McKenzie surveyed the SPC's recent progress and wrote, "the New Year finds the Party in a condition by no means unsatisfactory and we can look back over the most progressive year in its history and forward to one of promise." But in the very expansion which the Clarion editor found satisfying were to be found the beginnings of the party's disruption.

From the outset the western ideologues had harboured reservations about the doctrinal orthodoxy of their eastern comrades. For example, the Clarion reported that the party's first organizer in the East, O'Brien, "finds that many, in fact the vast majority of those he meets, and who consider themselves socialists are even yet floundering in the bogs and quicksands of the middle-class robbed-as-a-consumer philosophy." The westerners, in the enthusiasm of expansion, overcame these reservations. The easterners, for their part, were prepared to accept the impossibilist gospel, the truth of which had been made manifest at the polls in British Columbia. After 1905 locals of the party were established in most of Ontario's major centres and in some of the towns; the Toronto local was relatively strong. Montreal had a branch of the SPC. There were a handful of
locals scattered throughout the Maritime Provinces, but the party had no important support in the region except among the coal miners of Cape Breton.

When their candidates were overwhelmingly repudiated by the voters in the provincial election of 1908, the Ontario locals began to question the party's doctrines. By mid-1909 these locals were in full-scale revolt. Like Burns, the members of the party in Ontario urged the inclusion of immediate demands in the platform, a less antagonistic policy toward unions, and a national convention to curb the autocratic control of the Vancouver leadership. 142

Unfortunately for the easterners the crisis reached its climax late in 1909 when favourable returns from the British Columbia provincial election were coming in. Already convinced of the validity of their doctrines, the Dominion Executive regarded these returns as only additional confirmation and refused to consider the easterners' demands. As a result, the SPC disintegrated in the East.

Significantly, the Vancouver leadership's decision to purge the "dreadful pestilence of palliative and reform" advocated by the "intellectuals" and "parlor socialists" of Ontario was afforded virtually universal support by the English-speaking locals of the West. Alf Budden of Prince Albert provided a perceptive analysis of the disruption when he wrote, "we must expect that a Party produced by purely Western conditions such as the S.P.C. could not long satisfy the demands of the East." 143

While the Vancouver leadership and the English-speaking comrades across the West were reading the eastern rebels out of the SPC, the language locals remained ominously silent. It was already
apparent—that they were becoming increasingly reluctant to accept
the party's doctrinaire line. In Winnipeg, the centre of eastern
European socialism on the prairies, the language locals were
discouraged by the indifferent progress the SPC was making among the
workers of the north end.\textsuperscript{144} The basic reason, however, for their
growing dissatisfaction with the SPC was the fact that they formed
part of the Social Democratic tradition of eastern Europe. There
socialist parties tended to be much more pragmatic than the SPC,
combining revolutionary doctrines with reformist working programs.
These parties were also much more inclusive than the Canadian one.
For example, they regarded trade unions as natural and necessary
allies, having in some cases actually taken the lead in forming these.
In addition, the eastern European movement, particularly the German,
had been affected by the theories of the "Revisionists," led by
Edward Bernstein, who rejected Marx's analysis of capitalism and
argued that society must be transformed by gradualist, rather than
revolutionary, tactics. The SPC regarded "revisionism" as anathema.
Significantly, however, Rigg, in reviewing Bernstein's most important
work \textit{Evolutionary Socialism}, concluded, "the book demands, and must
ultimately receive, respectful consideration."\textsuperscript{145}

As the immigrant socialists "became more mature politically"
with years in Canada, they came to recognize that, despite the
similarity in rhetoric, there were real differences between their
Social Democracy and the socialism of the SPC.\textsuperscript{146} The criticism which
the language locals made of the party's doctrines grew directly out of
their European experience. The north end socialists considered the
SPC's attitude toward unions as unsound; a comrade, who had been in
the party for twenty-five years in Europe, wrote, "the social-
democracy represents the working man. The trades union movement
and the political movement are the two arms; we cannot work with one
arm." In addition, the eastern Europeans demanded the inclusion
of immediate demands in the party's platform. Not only would these
afford the proletariat some relief under capitalism, they would help
"in rousing the slumbering energies of the working class." By
expanding its platform, the SPC would abandon its dogmatic insistence
that the party's sole function was education and become part of the
mainstream of the labour movement. "You can talk till your black in
the face about only being robbed at the point of production and that
kind of thing [but] this simply doesn't get down to basics somehow.
[The worker] is concerned with another ten cents an hour; he's not
particularly concerned about economic theory; ten cents an hour, boy,
that's better than all the economic theory in the world," argues
Fred Tipping, one of the founders of the Social Democratic Party of
Canada. Also, a less rigid platform would destroy the sectarian
nature of the SPC which the eastern Europeans found highly offensive.
Of the party's insistence upon doctrinal orthodoxy, Saltzman said,
"the living gospel of Socialism is replaced by the SPC by rigid,
meaningless, formulas, petrified dogma, dead doctrines; they
replaced genuine sentiment by revolutionary rant. In brief, their
impossibilism is to Socialism what the petrified institutional church
is to the living Christianity. It is body without a soul, a mummy." Because the parties to which they had belonged, and most other
socialist organizations, had adopted immediate demands, and because
they equated the Canadian party's doctrines with the teachings of
the young Marx, the European socialists condemned the SPC as "reactionary." Stechishin and Rigg, in a joint statement, dismissed impossibilism as "a children's disease which threatens every socialist movement which has not got beyond utopianism."\(^{149}\) It was, therefore, imperative that the SPC affiliate with the International in order that it could profit by the experience of the European parties, which had passed beyond the doctrinal confusion in which the Canadian party was floundering, and thus join the "modern" socialist movement. When the Dominion Executive rejected the language locals' demands for affiliation, they were further alienated by what they regarded as dictatorial action.\(^{150}\) As in the past the British impossibilists refused to compromise with the moderates.

The developing rebellion of the non-English-speaking immigrants had all the elements which had been part of the two previous revolts in the SPC, but there was one new and important element. That was, paradoxically, the nationalism of the various European groups. In a strange land immigrants, who had no knowledge of English and few, if any, family connections, naturally tended to congregate in national groups. Socialists were no different than the other immigrants, and the revolutionary organizations of Winnipeg's north end, for example, had an important social as well as political purpose. Indeed, it seems clear that the immigrant socialist movement grew out of the various educational and cultural organizations of the ethnic groups.\(^{151}\) The practice of the immigrant socialist to promote his doctrines among his former compatriots tended to increase the feeling of group consciousness. Tipping admits that nationalism had "a strong pull" on the various groups of north end socialists: "it
would only be [the better socialists]—that would have the depth of knowledge that would pooh-pooh this kind of thing,"152 The tendency was most pronounced among the Ukrainians, the largest language group in the SPC. In his letter to the Dominion Executive of the SPC in 1907 demanding recognition of his movement, Stechishin had adopted a nationalistic tone, boasting, for example, that "the Ukrainians are one of the greatest peoples of Europe."153 With such an attitude these socialists were sure to become dissatisfied in the British-dominated SPC. For their part the English-speaking members of the party considered such "chauvinism" to be "anti-social." By 1909 relations between the two groups had become openly acrimonious, and the compromise fashioned at the end of 1907 to curb the nationalistic aspirations of Stechishin and his compatriots was in ruins. The Ukrainian leader complained bitterly, and with some justification, about the indignities heaped upon "foreigners" by the party's British leadership. And he sneered, "whenever it comes to deeds the English revolutionists are always conspicuous by their absence."154 Nowhere was the SPC's failure to integrate the non-English-speaking immigrants into the party better demonstrated than in the burning dissatisfaction of the Ukrainians. Late in 1909 representatives of Ukrainian locals from across the West met in Winnipeg and decided to establish a separate language federation within the SPC which would have "complete autonomy in matters of organization, propaganda and publications" and the right to deal with the socialist parties of other countries. In demanding that the party's constitution be amended to provide for this, Stechishin argued that such a federation was necessary because "the Ukrainian Locals are only nominally in the
Party; ninety-five per cent of the membership of our Locals do not read English at all." Although it recognized the validity of this contention, the Dominion Executive was not prepared to afford the Ukrainians the degree of autonomy they wished, because in separate organizations the European socialists "seem to cling to the ideas formed by the backward condition of capitalism in their home countries [and] as such they are ever a source of weakness to the Socialist Party." 155

By early 1910 the language locals on the prairies were in full revolt against the SPC's leadership. In February the Ukrainian Social Democratic Federation was established with Stechishin as its secretary. Though the organization professed to be a part of the SPC, it was virtually autonomous and declared Robochy Narod, a Ukrainian socialist paper formally endorsed by the SPC, its official organ. 156 In Winnipeg, where the impossibilist had already been purged from the provincial executive by the European majority, the north end locals fought to exclude their English-speaking comrades from the movement in the city's immigrant quarter. In July the "long expected" crisis was precipitated by a dispute over local politics, and the north end socialists left the SPC to begin laying the foundations for the Social Democratic Party (SDP), the party which would unite the eastern European and moderate British socialists. 157

In the following month a convention of the Ukrainian federation met at Edmonton to decide whether to join the new party. Despite O'Brien's warning that Rigg and Saltzman were "suffering from too much training in capitalist places of education and too little
knowledge in the Proletarian School," the convention decided to formalize the federation's separation from the SPC and affiliate with the SDP.158

Within eighteen months, the SDP could claim the status of a national party. After exhausting all possibilities of compromise with the Vancouver leadership, the expelled eastern locals of the SPC established the Canadian Socialist Federation in April, 1911. Immediately this organization established contact with the Winnipeg Social Democrats, and at a unity convention held at Fort Arthur in December, the eastern and western groups amalgamated to form a national Social Democratic Party.159 McKenzie might observe, "the defection of the reformist elements within our ranks was inevitable if the S.P. of C. was to continue as a purely revolutionary body; . . . the Party will be very much the better for this defection," but this revolt did irreparable damage to the Socialist Party of Canada.160 With its membership and revenues greatly reduced, it ceased to be a factor in the labour movement east of Alberta.

The revolt even spread to the stronghold of the SPC, British Columbia. There the controversy over doctrinal matters became confused with another disruptive issue, the Nanaimo local's feud with Hawthornthwaite. Although the life of a socialist MLA had never been an easy one, by the beginning of 1911 the member for Nanaimo found that he could no longer tolerate the criticisms and demands of the local, and he resigned his seat. The Nanaimo socialists immediately denounced him as "an enemy of the revolutionary working class" who, despite "his bourgeois education, . . . failed to hold his own with a coal miner in discussing proletarian, monistic philosophy." Not even the Vancouver
leadership would tolerate such an attack upon their most successful politician, and the Nanaimo local's charter was suspended. 161

Ironically the doctrinaire position of the Nanaimo socialists facilitated the entry of the SDP into British Columbia. After complaints were raised against the executive's action, a convention was held in December to review the expulsion. There were present a sufficient number of delegates opposed to the leadership to control the convention and add to the platform demands for "a fancy variety of palliatives and patchwork reforms." These the Dominion executive repudiated, taking the position that a provincial convention had no authority to amend the platform. After the convention, the delegates from several locals, including those from Nanaimo, voted to leave the SPC and affiliate with the distant Canadian Socialist Federation. 162

Although Burns played no role in the formation of the national SDP, he and his friends watched the disruption of the SPC with satisfaction and were in communication with the rebels. During 1912 these old opponents of the impossibilists took a leading role in encouraging the spread of the new socialist party in the province. In British Columbia the SDP, in Burns' words, was "mainly Finnish." But it also had locals in Vancouver, Victoria, and the mining regions. 163

The gains which the SDP made in the province severely weakened the SPC and alarmed its leadership. Early in the year Kingsley made the unprecedented admission that "throughout the Province the Locals, as a rule, are either semi-defunct or in a state of philosophic dryrot that is infinitely worse." In commenting on the rather disappointing returns in the provincial election of 1912, Burrough admitted that "the Socialist Party has been giving its attention more to its internal
affairs than to fighting the enemy. In the autumn of 1911, reduced revenues had forced the SPC to publish the Clarion as a monthly. At the beginning of 1912 it resumed publication as a weekly and staggered along with Kingsley's assistance. But in the autumn it ceased publication completely for a number of months. The party's weakened condition was also illustrated, and worsened, when the leading trade union socialists, Pettipiece and McVety, lost confidence in the SPC's ability to mobilize the working class and began to advocate the formation of an inclusive labour party. Indeed, so weakened was the SPC in British Columbia that, for a time during 1912, Alberta was the mainstay of impossibilism.

Despite this weakened condition, the faithful of the SPC, true to form, refused to make any compromise with the rival party. Almost from the time its locals were established in British Columbia, the SDP attempted to achieve some sort of unity with the impossibilists. But the SPC regarded the moderates with contempt; for example, a member of the Vancouver local observed that the SDP's provincial organizer, Sam Atkinson, "knows just as little about scientific Socialism as Jesus Christ did." And McKenzie argued that the SPC needed the rival organization: "It fills the invaluable function of a sieve; the grain comes to us and the chaff stays in the S.D.P. But for the Vancouver S.D.P. we would be cursed with Mrs. Burns' husband." Consequently, the Dominion Executive refused to consider "any proposition relating to or savoring of political trading." When, for example, Parker Williams came to an accommodation with the SDP local in Ladysmith, he was expelled from the party.
The impossibilists claimed that, instead of causing them to reconsider their position, the revolt of the Social Democrats made them even more determined to guard the orthodoxy of their doctrines. This was largely true. The SPC continued to be the epitome of impossibilism, and it remained the revolutionary vanguard in the West.

But, because it had been severely weakened by the split and because a new group of younger intellectuals were assuming leading roles in the party, the SPC made minor changes in tactics and doctrine after 1912. These changes allowed the Socialist Party of Canada to continue to play an important part in the radical movement though the time of its ascendancy had passed.
Notes

1. Western Socialist, April 24, 1903 and Western Clarion, May 7, 1903; May 9, 1903 and Nov. 5, 1903.

2. Western Clarion, Aug. 19, 1905 and Jan. 6, 1906.

3. Ibid., Jan. 26, 1905 and The Voice, April 7, 1905.

4. Western Clarion, Feb. 25, 1905 and The Voice, April 28, 1905.

5. The Voice, Sept. 20, 1907.


10. Woodsworth Memorial Collection, Transcript of Interview of Harrington by Fox and Western Clarion, Nov. 3, 1906.


15. Western Clarion, Jan. 13, 1906 and July 30, 1910.


17. The Trade Unionist, Nov., 1908.
18. Western Clarion, Feb. 15, 1908; July 18, 1908 and July 18, 1914.
19. Ibid., April 30, 1910.
22. Ibid., March 18, 1905 and The Voice, July 5, 1907 and Oct. 23, 1908. The SPC's advocacy of electoral reform did not entail support of Direct Legislation.
23. Jack Place, Record of J. H. Hawthornthwaite: Member for Nanaimo City in the Local Legislature (Nanaimo, n.d.) pp. 5-10; The Voice, March 17, 1911 and Angus McInnis Collection, Vol. 53-8, John McInnis to Steves, Sept. 20, 1958.
25. Lichtheim, Marxism, pp. 178-190.
28. Western Clarion, Aug. 20, 1904.
29. Socialism and Unionism, p. 12.
30. Western Clarion, March 21, 1908.
32. Ibid., March 18, 1905; April 22, 1905; July 15, 1905; Sept. 16, 1905 and March 21, 1908 and Woodsworth Memorial Collection, Transcript of Interview of W. W. Lefebu by Fox.
33. Western Clarion, March 7, 1908 and April 30, 1910.
34. The Voice, Feb. 7, 1908 and March 20, 1908 and Western Clarion, March 3, 1906.
35. Pritchard to the author, April 12, 1972.
36. The Voice, April 10, 1908 and Western Clarion, Jan. 18, 1908.
37. Western Clarion, Dec. 24, 1910; The Voice, Nov. 8, 1907; The Trade Unionist, July, 1908 and Western Clarion, March 31, 1906.
38. British Columbia Federationist, April 20, 1912.
39. Interview with Pritchard, Aug. 16-18, 1971 and Pritchard to the

41. Socialism and Unionism, p. 10 and Manifesto of the SPC, p. 29.

42. The Voice, April 6, 1906; Interview with Pritchard, Aug. 16-18, 1971 and Woodsworth Memorial Collection, Transcript of Interview of Harrington by Fox and Transcript of Interview of Alfred Farmilo by Fox.

43. The Voice, June 24, 1910; The Trade Unionist, July, 1908 and Western Clarion, March 31, 1906.

44. Western Clarion, Nov. 17, 1906 and Feb. 6, 1909.

45. Ibid., March 9, 1907 and March 2, 1912 and Interview with Pritchard, Aug. 16-18, 1971.

46. Western Clarion, Dec. 4, 1909.

47. Ibid., June 29, 1907.


50. Western Clarion, May 2, 1908.

51. Ibid., March 16, 1907; June 25, 1908; June 5, 1909 and Oct. 2, 1909. Hughan, an American socialist of the time, claimed that even those whom she called "revolutionists" in the SPA only regarded violence as a vague possibility and paid very little attention to it in their propaganda. [American Socialism of the Present Day, p. 115.]

52. The Voice, April 26, 1908 and Western Clarion, June 17, 1911.


54. The Voice, Oct. 9, 1908.


56. Western Clarion, April 14, 1906; The Voice, May 22, 1908 and Woodsworth Memorial Collection, Interview of Harrington by Fox.

57. The Voice, Dec. 17, 1909 and Sept. 20, 1910 and Bennett, Builders of British Columbia, p. 139.

58. Western Clarion, June 11, 1910.

59. Alex Patterson, "S.P. of C. Notes", undated manuscript.
60. Hughan, *American Socialism*, p. 238 and *Western Clarion*, Dec. 9, 1905 and Nov. 9, 1912.

61. Angus McInnis Collection, Vol. 53-4, Faulkner to Steeves, March 5, 1959; *Western Clarion*, July 31, 1903 and *The Voice*, May 29, 1908.


65. D. G. Steeves, *The Compassionate Rebel: Ernest E. Winch and the Times* (Vancouver, 1960), p. 28; *The Voice*, May 10, 1907; Interview with Pritchard Aug. 16-18, 1971 and British Columbia Federationist, May 20, 1912. The controversy caused Mrs. Burns to take up the poet's pen; she rhymed:

    Ten little Socialists, getting Marx down fine,
    'Surplus Value' tripped up one, then there were nine.
    Nine little Socialists growing crops of hate,
    One got drunk upon it, then there were eight.
    Eight little Socialists met a 'guide' from Heaven,
    One got 'Christian Socialism', then there were seven.
    Seven little Socialists in an argumental mix
    One lost his Terminology, then there were six.
    Six little Socialists in all the world alive,
    One met Miss Ermina Goldbrick, then there were five.
    Five little Socialists each to each a bore,
    One saw an Opportunity, then there were four.
    Four little Socialists Class-Conscious as could be,
    One bought out a Peanut Stand, to the Middle-class with he.
    Three little Socialists Revolutionaries true,
    One got a Steady Job, and that left two.
    Two little Socialists without a cent of 'Mum',
    One stole a loaf of bread; - the cops left one.
    One little Socialist says - 'The Movement's Clarified,
    Will now proceed to business,' but the son-of-a-gun 'he Died.

66. *Western Clarion*, March 9, 1907 and April 20, 1907.


69. Ibid., Feb. 18, 1905 and May 6, 1906.

70. Interview with Pritchard, Aug. 16-18, 1971; Woodsworth Memorial Collection, Transcript of Interview of Farmilo by Fox; *The Trade
Unionist, Aug., 1908 and Western Clarion, Feb. 27, 1909.

71. Western Clarion, April 3, 1909.


74. The Voice, May 10, 1907.

75. Western Clarion, Nov. 16, 1907; Dec. 7, 1907 and Dec. 28, 1907.

76. Western Clarion, Nov. 16, 1907 and Jan. 4, 1908.


78. Western Clarion, Jan. 4, 1908; Feb. 22, 1908 and Aug. 8, 1908.

79. Ibid., March 28, 1908 and July 31, 1909 and The Voice, May 8, 1908.

80. Western Clarion, May 4, 1907 and March 25, 1911.


82. The Voice, Nov. 29, 1907.


84. The Trade Unionist, Jan., 1909.

85. The Voice, Nov. 15, 1907; Dec. 27, 1907 and May 1, 1908; Western Clarion, Dec. 21, 1907 and Patterson, "S.P. of C. Notes."

86. Western Clarion, April 22, 1911.
87. Vancouver TLC Minutes, Oct. 19, 1911; Interview with Pritchard, Aug. 16-18, 1971; Woodsworth Memorial Collection, Transcript of Interview of Harrington by Fox and Angus McInnis Collection, Vol. 53-17, "Ambrose Tree: Old S.P.C. member", n.d.

88. Interview with Pritchard, Aug. 16-18, 1911.

89. The Trade Unionist, Feb., 1908 and Jan., 1909.


91. Ibid., April 16, 1909 and The Trade Unionist, Jan., 1909.

92. The Western Wage-earner, June, 1910 and Vancouver TLC Minutes, June 16, 1910.


95. Western Clarion, Oct. 24, 1908 and April 26, 1913 and The Trade Unionist, March, 1908.

96. Interview with Pritchard, Aug. 16-18, 1971. For the S.P.O.B. see below.


98. Angus McInnis Collection, Vol. 53-17, "Ambrose Tree: Old S.P.C. member."


100. Western Clarion, Feb. 10, 1906.

101. Place, Record of Hawthornthwaite, pp. 3-6.

102. Ibid., pp. 5-8 and Ormsby, British Columbia, pp. 348-353.

103. Interview with Tipping, May 3, 1971 and Western Clarion, June 18, 1910.


105. The Western Wage-earner, Feb., 1909 and Western Clarion, May 11,
1907.

106. Interview with Pritchard, Aug. 16-18, 1971 and Western Clarion.

107. Western Clarion, July 31, 1903.

108. Interview with Pritchard, Aug. 16-18, 1971; Interview with
    Tipping, May 3, 1971 and Woodworth Memorial Collection,
    Transcript of Interview of Farmilo by Fox and Transcript of
    Interview of Lefaux by Fox.

109. Woodworth Memorial Collection, Transcript of Interview of Farmilo
    by Fox and Pritchard to the author, March 16, 1972.

110. Interview with Pritchard, Aug. 16-18, 1971 and Pritchard to the
    author, Nov. 15, 1971. Pritchard's statement, of course, says as
    much about the English comrades as it does about the Europeans.


112. Transcript of Interview of Jacob Penner by Roland Penner.

113. Interview with Pritchard, Aug. 16-18, 1971; Pritchard to the
    author, Oct. 25, 1971; Woodworth Memorial Collection, Transcript
    of Interview with Harrington by Fox and Western Clarion, Jan. 16,
    1909.

114. Woodworth Memorial Collection, Transcript of Interview with
    Lefaux by Fox.

115. Woodworth Memorial Collection, Transcript of Interview with
    Lefaux by Fox and The Voice, April 10, 1908. The practical
    political implications of this sectarianism are discussed in
    Chapter 5.

116. Western Clarion, Nov. 28, 1908.

117. Interview with Pritchard, Aug. 16-18, 1971 and Western Clarion,
    Dec. 17, 1910.

118. Pritchard to the author, April 12, 1972 and Interview with

119. Sproul, "Situation in British Columbia," p. 742 and Western Clarion,

120. Daniel Bell, Marxist Socialism in the United States (Princeton,

121. Western Clarion, April 15, 1905 and Feb. 12, 1910 and The Voice,
    April 15, 1910.


131. *Western Clarion*, April 15, 1905; July 1, 1905; Feb. 15, 1908 and June 20, 1908.


133. *The Voice*, June 1, 1906 and Place, *Record of Hawthornthwaite*, p. 5.


137. L'Internationale Ouvrière & Socialiste: Rapports soumis au Congres Socialiste Internationale de Stuttgart (Bruxelles, 1907), p. 76.

138. *Western Clarion*, Aug. 7, 1909 and Wrigley; "Hardie Impeached," pp. 723-6. Obviously stung, Hardie told Puttee, "the humor of this is delightful, . . . . it is only Kingsley and the dogma-ridden junta which meets on the other side of the Rockies which discover heresy in the British movement." [*The Voice*, Dec. 17, 1909].


144. Transcript of Interview of Jacob Penner by Roland Penner.

145. Lichtheim, *Marxism*, pp. 278-300; *Western Clarion*, July 24, 1909 and *The Voice*, Aug. 13, 1909. Higg was British but he was actively involved in north end politics. There was a small English group allied with the language locals.


155. *Western Clarion*, April 9, 1910; May 21, 1910 and June 22, 1912.


159. *The Voice*, April 28, 1911 and Dec. 22, 1911 and Transcript of Interview of Jacob Penner by Roland Penner. For the SDP see Chapter 5.
160. Western Clarion, Aug. 5, 1910.

161. Ibid., May 6, 1911 and May 20, 1911.

162. Ibid., Oct. 12, 1912 and The Voice, Dec. 22, 1911.

163. Interview with Tipping, May 3, 1911; The Voice, April 30, 1909 and Feb. 17, 1911; Angus McInnis Collection, Vol. 53-1, "Interview with Ernest Burns" and British Columbia Federationist, Jan. 20, 1912 and Oct. 12, 1912.

164. Western Clarion, March 9, 1912 and British Columbia Federationist, April 5, 1912.


166. Western Clarion, July 27, 1912. The SDP made no important gains in Alberta; even the provinces' Ukrainian socialists returned to the SPC by mid-1911. [Western Clarion, July 27, 1912 and Weir, "Flaming Torch," p. 11].

167. Western Clarion, May 3, 1913 and April 17, 1914.

168. Ibid., Sept. 14, 1912 and April 5, 1913.
Chapter V

Winnipeg, 1899-1915: A Case Study in Radical Politics

In the years before the general strike, political activism was a significant and continuing aspect of Winnipeg's labour movement. This, however, was not the doctrinaire radicalism of British Columbia. The workers in Winnipeg were not affected by immigration in the way that those in Vancouver and Victoria were by the incoming waves of Asians. Nor were the labour men of the prairie city influenced by a revolutionary power base, the mines, as were their coastal brethren. In addition, geography ensured that no important American radical influence would be felt in the city. The radicalism of Winnipeg was the less militant variety which the British immigrants brought with them. As a result, the city's labour movement was comparatively moderate, a condition which was reinforced by its high proportion of conservative railway men.

Surveying the scene in 1909 Stebbings lamented, "I am certain that British Columbia and Alberta are 50 years ahead of Manitoba in matters that affect the working class."

As a result of these conditions, there grew up in Winnipeg a political labourism in the moderate British tradition. Inspired by the local and national improvements gained by the labour parties in the United Kingdom, the city's labourites sought certain basic reforms which would reduce the inequities in society and improve the quality of the worker's life. Led by Arthur Puttee, editor of The Voice, the labourites consistently worked to fashion an inclusive workingman's party, but they were never able to establish one which could last for more than a couple of years at most. Those who formed
and led parties had, in most cases, a definite ideological commitment to the end of labour's improvement, and thus they could accept defeat with a measure of equanimity. The rank and file, however, unlike that of the socialist party, lacked such commitment. They could be, and were, caught up in the enthusiasm of the party's formation, when labourites, like Puttee, told them that they were fashioning a means whereby they would receive immediate relief, but when the party failed to fulfill its promise, their commitment, based wholly on pragmatism, quickly waned. This process of disillusionment was the essential reason for the ephemeral nature of Winnipeg's long list of labour parties.

Other factors also hampered the efforts of the labourites. On the right wing of the labour movement, they had to contend with the attachment of many workers to the Liberal Party. During the second half of the nineteenth century, workers in the United Kingdom had developed a real commitment to the party of Gladstone and the Radicals; and although this commitment had begun to decline by the time of large-scale immigration to the Canadian West, many British trade unionists transferred their old allegiance to the Grits. A socialist perceptively characterized Lib-Labism as a Victorian residual: "it is all of a piece with antimacassars, the Crystal Palace, wax fruit, framed 'In Memoriam' cards and women's bustles. Like those things, it is an outward desire of the working class to be 'respectable' no matter what else happens." This attachment to the Liberals, which reduced the propensity of the workers to identify with a straight labour party, was of greater importance than the opposition with which the labourites had to contend on the left, but
the hostility of the Socialist Party of Canada was always a significant, and noisy, impediment to the efforts of Puttee and his associates. Though never an important force in Winnipeg, the impossibilists worked unceasingly to have the toilers take up the class struggle and never hesitated to strike out at the labour parties which had a different aim.

II

A slight trade revival resulted in the formation of Winnipeg's third trades council in January, 1894, and five months later C. C. Stewart, a printer, founded The People's Voice as the council's organ. Almost immediately Stewart began promoting the cause of independent political action; he told his readers, "no substantial progress can be made by the Labor class until they are thoroughly represented by their own men." Inspired by labour gains in the British General Election of 1892 and the formation of the Independent Labour Party (ILP) the following year, a group of the city's union leaders, many of whom were recent British immigrants, began working for the formation of a labour party, in order that Winnipeg workers could participate in the "social revolution" which had begun in their homeland. Before this could be achieved, however, it was necessary to overcome the opposition of conventional trade unionists based on the fear that the introduction of politics into the labour movement would result in fatal disunity. Stewart reassured the conservatives that "the union is something that cannot be replaced by any political measure." In the trades council, William Small of the American Railway Union worked actively to calm
these same fears. By the beginning of 1895 the trades council was able to take the lead in forming an organization which by no coincidence was called the Independent Labour Party. Almost immediately, however, this body collapsed and it was not until March, 1896 that the party was revived "principally [by] gentlemen who have not the opportunity of being identified with trades union."

The Winnipeg Labour Party (WLP), as it was now called, was a reformist body, the object of which was "to study economic subjects affecting the welfare of labor and the promulgation of information regarding same; and also to secure for labor a just share of the wealth it produces by such means as obtaining representation from our own ranks in the parliamentary and municipal bodies of the country."7

By its very nature the radical movement which emerged in Winnipeg was class oriented. From the outset the calls for independent action were based on the assumption that only a workingman could represent workingmen. Labour's interests could not be effectively promoted in legislative halls by members of the middle class, because "they do not shovel mud nor carry bricks nor a thousand other things that we do for a living; they never walk miles and months on a hopeless search for work, nor go hungry to bed, nor tell their children fairy tales to try and make them forget their hunger."8 But if the movement were class oriented, it was never narrow. The object of the WLP's founders was "to form a representative political party of all shades of workingmen" on the model of the British ILP. Like the leaders of the British party, those in Winnipeg refused to include the word "socialist" in the
the party's name for fear that such inclusion would alienate potential support among conservative trade unionists. Nevertheless, socialists were members of the party and came to play an increasingly important role in its counsels. Also because of its breadth, the WLP was able to gain some middle class support. "It became a meeting place and forum for the progressives and intellectuals of the labour movement and the community at large." Indeed, this first party established in Winnipeg came closest to the inclusive organization for which the city's labour politicians would work in future years. 

The death of the Member of Parliament for Winnipeg, R. W. Jameson, in February, 1899 provided the first test of the WLP's mettle. On February 24, three days after Jameson's death, Puttee called for the nomination of a labour candidate. His was a voice of some authority. British-born and much-travelled, Puttee, a printer, had settled in Winnipeg in 1891 and since then had been active in the city's labour movement, participating in the founding of the trades council, the labour party, and The Voice. Although the editor believed that "under our present system of party government it would appear to be well nigh impossible to elect a social reformer, as such, to the Dominion parliament; ... the labour party should not stand aloof, sulking in its tent" but enter the political fray. Early in March the WLP decided to contest the by-election, and with the aid of the trades council soon began building an organization based on the twenty-eight union locals of the city. Much to the satisfaction of the radicals, the locals responded "generously" to their appeals. It is in this context that the labourites' desire for an inclusive party becomes apparent;
the unions were essential to the establishment of a viable organization. In June a joint meeting of the labour party and the trades council nominated Puttee to contest the Winnipeg seat as an Independent Labour candidate.\textsuperscript{10}

Puttee was not the first candidate in the field. E. D. Martin, brother of Joseph Martin and president of the Winnipeg Liberal Association, had earlier been nominated to contest the vacant seat, but not by the Liberal Party. The Winnipeg Liberal Association was badly split as a result of a rebellion against Sifton's leadership, and Martin was the candidate of the rebels.\textsuperscript{11} The "kickers," as the rebels were called, had the active support of the Conservatives who had determined not to run a candidate in the hope of prolonging the insurgency and discrediting Sifton.\textsuperscript{12} Puttee found this "flutter in the political roost" encouraging, and his analysis of the situation demonstrated an astute understanding of Winnipeg politics. The "kickers" had come out in open opposition to Laurier's government, but, more specifically and more importantly, they had publicly defied, and thus permanently alienated, Sifton.\textsuperscript{13}

And it was Sifton and his followers who owned the machine. The only other candidate in the field, then, was one who would have to develop an organization just as Puttee was doing, but the labour candidate had an important power base in the unions which Martin lacked. Sifton was anxious to run a candidate against Martin, but considerations relating to provincial politics caused local Liberals to overrule the Minister of the Interior and decide against this course. The by-election, thus, became a straight contest between Puttee and the rebel, Martin.\textsuperscript{14}
The campaign became active in January, 1900. The platform upon which Puttee ran was conventional and reformist, calling for direct legislation, a land tax and public ownership of "all natural monopolies." Despite their essential moderation, Puttee's platform and his public statements provided the ammunition with which he was attacked. As a result, the basic issue in the campaign, the question of labour's right to have independent representation, emerged. Both he and Martin, who fancied himself a sort of Canadian populist, admitted that they agreed on general principles, but the latter argued that he was running as the candidate of all the people whereas Puttee could only represent the workers to whom he made his primary appeal. The Tribune, which supported Martin, found Puttee's "patch of revolutionary reforms fantastic and irresponsible" and observed that the labour candidate's platform was inconsistent with the mood of the country. But the organ of the "kickers" generally dealt with Puttee's candidacy in a restrained and responsible manner. Sifton's Free Press, ironically, was much less restrained. On January 17 the latter paper, in a violent editorial, declared, "class legislation is a recognized evil the world over," and described Puttee as an "agitator," because he called for independent labour representation, an "idiot," because he called for the nationalization of railways, and a "traitor," because he called for abolition of the Senate.

These tactics, which reflect the political innocence of Winnipeg at the turn of the century, obviously caused Puttee concern. From the outset, he had taken pains to avoid being identified as a narrow class candidate; the accusations now levelled against him,
particularly those of the *Free Press*, could not only alienate potential middle class support but also that of conservative trade unionists. Therefore, on January 19, *The Voice*, in a lengthy editorial, denied the opposition charges and argued that the reforms which Puttee advocated would benefit all classes. But, despite these claims his campaign was dependent on the support of the working class, and to make an effective appeal to their constituency, Puttee and his colleagues were obliged to emphasize the legitimacy of the movement for independent labour representation. On one occasion, William Scott, president of the WLP went so far as to trace its origin to "an upper room in Jerusalem." But the emphasis in Puttee's campaign was placed upon the positive effect independent representation would have on the workers and the country; "the workers and politics has [sic] been divided too long and both have suffered in consequence."17

Puttee carried the by-election held on January 25 by ten votes and thus became the first labour member elected to the House of Commons. The victory came as a result of the prevailing political confusion in Winnipeg. Although the *Free Press* and some Siftonites supported Martin, the Liberal machine was not turned out in his behalf, and party chieftains expected "a number" of Liberal votes to go to Puttee.18 The Conservatives, who stayed out of the contest to ensure the continuation of the split, freed their supporters, and both Martin and Puttee benefited.19 Party allegiance, then, broke down in January, 1900. And an examination of the returns in the three sections of the city demonstrates that party allegiance was replaced by class allegiance. In the south end of Winnipeg, a
middle and upper class area, Martin received 69 per cent of the vote; this majority The Voice called "a moss-money, smug, hypocritical, class and class hating vote." In the north end, "the home of the working man," the response was almost as decisive for Puttee; he received 66 per cent of all ballots cast. Only in the centre of the city where Puttee received 55 per cent of the vote, was the contest relatively close, reflecting the mixed socio-economic composition of the area.

The split in Liberal ranks continued during 1900, and its weakened condition caused the party to come to terms with Puttee and his supporters. In February A.J. Magurn, editor of the Free Press, informed Sifton of a meeting he had had with the MP for Winnipeg. Magurn reported that he had left the latter "thoroughly imbued with the policy that it was to his advantage to generally support the measures of the government and to act with them as a rule." Puttee, who appreciated the weakness of his position, was gratified when Magurn suggested that "to tide us over this approaching election, and to save the city of Winnipeg from the Tory column, it may, as a possibility, turn out to be an advisable thing not to run a candidate against him." Magurn pointed out that, with Puttee's "help," the Liberals could "thwart" the Conservatives and "keep the vote of the representative of Winnipeg practically in the Liberal column." In replying to Magurn's report, Sifton who for several weeks had been anxious to encourage the development of good relations between the city's labour movement and the Liberals, observed; "things are going as well as possible but of course it is not advisable to press him (Puttee) too strongly."
caution was wise, because during April a rumour that the Liberals were negotiating with Puttee began circulating in Winnipeg. In an interview published in The Voice, the Labour MP declared that he had no connection whatever with the Liberals. The wooing of Puttee and his supporters continued, however, and at the end of July Magourn reported to Sifton that "we have been paying special attention to our friends in the labor ranks." By the time the campaign opened in the early autumn, the Winnipeg Liberals had determined not to run a candidate but to support Puttee. It is impossible to determine whether Puttee played an active role in reaching this arrangement or to state categorically that he made specific commitments to the Liberals. However, it seems likely that he did, and certainly, it is obvious from the campaign of October and November that Puttee was willing to accept help from Sifton's supporters.

The connection between Puttee and Sifton in November, 1900 was best demonstrated by the active work done in the Labour MP's cause by John Appleton, a local Liberal wheelhorse who had been associated with the Winnipeg labour movement. In 1899 he had been expelled from the WLP on the grounds that he was a Liberal politician and in July, 1900 Appleton had been appointed as the Winnipeg correspondent of the Labour Gazette. Yet the radicals accepted Appleton as one of their most active campaigners. After the election Appleton informed Mackenzie King that "every moment of time I could possibly absent myself from business was spent in making votes and speeches." His devotion to the cause was probably something of an embarrassment to Puttee. The Tribune asked why Appleton was in the
labour camp, and *Citizen* and *Country* attacked him as an opponent of independent labour representation. 28 Indeed, it seems that Appleton did oppose independent action when Liberal interests were threatened; during the campaign he used his influence in an attempt to get labour candidates to withdraw from contests in which they constituted a threat to Liberals. 29

Ironically, had it not been for this Liberal connection, Puttee would probably have carried the seat by acclamation. But the Conservatives and the "sickers", refused to allow Sifton's candidate, as they regarded Puttee, to take Winnipeg unopposed. At the end of October they nominated Martin who spent virtually all his time on the hustings discussing the "understanding" which he charged, existed between the labour candidate and "the machine bosses." 30

Puttee's denial of these accusations constituted the main part of his campaign. Beyond this, he emphasized his record in the House where, he claimed, he had worked "not in the interest of any one class or special interest, but to conserve and enhance the public welfare." Puttee argued that his January platform which he did not elaborate, made him "the representative of the people, including the labor classes." 31

When the votes were counted the advantages of Liberal support became apparent. Puttee received a majority of 1200 votes with increased support in all sections of the city. The work of the machine was most evident in the south end where, in January, he had received 31 per cent of the poll; in November his vote rose to 49 per cent of the total. The *Free Press* called it a "splendid
"Victory," and Puttee attributed his success "to the fact that the labor people had won the confidence of the citizens generally."³²

Liberal involvement in the campaign and its moderate tone did not prevent all elements of the city's labour movement, including the socialists, from giving Puttee active support in November, 1900.³³ This unity was not to continue, however. The assumption of a position separate from, and to the left of, labour parties was an essential aspect of the growth of the socialist movement in western Canada. By 1901 this process was well underway in Winnipeg. In March of the following year, the important socialist group in the WLP bolted to form a CSL local in the city, and the labour party collapsed. The labourites in the trades council immediately began working to establish another inclusive organization. Again turning to a British model, they formed the Labour Representation League, a federation of unions and other groups, the purpose of which was to direct labour's political initiatives.³⁴ The loose structure of the LRL allowed the socialists to affiliate, though not without some difficulty, and they came to play an important role in the organization.³⁵ The new socialist mood and their presence in the LRL made conservative trade unionists uneasy. Appleton, who conducted the Free Press's labour department, played on these fears and thus increased the growing disunity.³⁶

The division in the city's radical movement was well demonstrated by the compromise slate which the LRL put up in the provincial election of 1903. The League nominated two candidates: Robert Thomas, a labourite, in North Winnipeg and William Scott, a socialist, in Centre Winnipeg. Thomas ran on a platform which
emphasized direct legislation and women's suffrage. Although Scott also discussed such reforms, Manitoba's first socialist candidate based his campaign on a rigid class analysis, and only he was endorsed by the Socialist Party of Manitoba. Ominously, both candidates were badly beaten.

Puttee, who, because of his election to the Commons and his ownership of The Voice, had emerged as the leading labourite naturally found these developments disturbing. His early conviction that a broadly based labour party was the only means by which the workers could be politically mobilized to improve their condition had been re-enforced by a visit to England in 1902. There, as the first Labour-man elected to the Canadian parliament, he met and came under the influence of Keir Hardie and Ramsay Macdonald. After his return Puttee paid considerable attention in the columns of his paper to the British leaders' efforts to establish the Labour Party, which the Winnipeg editor would come to regard as the ideal workingman's political organization. In Puttee's view, the main obstacle preventing the formation of such a party in Canada was the "irreconcilable" socialist, of whom he had always been suspicious. Alarmed by the destruction of the Progressive Party, he began criticizing the doctrinaire stance of the SPBC, which, he knew, had an important influence on the SPM. He told his readers that European socialists, who were "well versed in Marxian economics," had long since rejected the impossibilism which was becoming a disruptive force in the western Canadian radical movement. The socialists naturally resented this criticism and the campaign to organize a labour party, but, at this point in time, opinion in their
ranks on Puttee was divided. All condemned him for supporting the South African contingent, and some extremists denounced him as a "subservient adherent" of the Liberal Party. But moderate socialists regarded him as a sincere, if ineffectual, representative of the working class who belonged in their party. During the time he was in parliament, no open breach occurred between Puttee and the socialists. The editor had too much tolerance in his "make-up and was too committed to working class unity to make all-out war on his critics and he opened the columns of his paper to them.

For their part, Winnipeg's socialists, in these years before the formation of the SPC were a more tolerant breed than their coast comrades and seldom displayed the sectarianism of the SPBC.

The growing isunity in the city's radical movement hurt Puttee in his third campaign but not as much as the loss of Liberal support. In August, 1903 Dafoe, in a letter to Sifton, observed, "we shall never again be able to work the Puttee deal." This was the case for several reasons. The growing importance of the socialists in the trade council and its endorsement of the radical dual unions precluded the broad support Puttee had enjoyed in earlier elections. In November, 1900 it had required the full weight of Sifton's authority and prestige to gain Puttee support in Winnipeg's south end. After his election, the elite became quickly disenchanted with their labour MP. This resulted partly from a resentment of the enhanced stature of the city's labour movement which Puttee's election produced; for example, a businessman told the Law Amendments Committee of the Manitoba Legislature that Winnipeg was "about the most labor-ridden town in the country and it ought
to be stopped. But also important was the conviction that Puttee was not an effective representative of the city. The Board of Trade had attempted to employ the labour member as the city's voice in the House, but by the summer of 1903 the Board came to the conclusion that he could not represent its interests. It was against this background that both Sifton and Dafoe argued for "a business man" as the Liberal nominee. Also Puttee's stand on the transportation question which dominated the 1904 campaign precluded Liberal support. During his years in the House, he was a consistent advocate of government ownership and a consistent critic of Laurier's railway policy; in the major speech of his parliamentary career he condemned the Grand Trunk Pacific contract as a betrayal of the people.

If these factors prevented the Liberals from re-enacting "the Puttee deal" in 1904, other developments made such machinations unnecessary. Political normality had been restored by the loyal Liberals who suppressed the rebellion of the kickers. The united party nominated D. W. Bolé and began an energetic campaign, an important aspect of which was the drive to undermine Puttee's power in the north end. Perceptively, the Liberals recognized that the emerging "foreign vote" would be an important factor in the election and made early plans to capture it. Their campaign was directed by Appleton and J. Obediah Smith, formerly Sifton's chief organizer in Manitoba but in 1904 Immigration Commissioner in Winnipeg, who would, of course, have great influence in the immigrant community. The main vehicle of this campaign was a newspaper printed in Galician and edited by Appleton and Smith. So thorough were
their efforts that the Liberals organized the foremen of the Winnipeg Public Works Department, a traditional place of employment for eastern Europeans in the city. The Liberals' campaign to draw the labour vote away from Puttee was no less painstaking. Bole, after his nomination, became responsible for dispensing patronage and, in doing so, paid particular attention to the members of the working class. Probably the most effective aspect of the campaign to reduce Puttee's support among the workers was Appleton's column. Taking advantage of the division in the city's labour movement, he charged that the trades council was dominated by "socialistic parasites" and argued that Laurier had done a great deal for the working man. The column and the emphasis which the Free Press began to place on the labour policies of the Laurier Government were intended to identify the Liberal party as the legitimate representative of responsible trade unionists. The efforts to undermine Puttee's strength seem to have achieved early success; by September Smith was able to express "cheerful confidence" about Liberal prospects in the north end.

From the beginning Puttee was on the defensive, and as a result, his campaign took on a new aggressive tone. Never before had the independence and legitimacy of the political labour movement been so forcefully emphasized. It was described as "a moral force out of which there must come hope and good, for it is white all through." But this glorification of independent political action became a class line, and thus a tactical principle which had been observed since the inception of the movement in Winnipeg was violated. In previous contests Puttee had presented himself to the electorate as a
representative of all the people; but in 1904 he was the candidate of "Mr. Workingman." Of his opponents The Voice asked, "are they on your social or industrial level?" and advised that any workman who voted for the "employer" candidates would be a "sucker." Appleton skillfully took advantage of the labour campaign's new tone. He told his readers, a significant proportion of whom had always been suspicious of anything more than the radical movement's most limited "economic" objectives, that Puttee and his associates were "revolutionists" and "assassins."

Despite the new tone of his campaign, Puttee's platform was essentially that upon which he had run in the two previous elections. The only addition was a plank calling for old age pensions. He concentrated, however, on the railway question. The Voice charged that the Grand Trunk Pacific contract was "base and dishonest in its terms, reactionary in its policy, and [that] its fulfillment would further enrich the few at the expense of the many, adding another, and greatest to the list of our national disgraces."

The election was, as the Free Press observed, "a clear cut issue between the parties." Bole carried Winnipeg with 4,308 votes, approximately 300 more than what the Conservative candidate received; Puttee polled only 1,290 votes and lost his deposit. In all three sections of the city the labour candidate ran a poor third, and it was obvious that Puttee had no place in a party fight. This was most clearly demonstrated in the north end, "the home of the working man." In the General Election of 1900, he received 71 per cent of the vote in that area; in 1904 his proportion of the
vote fell to 21 per cent. Therefore, when political normality was re-established in the constituency, class allegiance was once again subordinated to political allegiance, and the working men of the city, who had afforded Puttee overwhelming support in abnormal times, returned to the old parties. In analyzing his defeat, Puttee wrote, "the labor vote is still as unstable as water and will remain so until experience and right thinking bring them to a clear perception of the real issues in human society." 58

Two other evaluations of the election's outcome were significant. Ralph Smith, the Lib-Lab boss of Nanaimo, attributed Puttee's defeat to his "compromising with Fanatics." But Weston Wrigley believed, "Winnipeg workingmen preferred an avowed capitalist representative to a spineless laborite who was 'putty' in the hands of the capitalist politicians." 59 In the middle ground between the two conceptions of working class political action upon which these views were based, Puttee would now try to build an inclusive labour party.

III

Like his British mentors, Puttee subscribed to a kind of qualified Marxism. His indictment of capitalism, which could be severe, was more rational than emotional. His view of society was based on a class analysis, and he looked to the ultimate inauguration of the co-operative commonwealth. But if he were ideological, the editor of The Voice, like Hardie and MacDonald, was not an ideologue. He eschewed systems:

'there is but one Socialism and Marx is its prophet',
alike cry the revolutionary and the opportunist, the scientific-minded and the utopian, the atheist and the Christian, the moralist and the sentimentalist who espouse that indeterminate doctrine. To each, Socialism is whatever restricted dogma his fancy or prejudice creates and he sees little merit in divergent views of other soldiers of the red flag. . . which leads us to say that it is not Marx but the 'ear-Marx' of a contentious babel, what is mostly heard nowadays under the guise of Socialism.

Above all things, Puttee was a pragmatist; he was much less concerned with the means than his end. For this reason, he became, for example, an advocate of Direct Legislation as a means whereby relief could be brought to the working class. He asked Weston Wrigley, "what is the good of slinging away at theories in this country, if politically your hands and feet are tied?" Indeed, Puttee, unlike the socialists, was prepared to consider virtually any such device, because "we have to bring changes about, economical and political, not sit by and hope to see them evolve into perfection." Similarly, the radical politician, if he had the best interests of his constituency at heart, was obliged to work for reforms which would improve the lot of the worker under the present system. Puttee wrote, "it would be stupid to refuse the half loaf because the whole one cannot be acquired from the enemy." Given these views, it was natural that Puttee should regard New Zealand, with its reformist labour government, as the ideal state.

The political party which would best serve the workers was the one that could unite them and thus utilize their commanding strength at the polls to effect their relief. "A party bigger than unionism, wider than the Socialists," became the goal for which Puttee worked unceasingly. He naturally found divisions in the radical movement growing out of ideological differences profoundly
disturbing. British Columbia, in his opinion, had "progressive men
enough in it to be the New Zealand of North America" and yet,
unconscionably, such an achievement was thwarted by "the policy
of division and subdivision to meet the supposed requirements of
unnumerable 'isms'."64 The unity which he saw in the British
movement inspired him to hold the Labour Party up to Winnipeg workers
as the example they were to emulate. The Voice was never without
detailed reports of the party and the activities of its members at
Westminster. Hardie was described as "the head of British democracy
and the most conspicuous personality of the whole English-speaking
labor movement." Puttee campaigned for an inclusive party on the
British model for the prairie city, because he believed that the
emergence of Labour had marked "the breaking of a new day for the
toiler, the aged and the industrially oppressed of the land."65

Puttee's campaign naturally brought him into direct
conflict with the sectarian SPC. The socialists were convinced that
because nothing short of the destruction of the wage system would
bring relief to the proletariat, only a revolutionary party, theirs,
could serve the working class. Indeed, parties which sought to
reform capitalism were actually counter-revolutionary, because, by
holding out false hope to the worker, they kept him from taking up
the struggle to overthrow the present system. Consequently, they
steadfastly refused to compromise or co-operate with labour parties;
McKenzie wrote, "unity is impossible, unification undesirable."
Initially, the SPC regarded Puttee as an irritating non-entity
lacking sufficient moral courage to declare socialism the working
class' only hope and treated him with contempt. Kingsley wrote of
his record in the House of Commons, "he stood for nothing definite, nothing concrete; he neither stood for the present system of property nor against it." But when the Winnipeg editor persisted and his efforts contributed to the failure of their party in the city, the socialists came to regard Puttee as an enemy of the proletariat in league with the capitalist parties, and their denunciation of him became bitter. For example, a Winnipeg comrade demonstrated the SPC's special talent for invective when he said of

The Voice's editor, "there is nothing too mean or dirty for him where his masters' interest are at stake; talk about prostitution, the most degraded woman that ever prostituted her sex is as white as snow in comparison with this cur." Puttee, who was sympathetic to most varieties of socialism, refused to regard the impossibilists as socialists but rather as a political aberration spawned in distant and different British Columbia. In his view the SPC had had a guidance most strange, it has been led by men who have gloried in being doctrinaire; scorning everything appertaining to current events and localized experience, preaching that the last word of economic revelation was written by Marx whom they worship with a fanaticism not excelled by priest or monk and happy only when expelling some comrade who has dared to deviate from the strict line of their orthodoxy or has rashly thought that he might take some political interest in the things and world of today.

Like his friend Hardie, Puttee scorned the SPC's rejection of immediate demands: "if they would study human nature they will find that, the more comforts a man gets through organization the more he demands and by giving a helping hand to immediate demands, [they] will soon lead the great mass on towards Socialist thought and once started from the bottom no power on earth will ever stop the flow towards Socialism." His bitter experience with the intransigent
SPC caused the long-suffering Puttee to lament, "Workers of the World Unite!"; when we attempt it, the Socialists say 'No'.

IV

After Puttee's defeat Winnipeg's radical movement entered a period of quiescence. The conservative craft unionists regained control of the trades council and the Labour Representation League collapsed. By the beginning of 1906 Dales could say, "Winnipeg is now a safe capitalist seat." But developments during 1906 allowed the city's labourites to establish another political party. Winnipeg workers were aroused in the spring by a dramatic street-car strike, which was climaxed by the calling-out of the militia and in the autumn by a general strike in the building trades. But more important in reviving the movement for working class political action was the great gains made by the British Labour Party in the General Election of 1906. A delighted Puttee wrote, "the British parliamentary Labor Party is an accomplished fact; . . . the clock of progress has been started afresh." To many of the city's British immigrants who had been active in working class politics in the United Kingdom, these gains represented "our" victory, and they were inspired to take up the fight in the new land. But, as if to point to the difficulties which lay ahead for the labourites, the enthusiasm caused by the British election resulted in a controversy over the nature of the victory. Vernon Thomas, a Lib-Lab politician argued that the gains, based on trade union support, represented "a signal and overwhelming defeat" for the socialist ILP. A former member of Hardie's party was quick to reply that socialism was "the
mainspring" of the British movement.71 Fearing that it could be harmful to his purpose, Puttee dismissed the controversy as essentially irrelevant, pointing out that the gains were "the result of cohesion and unanimity in the place of separation and strife." It was necessary that the growing desire to follow the British example be given direction; the editor wrote, "hundreds of men, and women too, are here now who have been trained in the S.D.F. and the I.L.F. of the old land and something should be done to bring us all together."72

At the TLC's Victoria convention in 1906 the question of independent political action was debated, largely because the western movement had been re-incorporated into the Congress. Because he believed that it was "imperative" that the TLC establish a Labour party, Puttee called upon the socialists, who, he knew, would attempt to have the SPC endorsed as the Congress' political arm, to compromise: "it is as impossible for them to lay down an unlimited socialist policy that will be acceptable in all parts of the Dominion, as it is for them or ourselves to accept the base A.F. of L policy of rewards and punishments to politicians."73 Led by Pétipiece, the socialists did attempt to have the Congress endorse their party, but instead, a compromise resolution instructed the TLC's provincial executives to hold conventions to establish the Canadian Labour Party, with a reformist platform.74 The SPC refused to accept this defeat. Kingsley believed that "these labor parties, without working-class programs are farces; whether they spring up in England or any other place, ... whether children of ignorance or cunning, they afford probably the last subterfuge that the ruling class can discover or conjure up for the purpose of prolonging their
reign and warding off the day of reckoning with an enslaved and
outraged working class." In British Columbia and Alberta the
socialists were able to take over the provincial conventions called
to establish the CLP and thus thwarted the attempt by the Congress'
leadership to cut into the SPC's constituency in those provinces.75

During the summer and early autumn considerable progress
toward the formation of a labour party in Winnipeg had been made by
some "old-time I.L.P. men," and these began co-operating with
Manitoba's Congress executive after the Victoria convention.
 Appropriately, Ramsay MacDonald visited the city at this time and
"brought the workers right in touch with the victory and enthusiasm of
the Labor party." He told his Winnipeg audience, "let me hear no more
of your difficulties and divisions." In mid-October, with the
support of the trades council, the Independent Labour Party (ILP) was
established and Puttee named chairman.76 The party, which adopted
the CLP platform, was, The Voice said, "the British expression of
the socialist aim of other countries." Such gradualism, Puttee
admitted, "may be slow, but this one thing is certain, that that is
the route we have to travel, if we would progress at all."77

One of the objects of the new party was to provide its
members with "reasonable rational recreation," and like the British
ILP, it became a social centre, where all varieties of progressive
thought from humanitarianism to impossibilism were given a hearing.
Similarly, the Nonconformist sentiment important to the ILP in
Lancashire and Yorkshire was an aspect of the Winnipeg party, the Sun-
day afternoon meetings of which were known as the "Industrial Church."78

From the time of the emergence of radicalism in the city,
there had been an important link between the movement and progressive men in the church. Leading radicals like Stott, Tipping and Rigg had taken up the fight of the workers after theological experience. And Puttee, whom Allen regards as the "most notable" advocate of the social gospel in the Unitarian church, regularly opened the columns of his paper to radical theologians; for example, the Presbyterian J. G. Shearer was a frequent contributor to The Voice. 79 The Methodists were the most important influence on the movement in Winnipeg and while labour radicalism across the West was affected by the social gospel, nowhere was the impact so great as in the prairie capital, because nowhere was there collected such a group of brilliant and dynamic radical churchmen. 80 In the first years of the decade A. E. Smith, later a prominent Communist, played an active role in labourite politics. 81 Wesley College became the dynamic centre of the social gospel in Canada when Salem Bland went there in 1903. Because of his sympathy for the workers and his commitment to reform, Bland immediately became important in progressive circles and was a frequent speaker at labour meetings. By the time the ILP was founded in 1905, he was respected by all radicals and was influential among the labourites. 82 In 1907 J. S. Woodsworth began work in Winnipeg's north end. Although he was not political in his early years at All People's Mission, Woodsworth's efforts to improve the lot of immigrant workers won him the respect of labourmen. 83 The regard that the city's radicals had for the Methodists was demonstrated when Tipping persuaded the trades council to allow the Ministerial Association to affiliate so that Woodsworth, Bland and his students could sit in the labour
If the labourites could expect support from the radical churchmen, Puttee and his associates could expect nothing but animosity from the socialists. When they became members of the SPC, Winnipeg socialists had enthusiastically taken up the impossibility which grew out of the party's British Columbia experience. Their new revolutionary fervour effectively isolated them from the mainstream of the city's labour movement which was more conservative than that of British Columbia. Nonetheless, they attempted to have the convention which founded the ILP in 1906 adopt the SPC platform, like their comrades in British Columbia and Alberta had done. But in Winnipeg the labourites easily suppressed the socialists, and this humiliation ensured the bitter opposition of the SPC. The party's columnist in *The Voice* declared, there is no difference in principle between this so-called Independent Labor party and either of the old political parties of capitalism. While such a party might be viable in Britain, where the trade union leaders possessed "a certain modicum of probity and honesty," in Canada it could never be more than an appendage of the Liberal Party because in the Dominion labour politicians had never risen above the level of Grit hacks. In two letters to *The Voice* Mortimer, who had directed Puttee's 1900 campaigns, denounced the editor as a "reactionary" whose aim it was to disrupt the movement; his calls for a Canadian labour party were deleterious because such a party was in existence, the SPC. "I recognize the fine crafty hardihood of the men who have kept the organized labor movement as a tail to the Liberal kite for many moons," Mortimer charged. He concluded with
a threat: "no two parties can exist side by side peacefully claiming to represent the same class in society; if war ensues, on whom does the onus rest?" 37

The political baptism of Winnipeg's ILP came in the municipal campaign of December, 1906. Because local politics, concerned with franchises, contracts and transportation, affected the workers directly, the trades council took an active interest in them, and labour candidates regularly ran, and lost, in civic contests.

Following this practice, the ILP nominated W. H. Popham and Ed McCaff to contest the two north end wards. Running on platforms which emphasized the "gas and water" socialism so dear to the hearts of British workers, they suffered the usual fate of labour candidates in such contests: In addition to the workers' ordinary reluctance to cast a class ballot, municipal candidates were hampered by the franchise which, based on property ownership, excluded a significant proportion of workmen from the vote. 38

The socialists treated the campaign with studied contempt. Popham had complained about the street railway's ban on smoking, and so a member of the SPC sneered, "the bold demand for the 'right to smoke on street cars on the part of labor's champions is a reform too far in advance of its times. . . . We suggest that a start be made by working for the right to chew tobacco on street cars on condition that those who do this shall expectorate in their pockets or in their sleeves - or on one another - but not on the car floor." 39 These remarks demonstrated very well the SPC's attitude toward municipal politics. Stebbings explained that civic government was solely concerned with property matters, and because
the proletariat owned no property it was the "masters' private business." Another Winnipeg socialist, R. I. Mathews, wrote, "the matters to come before a city council in any year are purely bourgeois." In addition, no real power was vested in local administrations, and, therefore, socialists were compelled to concentrate their efforts in the provincial and federal politics. McKenzie observed, "you can't hold much of a revolution in a peanut stand." The SPC's attitude further isolated them from the city's workers who were vitally concerned with many of those local issues which the socialists contemptuously dismissed.

In March, 1907 the labour party, now officially a CLP local, nominated Kempton McKim, president of the trades council, to contest the newly formed provincial constituency of West Winnipeg, which contained a substantial number of labour voters centred on the CPR shops. McKim's campaign, from which the SPC stood disdainfully aloof, emphasized labour standards legislation, which was badly needed in Manitoba, and public ownership of utilities. The aim of government, he told his audiences, should be to provide "the greatest good for the greatest number." The Conservatives nominated the city's former mayor, "of galling gun fame," who had called out the militia during the previous year's street car strike. And much to Putée's chagrin, the Liberals nominated Tom Johnson, a popular reformer. This annoyance demonstrated the labourites' belief, stemming from their British experience, that an informal connection existed between them and the more advanced members of the Liberal Party. As it would until the progressive break-through of 1914, the labour vote went Liberal, and Johnson was returned. The Voice lamely
described the contest as "a fine educative campaign," but in the pragmatic British tradition, actual gains were of much greater importance than the education of the working class." For this reason the defeat in the provincial election, and that earlier in the municipal campaign, dealt a severe blow to the labour party.

Another factor, one which was a continuing problem for labour parties, also contributed to the CLP's decline. The all-inclusive nature of such organizations encouraged almost any type of dissident to join and thus substantially increased the possibility of factionalism. As long as the vague end of the worker's betterment could be kept before the membership by the hurly-burly of active campaigning, unity could be maintained, but when the party came to discuss the actual means by which the lot of the worker could be bettered, the number of solutions which were pressed produced division. Guttee might jointly believe that the Winnipeg party was "largely composed of men of socialist tendencies... who are not prepared for the leadership of the socialist party," but it also contained a significant number of non-ideological trade unionists and middle class reformers. Early in 1908 the fragile unity of these groups was destroyed when pressure began to build for the party to define its philosophic position.

Some socialists, notably Pettipiece, urged the Winnipeg CLP to declare for socialism in the light of the SFC's growth and the decision of the conventions called by the TLC in British Columbia and Alberta. Much more important was Hardie's call, made when he visited Winnipeg in the autumn of 1907, for the party to come out for socialism. Then the British Labour Party's 1908 convention
declared that the collective ownership of the means of production was its ultimate aim. As a result, the former members of the British ILP, led by W. J. Bartlett, the current president of the trades council, and W. C. Turnock, president of the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters, began demanding that the party make a similar declaration. Puttee, recognizing the implications of this move, remained silent, though he favoured the ILP men's objective. The campaign immediately ran into bitter opposition from the reformist group led by Fred Dixon, an eloquent and superficially clever single-taxer. He argued, correctly, that if it were to declare that the collective ownership of the means of production was its ultimate aim, the party would have declared for socialism, and that was repugnant to the liberalism of his single-tax creed. "Socialism necessarily involves bureaucratic government," Dixon wrote, "and the complete subjugation of the individual to the state." When in June the Winnipeg CLP local came out for collective ownership, the party split and ceased to be an effective organization.

The disintegration of the CLP set the scene for the SPC's first and only federal campaign in Winnipeg. The socialist candidate in the 1908 General Election, J. D. Houston, received the qualified support of The Voice, but still, Puttee was bemused by the SPC's dry theoretical campaign, intended to educate the working class. He observed, "it sounds strange to hear election speeches confined to 'scientific socialism' here in the heart of Canada where the men have gathered from all parts of the globe seeking to wrest the best possible for themselves out of conditions which exist." Nothing, of course, could cause the socialists to adopt a different
approach, especially in 1908. They were much encouraged by the gains they had made among the city's eastern European immigrants; Stebbings wrote, "socialism has a grasp on the political situation in North Winnipeg undreamed of by the old parties." Therefore, in an attempt to capitalize on this new strength, they concentrated their campaign in the area north of the CPR tracks, and most of their nearly 2,000 votes, 12 per cent of the poll, came from this quarter of the city.\textsuperscript{98} But because they knew their ultimate victory was assured by the ongoing development of history, the socialists were not discouraged by these meagre results. Houston assured the readers of The Voice, "this nerves our hearts and steels our arms." And Mortimer observed, "when one considers the proverbial crass ignorance and pigheadedness of the average working plug with a vote, [it] is a magnificent showing."\textsuperscript{99}

The year 1910 saw the beginning of a new political ferment in Winnipeg. By that year, because of the long Conservative ascendency, the middle class reformism, which would be an important force in Manitoba politics for a decade, was in full swing.\textsuperscript{100} The labourites were associated with this movement in its early years, and hoping to capitalize on the ferment associated with it, they began to work for the formation of yet another labour party. The continuing strength of the British Labour Party in the first election of 1910 provided encouragement for the labourites and gave additional force to the drive to establish a party "like they 'ave at 'ome."\textsuperscript{101} In 1910 there was another factor contributing to the
renewed interest in independent political action, the People's Forum established by Woodsworth who was now taking a direct role in the city's radical movement. Leading labour-men like Puttee and Rigg spoke at the Sunday afternoon meetings of the Forum, and at one of these in 1910 Bland called for a new workingman's party. 102

By early spring what had become the conventional labourite campaign was under way. In The Voice Puttee denounced the SPC as an isolated and useless sect, and in the trades council Bartlett and Turnock pressed for a political convention. 103 In anticipation of a provincial election, a convention was held early in May, and the short-lived Manitoba Labour Party (MLP) formed. This was the first radical party in which Woodsworth was active. The platform of the new organization, which again contained moderate socialists, trade unionists and middle-class reformers, was made even broader than that of the CLP in an attempt to avoid the divisions which had wrecked the earlier party. The founding convention would not accept the platform committee's recommendation that it declare its long-term aim to be the collective ownership of the means of production but rather adopted a more cautious statement that "the ultimate object of attainment shall be to preserve to the worker the full product of his toil." The party also pledged itself to work for seemingly contradictory ends: the destruction of the profit system and the imposition of a land tax. Finally, the platform contained a batch of immediate demands very similar to those of the Liberal Party. 104

This compromise did not find favour with the socialists. The moderate Rigg said that the platform represented "an attempt to
combine the individualistic and socialistic principles, and this [can] not be done." The English local of the SPC, which had bitterly opposed the formation of the MLP, dismissed the platform as "the usual string of eccentricities." But, more significantly, the impossibilists professed to believe that they saw a sinister influence in the party's formation: "the Manitoba Labor, Liberal, Single Tax, any old crank party, must be another case of the immaculate conception—Puttee, political pimp and spineless animal though he is, could not have gathered such an aggregation." 105

The usual sectarianism of the English SPC local had come to verge on paranoia because of the growing independence of the eastern European socialists. Increasingly isolated in a movement dominated by the non-English-speaking immigrants, the British comrades had become alarmed when the other locals began a campaign to exclude them from north end politics. Early in the year friction developed between the impossibilists and the language locals over the question of the party's candidate in the provincial constituency of North Winnipeg, the eastern Europeans pressing for "an opportunist, step-at-a-time guy." 106 "Because no solution to the difficulty was found at this time, tension mounted, and when Gribble visited Winnipeg in April, he reported that it appeared likely that the "Eastern Utopians" would soon leave the party. 107 With the approach of the election, a convention was held. There neither the choice of the impossibilists, Armstrong, nor that of language locals, Saltzman, was nominated, but a compromise candidate, Ed Fulcher of Brandon, was chosen for North Winnipeg, and Armstrong ran in West Winnipeg. 108

To avoid a fight with the socialists, the MLP chose to
nominate only in Centre Winnipeg, a constituency which, because it contained many boarding houses, had in it a substantial number of working men. The party's candidate was Dixon, "our most forceful, fearless and logical speaker," who despite the earlier doctrinal dispute, accepted the nomination, because "it will give me scope to work for several much-needed reforms." Although he made it clear that "this is not a Single Tax fight," Dixon also ignored the basic principles of the MLP and campaigned as one of the progressives who could rid the province of the corrupt and incompetent Roblin administration. From the outset, Puttee was confident that his party's candidate could carry Centre Winnipeg and thus begin the process of change. 109

If Dixon's prospects were relatively good, they seemed to be immeasurably improved when the Liberal Party gave him its support. His deep involvement in the progressive movement, his commitment to free trade, and his essential liberalism made Dixon feel a real sympathy for the Liberal Party. Recognizing this, Norris and his associates were prepared to accept him as one of their own, and the Free Press declared Dixon to be "an advanced Liberal," who should be supported by members of the party. 110 But this support, rather than assuring an easy victory, resulted in his defeat. Because they viewed his acceptance of Liberal help as a betrayal of the working class, it became the impossibility's "most important" task in the campaign to defeat Dixon, and they nominated a spoiling candidate, W. S. Cummings, in Centre Winnipeg. The Clarion declared that the SPC preferred "the most reactionary of the reactionaries to the most altruistic of reformers [because]
they who are not with us without reserve are against us." Dixon lost the election by 83 votes; Cummings polled 99. Bitterly disappointed, Puttee told the trades council that the SPC's nomination in Centre Winnipeg was "the most despicable piece of political work which has been done in the labor movement in Canada" and charged that the socialist campaign against Dixon had been financed by the Conservatives. McKenzie found this bourgeoisie moralizing amusing: "any time a Conservative or any other party feels like putting up the money for us to do our own work, we will be Johnny on the spot with the hat; . . . if [the funds] were instrumental in defeating a 'Labor' candidate they could not have been used to better advantage." Although they denied the charge that Conservative money had actually been used, Winnipeg's English impossiblyists were delighted by the election's results, because "we dealt Puttee a good blow," and they called upon all socialists to unite to "destroy the Labor paper and the Labor Party."112

But it was the SPC which soon faced destruction. Its spoiling tactics in Centre Winnipeg caused a "most bitter and most just resentment" against the impossiblyist local in the city's labour movement. More important, the incident precipitated the long-expected exodus of the language locals, by far the largest proportion of the party in Winnipeg, from the SPC. A delighted Puttee found this development "full of encouragement for the real Socialist cause in the country [because] it is the Socialist Party of Canada, and not the Socialist movement which is the enemy of the labor movement."113 Stebbings might say of the split, "what the S.P. of C. lost in numbers she gained in prestige [sic]," but
he was whistling in the dark. After the split, the SPC "sunk very low" in the city; indeed, for a time, it ceased to exist.  

VI

Three months after the break-up of the SPC, the Social Democratic Party published its platform, which had been drafted by Rigg, Penny, and Saltzman. A product of the social democracy of the party's majority, the document was firmly based on Marxist principles, but it also contained a list of immediate demands which would facilitate what Rigg called "active practical work." The platform's blend of the revolutionary and pragmatic epitomized the socialism of the SDP. The Social Democrats firmly believed that some relief could be brought to the worker under capitalism. Tipping recalls that the SDP "said that here and now under capitalism there are certain aspects of life which can be effected by the action of the working class at the ballot box." The party therefore pledged itself "to work unceasingly" for its immediate demands and was "determined to wrest from the ruling class every concession for the improvement of the life of the workers within the present system." The general reforms for which the party pressed were many, ten in all, and varied, ranging from the eight hour day to the abolition of the Senate. Significantly, like the SPC, the Social Democrats placed special emphasis on electoral reform; Rigg believed that an extension of the franchise was "the most urgently needed reform in the city of Winnipeg." The party also believed that by effecting some improvement in the workers' lot or at least holding out the hope of some relief in the not-too-distant
future, it could mobilize the worker and make him a part of
proletarian army. The SDP consistently emphasized, however, that
reforms could only "minimize the present effects of capitalism." The
Social Democrats displayed a similar attitude toward trade
unions. They regarded economic organizations as "the only means
of preventing the working class from sinking into a condition of
depravity more absolute than the mind can conceive"; therefore, the
party pledged "its sympathy and active co-operation in every
struggle precipitated by the demands of labor or by the encroachments
of the employing class." In addition, because the unions contained
"the germ-life from which there will grow a power that will finally
drive away the evils of capitalism," the Social Democrats gave
strikes an official place in the class struggle. But in this case
also, they made the essential qualification: "the working class
can have no basis of hope in mere industrial warfare." The
SDP's pragmatism should not, however, be misconstrued
as indicating an absence of revolutionary zeal. The Social Democrats
were not reformers who affected revolutionary rhetoric, as one
historian has recently suggested. They were Marxists. Their
propaganda emphasized that capitalism was destructive and that the
workers were obliged to take up the class struggle as a matter of
"self-preservation." The Social Democrats, like the imposibilities,
conceived of themselves as a revolutionary vanguard whose historical
destiny it was to educate the proletariat: "our work is to show
the mechanism of capitalism; to show the worker is robbed as a wage
worker, to explain how he produces wealth that others get." This task
had but one end, "the overthrow of capitalism and the establishment
of the co-operative commonwealth."119

Indeed, the essential difference between the SDP and the SFC was one of tone and tactics rather than principles. The impossibilists officially denounced the "sloppy and loose propaganda" of their rivals, and Stebbings sneered, "they don't understand Marxism economics or any other."120 Tipping readily admits that "from the point of view of a knowledge of philosophy...I would put the Socialist Party of Canada above the Social Democratic Party." But such matters were of relatively little importance to the Social Democrats. To Rigg what Marx said on any given issue was "not the burning question in the working class movement"; he wrote, "a system of thought that marks off a little area of research outside of which there exists a great field of facts and forms its conclusions from the results of its investigations in this circumscribed area is not a science, but a humbug." The socialism of the Social Democrats, even if they believed it to be "scientific," was, in the words of David Orlikow, "almost a religion, golden rule." Similarly, the Social Democrats eschew the jargon which often cluttered the propaganda of the SPC. "The doctrinal body is liable to use terminology that is peculiar to itself," says Tipping, but "the language of the Social Democrat tended to be more the language of the street."121 As for tactics, even McKenzie, who was bitterly opposed to any sort of compromise with the SDP, allowed, "the chief difference [between the two parties] is one of method."122 The party's inclusion of immediate demands in its platform was, in part, tactical. The moderate socialists believed that the best way to educate the working class was to have it work for immediate relief
under capitalism. By rejecting the SPC's insistence upon doctrinal orthodoxy, which the eastern Europeans had found so offensive, the Social Democrats ensured that theirs would be an inclusive party rather than an exclusive sect. Norbert O'Leary, a member of the English local, claimed that while it had a basic body of principles, the SDP accepted "a very wide scope for individual opinions on countless matters of details or of policy." Certainly the Social Democrats were much more tolerant of other varieties of radical opinion than were the immoderates. This difference in tone and tactics, between the two parties, was by no means an insignificant one. Moreover, the SPC alarmed and alienated the great majority of Winnipeg's workers, but the SDP was able to develop a significant measure of support.

The Social Democratic Party was, by far, stronger in Winnipeg than in any other centre in western Canada. And the party's strength grew out of the support enjoyed in the city's immigrant quarter, the north end. The membership of the SDP was drawn almost entirely from the eastern Europeans immigants, organized in language locals. Like the SPC had earlier, the party found the north end's various national and cultural organizations valuable recruiting points. Indeed, Tipping believes that the SDP was "really a reaction from life in Europe." But the importance of the various non-Anglo-Saxon groups to the party meant that their particularism would also be a significant aspect of the SDP. As a reaction to what was regarded as the centralized control of the SPC, the Social Democratic Party emerged as a loose federation of national units. In fact, so loose was the organization of the party that,
ironically, the Ukrainians claimed that it made for the "toleration of groups and factions [and a] lack of unity in policy and work."

Although relations between the various "locals" were good, they were not particularly close. Tipping recalls, "it was only when we had a convention that the whole bunch got together." The periodic conventions, which Tipping remembers were "long" because each speech would have to be translated into four or five different languages, were the best co-ordinating mechanism which the party possessed.

Although a central committee was established, it was short-lived, and its performance was never more than adequate. Despite its multinational character and the relative numerical insignificance of the English local, the British-born played a leading role in the SDP, "simply because they were the men who could express themselves on behalf of the party." 122

The English-speaking face of the SDP probably contributed to the important role the party immediately began to play in the city's larger labour movement. But of more importance in this development was the Social Democrats' attitude toward trade unions. They believed that the SPC's antagonistic attitude had been "a fatal pedagogical mistake," and because their aim of politically mobilizing the economic organizations was "one of the justifying reasons" for the party, they actively helped the unions. For example, during the summer of 1911, leading Social Democrats played up important role in organizing carpenters' unions, among the various immigrant groups of the North end. 123 Such activities made for friendly relations between the party and the unions and allowed members of the party like Rigg, Tipping, A.A. Hoaps and Ed McGrath...
to play a role of predominant importance in the trades council. The
unions' sympathy for the party was given formal expression in 1914
when the SDP was invited to affiliate with the trades council. 129

VII

The Social Democratic party's strength in the north end and
its good relations with the unions made it a much more significant
political force in the city than the SD had ever been. In addition,
the party's inclusive nature allowed it to co-operate with the
labourites. This co-operation became an aspect of Winnipeg labour
politics from the time the SDP was formed. For example, when the
party ran Rigo unsuccessfully in the 1911 General Election, he
enjoyed the unanimous endorsement of the trades council and the
active support of The Voice. 130 This new spirit in the movement
encouraged the labourites to think that "the psychological moment
[has] arrived for the establishment of a basis of political activity,
upon which the great body of the working class could stand together
and act in unison." Consequently, they again took up the task of
building an inclusive labour party, and late in 1913 succeeded in
establishing the Labour Representation Committee (LRC), modelled
"on the lines of the organization of the same name in Great Britain."
The LRC's platform contained the conventional reform planks, such
as the eight hour day and municipalization of utilities, but it
declared the organization's ultimate aim to be "the transferring of
capitalist property into working class property." The renewed
radical tone of the platform reflected the labourites' move away
from the reform movement, based upon a growing belief in the part
that the progressives were only followers of Norris. Enthusiastically, Puttee declared that the LRC "represented men of all shades of working class thought." This assessment, however, was too sanguine. Not unexpectedly, the SPC denounced the members of the new organization as "docile tools of their masters." But even the SDP was cautious. The Social Democrats believed that the MLP had collapsed because "its representatives had more of [the] Non-conformist conscience about them than class-consciousness," and they suspected that, in the same way, the new organization lacked sufficient revolutionary zeal. For this reason the party refused to affiliate. In addition, the SDP had become a haven for former British ILP men like Turnock and Arthur Beech who had been members of earlier labour parties in the city, and it also attracted men like Heaps and John Queen, who in times past might have been expected to join the Labourite group.

The caution of the SDP did not, however, preclude co-operation with the LRC, and the two organizations worked together in the municipal campaign of 1913. This joint action and a solid immigrant vote resulted in Rigg's easy election to the seat on Sluys council from a north end ward.

Rigg's victory and the dissatisfaction of labour caused by the depression encouraged Winnipeg's radicals to launch their most important political effort to date in the provincial election of 1914. In February the LRC began negotiations with the SPC, and the SDP in an attempt to co-ordinate the labour campaign and avoid costly fratricidal fights. The Labourites discovered, however, "no disposition for united action or mutual understanding" on the part of either socialist party. Consequently, the LRC nominated
Bartlett in Assiniboia and R. W. Ward, a leading member of the trade council and the machinists' union in Western Canada, in Elmwood.  

The latter nomination represented a direct challenge to the SPC, which had earlier chosen Sydney Gage to contest Elmwood, the labourites took this action, Pattee explained, because the LRC would not be justified in committing itself to declared hostile candidates, and the bulk of the men would not support the most extreme doctrinaires put forward. Chew was quick to charge that "the reformers, the labor radicals and the labor leaders have joined forces to put us out of existence." Partially in retaliation, the impossibilists launched another splinter campaign in Centre Winnipeg where Dixon was running. The SPC nominated Saltman and Beech in the two-seat constituency of North Winnipeg without consultation with the LRC, and this temporarily strained relations between the two groups. But both candidates were quick to assure the labourites that the SPC was in harmony with the LRC, and the moderates co-operated during the campaign.

Active campaigning began in late May. Bartlett and Ward concentrated on the popular issues of the day, including the sense of moral indignation felt by many Manitobans toward Roblin's old and allegedly corrupt administration and as a result, received the support of some of the progressives, notably the suffragists, Hettie McClung and Mrs. A. V. Thomas. But the LRC campaign was by no means a part of the larger progressive effort. The labourites, anxious to gain the important immigrant vote in Elmwood and the Brocklands section of Assiniboia, rejected the Liberal demand for "national schools," declaring instead for free compulsory education.
and "sufficient facilities for teaching foreign languages when such language was native to the parents of a number of the children."

But more important, the campaign was wholly class oriented, and the LRC men declared their goal to be the collective ownership of all "the necessaries of life." Nonetheless, Ward had a hard fight against Gage in Elmwood where Rigg, "a man of many colors - a socialist among socialists, a Single Taxer amongst Single Taxers, a reformer of any type at all, amongst that type - in short, a typical vote catcher," led the moderates against the impossibilists.

In the north end Beech and Saltzman directed their campaign almost exclusively at the immigrant community, but there they encountered a serious problem. In a period of severe unemployment which was almost daily being aggravated by the arrival of new immigrants, labour leaders, including Rigg the SDF's most prominent member, had been demanding that the traffic be immediately stopped. Such demands were, of course, highly unpopular in the north end of the city, and the Social Democrats were hard pressed to reconcile their claims to be the champions of the trade unionist and the immigrant. None of the LRC or SDF candidates were returned. This failure gave rise to the usual bitter complaints from leading labourites about the rank and file's failure to recognize its class interests.

The most significant fight of the campaign was that in Centre Winnipeg. There Dixon chose to retain his connection with the progressives and ran as an Independent, instead of an LRC candidate. His platform was virtually the same as that of the Liberals, and he unceasingly attacked Roblin, because he "stands for things as they are; he is opposed to any change." Consequently, Dixon was.
completely identified with the Liberal cause. He figured prominently in Norris' campaign literature, and Dafoe called upon the faithful in Centre Winnipeg to give "the Independent Liberal candidate" their vote. Even Stubbs, hardly an uncritical student of the crusader, admits that Dixon had given the Liberals "a limited pledge."\(^{143}\) Tutte participated to a limited extent in Dixon's campaign, but because of the Liberal connection, the editor refused to regard him as a true labour candidate.\(^{144}\) The imposibilities were even less inclined to support Dixon, whom they despised. The members of the Socialist Party of Canada believed that by fighting such Lib-Labs they could "turn the working class away from the shibboleth of Liberalism, and they pledged to do everything possible to defeat the "take." Wherever Dixon spoke he was followed and harassed by Armstrong and Hoop, the SPC candidates in Centre Winnipeg.\(^{145}\) This "treachery" again gave rise to charges from the labourites that the imposibilities had become the "tools" of the Conservatives. The SPC officially denied these charges, but the help that the Tory labour boss was prepared to give the socialists lends some credence to the allegations.\(^{146}\)

Despite socialist harassment, Dixon was able to win a convincing victory and thus begin a political career which would span the years until his premature death in 1928. Liberal support, the progressive upsurge, and the discontent caused by the depression all contributed to Dixon's election in 1914, but something more played a part in his victory and his continuing popularity. The additional, and most important, factor was Dixon's emphasis on moderation. He might make violent and emotional attacks on the
inequities of society and the privileged few who ruled and robbed, but the remedies he proposed would work no fundamental change in society. He was a safe man. In addition, he had about him a kind respectability, derived from his middle class associations and his acceptance by the Liberals, which the labourites and certainly the socialists lacked, and this the British-born workmen who formed his constituency found reassuring. 147

During the session Dixon was a staunch defender of labour’s rights, and this won the approval of Winnipeg trade unionists. 148 But he also took a leading role in opposition to the faltering Conservative administration and thus maintained a cordial relationship with the Liberal Party. When the MLA for Centre Winnipeg appeared on a Grit platform, The Voice lectured, "Dixon as an Independent is an ideal man, but Dixon as a Liberal is only a cog in the Liberal machine." 149

In the election of 1915 called by Norris after Roblin’s resignation, Dixon was again associated with the Liberal campaign and enjoyed the support of that party. 150 Again the SPC nominated a spoiler, Hoop, even though they now regarded Dixon as unbeatable. 151 Certainly the results indicated that Dixon had great strength in the riding; he carried all but two of Centre Winnipeg’s sixty-one polls. 152 Pittco, who had condemned the SPC’s tactics from the outset, seemed to derive more satisfaction from Hoop’s dismal defeat than Dixon’s convincing victory. Over the outcome in Centre Winnipeg, the editor gloated, “It may be taken for a fact that [the impossibilists] are now eliminated as a factor to be reckoned with.” 153
In North Winnipeg the SDP nominated Arthur Beech, a school teacher, and Rigg; both candidates were officially endorsed by the LRC. In their manifesto the Social Democrats demanded, "the Earth and all that therein is" for the people who toil with hand or brain and render useful service to humanity"; but until the Co-operative Commonwealth could be achieved, they pledged themselves to support "every measure which leads in this direction or which in any way eases the burdens of the poor." The SDP refused to trade on the popular corruption issue because the working class suffered only as a result of the operation of the wage system. Said Tipping, "you can't rot an already rotted man." The Social Democrats called upon the workers to vote as a class: "can't you see the latent power in your individual ballot if you combine that ballot with millions of those of your co-workers?" Despite this line the impossibilists, who regarded the Social Democrats as a "conglomeration of Labor Pushers, Justice Seekers, sentimentalists and Christ lovers," harassed the SDP candidates, although they did not nominate candidates to run against Rigg and Beech. Relations between the two groups of socialists were so inflamed that members of the SFC were physically ejected from SDP election rallies. But when it appeared that Rigg, who accepted support from "notorious anti-Socialists" like Pitter, would be elected, the impossibilists became philosophical. Alex Patterson wrote, "It seems a fact ... that the Labor movement of the world has always to go through the same trough of compromise in every land, and R. A. Rigg will no doubt lead the way for the engulfing of the C.D.P. by the Labor Parties and the Trade Unions." Rigg...
won what Tipping called "a glorious victory." High unemployment, the general political ferment of the times, and the absence of divisive issues in the immigrant community all contributed to his election. Probably most important was the unity of the various ethnic groups. As an Anglo-Saxon and a popular labour politician, Rigg was not identified with any single group, and thus he was able to unite the north end politically.\textsuperscript{157}

By 1915, then, the radicals had become a factor of importance in Winnipeg politics. Developments during the next four years would ensure that the city's workers would remain a political force and that the north end would belong to radicals of one variety or another. To a very large extent the efforts of the men who had worked to form a labour party in the city, notably Puttee, contributed to this condition.
1. Western Clarion, Sept. 18, 1909.
2. British Columbia Federationist, July 2, 1913.
5. The People's Voice, Sept. 22, 1894 and July 6, 1895.
6. Ibidi., March 6, 1895.
8. Ibid.,Apr. 18, 1896.
10. The Voice, March 10, 1899; May 17, 1899; June 3, 1899 and June 28, 1899.
15. The Voice, Jan. 12, 1900.
16. The Winnipeg Daily Tribune, Jan. 14, 1900. It is interesting to note that several of the reforms advocated by Puttee had, in the past, received favourable consideration in the Tribune.
17. The Voice, Jan. 17, 1900 and Jan. 24, 1900.
20. Specific examples of this process of class identification within the Liberal Party can be cited. For instance, Isaac Campbell, a staunch Siftonite, could not bring himself to vote for Puttee and gave his support to Martin. But John Appleton, who considered himself a "representative" liberal loyal to Sifton, had strong connections with the city's labour movement, and he supported Puttee. [Sifton Papers, Vol. 71, Campbell to Sifton, Jan. 18, 1900 and Appleton to Sifton, Aug. 2, 1900 and The Voice, Feb. 9, 1900.]


22. Ibid., Vol. 236, Sifton to Magurn, Jan. 20, 1900; Jan. 23, 1900 and Feb. 20, 1900.

23. The Voice, April 27, 1900.


27. King-Papers, Vol. 3, Appleton to King, Nov. 16, 1900.


30. The Winnipeg Daily Tribune, Oct. 16, 1900; Nov. 5, 1900 and Nov. 9, 1900.

31. The Voice, Oct. 26, 1900 and Nov. 9, 1900.

32. Ibid., Nov. 9, 1900.

33. Western Marich, Jan. 20, 1906.

34. The Voice, Oct. 24, 1903; Western Clarion, Dec. 8, 1906. Early in 1900, Hardie and his ILP colleagues had taken the lead in the formation of the Labour Representation Committee, the federal structure of which served as the Winnipeg's model. [Henry Pelling, A Short History of the Labour Party (London, 1965), pp. 7-8].

35. The Voice, Nov. 21, 1902 and March 20, 1903.


37. The Voice, April 17, 1903; June 19, 1903 and July 24, 1903.
38. Ibid., Feb. 6, 1903; July 10, 1903 and Nov. 27, 1903.


42. The Voice, June 29, 1904.


44. Sifton Papers, Vol. 140, Notice to Sifton, Nov. 11, 1903 and Vol. 254, Notice to Sifton, Nov. 11, 1903.


49. Ibid., Vol. 154, Letter to Sifton, April 14, 1904 and The Voice, Nov. 13, 1904.


56. Ibid., Oct. 7, 1904.

57. Manitoba Free Press, Nov. 4, 1904.

58. The Voice, Nov. 4, 1904.


60. The Voice, Sept. 30, 1910.
61. Ibid., Dec. 13, 1902. Both the SPC and the SDP dismissed Direct Legislation as a bourgeois reform.


63. The SPC dismissed the program of New Zealand's Labour Party as "rank humbug." (Western Clarion, Aug. 4, 1906).


65. Ibid., July 19, 1907, Oct. 1, 1908 and March 3, 1913. The British Labour Party was, by no means, as unified as Puttee preferred to believe. (Pelling, Short History of the Labour Party, pp. 21-3).

66. Western Clarion, Oct. 6, 1906; April 25, 1908 and July 12, 1910.


73. Ibid., Sept. 14, 1906.


77. Ibid., Nov. 15, 1906.


85. Western Clarion, Jan. 30, 1908.

86. The Voice, June 1, 1907 and Western Clarion, Aug. 1, 1907.


88. Ibid., Nov. 29, 1906 and Feb. 15, 1907.

89. Ibid., Dec. 14, 1906.

90. Western Clarion, Feb. 1, 1907 and Oct. 30, 1906; and The Voice, Nov. 13, 1906.

91. The Voice, Feb. 15, 1907 and March 9, 1907; and Western Clarion, March 9, 1907.

92. The Voice, June 1, 1907.

93. Western Clarion, March 5, 1907; The Voice, May 2, 1907 and March 4, 1907; and Manitoba Free Press, May 2, 1907.

94. The Voice, March 5, 1907.

95. Ibid., May 2, 1907.

96. Ibid., June 1, 1907.


107. Ibid., April 30, 1910.


109. Ibid., June 10, 1910; June 17, 1910; June 24, 1910 and July 1, 1910 and Public Archives of Manitoba, F. J. Dixon Papers, circular from Dixon, July 6, 1910.


120. Western Clarion, Sept. 3, 1910, and June 29, 1912.

121. Interview with Tipping, May 3, 1971; The Voice, April 19, 1912, and July 12, 1912, and Woodsworth Memorial Collection, Transcript of Interview of David Urlik by Fox.

122. Western Clarion, May 3, 1913.


124. Transcript of Interview of Jacob Penner by Roland Penner and Interview with Tipping, May 3, 1971.


128. The Voice, May 19, 1911, and Aug. 25, 1911.


130. The Voice, Aug. 18, 1911, and Sept. 22, 1911.

131. Ibid., Oct. 18, 1912, and Jan. 31, 1913, and March 7, 1913.


134. For labour's reaction to the depression see Chap. 6.

135. The Voice, Feb. 20, 1914, and March 6, 1914.


137. The Voice, Feb. 20, 1914.

138. Ibid., May 1, 1914, June 12, 1914, June 19, 1914, and July 3, 1914.

139. Western Clarion, April 11, 1914, and July 18, 1914.


141. The Voice, July 10, 1914, and Dixon Papers, Watt to Dixon,
July 10, 1914.


144. The Voice, July 17, 1914.

145. Interview with Tipping, May 3, 1915; Western Clarion, June 6, 1914 and July 4, 1914 and Manitoba Free Press, July 8, 1914.


147. Interview with Tipping, May 3, 1915.


149. Ibid., July 2, 1915.


151. Western Clarion, Aug., 1915.


154. Ibid., July 16, 1915. The LRC also endorsed W. O. Bayley, another teacher, who unsuccessfully contested Assiniboia.


Chapter VI

The End of the Boom

In the years immediately before the outbreak of war, the West's great boom ended and the economy stagnated. As a result, thousands of men were thrown out of work. Bitter experience taught all working men to live in dread of losing their jobs. But in the West this fear was exacerbated by the operation of the National Policy and had been a continuing preoccupation in the labour movement since the turn of the century. With great sensitivity, Pettipiece characterized the anxieties of men who lived from day to day: "when a working man is out of a job and his wife and kiddies are located in a small rented tenement or apartment house, awaiting his return with food — and he fails to do so, that [is] as near hell as any man is afraid of." When massive unemployment came to the West, the workers, therefore, became resentful. During these years labour also engaged in several large and dramatic strikes, the very dimensions of which ensured widespread working class support; and when the unions were beaten and broken, the workers became even more resentful. In both the unemployed crisis and the strikes, government seemed to display a callous disregard for the needs of the workers and ally itself with the employers. Because of this, labour—men listened more readily to the calls of the radicals who insisted that the present order had to be destroyed.
British Columbia was the first western province to experience the economic stringency which would characterize the years before World War I. Much of the province's prosperity had been built on the unsound foundation of an active real estate market, while other sectors of the economy, notably mining, British Columbia's basic industry, had remained static. In 1911 dealings in land reached boom proportions and both businessmen and labour-men, recognizing that such a condition was "unhealthy," became uneasy. By the end of the year "a rather sluggish tendency" emerged in the real estate market, and this caused a "slump" in the building trades. Because the moderate weather of Vancouver and Victoria attracted seasonal workers from the prairies, the cities ordinarily had a surplus of labour during the winter months. But in 1911 the slowdown in the building trades meant that the usual winter labour surplus would become a real unemployment crisis. In addition, the conventional relief mechanism of mobility was denied the jobless in Vancouver and Victoria, because all the major cities on the United States Pacific coast were also "teeming" with unemployed workers. By December, 1911 the Clarion was predicting that "soup-houses, those prominent earmarks of modern civilization, will be the height of fashion for the next few months." In Vancouver "every trade ... [was] overrun with out-of-works," and a socialist reported that "it is impossible to get through the district around Carroll, Cordova and Powell streets without being 'touched' several times for the price of a meal or a bed." Similar conditions prevailed in Victoria. Even in the mining districts and the interior trade was dull.
For example, in the Crow's Nest Pass men were working half time "at wages that would puzzle an Oriental to live upon." And a Canadian
Northern contractor reportedly said, "in all my experience in
railway construction work I never saw the supply of labor so ample
as it is this winter; for several weeks, I have been turning down
over 100 applications daily.”

There was no doubt in the minds of leading labour-men as
to the cause of this condition. The capitalists' desire for a
surplus labour force had resulted in a huge number of men flooding
the market, and now the workers were to pay the price. Both
Dominion and Provincial authorities were denounced; Pettipiece,
now editor of the Federationist, wrote, "thanks to the traffickers
in human flesh and blood and the bonused immigration policy of the
federal and provincial governments . . . there are already hungry
men and women in Western Canada." The burning resentment of
British Columbia workers was increased as the immigrants continued
to flow into the province during 1912. In August Kier Hardie
reported to Trotter that "the Canadian Government has recovered
all its old éclat [sic] in touting for emigrants." The resentment
which the labour movement felt toward government immigration
programs encouraged the Clarion to attack one of its favourite
targets, the Salvation Army. Kingsley denounced the organization as
"a huge commercial concern with its tentacles reaching to the
utmost parts of the earth, cold-blooded and merciless in its
exploitation of human degradation and misery," and charged that
the Army functioned so "that the material possessions of a callous
and conscienceless old hypocrite and his successors may be swollen
to ever greater proportions." Because the Dominion and
Provincial governments were responsible for the unemployment crisis, it was their responsibility to relieve it. The Federationist warned, "unless some steps are immediately taken, trouble may be looked for, as the jobless are doing some significant grumbling. That the hungry men will not tamely consent to starve to death is only another characteristic of the west." 7

These were what Phillips has called "unsettled" times for the British Columbia labour movement, a condition to which the high unemployment greatly contributed. The mood of the province's workers was well demonstrated in 1912 when the affiliates of the British Columbia Federation of Labour (BCFL) overwhelmingly endorsed socialism. In 1910 the province's "penchant for innovations" had resulted in the formation of Canada's first provincial labour federation. From the outset socialists like McVety, Pettipiece, J. W. Wilkinson and Victor Midgley played an important role in the new organization, and it took up a much more radical position than the TLC. 9 By the second annual convention of the Federation in January, 1912, the leadership believed that the time was ripe to have the rank and file endorse socialism as the organization's political creed, and the eighty delegates, "not less than 65 [of whom] were avowed socialists," voted seventy-eight to two in favour of holding a referendum on the subject. 10 As might be expected, the province's miners voted heavily in favour of the BCFL adopting socialism as its basic principle, but so also did the affiliates of the trades councils in Victoria and Vancouver, where unemployment was a serious problem. When all the votes were counted, the referendum carried by a four-to-one majority. 11

A more dramatic demonstration of the "unsettled" nature
of the times was the free speech fight associated with the unemployment crisis. By the beginning of 1912 the unemployed, organized by the socialists and the IWW, began holding marches and street meetings to dramatize, and protest against, their plight. Such demonstrations of poverty and despair were repugnant to the expansive and ebullient boosterism of Vancouver. Recognizing this, a local businessman, by the name of James Findlay, successfully contested the mayoralty race on what today would be called "a law and order" platform. In January the newly elected mayor banned street meetings and prepared for trouble. It came on January 29. That day a crowd of several thousand workers gathered at the Powell Street grounds to hear a report from Pettipiece who had returned from a mission to Victoria to ask McBride to provide relief for the unemployed. As the editor mounted the platform, the Chief of Police called upon him to stop the meeting; Pettipiece refused. With the grounds surrounded by troops in mufti, almost one hundred police, mounted and afoot, charged the crowd, injuring a number of people. As the demonstrators fled, they were pursued by the police and small knots of men were roughly dispersed throughout the downtown area. Twenty-five demonstrators, including Pettipiece, were arrested. Similar meetings were broken up by the police in the following weeks.

Few issues could unify the radicals like a free speech fight and "Bloody Sunday," as it was inevitably called, drew from British Columbia's already aroused labour movement a storm of protest. The EPC, IWW and Vancouver trades council jointly formed a Free Speech Committee to co-ordinate the defense of the men arrested. The trades council also unsuccessfully demanded a provincial
royal commission be named to inquire into the police charge and warned that if no action were taken violence might ensue.

Demonstrations were held at various centres in the province to display solidarity with the Vancouver men. And Hawthornthwaite pressed the issue of free speech in the Legislature. The CPC found the mood of the working class gratifying: "the Socialist Party of Canada owes a debt of gratitude to Mayor Findlay for the disorderly conduct of his minions. . . . We should be grateful for the excellent propaganda done with the club and the whip; many a bruised cranium bears aching testimony today to the bitter fact of the class struggle that unbruised used to shout 'Rule Britannia.'" In the Federationist Pettipiece carefully drew the proper implications for the proletariat: "when we look at this affair entirely aside from legal quibble, it teaches the workingmen of Vancouver a lesson it is hoped will not soon be forgotten. It shows them the shallowness of their 'liberties' when their masters' interests are endangered. It illustrates better than any argument of words that government is class government and the governed class is the working class." By early spring labour's province-wide campaign forced Findlay to rescind his ban on street meetings. This "ungrateful retreat" and an improved labour market, caused by spring building, brought to an end the free speech fight.

III

Within a few weeks of the end of the free speech campaign, a dramatic strike of railway construction workers led by the Industrial Workers of the World would renew the ferment in the British Columbia labour movement. However, in June, 1905 delegates
representing the Western Federation of Miners, the remnants of the American Labour Union, the Socialist Labour Party and the left wing of the Socialist Party of America had met in convention at Chicago to found the Industrial Workers of the World, the purpose of which, in the words of William D. Haywood, who was to become the organization's principal leader, was "the emancipation of the working class from the slave bondage of capitalism." This was to be achieved through the organization of the wretched of the world into great industrial unions which would work in the economic field to destroy the existing order. Within three months of the Chicago convention, IWW organizers were working in British Columbia. Wobblie propagandists, famous and faceless, continued to travel across western Canada in future years. Frank Little, the IWW's "hobo agitator" who was lynched by Montana vigilantes, was "well-known" in British Columbia. De Leon lectured in Vancouver in 1907. And in 1909 Haywood spoke to large audiences in the cities and mining camps of the four western provinces.

Because of the WFM's initial affiliation with the new organization, and because of the earlier influence of the ALU, the IWW at first made most progress in the metal camps of British Columbia, and John Riordan of Phoenix was named to the first executive. But even after the WFM left the IWW, the Wobblies enjoyed some support in the Kootenays. Probably the organization's most impressive urban gains in Canada were made in Nelson. There the IWW was "firmly established" among the civic employees, teamsters and building labourers and effectively prevented TLC affiliates from gaining control of the city's labour movement. until 1911. The Wobblies, however, were never able to achieve
such strength on the coast. News of the 1905 convention revived
Vancouver's moribund SLP remnant, and the first IWW local in Canada
was established in the city early in 1906. The Wobblies thereafter
became an active and vocal part of Vancouver radicalism, working
among such unskilled groups as teamsters and native Indian
dockers. When Gompers visited the city in 1911, IWW men attempted
to break up his meeting by causing a disturbance and denounced the
AFL president in what the latter called "the vilest language I
have ever heard." But the organization never became important
in Vancouver. In Victoria at this time the IWW similarly had no
significant impact. It organized a local of garment workers,
but in 1910 this union's feeling of "isolation" from the larger
labour movement caused it to affiliate with the AFL.

As it did in the United States, the IWW in Canada made
its most important gains among unskilled itinerant workers,
specifically the men who built the Canadian Northern and Grand
Trunk Pacific in the West. Consequently, the peak of IWW strength
in Canada coincided with the railway building boom. The
construction workers, mainly "foreign immigrants in their first
year of innocence," suffered under atrocious conditions: "low
wages, long hours, slavish work, isolation, 'he' life, punk grub,
unsanitary camps, lack of proper hospital facilities, in short
inability to make even a living; these are factors at work in
railway construction camps." Here was a fertile field for IWW
propaganda, and when the Wobblies went among these men, the former
found a ready acceptance of their message of hope. Because
of the large number of itinerant workers in the province and
because Edmonton was a construction centre for both the CPR and
the OTP, the IWW had what Thompson has called a "meteoric" rise in Alberta during these years. Indeed, legend has it that the term "Wobbly" originated in Alberta when a Chinese restaurateur mispronounced IWW as "Eye Wobbly Wobbly." 24

There is general agreement among historians that the IWW never played any important role in the western Canadian labour movement. 25 The IWW, a revolutionary industrial union working among the unskilled, was naturally opposed by traditional trade unionists, as had been the ALU earlier, and therefore, the organization could look for no sympathy from TLC affiliates. For example, in Winnipeg Puttee and the labourites were suspicious of the Wobblies, and the IWW played no role in the city's labour movement. 26

Of more importance, however, than conservative or moderate opinion, was that of the radicals. In the United States the IWW's precarious position in the labour movement was, to an important extent, dependent upon its, at times unstable, alliance with the left wing of the SPA. 27 In Canada no such alliance existed. Even before he knew what the program of the IWW would be, Kingsley began attacking the organization because of the prominent role his old enemy De Leon played in it. When he learned the nature of the IWW's ill-defined syndicalism which rejected political action for industrial action, Kingsley naturally made all-out war on the heresy. To the impossibilist, convinced that the revolution could only be achieved through political action, the Wobblies' belief in the efficacy of the general strike seemed to demonstrate "a gross ignorance" of the nature of capitalism. Because the IWW taught the doctrine of direct action, he denounced.
it as "openly anarchistic and therefore reactionary, . . . an enemy to the peaceful and orderly progress of the labour movement." Kingsley's dominant position in the party ensured that his attitude toward the IWW would become the official one of the SPC. Though they might admire the courage of the Wobblies in their fights to organize the wretched, the socialists were convinced that the IWW's activities were essentially useless because its doctrines were unsound. After travelling with Haywood and coming to know him during the IWW leader's western Canadian tour of 1909, Catheren wrote, "he confuses the struggle between the buyers and sellers of commodities with the class struggle." Much worse, because it was attempting to lead the working class down the wrong road, the IWW was an enemy of the proletariat. Burrough wrote, "as their services are of value to the ruling class, they should be classed with the thugs, detectives, specialists and other pimps of capitalism; if they were paid for their services they could do their dirty work no better." The IWW repaid the socialists in kind for such attacks. Whenever Wobblies could, they attended SPC meetings to harass the speakers; W. L. Warren told such a meeting in Winnipeg that "the Socialist party is only leading the workers to the shambles with its policy of activity only at far-parted election times." During the dark days for the impossibilists in British Columbia, the Industrial Worker, an IWW paper published in Spokane, gloated over SPC difficulties and dismissed the party's leadership as "a bunch of mental cripples." Because the SPC was influential in the labour movements of British Columbia and Alberta, the natural areas for IWW activity, and because the craft unionists were opposed to the IWW, the
Wobblies were effectively isolated from the mainstream of the western Canadian labour movement. This condition was substantially re-enforced by the fact that the IWW had its major following among the itinerant construction workers who, unskilled, unorganized and un-British, themselves never really constituted a part of the labour movement.

The IWW, however, enjoyed a brief glory when it led the wretched construction workers against the railway contractors in a series of great strikes. The first of these occurred in Prince Rupert in the spring of 1911. The city, terminus of the CPR, combined all the worst features of a construction camp and a boom town; one worker said of conditions there, "possibly at no period of the great Canadian graft system has the wage slave been held up and robbed in such a high-toned fashion."31 Early in March 250 "foreign" road-graders, led by Wobblies, struck for higher wages and in a short time the number of men on strike rose to 1,000.32 Tension in the small town mounted as the contractors tried to resume work with scabs, and the strikers resisted these efforts. Municipal authorities and contractors re-enforced the local police with specials who were armed with pick-axe handles, and reports circulated of both strikers and specials carrying guns and of shooting incidents. Fear of serious disturbances caused federal, provincial and civic officials to prepare for the landing troops and the use of the cruiser Rainbow at Prince Rupert.33 Though neither the navy nor the militia were used, "several riots" took place in the city during the strike. The worst of these occurred on April 6 when strikers fought a pitched battle with police and specials who
were protecting scabs. Several men were wounded, one fatally, and more than fifty strike leaders were arrested. This outbreak ended the men's resistance; with the leaders in jail, the rank and file drifting out of town, and the IWW hall boarded up, construction work was resumed. 35

In 1911 major construction of the CNR line through the Fraser River Valley began. IWW agitators were on the scene almost immediately and they began a "general and persistent" effort to organize the construction workers. 36 The CNR camps were a fertile field for Wobbly propaganda because conditions in them were no better than in other such places. Of the living facilities, Ed Gilbert, an IWW leader said, "the places provided for the workers to live in could only be termed bunkhouses by courtesy." He went on, "men are cheaper to the contractor than timber." 37 Because the Wobblies were making progress with the men, the contractors and the railway company became uneasy. As in the United States West, Wobblies attempting to organize itinerant workers in Canada received rough treatment from employers. For example, in November, 1911 Kamloops contractors prosecuted J. S. Biscay, an IWW agitator. 38 A. C. McKenzie, Vice President of the Canadian Northern Construction Company, appealed to the Dominion government to send the RNWMP into the British Columbia camps to control the men. He told Sam Hughes that the contractors were "having a lot of trouble with the I.W.W.'s (I might call them the scrub [sic] of God's Creation)." When the request was passed on to Borden, McKenzie invoked the red bogey: "there is a large gang calling themselves the 'Industrial Workers of the World' who are going to create a lot of trouble in the line of railroad
construction and other works in all the western provinces, if they are not nipped in the bud." Because of inadequate reserves, the Dominion government refused to give the CNR contractors police protection against the Wobblies. But McBride, probably anxious to prevent any delays in the building of his political railway, re-enforced the British Columbia provincial police along the line of construction.

At the end of March, 1912 the men working on the CNR line between Hope and Kamloops struck for higher wages and improved living conditions. Estimates of the number of men involved ranged from 4,000 to 7,000; whatever their numbers, the strikers effectively halted construction work. Under IWW leadership the men set up their own camps, established commissaries and imposed a system of discipline in the strike zone. Tom Halcro, a member of the General Executive Board, was sent from IWW headquarters in Chicago to direct the strike. He announced that "the general office of the I.W.W. is determined that unless a satisfactory settlement can be made soon, this strike will be made an object lesson to the employing class; that when they engage in a conflict with the I.W.W. it is not child's play nor healthy for well-filled pocketbooks and big dividends; that when the workers next ask for better conditions in the construction camps, they will receive more consideration at the hands of the bosses than have the workers on the C.N." Despite these brave words, the strikers were hard-pressed from the beginning. Though IWW pickets were on duty in all western centres, American and Canadian, and as far east as Montreal, the CNR was able to secure strike-breakers. The loose labour market and the active help of the CPR allowed the company
to bring in men from Seattle. This re-opened an old wound, and
the Federationist denounced the Alien Labour Law as a "roaring
farce." To protect the scabs, the contractors brought
"professional thugs and plug-uglies" into the strike zone. In
addition, the provincial police instituted a campaign of systematic
intimidation in an attempt to force the men back to work; strikers
were "cursed, slugged, and in several instances shot" by police
officers. So numerous were McBride's police in the strike zone
that one Wobbly charged that "martial law was practically in
operation without cause or formal declaration." The Canadian
Northern believed that the British Columbia government "helped
us out fairly well." The railway company and its contractors
also had, seemingly, the help of local magistrates who sentenced
over two hundred and fifty Wobblies to terms in the over-crowded
Kamloops jail on charges of intimidation or vagrancy. Against
such opposition, the men could not contend and by mid-June their
strike petered out.

Within weeks of the end of the CNR fight, the IWW led
out on strike several thousand GTP construction workers to protest
the conditions in their camps. After travelling along the railway's
line immediately before the walkout, a reporter for the Edmonton
Capital wrote, "the system under which the G.T.P. is being built
through the mountains seems to be scarcely distinguishable from
peonage." He was most appalled at the high number of accidental
deaths for which "the contractors seem to have been at least morally
responsible." When the strike began, the men moved down the
line to Prince Rupert where they lived by fishing and digging clams.
From the port they sent a message to the Governor-General demanding
that the road be built as a co-operative enterprise; they told him, "we are quite well prepared to take over the whole work and change it from the worst kind of inhuman working-conditions to something worth while for every member of the working class." But the strike was to be short-lived. Before the CNR strike had ended, the Provincial government, probably fearful that the discontent of the men would spread, re-enforced its police force along the GTP line. And when the strike began troops were also sent into the area. To protect the strike-breakers who were immediately brought in, the police adopted "bullying and cowing tactics," and by mid-August the men were beaten.

These were dramatic confrontations between capitalists and the most-wretched members of the working class. So it was natural that the western Canadian labour movement, particularly in British Columbia, should be aroused by the IWW strikes. When it was learned that a Wobbly, an old man, was going blind in the Kamloops jail, labour-men in British Columbia raised a storm of protest and the provincial government was forced to release the prisoner. When the IWW appealed to the Vancouver trades council for financial support, this was granted and the body recommended that its affiliates also aid the strikers. Their experience with the AFL in the United States caused the Wobblies to be pleasantly surprised by this response. Even the SPC reacted in a sympathetic fashion, though the socialists did point out the essential folly of the Wobblies' efforts. Jack Kavanagh, a tile-settler who was emerging as one of the leading members of the Vancouver impossibilist local, declared that the IWW strikes constituted a part of class struggle because they had united,
really for the first time, the various ethnic groups which made up western Canada's itinerant labour force. 52

IV

The walk-outs of the construction workers in the interior were followed by the even more dramatic strike of the Island miners. By 1906 the unions of the men had been broken by the coal companies, but in 1909 one of the frequent mine disasters produced a new desire to organize. In the autumn of 1910 a request was made to UMWA headquarters in Indianapolis that organizers be sent to the Island, but the international, because of earlier experience in the area, was reluctant to act until the men took the lead. As a result, Ladysmith miners formed a local union, and branches of this organization spread to other camps. When an international officer visited the Island in June, 1911, he found these developments encouraging, and in December District 28 of the UMWA was formed. 53 An important change had earlier taken place in some of the mines; Dunsmuir had sold his works at Ladysmith and Cumberland to William Mackenzie and Donald Mann. But the railway promoters maintained the rough and ready industrial relations policy which had prevailed under the coal baron. A Cumberland miner complained, "we are tired of being helpless slaves, subjected to the whims and caprices of as mean a bunch of slave-drivers as ever drew breath of life." 54

The Island coal strike began at the Cumberland and Ladysmith pits of Canadian Gélinières when 3,000 miners walked off their jobs in September, 1912. 55 There is more than one explanation of the cause of this strike. Pro-labour historians have viewed it
as the result of a conspiracy hatched by Mackenzie and Mann to prevent exposure of their inability to pay dividends on the coal company's watered stock. The union was decidedly ambivalent in its explanations of the strike. Initially, and at times after the walkout began, the UMW claimed that it had originally ordered its Ladysmith and Cumberland locals to take a one-day "holiday" to protest company infractions of the Coal Mines Regulation Act, and when this "holiday" was in progress the company had instituted a lock-out. This view had the men being persecuted for no other reason than wishing to have the law properly enforced. At other times, however, the UMW claimed that it was striking to secure recognition by the company. A commissioner appointed by the federal Department of Labour to inquire into the dispute viewed it as a strike for union recognition. Clearly the strike was one for union recognition. For this reason the Federationist pledged that the Island miners would "receive and be entitled to the unreserved support of the affiliated membership of the B.C. Federation of Labor."

With the financial support of the UMW and the sympathy of the province's workers, the men began the long strike full of confidence. A Ladysmith man boasted, "we can continue this fight indefinitely, if necessary, having the support of 500,000 men at our backs."

But even though they were receiving substantial strike benefits, from the outset the miners found themselves hard pressed in a region the economy of which was so completely controlled by the operators. In November, to increase pressure on Canadian Collieries, the UMW ordered out the engineers and pumpmen who had been left in the mines to prevent flooding. The
union also began making an effort to secure government mediation and had the BCPL convention in January, 1913 demand that McBride bring the two parties to the dispute together. When the Premier attempted to open negotiations, the company, which had been confident of victory from the beginning, rejected his overtures because "conditions at our mines are improving daily and we are hopeful that in the near future our normal output will be attained."

Canadian Colliers had adopted conventional Island methods for fighting the strike. Soon after the men walked out they received notices of eviction from their company-owned houses, and the union was forced to quarter the strikers and their families in hastily-erected tent cities. The company also imported a number of special police "to jostle, bully, insult and intimidate everybody but shareholders in the mines. These "thugs" immediately began harassing union leaders and attempting to force men back to work through threats. They achieved their greatest success with the Chinese miners of Cumberland, who, fearful of deportation, returned to work. This naturally rekindled the old racial antagonism which the UMW had worked to overcome. A Cumberland socialist wrote: "from an evolutionary point of view we have no opposition to the Asianics, but this element coupled with capitalists of the McKenzie and Mann type form a very disagreeable compound working against the white race."

The company also imported southern Italian strike-breakers -- a Hindu member of the SPC called them "European waste" -- who, through their provocative and arrogant behavior, became an explosive element in an already volatile situation. The presence of the strike-breakers caused "a good deal of bitterness." And they were
harassed: a practice in which strikers' wives took a leading part; for example, one woman organized "a troupe of accordian players who serenaded the scabs home from work." But there was no violence on the part of the strikers. Nonetheless, McBride's government sent two hundred provincial police to Cumberland and Ladysmith to protect the strike breakers. This enraged the UMW; the press committee of the Ladysmith local charged, "there is no infamy to which Bowser is not permitting or instructing his paid flunkies to go in order to break down and whip the union miners into submission." Though the radicals were similarly angered, they could at least be comforted by the knowledge that the presence of the provincial police in the strike zone had a tremendous educational value. Pettipiece told his readers that McBride's action proved that the concept that all men were equal before the law was "a piece of bourgeois [sic] fiction."

By the spring of 1913 Canadian Collieries was hoisting and shipping two-thirds of its pre-strike production. Clearly a crisis had been averted in the fight. Instead, however, of ordering the Cumberland and Ladysmith men back to work, Frank Farrington, the international officer directing the UMW's campaign, determined to increase the pressure on the operators and instructed District President Robert Foster to call out all the Island miners. On May Day the 2,500 men working in the pits at Nanaimo and South Wellington walked out. When it expanded the strike, the UMW abandoned its ambivalent policy on the basic issue; in addition to the secondary claims of a slight raise in wages, better working conditions, and enforcement of the Coal Mines Regulation Act, the union demanded recognition. The Nanaimo local had actually turned
down a offer made by the Western Fuel Company, apparently in an effort to avert a strike in its mines, which contained a wage increase but not recognition. The nature of the fight and its new dimensions ensured that the miners would receive even greater support from the British Columbia labour movement. Christian Sivertz, president of the BCFL, told the province's union men that they must assist the "heroes of the Island coalfields, [because] their defeat would seriously affect the prospects of organized labor in British Columbia." 69

The operators remained adamant in their refusal to recognize the union. Mediation attempts by the Vancouver Board of Trade and the federal Minister of Labour, T. W. Crothers, were dismissed by the companies with what the Federationist called "unbridled arrogance." 70 Canadian Collieries extended its search for strike-breakers to the United Kingdom and Europe. Under false pretenses the company was able to import a large number of Durham miners, but these men, all union members, refused to work when they learned a strike was underway. 71 Early in August the Western Fuel Company began efforts to re-open its Nanaimo mines, attempting to recruit native Indians and some of the men on strike as scabs. When those who had agreed to go into the mines reported for work, they were harassed by mased pickets and had to be escorted by police. A demonstration at the house of one of the strike-breakers resulted in property damage and threats with a rifle. At South Wellington, a camp four miles from Nanaimo, union men raided the strike-breakers' "bull-pen" and forced them to agree to stop working. At Ladysmith a fight between four Italian scabs and two strikers resulted in the
stabbing of one of the latter. When the authorities arrested only one of the Italians, the union was incensed and declared that "if the police do not extend to our members the protection of the law we will be compelled to take measures to protect ourselves." These incidents, which occurred during the second week of August, indicated that tensions in the strike zone had reached the breaking point.

On August 13 serious rioting occurred in Nanaimo, Ladysmith and Extension. In the morning strikers assembled on the dock in Nanaimo and turned back a number of special police arriving on the boat from Vancouver. Later in the day word reached Nanaimo that several union men had been shot by strike-breakers at Extension. Arming themselves, some by raiding a gun shop, several hundred Nanaimo men set out for Extension. The most serious disturbances occurred in the latter camp. Strikers raided the Extension's Chinatown; they ordered company officials to leave within twenty-four hours; and they fought with strike-breakers at the pit-head. This resulted in the burning of the mine's surface works and the Italian bull-pen. Some of the strike-breakers and most of the Italian women and children fled the camp, but others of the men took refuge in the shaft. When the Nanaimo men arrived on the scene, they were fired upon from the mine's mouth, and a gun battle ensued.

The same day Attorney General Bowser told the Legislature, "when day breaks there will be nearly a thousand men in the strike zone, wearing the uniform of His Majesty. If the men will not obey the Police, they must have the military, and now that we are in the field, we intend to stay to the bitter
end. The troops, mostly Seaforth Highlanders from Vancouver, quickly restored order and then assisted the civil authorities when the latter began the arrests of strikers involved in the riots. The militia was commanded by Colonel John Hall who, in the best tradition of the service, believed the strike to be the result of a conspiracy hatched by foreign agitators. He came to be hated by the union men for his arbitrary action. For example, even though martial law was never declared in the strike zone, Hall instituted news censorship, an action for which he had no authority. The Colonel's finest hour came in the early morning of August 20, at the height of the police round-up of strike leaders. With bayonets fixed his men surrounded the Nanaimo Athletic Club where the UMW local was holding a meeting. A machine gun and search lights were trained on the building's only door and word was sent into the meeting that the men were to come out singly. As a large crowd, which contained many "weeping and hysterical" women, watched, over seven hundred men filed into the blinding light and between the ranks of troops to be searched by police officers. Seventy men were arrested. The building was then partially dismantled in a fruitless search for arms. In Hall's opinion the incident "had a most salutary effect." Though there was no violence in the strike zone after August 13, the militia had come to stay, largely at the insistence of local magistrates. The militia camps took on a semi-permanent air with cook-houses and rows of white-painted stones around the tents, and the troops settled in to the routine of guarding the mines and escorting the strike-breakers.

Labour's reaction to the arrival of the militia was
immediate and bitter. A hostile demonstration took place on the
Vancouver docks prior to the embarkation of the Seaforth
Highlanders; and several soldiers were so badly beaten that they
were unable to leave with their unit. The firemen and seamen
walked-off the boat which was to carry the troops to the Island,
and the crew had to be replaced by Chinese. The official UMW
view was that troops were on the Island as the result of "a well
defined plan devised by the mine owners." Foster charged that the
riots "originated in every instance because of provocation on the
part of the representatives of the coal companies or the scabs."
And Farrington announced that the UMW viewed the presence of the
militia with "indulgent calm." This was not, however, the view
of the union's rank and file. The arrival of troops was in more
ways than one a turning point in the Island coal strike; after
August, 1913 the international officers of the UMW would find it
increasingly difficult to work in harmony with the militant miners
and the radicals who dominated the British Columbia labour
movement. The day after the troops arrived on the Island, the
Federationist snapped, "it will cost Bowser his political life in
this province" and went on, "if the present conflict on Vancouver
Island results in bloodshed the responsibility lies with the
government. Bowser's irresponsible special have permitted the
scab, Chinks, plug-uglys and company detectives to do as they
dam well please, while union pickets have been harassed and
maltreated as criminals under the slightest pretext." Protest
meetings were held throughout the province, and one of these, at
Victoria on August 17, passed a resolution calling for a general
strike of British Columbia's workers unless the militia was
immediately withdrawn from the Island. The idea was taken up by
the BCFL which held a referendum of its affiliates on the proposal.
Some organizations believed that resort to the general strike was
justified; the Victoria trades council, for example, passed the
BCFL's resolution. But the majority of opinion was against such
action. Farrington thought that the calling of a general strike
would be "inadvisable." The Vancouver trades council, because of
growing unemployment and a strong SPC influence, tabled the
Federation's circular. So for a time, the proposal that all
the province's workers lay down their tools in support of the
Island miners was put aside.

By the end of August more than two-hundred and fifty
strikers had been arrested, and the trials of these men, which
were held during the autumn and winter, kept the resentment of the
British Columbia labour movement flaming. Charges were dismissed
against only ninety-two of the men. The rest, including such
leading miners as Jack Place, the Social Democratic MLA for
Nanaimo, Joe Angelo, the UMW's Italian organizer, and Joe Naylor,
president of the Cumberland Local, were found guilty of charges
arising out of the strike, and sentenced to jail terms ranging from
a few months to four years. Ever-defiant, the convicted men
regularly marched out of the court-room singing the Marseillaise
and other revolutionary songs. From jail the miners complained
bitterly about conditions; one charged that the treatment meted
out to the strikers in prison represented "all that can be desired
in the form of punishment." In the New Westminster jail the workers
got the "right"e martyr; Joseph Mairs, a young man who had been
sentenced in one of the first trials, died early in 1914. In a
voice choked with emotion, Parker Williams told the Legislature, "the root of all this sorrow and this suffering will be found in the incompetency, inactivity [and] callous and domineering methods of the government in handling this situation from the beginning."

The Clarion charged, "he has been as truly murdered by the state as though one of its miserable hirings had thrust a bayonet through his heart." 86

These developments caused a reaction in the labour movement across the West. McVety observed, "probably no series of trials in the history of Canada has done more to cast suspicion on the fairness of the much-lauded "British justice" and trial by jury." The TLC condemned the "savage sentences" as "outrageous.

Protests poured into Borden from western labour organizations. On behalf of the Winnipeg trades council, Rigg charged that "a great injustice has been perpetrated in the imprisoning and sentencing of these men." 87 The reaction was naturally strongest in British Columbia. A Methodist minister in Nanaimo reported that there had been "a general breakdown of all regard for British law or justice." In an official statement the UMW charged, "boasted British justice has been turned into a travesty; ... the whole procedure is obviously a conspiracy to discourage the men and break the strike." 88 In January Alex Watchman, the newly-elected president of the BCFL, threatened a general strike if the miners were not released from prison. The Federationist called upon the province's workers to "organize our power to sweep out of existence every vestige of the loathsome plague of industrial despots, bum politicians, clerical liars, press prostitutes, scabs and scab-herders who for years have festered like huge ulcerous sores..."
on the community; sapping its vitality and making almost a hopeless
contest the struggle for bread and the fight for human progress."

The resentment of British Columbia's workers was mobilized
by the Miners' Liberation League which was established in the
autumn of 1913. The organization, made up of representative of
the SPC, SDP, IWW and trades councils and with branches in several
provincial centres, worked to raise money for the support of the
prisoners' families and to dramatize the plight of the imprisoned
men, by, for example, parading their children through the streets
of Vancouver. But the League's most important function consisted
in staging protest rallies intended to pressure government,
provincial and federal, to release the miners. "The growth of
class-consciousness is the one thing that will throw the fear of
the proletariat into the council chambers of the ruling class,"
the Clarion explained. At a League meeting in Vancouver early
in December, Robert Gosden, a leading Wobbly, went rather far in
his efforts to strike fear in the hearts of the ruling class;
he threatened that the workers would institute an extensive
campaign of sabotage and make attempts on the lives of the members
of McBride's government. The reaction to these remarks was an
interesting one. Sam Atkinson, the SDP organizer in Vancouver,
excused the outburst by explaining that the Wobbly had only said
what many workers were thinking. The Federationist asked
rhetorically, "is it any wonder that violence is being publicly
advocated in British Columbia?" But an embarrassed Farrington
dismissed Gosden as "one of those fanatics who are afflicted with
a diarrhoea of words and a constipation of ideas." On purely
doctrinal grounds, the SFC denounced the Wobbly's "anarchistic"
statements and when the League refused to repudiate Gosden, withdrew from the organization. The IWW, which believed that "a good dose of direct action" promised to be the best means of securing the strikers' release, had, from the beginning, played an unusually prominent role in the Miners Liberation League. And Wobbly influence resulted in the organization's call for a province-wide general strike to take place on January 30, 1914 unless the prisoners were released. "Any man working on [January 30] will be a traitor to the working class," announced the League's circular. Farrington repudiated the call and the Vancouver trades council, despite strong feeling in favour of a general strike, refused to act. So another call for a general strike came to nothing. Nonetheless, the League's efforts to mobilize public opinion and bring pressure to bear on government undoubtedly contributed to the pardoning of some of the prisoners and the early release of the remainder.

The leadership of the SFC was far too shrewd not to capitalize on the propaganda opportunity presented by the miners' strike. Burrough wrote, "the situation on the Island is one so favorable that it cannot be expected to recur for some time and it is imperative that we make the most of it." From the time the strike began the SFC's most prominent speakers, men like Pritchard, Kavanagh, Lestor, Grumble and Lefaeux toured the strike zone. The party even bought a motorcycle so that its propagandists could move around the coal fields with greater ease and dispatch. In the pages of the Clarion, the impossibilists applied their ruthless class analysis to the events of the strike. Because the Premier was their creature, Mackenzie and Mann could properly direct McBride: "the government in straining or ignoring the law to
punish the revolting slaves of capital have done their duty as the executive committee of the master class, to whom alone they owe allegiance. The law has performed its proper function and if it had been exercised in a manner that would protect the slaves against their masters, those responsible would have been traitors to their salt."96 Despite the tone, the SPC was sympathetic to the strikers' cause.97 The miners' long years of socialist allegiance ensured this. Indeed, the impossibilists argued that the Island men were doing "vicarious atonement" for the failure of other British Columbia workers to elect socialist representatives.98 Members of Island locals played an important role in the UMW campaign. In Cumberland "the Reds are the ones who are staying right on the ground determined to see [the strike] through." And the Ladysmith local of the UMW felt the need to announce that it was not an exclusively socialist organization.99 The strike became a political struggle, the most important kind for the SPC, when the troops arrived. In the third week of August, Lester reported from the strike zone, "the growing spirit of class-consciousness is almost awe-inspiring; these men are ready for anything. . . . This struggle has developed into a class affair."100

Despite the sympathy and support of all elements of the province's labour movement, the cause of the miners was in trouble. Deprived of their leadership through arrests, they were forced to watch as the operators put scabs to work under military protection and thus further weaken the effectiveness of their strike. By early 1914 the Cumberland mines surpassed their pre-strike production, and by May the Island companies actually faced the prospect of over-production in coal.101 The military
also remained in the strike zone as an ever-present reminder to the men of their vulnerability. For example, when the UMW attempted to stage a May Day rally, the mayor of Nanaimo had troop re-enforcements rushed to the town in what the Federationist denounced as "a grim and deadly threat." Under these circumstances some of the men began to waver, and UMW officials worked to prevent a collapse of the strike. Other miners, similarly desperate, began calling for a general strike, to which the union officials also objected. When delegates from striking locals pressed for a general strike at the BCFL's convention in February, UMW officials, like Farrington opposed their efforts, as one miner said "with hair on end, frothing at the mouth and sweat issuing from every pore." But the miners, now too desperate to accept the moderate leadership of the international officers, continued to press for a province-wide walk-out, and they succeeded in having the BCFL call a special convention in July to consider the Island situation. At the convention, over the renewed opposition of Farrington, the votes of UMW delegates carried a resolution in favor of a general strike. But despite appeals from the miners, the important Vancouver trades council, and that in Victoria, determined that the prevailing wide-spread unemployment precluded such action. Though it never disclosed the results of the referendum, the BCFL announced late in August that it would not call a general strike. This defeat for the miners was soon followed by an announcement from Indianapolis that the UMW, after having expended one and a quarter million dollars in the Island fight, was forced to discontinue strike pay. Within a month a settlement worked out by McBride,
which the union had earlier rejected as "insulting," was accepted, and the beaten men called off their strike. Bitter at the defeat of the miners, British Columbia workers became even more resentful as they were forced to watch the coal companies systematically drive labour activists off the Island through blacklisting and, thus, destroy the union.

When it was proposed in 1913, the idea of a general strike was not new in western Canada. The writings of French syndicalists had, for some time, been known to western radicals. In 1906 Calgary had experienced what the workers regarded as a general strike, and in 1910 similar action was contemplated, though not taken, by Winnipeg unionists. But by the beginning of the century's second decade, "the thought of the general strike" was, in Puttee's words, "becoming more and more alluring to the proletariat the world over." The radicals of western Canada were aware of the gains syndicalism was making in the European labour movement, and they had before them the example of the general strikes staged in Sweden in 1909 and Belgium in 1913. To a Vancouver Island miner, the "splendid" gains made by the workers in these struggles, proved that direct action was "Labor's own tactic." The syndicalism of the IWW also had some effect on western radicalism; as has been noted, the Wobblies had, from the time of their organization's founding, a following in the mining and construction camps of Alberta and British Columbia. But in the two or three years before 1914, its courageous leadership of the construction workers, its efforts to organize the unemployed and
its work to free the Island miners, raised the stock of the IWW with western workers, and the Wobblies exercised their greatest influence in Canada. But of more importance to the West than the syndicalism of either the Europeans or the Wobblies was that of the United Kingdom. After 1910 syndicalists, prominent among whom was Tom Mann, had an important influence in the British labour movement. Because many of the workers who continued to emigrate to Canada from the United Kingdom up to 1914 had been exposed to these new theories, and because both the Federationist and The Voice gave extensive coverage to the great strikes of the dockers, transport workers and miners, western radicals came to regard direct action as, potentially, an important weapon in their arsenal. When Mann toured the West late in 1913 preaching syndicalism, he was given an enthusiastic hearing. Of the British miners strike of 1912, Puttee wrote "it means a new turn entirely to the course and aims of organized labor; it will produce as good results as has the success of the Labor party." Pettipiece believed that, in their new militancy, the British workers were "holding out the beacon light of hope, and we are bound to follow despite all obstacles."

When conventional union tactics proved useless in the struggle with the Island coal barons, the growing belief in direct action was given new impetus. Vancouver workers had already gained increased respect for the tactic as a result of what was regarded as a successful general strike of the city's building trades in 1911. When he called for a province-wide walkout to protest the use of the militia, Sivertz told the affiliates of the BCFL, "it is well known that [the capitalists] stand in greater
dread of the general strike than any other method that the organized workers have within their means of using." An Island miner argued, "the mobility of the mass-strike, covering a large area, disorganizes the forces of the enemy. Every available means to gain our end must be adopted in our tactics of the future.

The law of necessity gives [the general strike] a mandate.\textsuperscript{114} In some cases, advocacy of direct action went beyond the general strike. For example, a member of Vancouver's militant longshoremen's union wrote, "a resort to sabotage may not be the total means to the emancipation from wage slavery, but it has repeatedly proved its efficacy in definite cases. . . . The refusal of the exploited to avail themselves of this instrument of defense through a Pecksniffian adherence to some obsolete tenet of a master class morality must be a gratifying sight to profit mongers."\textsuperscript{115} That the appeal of direct action was not limited to a handful of unrepresentative militants was demonstrated when the BCFL's 1914 convention passed a resolution calling for the negotiation of all collective agreements so that they would expire simultaneously and thereby facilitate the calling of a general strike.\textsuperscript{116}

Such sentiment was not confined to British Columbia. Labour's frustration and resentment caused by defeat and depression in the years before 1914 bred a militancy which was expressed, at times, in appeals for direct action. The workers of Edmonton pledged to stage a general strike should a province-wide walk-out be called in British Columbia. In Winnipeg Rigg advocated a strike of all Canadian boilermakers and machinists as a means of winning the long fight of those trades against
The growing advocacy of direct action in the years immediately before the outbreak of war, though it demonstrated the influence of syndicalist propaganda, did not represent any widespread or important subscription to the tenets of the classic syndicalism of Europe or the Wobblies' vague variety.\textsuperscript{118} To most of the rank and file, the general strike was never more than an enlargement of the strike they knew. They regarded mass action as a means to enforce conventional trade union demands against unusually strong, or ruthless, opposition, not as a means to restructure society. The general strike was an economic weapon, a hefty one certainly, but it was not political. The attitude of the radical leadership was not as clear; all shades of opinion were more or less ambivalent on the issue of direct action. Petticoat could follow his British mentors in advocating use of the general strike to achieve specific political ends; but he was always suspicious of the tactic, because "syndicalism and anarchism and other visionary schemes for suddenly destroying the present organization of society" did not appeal to "the plain common sense" of the workingman. When the Miners Liberation League called for a general strike, he denounced the scheme and advocated conventional political means as the best way to free the prisoners.\textsuperscript{119} Petticoat, who, as editor of the Federationist, can be regarded as one of the BCFL's leading spokesmen, displayed a similar ambivalence. He looked upon the general strike as "a most deadly weapon for the purpose of accelerating the overthrow of the established order.\textsuperscript{120} And for this reason advocated the simultaneous termination of collective
agreements. But his long years in the SPC made him doubt the
effectiveness of strike action in the face of adverse conditions
in the labour market. Consequently, he strenuously opposed the
general strike proposals of 1913 and 1914, because he believed
prevailing unemployment precluded their success. 121

The Socialist Party of Canada seemed to display a similar
ambivalence. In the excitement of the days immediately following
the militia’s intervention in the Island coal fields, the Clarion
told its readers, “if a single miner is shot by the forces of
murder – strike!” But within a year the same paper would say,
the general strike is merely the application or extension of
what has hitherto been local folly, or insanity, to cover a field
circumscribed by national lines…. In principle it is the
same; in effect it is equally disastrous and futile.” 122 Despite
appearances, the SPC had, be the beginning of the war, a somewhat
better defined attitude toward direct action than did other
radicals. From the time of its inception, the party had tolerated
within it a small but sustained anarcho-syndicalist tendency. This
was most marked in the mining camps of the interior where syndicalist
doctrines were first introduced by the ALU. The tendency was to
some extent strengthened by the impossibilists’ apocalyptic vision
of the revolution. A Fernie miner wrote, “when we have an
intelligent majority throughout the land, a good safe majority,
will it be necessary, will it be sensible, for us to fool and fiddle
around with their elections act? … When you are sufficiently
united you won’t need to vote for what you want with your master’s
ballot; you’ll just take the world and that’s all.” 123 In the
years before 1914 members of the SPC, like other radicals, became
increasingly interested in the efficacy of the general strike. For example, a Winnipeg comrade, after hearing the British syndicalist speak, wrote: "In my opinion, Tom Mann shows great intelligence in leading the underdog to battle against the capitalist class in their fight for better conditions, and what better weapon can be found than the strike which comes down to the A.B.C. of showing class lines in society." 124 Even the Vancouver leadership, including Kingsley, was, during these years, coming to see some revolutionary value in action which mobilized large masses of workingmen. The impossibilists' willingness to reconsider their tactics clearly resulted from the decline of the SPC after 1910. When its political prospects were diminished by defections and defeats, the party was prepared to look to a new means whereby the proletariat could be emancipated. 125 In 1913 McKenzie wrote, "whether a line of action is political or not, is determined, not by the line of action itself, but by its purpose. . . . The most 'direct' action that the most rabid direct-actionist could suggest, [would] be political action if its purpose was in any way political, for instance, the overthrow of Capitalist rule." In Pritchard's opinion, "a general strike, because of its dimensions, necessarily takes on a political character." Consequently, the SPC came to look upon the general strike as a weapon which could be used in the class struggle. But the socialists continued to believe that, in a democratic state, the ballot was the better means to destroy capitalism. 126

Significantly, there was also developing, at the time of the growing interest in syndicalism a renewed enthusiasm for industrial unionism. After the collapse of the western revolt
in 1903 there had been a continuing, vague belief in the efficacy of industrial unionism. As an industrial crisis had in 1903 and as another would in 1919, pre-war conditions produced in the workers, especially those in British Columbia, a desire for the increased strength that they believed larger unions would afford them. The founding convention of the British Columbia Federation of Labour declared for industrial unionism. Then the 1911 convention of TLC, which, because it was held in Calgary, was dominated by western delegates, passed a Vancouver resolution calling upon the workers to organize by industry because the craft unions had demonstrated their inability "to successfully combat the present day aggregations of capital." The forces of craft unionism, led by Draper, were unable to block the western resolution at Calgary, but the following year, when the convention was safely back in Ontario, an eastern majority returned the Congress to Compersian orthodoxy: This did not, however, end promotion of the new cause in the West. In August, 1912 the Vancouver trades council unanimously passed a resolution endorsing industrial unionism and issued a circular calling upon the labour movement to adopt this form of organization. In response to the circular, trades councils in Victoria, Nelson and Calgary endorsed the principle of industrial unionism. Despite strong feeling in British Columbia, and some other parts of the West, the weakened condition of the labour movement, caused by the depression, prevented the industrial unionists from challenging directly the craft hegemony in the West.

But even though no direct challenge was made, the radicals promoted the workers' interest in industrial unionism, as they had in 1903. For the socialists the formation of larger,
consolidated unions was a necessary and inevitable response to the developing nature of capitalism. Pettipiece described the need for industrial unionism as "the effect of industrial development, the mandate of the machine." In both British Columbia and Winnipeg, the SDF urged the workers to repudiate the craft unions, which the development of technology and the consolidation of capital had made obsolete, and organize by industry. For example, Arthur Beech complained that "labor is divided into little ineffective craft companies, some flying their white flags of truce and merely looking on while others go to defeat after defeat, single-handed and unaided." In the SFC the issue of industrial unionism had been under discussion since 1910, but it was only with the decline of Kingsley's influence that the doctrine gained important support in the party. By 1912 the dynamic young members of the Vancouver local, like Pritchard, Kavanagh, and Burrough, and leading members of the SFC in Edmonton and Winnipeg were actively promoting industrial unionism. The cause had sufficient support in the party by 1913 that Burrough could write an editorial in the Clarion advocating a grand international union which could stand up to any capitalist conglomerate.

VI

The years after 1912 saw the on-set of the pre-war depression. The Balkan Wars, generating a demand for capital and at the same time creating uneasiness in the financial community, resulted in a substantial decline in the flow of British investment funds into Canada, and without those funds the rapid expansion, which had characterized the western economy
for over a decade, ceased. Building stopped and real estate values plummeted. The trend had begun on the west coast and, except for a slight correction during the summer months, persisted through 1912. By the beginning of the following year, signs clearly indicated that the depression was spreading across the West. For the workers this meant unemployment. Because the down-turn was initially manifested in a collapse of the real estate market, the building trades were the first to be affected by the trend. This produced immediate wide-spread unemployment, because a very large proportion of the western labour force was committed to this sector. In March the Federationist observed, "things are looking as though the workers have reached the end of the meal, except for the dessert -- which will be lemons." By June The Voice reported a "general slackness . . . in all the organized trades in the west." The ordinarily-busy months of July, August and September brought no change, and during the summer and autumn Labour Gazette correspondents across the West reported growing confusion in the labour market. In Saskatchewan men worked on farms for bread and board waiting for the harvest. In Calgary foremen of the city works department were mobbed by men looking for work. And a Vancouver union official reported, "there is a large number who can hardly make a bare living owing to the slackness of employment." For the single unemployed, soup kitchens and a cot at the Salvation Army Shelter or the Men's Own became the basis of existence. For the family man without a job, municipal authorities provided welfare. After a tour of western cities early in 1914, J. S. Woodsworth reported that the relief rolls were crowded in all the centres he visited. Edmonton's
welfare system was "simply overwhelmed." In Winnipeg the Associated
Charities announced that private agencies could no longer care for
the destitute, and public funds were necessary to avert tragedy.
Across the West harried and unsympathetic civic administrations
warned the jobless man to stay away from their jurisdictions.136

By the beginning of 1914 it was no longer mainly the
building trades which were affected by the depression. The
Labour Gazette reported large lay-offs and short-time in all sectors
of the western economy. By February Winnipeg's "unemployed problem
assumed rather serious proportions," the Labour Gazette
correspondent reported in dry official tones, and the City Council
demanded that the federal government name a royal commission to
inquire into the crisis. With an estimated 4,500 jobless in
the province's cities and only 30 per cent of Moose Jaw skilled
labour at work, the Secretary of the Saskatchewan Bureau of
Labour believed that his province had never experienced a worse
winter. In Calgary 4,000 men were registered as unemployed at
the Labour Bureau, and the city provided relief work on a week-about
basis to allow as many men to benefit as possible. In Edmonton,
where 4,000 were also registered as jobless, only family men
were given relief work, and they were paid $1.15 per day. McVety
estimated that 10,000 men were looking for jobs in greater Vancouver.137

By early spring, H. H. Stevens, MP for South Vancouver, reported,
"all work is practically at a standstill and many workers are
at their wits' end to feed and clothe their wives and children." On
the prairies "the streets were black with men crowding around
the employment offices looking in vain for work."138 The annual
exodus to the construction camps produced only slight change in the
urban labour market, and at the height of what was normally the busy season, the *Federationist* claimed that there were people "wanting bread" in the West. The Victoria Trades Council believed "the workers should demand work and see that they get it."139

Labour leaders immediately identified the cause of the workers' plight, immigration. More people immigrated to Canada in 1913, 400,000 in all, than in any other year in the nation's history. At a time when one hundred immigrants per day, "a large percentage" of whom were "mechanics," were crowding into the Vancouver labour market, it was inevitable that the workers' old resentment against the National Policy should be fanned into a new flame. "Canada has bought its unemployed from Europe at so much per head," a Vancouver man stormed, "and now that the folly of that policy is beginning to bear fruit, the only solution those responsible for it can offer is soup and policemen's clubs."140

Despite widespread unemployment the activities of private immigration agencies like the Salvation Army and the railways went on unabated. Pettipiece cried, "they pursue their pernicious tactics regardless of the ultimate consequences to nations and individuals."141 But ultimately the responsibility for labour markets swamped with immigrants lay with the Dominion government. "It is criminal on the part of the immigration department to allow this state of affairs to continue," Puttee charged. The *Federationist* carefully drew the proper conclusions for the working class; the crisis caused by the federal immigration policy demonstrated once again "the class bias and rank injustice" of the exercise of power by capitalist governments. Indeed, Pettipiece professed to see "a well laid plan at the bottom of it all to oust organized labor out
of existence" and counselled, "if ever there were a time in the history of labor in this dominion when the workers should gird up their loins it is now." 142

When Borden's mediocre Labour Minister, T. W. Crothers, toured the West in 1913, he was assailed with demands from union men to restrict immigration. This he refused to do. Labour leaders found the refusal and his assurances that "any little slackness that exists" would soon pass away "most unsatisfactory." 143 The opinion persisted in the western labor movement that the federal government was, in the words of the Saskatoon trades council, making "almost no" effort to relieve a crisis which it had created. 144 When, in December, 1913, Borden's government, finally alarmed by the level of unemployment, prohibited further immigration of mechanics into British Columbia, it received no gratitude. Pettipiece explained that the step had been taken because, "to allow more to come would only mean that the ratepayers would either have to feed them or be confronted with all the desperation which the sheer need of bread will put into men." In any case, the prohibition was not effective. 145

The resentment of the men who trudged the streets of the western cities in search of a job or stood self-consciously in the bread-lines naturally burned even hotter than that of the labour leaders. Said one of Vancouver's jobless, "it's about time the worker's awakened. Do the employers responsible for this situation think we are going to consent to starve to death on the instalment plan without a protest or a struggle? Not by a jugful!" In Winnipeg a highly literate British workman, who signed himself "Jesse James" forcefully expressed the frustration and bitterness
of the unemployed in a series of letters to The Voice: "it is a
travesty upon our present day civilization that people should be
so lured hither for the purpose of being fleeced by a bunch of
grafters to help swell their already protuberant pockets.

... We may feel the pinch this winter, but we will endeavor to make
others feel it hereafter." A Regina newspaper received a letter
from a man signing himself "Jerry Miner, Chief of the Unemployed
Gang," who threatened that jobless men would institute a sabotage
campaign unless public works were not immediately started. By
the autumn of 1913 the unemployed men of western Canada began to
march. On the coast they formed their own organization,
Associated Enforced Idle or Unemployed and held demonstrations in
Vancouver and Victoria. In Calgary men marched under banners
inscribed, "Work, Starve or Steal! Which Will It Be?"; when they
attempted to present a petition at city hall, the demonstration
was broken up and several men gilded. Pettipiece warned, "clubbing
the unemployed is but hastening the death knell of a social system
that produces such absurdities, in a world filled with plenty
for all." In Winnipeg unemployed demonstrations began late in
1913 and continued intermittently throughout the winter. Because
of the high proportion of eastern Europeans among the ranks of
the city's jobless, the EDF played an important role in
organizing these marches. In May, 1914 police attempts to disperse
one of these parades in the north end produced a riot in which a
number of men were injured.

The mood of the workers, their analysis of the depression
and the unemployed's willingness to protest against their plight
ensured that radical organizations would try to capitalize on the
discontent caused by the economic downturn. From the time large numbers of jobless men first appeared on the coast, Wobbly agitators were working among them. The IWW was more prominent in Victoria than in Vancouver, probably because of the predominant influence of the SPC in the latter city, and took a leading role in the free speech fights and jobless marches. In Winnipeg the IWW organized a local of unemployed Ukrainians claiming a membership of nearly four hundred. But it was in Edmonton, the "headquarters" for Wobbly organizers working along the line of construction of the GTP and the CNR, that the IWW played it's most important role among the unemployed. Because a large proportion of the jobless in Edmonton were men from the construction camps, the Wobblies became, in Woodsworth's words, "the brains" behind the Unemployed League which was established in the city late in 1913. The IWW urged the men to employ "a little direct action" to obtain relief, and "towards Christmas, the un-employed rough labour element assumed menacing features." On one occasion members of the League marched in a body to one of Edmonton's comfortable Methodist churches and after the service refused to leave until they were given food and accommodation. The city's welfare department "to avoid outbreaks of lawlessness," expanded its relief program and instituted public works. Such activities apparently made the authorities uneasy. When Joseph Ettor, one of the principal leaders of the IWW's great strike at Lawrence, Massachusetts, attempted to cross the border at White Rock, British Columbia, to keep a speaking engagement at Victoria, he was denied entry by immigration officials. Late in 1913 two Wobbly agitators were arrested in Revelstoke on trumped-up vagrancy charges and deportation proceedings initiated. When a
storm of protest ensued, the men were released. The SPC also attempted to capitalize on the discontent caused by the widespread unemployment. Sydney Gage of Winnipeg noted that "the workers are in that state of restlessness to make them take violent action. ... [One] finds in almost every worker one meets the feeling that 'something is going to happen' and a foolish hatred of the capitalist." Consequently, it was the official view of the party that "there never was a time like the present when the workers were so ready to assimilate the revolutionary tenets of Marxian Socialism." J. A. McDonald believed that "it is necessary for the growth and well being of the Revolutionary movement that immigration should steadily proceed." In a format designed to be easily read by men not well-versed in socialist theory, the Clarion trumpeted the SPC's message to the unemployed. "The man who uses the job is absolutely at the mercy of the man who owns the job, and he is usually a man of little or no mercy," the idle were told. But even at such a dark hour there was cause for hope: "capitalism is now enjoying the 'blind staggers.' It is stumbling and blundering more awkwardly and blindly each day. It is rapidly becoming more rotten ripe for its demise at the hands of an enlightened and virile working class." To enlighten the workers, and thus have them take up the class struggle, the SPC inaugurated an extensive propaganda campaign. During the depression, the party made an unusually large expenditure on literature, mainly easily-distributed and easily-read leaflets, and it held a great many public rallies. Unlike the IWW, the Socialist Party of Canada was more anxious to proselytize than
organize the jobless, but the impossibilists engaged in the latter activity as well. Members of the party regularly marched in unemployed parades, and the Alberta provincial executive committee sent an organizer among the men looking for work on the CPR's irrigation projects. The socialists were pleased with the progress they made during the depression; Burrough wrote, "things are looking good from the reds' point of view; larger meetings with a lot of the old faces back and battle in the air." In 1913 the miners of District 18, where the depression was especially hard-felt, voted to endorse the party's platform. Indeed, the SPC's campaign among the jobless, and the idle men's response, fostered the revival of the party in British Columbia and Winnipeg, after the troubles caused by the split.

When war broke out in August, 1914, the western Canadian labour movement was preoccupied with the depression, and its first priority was finding relief for the thousands of jobless men. To the majority of workers the needs of the nation at war were, at best, a secondary consideration. The Alberta Federation of Labour, at its convention in October, 1914, considered the war only in terms of its effect on the economy. Moreover, western labour saw the coming of the war cause increased unemployment, as jittery firms stopped production to wait upon events. But Pritchard told the workers that their plight was now a secondary consideration: "let the hungry and jobless workers remember that the first and highest duty of those now in authority is to expedite the killing of our country's enemies, rather than conserving the lives of our own 'bone and sinew' who are silly enough to be without jobs and minus bank accounts." The
leadership, at least, was unprepared to accept this set of priorities. Pettipiece complained, "the federal government has millions for war and the instruments of war. The provincial governments have given foodstuffs in untold quantities for war purposes. But what of the thousands of unemployed workers in Canada?" In Winnipeg, the trades council demanded that the Patriotic Fund support the unemployed as well as the dependents of service men. A miner from the Crow's Nest Pass told the Alberta Federation of Labour's convention that calling upon the Dominion government to help the unemployed was "like appealing to some unresponsive brass god," a charge which was given some substance when the Department of Trade and Commerce recommended that the jobless be fed surplus apples from British Columbia orchards. 161

In the late summer and autumn of 1914 the depression deepened, and more men joined the ranks of the unemployed. In Winnipeg the trades council promoted a back-to-the-land scheme, under which jobless men were to be given forty acre plots upon which to support themselves. 162 The Saskatoon trades council called for a federal public works project, and the Moose Jaw council warned, "the time as [sic] come when labor can no longer tolerate the condition of affairs." 163 Early in 1915 the Alberta Federation of Labour held an emergency convention to deal with unemployment and despatched a special delegation to demand action from Borden. The British Columbia Federation of Labour pressed McBride to take action to relieve the plight of the unemployed. When the premier tried instead to calm labour's fears with his usual expensive phrases, Pettipiece warned, "unless some steps
are taken before another month is over to alleviate sufferings of men and women and children who are hungry ... they will have unemployed demonstrations on their hands which will make the incidents of two years ago look like a pink tea. If the McBride-Bowser aggregation think that the working people of this province are going to lay down and meekly starve to death they have another guess coming. "Vancouver did experience disturbances when, in April, the civic administration discontinued relief to non-resident single men. After two days of demonstrations failed to have the relief re-established, approximately 2,000 men raided stores and restaurants in the centre of the city. "The eighth commandment is fitting morality for a bloated paunch, but it is no use for an empty stomach," observed the *Federationist*.

Conditions had become so acute by the spring that a delegation of western mayors travelled to Ottawa to inform the federal government that their administrations were no longer able to cope with the unemployed. In the spring large numbers of men left the cities to look for work on the construction of the Pacific Great Eastern and the Hudson Bay Railway. But if this brought relief to the cities, it brought none to the men. Very little work was available and men roamed along the lines of construction living off the land or begging for food at the road houses. At the Pas, Manitoba, the RNWMP was forced to supply rations for several hundred starving eastern European labourers when they began demonstrating and threatening to raid food stores. After touring the West in the summer of 1915, a British official observed, "I have never, in all my experience in England or elsewhere, seen such widespread and general unemployment."
VII.

By mid-1915 enlistments were taking men out of the labour market while, at the same time, the stepped-up war economy was providing new jobs. With the coming of 1916 widespread unemployment ceased. Western workingmen did not, however, forget the tribulations of the depression years. They did not forget the refusal of the eastern-dominated TLC to accept a form of organizations which they believed was well-suited to their special needs. Nor did they forget what they regarded as the collusion of government with the employers in the workers' spectacular defeats. These memories were to be extremely important during the war years.

2. Ormsby, British Columbia, pp. 359-361; and Western Clarion, April 1, 1911.

3. Labour Gazette, XII, p. 538; British Columbia Federationist, Jan. 6, 1912 and Western Clarion, Dec. 9, 1911.

4. British Columbia Federationist, Dec. 9, 1911; Jan. 20, 1912 and April 5, 1912; Western Clarion, Dec. 16, 1911 and Labour Gazette, XII, pp. 652-3 and 751-5.

5. Vancouver TLC Minutes, Jan. 18, 1912 and British Columbia Federationist, Aug. 10, 1912.

6. Western Clarion, Sept. 28, 1912.


9. Western wage-earner, June, 1910 and Bennett, Builders of British Columbia, pp. 44-5.


15. Western Clarion, Feb. 3, 1912 and British Columbia Federationist, March 5, 1912.


17. Dubofsky, We Shall Be All, pp. 81-7.

18. Western Clarion, Sept. 23, 1905; Oct. 6, 1906; and April 27, 1907;


33. *Western Clarion*, March 25, 1911 and DND Records, Vol. 6517, HQ 363-23, Deputy Minister of Militia to Deputy Minister of Naval Service, March 8, 1911 and Deputy Minister of Naval
34. Phillips and Bennett mistakenly claim that the ship was sent to Prince Rupert. (No Power Greater, p. 53 and Builders of British Columbia, p. 41.)

35. DND Records, Vol. 6517, HQ 53-8, District Intelligence Officer, M 11 to Acting Director of Military Intelligence, April 14, 1911.

36. The Voice, Sept. 15, 1911 and April 19, 1912.

37. British Columbia Federationist, June 22, 1912.


40. The Voice, April 19, 1912.

41. Labour Gazette, XII, pp. 1108-10 and British Columbia Federationist, June 22, 1912 and July 6, 1912.

42. British Columbia Federationist, June 8, 1912 and June 15, 1912.


44. The Voice, April 26, 1912 and May 17, 1912 and British Columbia Federationist, Aug. 2, 1912.

45. Labour Gazette, XIII, p. 79.

46. Ibid., pp. 189-91.

47. Quoted by The Voice, Aug. 16, 1912.


51. Vancouver T/LC Minutes, May 2, 1912 and May 16, 1912 and British Columbia Federationist, June 29, 1912.

52. Western Clarion, June 8, 1912 and July 8, 1912 and British Columbia Federationist, May 20, 1912.
54. Bennett, Builders of British Columbia, p. 67 and British Columbia Federationist, Oct. 9, 1912.
55. Labour Gazette, pp. 399-400.
57. Labour Gazette, XIV, p. 432.
58. British Columbia Federationist, Oct. 9, 1912.
59. Ibid., Oct. 26, 1912 and Nov. 29, 1912.
60. Ibid., Nov. 9, 1912 and Jan. 31, 1913.
62. Western Clarion, Oct. 5, 1912 and British Columbia Federationist, July 11, 1913.
63. Western Clarion, Nov. 2, 1912 and March 1, 1913.
64. Bennett, Builders of British Columbia, p. 69 and Western Clarion, May 10, 1913.
65. Western Clarion, Oct. 24, 1913; Bennett, Builders of British Columbia, p. 70 and Griffin, BC People's Story, p. 52.
67. British Columbia Federationist, Nov. 22, 1912 and Nov. 29, 1912. W. J. Bowser was BC's Attorney General.
68. Labour Gazette, XIII, p. 1299.
69. Ibid., p. 1415 and British Columbia Federationist, May 2, 1913; May 16, 1913; May 30, 1913 and June 6, 1913.
70. British Columbia Federationist, June 27, 1913 and July 4, 1913 and Labour Gazette, XIV, p. 305.
72. Griffin, BC People's Story, p. 52 and Hedley, Labor Trouble in Nanaimo, pp. 9-12; Bennett, Builders of British Columbia,
p. 70 and British Columbia Federationist, Aug. 15, 1913.

73. Hedley, Labor Troubles in Nanaimo, p. 12.


75. Canadian Annual Review, 1913, p. 981.


77. Ibid., V. 1, Henderson to Kelly, Aug. 17, 1913 and Judge Advocate-General to Adjutant-General, Aug. 19, 1913.

78. Ibid., Hall, "Report of OC Civil Aid Force" and V. 3, W. Rae, "Narrative and Appreciation of Events on Vancouver Island, August 14th - 31st, 1913."

79. Ibid., V. 1, Shaw et al to Hughes, Oct. 30, 1913.

80. Ibid., V. 2, Hall to Roy, Sept. 8, 1914.

81. Bennett, Builders of British Columbia, p. 73.

82. British Columbia Federationist, Aug. 15, 1913; Aug. 22, 1913 and Sept. 5, 1913.

83. Ibid., Aug. 15, 1913.

84. Ibid., Aug. 22, 1913 and Oct. 10, 1913 and Vancouver TLC Minutes, Sept. 4, 1913.

85. Western Clarion, Nov. 22, 1913.


87. British Columbia Federationist, March 27, 1914; The Voice, Nov. 7, 1913 and Borden Papers, Vol. 173, RLB 244, Rigg to Borden, Jan. 8, 1914.


91. Western Clarion, Nov. 22, 1913.
92. British Columbia Federation, Dec. 12, 1913. It is possible that Gosden was one of labour's proverbial agents provocateur; such widely different sources as Hardy and Pritchard take this view. [Hardy, Stormy Years, p. 54 and Pritchard to the author, Nov. 15, 1971.]


95. Western Clarion, June 7, 1913.

96. Ibid., Aug. 30, 1913; Nov. 9, 1913 and Jan. 17, 1914.

97. Robin's claim that the impossibilists refused to take part in the strike is misleading and based on a superficial reading of the documents. A small meeting of the Vancouver local did denounce the struggle, as he says, but this action was immediately repudiated by the provincial executive. The work of socialists in the fight, including members of the Vancouver local, attests to the SFC's support of the Island miners. [Radical Politics, p. 95 and British Columbia Federationist, Dec. 6, 1912 and Dec. 13, 1912.]


100. Western Clarion, Aug. 30, 1913.


103. Western Clarion, Oct. 10, 1914.

104. British Columbia Federationist, July 17, 1914.

105. Ibid., July 24, 1914 and Aug. 21, 1914; Vancouver TLC Minutes, Aug. 6, 1914 and Victoria TLC Minutes, Aug. 12, 1914.


108. The Voice, March 5, 1905; Sept. 28, 1906; Nov. 6, 1908 and

109. Ibid., June 2, 1911.


115. Ibid., Dec. 19, 1913.


117. *Western Clarion*, Dec. 6, 1913 and *The Voice*, May 7, 1912.


120. Note that the spoke of accelerating not effecting the destruction of capitalism; italics added.


125. It is interesting to note that precisely the same pattern had been evident when De Leon began to lead the Socialist Labour Party to syndicalism a decade earlier. [McKee, "De Leon: A Reappraisal," pp. 275-7].


128. TLC Proceedings, 1911, pp. 73-4.

129. Vancouver TLC Minutes, Aug. 15, 1912 and Oct. 17, 1912 and British Columbia Federationist, Nov. 15, 1912 and Nov. 22, 1912.


131. Western Clarion, April 11, 1914 and The Voice, Jan. 15, 1915.

132. British Columbia Federationist, April 20, 1912; The Voice, March 8, 1912; Western Clarion, May 10, 1913 and Sept. 17, 1913 and Interview with Pritchard, Aug. 16-18, 1913.

133. Labour Gazette, XII, pp. 842-6.


135. Labour Gazette, XIV, p. 141; The Voice, July 8, 1913 and British Columbia Federationist, Nov. 21, 1913.


143. The Voice, July 25, 1913 and March 6, 1914 and Interview with Tipping, May 3, 1914.


146. British Columbia Federationist, June 20, 1913 and The Voice.


150. Bennett, Builders of British Columbia, p. 41; British Columbia Federationist, April 20, 1913; Victoria, TLC Minutes, May 1, 1912 and Hardy, Stormy Years, pp. 36-38.


154. Western Clarion, March 8, 1913; May 3, 1913 and May 23, 1914.

155. Ibid., Jan. 27, 1912 and Jan. 20, 1914.

156. Ibid., Aug. 2, 1913 and June, 1915.

157. Ibid., June 29, 1912.

158. Ibid., Nov. 22, 1913; Jan. 17, 1914 and May 9, 1914; Pritchard to the author, Nov. 15, 1971 and British Columbia Federationist, Feb. 28, 1913.


166. Bennett, Builders of British Columbia, p. 104; Labour Gazette, XV, p. 1202 and British Columbia Federationist, April 9, 1915.


Chapter VII

Western Radicals and the War: 1914 - 1917

From the outset the radicals, who constituted a significant proportion of the western labour movement's leadership, objected to the war on theoretical grounds and attempted to foster opposition to the war among their followers. Initially these efforts had little effect. When the conflict in Europe began, the workers were preoccupied with the serious unemployment which had brought such hardship to the West after 1912. It was not until mid-1915, when the job market began to expand, that the labour movement became primarily concerned with the war. By 1916 economic anxieties and hardships were producing deep dissatisfaction among the rank and file. When, at the time rising prices were coming to be really burdensome, the federal government introduced Registration, the workers' dissatisfaction was intensified and directed, by the radical leadership, against the war effort. The campaign against Registration, and then Conscription, marked the beginning of a new western militancy, and encouraged by the rank and file's restiveness, the radicals launched their most ambitious political campaign to date.

II

Beliefs long held by many leaders of the western labour movement ensured that their response, and the response of a significant proportion of their followers, to the war would be much different from that of most English-speaking Canadians. In 1906
Petitpierre introduced an anti-war resolution at the TLC convention, and in subsequent years similar resolutions were passed.\textsuperscript{1} There was a high incidence of anti-militarism among western workers, an attitude mainly resulting from the frequent use of troops in strikes. Resolutions were often passed in central bodies condemning the military, and many labour men would agree with Kingsley's view that "militarism and slavery are Siamese twins. . . . When the first slave was shackled, an armed guard had to be provided in order that the slave could not escape." There was also a conspicuous strain of anti-imperialism in the western movement. The Federationist charged that the Empire was the product of "diplomatic cunning backed whenever necessary by openhanded brigandage." This sentiment went so far as open, and at times scurrilous, attacks on the monarchy. Naturally the SPC took the lead; when Edward VII died, McKenzie observed that his passing meant only that "one more parasite is off our backs and a new one takes his place." But even the Regina trades council could refuse to participate in the celebration of George V's coronation because it was "a matter which is of no concern to the working class."\textsuperscript{3}

The western Canadian labour movement's anti-militarism became stronger and more strident in the years after 1910. The leadership forcefully spoke out on the naval question from the beginning. When Laurier began searching for a solution to the perplexing problem, Dixon, a staunch pacifist, declared, "Canada needs no navy. There is no necessity for the politicians to broaden the basis of their operations by going to sea; they can rob us just as well on dry land." McVety struck a similar note after
the Prime Minister had decided to establish a small coastal service: "the only protection required by Canadian or other workers is from exploitation in the mills, factories and mines, and when that is accomplished, the navies will no longer be required for defence or offence, for there will then be nothing to steal." Borden's proposals met a similar response. Pettipiece complained, "$35,000,000 could be used in numberless ways, but instead of that we are asked to vote it for the building of murder ships, and then we are asked to send our sons out to be made the target for another fool's bullet."

As the war clouds began to gather with the beginning of fighting in the Balkans, the western radicals strove to convince the workers that they should not become caught up in the growing national excitement, because it was the workers who bore the brunt of war. Socialists, of both parties, following the lead of their German comrade, Wilhelm Liebknecht, argued that the war scares were the product of a conspiracy by an international armaments ring.

The Clarion charged that the war fever was fostered by Krupp, Vickers and other munitions manufacturers, because "to create a demand for their commodities, . . . it is necessary that a spirit of hate should imbue the peoples of the different nations in regard to each other."

Dixon warned, "this crying War! War where there is no war is an old trick of the exploiting classes . . . to distract the attention of the workers from needed reforms at home [and] to stem the rising tide of democracy." Most ominous was Puttee's demand that the workers prevent the Canadian government from making any commitments which would entangle the country in European affairs,
because they were "a vortex into which any sane people ought to shudder at the prospect of plunging."\textsuperscript{8} The western dominated Calgary convention of the BCFL in 1911 declared that the "Capitalists of the world cause all war" and called for a general strike to prevent the outbreak of hostilities. This was in line with the position of Kier Hardie and his ILP in the Second International. Then early in 1914 the convention of the BCFL took a strong anti-war line.\textsuperscript{9}

Such developments and their commitment to the international solidarity of the proletariat allowed the western radicals to hope that the workers might be able to prevent the ruling class from plunging the world into war. Pettipiece wrote, "the growing repugnance among the workers for militarism and all that it implies is one of the most cheering signs of the times." Puttee believed that "in the future the last word with regard to the declarations of war will be spoken by the working class of the countries concerned."\textsuperscript{10}

When war came, the reaction of the radical western leadership was universally negative. Puttee asked, "from the workers' point of view what quarrel have we with the workers of Germany, or they with us?" And to his rhetorical question he answered, "none, absolutely none . . . then what is all this hullabaloo about patriotism and the flag." Because they had no reason to fight, the workers should "fold arms and do nothing."\textsuperscript{11} To the Federationist the war was a "miserable muddle" caused by "certain kings, princes, politicians, financiers and other international scoundrels."\textsuperscript{12} The Executive Board of District 18 officially adopted an "anti-war policy" and continued the real fight with the operators.\textsuperscript{13}
The response of the SPC was predictable. The Clarion announced, "inasmuch as all modern wars have their origin in the disputes of the international capitalist class for markets in which to dispose of the stolen products of labor, or to protect themselves in the possession of the markets they already have, the motive of the anticipated struggle in Europe is of no real interest to the international working class." Because "the proletariat has no country," the workers must not be caught up in the war spirit: "that man is a patriot who would abolish class rule, with its slums and preventible diseases and unemployment and low wages and long hours; the true patriot is one who is true to his class." Because of its commitment to the International, because of the unusually strong pacifism of many of its members and because of its multinational nature, the SDP was loudest in its condemnations during the early months of the war. The party's executive denounced the conflict as a capitalist affair in which the workers should take no part and immediately inaugurated a propaganda campaign against the war. The Winnipeg General Committee announced, "we are indifferent whether our masters are English, American or German capitalists."  

For a time, however, the radicals also saw signs of hope in the war. Coming as it did on the heels of world-wide depression, the conflict seemed to represent the death throes of capitalism and, thus, to conform to Marx's grand model. To the SPC the war was "a fundamental and inevitable part of a world process." Lestor declared, "it is the beginning of the Social Revolution. . . . The war of the world will give us the Co-operative Commonwealth."
The CWP took a similar view; a member of the party in Vancouver wrote, "the European tragedy now opening up is to be the preliminary act in the world-wide social revolution [and] will usher in an era of peace and transform slaves and their keepers into free and useful citizens."17 Even Pattee initially believed that ultimate good would come to the workers as a result of European holocaust: "there is only one bright spot in this war and that is the fact that the terrible death roll, suffering and devastation will result in democracy rising in its might and declaring that there will be no more wars."18 Such pronouncements would continue for some time, but the hope soon faded and only the horror remained.

At the TUC convention of 1915 a Winnipeg delegate attempted to have the Congress stand by its 1914 resolution and call a general strike to stop the war, but the convention rejected this. Rather, while decrying war in the abstract, the TUC took the position that the conflict was not one "of Great Britain's choosing" and, therefore, pledged its support to the Empire in its time of need.19

Some western radicals also had believed that the International would be able to stop the war but this hope too soon faded. On the eve of May Day, 1915 Pattee observed dryly that celebration of the proletariat's international festival would have to be postponed, because "the workers are all too busy killing each other."20 To the SPC the collapse of the International was, in large measure, a vindication of its decision not to affiliate with the organization. The Clarion observed, "the diplomatists of capitalist Europe caught the International napping... The strength of the European movement has been purely nominal and in
the hour of need its solidarity evaporated into thin air." A much different reaction came from the SDF. The party "sorrowfully admitted that socialists had been "utopian" to believe that the International could prevent the outbreak of war. But, as Arthur Beech said, simply because "socialism has projected its ideals farther ahead than its organization," there were not grounds upon which the doctrine could be "ridiculed and condemned." 22

The initial response of most of the rank and file to the war was different than that of the radicals. Photographs of the German cruiser Leipzig loading scab-dug coal from Vancouver Island at the Western Fuel Company's bunkers in San Francisco harbor did not increase the patriotism of the average workman. And to him the entente with Russia, long hated by the British working class, was highly distasteful. 23 Some unions took explicit anti-war positions. In August, 1914 the Winnipeg boilermakers called upon all workers to act together to force peace. When it met early in 1915, the convention of UMW's District 13 condemned the war and declared that the workers of the world had "no quarrel whatsoever with one another." 24 The majority of western workers, however, either accepted the war as a simple aspect of their lives or responded to the country's call by enlisting. Patriotism was undoubtedly the basic motivation for the large number of British immigrants in the West who joined the colours. But workers enlisted for other reasons as well. In some cases they were forced to do so by employers inspired by more than the usual amount of war fever. British Columbia Electric, for example, included in the pay envelopes of single men a notice reading, "Your King and Country need you -
An even greater inducement for enlisting in 1914 and 1915 was what came to be called "hunger-scrifion"; jobless men joined the army in order to feed themselves and their families. A significant number of the eastern European labourers, starving on the line of construction of the Hudson Bay railway, joined the CEF. In Edmonton recruits were served a meal immediately after they underwent their medical examination. When he appeared at the meeting of the Winnipeg trades council in uniform, a former delegate self-consciously explained that he might "just as well fight in Belgium for [my] bread as to fight it in Winnipeg."*

When the conflict in Europe became their major preoccupation, western workers manifested an active concern about post-war economic dislocation. Given their recent experience, this was natural. The severe depression which followed the Boer War had been turned into the memory of the British working class, and as a result, labour feared worse unemployment would follow the war than had preceded it. "One of the first big problems which will affect the workers after the war is over will be that of unemployment," Pettipiece told his readers. He went on to draw the proper implications: "if anything is done it will have to be by the workers themselves refusing to be pushed aside as being of no further interest when 'Your King and Country Need You' no longer." In the mines of British Columbia and Alberta the workers seemed to be faced with the threats which they had known in peace-time now intensified under the guise of war requirements. Asians and eastern Europeans, enemy aliens,
competed with British-born workman for jobs. The Federationist charged: "for every man who enlists for overseas service an 'alien enemy' or an Oriental takes his place in the industrial world." In the Crow's Nest Pass, miners more concerned with job security than the war effort struck to enforce demands that enemy aliens be interned and thus taken out of the labour market. The changing patterns of industry caused by the war were also disturbing to the workers. They uneasily noted the large numbers of women who entered the labour force and became more concerned when their leaders told them that the capitalists would not return to more costly male labour after the war. Concern turned into alarm when the Salvation Army announced its intention to send thousands of British war widows to western Canada. But the greatest potential threat to the job security of the worker was, as Pritchard liked to point out in the editorial columns of the Clarion, the veteran. Because the returning men could underbid trade unionists by the amount of their military pension, they threatened to create a very real problem for labour. To avoid this, the Alberta Federation of Labour demanded that the country provide generously for the men who had fought for it. The threat which returned men represented to trade unionists seemed to be dramatically demonstrated when early in 1916 disabled veterans were used to break a strike of Calgary theatre projectionists. The incident caused grave alarm across the West. In an official circular the Calgary trades council charged that "many returned soldiers evidently do not appreciate the value of organized effort to maintain conditions of employment." By the beginning of 1917 the western labour movement was actively engaged.
in a search for a means whereby the impact of post-war unemployment might be reduced. But this search did nothing to allay the anxiety of the worker.

Of more immediate concern to the workers than post-war unemployment was the cost of living, mainly the cost of food. In its first issue after the outbreak of war The Voice had expressed concern about high prices and the possibility of war-time profiteering. At the same time, the Vancouver trades council urged, with "grave alarm", the prospect of price increases and demanded that the federal government act to prevent these. As it turned out, federal policies intended to control the war-time economy received only criticism from the western labour movement. This is not surprising in light of the fact that food prices in Canada increased by 65 per cent between August, 1914, and December, 1917. By 1916 the labour press was devoting a great deal of attention to rapidly rising prices. The Federationist complained, "never [was] the price of [necessities] so high, and in comparison never was the purchasing power of the producing class so low as at present. Not within the memory of living man was the purchasing power of an average day's wage so little." There was no doubt in the minds of labour leaders as to the cause of the increased prices: it was profiteering. Because they refused to regulate the economy as had been done in Britain and Australia, Borden and his colleagues were guilty of complicity. "The government allows the gamblers and trusts to boost the price of the necessities of the people while the so-called 'representatives' of the people are utterly desirous to the needs of the people," charged Rutte.

Most scholars agree that wages did not keep pace with
prices, and a recent study of several occupational groups in Winnipeg demonstrates how precipitous the decline in real wages was for some workers. By 1916, increased prices were causing hardship for workers across the West, and some labour leaders began making private representations to government for relief. The Victoria trades council informed Borden that the decline in real wages was "making it impossible for the worker and his family to exist." In the summer of 1917 a conference of international unions concluded that Canadian workers were experiencing a "serious depression of their standard of living occasioned by the increase in the price of necessities of life."

This situation naturally resulted in demands for wage increases. In 1915 the Winnipeg trades council, on behalf of the machinists, began a campaign to have a fair wage system established in the munitions industry, and this was taken up by other western central bodies. The Voice branded as "clearly an unpatriotic attitude" Borden's reluctance to regulate munitions production. In a blundering attempt at compromise the federal government made the hated IDI Act applicable to industries which produced war material, and western labour opinion was outraged. The Vancouver trades council charged that by this action Borden had given "the profit mongers a legislative handicap over those who do the wealth producing." Significantly the council also denounced the TLC executive's willingness to accept this step, and the Federationist warned Congress president J. C. Watters that he could not sacrifice labour interests to what appeared to be the national interest, because the westerners would "stand for no side-stepping and..."
Certainly many of the rank and file in western Canada were not prepared to subordinate their wage demands to war necessities. During 1916 inflationary pressures resulted in an increase in trade union membership and the movement recovered from the drastic effects of the pre-war depression. The following year was characterized by a large number of strikes; time lost was four times greater than in any of the three previous years. More than one million man-days were lost in Canada, and the West accounted for 86 per cent of the total. Major disputes occurred in Vancouver, Calgary, Edmonton and Winnipeg. But it was a series of strikes which began late in 1916 in the coal fields of the Crow's Nest Pass that resulted in the greatest time loss and best reflected the prevailing discontent.

Although the federal government, influenced by the P.F.M.T., believed that a general strike was imminent, and considered taking "direct steps" to force the men back to work, the strikes were no more than the miners' response to economic conditions. The Voice correctly attributed the disputes in the coal fields, and elsewhere in the West, to the high cost of living and warned Borden to take steps to reduce prices or face serious consequences.

Labour's militancy and its reluctance to participate in the war enthusiasm of the country was also caused, in part, by its fear of curbs on civil liberties. Acts of repression did occur which kept this fear alive and brought storms of protest from labour. In the autumn of 1916 a German pacifist who worked in the mines of the Crow's Nest Pass was interned for making allegedly seditious statements in a secret UMW meeting. Alarmed at the apparent
infiltration of the meeting as much as by the government's action, the Vancouver trades council despatched a circular to western central bodies calling for massive protests. The Victoria trades council condemned the arrest as "outrageous." The convention of District 18, held in February, 1916, denounced the action against one of its members as "sinister and despicable." 43 A more spectacular incident occurred the following year. In mid-1915 John Reid, an SFC organizer, was arrested in the Red Deer area for making seditious speeches. Taking up the fight, the party sent Joe Knight to the scene who, after brief investigation, announced: "John Reid is not on trial - it is the Socialist movement." After what the SFC branded as a "staged" trial, Reid was sentenced to fifteen months imprisonment. In an official circular issued by the Dominion executive, the socialists charged that this "barbarous treatment" had been meted out to Reid because of his political beliefs; to substantiate this, the executive cited the apparent freedom with which Bourassa and Lavergne made anti-German statements. The Federationist's Michel correspondent reported that Reid's conviction was "causing a good deal of discussion among the miners." Western indignation caused the TLC to take up the case, and under concerted labour pressure, the Dominion government suspended Reid's sentence in May, 1916. 44

By the beginning of 1916 the Dominion Police and military intelligence had made complaints to the Chief Press Censor about the Federationist and the Clarion. The Censor, Ernest J. Chambers, cautioned both papers to remain within the guidelines of press conduct, The editors were quick to publicize these warnings. Pettipiece
observed that press censorship demonstrated "the necessity of covering up [the war's] disgusting details, if those who pay the cost of the bloody game are to be kept keyed up to the necessary pitch of enthusiasm and patriotic fervor to ensure the continuation of their payments." When it met early in 1917, the Alberta Federation of Labour's convention denounced the government's "attack on the principle of a free press."\(^5\)

Probably the most serious blow struck against the radicals before 1917 was not an official one. "When the war came the Social Democratic Party was bust wide open," recalls Tipping. The war spirit made this "a time of chaos" for the SDF with its reputation for pacifism and its mainly European membership. With many of its members interned as enemy aliens or in billets, the party was badly disrupted in Winnipeg, its stronghold in the West, and declined in importance.\(^6\) In July, 1916 such developments caused J. J. Farmer, later leader of the Manitoba CCF, to decry "the growing spirit of Prussianism in this supposedly free and democratic country." Some reaction was paranoid; Joe Clarke, a radical Edmonton lawyer, feared that the warring nations were about to declare a "brief armistice to allow the armies to put down domestic criticism by ruthlessly slaughtering their own non-combatants, women, children and old men."\(^7\)

The war dealt a severe blow to the Canadian labour movement. In addition to economic conditions, enlistments resulted in a sharp decline in trade union membership during 1914 and 1915. For example, Rigg reported to the Winnipeg trades council that "several" affiliates lost 25 per cent of their membership due to enlistments while the plumbers lost 50 per cent.\(^8\) But more important than
numerical losses was the decline in stature that the labour movement suffered during the war years. In other Allied countries, governments recognized the importance of the trade unions. This was not done in Canada until the last year of the war and then only in a bungling fashion. Avoidable blunders were regularly made; for example, recruiting posters did not carry the union label. Borden's great failure was his refusal to invite union leaders into the councils of the nation as they had been invited in Britain and would be in the United States. Even on those issues which were vital to its interests, labour was ignored. The failure bred resentment. The Voice described the slight as "humiliating." The Federationist demanded a change: "it's about time the Borden government took the workmen of Canada into its confidence... If wage-workers are such an important factor in the war game, why should they not be consulted as to the conduct of national affairs?"

Also disturbing to the radical leadership was the tendency on the part of many workers to place nation before class. Percy Chew peremptively described the problem: "the position of the working class in the war is anomalous. It envolves [sic], on the one hand, the acceptance of ruling class ideas about the war and nationality... and on the other, a struggle to retain customs and prejudices firmly implanted by the exigencies of the class struggle." The workers who enlisted, some 26,000 by the end of 1917, became soldiers or veterans first and trade unionists second. This naturally was a source of concern to many western leaders. Hoop observed, "no matter how 'red' you are when the military band passes, the primeval instincts are aroused; a great majority of the men
overseas have developed the master class mind." Even some of those workers who remained at home tended to place the war effort before the objectives of the labour movement. Among this group the leadership saw an unfortunate tendency to co-operate with capitalists and warned, "we must fight the same employers after the war as before." Since August 1916 the Federationist admitted, there had been a "falling away from the gospel of class activity for class emancipation."

For a movement which depended upon group consciousness and hoped to achieve class solidarity, this was a situation fraught with danger. The Canadian Annual Review noted that the rank and file was willing to subordinate "the cherished fruits of agitation and organization... to imperative war necessities" but saw no such willingness on the part of the leadership of the movement. Western labour leaders were unprepared to forfeit the limited gains which they had made in the past to what were regarded as national priorities. In a 1916 Labour Day message Rigg said, "this labor movement is the biggest thing in history; infinitely bigger and more momentous than the great war in Europe." Western leaders quickly denounced anything that smacked of sacrifice to war necessities.

When it learned that the TLC was considering purchasing Victory Bonds, the Vancouver Trades Council indignantly protested. Similarly, the Patriotic Fund regularly came under fire. Various central bodies demanded that the Dominion assume responsibility for veterans' and soldiers' dependants, because in Butter's words, "this is a monopoly country - that the soldiers have defended; therefore let the monopolists pay the wages due." When the labour market began to
tighten in 1916, the Federationist told workers to disregard patriotic considerations and take advantage of their enhanced bargaining position. "With the number of available men reduced to somewhere near the number of jobs in B.C. the industrial outlook is somewhat brighter than for three years past and no union man left in the province should hesitate to make the best use of this opportunity to regain some of the lost ground. . . . Labor should proceed to help itself." 57

Virtually all official labor opinion was anti-war. Even the Saskatchewan executive of the TUE could say, "nothing is gained by [war] except a huge debt which for generations to come will be a heavy burden to the workers." 58 The attitude of the radical leadership in Winnipeg and British Columbia was much stronger. The war was consistently and simply portrayed as evil. To The Voice it was "a frightful disease of the social body caused by ignorance and superstition . . . [which] makes us forget sweet reason and pin our faith to the instincts that we derive from the jungle and the swamp." In October, 1915 the organ of the Winnipeg trades council called upon the Allies to sue for peace, because "it is time this crime against humanity ended." 59 To speak of the abuses of war, the Federationist argued, was akin to talking of "the foulness of tuberculosis or the beauties of leprosy." The paper asked, "Is wholesale slaughter a commendable thing? Are ruined homes, broken-hearted women, orphaned children, grey-haired sonless fathers, so many consummations devoutly to be wished?" 60

It followed logically that the workers should take no part in the war. The SPC, which was most outspoken in its
demands of the conflict, did not hesitate to adopt this position. Lefeaux expressed the attitude of his comrades very well: "I have no property in the wealth or in the means of wealth production of any country, so why should I sacrifice my life to defend that in which I have no stake?... To me war is neither right nor wrong; being a quarrel between those who own all the means of producing the necessities of life, I have no interest in it." So strong was the party's conviction that the workers should take no sides in the war that it actually regulated Kingsley when he wrote an article in the Clarion which appeared to be critical of Germany.61 Other radicals were not, however, as unequivocal as the SPC as to the part the worker should take in the war. The Prince described as "a dangerous fallacy" the contention that the outcome of the war should be a matter of indifference to labour. The paper argued that, while Britain did not exemplify "the pure spirit of democracy, she nevertheless realizes more of the democratic principle in her national and imperial administration than Germany does."62 Similarly, Pettipiece, despite his long-standing pacifism and his horror at the war, found it difficult to accept the possibility of Allied defeat with equanimity. Consequently, he easily came under the now-quixotic influence of Kingsley who, like some American socialists, considered it essential that "semi-feudal" Germany be crushed by the advanced capitalist states of western Europe in order that history's onward march to the Co-operative Commonwealth be expedited. After Kingsley joined the Federationist in 1916 as editorial writer, the organ of the Vancouver trades council and the BCFL argued, for a time, that the workers should support the war
effort, but on their own terms, so as to speed the revolution. 63

IV

Early in August, 1916 the Borden Government passed an
Order-in-Council authorizing the appointment of a National Service
Board "with a general power of supervision over recruiting as it
affected industries and labour." R. B. Bennett was named Director-
General in October, and during the following month plans for an
inventory of Canadian manpower were developed. Late in November
Bennett announced his intention to "determine the manner in which
men can better serve the nation at this time, whether in a military
or industrial capacity." This was to be achieved by a postal survey
in which every male citizen in Canada was to supply certain infor-
mation. 64 The program became known as Registration.

These developments alarmed western Canadian labour-men.
They regarded Registration as but the prelude to conscription, and
they had been verily opposed to the concept of compulsory
military service from the beginning of the war. They had watched
with a growing sense of disquiet the introduction of first
registration and then conscription in Britain. When enlistments
began to fall off in 1916 and various schemes were put forward to
induce men to join the Army, labour leaders became even more uneasy.
The Winnipeg trades council snubbed requests for support from the
Local Citizen's Recruiting League and District 18's annual
convention denounced patriotic firms which pressured their employees
to enlist. 65 The intensified recruiting campaign also came in for
criticism. "Big hulking and uncouth ruffians in uniform halting,
soliciting and bulldozing people upon the public streets or shallow-pated and impudent creatures in skirts attempting to pin white feathers upon male-passersby, are by no means displays calculated to appeal to the patriotism of possible warriors," lectured Pettigrew. During the spring and summer of 1916 leading labour-men across the West repeatedly announced that they would not tolerate conscription.

Only when faced with registration did the western labour movement's objections to conscription become fully defined and articulated. The Federationist stated, "a Labour movement can seriously threaten in any country that possesses a military establishment based on conscription," therefore, registration was advocated by all of those interests that have their share of exploitation fastened in the flesh of the workers and that fallen upon the profit sucked from their blood and sweat." In a less flamboyant manner The Voice observed, "a civilian can make a contract ... but not a soldier." The westerners were appalled to conscription because they believe it means the destruction of collective bargaining, the very foundation of the trade union movement. In addition, they charged that "the government has not shown a disposition to exact from capital sacrifices equal to those demanded from labour," and called for a more equitable distribution of the burdens of war through the conscription of wealth.

Early in December Borden and Bennett undertook a speaking tour to enlist the support of the country for registration. The tour, however, aggravated rather than allayed the fears of western labour-men and only hardened their opposition to registration. In
Winnipeg the Prime Minister and his colleague were given a very cool reception, and The Voice commented that the Government had no right to ask the people to make further sacrifices until it began acting in a responsible and patriotic manner. Apparently disturbed by this reception, Bennett wrote J. S. Woodsworth asking for his "active assistance and cooperation." On the coast the authorities made arrangements to have some trade unionists speak in favour of Registration. But this had little effect; the workers in British Columbia were in "a sullen and critical mood." Representatives of the BCFL and the trades councils of New Westminster, Vancouver and Victoria met with the government party on December 15. The Labour representatives demanded an assurance that conscription would not follow Registration, but this Borden refused to give. As a result, the delegation condemned the Government's "futile and ineffectual methods." In Calgary Borden and Bennett were similarly repulsed; after a meeting with the Prime Minister on December 18, the Calgary trades council issued a statement denouncing Bennett and "Irrational Service." Borden's reception in Winnipeg, Vancouver, and Calgary effectively demonstrated the mood of western labour.

While the Federationist saw in this "a veritable rainbow of promise," H. H. Stevens, the Conservative member for Vancouver, was alarmed. During the western tour, and possibly because of labour reaction to it, Borden arranged a meeting with the TLC Executive. The meeting took place on December 27. The Prime Minister explained that registration had been instituted to "render unnecessary any resort to compulsion." However, despite demands from the Executive, he refused to guarantee that conscription would not be
introduced. "I hope that conscription may not be necessary, but if it should prove the only effective method to preserve the existence of the State and of the institutions and liberties which we enjoy, I should consider it necessary, and I should not hesitate to act accordingly." Borden also rejected the principle of the conscription of wealth claiming that the existing tax structure provided an equal distribution of the burdens of war. The Prime Minister believed that this meeting would be "productive of good results." Despite their apparent failure, the following day the TLC Executive recommended that all members of affiliates complete and return the Registration cards, and by implication endorsed the government plan. This action enraged the radicals in the West. Earlier in the year the Congress Executive had proposed a general strike to prevent the introduction of conscription. This had been a grievous tactical error because even some of the most conservative elements of the western movement had responded favourably to the proposal, and now the Congress seemed to be making a humiliating surrender. Increasingly western radicals would regard the TLC's war policy as cowardly and submissive.

The western labour movement was certainly unprepared to adopt the course recommended by the Congress Executive. Winnipeg took the lead in the anti-Registration fight. At a meeting on December 21 the trades council declared itself "definitely and emphatically" opposed to Registration and recommended that the membership of affiliates refuse to sign the cards. An Anti-Registration League was established, with the support of the "EDP and was instructed to begin propaganda work. On December 24 the
League held a rally which 4,000 people attended. The crowd gave the Manitoba Director of the National Service Board, "a very poor hearing" when he attempted to defend Registration. But Dixon was cheered when he declared, "National Service is the first step toward compulsion. If there are justice and liberty at home, there will be no need of conscription. Compulsory military service has been decided in Australia, and it will be in Canada if it is put to a vote." Then, on the second day of the new year, an emergency meeting of the Winnipeg trades council was held to consider the T&L Executive's action. The meeting reaffirmed the recommendation not to sign the cards and officially censured Watters and his colleagues.77

The reaction was the same across the West. The Victoria trades council denounced Registration as "only a prelude to conscription" and charged that the T&L Executive had betrayed the workers.78 The Federationist claimed that Borden had "pulled the wool over the eyes" of the Executive. On January 4, the Vancouver trades council advised the membership of its affiliates not to sign the cards because the government had refused to conscript wealth and national basic industries.79 Joe Knight of Edmonton told the Alberta Federation of Labour's convention that Watters and his colleagues had demonstrated "their inability to act in accordance with the interests of the working class."80 Even the Regina trades council called upon all workers to join "the great fight" against Registration, because it was "but part of a programme designed to place the working power of the nation more completely under the control of that despicable group of men who are now feasting on the
nation's suffering, and 'fattening on our soldiers' blood'.”

The Calgary Trades Council declared that it would only support a scheme "which has for its object the mobilization and use of the Natural Resources and Utilities of this country for the direct benefit of the State" and demanded a special national convention, because "Labour is very much at variance throughout the Dominion" on the question of Registration.

There was not, in fact, "such variance throughout the Dominion, 'only two basic positions', the West and that of the East. In Eastern Canada the recommendation of the M.P. had met with general approval, but in the West it had failed". 

criticism almost bordering on open revolt." Watters believed that this reaction had only been manufactured by the parties. He described the stand of the Winnipeg Trades Council as "polarized" and accused Maloney, president of the C.I.F., of sowing "the germ of sectional differences in the minds of the workers." But Watters' analysis of the situation was invalid; the basic difference in outlook between the East and the West was again emerging. The difference at this point was manifested in the West's reaction to Registration. As the opposition to national war policies increased, the dichotomy became more pronounced, and its implications were profound.

The culmination of the western campaign against Registration was the convention of the British Columbia Federation of Labour, which was held at Revelstoke between January 29 and February 1. The Congress Executive was officially censured, and the Federation took the position that "the workmen of Canada are quite
willing to co-operate in any scheme of genuine national service, but refuse to be party to any arrangement by which the government hope to turn large number of workers over for exploitation to the profiteering manufacturers of this country."

Significantly the convention decided to defend and support any member of an affiliate arrested for non-compliance with the terms of Registration. Even more significant was the change in leadership. The convention, reflecting the temper of the movement, chose to replace McVety with Naylor, a revered veteran of Island impossibilism and a violent opponent of the war. Indeed, almost all the new slate of officers were "left-wing radicals." Next the convention turned to political matters. After they had declared their lack of confidence in the Borden Government, the delegates enthusiastically passed a Naylor resolution calling for the establishment of a political party by the Federation. 

The BCFL's stand on political action demonstrated a growing tendency in this direction in the West. Both the Calgary and Regina trades councils had passed resolutions calling for political initiatives. The latter body demanded Borden's resignation and the establishment of "a National Government in which labor will have adequate representation." The western labour journals had also begun to argue that the Government no longer had a mandate; on January 5 the Federationist remarked, "it is seriously a matter of question whether that precious body has any lawful excuse for its existence."
On May 18, 1917, the Prime Minister informed the House of Commons that conscription was imperative and legislation would be introduced. The reaction of western radicals was immediate and violent. In May 25, "The Voice" declared that "it smacks of Russia, Prussia and Hun-dom at large" and went on to accuse the Government of being responsible for the decline in voluntary enlistment: "if everything had been clean and just and above board at Ottawa there would have been no possible excuse for attempting to inflict conscription on Canadians." In behalf of the SPEL, Hayter called for opposition: "suffer slaves, if our masters force us to fight let us fight for our own liberty and cast from our limbs the chains of bondage." The Alberta executive of the SPC fumed, "says Premier Borden: 'We must fulfill our promise!' Our promise! Whose promise? That the national war broke out no opportunity has been given the people to express themselves." Robeddy Kars, organ of the Ukrainian Social Democrats, had no doubt what the opinion of the people would have been had they been consulted: "if the nation would have it derive the affair of conscription, it would never be instituted in Canada. Therefore the deceiver's of the nation did not permit a nation-wide vote on the Borden measure. Western radicals took the stand that, because its mandate had run out, the Government did not have the constitutional authority to impose conscription and called for an immediate election.

Across the West, labour meetings were held to condemn conscription and the Government. As a result, Borden was deluged by petitions and resolutions from central bodies and locals demanding
the conscription of wealth before the conscription of manpower and an election. 87

In Vancouver the trades council and the SPC co-operated in their opposition to Conscription, and this resulted in a resolve that "the organized labor movement will fight to a finish."

Interest in the general strike revived during this period, and A. S. Wells, Secretary of the British Columbia Federation of Labour, threatened," in the event of conscription passing, the B.C. Federation will ... issue a 'down tools' order throughout the entire province." Kingsley told workers that it was their responsibility to preserve democracy by opposing Conscription, "even if you have to go as far as the Russians brothers went." 88

Despite these rather flamboyant pronouncements, however, the SPC dominated the Vancouver campaign, and the impossibilists were still primarily committed to political initiatives. The official position of the BCFL was that, although active opposition was desirable, it should "be directed by reason and common sense" and that political action represented labour's best weapon. 89

Developments in Winnipeg paralleled those on the coast. On May 31 the trades council formally condemned the Government's policy and called for a referendum on compulsory military service. An Anti-Conscription League composed of "Trade Unionists, Socialists, conscientious objectors to military service, and those who on general democratic grounds look upon enforced service as a violation of personal liberty" was formed and, with the endorsement of the council, began organizational and propaganda work. 90 But soldiers and veterans prevented the League from achieving much success.
When it tried to hold meetings, the speakers were shouted down or attacked and beaten by men in uniform. Conditions became so explosive that the police refused the League permission to hold public meetings. The city's labour papers were outraged. The Voice lectured, "It seems strange and ironical that free speech, the basic theme of democracy, should be imperilled and condemned by those who say that they are fighting to preserve democracy from the attack of an overwhelming autocracy." Echoes noted with restrained: "the excesses [sic] of the soldiers and all kinds of dark-false-patriotic reactionary elements are tainting our general character. . . . Reaction raises its monstrous [sic] head again company with militarism oppresses everything that is against the cultivation of democracy." Not only Winnipeg labour-men denounced the actions of the veterans, however; criticism came from such different sources as Sir Clifford Sifton and the Western Clarion which described the culprits as "patriotic lunatics." Although there was talk of a general strike in Winnipeg, the leadership, as on the coast, pushed for political action. Little called for a new party composed of "all those who have always been forced to pay tribute to special privilege and capital."  

Although it reflected the old fears, the opposition to Conscription was characterized by a new strength and a new determination. Labour leaders claimed that the weight of Conscription, which had only become necessary because of government incompetence and corruption, would fall most heavily upon the working class, the class which had borne the greatest burden throughout the war. The workers would not accept this, and the radical leadership
demanded a more equitable distribution of the burden which was to be achieved through the conscription of wealth. On May 23 The Voice presented what was to become the working definition of wealth conscription:

What is meant by conscription of wealth is something much different from general taxation. There are many people who have great hoards of cash or liquid assets, hoards so large that they can never spend them all except by insane prodigality. If the state is in danger these hoards are, in danger of being lost. If the danger is so great and so impending as to call for conscription of men's living bodies in order to save the country then these hoards of cash and liquid securities should be utilized to pay the cost of the war.

But western leaders were opposed to conscription mostly because they believed it meant the death of trade unionism. They had always feared conscription was intended to destroy collective bargaining, and now they believed their worst fears were to be realized. Industrial conscription would be introduced, Labour's anxieties were greatly increased by the demands made by many middle and upper class Canadians that the federal government prevent unions from disrupting the war effort by keeping the workers at their jobs under military discipline. The Federationist declared, "a new Arcadia is looming in sight upon the horizon of our harried and worried employers of labour"; in this "Arcadia" all men would work for $1.10 a day, a soldier's pay. But though opposition to conscription was essentially economic, it certainly had doctrinal overtones. The Voice declared, "we take particular exception to being forced to take active part in any war between sections of the master class in which we would be compelled to shoot down and be shot down by other members of the International Working Class."
The leadership believed that they must have representation in Parliament to protect the movement from Borden's war policies, and therefore, as the fight against Conscription developed, steps were taken to achieve this. The Federationist declared, "the thing to do right now is for the workers to come together for concerted political action against their present masters and their accursed institution of slavery and torture." When it became clear that an election would be held, the radicals were jubilant, because it seemed that the times were propitious for political action. By the middle of August the Winnipeg trade council was considering what districts in the city it should contest. In Calgary labour had also decided to enter the political arena; William Irvine's Journal, The Nailer, announced in the middle of August that the newly formed Labour Representation League would nominate candidates. And on September 1 the British Columbia Federation of Labour committed the coastal movement to political action.

VI

The labour movement's truculence in the summer of 1917 caused much disquietude. And the federal government, which was coming under increased pressure because of the activities of trade unionists generally, and the westerners particularly, was anxious to improve a situation for which it was in part responsible. Shortly after Conscription had been announced some Conservatives suggested to Borden that the government send a delegation of trade unionists to France to inspect conditions at the front. He accepted the proposal as a valid means by which some labour support could be
Crothers approved of the scheme because the returning
diplomat "would make such a report as would tend to reconcile
labour in Canada to some of their actions which they are now opposing."
The Labour Minister submitted the names of men who might compose such
a delegation; significantly, not the westerners was included.
Apparently the delegation was never sent; this might be explained by
the fact that Leighen saw certain difficulties in the plan.
Another scheme to gain Labour's confidence was also under consideration
during the summer. In January 1917, E. Robertson, a Vice-President
of the Order of Railroad Telegraphers, had been appointed to the
Senate in an unsuccessful attempt to placate the trade-union
movement. Then in response to Labour criticism and demands for
representation in the Government, Borden began canvassing Robertson
for a cabinet post. He was not taken into the Government until
the late autumn, however, and by that time the small role which the
appointment might have had was lost. "Very shortly, "not very briefly," a
few railroad telegraphers knew him."
Despite their concern, then,
Borden and his colleagues were unable to quiet the protests of trade
anarchists, and by the end of the summer Bennett was forced to admit
that the situation in the West was "more or less acute." 103

Certainly this was the view of Canada's various security
agencies. In 1917 the RNWR, military intelligence and the Treas
Censor began a systematic surveillance of radical organizations; the
Regina headquarters of the Police functioned as a clearing-house
where dossiers on several hundred western radicals were prepared. 104
This clearly was the result of two developments in the year, the
Russian Revolution and Labour's opposition to Conscription. The
latter, which demonstrated the restless mood of the workers, was the
more immediate and disquieting. Increased interest on the part of
the security agencies in radical organizations coincided almost
precisely with the beginning of the campaign against compulsory
military service. The Chief Press Censor became much more active.
While he admitted that conscription, as a political question, needed
to be fully discussed, he believed that "there is a limit, on which
people say that the war is none of our business, they are
inquestionably using treasonable expressions which should be
stopped." The Government, however, believed that it would be
"disastrous" to suppress any paper which argued against
conscription. 106 Stil1 Chambers was profoundly disturbed by the
editorial policies of each of the Labour papers. In mid-July he
had the offices of The Messenger, a violently anti-war sheet,
published irregularly by the CDP in Victoria, raided by local police
and military intelligence forces. By the autumn he had recommended
the suppression of the Federationist and the Clarion. 106 Chambers
took these steps because "I strongly believe that the developments
along extreme Socialist lines in the part of several newspapers
in Canada is due to enemy support." 107 Col. F. E. Davis, Director
of Military Intelligence, harboured similar suspicions when he
ordered a crackdown on the IWW in July, 1917. He told Sir Percy
Sherwood, Commissioner of Dominion Police, "It is thought that the
'Industrial Workers of the World' (I.W.W.) may become a serious
menace, and there is reason to suppose they are being used and
financed by German agents." 108 Davis' fears of an IWW invasion of
Canada were clearly the product of the prevailing war psychology.
Reports of Wobbly plans to burn crops or disrupt the draft, supplied by American red-hunters or farmers disgruntled at a tight labour market, regularly proved to be totally without foundation when investigated by MNWMP agents. But it was a sign of the times that immigration officials maintained a constant vigil against an IWW threat which in all likelihood never existed. Domestic radicals were considered no less a threat. Mounted Police officers drove an SPC organizer out of Vegreville, Alberta with threats of jail when he tried to hold an anti-war meeting. In Winnipeg the military commander worried about socialist strength in the north end and observed, "it is . . . important that people who are fond of talking and acting in an illegal and disloyal manner and who offer or incite resistance to Conscription should be summarily dealt with."

VII

Government war policies dominated the TLC convention when it met in Ottawa late in September. From the outset it was apparent that the westerners were in a militant frame of mind and would demand more than the eastern-dominated Congress would be prepared to concede. The western leadership believed that a strong stand on Conscription was essential, and every resolution advocating organized opposition came from the West. But eastern trade unionists were not prepared to adopt a really hard line. When the Executive submitted its recommendation on Conscription, the final sectional split was assured. The recommendation read:

While the Congress cannot stultify itself to the degree
of either withdrawing or contradicting this year its firm and carefully thought out views on the question of Conscription. Still under our representative form of Government it is not deemed either right, patriotic or in the interests of the Dominion or of the Labor classes to say or do what that might prevent the powers that be from obtaining all the results that they anticipate from the enforcement of such law.

The western delegates considered this a complete surrender. They warned, "If there is no opposition to the Government we have handed over everything but our签名 to the capitalist class." The official policy of the organization, as expressed by a representative of the Alberta Federation of Labour, moved an amendment recommending that "every effort be made to force the complete conscription of wealth as an essential part of conscription for war purposes, and that the 'conscription of wealth', support be given to the principle of conscripting men for war purposes!". The Fairchild amendment was defeated 151 to 150. The Executive recommendation was carried by a vote of 134 to 31; the minority came "almost entirely from Winnipeg and were there too."

The convention's action was condemned in the West. The Voice charged that the TUC had "side-swiped and compromised." The Federationist cried, "never has a convention of alleged 'Labor representatives registered a more complete, open surrender to the minister and dangerous influence of political chicanery and reaction, than did the late convention of the Traders and Labor Congress of Canada." The organ of the BCFL believed that the convention had "proven that there is nothing at present in touch with the labor movement of the east and that of the west." It was time, Pettipiece said, that western 'workers repudiated the "servile and suicidal"
policies of the TLC. 115

Robin implies that the Congress' decision to encourage the formation of the Canadian Labour Party postponed the final split by forcing the western militants to forgo direct action for political action. 116 This view seems very difficult to accept.

After the September convention resentment in the West continued to grow, and the leadership became convinced that the difference between the two sections precluded any hope of co-operation.

For this reason the TLC's decision to encourage political action had no significant effect in the West. But even more important was the fact that westerners needed no prompting from the Congress to take political action. The leadership had been urging the workers to challenge Borjein on the political field since the end of January, and before the TLC convention met preparations were made to run candidates in nearly all the ridings which they would contest in December had been made. If the Western leaders had opposed political action before the convention, they could hardly have been turned from direct action by the convention's decision. The only two important central bodies which had opposed direct action were the British Columbia Federation of Labour and the Winnipeg Trades Council, and both had rejected general strikes as impossible before the Ottawa convention met. 117 Indeed, the realization that direct action would be impossible demonstrated the western militants' continuing commitment to political action as the primary weapon in their arsenal.

VIII

In Winnipeg the old problem of finding candidates acceptable
To all elements of the movement aid to be solved before the campaign
could proceed. In the middle of October the trays council announced
that labour candidates would contest the two newly formed seats of
Winnipeg Centre and Winnipeg North, and at that time the Conservatives
believed their labour candidate, H. A. Curry, would sweep Winnipeg North.

But there already were several candidates available in
the elections. During the past year and a bit a great deal of work
in Winnipeg North by Ed. Fuller has been accomplished, before him
the Conscription League in Winnipeg Centre. The Labour Representation
Committee realized that there candidates would have to achieve
wide support and attempted, through a series of meetings, to put
up a compromise slate. These efforts failed, however, and in
November 15 the IRP declared that it would not oppose the candidates
of "radical bodies more or less remotely allied to the labour
movement." It chose, rather, to nominate "local" and "eligible
representatives" to "show that 1 A. W. was a man and High were
contest winners for Winnipeg Centre and Winnipeg South respectively. But Ed. Fuller
Farmer protested this and the other local element. As a
result, on November 17, a meeting attended by representatives of all
the radical organizations in the city, including the IRP, emasculated
the candidate slate of local people.

The Laurier-Liberal slate nominate in Winnipeg Centre
and Winnipeg North before November 17, and on that day A. A. and Ward
were endorsed as Laurier party candidates. This was but one of the
most interesting features of labour's participation in the 1917 campaign. Two straight labour candidates on the prairies were encored
by Laurier. In July Winnipeg labour leaders had been invited to the
convention of the prairie Liberals, and although they did not attend, they were not displeased with the results. By September Laurier realized that the Manitoba Liberals would be forced to "prepare outside the official organization," and when he was informed that labour candidates would run in the two Winnipeg ridings, he suggested that his supporters co-operate with them. When the Liberal leader issued his election manifesto, which contained several planks sympathetic to trade unionists, labour acceptance of the proffered help was assured. The Voice described the manifesto as "full of wholesome truths," and Fred Dixon told Laurier, "your opposition to Conscription has encouraged many radicals who had begun to fear that democracy was doomed in Canada."

The alliance between labour and the Liberals was most definitely a marriage of convenience. Laurier's supporters were trying to conduct an election campaign with the remnants of a shattered organization, and they were compelled to capitalize on all opportunities. Winnipeg labour leaders, for their part, accepted the advantages of Laurier's support and some of the responsibilities. The Voice was the only Winnipeg paper to give the Liberal leader a good press, and when he visited the city it printed his speech in full. At the same time, however, the labour candidates realized that it was necessary for them to maintain some degree of independence; The Voice declared, "Rigg and Ward do not propose or promise to follow Laurier blindly in the event of his being returned to power." But such disclaimers did not prevent the SPC from repudiating the labour candidates for their connection with the Liberals, nor did the disclaimers prevent the Free Press.
from describing Rigg and Ward as "sugar-coated Laurierites." 125

Labour’s campaign in Winnipeg focused, of course, on
Conscription. Rigg declared, "I regard human life as the supremely
sacred thing and believe that if the state had adopted the policy
of the conscription of money, industry and natural resources, there
would be absolutely no necessity for the passing and enforcing of
any scheme to conscript men." He demanded the nationalization of
"the natural resources and the essential industries of the country"
and a referendum on Conscription. Ward warned that labour-men
were compelled to vote against the Government because industrial
conscription would be imposed immediately after a Union victory. 126

The Voice paid much attention to the cost of living, indicating the
increase in the price of various items. The paper charged that
the Union Government allowed prices to rise "to swell the bloated
purses of profiteers still larger." 127 The labour candidates also
attempted to appeal to class consciousness. The Voice described Rigg
as a "champion of Real Democracy and the rights of the common
people" and told the workers that they had "a fight on their hands"
to prevent Canada from becoming "a helpless prey to the piracy of the
big capitalists." 128

The Unionist campaign skillfully took advantage of the
basic weakness of the labour political movement - its inherent lack
of solidarity. Only "socialists of the Marxist type" were opposed
to Borden. 129 Responsible trade unionists favoured a vigorous
prosecution of the war, for, as the Free Press often noted, "Mr.
Gompers is an out and out win-the-war man." To convey the impression
that the place of patriotic trade unionists was beside Borden, the
Unionists employed men long associated with the labour movement as platform speakers. The most prominent of these was Salem Bland who advised workers that the Government's war policy offered labour the "opportunity to throw itself heart and soul into this great struggle for democracy." There can be no doubt that Bland, whose stature in the movement was great, did much to draw moderate trade unionists away from the labour candidates. T. A. Crcar believed that he did "splendid service" in support of the Union Government. In response to the appeal to class feeling, M. F. Blake, Unionist candidate in Winnipeg North, declared that there were "only two classes of voters in this election—loyal and disloyal." Some platform speakers went so far as to declare that supporters of Hogg and Ward were "anarchists and of alien sentiment." These tactics caused The Voice to assure its readers that Hogg and Ward were completely loyal and claim that "Labour is doing its part and will continue to voluntarily do its share." 

In its broad outline and general objectives the labour campaign in Saskatchewan was similar to the fight in Winnipeg. Conscription was the basic issue; economic conditions were important; internal quarrelling was evident; and the labour-men and Laurier-Liberals co-operated. But the contest in Saskatchewan displayed an aspect understandably absent in Winnipeg, co-operation between farmers and trade unionists. Labour candidates ran in three Saskatchewan ridings, Andrew MacBeth in Regina, James Casey in Saskatoon, and James Somerville in Moose Jaw. The Saskatchewan Independent Labour Party was formed in Regina on November 9 and became the only new labour party to play a
role in the campaign. Its President, Sommerville, was subsequently
nominated in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan's largest trade union centre,
and contested that seat despite the fact that the city's Labour
Representation League refused to support his candidacy. 133 In
Saskatoon Casey rejected the endorsement of the ILP and ran as the
candidate of the trades council. 134 It is interesting to note
that of the two candidates in the West offered support from a
party formed in response to the TUC call, only one accepted that
support, and he was rejected by the local organization. Also
interesting was MacBeth's nomination in Regina. On November 13 the
Labour Representation Committee nominated a candidate. But two days
later the trade unionists, in a meeting with Laurier's supporters,
rejected their own candidate and nominated MacBeth who had previously
been endorsed by the Liberals. 135

In Saskatchewan both labour and the Laurier-Liberals were
weak. Trade unions in the province had proportionately the smallest
membership in the West and had no tradition of independent political
action. J. A. Calder had controlled the Saskatchewan Liberal
organization, and when he joined the Union Government, the Laurier
loyalists were left "high and dry." In Laurier's opinion the
province was "the weakest spot from the Liberal point of view
between the two oceans." 136 Because of the weakness in both camps,
co-operation between labour and the Liberals was closer and more
open than in Winnipeg. MacBeth, of course, received the most help.
W. R. Motherwell, the provincial Minister of Agriculture spoke on
his behalf, and when Laurier was in Regina, MacBeth appeared on
the platform. 137
The labour candidates also received some support from farmers' organizations. Sydney Godwin, President of the Saskatchewan Non-Partisan League, campaigned for Somerville in Moose Jaw and J. A. Weir, a Vice-President of the United Farmers of Alberta, and a member of the Non-Partisan League, spoke on behalf of Somerville and MacBeth. However, support came only from the more radical farmers' organizations. The Saskatchewan Grain Growers were committed to the Union Government and on record as being in favour of limited industrial conscription.

All three labour candidates condemned conscription of manpower and called for the conscription of wealth. Somerville warned that if compulsory military service was imposed, it would produce "a condition of disruption which it would be impossible to heal." Casey based his campaign on discontent caused by the high cost of living and called for stringent government control of food supplies. MacBeth, in his election manifesto, promised similar action pledging to nationalize basic industries if necessary. Both MacBeth and Casey placed much emphasis on tariff reduction, reflecting, in addition to the long-felt grievance, the influence of the farmers and the Liberal party.

Even though the Saskatchewan labour candidates never constituted a threat to the Union Government, the same tactics were used against them as against Rigg and Ward. The three men were described as wild-eyed radicals who were unrepresentative of the trade union movement and as traitors. One of MacBeth's meetings was broken up by soldiers. In addition, Bland campaigned for Unionists who were opposed by labour men. These techniques were
as effective in Saskatchewan as elsewhere, and the moderate trade unionists supported the Government candidates.

Again in Alberta, the province in which labour was considered politically strongest in 1917, the broad outline of the campaign was the same. Because of labour’s reputation for strength, the Liberal Party took pains to court the movement, and in neither of the other two provinces did radical candidates receive as much Liberal help as in Alberta. A trade unionist was invited to address the convention of Laurier loyalists in Edmonton early in November. In Lethbridge the most striking example of the connection between labour and the Liberals in the whole campaign occurred. Laurier’s supporters nominated a candidate but withdrew him and endorsed Lambert Pack when the trades council nominated the latter on November 17. The Edmonton Morning Bulletin, Frank Oliver’s newspaper and the Laurier-Liberal organ in Alberta, termed labour’s entrance into politics “courageous” and claimed that trade unionists were being unduly burdened by Borden’s war policy. Prominent Laurierites campaigned for Pack and William Irvine, the labour candidate in Calgary East. The Liberals also brought in outside help. In Lethbridge Joseph Martin campaigned for Pack, while in Calgary East Irvine received the help of W. W. B. McInnis, the popular Liberal candidate in Vancouver Centre, as well as that of Martin. Irvine was on the platform in Calgary, on December 12, when Laurier advised his followers to develop “harmonious relations with organized labor.”

As in Saskatchewan there was a connection with the farmers; but in Alberta it was much stronger than in the former province.
When, on November 3, the Calgary Labour Representation League nominated William Irvine, they chose a man who had close connections with farmers' organizations, especially the Non-Partisan League. The Lethbridge trades council went even farther; Pack was a farmer. Weir, who had helped labour candidates in Saskatchewan, campaigned vigorously for Pack and Irvine. His efforts, however, caused H. W. Wood, President of the United Farmers of Alberta, to declare for Union Government, and this dealt a severe blow to the labour candidates.

The approach of Irvine and Pack to the issues of the campaign was conditioned by their peculiar position. Both condemned Conscription. Pack argued that more men, whether workers or farmers, were not needed for the war effort. Irvine explained in the Alberta Non-Partisan that he wanted "all natural resources and wealth put up to back the soldiers in the trenches." But beyond this neither candidate would go. Because of their hope for support from the farmers, the labour candidates were reluctant to introduce economic issues or class appeals into the campaign. They were forced to rely on vague theoretical statements, predicting, for example, that "a new civilization will spring into existence" when full co-operation between farmers and workers was achieved.

The Union campaign was designed, as usual, to woo the moderate trade unionists. On November 23 the Daily Herald observed, "Canadian labor surely do not wish to see Canada following in Russian footsteps, but such would be the result. . . . if the small disgruntled section of labor men who have presumed to dictate for the whole in this riding had their way." Trade unionists were
reminded that J. O'Donoghue, TLC solicitor, and Samuel Gompers were supporters of the Union Government. And the flamboyant Eye Opener continually described Irvine's supporters as anarchists and traitors. These appeals were effective; both Irvine and Pack were injured by labour desertions. 151

The strength of the SPC was great in the coal fields of Alberta's southwest corner, where the miners had already demonstrated their dissatisfaction with economic conditions by great strikes and, in the autumn of 1917, were becoming increasingly restive under the threat of approaching Conscription. 152 The party looked upon the reaction to Conscription as "a gold [sic] opportunity," and in August Jock Reid, the SPC organizer and candidate in Bow River, looked forward to an election because "we will be able to get in some propaganda at this time." 153 By the end of October the SPC had nominated, in addition to Reid, George Paton in Medicine Hat and Joe Knight in Red Deer. As was customary, Reid, Paton and Knight campaigned primarily upon the party's starkly revolutionary platform. But because of the major issue in the campaign, they based their analysis of society on the war and its implications for the proletariat. Conscription was condemned because "we object to being scientifically slaughtered in a fight in which working class interests are not involved"; therefore, Knight told the workers to refuse to serve if drafted. The working class and "the slaves of the farm," the socialists argued, had no place in this "capitalists' war": "You have only one war, and that is a continual war until you have destroyed the present foundation of society." 154

The very nature of their appeal assured only the most
marginal support. Although the Red Deer News said of Knight, "it is time to recognize him, not for a misguided theorist, but for a German soldier doing military work for Ludendorff," the press, both Unionist and Liberal, all but ignored the SPC candidates. The impossibilists' campaign caused "a wave of fear" throughout the region, and they were opposed by both farmers and trade unionists.

In Bow River a Non-Partisan League candidate ran against Reid, and labour-men in the town of Medicine Hat pledged their support to A. L. Sifton.

The campaign in British Columbia was marked by a tone which reflected the radical tradition of the labour movement in the province; but the issues were the same. The BCFL, consistent with the decision of the September convention, nominated and financed the campaigns of six candidates. Victor Midgley ran in Burrard; McVety in Vancouver South; Thomas Riggs in Kootenay East; Irvin Austin in Kootenay West; Joseph Taylor in Nanaimo, and A. S. Wells in Victoria. Pritchard contested Vancouver Centre for the SPC.

Unlike those in other western provinces, the labour candidates in British Columbia were opposed by Laurier-Liberals. There can be little doubt that it was the Liberals, and not the labour leaders, who chose not to follow the course of their prairie colleagues. When several local Liberal meetings in Kootenay West endorsed the candidacy of Austin, the Federationist published the news with great enthusiasm. But the Liberal leaders of the province were unprepared to accept even Austin, who was a member of a railway brotherhood and thus a relative moderate. One of Laurier's chief lieutenants in the province travelled to Nelson and forced the
riding association to nominate a straight Liberal candidate. This action and the provincial policy reflected the Liberal desire to endorse "responsible men," and Laurier's supporters in British Columbia could not accept the labour candidates as such.

The platform of the BCFL, which was issued on November 9, focused on Conscription and profiteering. Conscription, both military and industrial, was condemned as "a complete repudiation of all democracy, and its imposition on a people is essentially a triumph of reaction and a most sinister threat against the few remaining privileges that have been left to us out of the struggles of the past." Taylor warned the miners of Nanaimo that industrial conscription would follow a Unionist victory: "the miners will have to be exceeding [sic] prolific in the digging of coal; or else they may be forced to dig trenches." The labour candidates also argued that "no man should ever be called to fight the battles [sic] of a ruling class, at any less remuneration than that ruling class would be obliged to accord him in industrial pursuits." The cries against Conscription became more meaningful early in December when Duncan Kerr, a Vancouver trade unionist, was sentenced to two years imprisonment for non-compliance with the Military Service Act. Only when the capitalist system was destroyed would "the flow of profit into the pockets of captains of industry, lords of finance and war mongering patriots be brought to an end," the election manifesto declared. Consistent with the tone of the campaign, the candidates declared that the war was not the first responsibility of the workers, because "all wars are somehow or other fought over the differences and disputes that flow from and arise out of the robbery
of wealth producers and the distribution or division and enjoyment of the plunder so obtained. 164

The only novel technique used against the labour candidates in British Columbia was a direct appeal by Borden to the patriotism of trade unionists. This was occasioned by Government supporters who were concerned about the "very considerable industrial unrest in the province." 165 The Unionist press, most violently in Victoria, raised the conventional cry of disloyalty. In reply Midgley asked, "Does anyone want to lose the war?" 166

XI

All seventeen labour candidates went down to defeat on December 17. The only constituencies in which they made respectable showings were those which contained coal fields, reflecting the severe discontent of the miners. The leadership attributed this defeat in large part to the War Time Elections Act. Although the legislation probably had relatively little effect on the outcome of the campaign so far as the labour candidates were concerned, the belief that it did was important. During the campaign the Federationist declared that the act was "an achievement beyond compare, an achievement so atrocious, so contemptible, so low, so mean, so vile, so execrable, so repugnant to every principle and concept of common decency, as to preclude the possibility of meeting with the approval of any decent, clean-thinking and well-meaning person in the land." 167. There can be, however, no doubt as to the basic cause of the labour candidates' poor showing. Though they were angry, though they were willing to place their confidence in
radical leaders, the majority of western workers were not prepared to
desert the old parties and vote as a class. In 1917 this condition
was re-enforced by the war situation which convinced still more rank
and fileers that class loyalty must be subordinated to patriotism.
The *Federationist* observed that less than 3800 of Vancouver's 10,000
trade unionists had voted for the three labour candidates contesting
city ridings and sneered, "the blind and stupid host . . . nobly
rallied in support of its own betrayal and crucifixion upon the
cross of ruling class rapacity and rapine." In analysing the election
results The *Voice* said all that could be said: "Labor must become
class conscious before any political success will be ours." 168

But perhaps the defeat was more significant than victory
could have been. In September the BCFL convention had decided to
employ constitutional means in its attempt to gain recognition for the
labour movement in Canadian war-time society and to turn to direct
action only if the political initiatives failed. These had now
failed. After the 1917 General Election western radicals would turn
increasingly to direct action as a means of gaining their objectives.
As the economic burden became heavier for the workers they began to
listen more readily to this appeal. Within nine months of the
election there were strikes of semi-general proportions in Winnipeg
and British Columbia. During the election campaign the *Federationist*
made an observation which was to prove prophetic: "if the
constitutional opportunities afforded to press forward the demands of
democracy and progress are not seized upon and profited by, the time
will come when resort to more deadly and destructive weapons will be
made imperative." 169
Notes


4. The Voice, April 15, 1910, and Western Wage-earner, Jan. 21, 1911.


7. The Voice, Sept. 20, 1912.

8. Ibid., Dec. 13, 1912.


25. Bennett, Builders of British Columbia, p. 76.


32. The Voice, Aug. 18, 1914, and Vancouver TLC Minutes, Aug. 6, 1914.


39. Regina Trades and Labour Council, Correspondence, circular from...

40. British Columbia Federationist, April 28, 1916.


45. Chief Press Censor's Files, Vol. 272, Chambers to Sherwood, March 6, 1917; Davis to Chambers, Aug. 31, 1916; Chambers to Pettipiece, March 6, 1916; Western Clarion, Dec., 1915; British Columbia Federationist, Nov. 17, 1916 and Alberta Federation of Labor, Proceedings of the Fourth Annual Convention, [1917], p. 43.


52. British Columbia Federationist, June 1, 1917.

53. Ibid., Oct. 6, 1916.


61. Ibid., Nov. 7, 1914 and June 8, 1915 and Interview with Pritchard, Aug. 16-18, 1916.


74. Ibid., Borden to Stevens, Dec. 28, 1916.


80. Alberta Federation of Labor, Proceedings of Fourth Annual Convention, [1917], p. 41.


82. Ibid., Young to Regan, Jan. 6, 1917 and Labour Organizations in Canada, 1916, p. 43.


85. British Columbia Federationist, Jan. 12, 1917; Alberta Federation of Labor, Proceedings of Fourth Annual Convention, [1917], p. 34 and Regina Trades and Labour Council, Correspondence, circular from "Resolution Publicity Committee", Jan. 10, 1917.


87. Borden Papers, Vol. 66; this box contains a number of letters to Borden from western bodies, condemning Conscription.

88. British Columbia Federationist, June 1, 1917 and June 8, 1917.

89. British Columbia Federationist, June 1, 1917 and Pritchard to the author, Feb. 5, 1917.

90. The Voice, June 1, 1917 and June 22, 1917.

91. Ibid., June 8, 1917 and June 22, 1917 and Transcript of Interview of Jacob Penner by Roland Penner.


93. University of Manitoba, John W. Dafoe Papers, Vol. 1, Sifton to

95. Borden Papers, Vol. 213; this box contains a number of letters to Borden which advocate the industrial conscription feared by the labour movement.


97. The Voice, June 15, 1917.


101. Ibid., Vol. 219, Grain to Borden, May 30, 1917; McGillicuddy to Borden, June 2, 1917; Borden to Crothers, June 10, 1917; Crothers to Borden, June 13, 1917 and Meighen to Borden, June 23, 1917.

102. TLC Proceedings, 1917, p. 36; Borden Papers, Vol. 182, Godfrey to Borden, July 6, 1917 and British Columbia Federationist, Nov. 9, 1917.

103. Borden Papers, Vol. 82, Bennett to Clark, Sept. 1, 1917.

104. The registers to the Commissioners' Papers contain pages of entries for the "personal history files," but these are not on deposit at the PAC, if they still exist.


110. PAC, Dept. of Immigration Records, RG T6, File 917093, Scott to
Crothers, July 28, 1917.

113. TLC Proceedings, 1917, p. 43.
114. Ibid., pp. 142-4 and British Columbia Federationist, Sept. 28, 1917.
119. The Voice, Aug. 31, 1917; Sept. 14, 1917 and Nov. 16, 1917 and Manitoba Free Press, Nov. 12, 1917 and Nov. 19, 1917. Rigg and Ward were not nominated by "the newly formed Manitoba section of the Canadian Labor party," as Robin claims. Indeed, a labour party had not been formed. Although initial efforts had been made to organize one, these were suspended early in November and were not resumed until after the campaign. [Radical Politics, p. 135].
121. The Voice, July 20, 1917 and Aug. 18, 1917.
124. The Voice, Nov. 23, 1917.
126. The Voice, Nov. 31, 1917.
127. Ibid.
128. Ibid., Dec. 7, 1917.


133. The Morning Leader, Nov. 23, 1917.

134. The Saskatoon Phoenix, Nov. 15, 1917.


152. As quoted in *The Voice*, Nov. 30, 1917.


162. Ibid., Dec. 7, 1917.

163. Ibid., Nov. 9, 1917.

164. Ibid.


169. *British Columbia Federationist*, Nov. 9, 1917.
Chapter VIII

Western Radicals and the War: 1918

More than ever before, the workers of the Canadian West were dissatisfied. And the conviction that they, as a class, had sacrificed more and suffered more in the previous four years than any other segment of society produced an unusually high degree of militancy in the labour movement. The trend of rapidly rising union membership, which had begun in the previous year, continued during 1918, when the number of organized workers in Canada increased by 21 per cent. Conscious of this increased numerical strength and anxious to capitalize, while they could, on a tight labour market, workers across the West fought for higher wages and improved conditions, unmindful of the patriotic appeals made to them. In addition to strikes, this militancy was manifested in a substantially increased willingness on the part of the workers to listen to radical appeals. In 1918 the radicals were more than ever convinced, by the failure of the General Election and events in Russia, that Canadian society had to be reconstituted. The militancy of the larger labour movement and the avowed aspirations of the radicals ensured that during this turbulent year, Canadians, by and large, would view the western radical movement with resentment and fear. After four years of tremendous tension, it was not difficult to equate disagreement with national priorities with incipient treason and to view actions that hampered the war effort as the work of an enemy conspiracy. It was significant that radical labour leaders were associated in the public mind with enemy aliens; those who counseled actions...
inconsistent with the nation's commitment to the war were not regarded as part of the mainstream of Canadian society.

II

Several continuing preoccupations contributed to labour's militancy. Probably the most important was the phenomenon of ever-rising prices, especially prices of food. To the Executive Board of District 18 these were the "days of enormously increased cost of living." During 1918 the price of the Department of Labour's "basket" of staple foods increased 8 per cent. 3 Labour leaders and central bodies across the West repeatedly and bitterly complained about rising food costs. Federal efforts to control prices were looked upon as being totally inadequate, and the labour movement adopted what amounted to a policy of non-co-operation with the Food Controller. This grew largely out of the conviction that the agency was a "camouflage" established to allow the Borden government to refrain from regulating the economy in a significant way. For example, the *Federationist* sardonically published a report on the Food Controller's efforts to regulate the supply of whipped cream. Labour did not want clearly inadequate price controls, but rather massive government intervention in the economy, as had taken place in Britain and Australia. When bread prices rose substantially in Winnipeg early in 1918, the trades council demanded that the Dominion government nationalize the country's mills and bakeries. 5 Government participation in all aspects of the food industry would end the profiteering which, the workers continued to believe, was the basic cause of rising prices. In a series of articles in *The Voice*, 4
William Ivens, a Methodist minister of radical persuasion who would become increasingly important in the Winnipeg labour movement during 1918, condemned profiteers as "traitors of the deepest die." In a bitter editorial the Federationist observed that "it is remarkable, but a fact, that the people, in whom are vested according to the theory of democracy all the power of the state, are apparently so helpless to prevent a few food monopolists from starving them." 6

The Mathers commission, established by Borden to inquire into the causes of labour unrest, considered another continuing pre-occupation, "the haunting fear of unemployment," the principal cause of the workers' militancy during 1918 and 1919. In testimony before the Robson commission, James Winning, president of the Winnipeg Trades Council at the time of the 1919 general strike, eloquently expressed this fear:

Unemployment or the insecurity of a man's job is the greatest nightmare of the working class. When a man is out of a job he gets into debt. It means seeing his children running bare-footed when they ought to have shoes. It means if your wife is sick she can't get the necessary medicine and nourishment in order to build up her body; it very often means that you would get in a doctor if you were working, but if you are out of work you hesitate to do so, thereby endangering the lives of both your wife and family. 7

At the beginning of 1918 the old issue of Asiatic immigration again agitated workers on the coast when rumors began to circulate that large numbers of coolies were about to be imported. The Federationist bitterly condemned employers who wished to introduce even more cheap labour into the province: "Chinks, Negroes anything and everything in the line of human cattle... look good to the slave driving interests that, figuratively, drool at the mouth in
sweet anticipation of the profitable satisfaction to be drawn from the fact of being able to do their patriotic 'bit' in the glorious cause of 'making the world safe for democracy.' Wells, on behalf of the BCFL, demanded that Borden prohibit the entry of any Chinese into the province and warned that violence might ensue if this was not done. When an earlier order-in-council restricting immigration was renewed, the BCFL was not satisfied, and the federationist warned that the government would "have to shoulder responsibility for present conditions." More widespread and important, however, was continuing concern caused by the large number of veterans entering the labour market. In April, Pettipiece reported that "hundreds" of unemployed veterans were walking the streets and demanded that the country give work to the men who had fought for it. This and other such accounts were disturbing to the Press Censor, because the military authorities claimed that they retarded recruiting. By mid-summer concern about unemployment was so great in Vancouver that Ernest Winch devoted much of the speech he gave at his inauguration as trades council president to the thirty-hour week, a panacea that labour would increasingly advocate as the year advanced.

During 1918, western labour leaders continued to be suspicious of, and antagonistic to, the federal government. This attitude grew out of the essential conviction that Borden's mandate was illegitimate and that he and his colleagues were in league with the country's financial interests. Labour's reaction to conscription and its political campaign against compulsory military service caused the Union government to adopt a new policy of conciliation and consultation with the movement. In January, 1918 Borden called a
conference of trade union leaders. The first set of invitations was sent to easterners only, but protests from the prairies and British Columbia resulted in the conference being delayed two weeks so that western delegates could attend. Even with this expanded representation, only five of the fifty labour leaders with whom Borden and his colleagues chose to consult were from the West. The conference considered various issues relating to the war, and the delegates received assurances from the cabinet that, henceforward, labour would be consulted on matters of concern to the movement. Encouraged, the TLC executive issued a circular after the meetings announcing that the government's policy was "now one of co-operation with the organized Labour movement." The westerners were more cautious.

Middlely, Vancouver's representative, admitted that the assurances indicated "quite a departure from the attitude hitherto of the government in ignoring Labor in vital matters" but suggested that it was necessary to wait for more concrete evidence of a change.

The government took steps to implement the new policy immediately, but it continued to display an apparent reluctance to consult with leading labour-men from the West. None of the trade unionists appointed to various boards during 1920 were westerners. Given the attitudes of many of the latter, this reluctance was understandable, but it was disastrous nonetheless. In May the Federationist complained that "the only way to compel officials of organized labor to shoulder responsibilities is to have them assume it. This they can hardly do if ignored by the authorities. When the government of Canada emulates the example of all other allied countries it will have some excuse for finding fault with the attitude
of organized labor [toward the war]."12

In the spring Robertson suggested that Gompers, who was to speak to the Ottawa Canadian Club, be invited to address the Commons. Borden accepted the proposal as one which would improve the relations of his government with the labour movement. But the AFL President's enthusiastic support of the Allied war effort was regarded as a perfidy in the West; the Federationist believed that his Alliance for Labour and Democracy "reeks and stinks to high heaven with an effluvium that could only emanate from a moral latrine capable of being made foul with the yellow droppings from some corruption fund." When Gompers delivered a rousing win-the-war speech in which he attacked the Bolsheviks as well as the Hun, the western labour papers were outraged.13

The Gompers fiasco demonstrated that the federal government's new labour policy did nothing to reconcile the western movement. Indeed, it only served to widen the gap between the West and the TLC leadership which had responded favourably to Borden's campaign. The Federationist, for example, believed that the Congress Executive had become even less aggressive since January: "assault after assault and encroachment after encroachment has been made upon the Canadian workers by the tools of the dominant interests in the Dominion without an audible protest being heard from those appointed to watch the vulture roost at Ottawa."

A new factor, the operation of the Military Service Act, also contributed to western labour unrest during 1918. The workers continued to resent compulsory military service, and opposition to conscription only increased when the legislation was implemented.
Compulsion in any form was "an emphatic repudiation of all democracy and the denial of its existence," the Federationist charged, and went on to lecture, "all wealth producers are today slaves, common victims of ruling class rule, robbery and rapine... democracy is a thing unknown no matter how much we may talk about it." A significant number of workers literally took to the woods to avoid induction into the army; rag-tag colonies of these draft evaders grew up on Vancouver Island, British Columbia's lower mainland and on the Indian Reservations of south-eastern Manitoba. Labour leaders complained bitterly that the large number of exemption appeals from workers received unsympathetic consideration from military authorities. A Cumberland miner dryly observed, "It looks very much to me as if applications for exemption are put through a machine, somewhat similar to a sausage machine; the application goes through at one end and the refusal comes out at the other." The administration of any piece of legislation is complicated by a variety of problems, and the nature of the Military Service Act ensured that, when these occurred, they would help to aggravate more the already resentful workers. Rivalry broke out among lumber workers at Big River, Saskatchewan, when military authorities arrived to collect draftees. In Vancouver dockworkers struck when an army policeman challenged a stevedore who was not carrying his registration papers. Angry protests came from Revelstoke unions when a railway employee was arrested for draft evasion as a result of a clerical error. The indignation of the UMW local at Cumberland when several of its members received induction notices grew out of an old fear. The miners believed that the draftees would be replaced
by Chinese. The latter, a correspondent to the Federationist claimed, were delighted by the introduction of Conscription, because they looked forward to the day when "alla white man go fightem; Chinamen catchum four, five dollar one day, catchum hiya white woman."  

The labour movement also took up the cause of conscientious objectors, many of whom had no connection with trade unions. The Federationist complained that under the Military Service Act, "our very thoughts are rationed." Calgary trade unionists protested what they regarded as unduly harsh sentences imposed by magistrates on conscientious objectors. But the issue caused the greatest excitement in Winnipeg. When, late in January, it was reported that conscientious objectors were being mistreated at Minto Barracks, Dixon raised protests in the Legislature, and Ivens told Crerar that these men should not be treated as "inhuman fiends worthy of slow torture even unto death." Anger became outrage late in February when David Wells, a carpenter who had refused induction, died in Stony Mountain Penitentiary.  

Leading labour-men were no less concerned about the treatment of conscripts in the army, which they regarded as a brutal and autocratic institution. In January Pettipiece reported that draftees at Hastings Park Camp were in a rebellious frame of mind because of the arrogant and unreasonable behaviour of their officers. These reports caused consternation in Vancouver's military establishment which immediately marked Pettipiece as a German agent. Because his reports tended "to unpopularize military service in any form," officers informed the editor that if he persisted, he would be
prosecuted.\textsuperscript{21}

The basis of all concern over the operations of the Military Service Act was labour's continuing fear that conscription would be used to force men to work and thus destroy the trade union movement. Then, in April the federal government passed an order-in-council, the so-called "Anti-Loafing Law," which required all men in Canada between the ages of sixteen and sixty to be engaged in a useful occupation. The Voice was alarmed: "a net is being drawn around [the workers]; . . . they will no longer be free but at the mercy of private capital."\textsuperscript{22} Reaction to the national inventory of manpower which was begun in June was even stronger. In the minds of the leadership, the manner in which this registration scheme was implemented represented a violation of pledges made by Borden and his colleagues at the January conference. Despite assurances to the contrary, the belief persisted that industrial conscription was near: Warned The Federationist, "from the time these emissaries of the parasitic class stole the seats at Ottawa they have gradually tightened the screws until today the workers have no right but are weighed down with everything but iron shackles. . . . It is a safe bet that . . . [registration] is the thin edge of the wedge for the conscription of labor."\textsuperscript{23}

III

The mood of the western labour movement was also affected by the great events which were taking place in Russia. Like most Canadians, the workers of the West had greeted news of the fall of the Romanov dynasty, which they had always regarded as the epitome
of oppression, with enthusiasm. This satisfaction was reflected in their press; the Federationist observed, "it is more than gratifying to know that the spirit of revolt is still to be found among the Russian workmen. . . . A working class possessed of that spirit cannot be forever held in leash."

As the revolution developed in Russia, the sympathy and approval of western radicals increased. Trotsky's detention at Amherst, Nova Scotia was denounced as an "act of tyranny and brutality." And in July, 1917, The Messenger of Victoria observed, "the Russian situation is all right. The Russian people are displaying marvelous self-control and intelligence. They know what they want and through their council and their Peasants' Congress they are making perfectly plain that they are going to get it."

It was natural, therefore, that events in Russia, even before November, 1917, should be held up by radicals as worthy of emulation by Canadian workers. An Island miner wrote, "during no revolution that has yet occurred in human history has the red flag of labor been so completely in evidence. . . . The supreme command appears to be in the hands of the workers and others who are disciples of democracy and warriors of the social revolution"; for this reason the workers of Petrograd had "a message of hope" for their comrades in Canada. During 1917 western enthusiasm was, however, tempered by the pre-occupation with the anti-Conscription fight and, to some extent, by the mechanistic theories of the SFC. To some socialists, both inside and outside the party, the struggle in Russia could never be anything but "another bourgeois revolution." Kingsley, though now out of the party, could never abandon the theories he had
done so much to shape; he wrote, "the modern proletariat . . . has not yet become a sufficiently powerful factor in the [Russian] state to ensure that the new order shall be dominantly impressed with its aspirations and ideals. In fact the field has only been prepared for the acceptance of bourgeois seed." Clearly, events in Russia were encouraging in that they were moving the proletariat toward emancipation, but they did not herald the inauguration of the co-operative commonwealth, because "there is no sudden leaps over historic periods." 27

But from the very beginning of the revolution in Russia, the Ukrainian Social Democrats gave the movement their unqualified support. The collapse of the Romanov dynasty spelled the end of the oppression from which many of them had fled, and the party to which they had belonged was co-operating with the Russian socialists. 28 During the summer of 1917 the party was in direct contact with the revolutionaries in the Ukraine, and Robochy Narod promoted their cause by publishing appeals for funds. 29 A resolution endorsed by a Ukrainian SDP convention held in Winnipeg a few days after the czar's abdication demonstrated the party's attitude:

We . . . extend fraternal greetings to the Russian worker-revolutionaries on the brilliant victory of the revolution over autocratic tsarism and on the downfall of the prison house of nations, which will doubtless bring freedom also to the 30-million strong Ukrainian nation. We are convinced that our Russian comrades will not stop at the changes of the political system of Russia achieved at present but will carry the battle forward to the complete victory of the working people over all their enemies. 30

Virtually every available labour source testifies to the fact that the Bolshevik coup in November, 1917, had a profound effect
on the western radical movement. It was not, however, the great historical departure for Canadian radicalism which communist historians have claimed. Buck has written, "the effect of the [coup] had been like a thunder-clap," and this seems a valid, if perhaps overstated, characterization. But what other Communists have written about Canadian reaction in the months after November, 1917 is much more subject to criticism. No workers paraded the streets of western cities to celebrate the news, as Weir claims. Few indeed must have been the 'miraculous conversions to Communism like the one Smith claims to have experienced. Lenin was not the prophet of the new militancy, as Bennett claims; indeed, Buck and Fenner make it clear that the Russian leader's theoretical work was virtually unknown in Canada. 31

Still, there can be no doubt that the October revolution caused tremendous excitement among western Canadian radicals. W. J. Curry, an erudite Vancouver dentist and ardent Social Democrat, described the coup as "the greatest single event of this century and probably of all history." From his death-bed McKenzie wrote, "the end [of capitalism] is here... It is worth three incarnations to live now, better the coming five years than any other full three score and ten." And Kingsley, now too excited to be concerned with the operation of the law of economic development, told his readers, "the storm that began in Russia as a comparatively gentle zephyr a year since has now assumed the proportions of a cyclone soon to become a roaring hurricane sweeping all before it... The entire joblot of crowns, thrones and ruling class totem poles dubbed kings, kaisers, emperors, presidents and similar trash is destined to be
swiftly and effectively swept down the path already trod by the
Czar and his jag of junk.”32 After November, 1917 the Ukrainian
Social Democrats were even more outspoken in their praise of the
Russian revolutionaries. In its first issue after the coup
Robochy More declared that the Bolsheviks represented the hope of
the international proletariat. Yet, paradoxically, the paper’s
support of the Bolsheviks grew largely out of the conviction that
the latter would ensure self-determination for the Ukraine.33
Following the lead of its powerful Ukrainian language federation,
the SDP looked to the Bolsheviks as a source of hope, and a party
convention held at Winnipeg in March, 1918 sent greetings to the
Soviets.34 Even the SFC was caught up in the excitement generated by
the Bolshevik victory in Russia. Though real reservations persisted
in some party quarters about the possibility of a true proletarian
revolution occurring in such an economically backward country,
they were not pressed in the face of what appeared to be the
working-out of other more important aspects of Marx’s teachings. The
Dominion Executive informed the Petrograd Soviet that, after four
months of carefully observing its operations, “we have yet to note an
error of tactics or a violation of revolutionary working class
principles”; this was high commendation, indeed, coming from the
impossiblists. The Vancouver local was no less lavish in its praise;
it declared, “Trotsky above all other men since Marx, is the spokesman
of the Proletarian Revolution.”35

In addition to intellectuals, editors and party leaders,
progressive workmen across the West were aroused by the Bolsheviks.
A labourer from Winnipeg’s north end wrote,
equal rights for men and women, no child labor, no poverty, misery and degradation, no prostitution, no mortgages on farms, no revolting bills for machinery to keep peasants poor till the grave, no sweatshops, no long hours of heavy toil for a meager existence but an equal opportunity for all, a life made worth living with unlimited possibilities to all, aided by splendid machinery to make [the] earth a real paradise where nothing but happiness can prevail. This is Bolshevism.

A Powell River man told the *Federationist*'s editor, "I have been a socialist for twelve years; but I must say that latterly before the Russian revolution, I [had] become apathetic and indifferent. I had come to the conclusion that the workers would never have the courage to vigorously attack the capitalist system... But the Bolsheviks have rekindled all my old enthusiasm and given me fresh confidence in my class."36

In essence this was the immediate significance of the Russian workers' victory for Canadian radicals - hope. Regarded as the natural outcome of the war, the Russian revolution revived and strengthened the belief that in the European holocaust would be forged the forces, which would effect the final emancipation of the proletariat. Forces unleashed by the war had brought down the Romanovs; and as these same forces seemed to bear working class unrest westward, even to Canada, it was not difficult for the radicals to believe that the October revolution had only been the beginning of the time which Marx had taught would come.

In part, the Bolsheviks represented hope to the West's radicals, who were never able to forget their grinding war-weariness, because the Russian revolutionaries held out the promise of peace. Edmonton's Joe Clark celebrated the November coup, because he...
believed that the new government would immediately conclude a peace with Germany. When talks began at Brest-Litovsk between the Soviet government and the Central Powers, Robochy Norod called upon the Allies to join them. Lenin's insistence that a treaty be concluded, despite the extravagant demands of the German and Austrian ambassadors, won him the Federationist's nomination for the 1918 Nobel Peace Prize. While the Canadian government and public generally regarded Trotsky's signing of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk, by which the Soviets concluded peace with the Central Powers, as an act of supreme treachery, western radicals considered it the epitome of humanitarianism. By their actions Lenin and Trotsky had "shown themselves to be master statesmen and diplomats."

The impact of the Russian revolution on western Canadian radicals was demonstrated by their tendency to give legitimacy to actions by invoking the Bolsheviks. The Federated Labour Party was established, Kingsley said, because "the blood now courses through [the workers'] veins with new life and they are experiencing thrills of joy and hope, that were unknown to them before the rainbow of promise appeared upon the Russian horizon above the red clouds of ruling class savagery and bloody war." Even Puttee was prepared to summon up the Russian example when he began his campaign to establish the Dominion Labour Party, and after it was formed, Bolshevism and the party were regularly discussed. In March, 1918 the Social Democrats renewed their campaign for reconciliation with the SPC and proposed a union "on the basis of the Bolshevik programme." But the impossibilists were no less willing to invoke the new force in support of old policies. When some SPC locals responded favourably to the
SDP initiatives, Chris Stephenson, who had replaced Pritchard as
Dominion Secretary, reminded them that Lenin and Trotsky had
denounced socialists who failed to keep rigidly the revolutionary
faith. 41

IV.

In an attempt to capitalize upon the militancy in the larger
movement, some radicals began a campaign for new labour parties.
When the BCFL nominated its own candidates in November, 1917, it
had made a new departure in the province's radical politics, one
long advocated by such leaders as McVety and Pettipiece who had come
to believe that only by an inclusive party could the workers be
mobilized. In the Federationist, Pettipiece used the results of the
General Election to bolster his contention that only action through
a broadly-based labour party could provide protection for the
workers, a viewpoint which was gaining an increasing number of
adherents early in 1918. 42 At the BCFL convention late in January,
the advocates of a new political initiative were able to overcome
the opposition of members of the SPC, including that of the retiring
president, Joe Naylor, and have the Federation call for the formation
of a workers' party. A conference held immediately after the
convention established the Federated Labour Party (FLP). 43

The FLP became an important part of the province's
radicalism. It was led by an extraordinarily able group of men.
Kingsley, Pettipiece, McVety, Lestor, Hawthornthwaite and other
former impossibilists, who had lost hope in the SPC, gave their special
talents to the party. 44 Curry, Burns and other Social Democrats
forsook the shattered remnants of the SDP for the new party. The FLP also attracted prominent social reformers like W. R. Trotter and Woodsworth. The fact that Kingsley could stand on the same platform as Burns symbolized the radical unity which the FLP had achieved.

The inclusive nature of the party resulted in its rapid growth. In March the *Federationist* announced enthusiastically that "labor in British Columbia is moving forward faster today than at any other time in its history." By the following month the party had established thirteen locals throughout the province, that in Vancouver claimed a membership of 2000, and its propagandists lectured to packed houses. The FLP was truly a product of the times. The years of war had made a significant number of workers anxious to effect changes in society. Recognizing this, the leaders of the party fashioned a vehicle for change which could include virtually the entire provincial labour movement. But such was the mood of that movement that this entailed very little sacrifice on the part of the radicals. The FLP had what Phillips has called "an essentially socialist program"; its platform demanded simply labour standards legislation and the abolition of the wage system. Party speakers regularly demanded short-term reforms, particularly immediately relevant ones, such as price controls and shorter hours, but it was the revolutionary portion of the platform which received emphasis. Hawthornthwaite was cheered by workers in relatively conservative New Westminster when he denounced the Oliver government precisely because it was reformist. Kingsley who became one of the party's most prominent propagandists never changed his
line: "the F.L.P. is going to abolish wages and profits and the degradation of wage slavery." 48

A similar political campaign was underway in Winnipeg. The usual divisiveness prevailed in January, when The Voice called upon Manitoba's TLC executive to form a local of the Dominion Labour Party. Nevertheless, a DLP local was established in March. Like the FLP, the new party included a wide spectrum of radical opinion. Most prominent were labourites like Ward, V. G. Veitch, and Puttee, though the latter was becoming increasingly estranged from the newly militant labour movement. Tipping, Arthur Beach and other members of the shattered English SDP local chose to take up the fight anew in the DLP. Also, the party included reformers like S. J. Farmer and Dixon, though the latter's views had become substantially more radical since the beginning of the war. Reflecting the new mood for the labour movement, the DLP developed a much more radical program than that of any earlier Winnipeg party. Originally the platform emphasized reforms, but in June Tipping succeeded in having the party make abolition of the wage system its primary objective. 50

Developing beside these parties, and fostered by the same political and economic conditions, was a significant new enthusiasm for direct action. After the pre-war depression years, the idea of a general strike emerged from time to time, for example during the anti-Conscription campaign, but in 1918 it became an important force in the western labour movement. For the radicals who were giving it direction, this new tendency represented a rejection of conventional political action as a viable means of emancipating the proletariat.
Their attitude grew largely out of the frustration and bitterness of the 1917 General Election. The significance of that event seems to be very well demonstrated by the change in Pritchard's views between 1917 and 1918. On the eve of the election he was vehemently upholding the SPC's conventional political line in the pages of the Clarion but by the mid-1918 he had become an advocate of direct action. He was not alone. After considering the recent experience of the workers in capitalist elections, a Vancouver socialist was forced to conclude that the prospects of destroying the wage system by constitutional means were "poor indeed." In Winnipeg R. B. Russell and R. J. Johns regularly argued that efforts to elect representatives to capitalist legislatures were "all wrong." Another factor contributing to the growth of the tendency was the example of the Russian revolution. An anonymous correspondent to the Clarion stated that, after long years of believing that capitalism could only be destroyed by conventional political means, events in Russia had made him conclude that "if you want to get anywhere you have got to go after it — not with a ballot box but with a rifle."

The first explicit manifestation of this syndicalism was the establishment in Winnipeg, early in May, of the Workers' Union of Canada. Composed mainly of renegade north end socialists, notably Sam Blumenberg; the organization's purpose was to create a great industrial union which would seize control of the state by means of a general strike.

But much more important than this tiny sect was the growing influence of advocates of direct action in western central bodies. These advocates were mainly members of the SPC. Though the party
maintained an ambivalent attitude to the syndicalist tendency, some of its most energetic members - Kavanagh, Pritchard, Knight, Johns - took a leading role in promoting the new gospel. While this might seem to be a major departure from the party line, the change was not as great as might at first appear. Since the years immediately before the war, the SPC had assigned to the general strike a political role but had consistently held that in a democratic state the ballot was a superior weapon. Now, many members of the party, always the West's radical vanguard, the democratic process had failed, and they were prepared to turn to direct action to achieve the revolution.

Their essentially simple doctrine, though not fully understood, appealed to a great many workers, and during 1916 they gained real power in the Western labour movement. In Vancouver, which, a member of the SPC and a strong advocate of direct action, was elected president of the trades council, and Pritchard recalls that members of the party controlled the body at this time, 54 Knight became an important force in Edmonton's labour movement. In Winnipeg a power vacuum, which was created when Puttee was discredited and Rigg joined the army, resulted in Russell and Johns gaining positions of real strength in the trades council. 55

But if some impossibilists and a few other radicals advocated direct action as a means of destroying capitalism, it is clear that, during 1918 at least, they had not developed a clear-cut syndicalist doctrine. Indeed, their thought was characterized by a remarkable lack of precision. Walter Hed, a leading Island miner and member of the SPC, was an exponent of the general strike who denounced the UMW's policy of signing time contracts, yet he applauded the
formation of the FLP. 56 A similar fuzziness was typical of the
thought of Fred Fix, whom Tipping believes was influential in shaping
the ideas of Winnipeg's direct actionists. Although he was an
uplifting advocate of industrial unionism, Fix was apparently never
sure exactly what the object of the "One Great Union" which he
promoted would be. In what was his most important statement on the
subject, a speech to the trades council supporting an industrial
union resolution prior to the 1918 TLC convention, he assigned to his
grand economic organization a role ancillary to a political party in
the class struggle, but then he claimed for it the role of achieving
"a final solution of the labor problem." 57

This lack of precision did not prevent the labor movement
from responding to radical appeals to resort to the mass strike;
indeed, the fuzziness may well have promoted the tendency. It seems
clear that while the advocates of direct action were coming to see
the general strike as a political weapon, the workers continued to
consider it an economic one. Better than anything else, the
willingness to resort to the mass strike, almost on the slightest
pretense, demonstrated the new militancy. By the summer of 1918
western central bodies were prepared to issue strike calls whenever
they believed the traditional rights of organized workers were
threatened, and the rank and file was ever ready to "down tools" in
response. For example, during these months, the issue of the general
strike was continually before the Vancouver trades council.
Kavanagh had the organization's constitution amended to permit the
council to raise a special strike fund, because the times demanded
that labor adopt "new methods." The council threatened to declare
general strikes in support of a handful of striking laundry girls and in support of any worker who might be discriminated against by his employer for refusing to purchase Victory Bonds. In July SPC men, who were delegates on the council, took the lead, as they usually did, in a move to have electric power declared unfair, in order to support striking street railwaymen. McVety, increasingly being pushed to a comparatively moderate position, argued against what he pointed out was a general strike-call, but the council brushed his objections aside and voted overwhelmingly to submit the proposal to affiliates. All but two of these cast large votes in favour of declaring power unfair. It required "herculean efforts" on the part of a special strike committee to keep unions at work while negotiations by the street railwaymen continued to a successful conclusion. 58

The case of the postal employees strike of mid-summer demonstrates that this willingness to experiment with mass action was characteristic of the West as a whole. Never before had mailmen struck in Canada, and their action drew sharp criticism from editors, patriotic organizations and the federal government. But this only increased labour's support of the strikers. When Crothers was reckless enough to tell a meeting of Calgary workers that the action of the mailmen was "unworthy of their brothers who were risking their lives for their country," it promptly passed a resolution condemning him.

Central bodies across the West - Victoria, Vancouver, the Executive Board of District 18, Edmonton, Regina, Saskatoon, Winnipeg - issued ultimatums that unless the wage demands of the poorly-paid posties were met, general strikes would follow. In the face of such unity Crothers made a settlement favourable to the union and even accepted the demand
of Winnipeg negotiators that the men be paid for the time they had been on strike. The Federationist was encouraged by the new tendency: "the sympathetic response of thousands of unionists to the call of their striking brothers to come to their aid by also striking is one of the most significant phases of the present situation. It shows that the spirit of class solidarity is gaining strength among the workers and affords a most cheering augury for the future." The first of the general strikes occurred in Winnipeg.

After long and botched negotiations to increase their wages and improve working conditions, some two hundred civic employees struck early in May. In an atmosphere becoming increasingly tense, labour's representatives on the City Council, Heaps, Queen and Puttee, worked for the creation of a committee to deal with the strikers. This committee was able to devise a set of proposals acceptable to both parties, but hopes for a settlement were wrecked when City Council added a proviso, introduced by Alderman Frank Fowler, that denied civic employees the right to strike. By taking this stand the Council became, The Voice charged, "the tool of the most inveterate enemies of organized labor in the community." The Council's action represented a fundamental challenge to organized labour, and in 1918 there could only be one response. The trades council's solicitor, Thomas Murray, wrote, "there probably is no issue other than the right to strike... which could have brought about such a successful sympathetic strike." From the time the civic employees went out, other unions had considered sympathetic action, and the possibility of a general strike had been "very real." When the Fowler amendment passed, the trades council declared for "a strike for the right to strike" and
named a committee to coordinate the efforts of affiliates which decided upon sympathetic action. Firemen, telephone operators, street-railwaymen and thousands of railroad workers—all struck in sympathy with the civic employees. Within days, the Labour Gazette reported, "business in Winnipeg was badly disorganized, and trade throughout the Western Provinces was seriously affected." All shades of radical opinion in the city from labourite to impossibilist found this solidarity encouraging. Queen told the workers that the strike "must be won to make Winnipeg safe for Democracy." John Gabriel Soltis, a prominent north-end Social Democrat, praised the "splendid spirit of solidarity" displayed by the workers and warned that if they allowed the capitalists to "crucify one organization, ... there will be a universal crucifixion." In the Clarion, Alex Sheppard described the strike as "the finest instance of class solidarity that Canada has produced." But Johns wanted more. Instead of striking for essentially economic objectives, he would have the workers strike to destroy capitalism: "you have the right to demand anything that you have the power to enforce. In the City of Winnipeg we have the might. Let us use it."65

In the minds of middle and upper class Winnipeg, the general strike was at best criminally irresponsible. The city's dailies carried out a vicious attack on the strikers and their leaders of the labour movement. Winnipeg businessmen called on the federal government to intervene and take a hard line with the strikers. In the third week of May, Borden ordered Robertson to go to Winnipeg and mediate the strike.66 He arrived at a time when conversations between a neutral Citizen's Committee of One Hundred and leading
labour-men had already made considerable progress, and his efforts resolyed outstanding difficulties: The settlement, which ended the sympathetic strike, was a victory for the civic employees, who gained virtually all their demands. The victory increased the confidence of Winnipeg workers in their strength and enhanced the position of the direct actionists in the trades council. Masters regards this as "unfortunate," because it tended to increase the "aggressive truculence" of the movement. Certainly after the events of May, 1913 the appeal of direct action was increased, and not only in Winnipeg. During the strike many messages of support arrived and after the victory the secretary of the Regina trades council informed Ernest Robinson, his Winnipeg counterpart, that the strike "will stand out as a beacon light in the History of Trades Organization, thereby encouraging those that are of a weaker caste to gird their loins with the Bonds of Real Unionism."  

The mood of the Winnipeg labour movement during and after the general strike was demonstrated by its repudiation of Puttee, one of its leading spokesmen for nearly a quarter of a century. While The Voice had presented labour's case and defended it against attackers, the paper had disapproved of the strike from the outset. To Puttee, the action of the civic employees seemed to discredit one of his basic precepts: "when workingmen strike against the public operation of vital public utilities they are taking the most definite course possible of discrediting the whole principle of public ownership." More important, Puttee found himself out-of-step with the new militancy of Winnipeg's workers. "The strike as the first resort is the I.W.W. method," he told them. Puttee was clearly isolated.
His old enemies in the SPC took great satisfaction in this situation because they saw in it advantages for their party. But even labourites like Veitch, vice-president of the trades council and president of the DLP, found it impossible to support the editor. They during the strike the trades council, dissatisfied with The Voice's coverage of the dispute, had published its own information sheet, and now it moved to replace Puttee's paper with one firmly under its control. The council wanted to secure a much different kind of editor and first offered the position to Percy Chew, an old SPC firebrand. When he proved to be unavailable, William Ivens, who was in the process of founding the Labour Church after being dismissed from his Methodist pastorate because of radical views, was named editor of the Western Labor News.

Within a few weeks the Winnipeg trades council was preparing for another general strike. Late in July some one thousand metal workers struck for increased wages and recognition of the Metal Trades Council as their bargaining agent. Immediately after the men went out, there was talk of a general strike to support them. Ivens warned, "Russia refused to listen to the proletariat and as a result the regime of Russia has completely changed and the workers are now in control. The wise thing for the employers to do today is to recognize the inevitability of the changes that are taking place and for their own best interests to fit into the process." The strike of the metal workers was effective, and in an attempt to re-open their works, the employers secured an injunction against picketing. Injunctions were hardly an innovation in Winnipeg, but in the charged atmosphere of 1918's summer, the employers' action had a
galvanic effect. In a speech characteristic of the movement's new militancy and the leadership's extravagant rhetoric, Russell urged the trades council to respond to the capitalists' challenge, "a challenge to the whole labor movement virtually taking away their right to conduct a strike." The council decided to call out all its affiliates, unless the injunction were withdrawn. City unions voted seven to one in favour of sympathetic action, and a strike at least equal to that of May would undoubtedly have occurred if provincial officials had not been able to effect a settlement. 74

The mass walk-outs in Winnipeg had economic objectives — they involved conventional trade union issues — but the general strike which took place in Vancouver at the beginning of August was purely political. As a result, it polarized the city's population. Ginger Goodwin, a former vice-president of the BCFL and a leader of both the coal and metal miners, was "very popular" in the British Columbia labour movement. As a member of the SFC he had taken a leading role in the opposition to Conscription. When the Military Service Act passed, Goodwin was classified as physically unfit for army service, but soon after he was re-classified and drafted, because radicals said, of his efforts to organize the Trail miners. To avoid induction, he joined a group of draft evaders living in the bush near Cumberland. 75 Late in July Goodwin was shot and killed by a Dominion Police officer. When news of this reached Vancouver, there was, Pritchard recalls, "heck-a-popping." The labour movement was convinced that Goodwin had been murdered — shot in the back with a soft-nosed bullet — because of his trade union activity and his opposition to Conscription. An emergency meeting of the Vancouver
trades council issued a call for a general strike to take place the day of the funeral, August 2. 77

On August 2, Vancouver's unions responded overwhelmingly to the strike call; dockers, metal workers, building tradesmen and most significantly street railwaymen—all quit work. Business and patriotic organizations were enraged by this demonstration in honour of a draft evader. The city's dailies, in highly inflammatory editorials, denounced labour leaders as traitors. At Shaughnessy Military Hospital, members of the IODE tried recuperating veterans with liquor and recruited them to run the streetcars. 78 "Every effort was put forth for the evident purpose of affording an excuse to cause the streets to run with the blood of slaughtered workers, as has so often happened in history," the executive of the trades council charged. In mid-afternoon a mob of veterans marched on the labour temple, and encouraged by community leaders who watched from automobiles, they entered the building, breaking down doors, smashing windows and destroying records.

Midgley and an official of the Longshoremen's union were dragged into the street, beaten and forced to kiss the Union Jack. 79 That night a meeting which had been addressed by local politicians and business leaders passed resolutions demanding that the federal government "take strong and stern measures to suppress all seditious and anti-war movements or language" and that British Columbia labour organizations purge their radical leadership. Mayor E. H. Gale of Vancouver offered to put himself at the head of any body of men who would drive the extremists out of the trades council. 80 The following day violence again flared
between veterans and unionists when a Targe mob assembled at the Longshoremen's Hall. Interrupted by the noise of fighting in the street below, labour leaders negotiated with a committee of veterans who demanded that Winch, Pritchard, Kavanagh, Midgley and Naylor and the presidents of two offending unions be deported from the province for the duration of the war. There was also official reaction to the Goodwin strike. Vancouver's military intelligence officer recommended that the leaders should be charged with seditious conspiracy, and Carrothers considered bringing charges under the Industrial Disputes Investigation Act.

But if the strike had mobilized opinion against the workers, it had united the labour movement as never before. The violence and intimidation were subjected to a stark class analysis. The veterans had been the innocent tools of the city's capitalists who wished to destroy the unions. This would not be tolerated. Delighted by the workers' reaction, the Clarion reported, "the Labor forces . . . are united and on the defensive against the historically reactionary forces; . . . despite wire-pulling and intimidation, the Labor forces present a solid phalanx and refuse to be stampeded by the reactionary malignants." Union after union endorsed the action of their delegates to the trades council who had voted for the strike. As for the men whose deportation had been demanded, the radicals let it be known that they too had "a list," headed by the name of Mayor Gale, and for every labour leader driven out of the city, they would ensure that two "prominent citizens" also left. The labour-men also took steps to ensure that they would never again be defenceless against mob violence. The "Workers' Police" were organized, and in the following
months these men, identified by red badges and armbands, became a conspicuous part of labour meetings. Like the events in Winnipeg, the Goodwin strike created an exhilarating sense of solidarity.

During 1918 the sectional crisis, which had been developing in the TLC since the outbreak of war and which had been greatly exacerbated at the 1917 convention, began to emerge as the second full-scale western revolt against the Congress and conservative craft unionism. Western alienation had been fanned into new flame, in part, by the Congress Executive's attitude to Borden's war policies, and the final crisis came in 1918. The increasingly militant West regarded the policy of co-operation which had been worked out at the Ottawa conference by the officers of the internationals and the federal government as perfidious. "A no inconsiderable part of the officialdom of the international unions is working as zealously and earnestly in behalf of ruling class interests as would be the case if it was actually employed for the very purpose," the Federationist charged.

Also important in the developing sectional crisis was a renewed enthusiasm for industrial unionism. As they had in earlier industrial crises, western workers began to feel the need for what they believed were more powerful organizations. This was demonstrated, for example, by the desire of Winnipeg metal workers to form bigger, more powerful unions which could overcome the institutional difficulties of bargaining with large corporations. Another aspect of the pattern, apparent in the earlier western revolt, was manifested
in the prominent role played by socialists in the new industrial union crusade. In part they took this action for the old reason; for example, Pritchard believed that the workers should form larger unions because they were "a logical outcome of the developing forces of capitalism." But the left wing was also motivated by its new commitment to direct action, which, to be effective, demanded the formation of organizations through which the proletarian solidarity of the working class could be enforced. This could be done only by replacing the crafts with industrial unions.

Western alienation was manifested, as it had been in the past, in attacks upon the power and structure of the internationals and the Congress. The alienation was especially marked among the coal miners. In the Crow's Nest Pass, District officers had for some time found it difficult to restrain the rank and file, and by mid-1918 several locals controlled by radicals were in full revolt against the internationals' win-the-war policy. Much the same was true of Vancouver Island. Walter Head complained about increased per capita taxes with which "a bunch of reactionaries" were buying war bonds. He and Naylor advocated secession from the UMWA and the formation of one great union of Canadian miners, because the Comperian influence in the internationals precluded reform. The condition of the TLC was a matter much discussed in the Winnipeg trades council in the summer of 1918. Hoop told his colleagues that it was "a practically useless institution," because its executive had become "chloroformed" by their association with the federal government. Encouraged by Johns, Russell, Fix and others, the council determined to reconstitute the Congress on a "modern and scientific" basis. This was to be achieved
through industrial organization. Condemning the craft system as "organized scabbery," the council called upon the TLC to lay the foundations for "one union of all workers ... with the revolutionary goal [of] the taking over of the machinery of production in the interest of society."91 The Vancouver council, which had long since declared for industrial unionism, proposed the emasculation of the TLC by making it the creature of provincial federations. This innovation would ensure local autonomy and destroy the power of international officials, "who are mostly men that are versed and steeped in the machine-like methods which are in vogue at the American Federation of Labor conventions and which, to say the least, are not in the interests of the rank and file of the movement."92

The western attitude seemed to ensure conflict at the TLC's 1918 convention. Ivens observed, "the East and West are today radically different in temperament, and it will take wisdom and patience to keep labour true to its highest ideals in union. One branch will be satisfied with nothing but root and branch radicalism while another division wants to proceed by the road of evolution."93

As the time of the convention approached, suggestions were made that the West present a united front at Quebec, but Winning warned that "the Congress [will] be hard to move along" the desired path.94

At the Quebec convention the differences between the eastern and western labour movements were never more glaringly apparent. At no previous Congress had debate been so bitter. One after another the radical resolutions to which the westerners were committed and the easterners found offensive were defeated on sectional votes.

Conscription, relief for conscientious objectors, industrial unionism,
Allied intervention in Russia, the convention refused to act on all of these issues. The committee on Officers' Report split for the first time in the Congress's history. In a minority statement Kavanagh, Russell and an Alberta miner condemned the Executive for its win-the-war policy. The three westerners called upon the convention to repudiate the actions of the January conference and charged that Tom Moore, by accepting a seat on the National Registration Board, had "placed the Trades and Labor Congress of Canada in the position of aiding and abetting the government of this country in curtailing those petty liberties which had been gained only by struggle and sacrifice on the part of those workers who have preceded us." The eastern majority dutifully upheld the Executive. The westerners' defeat was climaxd in the vitally important election of officers. Tom Moore defeated Watters for the presidency. Even though they had found much fault with Watters, the westerners supported him because of his British Columbia background and one-time socialism. Moore, an easterner, close friend of Gompers' staunch supporter of craft unionism and outspoken patriot, was despised by the western radicals; Kavanagh described him as "the administration candidate." Then Draper was re-elected secretary defeating Russell.

The humiliation of the westerners at Quebec produced the deepest bitterness that ever existed in the Canadian labour movement. Western resentment burned hotter because of the wide-spread conviction that the conservative East had triumphed as a result of machinations between the AFL, international officers and the federal government. Kavanagh, who had taken a leading part in the West's fight to radicalize the Congress, charged that the convention, which, in his
opinion, consisted "largely of international organizers, an advertising solicitor or so, and a few other hangovers on of the Labor movement, together with some men who actually work," had betrayed the workers. The easterners, Kavanagh said loftily, "knew nothing about economics and less about the philosophy of the working class... and it is up to the Western workers in their own interest to see that [the easterners] get [the education]" so urgently needed. Such feeling was by no means confined to the extreme left. The Western Labor News complained, "it seemed to be conservatism against radicalism and ultra patriotism against reasoned progress." And the Federationist concluded that the TLC had become "an institution like unto the American Federation of Labor." Western delegates had caucused during the convention, and when it ended, they decided to hold a meeting to devise a means "to allow the western unions more clearly and firmly to present their views at the next convention of the Congress." It was agreed that this could best be done by holding a western labour conference. This decision clearly did not indicate a secessionist movement was underway. In the autumn of 1918, Ivens regularly insisted in the pages of the Western Labor News that unity was never more essential than at the present. When Wells issued the BCFL's call for the Calgary conference, he emphasized that the Federation was not promoting dual unionism but "a movement to give expression to the aims and objects of organized Labor in the West." The composition of the committee struck at Quebec also demonstrated the relatively moderate aims of the majority of westerners at this point. Only Middley, the secretary, would later take a leading role in the One Big Union. The Committee's two other
prominent members, David Rees, the West's TLC vice-president, and
Robinson, were advocates of political action who opposed the developing
syndicalism. But the final crisis of the war years was to put the
syndicalists in temporary control of the western labour movement, and
as a result, they were able to disrupt the TLC.

VI

Basic to the industrial crisis in late 1918 and early 1919
was the Union government's view of and response to radicalism. Since
the time the western labour movement made explicit its opposition to
Canada's war policies in the Conscription Crisis, Borden, his
colleagues and his advisers had been concerned about the growth of
unrest on the prairies and in British Columbia. When this unrest
became marked in 1918, federal concern turned to alarm, but the
government's response only contributed to the burning dissatisfaction
of western workers.

If there had been general approval in Canada of the
overthrow of the Romanovs, this feeling had never included the
Bolsheviks. Not only were they a revolutionary party, but the
Bolsheviks advocated a separate peace with the Central powers which
advocacy the great mass of Canadians regarded as abhorrent. The
reaction of the Dominion government to Bolsheviks before November,
1917 demonstrated the centrality of the war in its later policy
toward radicals in general. Late in the spring of 1917 the federal
government was informed by the British diplomatic service that the
American Department of Justice believed that large numbers of Russian
exiles were leaving the United States for their homeland by way of.
Vancouver. Officials of the GFR confirmed that their boats were carrying "many" Russians from the Canadian port to Yokohama, where they took ship for Vladivostock. During the first two weeks of May the streets of [Vancouver] were filled with strange faces, mostly young men respectably dressed, and everyone of them wearing a red neck-tie and a red carnation." These men, some two hundred and fifty in all, aroused the suspicions of the Dominion Police, and agents went on board the Empress of Asia, in which they were to sail, to question them. The agents quickly learned that the men who wore the red carnations and neck-ties were "the close followers [of] ... a very obstinate and strong-willed man, known all over Russia and responsible for the Red Monday whose name ... is Vladimir Ilyich Ulianov [Lenin]." They told the police officers that it was their intention to take Russia out of the war. An agent's report concluded, "those passengers are our present and future enemies, as their purpose in going to Russia is to help the propaganda which appears to be fostered by the German Socialists to help Germany and not Russia." Senior officials agreed. The Deputy Minister of Defense, Sir Eugene Fiset, suggested to Sir Joseph Pope that "the United States Government be approached with a view to controlling the movement of extremists whose return to Europe at the present juncture might injure the cause of the Allies." And Sir Percy Sherwood, Commissioner of Dominion Police, ordered his subordinates in Vancouver "to take such measures as circumstances justified" in controlling the departure of Russians. Significantly, at this point, neither minor functionaries nor senior officials were concerned about the effect which contact with the Bolsheviks might have on local radicals; they were only concerned
about the consequences which the departure of these men from a Canadian port would have on the Allied war effort.

The man who received Sherwood’s instructions to curtail this movement was Malcolm Reid, officially Dominion Immigration Inspector for British Columbia but also the general factotum in Vancouver for several security agencies; the manner in which he carried out the orders demonstrated the Gilbertian character which security operations often took on. Late in June some fifty Russians were to sail from Vancouver in the Empress of Japan. Reid immediately recognized these men as “a very dangerous gang,” and with the aid of local police delayed the ship’s departure in order to search their baggage. The search turned up arms and a large quantity of literature. Alarmed by what he had discovered, Reid attempted to seize the baggage and arrest the group’s leader, but the Russians, at least one of whom brandished a gun, told the federal agents that “they would die sooner than be arrested or give up their literature.” When an irate Russian consul threatened an international incident, Reid was forced to allow the ship to sail for Victoria. Undaunted, the agents went on board and, as the Empress crossed the Straits of Georgia, they “confiscated” 16,000 pieces of literature, “apparently of a highly socialistic and anarchist character.” Reid could not know the nature of the publications, because neither he nor any of his subordinates read Russian. Still they removed the suspect books and pamphlets from the baggage and replaced them with sand. When the ship docked at Victoria the literature was taken off the stern in sugar and laundry bags unknown to the Russians, who, presumably, sailed on only to be disappointed when they opened the baggage in their homeland.
Despite such harassment, Russian socialists continued to pass through Vancouver, and this traffic became a matter of even greater concern to Canadian authorities after the October revolution. After Lenin's victory, however, the important official fear was that Bolsheviks were entering Canada through the port.105

After November, 1917 authorities became increasingly disturbed by the western radicals' enthusiasm for Bolshevism. This concern was in part the result of a growing popular clamour against the Russian revolutionary bogey. For example, L. W. Makovski who conducted an anti-Bolshevik department in the Vancouver Province warned the Secretary of State that "gradually the poison spreads and undermines the constitution of the country."106 More important was Russia's status in the international community after Brest-Litovsk; with the signing of the treaty, official opinion began to take on the rigid and repressive character which marked it in the second half of 1917. In mid-March Chambers told his British counterpart that "among the Russian population and also among the extreme Labour Socialistic classes there is a strong current in sympathy with the Bolsheviki," and this had to be stamped out.107 In May the Press Censor warned Matthew Popovich, editor of Roboczy Norod, to discontinue his paper's enthusiastic promotion of Lenin's cause; he wrote, "most serious objection is taken to any attempt to introduce anarchy into this country, [because] Canada stands for law and order and does not believe in the system of anarchy which is advocated . . . by the Bolsheviki in Russia."108

Their growing fear of radicalism and the prevailing industrial unrest caused federal authorities to begin investigating
another revolutionary organization early in 1918. Alarmed by the new militancy of their workers and quick to attribute this to the most fearsome of all influences, businessmen in Alberta and British Columbia claimed that the western economy was being disrupted through the sinister machinations of the IWW. Members of Parliament, the secretary of the Canadian Manufacturers' Association, Sir Joseph Flavelle, all conjured up the Wobblie bogey. The secretary of the Mountain Lumber Manufacturers' Association informed Borden that labour was "very restless, [because] the I.W.W. are secretly working in the lumbering districts of British Columbia," and if the government were to hand out "drastic treatment" to these agitators, "we would get 50% more efficiency out of [the workers]." Anxious to keep war production at the highest possible level, Borden took these charges seriously. This was the case for two reasons: Robertson believed that the "vicious" Wobblies were "attempting to spread sedition and ferment industrial unrest in British Columbia" and, therefore, should be suppressed; and some federal security agencies were convinced that the IWW, because of its great war-time strikes in the American mountain states, was becoming a menace in the Canadian West. Indeed, Borden was so disturbed by the prospect of the Wobblies disrupting lumber production, as they had done in the United States, that he considered the possibility of his government organizing a "sweet-heart" union modelled on the Loyal Legion of Loggers and Lumbermen with which American authorities had fought the IWW. But the main federal response to the threat was more direct; at the end of February Borden told his Justice Minister, Charles Doherty, that I think it exceedingly important that no delay whatever should take
place in the investigation of the activities of the I.W.W. in Canada.\[112\]

Alarm at what was thought to be an IWW menace became confused with the longstanding fear of enemy conspiracies against the war effort, and as a result, the government's general sense of disquiet was increased. For example, the Deputy Minister of Militia had "no doubt whatever" that the Wobblies were "subsidized by enemy agents."\[113\] This confusion is not difficult to understand. The exaggerated and widely-publicized accounts of IWW aims and activities showed them to be clearly at variance with the values for which the vast majority of Canadians believed their country was fighting, and in the charged atmosphere of 1918 any such difference was easily construed as being pro-German. In addition, it was widely known that before the war, Wobblies had had strength among the itinerant eastern European labourers who now, as enemy aliens, embodied the fear of German subversion. Any behaviour among eastern Europeans, therefore, which was not wholly consistent with Canada's war policy, whether that took the form of organizing a strike or a socialist party, was suspected of being the work of German agents acting through Wobblies.

The Dominion Police established a special section to investigate the IWW in Canada, and its officers, aided by private detectives, immigration agents and provincial policemen, worked in the West during the spring. These efforts turned up no significant trace of the Wobblies.\[114\] The most substantial lead tended to re-enforce official association of eastern Europeans with the IWW. Intercepted letters indicated that one or two Ukrainian locals of the SDP in Alberta had reasonably close relations with IWW headquarters in
Chicago, but when secret agents were placed in these locals, they discovered nothing sinister. In June Sir Percy Sherwood, Commissioner of Dominion Police reported to Doherty that after a "thorough and exhaustive investigation...no trace can be found of any activity on the part of the I.W.W. in this country."

The findings of these investigations did not, however, quiet official fears. With the rash of large strikes and, more important, the new enthusiasm for direct action, it was easy for the authorities to believe that some sinister, alien influence was at work among the workers of western Canada. The Imperial Munitions Board continued to complain that its operations were being hampered by Wobblies, and intercepted correspondence indicated that the IWW was pleased with the "good progress it was making among unskilled workers on the coast, particularly the Finns." In British-Columbia military intelligence was greatly agitated by fear of the IWW spectre. A staff officer who had investigated the problem came to the doubtless erroneous conclusion that prosecution and persecution in the United States were driving Wobblies north, and as a result, "British Columbia is being inundated and undermined by the systematic and far reaching efforts of this body;" Indeed, "many" of the 125,000 members of the IWW known to American authorities were going to British Columbia; the dimensions of this menace made drastic action "most essential."

The officer recommended that steps be taken under the War Measures Act to suppress the organization. But he also proposed that the federal government encourage the formation of vigilante groups: "the system of 'Minute Men' which has been adopted by the United States in dealing with the I.W.W. organization, which system gives the minute men power
to arrest a man upon the least provocation, has been instrumental in crushing the activity of the I.W.W. in the United States." The general-officer-commanding in British Columbia and the district intelligence officer endorsed this proposal. 118

A similar fear prevailed in southern Alberta. In mid-July newspaper reports of IWW influence in the Drumheller miners' unions caused the RNWMP to send detectives into the district, who learned that there was a wide-spread popular-belief that the Wobblies were active. 119 Secret agents, including Constable F. W. Zaneth, later the leading prosecution witness at the Winnipeg strike trials, joined the Drumheller local and discovered that it contained men who had been members of the IWW. More disconcerting was the incipient syndicalism manifested by the fiery Italian miners, who boasted that they would have their way or close every mine in the country. 120

Sherwood, because of his department's findings, tended to discount such reports, but other officials concerned with radicals took a much different view. W. H. Armstrong, the Director of Coal Operations, told P. A. Acland, the Deputy Minister of Labour, that "the only proper solution of [the IWW] menace is the removal of certain elements from this area." Fiset told E. L. Newcombe, the Deputy Minister of Justice, that "there appears to be little doubt but that this organization is getting a strong foothold in the Western Provinces, and it seems highly desirable that legislation should be enacted under the War Measures Act to enable prompt measures to be taken to crush this organization before it has an opportunity to become fully developed." 121 Borden's government was to follow the advice of the hard-liners.
In May the Prime Minister had asked C. H. Cahan, a Montreal lawyer, to make a study of radicalism fostered "by German agents or with German support." This was a step of fundamental importance, because the policies based on Cahan's conception of radicalism were an important contributing factor to the war-end industrial crisis. Instead of viewing labour's new militancy as the product of German intrigues, he believed it to be caused primarily by Bolshevik propaganda. Canadian officials, as has been shown, had for some time been apprehensive about Bolshevism, but, in their minds, it had represented a menace ancillary and complementary to that of the enemy. Now, in the last months of the war, Cahan was to tell Borden and his colleagues that Bolshevism was the enemy, and they were to accept this view. Germans did not cease to be feared, but Russians came to be feared as much. It is not suggested that Cahan's conception of radicalism was unique or even original. The epithet 'Bolshevik' replaced 'dangerous demagogue' on the lips of most solid citizens who wished to vilify radicals. Virtually every western country experienced a Red Scare at the end of the war. But what is significant about Cahan is that he encouraged attitudes already developing and apparently led the government to the view of radicalism which provided the rationale for the continuation of repressive measures after the end of the war.

In July Cahan submitted an interim report to Doherty. The widespread unrest was not the result of the activities of German agents but simply war-weariness. He went on to warn, however, that he had discovered "considerable mental unrest" among eastern Europeans, "which is directly attributable to the dissemination in Canada of the
Socialistic doctrines, espoused by the Russian Revolutionary element. This fear of Bolsheviks was the theme of the long report made to the Justice Department in mid-September. The Russians, Ukrainians and Finns, who are employed in the mines, factories and other industries in Canada are now being thoroughly saturated with the Socialistic doctrines which have been proclaimed by the Bolshevik faction of Russia," he began. Not only did aliens remain the embodiment of the menace, but Cahan gave additional continuity to government fears by implicating the IWW in the Bolshevik conspiracy. The Wobblies had prepared the eastern Europeans for revolutionary doctrines, and now there was reason to suspect that IWW leaders had actually been trained in Russia. Cahan believed that it was "absolutely necessary for the preservation of peace and good order in Canada that this propaganda should be strictly supervised and controlled." Therefore, he recommended that Russians, Finns and Ukrainians be subject to the same regulations as nationals of the Central Powers. "The Bolsheviks," he said with ominous simplicity, "are enemy aliens." In addition, Cahan recommended the adoption of a much more stringent government security policy. He told Doherty that a number of eastern European radical organizations should be suppressed, that the dissemination of revolutionary propaganda, either oral or written, in "foreign" languages should be prohibited and that the right of search should be "widely extended." Finally, Cahan recommended the establishment of a Directorate of Public Safety to co-ordinate all security operations. During the first half of 1918, before Allied policy toward Lenin's regime was fully developed, the Canadian government had been reluctant to take any decisive
action against those who were regarded as Bolsheviks, particularly eastern-Europeans, for fear of antagonizing Russia. But now, after the invasion of Russia, there were no such compunctions. Cahan's report, Borden told Doherty, demanded "immediate and vigorous action."  

In mid-September the Justice Department ordered the Canada Registration Board to make the new more stringent enemy ordinances applicable to Russians, Finns and Ukrainians, and the Deputy Minister of Justice suggested that "perhaps there should be some further special regulations affecting them." Then, on September 28, Borden's government issued PC 2384. The order declared unlawful fourteen radical organizations, the advocacy of violent revolution, and meetings held in the languages of countries with which Canada was at war or Russian, Ukrainian and Finnish. Of the fourteen organizations suppressed only three - the IWW, the SDP and the Ukrainian Social Democrats - were anything more than tiny inconsequential sects, and the implications of the order vis-à-vis each of the three are instructive. It is highly unlikely that there was any sufficient Wobbly organization in British Columbia or Alberta to constitute a threat; therefore, this prohibition seems to have been unnecessary without even considering the matter of the alleged IWW-Bolshevik conspiracy. The SDP was brought under the ban because it was mainly composed of eastern Europeans and not because of its doctrines. Indeed, there is reason to believe that the party was actually included in the order only by mistake. Late in October Rowell told Borden that, because the SDP's aims were legal, and it contained a large number of labour leaders, the suppression of the
party was "contrary to the public interests" and urged that the
be lifted. Despite the objections of Cahan, now Director of Public
Safety, this was done soon after. Only the Ukrainian federation
within the SPC, which the government mistakenly believed was a
separate party, had any contact with the Bolsheviks, and ironically,
the Ukrainian socialists were really little affected by the ban.
With a ready-made front organization in the Ukrainian Labour Temple
Association, they were able to continue their propaganda without
serious interruption. But the inadequacies of the order only
seem to dramatize the gravity of the government's new repressive
policy.

Now radicals were regarded with the same official fear as
enemy aliens had been earlier. Reports in the files of the various
security agencies indicate that many western labour meetings—and
certainly all of the large ones, whether held by the DLP in Winnipeg
or the SPC in Vancouver—had agents planted in them to search out
Bolshevism. Similarly, the files demonstrate that the mail of radicals
was systematically searched. This was a matter of real concern to
Chris Stephenson, the Dominion Secretary of the SPC. He charged,
"almost every letter which arrives at this office bears unmistakable
signs of having been opened. . . . The postal service has become an
adjunct of the secret service department." Western radicals were
also profoundly disturbed by raids and the arrests of radicals—
Naylor and a friend on Vancouver Island, an SPC organizer in the
Kootenays, Mrs. Joe Knight in Edmonton and Winnipeg and a dilettante
Wobblie in Saskatoon. "The time had gone by when the workers
would sit quiet and allow their fellow workers to be railroaded
either over the line or to jail on some trumped up pretext or to satisfy the behest of some corporation," warned the Clarion in the last edition it would publish.\textsuperscript{131}

The organ of the SPC was itself to be a victim of the new federal policy on radicals, a victim of substantially increased censorship. Although the radicals protested violently against the stepped-up surveillance and arrests, they were most disturbed by the attacks on their press.

Since the beginning of the year Chambers had regarded Robochny Narod's enthusiasm for the Bolsheviks as offensive and had warned Popovich that his editorial policy exposed him to the risk of prosecution under the War Measures Act. During the summer the Press Censor discussed the Social Democrats' paper with many people in the West, including right-wing Ukrainian nationalists, and he came to the conclusion that Robochny Narod was at the centre of "a distinct and well organized revolutionary Bolshevik movement in Canada looking to the overthrow of all established authority and to the introduction into Canada of the chaotic condition of affairs which exists today in Russia."\textsuperscript{132} In addition, the paper had been banned in the United States and Britain. Therefore, early in September Chambers recommended that, in view of the fact that Canada was no longer in a "delicate position" vis-à-vis Russia, Robochny Narod be suppressed. The same day that the Ukrainian Social Democrats' federation was banned, a censorship order against their organ was gazetted.\textsuperscript{133}

The same fate befell the Clarion. The paper had been under investigation by security agencies for some time, and in May military intelligence agents had raided its offices.\textsuperscript{134} When
Stephenson refused to reply to his warnings and the Clarion failed to improve, Chambers himself visited its editorial offices— but there he met what he called men of "a rough and most decided cut-throat type" who defied him. "You fellows are sailing close to the wind," warned the Press Censor; "we are pretty good navigators," replied Pritchard. As a result of this defiant attitude, Chambers had the Clarion's offices and its staff put under surveillance. By the beginning of October, when he recommended its suppression, the Press Censor was convinced that the paper, which limped to press each month only as the result of acts of financial legerdemain, was in receipt of Bolshevik gold funnelled through Russian revolutionaries in the United States. Expecting the ban to come after Chamber's visit in the summer, the socialists had carefully made several sets of the Clarion's records and placed these in safe-keeping; therefore, when the police arrived to seize documents they dutifully gave the originals up. But it would have been totally out of character for the impossibilists not to fight. Stephenson denounced this violation of the freedom of the press. Chamber's reply is instructive: "you know perfectly well there is no question of the principle of a free press involved in this issue at all. The only question is the protection of the country by the prevention of the circulation of treasonable and dangerous statements calculated to have an injurious effect upon the war and to misrepresent the policies of the Allied countries and the actions and motives of enemies of the Empire and of ordered liberty."

Chambers found the editorial policy of the organ of the British Columbia Federation of Labour no less offensive. By the
The beginning of 1918 saw the viesn attacks which Kingsley made upon capitalism. In the columns of the *Federationist* had resulted in the paper being banned in both Britain and the United States. Chambers believed Kingsley to be "an out-and-out red Bolshevik Socialist of pronounced literary skill and unquestionably one of the most dangerous men in Canada." As industrial unrest increased during the summer of 1918 the Secretary of State, Martin Burrell who was a British Columbia politician, received a number of complaints from his constituents about the flamboyant *Federationist*. When public opinion laid a large measure of the blame for the Goodwin strike at the paper's door, Chambers concluded that "the time has arrived for a show[d]own. By using the threat of suppression, the Press Censor forced the directors of the *Federationist* to agree to conform to the censorship regulations. Much to Chamber's satisfaction, Kingsley resigned in protest, to be replaced by Wells. But the Press Censor's hope that he had solved the problem of the *Federationist* quickly faded. Complaints soon resumed; for example, the head of military intelligence in British Columbia wrote, "we cannot too strongly recommend that this paper be suppressed as it does not represent the views of the Anglo-Saxon Labour classes." At approximately the same time that other radical journals were being banned, Chambers recommended the suppression of the *Federationist*, but significantly the government did not act. In the charged atmosphere of the last months of 1918, Borden and his colleagues were not prepared to risk a confrontation with the Vancouver Trades Council and British Columbia Federation of Labour. A similar concern conditioned the government's response to
the Western Labor News. From the time that the paper began publishing, federal officials received complaints about its pronounced pacifism and its radical tone. For example, one of the editor's former colleagues, the Reverend Charles A. Sykes of Grace Church, told Chambers that Ivens "is sowing seeds of disloyalty and opposition to our part in the war and is the cause of much of the Labor trouble in this City and the West." When informal representations failed to force Ivens to adopt a more restrained tone, the Press Censor warned that unless a change were made, the Western Labor News would be suppressed. Chambers told Ivens that the pro-Bolshevik and anti-war views expressed in the paper did not accord with those of "the average loyal Canadian working man who, thank God!, has high standards of personal honour and is animated by too wholesome a patriotic spirit to countenance anything savouring of treason." When the trade council discussed the warning, Ivens and others advocated a defiant response; a secret agent reported. But the majority, including significantly radicals like Hoop, argued that such a course would be "useless" and that the paper must be kept open at all costs. Robinson assured Chambers that the council's organ would adhere to the censorship regulations. But in the autumn of 1918 it was seemingly impossible for a Western labour paper to improve, so far as security officials concerned. One of Chamber's staff reported that the Western Labor News published "a great deal of matter of a revolutionary and inflammatory nature, the effect of which must necessarily be to arouse a feeling of unrest and discontent among its readers and assist the Bolshevik propaganda of anarchism." Ivens became a cause of real concern to federal authorities. Cahan thought it essential that
he be silenced. The Justice Department proposed that the province of Manitoba be induced to prosecute him. And a weary Chambers fantasized, "if this man, Ivens, and a dozen or so like him could be jailed for the next eight or ten years, there would be very much less cause for anxiety as to events in Canada during the awkward period of reconstruction." Significantly, the focus of official concern was Ivens and not the Western Labor News. The government would not act against the paper. Chambers explained to Sherwood that, because the Western Labor News was the organ of the Winnipeg trades council, "one of the most influential and important labour organizations in Canada, an organization the loyalty of which one would not wish to impugn, . . . it would appear to be impolitic and unwise for us to take the extreme measure to suppress this publication."

It was not, however, the repressive political orders against which the larger labour movement initially reacted in a violent fashion but an unprecedented strike ban which the workers viewed as part of the government's new radical policy. Early in October an order-in-council was passed making strikes illegal in a large number of industries; persons striking or advocating strikes would be "deemed to be a soldier enlisted in the military forces of Canada and subject to military law for the duration of the present war." In the view of the leadership the industrial conscription that they had long predicted had arrived. "Nothing has occurred in the Labor world for some considerable time that has caused so much unrest and so much resentment as has the recent no-strike order-in-council," observed the Federationist. The Executive Board of District 18 announced, "we emphatically refuse to surrender the right to strike . . . [and] we
stand ready and willing to assist any Union who may have to declare
themselves against this Order-in-Council." In a circular issued by
the Winnipeg trades council, Robinson told the secretaries of central
bodies that the right to strike "must - at all costs - be retained"
and called upon them to hold general strike votes. Regina, Calgary
and Edmonton responded to the call. The vote in Winnipeg was 92 per-
cent in favour of a general walk-out if the government did not rescind
the order. 151

The issue was dramatized by a strike of Calgary freight
handlers which had begun late in September. In the city the street
railwaymen and the civic employees struck in sympathy and most of
Calgary's other unions were pledged to follow suit if a settlement was
not reached. Outside the city the workers were no less united.
Freight handlers from Port Arthur to Vancouver struck in sympathy.
The Director of Coal Operations feared that District 19 would go out.
And trades councils in virtually every major western centre were
pledged to support the strikers. The Western Labor News warned that,
if the government should act against the men under the no-strike
order, the result would be "nothing short of civil war." 152

Nevertheless, federal officials were instructed by the Justice
Department "to prosecute vigorously all strikers." In addition an
ad hoc citizens' committee, seemingly an inevitable response to any
labour trouble in these class-polarized times, demanded that "the
men on strike be arrested, placed in Kharki [sic] and sent to some
point east." The officer commanding the RNWMP in Calgary was
reluctant to take strong action against the strikers, because, he
reported, the situation was "very grave [and] once an arrest is made,
there is no telling what will happen. Although a few strike leaders were arrested, an early settlement of the strike allowed the federal authorities to drop the charges. "It has been a clear cut victory for Labor and a humiliating defeat for the Government," crowed the *Western Labor News*.

Most working class protest was generated by the various censorship orders. Resentment had been building up against curbs on civil liberties for some time. But when the government's offensive against the radicals began in the autumn of 1918, remarkably little outcry was made by western labour leaders, probably because they were reluctant to incur prosecution. Because Winnipeg workers could see first-hand the suppression of the Ukrainian federation of the SDP and its newspaper, they reacted most strongly to the orders-in-council in the weeks immediately after their passage. The government had instituted a policy of "Terrorism," Ivers said, because it was "afraid of the workers' new militancy; "the echo of these days will sound over the valley of the future with an unwelcome weariness," the editor warned. It was not, however, until hostilities had ended in Europe that western protests against censorship became noisy and threatening. The radicals had believed that the end of the war would bring the end to restrictions on speech and press; for example early in November Stephenson issued a circular for the SPC's Dominion executive assuring party members that immediately hostilities ceased the *Western Clarion* would resume publication.

In mid-November Kavanagh introduced a resolution in the Vancouver trade council declaring that, because censorship represented "a positive and direct attack upon freedom of the press,"
the organization would "use every available weapon against it"; the
resolution passed unanimously. A similarly ominous tone was
adopted by the council's organ. "During the past four years . . . the
master class has never lost an opportunity to cripple the mentality
of the slave and to rivet the chains of serfdom more firmly on his
limbs; the government of Canada is the most autocratic in the Empire
and the most ignorant on the planet," said the Federationist and went
on to warn that unless Borden and his colleagues showed "some glimmer
of sanity, we are likely to have serious trouble." In demanding
that the ban on the Clarion be lifted, the SPC was no less forceful;
Stephenson told Chambers, "we are not willing to be suppressed solely
because our analysis of history, our teachings of economics and
sociology do not altogether coincide with the view of these sciences
adopted by your department; failing some definite charge or
information upon this matter we will take the matter to the highest
court known, that of public opinion, in which we cannot and shall not
be denied a hearing." But, because of the government's new fear of
Bolshevism, the radicals' hope that censorship would cease with the
end of the war proved illusory. Indeed, restrictions actually became
more stringent. In a most provocative move, Chambers prescribed, late
in November, all the publications of Charles H. Kerr and Company of
Chicago, the main source of propaganda literature for western
radicals. "If the master class was not in a state of senile decay it
would never have attempted a stunt like that," snapped the
Federationist. The Island miners denounced the "autocratic" action,
because access to the "scientific" classics published by Kerr was
"absolutely necessary to the welfare of the working class." Leféaux
pledged that the SPC would continue to sell the banned literature.\textsuperscript{160}

Late in the year the radicals began a concerted campaign against censorship. The SPC and the Vancouver trades council called upon labour organizations to stage mass meetings to protest the orders-in-council.\textsuperscript{161} The response was overwhelming. In reply to a circular from Stephenson, the secretary of the Victoria trades council pledged that his organization would challenge "any bluff or otherwise from that bunch of ignoramuses at Ottawa." Across the West workers' meetings denounced the federal government's suppression of publications; from tiny locals in mining camps and powerful central bodies like District 18 and the Alberta Federation of Labour, the protests went to Ottawa. The storm reached its height late in December at the great meetings at the Walker Theatre in Winnipeg and the Empress Theatre in Vancouver. At the latter, Pritchard was cheered when he said, "we will say what we like; we will think what we like and we will write what we like in our own interests and leave it to the good sense of the working class."\textsuperscript{162} The number of left-wing journals that began publication early in 1919 demonstrated that this was precisely what the radicals intended to do. The Vancouver SPC local's Red Flag, the Labor Star, edited by Kingsley and Pettipiece, The Soviet,\textsuperscript{163} published by the Alberta provincial executive of the SPC, The Confederate in Brandon, the Winnipeg SPC local's Bulletin and the Ukrainian Labor News--all defiantly proclaimed the revolutionary gospel. With cause, Chambers regarded the foundation of these journals as a direct challenge to the government on the issue of censorship. The example of The Red Flag is a good one. Chambers told the Secretary of State that the paper represented "a deliberate and
insolent attempt to evade the warrant issued in the case of the "Western Clarion". In British Columbia the impossibilists publicly gloated over what Pritchard calls their "defiance" of government autocracy. The challenge of the new journals demonstrated that the radicals had determined to make, what Ivens called, "a definite stand," but the papers were only one aspect of the radical's response to continuing censorship. By the beginning of 1919 there was strong support developing for the proposal that the workers should stage a general strike to regain freedom of speech and press. Farmer told a meeting of the Winnipeg trades council that the body should issue an ultimatum: unless censorship was terminated within fifteen days, the workers would "take all action necessary to regain ordinary liberty." The trades councils in Regina, Vancouver and Victoria and the Alberta Federation of Labour advocated a general strike to force the suspension of the orders-in-council.

The western radicals were also angered by Canadian participation in the Siberian expedition. The enthusiasm for the Bolshevik cause which had developed after the October revolution became even more marked in the chaotic months at the end of 1918. The radical press seemed to publish every favourable account of the new order in Russia; this was especially true of the new papers, like The Red Flag and The Soviet, the columns of which were devoted almost exclusively to accounts of the Bolsheviks' good works. Part of the radicals' campaign in support of Lenin and his followers took the form of minimizing or dismissing accounts of revolutionary atrocities. For example, Kingsley told a Victoria audience, "I don't care what the Bolsheviks are doing to the land barons to win out, as long as they are
against the capitalistic gang and the bourgeoisie, and if they shoot every land baron and every general without an army, not one person would have lost his life compared to the thousands who lost theirs under the Czar." 166

To the western radicals the Bolsheviks were the legitimate authority in Russia, and intervention was, therefore, nothing more than international brigandage. The radicals believed that the Allies were in Russia for two reasons, both equally abhorrent. The French, British, American and Canadian troops were there to destroy the revolution before it could spread — "gendarmes of the Counter Revolution," The Red Flag called them — and radical journals frequently carried accounts of these troops, led by tsarist officers, shooting down workers. In addition, the expedition was regarded as an imperialistic adventure; in its last issue the Clarion charged that "the aim of the Allied intervention in Russia is to secure political and consequently economic control over this country, and the motive for such intervention is the insatiable hunger on the part of enterprising capitalists to make profitable investments and to exploit undeveloped territories and backward people." 167 Beside the campaign for the suspension of the orders-in-council, there developed a widespread protest against Canadian participation in the Siberian expedition. The Alberta Federation of Labour; the Victoria trades council, and the meetings at the Walker and Empress Theatres demanded the withdrawal of Canadian troops. The revolution marked "the inception of the new order in Russia based on industrial democracy," lectured the Federationist, and "the workers in Russia should be allowed to work out their own salvation according to the methods they thought most
The radicals' campaign against the Siberian expedition went beyond passing resolutions. They attempted to disrupt the loading of munitions in Vancouver and to encourage troops committed to the operation to desert. But, although these activities caused the government very real concern, their efforts were unsuccessful.

The opposition to the Siberian expedition demonstrated the radicals' belief that the Bolsheviks were the heralds of a new order and that their revolution had thus to be protected, as an example to other workers. The hope, which had been renewed by the Bolshevik coup, that the war would spark a global revolution burst forth after November, 1918. In addition to events in Russia, western Canadian workers were stirred by the Spartacist revolt in Germany, political unrest among the British working class and the One Big Union movement in Australia. "The world revolution is not coming - it is here," declared the Federationist. Clearly many western workers believed that with the end of the war they had entered a new phase of development; for example, the secretary of the Moose Jaw trades council wrote, "the great war for Liberty instead of being finished has just begun." As more and more men lost their jobs, as veterans returned to swell the ranks of the unemployed, as post-war economic chaos grew, there was a general consensus that it was inconceivable that the worker would return to his pre-1914 status. Labour expected, demanded, a new order, not a reconstruction of the old. "The reconstruction of capitalism is a physical impossibility," Pettipiece said. "Reconstruct a system of wage-slavery! Perpetuate your class bondage! Make the world safe for mansions and shacks, for private
parks and slums, for millionaires and paupers, for $10,000 poodles and underfed children!" stormed Joe Knight. "Reorganization rather than 'reconstruction' of society is essential. There must be a definite break with the past. We must strike out for something new," declared the reconstruction manifesto of the Saskatoon DLP.

"Reorganization rather than reconstruction of society is essential; there must be a definite break with the past," began the Winnipeg DLP's post-war platform.172

The last days of 1918 and the first days of 1919 were heady ones for radicals, and they were in an ebullient and optimistic mood. A Saskatchewan comrade asked Chris Stephenson, "Who can doubt that the revolution will be victorious in spite of bourgeois opposition and the chaos created by war?" History, as Marx had taught, was carrying man to his destiny: "the death knell of capitalist production has sounded. ... In this age and generation it has been decreed by all the economic forces on the planet that the working class shall henceforth be the only class in human society, that the useless element shall be transformed from parasites into producers."

At the end of 1918, the radicals' rhetoric and labour's truculent mood caused the uneasiness felt by many Canadians, as a result of the long years of war and the events in Russia to turn to alarm. The radicals were regarded by the mainstream of Canadian society as violent revolutionaries, as Bolsheviks, and it became necessary, therefore, to suppress them. Government officials received warnings and expressions of concern from across the West. "Bolshevism is something we may have to reckon with in this City before long," a Vancouver man told Chambers.171 Some concerned citizens, like those
in Victoria and Winnipeg, formed vigilante groups to take direct action to stamp out the radical menace. In the prairie capital, the RNWMP learned of efforts to form "a select body of men" who would "summarily deal with the leaders of the Socialists in the city, directly they begin to show open signs of activity with the view of inaugurating strikes etc. in the district. . . . It is intended to adopt a plan of systematic kidnapping of the leading Socialists, the liberal use of tar and feathers, and a very plain hint to place themselves beyond the confines of the province of Manitoba."175

Veterans and veterans' organizations played the most prominent role in the unofficial campaign against radicalism. With too much free time on their hands, imagining the radicals to be enemy aliens and often encouraged by employers, the returned men became the shock troops in the battle to preserve the constituted order. In Victoria veterans led by officers broke up a meeting held to protest the orders-in-council and the Siberian expedition and forced the speakers to give three cheers for the King. Because the returned men continued to constitute a threat to radical meetings, the trades council and FIE were unable to rent halls.176 In Vancouver the veterans were no less aggressive. The Army and Navy Veterans Association, the CWVA, the Comrades of the Great War and the British Campaigners, each appointed two men to a committee which was to keep Kingsley under constant surveillance with a view to prosecuting him for sedition. Here also, despite the efforts of the Workers' Police, the returned men became such a threat at labour meetings that theatre owners refused to rent their premises. But, unlike their Victoria comrades, Vancouver labour-men refused to
tolerate this state of affairs, and threatened a general strike if they were refused the right to hold meetings. In Edmonton the Fiery Knights, Joe and his wife, were the special target of the veterans, who broke up several SPC meetings at which they spoke. At a meeting early in February a group of veterans, accompanied by university students, chased Joe Knight off the platform, beat members of the audience, and forced the singing of the anthem. The Secretary of the GWVA informed the RWNMP that veterans would continue to disrupt such meetings. As it developed, the SPC were forced to stop holding meetings because they were unable to secure halls.

Veterans were probably nowhere more aggressive than they were in Winnipeg. This was caused, mainly, by the city's large concentration of Eastern Europeans, whom the returned men regarded as German sympathizers and revolutionists. On January 26, a mob of veterans prevented the SPC from holding a memorial service for Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg. In the two days of rioting that followed, companies employing Europeans were attacked, suspected enemy aliens were beaten in the streets, and the German Club was sacked. But the radicals also felt the veterans' wrath. They hunted Sam Blumenberg throughout the north end, wrecked his wife's dry cleaning shop and then went on to SPC headquarters. While terrified party members hid on an upper floor, the veterans ransacked the offices, threw records and literature from the windows, beat suspected socialists (who were promptly arrested by the watching police) and then, lighting the 'party's red flags, paraded the streets as they burned.'

Winnipeg's dailies, and the middle and upper class opinion which they represented, applauded the veterans' attack on the socialists. To
the Western press censor, F. G. Aldham, the raid seemed a "good-natured" lark.  

Aldham's reaction is instructive. Instead of being disturbed by the lawless action of some veterans and their organizations, government officials were clearly relieved and gratified. For a long time the security agencies had been fearful that the radicals would be able to mobilize the returned men, and when the GWVA and other similar organizations appeared to come out against the so-called Bolsheviks, relief and satisfaction were felt in Ottawa. The willingness of government officials, including Borden, to permit vigilantes to operate against the radicals demonstrated that the latter were regarded as outlaws, in the classic sense of the term. Because the radicals aimed to destroy society as constituted, it was legitimate for society to protect itself by whatever means it could, even to the extent of putting the radicals beyond the protection of the law. "I am firmly convinced," Chambers told John Bayne Maclean, the publisher, "that, [unless] the real solid sensible people of the country take into their own hands the active combating of this Bolshevik propaganda, we run the risk of reaching, within measurable time, the conditions which at present prevail in Russia."  

By the end of 1918 senior officials in federal security agencies were persuaded that a revolution was imminent in the West. In part, the security officials were led to this conclusion by the unrest among the workers and the fiery pronouncements of their radical leaders. More important, however, was the conviction that a conspiracy, hatched in Moscow, was being worked out in Western cities. From the Peace Conference Borden warned his colleagues that British
intelligence agencies believed that the Bolshevik government intended to undertake a propaganda campaign in North America. Security officials needed little urging to believe western labour unrest was the result of Russian machinations; they had, indeed, been moving to this view for some time. Chambers asked Sherwood rhetorically where the funds were coming from to finance the plethora of radical newspapers, broadsheets and pamphlets which appeared in western Canada after the war. Cahan believed that he could trace the spate of resolutions passed by western labour organizations against the orders-in-council and the Siberian expedition to a circular issued late in November by the Dominion executive of the SPC and thence back to sinister forces in Chicago, financed, according to the United States Department of Justice, by the Bolsheviks. "Never before in our political history has the Government of the country inaugurated so widespread and persistent a propaganda to bring about internal revolution in an enemy country as that which is now being carried on in the United States and Canada," Cahan told the Minister of Justice. Those whose responsibility it would be to put down the revolution, the WWP and the military, prepared for that contingency. For the first time the Police moved into British Columbia and were given instructions from the Commissioner to have agents fully infiltrate the province's labour movement. The army transferred what were regarded as unreliable Russian units out of the coast province and conducted an inventory of troops who would be available to quell disorders. Early in 1919 the Chief of the General Staff informed his western commanders that "it will be well for you to bear in mind the possibility of disorder beingomented
by [Radicals], and to have your course, should this come to pass, clear in mind. 186

Instead, however, of being able to move more forcefully against the radicals, on a broad front, security officials were constrained by the government's reluctance to cause further unrest by increasing restrictions on civil liberties. The security officials found this policy disturbing and vexing. Chambers criticized the decision to suppress no more radical journals: the authorities were obliged to stamp out the "poisonous propaganda" or discontinue censorship entirely, because "we are merely producing irritation and providing reasonable agitators with excuses to pose as victims of arbitrary repression." The Press Censor found the policy, he confessed to Perry, "remarkably awkward and annoying." 187 Most outspoken in his criticism of the government's reluctance to take preventive action against the revolutionaries was Cahan, whose resignation early in 1919 was probably caused, in part, by this issue. On leaving office, Cahan reminded the Minister of Justice that every country is bound to protect its citizens against the accomplishment of a revolution by force" and went on to observe that "the existing criminal laws are inadequate to that end." The Director of Public Safety privately complained to Gwathmey that "in every essential particular, I have failed to obtain the support of the Government in my efforts to eradicate the pernicious propaganda" and warned, "the Government's present policy merely serves to encourage internal disorders which may eventually result in its own destruction." 188

Because they played the essential role in shaping the Federal response to the industrial crisis of 1919, it is necessary
to understand the attitude of the security officials. They were neither agents of the capitalist class cynically desirous of destroying the labour movement nor paranoids. Indeed, it is not difficult to understand their fears. Radicals in these chaotic months were continually proclaiming that they were about to inaugurate the co-operative commonwealth, and by preparing to stop them, security officials were only taking them at their word. Similarly, contacts and correspondence, almost always intercepted, between western radicals gave the appearance of a co-ordinated campaign. For example, it was not difficult to discern such a campaign, in the efforts of Joe Knight, the "Red" hope in his province, to move the Alberta Federation of Labour to a radical position by use of resolutions submitted by the Vancouver Trades Council. Historians agree that no revolutionary conspiracy existed. But in the chaotic months at the end of the war security officials came to believe that such conspiracy did exist and their response to radicalism was informed by that conviction.

VII

In the turbulent months at the end of the war, forces that had been developing since at least August, 1914, converged to create an explosive situation. Many workers were profoundly dissatisfied and anxious to ensure that they would never again know deprivation. The radicals, to whom the rank and file were prepared to give the leadership of their movement, were excited by the mood of the workers and encouraged to believe that the time had come when they had the power to effect basic changes in society. There was, however, a
large proportion of the population, a majority, who could see little need for change, certainly not change of the order which had occurred in Russia, and it was such fundamental change that many people feared the workers meant to achieve. The federal government was determined to uphold this majority position. Western society was polarized.
Notes

1. Labour Organizations in Canada, 1918, p. 7.
2. The bitter dissatisfaction of ordinary workers is obvious time and again in their testimony before the Mathers Commission; see, for example, the observations of president of the Saskatoon Plumbers' Union on the rise of socialism. [Canada Dept. of Labour Library, "Proceedings of Royal Commission on Industrial Relations," 1919, typescript, p. 1060].
3. Royal Commission on Industrial Relations, Report, supplement to Labour Gazette, XIX (July), pp. 8-9; UMW Records, District 18 Executive Board Minutes, July 26, 1918 and Labour Gazette, XVIII, p. 1131.
4. The Voice, March 22, 1918 and British Columbia Federationist, May 31, 1918.
5. The Voice, Feb. 22, 1918.
6. Ibid., Jan. 25, 1918 and British Columbia Federationist, Feb. 8, 1918.
8. British Columbia Federationist, Jan. 18, 1918; Feb. 15, 1918 and April 26, 1918.
9. The Voice, Jan. 4, 1918; Western Clarion, April, 1918; British Columbia Federationist, April 26, 1918 and Chief Press Censor's Files, Vol. 272, Chambers to Pettipiece, May 9, 1918.
15. Ibid., Feb. 1, 1918.
16. Angus McInnis Collection, Vol. 53-17, "Amrose Tree: Old S.P.C."

17. British Columbia Federationist, May 24, 1918.

18. Ibid., Jan. 25, 1918; Feb. 1, 1918 and Feb. 8, 1918.

19. Ibid., Jan. 18, 1918.

20. Ibid., April 19, 1918 and July 19, 1918; The Voice, Jan. 25, 1918 and Borden Papers, Vol. 238, Ivens to Cressar, Feb. 25, 1918 and Robinson to Borden, April 8, 1918.

21. British Columbia Federationist, Jan. 18, 1918 and Chief Press Censor's Files, Vol. 272, Cowan to Gwatkin, Jan. 22, 1918; Tweedale to Chambers, April 30, 1918 and Reid to Chambers, June 12, 1918. The officers' threats may have contributed to Pettigrew's decision to resign the editorship of the Federationist in June, 1918.

22. Labour Gazette, XVIII, pp. 378-9 and The Voice, April 12, 1918.

23. British Columbia Federationist, June 7, 1918.


27. Ibid., May 18, 1917; Western Clarion, May, 1917 and Interview with Pritchard, Aug. 16-18, 1971.


34. Transcript of Interview of Jacob Penner by Roland Penner and The Voice, March 15, 1918.

35. Western Clarion, March, 1918; April, 1918 and July, 1918 and Pritchard to the author, Dec. 27, 1971.

36. Western Labor News, Aug. 9, 1918 and British Columbia Federationist, April 12, 1918.


40. Ibid., Feb. 1, 1918; The Voice, March 5, 1918 and Woodsworth Memorial Collection, Transcript of Interview of James Alken by Paul Fox. For the labour parties established in 1918 see below.

41. The Voice, March 15, 1918 and Western Clarion, March, 1918 and Sept., 1918.

42. British Columbia Federationist, Dec. 28, 1917 and Woodsworth Memorial Collection, Transcript of Interview of Angus McNinnis by Paul Fox.

43. British Columbia Federationist, Feb. 1, 1918 and Feb. 8, 1918.

44. Interview with Pritchard, Aug. 16-18, 1971. It is incorrect to say, as do Steeves and Robin, that the SPC split on the issue of the FLP; Kingsley, Pettipiece and the others had not been active in the party for some time. [Steeves Compassionate Rebel, p. 37 and Robin, Radical Politics, p. 150].

45. McNaught, A Prophet in Politics, p. 90.

46. British Columbia Federationist, March 15, 1918 and April 19, 1918.


49. The Voice, Jan. 4, 1918 and Jan. 25, 1918 and Western Clarion, Jan., 1918.
50. The Voice, Feb. 1, 1918 and June 7, 1918.

51. Interview with Pritchard, Aug. 16-18, 1917; Western Clarion, Oct., 1917; British Columbia Federationist, Sept. 27, 1918 and The Voice, May 3, 1918.

52. Western Clarion, Oct., 1917.

53. Ibid., June, 1918 and The Voice, May 17, 1918.

54. Steeves, Compassionate Rebel, pp. 36-8 and Interview with Pritchard, Aug. 16-18, 1917.

55. PAC, R. A. Rigg Papers, Murray to Rigg, May 28, 1918.

56. British Columbia Federationist, Jan. 11, 1918 and March 29, 1918.


58. British Columbia Federationist, July 15, 1918; July 12, 1918 and Oct. 18, 1918.

59. Ibid., Aug. 16, 1918; Victoria TLC Minutes, July 29, 1918; UMW Records, District 18 Executive Board Minutes, July 26, 1918; Regina Trades and Labour Council Correspondence; Sambrook to Churton, July 30, 1918; Western Labor News, Aug. 1, 1918 and Interview with Tipping, May 3, 1917.

60. British Columbia Federationist, Apr. 24, 1918.


63. The Voice, May 10, 1918 and May 17, 1918; Rigg Papers, Murray to Rigg, May 28, 1918 and Labour Gazette, XVIII, p. 526.

64. The Voice, May 10, 1918 and May 24, 1918 and Western Clarion, June, 1918.

65. The Voice, May 24, 1918.


68. Rigg Papers, Murray to Rigg, May 26, 1918; The Voice, May 24, 1918 and Regina Trades and Labour Council Correspondence; Sambrook to Robinson, June 1, 1918.
69. The Voice, May 10, 1918.

70. Western Clarion, June, 1918 and The Voice, May 17, 1918.

71. The Voice, June 7, 1918 and June 21, 1918.


73. Western Labor News, Aug. 2, 1918 and Aug. 9, 1918.

74. Ibid., Aug. 16, 1918 and Aug. 23, 1918 and Labour Gazette, XVIII, p. 740.

75. Interview with Pritchard, Aug. 16-18, 1918; Bennett, Builders of British Columbia, p. 77 and British Columbia Federationist, Aug. 2, 1918.

76. The police officer reported that he had shot in self-defense, and the bullet had ricocheted killing Goodwin. Medical testimony given at the inquest, however, seemed to discredit this claim. The officer was later exonerated. [Angus McInnis Collection, Vol. 344, "Proceedings at Inquest on the body of Albert Goodwin," July 31, 1918].

77. Western Clarion, Aug., 1918 and British Columbia Federationist, Aug. 2, 1918.

78. Interview with Pritchard, Aug. 16-18, 1918. Pritchard's brother was a patient in the hospital at the time.

79. British Columbia Federationist, Aug. 9, 1918 and Western Clarion, Aug., 1918.

80. British Columbia Federationist, Aug. 9, 1918.

81. Ibid.

82. Chief Press Censor's Files, Vol. 272, Buchanan to Chambers, Aug. 9, 1918.

83. Western Clarion, Aug., 1918 and British Columbia Federationist, Aug. 16, 1918.

84. Interview with Pritchard, Aug. 16-18, 1918 and Bennett, Builders of British Columbia, p. 80.

85. Interview with Pritchard, Aug. 16-18, 1918 and Angus McInnis Collection, Vol. 53-2, "John B. Burrough, Capsule biography and reminiscences.

86. British Columbia Federationist, May 24, 1918.


116. Ibid., Sherwood to Doherty, June 16, 1918.

117. DND Records, Vol. 2553-2102, Jukes to Davis, Aug. 17, 1918 and Hardy to Karrig, May 27, 1918.

118. Ibid., McQuire to Leckie, Aug. 16, 1918; Leckie to Fiset, Aug. 1, 1918, and Jukes to Davis, Aug. 17, 1918.


120. Ibid., Nold to Horrigan, Sept. 18, 1918, and Zaneth to Horrigan, Sept. 29, 1918.


123. Ibid., Cahan to Doherty, July 20, 1918.


127. Justice Dept. Records, 1918-2021, Newcomb to DeWolf, Sept. 16, 1918. In August the regulation of enemy aliens had been made more stringent by requiring all persons over sixteen years of age to register. [PC 1908, Aug. 5, 1918].


133. Ibid., Chambers to Burrell, Sept. 8, 1918 and Mulvey to Chambers, Sept. 26, 1918.

134. Ibid., Vol. 279-1, Chambers to Coulter, Aug. 31, 1918 and *British Columbia Federationist*, May 21, 1918.


139. Ibid., Vol. 272, Chambers to Pettipiece, Nov. 2, 1917 and Vol. 279-1a, Chambers to McLean, April 2, 1919.

140. Ibid., Burrell to Chambers, Aug. 3, 1918 and Chambers to Burrell, Aug. 5, 1918.

141. Ibid., Chambers to Burrell, Aug. 5, 1918 and Chambers to Buchanan, Sept. 8, 1918 and *British Columbia Federationist*, Sept. 20, 1918.

143. Ibid., Chambers to Burrell, Oct. 28, 1918 and Nov. 19, 1918.

144. Ibid., Vol. 279-12, Sykes to Chambers, Oct. 20, 1918.

145. Ibid., Chambers to Ivens, Sept. 18, 1918 and Sept. 24, 1918.


148. Ibid., Cahan to Mulvey, Oct. 28, 1918; Chambers to Campbell, Nov. 9, 1918 and Mulvey to Chambers, Dec. 16, 1918.


150. FC 2525, Oct. 11, 1918.


154. Western Labor News, Nov. 1, 1918. The ban on strikes was lifted on Nov. 19. [FC 2808, Nov. 19, 1918].


157. British Columbia Federationist, Nov. 27, 1918.

158. Ibid., Nov. 8, 1918.

159. Chief Press Censor's Files, Vol. 279-1(a), Stephenson to Chambers, Jan. 9, [1919].
160. Interview with Pritchard, Aug. 16-18, 1918 and British Columbia Federationist, Nov. 29, 1918 and Dec. 27, 1918.


163. It is interesting to note that although The Soviet was dated and printed in Edmonton, it was actually printed in Fernie and secretly shipped to the Alberta capital for distribution. "Chief Pretz: Censor's Files, Vol. 279-61, McLean to Perry, May 7, 1919].


170. British Columbia Federationist, Nov. 27, 1919.


185. RCMP Records, B-2(c), Vol. 68 F. 18, Perry to Horrigan, Feb. 20, 1919. British Columbia labour leaders were disturbed by the presence of the Rcmp in the province. [British Columbia Federationist, Jan. 24, 1919 and Victoria TLC Minutes, Jan. 8, 1919.]


188. DND Records, Vol. 2543, F. 2051-1, Cahan to Doherty, Jan. 8, 1919 and F. 2051-2, Cahan to Gwatkin, Jan. 4, 1919.

Chapter IX

Epilogue

By the end of 1918 the stage had been set for the nation's greatest industrial upheaval, and in the new year events moved quickly toward that crisis. The bitter experience of the war years caused virtually all western labour leaders to condemn Canadian society. But if there was agreement on the need for fundamental change, there was, even in the early months of 1919, no consensus on the means whereby this was to be achieved. Tension between moderates and radicals persisted. As they always had, members of the SPC made up the left wing, but in 1919 the mood of the labour movement was such that the moderates were advocates of political action as the means by which relief could be brought to the workers, while the radicals promoted direct action. In Winnipeg the trades council was the scene of several bitter fights between syndicalists, like Russell and Johns, and labourites, like Ernest Robinson and James Winning. Similar animosity prevailed in British Columbia, Alberta, and Saskatchewan. But when early in January Russell boasted of the Winnipeg situation that "we are fast knocking hell out of the Labor Party," he might well have been speaking of the West in general.

Despite vigorous campaigns by labourites across the West, the syndicalists were, in the early months of 1919, emerging as the commanding influence in the labour movement. Angered by continually rising prices, frustrated by the apparent inadequacy of their unions, resentful of government repression and aroused by the revolutionary ferment in Europe, western workers were, as never before, ready to
respond to the most radical appeals. And so, for the first time, they allowed the leadership of their movement to pass into the hands of the extreme left wing.

II

After the TLC convention in Quebec, the radicals began a campaign to convert the western labour movement to the gospel of revolutionary industrial unionism. Using his position as secretary of the western conference committee, Midgley, with the aid of Russell and Johns in Winnipeg, Knight in Edmonton, and Pritchard, Kavanagh, Wells and Winch in Vancouver, worked to achieve a syndicalist victory. The results of this campaign began to become apparent early in the new year. The radicals had been concerned about the state of affairs in Alberta, but the results of the mid-January convention of the province's labour federation gave them cause for satisfaction. As chairman of the resolutions committee, Knight was able to submit and see passed a number of radical motions, several of which were significantly, parachuted into the convention by the Vancouver trades council. The two most important resolutions called for the establishment of one big union and for the creation of machinery for the effective prosecution of general strikes. In February the delegates to District 19's annual convention took a similar line. After condemning the Siberian expedition and press censorship, they voted in favour of industrial unionism and ending the UMW's system of time contracts. The last in the series of preliminary conventions was that of the BCFL, the location of which Midgley and his associates had succeeded in having changed from Victoria to Calgary.
syndicalist attack on craft unionism and political action was led by Kavanagh and Pritchard, both of whom emphasized the workers' need to take up new weapons in their struggle against the capitalists. Although the members of FLP were prepared to accept the validity of industrial unionism, they insisted that the workers must also continue their fight on the political field. The convention went overwhelmingly for the new syndicalism, however, by going on record for the establishment of an organization "to embrace all the workers" which could enforce labour's demands through direct action.

The Western Labour Conference, held in Calgary in March, was the forum in which expression was given to the anger, frustration and bitterness which had grown up among the workers of the West over the past four years. Dominated and directed by the syndicalists, it was the most radical convention of consequence ever held in western Canada. It was also the swansong of the Socialist Party of Canada; Calgary would be the last western conference controlled by the brilliant revolutionaries of that organization. The first order of business, submitted by the Resolutions Committee which was chaired by Kavanagh, called for "the abolition of the present system of production for profit." This resolution was passed unanimously and without debate. The convention then sent "fraternal greetings to the Russian Soviet government, the Spartacists in Germany and all definite working class movements in Europe and the world." The old grievances were rehearsed. The delegates passed resolutions calling for the cessation of censorship, the release of political prisoners and the withdrawal of troops from Siberia; they threatened a general strike on June 1 if their demands were not met.
The most important aspect of the convention, however, was the triumph of revolutionary industrial unionism. The West's sense of alienation from the TLC was even greater in March, 1919 than it had been in the previous October; at the very time the delegates were sitting in Calgary, the *Federationist* and the *Western Labor News* were denouncing Tom Moore as a class collaborator. In this atmosphere the convention easily passed a BFL resolution, calling for a referendum on the proposition that western unions bolt the internationals and form "an industrial organization of all workers." Then Johns, chairman of the Policy Committee, introduced a series of seven resolutions which set out the machinery by which the *One Big Union* (OBU) would be organized. When these passed, the stormy history of the OBU began. Earlier the convention had unanimously passed a resolution, introduced by Kavanagh and seconded by Pritchard, calling upon the workers to forgo the practice of "lobbying parliament for palliatives which do not palliate" and to enforce their demands "by virtue of their industrial strength." The syndicalism which had been growing in strength since the General Election of 1917 was made explicit when the convention voted to table an Alberta Federation of Labour resolution, which recommended "a homogeneous political party" for the working class. Kavanagh spoke the new revolutionary gospel when he told the delegates, "any time the workers imagine they can emancipate themselves through the gas houses of this or any country, they have another think coming," but he recalled the SPC's earliest considerations of direct action when he added "any act taken by a class in defence of its own interests is political action."

The *Western Labour Conference* represented the high water
mark of western radicalism. At Calgary the two manifestations of the movement fused. The industrial unionism, in which the workers had long had confidence and to which they were now committed, became the vehicle for the revolutionary end of the socialists. Never had the radicals possessed more potential power. Had the syndicalists succeeded in establishing the One Big Union which they envisaged at Calgary, it would have been the ultimate expression of western Canadian labour radicalism.

Unlike their stands at the conventions earlier in the year, the advocates of political action at Calgary put up no strenuous fight against the syndicalists. Although they were convinced that direct action would ultimately prove disastrous for the western labour movement, moderates, like Rees, Trotter and McVety, were impressed by the enthusiastic response of a large and representative convention to the new syndicalism, and they were, therefore, prepared to allow the left wing to assume the leadership of the movement, for a time.13

The Calgary conference gave to the radicals the responsibility of establishing the OBU - the central organizing committee comprised of Pritchard, Knight, Johns, Midgley and Naylor14 - and with Vancouver as the centre of operations, they set to their task with vigour. By the beginning of April OBU propaganda, most of it written by Pritchard, was circulating across the West.15 "The old-fashioned and obsolete craft union . . . has outlined its usefulness," proclaimed the central committee's Bulletin; "by organizing the workers according to the industry in which they work . . . it becomes possible to get united action at any time along any line conducive to those workers'
welfare. Speakers, notably Mylne and Knight, carried the new gospel throughout the four provinces.

In the areas that had always been of central importance to the western radical movement, the response of the workers to the OBU was enthusiastic. In the Federationist, Wells, a staunch supporter of revolutionary industrial unionism, announced "the representatives of labor at [Calgary] took steps to bring the organized labor movement into line with the development of capitalistic society and made preparation to form an organization that would be of use during the transition period from capitalism to a system of production for use instead of for profit." The trades councils in Vancouver and Victoria voted overwhelmingly to endorse the OBU and to contribute funds to the central organizing committee.

A similar response came from the loggers, who were flooding into an OBU union directed by Pritchard, and from the miners on the Island and in the Kootenays. In District 18 the miners, who for some time had been dissatisfied with the UMWA, enthusiastically joined in the western rebellion against the international, and within weeks of the Calgary convention, the District Executive Board agreed "to fall in line with the One Big Union." In Winnipeg the Western Labor News promoted the cause of the OBU, and the trades council gave financial support to the organizational campaign. On two occasions audiences of several thousand workers cheered OBU propagandists. This response made Russell and Johnstone consistently optimistic during April and May, but the OBU referendum in Winnipeg was interrupted by the general strike. Though the province was not a traditionally radical area, Saskatchewan's workers also joined in
the western revolt during the spring of 1919. 20

Only the cities of Alberta failed to succumb to the campaign for the new unionism. Medicine Hat was the lone city in the province to pass the OBU referendum. And opposition in Calgary and Edmonton was quite strong. In the latter, for example, the advocates of political action and supporters of the internationals united and within weeks of the Calgary convention initiated an offensive which left the syndicalists, led by Knight, reeling. The Edmonton Free Press, which the moderates apparently established to counteract the radical propaganda, indulged in a red-baiting campaign which would have been worthy of any Citizen's Committee. Late in April the trades council, by a close vote, expelled all its affiliates which had declared for the OBU, a move which was heartily applauded by Tom Moore. 21 But even in the most radical centres, during these heady times, there was some opposition to the OBU movement. In District 18 fees led a fight to preserve the UMW. In Vancouver, some craft unionists, among whom metal tradesmen were prominent, worked to stop secessions and to prevent union funds from falling into the hands of the radicals. 22 Despite opposition, the members of the central organizing committee were, with cause, optimistic. In mid-May McIvor announced that the vote in the OBU referendum had "surpassed our most optimistic anticipations . . . in the vital industries of the West, and, therefore, a founding convention of the new organization would be held in Calgary in June. 23

During the spring of 1919, federal security agencies watched the spread of the western revolt with a growing sense of alarm. The Calgary convention had been profoundly disturbing to the
officials because they had long had the men who controlled it under surveillance; the Comptroller of the RNWMP described the SPC group as "Anarchists of the worst kind." At RNWMP and Militia headquarters, there could be no doubt that the victory of such men represented a clear and present danger to the state. Security officials quickly became convinced that "the O.P.U. is an organization whose aims and objects are to overthrow the present form of Government; the institution of an industrial or Soviet government, and the confiscation of property and industries." There were several opinions on when the attempt to overturn constituted authority would be made, though it is interesting to note that one report indicated that "the big strike at Winnipeg" would begin early in May. That the attempt would be made, however, there could be no doubt; early in April the Commissioner of the RNWMP wrote, "I am forced to discuss the possibility of a successful revolution being accomplished by force."

Given this view, it was natural that the security agencies should accelerate the build-up of troops and police which had been underway since the beginning of the year. Now special emphasis was placed on machine-gun units. In addition, the Police began conducting searches for arms caches, all of which proved fruitless. In light of subsequent developments, it is interesting that during this period security officials began to promote a new response to the radicals—deportation. For example, at the end of April Perry told a Police officer, "I am urging upon the Government the necessity for summarily arresting and deporting these dangerous revolutionists."

As they watched support for the new unionism grow across the West,
security officials concluded that the safety of the state depended upon the destruction of the OBU. The Chief of the General Staff observed, "in fighting hydra-headed revolution need we be particular as to the weapons we use? ... It is not unsportsmanlike to shoot a mad dog sitting." 31

Significantly, the radical victory at Calgary and the subsequent campaign for the OBU had, by the spring of 1919, caused Borden's cabinet to come to share the security officials' sense of alarm. The Adjutant General of the Canadian Army told a brother officer that "the Government has 'got the wind up' properly over the unrest in [the west]." 32 This condition was best demonstrated when the cabinet requested that Borden, who was in Paris, arrange to have a British cruiser call at Victoria and Vancouver. His colleagues informed the Prime Minister that "plans are being laid [in British Columbia] for revolutionary movement which if temporarily successful would immediately bring about serious disturbances in Calgary and Winnipeg where socialism is rampant." The presence of a British warship and its crew would have a "steadying influence" on the workers. Borden was unprepared to entertain the proposal, because he regarded the industrial unrest as a purely domestic matter in which British forces should have no part. 33 But though the cruiser was never dispatched, the incident demonstrated that in the approaching crisis the federal government would be prepared to take strong action against what it regarded as a challenge by the radicals.

On May 1 Winnipeg's building and metal trades went out on strike; in the latter industry, the issue was collective bargaining. When the metal workers called upon the trades council to support
their cause, the city's unions voted overwhelmingly in favour of sympathetic action, and on May 15 approximately 30,000 workers left their jobs. The Winnipeg general strike had begun. From the outset the strike committee made every effort to preserve order among the large number of strikers; the Strike Bulletin explained, "a fight usually means a strenuous time for all concerned, but our fight consists in doing no fighting."35 Despite this attitude and despite the declared aims of the trade council, the city's middle and upper classes believed the strike to be an insincere revolution, "an attempt to transfer the reins of government from the properly constituted authority to the Strike Committee at the Labor Temple."36 A similar view of the situation was taken by the federal government. The strike was the beginning of the revolution which the western radicals had been actively promoting for almost two years and which they had established the CCO to achieve.

Robertson, who was directly in charge of federal efforts to end the strike, told Samuel Gompers, "the underlying motive in calling the strike is undoubtedly in support of what is known as the One Big Union movement."37 The view that Borden's government aligned itself with the city's middle and upper classes to defeat the workers, a view that is central to McNaught's and Bercusson's interpretations of the strike, is clearly valid. To suppress what it regarded as rebellion, the Army made extensive military preparations: large numbers of reservists were kept in barracks at all times, mobile machine gun units were stationed at the city's various armouries, and an armoured car was secretly shipped to Winnipeg.38

No evidence exists to link the Winnipeg general strike
directly to the emerging OBU, and the historians who have studied the strike agree that the basic issue was, indeed, collective bargaining. Still it is necessary to understand the response of the federal government. Revolution was in the air in the months after November, 1917, and many western radicals had long since declared themselves Bolsheviks. For a year security officials had been telling Border and his colleagues that a revolutionary movement was developing in the West, and when the government had earlier failed to act in the vigorous manner recommended, that movement gained strength. During the early months of 1919 the flamboyant rhetoric of the OBU campaign had exacerbated tensions that had been growing for five years. How many times had Knight or Taylor or Kavanagh or Russell said that the wage system would be destroyed by a general strike? Certainly the federal government, and many other Canadians, had some grounds for fearing, however mistakenly, that a revolution was beginning in Winnipeg.

The official view of the Winnipeg strike seemed to be given substance by developments across the West. The tremendous sense of solidarity which had been developing in the labour movement since the end of 1917 caused thousands of workers to make the cause of the Winnipeg strikers their own. The trades councils in Brandon, Calgary, Vancouver and Victoria issued circulars calling for general strikes in sympathy with the Winnipeg workers. The ruling class' challenge to the basic principle of collective bargaining was "a national question," declared the Federationist. The radical centres of the West, those areas where support for the OBU was strongest, responded enthusiastically to the calls for sympathetic strikes. In District 18
a walkout was underway but the miners made it clear that they supported the Winnipeg workers. On June 3 almost 12,000 workers in Vancouver struck, and later, in the month they were joined by trade unionists in other British Columbia cities and by interior loggers. Sporadic strikes flared in Saskatchewan. And sympathetic strikes were held in Calgary and Edmonton, despite efforts by conservative craft unionists to prevent them. This great sympathetic response across the West was, in Joe Knight's opinion, a "living demonstration of the solidarity of labor."

For the federal government the sympathetic strikes were frightening. On May 26 Perry told McLean that "there is a grave possibility that the civilian authorities may find themselves unable to cope with the situation which will arise should a general strike be called in western Canada." Two days later, army headquarters in Ottawa issued elaborate orders to its western commanders regarding the military's role in the event of civil disorder. To keep the authorities fully in touch with conditions, the new ubiquitous agents monitored virtually all forms of commerce in the western labour movement. Outside of Winnipeg, military preparations during late May and June were most extensive in Vancouver, which Borden's government regarded as the centre of the CEF movement. Special militia units were raised; machine guns were mounted near the Labour Temple and an armored car was shipped to the city. The build-up in the coast city demonstrated, perhaps even more forcefully than similar preparations in Winnipeg, the government's determination to smash what it considered a revolutionary conspiracy. This determination, manifested as it was in surveillance, police raids
and military build-ups, intimidated many western workers and weakened their will to carry on the fight.

For Borden's government Winnipeg was the 'vital centre of the crisis.' There the strikes had begun; there the largest number of workers were cut; and there dislocation was greatest. Consequently, it was in that city that the major effort to stop the movement had to be made. "The City of Winnipeg is fighting the fight for the whole of Western Canada," said the Commissioner of the RNC. In the city the federal government's determination to defeat the workers was most manifest, and this determination ensured that provincial and municipal authorities would also take a hard line with the strikers. Robertson was prepared to go to truly remarkable lengths to prevent the workers from gaining their demands; for example, he intervened in mediation procedures to assure an award unfavourable to the metal workers. But by the beginning of June Borden's government decided to take much more drastic action to end the industrial crisis. On June 6 the House of Commons passed, in a matter of minutes, an amendment to the Immigration Act which would allow for the deportation of British-born immigrants. Four days later Parliament approved recommended amendments to the Criminal Code which broadened the definition of sedition. There is some reason to believe that the government had decided to take these actions to break the western radical movement before the strike in Winnipeg actually began. In any case, federal authorities in the city were now better armed to deal the strike a lethal blow.

Almost from the time the crisis began, there had been calls for the arrest of strike leaders, and late in May A. J. Andrews, the
Justice Department's agent in Winnipeg, had begun preparing cases against men like Ivens. 51 By the middle of June the strike had clearly passed into a more critical phase. Veterans were now holding regular parades; the special police had made their provocative appearance on the streets; and violence had flared. On June 17 six strike leaders, including Russell and Ivens, and two OBU propagandists, Johns and Pritchard, were arrested by the RNWMP. The arrests were a shattering blow to the already faltering resistance of the workers. Deprived of their most vigorous leaders, they passed through the horror of Bloody Saturday and capitulated on June 26.

For the Winnipeg workers the general strike was "a complete failure." 52 And their sense of defeat was transmitted to the strikers in other western cities who began to drift back to work at the end of June. 53 Across the West, but especially in Winnipeg and Vancouver, the workers were forced to pay heavily for the defeat. Triumphant employers established open shops and blacklists. In Winnipeg the unions in the contract metal shops, the storm-centre of the crisis, collapsed, and civic employees signed no-strike pledges. Men returning to work on the Vancouver docks were obliged, literally, to tear up their union cards and sign "yellow dog" contracts. 54

III

By breaking the strike in Winnipeg and intimidating the workers in other cities, the federal government had dealt a severe blow to radicalism. Since 1918 the extremists had been gaining strength in the West, and at Calgary they had won control of the labour movement. The debacle of May and June, however, badly
discredited the left wing. The industrial crisis of 1919 was not engineered by the emerging OBU, and historians have properly pointed out that the various strike committees were not dominated by the left wing. These qualifications notwithstanding, the general strike was certainly the weapon of the left wing. For almost a year the SPC men had preached its invincibility; it was, they said, the means by which the working class would be emancipated. In 1919, after the bitter war years, a great many workers in Western Canada were prepared to believe these claims, and they gave to the radicals greater support than they had ever enjoyed. In a spirit of hope, the rank and file, more than had joined in any previous struggle, had taken up the fight, and they had been beaten. The syndicalists had been wrong; mass action would not automatically result in victory. Many workers felt angry and betrayed. Consequently, during the summer of 1919 the radical fervour of earlier months quickly began to dissipate. Even the RNWMP and military intelligence were satisfied that the crisis was past. 55

The One Big Union, which was to have been the means by which the new order was achieved, was officially established at a conference in Calgary in mid-June. 56 At the end of the industrial crisis, this was a decidedly inauspicious time. Gone was the radical rhetoric which had been so much a part of the conference held three months earlier in the same city. The preamble to the OBU's constitution was a remarkably mild document. It was clear that the new organization would concentrate on the economic needs of the workers and leave the class struggle in temporary abeyance. Initially the OBU made some rather impressive gains; its essential support lay in the traditional
radical centres of British Columbia, the Alberta coal fields and
Winnipeg. But this early progress suggested a strength which the
organization seems never to have really had. From the beginning the
OBU was under attack. As Masters has pointed out, "the real prisoner
in the dock [at the Winnipeg strike trials] was the O.B.U."57

Official pursuit of the union continued into 1920, and this tended
to deprive it of the services of three of its most dynamic leaders,
Russell, Johns and Pritchard, who first had to devote much time to
their defense, and were then removed entirely when they went to
prison. A second attack was made upon the OBU by the international
craft unions which began a strenuous campaign to smash the western
insurgency in the summer of 1919. Significantly, the campaign of
the internationals aimed to capitalize on the disillusionment of the
workers. For example, the Edmonton Free Press argued that, as a
result of the sympathetic strikes, "organized labor has been led
into a most uncomfortable position ... and may have sacrificed some
prestige and confidence that required years in the building."58

In the fight with the OBU, the internationals portrayed themselves
as the representatives of responsible and legitimate trade unionism,
and as a result, both the federal government and employers supported
their efforts. 59 By the beginning of 1920 it was plain that the
international campaign would succeed, and the West would return to
craft unionism. The once-feared One Big Union would soon only be a
caricature of its founders' dreams. The West's greatest industrial
union crusade had faltered before the combined opposition of the
state and the owner-managerial class. From the turn of the century
militant industrial unionism had been a response to this combination,
and the defeat of 1919 did much to shake the workers' confidence in this manifestation of western radicalism.

Another, and equally important, blow to western radicalism was the disintegration of the Socialist Party of Canada. During 1920 the party struggled, with only partial success, to resume its operations which had been disrupted during and after the sympathetic strikes. Then in 1921 the issue of affiliation with the Third International began to wrack the SPC. The Comintern had adopted the so-called Twenty-One Points as obligatory conditions for the affiliation of all national parties, and these the Communist Party of Canada adopted when it was formed in May, 1921. To some members of the SPC, particularly the Vancouver intellectuals, the Twenty-One Points had no application in Canada. Certainly, after the debacle of 1919, the Communist International's insistence that violent revolution was the only means whereby the proletariat could be emancipated had little appeal. In addition, the autocrats of Vancouver clearly were not prepared to accept the direction of the emerging bureaucracy in Moscow. Still, there were others in the party, apparently the majority, who could see no other hope for the working class than Leninism and who, therefore, favoured affiliation with the International. After the formation of the Communist Party, debate within the SPC on this issue became more heated and bitter. In January, 1922 the Winnipeg local bolted to become a part of the Workers' Party. And Kavanagh and Wells led a minority of the Vancouver local out of the SPC to join the communist organization. The split wrecked the Socialist Party of Canada.

After 1919, Canada's radical centre of gravity, which, since
the turn of the century, had been located in the West, moved east. Montreal and Toronto were the core of the emerging Communist Party. The collapse of the SPC was highly significant because, despite its impossibilist doctrines, it had always been able to play an influential role in the western labour movement, particularly that of British Columbia. Now the left wing was the Communist Party but, unlike the SPC, this was a non-British organization. Though its leadership was mainly British-born, the party was largely composed of Ukrainians and Finns, and these ethnic groups had not been integrated into the larger labour movement. The nature of the new party, therefore, ensured that the left wing of the labour movement, instead of having a direct influence, would be alien and isolated.

The mood of the great majority of western workers was of even greater importance in the decline of left wing influence. The decade of the twenties was one of quiescence for labour across the continent. Given the levels of earlier militancy, this tendency was, in comparison, even more marked in the West. In part the changed mood grew out of the fact that conditions were improving for the workers. During the twenties the rate of immigration declined, and real wages began an upward movement. In part western quiescence was the result of sheer exhaustion. It would have been impossible to sustain the radical fervour of 1918 and 1919, and its decline was greatly accelerated by the bad beating which the workers had taken.

The progressive tradition in the western labour movement was not destroyed by the crisis of 1919; indeed, in some cases the tradition was given new force by those events. But the changed mood
of the workers meant that labourism would now be the creed of the leading radicals. In British Columbia the Socialist Party of Canada all but disappeared, and the Federated Labour Party and then the Canadian Labour Party became the centres of radicalism. Through co-operation with the farmers, the Dominion Labour Party of Alberta, which had never really been inspired by the militancy of 1918 and 1919, was able to play a role in provincial politics. The twenties saw the important beginnings of working class political action in Saskatchewan and at the end of the decade the emergence of the Independent Labour Party in Regina. In Winnipeg, the legacy of the general strike ensured that first the Dominion Labour Party and then the Independent Labour Party would be important political forces in the city. All of these parties espoused the western labourism, which was inspired by British radicalism, the labourism which aimed at immediate relief for the workers while it looked to an ultimate restructuring of society. The triumph of this relatively moderate philosophy in the twenties marked the end of the tension between labourism and socialism, which had been a part of western radicalism since the turn of the century. While both doctrines had enjoyed periods of ascendancy, the revolutionary creed had gained the majority of its adherents in either the most class-polarized geographic regions or in the most unsettled times; in the decade of the twenties labourism could have a much broader appeal. Significantly, J. S. Woodsworth was emerging as the most prominent western radical; his commitment to the need for change in society was derived from Christianity, not Marxism, and was markedly more moderate and humane than earlier western socialism.
During the first two decades of the twentieth century, radicalism became firmly established in the West. In the booming economy and immature society of the region, labour came under special pressures. The response of some of the immigrant workers to those pressures took two forms - independent working-class political action and militant industrial unionism, responses which were derived from the radical traditions of Britain, the United States, and Europe.

Radicals became an important force in the labour movement, and each party or sect pressed its own formula for salvation on the workers. Because of a basic lack of class solidarity, the response of the rank and file to this propaganda was never such as to produce really significant political progress. But during the war years a remarkable degree of solidarity developed among the workers, and as a result, the two radical forces fused in a vain crusade for the workers' relief. The defeat of 1919 marked the end of the first period of western radicalism. With industrial unionism and doctrinaire socialism discredited in the eyes of the workers, a more moderate philosophy emerged as the basis of progressive politics.

But the foundations of the broadly-based reform party, which began to emerge in the twenties, had been laid by impossibilists and revolutionaries as much as by labourites. There was real continuity - in personnel, in institutions, in character and in doctrines - between the two movements separated by the great events of 1919. If J. S. Woodsworth was the political beneficiary of Arthur Puttee, the founder of the CCF, was equally the political beneficiary of E. T. Kingsley.
Notes


3. Quoted in Masters, Winnipeg General Strike, p. 32.

4. The newly available OBU records in the PAM clearly demonstrate that such a campaign was conducted.


12. Ibid., pp. 11 and 46-50.

13. Robin, Radical Politics, p. 177. Marion Dutton Savage suggests that the delegates probably did not understand fully the doctrines they endorsed. Industrial Unionism in America (New York, 1922), p. 179.


19. Western Labor News, April 11, 1919; April 18, 1919; April 25, 1919 and May 9, 1919 and Bercusson, "Labour in Winnipeg," p. 266.


34. Masters, Winnipeg General Strike and McNaughton, Prophet in Politics, Chap. 8, provide good accounts of events in Winnipeg, but all earlier research has been superseded by Bercusson, "Labour in Winnipeg."


36. The Activities and Organization of the Citizen's Committee of One

38. The military build-up in Winnipeg is extensively documented in DND Records, Vol. 2733-5678-2.


50. On May 16, Perry informed Cortland Starnes, the RNWMP commander in Winnipeg, that "many important questions were settled when I was in Ottawa. The Government has taken power to deport undesirable foreigners whether they are naturalized or not. A very important amendment with regard to treason and seditious libel will probably be made to the criminal code [sic]."

[RCMP Records, H, Vol. 1, Perry to Starnes, May 16, 1919.]

51. Ibid., Starnes to Perry, May 30, 1919.


56. Savage, *Industrial Unionism* remains the best account of the OBU.

57. Masters, *Winnipeg General Strike*, p. 133.


59. For the most blatant case of government-management-international co-operation, the campaign against the OBU in District 18, see McMillan, "Trade Unionism in District 18," pp. 146-55.

60. For the early years of the Communist Party of Canada see Poiney, *Soldiers of the International*, pp. 26-52.


64. Interview with Pritchard, Aug. 16-18, 1971.


A. Note on Sources.

It seems appropriate to make some general comments on the three main categories of primary sources used in the preparation of this study.

1. Newspapers

Newspapers have been the main source for the activities and attitudes of the various radicals and their organizations. These journals, either the official organs of parties, like the Western Clarion, or edited by prominent radical intellectuals, like The Voice or the British Columbia Federationist, provide valuable information on the nature of the movement and, indeed, represent the only large body of evidence available to the scholar. By and large the papers contain a full record of the institutional development of radicalism. But the nature of this source imposes certain constraints upon the historian. Most important in the present context, it is necessary to recognize that the journals mainly contain the opinions of prominent or articulate individuals. As a result, this study has focussed to a large extent on the elite. It seems safe to assume, however, that the radical journals represented much better than did the commercial press the attitudes of those who read them. The papers were democratically controlled, and there is ample evidence to indicate that when an editor took a position unacceptable to a significant proportion of his constituency he was disciplined in one of several ways.

2. Manuscripts

Newspapers were the main source for this study because few
manuscript collections are available. Still, there are some such sources. It was gratifying to discover valuable information in the Socialist Labour Party Papers held by the Wisconsin State Historical Society. More important were the excellent collections of WFM records and Vancouver trades council minutes at the University of British Columbia. The manuscript proceedings of the Royal commission on the early metal mining industry in British Columbia appear to be a source previously unknown to scholars. The papers of national leaders provided some information on radical politics. But probably most interesting and useful were the records of the various security agencies which demonstrated the official reaction to radicalism in the critical war years.

3. **Oral Sources**

These sources, collected by the author and other scholars, were important. The historian must exercise a special kind of care in the use of such evidence; for example, matters of fact are frequently confused. But oral testimony was a valuable source of information on attitudes, impressions and influences. It sometimes corroborated or enhanced information drawn from other sources. And it often enriched dry reportage with anecdotes.
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