'To Waffle to the Left:' The Waffle, the New Democratic Party, and Canada's New Left during the Long Sixties

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Abstract

The Sixties were time of conflict and change in Canada and beyond. Radical social movements and countercultures challenged the conservatism of the preceding decade, rejected traditional forms of politics, and demanded an alternative based on the principles of social justice, individual freedom and an end to oppression on all fronts. Yet in Canada a unique political movement emerged which embraced these principles but proposed that New Left social movements – the student and anti-war movements, the women’s liberation movement and Canadian nationalists – could bring about radical political change not only through street protests and sit-ins, but also through participation in electoral politics. The Waffle movement, which formed around the “Manifesto for an Independent and Socialist Canada” and challenged the leadership of the New Democratic Party (NDP) from 1969 to 1973, represents a dynamic convergence of many of the social movements that comprised the New Left in Canada. The Waffle argued that the NDP should promote socialist measures to combat American economic domination and ensure Canadian independence while simultaneously engaging with extra-parliamentary struggles. NDP and trade-union leaders, reluctant to adopt such a radical approach, expelled the Waffle from the Ontario NDP in 1972. Despite its short life-span, the Waffle had a considerable influence on Canadian politics and the issues that it raised – Canadian economic dependency, Quebec’s right to self-determination, women’s equality, and the decline of the manufacturing sector, among others – continue to resonate to this day. Furthermore, the Waffle’s impact on Canadian nationalism and its legacy in the NDP, labour and women’s movements, radical left and academia remain contested. The Waffle’s successes and failures represent a potentially revealing perspective on Canadian politics and society during a period of rapid social change, the Sixties. While the existing historiography has sketched the outlines of the Waffle’s history, the focus overall has been limited to analyses of internal leadership disputes and the experience of the Ontario Waffle in particular. Abundant research materials now exist to support a wider and more intensive examination. Through an analysis of the Waffle, focusing on grassroots activists as well as the movement’s leadership, this dissertation demonstrates important connections between the Waffle and other New Left social movements. This interconnectivity is particularly significant, as it indicates that the Waffle occupied a unique place in the international New Left, specifically a convergence of social movements which sought to engage with electoral politics through an existing political party, the NDP. The dissertation also revises the movement/party dichotomy which has dominated much of the Waffle/NDP historiography. Finally, my study of the Waffle, a group active from 1969-75, indicates the flaws of applying a declension narrative to the Canadian Sixties, instead demonstrating the value of a “long Sixties” approach. As the clock ticked down on the 1960s, the Canadian New Left neither died nor retreated into cynicism nor lashed out in violence. Instead, its diverse elements, led by the Waffle, nurtured the wild dream of redirecting and leading to triumph an established political party.

Keywords: History, Politics, Social movements, New Democratic Party (NDP), New Left, Protest, Nationalism, Sixties, Feminism, Women’s Movement, Unions, Labour Movement, Marxism, Radicalism
Statement for the Lay Person

The Sixties were time of conflict and change in Canada and beyond. Radical social movements and countercultures challenged the conservatism of the preceding decade, rejected traditional forms of politics, and demanded an alternative based on the principles of social justice, individual freedom and an end to oppression on all fronts. Yet in Canada a unique political movement emerged which embraced these principles but proposed that New Left social movements – the student and anti-war movements, the women’s liberation movement and Canadian nationalists – could bring about radical political change not only through street protests and sit-ins, but also through participation in electoral politics. The Waffle movement, which formed around the “Manifesto for an Independent and Socialist Canada” and challenged the leadership of the New Democratic Party (NDP) from 1969 to 1973, represents a dynamic convergence of many of the social movements that comprised the New Left in Canada. The Waffle argued that the NDP should promote socialist measures to combat American economic domination and ensure Canadian independence while simultaneously engaging with extra-parliamentary struggles. NDP and trade-union leaders, reluctant to adopt such a radical approach, expelled the Waffle from the Ontario NDP in 1972. Despite its short life-span, the Waffle had a considerable influence on Canadian politics and the issues that it raised – Canadian economic dependency, Quebec’s right to self-determination, women’s equality, and the decline of the manufacturing sector, among others – continue to resonate to this day. Furthermore, the Waffle’s impact on Canadian nationalism and its legacy in the NDP, labour and women’s movements, radical left and academia remain contested.
Acknowledgements

Countless people have contributed to this project in the many years it has taken to transform from a notion into a dissertation.

My supervisor, Dr. Keith Fleming, has always been generous with his time and counsel. In addition to providing thoughtful and insightful comments on my work he has proven to be a meticulous editor, an excellent adviser and a calm voice throughout the evolution of this dissertation. Dr. Robert Wardhaugh’s encouragement and criticism has been invaluable.

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<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACCL</td>
<td>All-Canadian Congress of Labour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACTRA</td>
<td>Alliance of Canadian Cinema, Television and Radio Artists</td>
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<tr>
<td>ATAK</td>
<td>Association for Tenants’ Actions, Kingston</td>
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<tr>
<td>BCFL</td>
<td>British Columbia Federation of Labour</td>
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<tr>
<td>CAIMAW</td>
<td>Canadian Association of Industrial, Mechanical and Allied Workers</td>
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<tr>
<td>CAUT</td>
<td>Canadian Association of University Teachers</td>
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<tr>
<td>CAW</td>
<td>Canadian Auto Workers</td>
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<tr>
<td>CBRT</td>
<td>Canadian Brotherhood of Railway, Transport and General Workers</td>
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<tr>
<td>CCF</td>
<td>Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (Farmer, Labour, Socialist)</td>
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<tr>
<td>CCL</td>
<td>Congress of Canadian Labour</td>
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<tr>
<td>CCND</td>
<td>Canadian Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament</td>
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<td>CCPI</td>
<td>Committee for the Canadianization of the Petroleum Industry</td>
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<tr>
<td>CCYM</td>
<td>Co-operative Commonwealth Youth Movement</td>
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<tr>
<td>CCU</td>
<td>Council of Canadian Unions</td>
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<tr>
<td>CDC</td>
<td>Canadian Development Corporation</td>
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<td>CEQ</td>
<td>Corporation des enseignants du Québec</td>
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<td>CIC</td>
<td>Committee for an Independent Canada</td>
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<td>CIO</td>
<td>Congress of Industrial Organizations</td>
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<td>CLC</td>
<td>Canadian Labour Congress</td>
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<td>CLM</td>
<td>Canadian Liberation Movement</td>
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<td>CLP</td>
<td>Canadian Labour Party</td>
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<td>CND</td>
<td>Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament</td>
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<td>CNTU</td>
<td>Confederation of National Trade Unions</td>
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<td>CORE</td>
<td>Congress of Racial Equality</td>
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<td>CP</td>
<td>Communist Party of Canada</td>
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<td>CPC</td>
<td>Canadian Peace Congress</td>
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<td>CPC (M-L)</td>
<td>Communist Party of Canada (Marxist-Leninist)</td>
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<tr>
<td>CPL</td>
<td>Canadian Party of Labour</td>
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<tr>
<td>CSDS</td>
<td>Canadian Struggle for a Democratic Society</td>
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<td>CSM</td>
<td>Committee for a Socialist Movement</td>
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<tr>
<td>CTCU</td>
<td>Canadian Textile and Chemical Union</td>
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<tr>
<td>CUCND</td>
<td>Combined Universities Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament</td>
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<tr>
<td>CUP</td>
<td>Canadian University Press</td>
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<td>CUPE</td>
<td>Canadian Union of Public Employees</td>
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<td>CUPW</td>
<td>Canadian Union of Postal Workers</td>
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<td>CUS</td>
<td>Canadian Union of Students</td>
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<tr>
<td>CYC</td>
<td>Company of Young Canadians</td>
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<td>ERAP</td>
<td>Economic Research and Action Projects</td>
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<tr>
<td>FLQ</td>
<td>Front de libération du Québec</td>
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<tr>
<td>FYS</td>
<td>Fredericton Young Socialists</td>
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<tr>
<td>GATE</td>
<td>Gay Alliance Towards Equality</td>
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<td>ILP</td>
<td>Independent Labour Party</td>
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<tr>
<td>IS</td>
<td>International Socialists</td>
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<td>IWA</td>
<td>International Woodworkers of America</td>
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<tr>
<td>LPP</td>
<td>Labour Progressive Party</td>
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LSA: League for Socialist Action
LSR: League for Social Reconstruction
MISC: Movement for an Independent Socialist Canada
NCCRH: National Committee for the Control of Radiation Hazards
NCPE: New Canadian Political Economy
NDP: New Democratic Party
NDY: New Democratic Youth
NEP: New Economic Policy
NFU: National Farmers Union
OFL: Ontario Federation of Labour
OND: Ontario New Democratic Party
OYND: Ontario Young New Democrats
PL: Progressive Labor Party
PPWC: Pulp, Paper, and Woodworkers of Canada
PQ: Parti Québécois
RMG: Revolutionary Marxist Group
ROTC: Reserve Officers’ Training Corps
RWL/LOR: Revolutionary Workers League/Ligue Ouvrière Révolutionnaire
SCM: Student Christian Movement
SDPC: Social Democratic Party of Canada
SDS: Students for a Democratic Society
SDU: Students for a Democratic University
SFL: Saskatchewan Federation of Labour
SPC: Socialist Party of Canada
SNCC: Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee
STF: Saskatchewan Teachers Federation
SUPA: Student Union for Peace Action
SWW: Saskatchewan Working Women
TADP: Toronto Anti-Draft Programme
TLC: Trades and Labour Congress of Canada
TWLM: Toronto Women’s Liberation Movement
TWUA: Textile Workers Union of America
UAW: United Auto Workers
UE: United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers
UFA: United Farmers of Alberta
UFC (SS): United Farmers of Canada (Saskatchewan Section)
UFO: United Farmers of Ontario
UGEQ: Union générale des étudiants du Québec
UMW: United Mine Workers
UNB: University of New Brunswick
USWA: United Steel Workers of America
UTWA: United Textile Workers of America
UWO: University of Western Ontario
VWC: Vancouver Women’s Caucus
WULF: Washington University Liberation Front
YS: Young Socialists
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Introduction

The Sixties heralded a period of significant social transformation, the effects of which reverberate to the present day. Yet historians have only begun to explore the diversity of social movements which demanded sweeping political, social and cultural change during this critical period of Canadian history. Many of these social movements comprised the Canadian New Left, and while pursuing distinctive goals they also shared a political voice in the Waffle movement which formed around the “Manifesto for an Independent and Socialist Canada.” The Waffle movement, in challenging the leadership of the New Democratic Party (NDP) from 1969 to 1972, thus represents a dynamic convergence of many of the social movements comprising the New Left in Canada. The Waffle argued that the NDP should promote socialist measures to combat American economic domination and ensure Canadian independence while simultaneously engaging in “extra-parliamentary” struggles. NDP and trade union leaders, reluctant to adopt such a radical and militant approach, expelled the Waffle from the Ontario NDP in 1972. By the mid-1970s the national movement had lost momentum and faded into irrelevancy as a political force.

In October 1969 the debate over the “Manifesto for an Independent and Socialist Canada,” commonly known as the Waffle Manifesto, at the national convention of the NDP in Winnipeg excited delegates and party members and placed the NDP on the front pages of Canadian newspapers.\(^1\) Written by a group of radical intellectuals and presented

\(^1\) The group’s odd name came from a comment made at one of the meetings, when a participant suggested the way out of an impasse in discussion, commenting “If we’re going to waffle, I’d rather waffle to the left than waffle to the right.” Hugh Winsor, a Globe and Mail reporter and signatory of the Manifesto, described the comment to Jean Horwath, the Globe’s chief editorial writer, and the paper’s editorial was titled “The Waffle Manifesto.” James Laxer recalled, “we knew it would be a problem to have a left-wing group that was seen as too serious, so to have a name that was humorous was just great. We knew right
to the convention as a potential party policy, the document boldly proclaimed “our aim as
democratic socialists is to build an independent socialist Canada.”\(^2\) Suggesting that the
NDP “must be seen as the parliamentary wing of a movement dedicated to fundamental
social change,” the authors argued that “American corporate capitalism is the dominant
factor shaping Canadian society… it is an empire characterized by militarism abroad and
racism at home.”\(^3\) Criticizing Canadian economic underdevelopment and American
economic domination, the Manifesto called for a socialist response:

> Relevant instruments for bringing the Canadian economy under Canadian
ownership and control and for altering the priorities established by corporate
capitalism are at hand. They include extensive public control over investment and
nationalization of the commanding heights of the economy, such as the key
resources industries, finance and credit, and industries strategic to planning our
economy.\(^4\)

The Manifesto’s authors also argued for workers’ participation in industrial decision-
making and, in possibly the most controversial section, recognized the existence of two
nations within Canada, English and French, “each with its own language, culture and
aspirations.”\(^5\) The Manifesto concluded with a rousing call to action, calling on the NDP
to lead the struggle for an independent and socialist Canada.

The debate over the Waffle Manifesto, which the authors had released publicly
two months earlier, animated the NDP convention and drew national media attention.
But the NDP leadership and much of its membership rejected the document’s “anti-
American” tone and calls for a radical socialist response. David Lewis, the party’s
deputy leader and, in the view of many, the architect of the modern NDP, led the debate

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\(^3\) Appendix B “The Waffle Manifesto.”
\(^4\) Ibid.
\(^5\) Ibid.
against the Waffle Manifesto, warning that its “arid nationalism or anti-Americanism” would place the party in an “ideological straitjacket.”

Lewis argued that “to bury the party’s policy on economic independence in words foreign to the Canadian people and put around it a lot of their issues, is to lose the objective and betray the people of Canada.”

Tommy Douglas, the NDP leader, described the Manifesto as “ambiguous and ambivalent.”

John Harney, secretary of the Ontario NDP, criticized the section on Quebec, suggesting it advocated Quebec separatism. Mel Watkins, an economist and one of the Manifesto’s primary authors, defended the document, describing the American system as “the military-industrial complex,” and saying “In this century Canada has been absorbed into the American system, and has become a resource base and consumer market for the American economic empire.” Watkins called on the NDP to support socialist measures, including extensive public ownership, in order to roll back “the dangerous extent to which our economy is owned and controlled by the American corporate elite.”

Watkins’s arguments failed to persuade many of the delegates. The convention rejected adopting the Waffle Manifesto as NDP policy by a vote of 499 to 268. Manifesto supporters nevertheless agreed they would continue organizing after the convention in an ongoing effort to radicalize the NDP. Their efforts, and the conflict with the party leadership they engendered, would shape the NDP and the broader Canadian left for the next three years and beyond.

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7 Ibid.
8 Ibid.
9 Ibid.
10 Murray Goldblatt and Roger Newman, “NDP delegates reject Watkins manifesto by margin of nearly 2 to 1,” *Globe and Mail*, October 31, 1969. At its maximum the Waffle mailing list included 2500-3000 names, less than 10% of the NDP’s approximately 50,000 members.
Although previous scholarship has examined the Waffle in Ontario, Saskatchewan and New Brunswick, this dissertation broadens our understanding of the movement’s significance by examining the Waffle from as close to a national perspective as available sources permit. Existing scholarship treats New Left social movements as distinct entities without exploring their interconnectedness, much less their relationship with the NDP. Yet these connections are important. Linked ideologically by a belief in the need for radical and possibly revolutionary change, many New Left activists developed political ties across social movements and therefore had to negotiate differences of class, race, gender, age and sexuality. Furthermore, previous studies of the New Left have either ignored or dismissed the relationship between radical social movements and electoral politics. This study, by revealing the convergence of social movement activists within the Waffle and their willingness to engage with the NDP, a mainstream political party, shows that the Canadian New Left did not dismiss electoral politics as a means for achieving radical change.¹¹ Therefore, while my principal focus is on the Waffle, I also consider the backgrounds, constituencies and historical trajectories of other social

¹¹ A cursory glance over the history of the international New Left suggests that few New Left social movements sought such extensive engagement with an existing political party as did the Waffle with the NDP. In the United States, the Democratic Party’s unwillingness to seat the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party’s delegation at the party’s 1964 national convention scuttled the hopes of many young civil rights activists, and any remaining hopes for the Democrats died with Robert Kennedy’s assassination and the 1968 Democratic Convention in Chicago, during which police violently clashed with protesters on the streets and Eugene McCarthy’s anti-war campaign for the presidential nomination ended in defeat. Although activists continued to work with Democrats at the local level, New Left social movements largely forsook the Democratic Party as an effective means for radical change. See Maurice Isserman and Michael Kazin, America Divided: The Civil War of the 1960s (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000). In Britain, efforts from 1957-61 by the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament to force the Labour Party to adopt a policy of unilateral disarmament failed, and the social movements turned their attention away from electoral politics until the 1980s. See Adam Lent, British Social Movements Since 1945: Sex, Colour, Peace and Power (New York: Palgrave, 2001), 45-6, 168-73). In Germany, although the New Left grew out of the Social Democratic Party’s (SPD) nuclear disarmament campaigns in the late 1950s, activists largely worked outside of electoral politics – the SPD discredited by its governing coalition with the Christian Democrats. See Cyril Levitt, Children of Privilege: Student Revolt in the Sixties (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984).
movements including the student movement, the women’s movement, and Canadian left nationalism.

This dissertation addresses several historiographical gaps and issues. First, it describes and discusses the Waffle as a national phenomenon, thereby providing a comprehensive account of what has hitherto been a piecemeal treatment of an important chapter in the larger history of the NDP. Second, it contributes to the growing body of academic literature concerned with the periodization of the era of political, social and cultural radicalism and upheaval commonly known as the “Sixties.” Third, it addresses how a relatively small socialist and nationalist political movement influenced the popularity of Canadian economic nationalism and the related shift away from the country’s longstanding British identity during the “Long Sixties.” Finally, the dissertation assesses the history of the Waffle by rejecting the flawed “movement/party” dichotomy that has long been applied to histories of the CCF/NDP. Previous scholars have interpreted the Waffle primarily within the context of CCF/NDP historiography, with most authors adopting a movement-versus-party dichotomy to explain the group’s appeal as well as its ultimate demise. Instead, I analyze the Waffle within its historical context, highlight its connections with other New Left social movements, and examine its efforts to influence the NDP from a New Left perspective.

The American historian Van Gosse argues persuasively that scholars have defined the New Left too narrowly by focusing on the young, white, college-based anti-war movement and the national American organization, Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), in particular. Gosse defines the New Left more broadly, as a “movement of  

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movements,” thereby recognizing the important overlap that occurred among New Left groups. Adopting a broader definition of the New Left has prompted scholars to question when the ‘Sixties,’ as shorthand for a unique period of political and cultural upheaval, truly occurred.\textsuperscript{13} The growth and activity of the women’s, gay and lesbian rights, environmental, Black and Red Power movements in the early 1970s suggests a “Long Sixties” periodization extending to 1975.\textsuperscript{14} Significantly, this approach challenges a popular interpretation of the Sixties as a dichotomy by which an idealistic, unified, non-violent and optimistic New Left of the early “Sixties” is separated from the cynical, disparate, confrontational, and pessimistic New Left of the late “Sixties.”\textsuperscript{15} My study contributes to a revision of the declension narrative that dominates the historiography of the Sixties. The Waffle’s emergence in 1969, its activism in the NDP until 1972, and its connections with other social movements active in this period indicate a necessary reappraisal of the decline of the New Left in the late Sixties and suggests the appropriateness of a “Long Sixties” periodization extending into the early 1970s.

\textsuperscript{13} Andrew Hunt, “‘When Did the Sixties Happen?’ Searching for New Directions,” \textit{Journal of Social History} 33, 1 (1999): 147-61.

\textsuperscript{14} I first came across this term in Joan Sangster, “Radical Ruptures: Feminism, Labor and the Left in the Long Sixties in Canada,” \textit{American Review of Canadian Studies} 40, no. 1 (2010), 1-21. Sangster uses the phrase “the Long Sixties” to refer to the period 1965-1975. Other historians have extended the “Long Sixties” back into the 1950s, an approach which can, as Bryan Palmer suggests, obscure the significant ruptures that occurred in the 1960s in favour of emphasizing historical continuities. Bryan Palmer, Review of \textit{New World Coming: The Sixties and the Shaping of Global Consciousness}, eds. Karen Dubinsky, Catherine Krull, Susan Lord, Sean Mills and Scott Rutherford, \textit{Left History} 14, no. 1 (2009), 99.

\textsuperscript{15} Perhaps the most obvious example of this dichotomy is Todd Gitlin’s \textit{The Sixties: Years of Hope, Days of Rage} (New York: Bantam Books, 1987), although this dichotomy appears repeatedly even in more nuanced accounts. Andrea Levy’s article “Progeny and Progress? Reflections on the Legacy of the New Left” in \textit{The New Left: Legacy and Continuity}, ed. Dimitrios Roussopoulos (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 2007) acknowledges the false dichotomy between the “good Sixties” and “bad Sixties” even as she reinforces it. The contested legacy of the Sixties in the United States, particularly the conservative backlash against the New Left, may have contributed to the dichotomous treatment. See Peter Collier and David Horowitz, \textit{Destructive Generation: Second Thoughts About the ‘60s} (New York: Summit Books/Simon & Schuster, 1989) for a particularly incendiary example of the conservative backlash against the New Left and the “Sixties.”
The history of the Waffle indicates that one pre-existing interpretation of the Sixties is long overdue for revision. The dichotomy between the New Left of the early “Sixties” and the New Left of the late “Sixties,” documented by Todd Gitlin in his book on the American New Left, *Years of Hope, Days of Rage*, has been too readily adopted by students of the Canadian Sixties, including Cyrill Levitt, Myrna Kostash and Doug Owram. For example, national student organizations such as the Canadian Union of Students dismantled by 1969, yet large student protests continued at individual universities into the 1970s. And the range of social movements which comprised the New Left in Canada extended well beyond national student organizations. Second-wave feminist, gay liberation, environmentalist, and aboriginal rights movements only began to emerge and influence Canadian politics and society during the 1970s.\(^1^6\) Similarly, the heyday of Canadian economic nationalism was the 1970s. An examination of the Waffle, which emerged in 1969 and remained active until 1975, reveals important connections between the mid-Sixties New Left, dominated by the student movement, and late-Sixties/early-Seventies social movements which have had a lasting impact on Canadian society. Compared to the plethora of published research on the American Sixties, the historiography of the Canadian Sixties long remained relatively undeveloped. Three key books, Myrna Kostash’s *Long Way from Home*, Cyrill Levitt’s *Children of Privilege*, and

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\(^{16}\) The New Left won important victories in the late 1960s and early 1970s, the supposed period of decline. For example, the “Stop Spadina, Save Our Community Co-ordinating Committee” was formed in October 1969 and successfully prevented the construction of the Spadina Expressway in Toronto when Premier Bill Davis cancelled the project in 1971. The declension narrative is so popular among scholars of the Sixties that it appears even when the chronology directly contradicts such an interpretation. Thus, James Pitsula, in his fascinating study of student protest on the Regina campus of the University of Saskatchewan, titles one chapter “1968: The Year that Everything Changed” despite the fact that the major student protests discussed in his book occurred over the 1968-69 academic year and further protests continued through 1972. The evidence used to demonstrate that “everything changed” in 1968 is a description of the Democratic National Convention in Chicago. Pitsula, *New World Dawning: The Sixties at Regina Campus* (Regina: Canadian Plains Research Center, 2008).
Doug Owram’s *Born at the Right Time* dominated the historiography by default. Fortunately studies of the Canadian Sixties have proliferated in recent years as a new generation of scholars grapples with the impact of that profoundly important period of Canadian history. The resulting historiography reveals vibrant and diverse movements of cultural and political rebellion operating throughout Canada during the Sixties.

Myrna Kostash, an active participant in the activism and counterculture of the Sixties in Canada, wrote *Long Way from Home*, an engaging account of the key events and organizations between 1964 and 1970. Kostash utilizes memoir, biography and oral history, and presents international developments alongside the Canadian domestic experience. She argues that the period of 1964-70 was transformative – for her generation and the country – and urges readers to remember and revive the audacity and idealism of the political and cultural struggles of the Sixties. She focuses on the Student Union for Peace Action (SUPA), but also describes a variety of activities embraced by the Canadian New Left, including aiding American war resisters, leading “student power” campaigns and promoting women’s liberation. Kostash also incorporates the counterculture into her narrative of the Sixties in Canada, discussing prevalent archetypes such as “sex, drugs and rock’n’roll,” as well as communal expressions of the counterculture in places like Kitsilano and Gastown in Vancouver, Riley Park in Calgary, Yorkville in Toronto and Mountain and Crescent streets in Montreal. While noting the New Left’s criticisms of the counterculture, Kostash attempts to define the movement as

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18 Ibid., 122. Kostash focuses exclusively on hippies in this section, although other groups and identities were an important part of the counterculture, as Stuart Henderson illuminates in his local study of Yorkville. See Stuart Henderson, *Making the Scene: Yorkville and Hip Toronto in the 1960s* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2011).
part of a politicized rejection of society, an attempt at “living otherwise,” and part of the broader youth movement of the Sixties.

Published a few years after *Long Way from Home*, Doug Owram’s *Born at the Right Time* examined the youthful experiences of the Canadian baby boom generation. His narrative, primarily a social and cultural history, links the immediate post-war period with the turbulent era of the Sixties. Owram argues that by its sheer size the baby boom generation was a unique phenomenon which dominated the post-war period. He contends that the baby boomers perceived their generation as unique, a perception encouraged by the child-centered culture of the 1950s and reinforced by the youth-centered culture and politics of the 1960s. Characterizing the Sixties as “the moment in history that forever defined the baby boom as a distinct generation,” Owram examines both political activism and a cultural ‘generation gap’ marked by many boomers’ rejection of traditional 1950s values such as security, domesticity and conformity. While few youth actually became hippies or activists, the boomers, according to Owram shared a “generational sense of identity.”

Owram’s examination of the sexual revolution reinforces his central argument that the cultural forces of the 1950s and 1960s represented both continuity and rupture. Although the cult of domesticity and adherence to strict gender roles dominated 1950s culture, a new emphasis on sex, as represented by *Playboy* magazine, attacks on literary censorship, and Freudian psychological theories about human sexuality clashed in the 1950s with the conservative gender discourse, resulting in profound sexual confusion.

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20 Ibid., 159.
21 Ibid., 215.
The 1960s sexual revolution that emerged was therefore as much a product of 1950s culture as it was a rejection. Owram details changes in concepts of sexual morality, the effect of the availability of the birth-control pill for unmarried women after 1966, and the influence of the women’s liberation movement in the late 1960s.

Combining analysis of cultural trends and social organizations, Owram crafted a detailed synthesis of the social and cultural history of post-war Canada. His emphasis on the continuities, rather than ruptures, between the 1950s and 1960s is a major contribution to the historiography. However, because his extensive account of popular culture relies largely upon international, and primarily American, artists and trends, the resulting analysis diminishes the uniqueness of the Canadian popular culture experience despite his focus on Canadian New Left groups when discussing Sixties radicalism.22 Finally, although Owram convincingly redefines the links between the 1950s and 1960s, he largely adopts the prevailing model of the Sixties as early idealism replaced by “polarization, repression and decline.”23 This model, although partially accurate, trivializes the tremendous growth in feminism, gay rights and environmentalism that occurred in the late Sixties.

Cyril Levitt’s *Children of Privilege* is a sociological study of the student movement in Canada, the United States and Germany. Levitt characterizes the student movement as “a movement of privilege, against privilege, for privilege – at a time in which the character of privilege itself was changing.”24 He argues that student activists,

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24 Levitt, *Children of Privilege*, 185.
primarily from middle- and upper-class backgrounds, were disappointed by the loss of status that accompanied the “massification” of university education. Disillusioned by the promise of status going unfulfilled, the students of the Sixties reacted by revolting – first on behalf of others, then for themselves as students. As Levitt explains, “their assertion of privilege took the form of its opposite – the radical-democratic assault upon privilege.” The movement retreated to the campus after 1967 and died, Levitt suggests, when the students grew up.

Canadian scholars, by transposing an American chronology and narrative of division and decline after 1968, have diminished the Canadian experience of the 1960s. A notable exception, Bryan Palmer in *Canada’s 1960s*, largely abandons this “divided Sixties” framework and instead focuses a large part of his narrative on Quebec nationalist and Red Power movements of the late Sixties. However, in arguing that after SUPA’s demise in 1967 “a new New Left emerged,” his explanation that this “new New Left” only “rode out what remained of the revolutionary wave of the 1960s” reinforces the declension narrative of the good Sixties/bad Sixties approach. Recent works by Canadian historians abandon the good Sixties/bad Sixties dichotomy in favour of a “Long Sixties” historical framework, extending the periodization of the “Sixties” as a time of radical political and cultural upheaval into the mid-1970s.

In addition to three collections of scholarly articles about the Sixties in Canada, several recent monographs both challenge and broaden the existing interpretation of the

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25 Ibid.
Stuart Henderson’s *Making the Scene*, a fascinating account of the Toronto neighborhood of Yorkville and its counterculture from 1960 to 1970, rejects oversimplified narratives of Yorkville’s eventual demise by presenting a nuanced discussion of the counterculture. Henderson shows that not just hippies, but also a gay underground, working-class ‘greasers’ and ‘bikers,’ and New Left and feminist activists formed the Yorkville “scene.” Draft dodgers also were included, as Jessica Squires reveals in *Building Sanctuary*, an examination of the Canadian movement to support war resisters in the 1960s and 1970s. Sean Mills’s study of political activism in Sixties Montreal, *The Empire Within*, reveals the importance of an international discourse of decolonization shared and utilized by a variety of Montreal activists and movements for social and political change and internal anti-colonization struggles. Mills contributes a narrative of political activism beyond the neo-nationalist project of modernization and a radicalism rooted in the language of decolonization. He thereby highlights, for Canadian activism and political ideology, the importance of international developments, not only in the United States, Britain and France but also in the global South.

Although much of the scholarship on activism in the Sixties deals with post-secondary students, the majority of baby boomers ended their schooling after high school and readily found employment in that period’s prosperous economy. Two excellent books analyze Canadian worker militancy in the 1960s. Benjamin Isitt uncovers

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28 Henderson, *Making the Scene*.


connections in British Columbia between the radical labour movements associated with the New Left and the ‘Old Left,’ by focusing on the political activism of a “militant minority” of workers.\textsuperscript{31} Ian Milligan’s \textit{Rebel Youth} details a wave of revolt amongst young workers in the mid-1960s and connects worker rebellion with the broader New Left.\textsuperscript{32} Milligan also examines the evolving position of student New Left activists toward the working-class and labour unions, culminating with increasing New Left support for workers’ struggles in the early 1970s.

All of these authors adopt the framework of the “Long Sixties,” although only Milligan does so explicitly. Mills concludes his narrative of activism in Quebec with the massive May Day protests of 1972, Milligan with a 1973 strike involving New Leftists and workers, and Isitt with the provincial election of Dave Barrett’s NDP government in 1972. Thus, neither the good Sixties/bad Sixties dichotomy nor the chronological model of decline after 1968 fully explain the Canadian experience as there is ample evidence of New Left social movements growing in strength during the “late Sixties.” By assessing the meaning and legacy of the Waffle, a New Left movement seeking to transform an established political party from 1969 to 1973, this dissertation reinforces the need to supplant the post-1968 declension narrative of the Sixties with a “Long Sixties” framework.

It is necessary to situate the Waffle within the historiography of the Canadian Sixties in another way. By its espousal of a progressive Canadian nationalism linking independence to socialism, the Waffle played a small but noteworthy role in weakening

the British identity many Canadians cherished before the Sixties. Popular historians and academic scholars alike have portrayed the Sixties as a transformative period for the elusive concept of Canadian identity. Historians addressing the assertion of a new Canadian identity in the 1960s frequently allude to the parliamentary debate over the creation of the Canadian flag, or the year-long festivities associated with the celebration of Canada’s centennial, especially the hugely popular Expo 67 in Montreal. Pierre Berton, a best-selling and prolific popular historian, covered Expo 67 for Maclean’s magazine. His book 1967: Canada’s Turning Point combines personal memory and historical research in a highly engaging narrative. In discussing the Centennial celebrations, politics, hockey, hippies and an emerging radicalism visible in such causes as second-wave feminism, gay liberation, and Quebec separatism, Berton emphasizes the extent to which Canada and Canadian identity were transformed during that year. Although Berton argues that a “new Canadian attitude” appeared, he was circumspect about defining such an attitude. He did, however, end the book by quoting Judy LaMarsh, the Secretary of State for Canada, who provided an unequivocal summation of the Centennial’s impact: “since 1967 no one has asked what it means to be a Canadian… the year 1967 changed us all profoundly, and we will never look back.”

José Igartua in The Other Quiet Revolution utilizes school textbooks, newspaper editorials, and a narrative of the flag debate to demonstrate the Sixties shift in English Canada from British patriotism to civic nationalism. Philip Massolin adopts a similar position in his study of the last generation of Anglophile, “anti-modernist” intellectuals to lament the passing of the British Tory tradition of Canadian national identity from the


Bryan Palmer argues in *Canada’s 1960’s* that the decade represented a profound change in Canadian national identity. Although Canada had largely ceased to be defined by a British connection and character in the 1960s, this former British identity “was replaced only with uncertainty.”  

According to Palmer, the ruptures of the 1960s brought an end to the old British Canada without establishing a unified and singular sense of national identity in its place. He identifies key incidents of the 1960s, including the dollar crisis of 1961-62, the Munsinger affair, the Ali-Chuvalo boxing match, riotous celebrations of Victoria Day, youthful protest movements in the workplace and universities, and the rise of women’s liberation and ‘Red Power’ movements to demonstrate vast changes in the social construction and understanding of class, race, gender, sexuality and national identity during this transformative decade. C.P. Champion contends that despite superficial appearances, Canada in fact retained many of the institutions and values symptomatic of its British heritage.  

Yet, Igartua, Massolin, Palmer and Champion are in agreement that the 1960s was a transformative period for Canadian national identity. Although my primary focus is not the slippery concept of an emergent Canadian identity, the Waffle’s espousal of a progressive Canadian nationalism that linked independence with socialism, and its connections with New Left social movements that sought to redefine the meaning of Canadian citizenship, suggest that the group played a role, however minor, in this

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transformation. Indeed, other scholars have begun to assess the Waffle’s influence on the popularity of economic nationalism in Canada in the 1970s.\(^{38}\)

The history of the Waffle must also be situated within the expansive historiography of the CCF and NDP. Unlike many European countries during the twentieth century, where the left consistently rivaled conservative parties for power, or in the United States, where social democracy had comparatively little impact, in Canada the CCF/NDP emerged as the major third party in Canadian politics by the 1940s. The history of the CCF and NDP has been extensively documented, but few historians have written comprehensive accounts encompassing the parties at both the federal and provincial level. Instead, the focus typically has been narrower, zooming in on the federal party or one of its provincial sections, or a biography of the party’s leading figures.\(^{39}\)

The debate that looms largest over the historiography of the CCF/NDP centres on the question of whether or not the CCF is best understood as a “party” or a “movement,” distinctions first made by Walter Young in his 1969 book *The Anatomy of a Party: The National CCF 1932-61.*\(^{40}\) Young presents social movements as more ideologically rigid than political parties, while parties are seen as willing to sacrifice ideological principles as the price of gaining political power. Social movements are viewed as more decentralized and democratic than political parties, which are dominated by elites willing

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to impose internal discipline to maintain party unity. Young described the CCF as shifting over time from a movement into a party, and rebalancing its policies and practices accordingly. Interestingly, although Young commends the transformation, scholars who followed him have adopted the movement/party distinction in order to both criticize the CCF/NDP’s rightward trajectory as well as to praise the party’s supposed maturation.\(^{41}\)

The movement/party thesis has been enticing for scholars of the CCF/NDP. Struggles over policy, often characterized by left/right ideological divisions, were a fixture of the CCF since its founding in 1932. The CCF originally brought together a collection of social movements – its full name included “Farmer, Labour, Socialist” – but thereafter also developed ties, sometimes tenuous, with other interests, such as the women’s and peace movements. However, several problems with Young’s approach have been identified. Alan Whitehorn criticizes the movement/party thesis on a number of counts, calling it “excessively inbred and increasingly unproductive for future research.”\(^{42}\) He argues that differences between movements and parties are overstated, pointing out that political parties can also be ideological, focused on social change, and less concerned with electoral success than with publicizing their ideas. Furthermore, he suggests that social movements, some of which are highly structured, require different


degrees of organization. Finally, Whitehorn argues that the movement-to-party model romanticizes the CCF and ignores the party’s history. He contends that the CCF was a “political party” from its inception, and points to its imposition of internal discipline as evidence. The larger problem with the movement/party dichotomy lies in the flawed nature of the categories Young introduced. The Communist Party of Canada (CP), in its various incarnations, exemplifies this point. The CP, never expecting realistically to win power through electoral politics, retained its ideological purity while running candidates with the avowed purpose of using elections to educate the public about the benefits of communism. By this measure the CP should, according to Young, be classified as a “movement.” Yet the CP also manifested extraordinary centralization, domination by elites, and an unparalleled penchant for party discipline, all facets of Young’s definition of “party.” As such, Young’s schema for differentiating parties from movements is fundamentally flawed when applied to the history of the CCF/NDP. James Naylor’s recent work, The Fate of Labour Socialism, asserts the working-class character of the early CCF and addresses the movement/party thesis. Naylor acknowledges that Young introduced “somewhat rigid, dichotomous categories” but suggests that Young’s study recognizes “transitions on the non-Stalinist left” and the “growing demobilization” of the CCF’s membership in the 1940s and 1950s that his critics ignore. Naylor points out that “much ink has been spilled in tracing the rightward trajectory of the CCF,” and argues that “whether presented in its original form by Zakuta and Young, or turned on its

43 The environmentalist group Greenpeace, for example, has evolved from its origins in the New Left into a hierarchical, bureaucratic and centralized organization. See Frank Zelko, Make it a Green Peace! The Rise of Countercultural Environmentalism (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013).
44 Ibid., 6-7.
head by Whitehorn, the declension argument of the 1960s failed to address the specific character of socialism in the 1930s.  

In addition to accepting the flawed movement/party dichotomy, historians of the Waffle have often fallen victim to another historiographical trap – a belief in rigid, unchanging ideological categories, such as “socialist” and “social democrat,” which discount historical context. Ian McKay, assessing the historiography of the Canadian left, explains:

The traditional approach invites us to see each one of these names as labels for separate species that compete with other species in a struggle of the ideologically fittest to survive in the dog-eat-dog world of political warfare… the governing assumption is that a Communist was a Communist was a Communist: in 1921, 1935, 1956, or 1989… or you might argue that the ‘democratic left’ was much the same in 1921, 1932, 1948, and 1968, and always at war with the Communists. Once in play, these categories become more and more reified: Marxists and social democrats (and so on) fight on through the ages.

This “vertical” approach, emphasizing similarities between leftists groups and ideologies across time favours ideological consistency over historical context. When applied to the CCF/NDP this “vertical” approach explains the party’s history as a continuing struggle of socialist versus social democrat, radical versus moderate, or movement versus party. To pick but one example, Ivan Avakumovic equates the radicals at the 1933 CCF convention who criticized the Regina Manifesto as being insufficiently socialist, to the Wafflers at the 1969 NDP convention who criticized the party for veering too far from the Regina Manifesto’s socialism. Similarly, J.T. Morley addresses the Waffle alongside previous expulsions of Communists and Trotskyists in his chapter on “Party Discipline” and applies his stretched metaphor of the “party personality” to assert that “like many human

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individuals, the party, as it came to maturity… was still recognizable as the same person it had always been.” McKay urges scholars to instead adopt a “horizontal” approach, positioning and interpreting groups and ideologies within their proper historical context. My study, instead of viewing the Waffle as one manifestation of an ongoing but largely unchanging ideological struggle within the NDP, subscribes to McKay’s “horizontal” approach by presenting the Waffle as a product of a unique historical period and uniquely Canadian manifestation of the New Left.

One further issue mars the historiography of the Waffle. Much of what has been published about the Waffle was written by either its members or their opponents, and too often these accounts seek to judge whether the participants were right or wrong in their actions. McKay dismisses this “scorecard approach” to history, arguing “sectarian exercises in scorecard history will confirm the values of the present day leftist, over and over and over again… what bothers me most about scorecard history is the hubristic arrogance of believing that any historian can infallibly bestow or deduct points.”

The harshest assessment of the Waffle was provided by Desmond Morton, an advisor to Tommy Douglas and assistant secretary of the NDP in the mid-1960s. Morton’s *NDP: The Dream of Power*, published shortly after the Waffle’s challenge to the party leadership, describes the Waffle Manifesto as “emotionally cathartic for younger, radical academics” and suggests the group’s primary appeal was as an “alternative to… the indispensable drudgery of a self-financed political organization.”

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50 McKay, *Rebels, Reds, Radicals*, 34. McKay explains “this second approach is a horizontal approach that looks at how leftists in a given period shared many things.”
51 For example, both Terry Morley and Desmond Morton were members of the ONDP executive during the Waffle period and opposed the group’s positions consistently.
53 Morton, *The Dream of Power*, 131
Dismissing the group’s motivations as primarily egotistical, Morton asked “after four days of meeting, plotting, mutual congratulation and media attention, what was the point of stopping?”\(^{54}\) In Morton’s estimation, the Waffle’s leaders, having opted to persist in challenging the NDP status quo instead of ascending to “positions of prestige and influence in the party,” were quite simply “losers.”\(^{55}\) Morton chastises the Waffle for mimicking the rhetoric and demands of the American New Left – notorious in Morton’s eyes for attacks on “American imperialism” and “appeals for sexual freedom” – by urging the NDP to adopt radical tactics with potentially damaging implications for the Canadian left.\(^{56}\) Yet Morton ignores the Waffle’s importance in directing the Canadian New Left away from issues that dominated the American movement – the Vietnam War in particular – and focusing attention on Canadian independence and the role of the state on the road to socialism. In addition, Jill Vickers has demonstrated how the Waffle’s feminism, driven by increased demands on the welfare state, differed dramatically from the American women’s liberation movement, which sought to avoid the state by creating a women’s-centered alternative.\(^{57}\) Contrary to Morton’s portrayal, the Waffle, despite emerging from the Canadian New Left and presenting a radical critique of American capitalism and foreign policy, was a uniquely Canadian political movement.

While highly critical of the Waffle, Morton nevertheless subscribes to an interpretation of the NDP history similar to that of Waffle sympathizer Robert Hackett, by embracing Walter Young’s “movement-party thesis.” The “problem for the NDP,”

\(^{54}\) Morton, *The Dream of Power*, 94.


\(^{56}\) Morton, *The Dream of Power*, 96. Morton comments “radical chic obscured the fact that taking to the streets is a tactic of the weak.”

Morton maintained, “was due to its own ambivalence. It was and behaved like a mass party of the democratic Left; it also presented itself as a socialist movement.” But as a “mass party” it was preferable, Morton believed, that the NDP consign its “movement” phase to the proverbial dustbin of history.

Robert Hackett’s account of the Waffle, titled “Pie in the Sky” and first published as a special issue of Canadian Dimension in 1980, situates the group within the movement/party dichotomy. Hackett claims the Waffle “represented the best organized and most sustained leftist attempt to transform the parent party,” describing its emergence as a product of the international New Left and burgeoning Canadian nationalism. He argues that the Waffle positively influenced the NDP on a number of policies, including women’s issues and nationalism, and laments the group’s departure from the party. Hackett utilizes data from surveys of NDP convention delegates to draw ideological and demographic distinctions between Wafflers and other New Democrats. But, like Morton, Hackett interprets the Waffle’s exit as signaling an end to the NDP’s movement/party dichotomy. Ultimately, he concludes, the NDP and indeed all “social democratic parties in advanced capitalist societies,” could not be a vehicle for a socialist, anti-imperialist left such as the Waffle. He argues that the Waffle, emblematic of the “movement” orientation but lacking a Marxist analysis, was doomed in its struggle to

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58 Morton, The Dream of Power, 137.
59 Ibid. The term ‘mass party’ still distinguishes the CCF/NDP from the two main parties (Liberals and Conservatives), which are often referred to in political science terminology as ‘brokerage parties’ with little ideological basis or internal democracy. In the final analysis, however, Morton’s book gives little credence to any characterization of the NDP as a “movement;” its focus is entirely on federal and provincial elections and the details of party organization.
transform the NDP. According to Hackett, social democratic parties, committed to change through electoral means, are incapable of embracing a socially transformative ideology. Furthermore, the structure of social democratic parties, including the power of the party leader, the importance and autonomy of the legislative caucus, and the veto power of affiliated unions, both as a voting bloc and as financial supporters, makes fundamental change virtually impossible without a mass mobilization of the working class.⁶³

Former Wafflers have contributed to the movement’s historiography, most notably in a series of retrospectives published in the journal *Studies in Political Economy* in 1990. The authors vary in their approach, but generally agree that the Waffle contributed positive ideas to the NDP and Canadian politics. Moreover, they lament its passing and what they perceive as the NDP’s subsequent moderation.⁶⁴ Reg Whitaker, who wrote the introduction to the retrospective series, claims the Waffle’s departure from the NDP produced an intellectual vacuum. This assessment was reinforced by David Lewis who, exasperated with his party’s “me-too performance” during the constitutional debates of the 1980s, commented to Whitaker, “when the Waffle left the party, most of

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⁶⁴ The latter position can be attributed, in part, to the 1988 federal election in which the Progressive Conservatives had been re-elected in a campaign dominated by the debate over a Free Trade Agreement with the United States. The Liberals had overtaken the NDP as the primary opponents of the FTA during the campaign, disappointing nationalist supporters of the NDP and splitting the opposition vote in the election. Also see the reflections on the Waffle by John Richards, Don Mitchell and Lorne Brown in *Western Canadian Politics: The Radical Tradition*, ed. Donald C. Kerr (Edmonton: NeWest Institute for Western Canadian Studies, 1981).
the brains left with them.”

Not surprisingly, many former Wafflers shared this perspective.

The articles by former Wafflers possibly overstate their group’s overall impact by crediting it with initiating virtually every nationalist policy the NDP subsequently adopted. Yet their wide-ranging reflections highlight convincingly the Waffle’s impact on a multitude of issues ranging from Canadian and Quebec nationalism to international New Left protest causes such as the women’s and anti-war movements, rather than dwelling, as many historians of the NDP have done, on where the Waffle fits into the party’s long history of internal ideological struggle.

Mel Watkins and John Smart suggest that the Waffle contributed to groundbreaking economic nationalist initiatives implemented in the 1970s, including the Canada Development Corporation, the Foreign Investment Review Agency, Petro-Canada and the “Third Option.”

Pat Smart notes the Waffle’s forward-looking position on Quebec, which entailed recognition of “two nations” within Canada and Quebec’s right to self-determination. Rianne Mahon and Gregory Albo focus on the Waffle’s intellectual contribution to the new Canadian political economy school and its journal *Studies in Political Economy*. Gilbert Levine argues that the Waffle helped to pave the way for the “Canadianization” of the labour movement, including the separation of a

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number of Canadian branches of international unions into national entities. Varda Burstyn discusses some of the issues for which women in the Waffle advocated, including childcare, abortion, equal pay and quotas for women on the NDP’s governing bodies. Burstyn credits the Waffle not only with pressuring the NDP to recognize women’s oppression within its own ranks, but also with being “the conduit through which the radical women’s politics of the late 1960s entered and profoundly moved the NDP, and indirectly, many members of the unions affiliated to it.”

John Richards, a Waffler and former MLA in Saskatchewan, and Larry Pratt argue in *Prairie Capitalism* that the Waffle directly influenced the Saskatchewan NDP’s 1971 election platform, but concede its influence faded once the Waffle withdrew from the party.

Among former Wafflers, Dan Heap is unusual in his criticisms of the group. Heap suggests that the Waffle’s failure was not because of its ideological radicalism within a moderate party, but resulted from the group’s own elitism. He insists the Waffle exhibited an “elitist tendency,” and placed too much emphasis on “convention battles over policy statements and party office.”

In addition to published discussions of the Waffle, three MA theses focus primarily on provincial Waffle sections. John Bullen’s MA thesis, which he published in condensed form in *The Canadian Historical Review* in 1983, concludes that the Ontario

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Waffle “overestimated the immediate potential for radicalism… and recklessly disregarded the consequences of its own continued existence within the NDP.” 73 He suggests the Waffle underestimated the extent of the ideological gap separating the NDP’s moderate leadership from the party’s “radical left wing.” 74 Moreover, the Waffle erred strategically with its singular focus on transforming the NDP, thereby alienating long-time party and union activists who expected some acknowledgement that the radicals shared the same goals. Despite its shortcomings, Bullen is convinced the Waffle influenced both the NDP and Canadian nationalism, and that the NDP has moderated the party’s image and policies as part if its transformation from the CCF.

Peter Borch’s 2005 MA thesis on the Saskatchewan Waffle identifies significant differences between the Ontario and Saskatchewan groups, in particular the emphasis they placed on labour and agriculture respectively. Borch also reveals that the Saskatchewan Waffle grew out of the Committee for a Socialist Movement (CSM), a small Regina-based discussion group formed in 1966 he describes as “dominated by expatriate American Marxist intellectuals… dedicated to furthering socialism in Saskatchewan.” 75 Following the release of the Waffle Manifesto in 1969, CSM members joined with other student and farm activists in creating the Saskatchewan Waffle in 1970. Borch also points to the group’s Marxist ideology to explain its conflict with and ultimate departure from the social democratic NDP.

74 Ibid., 213.
The third MA thesis is Patrick Webber’s analysis of the Waffle in New Brunswick where the group was closely associated with New Left activism at the University of New Brunswick and was predominantly Trotskyist in orientation. The New Brunswick Waffle was formed by members of the Fredericton Young Socialists, a branch of the League for Socialist Action (LSA), Canada’s major Trotskyist organization. Against the advice of LSA leader Ross Dowson, the New Brunswick Waffle successfully took over the New Brunswick NDP in 1971, only to have the federal party suspend the provincial section later that year. Thus Webber’s study highlights the presence of important ideological divisions within the Waffle, in particular between adherents of Trotskyism and others.

In Chapter One this dissertation provides a brief history of the Canadian left, specifically the CCF/NDP, from 1932 to the emergence of the Waffle in 1969. Although covering well-trod ground, this chapter establishes the historical context of the CCF/NDP within the Canadian left that informed the Waffle’s decision to seek transformative change to a well-ensconced political party. The chapter also addresses the conflict between the CCF and the Communist Party, primarily a proxy war in the labour movement, a conflict that profoundly affected how NDP leaders such as David Lewis eventually regarded the Waffle.

The second chapter addresses the growth of the New Left in Canada from 1959 until the Waffle’s emergence in 1969. Adopting an expansive definition for the Canadian New Left, this chapter asserts that historians of the Sixties should examine not only the anti-war and student movements most commonly associated with the New Left, but also

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the women’s liberation movement, the ‘Red Power’ movement, left-nationalist movements in Quebec and English Canada, and the wave of militant labour actions taking place throughout the period. The short-lived but influential Combined Universities Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CUCND) and the Student Union for Peace Action (SUPA), as well as the activism of the women’s liberation, student, and anti-war movements were formative for many future Wafflers.

The third chapter examines the formation and emergence of the Waffle. A group of NDP and student activists first met in April 1969 to discuss the party’s perceived failures, in particular its inattention to “the growing dominance of the United States,” and agreed to outline their beliefs in a manifesto. In addition to the activism of the New Left, the original Wafflers were greatly influenced by the strength of English-Canadian nationalism in the 1960s, shaped in part by the publication of George Grant’s *Lament for a Nation* in 1965 and the Watkins Report on foreign business ownership in 1967. The chapter reviews the evolution of the Waffle Manifesto through successive drafts written by James Laxer, Mel Watkins and Gerald Caplan, and explores efforts by the early Wafflers to build support within NDP riding associations, youth clubs, and affiliated unions. The response they received indicated both enthusiasm for youthful radicalism and hesitation by others within the party to alter dramatically its direction. Debate over the Waffle Manifesto at the October 1969 federal NDP convention in Winnipeg thrust the group into the media spotlight. Despite the Manifesto’s rejection by convention

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delegates, the Wafflers were sufficiently inspired by the support they did receive to commit to continuing their campaign for party reform.

The fourth chapter addresses the Waffle’s efforts to transform the NDP in the year following the group’s emergence at the Winnipeg NDP convention. The Waffle organized provincial sections, mirroring the NDP’s structure, and held both a western regional conference and a national meeting. It sought, with some measure of success, to influence party policy at provincial NDP conventions in Saskatchewan, British Columbia, Ontario and Manitoba in 1970, and contested, albeit unsuccessfully, the leadership of the Saskatchewan NDP following Woodrow Lloyd’s resignation. Beyond the party Wafflers, motivated by New Left support for women’s liberation and decolonization movements, participated in extra-parliamentary protests and encouraged the NDP to follow suit.

Diverging from the chronological narrative of the Waffle and the NDP at national and provincial levels, Chapter Five is devoted primarily to examining the Waffle at the grassroots level in Winnipeg, London and Saskatoon. In addition to working within the NDP, local Waffle activists engaged in extra-parliamentary social movements including the women’s liberation and anti-Vietnam War protests, as well as supporting striking workers and the National Farmers’ Union. The chapter also explores Waffle attempts to engage in a different kind of electoral politics on a local level, emphasizing policy issues instead of merely winning votes.

Chapter Six examines the Waffle’s participation in the federal NDP leadership race and the successful provincial election campaign in Saskatchewan during the first half of 1971. In an effort to raise the group’s prominence and influence, Waffle candidate James Laxer entered the race to succeed Tommy Douglas as leader of the federal NDP in
April 1971, finishing a surprising second place behind David Lewis. Wafflers also took heart from their influence on the Saskatchewan NDP’s election platform ahead of the 1971 provincial election which brought the party to power and elected a pro-Waffle MLA amongst the NDP caucus.

The seventh chapter analyzes the Waffle’s escalating conflict with the NDP leadership throughout the latter half of 1971 and early 1972, culminating with Ontario NDP leader Stephen Lewis’s speech denouncing the Waffle as “a party within a party” in March 1972. The Waffle in Ontario sought to capitalize on the prominence of Canadian economic nationalism in 1971 by supporting striking workers at Texpack in Brantford while backing six pro-Waffle NDP candidates in the provincial election held that fall. In Manitoba and Saskatchewan, where the NDP had formed governments, the Waffle struggled with its relationship with the party. But conflicts over the Trotskyist-dominated New Brunswick Waffle, the Waffle’s role in the Ontario election campaign, and support amongst dissident caucuses within leading pro-NDP unions exacerbated the divide and prompted Ontario labour leaders and party moderates to push for the Waffle’s marginalization in early 1972.

The remainder of 1972, a pivotal year for the Waffle, is the focus of Chapter Eight. The Ontario Waffle’s ultimately unsuccessful efforts to remain within the NDP in the first half of 1972 initiated an existential crisis in the group, whose primary focus for the previous two-and-a-half years had been on transforming the party. When faced with a choice between disbanding and expulsion, the majority of Ontario Wafflers chose to leave the NDP and form a new Movement for an Independent Socialist Canada. Nevertheless, the decision split the Ontario Waffle and a substantial minority remained to
“stay and fight” in the party and formed a Left Caucus to do so. In the two provinces where the NDP formed the government, the Manitoba and Saskatchewan Waffle groups struggled with their frustration at the party’s moderate agenda. The group dwindled in Manitoba and debated the timing and manner of its inevitable departure from the party in Saskatchewan.

Chapter Nine examines the year-and-a-half the Waffle spent engaged primarily in internal debate following the group’s ouster from the Ontario NDP. Absent its primary purpose – transforming the NDP into a socialist party focused on preserving Canadian independence – the Waffle struggled to regroup. During the 1972 federal election both Ontario and Saskatchewan Wafflers mounted a “counter-campaign” criticizing the NDP yet neither group was prepared to challenge the party electorally. Provincial elections in British Columbia in 1972 and Manitoba in 1973 illustrated the group’s demise in those two provinces. Throughout 1972 and 1973 Wafflers debated options for the group’s future direction amidst a rapidly evolving New Left milieu highlighted by an intellectual turn towards Marxism and the working-class. By the end of 1973 the Saskatchewan Waffle had finally broken decisively with the NDP and the Ontario Waffle prepared to challenge the party electorally.

Chapter Ten analyzes the Waffle’s activities and internal debates during 1974 and 1975 following the group’s decisive break with the NDP. In particular the group’s embrace of a strict Marxist analysis that emphasized the importance of class divisions above all else had ramifications for its relationship with the women’s, labour and farmers’ movements as well as its approach to electoral politics. Furthermore, the emphasis on Marxism resulted in many Wafflers reevaluating their group’s commitment
to Canadian nationalism, and produced contentious ideological debates that split the
Ontario and Saskatchewan Waffles into tiny sectarian fragments. By the end of 1975, the
Waffle as a national movement was dead.

The Waffle’s successes and failures offer revealing and hitherto largely
overlooked perspectives on Canadian politics and society during a period of rapid social
change, the Sixties. While the existing historiography sketches the outlines of the
Waffle’s history, it is limited by focusing largely on internal leadership disputes within
the NDP and the experience of the Ontario Waffle in particular. Abundant research
materials now exist to support a wider and more intensive examination of this important
and unique group’s significance in Canadian political history. Specifically, the
dissertation is based upon significant archival collections documenting NDP and Waffle
correspondence, meeting minutes, position papers, leaflets and speeches, as well as
interviews with former Wafflers, New Democrats, and New Left activists. Through an
analysis of the Waffle focusing on grassroots activists in three local studies as well as the
movement’s leadership, this dissertation demonstrates influential connections between
the Waffle and other New Left social movements of the time. In addition, it revises the
movement/party dichotomy which has dominated so much of Waffle/NDP
historiography, while also emphasizing the Waffle’s place in the international New Left,
specifically as a convergence of social movements which sought to engage with electoral
politics through an existing political party, the NDP. Finally, my study of the Waffle, a
group active from 1969-75, indicates the inherent flaws in applying a declensionist
narrative to the Canadian Sixties, demonstrating instead the relevance of the “long
Sixties” approach. For as the clock ticked down on the 1960s, the Canadian New Left
did not die, retreat into cynicism or lash out in violence. Instead, as the Waffle’s story demonstrates, young radicals and activists nurtured the ambitious dream of achieving, via an established political party, the NDP, “fundamental social change… an independent socialist Canada.”

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79 Appendix B “The Waffle Manifesto.”
Chapter One
“Our party was born out of protest:” The CCF/NDP, 1932-69

The activists and intellectuals who comprised the Waffle viewed the New Democratic Party (NDP) as a logical vehicle through which to advance their own New Left agenda. The NDP, and its predecessor the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (CCF), between them had almost four decades of experience on the Canadian political scene, both nationally and provincially, organizing leftist electoral challenges to a political status quo dominated by the Liberal and Conservative parties, as well as striving to distance themselves from challengers, Communists in particular, that existed on their own left. The institutional and electoral history of the CCF and its successor NDP, which in summary fashion is the subject of this chapter, can be placed within four more or less distinct periods. Formed in Calgary in 1932, the CCF reached the height of its popularity in the midst of the Second World War. However, the period of its greatest successes — including forming the government in Saskatchewan in 1944 and briefly leading the national polls in 1943 — was relatively short-lived. As the Liberals and Progressive Conservatives moved to the left, and business organizations funded vicious anti-CCF campaigns, the party lost its luster. The CCF outside Saskatchewan never regained the popularity it enjoyed during the Second World War, and saw its electoral record decline in the heightened tension of the Cold War. By the mid-1950s, party leaders became convinced there was little future for the CCF and sought to moderate the party’s commitment to socialism. At the same time, the CCF worked in conjunction with sympathetic trade union leaders to largely purge Communists from the labour movement and to establish a new party, the NDP, in 1961. Although the NDP initially struggled to win more support than the CCF had experienced, by the summer of 1969 it had
profoundly influenced Canadian politics and society, held significant representation in legislatures across the country, and appeared to be on the cusp of gaining power in several provinces.

In each of these periods – the CCF’s formative years (1932-40), its rise (1941-45) and decline (1946-60), and the NDP’s early history (1961-69) – the prospects and policies of the parties were determined primarily by the economic and political context of the time as well as by such internal factors as party leadership, organization, and membership. This chapter addresses these internal factors as well as examining the effects of the political economy more broadly on the party’s fortunes.¹ The impact of the Great Depression which devastated the economy and left millions unemployed, sent farmers’ incomes plummeting, and made one in five Canadians dependent on relief for survival, profoundly influenced the early days of the CCF. Extensive economic planning, coordination and oversight by the federal government during the Second World War combined with a war weary populace’s demands for postwar social security, briefly enhanced the CCF’s popularity and prospects. But following the war, the party experienced a drop in popularity as the Cold War encouraged public suspicions of socialism. Furthermore, postwar prosperity contradicted the CCF’s claims of capitalist collapse. In the 1960s, crises in the postwar society – decolonization, the civil rights and anti-Vietnam War movements in the United States, renewed and intensified nationalism in both Quebec and English Canada – created political opportunities and challenges for the newly-established NDP.

The history of the CCF/NDP is significant to the Waffle story because that history informed and influenced the decisions made by Waffle activists and NDP leaders alike. For Wafflers, the very existence of a social democratic party with a direct connection to the labour movement and a history championing left causes contrasted the Canadian New Left from its American neighbour. Furthermore, the sense that the NDP had moderated its commitment to socialism and strayed from the CCF’s founding principles lent substance to the Waffle’s arguments and appealed to some long-time party members.² On the other hand party and union leaders, who had spent decades struggling to rid the labour movement of Communist influence, saw the Waffle as a reincarnation of these left-wing rivals.³ The close ties the party enjoyed with the labour movement had only recently been established with the NDP’s formation in 1961, and party and union leaders were determined to preserve this connection.

As will become obvious in this chapter, characterizing the CCF/NDP as a singular entity presents a challenge.⁴ Whereas most historians have focused on either the national party or one of the provincial parties as the basis of analysis, clear distinctions between the federal and provincial parties are often difficult to discern. The national CCF, beyond its caucus and small central office, existed essentially as a conglomeration of provincial sections with overlapping memberships. As a result, any attempts at characterizing the

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² For example, James Laxer and Gerald Caplan claimed the NDP had been “born at the end of a long ideological retreat on the part of its predecessor, the CCF.” Laxer and Caplan, “Perspectives on un-American Traditions in Canada,” in Close the 49th Parallel etc: The Americanization of Canada, ed. Ian Lumsden (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1970), 315.
³ As Desmond Morton explained about the Waffle and party moderates at the time, “both sides are consciously or unconsciously re-running the battles of the 1930s and 40s.” Morton, “Reconciling the extremes within the NDP,” Toronto Star, March 8, 1972.
⁴ James Naylor likewise argues that “it is difficult to characterize the CCF as a whole. CCFers came from a range of radical and reform currents and organized themselves into various affiliated organizations. Also the balance between different currents in the CCF could vary dramatically from province to province” and asserts “the CCF was a study in ambiguity and little can be gained by attempting to proclaim on the essence of the party.” The Fate of Labour Socialism, 9, 17.
party’s ideological shifts by a limited focus on a single component of the party risks oversimplification. The CCF/NDP has been since its founding a coalescence of multiple interests, personalities, ideas, policies, and strategies, operating in all of Canada’s diverse regions and at all three levels of Canadian politics, thereby defying easy categorization.

Before the CCF’s creation, various left-wing currents surfaced in Canada during a surge of radical political activity following the First World War. The 1919 Winnipeg General Strike was the largest and most visible manifestation of increasingly intensive worker activism that included labour organizing and striking for union recognition. Labourist and socialist parties emerged throughout the 1920s, including the Communist Workers’ Party in 1922. Several Independent Labour Parties (ILP) elected members in Winnipeg, Regina, Saskatoon, Vancouver and Hamilton, while the Socialist Party of Canada (SPC) and the Social Democratic Party of Canada (after 1920 the Federated Labour Party) offered unique interpretations of socialism. The Trades and Labour Congress (TLC) formed the Canadian Labour Party (CLP) in a bid to elect union candidates municipally, provincially and federally, even attempting collaboration with Communists in the CLP, albeit with difficulty, before largely abandoning the project in 1928.

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5 For example, in 1936-7 the Saskatchewan CCF moved to the right, the British Columbia CCF shifted clearly to the left, and in the late 1960s the Manitoba NDP moved to the right while the Saskatchewan NDP campaigned on one of the most left-wing platforms in the party’s history.


7 McKay, Rebels, Reds, Radicals, 152-4. See also Ian McKay, Reasoning Otherwise: Leftists and the People’s Enlightenment in Canada, 1890-1920 (Toronto: Between the Lines, 2008).

8 Norman Penner, The Canadian Left: A Critical Analysis (Scarborough: Prentice-Hall, 1977), 130. The CLP continued to be active in Alberta through the creation of the CCF, to which it affiliated, in 1932.
Growing numbers of farmers rejected the established Liberal and Conservative parties in resounding fashion, electing United Farmers governments in Ontario in 1919, and in Alberta and Manitoba in 1921. The farmers’ electoral rebellion extended into the federal election of 1921 when fifty-eight members of the newly-formed Progressive Party won seats in the House of Commons. Although Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King eventually wooed many Progressives back to the Liberal Party, a remnant of the Progressive caucus eventually allied with Labour MPs James Shaver Woodsworth (Winnipeg North Centre), William Irvine (Calgary East), and, A.A. Heaps (Winnipeg North). Holding the balance of power after the 1925 federal election produced a Liberal minority government, Woodsworth, Heaps and a faction of left-leaning Progressive MPs formed the ‘Ginger Group’ whose achievements included forcing King to introduce old-age pension legislation in exchange for their support.

Outside Parliament, coordination and cooperation among farmers, workers and socialists proved harder to achieve, despite their often shared common intellectual heritage. In Saskatchewan, where farmers had supported the Liberal Party in the 1920s and the Progressives had never challenged for provincial power, the United Farmers of

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11 Ibid., 213.

Canada (Saskatchewan Section) [hereafter UFC (SS)] moved steadily to the left, adopting in 1930 a radical farmers’ program committed to political action based on socialist ideas.\textsuperscript{13} Around the same time the Western Labour Parties Conference, first held in Regina in 1929, connected workers’ and farmers’ organizations.\textsuperscript{14} In the summer of 1931, a joint conference of the UFC (SS) and the Saskatchewan ILP, led by former teacher and Regina city councillor M.J. Coldwell, agreed to work together to “establish a cooperative commonwealth” and support political candidates committed to the same.\textsuperscript{15} Developments occurred quickly thereafter. In May 1932, members of the ‘Ginger Group’ meeting in William Irvine’s Parliament Hill office agreed to form a national political party.\textsuperscript{16} The following month the United Farmers of Alberta (UFA) also agreed to cooperate with like-minded organizations in creating a “cooperative commonwealth,” and in July the UFC (SS) and the Saskatchewan ILP elected Coldwell as leader of the Farmer-Labour Group in their province.\textsuperscript{17} In August the Western Labour Conference, including the Manitoba and Saskatchewan ILPs, the Socialist Party of Canada, and labour parties from Alberta, were joined in Calgary by representatives from the UFA, the UFC (SS) and several left-wing intellectuals from the League for Social Reconstruction (LSR).\textsuperscript{18} This meeting’s outcome was the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation

\textsuperscript{13} Lipset, \textit{Agrarian Socialism}, 76-77, 79, 82.
\textsuperscript{14} Young, \textit{The Anatomy of a Party}, 29.
\textsuperscript{15} Lipset, \textit{Agrarian Socialism}, 104.
\textsuperscript{17} The Farmer-Labour Group gained a MLA before the election when Progressive Jacob Benson left the governing Progressive-Conservative coalition to sit as a Farmer-Labour representative.
(Farmer, Labour, Socialist), an amalgam of the various constituent organizations. J.S. Woodsworth, by then a prominent and respected Labour MP, an ally of farmers, and the honourary president of the LSR, was elected president of the new political party.¹⁹

The CCF at its convention in Regina the following year endorsed as its party platform the Regina Manifesto. The Manifesto’s meaning and significance has been much debated ever since. Ian McKay’s description is as accurate as any. He deemed the Manifesto: “a sandwich; it had a moderate middle between two slices of radicalism.”²⁰ In calling for the eradication of capitalism, the Manifesto was uncompromising in its criticism of what it perceived as a failed economic system needing replacement by public ownership and economic planning. Sweeping in scope, the Manifesto catalogued a long list of urgent reforms including increased public expenditures on housing, schools, and parks, tax reform, a labour code to improve working conditions, and free universal health care.²¹ Drafted by Frank Underhill, a University of Toronto professor of History and co-founder of the LSR, the Regina Manifesto expanded upon the LSR’s own manifesto, whose contributors included Eugene Forsey, a lecturer at McGill University, King Gordon, a professor at the United Theological College in Montreal, and Frank Scott, a poet and law professor at McGill University. Most notable among the few changes made

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¹⁹ Possibly the only leader the various groups in attendance could unite behind, J.S. Woodsworth had widespread appeal as a long-standing and principled opponent of injustice in Canada.


²¹ Avakumovic, Socialism in Canada, 58-9; Whitehorn, Canadian Socialism, 38-45. The reformist nature of its program can obscure the Marxist basis of the Manifesto’s critique of capitalism – and vice versa, depending on the reader. James Naylor points out that even CCFers who rejected “reformism” in favour of overthrowing capitalism still espoused an “immediate program” of enactable measures to implement if elected. Naylor criticizes Whitehorn and Walter Young for characterizing the early CCF as moderate and opposed to revolution. Naylor emphasizes the commitment of early CCFers to public ownership and replacing capitalism with socialism, even if they were “gradualists.” Nevertheless he argues that the LSR’s influence at the Regina convention “suggest a strategic moment in an ongoing coup, as the contingent of working-class socialists were marginalized at an important moment in the creation of the new movement.” Naylor, The Fate of Labour Socialism, 71-2, 105.
to the draft manifesto at the CCF convention was the addition of the rousing closing sentence – “no CCF government will rest content until it has eradicated capitalism and put into operation the full programme of socialized planning which will lead to the establishment in Canada of the Cooperative Commonwealth.”

Although Underhill later disavowed the Manifesto and criticized the radical additions to it, historian Michiel Horn points out “the sentence was not fundamentally out of harmony with the rest of the manifesto or, indeed, with Underhill’s draft.”

With a nascent party structure in place and stirring manifesto in hand, CCF supporters next confronted the formidable task of establishing provincial parties from among the various leftist fragments, as well as organizing for the next federal election. The CCF’s structure as a federation of affiliated organizations proved both boon and burden. First off the mark was British Columbia, where the Socialist Party of Canada, the successor to the ILP (Socialist) of BC, was initially the CCF’s sole affiliate in that province. The SPC’s membership included radicals such as Ernest Winch, the former president of the Vancouver and District Labour Council and a committed socialist, and his son, Harold, as well as the moderate ILP MP Angus MacInnis (Vancouver South). Members of the Vancouver and Victoria LSR clubs formed the short-lived Reconstruction Party to join the CCF, while otherwise unaffiliated individuals got on board by establishing CCF clubs. At the BC party’s founding convention in September 1933 an election platform for contesting the provincial campaign in November was

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23 Horn, “The LSR, the CCF and the Regina Manifesto,” 33. M.J. Coldwell would later describe the sentence as a “millstone around the party’s neck.” It may well have been written by two other members of the LSR, Scott and Gordon, anxious to preserve the spirit of the original. See Fleming, The World is Our Parish, 104-5.
endorsed. Running candidates in most ridings, the BC CCF won over thirty per cent of the vote and elected seven members, a commendable first try, but not enough to prevent the return to power of self-proclaimed reformer “Duff” Patullo’s Liberal government.

In Saskatchewan, M.J. Coldwell led the Farmer-Labour Group established in 1931 by the UFC (SS) and the ILP into the June 1934 provincial election, winning a respectable twenty-five per cent of the popular vote and five seats after enduring a campaign marked by intense opposition from the press and the Roman Catholic Church. Here too the election result proved disappointing insofar as Coldwell’s team failed to capitalize sufficiently on farmers’ discontent with the incumbent Conservative government of James Anderson to prevent James Gardiner’s Liberals from sweeping into office with a large majority.

A lack of ideological unity among the disparate groups that constituted the CCF was most apparent in Ontario. A dispute in early 1934 within the Ontario CCF over whether to support the Communist-linked Canadian Labour Defence League deepened existing divisions between moderates in the Ontario CCF and members of the radical and influential Labour Conference, comprised of several small labour and socialist parties. When the moderate UFO disaffiliated from the CCF, the CCF National Council intervened by dissolving and then reconstituting the Ontario party, thereby eliminating the federated structure in favour of straight party memberships for individuals.

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26 Gerald L. Caplan, The Dilemma of Canadian Socialism: The CCF in Ontario (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1973), 50-62; Naylor, The Fate of Labour Socialism, 125-42. Naylor emphasizes the role long-time Liberal Elmore Philpott played in ostracizing the Labour Conference during his brief tenure in the CCF. He indicates that the conflict was another moment in the process of transforming the party from the working-class character of the labour socialists to the middle-class social democracy it embraced after the Second World War. Naylor argues that “the contest in Ontario was particularly explosive, due to the
its recent internal conflict and reorganization, the party was not surprisingly ill-prepared for its first provincial electoral contest that same summer. With candidates running in just over one-third of Ontario’s ridings, the CCF drew seven per cent of the popular vote and elected just one member in the face of the Liberal party’s sweep to power under the flamboyant leadership of Mitchell Hepburn.

Although the UFA and the Canadian Labour Party in Alberta had experienced electoral success and held seats in the provincial legislature, when both organizations affiliated with the CCF they carried significant problems. The UFA had remained in government since 1921, and the CLP shared municipal power with centrists in Edmonton and Calgary. But the desire of both groups to retain their autonomy prevented them from cooperating in essential outreach and organizational activities following their affiliation within the CCF. Moreover, the unpopularity of Premier Richard Reid’s scandal-ridden UFA government, as well as the Labour-led municipal government in Edmonton, contributed to Albertans backing William Aberhart’s nascent Social Credit Party, which swept into office with a massive majority in the 1935 provincial election.  

The CCF’s first federal election results in the fall of 1935 also proved disappointing. With candidates contesting only half of the country’s ridings, including just three east of Ontario, the party was not a serious contender for government. Its campaign platform, which emphasized the Regina Manifesto, the socialization of banks and finance, social insurance, new public works, the cessation of farm and home foreclosures and neutrality in wartime, failed to sway many, who opted instead for

relationship of forces representing the older tradition of labour socialism and the newcomers who rejected this class-based epistemology.”

Mackenzie King’s Liberals despite Conservative Prime Minister R.B. Bennett’s last minute embrace of a Franklin Delano Roosevelt inspired “New Deal.” The following summer, candidates in the Manitoba provincial election ran under the ILP-CCF banner, although as the party’s membership expanded, primarily from the growing number of CCF Clubs, the ILP was undergoing a slow demise as an independent entity. Running few candidates and facing a popular leader in the Liberal-Progressives’ John Bracken, the party elected only seven MLAs with twelve per cent of the popular vote, primarily in north and central Winnipeg.

Despite failing to persuade a majority of Canadians to adopt a socialist solution to the Depression, those whom the CCF did elect rapidly became advocates of enhanced public services and civil liberties in Canadian society, and critics of governments for failing to staunch worsening unemployment and unchecked monopoly capitalism. In Saskatchewan, significant support developed for pursuing an electoral alliance with Social Credit. For example, the Baptist minister Tommy Douglas had won his federal seat for the CCF in 1935 with Social Credit support and nomination. However, federal CCF leaders expressed grave concerns about the potential alliance. Regardless, the Saskatchewan CCF dropped all references to socialism at its 1936 convention, abandoned

29 Wiseman, Social Democracy in Manitoba: A History of the CCF-NDP (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1983), 22. Wiseman suggests that the debate over the ILP’s continued autonomy reflects the tension between “urban socialists and progressive farmers” in the party.
30 Ibid., 19. Wiseman notes that the party performed worse than the ILP had in 1932. Winnipeg’s ten-member constituency also elected independent left-wing judge Lewis St. George Stubbs, and communist James Litterick. The constituency subsequently elected communist William Kardash in 1945 and re-elected him three times as a LPP candidate.
31 Avakumovic, Socialism in Canada, 72-3.
32 Thomas H. McLeod and Ian McLeod, Tommy Douglas: The Road to Jerusalem (Edmonton: Hurtig Publishers, 1987), 60-2; Seymour Lipset characterizes the enthusiasm for an alliance as another example of the internal divide between progressive farmers searching for an adequate response to the Depression and committed socialists within the party in Agrarian Socialism, 107-12.
the party’s commitment to land nationalization and continued to seek electoral coalitions with Social Credit in select ridings.\footnote{Lipset argues in \textit{Agrarian Socialism} that these decisions transformed the CCF into a “farmers’ pressure group seeking to win agrarian reforms,” 110. Peter Sinclair contends that the party’s “commitment to winning power led to a conservative compromise” in “The Saskatchewan CCF: Ascent to Power and Decline of Socialism,” \textit{Canadian Historical Review} 54, no. 4 (1973), 420.}

The British Columbia CCF also explored new directions. After contesting a leaderless election campaign in 1933, its seven-member caucus chose Robert Connell, an Anglican clergyman and member of the Victoria LSR, as house leader. Connell clashed with Ernest Winch and other party leaders, and rival newspapers the \textit{Clarion} and the \textit{Commonwealth} debated the CCF’s policies and internal struggles.\footnote{Young “Ideology, Personality and the Origin of the CCF in British Columbia,” 154-6; Naylor, \textit{The Fate of Labour Socialism}, 142-55.} The divide came to a head when Connell repudiated Winch’s “Marxist and revolutionary” positions on the floor of the provincial legislature.\footnote{Young, “Ideology, Personality and the Origin of the CCF in British Columbia,” 156.} When left-wingers moved no-confidence in Connell at the 1936 BC CCF convention the motion was defeated but the left dominated elections to the executive that in turn wielded authority over the party caucus. Unwilling to accept such ideological constraints and facing expulsion, Connell joined three other members of the CCF caucus in forming the short-lived Social Constructives party.\footnote{Although this conflict is characterized by both Young and Winch’s biographer as a clash of personalities, the expulsion of Connell established the dominance of the left-wing within the British Columbia CCF for nearly fifteen years. Naylor indicates that “programmatic differences proved to be the catalyst for, but not the cause of, the dispute,” points out that the BC CCF dropped the “socialized finance” plank which Connell had objected to after his departure with little opposition, and argues the lack of support for Connell, even amongst moderates in the CCF, was indicative of “a loyalty to class and to party that transcended political differences.” \textit{The Fate of Labour Socialism}, 154. See also Dorothy Steeves, \textit{The Compassionate Rebel: Ernest E. Winch and His Times} (Vancouver: s.n., 1960).}

The federated structure of the early CCF clearly posed challenges in Ontario, Saskatchewan, Alberta, and British Columbia, where the various organizations comprising the provincial parties strove to ensure their autonomy and the primacy of their own ideological positions and leaders. But more positively, the decentralized structure

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also presented opportunities for an array of leftists, unionists, farmers, women, and socialists to engage with the CCF, and accommodated a wide mix of ideological discourse, ranging from Marxism and populism, to Christian socialism and labourism. Furthermore, the early CCF had strong links to several social movements of the 1930s, including the unemployed and pacifist movements, although little connection with a diminished women’s movement. As circumstances in the labour movement changed in the 1930s and 1940s and under the influence of David Lewis, the CCF sought closer ties with trade unions.

The struggles faced by single unemployed men during the Depression, and the refusal of multiple levels of government to offer them adequate relief, sparked protests across Canada, including the 1935 On-to-Ottawa trek. The BC CCF, for instance, was outspoken in defending the unemployed men’s demands for relief, and members routinely attended, spoke at and led rallies and demonstrations in support. In addition to the economic crisis of the Depression, many CCFers argued that the capitalist system was responsible for war. Early CCF policy statements, from the Regina Manifesto to the party’s election platforms, demonstrated their commitment to pacifism, and close links existed between the CCF and various pacifist and Christian organizations, such as the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom and the Fellowship of Reconciliation. Pacifists abounded in the CCF, LSR and Co-operative Commonwealth Youth Movement (CCYM). However, the danger of fascism challenged the party’s commitment to pacifism, initially when faced with Communist and socialist struggles

against Franco in Spain from 1936-39, and subsequently from the looming spectre of war with Germany.\textsuperscript{39} 

The CCF’s relationship with the women’s and labour movements was not as strong in the 1930s. Women formed an “important presence” in the CCF and in some cases, such as the Women’s Joint Committee in Toronto, organized around distinctively women’s issues during the Depression. However, their influence within the party was limited and long-time female party activists were often frustrated by the lack of leadership opportunities and their relegation to secondary tasks like making coffee and stuffing envelopes.\textsuperscript{40} Despite Canadian Brotherhood of Railway Employees leader A.R. Mosher’s attendance at the party’s founding meeting, the CCF struggled to attract support from trade unions and their leaders throughout the 1930s. The rivalry between the Trades and Labour Congress (TLC) and the All-Canadian Congress of Labour (ACCL), the two primary English-Canadian union centrals, constrained the party’s ability to win support. The TLC, suspicious of the party’s ties to the ACCL, kept its distance and repeatedly rejected appeals to support the CCF, while sympathetic ACCL leaders such as Mosher distanced themselves from the party in a vain effort to avoid antagonizing the TLC.\textsuperscript{41} Furthermore, after the dissolution of the Workers’ Unity League in 1936, Communist organizers and union leaders formed a significant part of the labour movement in Canada, and enjoyed support even from members who disagreed with their politics.\textsuperscript{42}

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\textsuperscript{39} Naylor, \textit{The Fate of Labour Socialism}, 259-67. Naylor asserts that “a notion of war as an inherent byproduct of capitalism remained at the bedrock of labour-socialist, and CCF, understanding. But the specific responses to world and national events were not always consistent with this belief.”

\textsuperscript{40} Joan Sangster, “The Role of Women in the Early CCF, 1933-1940,” in \textit{Beyond the Vote: Canadian Women and Politics}, ed. Linda Kealey and Joan Sangster (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989), 118-38.

\textsuperscript{41} Horowitz, \textit{Canadian Labour in Politics}, 63-5.

\textsuperscript{42} Reg Whitaker and Gary Marcuse, \textit{Cold War Canada: The Making of a National Insecurity State, 1945-1957} (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994), 310. For example, Communist organizers played a
Circumstances in the labour movement changed rapidly during the late 1930s. Industrial unions organized by the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) began to expand and CCF and Communist activists alike struggled alongside workers in their often bitter fights for union recognition and collective bargaining rights. Nevertheless, it came as a surprise to CCF leaders when, after a lengthy struggle in 1938 between Communists and moderates to represent Cape Breton mineworkers, District 26 of the United Mine Workers (UMW) sought to affiliate with the CCF. After much debate the CCF adopted a policy allowing for union affiliation, and established a Nova Scotia section of the party in 1939. David Lewis, arguably the most significant figure in the history of the CCF/NDP, supported union affiliation to the party. Lewis is rightly acknowledged as the guiding force of the CCF and chief architect of its successor. A Rhodes Scholar and labour lawyer who developed a healthy respect for the British Labour Party while at Oxford, Lewis returned to Canada in 1935 to serve as the CCF’s national secretary. Serving in that position until 1950, Lewis strove to build a party organization with limited resources while imposing discipline and solidarity on the oft-divided party. Furthermore, Lewis worked closely with union leaders, especially in the


43 Heron, The Canadian Labour Movement, 66. The United Auto Workers’ (UAW) 1937 strike in Oshawa, and the response of Liberal Premier Mitch Hepburn provided the most prominent example of this enmity. See also Irving Martin Abella, Nationalism, Communism and Canadian Labour: The CIO, the Communist Party, and the Canadian Congress of Labour, 1935-1956 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1973), 7-26.


45 Smith, Unfinished Journey, 236; Naylor, The Fate of Labour Socialism, 245.

46 Smith, Unfinished Journey, 184-200, 236-53.
Steelworkers, to expel Communists from the labour movement, take over Communist dominated unions, and affiliate unions to the CCF.47

The CCF struggled to improve its electoral fortunes. The party’s share of the popular vote declined in provincial elections in British Columbia, Ontario, Saskatchewan, and Alberta throughout the 1930s, as well as federally in 1940. In many cases the party failed even to muster a full slate of candidates.48 The CCF was also divided over Canada’s decision to enter the Second World War in September 1939, most notably due to the pacifist convictions of its leader J.S. Woodsworth, while others, including Saskatchewan CCF leader George Williams and Winnipeg MP A.A. Heaps, advocated full support for the war effort. An attempt by the CCF’s National Council to calm tensions in the party with a compromise position endorsing limited participation in the war resulted in Woodsworth, true to his pacifist principles, tendering his resignation as party leader.49 When the National Council refused the resignation it was Woodsworth who led the CCF in the 1940 federal election campaign, although it fell largely on M.J. Coldwell to explain the party’s position opposing military conscription of manpower and urging “greater equality of sacrifice,” state planning of the economy, and nationalization of wartime industries.50 The CCF gains were marginal with eight MPs elected on 8.4 per cent of the popular vote, while King’s Liberals were returned with a massive majority winning 179 of the 245 seats.

48 The party only nominated thirty-seven candidates in ninety Ontario ridings in 1937, thirty candidates for fifty-five Saskatchewan ridings the following year, and ninety-three out of 245 ridings in the 1940 federal election.
50 Whitehorn, Canadian Socialism, 73-74.
If the 1940 federal election demonstrated the CCF’s “capacity for survival,”
events in Manitoba quickly posed a new challenge to the party’s long-term prospects.⁵¹
A proposal by Premier Bracken to form a non-partisan coalition government appealed to
many in the Manitoba CCF who were convinced their party could ill afford to oppose the
popular premier in wartime, much less force an election for which they were unprepared.
Although David Lewis and the national CCF executive opposed the coalition proposal,
the Manitoba party accepted Bracken’s offer. Seymour Farmer, the Manitoba CCF party
leader, entered Bracken’s cabinet as Minister of Labour, the only CCF MLA to be given
a seat at the table. The arrangement proved disastrous for the CCF. The coalition
government accepted none of Farmer’s reform proposals, and the CCF eventually
withdrew its support in 1942 after Bracken bolted to federal politics as leader of the
recently renamed Progressive Conservative Party.⁵² Meanwhile, back in Manitoba, the
CCF would be reduced to three seats in the ensuing 1945 election.

Bracken’s departure signaled a move to the left by both the PCs and the Liberals
as they tapped into growing public support for social security programs.⁵³ CCF fortunes
improved over the course of the war. Massive industrial expansion went hand-in-hand
with widespread government planning and control, lending credence to the CCF’s
arguments in favour of nationalization and economic planning while simultaneously
adding thousands of industrial workers to the party’s base of support.⁵⁴ The ACCL had
merged with the CIO in 1940 to form the Congress of Canadian Labour (CCL), which

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⁵¹ Avakumovic, *Socialism in Canada*, 93.
⁵² Wiseman, *Social Democracy in Manitoba*, 24-34.
⁵³ For example the federal Liberals introduced unemployment insurance in 1940 and the 1942 Conservative
Port Hope Conference sought to redefine party policy with a progressive bent.
⁵⁴ Especially in working class areas with a history of support for labour and/or socialist candidates such as
north Winnipeg, Hamilton, Vancouver, and resource extraction towns in Cape Breton and the BC interior.
experienced rapid growth. By 1942 its membership had grown to 200,000 from 70,000 in 1940, a potential body of support the CCF hoped to attract with its policies of postwar planning and social security programs, labour rights, and the conscription of wealth for the war effort. Shamefully, the party also endorsed the wartime internment and deportation of Japanese-Canadians.

The first indication of a boost in party support appeared in British Columbia where the CCF, now led by Harold Winch, won 33.4 per cent of the popular vote in the October 1941 provincial election and doubled to fourteen its representation in the legislature. Reduced to a minority, the governing Liberals were forced into a coalition with the Conservatives, which ensured Duff Patullo’s resignation as premier. One week later in Nova Scotia, Cape Breton elected the first three Maritime CCF MLAs thereby solidifying the party’s beachhead on the island first established by Clarence Gillis’s election to the House of Commons in 1940. A federal by-election in February 1942 in the Toronto working-class riding of York South, long a safe Conservative seat, was expected to provide a coronation for Conservative leader Arthur Meighen as he sought to return to the House of Commons after an absence of sixteen years. Instead, a surprise upset resulted when schoolteacher Joseph Noseworthy of the CCF took the seat in the absence of a Liberal candidate. The next generation of party leaders was also emerging at the time as exemplified by United Church minister Stanley Knowles replacing

55 Abella, Nationalism, Communism and Canadian Labour, 41-53.
56 Heron, The Labour Movement in Canada, 70; Horowitz, Canadian Labour in Politics, 72-80.
57 McLeod and McLeod, Tommy Douglas, 92-5; Werner Cohn, “Persecution of Japanese Canadians and the Political Left in British Columbia, December 1941-March 1942,” BC Studies 68 (Winter 1985-6), 3-22. Radicals (Harold Winch) and moderates (Angus and Grace MacInnis) alike in the BC CCF supported internment.
58 The CCF won 151,000 votes to the Liberals 149,000 and the Conservatives 140,000.
Woodsworth in the riding of Winnipeg North Centre, and Ted Joliffe and Tommy Douglas taking over as leaders of the Ontario and Saskatchewan CCF respectively.

The CCF’s upward trend continued with the August 1943 election in Ontario where a real breakthrough appeared possible. The party’s support in the popular vote surged to nearly thirty-two per cent, enough to elect thirty-four members, only four fewer than the victorious Conservatives. Five days later, four federal by-election losses – two to the CCF in Manitoba and Saskatchewan, and two in Montreal to the Labour-Progressives and the Bloc Populaire – convinced Mackenzie King that his governing Liberal party might be in trouble, an impression confirmed by a September 1943 Gallup poll that placed the CCF narrowly ahead of the Liberals, twenty-nine per cent to twenty-eight per cent.\(^59\) The party’s growing popularity and strongly expressed dissatisfaction towards the King government’s labour policies inspired the 1943 CCL convention to endorse the CCF and encourage its union locals to affiliate with the party.

During the summer of 1944 Tommy Douglas led the Saskatchewan CCF to an astounding election victory, winning over fifty-three per cent of the popular vote and forty-seven of the legislature’s fifty-two seats. A variety of factors had contributed to the upset: a forceful campaign promising expanded social services, security of farm ownership, and improved farm incomes; a strong party organization boasting an increasingly active membership; and Douglas’s personal appeal.\(^60\) Douglas in turn

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\(^59\) Avakumovic, *Socialism in Canada*, 101. King persuaded the Liberal Party to adopt a reform program in response, recording “I think I have cut the ground in large part from under the CCF.” Mackenzie King quotation in Horowitz, *Canadian Labour in Politics*, 108.

acknowledged the fortuitous timing of the election: “we were lucky in Saskatchewan. We happened to come in in 1944 when the tide was running in.”

The election of one CCF MLA in the Quebec provincial election of 1944, when the party ran candidates in fewer than one-third of the constituencies and espoused a strong federal government, also prompted hopes that perhaps the party was on track to acquire a truly national presence. However, the 1944 provincial election in Alberta, coming on the heels of popular Social Credit Premier William Aberhart’s death, proved disappointing to the CCF. Ernest Manning led the Social Credit to re-election, solidifying its grip on power in Alberta and restricting the CCF to twenty-three per cent of the popular vote and just two MLAs. It appeared the tide might already have started to roll out.

The CCF’s opponents also increasingly took aim at the perceived socialist upstarts. Prime Minister King sought to undercut CCF appeal by legislating social benefits such as family allowances and a veterans’ charter, and promising an expanding list of postwar reconstruction and social security programs. Furthermore, after the German invasion of the Soviet Union sparked a reversal in the Canadian communist position on the war effort, from opposition to full-fledged support, both the federal and Ontario Liberal parties arranged unstated coalitions with the communists in working-class ridings that undercut CCF support.

Business organizations, including insurance

61 Douglas quotation in Avakumovic, Socialism in Canada, 169.
63 David Lewis claims that “in retrospect, it seems clear to me that 1945 was the year which decided the fate of the CCF,” in The Good Fight, 261.
64 Horowitz, Canadian Labour in Politics, 123; John Boyko, Into the Hurricane: Attacking Socialism and the CCF (Winnipeg: J. Gordon Shillington Publishing, 2006), 136-40. The Communists’ positions on strategy were subject to abrupt change. The party shifted from a policy of working within existing unions
companies and the Canadian Chamber of Commerce, attacked the CCF by aggressively expounding the benefits of free enterprise and cautioning the public against the perils of socialism.\textsuperscript{65} Gladstone Murray, a former journalist and CBC manager, and Burdick Trestrail, a former advertiser and consultant, received funding from business to attack the CCF via speeches, advertising, publications and direct mail.\textsuperscript{66} In conjunction with criticisms hurled by the press, religious leaders, and several business organizations, Murray and Trestrail warned that the CCF’s socialism would lead inevitably to totalitarianism. Shortly before the 1945 provincial election, Ontario CCF leader Ted Joliffe accused Conservative Premier George Drew of organizing a Gestapo-like “secret police” unit of the OPP to spy on the party. Drew vehemently denied the accusations, and received support from the press when he counter-attacked the CCF for making desperately slanderous allegations.\textsuperscript{67} The resulting national furor severely damaged the CCF’s prospects in Ontario where it lost twenty-six seats and watched its popular vote fall to 22.4 per cent during the June provincial election. The backlash was also felt during the federal election held one week later.

Despite achieving the highest popular vote (15.5 per cent) and seat count (twenty-eight) in its history to this point, the CCF had cause for disappointment with the 1945 federal election results. The party nominated candidates in most ridings outside Quebec and won a significant share of the popular vote in seat-rich Ontario, but failed to elect a...
single MP in that province.\textsuperscript{68} Provincial election returns in Manitoba and British Columbia during October were further confirmation that fierce opposition had stalled the CCF’s momentum. Despite winning the largest share of the popular vote (33.8 per cent) in Manitoba, the ability of the governing coalition of Liberal-Progressives and Conservatives to coordinate the allocation of seats resulted in the CCF electing only nine MLAs out of the legislature’s fifty-five. The decision of two MLAs to run as “Independent CCF” candidates after facing discipline for advocating closer cooperation with Communists provoked a controversy that deeply divided the provincial party and marred its campaign.\textsuperscript{69} Similarly in the British Columbia contest the Liberal and Conservative electoral coalition contributed to the CCF losing four seats despite capturing over thirty-seven per cent of the popular vote.

The years 1946 to 1960 were marked by a long decline for the CCF. In the Cold War environment, promoters of public ownership and socialism were easily suspected of being atheistic communist sympathizers. Adding insult to injury, CCF predictions of economic crisis and capitalist collapse were undercut by the relative prosperity Canada was enjoying in the immediate postwar years. At the same time the party reduced its earlier commitments to public ownership and focused instead on economic planning and social welfare measures, yet efforts at presenting a more moderate image failed to attract widespread support. Developments in the labour movement, however, particularly the exclusion of communist unionists and the creation of the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) in 1956, promised new opportunities for CCF leaders determined to forge a closer connection between the party and the unions.

\textsuperscript{68} Whitehorn, \textit{Canadian Socialism}, 75.
\textsuperscript{69} Wiseman, \textit{Social Democracy in Manitoba}, 41-51.
Admittedly, the news for the CCF in the immediate postwar years was not all bad. In the Ontario provincial election of June 1948 financial support from the CCL’s Political Action Committee substantially augmented the CCF’s advertising budget. The improved results – a rebound in its popular vote to twenty-seven per cent, the party’s return to Official Opposition status with twenty-one seats, and the personal defeat of Conservative Premier George Drew by CCFer William Temple – demonstrated to the CCF and its union supporters the potential benefits of closer cooperation with organized labour.\textsuperscript{70} Seventeen days later, Tommy Douglas’s CCF was returned in Saskatchewan with a reduced majority of thirty-one seats and 47.5 per cent of the popular vote. However, undermining these positive signs was a continued slippage in the CCF’s popular vote generally, often resulting in significant numbers of lost seats, as occurred in the 1949 federal election when over half its caucus fell leaving a rump of only thirteen MPs. Provincial elections in Manitoba in 1949 and Ontario in 1951 mirrored this decline; in Ontario, for instance, the party lost all but two of its seats.\textsuperscript{71} Saskatchewan remained the party’s bright spot. There in 1952 the CCF increased its seat count to forty-two, won fifty-four per cent of the popular vote, and earned a third term as a result of popular reforms and a formidable organization.

The Cold War also sharpened divisions, between Communists and CCFers within the labour movement, and moderates and radicals within the party. The CCL established a Political Action Committee to act as the political instrument of the labour movement, and pro-CCF unionists sought to ensure support for the party despite internal opposition,\textsuperscript{70} Horowitz, \textit{Canadian Labour in Politics}, 132-3.\textsuperscript{71} According to historian Dan Azoulay, this result inspired the party leadership to emphasize organization as the means for survival, if not success. \textit{Keeping the Dream Alive: The Survival of the Ontario CCF/NDP, 1951-1963} (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1997), 31-2.
especially from Communists.\textsuperscript{72} At times embracing Cold War rhetoric and working in tandem with employers and the state, CCF leaders attempted to eliminate Communists from influential positions within the Canadian labour movement. The expulsion of the Canadian Seamen’s Union from the TLC in 1949 initiated a series of purges that, by 1955, had eradicated Communist influence within the Congress.\textsuperscript{73} Similar battles occurred in the industrial unions that comprised the CCL. Two examples will suffice here. The CCF considered Communist interference the greatest challenge to winning seats in automobile manufacturing centres such as Windsor.\textsuperscript{74} CCF leaders, resentful of Communist influence over Canadian UAW director George Burt, worked with the newly elected UAW president Walter Reuther to dislodge Communists from the union. By 1951 their efforts paid off as a diminished Communist presence forced Burt to embrace the pro-CCF stance of the CCL leadership in order to remain in power.\textsuperscript{75} Similarly, CCFers in British Columbia worked to undermine Communists within that province’s labour movement wherever possible. During the ‘Red Wars’ of 1948, their efforts bore fruit, first by winning control of the Vancouver Labour Council (affiliated to the CCL), next by suspending the International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers (Mine-Mill) from the CCL in response to intemperate and critical comments by Communist activists about the union’s leadership, and finally by taking advantage of the absence of

\textsuperscript{72} Horowitz, \textit{Canadian Labour in Politics}, 92-102, 134-40, 150-57.
\textsuperscript{73} Whitaker and Marcuse, \textit{Cold War Canada}, 310-63. The authors point out that the Communist purges also resulted in fewer Canadians unions and larger international unions affiliated with the AFL as well as the TLC. They argue “the Canadian purges were thus motivated by an alliance of anti-Communist and anti-nationalist interests.”
\textsuperscript{74} Horowitz, \textit{Canadian Labour in Politics}, 113. The LPP had helped to defeat three CCF MPPs in Windsor in the 1945 provincial election and urged their Windsor supporters to back the successful Liberal candidates in the federal election that same year. David Lewis claimed “if the UAW had not been controlled by the communists, it would undoubtedly have supported the CCF candidates, who would likely have won all three ridings,” David Lewis, \textit{The Good Fight}, 303.
\textsuperscript{75} Abella, \textit{Nationalism, Communism and Canadian Labour}, 30-33, 163-67.
Mine-Mill delegates to win control of the BC Federation of Labour (BCFL). The struggles peaked in the battle over BC’s woodworkers. Amidst attacks from CCF unionists, the mainstream press, and the international executive of the International Woodworkers of America (IWA), the Communist Labour Progressive Party (LPP) decided to break away from the IWA. In the ensuing legal battles, the courts, the Labour Board, and the employers all favoured the IWA. The inability of LPP leadership to garner member support for the break would cost the Communist party one of its largest union bases. Indeed, the IWA, much like the UAW, became one of the CCF’s strongest supporters in the labour movement.

Struggles existed within the CCF as well. In Ontario, the explicit emphasis on party organization upset members who felt the party should focus on education. Dissatisfied members formed a ‘Ginger Group’ in 1952 with the slogan “Keep Left.” Shortly after, a conflict ensued over the finances and autonomy of the Woodsworth Foundation, a progressive think-tank headed by Frank Underhill. Although members of the ‘Ginger Group’ were also active in the Woodsworth Foundation, they disagreed with Underhill’s view of the party’s direction. Underhill, who had been the primary author of the Regina Manifesto, argued that the CCF must update its platform from the 1930s, and strongly warned against a party dominated by union leaders. Historian Dan Azoulay

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76 Isitt, Militant Minority, 47-52 and Abella, Nationalism, Communism and Canadian Labour, 80-110. For an example of a Mine-Mill local that resisted a two-year-long anti-Communist raiding attempt by the USWA, see Ron Verzuh, “The Raiding of Local 480: A Historic Cold War Struggle for Union Supremacy in a Small Canadian City,” Labour/Le Travail 82 (Fall 2018): 81-117.

77 Ibid., 52-55. See also Abella, Nationalism, Communism and Canadian Labour, 111-38. The remaining large Communist unions included the International Union of Mine, Mill, and Smelter Workers (Mine Mill) whose Sudbury local was the largest in Canada, and the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers (UE). UE was expelled from the CCL in 1950. See Abella, 157-60.

78 Azoulay, Keeping the Dream Alive, 33-45.

79 Azoulay, Keeping the Dream Alive, 45-51. Underhill would gradually move further away from the CCF in the 1950s.
astutely recognizes that conflicts within the Ontario CCF at the time originated in the paranoid atmosphere of the Cold War. Members of the ‘Ginger Group’ and Woodsworth Foundation alike were sufficiently fearful of being associated with totalitarianism that they exaggerated any tendencies of the CCF toward centralization, bureaucratization, and the elimination of dissent.\textsuperscript{80}

An atmosphere of fear engendered by the Cold War also loomed large over the BC CCF in the 1940s and 1950s. Foreign policy debates frequently divided ‘left’ and ‘right’ factions of the provincial party, with moderates led by Angus and Grace MacInnis working with national CCF leaders such as David Lewis to curb the influence of radicals such as Ernest and Harold Winch, Rodney Young, Bert Herridge, Colin Cameron and Dorothy Steeves.\textsuperscript{81} Angry over this turn to the right, lefists in the BC CCF formed a Socialist Caucus, soon renamed the Socialist Fellowship, to fight the moderates’ growing influence. The Socialist Fellowship was short-lived, and dissolved under pressures exerted both from without and within.\textsuperscript{82} Although Harold Winch remained the CCF leader, Steeves was removed from her position with the \textit{CCF News} in 1951.\textsuperscript{83} The party’s ‘right’ faction thus asserted itself in executive elections and, to a lesser extent, in the party’s policy platform. Despite entering the 1952 provincial election campaign divided, the BC CCF emerged with the most votes of any party (thirty-four per cent of the popular vote) and eighteen seats, decimating the governing Liberal-Conservative

\textsuperscript{80} Ibid., 54-8. There was good reason for their concerns. The CCF’s determination to eliminate Communists from the labour movement and distinguish itself from Communism led to an atmosphere in which dissent was not only discouraged, but often a cause for discipline. This was not unusual in the Cold War period.

\textsuperscript{81} Rodney Young was an alleged Trotskyist and MP for Vancouver Centre; Bert Herridge was expelled from the CCF for supporting cooperation with the LPP, Colin Cameron was a MLA from 1941-45 and MP from 1953-8 and 1962-8, and Dorothy Steeves was BC CCF President from 1948-50 and author of a regular foreign affairs column in the \textit{CCF News}.

\textsuperscript{82} Isitt, \textit{Militant Minority}, 97.

\textsuperscript{83} Ibid., 98.
coalition which had been created to keep the CCF from power. Under the short-lived preferential ballot system used in BC, many voters placed Social Credit as their second choice, allowing the Socreds to elect nineteen members without a leader. Former Conservative MLA W.A.C. Bennett assumed the Social Credit leadership, and with the assurance of support from Labour MLA Tom Uphill was offered the opportunity to form a government.\footnote{Ibid., 100.} When Bennett engineered his government’s defeat in 1953, hopeful he could achieve a majority in the subsequent election, Harold Winch first requested and was denied by the lieutenant governor the opportunity to form a government.\footnote{Avakumovic, Socialism in Canada, 151-2.} Winch subsequently resigned after being heavily criticized by his own caucus. Arnold Webster, his successor, was more moderate, but when he led the ill-prepared party into the 1953 election the result was a Social Credit majority and the loss of four CCF MLAs.

The Manitoba CCF also chose a new leader, United Church minister Lloyd Stinson, in preparation for the 1953 election that followed dissolution of the Liberal-Progressive and Conservative governing coalition. The CCF assembled only twenty-five candidates to run in the election, and returned five MLAs with 16.5 per cent of the popular vote as the Liberal-Progressives were swept back into power.\footnote{Wiseman, Social Democracy in Manitoba, 65.} Although the CCF’s popular vote declined in the August 1953 federal election, concentrated support in working-class areas of BC, north Winnipeg, Cape Breton and in part of Saskatchewan yielded twenty-three seats and further convinced the Ontario CCF of the importance of party organization and the new poll-by-poll committee system of identifying supporters.\footnote{Azoulay, Keeping the Dream Alive, 68.}
In November, the architect of that system, former national treasurer Donald C. Macdonald, was elected leader of the Ontario party.

Ongoing developments in the labour movement continued to impact the CCF. The widespread acceptance of collective bargaining and automatic dues check-off contributed to lessening spontaneous protests and “wildcat strikes,” while enhancing the power of unions and their leadership in negotiating labour relations. Combined with purges of Communist activists and their unions from the mainstream labour movement, the changed labour relations climate (often referred to as “the postwar compromise”) allowed senior union leaders to alter significantly the political direction of the Canadian labour movement. Beginning in 1953, CCL and TLC leaders explored the possibility of a merger. Following the election of the left-wing former president of the Montreal Trades and Labour Council Claude Jodoin as TLC president, the two organizations merged in 1956 as the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC). Unlike his earlier efforts to secure CCL support for the CCF, David Lewis, in concert with Jodoin, counseled patience and made no attempt to ensure the new union centre would immediately back the CCF. Instead, Lewis initiated discussions with CLC leaders about the possibility of creating an entirely new party in the near future.

Meeting in Winnipeg in 1956 for the party’s federal convention, CCF leaders sought to update the party’s image and policies. The resulting Winnipeg Declaration, written primarily by David Lewis and national secretary Lorne Ingle, moderated the CCF’s statement of principles. In deference to Cold War anxieties, the Winnipeg

88 Craig Heron perceptively points out that the contemporary social democratic thinking emphasized planning and expertise, a tendency which encouraged centralization and bureaucratization. Heron, The Canadian Labour Movement, 75-83.
89 Ibid., 75.
90 Horowitz, Canadian Labour in Politics, 167-9.
Declaration contained few condemnations of capitalism and proposed only a limited program of public ownership alongside extensive economic planning and social welfare reforms.\(^{91}\) The Declaration’s “guarded” language emphasized the modifier “democratic” whenever referring to the party’s socialism.\(^{92}\)

Despite falling to 45.3 per cent of the popular vote and thirty-six seats, Tommy Douglas and the Saskatchewan CCF won a fourth consecutive majority in the summer 1956 election. Elsewhere the party still appeared to be in decline. In the Alberta election of 1955, Social Credit retained its grip on power while the CCF’s eight per cent of the popular vote translated into just two seats and the personal defeat of its leader, Elmer Roper.\(^{93}\) That same year in Ontario, the CCF’s new leader Donald Macdonald managed to win back York South, but with only 16.5 per cent voter support the party won two seats in Oshawa and Hamilton and lost its lone northern Ontario seat.\(^{94}\) For Robert Strachan, the BC CCF’s new leader, the 1956 election in that province proved equally disheartening. W.A.C. Bennett and Social Credit enjoyed an increased majority while the CCF’s share of the popular vote (28.3 per cent) was its lowest yet in that province. Federally the party added two MPs to its caucus in the 1957 election, but was decimated by Conservative John Diefenbaker’s historic electoral sweep of the country in 1958. When the dust had settled, the CCF was reduced to three northern Ontario ridings, Hazen Argue’s seat in Saskatchewan, and four working-class strongholds in BC. The debacle convinced CCF leaders the time had come for a new party and a fresh start.

\(^{91}\) Whitehorn, *Canadian Socialism*, 47-8.
\(^{92}\) Ibid., 49.
\(^{93}\) Roper was subsequently twice elected mayor of Edmonton, in 1959 and 1961.
\(^{94}\) Azoulay, *Keeping the Dream Alive*, 90.
One month after the federal election, the CLC in convention adopted a resolution calling for the establishment of a new “broadly based political movement.” CCF and CLC leaders soon thereafter created the National Committee for the New Party (NCNP). Stanley Knowles, who had lost his Winnipeg North Centre seat in the 1958 rout, was elected CLC vice-president to work with Lewis in developing a new political party. Farm organizations, unlike in 1932, were uninterested in affiliating with the new party. In addition to the CCF’s existing labour constituency, the NCNP sought to attract “professional people and liberally minded persons” through the creation of New Party clubs, of which there were 300 by 1961. Many CCFers expressed suspicion that an influx of union activists and liberal professionals might dilute the commitment to socialism and, in the case of labour specifically, use its considerable financial clout and large membership to dominate the party.

Oddly, given the federal CCF’s reliance on its constituent provincial sections, the provincial parties were little consulted in the discussion and planning for the new party. Some of those parties, most notably in Manitoba, Ontario, Saskatchewan and BC, had managed to overcome the CCF’s general struggle with dwindling support and diminutive caucuses to exert an important influence on Canadian political life and society. In Manitoba, for example, where the CCF held the balance of power after the 1958 provincial election, it backed Duff Roblin’s minority Progressive Conservative government in implementing extensive reforms including hospital insurance and a

95 Avakumovic, Socialism in Canada, 189.
96 Ibid., 191; Azoulay Keeping the Dream Alive, 232. Azoulay claims that “the suspicion among farmers that the CCF had a hidden, communist agenda; their long-standing antagonism toward organized labour; the non-partisanship of the leading farm organizations in the province; and the CCF/NDP’s shortage of rural organizers” contributed to the lack of farmers’ support for the new party in Ontario.
97 Avakumovic, Socialism in Canada, 190.
centralized public school system. The Saskatchewan CCF fought the 1960 provincial election over the proposed introduction of Medicare, a provincially-funded, universal medical care plan, and won a slightly increased majority despite facing heated opposition from the College of Physicians and Surgeons. Medicare’s successful introduction in Saskatchewan two years later was an important first step in the eventual creation of a nationwide publicly-funded health insurance plan. In the British Columbia election of 1960, Robert Strachan and the CCF vigorously promoted nationalization of the province’s hydro-electric industry, enduring Premier W.A.C. Bennett’s taunts about socialism in the process, only to have Bennett implement the idea once his government was returned to office.99 The CCF’s policy influence in spite of disappointing election results prompted some within its ranks to question the need for a new party, and many expressed their discontent by supporting MP Douglas Fischer’s unsuccessful attempt to challenge David Lewis for the CCF presidency in 1958.100

The act of creating the new party involved retaining many aspects of the old CCF, although one noteworthy difference was enhanced financial support from organized labour.101 Dan Azoulay has shown how in Ontario the new party was “new” in image only, and instead of recruiting supporters into New Party clubs, organizers focused on bringing them into existing CCF riding associations. Indeed, the organization of the new party often remained reliant upon existing CCF riding associations rather than the New Party clubs and donations from labour continued to originate with the same sympathetic

99 Isitt, Militant Minority, 171.
100 See Wiseman, Social Democracy in Manitoba, 96-99; Isitt, Militant Minority, 170; and Avakumovic, Socialism in Canada, 190-1, for examples of opposition to the New Party.
101 W.A.C. Bennett banned automatic dues check-off for unions that made political donations in British Columbia, for example, and numerous newspapers attacked the influential role of labour in the New Party.
union leaders who had supported the CCF. Nevertheless, early on there were grounds for encouragement when Walter Pitman, a school teacher, won the 1960 federal by-election as the New Party candidate in Peterborough, a city where the CCF previously had been shut out. Also positive was the decision by Tommy Douglas, the CCF’s most successful politician to date, to run for the new party’s leadership. Despite David Lewis’s efforts to ensure Douglas was acclaimed to the position, Hazen Argue, the CCF house leader and only Saskatchewan MP to survive the Diefenbaker sweep of 1958, also threw his hat into the ring. Argue was suspicious of the motives for creating the New Party and of the increased influence that labour was likely to exercise within it. He was backed by his caucus mates Douglas Fisher, Frank Howard and Arnold Peters, as well as left-wingers in the CCF angered by the party’s apparent rightward drift.

Over two thousand delegates attended the New Party’s July 1961 founding convention in Ottawa. Much about the New Party’s program, with its emphasis on economic planning and regulation, progressive taxation, and an expanded welfare state in the form of health insurance, pensions and free education, was carried over from the old CCF. Douglas easily defeated Argue’s challenge for the leadership by 1391 votes to 380. Much closer was the decision over the party’s name, with New Democratic Party (NDP) eventually winning out over, among other suggestions, the Social Democratic Party. The excitement generated by the first federal convention was not emulated in the provinces. Founding conventions for the provincial NDP in British Columbia, Manitoba and Ontario only highlighted the “lack of substantive change in membership

102 Azoulay, *Keeping the Dream Alive*, 178-82.
103 Morton, *NDP: The Dream of Power*, 22
104 McLeod and McLeod, *Tommy Douglas*, 233
and leadership.\textsuperscript{107} Also disheartening was Argue’s decision, six months after losing the leadership, to cross the floor and join the Liberals, claiming that labour’s domination of the NDP rendered it untenable.

The new party’s first electoral test was not long in coming. Diefenbaker’s PCs sought re-election in 1962 following a tumultuous first term in office marked by cabinet divisions over nuclear weapons and a feud with Bank of Canada governor James Coyne. The NDP’s platform emphasized increased and portable pensions, a federally-funded but provincially-run universal medicare program, and a royal commission on bilingualism and biculturalism.\textsuperscript{108} Despite renewed interest in Quebec, the NDP mustered only forty candidates for that province’s seventy-five ridings. Elsewhere in the country it assembled almost a full slate of candidates.\textsuperscript{109} Spending more money on the 1962 campaign than the CCF had ever managed to amass, the NDP was still vastly outspent by both the Liberals and PCs. In the final week of the campaign the NDP staged several massive rallies featuring Tommy Douglas in a bid to draw greater media coverage.\textsuperscript{110} But the election returns for the NDP – nineteen seats and 13.6 per cent of the popular vote – while an improvement over the CCF’s in 1958, were disappointing nonetheless. Although its support remained focused largely in the same areas that previously supported the CCF, the NDP was shut out of Saskatchewan despite winning twenty-two per cent of the vote in that province, and Tommy Douglas lost in his bid to return to the

\textsuperscript{107} Wiseman, \textit{Social Democracy in Manitoba}, 103, refers only to Manitoba but the comment is equally applicable elsewhere.
\textsuperscript{108} Whitehorn, \textit{Canadian Socialism}, 82-4.
\textsuperscript{109} Morton, \textit{NDP: Dream of Power}, 37
\textsuperscript{110} Morton, \textit{NDP: Dream of Power}, 35
House of Commons after an absence of eighteen years. Particularly galling, Argue won re-election for the Liberals.

The national NDP’s embarrassing failure to win a single seat in Saskatchewan – the birthplace of the Regina Manifesto, home to three CCF/NDP leaders, and location of the first social democratic government in North America – was not corrected when Canadians returned to the polls in 1963 amidst a heated debate over the stationing of American nuclear missiles in Canada. The NDP augmented its previous election platform by emphasizing an internationalist foreign policy and strong anti-nuclear stance. Douglas, who had been returned in a by-election in British Columbia’s Burnaby-Coquitlam riding, attempted to convince voters that the Liberals’ pro-nuclear position was equivalent to championing continentalism and an American-dominated economy. But Douglas struggled to be heard over the clamour of Diefenbaker railing against American imperialism in a losing battle against Lester Pearson’s Liberals. The NDP lost three seats and remained in fourth place in the House of Commons. In the aftermath of the 1963 election, delegates to the party’s second national convention in Regina endorsed a statement confirming the NDP’s commitment to “democratic socialist” principles and agreed that Quebec’s ‘special status’ within Confederation needed to be formally recognized.¹¹²

Provincial elections in the early 1960s produced further disappointments for the NDP. A decline in its popular vote in elections in Ontario and British Columbia during 1963 was an unnecessary reminder of the challenges involved in tackling well-ensconced

¹¹¹ Ten of the NDP’s nineteen seats came from British Columbia, including left-wingers Harold Winch, Colin Cameron and Bert Herridge, and another six in Ontario from Toronto and the province’s north. The two Winnipeg and one Cape Breton seat were likewise in CCF territory.
provincial regimes. Despite gaining two seats in Ontario, the NDP’s share of the popular vote slipped marginally to 15.5 per cent, while in British Columbia a steeper decline in its popular vote to 27.8 per cent produced fourteen seats. A severer blow occurred a year later in Saskatchewan where voters replaced the twenty-year-old CCF government with Ross Thatcher’s Liberals. After the bitterness of the doctors’ strike, the CCF finished fewer than 700 votes behind the Liberals in the provincial election, but won only twenty-five seats to the Liberals’ thirty-two. “The NDP,” historian Desmond Morton lamented, “was at its nadir”.

Morton and some other historians of the NDP have interpreted the by-election in the Toronto riding of Riverdale in September 1964 as a “turning point” for the party. David Lewis’s 25-year-old son Stephen masterminded for the party a volunteer-based door-to-door canvassing and ‘get-out-their-own-vote’ strategy. After contributing to NDPer James Renwick’s victory in Riverdale, the strategy became a model for the party’s future campaigns. Two additional by-election victories in late 1964 – federally in Waterloo and provincially in Hanley, Saskatchewan – raised hopes that further gains would materialize in the upcoming federal election. Meanwhile, in 1965 at its third national convention, the party at the urging of Robert Cliche, the leader of the Quebec NDP, adopted a position endorsing joint federal-provincial consultations and pledged to work for French-language rights in English Canada.

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113 The Saskatchewan CCF did not rebrand itself as the NDP until 1967.  
114 Morton, NDP: Dream of Power, 52.  
115 See also Morley, Secular Socialists, 83; Smith Unfinished Journey, 350.  
116 Morton, NDP: Dream of Power, 53-4. The Riverdale by-election and the “system” became famous in the party’s lore. When clearing out the ONDP’s office in 2007, I discovered a box of old leaflets produced about Riverdale to inspire canvassers.  
117 Morton, NDP: Dream of Power, 60-1.
In the 1965 federal election that followed, the NDP achieved a record twelve per cent of the popular vote in Quebec, but was unable to elect a single member. Charles Taylor, the party’s leading intellectual, lost to Pierre Elliott Trudeau, who along with Jean Marchand and Gerard Pelletier had recently accepted Pearson’s overtures to join his Liberal government. The NDP platform focused on the creation of a national medicare system, promised an immense array of social programs, an increase to old age security, and improved federal provincial cooperation and economic planning. ¹¹⁸ Winning an improved 17.9 per cent of the popular vote, up from 13.6 per cent in 1963, the party only increased its seat count by four, up to twenty-one, comprised of nine each in British Columbia and Ontario and three in Manitoba. At least the continued minority government status of Pearson’s Liberals seemed to guarantee that the NDP would continue to wield influence over it for a while longer. Indeed, Pearson’s two minority governments (1963 to 1965 and 1965 to 1968) often relied on NDP support, resulting in several major reforms the CCF/NDP had advocated for years, including a new Canadian flag, a public pension plan, and federally-funded public medicare. ¹¹⁹

A series of provincial elections in 1966-67 seriously tested the NDP’s resources. Improved results and close races in Manitoba, British Columbia, Saskatchewan and Ontario were gratifying, but in each province the party experienced a turnover in leadership following the election. The departure of Russell Paulley, Robert Strachan, Woodrow Lloyd and Donald C. Macdonald, each of whom had led a provincial CCF

¹¹⁸ Whitehorn, Canadian Socialism, 86.
¹¹⁹ Although it would be hard to discern from most accounts of Pearson’s government, the Liberals need for NDP support significantly influenced the government’s direction. See P.E. Bryden, Planners and Politicians: Liberal Politics and Social Policy, 1957-1968 (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1997), 106-8, for a discussion of Medicare’s introduction.
party before the advent of the New Party, suggested a significant generational and image change was underway.

The popularity of Duff Roblin’s PCs was waning in Manitoba, and although they were reelected in 1966 with a reduced majority and the Liberals returned as Official Opposition, the increase in NDP popular vote (23 per cent) and seat count (eleven) were grounds for optimism.\textsuperscript{120} In British Columbia the NDP’s provincial secretary described the 1966 provincial election results there as “quite satisfactory,” given the party had gained two seats and won over thirty-three per cent of the popular vote even as Social Credit under W.A.C. Bennett returned to a sixth term in office with a comfortable majority.\textsuperscript{121} In Saskatchewan the NDP made its debut under Woodrow Lloyd. Emerging only 5200 votes behind Ross Thatcher’s incumbent Liberals, the NDP’s seat total was twenty-four to the Liberals’ thirty-five. Six days later, on October 17, 1967, Ontario voters awarded the NDP its best result yet in that province, with 26 per cent of the popular vote and twenty seats, including wins in Toronto, Hamilton, Oshawa, Scarborough and northern Ontario, as well as in Brantford, Windsor and Peterborough, where there had not traditionally been a strong history of CCF support.

Despite some increases in party strength since 1965 at both the provincial and federal levels, pressure was building from NDP members and activists to recruit a new generation of leaders. In the aftermath of the British Columbia election, for example, union affiliations with the party proliferated after newly-elected MLA Thomas Berger, with the support of BCFL secretary Pat O’Neil, announced he would challenge Robert

\textsuperscript{120} Wiseman, \textit{Social Democracy in Manitoba}, 110.
\textsuperscript{121} Clive Lytle quotation in Isitt, \textit{Militant Minority}, 178.
Strachan’s leadership at the 1967 provincial convention. Strachan eventually fended off Berger’s challenge by a vote of 277 to 178 among convention delegates. A desire for generational change was also evident at the national level. At the party’s fourth national convention held in Toronto during the summer of 1967, a group of ‘Young Turks,’ including future provincial party leaders Stephen Lewis and Grant Notley, former federal secretary Terry Grier, provincial secretaries John Harney and Clive Lytle, and provincial legislators Sidney Green and Jim Renwick, focused on defeating the federal executive’s choice for party president, former Saskatchewan cabinet minister J.H. Brockelbank. Stephen Lewis considered challenging for the presidency but was dissuaded after a conversation with his father and reported to his fellow ‘Young Turks’ that “blood would run in the streets” were he to personally challenge Brockelbank. Nevertheless, their opposition prevailed and Jim Renwick won the presidency “by dint of feverish canvassing.” Also noteworthy, effective lobbying by Robert Cliche, Laurier LaPierre, and Charles Taylor prompted the party to adopt a policy recognizing ‘special status’ for Quebec, including the potential for separate social programs along the lines of

122 Berger, a former MP and lawyer who advocated for labour and civil liberties, had successfully sued Bennett on a wrongful dismissal case. An exchange of letters in Canadian Dimension prompted by allegations that Berger and O’Neil’s labour support came from international unions annoyed with Strachan’s support for the Pulp, Paper and Woodworkers of Canada (PPWC) over the IWA is interesting as a reminder of the often close involvement of CCF/NDP scholars in the party’s activities. Political scientist Walter Young wrote to dismiss the rumour about O’Neil supporting Berger and to criticize Strachan’s leadership. Strachan himself replied and assured readers that “no one in BC takes Mr. Young seriously.” Walter D. Young, “Old-Left, New Left in the NDP,” Canadian Dimension, November-December 1967, 39; Robert Strachan, “Letter,” Canadian Dimension, January-February-March 1968, 56.
124 Morton, NDP: The Dream of Power, 75-6. The party was forced to hold the federal convention in Toronto because of the scarcity of hotels in Montreal that summer of Expo 67.
126 Morton, NDP: The Dream of Power, 75-6; McLeod and McLeod, Tommy Douglas, 270.
the Quebec Pension Plan. Furthermore, in the late 1960s the NDP was the only Canadian party closely associated with opposition to the Vietnam War. Tommy Douglas condemned Canadian complicity in the “bloody and barbaric” war in Vietnam in a February 1967 speech to the House of Commons. New Democrats were regular speakers at antiwar rallies and NDP riding associations and youth groups were occasional participants in organizing protest demonstrations.

Although the NDP had briefly led the PCs in a March 1967 Gallup Poll, the Tories rebounded in public opinion nationally when the selection of Nova Scotia premier Robert Stanfield as PC party leader later that year helped to ease memories of woes associated with Diefenbaker’s tempestuous leadership. One year later Pierre Elliot Trudeau succeeded Pearson as the Liberal leader. Long identified with the left in Quebec, Trudeau posed a threat to the NDP in particular, both from his reputation as a progressive and socially liberal reformer, and as a staunch opponent of Quebec nationalism.

Even before Trudeau’s elevation to the Liberal leadership, Stephen Lewis, who had recently been elected provincially in the Ontario riding of Scarborough, met with Tommy Douglas in Vancouver to urge his resignation from the helm of the NDP.

Lewis’s request, which he claimed was supported by the Ontario caucus, and was in

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128 Although Prime Minister Pearson’s timid criticism of American bombing in Vietnam at an April 1965 speech at Temple University resulted in an infamously angry response from President Lyndon Johnson (“you don’t come here and piss on my rug”), Pearson, Trudeau and successive Liberal governments supported the American war effort, although their public comments on the matter were muted. Mild criticisms and the government’s willingness to welcome draft dodgers may have contributed to a belief that the Liberal Party stance on Vietnam was at least conflicted. See Powell, 238-239 and English, Worldly Years, 362-367.
129 Powell, 209.
response to Douglas’s earlier willingness to step aside for a new generation to take over, was nevertheless badly received.\textsuperscript{131} An obvious and ambitious candidate to succeed Douglas was Stephen’s father, David, the federal house leader, but he was only four years younger than Douglas. Moreover, Douglas was looking forward to leading the NDP into an election against Stanfield and Trudeau, relatively inexperienced leaders at the federal level.

There was much that was new about the 1968 election; in addition to the arrival of Stanfield and Trudeau, the campaign included the first televised leaders’ debate.\textsuperscript{132} In the afterglow of the highly successful Centennial celebrations held the year before, nationalism was a prominent campaign theme. Economic nationalism, in particular, had been at the forefront of political debate since Walter Gordon’s brief stint as Liberal Minister of Finance from 1963 to 1965, and the publication of the Watkins Report of February 1968 into foreign ownership had sharpened concerns.\textsuperscript{133} Douglas and the NDP attacked Trudeau and the Liberals for promoting a dependent continentalism, and campaigned instead on a platform of affordable housing, the establishment of a prices review board to reduce the cost of living, a guaranteed annual income and tax reform, and for an end to the American bombing of North Vietnam.\textsuperscript{134}

By keeping the details of Trudeau’s promise of a ‘Just Society’ deliberately vague, the Liberal campaign focused attention on the charismatic leader himself.\textsuperscript{135} On one issue, however, the lines were clear – Trudeau’s opposition to Quebec nationalism

\textsuperscript{133} Morton, \textit{NDP: The Dream of Power}, 82-3.
\textsuperscript{134} Whitehorn, \textit{Canadian Socialism}, 88-9.
\textsuperscript{135} English, \textit{Just Watch Me}, 20-1.
and his criticisms of Quebec’s attempts to gain for itself a heightened international status stood in stark contrast to the positions of both the PCs and the NDP. On the eve of the election, Trudeau’s widely reported resilience and personal courage in the face of a nationalist riot on St. Jean-Baptiste Day in Montreal endeared him further to many English Canadians. The result was a Liberal majority with 154 seats and 45.4 per cent of the popular vote compared to seventy-two seats and 31.4% of the popular vote for Stanfield’s PCs. Although the Liberal victory was not unexpected given the unprecedented outpouring of Trudeaumania, the result was a disappointment nevertheless for the NDP. It had nominated a record 263 candidates but elected just twenty-two MPs with 16.9 per cent of the popular vote. In Quebec the NDP had run such high-profile standard bearers as Charles Taylor and Laurier LaPierre, yet instead of achieving a breakthrough due to the party’s adopting a ‘deux nations’ approach to federalism, its support in that province slumped to 7.5 per cent of the popular vote. The election in Oshawa of Ed Broadbent, a young political science professor, and its resurgence in Saskatchewan, where it won thirty-five per cent of the vote and elected six members including Canada’s youngest MP, Lorne Nystrom, only partially compensated for NDP losses incurred in northern Ontario, Toronto and Hamilton. With the loss of Douglas’s redistributed Burnaby-Seymour seat, attention refocused on the leadership question. This time, Douglas, now sixty-three years of age and approaching icon status in the party, made clear his intention to resign at the 1969 convention. The death of long-time leftist Colin Cameron only a month after the election, however, opened a relatively safe

137 Whitehorn, Canadian Socialism, 88-9.
138 Morton, NDP: The Dream of Power, 86.
seat on Vancouver Island, and Douglas, at the urging of the party executive, stayed on as leader and re-entered the House of Commons after winning the February 1969 by-election.139

Leadership challenges in Ontario and Manitoba during the fall of 1968 highlighted differences in image, more so than ideology or policy. Jim Renwick in Ontario, although only four years Donald Macdonald’s junior, represented a fresh face. First elected in 1964 and named federal NDP president at the party’s 1967 convention, Renwick surprised Macdonald by announcing that he planned to challenge his leadership at the November ONDP convention in Kitchener.140 Although many agreed the party should have performed better in the provincial election of 1967, Macdonald’s long-standing connections with many party activists complicated Renwick’s struggle to win delegates. In the event, Macdonald prevailed by a vote of 859 to 370.141 That same month Grant Notley took over the leadership of the Alberta NDP from Neil Reimer, who resigned after the party won sixteen per cent of the vote but no seats in the 1967 provincial election.

In Manitoba, Sidney Green challenged Russell Paulley’s leadership of the province’s NDP, not over policy differences but because he believed a contest would be healthy for the party.142 However, many party members interpreted Green’s challenge as a left-wing insurgence. Paulley indicated he planned to resign soon, but his preferred

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139 McLeod and McLeod, Tommy Douglas, 273-5.
141 Smith, Unfinished Journey, 420. Lewis denied urging Renwick to run in order to set up his own leadership challenge subsequently, as Renwick ally John Brown alleged, but acknowledged his own leadership ambitions.
142 Wiseman, Social Democracy in Manitoba, 118.
successor was the popular MP Ed Schreyer.\textsuperscript{143} Paulley retained his leadership at the Manitoba party’s November 1968 convention by a vote of 213 to 168 and eventually resigned the following year. Thereupon, the majority of the caucus encouraged Schreyer to run in the June 1969 leadership race which he won handily.\textsuperscript{144} In British Columbia, after Robert Strachan resigned the leadership in early 1969, Thomas Berger defeated MLAs Dave Barrett and Bob Williams and New Left activist John Conway to head that province’s NDP.\textsuperscript{145}

When the activists and politicians who ultimately formed the Waffle began meeting in the spring of 1969, the CCF and NDP had significantly influenced Canadian politics and society over the previous thirty-seven years. Despite experiencing electoral disappointments and misplaced optimism repeatedly at both the federal and provincial levels, the CCF/NDP had nevertheless achieved strong representation in many provinces, especially Saskatchewan, and demonstrated the potential to take power in others, specifically Manitoba and British Columbia. The party could point to solid regional bases of support in British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Nova Scotia and parts of Ontario, and commentators across the political spectrum characterized leading party figures as committed, intelligent and principled parliamentarians.\textsuperscript{146} At the same time the NDP faced many challenges in the late 1960s, including alternating hostility and inattention from the press, a dearth of financial resources, entrenched Liberal and

\textsuperscript{143} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{144} Ibid., 119.
\textsuperscript{145} Isitt, \textit{Militant Minority}, 182. Both Schreyer’s and Berger’s elections were interpreted as moves to the right by the NDP.
\textsuperscript{146} The party’s support base included parts of Vancouver, Vancouver Island and resource extraction communities in the north and interior of British Columbia, much of Saskatchewan, north and central Winnipeg, Cape Breton, Toronto, Scarborough, Hamilton, Oshawa, Timmins, Thunder Bay and other parts of northern Ontario.
Conservative supporters in many regions of the country, and a first-past-the-post electoral system which often worked to its disadvantage.

Each period of the CCF’s history – its early years from 1932 to 1940, its rise from 1941 to 1945, and its decline from 1946 to 1960 – had been primarily influenced by the political and economic context in which the party operated, especially the “matrix events” of the Great Depression, World War II, and the Cold War. The context of the 1961 to 1969 period, including various crises in the postwar system such as decolonization, the civil rights and anti-war movements in the United States, and intensified nationalism in both Quebec and English Canada, created both challenges and opportunities for the NDP. One of the greatest challenges was the emergence of a series of social movements that, taken together, represented an entirely different approach to political action and social change. As will be seen in the following chapter, a ‘New Left’ comprised primarily of young ‘baby boomers’ active in extra-parliamentary social movements such as the student and anti-war movements rejected the politics of an ‘Old Left’ which many in Canada associated with the NDP and its allies in the trade union leadership.

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147 McKay, Rebels, Reds, Radicals, 95.
Chapter Two
“We had a sense of the world afire with revolution:” The New Left in Canada, 1959-69

The Waffle was closely tied to the New Left’s emergence in Canada during the 1960s. Indeed it was within a variety of New Left movements that many future Waffle activists first met and were attracted to ideas of radical political reform. James Laxer and Krista Maeots, for example, each began their activism in the Student Union for Peace Action (SUPA) and the Canadian University Press (CUP), two key organizations of the Canadian New Left. Another prominent Waffler, the liberal economist Mel Watkins, through his involvement in such New Left manifestations as the American civil rights and Canadian anti-war and draft resistance movements, developed an enhanced sense of Canadian nationalism and questioned the benefits of continental economic integration. Other future Wafflers cut their activist teeth in the labour movement, especially within massive locals of the automotive and steel industries radicalized by an influx of young workers and a wave of wildcat strikes. And young members of the New Democratic Party such as Giles Endicott, John Smart and Gerald Caplan, all of whom would become Waffle supporters, were drawn to the New Left’s youthful, aggressive and exciting politics next to which the NDP appeared old, timid and dull by comparison.

The concept of the New Left, which was international in scope, is inseparably linked to the rebellious political, social, and cultural ferment of the “Sixties.” The term “New Left” was first used self-referentially by activists in the British anti-nuclear movement of the late 1950s, many of whom, in the stark Cold War atmosphere, were determined to distance themselves not only from capitalism, but from their former
communist sympathies as well.\textsuperscript{1} By May 1968, Parisian student insurgents manning the barricades and scrawling poetic graffiti (“be realistic, demand the impossible;” “it is forbidden to forbid;” “run comrade, the old world is behind you”) on city buildings while battling police in the streets, had become, along with clamorous protests from a cross-section of American society opposed to United States involvement in the Vietnam War, the indelible image of the international New Left.

This chapter, in surveying the New Left’s origins and activities in Canada, and thereby establishing the important ideological and institutional backdrop in which the Waffle is situated, adopts Van Gosse’s broad definition of the New Left discussed earlier. As will be shown, the Canadian New Left, in addition to encompassing the anti-Vietnam War movements and university campus-based organizations such as the SUPA, also included the women’s liberation, ‘Red Power,’ left-nationalist, and militant labour movements that took place throughout the “Long Sixties.”\textsuperscript{2} Those rejecting the Old Left,

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\textsuperscript{2} Two days of protest in Toronto demonstrate the broad range of issues and intermingling of activists common in the New Left. On May 6, 1970, a larger than usual antiwar demonstration at the US Consulate, in response to the American invasion of Cambodia and the deaths of four student protesters at Kent State University only days earlier, overlapped with a nearby rally held by the Abortion Caravan of women’s liberationists travelling to Ottawa to demand the legalization of abortion. The two groups joined together to mount a large antiwar protest that evening, when their numbers were further bolstered by members of the ‘Stop Spadina’ Committee, who joined the demonstration after holding their own protest against a proposed expressway’s construction through downtown Toronto, while students from the countercultural hotbed and experimental Rochdale College threatened to occupy the US consulate. Three days later, a ‘City is for the People Day’ festival in Nathan Phillips Square organized by the Stop Spadina Committee served as a staging ground for the largest antiwar demonstration in Canada during the Vietnam War. Christopher Powell, “‘Vietnam: It’s Our War Too’: The Antiwar Movement in Canada: 1963-1975,” (PhD diss., University of New Brunswick, 2010), 306-308 and 313-314. Although not discussed in this chapter, the counter-culture’s rebellious challenge to authority, hierarchy, and established structures constituted an important source of inspiration and, for many, an entrance and connection to the left-wing politics of the period. See Henderson, \textit{Making the Scene}, for an excellent history of the counter-culture in the alternative Toronto neighborhood of Yorkville in the 1960s.
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represented in Canada by the NDP and union leaders, brought a new approach to politics, as described by Peter Warrian, a Canadian New Left activist, in 1968:

We are committed to democratic and humanistic values. Consequently, we are opposed to authoritarian forms of social organization that repress self-determination and self-development and we aim at democratization of education and, necessarily, the democratization of our society.  

The Canadian New Left, in addition to being influenced by British and American New Left social movements, originated in three historical developments in the aftermath of the Second World War: the baby boom; the Cold War; and the decolonization movements that emerged in Africa and Asia throughout the 1950s and 1960s. A fourth influence, unique to Canada, was the early 1960s Quiet Revolution in Quebec.

The baby boom of approximately 1946 to 1962 massively altered Canadian society. Between 1946 and 1955 alone, 3.9 million babies were born as the birth rate per thousand of the population rose from 24.3 in 1945 to 28.9 in 1947, and remained above twenty-four until 1963. Historian Doug Owram has demonstrated how the baby boom generation dominated the post-war era. He details, for instance, the explosion in state-financed educational investments, including buildings and instructors, required by the baby boomers as they progressed through elementary, secondary and post-secondary

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3 Peter Warrian, “The State of the Union or Brothers and Sisters This Is Our Thing So Let It All Hang Out” *Canadian Dimension* (September-October 1968): 10-11. It can be difficult for an historian to convey the optimism, idealism and enthusiasm of young people in the “Sixties”. Historian Ian McKay, then a teenager growing up in Sarnia, Ontario, captures the sentiment of many young people in his reflections, explaining, “we had the sense of a world afire with revolution, and a profound sense that whatever we could do would somehow matter.” Ian McKay, “Sarnia in the Sixties (or the Peculiarities of Canadians),” in *New World Comin' Coming: The Sixties and the Shaping of a Global Consciousness*, eds. Karen Dubinsky, Catherine Krull, Susan Lord, Sean Mills and Scott Rutherford (Toronto: Between the Lines, 2009), 26.

4 *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, 3rd ed., s.v. “Baby Boom.” (Toronto: McLelland and Stewart, 2000); Milligan, Rebel Youth, 14; Owram, *Born at the Right Time*, 4. The absolute number of babies born in Canada rose from 300,000 in 1945 to 372,000 in 1947 to over 400,000 in 1952 and remained above 400,000 in each year until 1966.

5 Owram, *Born at the Right Time*, 1-5.
institutions in unprecedented numbers. Despite the increasing numbers of youth attending university by the 1960s, a majority of the boomers did not advance beyond secondary school, opting instead to enter the paid workforce in a relatively buoyant economy with its expanding job market. Raised in the child-centered environment of the 1950s that merged into a youth-centered culture and politics of the 1960s that was quick to reject hitherto normative values of domesticity and security, the boomers, Owram asserts, perceived their generation as unique. Their replacing of the previous generation’s values of domesticity and security with a radical counterculture and politics highlighted a broadening ‘generation gap.’

The virulent anticommunism of the Cold War only enhanced the political conservatism of the 1950s, soon to be challenged by outbreaks of liberalized sexual expression and adolescent rebellion. Fears of nuclear annihilation motivated students to form the first New Left organization in Canada, the Canadian Universities Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CUCND). The slow and painful end to European colonialism following the Second World War also profoundly affected the development of the Canadian New Left. As historian Sean Mills has demonstrated, the influence of Third World decolonization movements, including revolutions in Cuba and Algeria, and the accompanying views of anti-colonial theorists deeply influenced activists’ analysis of their own oppression in Montreal and Quebec throughout the 1960s. His conclusions

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6 Ibid., 181. Canadian university enrolment increased as much between 1963 and 1968 as it had in the previous fifty years, and the ranks of university faculty nearly tripled between 1961 and 1971 as a result. New universities built in the 1960s include Trent, Brock, York, Lethbridge and Simon Fraser, while branch campuses at Calgary, Regina, Waterloo, and Sir George Williams became full-fledged independent universities over the course of the decade.

7 Ibid., 172.
could easily be applied to English Canada as well.\(^8\) Finally, the Quiet Revolution in Quebec that followed the death of long-time conservative Union Nationale Premier Maurice Duplessis in 1959 and the election of Jean Lesage’s reformist and modernizing Liberal government the following year fundamentally altered provincial society during a period of rapid social and economic development marked by an expanded welfare state, a redefined Quebec nationalism, and an expanded and increasingly secularized educational system that signaled the waning power of the Roman Catholic Church.

The international New Left’s influence on the Canadian movement must also be acknowledged. From the British Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament in the late 1950s to the student protests in Paris, Prague, Tokyo and Mexico City in the late 1960s, Canadian activists engaged with and were inspired by the struggles of New Left movements around the world. The proximity of the United States meant that the civil rights and anti-war movements in that country held particular importance for Canadian New Leftists, with the American radical newspapers *The Guardian* and *Ramparts* conveying to Canadian readers the immediacy of New Left activism south of the border.

Although the Canadian New Left contained important links to the Old Left, its ideology and tactics represented a significant rupture with its predecessor organizations.\(^9\) In particular, Canada’s social democratic party, the NDP, came under attack from New Leftists dismayed by the perceived limitations of parliamentarianism and of postwar social democracy. Stanley Gray, a prominent New Left activist, criticized the NDP’s “top-down” approach to social change for “failing to create a popular movement for a

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\(^8\) Sean Mills, *The Empire Within*, 62-84. Anti-colonial theorists Albert Memmi, Franz Fanon and Aime Cesaire were widely read alongside such New Left heroes as C. Wright Mills, Herbert Marcuse and Jean-Paul Sartre.

\(^9\) Some historians, such as Benjamin Isitt in *Militant Minorites*, have emphasized the continuities between the Old and New Lefts in British Columbia, and while there are many, significant differences did emerge.
democratic and socialist Canada” and not harnessing the energy of youth protest
cmovements.10 “An exclusive concentration on electoral politics,” Gray argued, and
“attempts to introduce social change from the top” were incapable of revolutionizing
Canadian society.11 Even more telling, Gray doubted the NDP even harbored a
commitment to “fundamental social change.”12 James Harding, another prominent New
Left activist but future critic of the Waffle concurred, writing in Canadian Dimension
that “the present rationale of the NDP stands in contrast to the position of the new left” as
“our present political institutions are not capable of ensuring that our degree of
democracy will survive or participation in decisions occur.”13 Seeking revolutionary
social change, participatory democracy and humanism alongside equality, the New Left
looked askance at the NDP and other representatives of the Old Left, in particular labour
unions and the largely discredited Communist Party.

In Canada, students at Montreal organized the first New Left group in response to
Prime Minister Diefenbaker’s 1959 decision to position American Bomarc nuclear
missiles at sites near Thunder Bay, Ontario and La Macaza, Quebec.14 Dmitri
Roussopoulos, a graduate student from Montreal who had been profoundly influenced by
the British Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND) while studying at the London
School of Economics, proposed and launched the CUCND with students from McGill
and Sir George Williams universities. In tandem with students from the Université de
Montréal, the group held a demonstration in Ottawa on Christmas Day 1959, during

11 Ibid., 12.
12 Ibid.
13 James Harding “The NDP, The Regina Manifesto and the New Left,” Canadian Dimension (November-
December 1966), 19.
14 Michael Maurice Dufresne, “‘Let’s Not Be Cremated Equal:’ The Combined Universities Campaign for
which eighty participants delivered petitions to the federal government opposing Canada’s decision to host the Bomarc missile system and laid a symbolic memorial wreath at the National War Memorial.\textsuperscript{15} This was, Roussopoulos explains, “the first such action by young people in the postwar period.”\textsuperscript{16}

CUCND chapters, in the face of hostility and accusations of harboring Communist sympathies from other students and the press, began springing up at universities across Canada. A priority of the CUCND was to distinguish itself from the Canadian Peace Congress (CPC), the much-maligned face of the Communist-dominated peace movement of the 1940s and 1950s. In fact, the Toronto chapter of the CUCND expelled a campus Communist leader from the group for refusing to denounce Soviet nuclear tests.\textsuperscript{17} Yet this first New Left organization also retained important ties to the Old Left. For example, when the CUCND engaged with the National Committee for the Control of Radiation Hazards (NCCRH), a body which disseminated educational information on the dangers of nuclear radiation exposure, it successfully pressured the committee into adopting a position opposing the placement of nuclear weapons on Canadian soil and even to changing its name to the Canadian Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CCND).\textsuperscript{18} Furthermore, as Doug Owram describes, many student activists began in the Student Christian Movement (SCM), another manifestation of the ‘Old Left,’ while Myrna Kostash has linked many CUCND activists to membership in the NDP youth.\textsuperscript{19} Despite the acknowledged influence of the British CND, the CUCND

\begin{footnotes}
\item[Ibid. 19-20.]
\item[Dufresne, “‘Let’s Not Be Cremated Equal’,” 21.]
\item[Ibid., 27.]
\item[Owram, \textit{Born at the Right Time}, 219; Kostash, \textit{Long Way from Home}, xxvii.]
\end{footnotes}
initially focused its attention on opposition to nuclear weapons and unlike its British counterpart did not undertake a broader critique of the existing social and political systems. Neither was the CUCND the only peace group actively opposing nuclear weapons. The Voice of Women, founded in 1960 as part of the immense grassroots response to journalist Lotta Dempsey’s columns in the Toronto Star opposing nuclear weapons, also lobbied the federal government. Nevertheless, as Kostash explains, “for the post-war generation at this point, the ‘movement’ was CUCND.” The Montreal-based newspaper Our Generation Against Nuclear War, founded in 1961 by Dimitri Roussopoulos, became an important source of information and debate for the nascent New Left.

The CUCND continued its own public agitations against nuclear weapons throughout 1960, staging a one hundred-student picket at the Bomarc construction site in North Bay in May, and a Christmas Day demonstration in Ottawa that attracted a crowd of 450 from seventeen universities across Canada. The following year the CUCND in conjunction with the CCND held a Thanksgiving weekend vigil in Ottawa and presented Diefenbaker with a 140,000-person petition opposing the Bomarcs, actions that contributed to the prime minister’s decision to renege on his previous nuclear

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20 Dufresne, “‘Let’s Not Be Cremated Equal’,” 22.
22 Kostash, Long Way from Home, xxvii.
23 The newspaper was renamed simply Our Generation after CUCND’s demise in 1964. The magazine Sanity was also published out of the same location as Our Generation, and both contained news and articles about and by leading British, American and Canadian opponents of nuclear weapons.
commitment, deeply dividing his cabinet in the process. After failing to defeat Diefenbaker’s Progressive Conservatives in the 1962 federal election, Liberal leader Lester Pearson reversed his party’s stance and vowed to accept the Bomarc missiles if elected. When the April 1963 election produced a Pearson Liberal minority government committed to nuclear weapons, CUCND reconsidered its own tactics.

At a September 1963 meeting in Regina, speakers including Art Pape and James Harding, who would go on to chair CUCND and SUPA respectively, urged the CUCND to expand its mandate and to learn from other social movements, such as the civil rights movement, to link economic exploitation with war. At the CUCND’s federal conference in Montreal that December, the membership broke with the CCND over the latter’s refusal to endorse a proposal urging Canada’s withdrawal from all military alliances, including NATO. The CUCND’s Christmas Day 1963 march to the War Memorial in Ottawa was its last prior to adopting new strategies for opposing nuclear weapons and promoting broader social change.

In January 1964, Bomarc nuclear missiles were installed at bases near North Bay and La Macaza. That summer, CUCND activists began projects in both communities that revealed a newfound approach to organizing locally, including utilizing the tactic of civil disobedience, reflecting the influence of the civil rights movement in the United States. Twelve students, including one staffer from the American Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), lived in North Bay for the summer in an effort to persuade the community to oppose nuclear weapons. The students, confronted with considerable local support in

25 Ibid., 28.
26 Ibid., 29-33.
27 Bruce Douville, “Project La Macaza: A Study of Two Canadian Peace Protests in the 1960s,” in Worth Fighting For, 161.
favour of the missile base and its anticipated economic benefits, instead focused on identifying alternative modes of community development, all the while warning of the dangers of nuclear fallout.\textsuperscript{28} Unable to offer the residents of North Bay a tangible alternative to the Bomarc base, the organizers’ efforts came to naught. At La Macaza as well, CUCND activists, in conjunction with union supporters and members of Quebec Socialist Youth, adopted non-violent direct action tactics to register their opposition to the nuclear weapons.\textsuperscript{29} In June 1964, activists combined a week-long vigil outside the Quebec base with attempts to engage in discussions with the local community. Seventeen activists, coached by a Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) veteran, blocked the access road into the base for two hours during which police repeatedly dragged the protesters into an adjacent ditch. This demonstration of civil disobedience was the first large-scale use of non-violent direct action amongst the Canadian New Left, and was followed by an even larger demonstration that September.\textsuperscript{30}

Energized by these efforts and by examples of activism by students in the United States and elsewhere, 150 students from eighteen Canadian universities met in Regina over the 1964-65 Christmas break. Following the SDS example of making decisions by consensus, the group agreed to disband the CUCND and create in its place the Student Union for Peace Action.\textsuperscript{31} Although SUPA’s statement of purpose re-emphasized opposition to nuclear weapons and war, the document also included an analysis of the role of universities and students in society, emphasizing participatory democracy and

\textsuperscript{28} Dufresne, “‘Let’s Not Be Cremated Equal’,” 39.
\textsuperscript{29} Douville, “Project La Macaza,” 164.
\textsuperscript{30} Ibid., 167-8. The September protest repeated the form of the June action, beginning with a lengthy vigil and ending with a sit-in at the entrance to the military base. The September sit-in lasted for forty-eight hours, assisted by the activists’ further training in civil disobedience, and included “teachers, clergy, housewives, artists and blue-collar workers” as well as students.
\textsuperscript{31} Dufresne, “‘Let’s Not Be Cremated Equal’,” 42.
non-violent protest as the legitimate means for effecting fundamental social and political change.\textsuperscript{32}

SUPA’s first major action in March 1965 signalled how far the group had advanced beyond a singular focus on opposition to nuclear weapons as well as the importance of international connections among New Left movements across borders. In response to the violent dispersal by police a few days earlier of the civil rights marchers Martin Luther King Jr. led from Selma to Birmingham, Alabama, SUPA and SCM activists, alongside veterans of the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and CORE, organized protests outside the United States consulate in Toronto.\textsuperscript{33} Sixty-five people, mostly students from the University of Toronto, prevented the consulate from opening and, in an act of civil disobedience purposefully reminiscent of the civil rights movement, went limp as police arrested them and supporters sang “We Shall Overcome.”\textsuperscript{34} The performance was captured in a photograph printed in the 	extit{Globe and Mail}, thereby vastly enhancing the new group’s visibility and attuning its members to the power of the media.\textsuperscript{35} Canadian activists, seeing a role for themselves in the struggle for civil rights, established the Canadian Friends of SNCC and held a conference in May 1965 featuring SNCC speakers.\textsuperscript{36} SUPA activists, by now closely connected with the SDS, at the same time helped organize a protest against Adlai Stevenson, the American Ambassador to the United Nations, who was scheduled to receive an honourary degree at the University of Toronto. Stevenson, a defender of American involvement in the

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\textsuperscript{32} Kostash, \textit{Long Way from Home}, 5-9.
\textsuperscript{34} Ibid., 47.
\textsuperscript{35} Owram, \textit{Born at the Right Time}, 234.
\textsuperscript{36} Kostash, \textit{Long Way from Home}, 11.
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Vietnam War, was met by three hundred protesters when he arrived at Convocation Hall.\textsuperscript{37}

Following the American consulate protests, editorial opinions in both the *Globe and Mail* and the *Toronto Star* questioned why Canadian students were focusing on American rather than domestic issues. Home-grown problems were very much the impetus for five summer projects SUPA undertook across Canada during 1965. SDS, which previously had staged Economic Research and Action Projects (ERAP) on a model of community organizing popularized by Saul Alinsky, clearly influenced SUPA’s plans to situate student organizers among the working poor in Kingston, on First Nations reservations in Saskatchewan, and in pacifist Doukhobor settlements in British Columbia.\textsuperscript{38} Nor were previous issues forgotten – students continued to protest against nuclear weapons in La Macaza and Toronto SUPA members researched examples of Canadian support for the Vietnam War. However, the students quickly learned the challenges of community organizing. Faced with the realization that revolution was not imminent and suspicion from those who would remain in the marginalized communities long after the students returned to class, SUPA activists recognized the limitations of the 1965 summer projects. Amongst First Nations in Saskatchewan, the students spent much of their time working to earn the trust of a suspicious community, and their attempts at political organizing faced stiff opposition from the federal government.\textsuperscript{39} In the Kootenay region of British Columbia, the SUPA workers discovered to their dismay that

\textsuperscript{37} Churchill, “SUPA, Selma, and Stevenson,” 53.
\textsuperscript{39} Palmer, *Canada’s 1960s*, 265-6.
young Doukhobors were as materialistic as their own peers back home.\textsuperscript{40} In Halifax, a single African-Canadian SUPA organizer sought to organize the black community, but when left largely to his own devices failed to experience much success.\textsuperscript{41} Only in Kingston, where the students successfully lobbied for minor changes such as road and park safety measures and forced a public meeting with a negligent landlord could they claim a modicum of success in community organizing.\textsuperscript{42} The one sobering lesson to be taken away from all five of the summer projects was that the poor were not inherently radical agents of an incipient revolution.\textsuperscript{43}

Although Joan Newman and Myrna Wood continued their organizing efforts in Kingston by forming the Association for Tenants’ Action, Kingston (ATAK), SUPA did not reprise the summer projects in the future.\textsuperscript{44} Instead, responding to the escalation of American military intervention in Vietnam in the mid-1960s became the larger focus. The anti-war movement which in Canada began in 1964, was linked from its beginning to the international anti-war movement. Furthermore, as Christopher Powell has documented, the Trotskyist League for Socialist Action and its youth branch, the Young Socialists (LSA/YS), along with the Communist Party of Canada (CP) played important organizational roles in fostering the anti-war movement.\textsuperscript{45} Describing the 1965 International Days of Protest in Toronto Powell notes, “the participation of SUPA, Trotskyists, Communists, the NDY and others indicated a rare unity of old and new left.”\textsuperscript{46} Although the anti-war movement drew the largest crowds in major cities like

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\textsuperscript{40} Kostash, \textit{Born at the Right Time}, 16-7.
\textsuperscript{41} Palmer, \textit{Canada’s 1960s}, 267.
\textsuperscript{42} Dufresne, “‘Let’s Not Be Cremated Equal’,” 47.
\textsuperscript{43} Palmer, \textit{Canada’s 1960s}, 263.
\textsuperscript{44} Kostash, \textit{Long Way from Home}, 19.
\textsuperscript{45} Powell, “‘Vietnam: It’s Our War Too’.”
\textsuperscript{46} Ibid., 140.
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Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver, anti-war demonstrations attracted protesters across the country and was not limited to university students.

Organizers of the spring 1965 protest against Adlai Stevenson at the University of Toronto had included both SUPA activists and NDP youth, but professors Chandler Davis and Natalie Zemon Davis, immigrants from the United States, had been the principal instigators. Economics professor Mel Watkins, whose ideological orientation had begun to move leftward, also attended the protest. These three faculty members, along with economist Abraham Rotstein and historians Peter Russell and Kenneth McNaughton, organized an ‘International Teach-In on Vietnam’ for October 1965.47 Framed as an educational event rather than a protest, the undertaking received institutional support and the blessing of the university’s president. Broadcast over three days on radio in New York as well as across Canada via the CBC, the event may have felt “top-heavy” to seasoned student activists, but it was, according to Myrna Kostash, a “coup” and a “phenomenon” for those beginning to question the war and Canada’s role in supporting the United States in waging it.48

Groups opposed to the Vietnam War, such as Winnipeg’s Vietnam Action Committee and Saskatoon’s Committee to End the War in Vietnam, began appearing across the country. In the aftermath of the Teach-In, SUPA activists Heather Dean and future Waffler Danny Drache began assisting American war resisters in Toronto with securing housing, legal advice and employment.49 SUPA produced a pamphlet, ‘Escape to Freedom,’ aimed at Americans worried about the draft and distributed by SDS in the

48 Palmer, Canada’s 1960s, 271; Kostash, Long Way from Home, 46.
49 I use the term “war resisters” to encompass both deserters and draft dodgers, as was common in the anti-draft movement. For a more detailed discussion of the commonalities, distinctions and debates, see Squires, Building Sanctuary.
United States. By 1966 SUPA had set aside space in its crowded Spadina Avenue office for its Anti-Draft Programme – soon renamed the Toronto Anti-Draft Programme (TADP) – and hired war resister Mark Satin to run it. Around the same time, the editor of the radical magazine Sanity formed the Montreal Council to Aid War Resisters, and activists on the other side of the country organized the Vancouver Committee to Aid American War Resisters. These three groups would stay in frequent contact by early 1967. Also that year, the TADP began publishing the Manual for Draft Age Immigrants to Canada, printing 35,000 copies of the pamphlet in the first three editions alone for distribution throughout the United States. American refugees established their own American Deserters Committees in both Toronto and in British Columbia. A small expatriate community lived on Baldwin and Huron streets in Toronto and for the most part integrated within local student, activist and bohemian communities. The magazine AMEX, whose target audience was war resisters, urged them to integrate into Canadian life and most did, although some were accused by the Canadian academic and future Waffler Robin Mathews of extending American imperialism to Canada by retaining an exclusive focus on the politics of the United States. Regardless of such criticisms, many Canadian activists viewed assisting American war resisters as a tangible means of

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53 Ibid.
54 Ibid., 176.
actively opposing the Vietnam War, a cause with international resonance for the New Left.\textsuperscript{57}

By the mid-1960s, student off-campus activism in the Canadian anti-war movement and SUPA’s attempts at community organizing in marginalized communities were augmented by more students focusing their attention on reforming the university itself. Many among the new wave of “boomers” flooding university campuses increasingly regarded themselves as a distinct group tasked as agents of social change.\textsuperscript{58}

A variety of often overlapping organizations, including the Canadian Union of Students (CUS), local student councils, Students for a Democratic University (SDU), and campus newspapers, strove to transform the university into their idea of a democratic, accessible and socially engaged institution.

Until 1965 the CUS had acted primarily as a service organization and eschewed political action. However, between 1964 and 1966 all Quebec-based francophone student groups left the CUS to join the Union générale des étudiants du Québec (UGEQ) which had been established in 1960. The exodus was initiated by two influences: a heightened sense of Quebec nationalism, and ‘student syndicalism,’ the belief that students, by virtue of being the upcoming generation of workers not yet embedded in the capitalist system, had a unique and vital role to play in bringing about revolutionary social change.\textsuperscript{59} In response the participants at the 1965 annual CUS conference recognized UGEQ as a “sister union” and adopted policies endorsing financial accessibility to higher education.

\textsuperscript{57} Squires, “‘A Very Major Wheel’,” 176-7.
\textsuperscript{58} Roberta Lexier, “To Struggle Together or Fracture Apart: The Sixties Student Movement at English Canadian Universities,” in \textit{Debating Dissent}, 82.
\textsuperscript{59} Owram, \textit{Born at the Right Time}, 234. The work of Herbert Marcuse, especially, influenced students’ embrace of the “student syndicalist” theory.
and student power in university governance.\textsuperscript{60} At the following year’s annual conference, student activists adopted a full-fledged “student syndicalism” policy that positioned CUS as a New Left organization in tune with the activism of the times.\textsuperscript{61} Despite routinely facing backlash from conservative students who sought to disassociate their schools from the CUS, the organization would prove integral to the New Left throughout the late 1960s, distributing activist literature from SUPA’s Research, Information and Publications Project after that group’s demise, and radicalizing numerous student leaders who attended CUS seminars and conferences.\textsuperscript{62}

In addition to anti-war and civil rights demonstrations, by 1967 “student power” in university governance had become the “overriding goal in campus struggles.”\textsuperscript{63} As historian Roberta Lexier demonstrated, student activists at Canadian universities imbued with democratic ideals mobilized in large numbers to fight for “direct student representation on university governing structures,” such as university senates, boards, and departmental committees.\textsuperscript{64} Self-identifying as a distinct group with a collective identity on campus, many students questioned the university’s role in society, and in particular its support for the hierarchical and technocratic world student activists rejected.\textsuperscript{65} The most prevalent “student power” organization on campuses was the Students for a Democratic University (SDU), although SDU groups actually shared little beyond the name and irreverent style.\textsuperscript{66} Radicalized student councils also led numerous “student power”

\textsuperscript{60} John Cleveland, “‘Berkeley North’: Why Simon Fraser had the Strongest 1960s Student Power Movement,” in \textit{The Sixties in Canada: A Turbulent and Creative Decade}, 201-2.
\textsuperscript{61} Ibid., 202.
\textsuperscript{62} Ian Milligan, \textit{Rebel Youth}, 74-5.
\textsuperscript{63} Cleveland, “‘Berkeley North’,” 202.
\textsuperscript{64} Roberta Lexier, “To Struggle Together…”, 86.
\textsuperscript{65} Ibid., 82.
\textsuperscript{66} Myrna Kostash suggests that SDU groups “took the theatricality of protest as seriously as its rhetoric,” \textit{Long Way From Home}, 83.
campaigns. Although not widely adopted at other universities, departmental and course
unions were created to advocate for students’ rights at the University of Toronto and
Simon Fraser University. 67  Student newspapers such as the Varsity, the Carillon, and the
Ubyssey also emerged as forums for campus activism. Often the only media outlet
reporting on student protests and demands, campus newspapers provided lively and often
explicitly New Left perspectives. 68  Equally important was the Canadian University Press
(CUP) which not only shared and disseminated news and opinions across university
campuses but also held annual gatherings at which many students were radicalized. 69
Numerous Wafflers, including James Laxer, Krista Maeots, John Conway, Don Kossick
and Don Mitchell, launched their activist careers at student newspapers.

It should not be overlooked that a large majority of young Canadians in the 1960s
did not attend post-secondary institutions, and thus had no part in campus civil rights
demonstrations, anti-war rallies and “student power” protests. Despite the tremendous
growth in enrolments at Canadian universities and colleges during the decade, only one in
six high school graduates pursued post-secondary education in 1965. With
unemployment less than four per cent that year, clearly the majority entered directly into
the workforce after graduation. 70  Yet young workers also were not immune to the spirit
of protest and unrest as the wave of illegal wildcat strikes that swept the country in 1965
and 1966 attests. Exact numbers are difficult to determine, but historians estimate
between twenty and fifty per cent of the 1100 strikes that occurred over those two years

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68 Owram, Born at the Right Time, 240-1.
69 Milligan, Rebel Youth, 75.
70 Owram, Born at the Right Time, 172.
were wildcats, many of them initiated by younger workers.\textsuperscript{71} By rejecting their union leaders and participating in these informal “quickie strikes,” workers challenged the “postwar compromise” for workplace stability that had been reached among the Old Left union leadership, management, and the state.

This “postwar compromise,” initially defined by the ‘Rand Formula,’ was subsequently enshrined in legislation that provided unions with the security of formalized collective bargaining and automatic dues check-off.\textsuperscript{72} However, the compromise reserved for management the right to make major decisions involving production and technology, while unions were limited to negotiating wages and benefits. Furthermore, strikes were permitted only between contracts, while shop-floor issues – staffing, overtime, discipline, and technological change – were addressed through a formal grievance process between union representatives and management.\textsuperscript{73} By the mid-1960s, frustration over the formalized, bureaucratic, and often plodding means for negotiating contracts and resolving shop-floor issues frequently erupted as walkouts and illegal strikes. As historian Bryan Palmer has described, informal and spontaneous wildcat strikes were “the perfect vehicle for the expression of youthful labour rebellion.”\textsuperscript{74}

\textsuperscript{71} Peter S. McInnis, “Hothead Troubles: 1960s-Era Wildcat Strike Culture in Canada,” in \textit{Debating Dissent}, 157 and Palmer, \textit{Canada’s 1960s}, 223. McInnis estimates 53% were wildcats, while Palmer is more conservative in his estimation.

\textsuperscript{72} Craig Heron, \textit{The Canadian Labour Movement}, 75. Although the Rand Formula did not require employees to join a union that had been certified as the employee’s bargaining agent it did require them to pay union dues since they benefitted from the union’s negotiated agreement. The Industrial Relations and Disputes Act (1948) enshrined P.C. 1003, introduced in 1944 to ensure compulsory collective bargaining, eliminate the need to strike for union recognition and establish a framework for industrial relations, and in combination with similar provincial legislation created an industrial regime that lasted for the next three decades.

\textsuperscript{73} Heron, \textit{The Canadian Labour Movement}, 76-80.

\textsuperscript{74} Palmer, \textit{Canada’s 1960s}, 221.
Young workers, who were flooding into the general labour force at the time, were undoubtedly central to the mid-1960s wildcat wave.75 Moreover, the youngest low-seniority workers were often clustered together in less desirable jobs or locations.76 Perhaps most importantly, young workers often shared with other youths of the 1960s a similar cultural outlook. Historian Ian Milligan has identified a mass culture of the time that, although interpreted somewhat differently by working-class and middle-class youth, nevertheless resulted in a “shared youth consciousness.”77 Emphasizing personal liberties, individual expression, and anti-authoritarianism, this common youth culture was primed to protest on the factory shopfloor and campus courtyard alike during the 1960s. Older workers obviously led and participated in wildcat strikes as well, but “the new militancy” clearly “signaled a rejection of the ‘old left’ unionism of the previous decades.”78

Although the majority of wildcat strikes in 1965-66 were confined to a single union local, two nation-wide strikes notably defied this pattern. Members of the Canadian Brotherhood of Railway, Transport and General Workers (CBRT) throughout southwestern Ontario walked off the job illegally in June 1965 to protest management’s imposition of disciplinary demerit points, and again in August 1966 over the slow pace of negotiations with Canadian National Railway (CN).79 In both cases, the wildcat strike spread from an initial walkout across disparate locations. The 1965 illegal strike by postal workers was relatively well-organized by comparison, and paved the way for the formation of the Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW) and extension of collective

75 Palmer, *Canada’s 1960s*, 216.
76 Milligan, *Rebel Youth*, 45, 47; Palmer, *Canada’s 1960s*, 216.
77 Milligan, *Rebel Youth*, 20, 23.
78 McInnis, “Hothead Troubles,” 165.
79 Milligan, *Rebel Youth*, 54-5.
bargaining rights to public servants. Most of the wildcat wave, however, occurred at individual union locals in spontaneous expressions of anger and frustration. For example, workers represented by UAW Local 444 conducted fifty-five brief wildcat strikes at Chrysler’s Windsor plant in 1966 alone. Buzz Hargrove, a shop steward at the Chrysler plant while still in his twenties, recalled the rebellious atmosphere:

The Chrysler plant was overrun with young hotheads full of their own ideas and not willing to take orders from authority figures – company or union. We were rebellious and took advantage of our collective power and the protection the union offered us. Between 1965 and 1968 we had more wildcat strikes in our section – the cushion room – than at any other time in the plant’s history.

Seemingly trivial issues could spark a walkout, particularly in workplaces with a history of severely strained labour-management relations. Such was the case at the remote Levack Mine outside of Sudbury in July 1966, where young Newfoundlanders employed by the International Nickel Company of Canada (Inco) were disciplined for eating sandwiches while on break. At the time, contract negotiations between the United Steelworkers of America (USWA) local and Inco were languishing in conciliation and only a small spark was required to ignite spontaneous protests. The wildcat strike at Levack quickly spread to all of Inco’s operations, sidelining nearly 16,000 workers despite their union leadership’s pleas that they return to work. Union officials clearly lost control of their membership for several days, particularly when gunshots were fired by strikers at helicopters transporting managers over the picket lines. After returning to work the union members rejected a proposed contract just three weeks later prompting

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80 McInnis, “Hothead Troubles,” 159.
81 Milligan, Rebel Youth, 45.
83 Milligan, Rebel Youth, 53.
yet another brief wildcat which ended only after a collective agreement was negotiated that doubled the earlier wage offer.  

Also in 1966, workers represented by USWA Local 1005 at the Steel Company of Canada (Stelco) in Hamilton, frustrated over the slow pace of their contract negotiations, exploded in anger when a foreman taunted them saying “you guys haven’t got the guts to walk out.” The mass walkout by nearly 11,000 workers that ensued ground Stelco’s operation to a halt. But without clearly defined leadership or a list of demands the strike consisted of “just picket lines and angry young men” who rejected their local president’s entreaties to return to work. Three hundred police officers eventually broke through the picket lines charging some workers with unlawful assembly, while other strikers burned cars and staged a sit-down on the street blocking traffic. A mass meeting, conducted while the strikers’ wives held the line, voted to return to work. Ultimately the local won a generous collective agreement, but the strike was the precursor to the membership ousting the local leadership the following year, further demonstrating how a culture of rebellion against the established authority of management and union leadership alike was taking hold. Just as the student protest movements provided a breeding ground for future Wafflers, so too did the wildcat wave create fertile territory for young workers to become politicized and radicalized. USWA Locals 1005 in Hamilton and 6500 in Sudbury later became important centres of Waffle support alongside large UAW locals in southern Ontario such as 444 in Windsor, 222 in Oshawa and 27 in London.

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84 Milligan, Rebel Youth, 53.
85 Palmer, Canada’s 1960s, 227.
86 Milligan, Rebel Youth, 48.
87 Milligan, Rebel Youth, 50. USWA Local 1005 became an important base of the Waffle’s labour support in Ontario.
Meanwhile, SUPA activists debated whether they might have acted prematurely in disregarding the working-class as potential agents for revolutionary change. At SUPA’s September 1965 conference in Saint Calixte, Quebec, activists debated the efficacy of the organization’s five community projects in Kingston and elsewhere the previous summer, while the aforementioned Stanley Gray, at that point a graduate student at Oxford University, urged more attention be focused on working-class struggles. 88 Dimitri Roussopoulos criticized the group for its “lack of intellectual vigour” in examining “neocapitalism in Canada,” while James Harding described SUPA as “an ethical movement in search of an analysis.” 89 Roussopoulos later concluded that “turning our backs on the campuses had a crippling effect,” and Myrna Kostash sees the Saint Calixte conference as “the beginning of the end” for SUPA. 90 Although SUPA’s primary activity during the final two years of its existence was its Research, Information and Publications Project, including publication of the SUPA Newsletter, the group continued with its public activism by organizing anti-war rallies in Ottawa and Toronto. In addition, some student members returned to Saskatchewan First Nations reservations in the winter of 1965-66 before ultimately admitting that SUPA’s projects there “did little to affect change in the Indian and Métis communities.” 91

The Saint Calixte conference introduced an additional challenge for SUPA activists. Inspired by the success of the American Peace Corps, Lester Pearson’s Liberal government had established in April 1965 the Company of Young Canadians (CYC), a

somewhat vaguely defined government initiative that was intended to mobilize Canadian youth enthusiastic for social change. SUPA activists, including Art Pape, the former CUCND chair, and David DePoe, who saw an opportunity to fund the Toronto Youth Project with “free” government money, moved quickly to embrace the CYC. Largely controlled by young activists imported from student protest movements in its chaotic early years, the CYC commissioned a report on SUPA’s community organizing projects and paid for much of the Saint Calixte conference, leading to criticism from Roussopoulos and others that the Canadian student movement was in danger of being co-opted by the state. Nevertheless, several SUPA activists were recruited by Pape to join the CYC, including Alan Clarke as Executive Director, Stewart Goodings as Associate Director of the Organizing Committee, and Doug Ward, the first New Left president of the CUS. According to historians of the CYC Carrie Dickenson and William Campbell, many student activists were “genuinely excited” at the possibility of government promoting New Left values of “participatory democracy and empowerment as opposed to colonialism, oppression and marginalization.” Unfortunately, CYC volunteers sent to some of Canada’s most impoverished and marginalized Canadian communities soon encountered the same sorts of challenges and disappointments stemming from community organizing that SUPA activists had previously discovered. Even more

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96 Ibid.
troubling for the organization, when the participation by CYC workers David DePoe and
Lynn Curtis in a January 1967 anti-war protest at the U.S. consulate in Toronto attracted
harsh media attention, the relative autonomy hitherto enjoyed by CYC activists began to
diminish. Increasingly, politicians and the press alike focused on CYC worker radicalism
and “bad behavior.” The revelation of CYC connections to separatist sympathizers in
Quebec was the proverbial final straw which resulted in government appointees, rather
than the student activists, assuming tight control of the organization. Shorn of its
autonomy, energy and sense of purpose, the CYC gradually withered until the final
elimination of its funding in 1975 killed the experiment.

The lure of CYC salaried positions and funded projects also took a toll on SUPA.
Recriminations, doubts and debates over SUPA’s ongoing purpose tainted its December
1965 conference in Saskatoon.97 Rising tensions among SUPA’s central office in
Toronto, its more radical western Canadian chapters, and Montreal activists centered
around Our Generation exacerbated the divisions.98 The following year’s conference in
Waterloo resumed the debate over the organization’s future directions; in particular the
question of where SUPA should focus its energies – on students, youth, the working-
class, minorities, or the marginalized – remained unresolved.99 The conference tasked
seven men, including James Laxer, with drafting a SUPA manifesto, which was
presented at the September 1967 conference held in Goderich, Ontario.100 Aimed at an
“integration of Marx and new left theory” the document identified a “new working class”
borne out of “society’s contradictions” which would replace the economically stable and

99 Milligan, Rebel Youth, 78-9.
100 Ibid., 79. The authors were James Laxer, James Harding, Jon Bordo, Ted Folkman, Tony Hyde, Donald
McKelvey and Jim Russell.
culturally conservative traditional working class as the agent for revolutionary change. Unlike the “couple of hundred” who had attended the Saint Calixte conference two years earlier, only forty students attended the Goderich meeting, and they failed to reach agreement on the manifesto, or much else. SUPA dissolved shortly afterwards. Twelve of its former members formed the short-lived New Left Committee, but it too folded after publishing only a couple of issues of the *New Left Committee Bulletin.*

As Ian Milligan notes, SUPA’s choice of seven men and no women to compose its manifesto “speaks volumes” about the organization’s often misogynistic atmosphere. As readers of Sara Evans’s foundational work *Personal Politics: The Roots of Women’s Liberation in the Civil Rights Movement and the New Left* will recognize, the emergence of the Canadian women’s liberation movement from within the New Left closely mirrors the American experience. As the four female activists who authored “Brothers, Sisters, Lovers… Listen…” for the 1967 SUPA conference in Goderich attested, the organization segregated women into just two roles – “the workers and the wives.” As such, they argued the “myth of participatory democracy is just that, if one looks at the participation of women in SUPA.” The realization that they were “oppressed as women within an organization that was attacking oppression” prompted the four to declare “we are going to be the typers of letters and distributors of leaflets (hewers of wood and drawers of water) no longer.” Political scientist Naomi Black

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101 Milligan, *Rebel Youth*, 80.
103 Milligan, *Rebel Youth*, 79.
105 Ibid., 38.
points to the use of this famous Canadian imagery to suggest differences between the emergence of the Canadian and American women’s liberation movements. Most significantly, Canadian women did not exit the New Left with the same level of anger as their counterparts in the United States often did. Indeed, many who became involved with women’s liberation groups in Canada continued their activism in various New Left organizations, at least initially.

Toronto Women’s Liberation, which began meeting in the winter of 1967-68, prepared and presented to the House of Commons a brief on abortion. Other activities included protesting a “winter bikini contest” that denigrated women, and demanding daycare services at the University of Toronto. In June 1968, women active in the New Left at Simon Fraser University formed a women’s liberation group which soon became the Vancouver Women’s Caucus that included non-campus women as well. With abortion rights becoming a central focus of the early movement, in Montreal women’s liberation activists published a Birth Control Handbook. The women’s liberation movement considered itself distinct from liberal feminist groups, including the voluntary and professional women’s organizations that formed the Committee on Equality for Women and pushed for a Royal Commission on the Status of Women. However, following the 1970 publication of the Royal Commission’s report in 1970 and the subsequent creation of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women, greater

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111 Mills, The Empire Within, 119-137.
overlap between the more radical women’s liberationists and liberal feminists occurred.\textsuperscript{112}

Even as SUPA disintegrated, mass protest continued unabated across Canada. Anti-war demonstrations continued to draw large crowds, including 1800 participants at a rally in Montreal in 1967. Dow Chemical, the manufacturer of napalm, was targeted by anti-war activists during on-campus job recruitment sessions at universities in Toronto, Waterloo, British Columbia and Manitoba, among others.\textsuperscript{113} Until they were forcibly evicted by police, SDU members at McGill occupied the administration building to protest perceived attacks on the campus newspaper’s autonomy, while at the University of Alberta the SDU protested tuition increases in the spring of 1968 and set up counter-education groups in Edmonton and at the University of Calgary.\textsuperscript{114}

Protests occurred at Simon Fraser University (SFU) almost from the school’s opening in 1965. An “instant university” that had been constructed atop Burnaby Mountain in Vancouver in just two years, SFU’s nascent departmental and faculty structure, its overrepresentation of junior untenured faculty members close in age and outlook to many graduate students, and its promotion of a different kind of education that attracted a student body more inclined to radical activism than was found on most Canadian university campuses, proved to be a volatile mix.\textsuperscript{115} In March 1967 police arrested five graduate students for staging a protest in support of a high school student

\begin{footnotes}
\item[114] Ibid., 51; Richard Price, “The New Left in Alberta,” in \textit{The New Left in Canada}, 44.
\end{footnotes}
suspended for satirizing his poetry teacher.\textsuperscript{116} When the university dismissed the five as teaching assistants, several days of protest rallies and the threat of a student strike ensued until all were reinstated.\textsuperscript{117} Shortly thereafter, activists established a SDU group on the SFU campus.

Following the spring and summer of 1968, when massive student protests internationally shared media attention with the assassinations of Martin Luther King Jr. and Robert Kennedy, and reaction to the Democratic National Convention in Chicago engulfed the city in riot, Canadian student protests exploded in the fall and winter of 1968-69.\textsuperscript{118} An October anti-war rally in Winnipeg drew five hundred people, “by far the most successful demonstration yet held in Manitoba,” and over 1000 students protested over access to student loans at the Regina Campus of the University of Saskatchewan.\textsuperscript{119} At SFU students occupied the administration building to protest “the administration’s discrimination against junior college students” in admissions procedures, and the SDU campaigned to rename SFU ‘Louis Riel University’ instead of commemorating what one future Waffler called “a member of the vanguard of pirates, thieves and carpetbaggers which dispossessed and usurped the native Indians of Canada from their rightful heritage.”\textsuperscript{120} The Toronto Student Movement, an independent New Left group at the University of Toronto, joined striking workers at the \textit{Peterborough Examiner} on the picket line, another example of the student movement’s broadening horizons. “Student power” continued to be a central issue, however, at the University of Ottawa when

\textsuperscript{117} Owram, \textit{Born at the Right Time}, 245.
\textsuperscript{118} Student protests in Paris, France, at Columbia University in New York, and in the brutally repressed ‘Prague Spring’ in Czechoslovakia were prominently covered in Canadian media.
demands for student representation on university governing bodies prompted a strike amongst social science students.¹²¹

Seemingly innocuous issues occasionally developed into major protests during the 1968-69 academic year. At the University of New Brunswick (UNB), physics professor and future Waffler Norman Strax objected to his university’s decision to introduce student identification cards for the fall semester as an “erosion of civil liberties and democracy.” Student activist members of the Canadian Struggle for a Democratic Society (CSDS) followed up by inundating the library circulation desk with hundreds of books and refusing to produce identification cards. When UNB suspended Strax, several students registered their support for the professor by occupying his office, an action dubbed ‘Liberation 130’ in reference to Strax’s room number. Despite a court injunction removing Strax from campus, regular confrontations between student activists and opponents seeking to end the office occupation occasionally turned violent. Police ended the stand-off after forty-four days and thwarted a second ‘Liberation 130’ attempt in January 1969. UNB’s student council was divided over the occupation, but a Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) censure of the university in March 1969 prompted a student council-sponsored protest attended by over 1000 students at which a makeshift coffin was burned to symbolize the passing of the “old order” of the university’s Board of Governors.¹²²

A similarly minor issue – the December 1968 publication of a ‘Happy New Year’s’ image of the Vietnamese communist revolutionary Ho Chi Minh emerging from an abstract womb printed in the University of Saskatchewan’s Regina campus student newspaper *The Carillon* – raised the ire of the school’s principal and Board of Governors who responded by suspending collection of student activity fees and thereby cutting off the paper’s funding. Some 1600 students held a mass demonstration on the Regina campus in January 1969 to protest the clamp-down and 100,000 copies of a special issue of *The Carillon* were distributed across the province with the assistance of the National Farmers’ Union (NFU) and the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour (SFL). Bowing to the pressure, the Board of Governors reinstated the newspaper’s funding two months later.¹²³ Nor was this the first occasion in which *The Carillon*’s left-wing editorial policy had been attacked. In 1965 future Waffler John Conway had been forced to resign as editor after he placed a picture of a frosh parade next to images of the Vietnam War. Conway was replaced as editor by another future Waffler, Don Mitchell, who was succeeded by yet another future Waffler, Don Kossick.¹²⁴

Long-standing social and political tensions and the existence of a diverse and vibrant radical community in Montreal made the atmosphere in that city particularly fraught during 1968-69. Quebec’s Union Nationale government opened the first twelve Collèges d'enseignement général et professionnel (CEGEPs) in 1967, only to announce just one year later that 20,000 CEGEP students would not be able to find a place at

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¹²³ A full account of the “Carillon Crisis” can be found in Pitsula, *New World Dawning*, 94-102.
university in the fall of 1969 due to insufficient capacity. CEGEPs across the province effectively stopped functioning during two weeks of student occupations and protests following the announcement. Students protesting the inadequacy of French-language education in Montreal during the fall of 1968 directed their anger at McGill University. A protest march of 5,000 to 10,000 students on campus in October was followed two months later by a student occupation of McGill’s computer centre, which only ended when the radicals were evicted by police. In February 1969 the university fired Stanley Gray, by then a political science professor and author of a recent and widely reprinted article “McGill and the Rape of Quebec,” a move activists perceived as politically motivated that prompted further protests. In an unprecedented move at the end of March, between 10,000 and 15,000 protesters sought to occupy McGill, an action requiring over 2500 police officers to prevent. Opération McGill, its visibility and support enhanced by the ongoing political debate in the province over the Union Nationale government’s language rights Bill 63, continued into the fall of 1969 with some demonstrations drawing crowds of over 20,000 supporters. Meanwhile, at Sir George Williams University, the failure to resolve year-old accusations of racism in the biology department prompted students to occupy both the campus computer centre and faculty club in January 1969. Two weeks into the occupation of the computer centre, police stormed the student-erected barricades. In the ensuing violent confrontation the facility was destroyed. In response, the outraged mainstream media harshly criticized the students for their militancy.

125 Mills, The Empire Within, 144.
126 Ibid., 139-54.
127 Marcel Martel, “‘Riot’ at Sir George Williams: Giving Meaning to Student Dissent,” in Debating Dissent, 97-114. Martel reveals a more nuanced reaction from Québécois contemporaries, and Sean Mills
Student activists, inspired by their counterparts in the international New Left, had thus ensured that the 1968-69 academic year on Canadian campuses was contentious. In addition to encouraging student protests, international developments in the New Left also influenced Canadian women’s liberationists. CUS meetings provided opportunities for female students from across Canada to connect with one another. An SFU activist described one CUS seminar as “fantastic, women met daily and turned on almost all girls from campuses… women were the only ones to break down the terrible regionalism that dominated the conference, the only ones to really exchange experiences and theories.”

By 1969 women in Halifax, Montreal, Ottawa, Kingston, Toronto, Hamilton, Guelph, Sarnia, Winnipeg, Regina, Saskatoon, Edmonton and Vancouver could all access a local women’s liberation movement. But when a group of Ontario women attended a Women’s Liberation conference in Chicago in 1969 they were exposed to serious divisions among American activists, some of whom insisted on linking women’s liberation to Marxism and others who defined themselves solely as “consciousness raisers.” Consequently, a split subsequently developed within the Toronto Women’s Liberation Movement when several women who “rejected the view of a social and argues that the protest, riot, and reaction generated an upswing of black activism in Montreal. Both Mills and David Austin point out that black activism in 1960s Montreal has been largely ignored in the literature and describe important connections between domestic protests and American and Caribbean activists and intellectuals. Sean Mills, “Democracy, Dissent and the City: Cross-Cultural Encounters in Sixties Montreal,” in The Sixties in Canada: A Turbulent and Creative Decade, 157; David Austin, “An Embarrassment of Omissions, or Rewriting the Sixties: The Case of the Caribbean Conference Committee, Canada, and the Global New Left,” in New World Coming, 368-78.

128 Melody to Margaret Bentson, May 21, 1969, F-126-1-0-4 Correspondence, Margaret Bentson fonds, Simon Fraser University Archives and Special Collections (hereafter SFUA), Burnaby, British Columbia.


political revolution as a precondition for the liberation of women” left to form the New Feminists.\textsuperscript{131}

Canadian New Leftists who turned toward Marxism in the late 1960s could be forgiven for feeling overwhelmed as they contemplated the plethora of ideological interpretations proffered by a range of sectarian Marxist organizations operating in Canada at the time. Two parties with a long history in the Canadian left, the Communist Party (CP) and the Trotskyist League for Socialist Action (LSA), competed for adherents with three Maoist groups that emerged in the late 1960s. As Christopher Powell has demonstrated, both the CP and the LSA played an important role in the Canadian anti-war movement.\textsuperscript{132} Although significantly diminished from when its membership peaked in the 1930s, the CP continued to exert influence over several unions, including the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers (UE), in the 1960s. However the CP, tainted by Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev’s 1956 revelations of Stalinist purges and the Soviet suppression of uprisings in Hungary in 1956 and Czechoslovakia in 1968 struggled to obtain much support in the Canadian New Left.\textsuperscript{133}

Not all Canadian Marxists embraced the Soviets. Hardial Bains, an Indo-Canadian microbiology student at the University of British Columbia, opposed Soviet communism’s perceived “revisionism” after Khrushchev succeeded Stalin, endorsed

\textsuperscript{131} “Introduction,” in \textit{Women Unite!: An Anthology of the Canadian Women’s Movement}, (Toronto: Canadian Women’s Educational Press, 1972), 10.
\textsuperscript{132} Powell, “‘Vietnam: It’s Our War Too’,” 49.
\textsuperscript{133} Nonetheless, former Communists, many of whom left the party in the late 1950s, continued their activism in the Canadian left. Furthermore, many of their children, so-called “red-diaper babies,” continued the family tradition of activism and were central figures in the New Left, including prominent Wafflers James Laxer and Steve Penner. Norman Penner notes that the CP was unable to attract former Wafflers to the party in \textit{Canadian Communism}, 260-1.
China’s position in the Sino-Soviet split, and advocated Maoism.\textsuperscript{134} Bains’s new organization, the Canadian Student Movement, appealed to New Leftists through its unquestioning support of China and opposition to American imperialism. The group renamed itself the Communist Party of Canada (Marxist-Leninist) in 1970 and competed, sometimes violently, with other sectarian Marxist groups.\textsuperscript{135} In the late 1960s and early 1970s “Maoism… absolutely permeated the New Left,” not only in Canada but throughout the Western European and American movements as well.\textsuperscript{136} For New Leftists in search of a revolutionary Marxist analysis updated to reflect the conditions of a postwar, decolonizing world, Maoism held significant appeal. The most prominent adherents of Maoism in the United States, the Progressive Labor (PL) party, ferociously defended its belief in the working class as the only potential agent of revolution. Not surprisingly, its dismissiveness towards students and racialized minority protesters infuriated critics and divided the SDS national organization. The PL’s disciplined and hierarchical organization enabled it to control a sizeable minority of delegates to the 1969 SDS convention in Chicago, where the divide between the PL and its opponents over


SDS support for the Black Panthers, Brown Berets and Young Lords fatally split the student organization. 137

The Canadian Party of Labour (CPL), formed in the late 1960s, associated with the American PL and adopted its analysis that “all nationalism is reactionary.” 138 The CPL, like the PL, sought to establish Worker-Student Alliances at universities and criticized New Left movements when they failed to adhere to the CPL’s line. 139 In contrast, the Canadian Liberation Movement (CLM) interpreted Maoism to highlight nationalist, anti-imperialist struggle and sought to elevate Canadian independence as the primary goal of the Canadian New Left. Gary Perly, his wife Caroline Walker, and Norman Endicott were the central figures in the militantly nationalist CLM. 140 The group’s public profile was enhanced in the early 1970s through its publishing house, New Canada Press, and its association with Milton Acorn, a well-known poet and resident of Toronto’s seedy Waverly Hotel. 141

Unlike Maoism, Trotskyism’s much deeper roots in the Canadian left dated back to the 1920s. One variant, the League for Socialist Action (LSA), was spearheaded by Ross Dowson and founded shortly before the NDP in 1961. The LSA practiced

139 CPL “Nationality of Professors Means Nothing – Fight Nationalism,” and “Worker-Student Alliance,” Files 3 and 17, Box 1, Canadian Party of Labour fonds, University of British Columbia Special Collections (hereafter UBCSC), Vancouver, British Columbia.
140 Terry Barker, “Origins of the CLM”, File 1, Box 28, Canadian Liberation Movement fonds, William Ready Division of Archives, McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario (hereafter MUA). Perly had been an anti-war activist and member of Friends of SNCC at the University of Toronto before becoming a systems analyst for IBM and ultimately taking over the family business, Perly’s Maps, in 1979. Endicott, a lawyer, was the son of James Endicott, the prominent Communist sympathizer and United Church missionary to China who chaired the Canadian Peace Congress from 1949 to 1971. Norman Endicott represented Waffler Dan Heap when he was arrested on the picket line during the 1973 Artistic Woodwork strike.
141 Alan Filewod, “Maoist Performativities: Milton Acorn and the Canadian Liberation Movement.”
“entryism,” an international strategy premised on infiltrating a country’s major working-class party, in this case the NDP, and urging the party to adopt a more radical and socialist platform in order to win new recruits to Trotskyism. The LSA viewed itself as a Leninist “vanguard” party prepared to lead the much anticipated workers’ revolution. It published a newspaper, the *Workers Vanguard*, but failed to exert much influence within the NDP, not least because its members regularly were expelled from the party. By contrast, the LSA’s youth wing, the Young Socialists (YS), did achieve an important presence in the student New Left by the late 1960s, and played an important role in the Canadian anti-war movement. Although Trotskyist groups were expelled from anti-war coalitions in Toronto and Vancouver in 1966, two years later the LSA/YS dominated the Vietnam Mobilization Committee, the leading anti-war organization in Toronto.

Other New Left social movements began to gather momentum internationally in 1969, while their Canadian equivalents were only in their infancy, if active at all. The civil rights and Black Power movements profoundly influenced the emergence of ‘Red Power’ movements in both Canada and the United States, leading to engagement with

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143 In the tradition of the CP, both the LSA/YS and the CSM/CPC (ML) both established ‘front’ organizations to attract uncommitted leftists to their cause without emphasizing their Marxist ideology and to increase the size of their representation in left coalitions. To that end, the LSA/YS established numerous anti-war groups across campuses in the late 1960s, while the CSM encouraged branch movements (the Toronto Student Movement, the Hamilton Student Movement, etc.) with a broad scope but specific agenda. At the University of Toronto, the broadly-based Toronto Student Movement, so named at the suggestion of a CSM activist, split in 1969, after only a year of activity, into at least three groups – the CPL’s Worker-Student Alliance, the CSM’s largely defunct Toronto Student Movement, and the unaffiliated New Left Caucus.

144 Powell, “‘Vietnam: It’s Our War Too’,” describes the tactics of the LSA/YS, including holding closed caucus meetings ahead of larger group meetings to determine the correct line, creating multiple organizations in order to dominate coalitions such as the Toronto Coordinating Committee to End the War in Vietnam, along with its secretiveness, its dedication, and its hard work.
New Left activists in the years to come. Although homophile organizations existed in Canada during the 1960s, they were based on the educational and behind-the-scenes lobbying approach of the American Mattachine Society. In the aftermath of the June 1969 Stonewall riot in New York, gay liberation groups began to emerge, first in the United States and then in Canada by the early 1970s. Unlike the gay liberation movement, the inspiration for Canada’s 1960s environmental movement lay close to home. Historian Ryan O’Connor traces the movement’s origins to the airing of the television documentary *The Air of Death* on CBC in October 1967. Although O’Connor does not characterize Pollution Probe, an early Ontario environmental group, as a New Left organization, despite New Leftists and Wafflers such as Varda Burstyn being amongst its founders, the British Columbia movement Greenpeace grew directly from the anti-war and counter-cultural milieu of late 1960s Vancouver. However, in 1969, both groups’ days of public activism lay ahead of them.

The New Left operated in a context of an international culture of social and political rebellion against established authority. In Canada, New Leftists rejected established political, social and cultural traditions, structures and institutions, including the NDP and union leadership. A wide-ranging series of movements constituted the New Left in Canada, including CUCND/SUPA, the anti-war movement, the “student power” movement, wildcat striking workers, women’s liberationists and, after 1969, many others. Despite their disparate contexts and goals, the characteristics of the New Left in Canada –

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146 The Stonewall riot, a spontaneous act of resistance against a police raid on the Stonewall Inn, a popular gay bar in Greenwich Village, is widely considered the spark for the gay liberation movement.
148 Zelko, *Make it a Green Peace!*
the youthfulness of the participants, their acceptance of a democratic ethos, their anti-authoritarianism, and their willingness to embrace unconventional tactics and strategies – were present in each of these movements. At the same time, the diversity of aims and constituencies among these movements presented a difficult challenge to anyone seeking to channel the New Left in a particular direction. In the midst of this sometimes cacophonous mélange of voices, the authors of the Waffle Manifesto, among whom were experienced New Left activists, embarked on a brazen campaign to transform Canada’s major ‘Old Left’ political party, the NDP.
Chapter Three
“A little subversive gathering:” The Waffle Manifesto, 1969

By early 1969, James Laxer, a leading New Left activist, graduate student, and former president of the Canadian University Press, had become disillusioned with the student movement in Canada for uncritically replicating its American counterpart. At much the same time the economist Mel Watkins, who in 1968 was writing a prominent report on foreign ownership commissioned by the federal government, concluded that Canadian independence could only be achieved through socialism. Meanwhile, Gerald Caplan, a young professor and NDP activist, added his voice to this growing chorus of lament by expressing frustration with the NDP for its timidity over “the growing dominance of the United States” in Canada.¹ This chapter explores how Laxer, Watkins, Caplan and a small group of New Left and NDP activists came together in the spring of 1969 to draft a statement – the Waffle Manifesto – in which they outlined their belief in an independent, socialist Canada, and devised a strategy to co-opt an increasingly left-leaning NDP as the electoral vehicle by which their goals would be advocated and hopefully realized. Even prior to meeting in 1969 the original Wafflers had been influenced by the rising tide of nationalism in English Canada during the 1960s. Before turning attention to the “little subversive gathering” that gave birth to the Waffle, this chapter addresses the political events which contributed to the nationalist wave that the young authors of the Waffle Manifesto sought to catch by tapping into the concerns shared by many Canadian leftists. Furthermore, as will be shown by examining the Manifesto’s evolution through three drafts written by Laxer, Watkins, and Caplan, and

their efforts at reaching out to NDP riding associations, youth clubs and affiliated unions, the Waffle moderated the rhetoric of the Manifesto in a strategic attempt to broaden its appeal to New Democrats ahead of their party’s federal convention held in Winnipeg in October 1969. At the convention the Waffle generated intense publicity, thrusting the group into the media spotlight. Despite the Manifesto’s defeat, the strength of their support inspired the Waffle to commit to ongoing organizing within the NDP.

Laxer’s scathing 1969 critique argued “the Canadian New Left derived much of its style and ideology from the United States and American-centered issues filled its political agenda.” As a result, “it has been unable to formulate a political strategy relevant to Canadian society.”² Laxer accused the Canadian New Left of uncritically adopting the analysis of the American movement which, he contended, ignored uniquely Canadian circumstances. Laxer criticized the New Left’s “suspicion of institutional structures” and lack of concern for “the survival of Canadian national institutions, in that they represent the best means to thwart American dominance.”³ By focusing on American issues such as the Vietnam War and civil rights, Canadian New Left activists typically ignored and showed little appreciation for the history of workers’ and farmers’ movements in Canada, as well as the role of the CCF/NDP. Most importantly for Laxer, the Canadian New Left failed to recognize the dire threat that American economic domination posed to Canadian independence.

Laxer’s focus on Canadian independence and his expressed desire to disentangle Canada from a United States fraught with war and racial divisions was representative of the “new nationalism” expressed in English Canada during the late 1960s and early

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³ Ibid., 30.
1970s. The “new nationalists” encompassed a wide range of spokespersons and ideological perspectives. In addition to the Waffle’s New Left-influenced socialism, prominent voices included Walter Gordon, Peter Newman, and Abraham Rotstein, whose Committee for an Independent Canada championed a moderate economic nationalism, and the academic Robin Mathews, who espoused a particularly vigorous form of cultural nationalism. Two points about the “new nationalism” are especially pertinent. First, some observers, such as the Wafflers, harbored deep concerns about both American economic and cultural domination of Canada. Other “new nationalists” had a narrower focus. Walter Gordon, for instance, showed little interest in cultural protections. Yet Robin Mathews focused relentlessly on issues of Canadian hiring and content at cultural institutions and universities. Secondly, criticism of the American model of liberal capitalism in Canada had hitherto been primarily the preserve of conservatives who valued the British connection and were suspicious of the individualism, consumerism and liberalism of the United States, whereas links between Canadian and American leftists were often very strong. The “new nationalists” of the late 1960s and early 1970s, by comparison, tended to critique American liberal capitalism from a left-wing perspective, albeit with considerable variation.

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5 Cormier, The Canadianization Movement, 6-7.


7 Historian Paul Litt suggests that “contemporary American issues like the civil rights movement, the nuclear arms race, pollution, ghetto riots, and Vietnam showed Canada to be the morally superior North
These “new nationalist” critiques frequently were responses to developments in Canadian-American relations already several decades in the making. The move towards closer military and economic integration between the two countries accelerated dramatically during World War II and continued into the postwar period. On the cultural front, the final report of the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences, released in 1951, warned against the “dangers of dependence upon American culture in the postwar world.” Popularity known as the Massey Commission after its chair, Vincent Massey, the commission proposed government-sponsored strategies for strengthening Canadian culture. By the mid-1950s concerns about increasing American control of the Canadian economy were a topic of public debate. Walter Gordon was foremost among the critics. As the wealthy scion of the prestigious accounting firm Clarkson Gordon and personal friend of Secretary of State for External Affairs Lester Pearson, Gordon had the government’s ear. Consequently, when Walter Harris, the minister of finance, established the Royal Commission on Canada’s Economic Prospects in 1955, he appointed Gordon as chair. Although not originally a priority, the issue of foreign investment soon was a highlight of its public hearings. The Dominion Bureau of Statistics’ data demonstrating markedly increased

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8 Canada and the United States committed to closer cooperation in defense in the Ogdensburg Agreement (1940). Canada was among the founding members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in 1949 and joined the North American Air Defense Command (NORAD) in 1957. In that same year, seventy-one percent of Canada’s imports came from the United States, and fifty-nine percent of its exports went to the U.S. The Auto Pact, signed in 1965, cemented the integration of the countries’ auto industries.


10 Azzi, Walter Gordon, 27-28. Gordon had previously acquired some influence with the national Liberal government through his wartime work in the Ministry of Finance and service on various boards and commissions. As Azzi explains, Gordon raised enough money to provide for Pearson’s livelihood in order to ease his fears about leaving the security of the civil service for the insecurity of electoral politics.

11 Ibid., 38.
levels of American investment in Canada amplified the concern, and a July 1956 poll indicated increasing numbers of Canadians fretting over the prospect of even higher levels in the future. The Commission’s Preliminary Report issued in January 1957 mildly criticized the increase in foreign investment and recommended tax incentives to motivate enhanced Canadian investment and employment, a solution largely panned by economists at the time.

Other events of the 1950s exacerbated Canadians’ concerns over American interference in their affairs. Many Canadians, never completely comfortable with ruthless US Senator Joseph McCarthy’s virulent anti-communism, became further concerned about American interference when Canadian diplomat Herbert Norman committed suicide in Egypt in 1957 after being publicly accused of Communist sympathies by the US Senate Subcommittee on Internal Security. John Diefenbaker, the leader of the Progressive Conservative party, attempted to capitalize on the tragedy while on the campaign trail later that year by criticizing the Pearson government for mishandling Norman’s situation, and in turn insisting that Canadian independence must be defended against American interference. Diefenbaker’s rhetoric describing his “New Frontier Policy” was designed to inspire a sense of Canadian nationalism. His tactics succeeded. The Progressive Conservatives took power, first as a minority

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12 Ibid., 43-7.
13 Ibid., 52-7.
14 Whitaker and Marcuse, Cold War Canada, 403-25.
16 Diefenbaker emphasized the economic development of Canada’s regions, especially the north, in painting a positive picture of Canada’s national purpose during the election campaign.
government from 1957-58 and then with a massive majority from 1958-62.\footnote{The Progressive Conservatives won 208 seats compared to the Liberals’ forty-eight and the CCF’s eight in the 1958 election.} As historians Robert Bothwell, Ian Drummond and John English explain, “Diefenbaker was honestly attached to the British connection and genuinely distressed about the ever-closer integration between the Canadian and American economies.”\footnote{Robert Bothwell, Ian Drummond, and John English, \textit{Canada since 1945: Power, Politics and Provincialism} (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1981), 189.} After attending the meeting of Commonwealth leaders in London in 1957, Diefenbaker announced his intention to divert fifteen percent of Canadian spending on imports from the United States to Great Britain.\footnote{Denis Smith, \textit{Rogue Tory: The Life and Legend of John G. Diefenbaker} (Toronto: Macfarlane, Walter & Ross, 1995), 251-3. Bothwell, Drummond and English suggest that the fifteen percent figure “occurred to him in the course of the interview,” \textit{Canada since 1945}, 189.} While the trade diversion proposal, not surprisingly, went nowhere, concerns over the perceived threat that powerful American multinational corporations and growing Canadian-American economic integration posed to Canadian independence grew louder throughout the second half of the 1950s.\footnote{Bothwell, Drummond and English, \textit{Canada since 1945}, 190-1. The General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade prohibited further preferential tariffs, Canada rejected Britain’s proposal of free trade, and the rest of the government had little appetite for such a measure. Diefenbaker also opposed Britain’s application for entry into the European Common Market in 1961. Historian José Igartua examines the Canadian editorial response to the incident in comparison with the response to the St. Laurent government’s handling of the Suez Crisis five years earlier to “illustrate how quickly the definition of Canada as a British country was being transformed.” Igartua, \textit{The Other Quiet Revolution}, 115.}

Canada’s close ties to the American-dominated NATO and NORAD military alliances also raised concerns among some Canadians, including a significant portion of the CCF, over the resulting loss of national autonomy. In particular, Diefenbaker’s obfuscation over whether Canada should accept nuclear warheads on Bomarc missiles stationed in Ontario and Quebec as part of its NORAD commitment divided his cabinet and the country.\footnote{Smith, \textit{Rogue Tory}, 471-85.} The issue festered through the 1962 election that reduced the Progressive Conservatives to a minority government, prompted the resignation of
Defence Minister Douglas Harkness in protest, and dominated the federal election of 1963 when NDP leader Tommy Douglas associated Lester Pearson’s pro-nuclear weapon stance with American domination of the Canadian economy.\(^{22}\) Although Pierre Berton declared in *Maclean's* that “if this election proves anything it proves that anti-Americanism is finished as a political issue. We have cast our lot with the continent for better or worse and the people know it,” the election of Pearson’s Liberals to a minority government merely shifted nationalists’ focus to Canada’s economic, rather than military, integration with the United States.\(^{23}\) Certainly, the Liberals’ success at the polls in 1963 provided Pearson’s friend Walter Gordon with an opportunity to put his economic nationalist beliefs into practice.

In the aftermath of the disastrous 1958 election, Gordon along with the party’s national campaign director Keith Davey and Pearson advisor Tom Kent had reshaped the Liberal organization and polices into a modern, progressive force.\(^{24}\) Although Gordon never succeeded in getting his opposition to foreign investment and American control of the Canadian economy formally adopted by the Liberal Party, his views were well-known, having been published in his 1961 book *Troubled Canada*.\(^{25}\) However, as Minister of Finance in the new government, Gordon had the clout to overcome wary civil servants and present in June 1963 as part of Pearson’s “sixty days of decision” a budget that reflected at least some of his concerns over American investment in Canada.\(^{26}\) Gordon’s budget imposed a “takeover tax” of thirty percent on foreign takeovers of


\(^{25}\) Ibid., 87-8.

\(^{26}\) Ibid., 99.
Canadian companies, along with changes to the withholding tax that favoured companies even partially owned by Canadians. The stock market’s negative reaction to the changes forced Gordon to withdraw the proposed takeover tax just six days after announcing it in the budget. He also offered his resignation to Pearson, who refused it, but the 1963 budget imbroglio irreparably weakened Gordon’s standing in cabinet. He did not pursue further policies to limit foreign investment during his remaining two years in the finance portfolio.

Whereas Pearson and the Liberal government remained generally cool to economic nationalism, Canadian symbolism loomed large in political debates throughout much of the following year. On the Victoria Day weekend in 1964, Pearson announced, to a chorus of boos at the Royal Canadian Legion Hall in Winnipeg, his intention to introduce a new Canadian flag. When opening debate on the subject in the House of Commons, Pearson expressed hope the new flag would “strengthen national unity and national pride.” But the Progressive Conservatives, with an apoplectic Diefenbaker at their helm, would have none of it. They mounted an intense public opposition to the proposed flag – derided as “Pearson’s pennant” – and filibustered debate while Diefenbaker demanded a national plebiscite. With the filibuster grinding government business to a virtual halt, and Conservative professions of affection for British institutions and symbols sounding increasingly critical of French-Canadians specifically, Pearson

27 Ibid., 99-102.
28 Ibid., 111. Gordon promised to resign from Finance if the Liberals failed to win a majority in the 1965 election, and he duly offered his resignation to Pearson after they won only three additional seats, but was upset when the Prime Minister accepted it and appointed Mitchell Sharp to replace him.
29 Igartua, The Other Quiet Revolution, 177.
30 Ibid., 183-5.
invoked closure. The motion to approve the new Canadian flag passed the House of Commons in December 1964.31

Pearson’s determination to provide the country with a distinctively Canadian flag was motivated in part by concerns over recently growing strains on the national fabric, in Quebec especially. That province’s rapid political and economic modernization under the Liberal government of Jean Lesage had also precipitated a dramatic surge in radical Quebec nationalism during the 1960s. The separatist Rassemblement pour l'Indépendance Nationale (RIN) was formed in 1960 to advocate for Quebec’s independence, the Front de Libération du Québec (FLQ) exploded its first bomb in March 1963, and René Lévesque, the Minister of Natural Resources in Lesage’s government, proclaimed Quebeckers were “maîtres chez nous” when rationalizing expansion of the publicly-owned Hydro-Québec in the early 1960s.32 The question of Quebec’s place in Canada would continue to dominate Canadian political discourse for the next three decades.

Along with the new flag, Pearson’s government sought to foster national unity and pride with a boisterous celebration of Canada’s centenary in 1967. Montreal’s success hosting a widely popular world’s fair, Expo 67, did much to enhance Canadians’ pride in, and optimism for, their country that, in 1967 at least, felt one hundred years young. Indeed, as the journalist Margaret Wente observed fifty years after the fact,

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31 Ibid., 192. The nationalist mood seems to have spread into the domain of Canadian science. In 1966, the director of the Canadian Geological Survey launched a new Canadian expedition to the Burgess Shale in the Canadian Rockies. The site’s American discoverer had taken all his specimens to the Smithsonian Institution in Washington years before. The new expedition was justified by the fact that no Canadian museum possessed a specimen from their country’s most illustrious paleontology dig. The results were to prove revolutionary in changing understanding of the workings of evolution. Stephen Jay Gould, Wonderful Life: The Burgess Shale and the Nature of History (New York: W.W. Norton, 1989), 70.
young Canadians felt as if their generation came of age at the same time as their
country. Historians Bothwell, Drummond and English described Canadian nationalism
in 1967 as “gentle,” and Pierre Berton later rhapsodized how “Expo taught us to go first
class, and we reveled in the pride that inspired.” Yet, according to Stephen Clarkson,
accompanying this sense of “prevailing optimism” was a “fear that the United States
might drag the world into nuclear holocaust with the Soviet Union – unless a social
revolution did not first erupt there.”

All the while, Canadian opposition to America’s escalating military conflict in
Vietnam grew. As was shown in the previous chapter, the Canadian New Left was an
energetic participant in the emerging international anti-war movement. Emulating the
spontaneous “teach-ins” breaking out at American universities, anti-war faculty at the
University of Toronto organized an administration-sponsored “International Teach-In on
Vietnam” in October 1965. One of the speakers, and an unusual darling of the Canadian
New Left, was 47-year-old McMaster University philosophy professor George Grant.
Earlier in 1965 Grant had published Lament for a Nation: The Defeat of Canadian
Nationalism, a pessimistic indictment of the Liberal Party’s acceptance of the country’s
growing integration with the United States, and a eulogy for the British tradition in
Canada and its recently defeated champion, John Diefenbaker. Among Grant’s laments
was the Pearson government succumbing to pressure from the United States to accept

34 Bothwell, Drummond and English, Canada since 1945, 315; Pierre Berton, 1967, 366.
35 Stephen Clarkson, “Personal Success versus Public Failure: The Muting of Canada’s Academic
Intellectuals,” in The Public Intellectual in Canada, ed. Nelson Wiseman (Toronto: University of Toronto
36 Powell, “‘Vietnam: It’s Our War Too.’” Powell explores the international dimensions of Canada’s anti-
war movement in addition to the important role played by the CP, the LSA and the VOW.
37 Bothwell, Drummond and English suggest “the passions of Grant’s argument and its intellectual
sophistication and sublety apotheosized the Diefenbaker government, shielding its contradictions behind a
historical dialectic,” Canada since 1945, 250.
nuclear warheads on Canadian soil. *Lament for a Nation*, in addition to establishing Grant as a “Canadian intellectual celebrity,” resulted somewhat ironically in this conservative and religious philosopher being embraced by the Canadian New Left.\(^{38}\) Much of Grant’s critique of American society – the homogenizing impact of its technology, consumerism and materialism – and its unparalleled threat to a uniquely Canadian culture, identity, and independent nationhood, resonated strongly with New Left activists.

As became evident at the Toronto “teach-in,” Grant not only opposed the war in Vietnam. He also criticized Canadian industrial and diplomatic interests for their complicity with the American war effort, and connected the lack of an independent foreign policy to the decline in Canadian sovereignty. For Mel Watkins, then a thirty-four-year-old economist at the University of Toronto, “the whole experience of the teach-in was very radicalizing.”\(^{39}\) Watkins had been a student of Harold Innis in the 1950s and completed his graduate studies at MIT before assuming an academic appointment in the University of Toronto’s Political Economy department. A self-described “well-trained technocrat and an American left democrat” upon his return to Canada, Watkins grew “disillusioned” by American involvement in Vietnam.\(^{40}\) Innis’s influence remained strong, and Watkins’s 1963 article “A Staple Theory of Economic Growth” updated the senior scholar’s earlier groundbreaking explanation of Canada’s economic development as a series of “staple” resources for export.\(^{41}\) Although initially skeptical about the


\(^{40}\) Ibid., 71-72.

possibility of Canadian nationalism, Watkins had become concerned by 1966 about the “political costs” associated with American investment despite its “economically advantageous” effects.\(^{42}\) Thus, when Walter Gordon approached another University of Toronto economist, Abraham Rotstein, to chair a Task Force on the Structure of Canadian Industry, Rotstein suggested Watkins instead.\(^{43}\) Watkins accepted. Gordon had resigned as Minister of Finance following the 1965 election but then re-entered Pearson’s cabinet as minister-without-portfolio on condition a cabinet committee on foreign investment be established. Watkins’s task force was to conduct the committee’s research. In the meantime Gordon had also published his second book, \textit{A Choice for Canada: Independence or Colonial Status}. A critique of foreign investment in Canada, the book sold 12,000 copies in its first six months, a Canadian bestseller.\(^{44}\) Watkins recalled reviewing the book “favourably on the whole, which put me in a distinct minority among Canadian economists.”\(^{45}\)

The report of the Task Force, titled “Foreign Ownership and the Structure of Canadian Industry,” caused a stir upon its release in February 1968, despite its accompanying caveat that the report had not yet been endorsed by the government.\(^{46}\) In fact, the report’s recommendations were far from radical, reflecting the task force’s


\(^{43}\) Azzi, \textit{Walter Gordon}, 151.

\(^{44}\) Ibid., 138-40.


The document accepted that the Canadian economy needed foreign investment, and argued that there was little difference in the performance of American-owned and Canadian-owned firms. The task force recommended multilateral tariff reduction and the creation of a Canadian Development Corporation to provide investment capital to domestic companies. The issue of extraterritoriality – the application of American laws to companies operating in Canada and in particular the US embargo against Cuba – rankled all of the task force’s members and they recommended establishing a government agency to monitor foreign-owned firms and passing legislation to prevent foreign laws from being applied to foreign-owned firms operating in Canada. Media responses to the report generally reflected previously established editorial opinions about Walter Gordon and foreign investment – the Toronto Telegram and Winnipeg Free Press for instance, were critical, while the Toronto Star’s coverage was detailed and laudatory. Historian Stephen Azzi notes in his biography of Gordon that “the most interesting aspect of the media’s coverage of the report was the context,” as stories about the task force were placed alongside articles and photographs of the ongoing war in Vietnam and violent police responses to peaceful civil rights protesters in the United States.

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47 Azzi, Walter Gordon, 158-9. Azzi explains “all of the task force’s members were academic economists. The key participants were Watkins, Rotstein, [A. Edward] Safarian of the University of Toronto, and Stephen Hymer of Yale.”

48 George Lermer, “The Task Force Report: An Economist’s Notebook,” Canadian Dimension (April-May 1968), 18-20, 43. Lermer pointed out that “the report has restricted its policy suggestions to those that could readily be accepted by current political orthodoxy.” Watkins commented that he censored himself writing the report, but joked that “my secretary was always typing ‘nationalization of industry’ when I had written ‘rationalization of industry’,” in Watkins, “Learning to Move Left,” 76.

49 Azzi, Walter Gordon, 162-3.

50 Ibid., 168. The election of Justice Minister Pierre Trudeau, noted for his progressive image and commitment to unifying federalism, as Liberal leader and Canadian Prime Minister on April 6, 1968, only two days after the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. and the subsequent violence in the United States further juxtaposed the direction of the two countries. Trudeau’s campaign team carefully cultivated much about his image, ensuring that the election campaign focused almost exclusively on Trudeau rather than the
Although the Watkins Report received significant public attention, many intellectuals and New Democrats were already aware of corporate America’s expanding ownership of the Canadian economy. Concerns over foreign ownership of the economy and Canada’s increasing continental integration had been a staple of NDP policy since the party’s founding, and its election platforms in 1963 and 1968 had harshly criticized the federal Liberal government’s tacit support of continentalism. Nevertheless, political scientist Gad Horowitz expressed surprise at the results of a 1966 survey of politicians, academics and reporters on the future of the NDP, published in the left-wing magazine *Canadian Dimension*, which indicated that a majority of respondents expected the party to become the voice of Canadian independence.\(^{51}\) Founded by Cy Gonick, a future Waffler and Manitoba NDP MLA, *Canadian Dimension* was a regular forum for critics of the Vietnam War and of Canada’s continuing absorption by American cultural, economic, and foreign policy influences.\(^{52}\) McGill University philosopher Charles Taylor, the NDP’s leading public intellectual, published articles in the magazine on “Alternatives to Continentalism” and “Nationalism and Independence.”\(^{53}\) The NDP also

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held policy seminars in 1966 and 1967 at which Taylor, Mel Watkins and Kari Levitt presented policy papers on challenges to Canadian independence. Although Levitt’s classic indictment of continental integration, *Silent Surrender*, was not published until after the Waffle Manifesto was written, her work began as a study of foreign ownership prepared for the NDP at the behest of Charles Taylor, and the Manifesto’s authors were certainly familiar with and influenced by her conclusions.

During the 1968 federal election campaign, Douglas and the NDP endorsed the Watkins Report and criticized the incumbent Liberals for Canada’s unchecked drift toward continentalism that had occurred on their watch. The NDP even invited Watkins to join with Douglas’s campaign tour, but he declined on the grounds that he had assured Gordon that he would be available to promote the task force report for one year following its publication. Watkins did acknowledge, however, that the entire process of writing and defending the report “pushed me towards socialism. It seemed clear to me that only through substantial nationalization could Canadians regain control of their economy.” Still, he remained uncertain about the NDP’s brand of democracy, describing it as “the Old Left position of considering hierarchical power structures inevitable.”

Watkins identified instead with “a New Left version of socialism” which emphasized

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58 Watkins, “Learning to Move Left,” *This Magazine*, 82.
democratic decision-making by citizens in their workplaces, universities and
neighbourhoods.\textsuperscript{59}

In April 1969, after Watkins had spent the year as promised promoting his report, he was invited by Gerald Caplan, a professor at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, to attend a weekend meeting at his home in Toronto. Also on the guest list were, as Caplan explained, other like-minded friends and acquaintances “who feel that we’re significantly left of the NDP but not happy to simply embrace all of the jargon and tactics of the New Left.”\textsuperscript{60} Watkins and Caplan were joined by Ed Broadbent, James Laxer, Krista Maeots, Doug and Carol Myers, John and Patricia Smart, and Giles Endicott in what would become the inaugural meeting of the Waffle. Among Caplan’s invitees, only Stephen Lewis, the MPP for Scarborough West, failed to respond to Caplan’s invitation. Caplan and Lewis were close friends, but Lewis’s nonattendance reportedly did not surprise the others.\textsuperscript{61}

It had been Stephen Lewis who, in the late 1950s, introduced and converted Caplan, then an undergraduate student at the University of Toronto, to socialism. Together they had co-managed in the spring of 1962 David Lewis’s successful election campaign in the riding of York South.\textsuperscript{62} Caplan went on to graduate school in England and then Rhodesia, where he was arrested and deported in 1965 for supporting black student protests against Ian Smith’s white nationalist government.\textsuperscript{63} Giles Endicott also met Caplan and Stephen Lewis while an undergraduate at the University of Toronto and

\textsuperscript{59} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{60} Gerald Caplan to Giles Endicott, February 6, 1969, Box 2009-047/001, File 6 Waffle – History, 1969-1972 (1 of 2) Giles Endicott fonds, YUA.
\textsuperscript{61} Gerald Caplan to Gang, April 14, 1969, Box 2009-047/001, File 2 Waffle - Correspondence, 1969, Giles Endicott fonds, YUA.
\textsuperscript{62} Cameron Smith, \textit{Unfinished Journey}, 364, 393.
served with them and John Smart in a CCF student cabinet. Along with Caplan and Ed Broadbent, Endicott later joined a group of Canadians living in London, England, in the early 1960s in founding a New Party club. By 1969, Endicott was back in Canada as research director with the United Packinghouse Workers-Amalgamated Meat Cutters union, a member of the NDP’s federal council, and party activist in the downtown Toronto riding of St. David. Endicott had participated in the ‘Young Turks’ revolt against the party establishment at the federal NDP’s 1967 convention, for which he was criticized and threatened by his union for breaching the principle of labour “caucus solidarity.” Although Cy Gonick dismissed the ‘Young Turks’ revolt as “a family quarrel which saw the presidential candidate of the middle-aged generation, James Renwick, defeat the candidate of the over-sixties generation, J.H. Brockelbank,” Endicott walked away from the unpleasant experience convinced that the NDP sorely needed to modernize and move further left. Endicott ran unsuccessfully as the NDP candidate in St. David in the 1963 and 1967 provincial elections.

Endicott had remained friends with Ed Broadbent, who taught political science at York University until NDP and UAW activists recruited him to seek the federal party’s nomination in his hometown of Oshawa. In one of the NDP’s few gains in the 1968 election, the thirty-two-year-old Broadbent defeated long-time Progressive Conservative MP Michael Starr by a margin of just fifteen votes. Upon joining the NDP caucus in

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64 Smith, *Unfinished Journey*, 384.
66 Endicott recalled that he was “attacked” by other union officials for “selling out the glory of the Packinghouse workers, and… for being an intellectual… I said that I had been stupid in not following through the labour caucus, but objected to being regarded as a traitor.” Giles Endicott, “Account of ‘Young Turks at NDP Convention,” 1967, Box 2009-047/001, File 3 Waffle - History - Prior Documents leading to the Waffle Manifesto - ca. 1964-1967 (1 of 2), Giles Endicott fonds, YUA.
Ottawa Broadbent initially devoted much of his energy advocating for industrial democracy, a concept then popular with elements of the American New Left that sought greater levels of worker participation and influence in the workplace. Broadbent fully expected the NDP to embrace the concept, but his idealism took a blow over the steadfast opposition of the union movement, including the UAW, to the idea. A similar naivety was on display when Broadbent attempted to arrange for Caplan and Laxer, neither of whom had been formally invited, to present to the federal NDP caucus their views on the party, Canadian independence, and socialism. The decision by caucus not to break procedure and hear them out caused Broadbent much embarrassment.

James Laxer, who had been active in the student movement as an undergraduate at the University of Toronto, was head of Canadian University Press (CUP) in 1965 when it added to its mission statement a commitment to “act as an agent of social change.” Along with Dimitri Roussopoulos, Art Pape and Doug Ward, Laxer was a leader of SUPA’s Vietnam Action Committee when it organized the March 1966 sit-in on Parliament Hill that resulted in sixty-one arrests. By that point, Laxer was at Queen’s University where, along with fellow graduate student and SUPA activist Krista Maeots, he worked at revitalizing the campus NDP club. There was “considerable overlap” in membership between the Kingston SUPA and the Queen’s University NDP, but by 1966-67 “the NDP had taken over SUPA’s role as the major political organization on

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69 Ibid., 137-8. Steed explains that “in North America, the adversarial union-management relationship proved stony ground for industrial democracy. Unions feared giving up hard-won rights and being co-opted into sweetheart deals; management feared sharing power and could not envision bringing workers onto boards of directors.”

70 Ibid., 143.


72 Powell, “‘Vietnam: It’s Our War Too’,” 153-155.
Although Laxer was the “key figure” in the campus NDP, he continued his involvement in SUPA until its demise. Maeots edited the *Queen’s Journal* in 1967, and under her direction the campus newspaper began featuring broader social and political coverage. However, as Laxer grew disenchanted with the Canadian New Left’s focus on American issues and its ignorance of the history of socialist struggle in Canada, his focus shifted away from the student movement and towards the NDP.

While at Queen’s Laxer participated in student-run seminars on Canada’s history and politics where he encountered kindred spirits among graduate students and junior faculty primarily from the Department of History, including George Rawlyk, Krista Maeots, George and Rosemary Warskett, John and Patricia Smart, and Lorne and Caroline Brown. Laxer, who at the time was writing a Masters thesis on the Quebec nationalist politician Henri Bourassa, became increasingly convinced that a leftist program combining socialism and economic nationalism “would attract French-Canadian nationalists back to federal politics.” Patricia Smart recalls having long conversations

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74 Ibid. Laxer was one of the seven men assigned to write a manifesto for SUPA, which they presented at the organization’s final conference in September 1967.
75 Ibid.
76 Laxer was one of a number of “red-diaper babies” involved in the Canadian New Left. His father, Robert, had been a longtime Communist Party organizer until leaving the party in the mid-1950s. As a child Laxer resented feeling ostracized on account of his parents’ politics and recalled “I hated the CP,” in Steed, *Ed Broadbent*, 151. See James Laxer, *Red Diaper Baby: A Boyhood in the Age of McCarthyism* (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 2004), for his fascinating account of growing up with Communist parents in Toronto in the postwar period. His background likely raised suspicions amongst New Democrats with lengthy experience battling Communist organizers in the labour movement. Desmond Morton, for example, writes that Laxer “inherited his politics from his father, formerly a leading Communist” in *NDP: The Dream of Power*, 92. Steve Penner was another prominent Waffler from a Communist family whose background may have caused some concern, although his uncle Roland Penner was later elected as a New Democrat and served as Manitoba’s Attorney General during the 1980s. See Roland Penner, *A Glowing Dream: A Memoir* (Winnipeg: J. Gordon Shillingford Pub., 2007).
with Laxer about Quebec nationalism and Canadian independence.\footnote{Pat Smart, “Queen’s University History Department and the Birth of the Waffle Movement,” in \textit{The Sixties in Canada: A Turbulent and Creative Decade}, 313.} Her husband, John Smart, also a Queen’s graduate student in history, had been active in the CCF/NDP as an undergraduate at the University of Toronto with Stephen Lewis, Caplan and Endicott. He later worked on David Lewis’s 1962 federal election campaign, managed Stephen Lewis’s 1963 provincial election campaign and after moving to Kingston managed John Meister’s 1965 federal and 1967 provincial election campaigns before becoming president of the local riding association by 1969.\footnote{Smith, \textit{Unfinished Journey}, 384; Pat Smart, “Queen’s University History Department,” in \textit{The Sixties in Canada}, 311-2; Harris, \textit{Democracy in Kingston}, 103.}

Laxer’s small coterie of Queen’s students transformed the Kingston NDP. At the suggestion of Joan Newman, a SUPA activist who had continued her organizing efforts among the city’s poor and working-class youth after SUPA ended its summer community project in September 1965, the local riding association supported the creation of an information centre in Kingston’s poor North End. The Community Information Service that opened in January 1968 with NDP support proved so popular that within months Newman and others established the Association for Tenants’ Action, Kingston (ATAK).\footnote{Harris, \textit{Democracy in Kingston}, 103-4.} Although the NDP and ATAK were not formally linked the connection nevertheless expanded the Kingston NDP’s commitment to grassroots community organizing because many people were active in both the riding association and the tenants’ organization.\footnote{Ibid., 110.} Involvement in community organizing appeared to pay immediate electoral dividends when two of the three ATAK candidates were elected aldermen and the NDP vote in the city’s north end increased in the 1968 federal...
Laxer regarded Joan Newman’s election to city council in particular as representing “the beginnings of a new coalition of poor tenants, labour and students.” Such fruitful ties between the New Left and Kingston NDP working together to address local social problems further motivated Laxer, Maeots and the Smarts to join Watkins, Broadbent, Endicott and the Myers at Gerald Caplan’s house in late April 1969 for what the host dubbed “a little subversive gathering.”

Over the course of the weekend the group discussed the state of the NDP and the left in Canada, while formulating ideas for inclusion in a draft statement that Laxer would compose. They also agreed that new recruits to the group should be members of the NDP. At the second meeting held one month later at John and Patricia Smart’s home in Kingston, they were joined by Lorne and Caroline Brown, who had been active in the Saskatchewan NDP before moving to Kingston where Lorne was a graduate student. Also new were Don Taylor, an assistant research director for the Steelworkers, Hugh Winsor, a reporter for the Globe and Mail, Gordon Flowers, the federal NDP Youth secretary, Hans Brown, a staffer in the federal NDP leader’s office, and several others, mainly from Toronto and Kingston. The enlarged group assigned Watkins the task of incorporating ideas from their second meeting into Laxer’s draft. After a third meeting held in Toronto two weeks later, Caplan made the final edits to the document.

82 Ibid., 110.
84 Gerald Caplan to Gang, April 14, 1969, Box 2009-047/001, File 2 Waffle - Correspondence, 1969, Giles Endicott fonds, YUA.
Much of the substance of Laxer’s draft would be included in the final Waffle Manifesto, and reflected many of the concerns he had previously expressed in articles appearing in *Canadian Dimension*. The draft highlighted two key issues: domination of the Canadian economy by a morally bankrupt United States tainted by chronic racial inequality and its war in Vietnam, and the potential for a heightened emphasis on Canadian economic nationalism to attract Quebec nationalists into a pan-Canadian socialist coalition.\(^8\) The first draft also argued that capitalism caused regional inequalities within Canada, and included a nod to the importance of “the struggle for worker participation in industrial decision making.” No mention was made of the NDP specifically until the final paragraph.\(^9\) Laxer later recalled that “we had the spirit of the New Left. The Manifesto was an expression of the youthful radicalism of the era, but it was Watkins who made it a brilliant document. Watkins was my idol.”\(^9\)

Watkins’s draft considerably improved Laxer’s. Watkins added stirring introductory and concluding paragraphs, reworked some of Laxer’s awkward phrasing, and included three paragraphs on industrial democracy – a major preoccupation of Broadbent’s – that highlighted the need to redistribute managerial power to workers and concluded that the labour movement was crucial to the struggle for Canadian independence and socialism.\(^9\) The draft acknowledged that “concern is sometimes expressed in Canada about the role of international unions and there are some who call

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for national unions” before rejecting such an approach for fear of “weakening unionism and the condition of the working man.” As Watkins later explained:

Although we were nationalists, we did not want to take a stand denouncing international unions, despite urgings from some of our friends on the Left. We felt that taking that stand would have been political suicide. For one, it would have made it impossible for us to stay in the NDP. Also it would have put our supporters who are militant members of international unions, in an intolerable position.

The references to international unions were eventually removed, and the final version of the Manifesto remained silent on the issue. According to Endicott, the discussion over international unions inspired the group’s odd name:

We agreed that the case was very different from that of multinational corporations, since the corporations have real power to initiate and control economic development whereas the unions do not. But in the course of this discussion it was argued that if we were going to waffle, it would be better to waffle to the left than waffle to the right.

After the Globe and Mail used the term in a September 1969 editorial “The Waffle Manifesto,” the group quickly adopted the “Waffle” name publicly. Even prior to the editorial, Endicott had signed his letters “the Waffle King,” and declined some requests for copies of the Manifesto with the regretful admission “we are now out of waffles.”

Although Laxer recalled that “we might not have had it without the editorial… We knew

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92 Second Draft, June 8, 1969, Box 2009-047/001, File 9 Waffle - Manifesto, 1969, Giles Endicott fonds, YUA.
95 Hugh Winsor, a Globe and Mail reporter and signatory of the Manifesto, described the comment to Jean Horwath, the Globe’s chief editorial writer. Smith, Unfinished Journey, 579; Editorial, “The Waffle Manifesto,” Globe and Mail, September 6, 1969; John Conway mentioned fondness for the name of the “waffle document” in British Columbia in a letter to Endicott sent weeks before the editorial. John Conway to Giles Endicott, August 12, 1969, Box 2009-047/001, File 2 Waffle - Correspondence, 1969, Giles Endicott fonds, YUA.
96 Giles Endicott to Ken Novakowski, October 15, 1969, Box 2009-047/001, File 2 Waffle - Correspondence, 1969, Giles Endicott fonds, YUA.
it would be a problem to have a left-wing group that was seen as too serious, so to have a name that was humorous was just great. We knew right away that it was a great name.”

The group also waffled on the strength of their statement’s wording on the thorny issue of Quebec’s right to self-determination. Explicitly stating support for Quebec’s right to determine its own fate, including separating from the rest of Canada, went further than existing NDP constitutional policy that endorsed a “deux nations” approach to federalism including “special status” for Quebec. When the executive committee of Endicott, John Smart, Caplan, Laxer, Watkins and Don Taylor met in June to finalize the Manifesto, they did not alter the document significantly aside from striking the sentence “Quebec’s right to self-determination is not in question” from a paragraph that began “a united Canada is of critical importance in pursuing a successful socialist strategy.”

Despite the controversy it soon created within the party, the Waffle Manifesto did not represent a complete radical rupture with NDP policies and ideology in the late 1960s. As Ontario NDP provincial secretary John Harney explained to Waffler Steven Langdon, “there is almost nothing in there that I have not endorsed already as a member of the NDP… if anything, I think that the ‘manifesto’ is not radical enough, and in

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97 Smith, Unfinished Journey, 579.
98 These two issues – international versus national unions, and Quebec’s right to self-determination – would prove to be what caused the most division and acrimony between Waffle supporters and the NDP leadership. Interestingly, both of the original authors recall the Manifesto containing elements that were not, in fact, included. Laxer explains that the Manifesto’s “assertion that Quebec had the right to self-determination” went beyond the NDP’s policy, but the group actually chose to eliminate the sentence of the Manifesto which included that assertion. Watkins recalled that “It was really advanced in its perceptions of issues – not only nationalism but Quebec’s right to self-determination, feminism, the environment and support for independent Canadian unions.” However, the Manifesto is also silent on the issues of feminism, the environment, and independent Canadian unions. Given the centrality of these issues to the Waffle’s future conflict with the NDP leadership, it is perhaps unsurprising that they feature in many Wafflers’ recollections of the Manifesto. James Laxer, In Search of a New Left, 151; Watkins quotation in Steed, Ed Broadbent, 147.
several points seems to be taking a step backward from positions which the party has already taken."\textsuperscript{100} Certainly the Manifesto’s proponents had waffled on the contentious issues of international unions and Quebec’s right to self-determination. However, the Waffle Manifesto distinguished itself from the mainstream Canadian left, as represented by the leadership of the NDP and the affiliated labour movement, by its aggressive tone and its origins in the New Left, both as articulated by its authors and as evidenced by its approach to the issues of capitalism and Canadian independence.

The Canadian nationalism central to the Manifesto – it pronounced that “the most urgent issue for Canadians is the very survival of Canada” – was a product of the New Left’s avid opposition to American “racism at home and militarism abroad.”\textsuperscript{101} The civil rights and anti-war movements in the United States were pivotal for a generation of young people who mobilized to expose the hypocrisy they perceived at the heart of Cold War America. The Canadian New Left in turn demanded Canada chart a course distinct from the racism and militarism plaguing American society. Capitalism, too, was condemned for threatening Canada’s independence. The Manifesto linked the American “empire” and “military-industrial complex” to a dominant corporate capitalism it castigated for producing Canada’s regional economic disparities. Notably, the Manifesto did not attack capitalism for impoverishing Canadians or alienating workers. Moreover, it is vague in its discussion of socialism, indicating only that it will be achieved “by

\textsuperscript{100} John Harney to Steven Langdon, August 27, 1969, Series 10 Chronological files, File Chronological files 1969, New Democratic Party of Ontario fonds, Queen’s University Archives, Kingston, Ontario (hereafter QUA).

\textsuperscript{101} Appendix B The Waffle Manifesto.
national planning of investment and by the public ownership of the means of production in the interests of the Canadian people as a whole.\textsuperscript{102}

A New Left emphasis on democracy was central to the Waffle Manifesto’s assertion that neither independence nor socialism “are meaningful without true participatory democracy.” A section on industrial democracy argued that “the NDP must provide leadership in the struggle to extend workingmen’s influence into every area of industrial decision-making.” Despite its stance that the NDP must ally with New Left social movements as “the parliamentary wing of a movement dedicated to fundamental social change,” the Manifesto was not an expression of a post-materialist, “new social movement” approach sometimes associated with the New Left.\textsuperscript{103} Issues such as women’s and gay liberation, racial discrimination, and environmental protection, while not mentioned specifically in the Manifesto, would nevertheless become important to the Waffle.

In preparation for the October 1969 federal NDP convention in Winnipeg, the Wafflers devised concrete plans for rallying support of the Manifesto and their goal of moving the party’s policies further left. They put Endicott in charge of “overall organization of our efforts,” appointed Caplan “internal secretary,” and tasked John Smart with coordinating a slate of resolutions for submission to the convention on such “agreed topics” as industrial democracy, Quebec, foreign ownership, extra-parliamentary

\textsuperscript{102} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{103} New Social Movement (NSM) theory holds that social movements that arose in a post-industrial economy during the second half of the twentieth century are fundamentally different from their predecessors in their aims. Specifically, NSMs are said to focus on non-materialist goals based on human rights, such as gay rights or environmentalism, in comparison to their predecessors’ focus on materialist goals based on the redistribution of wealth. Although not the focus of his book, Dominique Clément explains that in the 1960s and 1970s “previously marginalized and powerless members of Canadian society were employing rights discourse to make claims for equality and fair treatment.” Clément, Canada’s Rights Revolution: Social Movements and Social Change, 1937-82 (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2008), 33-4.
social movements, party structure, and the Americanization of universities, and also for ensuring they were submitted to the convention.\textsuperscript{104} 

Broadbent, meanwhile, began expressing doubts about the direction the group was headed. After he showed the Manifesto to the NDP’s research director, Marc Eliesen, who was decidedly unimpressed, the two of them rewrote it.\textsuperscript{105} Although Endicott wrote to Caplan to suggest that several sections of the Broadbent/Eliesen draft could be incorporated into the Manifesto, others were equally unhappy with the revisions.\textsuperscript{106} Laxer, for example, complained “you’ve taken all the juice out of it… the guts are gone.”\textsuperscript{107} Broadbent, whose focus was still the issue of industrial democracy, quietly withdrew from the group. Others among the original Wafflers were determined that the Manifesto remain a radical statement. In an interview twenty years later, Saskatchewan Waffler John Warnock explained:

I was talking with Lorne Brown the other day about the drafting of the Waffle Manifesto, spring of 1969, and he said that people don’t realize that his position, which was then supported by Mel Watkins, is that the Waffle Manifesto should be strong enough to the left so that the NDP could not accept it, and this would force the creation of a left-wing caucus within the NDP, so Caplan and Broadbent and Endicott tried to water it down, but they wanted the Waffle Manifesto to be strong enough that it could not be co-opted by the NDP leadership and would create an organization.\textsuperscript{108}

However, Laxer’s recollections suggest that Brown’s determination was not universally shared among the original Wafflers, and he explained:

\textsuperscript{104} Giles Endicott to the Group, June 11, 1969, Box 2009-047/001, File 2 Waffle - Correspondence, 1969, Giles Endicott fonds, YUA.
\textsuperscript{105} Steed, \textit{Ed Broadbent}, 145.
\textsuperscript{107} Steed, \textit{Ed Broadbent}, 146.
The furthest thing from my mind was the idea of destroying the NDP… when we drafted the Waffle Manifesto, I was full of virtue and belief that we were doing some thing that was good… I didn’t think that there was anything conflictual, or that David Lewis would hate this, or that trade union leaders would almost give themselves coronaries chasing twenty-six-year-olds from one side of a convention hall to another to stop us…

Mel Watkins recalled:

None of us who wrote the Waffle Manifesto, and certainly not myself, ever sat down and said: “Let’s radicalize the NDP.” It was much more of a spontaneous thing of a half dozen or so people realizing they were in the Party and fed up with it. We never set out to do what we ended up doing. In the best sense, I think, you’re doing something real if you touch a nerve and everybody jumps.

The Waffle’s executive committee next decided to draw more publicity for the Manifesto in advance of the convention by seeking endorsements from prominent New Democrats “whose names will be recognizable and attractive.” Copies were sent to potential supporters with a note explaining the desire to “swing the NDP convention a bit to the left.” Among those Endicott contacted were MPs Alf Gleave, Grace MacInnis and Max Saltzman, newly-elected Manitoba MLA and editor of Canadian Dimension Cy Gonick, Nova Scotia NDP leader Jeremy Akerman, former BC NDP leadership candidate and New Left activist John Conway, UAW-Canada Director Dennis McDermott (who formerly worked with SUPA activists as an organizer in Kingston), left-wing Simon Fraser University political scientist Martin Robin, and two American-born professors in Saskatchewan, Joe Roberts and John Warnock.

109 Laxer quotation from Smith, Unfinished Journey, 430.
111 Gerald Caplan to Group, June 25, 1969, Box 2009-047/001, File 2 Waffle - Correspondence, 1969, Giles Endicott fonds, YUA.
112 Giles Endicott to Warnock, July 7, 1969, Box 2009-047/001, File 2 Waffle - Correspondence, 1969, Giles Endicott fonds, YUA.
113 Giles Endicott to various, July 3-9, 1969, Box 2009-047/001, File 2 Waffle - Correspondence, 1969, Giles Endicott fonds, YUA.
Many of the recipients were already aware of the Manifesto. Broadbent had presented it at a meeting of the federal caucus, and he was informed “that such papers should not be circulated without having their source attached.” Both MacInnis and Gleave thought the document “interesting,” but declined to endorse it.\textsuperscript{114} The response beyond the federal caucus was considerably more positive. Cy Gonick, Joe Roberts, John Warnock and Jeremy Akerman all indicated their enthusiastic support, but not without suggesting some revisions were in order. Gonick in particular explained that he had spoken at length with Watkins and Laxer about the document and indicated that “the contents are okay but it starts off badly.”\textsuperscript{115} Concerned that the Manifesto “casts us as outsiders,” Gonick offered a new preamble he had written that he thought better situated concerns about American economic and cultural domination of Canada within the broader history of the CCF/NDP.\textsuperscript{116} Endicott replied positively to Gonick’s preamble, but regretted it was too late to make further changes to the document as it had already been distributed widely among potential supporters.\textsuperscript{117} Stephen Lewis recalled that he “came fairly close to signing” the Manifesto because “I felt I had a similar view of the left.” However, he explained “I think I was scared off by David [Lewis]. I think it was a severe parental admonition – he scared me off – and it was ironic that I didn’t rebel by signing.”\textsuperscript{118}

\textsuperscript{114} Grace MacInnis to Giles Endicott, July 15, 1969, Box 2009-047/001, File 2 Waffle - Correspondence, 1969, Giles Endicott fonds, YUA; A.P. Gleave to Giles Endicott, July 25, 1969, Box 2009-047/001, File 2 Waffle - Correspondence, 1969, Giles Endicott fonds, YUA.

\textsuperscript{115} Cy Gonick to Giles Endicott, July 17, 1969, Box 2009-047/001, File 2 Waffle - Correspondence, 1969, Giles Endicott fonds, YUA.

\textsuperscript{116} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{117} Giles Endicott to Cy Gonick, July 24, 1969, Box 2009-047/001, File 2 Waffle - Correspondence, 1969, Giles Endicott fonds, YUA.

Once a list of notable supporters whose names could be affixed to the Manifesto was compiled, the executive committee planned to distribute the document to riding associations during the month of August in a preemptive bid to ensure that it received due consideration at the October convention. The Wafflers were worried that the structure of the convention, which provided for resolutions to be debated by panels rather than the entire assembly, would preclude the Manifesto from being debated and voted on by all delegates. However, if sufficient riding associations indicated support for the Manifesto, Wafflers hoped that party officials could be persuaded to allow a convention-wide debate on the topic. While John Smart continued his work of coordinating a series of left-leaning resolutions for submission to the convention, Wafflers sent copies of the Manifesto to provincial NDP newspapers and *Canadian Dimension* for publication in September and encouraged supportive party members to seek election as delegates to the October gathering.¹¹⁹

Some Manifesto supporters proved so enthusiastic they jumped the queue and circulated it at NDP meetings in advance of the Wafflers’ intended distribution date. John Conway handed out copies at the Saskatchewan NDP convention in Saskatoon in early July, where “it was given further attention by Ed Broadbent who declared his disagreement with it.”¹²⁰ Delegates to the Young New Democrats convention in Ottawa also distributed the Manifesto prematurely, resulting in its mid-July publication in the *Workers Vanguard*, the newspaper of the Trotskyist League for Socialist Action (LSA).

¹¹⁹ The above description of the Waffle’s plans prior to the convention is drawn from “Minutes of July 26 Meeting in Kingston,” July 26, 1969, Box 2009-047/001, File 2 Waffle - Correspondence, 1969, Giles Endicott fonds, YUA.
¹²⁰ Joe Roberts to Giles Endicott, July 14, 1969, Box 2009-047/001, File 2 Waffle - Correspondence, 1969, Giles Endicott fonds, YUA.
The newspaper’s editor apologized for the misstep, but perhaps he need not have. The Manifesto was not further circulated over the balance of the summer, prompting Endicott’s comment to political scientist Joe Roberts, “we are grateful that the paper has not yet hit the regular press – apparently nobody reads the *Workers Vanguard.*”

In Saskatchewan the Waffle encountered an existing network of intellectuals and students predisposed to supporting an expression of New Left-tinged socialism within the NDP. Intellectuals and activists critical of American imperialism had founded the Committee for a Socialist Movement (CSM) in 1967. Primarily a Saskatoon- and Regina-based discussion group, the CSM was the initiative of two expatriate American academics, Joe Roberts and Ed Mahood, along with Bill Gilbey and Roy Atkinson, who were union and farm activists respectively. A fifth participant was Jack Shapiro, whose friendship with Woodrow Lloyd’s executive assistant, Jack Kinzel, prompted an informal dialogue with the Saskatchewan NDP leader as well. Lloyd believed internal ideological debates were vital for a healthy social democratic party. His public criticisms of unrestrained capitalism’s damaging effects on the marginalized of Saskatchewan convinced those in the CSM that they were exerting at least some influence on the NDP leader. The group also connected with student New Left activists, including Don Mitchell, Richard Thompson and Don Kossick. In the summer of 1969, following an unsuccessful foray into Saskatoon’s municipal election and internal disagreements over

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121 Richard Fidler to Giles Endicott, July 30, 1969, Box 2009-047/001, File 2 Waffle - Correspondence, 1969, Giles Endicott fonds, YUA.
122 Giles Endicott to Joe Roberts, July 25, 1969, Box 2009-047/001, File 2 Waffle - Correspondence, 1969, Giles Endicott fonds, YUA.
the group’s future direction, the CSM’s members were “re-energized” by the timely appearance of the Waffle Manifesto.\textsuperscript{126}

That same summer in neighbouring Manitoba the outlook was propitious for New Democrats. Shortly after Ed Schreyer, a popular thirty-three-year-old MP, won the race to succeed Russell Paulley as leader of the Manitoba NDP, the province was in the midst of a provincial election campaign. Schreyer’s “rural touch” appealed to many voters, and his party also enjoyed additional media coverage early in the campaign as a result of its recently televised leadership convention.\textsuperscript{127} With the Liberals under the leadership of R.R. Bend occupying much the same territory on the right of the political spectrum as the governing Progressive Conservatives, the NDP enticed progressives and reformers with a platform promising lower medicare premiums, public automobile insurance, an increased minimum wage, a lowered voting age, the appointment of a provincial ombudsperson, and a review of Manitoba’s hydro-electric industry.\textsuperscript{128} Aided by a “voting coalition of the ethnic minorities, the traditional outsiders in Manitoba society and politics,” and a more representative redistribution of electoral districts, the NDP won the June 25\textsuperscript{th} election with twenty-eight of the province’s fifty-seven seats and formed a majority

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\item \textsuperscript{126} Borch, “The Rise and Decline of the Saskatchewan Waffle,” 35-8. The decision of fifty to sixty university students active in the Saskatoon CSM to contest the municipal election caused conflict with the Regina CSM, whose members believed that participating in an election without a class conscious electorate would be premature. Nevertheless, the Saskatoon CSM ran three candidates for city council, Richard Thompson, Lenore Boyes and Howard Brown, and two candidates for school board, Karen Kopperud and Marylin Laird. Despite the students finishing last Thompson was encouraged that even four percent of voters backed candidates running on a radical socialist platform. Thompson, Brown and Kopperud had left the Waffle by September 1970 to join the LSA. See Jack Warnock to John Richards, September 28, 1970, File II.3 Correspondence 1968-1971, John Richards Papers, Saskatchewan Archives Board, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan (hereafter SAB).
\item \textsuperscript{127} Wiseman, Social Democracy in Manitoba, 120.
\item \textsuperscript{128} Ibid., 120-1.
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government when Liberal MLA Larry Desjardins joined the NDP caucus as a “Liberal Democrat.”

The NDP in British Columbia, led by thirty-six-year-old Thomas Berger, likewise appeared poised for victory when Social Credit premier W.A.C. Bennett dissolved the legislative assembly in July 1969 and called a provincial election. Bennett had antagonized workers and unions by limiting collective bargaining and legal strikes in the province, and the NDP raised money from national unions headquartered in English Canada and hired organizers to target vulnerable Social Credit-held seats. Bennett stoked fears of socialism by seizing on the NDP’s commitment to nationalizing the British Columbia Telephone Company. A modest gain in its popular vote did not prevent the NDP from losing four seats, including Berger’s, and Social Credit from increasing its majority in the August election. Berger resigned soon afterwards leaving his former leadership rival David Barrett, the MLA for Coquitlam and signatory to the Waffle Manifesto, as party leader.

Much like in Saskatchewan, in British Columbia an existing array of left-wing party members and activists were attracted to the radical tone of the Waffle Manifesto. But unlike in Saskatchewan, an organized network of socialist academics and students comparable to the CSM did not exist. In British Columbia the Waffle attracted grassroots members of the provincial NDP’s long-standing and influential left wing alongside Barrett and his supporters in caucus. Perhaps frustrated by Berger’s moderate views and

\[\text{Ibid., 125.}\]
\[\text{Ibid., Militant Minority, 182-3.}\]
\[\text{British Columbia public servants voted to transform their employee association into a union after the chair of the Mediation Commission declared there would be no collective bargaining for civil servants. The appeal to unions outside BC allowed the NDP to raise money from labour in spite of Bennett’s de facto ban on political donations.}\]
\[\text{Ibid., 183-4.}\]
unsuccessful leadership of the provincial party, five Vancouver-based NDP MLAs signed
the Waffle Manifesto. So too did Wally Ross, NDP provincial secretary, Norm Levi, a
former MLA and party president, and Paddy Neale, the left-wing secretary-treasurer of
the Vancouver and District Labour Council. Barrett recalled several years later that he
had viewed the Manifesto as a good starting point for a discussion about the NDP’s next
steps, but he did not support the entire statement outright.

After a summer spent attempting to garner support for their cause among NDP
riding associations, Wafflers officially unveiled their Manifesto at a press conference in
Ottawa on September 4, 1969. Six of the signatories were present, with Watkins, who
was the best known among the group from his previous public defense of the Watkins
Report, acting as spokesperson. Journalists in attendance were blunt in their criticisms.
Charles Lynch, reporting for the Southam News Service, dismissed as “fatuous”
Watkins’s views on the “American Empire,” and jeered the Waffle “wouldn’t even be
able to elect a dog-catcher anywhere in Canada on a platform like that.” Douglas
Fisher, a Toronto Telegram columnist and former CCF and NDP MP, dubbed the
Manifesto “a jumble of discarded slogans of the 1930s, a nostalgia of guild socialism and
above all a frenzy of anti-Americanism.” He predicted that not even twenty of the
approximately one thousand delegates to the NDP convention would be interested in
discussing the Manifesto in any detail.

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132 Along with Barrett the other BC MLAs were Eileen Dailly, Gordon Dowding, Jim Lorimer and Alex
MacDonald.

133 Vancouver Sun, November 28, 1975.

134 John Burns, “NDP radicals’ manifesto calls for socialist leftward shift and anti-U.S. stand,” Globe and

Left,” This Magazine, 84.
Ontario NDP leader Donald MacDonald was similarly critical. In an interview the day after the press conference, he described the Manifesto as “a disappointing document containing old and weary rhetoric and ideas.” Later in the month, Manitoba’s Ed Schreyer expressed concern about the Manifesto’s “strident anti-Americanism,” and intimated he would work behind the scenes to reject the document at the upcoming Winnipeg convention. Most of the critical responses directed to Endicott focused on problems of worker participation in management, and warned that the Manifesto’s support for industrial democracy threatened to antagonize the labour movement. At least one unionist smelled a plot, and demanded to know whether the party leadership had been informed of the Waffle group’s “secret meetings.” He assured them that “it was not the lack of a good old-fashioned doctrinaire socialist program that lost us that [BC] election.” In general, however, the Manifesto’s founders were pleasantly surprised and encouraged by the interest and positive response their initiative had generated.

Watkins recalled that “when we called meetings to discuss it [the Manifesto], 50-60 party members would show up regularly. We were also getting letters and phone calls from NDP’ers across the country.” At an Ontario Young New Democrats seminar at the University of Toronto, 150 delegates debated and endorsed the Manifesto. Prominent Wafflers recommended to the gathering a combination of social movement

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138 Peggy Prowse to Giles Endicott, August 29, 1969, Box 2009-047/001, File 2 Waffle - Correspondence, 1969, Giles Endicott fonds, YUA; Lowell Paulson to Giles Endicott, September 2, 1969, Box 2009-047/001, File 2 Waffle - Correspondence, 1969, Giles Endicott fonds, YUA.
139 Harold Thayer to Giles Endicott, September 3, 1969, Box 2009-047/001, File 2 Waffle - Correspondence, 1969, Giles Endicott fonds, YUA.
activism and electoral politics. Caplan’s complaint was whereas “most of the student
movement in Canada doesn’t talk to anyone but itself… socialism means dialogue,”
while Laxer cautioned that “the NDP has become dangerously fossilized as a left-wing
institution.” Steven Langdon, the former president of the University of Toronto Student
Administrative Council, advised that “the NDP in power in parliament, by itself, cannot
make the fundamental changes for a socialist society.” Eventually, twenty-one riding
associations endorsed the Manifesto, but usually only after heated debate.

By now widely known as the Waffle, thanks to the Globe and Mail’s editorial, the
group began printing a rudimentary Waffle Weekly news bulletin in the lead-up to the
convention. A victim of their own success in generating interest, the Wafflers
struggled to manage all the requests for information. Endicott reported “various self-
made promotional committees” popping up in support of the Manifesto, and a month
before the convention additional copies of the document were unavailable. Meanwhile,
queries directed to the overburdened Wafflers often went unanswered for several
weeks. Some members of the media began to recognize, as the Winnipeg convention
drew nearer, that the Manifesto and its oddly-named champions might well be a force to
be reckoned with.

142 Pat Smart, “Queen’s University History Department” in The Sixties in Canada: A Turbulent and
Creative Decade, 314; John Otvos to Giles Endicott, August 1, 1969, Box 2009-047/001, File 2 Waffle -
Correspondence, 1969, Giles Endicott fonds, YUA.
143 In much of the media the Manifesto continued to be referred to as the Watkins Manifesto after its most
prominent author.
144 Giles Endicott to John Harney, September 10, 1969; Giles Endicott to Gordon Flowers, October 2, 1969;
Endicott to Jeremy Akerman, September 12, 1969, all Box 2009-047/001, File 2 Waffle - Correspondence,
1969, Giles Endicott fonds, YUA.
145 Gordon Pape, “Watkins socialist manifesto may rock NDP meet in Winnipeg,” Winnipeg Tribune,
September 12, 1969.
On the down side, the Waffle Manifesto achieved little traction with either the labour movement or the federal NDP leadership. Don Taylor, the Steelworkers’ assistant research director and original member of the Waffle executive committee, resigned from the group before the convention. Taylor explained he no longer wished to defend “the workers’ participation section with which I never really agreed and from some superfluous anti-Americanism; none of which is really essential to the manifesto” but which triggered “almost automatic distrust” among his colleagues in the labour movement. The philosopher Charles Taylor, who had signed and subsequently repudiated the Waffle Manifesto, collaborated with NDP deputy leader David Lewis in producing a statement ‘For a United and Independent Canada,’ that both acknowledged the Manifesto’s popularity within the party and attempted a repudiation of its more radical elements. In response to widely shared concerns about expanding foreign ownership, the Taylor/Lewis document called for the creation of a Canada Development Corporation and held up public ownership as one important, but not exclusive, means of limiting and regulating foreign ownership of the Canadian economy. Endicott alerted other Wafflers to the existence of a “competing statement” that union officials such as Modren Lazarus of the OFL and Lorne Ingle of the Steelworkers distributed to labour leaders prior to the convention. Labelled the Marshmallow Manifesto by convention delegates for its moderate tone, the Taylor/Lewis statement criticized anti-Americanism...

147 Don Taylor to Giles Endicott, October, 7, 1969, Box 2009-047/001 File 2 Waffle - Correspondence, 1969, Giles Endicott fonds, YUA.
148 Appendix C The Marshmallow Manifesto.
149 Giles Endicott to Mel Watkins, James Laxer, Gerald Caplan, October 9, 1969, Box 2009-047/001 File 2 Waffle - Correspondence, 1969, Giles Endicott fonds, YUA.
as a “barren and negative” concept and was adopted by the party’s federal council.\(^{150}\)

Prior to the convention some NDP executive members attempted to block the Waffle Manifesto from even reaching the convention floor, but David Lewis insisted that the party both debate and vote on it.\(^{151}\) Eventually it was decided that both manifestos would be debated simultaneously on the final night of the convention.

The media interest generated by the Waffle, the ideological and generational differences between Waffle supporters and long-time New Democrats, and the convention’s plenary structure combined to create an often frantic atmosphere. Several days of policy panels open to all delegates found Waffle supporters and party moderates alike rushing from one panel session to another in an effort to win crucial votes. Desmond Morton described it as “a nightmare for party regulars” as “rival clutches of delegates were sent panting through the corridors of Winnipeg’s Civic Auditorium.”\(^{152}\) James Laxer recalled a similar scenario of “young, long-haired and often bearded Waffle supporters… racing from one workshop session to another, being pursued by older, and often paunchy, trade union delegates.”\(^{153}\) The Waffle arranged for its own space at the convention which proved fortuitous since its meetings regularly drew 300 to 400 delegates, although the Waffle was not intended to operate as a “binding caucus” whose members would vote in concert, in contrast to the expectation of solidarity among union delegates on party policy issues.\(^{154}\)


\(^{152}\) Morton, *The NDP: The Dream of Power*, 94.

\(^{153}\) Laxer, *In Search of a New Left*, 153.

\(^{154}\) Giles Endicott to George Cadbury, October 9, 1969, Box 2009-047/001 File 2 Waffle - Correspondence, 1969, Giles Endicott fonds, YUA. Some members of the media were intrigued by the appearance and style of the young Waffle supporters. One reporter’s description illustrates a casual sexism that was not atypical:
Douglas Fisher’s prediction proved wildly inaccurate. Debate over the Waffle’s policy resolutions dominated the convention, and revealed some delegates were prepared to support some of its policy positions without endorsing the Manifesto in its entirety. For instance, a Waffle resolution advocating Canada’s withdrawal from NATO, NORAD and other joint military agreements with the United States passed a policy panel despite opposition by the NDP’s foreign affairs critic. Indeed, John Harney, the Ontario NDP provincial secretary, and Lorne Nystrom, a Saskatchewan MP, supported the withdrawal resolution, suggesting that the Waffle’s opposition to American militarism was shared by some young party moderates.155

The Waffle also successfully influenced the policy panel on education when the Ottawa South New Democratic Youth (NDY) submitted a proposal to replace the Resolutions Committee’s education policy with one more radical that passed by a close vote of ninety to eighty-eight. Wafflers Krista Maoets and Daniel Drache spoke in favour of the NDY resolution which proposed giving students a greater role in university governance, abolishing tuition fees, paying salaries to students, and requiring universities to hire a majority of Canadian professors.156

The Waffle was less successful in the policy panel dealing with Quebec. The Kingston NDP sponsored a resolution, supported by the Waffle, that committed the party to recognizing Quebec’s right to self-determination, defined Canada as two nations, and criticized bilingualism as a futile endeavour. Charles Taylor confronted the Waffle head

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on, and advocated retention of the party’s current policy that promoted bilingualism but was silent on the question of Quebec’s right to self-determination. Taylor proposed a formal special status for Quebec, arguing “I don’t think it is wise for this convention to tell us what to do in Quebec.” Taylor’s moderate resolution passed by a vote of 123 to seventy-seven.

Wafflers were instrumental in devising a compromise resolution on foreign ownership passed by the policy workshop. Watkins moved the resolution, which stated that “multi-national corporations, mostly American based, are the dominant institutions of Canadian life,” and claimed that Canada “has virtually been reduced to a resource base and consumer market within the American empire.” It went on to advocate government restrictions on foreign takeovers of Canadian-owned firms, and a general prohibition on foreign ownership in certain unspecified sectors of the economy. The resolution also proposed creating a Canada development corporation as an instrument of state economic planning and means of increasing Canadian economic independence, a government export trade agency, and requiring higher standards of financial data disclosure by corporations. David Dodge, secretary-treasurer of the CLC, argued unsuccessfully in support of the NDP federal council’s recommendation that the motion advocate foreign investment controls without criticizing the United States directly. Dodge decried the compromise resolution as “dangerous nonsense” and criticized its anti-American language, but delegates at the plenary session of the convention two days later

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nevertheless passed it with minor modification, replacing the phrase “American empire” with “American economy.”

The Waffle could also share credit for the convention’s acceptance of a resolution calling for Canada’s withdrawal from NATO and NORAD. Some other Waffle causes, however, were defeated. Its radical education policy, which had been adopted by the conference’s education policy panel, was referred at the plenary to the federal council for redrafting. Also defeated was the Waffle resolution calling for recognition of Quebec’s right to self-determination, with the party choosing instead to stick with its position on Quebec’s ‘special status’ adopted at the 1967 convention.

Amendments to the party’s constitution were also debated. A proposal to end affiliated memberships for trade unions was soundly defeated, and convention delegates instead opted to increase the spots allocated to affiliated union representatives on the party’s federal council. Also rejected were two proposals to increase the number of federal council spots designated specifically for women. The first, sponsored by the women’s caucus, advocated increasing the allotment from five to twenty-five. When the motion was defeated, deputy leader David Lewis moved an amendment to increase women’s representation to fifteen seats. It also failed to achieve the support of two-thirds of voting delegates necessary for passage, much to the frustration of feminists and Waffle supporters.

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The convention’s keynote speakers sounded markedly different notes over the party’s direction moving forward. Tommy Douglas opposed the Waffle Manifesto, but his speech conveyed at least some sympathy for the issues it championed:

We must achieve economic independence so that the decision-making power will be restored to the people of Canada… I believe that the challenge of the ‘70s calls for greater public intervention in the economy, social planning, direction of investment to meet social needs and where necessary, public ownership of those sectors of our economy which are essential for economic planning… However, we must do more than advocate programs. We must involve ourselves in the daily struggles of those who fight against social injustice. The NDP must become the voice of the voiceless and the champions of those who are the victims of injustice and exploitation. Most important of all, the NDP must be the political vehicle by which the people of this country can bring about social change by democratic means.¹⁶⁵

Manitoba Premier Ed Schreyer, by contrast, spoke of the importance of achieving political power in order to implement a progressive agenda. In a thinly-veiled critique of the Waffle’s radical policies and rhetoric, Schreyer ignored the issue of foreign investment and described his own government’s legislative agenda, including its plans for public auto insurance, before emphasizing “the kind of progress which I have been able to report to you this evening has been possible because we are in power… We are not fulfilling our responsibilities as a political party or as committed social democrats if we place the problem of gaining political power as being beneath our consideration.”¹⁶⁶

The seventy-five minute televised debate between supporters of the Waffle and Marshmallow Manifestos, proved a highlight of the convention. David Lewis started off, urging delegates to reject the Waffle Manifesto’s anti-Americanism. Mel Watkins

responded, rejecting accusations of anti-Americanism by explaining how “a growing number of Americans reject American militarism and the exploitation of the third world by its multi-national corporations.” Referring to the rapidly changing politics of the 1960s, Watkins implored the NDP to “relate itself as a Party to these new undercurrents of radicalism… It must become the parliamentary wing of a broad social movement.” Several more speakers, including Dennis McDermott and Ed Broadbent, accused the Waffle Manifesto of anti-Americanism, with McDermott reminding delegates “we belong to a political party not a pseudo-intellectual debating society.” Despite earlier comments he made to Steven Langdon, John Harney criticized the Manifesto for implying that Quebec separatism was desirable. Three MLAs spoke in its favour. Cy Gonick suggested the NDP had become “too soft… too timid… more concerned with respectability than with social action,” while Gordon Dowding (Burnaby-Edmonds) and Walter Smishek (Regina North East) beseeched the convention to support the Manifesto as a clear affirmation of their commitment to independence and socialism. Party leaders added to Lewis’s opposition. Allan Blakeney, the federal NDP’s incoming president, and federal leader Tommy Douglas both rejected the Waffle Manifesto for its lack of specificity compared to the Marshmallow Manifesto’s clear policies on introducing a Canadian Development Corporation, corporate financial disclosure rules, and a takeover tax. Douglas indicated “both documents recognize that we can only attain independence through democratic socialism, and that we will never get complete democratic socialism until we have succeeded in winning economic independence,” but questioned the meaning of the Waffle’s commitment to “public ownership of the means of production.” After lengthy and boisterous debate, delegates defeated the Waffle

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167 Debate on the Resolutions: “For a United and Independent Canada” (C-17) and “For an Independent and
Manifesto by a vote of 499 to 268, and passed the Marshmallow Manifesto by a wide margin in an unrecorded vote.\textsuperscript{168} Despite the setback, Wafflers were energized by their success in garnering significant support for several of their policy proposals throughout the convention, as well as over the substantial media attention they had attracted.

Furthermore, the Waffle experienced some success in elections for the party executive and council. Watkins was elected one of the seven vice-presidents on the executive, and Waffle sympathizers won eight of the twenty available council spots.\textsuperscript{169} The Waffle did not challenge Allan Blakeney’s acclamation as NDP president.

Delighted with the enthusiasm the Manifesto and their radical policy positions had generated, after the convention the Wafflers committed to continue organizing as a distinct group within the NDP.\textsuperscript{170} Before travelling to Winnipeg, as Endicott had acknowledged, “we cannot expect to change the whole party at one convention… it really matters more what the delegates go away thinking than what they go away having endorsed.”\textsuperscript{171} Despite the Manifesto’s failure to win support among a majority of the convention delegates, the Wafflers “were ecstatic about their success in drawing national attention to their cause.”\textsuperscript{172} Although still a minority faction within the NDP, the Waffle had nevertheless made strides towards achieving its objective of providing for


\textsuperscript{169} “Moderate elected president; Watkins joins executive,” \textit{Globe and Mail}, November 1, 1969.

\textsuperscript{170} Watkins, “Learning to Move Left,” \textit{This Magazine}, 86.

\textsuperscript{171} Giles Endicott to Jeremy Akerman, September 12, 1969. Box 2009-047/001, File 2 Waffle - Correspondence, 1969, Giles Endicott fonds, YUA.

\textsuperscript{172} Laxer, \textit{In Search of a New Left}, 154.
representatives of radical social movements a sympathetic forum and effective impetus for political action within an established national political party.

The Waffle Manifesto and its supporters shook up the 1969 NDP convention. The image of an incursion by radical young activists into the staid and sober NDP was enhanced by media reports, well-versed in the Sixties tropes of the generation gap, that emphasized the Wafflers’ youth and unusual appearance. One Toronto Star reporter described the “long-haired and bearded” leftists while another columnist explained “many of them have long curly hair, with sideburns and mustaches. They do not favor ties and wear jeans as if they were a uniform for the guerrilla army.”

NDP leaders rejected any suggestion that the Waffle represented one-third of party members, despite the results of the Manifesto vote, and argued that “students and other radicals” were overrepresented at the convention. Yet this element of the Canadian New Left was unusual in its embrace of the ‘new nationalism’ that had emerged in English-Canada during the preceding decade as well as anti-imperialist decolonization movements internationally. The authors of the Waffle Manifesto, with backgrounds in both the New Left and the NDP, had become concerned that the party was ignoring the single most pressing issue of the time – American domination of the Canadian economy. Convinced that only extensive public ownership could reverse this trend, they sought to convince the NDP to turn leftward and espouse a similar message. Coming together in the spring of 1969, they had crafted a Manifesto that resonated with a significant minority of New Democrats and attracted excited media attention to the party’s 1969 convention. After

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the Waffle Manifesto’s defeat Tommy Douglas thanked the young radicals for helping to
revitalize the party and suggested he was “delighted” they were part of the NDP.
Douglas praised the debate the Manifesto had spurred, commenting “the time to worry is
when a convention turns into a mutual admiration society.” The New Left’s arrival in
the party via the Waffle ensured that would not be the NDP’s immediate fate.

Chapter Four
“The Waffle has made the NDP exciting:” Activism and Influence, 1970

Following the October 1969 federal NDP convention in Winnipeg, the Waffle sought to continue working within the party to promote socialism and Canadian independence from American economic domination. Without question, its activism at Winnipeg had jolted the NDP. Donald MacDonald, the leader of the Ontario NDP, acknowledged the Waffle’s role in producing “the most exciting and satisfying” convention of his career, but simultaneously warned against adopting policies that “would totally isolate us from the community at large.”

Despite minor conflicts arising between the Waffle and the party’s leadership, and criticisms from some party moderates that as the group organized further it threatened to create a “party within a party,” the Waffle became an important influence within the NDP in the year following its emergence. Mel Watkins declared after his election as one of the party’s vice-presidents that he intended to act as a spokesperson for the Waffle and would not be “co-opted.”

Acknowledging the ongoing radical activism amongst students, women, and workers, Watkins hinted at the Waffle’s potential strategic role on the left of the party, saying “we want to demonstrate that the NDP can relate to such groups.” Indeed, throughout 1970 the Waffle would pursue its goals both from inside the NDP and through extra-parliamentary activism including participating in the Abortion Caravan and rallies opposing the federal government’s use of the War Measures Act. Within the party the Waffle influenced with some measure of success policy conventions in Saskatchewan,

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2 Waffle Weekly, November 1969, Box 2008-017/001, File 1 Waffle Newsletter, Kim Malcolmson and Paul Barber fonds, YUA.
3 Ibid.
British Columbia, Ontario and Manitoba, as well as supported a Saskatchewan NDP leadership candidate who ran an “issues-based campaign.”

Cy Gonick, the MLA and editor of the influential Canadian Dimension, proposed during the final Waffle caucus of the Winnipeg convention that they continue their organizational efforts by establishing provincial committees across the country. Gonick took the lead in Winnipeg, organizing during the 1969-70 winter holidays a group who met regularly at the Dimension bookstore.\(^4\) The Manitoba Young New Democrats (YND) at their January 1970 convention passed a manifesto calling for an independent and socialist Canada and support for party participation in the women’s liberation, anti-Vietnam War, and student movements.\(^5\) In Saskatchewan, a Waffle group formed in December 1969 at a meeting in Moose Jaw called by John Conway, Joe Roberts and Don Mitchell attended by thirty people. The following month the Committee for a Socialist Movement (CSM) agreed to fold its activities into the Saskatchewan Waffle.\(^6\) In preparation for its public launch at a conference in March, the group developed a statement for the Saskatchewan NDP convention expected in the fall of 1970, and participated in several of the party’s regional policy seminars.\(^7\) In Toronto, a chapter of the Waffle was launched in an early December meeting attended by 150 people. Even in Newfoundland, where the party had few supporters, NDP activists established a small Waffle group.\(^8\)

\(^5\) Ellen Simmons, “Go left young man, says NDP manifesto,” Globe and Mail, January 31, 1970; The Alberta Waffle was formed at the Alberta NDP convention in November 1969.
\(^7\) “Saskatchewan Waffle Statement,” Waffle News, February 1970, File 446-18, Waffle-NDP fonds, LAC.
\(^8\) “From Sea To Sea,” Waffle News, February 1970, File 446-18, Waffle-NDP fonds, LAC.
The Waffle caucus, having decided at the 1969 federal NDP convention to hire Jackie Larkin as a full-time organizer to plan both a western regional conference and a national conference in 1970, began soliciting monthly donations to support its initiatives. Not all Waffle supporters were pleased with these decisions. Wally Ross, the B.C. NDP’s provincial secretary and a signatory to the Manifesto, declared that although he continued to support the group’s “aims and objectives,” he opposed development of a distinct Waffle organization as “no political party can long afford to contain within it another.” Giles Endicott responded to Ross by explaining that the monies collected were solely for funding the conferences and no memberships were being sold. Endicott shared Ross’s concerns that the establishment of a “real bureaucratic apparatus” by the Waffle risked creating a “party within a party.” In fact, both Endicott and Gerald Caplan would soon leave the Waffle, for roles organizing Stephen Lewis’s leadership bid for the Ontario NDP.

Some disputes raised during the October 1969 convention carried over into the party’s federal council when it met in Toronto three months later. Despite creating a Participation of Women Committee to “assist and encourage women’s participation in all forms of political activity,” convention delegates had twice defeated proposals to increase women’s representation on the federal council. Nevertheless, during the October convention the party’s Women’s Committee had elected five of its members to represent it on the federal council. Yet when the council met in January the five were denied

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9 Wally Ross to Giles Endicott, November 27, 1969, Box 2009-047/001, File 2 Waffle - Correspondence, 1969, Giles Endicott fonds, YUA.
10 Giles Endicott to Wally Ross, December 9, 1970, Box 2009-047/001, File 2 Waffle - Correspondence, 1969, Giles Endicott fonds, YUA.
delegate status. Carol Fogel, the chair of the Women’s Committee, suggested that the youthfulness and activist backgrounds of the five women were contributing factors to the party’s refusal to grant them seats on the council. Fogel commented, “I think if we had elected four nice middle-aged women, they wouldn't have protested.” Fogel also claimed the party had misconstrued the five women as Waffle supporters as only three of them voted in favour of the Waffle Manifesto. Eileen Dailly, the British Columbia MLA who chaired the Women’s Committee meeting at Winnipeg, attempted to clarify that the point of the election was only to recommend, not appoint, the five as members of the federal council. Allan Blakeney, the party’s newly acclaimed president, attributed the dispute to confusion over the respective roles of the two women’s committees. Regardless, the refusal to seat the women’s delegates, combined with other defeats of Waffle policy proposals at Winnipeg on issues such as education and Quebec, caused some Wafflers to question the NDP’s commitment to radical societal reform.

Mel Watkins ruffled more feathers by writing in the Globe and Mail that his appointment to the party’s policy review committee did not indicate the Waffle’s demise in favour of “instant consensus.” Rather, Watkins offered assurances that “the Waffle is very much alive and well” and there remained “disagreements within the party on a number of fundamental issues” still to be resolved. NDP federal secretary Cliff Scotton, in a private reply to Watkins, attempted to assuage his concerns with an

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12 The five women elected were Carol Fogel, 36-year-old executive assistant to Manitoba cabinet minister Philip Petursson, as chair, Ena Parsons, Sheila Kuziak, Krista Maeots and Pat Armstrong.
14 Ibid., Kuziak, Maeots and Armstrong all supported the Waffle Manifesto.
15 Ibid.
17 Ibid.
assurance that the policy review committee would certainly stimulate debate within the party, but suggested its disputes should not be aired in the media.\(^{18}\)

The emergence of provincial Waffle groups in Saskatchewan, Ontario and Manitoba after the 1969 federal convention illustrated the Waffle’s growing influence as it challenged the NDP status quo. The official launch of the Saskatchewan Waffle at an Easter weekend conference in Saskatoon in March 1970 was overshadowed by the provincial NDP leader Woodrow Lloyd’s sudden resignation. Lloyd had led the provincial party ever since Tommy Douglas left the premiership to pursue the federal NDP leadership in 1961. Despite negotiating a successful end to the 1962 Doctors Strike and overseeing the implementation of universal health care in the province, Lloyd lost the 1964 election to Ross Thatcher and the Liberal Party. He recruited new and younger candidates to contest the 1967 election campaign, but after the NDP again lost to Thatcher’s Liberals some began questioning his leadership.\(^{19}\) Lloyd gave moderates in the Saskatchewan NDP, including a number of the young MLAs he had recruited, further cause for doubt when he voted for the Waffle Manifesto at the October 1969 federal NDP convention.\(^{20}\)

Approximately half of the Saskatchewan delegation had supported the Manifesto at Winnipeg, including MLA Walter Smishek and Carol Gudmundson, vice-president of

\(^{18}\) Cliff Scotton to Mel Watkins, cc Federal Officers, February 6, 1970, 446-4, Waffle-NDP fonds, LAC. The Waffle’s tendency to air dirty laundry in the media would be an ongoing source of concern and distrust for the NDP leadership. Scotton also took issue with Watkins’s claim that no women or farmers were on the policy committee, pointing to the presence of ONDP research director Marion Bryden and Saskatchewan MP and farmer Alf Gleave as evidence of the committee’s diversity.


\(^{20}\) Dianne Lloyd, *Woodrow: A Biography of W.S. Lloyd* (Regina: Woodrow Lloyd Memorial Fund, 1979), 168. Lloyd shared the Waffle’s concern about the impact of foreign ownership and the Vietnam War, although he did not feel comfortable signing the document. His daughter and biographer explains that “by lending his support to this new trend in the movement, Woodrow could administer a shock to the members of the party establishment who were attempting to squash these young rebels.”
the Saskatchewan NDP.21 Gudmundson had been elected to the provincial party executive only a few months earlier along with a number of other leftists, including Lloyd’s friend Bev Currie, a farmer from Swift Current sympathetic to the Waffle and the National Farmers Union (NFU).22 Currie raised the ire of NDP moderates when, in a discussion paper at the Winnipeg convention and an article in the provincial party’s newspaper the Commonwealth, he endorsed the concept of a land bank, a measure by which the government purchased land to lease back to farmers on a voluntary basis as a means of alleviating the decline in family farms resulting from the corporate consolidation of farmland.23 The policy of “use-lease” had been a controversial issue for the CCF during the 1930s when the Great Depression ravaged the province’s agrarian economy, and was eventually eliminated from the party’s program in 1936. Now Currie’s proposal revived fears that any move to purchase farmland at its “assessed” value would ultimately result in forced expropriations of properties at much less than their actual value.24 Under pressure from MLAs Gordon Snyder and Ted Bowerman, the provincial party caucus asked Lloyd to call a joint meeting of the executive and caucus to

22 Rich Thompson, “NDP: Convention and Caucus,” 1969, File 446-14, Waffle-NDP fonds, LAC; Farmers in Saskatchewan mobilized in the late 1960s to protest falling grain prices and the federal government’s Task Force on Agriculture, which recommended a two-thirds decline in the number of family farmers in Canada. Thousands of farmers protested in Saskatoon and beyond in 1969, clogging the province’s highways, and again in Regina in 1970. Don Kossick, a former Waffle and Farmers Union activist, remembers the spirit of “extra-parliamentarianism” and “mass mobilization” in the farmers’ protests. The National Farmers Union formed in 1969 out of several provincial Farmers Unions, and began to lobby the federal government and advocate for “orderly marketing” of grain and for a Land Bank of farmland.
24 Lipset, Agrarian Socialism, 175; Dianne Lloyd, Woodrow: A Biography of W.S. Lloyd (Regina: Woodrow Lloyd Memorial Fund, 1979), 171.
discuss Currie’s actions. Although the meeting, held on March 26, 1970, began with criticisms of Currie, former MLA and current executive committee member Robert Walker redirected the focus to questioning Lloyd’s leadership and his lack of electoral success. However, the timing of his criticisms – shortly after Lloyd’s support for the Waffle Manifesto and immediately following the formation of an organized Waffle group in Saskatchewan which included Lloyd’s allies – suggests that Lloyd’s critics were motivated as much by ideological differences with their leader as by the party’s disappointing recent election results. One group of MLAs piled on with criticisms of their own, while Lloyd’s friends and allies – including MLAs Walter Smishek and Bob Davies and executive members Jack Shapiro and Frank Coburn – attempted, largely unsuccessfully, to defend Lloyd by returning attention to Currie’s action as party president. Shaken by his critics’ attacks and the lack of a vocal defense from his supporters, Lloyd promptly offered his resignation and left the room. When urged by the executive to reconsider his decision, Lloyd waited three days before confirming that he would indeed be resigning as party leader in the Legislative Assembly the following day.

When details of the stormy caucus-executive meeting leaked out, the Waffle interpreted the incident as an unfortunate victory for the Saskatchewan NDP’s right

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25 Gruending, *Promises to Keep*, 64. Snyder was facing a nomination challenge from Waffler John Conway in Moose Jaw South after the incumbent Bill Davies declined to stand and Snyder saw an opportunity to secure a safer seat.


27 Lloyd, *Woodrow*, 173. Lloyd’s daughter and biographer explains, “it was powerful, it was personal and it was devastatingly painful.”

wing. In a reflective speech on leadership, party and province Lloyd made to the NDP provincial council a couple of weeks later, he professed to being incapable of generating the “mass emotional appeal” necessary for winning votes in a contemporary political environment. Lloyd also extolled the virtues of encouraging debate and accommodating a diversity of opinions within the NDP:

We as a party have never been (certainly have never wanted to be so far as I am concerned) a tightly disciplined organization. That is both a strength and a weakness… We have always been tolerant with ideas. This must continue, but even this can be a strength or a weakness. Some of those ideas or inclinations inevitably worry and may even frighten some. Whether such tolerance is strength or weakness depends on the respect and sensitivity for the positions and opinions of those with a right to worry or be frightened by that which they fear is a barrier rather than a bridge.

For his part, Robert Walker denied that he had sought to prompt Lloyd’s resignation, claiming instead that Lloyd had previously indicated an intention of resigning before the next provincial election. The caucus also responded to the accusation, levelled on the CBC, that it had forced Lloyd’s hand. In an open letter caucus members contended that political style rather than policy differences were behind their criticisms of Lloyd’s leadership.

The recently formed Saskatchewan Waffle believed otherwise. Interpreting caucus pressure for Lloyd’s resignation as a right-wing reaction to the emergence of a coordinated leftist bloc within the provincial party, the Saskatchewan Waffle prepared a

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31 Commonwealth, June 10, 1970, File I.5 Clippings 1969-70, Saskatchewan Waffle fonds, SAB (Regina). Walker’s motives in particular came under suspicion as he was leadership aspirant Roy Romanow’s partner in their law firm.
32 “NDP Caucus Statement,” April 1, 1970, File 446-14, Waffle-NDP fonds, LAC.
statement for the group titled *For a Socialist Saskatchewan in an Independent Socialist Canada*. The document, which shared the original Waffle Manifesto’s concerns about the increasing Americanization of Canada, also contained a brief history of socialism in Saskatchewan that emphasized economic planning as the key to reversing regional underdevelopment. It also included an extensive agricultural policy, which the Manifesto had not mentioned at all, that promoted guaranteed farm incomes, a halt to corporate farming, the creation of a land bank, limits on farm size, and a rationalized food industry in which processing and marketing were conducted in the same region as production.33 The Saskatchewan Waffle’s statement also addressed women’s liberation, environmentalism and the plight of native peoples, all topics absent from the original Waffle Manifesto.34

An Ontario section of the Waffle was also formed at the end of March. It elected a steering committee with representatives from several localities in the province and adopted *For a Socialist Ontario in an Independent Socialist Canada*, a statement that echoed the Waffle Manifesto’s emphasis on the dangers of American domination of the Canadian economy and Ontario’s reduction to a “branch plant society.”35 The Ontario Waffle statement criticized the provincial government’s support of foreign corporate takeovers and subsidies, and shared the original Manifesto’s prescription of centralized planning and public ownership of “key sectors of the economy.”36 *For a Socialist Ontario* also incorporated the Manifesto’s emphasis on extra-parliamentary social

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33 Appendix E The Saskatchewan Waffle Manifesto.
34 Ibid. The statement called for public ownership of resource development industries and argued, “any program of extractive industries must be based upon and judged against its social and ecological consequences.” The authors also argued that “a socialist movement in Saskatchewan requires the involvement and the leadership of native people.”
35 Although Watkins criticized the original Waffle Manifesto as “too academic, too elitist, too rhetorical,” the Ontario version hardly differs in this regard.
36 Appendix D The Ontario Waffle Manifesto.
movements of workers, farmers, students, tenants, women, and minority groups as key components to achieving social transformation, and called on the NDP to act as “the vitalizing centre that gives these social forces a common perspective, a sense of solidarity and an organization for united action.”

Unlike the Waffle Manifesto, the Ontario document warned of the “reckless exploitation of the natural environment,” and linked its ecological concerns to the consequences of entering into energy resources deals with the United States. The Ontario statement also included a section, heavily influenced by Robin Mathews, on the Americanization of Ontario’s “branch plant system of higher education.”

On labour matters it called for the “full autonomy” of Canadian sections of international unions, and encouraged mergers among domestic unions. Whereas the Manifesto did not address feminism, the Ontario statement called on the NDP to “provide its full support to the struggle for the liberation of women” including for independent feminist groups. The Ontario document retained the Manifesto’s commitment to giving “control in decision-making to workers and the community,” but the absence of the phrase “industrial democracy” reflected Broadbent’s departure from the Waffle.

Finally, in the event of Donald MacDonald’s resignation as provincial NDP leader, the Ontario Waffle agreed it would only field a leadership candidate if no other candidate agreed to “publicly endorse and actively support” the manifesto.

In addition to organizing provincial sections within the NDP, Wafflers attempted to practice the Manifesto’s commitment to extra-parliamentary activism. The Winnipeg

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37 Ibid.
38 Ibid.
39 Ibid.
40 Ibid.
41 Ibid.
Waffle sponsored two conferences in the spring of 1970: the first, on the theme “Manitoba: Colony Within a Colony,” drew 200 attendees, while the second, an exploration of extra-parliamentary activism, included invitees from the women’s liberation movement, the Métis Federation, the NFU, the Welfare Rights Union, and the Manitoba Association of Students. The Toronto Waffle, in conjunction with the University of Toronto NDP club, organized a two-day public forum in March 1970 dubbed “Teach-In: The Americanization of Canada.” The event attracted approximately eight hundred participants who heard featured speakers Walter Gordon, Cy Gonick, Robin Mathews, NDP MP Andrew Brewin, and Michel Chartrand, president of the Montreal council of the Confederation of National Trade Unions (CNTU). Grace Hartman, secretary-treasurer of the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), utilizing a report prepared by the union’s research director and Waffler Gil Levine, informed the crowd that $35 million of Canadian workers’ union dues were sent annually to the head offices of international unions in the United States, for which little benefit was received in return.

Although the Waffle Manifesto failed to address the issue of women’s liberation, many female Wafflers were actively involved in Canada’s burgeoning women’s liberation movement. As has been seen, the debate over women’s representation on the federal NDP council was among the most contentious at the 1969 Winnipeg convention. Waffler D.J. O’Donnell, a member of the Vancouver Women’s Caucus, later reflected on

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the disappointment caused by the convention majority twice defeating proposals to increase women’s representation on the council. She argued that women “need special representation on party bodies to both speak to women's issues and to criticize male chauvinism within the party, just as labour requires special representation to speak to working-class issues and to ensure the party maintains its commitment to the working-class.”

Citing the Waffle Manifesto’s insistence that the NDP act as “the parliamentary wing of a movement dedicated to fundamental social change,” O’Donnell cautioned that unless the NDP took a strong stand in support of women’s liberation, it risked becoming as “irrelevant” to that vital cause as it was to the anti-Vietnam war movement.

O’Donnell and other Vancouver Wafflers pursued women’s liberation struggles beyond party politics. In the spring of 1970 they staged what became a historic cross-country protest against Canada’s abortion laws. Despite the federal Liberal government’s partial legalization of abortion in 1969, abortion remained in the Criminal Code of Canada and the law was interpreted inconsistently among hospitals and doctors. The Vancouver Women’s Caucus (VWC), which emerged in 1968 out of the Students for a Democratic University movement at Simon Fraser University, was one of the earliest women’s liberation groups formed. In protest against the continued criminalization of most abortions and the difficulties of accessing the procedure legally throughout the country, the VWC organized an ‘Abortion Caravan’ to travel across Canada.

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47 Ibid.
48 In 1969, the government of Pierre Trudeau amended the Criminal Code, allowing doctors to perform abortions in hospitals if a pregnancy threatened the health or life of a woman, a decision made only by a committee of doctors. Otherwise, abortion remained illegal in Canada.
49 For further information on the Abortion Caravan, see Christabelle Sethna and Steve Hewitt, “Clandestine Operations: The Vancouver Women’s Caucus, the Abortion Caravan, and the RCMP,” Canadian Historical Review 90, no. 3 (2009), 463-96; Shannon Stettner, “‘We are Forced to Declare War’: Linkarges
Carrell, a Vancouver Waffler and one of the Abortion Caravan’s two key organizers, first crossed the country ahead of the Caravan to mobilize support. Jackie Larkin, whom the Waffle hired to plan its 1970 conferences, was released by the group to work on the Caravan instead. She described a “cross-country connection of socialists, students, women and anti-war activists” who provided the “framework” for the protest. The caravan of automobiles, carrying a coffin filled with coat hangers “in memorial to the thousands of women who die each year from illegal abortion,” departed Vancouver on April 29, 1970, stopping in nine cities before arriving in Ottawa on Mother’s Day weekend. Another Waffler, Sally Mahood, was the Caravan’s contact in Regina, and Toronto Wafflers, under the guise of the women’s liberation group of the NDP, worked with the Voice of Women, the Trotskyist Young Socialists (YS), and the radical New Feminists to organize a welcoming rally for the Abortion Caravan. Five hundred people, including pregnant women and children, attended the resulting Free Abortion on Demand protest in downtown Toronto.

Once in Ottawa, the caravaners requested an audience with Pierre Trudeau and invited any interested MPs to meet with them. Only three NDP MPs (Grace MacInnis, David Lewis and Lorne Nystrom) and one Progressive Conservative backbencher (Gerald Baldwin) accepted the invitation. Trudeau declined, as did John Munro, the minister of

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51 Larkin quotation from Rebick, Ten Thousand Roses, 39.
health, and John Turner, the minister of justice, to whom the VWC’s brief was addressed. Refusing to be ignored, the several hundred protesters who had gathered on Parliament Hill marched to the prime minister’s residence to leave the coffin of coat hangers.\textsuperscript{54} One Waffler, Dawn Carrell, expressed the sentiments of many in the crowd: “we’re tired of this buck passing and we won’t stand for it any longer – the poor and working women bear the brunt of the current law; we cannot stand by and watch our sisters die.”\textsuperscript{55}

The following day thirty-six women, including Ottawa Waffler Jackie Larkin, gained access to the public gallery of the House of Commons, chained themselves to chairs, and disrupted proceedings with chants of “free abortion on demand” and “we want control of our bodies.”\textsuperscript{56} Their protest caused Commons Speaker Lucien Lamoureux to adjourn the House while guards cleared the galleries.\textsuperscript{57} Waffler Krista Maeots described the protests associated with the Abortion Caravan as the “first significant national expression of a movement which had been active and growing for some time.”\textsuperscript{58} Maeots explained that women’s liberationists were concerned with a variety of issues, but abortion “served as no other issue to link university and working women, the economically comfortable and the poor, young and middle-aged in an urgent, personal struggle to achieve a definable goal.”\textsuperscript{59}

The Waffle in Ontario and British Columbia also took action to support various worker-related causes. Waffler Sharon Yandle described the B.C. Waffle as forming “around the dual issues of extraparliamentary activity and foreign ownership of the

\textsuperscript{59} Ibid.
Canadian economy” and its April 1970 meeting in Vancouver was attended by one hundred people, leading a visiting Cy Gonick to consider their prospects “very promising.”  

It organized a public demonstration against BC Hydro rate increases that attracted two hundred people, held a seminar featuring Mel Watkins, and published a newsletter. Wafflers in Vancouver also supported striking tugboat workers during a month-and-a-half-long strike in May and June 1970. Court injunctions which prohibited picketing at the MacMillan Bloedel’s mills and resulted in jailed union leaders and seized union assets when defied, further motivated the Vancouver Waffle. Yandle described the group’s activities as “involving the NDP in the day-to-day struggle for democratic socialism in the community, the workplace, the school and the living place.”

In late March 1970, at the union local’s invitation, the Toronto Waffle offered assistance to the 600 workers then fighting closure of the Dunlop Tire plant on Queen Street East in Toronto. Wafflers attended union meetings, helped the local create and distribute a newspaper, and aided in circulating a petition throughout the adjacent community. They also helped organize a demonstration at Queen’s Park where, following addresses by Watkins, James Renwick, the local NDP MPP for Riverdale, Waffler Steven Langdon, the former president of the University of Toronto Students

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64 Sharon Yandle to Ron Johnson, February 25, 1971, File 1-9 BC Young New Democrats Correspondence, New Democratic Party of British Columbia fonds, UBCSC.
65 Watkins “Learning to Move Left,” This Magazine, 86.
Administrative Council, and Phil Japp, the president of Local 132 of the United Rubber Workers of America, scuffles broke out between protesters and police.\(^{66}\)

However, the Waffle and the NDP differed on how best to support the Dunlop workers. Despite Renwick’s efforts in the Legislature to require Dunlop to keep the plant open for three months to allow for a study of its economic feasibility, he eventually concluded the plant could not be saved and advised the union to take legal action to secure the best severance pay deal possible.\(^{67}\) Despite the NDP’s Community Action Committee declaring themselves “generally satisfied” with the party’s participation in the campaign to save the plant, Mel Watkins recalled that the Waffle “would like to have thrown our support behind the more militant workers of the plant who were contemplating direct industrial action, such as sit-ins or work-ins.”\(^{68}\) In his critique of both the union leadership and Renwick, Waffler Steve Penner argued that “the potential militancy of the Dunlop workers and the rank and file of Toronto’s labour movement was never really tested.”\(^{69}\) NDP member Michael Prue defended Japp and Renwick from Penner’s criticisms and argued that Penner’s “doctrinaire truth… was not that of the workers.”\(^{70}\) For their part, the Wafflers’ efforts on behalf of the Dunlop workers were viewed favourably by union activists. As Watkins saw it, “labour people were beginning

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\(^{69}\) Steve Penner, “Potential worker militancy was never really tested,” \textit{New Democrat}, March-April 1970.

to lose some of their suspicions of us as impractical intellectuals and long-hairs when we actually did some of this practical work.”

A Waffle influence within the labour movement was also apparent at the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) convention in Edmonton in May 1970. A ‘Reform Caucus’ of younger union activists presented a five-point program urging the CLC “to establish a team of organizers who could be assigned on short notice to help underprivileged groups – slum dwellers, native people, working poor and the unemployed.” The program also called for the creation of a CLC youth department to counter younger workers’ tendency to feel alienated from unions, the adoption of a policy supporting equal rights and opportunities for women, the creation of aid and information centres for the poor and unemployed, and the use of multi-union teams to organize the unorganized. In addition, the Reform Caucus demanded that Canadian sections of international unions be allowed to operate independently by having domestic offices, policy conferences, staffs, funds specifically earmarked for Canadian projects, and complete autonomy over their political involvement. Much of what the Reform Caucus proposed did not come to fruition. Although Waffler Gil Levine later admitted only a few among the “odd lot” who comprised the Reform Caucus “had any direct connection to the Waffle” beside himself, commentators described the caucus as the “counterpart

within the union movement of the Waffle,” and members acknowledged the influence of

Historian Steve Hewitt has documented the extensive surveillance and
investigation of New Left social movements in the 1960s and 1970s by the RCMP,
including the Waffle. The RCMP Security Service monitored the Waffle’s activities
“believing that subversives were using it as a means to infiltrate the NDP” and
investigated both Waffle and NDY meetings.\footnote{Steve Hewitt, Spying 101: The RCMP’s Secret Activities at Canadian Universities, 1917-1997 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002), 135.} A brief submitted by the RCMP Security
Service to Solicitor General Jean-Pierre Goyer in March 1971 accurately summarized the
Waffle’s intentions:

> The prime aim of the Waffle Group within the NDP is the establishment of an
independent socialist Canada to be achieved through the existing structure of the
New Democratic Party. The Waffle Group hope to change the NDP from within
and radicalize the NDP socialist policies. Considering the Waffle group as a
whole, it is felt that they will be a viable political force within the NDP.\footnote{Quotation in Report of the Commission of Inquiry Concerning Certain Activities of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police [Macdonald Commission] Freedom and Security Under the Law, Second Report, Vol. I, August 1981, 483.}

Although a police informant attending the 1970 ‘Americanization of Canada Teach-In’ at
the University of Toronto focused on the attendees’ factionalism and suggested “several
more teach-ins of this type would really scatter any semblance of cohesion left within the
‘New Left’” another disagreed and warned that the Waffle had the potential to polarize
debate over Canadian independence.\footnote{Ibid.} The RCMP Security Service targeted Waffle
groups at eight universities as well as the NDY at the University of Regina and the
University of Saskatchewan but only the Waffle at the University of Toronto was
considered a “significant threat.” The Waffle was investigated alongside other radical left groups active at the time, including the YS, CLM, SDS, CPC (M-L), Black Students Unions and the CP.

Its involvement in extra-parliamentary struggles for women’s liberation and worker’s rights, and against Americanization and foreign ownership, did not distract the Waffle from focusing on transforming the NDP from within. In riding associations and especially at provincial party conventions in B.C., Saskatchewan, Ontario and Manitoba, Wafflers sought to alter party policy and thereby shift the NDP decisively leftward. Although ultimately falling far short of its goals, the Waffle during the summer and fall of 1970 did wield influence on a variety of issues, including agriculture in Saskatchewan, and in Ontario and British Columbia women’s equality and nationalization of resource industries.

In May 1970, just over a year after its initial meeting at Gerald Caplan’s house in Toronto, the Waffle described itself as a “national coalition of socialists within the NDP” with a mailing list of 1300 people across nine provinces. A Western Regional Conference held in Banff in late April failed to attract many delegates from B.C. or Saskatchewan and none from Manitoba. Despite “productive” discussions in a series of workshops, the conference only produced a “substantial statement” on agricultural policy, leading Lorne Brown to conclude that “good written statements… amplifying existing policy are not possible to produce in a two-day seminar – at least not without

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79 Hewitt, Spying 101, 180-1. The Waffle groups investigated by the RCMP were at Brock University, the University of Guelph, McMaster University, York University, the University of Western Ontario, the University of Regina and the University of Calgary.
80 This period likely represents the peak of the Waffle’s influence on NDP policy, and the group’s advocacy of nationalism, women’s equality and agricultural reform was reflected in both subsequent provincial party and federal party platforms.
81 Waffle News, May 1970, File 446-18, Waffle-NDP fonds, LAC.
considerable preparation beforehand.”

Laxer spoke at the conference, emphasizing the need for a national campaign opposing a possible energy resources agreement with the United States. Despite the low turnout in Banff, the Waffle persisted with plans to hold a national conference later that year in August.

In the meantime, the Saskatchewan Waffle’s efforts to move the provincial NDP further left in the aftermath of Woodrow Lloyd’s resignation was facing tough resistance from party moderates. The Waffle’s takeover of the Regina South riding association in early April 1970 aroused concern, but its efforts to deny a sitting MLA the NDP nomination for Moose Jaw South raised genuine alarm. When Bill Davies, the NDP incumbent in Moose Jaw South announced his retirement, Gordon Snyder, the NDP MLA for Moose Jaw North seized the opportunity to seek for himself the nomination in Davies’s former riding, which was considered to be the safer seat of the two. But then John Conway, a sociologist, New Left activist, and former candidate for the BC NDP leadership announced his intention to contest the Moose Jaw South nomination. Conway promptly staked out his ideological turf, criticizing American domination of the Canadian economy, the corporate consolidation of agricultural land, and its resulting threat to rural life, arguing “we must point to a bolder future of a society that puts people’s needs before the profits of a few.”

After the party’s provincial secretary, Don Faris, intervened to delay the nomination meeting from January to April in order to assist Snyder, Conway and his Waffle supporters campaigned hard, canvassing party members and holding a

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84 Gruending, *Promises to Keep*, 62.
Moose Jaw teach-in on the topic of the Americanization of Canada that featured Mel Watkins, Fred Gudmundson, Cy Gonick and Conway. 86 Snyder, who had the added advantage of being nominated by the popular Davies, eventually won the contest, which only deepened the animosity between Saskatchewan Wafflers and NDP moderates. 87

One month later, Robert Walker, the executive committee member who led the attack on Woodrow Lloyd’s leadership, wrote to party president Bev Currie and all provincial council members, riding presidents, and secretaries, to accuse Currie and “a majority of the executive” of identifying with “an extremist minority group” that placed the Waffle’s interests ahead of the NDP. Walker attacked the Waffle’s land bank policy as “compulsory socialization of farmers’ land,” expressed anger over “the two women on the executive” who vowed to defeat “reactionary” NDP MLAs, and accused Currie of using party funds to subsidize Waffle activities in contravention of provincial council directives. 88 Currie dismissed Walker’s charges as misleading “inaccuracies” and denied that a grant to the Saskatchewan Young New Democrats (SYND) constituted a misuse of party funds. 89

The Saskatchewan NDP leadership convention to name Lloyd’s successor was scheduled for early July 1970. Allan Blakeney, the party’s deputy leader and MLA for Regina Centre, as well as the favourite to win, announced his candidacy in mid-April.

87 The Waffle members were not the only party members to mount nomination challenges to sitting MLAs with unsympathetic ideologies. John Warnock reported that Regina Mayor and MLA Henry Baker considered challenging left wing MLA Walter Smishek for the nomination in Regina North East prior to the 1971 provincial election rather than seeking reelection in the redrawn constituency of Regina Wascana. Jack Warnock to John Richards, May 11, 1970, File II.3 Correspondence, John Richards Papers, SAB (Saskatoon).
88 Robert A. Walker to Bev Currie, June 1, 1970, File I.9 Correspondence, Saskatchewan Waffle fonds, SAB (Regina).
89 Bev Currie to Provincial Council Members, May 29, 1970, File I.9 Correspondence, Saskatchewan Waffle fonds, SAB (Regina).
Roy Romanow, the MLA for Saskatoon-Riversdale, made it a race a few weeks later. Blakeney emphasized his proven competency in government and the need for party unity to win back voters who had switched over to the Liberals in recent elections. Romanow touted his ability to communicate effectively with voters in a modern era in which television was the predominant medium of politics.\(^{90}\) Neither candidate presented a comprehensive policy platform.

The Saskatchewan Waffle held two meetings in early May, one of which included leaders of the Saskatchewan NFU, to determine their strategy for the leadership race. Since none of the Waffle’s “serious possibilities – Bev Currie, Roy Atkinson, Fred Gudmundson” was willing to run, the group adopted the unusual strategy of encouraging two different candidacies.\(^{91}\) At the urging of the NFU, Waffer Don Mitchell, a NFU organizer and student activist, threw his hat into the ring in part to support Waffle efforts to defeat Romanow by denying him “the ‘youth’ vote.”\(^{92}\) The Waffle also intended to support a labour candidate in an effort to “split the labour vote in the cities,” but their preferred choice, MLA Walter Smishek, declined to run, and the group was not associated with another candidate, the respected labour lawyer George Taylor.\(^{93}\) Don Mitchell was not explicitly a Waffle candidate, although he drew his campaign team and policy positions from the Saskatchewan Waffle.\(^{94}\) Campaigning under the slogan “issues not images,” Mitchell criticized his opponents’ lack of substantive policies and the “bankruptcy of image politics,” claiming “we cannot stand by playing polite politics

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90 Gruending, *Promises to Keep*, 69-70.
91 Jack Warnock to John Richards, May 11, 1970, File II.3 Correspondence, John Richards Papers, SAB (Saskatoon).
92 Ibid.
93 Ibid.
while farms and town are abandoned, unemployment soars, and our people are forced to leave Saskatchewan in mass exodus.”

At his first press conference Mitchell advocated “an agricultural policy which would keep farmers and eliminate profiteers.” Although Mitchell pitched a detailed and comprehensive platform, agriculture featured most prominently in it, including a land bank proposal, the nationalization of farm machinery and food processing industries, a plan for provincial government procurement of agricultural products, and more government investment in agricultural research. His links to the National Farmers Union were an important element of his campaign. As Don Kossick, a former student activist and NFU organizer explained, “we used the Farmers Union as a cover to organize for Mitchell… we were using that to offset Taylor… he was organizing the labour vote and the way we were balancing every labour vote that Taylor had was with every NFU local we could penetrate. We spent our time organizing.”

After Mitchell entered the race, Blakeney finally began to espouse his position on agriculture, labour, health, taxation and education policies. Romanow too was more forthcoming, articulating an eighteen-point agricultural platform that included loans to young farmers and warnings about the dangers of foreign ownership. Yet, the Waffle’s influence on the leadership campaign extended beyond prompting Blakeney and Romanow to develop more detailed policy positions. By the start of the leadership convention in Regina, all three leading candidates expressed support for the idea of a land

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95 “Former student political leader jumps into NDP race,” Regina Leader-Post, May 26, 1970.
99 Gruending, Promises to Keep, 73.
bank. Mitchell claimed such a policy would reduce “the burden of land debt that excludes young farmers from starting out,” and Blakeney, in agreeing to a land bank, also emphasized Saskatchewan’s disputes with Ottawa over agricultural price and market guarantees. Even Romanow, the most centrist among the candidates, supported a land bank, criticizing corporate and absentee ownership of farmland but cautioning such a policy must include an option-to-purchase clause and explicit refutation of expropriation.  

The Saskatchewan Waffle, which attracted an average of 130 delegates to its convention meetings, urged centre-left delegates to vote for Mitchell on the first ballot but heard from many who, fearing a Romanow victory, were committed to Blakeney instead. Others, particularly union delegates and those identified with “the old left” were reported to be endorsing Taylor.  

With the importance of the rural vote in the upcoming provincial election a foremost concern, the Saskatchewan NDP also used the leadership convention as an opportunity to debate a new agricultural policy. Its “Position Paper on Agriculture and Rural Life” strongly resembled aspects of the Waffle’s agricultural policy, including proposals for a land bank, limits on farm size, and a publicly-owned farm machinery industry.  

The position paper maintained,

> We require a farm policy that increases the farm population, not one that depletes it. We require a policy that opens the door to young farmers, not one that slams it in their faces. We require a land policy that provides the basis for a new and invigorated rural community, not one that undermines it. We require a policy that supports the family farm, not one that destroys it.

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103 Ibid.
Aspects of the position paper proved controversial, and a committee review of it produced several revisions, including a clarification that “the NDP does not contemplate any program of compulsory acquisition of farm lands.” 104 To that end, the convention revised the ‘Position Paper on Agriculture and Rural Life’ by replacing the limit on farm size with restrictions on the foreign ownership of farmland, rejecting the idea of a publicly-owned farm machinery industry, and strongly restating the NDP’s support for the family farm. 105 As the Leader-Post explained, “while the original paper was in no way considered a product of the Waffle caucus… some parts of it came closer to Waffle policies on farm land ownership than past party policy, and the changes approved by the convention were considered a defeat for the left-leaning faction.” 106 Certainly Waffle supporters disapproved of the changes and in particular the continued emphasis on private over public ownership. Fred Gudmusson of the NFU argued “many feel it is not always desirable for a farmer to own all or part of his land… by renting, the farmer can beat the banks and the mortgage companies. If we reject the farmers, they will reject the party, and they should.” 107

In his speech to the convention, Mitchell reminded delegates “our party was born out of protest! It was created by the people of Saskatchewan to express anger and fight for social justice!” 108 He urged the party to “not be afraid” of policy debates or the

105 “NDP land acquisition claimed not compulsory” Regina Leader-Post, July 3, 1970.
106 “NDP approves paper on agricultural policy” Regina Leader-Post, July 4, 1970.
107 Ibid.
party’s youth, messages that secured for Mitchell a respectable twenty-two per cent of first-round ballots cast.\textsuperscript{109}

\textbf{Saskatchewan NDP Leadership Election – July 4, 1970}

<table>
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<tr>
<th>First Ballot</th>
<th>Second Ballot</th>
<th>Third Ballot</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Roy Romanow</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>320</td>
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<tr>
<td>Allan Blakeney</td>
<td>286</td>
<td>311</td>
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<tr>
<td>Don Mitchell</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>219</td>
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<td>George Taylor</td>
<td>78</td>
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<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>851</td>
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Many of Taylor’s delegates supported Mitchell on the second ballot, and Mitchell’s supporters in turn voted for Blakeney over Romanow by a three-to-one margin on the final ballot. Waffle support was therefore key to Blakeney’s victory, and they were relieved over Romanow’s defeat, but ninety-six Wafflers including Mitchell declined to vote on the third ballot in response to Bev Currie’s failed bid for re-election as party president.\textsuperscript{110} In fact, the leftist candidates lost every election for party office, and the Saskatchewan Waffle suggested that even Blakeney was upset that “the far right swept the executive.”\textsuperscript{111} Still, the Wafflers departed the convention enthusiastic over what had been accomplished. Their support had been crucial to Blakeney’s win, the party’s updated agricultural policy bore their imprint, and Blakeney had appointed Mitchell as a legislative advisor and encouraged him to seek an NDP nomination in the next election.\textsuperscript{112} In a press conference immediately following the convention the new leader

\textsuperscript{109} Commonwealth, July 8, 1970, File I.5 Clippings 1969-70, Saskatchewan Waffle fonds, SAB (Regina); Regina Leader-Post, July 6, 1970.


\textsuperscript{112} Saskatoon Star-Phoenix, July 6, 1970.
admitted that “perhaps the party will move moderately more leftward than it has in the past.”

The left wing had fared much better in elections for party offices at the B.C. NDP convention held earlier that summer in Chilliwack. The BC Waffle estimated that 150 of the 500 delegates to the convention were its supporters. Waffle resolutions to nationalize chronic industrial polluters, and to advance women’s equality by committing to supports for child daycare, abortion clinics, and free abortion on demand, were all adopted by the convention. The BC Waffle also distributed a “Statement of Principles” echoing the Waffle Manifesto’s warnings about the inequalities inherent in capitalism and American corporate domination of the Canadian economy, as well as its call for party members to engage with their communities at a grassroots level and not only during election campaigns. Unlike the Manifesto, the BC Waffle “Statement” specifically emphasized the primacy of the working class in realizing “fundamental social change,” and insisted “the NDP must clearly be seen as the only mass party rooted in the working class.”

The Waffle ran a full slate of fourteen candidates for the party executive, electing three – Paddy Neale, the secretary-treasurer of the Vancouver and District Labour Council, Dawn Carell and Harold Winrob. The BC NDP went into the convention divided between supporters of Tom Berger and Dave Barrett, who had been acting leader in the Legislature since Berger’s resignation the previous year. Yet Barrett, who also supported Neale for party vice-president, was acclaimed as party leader, and the BC Waffle

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reported that “the Barrett forces (which comprise the left and centre of the party) basically smashed the party’s right wing at the convention.”

Despite the Waffle’s high profile at the recent Saskatchewan and BC NDP conventions, and its efforts to subsidize costs for delegates travelling longer distances to attend, its national conference held in Toronto in early August did not attract many representatives from Western Canada. For the nearly 200 delegates who did attend, workshops on themes such as anti-imperialist strategies, energy and resources, regional underdevelopment, media and universities, women’s liberation, labour and the left-wing within social democratic parties occupied much of the conference which was designed to be as much educational as strategic in focus. There were also panels on organizing the unemployed, farmers, tenants, minorities, students and youth in recognition of the Waffle’s commitment to extra-parliamentary activism.  Steve Penner criticized the educational focus and complained “we are so preoccupied with intellectual debate that the very debate is taking place in a vacuum where questions of strategy... are hardly considered. We lack a sense of praxis – the creative give and take between revolutionary ideology and radical action.”

A debate over the Ontario Waffle’s relationship with organized labour occupied the conference for an entire evening, causing Saskatchewan

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117 “B.C. New Democrats elect Barrett leader,” *Globe and Mail*, June 8, 1970; “Healthy Waffle Base at B.C. Provincial Convention,” *Waffle News*, July 1970, 446-18, Waffle-NDP fonds, LAC. The ideological divisions between Barrett and Berger supporters were not always clear-cut. Rosemary Brown describes the group who pushed her to seek the BC NDP nomination in Vancouver-Burrard as both “part of the radical wing that kept the party on its toes” and anti-Barrett due to Barrett’s rivalry with Roy Haynes, the secretary-treasurer of the BCFL. Brown, seen as a Berger ally, was nominated as a candidate in the two-member constituency along with Norm Levi, a Barrett ally who also endorsed the Waffle Manifesto. Rosemary Brown, *Being Brown: A Very Public Life* (Toronto: Random House, 1989), 109-10, 122-3.

118 National Waffle Conference Agenda, August 1-3, 1970. File 446-12, Waffle-NDP fonds, LAC.

Waffle delegates to complain that Ontario’s issues were dominating proceedings.\textsuperscript{120} Another debate erupted over an unsuccessful proposal for the Waffle to hire three people to undertake a national campaign to organize the unemployed.\textsuperscript{121} Cy Gonick explained the challenges the Waffle faced attempting to navigate between “visions of apocalyptic revolutionary transformation” and “the trap of evolutionary reformism.” Although the Waffle “must view capitalism as a system and must elaborate an alternative system in its stead,” Gonick cautioned against relying on revolutionary rhetoric alone, arguing “just to state and restate the overall goal is to have no strategy at all.”\textsuperscript{122}

The primary strategic decision confronting the Waffle involved the impending federal NDP leadership race. At the conference it was decided to form a ten-person campaign committee tasked with promoting the Waffle’s vision for the party among other NDP members before settling on a leadership candidate to endorse. Cy Gonick, Mel Watkins and James Laxer were each touted as possible contenders. Watkins, who had health concerns, was prepared to exclude himself, although he and Gonick endorsed the campaign committee plan as an opportunity to prioritize “issues” over the “cult of personality.”\textsuperscript{123} In addition to Gonick, Watkins, and Laxer, the conference selected Gil Levine, John Conway, Jackie Larkin, Kelly Crichton and Sheila Kuziak for the campaign committee, and left two spots open to be filled later by the Saskatchewan Waffle.\textsuperscript{124}

Regardless of who ultimately would be selected to lead the party, Laxer was adamant that the NDP must engage in an ambitious campaign opposing the “energy

\textsuperscript{120} “Nat. Conference Analyses,” \textit{Waffle News}, September 1970, File 446-18, Waffle-NDP fonds, LAC.
\textsuperscript{121} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{124} Ibid.
sellout” of Canada’s resources to the United States. In response, the Waffle in September 1970 sponsored demonstrations across the country protesting the “sellout” of Canadian natural gas to the Americans. The Canadian government announced an increase in natural gas exports to the US at the same time as the United States, after months of bilateral energy negotiations, hiked its quota on Canadian oil imports. Tommy Douglas criticized the Trudeau Liberal government’s decision, predicting it would raise the price of gas in Canada. Laxer prophesized an even more disastrous result, describing the federal government as “incompetent” and suggesting the sale was the first step toward a continental energy deal endangering Canadian sovereignty.

In addition to the provincial Waffle groups in Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia, there were sympathetic New Democrats and activists in Nova Scotia, Newfoundland and Quebec who corresponded with prominent Wafflers without forming their own provincial organizations. In New Brunswick, by contrast, a provincial Waffle section was launched in September 1970 despite having had only limited contact with the authors of the Waffle Manifesto. Earlier in 1970 a handful of Trotskyists in Fredericton had contacted the LSA and formed the Fredericton Young Socialists (FYS). Upon discovering there was no NDP to infiltrate in Fredericton, the FYS members approached former NDP candidate Pat Callahan and together they began reorganizing a riding association in the local riding of York-Sunbury. The provincial NDP was without a leader at that point and had run only three candidates in the previous provincial election, all of whom lost their deposits. The nascent New Brunswick Waffle

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was therefore well positioned to revitalize the NDP’s organization, electing Callahan as party president and several other Wafflers to executive positions at a provincial NDP convention. Despite adopting a number of Waffle policies, such as the creation of a mass public transit system, public ownership of natural resource industries and committing the party to supporting women’s liberation, the delegates voted against adopting the Waffle Manifesto by a vote of twenty-four to eighteen and elected non-Waffer J. Albert Richardson as party leader. In the New Brunswick election one month later, the NDP nominated candidates in thirty-one of the province’s fifty-eight ridings, but secured only 2.8% of the popular vote.128

The Ontario NDP’s longtime leader Donald MacDonald had previously fended off a leadership challenge by Jim Renwick in 1968, but by early 1970 Stephen Lewis was mobilizing for his own bid to unseat MacDonald. Lewis contended that after seventeen years headed by MacDonald the party needed a “fresh face.” He built alliances within the provincial caucus, and served as the NDP’s labour critic in an attempt to attract union supporters.129 When senior union leaders and members of the party’s executive failed to dissuade Lewis from following through with his campaign, MacDonald simplified matters somewhat by resigning. As Desmond Morton described the alignment of factions behind Lewis, “senior union leaders had discovered, somewhat to their chagrin, that he had quietly lined up many of the second-level leaders in their organizations as well as Dennis McDermott, the aggressive new leader of the United Autoworkers in Canada.”130

With his friend and former Waffer Gerald Caplan managing the campaign, Lewis

130 Ibid., 109.
announced his candidacy on July 3, 1970, counting fourteen of the twenty-one members of the ONDP caucus amongst his supporters.\(^\text{131}\) Six weeks later, Walter Pitman, MPP for Peterborough since 1967 and now the voice of party members disgruntled over Lewis’s ambitions, announced his own candidacy for the top job.\(^\text{132}\)

With little to differentiate between the two candidates in terms of policy, Pitman contended that his softer and more moderate image would appeal to voters. Lewis, by comparison, portrayed himself as a fighter committed to advancing the party’s principles.\(^\text{133}\) Described in the press as waging “a contest between the centre and right wings of the party,” neither candidate advocated sweeping nationalization, for which they were received with muted enthusiasm at a Waffle meeting in Toronto.\(^\text{134}\) Granted, unlike the restrained Pitman, Lewis’s impassioned rhetoric at times came close to emulating the Waffle’s strident nationalism, if not its emphasis on public ownership.\(^\text{135}\) Indeed, Lewis claimed to have moved further to the left ideologically of late, explaining “there are too many parties clouding up the centre. The place in the political spectrum is for us to take a radical posture on issues” rather than the NDP’s recent “anxious, self-conscious search for respectability and security in a Canadian body politic. It was a false quest and we have paid the price.”\(^\text{136}\)

Based on its own survey data, the Ontario Waffle concluded that with only thirteen percent of convention delegates prepared to vote for a Waffler it was futile for the group to attempt a credible leadership campaign. Yet they also agreed that “it is, of course, obvious to most of us that Stephen Lewis will not lead the party in a socialist direction either in program or in the practice of the party.” As a result, the Waffle concentrated instead on attempting to shape party policy and getting some of their group elected to executive and council positions, including Krista Maeots for ONDP president and John Smart for secretary.

The day before the convention’s official start, Waffle supporters on the provincial council attempted to replace a resolution critical of a recently announced sale of Canada’s natural gas to the United States with a policy of widespread nationalization, but were defeated handily. The Waffle proved more successful the following day. By the overwhelming ratio of twenty to one, the convention adopted a Waffle resolution to nationalize Ontario’s energy resource industries, such as Imperial Oil’s refineries. The resolution also committed the NDP to a “massive public campaign” against a possible continental energy agreement between Canada and the United States. A delighted Laxer described the resolution as a “clear indication” that Ontario New Democrats supported nationalization, and he told reporters that its passage “takes it [NDP policy] a significant step further.” The Globe and Mail noted that none of the party’s leadership spoke

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137 Ontario Waffle, “A discussion of priorities affecting the running of a candidate for the Ontario Leadership of the NDP,” File 446-12, Waffle-NDP fonds, LAC.
138 Ibid.
during the debate, leaving it to the ONDP’s research director Marion Bryden to present the opposing viewpoint. 142 Although both Stephen Lewis and Pitman expressed support for the resolution, both had reservations about the precise extent of the nationalization being proposed. 143 At the initiative of Bruce Kidd, a Waffle, the convention passed a second resolution endorsing the imposition of stiff penalties, including “forfeiture of ownership,” for polluting industries. The Waffle’s housing policy, which called for greater involvement by the Ontario Housing Corporation, financial aid for co-operative housing, and expanded rights for tenant unions, was also approved. Throughout the entirety of the convention, the ONDP women’s caucus, which included Wafflers Krista Maeots, Kelly Crichton, and Jackie Larkin, lobbied tirelessly for a series of resolutions of particular concern to women. 144 On the final day, following an abbreviated debate, the convention endorsed the Waffle’s lengthy resolution on women’s liberation which included prohibitions on gender-based discrimination in hiring and in the workplace, a government-funded houseworkers’ allowance, improved access to child-care, amendments to the nation’s divorce law, and support for abortion on demand. 145 The women’s caucus was stymied, however, in its attempt to pass a constitutional amendment that would have stipulated one-third of the provincial NDP executive must be comprised of women, and elected by women. 146

The Waffle’s candidates for party executive positions also met with some success. Although Krista Maeots lost the presidency to Gordon Vichert by a vote of 818 to 416, 

143 “Lewis, Pitman have reservations about party’s new nationalization policy,” Globe and Mail, October 3, 1970.
145 “Feminists in NDP want to see half of party’s responsible posts in hands of women” Globe and Mail, October 5, 1970.
146 Ibid.
and John Smart was defeated by Gordon Brigden with a similar margin in the election for party secretary, four Wafflers were elected executive members-at-large and Laxer earned a spot on the federal council.\(^{147}\) Yet despite making significant gains pushing its agenda and candidates during the conference, the Ontario Waffle’s statement \textit{For a Socialist Ontario in an Independent Socialist Canada} was defeated by a secret ballot vote of 744 to 628.

Numerically, organized labour wielded greater influence over the convention than did the Waffle. Union members accounted for 830 of the 1868 delegates in attendance, the majority of them Autoworkers or Steelworkers.\(^{148}\) While Walter Pitman continued to emphasize his moderate image and electability amongst conservative Ontarians, it was Lewis who attracted the largest bloc of union delegates, with twice as many present as had attended the previous provincial convention.\(^{149}\) When the votes were counted, Lewis easily prevailed over Pitman 1,188 to 642.

As had been the case at the federal, British Columbia, and Saskatchewan conventions, the Waffle had good reason to be pleased with its performance at Toronto. A number of policy resolutions, most significantly those dealing with energy resources, housing, and women’s liberation had been approved, and the group had even made inroads among union delegates. Cy Gonick, for example, recalled counting at least fifty

\(^{147}\) Ross H. Munro, “NDP resolutions aim to halt Americanization of Ontario’s economy,” \textit{Globe and Mail}, October 5, 1970. The four Wafflers elected to the executive were Krista Maeots, John Smart, Bruce Kidd and Jackie Larkin. Stephen Lewis later recalled that the toughest battles with the Waffle were fought on the provincial executive. Smith, \textit{Unfinished Journey}, 433.

\(^{148}\) Wilfred List, “Labor emerges as key force after record NDP turnout” \textit{Globe and Mail}, October 5, 1970, 1-2. As the CLC noted, the size of the union delegation (830) nearly matched the number of delegates from riding associations (864) at the convention. “October 2-4, 1970 Ontario NDP Provincial Convention,” Box 2009-047/001, File 1 Waffle - CLC Chronology (May 1972), Giles Endicott fonds, YUA.

labour delegates among the 250 attendees at a meeting of the Waffle caucus during the convention.\textsuperscript{150} Also encouraging was the fact both leadership contenders had embraced a pro-nationalist message in their campaigns, albeit with strong reservations about public ownership. All in all, the party appeared poised to highlight economic nationalism in the next provincial election. The \textit{Globe and Mail} was unimpressed; in an editorial it decried the ONDP’s support for nationalization, and dismissively defined its new leader Lewis as “an attractive young man shackled to the wranglers and wafflers.”\textsuperscript{151}

Certainly the Waffle’s influence and successes to this point should not be overstated. Desmond Morton and Gonick suggested that the party establishment’s distraction over the leadership race had enabled the Waffle to fill a policy vacuum at the convention, and neither of the leadership candidates had openly championed controversial policies identified with the Waffle. Indeed, following the convention party leaders publicly downplayed the Waffle’s impact shaping NDP policy. Lewis, during his first press conference as leader, explained “what the party has done is taken a very strong vote for independence. Now we will have to see how that applies in the province of Ontario.”\textsuperscript{152} Jim Renwick, the former deputy leader, suggested that the Waffle resolution on energy resources represented merely a “general statement” which provided caucus with a “framework” for future consideration.\textsuperscript{153} Another party leader, albeit unnamed, claimed the Waffle had been absorbed: “That’s the ballgame… They’ve been sucked into

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the mainstream of the party.” Mel Watkins countered that “the party establishment is not co-opting us, it’s jumping on our bandwagon.”

Following the convention, Lewis reached out to party establishment figures he might have alienated during the leadership race, including appointing Pitman as his deputy leader. Lewis largely dropped whatever radical rhetoric he had employed during the campaign, and began addressing business clubs to reassure them that the prospect of an NDP government was nothing to fear. Lewis also recruited Desmond Morton who, in one of many attacks on the Waffle, deemed its ideology “a particularly archaic, sterile and academic brand of socialism.” Tasked by Lewis to “clean up the radical policy mess left at the convention,” Morton eventually produced a 73-page campaign platform “that only used the word ‘socialist’ once.” Gonick’s post-convention evaluation pointed to the sorts of difficulties likely to confront both the Waffle and the party in the days ahead: “The NDP was boring and dull before the Waffle. The Waffle has made the NDP exciting. How it will retain the delicate balance of simultaneous autonomy from and involvement in the party remains to be seen.”

Disturbing news from Quebec had overshadowed the Ontario NDP convention and Stephen Lewis’s election as party leader. On October 5, 1970 members of the violent separatist Front de libération du Québec (FLQ) kidnapped first the British trade commissioner, James Cross, and five days later Quebec’s Minister of Labour and Immigration, Pierre Laporte. On October 15, in an atmosphere of crisis and uncertainty,

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154 Ibid.
157 “Spring Cleaning: How Stephen Lewis Gave up Wellington Boots, The Waffle, the NDY, and Grew Wiser in His Years,” The Last Post, April-May 1971, 34.
the federal cabinet invoked the War Measures Act, which never before had been used in peacetime, to grant police extraordinary powers of search, seizure and imprisonment. Eventually over five hundred individuals were detained, some as suspected terrorists or their sympathizers, as well as Parti Québécois supporters.\footnote{John English, \textit{Just Watch Me}, 79-80; Murray Goldblatt and John Burns, “FLQ Outlawed – 250 Rounded Up,” \textit{Globe and Mail}, October 17, 1970; “October Crisis,” \textit{The Oxford Companion to Canadian History}, ed. Gerald Hallowel (Don Mills: Oxford University Press, 2004).} All but four members of the NDP’s federal caucus opposed implementation of the War Measures Act, thereby backing their leader Tommy Douglas who condemned it as “overkill on a gargantuan scale… we are not prepared to use the preservation of law and order as a smokescreen to destroy the liberties and the freedom of the people of Canada.”\footnote{“Trudeau’s explanation in the Commons for invoking the War Measures Act,” \textit{Globe and Mail}, October 17, 1970.} According to Morton, many Canadians in turn “vilified the NDP as an alliance of cowards, traitors and secret separatists.”\footnote{Morton, \textit{NDP: Dream of Power}, 120; A CTV poll released on November 15, 1970 revealed that eighty-seven percent of respondents supported the Trudeau government’s implementation of the War Measures Act. English, \textit{Just Watch Me}, 92.} The Waffle demonstrated its support of the federal caucus’s stance by organizing several large public meetings at which the Trudeau government’s use of the War Measures Act was challenged. The Ontario NDP executive declined officially to co-sponsor one such event, although MPs David Lewis and Ed Broadbent each spoke at a demonstration in Toronto that drew several thousand people.\footnote{Minutes of Provincial Executive, October 5-31, 1970, Series 13 Executive and Council Minutes, File 3 Executive and Council Minutes 1968-70, New Democratic Party Ontario fonds, QUA.}

Manitoba’s Ed Schreyer, leader of Canada’s only provincial NDP government at the time, broke with the federal NDP and offered his measured support for the War Measures Act during the October Crisis. The issue continued to hang over delegates to the Manitoba NDP convention in November 1970, where otherwise the speeches and policy debates focused largely on provincial issues. The Manitoba Waffle, when
organizing for the convention, recognized the potential dilemma it faced of being true to its radical roots on the left of the party, yet reluctant to criticize Manitoba’s first social democratic government. As Don Mitchell observed in the *Waffle News*, “with a precariously situated government party, it is difficult to get many left thinking people to identify with the [W]affle. Understandable, and it is probably important the [W]affle group in no public way create the impression of a split in the Manitoba NDP.”163 As it happened, the Waffle suffered a series of policy defeats at the convention involving labour rights, economic and northern development, and a constitutional amendment designed to bind MLAs to uphold party policies.164 Waffler Alvin Finkel complained that cabinet ministers frequently intervened in convention debates to urge delegates not to “tie the hands” of government with specific and radical policy instructions, a practice that threatened to reduce the gathering to “an exercise in cheerleading for the government team.”165 Nevertheless, the Waffle attracted 120 of the convention’s 600 delegates to its public meeting, and filled four of the ten elected executive positions including Una Decter as party vice-president.166 Furthermore, delegates loudly applauded Douglas’s fierce defense of the federal caucus’s opposition to the War Measures Act, yet remained largely silent when Premier Schreyer repeated his qualified support for the Act.167

Although unhappy that the NDP leadership exercised such firm control, Wafflers were

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optimistic that a lack of policy debate or meaningful consultation among party members would ultimately direct more people into the Waffle.\(^{168}\)

One year after the federal NDP convention debate that shot the group into prominence, the Waffle had established itself as a significant minority within the NDP. The Waffle boasted a presence virtually everywhere that the NDP did, demonstrating its capacity to influence the party’s policy and leadership elections at the provincial level. The Waffle had also acted on its commitment to engage with extra-parliamentary social movement activism through strike support, abortion law protests, and public demonstrations against the War Measures Act, at times dragging the NDP along with it. Within the party, the Waffle had a strong presence in the minuscule NDP sections in Atlantic Canada, although Wafflers in Newfoundland, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick tended to be too busy organizing the largely moribund NDP to cause significant conflict with the party leadership.\(^{169}\) In Ontario, the largest Waffle group had influenced the provincial party’s policies and ensured that Stephen Lewis was elected leader over the more moderate Walter Pitman. The Manitoba Waffle, despite its weakness at the convention, continued to organize and featured a spokesperson in MLA Cy Gonick capable of publicizing their criticisms of Premier Schreyer and the NDP government. In Saskatchewan the Waffle’s leadership candidate had achieved a respectable 25 per cent of the vote in the provincial party’s leadership contest, had helped elect Allan Blakeney instead of Roy Romanow, and had significantly influenced the party’s policy on


\(^{169}\) In Nova Scotia, NDP leader Jeremy Akerman had been an early supporter of the Waffle Manifesto, and his efforts at building the NDP in Cape Breton were not in vain as both he and Paul MacEwan were elected there in the October 1970 election. In New Brunswick, the Waffle was dominated by Trotskyists associated with the LSA, and significant conflict would soon arise there.
agriculture. The BC Waffle, while not as organized as the Ontario or Saskatchewan groups, had also influenced the provincial party’s policies at convention, content to work with a leader and caucus that appeared sympathetic to their cause. After one year of organized activity, the Waffle’s efforts to transform the NDP had borne some fruit. But the Waffle’s plans to run a leadership candidate to succeed Tommy Douglas as leader of the federal NDP would bring the group into direct conflict with established party and union leaders and set the stage for open struggle within the party.
Chapter Five
Waffling in Winnipeg, London, and Saskatoon

This chapter diverges from the chronological narrative of the Waffle and the NDP at national and provincial levels to examine the activists and activities of local Waffle chapters in three diverse localities.\(^1\) The history of the Waffle is not only one of intra-party conflict, nor was the group’s impact limited to the resurgent Canadian nationalism of the 1970s. Instead, as has been discussed earlier, the Waffle’s struggle within the NDP both developed out of the existing work of New Left activists and inspired Wafflers to engage in local, extra-parliamentary struggles. Examining the grassroots of the Waffle in Winnipeg, London and Saskatoon demonstrates that Waffle activists, in addition to working within the NDP to advocate for socialism and Canadian independence, engaged in extra-parliamentary social movements within their local communities. These movements included second-wave feminism, anti-Vietnam War protests, aid for draft resisters, and support for striking workers, as well as participation in municipal politics. Furthermore, election campaigns undertaken by local Waffle chapters, including municipally in Winnipeg in 1971, federally in Middlesex-Lambton-London in 1974, and provincially in Saskatoon-Centre in 1975, demonstrate their efforts to engage in a different sort of electoral politics, emphasizing policy issues instead of merely winning votes.

The three Waffle chapters were chosen primarily on the basis of available archival materials and oral histories. Together they provide an opportunity for comparisons. Winnipeg was the centre of both the provincial NDP and Waffle in Manitoba and had a

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\(^1\) This chapter includes material previously published as “Waffling in Winnipeg and London: Canada’s New Left and the NDP, 1965-75,” in *Party of Conscience: The CCF, the NDP, and Social Democracy in Canada*, eds. Roberta Lexier, Stephanie Bangarth, and Jon Weier (Toronto: Between the Lines, 2018): 72-82, and is reproduced with permission.
long history of left-wing radicalism tempered by the election of a moderate NDP government in 1969. London was neither a hotbed of NDP support nor the home of Ontario’s Waffle leadership, but it contained the third-largest local chapter in the province drawing supporters from the UAW as well as the University of Western Ontario (UWO). Saskatoon was not the centre of the provincial Waffle leadership – that title belonged to the Regina chapter – but it was the largest provincial chapter and took on enhanced significance for the group after John Richards’s election as an NDP-Waffle MLA for the riding of Saskatoon-University in 1971.

Over the winter holidays in 1969-70, an initial gathering of “about thirty” people established a Waffle group in Winnipeg following the Manifesto’s well-publicized defeat at the federal NDP convention just a few months before. With an expanding student population, a tradition of left radicalism and the presence of a sympathetic MLA schooled in the New Left, in many ways Winnipeg was an ideal city for the Waffle to organize support. Winnipeg’s status as the “gateway to the west” had declined as the city grew and transformed in the decades following the Second World War. In becoming a major urban centre for the surrounding hinterland, metropolitan Winnipeg increasingly dominated the province’s economy, especially in finance, insurance, trade, services, construction, transportation, communications, and utilities, while accounting for nearly two-thirds of the province’s employment. While the city experienced a slight population decline in the 1960s, the rapid expansion of the surrounding suburban communities increased metropolitan Winnipeg’s population by over 30,000 to 540,000 during the five

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years prior to 1971.\(^4\) Skyrocketing demand for postsecondary education led to the creation of the University of Winnipeg, newly separated from the University of Manitoba, in 1967.\(^5\) The city historically attracted a diverse population, but whereas working-class north Winnipeg had a well-deserved reputation for radicalism, having previously elected both CCF/NDP and Communist representatives at the municipal, provincial, and federal levels, south Winnipeg was considered equally conservative.\(^6\) The city’s municipal politics had been dominated by a pro-business, anti-socialist coalition since 1919, but the Manitoba NDP’s provincial election victory in 1969 depended on strong urban support, with seventeen of the party’s twenty-eight MLAs coming from Winnipeg.

After focusing on the New Democratic Youth (NDY), Winnipeg Wafflers prepared position papers on Manitoba’s economic development and labour issues in a bid to influence the provincial NDP convention in the autumn of 1970. Throughout that year a group met regularly at the Dimension bookshop run by Cy Gonick, the NDP MLA for the Winnipeg riding of Crescentwood, to discuss issues such as foreign ownership, the Americanization of universities, and independent Canadian unions.\(^7\) In the fall of 1970, two young Wafflers, Arthur Schafer and Michael Mendelson, began hosting regular political education meetings. The provincial group elected a steering committee, chaired by Sheila Kuziak and comprised almost exclusively of Wafflers from Winnipeg.\(^8\) Indeed,

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\(^6\) Brownstone, *Metropolitan Winnipeg*, 17; See Wiseman, *Social Democracy in Manitoba* for background on the party’s electoral record in Winnipeg.

\(^7\) “On the Move in Manitoba,” *Waffle News*, May 1970, Box 2008-017/001, File 1, Kim Malcolmson and Paul Barber fonds, YUA.

\(^8\) Sheila Kuziak to Kim Malcolmson, November 15, 1970, and Sheila Kuziak to Kim Malcolmson, November 29, 1970, Box 2008-017/001, File 5, Kim Malcolmson and Paul Barber fonds, YUA.
all but seventeen of the 182 names on the Manitoba Waffle’s mailing list in late 1971 hailed from Winnipeg. The Winnipeg Waffle group managed to elect to the federal NDP leadership convention in support of Waffle candidate James Laxer “a number of delegates largely representing the New Democratic Youth and the federal constituency of Winnipeg South.”9 In the summer of 1971 the group restructured, began publishing a newsletter for the Manitoba Waffle, offered support to striking construction workers and started organizing for Winnipeg’s municipal elections in October.

The Winnipeg Waffle would focus much of its efforts on local issues.10 The creation of the amalgamated metropolis of Winnipeg “unicity” and its first municipal elections in the fall of 1971 engendered much local public debate including among members of the Winnipeg Waffle. Furthermore, the NDP ran a slate of candidates on a unified municipal party platform. The Winnipeg Waffle, concerned that “unless the left within the party draws up a concrete set of proposals for the NDP’s policy convention, there can be little doubt that the party will run on a platform indistinguishable from the platform of real estate groups,” organized an Urban Policy Conference in June 1971.11 At the conference the Winnipeg Waffle developed policies on housing, taxation, transportation and citizen involvement in the newly amalgamated city, and made plans to support the nomination of Waffle sympathizers and left-wingers as NDP candidates in the

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9 Paul Barber, “Ten Wafflers in Manitoba, Appendix I – A Short History of the Manitoba Waffle,” Box 2008-017/001, File 8, Kim Malcolmson and Paul Barber fonds, YUA.
10 Many of the Manifesto’s original authors were certainly familiar with the successful community-organizing efforts in north Kingston which, supported by the local NDP, resulted in the election of a New Left activist to city council in 1968, as discussed in Chapter Four. James Laxer portrayed the election of Joan Newman, representing the Association for Tenants’ Action, Kingston, to city council in Kingston, as representing “the beginnings of a new coalition of poor tenants, labour and students” but the leadership of the Ontario Waffle showed little interest in organizing to influence municipal politics thereafter. Dan Heap was elected in Toronto’s 1972 municipal election after leaving the group. However, Wafflers outside of Ontario undertook several municipal election campaigns.
11 Manitoba Waffle News n.d. [1971], File 446-21, Waffle-NDP fonds, LAC.
upcoming municipal election. At the NDP’s Municipal Policy Convention in August 1971, the Winnipeg Waffle was, by its own account, “relatively successful in winning support for its policies.” The NDP’s municipal platform clearly reflected Waffle policies including proposals to nationalize the Greater Winnipeg Gas Company, and create a Winnipeg public housing corporation, a mass-transit system, and more progressive taxation. Although Waffle sympathizer and incumbent Metro councillor Andrew Robertson lost to fellow councillor Art Coulter the vote to become party electoral chair by 125 to 90, Robertson was elected to a three-person leadership committee for the municipal NDP, and a Waffle resolution binding NDP councillors to the party’s policy platform was passed. Nevertheless, only three Waffle-supported candidates won their nomination as NDP candidates, and none were elected in the October general election. The NDP elected only seven councillors, while the right-wing Independent Citizens’ Election Committee elected thirty-seven. On a more positive note, one Waffle-supported candidate and four other New Democrats were elected to the Winnipeg school board, constituting a left-wing majority. In a reflection on the NDP’s poor showing in the city’s north end, Waffler Alvin Finkel acknowledged the advantage enjoyed by incumbents and the strong support for Communist councilor Joe Zuken, but complained the “NDP has to date completely failed to make people think of municipal elections as important” and urged candidates to “run issue-oriented campaigns” instead of seeking election based on the party brand. Waffler Paul Barber emphasized the city’s

12 Ibid.
13 Paul Barber, “Ten Wafflers in Manitoba, Appendix I – A Short History of the Manitoba Waffle,” Box 2008-017/001, File 8, Kim Malcolmson and Paul Barber fonds, YUA.
“class cleavages” in his analysis of the campaign and pointed to Waffler Carol Fogel’s strong support in an “area of older, small, working class homes” in comparison with her poor showing in wealthier parts of south Winnipeg. Barber warned that unless the NDP challenged the “capitalist value structure” and altered Canadians’ “political consciousness” it should expect little success at the ballot box.¹⁷

Following the municipal election the Winnipeg Waffle produced four pamphlets outlining its policy positions, distributed them at the Manitoba NDP convention in November and held a “well-attended public meeting” featuring Saskatchewan Waffle MLA John Richards. After several educational meetings in March and April 1972, the group’s activity slowed as its members became disillusioned with the NDP government. At the same time, several Winnipeg Wafflers began to publish an alternative newspaper titled Prairie Dog Press which continued until August 1973.¹⁸

As was the case in Winnipeg, the Waffle in London drew a large portion of its members from the local university community. Unlike in Winnipeg, however, it also had a base in the labour movement, specifically the large UAW Local 27. London in the late 1960s and early 1970s was in many ways true to its image as a conservative, white, Anglo-Saxon Protestant city. With a population of 200,000 London was home to insurance and trust companies, as well as John Robarts, Ontario’s Progressive Conservative Premier from 1961 to 1971. But significant change was afoot as the city underwent a decade of suburban expansion and industrial growth. UWO was growing too, with the addition of eight new academic buildings and three student residences

¹⁸ Paul Barber, “Ten Wafflers in Manitoba, Appendix I – A Short History of the Manitoba Waffle,” Box 2008-017/001, File 8, Kim Malcolmson and Paul Barber fonds, YUA.
during the 1960s, while Fanshawe College of Applied Arts and Technology opened in 1967.\footnote{Orlo Miller, \textit{London 200: An Illustrated History} (London, Ontario: London Chamber of Commerce, 1992), 216.} Immigration from south Asia, Africa and the Caribbean changed the face of London in this period, as diverse communities expanded across the city.\footnote{Miller, \textit{London 200}, 221-2. The Cross Cultural Learners Centre, established in 1968, became an important service centre for recent immigrants in the city.} Furthermore, London fostered a dynamic art scene in the 1960s where nationally renowned artists worked, taught, and fostered a vibrant creative atmosphere.\footnote{Nancy Geddes Poole, \textit{The Art of London, 1830-1980} (London, Ontario: Blackpool Press, 1984), 125.} Although the Liberals and Conservatives had long dominated London’s politics, this too began to change in the 1960s. Anglican archdeacon Kenneth Bolton won a 1969 by-election for the NDP in Middlesex South, a riding containing part of London, while in 1972 Jane Bigelow became the first female and New Democrat to become the city’s mayor.\footnote{Miller, \textit{London 200}, 223-4.} The Ontario Young New Democrats (OYND) reported having two clubs in London in 1970, including a campus club at UWO. The OYND indicated “many of the NDP and NDY in London seem to be from a first or second generation European family, probably because the WASP power structure has tended to exclude them.”\footnote{Ontario Young New Democrats Newsletter, May 1970, Series 20 File, File 657 ONDY, New Democratic Party of Ontario fonds, QUA.}

The key figures in the London Waffle were Mary and Al Campbell. Mary Campbell, who worked at the UWO library, was active in a variety of social justice groups, including the Committee to End Canada’s Complicity in Viet Nam, the Voice of Women, and the Women’s Auxiliary for Auto Workers. She was also involved in early attempts to unionize staff at the university.\footnote{Roberta McClelland, “Mary Campbell,” in \textit{100 Fascinating Londoners}, eds. Michael Baker and Hilary Bates Neary (Toronto: James Lorimer & Company, 2005).} Hilary Bates Neary, who worked with Mary Campbell, describes her as “an organizer… She knew exactly why she held certain
political attitudes and beliefs. I’m not saying she was a rabid proselytizer, but she never lost an opportunity to remind people why things were the way they were and how they could change.”

Bates Neary and Margaret Simpson, a social work professor at Fanshawe College, remember Mary Campbell welcoming and helping American draft evaders in addition to her other activism. Both Mary Campbell and her husband Al, an employee at Eaton Automotive and former president of UAW Local 27, were active in the NDP riding association and supported Waffle positions, albeit with limited success, at local party meetings.

The London Waffle’s 1972 mailing list of 128 people is not truly indicative of local support for the group as it included both Wafflers and its opponents. Several New Democrats on the list ran for party offices in opposition to the Waffle, such as Charles and Jane Bigelow, or denied any involvement with the Waffle. Another London Waffler, Paddy Musson, a graduate student, suggests “Mary Campbell would see all of those people as people she could talk into supporting something she was interested in.” After the Ontario Waffle decided to form the Movement for an Independent Socialist Canada (MISC) at the August 1972 conference at Delaware, a decision that split the twelve-person London delegation, the number of Waffle supporters declined. Still, between November 1972 and September 1974 the London Waffle’s membership ranged between twenty-nine and forty-three, making it the largest local chapter outside of Toronto and Ottawa. Many London Wafflers continued to support the NDP after MISC’s formation.

One of the delegates to the Delaware conference remembers that he “wanted to remain in

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25 Hilary Bates Neary interview.
27 Paddy Musson interview.
the party… because I thought it [MISC] would be a dissipation of our energies – we
couldn’t afford to do that.”

He remained a NDP member and volunteered for election
campaigns throughout the 1970s. Paddy Musson also remained involved with the NDP,
including running as a candidate in the 1979 and 1980 federal elections. In contrast,
UWO professor Henry Roper’s frustration with the ONDP’s treatment of the Waffle led
him to resolve not to work for the NDP after 1972.

As well as Campbell’s colleagues at the university library, the London Waffle
mailing list included the names of professors and graduate students at UWO. Craig
Simpson, a history professor, had moved to London after attending university in the
United States, where he and his spouse Margaret Simpson were radicalized by the anti-
Vietnam War and student movements. Craig Simpson remembers “we’d come from a
highly politicized environment, where by that time I think it’s fair to say that we were
ready for some action.” Another faculty member, Henry Roper, had been politically
involved prior to joining the Waffle, both as a canvasser for the British Labour Party in
1964 while studying at Cambridge University, and as campaign manager for an NDP
candidate in Halifax in 1968. Roper suggests that he was sympathetic to the Waffle’s
nationalism and influenced by the Vietnam War, concerns over Canada becoming a
“branch plant economy,” the writings of George Grant, and the perception that Canadian
universities were hiring too many American professors. The mailing list also included
members of London’s burgeoning arts community alongside the professors, students, and

29 Craig Simpson interview
31 Musson interview.
32 Henry Roper interview.
33 Craig Simpson interview.
34 Roper interview.
Al Campbell’s co-workers at the Eaton Automotive plant. Among several London artists involved with the Waffle, Greg Curnoe was the best known.\textsuperscript{35} Curnoe had gained national notoriety in 1968 when his 110-foot mural at Montreal’s Dorval airport was taken down after just four days for its “anti-American” content.\textsuperscript{36} Hugh McIntyre, another London artist and Waffler, co-founded the improvisational Nihilist Spasm Band with Curnoe and others during the late 1960s.

The London Waffle’s primary activity outside the NDP was in providing support for workers, for example by opposing the closure of the American-owned Eaton Automotive factory and joining striking workers at Brantford’s Texpack plant. London Wafflers also helped organize the Ontario Waffle’s Delaware conference during the summer of 1972 when, after contentious debate, the group split and the majority left the NDP to form the Movement for an Independent Socialist Canada. Mary Campbell was one of three MISC candidates to run in the 1974 federal election, but received only a fraction of the NDP’s vote in the riding of Middlesex-Lambton-London.\textsuperscript{37} The London Waffle characterized the campaign as an opportunity to educate people about the Waffle’s positions on independence and socialism. Campbell had decided to run in Middlesex-Lambton-London instead of London West since it was “Waffle policy not to run against left-wing NDP candidates,” or in London East, where the NDP candidate Ray

\textsuperscript{35} See James King, \emph{The Way It Is: The Life of Greg Curnoe} (Toronto: Dundurn, 2017) for a biography of this controversial and fascinating artist.

\textsuperscript{36} Poole, \emph{The Art of London}, 140-1. The mural, titled \emph{Homage to the R 34}, included texts referencing draft-dodger Muhammad Ali and a page from the artist’s journal deemed anti-American. Moreover, Curnoe’s depiction of a man falling out of a gondola with his hand severed by the propeller bore an uncanny likeness to U.S. president Lyndon Johnson, although Curnoe claimed it was based on a neighbour.

\textsuperscript{37} Interestingly, Campbell chose to run in Middlesex-Lambton-London out of concern for the NDP candidate’s prospects in the other, more traditionally left-wing, London ridings. “London Election Report,” \emph{Advance}, September 23, 1973, Box 1, File 8, New Democratic Party Waffle Collection, MUA.
Funk was believed to have a strong chance of winning.\textsuperscript{38} Furthermore, the London group had been surprised by the Ontario Waffle election strategy committee’s decision to field a candidate in London and were ill-prepared for a full-fledged campaign. In an attempt to engage electors in more substantial discussions than usually occur during campaign door-to-door canvassing, they opted to canvass one-third of the riding twice. The first visit, a “light canvass,” was limited to leafleting, whereas during the second sweep they sought to engage people in longer discussions about socialism and the Waffle’s policies.\textsuperscript{39} Unfortunately, they failed to convince voters the Waffle’s long-term socialist program was substantially different from other parties’ short-term election promises. The London Wafflers also regretted not preparing a pamphlet focusing on women’s issues despite running a female candidate.\textsuperscript{40}

The London Waffle’s primary extra-parliamentary activity was to support local left-wing labour causes. Al Campbell, president of the large UAW Local 27 and longtime editor of its newsletter had formerly been a Communist Party (CP) member and electoral candidate.\textsuperscript{41} Although Campbell had left the CP in 1956, he was still regarded as a leftist within the UAW by the union leadership.\textsuperscript{42} When London’s Eaton Automotive plant, where many members of the left wing of UAW Local 27 worked, closed in 1971, Campbell found himself out of a job and the UAW.\textsuperscript{43} The London Waffle’s prompt response was to organize a meeting to decry plant closures by American-owned companies and to picket the Eaton Automotive plant alongside activists

\textsuperscript{38} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{39} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{40} Ibid.  
\textsuperscript{42} Ibid., 80.  
\textsuperscript{43} Ibid., 44.
of the Militant Co-Op group.  In light of the plant’s impending closure, Campbell, a Laxer supporter and delegate at the federal NDP’s April 1971 convention in Ottawa, led his fellow New Democrats in a spontaneous protest on Parliament Hill against the Liberal government’s economic strategy.

London Wafflers also participated in the September 1971 Texpack strike in Brantford. The strike set a small independent Canadian union representing a primarily female workforce against a large American-based multinational corporation. While wages and benefits were in dispute, Kent Rowley and Madeleine Parent, the leaders of the Canadian Textile and Chemical Union (CTCU), considered the phasing out of manufacturing operations at Brantford a fundamental issue. The Texpack strike encapsulated several significant issues for the Waffle, including Canadian economic underdevelopment, foreign ownership, exploitation of female workers, and the influence of conservative international unions. Craig Simpson recalls:

The issue involved the strikebreakers, who were coming up in their buses, and he [Rowley] broke the containment of the police and ran off in front and tried to position himself – like the man in Tiananmen square with the tank – and the lead bus had to stop. And he was whacked a couple of times by the cops and hauled out of the way. And that infuriated many of us, and the cops formed a cordon protecting the area for the buses to go into the plant.

As the crowd of demonstrators surged forward, police ordered them to disperse as a court injunction had limited to seven the number of pickets permitted at the plant. Several Wafflers became involved in heated arguments with the police, including Simpson who

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44 Cy Gonick, *A Very Red Life: The Story of Bill Walsh* (St. John’s: Canadian Committee on Labour History, 2001), 252. One of the Eaton Automotive workers told a local reporter that he did not want the plant closure to be “used as a political platform for groups such as Militant Co-Op or the NDP Waffles.” Quotation in Russell, “The Union Local,” 44.


47 Craig Simpson interview.
had to be restrained by his friends. London Wafflers Henry Roper, Al Campbell and James Napier were arrested along with eleven others, including Mel Watkins, Steve Penner, Robert Laxer and Daniel Drache.\textsuperscript{48} Roper recalls being separated from the others in jail for several hours before undergoing police questioning and eventually being charged with obstructing a police officer in the course of duty.\textsuperscript{49} After the arrests, the remaining Wafflers drove to the courthouse to wait for their friends to be released on bail. The obstruction charges against the London Wafflers were later dropped, and Roper suggested “they weren’t interested in me, I wasn’t high-profile” like some of the other Wafflers arrested.\textsuperscript{50} Although the strike was not resolved until October, the Waffle’s participation in the Texpack demonstration drew attention to the company’s use of replacement workers and the Waffle’s criticisms of foreign ownership.

The Saskatoon Waffle, like the groups in Winnipeg and London, drew much of its support from young people. Saskatoon experienced significant population growth throughout the 1960s that led to the construction of a new freeway, bridge, and residential neighbourhoods, especially on the east side of the city. The removal of the rail yards from downtown resulted in the construction of a shopping mall, YMCA building, and the Centennial Auditorium.\textsuperscript{51} The construction of office buildings and residential high-rises “was rapidly changing the look and feel of Saskatoon’s downtown.”\textsuperscript{52} Like Winnipeg and London, post-secondary education institutions responded to the influx of baby


\textsuperscript{49} Henry Roper interview.

\textsuperscript{50} Ibid.


\textsuperscript{52} Ibid., 122.
boomers in Saskatoon. The University of Saskatchewan expanded in numbers of students and buildings, and the Saskatchewan Technical Institute opened in 1959.53

Members of the Saskatoon Waffle were drawn to the group through their backgrounds in student and anti-war activism. John Conway, Don Mitchell and Don Kossick served as editors of the Carillon, the often controversial student newspaper of the Regina campus of the University of Saskatchewan in the mid-1960s. Conway described his experience as an undergraduate during the Sixties as an “awakening” and recalled being fired as editor for placing a picture of a frosh parade directly adjacent a photograph of Vietnamese people suffering and dying from American bombs.54 Likewise, Don Kossick recalled students being radicalized over issues such as opposition to the Vietnam War, racism against native peoples, student power and university autonomy. He explained “I tended to come to the Waffle more through the organizing work in the student’s movement and the farming union.”55 Don Mitchell pointed out that opposition to the Vietnam War was "really where I got that commitment because I came out of a conservative family, I was a student conservative in Saskatoon, I mean large-C, I was a member of the Young Progressive Conservatives,” and it was “only gradually, through these issues on campus, that I got drawn into broader politics."56 Mitchell, like Kossick, organized for the National Farmers Union alongside numerous other Wafflers, including Conway, John Warnock, Lorne Brown, Gerry Sperling, Doug Daniels and Pat

53 Ibid., 104.
54 John Conway interviewed by Sadia Zaman, April 7, 1987, R-10, 315, Saskatchewan Student Unrest Oral History Project, SAB (Regina).
Gallagher. Kossick explained that “we were looking for a politics that was beyond the formalized NDP. And while we were looking at that we also recognized that we were also sitting in opposition, trying to get rid of the Thatcher government.”

John Richards, a twenty-six-year-old graduate student who had studied as an undergraduate at the University of Saskatchewan prior to moving to St. Louis, planned to return to the province and seek the nomination as an NDP candidate in Saskatoon for the 1971 election. Richards was preoccupied with the escalating anti-Vietnam War movement at Washington University for much of the spring of 1970. Protests led by the Washington University Liberation Front (WULF) culminated in a mass demonstration outside the campus Reserve Officers’ Training Corps (ROTC) building which ended after a protestors threw a cherry bomb firecracker that set the building on fire. As one of the demonstration organizers, Richards was charged with unlawful assembly. Soon thereafter John Warnock gave Richards, who had previously researched the development of Saskatchewan’s potash industry and kept abreast of the province’s politics, some Waffle literature and encouraged him to seek the NDP nomination in Saskatoon-University when he returned to Canada later in 1970. Warnock explained “we are going to stress the necessity of a young candidate, to win the university vote. The new dormitories will place about 800 new voters in that riding. We think we can get the wafflers out – the right has not been showing up for meetings in Saskatoon.”

59 John Richards to Jack Warnock, May 19, 1970, File II.3 Correspondence 1968-1971, John Richards Papers, SAB (Saskatoon). Richards was given a six-month suspended sentence and two years probation for “supplying red paint to an anti-ROTC demonstration” which he admitted to organizing.
60 Jack Warnock to John Richards, May 11, 1970, File II.3 Correspondence 1968-1971, John Richards Papers, SAB (Saskatoon).
61 Ibid.
accepted the invitation, claiming his decision to trade extra-parliamentary protest for the nomination of a major political party could be explained in part by differences between American and Canadian politics:

In America, there is no parliamentary politics worthy of the name. The only kind of popular politics involves people in the streets, demonstrating, both violently and non-violently; against the war, against racism, and against a great number of other things which are wrong with America. Thus, from afar I began to appreciate more, one of the few things which does separate Saskatchewan, and Canada in general, from the States; that there still remains, hopefully, enough of democratic socialist politics within the New Democratic Party that one can avoid the kind of politics that’s got to be fought in the States. A politics which is much more violent, much more dangerous and altogether frightening… One shouldn’t forget, however, that one of the things which defines Waffle is that it is, in some sense, consciously distinguishing itself from ordinary New Left politics. Whereas ordinary New Left politics has as its axiom that Parliamentary Politics ‘Stinks’; the Waffle has as its axiom that we must make a last desperate effort to win over the NDP.⁶²

The Saskatoon Waffle operated informally until 1972 when the provincial group adopted a constitution that provided for formally organized local chapters. The Saskatoon Waffle adopted a “revised strategy” to redirect its efforts toward “building an active socialist political base within the community through direct action” and “moving away from an exclusive concern with radical organizing within the NDP.”⁶³ They established committees on university reform, resources, co-ops, community clinics, communications, and a trailer park in the Sutherland neighbourhood.⁶⁴ The university reform committee organized a seminar in February 1973 titled “The University: Who Benefits?” attended by sixty people which provided the impetus for Saskatoon Waffler Ed Mahood to draft a policy paper on education for the provincial group. The

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⁶³ Saskatoon Waffle Meeting Minutes, November 13, 1972, File III.25, Waffle – Locals, John Richards Papers, SAB (Saskatoon).
⁶⁴ Ibid.
committees focused on community health clinics and the threatened Sutherland trailer park resolved to meet with activists and offer assistance. Individual members contacted the Unemployed Citizens Welfare Improvement Council in Saskatoon and developed a welfare rights policy for the provincial Waffle. According to the chair, the Saskatoon group also “played a leading role in the Sask Oil Campaign” for the establishment of a publicly-owned oil company by preparing and distributing pamphlets, bumper stickers, buttons and posters, holding a one-day seminar on campus, and gathering signatures for a petition.

The Saskatoon group also established a citizens’ committee which mobilized a “progressive coalition” including the Métis Society, legal aid clinics, native women, and the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union (RWDSU) to support three left-wing candidates running independently of the NDP in the October 1973 municipal elections – the Wafflers Nora Thibodeau, Mary Arpin and Vicki Wilson. The committee reported that the “coalition formed enthusiastically without any serious dissension over being in the field against a secret NDP-labour slate.” Fifty volunteers canvassed the city for the three Wafflers and prepared a four-page tabloid with help from The Sheaf, the student newspaper at the University of Saskatchewan. The committee was pleased with its efforts, explaining “the vote ran between 3 and 12 percent and some promising contacts were made.”

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65 Saskatoon Waffle Meeting Minutes, December 18, 1972, File III.25, Waffle – Locals, John Richards Papers, SAB (Saskatoon).
68 Ibid.
In the summer of 1972, before organizing as a formal chapter, the Waffle registered 124 supporters in Saskatoon. The following year Rob Dumont, the local chairperson, reported that the Saskatoon Waffle had seventy members and an additional 125 people on its contact list. He praised Waffle MLA John Richards as a “pamphleteer, orator, mediator, researcher, organizer, agitator and always a socialist,” but the activities of the Saskatoon Waffle were sustained by a dedicated group of activists including Dumont, Duncan Bury, Gerry Kowalenko, June Santjes, John Piper, Jill Sargent and Don Kerr. Dumont acknowledged that “liaison and communication with the women’s movement has been very bad” and recommended that the next chair be an active feminist and a “rigid policy of parity on all committees be reaffirmed by the Saskatoon local.” Furthermore, Dumont regretted that work amongst Saskatoon unions had been “minimal,” for which he blamed the “uncertainty” of the provincial Waffle’s position on the labour movement and the “underrepresentation of working people in the Saskatoon local.” Although no longer chairperson, Dumont remained actively involved in the group’s next major undertaking – John Richards’s re-election campaign – which preoccupied the Saskatoon Waffle for the ensuing year-and-a-half.

The “Independent Socialist” campaign committee established by the Saskatoon Waffle decided early on that its primary aim was to “successfully raise socialist issues of substance,” and maintained that although “it would be nice to win – not least because

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69 Proposal for Regional Workshops, Summer 1972, File III.26(1), Waffle Meetings, John Richards Papers, SAB (Saskatoon).
70 Saskatoon Waffle Chairperson’s Report, October 1973, File III.25, Waffle – Locals, John Richards Papers, SAB (Saskatoon).
71 Ibid.
72 Ibid.
Richards needs a job” electoral success remained a “secondary goal.” Running in the newly-created riding of Saskatoon-Centre, Richards sought to increase his profile by canvassing, holding public meetings, and criticizing the NDP government from the left in the media. Nearly fifty canvassers assisted the Richards campaign despite realizing that Paul Mostoway, the NDP candidate, was “folksy and poses a real threat.” Researching and writing policy for the Richards campaign was a group effort. The campaign committee produced tabloid-style information pieces titled *Citizens’ Advocate* which addressed issues such as public ownership of provincial energy resources, housing in Saskatoon, and the “colonial state” of northern Saskatchewan, as well as pamphlets on senior citizens, women, health care and resources. In keeping with the campaign’s goal of raising socialist issues, pamphlets such as the one titled “Bread and Butter Issues” sought to educate its recipients about the global politics of food production, trade agreements and overconsumption using poetic verse and featuring a suggested reading list including the books *Small is Beautiful: Economics as if People Mattered* by E.F. Schumacher and *Diet for a Small Planet* by Frances Lappe.

At the campaign launch Richards argued that “residents of this constituency suffer more than their share of the injustices of our present society” and emphasized six policy areas. He advocated for public ownership of urban land to prevent speculation, and promoted low-cost public housing and the preservation of heritage properties in older neighbourhoods. He proposed community health centres as an alternative to private

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73 Tentative Proposals for an Election Campaign, February 22, 1974, File III.17, Saskatoon-Centre, 1974-75, John Richards Papers, SAB (Saskatoon).
74 Canvassers Meeting, June 6, 1975 and Minutes of the Committee of Fifteen, February 4, 1975, File III.17, Saskatoon-Centre, 1974-75, John Richards Papers, SAB (Saskatoon).
75 Bread and Butter Issues pamphlet, 1975, File III.17, Saskatoon-Centre, 1974-75, John Richards Papers, SAB (Saskatoon).
medical practices, and a provincial prescription drug program. Richards’s platform also included mandating that a majority of university faculty positions be held by Canadians, and measures to alleviate unemployment and poverty among Saskatchewan’s native peoples. Despite presenting a detailed slate of policies and recruiting a dedicated group of supporters, Richards’s educative approach to the campaign did not result in his re-election.

The provincial Waffle’s decision not to support Richards’s 1975 re-election bid had devastating ramifications for its Saskatoon chapter. After an extended debate during 1974, which is discussed in Chapter Ten, over the purpose and value of participating in electoral politics left the issue unresolved, Richards opted to run as an independent candidate with the support of the Saskatoon Waffle. The provincial Waffle ultimately declined to back a campaign for the re-election of a “social democrat,” albeit one to the left of the governing NDP. Most Saskatoon Wafflers joined Richards’s “Independent Socialist” campaign committee leaving the local chapter of the Waffle in “shambles.”

John Warnock suggests that “resentment” over the Waffle’s treatment of Richards accounted for the group’s decline in that city, explaining:

From ’69 to the spring of ’74 I was in Saskatoon and during the period when they were in the NDP we had enormous... well probably enormous representation in our meetings and in our phoning lists and everything else. I mean we had a very large group in Saskatoon... it’s really surprising to see that as big a group as we had in Saskatoon kind of just disappeared completely.

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76 News Release: Campaign Launch John Richards, March 29, 1974, File III.17, Saskatoon-Centre, 1974-75, John Richards Papers, SAB (Saskatoon).
77 See Chapter Ten for a further discussion of the 1975 Saskatchewan election.
78 Letter from Blue Caucus, Waffle Newsletter, Special Issue, 1975, File II.35 Newsletters, c. 1971-1979, Saskatchewan Waffle fonds, SAB (Regina).
After 1975, in the absence of a large contingent from Saskatoon, the provincial Waffle was increasingly dominated by a Regina-based group. After ten members of the International Socialists (IS) resigned from the organization in August 1975 “there was practically no representation from Saskatoon.”

The political foci of the Waffle chapters in Winnipeg, London and Saskatoon varied, but each one attracted activists from the burgeoning women’s liberation movement. The Waffle’s advocacy of government-funded wages for housework reflected the ongoing theoretical debates amongst early Canadian women’s liberationists. Authors Adamson, Briskin and McPhail explain that “the debate on wages for housework was an important theoretical and strategic turning point for many socialist women,” who realized that women’s liberation could be approached from a Marxist-influenced analysis. Women’s liberationists in the Waffle were among the organizers of the 1970 Abortion Caravan which travelled across the country to protest the continued criminalization of many abortions and the difficulty in accessing legal abortions in many parts of the country. As was discussed in Chapter Four, Wafflers

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80 Ibid. At the Saskatchewan Waffle’s October 1973 conference in Moose Jaw, delegates from Regina outnumbered those from Saskatoon fifty-nine to forty-six despite the Saskatoon membership outnumbering that of Regina 124 to fifty-six in the summer of 1972.

81 Margaret Benston “The Political Economy of Women’s Liberation,” *Monthly Review* 21, no. 4 (September 1969), 13-27, initially circulated amongst activists under the title “What Defines Women?” and Peggy Morton’s original essay “A Woman’s Work is Never Done, or: The Production, Maintenance and Reproduction of Labor Power,” was eventually published in Edith Altbach, ed., *From Feminism to Liberation* (Cambridge, Mass: Schenkman, 1971), 211-227. Wafflers would have encountered these arguments in women’s liberation groups or the NDP youth. Benston described to an American friend a series of papers written by women’s liberation activists, explaining “the longer papers were only written down under the pressure of a conference in May of the youth of the New Democratic Party (social democrats). The radicals took it over and particularly the women. It was very successful from our point of view but I suspect that anyone doing much reading got eyestrain.” Benston to friend, June 1969, File Correspondence, Margaret Benston fonds, SFUA. The Waffle’s support for wages-for-housework preceded English feminist Selma James and her Wages for Housework campaign’s tour of Canada in 1973.

welcomed the Caravan as it arrived in several cities along its route.\(^{83}\) The Abortion Caravan held a press conference at the University of Winnipeg where a member of the Vancouver Women’s Caucus promoted their abortion information service, explaining “within five years women will come to women’s liberation groups instead of psychiatrists… they will realize they’re not mentally ill in seeking an abortion.”\(^{84}\) Winnipeg Wafflers and women’s liberationists were also active in the Abortion Action Committee of Winnipeg. They responded to Manitoba NDP cabinet minister Joe Borowski’s high-profile opposition to abortion by supporting the health clinics that referred women to resources for legal, out-of-province abortions. The Wafflers demanded that Borowski and other anti-abortion MLAs be driven out of the NDP.\(^{85}\)

Students at the University of Manitoba founded Winnipeg Women’s Liberation in 1969-70 as a “development of the consciousness-raising sessions begun in the living room of Millie Lamb, a feminist and high school teacher.” Unlike the Manitoba Status of Women group, Winnipeg Women’s Liberation worked within a socialist framework and established a newsletter in 1973 as “a way for those of us involved on the left wing of the women’s movement to communicate with each other.”\(^{86}\) Ellen Kruger and Linda Taylor recalled that “there was very little written theory in the feminist world, and we worked out our policies and positions on issues through animated discussions and consensus decision-making. There were some women with years of political experience in the NDP,

\(^{83}\) “Waffle Women’s Caucus,” \textit{Manitoba Waffle Newsletter}, March 1970, Box 2008-017/001, File 9, Kim Malcolmson and Paul Barber fonds, YUA.


particularly the Waffle.”

Winnipeg Women’s Liberation established a Woman’s Place as a drop-in centre and meeting space in 1973 before separating in the late 1970s into sub-groups such as the Socialist Women’s Collective, the Winnipeg Lesbian Society, Women for Non-Sexist Education, and Mothers for Change. Wafflers Margaret Simpson and Paddy Musson were active in London’s women’s movement throughout the 1970s and helped to establish the Women’s Resource Centre and the Women’s Credit Union in that city.

Saskatoon Women’s Liberation has been described as the “first self-conscious socialist-feminist organization in Canada.”

Members of the CSM, predecessor to the Waffle in Saskatchewan, formed Saskatoon Women’s Liberation in 1969 and decided men would be allowed to attend only public meetings of the new organization. The following summer Saskatoon Women’s Liberation established a Birth Control Information phone-in centre and in the fall hosted the first national women’s liberation conference. The group also organized a conference on campus which led to courses in Women’s Studies, and established a Women’s Centre which served as a base for further feminist organizing where Waffle policy statements could be found amongst the “mountains of lit.”

Waffler Mollie McQuarrie was a feminist activist, and Lynda Holland, Rosemarie Rupps and Maylynn Woo, all members of the Saskatoon Waffle,

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87 Ibid.
89 Adamson, Briskin and McPhail, Feminist Organizing for Change, 70.
served on the editorial committee for the *Saskatoon Women’s Liberation Newsletter*. An article in the newsletter reported that women activists in Saskatoon were supporting both John Richards’s “Independent Socialist” re-election bid and the campaign of Ann Boulton, “an avowed and unabashed feminist,” to become the NDP MLA for Saskatoon-Sutherland.

Furthermore, Wafflers such as Pat Gallagher and Sheila Kuziak, who both became active in trade unions, were crucial figures in Saskatchewan Working Women (SWW), a feminist group in the provincial labour movement in the late 1970s and early 1980s. John Warnock suggested that SWW was “virtually a direct offspring of the Waffle” and Kuziak concurred that “women in the Waffle demanded a strategy… there was a strong sense that trade union women did not have a voice in their unions. They weren’t really organized as women.” Lorraine Beardsworth explained that although SWW was organized by Wafflers, “we did not want to set it up as a front for the Waffle, supposedly, at the time we formed it we were talking about a mass women’s organization… asking the women who were associated with the Waffle, to help them organize something different where they could talk about women’s issues as well as union issues.” She elaborated that “SWW may not have ever turned into the mass movement that we wanted it to turn into but it was another training ground and it was the place that we Waffle women needed to go to as well, in order to learn the skills we needed that we weren’t

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learning in the Waffle.”

Certainly women’s liberationists such as Jackie Larkin, Varda Burstyn, Krista Maeots, and Kelly Crichton took on high-profile roles in the Waffle. Female Wafflers in Winnipeg recalled the effect of seeing other women assuming leadership roles in the group. One anonymous Waffler commented that “the activity of other women in the Waffle… had an impact developing my confidence, overcoming feelings of shyness and intimidation.” Two Waffle-backed candidates in the 1971 Winnipeg municipal elections, Carol Fogel for council and Gloria Mendelson for school board trustee, were encouraged by their experience in the women’s liberation movement to become political candidates. As one female Winnipeg Waffler explained, “the women’s liberation movement says go, do, fight, it gives an impetus and a motivation to activity.”

The relationship between women’s liberationists and the Waffle was nevertheless strained on occasion. One woman in the Winnipeg Waffle commented that,

during Waffle educationals there was a kind of intellectual one-upmanship. I often had strong arguments with the men about this. The whole consciousness raising experience and democratic thing, the sense of the quality of experience and environment, isn’t part of male culture, and therefore you can’t bring that into political life.

Another Winnipeg Waffle woman suggested that the “women’s liberation movement has forced men in the Waffle to look at themselves to see if they are male chauvinists.”

Male Wafflers, when asked about the effect of the women’s liberation movement, described their appreciation of the necessity for changing both their personal

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95 Ibid.
96 Anonymous, quotation in Kim Malcolmson, “Ten Wafflers in Manitoba,” Box 2008-017/001, File 8, Kim Malcolmson and Paul Barber fonds, YUA.
97 Ibid.
98 Ibid.
99 Ibid.
relationships and conduct and their political structures and priorities. Yet not all female Wafflers were convinced of the immediacy or extent of their male counterparts’ enlightenment. Martha Tracey indicated that although most appeared genuinely committed to women’s liberation, “putting it into effect” could be difficult. Ken Collier suggested:

The experience that women and Native people had in [the Waffle] was far different from what men had in it. Many of the women who were not on the executive but who came to the Waffle things mentioned that 'boy, it’s sure uphill for women to get right into that, to take part’… I guess one of the major criticisms that I heard from women was that a lot of things the Waffle did they thought were not very practical for them.

Similarly, the experience of women’s liberationists in the London Waffle led the women to deepen their commitment to feminist activism. Paddy Musson remembered being asked to leave the Delaware conference after confronting a male Waffle leader:

He came in and made this broad statement in terms of this issue, and as an energized university student who was interested in social change, I thought his analysis had serious flaws in it. I dared to tell him and I was told to be quiet and I told him that I owned this meeting as much as he did and that the whole principle of the Waffle was to move away from the domination of the party centre control and… here he was practicing the same techniques that had been practiced by the party centrally and that was the point at which I left.

Neither Paddy Musson nor Margaret Simpson remembered the Waffle as a feminist movement. Simpson recalled feeling like “an onlooker” at the Delaware conference, and neither she nor Musson detected signs of either feminist concerns or female leadership. Simpson remembered feeling like “I was just some young kid trailing along on the coattails of the professors who understood about socialism, the political movement and

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100 Kim Malcolmson, “Ten Wafflers in Manitoba,” Box 2008-017/001, File 8, Kim Malcolmson and Paul Barber fonds, YUA.
103 Musson interview.
the CCF.”

Her main commitment, however, was to feminism. In comparing the fun and excitement of her involvement with feminist groups and actions in the 1970s to the Waffle experience, Paddy Musson concluded “The Waffle was not fun. Those were not fun men… they were earnest, all of them.” Thus, the Waffle attracted women’s liberationists and the experience of women within the Waffle in Winnipeg, London and Saskatoon both strengthened their commitment to feminism and inspired them to greater political involvement.

Most of the Waffle leadership’s energy was devoted to clashing with the NDP and determining the policies and tactics of the provincial Waffle groups. This chapter’s study of local Waffle groups in Winnipeg, London and Saskatoon adds another dimension to the narrative of intra-party conflict that is highlighted throughout this dissertation.

Young activists, influenced especially by the student and anti-Vietnam War movements, joined the Waffle in an attempt to extend the ethos of the New Left to Canada’s established social democratic party, the NDP. The Waffle’s explicit declaration that the party should be the “parliamentary wing of a movement dedicated to fundamental social change” reflected the New Left’s faith in the power of social movements and frustration with traditional forms of electoral politics. James Laxer explained that the authors of the Waffle Manifesto sought to “move this stream of very powerful youth politics into Canadian social democracy,” and the experience of Wafflers in Winnipeg, London and Saskatoon suggests this goal was at least partially realized. Moreover, many of the activists in these three local chapters were significantly impacted by their experiences in the Waffle. Their hands-on activism such as supporting striking workers on a picket line,

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104 Margaret Simpson interview.
105 Musson interview.
distributing radical publications, or participating in the burgeoning feminist movement enhanced many Wafflers’ commitment to a lifelong struggle for social justice. When Wafflers engaged in electoral politics in Winnipeg, London, and Saskatoon, they attempted an alternative vision of politics based on education and “the development of a socialist consciousness” instead of merely prioritizing the winning of votes. The pursuit of a different kind of politics by local Waffle chapters was indicative of its place in the broader Canadian New Left and its unique position in the international phenomenon of youth activism in the late 1960s and early 1970s.
Chapter Six
“I'll swallow them only if they are digestible:” Inside the NDP, 1971

This chapter examines the Waffle’s participation in the federal NDP leadership race and the successful provincial election campaign in Saskatchewan during the first half of 1971. During this period, the Waffle attempted to utilize the campaign to succeed Tommy Douglas as leader of the NDP to improve its profile and influence within the party. James Laxer’s surprising second-place finish to David Lewis indicated that the Waffle commanded substantial, albeit minority, support within the party. The federal contest and subsequent election victory in Saskatchewan suggested that despite its internal defeats the Waffle exerted a small influence over NDP policy and that conflict between the Waffle and party leadership, while serious, was not irreconcilable. However, a growing backlash by NDP moderates and labour leaders against the Waffle’s radicalism only enhanced the existing polarization within the party.

After leading the federal NDP through four elections since its inception in 1961, Tommy Douglas, having lost his own seat in the 1968 federal election, indicated his plans to resign. But when the death of NDP MP Colin Cameron only a month after the election opened up a relatively safe seat on Vancouver Island, the party executive persuaded Douglas to continue as leader. Douglas agreed, and after winning the resulting by-election in Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands in early 1969, he announced that he would remain at the helm until 1971.¹ The NDP stalwart David Lewis was regarded as Douglas’s heir apparent, even after indicating he would not be seeking the leadership since he believed the next leader should be from the younger generation.²

¹ McLeod and Mcleod, Tommy Douglas, 276.
² Ibid., 273.
Ed Broadbent was the first to enter the leadership race to replace Douglas. Announcing his candidacy at an Ottawa press conference in June 1970, Broadbent was endorsed by four of his fellow MPs and promised a campaign that highlighted issues of full employment, the control of foreign investment, and industrial democracy. The press focused on the thirty-four-year-old Broadbent’s youthfulness and his obvious intellectualism, claiming he appeared “ideologically closer” to the Waffle than were any of the other likely leadership candidates. Broadbent did not approve of the affiliation. “I think I am of the left” within the NDP, he said, but he denied associating with the Waffle and criticized the reference in its Manifesto to American “imperialism abroad and racism at home.” Broadbent concentrated his campaign on discrediting Pierre Trudeau and the Liberal government, even releasing a book titled The Liberal Rip-Off in which he castigated the prime minister for failing to address poverty in Canada, and claimed “Trudeau has done less for the average or poor Canadian than any prime minister since the Second World War.”

John Harney was next to enter the race, in late November 1970. Although he neither held a seat in Parliament nor enjoyed the backing of any federal MPs, the Globe and Mail deemed the “bilingual, articulate and contemporary” thirty-nine-year-old Harney a potentially appealing candidate. A humanities professor at York University, Harney served as the Ontario NDP’s provincial secretary from 1967-69, and ran

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3 “Broadbent first to toss hat in ring, opens NDP’s national leadership race,” Globe and Mail, June 22, 1970. The four MPs supporting Broadbent were John Gilbert (Broadbiew), Arnold Peters (Timiskaming), Mark Rose (Fraser Valley West), and Rod Thomson (Battleford-Kindersley).
5 Broadbent first to toss hat in ring, opens NDP’s national leadership race,” Globe and Mail, June 22, 1970.
unsuccessfully, in four federal elections under the NDP banner.\(^8\) He promised that as leader he would move the NDP further left, and prioritize adding urban and rural poor to the core of workers, intellectuals, and members of the progressive middle class who already supported the party. Harney had voted against the Waffle Manifesto at the Winnipeg convention, but nevertheless supported both Quebec’s right to self-determination and the Ontario NDP’s recently adopted policy of nationalizing resource industries.\(^9\)

David Lewis joined the race one week after Harney. Lewis was an architect of the NDP and long coveted the leadership. Electorally he had struggled to win and retain a House of Commons seat until he recaptured York South in Ontario for the NDP in 1965 and held onto it in the face of the Liberal surge of 1968. Lewis achieved significant public prominence in 1970 as a leading opponent of the War Measures Act and its successor legislation, the Public Order Act. His principled defense of Canadians’ rights and freedoms – expressed “eloquently, gracefully, and convincingly” according to one commentator – was lauded by many New Democrats.\(^10\) Backed by nine other MPs, Lewis announced his long-expected candidacy for the party leadership in early December in Ottawa, describing himself as “a very angry, very militant democratic socialist.”\(^11\)

That said, Lewis made clear that as leader he would pursue a moderate policy approach

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\(^8\) The first three candidacies were in Wellington South in 1962, 1963 and 1965, and the most recent in Scarborough West in 1968.

\(^9\) “Harney joins fight for NDP leadership in bid to move party to the left,” *Globe and Mail*, November 26, 1970.


\(^11\) “Nine MPs support Lewis for leadership,” *Globe and Mail*, December 3, 1970. The nine MPs included three from Manitoba – Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre), David Orlikow (Winnipeg North), and Douglas Rowland (Selkirk) – two from Saskatchewan – Alf Gleave (Saskatoon-Biggar) and Lorne Nystrom (Yorkton-Melville) – three from British Columbia – Thomas Barnett (Comox-Alberni), Randolph Harding (Kootenay West), Barry Mather (Surrey) – and only one from Ontario, Max Saltsman (Waterloo).
for the NDP and not attempt to woo the Waffle with radical policy commitments. He claimed “I’ll swallow them only if they are digestible.”\textsuperscript{12}

The Waffle began preparing for the leadership race during its national conference in August 1970 by forming a ten-person campaign committee. The committee planned to promote Waffle policies to NDP members and decide on a leadership candidate after holding a series of meetings with Wafflers across the country.\textsuperscript{13} By early November it was clear that ill health would prevent Mel Watkins, the Waffle’s most prominent spokesperson, from seeking the leadership. After the Quebec-based television personality Laurier Lapierre also declined to run, the Waffle’s choices were whittled down to Cy Gonick and James Laxer.\textsuperscript{14} John Warnock, who was then teaching at York University, suggested to his Saskatchewan Waffle colleagues “I think Jim is the most articulate spokesman the Waffle has now,” but encouraged Gonick to enter the contest for “tactical reasons.”\textsuperscript{15} Warnock thought Gonick, an elected politician from Manitoba who was also older than Laxer, might be considered by some to be the more credible candidate among the two, and also able to draw support from western Canada.\textsuperscript{16} However Gonick’s frustration with Manitoba’s NDP government and determination to build up the left in his home province dissuaded him from seeking the national party leadership. Laxer thereby became the Waffle’s candidate of choice, declaring his candidacy in Toronto at the end of November before rushing back to Kingston to be

\textsuperscript{12} “Nine MPs support Lewis for leadership,” \textit{Globe and Mail}, December 3, 1970.
\textsuperscript{14} “Six expected to contest NDP leadership by Blakeney,” \textit{Globe and Mail}, July 18, 1970.
\textsuperscript{15} John Warnock to Don Mitchell, John Richards, Lorne Brown, November 8, 1970, File II.3 Correspondence, 1968-1971, John Richards Papers, SAB (Saskatoon).
\textsuperscript{16} Ibid.
present for the birth of his and Krista Maeots’s first child, Michael.\(^{17}\) He promised to emphasize economic nationalism and the necessity of striking a new deal for Quebec within Confederation, while attacking Pierre Trudeau’s invocation of the War Measures Act as a ploy “to suppress his political opposition in Quebec.”\(^{18}\) The Waffle committed to a collectively-run campaign, and Laxer recalls “I was as much the representative of the Waffle movement’s ideas as an actual candidate for the leadership of the party,” suggesting that the Waffle aimed primarily to influence party policy.\(^{19}\)

Frank Howard, the final candidate to enter the race in January 1971, was a veteran MP for Skeena, British Columbia, and something of a maverick in the federal NDP caucus for splitting with the majority in supporting Trudeau’s imposition of the War Measures Act. In addition to advocating for prisoners and opposing Canada’s archaic divorce laws, he had achieved some notoriety in 1967 after a former friend’s attempt to blackmail him resulted in Howard’s admitting that as a young man he had spent time in jail for armed robbery. In his leadership campaign, Howard contrasted his rough background as a miner, ironmolder, and logger to the university professors in the race, and criticized the Waffle’s “academic and professional theories” of nationalization of resource industries as “out of touch with the realities of politics and with common sense.”\(^{20}\) Going further still, Howard warned that widespread nationalization “would destroy Canada completely and thoroughly – just as any endorsement of these Waffle proposals will destroy the NDP.”\(^{21}\) By the time Lewis, Broadbent, Harney, Laxer and

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21 Ibid. Several potential candidates declined to enter the race, including Charles Taylor, a McGill political philosopher whose candidacy David Lewis was rumoured to have supported, Allan O’Brien, the popular
Howard began a tour of Canadian cities to hold a series of twenty public debates, clear policy divisions had emerged among the five leadership candidates.²²

The Waffle’s position on Quebec polarized the NDP leadership race more than any other issue. In January 1971, Laxer publicized five resolutions on Quebec that the Waffle proposed for debate at the upcoming NDP convention, including commitments to support Quebec’s right to self-determination and building “a people’s alliance” between English Canadian and Quebec socialists.²³ The Waffle’s position on Quebec received coverage in both the English and French-language press, and provoked David Lewis into accusing the group of factionalism and harming the NDP’s credibility by proposing an alliance with the separatist Parti Québécois (PQ).²⁴ Moreover, he rejected the Waffle’s emphasis on nationalization as anachronistic socialist fundamentalism.²⁵ Laxer shot back, rejecting Lewis’s charge of a Waffle-PQ alliance, disavowing the suggestion that the Waffle endorsed separatism, and complaining that “Frank Howard and David Lewis...
have spent too much time criticizing the Waffle group and too little time putting forward their own positive proposals.”

NDP leaders were sensitive to suggestions that the party was sympathetic to Quebec separatism. Pierre Trudeau had charged during the 1968 election that the NDP’s embrace of the *deux nations* concept and ‘special status’ for Quebec appealed to separatists, claiming that “René Lévesque’s movement is supporting [Quebec NDP leader] Robert Cliche because they feel Robert Cliche’s position is as far towards separatism as any federal party can go.” Furthermore, the federal NDP caucus’s opposition to the use of the War Measures Act did not endear the party to many English Canadians. As a result, although the Waffle did not openly advocate for Quebec independence, their endorsement of Quebec’s right to determine its own future went further than other English-Canadian politicians and appeared to some a quasi-separatist policy. Wafflers, especially Laxer, were highly attuned to political developments in Quebec. Both the Waffle and many nascent Quebec separatists were a product of New Left social movements which derived much of their inspiration and rhetoric from anti-colonial independence movements in Asia and Africa. In late 1970 the Waffle did approach the PQ to “enter into discussions with socialists in Quebec.”

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27 Trudeau quoted in Wright, *Trudeaumania*, 263.
28 Thirty-six percent of respondents indicated that their opinion of Tommy Douglas went down as a result of what he did or said during the recent FLQ crises compared to only eight percent who said it went up. “Stanfield and Douglas Lost Most Favor in FLQ Crises,” *The Gallup Report*, December 19, 1970.
29 Mills, *The Empire Within*.
30 Minutes of Waffle National Housekeeping Committee, October 17, 1970, Box 2008-017/001, File 5, Kim Malcolmson and Paul Barber fonds, YUA.
suggested establishing regular meetings between the Waffle and the “left in the PQ.”

However, the group decided “to postpone any meetings with Quebeccois” until after the Quebec NDP convention, and contact was not resumed in its aftermath.

Three weeks after the Laxer-Lewis dispute, some 200 delegates gathered in Montreal at the Quebec NDP convention, planned as an “open” meeting to attract progressive supporters into the hitherto moribund provincial party. Delegates overrode objections by David Lewis and several English-speaking members and approved a resolution recognizing Quebec’s right to self-determination. They also passed resolutions highlighting the provincial party’s autonomy, including a decision not to run NDP candidates in future provincial elections, and a promise to collaborate with the federal NDP only when doing so “does not come into conflict with” the Quebec NDP’s principles.

The convention replaced the party’s retired president Roland Morin with Raymond Laliberté, a Quebec nationalist and former president of the Corporation des enseignants du Québec (CEQ) who had been among that union’s leadership during its controversial 1969 strike. Although Laliberté ruled out forming an alliance with the PQ, many long-time English-speaking party members remained suspicious.

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31 Cy Gonick to Kim Malcolmson, November 10, 1970, Box 2008-017/001, File 5, Kim Malcolmson and Paul Barber fonds, YUA. Additionally, in April 1970 one Waffler reported in private correspondence that he had “met with the FLQ. They are willing to send a speaker to the National Waffle Conference in July. I hope to receive material from the FLQ and FLP that could be reprinted in English for our membership.” Gordon to Ken Novakowski, April 6, 1970, File 446-4, LAC. No evidence of further contact between the FLQ and the Waffle was found.

32 Minutes of National Housekeeping and Steering Committees, January 30, 1971, Box 2008-017/001, File 5, Kim Malcolmson and Paul Barber fonds, YUA.

33 The Quebec NDP had not previously run candidates in provincial elections, concentrating exclusively on federal politics.

34 “Quebec NDP to quit provincial politics” Globe and Mail, February 22, 1971; Desmond Morton describes the meeting in NDP: The Dream of Power, 122, as “a coalition of quasi-separatists [who] had taken over the party” in concert with the Waffle. The idea that the Waffle endorsed Quebec independence outright persists. Azzi claims that Mel Watkins “openly supported the separation of Quebec from the rest of Canada” in Walter Gordon, 169, based on his backing the “oui” side in the 1980 referendum. Sylvia
That same weekend in Kitchener, Stephen Lewis launched his first public attack on Waffle policies during a meeting of the Ontario NDP provincial council. Lewis’s speech described the Ontario NDP as a “truly serious political party on the threshold of a dramatic advance,” and suggested many New Democrats had been “diverted from the essential chore of reasonable policies reasonably conveyed” by concentrating too heavily on basic organizational tasks, allowing party policy to be dominated by the radical left. Without mentioning the Waffle directly, Lewis took issue with two of its most prominent policies: support for Quebec’s right to self-determination, and large-scale nationalization. Lewis explained that part of the motivation behind his speech was to express concern that the NDP’s opponents were benefitting from the Waffle’s vocal promotion of policies unpopular with many English Canadians, concluding “it’s the kind of issue that Bob Nixon has already played by linking the party to Quebec separatism.”

Lewis himself endorsed a flexible federalism and insisted the right to self-determination already existed, but argued it was “perverse” and “presumptuous” to continually focus on Quebec’s right to self-determination as the Waffle was doing. Lewis reminded the council of Desmond Morton’s contention that the NDP had “nothing to gain save our permanent and well-deserved oblivion” by adopting such a platform. Despite the prominence he gave in the speech to warnings about foreign ownership of the Canadian

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35 Statement by Stephen Lewis to the NDP Provincial Council Meeting, Sunday, February 21, 1971, Box 2009-047/001, File 7 Waffle - History, see "manifesto" for first drafts, 1969-1972 (2 of 2), Giles Endicott fonds, YUA. Lewis also got in a few good shots at the new PC Premier, William Davis, commenting “we have entered an era of discursive circumlocution. If the point can be obscured, it will be obscured. If the core can be missed, it will be missed. Bill Davis would never say fuddle-duddle in the Legislature. It’s not that he’s too refined, it’s just that he’s too loquacious.”


economy, Lewis objected strenuously to “advocating a peculiarly sterile and sectarian view of nationalization as the answer” to foreign domination.\(^{38}\)

Waffler Gordon Cleveland responded to Lewis’s attacks by suggesting a confrontation between the Waffle and the Ontario NDP leadership was “inevitable.”\(^{39}\) Laxer hinted that Stephen Lewis’s criticisms were on behalf of his father’s leadership bid, commenting “I think they should only attack one at a time so I can be there to defend myself,” and insisted Stephen Lewis had misrepresented the Waffle’s position on Quebec.\(^{40}\) Meanwhile, both Harney and Broadbent adopted positions on Quebec similar to the Waffle’s by recognizing Quebec’s right to self-determination. Broadbent promised a renewed federalism, and Harney decried the presence of separatists within the Waffle, but both were at odds with David Lewis who believed acknowledging Quebec’s right to self-determination only encouraged provincial separatists.\(^{41}\)

The Waffle’s strategy for the leadership campaign was to promote Laxer as a “socialist alternative” and emphasize the Waffle’s major policy divergences from Lewis and other NDP moderates, including their difference over Quebec’s autonomy. In announcing Laxer’s acclamation as their candidate, the Waffle national steering committee solicited resolutions from its various provincial groups on an array of topics including labour, energy resources, economic development, the petrochemical industry, pollution, women’s liberation, foreign ownership, education, poverty and

\(^{38}\) Ibid.


The Saskatchewan Waffle, for example, developed the group’s agricultural policy including commitments to a land bank and the nationalization of the farm implement industry. In preparation for the convention, the Waffle steering committee distributed to riding associations, affiliated union locals, and youth clubs a thirty-page booklet of resolutions that represented its “most expensive piece of campaign literature” to support Laxer’s leadership bid. Although Harold Steves (Vancouver), Ken Novakowski (Edmonton) and Bruce Archibald (Halifax) joined the ten members on the campaign committee elected at the Waffle’s national conference the previous summer, most of the organizational work was performed by a small coordinating committee based in Kingston and Toronto. Krista Maeots prepared a tabloid-style leaflet introducing Laxer and the Waffle to convention delegates which emphasized the importance of “public ownership of large corporations in key sectors of the economy,” and presented a strong feminist position in the section on “Women and Socialism.”

Laxer’s campaign was supported by youth sections of the NDP as well as provincial Waffle groups, the latter providing an existing organizational and fundraising network. Wafflers in Saskatchewan, Ontario, Manitoba and New Brunswick all reported success in recruiting and electing pro-Laxer delegates to attend the April 1971

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42 Letter from John Smart and Kim Malcolmson to Provincial Waffle groups, November 22, 1970, File 05, Kim Malcolmson and Paul Barber fonds, YUA.
44 For an Independent Socialist Canada: Resolutions, April 1971, File 446-7, Waffle-NDP fonds, LAC; Minutes of National Housekeeping and Steering Committees, January 30, 1971, Box 2008-017/001, File 5, Kim Malcolmson and Paul Barber fonds, YUA.
45 Minutes of National Housekeeping and Steering Committees, January 30, 1971, Box 2008-017/001, File 5, Kim Malcolmson and Paul Barber fonds, YUA.
46 James Laxer for NDP National Leader pamphlet, April 1971, File 446-7, Waffle-NDP fonds, LAC.
47 Minutes of a Meeting of the Provincial Council of the British Columbia Young New Democrats, March 13-14, 1971, File 1-5 BC Young New Democrats Minutes, Provincial, New Democratic Party of British Columbia fonds, UBCSC; Kim Malcolmson, Ten Wafflers in Manitoba, Box 2008-017/001, File 8, Kim Malcolmson and Paul Barber fonds, YUA.
convention in Ottawa. In addition, the Waffle nominated Saskatchewan activist Carol Gudmunson for party president in an effort to win support from uncommitted female and western Canadian delegates for the group and, in turn, Laxer. The Waffle’s success at organizing in riding associations, often where little NDP support previously existed, caused party moderates to worry that the group might appear larger and more influential than was the case. Harney supporter Desmond Morton later criticized what he viewed as a Waffle strategy of attempting to secure delegates and policy endorsements at thinly-attended riding association meetings by staging long and tedious debates that exhausted and drove away less committed party members. Morton recalled his own response to Waffle tactics was to co-found with Ontario NDP research director Marion Bryden the group NDP Now:

> It rapidly became the concern of a group of moderates, based on the party’s federal council, who decided that in the Ottawa convention the Waffle would not win by default… Launched a few months before the convention, the NDP Now group, like the Waffle in 1969, was no more than a cadre of like-minded people in search of wider support.

Much of NDP Now’s support came from the unusually large bloc of union delegates at the convention. The CLC had established a steering committee of key union leaders to

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48 Minutes of National Housekeeping and Steering Committees, February 28, 1971, and Minutes of National Housekeeping and Steering Committees, April 10, 1971, Box 2008-017/001, File 5, Kim Malcolmson and Paul Barber fonds, YUA.
49 Sheila Kuziak to James Laxer, January 29, 1971 and Caroline Brown to Kim Malcolmson, February 7, 1971, Box 2008-017/001, File 5, Kim Malcolmson and Paul Barber fonds, YUA.
50 The Saskatchewan delegation was the second-largest at the convention, and many supported Laxer. However, the Manitoba Waffle elected pro-Laxer delegates from several ridings, including the typically moribund Winnipeg South. The New Brunswick Waffle’s successful organizing over the previous year ensured it dominated the two largest ridings in that province, and sent several pro-Waffle delegates to the convention. Kim Malcolmson, Ten Wafflers in Manitoba, Box 2008-017/001, File 8, Kim Malcolmson and Paul Barber fonds, YUA; Webber, ‘‘For a Socialist New Brunswick’: The New Brunswick Waffle, 1967-1972,” *Acadiensis*, 84. The two Fredericton area ridings were York-Sunbury and Carleton-Charlotte.
52 Keith Archer, *Political Choices and Electoral Consequences: A Study of Organized Labour and the New Democratic Party* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1990) finds 32.3% of the 1971 convention delegates were from organized labour (a larger percentage than any subsequent convention).
coordinate labour’s role at the convention, and in particular to oppose Waffle policy positions.53 Lynn Williams, an USWA official, acted as liaison between the CLC steering committee and NDP Now.54 Unlike the 1970 Ontario NDP convention when Dennis McDermott and the UAW were prominent supporters of Stephen Lewis, in 1971 Autowerker delegates were divided over whom among the leadership aspirants to endorse. Therefore the Steelworkers took the lead in organizing opposition to the Waffle.55 Speaking at a USWA conference in Hamilton, Morton attacked the Waffle and alleged it contributed nothing to the NDP “that is not archaic, opportunistic or irrelevant” and added that “indulging youth, as the NDP regularly does, may be emotionally satisfying but it is politically stupid if it turns off hard-working, sensible people with mortgages.”56 For its part, the Waffle’s steering committee acknowledged NDP Now’s success in electing anti-Waffle delegates at riding association meetings across Toronto ahead of the convention.57

Despite the efforts of NDP Now and the other four leadership campaigns, the Waffle steering committee operated on the premise that many delegates would arrive at the convention still undecided about their choice for leader. The committee ensured that Wafflers were spread among the various Ottawa hotels hosting provincial delegations in order to canvass and record delegate information, including their first and second choices for leader, and their positions on issues such as Quebec’s self-determination and natural resource development. With this detailed data in hand, Wafflers could more effectively

53 Wilfred List, “CLC presence at NDP convention to assure labor’s voice is heard” Globe and Mail, April 21, 1971.
54 “NDP ‘unity’ group is out to crush party’s Wafflers,” Toronto Star, April 21, 1971.
57 Minutes of National Housekeeping and Steering Committees, February 28, 1971, Box 2008-017/001, File 5, Kim Malcolmson and Paul Barber fonds, YUA.
appeal to delegates in the later rounds of voting. The Waffle steering committee estimated at the beginning of the convention that 426 delegates, or twenty-three to twenty-five percent of the total, would support Laxer on the first ballot, putting him in second place behind David Lewis. It expected most of the youth and Quebec delegates and one-third of the Saskatchewan and British Columbia delegations were committed to Laxer. Yet anticipated support from Ontario lagged. Despite the emergence of Waffle groups in Windsor, London, Hamilton, St. Catharines and Welland that backed Laxer, and hopes for strong second-ballot support from northern Ontario, it was clear that NDP Now had limited the Waffle’s ability to attract Toronto-area delegates.

In addition to promoting anti-Waffle candidates at riding association delegate selection meetings, Morton produced a pamphlet criticizing the “Americanization of the Canadian left” and calling on delegates to reject Waffle positions. Ontario NDP president Gordon Brigden assisted Morton’s efforts by securing prominent endorsements for the pamphlet. Brigden wrote to Manitoba cabinet minister Howard Pawley, for example, explaining that “a number of NDPers are concerned that we have positive policies for the forthcoming federal convention rather than go to the convention and swat down ideas we don’t like.” Marc Eliesen, the federal party’s research director and NDP

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58 Minutes of National Housekeeping and Steering Committees, February 28, 1971, Box 2008-017/001, File 5, Kim Malcolmson and Paul Barber fonds, YUA; Laxer Campaign Strategy and Physical Arrangements, n.d. [1971], Box 2008-017/001, File 5, Kim Malcolmson and Paul Barber fonds, YUA.

59 Minutes of National Housekeeping and Steering Committees, April 10, 1971, Box 2008-017/001, File 5, Kim Malcolmson and Paul Barber fonds, YUA.

60 Minutes of National Housekeeping and Steering Committees, February 28, 1971 and Minutes of National Housekeeping and Steering Committees, April 10, 1971, Box 2008-017/001, File 5, Kim Malcolmson and Paul Barber fonds, YUA.


Now member, wrote to Lewis in an effort to ensure the convention schedule favoured their supporters:

I suggest we attempt to seek Federal Council approval for the position that votes on resolution matters be taken at certain times during or at the end of the day. Because of the hardcore dedication of the Waffle group, it is imperative that the anti-Waffle forces be there at all times when votes are taken on important policy matters. A large number of labour delegates do not participate in these policy matters and are therefore very difficult to round up for the final votes.  

NDP Now successfully challenged the Waffle for positions on the party’s crucial Resolutions Committee, which selected, drafted, and prioritized from among the hundreds of submissions by riding associations, affiliated unions and youth groups the resolutions for debate at the convention. With Wafflers making up only a quarter of the Resolutions Committee membership, Morton and his allies ensured resolutions that made it to the convention floor reflected moderate policies. As a result, during debates on the convention floor the Waffle was forced to refer resolutions back to the committee with specific instructions to re-draft the policy. This approach signaled to NDP Now and their union allies that all motions to refer must be defeated. Indeed, some delegates received written instructions from USWA official Bob Mackenzie to “push through – defeat those marked Waffle.” But not all union delegates opposed the Waffle. Harry Greenwood, the secretary of USWA Local 1005, stated before the convention that some unionists supported the Waffle, and warned that labour leaders should not automatically expect all union delegates to fall into line behind them. On the other hand, Greenwood noted that not all Waffle unionists necessarily supported Laxer for leader; four of the

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63 Marc Eliesen to David Lewis, Confidential, January 20, 1971, File 446-4, Waffle-NDP fonds, LAC.
eleven delegates from Local 1005 for instance, backed Laxer, but Greenwood favoured Broadbent.⁶⁸

Divergent and strongly-held opposing ideological visions for the NDP resulted in a highly polarized convention. Liz Valleau, a Toronto NDP activist and former neighbour of Broadbent’s, recalled “I can’t describe how horrible that convention was… There was intense bitterness among the candidates, dirty dealings, backstabbing and a sort of psychological violence to it.”⁶⁹ She added “the back-stabbing got to me. I hated the way the Lewis faction treated the Waffle. I felt the party wasn’t open to new ideas, and I’ve never felt the same about the NDP since.”⁷⁰ Terry Grier, a former federal NDP secretary, faced the ire of Wafflers at the convention and remembered being hissed and booed by hordes of young people who hadn’t been anywhere in sight two years earlier and weren’t in sight two years later. I wasn’t elderly then – I was only thirty-five – and I was really turned off by them. I had joined the party at their age and I had stuck with it, working to build it. I was getting ready to run in ’72 and was worried that relationships with my own constituents would be poisoned by their shenanigans.⁷¹

An early indication of the convention’s polarization was the debate on gender parity for the party’s federal council. On the first day of the convention, Krista Maeots presented a resolution requiring twelve of the twenty-four federal council positions elected at the convention be held by women. Maeots argued “discrimination does exist in the politics of this country and in the politics of this party,” a view that would be reinforced for women’s liberationists over the coming days.⁷² The debate on Maeots’s resolution, chaired by former Ontario MLA and longtime USWA and NDP official

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⁷⁰ Ibid., 164.
Eamon Park, was cut off before the time allotted had expired, bringing cries of “Seig heil” from frustrated feminists. Although Harney spoke in favour of gender parity, the remaining four speakers opposed the resolution. Mary Eady, the party treasurer, insisted the resolution represented “an unwise step backward by replacing discrimination with tokenism.”\textsuperscript{73} After the convention, Varda Burstyn described the result: “the parity resolution was not merely defeated or rejected – it was railroaded.”\textsuperscript{74} On the final day of the convention, the Resolutions Committee introduced its policy statement on women’s issues, which called for legislation to eliminate discrimination in employment opportunities, provide for equal pay and paid maternity leave, and eliminating abortion from the Criminal Code.\textsuperscript{75} The document’s conservatism appalled women’s liberationists who decried it as totally inadequate. Waffler Kelly Crichton attacked it as an insult to women that would leave the NDP far behind the Liberals on support for women’s equality.\textsuperscript{76} An attempt to refer the document back to committee for revision including a commitment to hold a national conference of NDP women was defeated.\textsuperscript{77}

Policy defeats were not the only source of frustration for women’s liberationists at the convention. Many delegates were visibly uninterested during the debate on women’s issues; union delegates and male Wafflers alike read newspapers and chatted amongst themselves throughout.\textsuperscript{78} Varda Burstyn recalled being heckled and insulted as she waited in line for a microphone, being told “go back to the kitchen where you belong.”

\textsuperscript{73} John Zaritsky, “NDP rejects resolution by Waffle to guarantee women party voice,” \textit{Globe and Mail}, April 22, 1971.
\textsuperscript{74} Varda Burstyn (Kidd), “Sexism Prevailed at the NDP Convention,” \textit{Canadian Dimension}, June 1971, 7.
\textsuperscript{75} John Zaritsky, “NDP vetoes a conference to plan program for females,” \textit{Globe and Mail}, April 26, 1971.
\textsuperscript{77} As will be discussed in following chapters, the 1973 federal NDP convention, in the Waffle’s absence, voted to hold a national women’s conference the following year. The conference endorsed a feminist policy agenda and laid the groundwork for Rosemary Brown’s leadership campaign in 1975.
\textsuperscript{78} Cross, “Third Class on the Titanic,” 4.
“you have to get married to join the union,” and “what you really need is a good fuck.”

The referral motion on the women’s resolution was defeated to the tune of “Solidarity Forever” sung by satisfied union delegates. Despite the party prominently advertising its daycare provisions for the children of delegates, the facilities were only open from 2:00 to 5:00 p.m. Women’s liberationists were disgusted by an advertisement for a topless nightclub in the convention brochure. Yvonne Trower summarized the feelings of many when she lamented, “this party is prepared to see women, not as policy makers, but as playmates.”

The Waffle fared little better in the debate over foreign policy held on the second day of the convention. The catchall resolution produced by the Resolutions Committee called for revisions to Canada’s approach to foreign aid and trade, including increasing Canada’s foreign aid to one percent of the gross national product, less than the two percent called for at the 1969 Convention. Rejecting Wafflers’ criticisms that the resolution was too weak, Don Montgomery, Toronto-area director for the USWA, compared them to “a bunch of clerics debating how many angels could stand on the head of a pin.”

Michael Cross, a commentator sympathetic to the Waffle, argued “imperialism was ignored, aid for national liberation movements in Africa was ducked,

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79 Burstyn, “Sexism Prevailed at the NDP Convention,” 8. She described responding to the “Steelworker bureaucrat” who delivered the last line “with a few well-chosen feminist expletives” without realizing that her comments, though not his, were broadcast by CTV across the country. After the convention she had “to face the grim fury of the Beaches-Woodbine women’s auxiliary… I was told that I had disgraced the riding association and betrayed the trust of its members, especially the women.” Burstyn, “The Waffle and the Women’s Movement,” 179.
82 Ibid.
Canadian defence policies and alliances were not discussed.” Waffler Jackie Larkin dismissed it as “a liberal resolution.”

After two days of continuous policy defeats, the Waffle geared up for the critical third day of the convention in anticipation of the elections of party officers and the debates to determine the NDP’s stance on natural resources and Quebec. But disappointment followed on all fronts. Despite its related success at the Ontario NDP convention only a few months earlier, the Waffle was rebuffed in its attempt to refer the proposed policy on natural resources back to committee for consideration of its position on widespread nationalization. Instead, the convention passed a resolution calling for increased public control over Canada’s resource industries via several methods, including public ownership and joint participation with private corporations. Broadbent argued this was a retreat from existing party policy and attempted to introduce an amendment to the resolution calling for nationalization of all aspects of the oil and gas industries, but the vote was taken before he was recognized by the chair. Laxer, who had avoided involvement in the early policy debates, spoke in favour of the Waffle position, but his speech was criticized by Art Kube, a CLC director and former Steelworker, who “drew angry shouts and applause with an attack on the academics in the Waffle faction.”

According to Wilfrid List, a reporter covering the convention for the *Globe and Mail*, Kube was furious, claiming “I’m sick and tired of those people in Kingston, led by Laxer.

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83 Cross, “Third Class on the Titanic,” 5.
84 The Waffle indicated it would nationalize resource industries including petroleum (oil, gas, pipelines, refineries and the petro-chemical industry), coal, uranium, forest products, mineral and related smelting industries.
85 The policy passed by the convention called for the establishment of a Canadian development corporation, co-operation with provincial governments to establish uniform standards of resource development, the elimination of tax concessions for resource industries, and promised to study means of increasing the amount of raw materials processed in Canada.
86 Wilfred List, “Complete public ownership of oil, mines is rejected 3-1 by New Democratic convention” *Globe and Mail*, April 24, 1971.
It’s time we had people who did some work rather than professors who write resolutions… No one has refused to join the NDP because we’re not radical enough.”

The Waffle’s referral motion was defeated, and the resolution passed by a three-to-one margin.

After an unsuccessful attempt at crafting a compromise policy on Quebec, the Resolutions Committee presented a resolution expressing a clear commitment to federalism, with the only concession to Quebec nationalism being acknowledgement that Canada should not be kept together by force. Both the Waffle and the Quebec delegates attempted to refer the resolution back to the committee with instruction to include the policy recognizing Quebec’s right to self-determination adopted at the provincial NDP meeting in Montreal two months earlier. Raymond Laliberté, Jim Laxer, Mel Watkins, Robert Cliche and Laurier LaPierre all spoke in favour of referral and “autodetermination,” while the other leadership hopefuls David Lewis, Harney, and Howard all spoke against. Desmond Morton argued that supporting self-determination would ruin the NDP’s electoral ambitions in English Canada. Murray Cotterill, director of public relations for the USWA, denounced “bloody academic labels” and warned Quebec independence would divide bargaining teams, cripple workers’ negotiating power, and harm organized labour. Broadbent’s attempt at a compromise by strengthening the resolution’s wording in support of Quebec’s right to self-determination

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87 Ibid.
88 The Resolutions Committee’s compromise resolution, which sought to combine recognition of Quebec’s right to self-determination with a commitment to keeping Canada together, was rejected by the Quebec NDP executive. Lewis Seale, “New Democratic resolutions group adds federalist tone after Quebeckers reject formula,” Globe and Mail, April 22, 1971; “NDP delegates start manoeuvring for Quebec policy fight,” Toronto Star, April 21, 1971.
while retaining the party’s commitment to federalism, was rejected by both sides. The convention voted 953 to 423 to reject the referral motion and endorse the strictly federalist policy. After the convention, David Lewis suggested that the resolution left the party’s policy on Quebec in the hands of the federal council, and emphasized his own support for a federalist solution.91

The *Globe and Mail* neatly summarized the alignment of forces that had successfully opposed the Waffle at the convention: “labor supplied the muscle in these crucial votes but the ideas were developed by the NDP Now group.”92 Union delegates had indeed literally “supplied the muscle” on occasion. After the Waffle motion to refer the resource resolution back to committee was defeated in a vote by show of hands, Waffler Gilles Teasdale lunged for a microphone to demand a recorded vote. As the *Globe and Mail* reported the incident:

> He was thrown back from the podium by three trade union delegates acting as convention ushers. When Mr. Teasdale again attempted to climb onto the podium, the ushers pushed him back and a fight almost resulted.93

When Steve Penner, chair of the Ontario Waffle, tried to reach a microphone to suggest a standing vote, he too was rebuffed by union delegates when Terry Meagher, the secretary-treasurer of the OFL, noted Penner was not wearing a delegate badge. Near bedlam ensued as Waffle and trade union delegates “cursed and pushed at each other,” Mel Watkins screaming that Meagher was “a fascist” and unionists retorting that Watkins was a “commie.” Stephen Lewis intervened, telling the union delegates to “cool it,”

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92 “Ad hoc policy committee calls on radical Waffle group to dissolve” *Globe and Mail*, April 26, 1971.
while Watkins urged the Wafflers to calm down and Penner to leave the podium. The Wafflers were justifiably upset over the actions of some union delegates to the convention. According to Cy Gonick and Jack Warnock, “union muscle intimidation was let loose throughout the convention floor.” They described the scene:

A Manitoba cabinet minister who, in the final ballot, was refusing to wear a Lewis button was surrounded by representatives of the Manitoba steelworkers and told, “You vote for Laxer and we’ll fix you.” He didn’t buckle, and that little exchange cost David a few more votes. A union man who put on a Laxer button was grabbed by three others, pressed against a wall and threatened if he didn’t remove the button. One of us was grabbed and threatened by a union delegate for cheering one of the Waffle’s few procedural victories.

The Waffle had also resolved to challenge the “administration slate” of candidates for party offices by nominating its own members for various positions. However, as with its policy setbacks, the group experienced several defeats with the result that fewer Waffle supporters were elected to important party posts in 1971 than had been two years earlier. Former Ontario NDP leader Donald MacDonald defeated Waffler Carol Gudmundson for the party presidency by 885 votes to 565; Mary Eady was re-elected party treasurer over Waffler Sheila Kuziak by 897 votes to 497; and Roland Morin was re-elected associate president over Waffle-backed Marc Boulard by 807 votes to 680. Carol Gudmundson was the only Waffler to be elected to one of the NDP’s seven vice-president positions when Mel Watkins lost his bid for re-election. Gonick and Watkins

94 “Union delegates scuffle with radical faction” Globe and Mail, April 24, 1971; Michael Cross “Third Class on the Titanic,” 5.
96 Clarkson, “Policy in the NDP,” 8. The official “slate” was a list of candidates seeking party offices approved by a collection of party and union leaders and distributed to convention delegates before voting. In 1975 a reporter explained that the “party establishment… is much stronger in the NDP than it is in the Conservative, or even the Liberal, Party. (The fact the convention elected to the NDP’s governing body, the Federal Council, every person recommended by the executive indicates the extent of the Establishment’s sway),” Geoffrey Stevens, “The best man won,” Globe and Mail, July 8, 1975.
were the only two Wafflers elected to the twenty member-at-large spots on the federal council. In the convention’s highly polarized atmosphere, Sidney Green, a Manitoba cabinet minister, was left off the party establishment’s slate for re-election as a vice-president. Although Green was not a Waffle supporter per se, he attributed his rebuff by “the establishment group” to the fact they “were not satisfied with me, because I did not share their obsession” with the Waffle.\textsuperscript{98} Despite the electoral defeats, the Wafflers were buoyed by the results. Many of their candidates had received over 400 votes, a promising harbinger it was believed for Laxer in the election for party leader to be held the next day.

Laxer’s speech to the convention emphasized how the Waffle’s vision for Canada and the NDP differed from his rivals. Key defining tenets were “public ownership is central to any notion of building an independent Canada,” and the need to transform the NDP so its influence extended beyond Parliament Hill and periodic election campaigns. Laxer reminded delegates of the Waffle’s link to the broader New Left when he criticized “an educational system that is nothing more than a glorified babysitting service for society and nothing more than a training ground for the corporations in this country,” and held up the women’s liberation movement and the youth movement against authoritarianism as essential vehicles of social transformation. He reminded New Democrats that adopting radical policies without a basis in people’s movements was not sufficient to avoid “the trap of coming to office but the people not coming to power”.\textsuperscript{99}

While David Lewis was widely favoured to win the party leadership, an equally important question was how much support Laxer and the Waffle would draw. An article in the left-wing publication \textit{The Last Post} suggested some Lewis supporters planned to


\textsuperscript{99} James Laxer: Candidate’s Speech, Federal NDP Convention, April 1971, Box 2009-043/002, File 11, Gordon Laxer fonds, YUA.
back Harney on the first ballot in an effort to deny Laxer second place. But as one party official explained, “it’s very tough to rig a ballot… you might subtract too many votes from Lewis or not give Harney enough. So it’s going to be very very tough.”

Publicly Lewis supporters predicted their man would have forty percent of the vote after the first ballot with Laxer in second place at twenty percent, but then Lewis would triumph on the second ballot by drawing the remaining anti-Waffle delegates into his camp.

Lewis did indeed lead from the first ballot, but he saw his support grow agonizingly slowly over the next two ballots. Laxer finished second, ahead of Harney, and Broadbent came in fourth, although with less support than anticipated. Howard received more votes than expected, but finished last on the ballot and was required to withdraw from the race. When Broadbent again finished fourth on the second ballot and was eliminated, his supporters mostly split between Laxer and Harney on the third ballot, which Lewis continued to lead. With Broadbent out of the running, Waffle supporters led by Watkins pushed into the Broadbent section of the convention hall offering delegates Laxer buttons. As Wafflers Cy Gonick and John Warnock later recalled, “as soon as Broadbent dropped, they literally rushed to take up Laxer buttons, and for the first time in the past six months they felt politically comfortable.”

When Harney was removed from the third ballot, MPs and Lewis supporters Max Saltsman and Andrew Brewin pressured him to declare for their candidate. Badgered by

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100 “Spring Cleaning: How Stephen Lewis Gave up Wellington Boots, The Waffle, the NDY, and Grew Wiser in His Years,” The Last Post, April-May 1971, 35; See also Peter Regenstreif, “Waffle sharpens old NDP dilemma: Is it a political party or movement?” Toronto Star, April 22, 1971.


102 Gonick and Warnock “Sour Winners,” 5.
CBC reporters eager for a story, Harney sat silently and refused to commit.103 Terry Grier, Desmond Morton, John Brewin and Donald MacDonald, all key Harney supporters and determined to defeat Laxer, donned Lewis buttons and encouraged others to do likewise. Lewis finally prevailed over Laxer on the fourth ballot, by a vote of 1046 to 612.104 While his supporters chanted “Power to the people,” Laxer moved the obligatory motion that Lewis’s election be declared unanimous and exhorted the party to “get together in the 1972 election.”105 Desmond Morton, writing of the event two years later, described the leadership vote as “a shabby triumph for a veteran who deserved better from his party.”106 Gerald Caplan described the Lewis victory celebration at the Château Laurier hotel as “one of the worst celebrations I’ve ever been at. It was like a wake… I’ve never been to a place at which the winner felt so much like a victim.”107

103 The CBC’s extensive coverage of the convention was not always smooth or accurate. Harney made clear that his choice for leader was being kept private, but when pressed by the reporter he joked that the name of the candidate he would support began with “L”. The interviewer, overcome with excitement, proclaimed over Harney’s protests that he was supporting Lewis, not Laxer. “The CBC’s Distortion and Trivialization of Convention Issues,” Canadian Dimension, June 1971, 10.

104 “NDP requires 4 ballots to elect Lewis as leader,” Globe and Mail, April 26, 1971.

105 Ibid.


107 Gerald Caplan, quotation from Smith, Unfinished Journey, 471; Michael Bradley in Crisis of Clarity contrasts Tommy Douglas and David Lewis, suggests that Douglas was sympathetic to the Waffle, and even hints that he preferred Laxer over Lewis to succeed him. Bradley claims “there is a fair bit of evidence to suggest that Douglas wanted a younger man to succeed him as NDP leader, or at least to contest the leadership… and that the young man he liked was James Laxer.” However, Ed Broadbent also remembered Douglas “discreetly encouraging” him to run for leader, explaining “he wanted a leader from the new generation.” Bradley further contends that Douglas’s mention of Laxer’s book during “his speech just before balloting began” represents “a hint that Douglas may have done all he could to help Laxer during the 1971 convention.” Bradley’s suggestion seems unlikely. Certainly Douglas’s comments that “I have always welcomed having inside the party a group of people who keep pushing the party into being more aggressive and more radical” suggests sympathy for the Waffle’s position. However, in the next breath Douglas explained “if it becomes divisive, if it sets up a party within a party… then it becomes a source of friction rather than a source of strength” and warned that “the group inside the party which is trying to move the party forward may tend to shut its eyes to political realities… without any regard to (a) whether the things they are suggesting are practicable and (b) whether these things they are suggesting are acceptable to the electorate, who, in the final analysis, we must win over.” Douglas’s closeness to Hans Brown, a Waffler and his executive assistant, in combination with Douglas’s own ideological inclinations, appears a likelier explanation for his relative sympathy for the Waffle position, at least compared to other members of the NDP leadership. Bill Knight, a Saskatchewan NDP MP, suggested that Douglas was “every bit as tenacious in his opposition to the Waffle as Lewis… if he’d stayed on, he would have put the sword
Leading Wafflers, despite the group’s various policy and leadership defeats, nevertheless expressed satisfaction over the convention’s outcome in general. Laxer considered his second-place showing for the party leadership to be a great victory, making it “impossible for the left ever again to be ignored by the NDP.” Mel Watkins described the race for party leader as one of the greatest days of his life, and proclaimed the Waffle was ensconced within the NDP while continuing to function as a distinct movement. Laxer and Watkins both interpreted the increasingly polarized NDP on display at the Ottawa convention as evidence of growth in support for the Waffle since 1969 when it was still a largely unknown entity to many in the party. Lewis, in his leadership acceptance speech to the convention, commented “I look forward to working with Jim Laxer and his friends. There is no difference of purpose in this party.” But during the press conference that followed he was unequivocal and uncompromising in his stance on the Waffle, describing it as an “organization of its own” and pledging he would focus on NDP policy, not the Waffle. When asked for his reaction if the Waffle continued organizing the workers and the oppressed, Lewis replied “Well, if they do

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109 “NDP requires 4 ballots to elect Lewis as leader,” Globe and Mail, April 26, 1971.
110 Ibid.
organize the workers and the oppressed I would be a great deal happier. So far they’ve organized the students and the oppressing.”

At the same time as the Waffle was capturing national media attention for shaking up the federal NDP at its convention and beyond, Wafflers were playing critical roles during 1971 in the Saskatchewan and Ontario provincial elections and the New Brunswick NDP convention. Saskatchewan Wafflers comprised the second largest group within the movement overall, and the election there represented an opportunity for incorporating Waffle ideas into an NDP campaign for winning back a province where the CCF/NDP had a strong presence historically, but currently had a Liberal government.

Saskatchewan Premier Ross Thatcher appeared confident when he announced a provincial election for late May 1971. Believing rebounding grain sales and the promise of a federal grain stabilization program subsidy for farmers would offset the unpopularity of the federal Liberals’ Operation LIFT (Lower Inventories For Tomorrow), Thatcher was also buoyed by apparent divisions amongst his political opponents. An attempted merger between the Social Credit and Progressive Conservative parties that ended in acrimony had undermined an effective challenge to the Liberals from the right, and news reports that the Waffle had split with the NDP in early 1971, although erroneous, initially reassured Thatcher that the left too was in disarray. Nevertheless, signs of voter disenchantment with Thatcher’s government existed. In addition to

113 Foster Barnsley, “Most Sask. farmers survived tough year,” *Regina Leader-Post*, January 2, 1971. In a period of low grain prices, the federal government’s Operation LIFT aimed to reduce the country’s surplus of supply by making federal subsidies dependent on farmers reducing their wheat production.
plunging grain sales troubling Saskatchewan farmers in 1969 and 1970, the Thatcher
government had battled with students over university autonomy, introduced unpopular
user fees for hospitals and medical care programs, and consolidated schools against local
opposition. Furthermore, the Liberal government was known to have blatantly
gerrymandered electoral districts to its own advantage.115

The Liberal campaign, with its two-fold focus promising legislation prohibiting
strikes and a commitment to economic development and diversification by opening more
mines and mills backfired. The Saskatchewan Federation of Labour responded to the
anti-strike pledge by extensively supporting the NDP campaign. And the announcement
of more pulp mills, which many assumed would be American owned, angered opponents
of foreign ownership and industrial pollution.116 In the span of four years the Thatcher
government had antagonized students, farmers, teachers and the labour movement. As
Waffler Don Kossick recalled, “there was a really important coalition politics that was
developing in the late 60s and helped the NDP get elected in ’71.”117

To counter the Liberals, the NDP platform a New Deal for People promised free
collective bargaining, a Land Bank Commission and land-lease program to protect family
farms, a commitment to challenge unhelpful federal government agricultural policies, and
implementation of a fairer tax system. The NDP also took aim at the Liberals’ record of

115 “Both New Democrats, Liberals shocked by NDP’s Saskatchewan sweep,” Globe and Mail, June 25, 1971. The cynical gerrymandering of the two seats in Moose Jaw encouraged NDP MLA Gordon Snyder to shift from Moose Jaw North to Moose Jaw South, setting off the nomination battle with Waffler John Conway described in Chapter Five. Moose Jaw North, redrawn to include half as many voters as Moose Jaw South, turned out to be the only Liberal gain in the provincial election.
promoting economic development by subsidizing American investors. It promised to cancel construction of the Meadow Lake pulp mill project Thatcher announced early in the campaign, and to “stop sellouts to foreign promoters… develop resources for the benefit of all and… protect our environment from pollution.”

The Waffle’s influence was clearly evident in the Saskatchewan NDP’s electoral platform. As an editorial in the Regina Leader-Post noted, the NDP platform “has a lot of Waffle in it.” In addition to criticizing the extent of foreign ownership of the major provincial resource industries and the unfavourable – to the public – terms on which new mines and mills relied, the platform promised an NDP government would “consider [the] feasibility of bringing the potash industry under public ownership,” which was a major Waffle demand. David McGrane, a political scientist, has pointed out that the platform contained ideas also found in the Saskatchewan Waffle Manifesto, including a commitment to eliminating “all sexual discrimination.” A New Deal for People pledged to enact a new Human Rights Code that prohibited sexual discrimination in hiring and the workplace and ensured pregnancy leave entitlements.

Both the Saskatchewan Waffle Manifesto and the New Deal for People also promoted creation of a government-run land bank to lease land to farmers unable to buy their own. The NDP had adopted a modified version of the land bank at its 1970 convention, and gone to great lengths to demonstrate its support for private property and

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118 Saskatchewan NDP, New Deal for People (Regina: Saskatchewan NDP, 1971).
119 “Take the plunge, say the Wafflers” Regina Leader-Post, August 4, 1971.
120 Saskatchewan NDP, New Deal for People.
121 David McGrane, “A Mixed Record: Gender and Saskatchewan Social Democracy,” Journal of Canadian Studies 42 (Winter 2008), 187. McGrane explains, “this sentence on women was the first movement forward on women’s issues in the CCF-NDP since the Douglas government inserted discrimination on the basis of sex into the Saskatchewan Human Rights Code and passed legislation guaranteeing equal pay for equal work irrespective of sex for women working in the provincial government in the 1950s.”
122 Appendix F The Saskatchewan Waffle Manifesto; Saskatchewan NDP, New Deal for People.
the family farm. Regardless, its more conservatively-oriented critics such as David Steuart, the Liberal Minister of Finance, attacked the NDP program as communistic, and likened the Waffle to the humourless “Red Guard.”

Perhaps fearing such criticisms, Allan Blakeney ensured his party’s provincial council included an option-to-purchase clause in the land bank plank of its election platform. A New Deal for People explained that the Land Bank Commission would “purchase land offered voluntarily on the market at competitive prices and lease this land, guaranteeing tenure, on the basis of need, with option to buy, with the objective of promoting the maximum number of family farms in Saskatchewan.”

The Regina Leader-Post predicted “the farm vote is expected to tell the story” as both parties wooed Saskatchewan’s farmers. Blakeney presented his NDP and its proposals for a land bank and curbs on foreign ownership as the “saviours of the family farm.” Ross Thatcher countered that “our program is just the opposite” of the land bank proposal. “We have sold more than one million acres of Crown land back to the farmers and we will continue to do so.”

Thatcher’s Liberals remained highly critical of Waffle influence over NDP policies throughout the campaign, contrasting the benefits of free enterprise with the dangers of socialism.

The Waffle made a conscious effort to minimize its conflicts with the party leadership in the weeks leading up to the provincial election. Antagonisms between radicals and moderates in Moose Jaw, where MP John Skoberg openly sympathized with

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124 Blakeney, interviewed later, commented “I took an active part in some of these battles saying we really have to have the right to repurchase. We always intended that, but I said it had to be stated. It was not our purpose to have a vast store of land owned by the Government of Saskatchewan.” Gruending, Promises to Keep, 105-6.
125 Saskatchewan NDP, New Deal for People.
126 “Blakeney says NDP saviors of family farm” Regina Leader-Post June 17, 1971.
127 “Thatcher says election significant to Canada.” Regina Leader-Post June 22, 1971.
the Waffle, threatened to spill over into the rest of the province.\textsuperscript{129} In the aftermath of the bitter nomination battle won by Gordon Snyder over Waffler John Conway to succeed William Davies in the riding of Moose Jaw South in April 1970, Conway and other Wafflers took over Moose Jaw’s leftist municipal group, the Civic Reform Association, prompting the city’s two-term mayor L.H. “Scoop” Lewry, a former CCF MP, along with four other moderate candidates to leave the group.\textsuperscript{130} Running as an independent in Moose Jaw’s December 1970 municipal election, Lewry was defeated by former Conservative MP J. Ernest Pascoe.\textsuperscript{131} Blakeney explained to Waffler John Richards that

\begin{quote}
The situation in Moose Jaw is very, very prickly. A couple of weeks ago I spent a long evening with Snyder, Davies and Skoberg trying to pour oil on troubled waters. As a result a letter went out to the membership in Moose Jaw signed by all three which was (I hope) a delicate call for unity. As you may know some of the Snyder group (if I may use that term) are feeling less than cordial to John Skoberg and less than cordial to Don Mitchell and John Conway.\textsuperscript{132}
\end{quote}

Blakeney admitted he was “concerned about Waffle” and “hesitated to make any public statements on Waffle since that is clearly to rise to Thatcher’s bait.” He did promise to be conciliatory in the press and emphasized the importance of party unity heading into the provincial election.\textsuperscript{133} For its part, as Richards explained to Blakeney, the Waffle “wisely decided to adopt a ‘low profile’ until the election is over.”\textsuperscript{134}

Privately, however, the NDP leadership was concerned that internal divisions might hinder the party’s electoral fortunes. Clifford Scotton, the federal party’s secretary, predicted the NDP eking out a bare majority winning thirty-two of the

\textsuperscript{129} John Skoberg to Cliff Scotton, June 9, 1972, File 446-4, Waffle-NDP fonds, LAC.
\textsuperscript{130} “Lewry quits civic group as Waffle Group enters” \textit{Globe and Mail}, October 23, 1970.
\textsuperscript{131} “Mayors ousted in Moose Jaw and Regina,” \textit{Globe and Mail}, December 4, 1970. NDP MLA Henry Baker, who had also served as Mayor of Regina since 1958, was defeated in the same municipal election.
\textsuperscript{132} Allan Blakeney to John Richards, February 3, 1971, File II.3 Correspondence, 1968-1971, John Richards Papers, SAB (Saskatoon).
\textsuperscript{133} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{134} John Richards to Allan Blakeney, January 19, 1971 and Allan Blakeney to John Richards, February 3, 1971, File II.3 Correspondence, 1968-1971, John Richards Papers, SAB (Saskatoon).
legislature’s sixty seats.\textsuperscript{135} Ontario NDP provincial secretary Gordon Brigden reiterated the party’s concerns about Liberal gerrymandering while also recognizing that “the party is split, thanks to the Waffle and Thatcher is exploiting this” alongside anti-union rhetoric.\textsuperscript{136} For some Ontario party leaders already concerned about the Waffle the Saskatchewan group appeared to loom larger than life. USWA staffer, party organizer and Waffle opponent Bob Mackenzie wrote to Brigden to complain about being sent to the riding of Elrose for the election, which he claimed was the “centre of Saskatchewan Waffle” in addition to being large, rural and featuring a poorly organized campaign marred further by suspicions of the party’s Provincial Office.\textsuperscript{137} Mackenzie added that the Provincial Office was in complete chaos and suggested that they need to “get rid of some of the unreasonable and unsupported optimism.” He concluded “I would not dare report all this to Sefton.”\textsuperscript{138} As it turned out, NDP candidate and Eston machinery dealer Hayden Owens, who demonstrated no discernible interest in the Waffle, defeated the Liberal incumbent in Elrose.

The Saskatchewan Waffle was active in the election campaign, especially in supporting two candidates, Walter Smishek and John Richards. Smishek, the NDP MLA for Regina North East, earned his reputation as a leftist in 1961 when, as the provincial government structured Saskatchewan’s medicare system, he strongly opposed the introduction of premiums and patient deterrent fees, and argued that doctors should be salaried rather than allowed to work on a fee-for-service basis. Smishek had spoken

\textsuperscript{136} Gordon Brigden to Don Stevenson, June 17, 1971, Series 20 File, File 118 Brigden, Gordon, 1970-73, New Democratic Party of Ontario fonds, QUA.
\textsuperscript{138} Ibid. Larry Sefton was the USWA Director in District 6 (Canada).
favourably of the Waffle Manifesto during the party’s 1969 convention. The Waffle also actively supported the campaign of Richards, a twenty-six-year-old professor of political economy at the University of Saskatchewan who was contesting the riding of Saskatoon-University. Active in the campus NDP as an undergraduate, Richards went on to do graduate work in economics at the University of Cambridge in England and Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri. When planning his return to Saskatchewan, Richards decided to seek an NDP nomination and wrote to party activists in the province requesting their support. At that point still unaware of the Waffle, Richards expressed his belief that Canadians “must try to diminish greatly our dependence – economic, political, and social – on America,” and he blamed American ownership, at least in part, “for the present chaotic conditions in potash communities.”

After he won the NDP nomination in September 1970 and publicly identified himself with the Waffle, Richards unwittingly became the focus of controversy and student protests on the University of Saskatchewan campus when his one-year teaching contract with the Department of Economics and Political Science was not renewed in 1971. Two weeks of student occupations of the university’s arts building turned Richards’s case into a cause célèbre, with the student union council, the Saskatchewan Waffle and the Saskatchewan NDP Youth all endorsing the protesters. Richards’s supporters suggested that his Waffle sympathies and NDP candidacy were behind the non-renewal decision, but Leo Kristjanson, who was the department head and also a New

Democrat, denied the claims.\(^{141}\) The real reason was opposition from economists in the department who disapproved of Richards’s political economy course.\(^{142}\)

It is possible the controversy contributed to Richards’s election victory, or perhaps he simply was propelled along as the NDP swept into power under Blakeney’s leadership, capturing forty-five of sixty seats, including thirty-two of the province’s forty-three rural ridings, and fifty-five per cent of the popular vote. Despite his PC opponent Peter Russell’s criticisms of Richards’s inappropriate language and Waffle “extremism,” the NDP triumphed in the newly created Saskatoon-University riding by a margin of over 1000 votes.\(^{143}\) Commentators at the time attributed the massive and surprising swing to the NDP across Saskatchewan to the unpopularity of the federal Liberals’ agricultural policies, dissatisfaction over the Thatcher Liberals’ two tumultuous terms in government, distrust of foreign investment, concerns over industrial pollution, and the NDP’s modernized and active canvassing operation.\(^{144}\) Although historians of the NDP have largely ignored the appeal of the Saskatchewan NDP’s platform when

\(^{141}\) “Support growing for student sit-in,” *Saskatoon Star-Phoenix*, March 18, 1971.


\(^{143}\) Election Leaflet: Peter Russell, 1971, File III.6 Elections – 1971 Campaign 1971, John Richards Papers, SAB (Saskatoon). The PC leaflet quotes Richards as saying, “Laxer is coming to mess up your mind by dwelling on the irrelevant fucked-up details such as potash and poverty and unemployment that he claims is intentionally created by our government’s attempt to cut down inflation by throwing people out of work and that the inflation all started anyway by the Americans’ spending $20-30 billion a year on fighting Charlie in Vietnam… I strongly advise you to stay away from Laxer altogether. His wife is liberated and makes him do the washing up; he wears a beard, and probably doesn’t understand the necessity of locking up 250 crazy Frogs in Quebec who mess up good Frog minds by talking about socialism and separatism and cultural genocide and other irrelevancies.”

explaining the 1971 election victory, Thatcher’s biographer Dale Eisler described *New Deal for People* as a “masterstroke.”\(^{145}\)

While Saskatchewan Wafflers granted that the unpopularity of both Thatcher’s government and the federal Liberals significantly influenced the election results, they also emphasized the contributions of extra-parliamentary “constituent groups.”

According to Waffler John Gallagher, the NFU, the SFL, the Saskatchewan Teachers Federation (STF), and various environmental groups all vociferously opposed Thatcher’s Liberals thereby enabling the NDP to benefit “from a sentiment it did not generate.”\(^{146}\) Don Mitchell, formerly a Waffle leadership candidate, agreed that the organized opposition of labour, farmers and teachers was significant to the NDP’s success, but also suggested “the left revival in the NDP made the party more credible.”\(^{147}\) Saskatchewan Wafflers were pleased that Walter Smishek was appointed minister of health in Blakeney’s cabinet and John Richards named his legislative secretary. Still, the Waffle harboured uncertainties about the new government. Specifically, John Gallagher noted “some serious ideological differences” remained between left and right wings of the caucus, and predicted only moderate reforms would be implemented under the Blakeney NDP.\(^{148}\)


Nearly two years after its formation the Waffle’s relationship with the NDP had been strained but not broken. The federal NDP leadership race exposed significant policy divisions between the Waffle and moderate New Democrats over Quebec’s right to self-determination, women’s liberation and gender parity on the party executive and council, and widespread nationalization of resource industries. The creation of an organized opposition to the Waffle in the form of the NDP Now group, with its union allies, both curtailed the Waffle’s policy influence and further polarized the party between radicals and moderates. Yet Laxer’s surprising second-place finish to David Lewis and the strength of his final ballot support indicated that the Waffle’s message appealed to a significant minority of party members. Furthermore, the Waffle’s presence did not deter voters in Saskatchewan from electing the NDP in that province to a majority government in the 1971 election. Despite struggles with party moderates over nominations and policy, the Waffle influenced the Saskatchewan NDP platform and had one of its members elected as a MLA. Overall, circumstances appeared propitious in mid-1971 for the Waffle to continue exerting pressure from the NDP’s left wing.
Chapter Seven
“I don’t like to see people get their fingers burned unnecessarily:” Polarization, 1971-72

The Wafflers’ optimism was soon challenged. This chapter examines the Waffle’s escalating conflict with the NDP leadership throughout the latter half of 1971 and into 1972, culminating in Stephen Lewis’s Oshawa speech denouncing the group as a “party within a party,” thereby setting the stage for its expulsion from the Ontario NDP. Canadian economic nationalism was high on the political agenda in 1971, and provincial Waffle groups sought to capitalize on the political climate by pushing the NDP to adopt policies reflecting the Waffle’s focus on independence and socialism. The group’s distinctive strategy to conduct parallel electoral and extra-parliamentary activism was never clearer than during the late summer and fall of 1971. Wafflers in Ontario supported the Texpack strikers while simultaneously fighting a landmark provincial election. In Manitoba and Saskatchewan, they struggled to define their relationship with NDP governments, while federally the NDP agonized over its own relationship with the Waffle. But conflicts with the party leadership – over the Trotskyist-dominated New Brunswick Waffle, the Waffle’s role in provincial elections in Saskatchewan and Ontario, and Waffle supporters within NDP-affiliated unions – intensified to the point where union leaders and party moderates were pushing by 1972 to marginalize the Wafflers. Canadians fearful of American domination of their nation’s economy were given further cause for concern during the summer and autumn of 1971. President Richard Nixon announced his New Economic Policy (NEP) in a speech on August 15, 1971, marking a significant shift in American economic and trade policy. Often referred to as the “Nixon Shock,” it has been described as an “epochal event in the history of Canada-
United States relations” as the Americans made clear Canada would not be exempt from protectionist measures.\(^1\) Of particular concern to Canadians were the ten percent temporary import surcharge, the NEP’s ten percent tax credit for American-made machinery and equipment, and the Domestic International Sales Corporation (DISC) that allowed American companies to defer paying taxes on at least half of their profits earned from exports. Authored by John Connally, the Nixon administration’s combative Secretary of the Treasury, the combined impact of these measures was intended to bolster American manufacturing in the face of increasing competition from Western Europe and Japan. But Canada too was in the crosshairs, thereby signaling to many the end to the ‘special relationship’ Canadians had enjoyed with the U.S. to that point.\(^2\) Particularly worrisome were documents revealing American objections to the Auto Pact’s safeguarding of Canadian economic interests.\(^3\) The announcement of America’s unilateral termination of the Auto Pact had only been removed from Nixon’s speech at the last minute.\(^4\) The Nixon Shock led even the reliably pro-business Globe and Mail to editorialize “we have lately learned, and are still learning, that Canada’s economic and political dependence on the United States is not as easy, secure or undemanding as Canadian complacency has tended to assume in the past.”\(^5\) Although the United States ultimately backed down on changes to the Auto Pact and soon suspended the ten percent import surcharge against Canada, the aggressively protectionist stance adopted by Nixon


\(^2\) Ibid., 439.

\(^3\) Ibid., 433-34.


\(^5\) “The visit could have value,” *Globe and Mail*, October 16, 1971.
and Connally seriously shook many Canadians’ faith in American economic benevolence.

A leaked federal cabinet report in late 1971 confirming large-scale foreign ownership of the Canadian economy further eroded that confidence. At the request of Prime Minister Trudeau, Minister without Portfolio Herb Gray had created a working group to study levels of foreign direct investment in Canada. The Gray Report, submitted to cabinet in May 1971 and not intended for public consumption, recommended a “screening agency” for direct foreign investment be implemented in particular areas of the economy. After a version of the report was leaked by a government official and published in Canadian Forum in November 1971, the Trudeau government released the entire report and introduced legislation the following year to create the Foreign Investment Review Agency.  

As fears of American economic domination percolated in the Canadian political psyche, conflict within the miniscule New Brunswick NDP boiled over in the fall of 1971. The New Brunswick Waffle, which was the dominant presence in two of the NDP’s largest riding associations in the province, was confident of attracting even more delegates into its camp when the provincial party met in convention in late September. But even they were shocked when the New Brunswick Waffle manifesto, which contained a stronger critique of capitalism and recommended more extensive socialist remedies than even the original Waffle Manifesto, passed at the convention by a vote of forty-one to forty.  

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7 Webber, “‘For a Socialist New Brunswick’,” Acadiensis, 91.
joined shortly afterwards by more Waffle opponents, thereby thrusting the convention into chaos and a premature adjournment. At a subsequent meeting of anti-Wafflers, Cliff Scotton, the NDP federal secretary, admonished the trade unionists for allowing the New Brunswick Waffle manifesto to pass. By mid-October, Waffle opponents within the New Brunswick NDP had scheduled another convention, while the Wafflers reconvened the earlier meeting from September and elected one of their own, Pat Callahan, as party leader alongside a new executive. The New Brunswick NDP thus found itself with two competing leaders and executives.8

Meanwhile, the New Brunswick Waffle was itself splitting apart. Members of the Fredericton Young Socialists (FYS), who had founded the province’s Waffle, had not attended the September New Brunswick NDP convention since the Toronto-based Central Executive Council of the YS had suspended their memberships for failing to heed the instructions of Ross Dowson, leader of the LSA, to adopt a more moderate approach within the NDP. Fearful that a confrontation in New Brunswick could lead NDP leaders to purge the LSA and the Waffle from the party in the rest of the country, Dowson instructed the FYS to intervene in the New Brunswick Waffle in the hopes of avoiding a split with the provincial NDP.9 The twists and turns of Trotskyist tactics in New Brunswick could have proved a minor embarrassment for the Waffle had these maneuvers not been overshadowed by a dramatic series of events much closer to Canada’s media centre in Toronto.

In the fall of 1971, the Ontario Waffle allied with workers represented by Local 520 of the Canadian Textile and Chemical Union (CTCU) on strike at the Texpack textile

8 Ibid., 95.
9 Webber, “‘For a Socialist New Brunswick’,” M.A. Thesis, 121-123.
plant in Brantford, as discussed in Chapter Five. The CTCU represented the remnants of
the Canadian Textile Council of the United Textile Workers of America (UTWA) that
had split from the parent union when the UTWA expelled the popular organizers and
leaders of the Council, Kent Rowley and Madeleine Parent, amidst accusations of
communism.\textsuperscript{10} The pair continued organizing and representing textile workers in Ontario
and Quebec through the Canadian Textile Council and Parent eventually joined Rowley
in Brantford in 1967.\textsuperscript{11} The CLC continued to perceive them as communists. Parent had
assisted the Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers Union in the battles against USWA for the
Inco and Falconbridge locals in Sudbury in 1961, 1962 and 1965, resulting in
Steelworker officials portraying her as a red witch atop a broomstick during the bitter
campaigns.\textsuperscript{12}

Other unions had also seceded from their international parent unions in the 1960s,
forming independent Canadian unions as a replacement. Dissatisfaction with the
International Brotherhood of Pulp, Sulphite and Paper Mill Workers, and the harassment
of two radical unionists from British Columbia by American border guards, led to the
formation of the Pulp, Paper and Woodworkers of Canada (PPWC) in 1963. The
Canadian Association of Industrial, Mechanical and Allied Workers (CAIMAW) formed
in 1964 at Griffin Steel in Winnipeg after seceding from the International Molders and

and trans. Andrée Levesque (Toronto: Sumach Press, 2005), 59-70. Despite rumours that Parent was a
Soviet spy, she and Rowley had organized textile plants around Montreal in the 1940s, and led a successful
strike for union recognition at Dominion Mills in Montreal and Valleyfield in the face of determined
opposition from the company, the provincial government, and the Catholic church. However, Premier
Maurice Duplessis insisted that Rowley and Parent be arrested and tried for “seditionary conspiracy” and the
UTWA leadership, accusing them of communist sympathies, expelled Rowley and Parent from the union in
1952.

\textsuperscript{11} Rick Salutin, The Organizer: A Canadian Union Life (Toronto: J. Lorimer, 1980), 99.

\textsuperscript{12} John Lang, “Carrying on the Struggle in Ontario, 1952-1973,” in Madeleine Parent: Activist, ed. and
Barred from the CLC and recognizing an opportunity, Rowley and Parent organized an alternative national labour federation, establishing the Council of Canadian Unions (CCU) in July 1969. Along with the CTCU the CCU included the remnants of Mine-Mill Local 598, which continued to represent workers at Falconbridge in Sudbury, CAIMAW and the PPWC. The creation of a small, nationalist rival to the CLC did not endear Rowley and Parent to the leadership of the labour movement.

Texpack was owned by the American Hospital Supply Corporation, which had begun phasing out manufacturing at Brantford and using the plant as a warehouse for repackaging surplus U.S. army bandages labelled “Made in Canada.” The company paid low wages to a workforce eighty percent female. The union local hoped an improved wage and benefit package would force the company to maintain manufacturing operations in Brantford. Strike tensions were exacerbated by the company’s hiring of replacement workers and a court injunction restricting picket lines at the plant. The strikers’ frustration occasionally boiled over into violent confrontations with police who were protecting buses of scab labour entering the plant.

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13 Isitt, *Militant Minority*, 159; Salutin, *The Organizer*, 117-121. In addition, Italian immigrant construction workers, unhappy with their treatment in the Bricklayers, Masons and Plasterers’ International, left to form the Bricklayers, Masons Independent Union in 1965, and the United Oil Workers of Canada seceded from the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers’ International in 1967. Nevertheless, mostunionized Canadian workers continued to be represented by international unions until the dramatic growth of public sector unions, necessarily organized as Canadian, dramatically changed the labour landscape in the mid-1970s. Public sector unions such as the Public Service Alliance of Canada and associations of provincial government workers were initially wary of political involvement. CUPE was the exception, but a jurisdictional rivalry between CUPE and the provincial associations and CUPE’s extensive organizing and rapid expansion occupied most of its energies in the early 1970s. In 1971 nearly three-quarters of unions belonged to the CLC and seventy-seven percent of CLC union affiliates also belonged to the American Federation of Labour. The largest unions in Canada in 1971 were USWA (156,000 members), CUPE (138,088 members), PSAC (121,877 members), and UAW (111,219 members). *Labour Organizations in Canada*, Canadian Department of Labour Economics and Research Branch, 1971.

14 Heron, *The Canadian Labour Movement*, 102.

15 Rowley, *The Organizer*, 111.

16 For a detailed discussion of the Texpack strike see Sangster, “Remembering Texpack.”
The CTCU, which contested on principle the use of court injunctions limiting pickets as a means of easing the use of replacement workers, initially received little support for the Texpack strike. The Brantford and District Labour Council waited two months before endorsing the strike in August, and did so then only grudgingly, refusing to provide financial support because the CTCU was not affiliated with the CLC.17 Worse still, the Textile Workers Union of America (TWUA) conducted a CLC-endorsed raid of the CTCU Local at Harding Carpets in Collingwood, claiming the Texpack strike was destined to fail.18 Adding insult to injury, the TWUA crossed CTCU picket lines at Texpack’s Rexdale plant to sign up replacement workers, and applied to the Ontario Labour Relations Board for bargaining rights before the predictable backlash forced them to drop the application.19 Texpack workers did receive support, however, from Wafflers and dissident unionists at USWA Local 1005 at Stelco in Hamilton and UAW Local 439 at Brantford’s Massey-Ferguson plant. By late August the Brantford and District Labour Council had eased its earlier reticence and helped to organize a demonstration in aid of the striking Texpack workers. Seven hundred supporters from Brantford and Hamilton joined the CTCU in a massive demonstration on August 25 which descended into violence; demonstrators broke windows, threatened photographers and destroyed their cameras, attacked a police cruiser with rocks, and broke into the plant overturning a garbage disposal unit that caught fire. A small police contingent stood by without intervening, less concerned apparently with protecting Texpack property than with

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avoiding a violent confrontation.\textsuperscript{20} The next day 300 demonstrators again gathered outside Texpack, but this time were dispersed by police in riot gear, a first for Brantford.\textsuperscript{21} One week later, 600 demonstrators marched outside Texpack but police stayed away and the company closed the plant at the Mayor’s request.\textsuperscript{22} The following day, Brantford police withdrew ‘special protection’ for scabs at Texpack.\textsuperscript{23}

The Ontario Waffle joined the Texpack fray in early September by organizing a conference in Brantford to highlight the strike that drew trade unionists and pledges of support from the USWA, UAW, and CUPE. Wafflers from Hamilton, London and Toronto joined the picket lines at Texpack resulting in several, including Mel Watkins, Steve Penner, Robert Laxer and Daniel Drache, being arrested following a confrontation with replacement workers and their police protectors.\textsuperscript{24} Finding it difficult to maintain its Brantford facility using only replacement workers, the company re-opened a plant in Rexdale. There as well, Toronto Wafflers joined CTCU members picketing the plant and scuffled with police while attempting to prevent scabs from crossing their lines.\textsuperscript{25} The Waffle also organized a rally at Queen’s Park, and continued to defy the court injunction limiting picketing. The company, under pressure from government mediators, and the union agreed to a settlement including a wage increase of seventeen cents an hour on

\textsuperscript{20}“All police on standby at Strikebound plant,” \textit{Hamilton Spectator}, August 26, 1971
\textsuperscript{21}“All police on standby at Strikebound plant,” \textit{Hamilton Spectator}, August 26, 1971
\textsuperscript{23}“Protection ended,” \textit{London Free Press} and \textit{Hamilton Spectator}, September 4, 1971. The police had denied giving any kind of ‘special’ protection to scabs until this point.
\textsuperscript{24}“Watkins, 13 others arrested at Texpack during demonstration by Waffle members,” \textit{Globe and Mail}, September 10, 1971. The charges were withdrawn in January 1972 by a special crown attorney who argued that the dismissed injunction negated the charges.
\textsuperscript{25}“Student, 20, is arrested in scuffle as Texpack reopens in Rexdale,” \textit{Globe and Mail}, September 30, 1971.
October 15 which the striking workers ratified three days later. Its encounter with Rowley and Parent’s CCU and the experience of the bitter Texpack strike hardened the Waffle’s stance on the role of international unions in the Canadian labour movement. John Lang, a researcher at York University and CCU member, recalled that the Texpack strike “challenged the Wafflers to include the domination of Canada’s labour movement as an important aspect of the US control of our economy.” In an analysis that appealed to the Waffle, Marc Zwelling concluded in *Canadian Dimension*:

> The Canadian Textile & Chemical Union has now given the lie to the myth that independent Canadian unions can never win against powerful multinational corporations… It is not the existence of international unions that gives labour its strength – but a dedicated union leadership, a militant membership and strong support from the rest of the labour movement.

At the Ontario Federation of Labour (OFL) convention in November 1971, Cecil Taylor and George Gilks, Wafflers in USWA Local 1005, submitted an emergency resolution calling on the OFL to condemn the TWUA for its “collusion with the company” in signing up scab workers but were ruled out of order. OFL president David Archer declared “we’ll not allow anyone to attack affiliates of this group.” Unlike the previous year’s Reform Caucus at the CLC convention, a newly-formed Waffle Labour Caucus appeared at the OFL convention, leading the *Globe and Mail* to report that the Waffle “is out to defeat the right-wing bureaucracy it says dominates major Canadian
unions.” The Waffle Labour Caucus also sponsored a hospitality suite, distributing a leaflet that called for “completely sovereign and independent Canadian unions.” The program for achieving such independence outlined in the leaflet largely aped the CLC Reform Caucus’s program for autonomy, including ensuring Canadian union officers were elected by Canadians, union dues paid in Canada remained in Canada, and making specific acknowledgement of Canadian autonomy in the constitutions of international unions based in the United States.

The Nixon Shock and Waffle involvement in the Texpack strike reverberated in the Ontario election of October 1971 and beyond. Bill Davis, the new leader of the Ontario Progressive Conservatives, called the election on September 13, 1971, a few months after succeeding John Robarts as premier. Davis had quickly disposed of two controversial issues handed him by Robarts when he cancelled construction of the proposed Spadina Expressway through downtown Toronto, and announced full provincial funding would not be extended to the province’s Catholic high schools. In his brief time leading the government Davis had established the Ministry of the Environment, promised provincial money for public housing, initiated a lawsuit against Dow Chemical for mercury pollution, created Nordair, a provincially-owned airline to service northern Ontario, and enacted minor economic nationalist measures such as giving preferential treatment to Canadian-owned firms seeking government loans and grants. Emphasizing their activist record in government, Davis’s leadership, and a promised three percent cut in the provincial income tax, Ontario’s PCs combined stellar organization, effective

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32 *Waffle Labour News*, November 1971, Box 1, File 4, New Democratic Party Waffle collection, MUA.
fundraising and prominent advertising to give birth to the ‘Big Blue Machine’ that would repeatedly propel the party into power over the next four elections.  

Yet Stephen Lewis and the Ontario NDP leadership were optimistic as they embarked on the 1971 election campaign. The senior campaign team, which included Lewis’s close friend and former Waffler Gerald Caplan, defeated leadership rival Walter Pitman, former leader Donald MacDonald, party pollster and professor of political science John Wilson, party secretary Gordon Brigden, and party treasurer John Brewin, identified sixty-five ridings as the focus of the NDP’s efforts.

All three parties responded to the Nixon Shock by featuring economic nationalist planks in their election platforms. Davis’s accomplishments during his brief stint as premier included halting the sale of Crown lands as well as giving preference to Canadians when leasing these lands and to Canadian-owned firms seeking government loans. Ontario Liberal Party leader Robert Nixon promised that a Liberal government would create a Foreign Investment Review Board, possibly headed by the prominent economic nationalist Walter Gordon. And Stephen Lewis began the campaign with a promise the Ontario NDP would focus on regaining control of the provincial economy while creating jobs, reducing the cost of living, reforming the tax system, and instituting new environmental protections.

Although the Waffle had enjoyed some success influencing Ontario NDP policies at the 1970 leadership convention, including commitments to nationalize the province’s

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34 Ibid., 85-87.
36 Claire Hoy, Bill Davis: A Biography, 90-92.
energy resource industries, an expansive housing strategy, and women’s liberation, Stephen Lewis tempered the more radical aspects of the party’s messaging in the following months. The party sought to moderate Lewis’s image in the lead-up to the election campaign. In addition to speaking to business clubs, Lewis cut his hair, replaced his corduroy suits, spoke more slowly and quietly, and sought camera angles that made him appear more polite. It was all part of a concerted effort to portray the Ontario NDP as “a reasonable political force,” a moderate image somewhat at odds with how the Waffle was typically perceived.³⁹

Wafflers secured NDP nominations in six ridings going into the provincial election. Bruce Kidd, a former Olympian and long-distance runner, defeated Marion Bryden, the Ontario NDP research director and NDP Now member, for the nomination in the east Toronto riding of Beaches-Woodbine. John Brown, a social worker, had won the riding for the NDP in the 1967 election, but opted not to seek re-election after incurring public criticism over the controversial experimental treatment centre he ran for emotionally-disturbed children. Among the twenty-one seats it held at the start of the campaign, the NDP considered Beaches-Woodbine one of the most vulnerable.⁴⁰ Reid Scott, a Toronto alderman and longtime CCF/NDP stalwart, worked closely on Kidd’s campaign, while Kidd proceeded to garner headlines for his outspoken positions on Canadian sports.⁴¹ Within NDP riding associations Waffle support for women’s liberation at times faced opposition. Varda Burstyn recalled the difficulty of watching

⁴⁰ Jonathan Manthorpe, “How good are NDP’s chances of replacing the Liberals in opposition?” Globe and Mail, August 7, 1971. Other seats seen as vulnerable were Middlesex South, Brantford, Scarborough Centre, Windsor West and Cochrane South.
⁴¹ Kidd, for example, suggested nationalizing the three Canadian NHL teams and criticized the league’s 1967 expansion which added six new teams in the United States. Dick Beddoes, “Article,” Globe and Mail, June 26, 1971.
“the grand old lady of Beaches-Woodbine, a stalwart Scots left winger who had never allowed herself to be politically contained in the women’s auxiliary,” oppose the inclusion of abortion rights in Kidd’s campaign literature for fear of alienating voters.42

Dan Heap, a self-described Anglican “worker-priest,” secured the NDP nomination in the downtown Toronto riding of St. Andrew-St. Patrick, where he faced off against Allan Grossman, a prominent cabinet minister in the Davis government. Heap and his wife, Alice, who housed young anti-war, anti-poverty and Student Christian Movement activists in their Kensington Market home, had been among the activists opposing the proposed Spadina Expressway through downtown Toronto.43 A concerned Grossman reminded voters that the NDP, unlike his Progressive Conservative party, had not consistently opposed the expressway’s construction.44

Other than Bruce Kidd, the Waffle’s best opportunity to elect an MPP appeared to be in the west Toronto riding of Dovercourt, where Steve Penner, chair of the Ontario Waffle, had defeated Bruce Knapp, a Pollution Probe activist, in a bitter and controversial nomination battle. A dispute over registration procedures had caused the party to postpone the nomination meeting, and when it did occur the initial results were ruled invalid when more ballots were cast than there were delegates registered.45 In addition to his Waffle activities, Penner had led a protest in downtown Toronto in January 1971 as

43 Joan Doiron, “Letter – Ontario Election,” Globe and Mail, October 11, 1971. The author also pointed out, with enthusiasm, that Heap arrived at an all-candidates meeting on his bicycle.
45 Michael Smith, “NDP nomination for Dovercourt stalled when meeting ends with shouts, scuffle,” Globe and Mail, March 22, 1971; “NDP to investigate Dovercourt disputes,” Globe and Mail, March 24, 1971. A critic of Stephen Lewis suggested that “top party officials would warn riding presidents and other key ‘good’ party workers… make sure that your own people are out in full force when the riding delegates are chosen and especially when you hold a nomination meeting for the next election, was the advice. Pack the meeting if necessary but for God’s sake don’t get caught and most certainly don’t say anything about our conversation.” Anonymous, “Spring Cleaning,” Last Post, April-May 1971, 35.
part of the National Poor People’s Conference, and planned ongoing demonstrations at a welfare office to publicize the inadequacy of the program.\textsuperscript{46} Mel Watkins managed the twenty-seven-year-old Penner’s campaign during which he lauded the efforts of some two hundred youthful volunteer canvassers for revitalizing the NDP’s campaign on the ground, but complained that the party’s central campaign committee was withholding its support for Penner.\textsuperscript{47} Penner emphasized that working people were “extremely angry” with job losses resulting from foreign ownership and government inattention to the issue, and Waffler Dominic Pagnini, leader of a Toronto-area Italian labour organization, helped the NDP campaign canvass the riding’s large immigrant population. Penner opposed the replacement of workers’ homes with high-rise apartment and condominium buildings that his Liberal and PC opponents endorsed wholeheartedly.\textsuperscript{48} Watkins explained that the Waffle sought to demonstrate “that you can put forward a candidate and a program which represent a genuine alternative, and that people will support programs more socialist than those presented in Ontario.”\textsuperscript{49}

None of the other three Wafflers were running in ridings where the NDP was given much chance of success. Dave Neumann, a secondary school teacher, challenged Ontario Liberal leader Robert Nixon in Brant, Jean Usher took on the Minister of Health, Bert Lawrence, in Carleton East, and Garth Stevenson ran in Carleton, which had elected Tories without interruption for decades.

\textsuperscript{48} Ibid.; John Slinger, “Davis pledges to meet anti-high-rise groups after protests at campaign stops,” \textit{Globe and Mail}, October 18, 1971.
Stephen Lewis was not especially effective selling his party to Ontario’s electorate during the 1971 campaign. His responses to reporters’ questions were often long-winded and meandering. Although his sharp wit, remarkable memory, and articulate speeches frequently impressed members of the Queen’s Park press gallery, the same characteristics did not always resonate clearly with voters. Moreover, he found the Waffle to be a source of continuous frustration, recalling later that “we fought the election with and against the Waffle rather than with and against the Tories.” Lewis criticized the New Brunswick Waffle and in response to a reporter’s question exclaimed “thank God we don’t have an NDP member of the legislature in New Brunswick if that is what the Waffles are suggesting.” Desmond Morton also looked askance at Wafflers’ practice of questioning Lewis on the campaign trail on such controversial issues as nationalization and access to abortion. Lewis’s biographer Cameron Smith claims that “nine times out of ten he’d be asked [by reporters] to respond to something the Waffle had said that differed from the party position.” Bill Davis, not surprisingly, leapt at the opportunity to exploit the divisions among the NDP ranks, joking that the Waffle was causing Stephen Lewis “indigestion.” Bruce Kidd pointed out how Conservatives further sowed suspicion towards the Ontario NDP by distributing leaflets detailing the

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51 Claire Hoy, a longtime reporter for the *Toronto Sun*, recalls that Lewis, asked why he was campaigning in the NDP doldrums of Hastings County, replied that he was there to “throw a few crackers at the animals,” in Hoy, *Bill Davis: A Biography*, 94.
54 Morton *The NDP: The Dream of Power*, 130.
55 Smith, *Unfinished Journey*, 452.
New Brunswick NDP’s adoption of that province’s Waffle manifesto “which called for the nationalization – without compensation – of everything in sight.”

Confident that the PC party’s well-funded advertising campaign would translate into more votes, Davis changed his itinerary during the final days of the campaign in order to visit NDP-held ridings in Oshawa, Peterborough and Brantford. In response, Lewis held a rally with 3,200 supporters at Toronto’s O’Keefe Centre at which he echoed one of the Waffle’s core beliefs, namely that increasing foreign control of Ontario’s economy was “the single most important issue” in the election campaign, and vowed that an NDP government would reverse the trend and “we’ll head straight down the road to regaining social, economic and cultural independence.”

The results of the election, in which Davis and the Progressive Conservatives increased their majority to seventy-eight seats with 44.5 percent of the popular vote, were a disappointment for the NDP. The party failed to supplant the Liberals as Official Opposition despite the Liberals’ own lackluster performance. Although the NDP increased slightly its percentage of the popular vote, from 25.9 percent to 27.1 percent, it lost several close races and won only nineteen seats, two fewer than it held at dissolution. The three Toronto Wafflers were among the casualties, all losing to their Tory opponents. Toronto alderman Tom Wardle surpassed Kidd by over 2500 votes, but Penner came tantalizingly close to winning in Dovercourt where he received just fifty-five votes fewer than the victor George Nixon, which was an increase of some 1500 votes

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59 The NDP held onto only fourteen seats, losing in seven ridings where it had been the incumbent party, and gaining five new seats, including three additional ridings in northern Ontario. Donald Jackson (Timiskaming), Walter Pitman (Peterborough), Cliff Pilkey (Oshawa), Margaret Renwick (Scarborough Centre), Bruce Kidd (Beaches-Woodbine), Mac Makarchuk (Brantford) and Kenneth Bolton (Middlesex South) all lost their seats while the NDP caucus gained Michael Cassidy (Ottawa Centre), Jan Dukszta (Parkdale), Jim Foulds (Port Arthur), Floyd Laughren (Nickel Belt) and Bud Germa (Sudbury).
over what the NDP candidate achieved in 1967. Heap likewise increased the NDP’s share of the popular vote in St. Andrew-St. Patrick, rising from 24.9 percent to 41.8 percent and receiving 3800 votes more than his predecessor had managed, but still lost to Grossman.\footnote{\textsuperscript{60}}

Wafflers Garth Stevenson and Dave Neumann nearly doubled the NDP’s vote in Carleton and Brant, and Waffler Jean Usher increased the NDP’s vote from 1075 to 6069 in Carleton East, reflecting the “inexperienced but enthusiastic campaign workers” who revitalized the party’s door-to-door canvassing efforts in Ottawa.\footnote{\textsuperscript{61}} But the Ontario Waffle’s inability to elect one of its own would hinder the group’s capacity to influence the party’s direction or to defend itself against critics in the months ahead. Steve Penner, the Dovercourt NDP riding association, and the six Wafflers on the ONDP Provincial Executive all urged the party to pursue legal action to overturn the Dovercourt results, pointing to a number of irregularities. Although the party’s legal counsel suggested a challenge had a strong likelihood of success, the Administration Committee and a majority of the Executive were concerned with the potential cost and requested instead that the caucus ask the Chief Electoral Officer to void the election. Penner and the Waffle continued to agitate for a legal challenge with the Executive finally agreeing to go along if the Dovercourt riding association could raise sufficient funds to pay the costs.\footnote{\textsuperscript{62}}

\footnote{\textsuperscript{60} “Riding-by-riding returns in provincial election,” \textit{Globe and Mail}, October 23, 1971.}

\footnote{\textsuperscript{61} Jean Usher, John Smart, Sylvia Sanders, Burke Ryan to Michael Lewis, November 15, 1971, Series 20 File, File 733 Provincial Council, 1970-73, New Democratic Party of Ontario fonds, QUA.}

\footnote{\textsuperscript{62} Minutes of the Provincial Executive, January 22, 1972, Minutes of the Provincial Executive, March 17, 1972 and Minutes of the Provincial Executive, April 8, 1972, Series 13 Executive and Council Minutes, File 3 Executive and Council Minutes 1968-70, New Democratic Party of Ontario fonds, QUA. The riding association stopped pushing for a legal challenge after the Waffle’s ouster from the ONDP. Minutes of the Provincial Executive, November 18, 1972, Series 13 Executive and Council Minutes, File 3 Executive and Council Minutes 1968-70, New Democratic Party of Ontario fonds, QUA.}
In a closed and confidential meeting of the provincial council following the election, Lewis reviewed reasons for his party’s disappointing performance and “the large anti-socialist vote in Ontario.” Among the multiple causes was a backlash against the NDP for its stance on issues such as abortion and automobile insurance; a “strong anti-union, anti-labour vote;” the Conservatives’ expensive and effective advertising campaign; an over-abundance of party policy that occasionally contradicted itself; and distractions created by the Waffle. Conceding that “there was a good showing by candidates who were identified as Waffle,” Lewis pointed out “there was also a good showing taken by more moderate candidates.”

In the discussion that followed Lewis’s analysis, others voiced criticisms of the campaign and admitted feeling “disturbed” over the Waffle’s role in the election. Privately, Lewis and several others among the Ontario NDP leadership did not hesitate to lay blame on the Waffle. Morden Lazarus, for example, attributed Mac Makarchuk’s loss in Brantford to his association with the Waffle’s support for the controversial Texpack strike. Desmond Morton accused Steve Penner of mounting a “well-publicized attack on the party’s official programme,” and upbraided the Waffle for fighting a semi-autonomous campaign that relied in part on drawing sympathetic party members away from nearby campaigns to work for Waffle candidates. Morton sneered that “sectarian purity undoubtedly has its admirers but among Ontario voters they are not easy to find. By making the NDP appear faction-

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64 Ibid.
65 Smith, Unfinished Journey, 452.
67 Morton The NDP: The Dream of Power, 130. Morton neglected to mention that he was the primary author of the party’s official program.
ridden and far more extreme than its actual program, the Waffle hurt the party’s electoral prospects."  

Waffler John Smart retorted that “if I had as much responsibility for the campaign as he and his friends in Toronto had, I would probably be looking for someone else to blame now too.” An editorial in the Globe and Mail suggested Lewis had been “hamstrung by the Waffle” and forced to spend much time and energy “to keep the split within his own party from destroying the foothold it had going into the election.”

The Waffle, by contrast, attributed the Ontario NDP’s disappointing performance to the campaign team’s decision to focus on leadership rather than the socialist policies adopted by the party convention the previous fall. The convention’s commitment to nationalizing the province’s vast energy resources, for example, had been reduced to a campaign promise to nationalize the natural gas distribution system only. Mel Watkins argued the NDP had “effectively linked unemployment and foreign ownership” but failed to present a convincing solution. Moreover, by highlighting too many different issues the NDP campaign lacked focus. Most significantly, according to Watkins, the party failed to make the “Americanization of Ontario” its campaign focus, thereby allowing “Stephen Lewis… [to] be outflanked on the left by Robert Nixon on the issue of foreign ownership.” In Bruce Kidd’s estimation, it was essential the Ontario NDP undertake “much more educational work and extra-parliamentary organizing than ever before.”

Anger over the Waffle’s impact on the Ontario election was still rife when the NDP Federal Council met the following month. The New Brunswick NDP’s split into

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69 Smart quotation in Hackett, “Pie in the Sky,” 53.
71 “Mel Watkins, “NDP Ran Against Itself,” Toronto Citizen, November 25-December 9, 1971, File 32-1, Ross Dowson fonds, LAC.
72 Ibid.
competing Waffle and anti-Waffle sections was the first item on the agenda. Twenty-eight members of the New Brunswick NDP opposed to the Waffle had petitioned the Federal Council to intervene to end the dispute, and Clifford Scotton, the party’s federal secretary, summarized recent developments in the province. Both David and Stephen Lewis attacked the New Brunswick Waffle, criticizing its manifesto’s radical policies and lamenting the harmful impact negative press coverage had on the recent NDP campaign in Ontario. Despite protestations by Alistair Robertson, the newly elected New Brunswick NDP President and a Waffler, that the Federal Council lacked authority to rule on the internal affairs of a provincial party, the councillors nevertheless voted to suspend the New Brunswick NDP until federal party officers were satisfied it had held a legitimate convention and repudiated the Waffle’s radicalism. Waffler Pat Callahan reacted angrily to the decision, saying it was up to the people of New Brunswick “to decide whether to accept or reject our policies, not David Lewis or the union brass of Ontario.” The Federal Council’s decision evidently had a desultory effect on the New Brunswick Waffle, and at a poorly attended meeting the following week the Trotskyist FYS won support for a less divisive and confrontational approach within the New Brunswick NDP in an effort to avoid expulsion. Unwilling to accept the federal NDP’s intervention in the provincial party, the non-Trotskyist members of the New Brunswick Waffle left the group as a result of the decision to acquiesce and at the rescheduled New Brunswick NDP convention in late November the FYS, now all that remained of the provincial Waffle, sought to avoid expulsion by recognizing the Federal Council’s

authority and acclaiming previous leader J. Albert Richardson into the position again.\footnote{Webber, “‘For a Socialist New Brunswick’,” \textit{Acadiensis}, 98.} With the New Brunswick Waffle effectively neutered, federal NDP President Donald MacDonald, observing for the federal party, declared the convention legitimate.

Despite the rift within the New Brunswick NDP and the growing animosity between Wafflers and the NDP in Ontario stemming from the recent provincial election there, David Lewis presented the Federal Council with an optimistic picture of the party’s prospects, claiming there existed “a very deep feeling of intense unity in the Party right across the country.”\footnote{Report by David Lewis, Federal Leader to the Federal Council of the NDP, Ottawa, November 14, 1971, File 15-2, Dave Barrett fonds, UBCSC.} Unity, however, was not a descriptor Wafflers and New Democrats in Manitoba and Saskatchewan were likely to use when reflecting upon the state of their party at that moment.

The Manitoba Waffle’s activities had peaked with its support of Laxer’s bid for the party leadership in early 1971, but then slipped into a semi-dormant state before restructuring itself in the summer of 1971.\footnote{Paul Barber, “A Short History of the Manitoba Waffle,” in Kim Malcolmson, “Ten Wafflers in Manitoba,” Box 2008-017/001, File 8, Kim Malcolmson and Paul Barber fonds, YUA.} As mentioned in the more detailed local study in Chapter Five, the group, which was largely confined to Winnipeg, published a newsletter, supported striking construction workers, and organized for the city’s municipal elections before turning its attention in November to the Manitoba NDP convention where it hoped to wield greater influence than previously. The Waffle did win the convention’s support for several of its policy resolutions, including a commitment to nationalize the Greater Winnipeg Gas Company, and to convene a conference to study the connection between unemployment and American economic
Two issues threatened to divide the convention – the question of public financing of private and separate schools, and the liberalization of abortion laws. Joe Borowski, a popular former Minister of Transportation and Public Works who had recently been dropped from the cabinet for opposing liberalized abortion laws, was a prominent proponent of the former and opponent of the latter. The Waffle, who drew seventy-five delegates to their convention caucus meeting, opposed government support of private schools, endorsed “greater flexibility in education curricula,” and were vocal advocates of abortion on demand. Despite the internal party divide, Premier Ed Schreyer, who was popular with delegates, successfully urged the convention to pass a compromise resolution on public aid for private schools that allowed his cabinet flexibility to decide the issue. Although members of a policy workshop passed a resolution over the objections of Joe Borowski and Health Minister René Toupin that called for abortion to be removed from the Criminal Code, the Waffle was disappointed when the convention as a whole defeated the resolution several days later. Cy Gonick estimated at least 125 of the 555 delegates attending the convention were sympathetic to the Waffle, and Waffler Una Decter lost in her race for the party presidency to incumbent Lawrence Bell in a 290 to 146 vote. Frustrated with the lack of substantial policy debates in the Manitoba NDP, Waffler Alvin Finkel complained “many left-wing delegates left the 1971 convention believing that the cabinet ministers had so much manipulated the convention delegates that the big issue was how to restore democracy to

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the convention floor.” As its swan song the Manitoba Waffle hosted newly elected Saskatchewan MLA John Richards at a well-attended public meeting after the convention, but its activity subsided thereafter.

Although the Saskatchewan Waffle had reason to be encouraged after the successful summer election in which Richards was elected in the riding of Saskatoon Centre, the moderate and top-down approach of the Schreyer government in Manitoba gave them reason for pause. A month after the provincial election, the group held a conference in Fort Qu’Appelle that, while closed to the media, attracted over two hundred people. The purpose of the conference was to determine the Waffle’s role in the new NDP government. Many options were debated: should the Waffle be the conscience of the NDP; a “loyal internal opposition;” a traditional “left caucus;” the voice of extra-parliamentary social movements; an “intellectual wing;” advocates of “smallness” and local control; or left-nationalists. Failing to arrive at a consensus left Wafflers to pursue these disparate roles as they preferred, and they planned an ambitious strategy. The meeting agreed they would carefully monitor the progress of major policies through the legislative process to ensure bureaucrats did not dilute the measures of their leftist heft. The Wafflers also intended to promote socialism via the press, particularly such left-wing publications as Prairie Fire and Canadian Dimension while focusing specifically on policies for a land bank, alternative development strategies in northern Saskatchewan, the potash industry, health care, and the environment. Finally, they

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86 Al Finkel, “Cabinet Dictatorship in Manitoba?” Canadian Dimension, January 1972, 18, 49.
87 Paul Barber, “A Short History of the Manitoba Waffle,” in Kim Malcolmson, “Ten Wafflers in Manitoba,” Box 2008-017/001, File 8, Kim Malcolmson and Paul Barber fonds, YUA.
planned to create “study-action” groups throughout the province and to engage in unspecified local community organizing. At the end of the conference, the Saskatchewan Waffle welcomed the Blakeney government’s announced cancellation of an unfavourable contract with an American company to build a pulp mill at Meadow Lake, a decision Liberal leader Dave Steuart blamed on the “Waffle element” in the NDP. But the Wafflers were disappointed both by government’s unwillingness to nationalize the company’s other mill in Prince Albert and by its intention to compensate the company for expenses incurred at Meadow Lake and, claiming Saskatchewan voters would support a legal battle to deny compensation, argued that “people are fed up with government deals that offer crumbs to the people and huge benefits to entrepreneurs.”

Don Mitchell urged the government to hold public hearings prior to “any further development plans for the north, whether for pulp mills or other resources.” The recently-elected John Richards warned the NDP that Waffle support remained conditional on the party enacting its election platform recently endorsed by the province’s voters and encouraged “farmers, labourers, people in education and the party members to remain very active in assuring that the program is fulfilled.”

In addition to formulating its ambitious agenda, the Saskatchewan Waffle questioned what precisely Richards’s role should be both within the group and the party. Some Wafflers expressed concern that Richards was being identified by the mainstream media as their group’s sole spokesperson, a problem Richards also acknowledged while

91 “Hopes said dashed,” Regina Leader-Post, August 2, 1971. Dave Boldt, another Liberal MLA, attacked the NDP as a “party elected by the extreme radical, the demonstrators, the long hair, fuzzy and foggy thinking professors,” in “Boldt raps move on bill,” Regina Leader-Post, August 3, 1971.
94 Ibid.
defending his right to provide a Waffle critique of the government.95 Richards sought advice from former leader Woodrow Lloyd who warned him to be prepared for disappointment when promoting leftist policies in government. Yet Lloyd also encouraged Richards, explaining “there may be more support than expected in caucus. My own guess is that there is more in the country generally than is assumed by many.” Lloyd assured him “it seems to me that the Waffle group has a real opportunity and a very considerable responsibility.”96

In the lead-up to the Saskatchewan NDP convention of December 1971, the Waffle agitated for the NDP to take radical actions. The group placed advertisements in the party newspaper and held “teach-ins” at Regina to mobilize NDP members into pressing the Blakeney government to support socialist measures such as eliminating the option-to-purchase clause from the land bank policy.97 In a press release issued just prior to the convention, the Waffle criticized the government for failing to fulfill its election platform, and argued in favour of public ownership of resource industries as an alternative to foreign ownership.98 Nevertheless, a majority of convention delegates defeated two key Waffle resolutions – the nationalization of the Prince Albert pulp mill, and elimination of the option-to-purchase clause from the proposed land bank legislation

95 Don Kerr to John Richards, August 5, 1971, and John Richards to Don Kerr, August 5, 1971, File III.14 NDP – Saskatoon-University – Minutes, 1971-73, John Richards Papers, SAB (Saskatoon). The problem was exacerbated by the difference in coverage of Richards by the two major Saskatchewan newspapers. The Regina Leader-Post covered Richards’s response to the Throne Speech and the Waffle conference with the headlines “NDP Program Said Reason for Victory” and “Waffle Group Outlines Policy”. The Saskatoon Star-Phoenix covered the same events with the headlines “NDP Best of Poor Bunch…” and “Waffle Group Threatens Split” which prompted Kerr to warn Richards, “the Star is out to kill you and we’d better fight back as thoroughly as possible.”
96 Woodrow Lloyd to John Richards, July 31, 1971, File III.24 Waffle – Correspondence, 1971-75, John Richards Papers, SAB (Saskatoon).
97 Commonwealth, November 24, 1971, File II.7 Clippings 1972-74, Saskatchewan Waffle fonds, SAB (Regina).
– and no Wafflers were elected to the party’s Provincial Council.99 The Waffle did succeed, however, in convincing the convention to adopt both a resolution favouring creation of a publicly-owned oil company for the province and a constitutional change requiring constituency associations to elect at least one woman among their two delegates to the party’s provincial council.100 Wafflers were pleased with the party’s adoption of these policies but declared themselves “uneasy” about the election of party officials who “are in many cases opposed to the very policies adopted by the convention.”101 John Warnock estimated that about thirty-five per cent of the delegates supported Waffle initiatives, but concluded “the polarization is growing within the provincial NDP… It will be difficult for the Waffle movement to hold down those elements (mainly the older CCFers and the youth) who want to split and form a socialist party.”102

The Waffle’s disappointments over its proposals’ generally poor reception at the Saskatchewan NDP convention were augmented by Minister of Agriculture Jack Messer’s plans for a Land Bank Commission presented to the Saskatchewan cabinet later that month. Although Messer and Deputy Minister Doug McArthur advocated keeping rents low in order to encourage leasing rather than the option-to-purchase, the Waffle opposed the weakened land bank proposal as inadequate.103 Don Mitchell argued that without first implementing other Waffle measures, such as regulating the farm machinery and food-processing industries, and limiting farm size, a diminished land bank would fail

100 Ibid., “Women gain ‘major’ victory,” “Control of oil industry urged,” Regina Leader-Post, December 6, 1971.
103 McArthur explained, “we were concerned that the option to purchase not undermine the main tenure option that the Land Bank was attempting to introduce.” Quotation in Gruending, Promises to Keep, 106-107.
to stem the tide of farm consolidations and rural depopulation. Linking the government’s proposal to the unpopular federal Minister of Agriculture Otto Lang, Mitchell suggested that a “land bank coupled with the assumptions of the federal task force will ‘Lang bank’ all the way!”

Questions about their role and future strategy also dominated discussions among Wafflers in Ontario. The Toronto Waffle, as the largest group in the province and home to most of the Ontario leadership including James Laxer, Krista Maeots, Mel Watkins, Kelly Crichton, Steve Penner and Jackie Larkin, met in December 1971 to debate strategy and determine if only NDP members should be allowed to participate in the Waffle. A small number criticized the Waffle’s commitment to working within the NDP, arguing the Waffle leadership was too focused on electoral activity and therefore dismissive of extra-parliamentary activism. Having “grasped the essence of social democracy… the fact that it is not a solution at all to class oppression, but an attempt – always unsuccessful – to divert the crisis inherent in capitalism,” they urged the rest of the Waffle “to become serious about starting to build an anti-imperialist movement, or, at least… start to discuss it seriously.”

They also contended the Waffle should remain open to non-members of the NDP, making the confusing claim that the Waffle, having been open to non-members in the past, was more than a “left caucus” of the NDP and therefore accountable to its own membership. Not persuaded, the Toronto Waffle

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105 Ibid. The federal task force on agriculture produced a policy entitled Operation LIFT (Lower Inventories for Tomorrow) which compensated farmers for reducing their wheat acreage in order to address Canada’s excess wheat production and assumed that fewer farmers would be required in the future.
107 Ibid. The Waffle had asked that its supporters be eligible for membership in the NDP, which precluded belonging to any other political party, including the LSA, CPL, CLM, or CPC (M-L).
instead adopted the position of other Waffle groups that only NDP members were allowed to vote or hold office in the Waffle. Jackie Larkin and Steve Penner questioned how well the Waffle’s electoral activity fit with its overall political strategy. They believed the group should remain active in the NDP in order to build a “strong mass base of support for socialist politics” in anticipation of its eventual split from the party’s right wing. Ongoing coordinated Waffle activity in electoral politics as well as community and workplace organizing efforts was therefore essential.¹⁰⁸

Waffle leaders acknowledged the veracity of some of these critiques. Mel Watkins, Kelly Crichton and Gordon Laxer were among those who admitted “the Waffle has tended so far to be unduly preoccupied with moving from convention to convention and from election to election,” and believed further efforts at political organizing around community issues was in order. They also advocated continued electoral activity, urging Wafflers to seek NDP nominations and “special efforts be made to encourage women, workers and new Canadians” especially.¹⁰⁹ Krista Maeots noted that whereas the Waffle had participated in non-electoral activities its primary focus had been “mass educational work.” As a result “our most important failing has been in the area of advancing beyond mass educational work to the building of a solid core of socialist activists in plants, offices, schools and rural communities.” Encouraged by the formation of a Waffle Labour Caucus, Maeots warned that “the labour leadership no longer sees us as a force that will quickly die away; instead they see us beginning to carry anti-imperialist,

socialist politics and the demand for a Canadian trade union movement into their back yards.”

Indeed, union leaders did grow increasingly concerned as the Waffle built a support base within the labour movement. As James Laxer explained, “the fact that dissident Steelworkers and Auto Workers were becoming involved with the Waffle was highly alarming to the regional and national leadership of the USWA and the UAW… they feared the Waffle might be gaining a foothold in their very organizations.” In order to do so the Waffle allied with existing factions in some of the largest and most powerful locals in the two biggest unions affiliated with the NDP – USWA locals 1005 (Stelco in Hamilton) and 6500 (Inco in Sudbury) and the UAW Left Caucus, which included leaders of powerful Autoworker locals across southern Ontario – whose membership was becoming increasingly antagonistic towards its international leadership.

Lingering bitterness over the USWA’s successful 1962 raid on Mine-Mill, the Communist-linked union which had long represented Inco workers, and the USWA’s handling of the 1966 wildcat strike at Inco, helped the Waffle attract support at USWA Local 6500 in Sudbury. As well, as James Laxer recalled, “leading figures in Local 1005 at Stelco in Hamilton… gravitated to the Waffle.” Political conflict within the massive USWA Local 1005 dated back to the union’s formation, but by the late 1960s a

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111 Laxer, In Search of a New Left, 159.
112 The UAW Left Caucus had supporters in Local 200 (Ford in Windsor), Local 444 (Chrysler in Windsor), Local 222 (GM in Oshawa), Local 707 (Ford in Oakville), Local 199 (GM in St. Catharine’s), Local 27 (Amalgamated in London), and Local 28 (Amalgamated in Oshawa).
113 As described in Chapter Two.
114 Laxer, In Search of a New Left, 159. See discussion of the wildcat strike at Stelco in Chapter Two for background.
growing influx of young workers further altered that local’s political dynamics. After the 1966 wildcat strike at Stelco two groups of union activists gained support in opposition to the ‘Right Wing Group’ which supported the international union and was closely aligned with USWA staff. The longstanding ‘Left Wing Group’ included older workers who had been active in the 1950s opposing USWA raids on Communist unions but gained new supporters in the late 1960s. The ‘Autonomy Group’ formed in 1965-66 criticized Steelworker staffers, such Stewart Cooke, the Hamilton Area Supervisor, and Larry Sefton, Director for District Six, and pushed for the Canadian sections of the USWA to break away from the international union. Leaders of both the ‘Left Wing Group,’ such as Harry Greenwood, and the ‘Autonomy Group,’ such as Cec Taylor, supported the Waffle.\footnote{Bill Freeman, \textit{1005: Political Life in a Union Local} (Toronto: Lorimer, 1982), 126.} Greenwood challenged Sefton’s handpicked successor and NDP stalwart, Lynn Williams, for election as District Director for District Six in February 1972, promising “Canadian control through a Canadian Constitution.”\footnote{Harry Greenwood for District 6 Director, n.d. [1972], Box 1, File 5, New Democratic Party Waffle collection, MUA.} Although Williams won, Greenwood’s challenge was the first time the USWA District Six Director had not been acclaimed, an indication of increasing polarization within the Steelworkers during the early 1970s.

The other major industrial union closely linked with the NDP, the UAW, had a Left Caucus in its Canadian section which included both Communists and left-wing CCFers since before the Second World War until the 1950s.\footnote{Charlotte A.B. Yates, \textit{From Plant to Politics: The Autoworkers Union in Postwar Canada} (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1993), 67, 77, 99.} In the 1960s the Canadian UAW became divided over the direction the continental auto industry was taking. Beginning in 1960, a minority in the Canadian UAW opposed the formalized integration
of the Canadian and American auto industries and advocated instead for automobiles
designed and manufactured entirely in Canada.\textsuperscript{118} Charlie Brooks, president of Local 444
(Chrysler in Windsor) from 1956 to 1977 and Abe Taylor, president of Local 222 (GM in
Oshawa) from 1963 to 1978, were among the most vocal critics of the Auto Pact, which
allowed for duty-free trade in vehicles and auto parts between Canada and the United
States while establishing minimum Canadian content safeguards.\textsuperscript{119} However, UAW
President Walter Reuther, the Canadian UAW Director George Burt, and the Canadian
Council of the UAW all supported the Auto Pact, believing a fully integrated continental
auto industry to be in their members’ best interests.\textsuperscript{120} James Laxer recalled that Waffle
support in the UAW “included left wingers and nationalists who had been opposed to the
Canada-United States Auto Pact during the 1960s.”\textsuperscript{121}

Demographic changes among the UAW’s membership further enhanced the
union’s rebelliousness and support for the Waffle. The Ontario New Democratic Youth
reported that their Oshawa club consisted mainly of young workers from UAW 222 who
acted as a “left grouping with the NDP, and to some extent, within their unions.”\textsuperscript{122} As
was happening in the steel industry, auto plants experienced during the mid to late 1960s
an increase in young workers whose expectations differed from their older peers. They
insisted, for example, that working conditions as well as wage gains be up for
negotiation. When the UAW struck GM in the fall of 1970 at the outset of the ‘Big

\textsuperscript{118} Sam Gindin, \textit{The Canadian Auto Workers: The Birth and Transformation of a Union} (Toronto: James
Lorimer, 1995), 155-156.
\textsuperscript{119} Buzz Hargrove, who began his union career as a shop steward at UAW Local 444, remembered Brooks
as “a real progressive. He believed workers had a responsibility to agitate for social change as readily as
we fought for improved wages and benefits.” Hargrove, \textit{Labour of Love}, 56. Taylor, elected as Local
\textsuperscript{120} Anastakis, \textit{Auto Pact}, 114-116.
\textsuperscript{121} Laxer, \textit{In Search of a New Left}, 159.
\textsuperscript{122} Clubs Report, Ontario Young New Democrats (OYND) Newsletter, May 1970, Series 20 File, File 657
ONDY, 1970-73, New Democratic Party of Ontario fonds, QUA.
Three’ bargaining round, members in the United States returned to work before their Canadian counterparts who remained out on strike until December in an attempt to win additional demands that included voluntary overtime and the primacy of the French language at GM’s plant in Ste-Thérèse, Quebec. The international union leadership, including UAW President Leonard Woodcock, intervened to reach a settlement that included a generous wage increase but dropped the Canadian membership’s secondary demands, fueling opposition to the UAW leadership in Canada.\footnote{Yates, \textit{From Plant to Politics}, 147-148.} Concessionary agreements at UAW locals representing workers at Acme Screw and Gear and Massey-Ferguson in January and February 1971 further angered leftists in the Canadian UAW frustrated by their union’s timidity. As a result, a group of UAW radicals met in June 1971 to establish a new Left Caucus and elect a steering committee.\footnote{Ibid., 149.} With members drawn from the old Left Caucus such as Gordie Lambert and Bill Rutherford, aligning with younger activists such as Pat Clancy and Waffler Al Campbell, the new Left Caucus advocated a strategy including mass demonstrations and wildcat strikes to combat work speedups, imposed overtime, and threatened plant closures. Also highlighted was increased activism within the NDP, and most importantly recognition of Canadian autonomy within the UAW.\footnote{Ibid., 149-150.} The UAW strike at Douglas Aircraft in Malton, Ontario, in the fall of 1971 gave the new Left Caucus further ammunition in demanding Canadian autonomy. When the workers represented by UAW Local 1967 decided to remain on strike after their American counterparts settled for salary increases dictated by President

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\footnote{Yates, \textit{From Plant to Politics}, 147-148.} \footnote{Ibid., 149. The new Left Caucus steering committee consisted of Gordie Lambert (Vice-President, Local 199), Al Campbell (President, Local 27), Reg Screen (President, Local 28), Bill Rutherford (Vice-President, Local 222), Pat Clancy (President, Local 707) and Lyle Dotzert (Committeeman, Local 200).} \footnote{Ibid., 149-150. Measures to achieve Canadian autonomy within the UAW included an end to international collective agreements, a Canadian constitution, separate national policy and bargaining goals for Canada and the U.S. and a separate Canadian newspaper.}
Nixon’s recently introduced wage controls, the international and Canadian UAW leadership intervened to end the strike and force the striking members back to work.\textsuperscript{126}

In response to reports that Canadian safeguards in the Auto Pact were at risk from President Nixon’s New Economic Plan, the Left Caucus pushed for a one-day strategy conference at the Canadian District Council meeting in September 1971, but the majority of council delegates rejected the proposal. In contrast to the militant strategy of a one-day walkout and mass demonstration that the new Left Caucus advocated, Canadian UAW Director Dennis McDermott initiated a letter-writing campaign aimed at MPs to protest against revisions to the Auto Pact that might disadvantage Canadian workers.\textsuperscript{127}

When the Waffle organized and co-sponsored a conference on the Auto Pact with its UAW allies from the Windsor and District Labour Council in January 1972 – after the Left Caucus’s proposal for a similar conference had recently been defeated by the Canadian UAW – McDermott saw the move as an affront to internal union democracy and the all-important principle of solidarity.\textsuperscript{128}

The Waffle conference, which attracted 230 autoworkers, was addressed by Charlie Brooks, President of the UAW Canadian District Council, Ed Baillargeon, President of the Windsor and District Labour Council, and Ed Broadbent. Dennis McDermott did not attend. Attracting front page coverage in the \textit{Windsor Star}, the conference called for an independent Canadian auto industry and attacked the UAW leadership for failing to defend adequately Canadian production safeguards in the Auto

\textsuperscript{126} Ibid., 148-149; Gindin, \textit{The Canadian Auto Workers}, 150.
\textsuperscript{127} Yates, \textit{From Plant to Politics}, 151.
Pact. The conference also called for a one-day walkout and a demonstration by Autoworkers in Ottawa. Two days later the Windsor and District Labour Council likewise endorsed a resolution calling for a one-day strike in the auto industry to oppose the rumoured elimination of safeguards. As James Laxer later realized, the “highly successful event in the heart of UAW country… the Windsor conference was the last straw” for labour leaders.

Dennis McDermott, at a meeting of the UAW Canadian District Council the following weekend, assailed the Waffle at the same time he accused the new Left Caucus of disrupting internal union democracy. He warned that the Waffle was behaving like an independent political party and seeking to infiltrate the labour movement. “This union has dissociated itself from the activities of the Waffle,” McDermott claimed, “and in my view the NDP will have to do the same thing.” He labelled James Laxer “an irresponsible academic, accountable to no one, a headline-hunter, and an ego-tripper par excellence. His solution to every industrial problem is to first seize the plant and then nationalize the industry.” Clearly on a roll, McDermott suggested that Waffle leaders start their revolution in the universities where “they draw their fat salaries for lecturing a couple of hours a week, and have all kinds of free time on their hands to meddle in other people’s business. Meanwhile, why don’t they… for want of a better expression… get lost.” The new Left Caucus’s resolutions criticizing the UAW leadership for the timidity of the letter-writing campaign and its handling of the Douglas Aircraft strike

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132 Laxer, In Search of a New Left, 160.
were defeated decisively by the Canadian District Council.\textsuperscript{134} Watkins and Laxer responded in a statement released the following day. Calling McDermott’s attack “beneath contempt,” the Wafflers suggested that McDermott “is more concerned about the heads of his union in Detroit than he is about the sellout of the auto pact safeguards.”\textsuperscript{135} Nevertheless, they described their own relationship with the NDP as cordial. Laxer commented that “I don’t expect any tension over the next few months. We are all working together for the next election.”\textsuperscript{136} He could not have been more mistaken.

The labour movement leadership monitored W affler and leftist activity in the major union locals, sharing their findings with senior party officials. Morden Lazarus, Public Relations Director of the OFL, wrote to NDP federal secretary Cliff Scotton about Laxer and Watkins and informed him that a pro-McDermott slate had ousted the “Abe Taylor group” in UAW Local 222 in the aftermath of the Auto Pact Conference and the UAW Canadian Council.\textsuperscript{137} The CLC maintained a confidential collection of documents and press clippings recording Wafflers’ statements about the Canadian labour movement.\textsuperscript{138} Jean Beaudry, Executive Vice-President of the CLC, told a Saskatchewan Federation of Labour convention that the Waffle should not try to “capture unions for their own particular purposes or political motives.” Beaudry defended international unions and

\begin{footnotes}
\item[134] Yates, \textit{From Plant to Politics}, 154.
\item[136] Ibid.
\item[137] Modore Lazarus to Cliff Scotton, February 8, 1972, File 446-4, Waffle-NDP fonds, LAC.
\item[138] “Confidential: Chronological Survey of Documents Dealing With the Waffle Group within the NDP and also public comments based on their activity,” Box 2009-047/001, File Waffle - CLC Chronology, Giles Endicott fonds, YUA. For example, the collection highlights \textit{Toronto Star} columnist Anthony Westell’s comment, “the NDP’s rapidly growing left-wing waffle group, which now has more than 700 names on its mailing list, is quietly working to radicalize one of the most conservative elements in society, the trade unions, by encouraging young activists to overthrow aged leaders,” from his column titled “New Style of Grass-roots Politics in Stealing Parliament’s Thunder,” \textit{Toronto Star}, April 17, 1970.
\end{footnotes}
“served notice” that “the labour movement is well able to look after itself,” before hinting ominously that “I don’t like to see people get their fingers burned unnecessarily.”

Union activists and NDP members in the Hamilton-Mountain riding association, angered by the Waffle’s role in the previous Ontario election and its unwelcome interventions in the labour movement, passed a resolution in late November 1971 for debate at the Ontario NDP Provincial Council in March 1972 calling for “those who adhere to any clearly identifiable ongoing political group” to be removed from the party’s membership rolls. Ian Deans, MPP for the Hamilton-area riding of Wentworth and House leader of the Ontario NDP caucus, supported the motion, arguing the Waffle was damaging the NDP’s ability to speak clearly for itself. Deans alleged the Waffle had become “a political organization unto yourself,” and its presence meant “continuous harangues and battles that go on between the two factions.” The Waffle’s Auto Pact Conference in Windsor had only exacerbated frictions with its opponents. An informal discussion in January 1972 between Stephen Lewis, Michele Landsberg, James Laxer and Krista Maeots failed to resolve the differences between the party leadership and the Waffle.

139 Speech by Jean Beaudry to Saskatchewan Federation of Labour Convention, October 15, 1971, Box 2009-047/001, File Waffle - CLC Chronology, Giles Endicott fonds, YUA.
142 Smith, Unfinished Journey, 431-432. Smith, Lewis’s biographer, argues that the Waffle and ONDP reached the “point of no return” with this failure. Lewis recalled, “It was the hand of friendship. Jim was giving out signals everywhere that he wasn’t comfortable” and Landsberg remembered, “our joking as we walked up to their house about an entente cordiale [and] Jim, who was sort of affable and charming and wanting to be friends and didn’t seem to clue in to how much harm he was doing at all, was all ready…to work out a more benign way of behaving. [But] Krista all but hit the coffee table over his head and absolutely forbade any entente.” Lewis suggested that the NDP “was sufficiently flexible to accommodate the nationalist drives of the Waffle and some of what would be considered [its] radical prescriptions…if they could lay off the separate membership lists and the union bashing and that kind of stuff. We understood what the quid pro quo would mean.” Landsberg recalled, “We walked away depressed. And
In February 1972 the Ontario Waffle held a conference at Hamilton’s McMaster University featuring sessions on Quebec, the labour movement, the women’s liberation movement, culture and media, and several other topics. The conference only fuelled the ire of the NDP leadership. Stephen Lewis took a clear stand on the Waffle’s position within the NDP during his speech to the Ontario NDP’s Provincial Council the following month. Declaring that “we, as a political party, can no longer proceed in our present state,” Lewis attacked the Waffle on four fronts – “human relationships, structure, labour and ideology.” He criticized the Waffle for instilling “acrimony and bitterness” in the party, for its harsh attacks on union leadership, and for publicly promoting policies contrary to the NDP’s. Referring specifically to the recent Hamilton conference, Lewis outlined the Waffle’s structure and fundraising efforts, arguing “it seems to me indisputable that the Waffle has already virtually become – certainly verges on – a party within a party.”

Rather than following up Lewis’s speech with the scheduled debate on the Hamilton Mountain riding association’s resolution to expel the Waffle, Ontario NDP provincial secretary Gordon Brigden introduced a compromise resolution acknowledging “the grave anxiety among our membership at the emergence of a distinct group within the Party” and calling on the party executive to “prepare a statement outlining the responsibilities and obligations of members of the party.” The motion passed by a vote of 157 to 62. A committee was established comprised of Gordon

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143 “Ontario Waffle Group in the NDP – Provincial Conference Agenda” personal files. The conference included a short address by a representative of the Toronto Gay Liberation Front, indicating that the Ontario Waffle sought to establish ties with another social movement.


146 Ibid.
Vichert, the party’s president, John Brewin, its treasurer, and Gerald Caplan, tasked with drafting a statement to be discussed at the next provincial council. The Waffle thereby retained its place in the Ontario NDP, at least momentarily.

The Waffle’s unique strategy of conducting parallel electoral and extra-parliamentary activism was most apparent in the summer and fall of 1971. The American turn to protectionism represented by the “Nixon Shock” and the leak of the federal government’s Gray Report showing increasing American ownership of the Canadian economy caught the attention of many Canadians. As a result, economic nationalism gained political prominence in late 1971 and the Waffle sought to take advantage of the situation. The Ontario Waffle’s support of striking workers at Brantford’s Texpack factory served to demonstrate the dangers of foreign ownership and the limitations of conservative international unions whose leadership was closely connected to the NDP. Nevertheless, Wafflers continued to work within the party to organize for the adoption and implementation of more left-wing policies. Six Wafflers won nominations and ran for the NDP during the October 1971 election in Ontario. However, all were defeated despite Steve Penner coming agonizingly close to victory, hindering the Waffle’s influence within the Ontario NDP. Wafflers in Manitoba and Saskatchewan alike were frustrated by their inability to substantially influence party conventions, let alone NDP governments, in those two provinces and began to question the group’s role in the party as a result. Moreover, the Waffle’s struggle with the NDP leadership was exacerbated by conflict in New Brunswick between the Trotskyist-dominated Waffle and party moderates, perceptions that the Waffle’s presence during the Ontario election had harmed the party’s electoral prospects there, and the enhanced support for the Waffle amongst
dissident caucuses within the USWA and UAW. Events in Ontario early in 1972 would thrust all of this internal strife into public view and signal the beginning of the end for the Waffle in the NDP.
Chapter Eight

“To fight for a free Canada, but without the Waffle forever an encumbrance around my neck:” Conflict, 1972

Stephen Lewis’s speech denouncing the Waffle at the Ontario NDP’s Provincial Council meeting at Oshawa in March 1972 reverberated throughout the NDP nationwide. The Waffle would spend much of the ensuing two years in an existential crisis, debating its position vis-à-vis the NDP. Until the spring of 1972, its raison d’être had been to challenge many of the NDP’s core attitudes and principles. Central to James Laxer’s argument that the Canadian New Left should engage in electoral politics as well as extra-parliamentary struggles was the existence of a social democratic party with a union base and history of leftist politics. Although the Waffle had engaged with non-electoral social movements, most notably within unions, its primary focus over the previous two-and-a-half years had been to change the NDP. In the aftermath of Lewis’s Oshawa speech, the Ontario Waffle, which the media tended to cast as representative of the group nationally, devoted all of its energies to offsetting Lewis’s criticisms while struggling to maintain a foothold in the Ontario NDP. In Saskatchewan and Manitoba, by contrast, the Waffle questioned its very existence in the party. Frustrated by an inability to influence substantially the NDP governments in those provinces, leading Wafflers soon abandoned hope in the party’s openness to radical economic and societal changes. Socialism, at least as the Waffle understood it, simply was not in the cards in either Saskatchewan or Manitoba in 1972. In Manitoba, where the Waffle was weakest, its members began drifting away from both the group and the NDP, while its sole MLA, Cy

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1 Laxer had advanced this argument in “The Student Movement and Canadian Independence,” Canadian Dimension (August-September 1969), as discussed in Chapter Three. John Richards made similar arguments to explain his interest in running for the NDP after his involvement in the American anti-war movement, as discussed in Chapter Five.
Gonick, grew increasingly disillusioned with electoral politics. In Saskatchewan, where the existence of a stronger left tradition within the NDP might have been cause for greater optimism among Wafflers, they nevertheless spent much of the next eighteen months debating the appropriate time and tactics for departing the NDP. After losing the fight to remain within the Ontario NDP, the Waffle there divided into those who chose to park their loyalties with the party and the rump who preferred to eventually establish a new political party to challenge the NDP electorally. Meanwhile, in British Columbia, the election of an NDP government in August 1972 became final confirmation that the west coast Waffle had been fully absorbed into the party’s mainstream. All told, by the fall of 1972, the Waffle remained active in just two provinces, Ontario and Saskatchewan.

In Ontario, the NDP executive established a committee consisting of Gordon Vichert, John Brewin and Gerald Caplan to fulfill the Provincial Council’s mandate of preparing “a statement outlining the responsibilities and obligations of members to the Party” with the expectation that the Waffle’s involvement in particular would be scrutinized. The executive agreed to a motion by James Laxer that the committee hold consultation meetings with party members in Thunder Bay, Timmins, Sudbury, Ottawa, London, and Toronto. 

Vichert, in recalling these meetings, commented on the relentless hostility the committee encountered from Waffle supporters. Comparing Wafflers to the Baptist fundamentalists of his youth, Vichert proclaimed “over and over again, wherever we went, we were subjected to that kind of blood test on the part of the Waffle who set up

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2 Minutes of the Provincial Executive, April 8, 1972, Series 13 Executive and Council Minutes, File 4 Executive and Council Minutes 1970-72, New Democratic Party of Ontario fonds, QUA; A Statement by the Ontario Waffle to the Ontario Executive of the New Democratic Party, personal files. Waffler and ONDP candidate Steve Penner continued to push the executive to support a recount in the close election in Dovercourt at the same executive meeting.
its own strict interpretation of what the policy of the party ought to be, and then called everyone a heathen who didn’t adhere to those policies.”³ He noted “we were not only dealing here with an ideological movement but with a movement for the leadership of Jim Laxer and Mel Watkins, for their own prestige and power within the party, and that seemed to us intolerable.”⁴

The Vichert Committee received over one hundred submissions reflecting widely divergent views of the Waffle’s role in the NDP. The St. George riding association executive brief to the Vichert Committee acknowledged that the Wafflers “may have caused some confusion in the public mind,” but argued its actions did not warrant a purge and they would be ill-inclined to continue supporting a party that ousted the Waffle.⁵ The Welland riding association, by contrast, demanded “the dismantling of the structure and organizations of the Waffle” and advocated constitutional changes to “prevent the continuance or new formation of any such group.”⁶ A group of moderates, including John Harney, Walter Pitman, Karl Jaffary and Desmond Morton, claimed the party was “being presented with a terrible set of alternatives and we do not want to be forced to choose between them.” They proposed instead a compromise that would allow an autonomous Waffle separate from the NDP, to associate with the party in a manner similar to union affiliation.⁷

The Ontario Waffle’s submission to the committee recognized the intra-party tensions, but accused Stephen Lewis of escalating them into a full-blown crisis with his

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speech to the ONDP Provincial Council. The Waffle contended instead that the greater crises with which the party needed to be concerned were “the increasing contradictions that manifest themselves in a dependent capitalist Canada,” namely the dangers to the country’s economy posed by foreign ownership and the growing appeal of a progressive Québécois nationalism. The Waffle brief also claimed Lewis’s criticism of the Waffle for maintaining its own mailing list and conducting independent fundraising efforts was just a ploy for disguising his true ideological objections to the group. The brief defended Waffle support of unions, and proposed several changes to the party’s governance including provision for allowing only ONDP members to sit as delegates at the party’s councils and conventions.\(^8\)

Although the Ontario Waffle’s message to the Vichert Committee was combative in defending its right to exist within the NDP, the group was taking measures to limit its conflicts with the party and union leadership by disassociating from more radical left groups. Laxer explained that “behind the scenes, a few efforts were made to find common ground between the Waffle and the party leadership. At one point, Stephen Lewis asked me to have dinner with him, and the pleasant evening we spent discussing the future of the party gave me a false sense of hope that compromise could be possible.”\(^9\) Before Laxer defeated Marion Bryden for the federal NDP nomination in East York he denied suggestions that a victory represented a test of the Waffle’s strength in the party and instead indicated that “if Marion wins tonight, I’ll work for her, and I think that if I win, she’ll work for me.” A reporter, obviously frustrated by the lack of a

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\(^8\) A statement by the Ontario Waffle to the Ontario Executive of the New Democratic Party, personal files. This stipulation would preclude union members or staff who were not New Democrats from sitting as delegates at the ONDP’s councils and conventions.

\(^9\) Laxer, *In Search of a New Left*, 161.
political “bloodbath” at the nomination meeting, complained about an atmosphere lacking energy, commenting “there were no demonstrations; there was no bar; there were none of the visceral pleasures associated with traditional political competitiveness… there were no fireworks.”\textsuperscript{10} Meanwhile the Ottawa Waffle, for example, had initially partnered with the Canadian Liberation Movement (CLM) on the Committee Against the Nixon Visit to protest the American President’s visit to Canada and speech to a joint session of Parliament in April. But barely a week before Nixon’s arrival the Waffle withdrew from the committee and chose to hold an educational event rather than participate in the protest. Its erstwhile partners alleged the Ottawa group had been threatened with expulsion from the NDP if it went ahead with the protest alongside the radical CLM and accused Wafflers Laxer and Watkins, who refused to speak publicly alongside Gary Perly, the CLM’s outspoken leader, of submitting to pressure from David and Stephen Lewis.\textsuperscript{11} The same month Watkins decried the radical New Brunswick Waffle manifesto as “a totally unacceptable thing” that “lay beyond the pale of social democracy.”\textsuperscript{12}

Internal strife within the Council of Canadian Unions (CCU) provided more fuel to the CLM charge that the Waffle leadership was yielding to party demands. Jim Tester, a Waffle supporter and president of the only remaining Mine Mill local (Local 598) representing workers at Falconbridge in Sudbury, sought advice from Bill Walsh, a union arbitrator and consultant and long-time member of the Communist Party before joining

\textsuperscript{10} William Cameron, “NDP’s non-battle still produces a winner and a loser,” \textit{Toronto Star}, March 16, 1972.
\textsuperscript{11} The NDP, the Waffle and the US-Run Unions, n.d. [1972], Box 1A Leaflets A-H, File 139, Canadian Liberation Movements fonds, MUA; CLM Statement Regarding the Withdrawal of the Ottawa Waffle Group From the Committee Against the Nixon Visit, April 1972, Box 1A Leaflets A-H, File 139, Canadian Liberation Movements fonds, MUA.
\textsuperscript{12} Watkins quotation in Webber, “For a Socialist New Brunswick,” 128.
the NDP in 1969 and becoming active in the Ontario Waffle. At Robert Laxer’s request, Walsh had helped to establish the Waffle Labour Caucus. Although Mine Mill had a long relationship of mutual support with Kent Rowley and Madeleine Parent, including hosting the CCU’s founding convention in Sudbury in July 1969, that relationship began to unravel. Simultaneous strikes at Inco and Falconbridge in the fall of 1969 led to cooperation between the old rivals, USWA and Mine Mill, despite Parent’s advice to the contrary. Furthermore, Mine Mill had downplayed its CCU connection during the strike in order to solicit support from international unions the CCU had loudly criticized previously.  

When Rowley requested Mine Mill Local 598’s assistance in the CCU’s attempted raids on Steel locals at Trail, Kitimat, Thompson, and Hamilton, Tester and Walsh declined. Concerned that the CCU connection might invite another raid by the USWA, they pushed for disaffiliation from the CCU, a move the membership supported in April 1972. The CLM in turn interpreted the push for CCU disaffiliation as further evidence of the Waffle acquiescing to the NDP and labour leadership in order to avoid a purge. According to the CLM, Walsh, Tester and the Ontario Waffle leadership were seeking “to prove to the NDP leaders and to the all-powerful Steelworkers, who would just love to have the Mine-Mill membership, just how good and trustworthy the Waffle leadership is.”

Unlike their Ontario counterparts, the Saskatchewan Waffle determined that it must break away from the NDP. Disappointment over the NDP government’s newly-created land bank spurred the decision. When Jack Messer, Saskatchewan’s Minister of

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14 Ibid., 246.
15 The NDP, the Waffle and the US-Run Unions, n.d. [1972], Box 1A Leaflets A-H, File 139, Canadian Liberation Movements fonds, MUA.
Agriculture, introduced legislation in early 1972 to create a Land Bank Commission it faced multiple criticisms. The president of the Estevan Chamber of Commerce described the plan as “complete folly,” Liberal leader David Steuart attacked the bill as a “land grab” akin to farm policies behind the “Iron Curtain,” and the Saskatchewan Waffle complained the land bank’s option-to-purchase detracted from the broader goal of furthering public ownership.\(^\text{16}\) Doug McArthur, the Deputy Minister of Agriculture and principal author of the legislation, sought to encourage leasing by keeping rents low. However, his explanation “that the option to purchase not undermine the main tenure option that the Land Bank was attempting to introduce” failed to convince the Waffle.\(^\text{17}\) The Land Bank Act passed the Saskatchewan legislature in May 1972 and the Land Bank Commission began operations later that year.\(^\text{18}\)

Consequently many of the key figures in the Saskatchewan Waffle had given up hope by the spring of 1972 of sufficiently influencing the NDP. At a conference in March that was closed to the press, Wafflers discussed the province’s resource policy and economic development, focusing on oil and potash. Although they agreed to emphasize nationalization as the preferred path towards a comprehensive socialist economic development policy, some expressed fear that “the NDP government could conceivably give in to pressure and act in this area – as they are now doing in the land bank – without any socialist orientation, and indeed corrupting the idea.”\(^\text{19}\) There was general agreement that the Waffle’s continued presence in the NDP maintained the “left legitimacy of the


\(^{17}\) McArthur quotation in Gruending, Promises to Keep, 107.


\(^{19}\) Waffle Conference in Regina, March 1972, File I.22 Saskatchewan Waffle-NDP 1972, John Warnock Papers, SAB (Saskatoon).
party,” and that a split was both an inevitable development and a positive step on the road to socialism in Saskatchewan. The one remaining question that was to dominate the Saskatchewan Waffle for the next year involved the “tactics and timing” for breaking with the NDP. In the meantime the group resolved to remain politically active by starting a bimonthly news magazine to report “the news omitted by the capitalist press.” The resulting publication, Next Year Country, would occupy the attention of several leading Wafflers for several years to come.

Given the Manitoba Waffle’s limited strength compared to its counterparts in Ontario and Saskatchewan, the decision by disgruntled NDP MLA Jean Allard to depart the caucus in April 1972 due to “the growing influence of doctrinaire socialists and social radicals” was met with incredulity by most observers. Caucus annoyance over Allard’s public musings that he might contest the federal Liberal nomination in Churchill seemed a likelier reason. Certainly neither Cy Gonick nor the social conservative NDP MLA Joe Borowski were dismayed by Allard’s news. Gonick suggested personal conflicts rather than ideological differences were responsible for Allard’s departure: “he was not a person that most members of the caucus liked to deal with.” Although Allard had agreed with Borowski’s opposition to the legalisation of abortion and his support for funding separate schools, Borowski, who was no stranger to intemperate outbursts himself, described Allard’s departure as “the best news I’ve heard” since being elected.

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20 Ibid.
21 Ibid.
24 Ibid.
Gonick would undoubtedly have dismissed Allard’s claim that radical socialists were influencing Manitoba’s NDP government. Although Gonick supported the government’s land bank strategy for tackling rural depopulation, he did not hesitate to hold the Schreyer administration to account.25 Gonick urged the government to adopt a strategy for industrial development and address the problem of multinational corporations shutting down plants in Manitoba by committing to nationalize any industry that terminated operations in the province.26 He also challenged the government’s conclusions on the potential impact of South Indian Lake flooding, leading a reporter to note that Gonick “has been known to ask embarrassing questions of his government colleagues.”27 Gonick was also a lonely voice for the women’s liberation movement, calling on the provincial Human Rights Commission to take action on the “sexist nature of readers in our elementary schools.”28 On one occasion, to highlight how women were treated as sex objects “to sell products” he jokingly exposed the Manitoba legislature to a fold-out photograph of a nude Burt Reynolds that appeared in Cosmopolitan magazine.29

The struggling Manitoba Waffle, concerned over developments in Ontario and Saskatchewan and the fact that the national Steering Committee had been inactive for a year, initiated a call for a national meeting of representatives from all provincial Waffle groups to meet in Winnipeg at the end of April. Ontario, Saskatchewan and Manitoba were all represented but the sole expected representative from British Columbia, Ken Novakowski, a Waffler and federal NDP candidate, was unable to attend. Mel Watkins

29 “Male ‘Playmate’ Raises Query,” Winnipeg Free Press, March 30, 1972. PC Inez Trueman was the only woman among the fifty-seven MLAs.
reported on the Waffle’s situation in Ontario and outlined concessions it was willing to make to remain in the provincial NDP. These included notifying the party in advance about the Waffle’s public activities, clarifying that any of its public statements were not necessarily reflective of official NDP policy, and ensuring that Waffle candidates in the upcoming federal election adhered to the party platform. Watkins did not anticipate the ONDP Provincial Council taking action against the Waffle any time soon.\(^{30}\) As John Warnock, Carol Gudmundson, and Jill Sargent explained, the Ontario steering committee believed an attempted purge of the Waffle in that province would be hotly contested by those riding associations opposed to the idea, making it likely that “the Lewis forces do not want such a ‘victory’ and will therefore back down.”\(^{31}\) Watkins and Laxer did face some criticism at the national Waffle meeting over the Ontario group’s brief to the Vichert Committee and decision to pull out of the Nixon demonstration in Ottawa.\(^{32}\)

Whereas the Ontario Waffle had outlined concessions it would make in order to remain in the NDP, leading Wafflers from Saskatchewan and Manitoba demonstrated they had abandoned all hope of transforming the NDP provincially. Myron Kuziak reported that the Saskatchewan Waffle “has reached an impasse in the NDP” and now wondered if it should plan for a split or wait for one to be initiated by party right-wingers. Cy Gonick explained that the “personality cult” surrounding Premier Schreyer undercut any internal opposition in the Manitoba NDP, and lamented being the only left-wing

\(^{30}\) Al Finkel and John Warnock, “Notes on a clandestine and unofficial meeting of provincial Waffle representatives and interested observers,” 1972, File I.8 NDP-Waffle 1972, John Warnock Papers, SAB (Saskatoon).

\(^{31}\) Jack Warnock, Carol Gudmundson, Jill Sargent to Saskatchewan Waffle Steering Committee, June 12, 1972, File II.16 Correspondence, 1973-1981, Saskatchewan Waffle fonds, SAB (Regina).

\(^{32}\) Watkins and Laxer were criticized by other Ontario Wafflers for not involving the membership in responding to Stephen Lewis’s attack on the group and by Manitoba and Saskatchewan Wafflers for the concessions they were willing to make in order to remain in the NDP, especially since Waffle leaders in both prairie provinces had concluded there was not a viable future in the party. The Ontario Waffle leaders also faced questions over their pressuring the Ottawa Waffle to “back off” from the anti-Nixon protest.
voice in the party’s caucus.\footnote{Al Finkel and John Warnock, “Notes on a clandestine and unofficial meeting of provincial Waffle representatives and interested observers,” 1972, File I.8 NDP-Waffle 1972, John Warnock Papers, SAB (Saskatoon).} The Winnipeg gathering debated the Ontario and Saskatchewan Waffles’ diverging strategies, with some advocating adoption of a national strategy. Although a national coordinator position was created to improve communications, the provincial groups remained fully autonomous. Responding to the earlier attacks against the Ontario Waffle, representatives at the national meeting confirmed that the Waffle must continue to identify and act independently, refuse to concede its right to exist as a separately structured entity within the NDP, and improve its links with union locals while attempting to re-establish a national focus. Some disagreements were not settled at the Winnipeg gathering. For instance, a debate that emerged among Esther Mathews, Kelly Crichton, Mel Watkins, Joe Flexer, and Jackie Larkin over the relative importance of cultural nationalism, foreshadowed future divisions over nationalism and class.\footnote{Ibid.; Summary – Winnipeg Waffle Meeting, April 30, 1972, File III.28 National Waffle, John Richards Papers, SAB (Saskatoon).}

Saskatchewan Wafflers expressed frustration after the meeting with what they perceived as the Ontario Waffle’s timidity. John Warnock, Carol Gudmundson, and Jill Sargent complained to the Saskatchewan steering committee that the Ontario group was “on the defensive – or so it appears, and at a time when they by rights should be on the offensive because of the disastrous showing that the right-wing approach made in the past Ontario election.”\footnote{Jack Warnock, Carol Gudmundson, Jill Sargent to Saskatchewan Waffle Steering Committee, June 12, 1972, File II.16 Correspondence, 1973-1981, Saskatchewan Waffle fonds, SAB (Regina).} John Conway also expressed displeasure with the Ontario Waffle leadership, explaining to Warnock he did not think it important to attend the Winnipeg meeting since “it was called only because Laxer does not like what we are discussing out
Conway was also angry over Laxer’s appearance at a Waffle meeting in Regina, which he interpreted as an attempt to influence the Saskatchewan Waffle’s plans for splitting from the NDP. Laxer, Conway snapped, “is beginning to behave like a David Lewis of the left.”

While the Saskatchewan Wafflers urged their Ontario conferees to take the offensive, the Vichert Committee contended the Waffle had become too offensive. In its report the committee accused the Waffle of changing for the worse since its formation in 1969. The committee had been appalled at the Wafflers’ behaviour during its hearings at Toronto and Ottawa, when party members with whom they disagreed were subjected to booing, hissing, jeering, and “indifference or scorn.” Furthermore, the committee concluded the Waffle’s continued existence as a permanent opposition “cannot fail to confuse the public.” The report commented on the deep divisions separating the Waffle and NDP on basic party principles, which included divisions over electoral politics, policies, leadership, structure, and commitments to union affiliation. While recognizing the right of members, riding associations, and affiliated organizations to express dissent over aspects of NDP policy and leadership, the Vichert Committee believed no compromises were possible as long as the Waffle insisted on existing as “an organized opposition in the party.” The report deemed the Waffle “a group organized on a continuing basis for the expressed purpose of securing fundamental changes in the strategies, structure, leadership, policies and principles of the party,” and as such must either dissolve or face disciplinary action.

James Laxer remembered the report being

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36 John Conway to Jack Warnock, May 1, 1972, File I.22 Saskatchewan Waffle-NDP, 1972, John Warnock Papers, SAB (Saskatoon).
37 Ibid.
“harshly critical of the Waffle, even going so far as to compare its political tone to the stridency of former Alabama Governor and segregationist George Wallace – a metaphor for new left Canadian nationalists that was so extreme as to ultimately undermine the credibility of the task force.”

Although Watkins had been sanguine about the unlikelihood of the Ontario NDP Provincial Council attempting a purge of the Waffle, the party’s Provincial Executive did adopt the Vichert Committee report when it met on May 6, 1972. The only opposition to the move was expressed by the six Wafflers on the Executive. The Waffle had not taken seriously John Harney’s proposal that it assume an affiliate status similar to a union local, and when Desmond Morton sought to amend the Executive Committee’s report to incorporate the possibility of affiliate status for the Waffle his motion was defeated.

Five days after the ONDP Executive meeting Mel Watkins, Kelly Crichton, and James Laxer met with moderate party activists, primarily from the St. David riding association in Toronto, including former Waffler Giles Endicott and Toronto alderman Karl Jaffary. MPPs Elie Martel (Sudbury East), Michael Cassidy (Ottawa), Janusz Dukszta (Parkdale) and Jim Foulds (Port Arthur) also attended the meeting at Watkins’s home. Endicott chaired and explained how St. David activists had met with Stephen Lewis to tell him the Provincial Council in Oshawa “was a hell of a way to run the party” and that he should “cool it.” Endicott urged the Wafflers to do the same, and clarified to Watkins, Crichton and Laxer that “this meeting may seem like an attacking session – it

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39 Laxer, In Search of a New Left, 161.
40 Jack Warnock, Carol Gudmundson, Jill Sargent to Saskatchewan Waffle Steering Committee, June 12, 1972, File II.16 Correspondence, 1973-1981, Saskatchewan Waffle fonds, SAB (Regina); Minutes of the Provincial Executive, May 6, 1972, Series 13 Executive and Council Minutes, File 4 Executive and Council Minutes 1970-72, New Democratic Party Ontario fonds, QUA. Morton describes the affiliation proposal as an “ingenious scheme which, however, found favour with neither side,” in Morton, The New Democrats, 133.
is.”41 The moderates criticized the Waffle for making personal attacks on NDP and labour leaders, conducting independent fundraising efforts, and for operating separate from internal party structures. They urged Wafflers to begin making positive statements about the NDP to demonstrate their loyalty.42 The Wafflers indicated a willingness to compromise on some of these issues. Laxer explained they were prepared to “cool it on personal attacks,” to work within the party structure, stop publicizing Waffle statements as ‘NDP-Waffle’ and curb their fundraising. However Watkins, Crichton and Laxer rejected Dukszta’s suggestion “that the Waffle should disband formally and continue to do what it does.” Watkins indicated that the Waffle was considering Morton’s idea of seeking affiliation status with the NDP, but it preferred the status quo and certainly had no intention of disbanding.43

At the same time as the Waffle was facing pressure from party moderates to change its behaviour, party officials across the country, including federal NDP leader David Lewis, urged the Ontario section to compromise and avoid issuing the Waffle any ultimatums. Saskatchewan MP John Skoberg opposed the “all or nothing” position taken by the Vichert Committee since the Ontario party’s decision was certain to reverberate in the party across the country. Rather, the matter of the Waffle and “groups… using pressure politics to bring about democratic change within the Party” should be handled by a federal NDP convention.44 Grant Notley, Alberta’s NDP leader, signed a petition opposing any move by the Ontario party to oust the Waffle and as a result was admonished by Ontario NDP secretary Brigden for interfering in the affairs of another

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41 Notes: Meeting at Mel’s place, May 11, 1972, Box 2009-047/001, File Waffle - History, see "manifesto" for first drafts (1 of 2), Giles Endicott fonds, YUA.
42 Ibid.
43 Ibid.
44 John Skoberg to Gordon Vichert, June 8, 1972, File 446-4, Waffle-NDP fonds, LAC.
provincial party. David Lewis wrote to Vichert recommending informal discussions between the federal and Ontario NDP leaderships to address how “federal aspects of the problem may be taken into consideration in discussions and preparations” for the ONDP Provincial Council scheduled for June in Orillia. Although Lewis’s tone suggested concern that a showdown with the Waffle might harm the party’s chances in the upcoming federal election, he reassured Vichert “I do not have any hesitation about the fact that an appropriate and decisive step has to be taken with respect to the Waffle.”

Stephen Lewis later recalled:

There were two meetings at the Ontario Federation of Labour building which I would sooner forget at which father and son were at bitter loggerheads… There was one meeting attended by David, by Mahoney, by Dowling, by Larry Sefton, by Lynn, by Don Taylor, by Montgomery, by Bud Clark, Sam Fox, David Archer, Dennis, Vichert, and myself at which David made a strong appeal that we shouldn’t do it, that we should lay off. I was taking an absolutely intransigent line; so was Sefton; so was Williams. McDermott was touch and go. McDermott wasn’t sure – he wanted to move the Waffle out but he didn’t want to offend the old man – none of them did.

Kenneth Bagnell reported in the *Globe and Mail* that David Archer, Dennis McDermott and William Mahoney were approaching a compromise position, since they preferred to have the Waffle remain inside the NDP rather than witness the departure of hundreds of party activists, leaving a divided and demoralized party in their wake.

Media reports of this development led Ontario Wafflers to believe the party and union

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45 Gordon Brigden to Grant Notley, June 22, 1972, File 446-4, Waffle-NDP fonds, LAC.
46 David Lewis to Gordon Vichert, May 23, 1972, File 446-4, Waffle-NDP fonds, LAC.
47 Stephen Lewis quotation in Morley, *Secular Socialists*, 217. Morley records the participants as Bill Mahoney, National Director, USWA; Fred Dowling, Canadian Director, Canadian Food and Allied Workers; Larry Sefton, District Six Director, USWA; Lynn Williams, Sefton’s assistant and Vice-President of the Ontario NDP; Don Taylor, Mahoney’s assistant; Don Montgomery, Toronto Area Supervisor, USWA and President, Toronto and District Labour Council; David Archer, President, OFL; Dennis McDermott, Canadian Director, UAW; Bud Clark, assistant to the Canadian Director, TWUA; Sam Fox, Canadian Vice-President of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union; David Lewis, Stephen Lewis and Gordon Vichert. Morley, *Secular Socialists*, 257, footnote 41.
leadership were debating withdrawing the Vichert Committee’s report. Although willing to make some compromises, leading Wafflers resisted agreeing to any restrictions on their group’s activities beyond the concessions already granted. Confident that it could count on support from party members in the various riding associations, the Waffle intended to force Stephen Lewis and the party leadership to drop all threats of expulsion and postpone any decisions on the Waffle’s right to exist until the ONDP convention met in the fall of 1972.49

In attempting to persuade party members of its right to remain within the NDP, the Ontario Waffle emphasized the democratic necessity of allowing members to initiate and organize internal reforms. James Laxer recalled “the Waffle fought a provincewide campaign to salvage its legitimacy within the party.”50 Wafflers urged party members in their riding associations to oppose the Vichert Committee’s recommendations. Several ridings, including Ottawa South and St. David, threatened a strike by party members “on all aspects of normal riding activities” should the Waffle be expelled from the ONDP.51 Party activists from riding associations across the country urged the ONDP leadership to reconsider its expulsion plans.52 The riding association executive in Vancouver Point Grey lauded the Waffle’s “positive, vital, and constructive influence,” while in Moose Jaw North members implored the ONDP leadership and the Waffle to “resolve their differences in the interests of the NDP as a whole.”53

49 Description of conversation with Krista Maeots, June 8, 1972, File I.22 Saskatchewan-NDP 1972, John Warnock Papers, SAB (Saskatoon); Richard Comber to John Richards, April 18, 1972, File II.7 Job Applications, 1972-73, John Richards Papers, SAB (Saskatoon).
50 Laxer, In Search of a New Left, 161.
51 John Mather to ONDP Riding Associations, June 7, 1972. File 446-27, Waffle-NDP fonds, LAC.
52 Chas T. Haddrell to Gordon Brigden, May 11, 1972, and Thora Wiggins to Stephen Lewis, May 21, 1972, File 446-27, Waffle-NDP fonds, LAC.
53 Roger Howard to Clifford Scotton, June 4, 1972, and Dorothy Hannon to Clifford Scotton, June 5, 1972, File 446-27, Waffle-NDP fonds, LAC.
Concerned that attempts to implement the Vichert Committee’s harsh recommendations might be rejected by moderate party activists, Vichert and Gerald Caplan produced a compromise resolution via the Peterborough riding association similar to the one John Harney and Desmond Morton had previously floated unsuccessfully. The motion proposed introducing a category of associate membership “open to organizations whose purpose is the dissemination of political ideas compatible with those of the party and which are not organized to seek public office, providing they undertake to accept and abide by the principles and constitution of the party.” An added proviso would forbid associate members from using the party’s name or maintaining a separate organizational structure within the NDP. The Administrative Committee of the Provincial Executive rejected the Peterborough compromise in favour of the Vichert Committee’s original recommendations, a decision that Terry Morley, a member of the Administrative Committee, recalled was “strongly influenced by Lynn Williams.”

In their discussions with the Ontario NDP leadership about the Waffle and the Vichert Committee report, labour leaders were resolute. The Waffle’s connection to left-nationalist caucuses within the USWA and UAW in the unions’ heartland of southern Ontario threatened labour leaders who could not help being reminded of their struggles against Communist unionists in the recent past. Although Stephen Lewis remembered being “persuaded that the Waffle was destroying the party,” he also recalled an “unstated ultimatum” from the trade union movement intimating labour would rescind its financial

54 Peterborough resolution, Minutes of the Provincial Council, June 24-25, 1972, Series 13 Executive and Council Minutes, File 4 Executive and Council Minutes 1970-72, New Democratic Party Ontario fonds, QUA.
55 Morley, Secular Socialists, 216.
support of the NDP unless the Waffle was removed.\textsuperscript{56} Lewis worried that the Vichert Committee report was “engendering so much antagonism” within the NDP it would produce an irrevocable rupture between party and union activists. He therefore had no choice but to “persuade the trade unionists that alternative wording had to be found” in order to retain the support of moderate party members, even while he personally bore the brunt of labour’s displeasure. As Lewis explained, “Lynn Williams, who was the bargainer for the trade union movement, was treating me like INCO and he just wasn’t moving an inch.”\textsuperscript{57} Larry Sefton, USWA District Six Director, who was then dying of cancer, expressed deep displeasure over Lewis’s request to compromise on the Waffle when Sefton himself had devoted his life to building up the CCF and NDP.\textsuperscript{58} Williams does not recall threatening to withdraw Steelworker support from the NDP, but explained:

> My sense of myself was built around indignation that the Waffle was going to destroy my party not that I was going to destroy my party. And my whole focus was that we had to win this argument… I can’t imagine ever threatening that we were going to leave. Where would we go?\textsuperscript{59}

As Williams described in his memoirs, Sefton was “strong and unequivocal” on the existence of the Waffle. At a meeting between Sefton, Williams and Lewis, Sefton “made it clear where the Steelworkers stood and that there would be no change in that position.”\textsuperscript{60} Williams maintained that the Waffle’s presence in the NDP “would jeopardize the union support the party enjoyed… And I’m certain that I would have

\textsuperscript{56} Lewis quotation in Morley, \textit{Secular Socialists}, 216.
\textsuperscript{57} Ibid., 217.
\textsuperscript{58} Morley, \textit{Secular Socialists}, 217. Stephen Lewis described the situation: “I can remember an absolutely impossible meeting with Larry and Lynn one afternoon, with Larry, who I knew was dying of cancer, saying ‘you have no right to come to me as leader of the party and ask me to jettison everything that is important about the party and about my life.’”
\textsuperscript{59} Williams quotation in Smith, \textit{Unfinished Journey}, 440.
\textsuperscript{60} Lynn Williams, \textit{One Day Longer: A Memoir} (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2011), 129.
argued that the trade union membership represented much more of a cut of what Ontario citizens thought than did a meeting of the council of the party.”61 Moreover, as Bob Mackenzie, another Steelworker official deeply involved with the NDP explained in a letter to David Lewis, his support for the NDP was conditional on the Waffle’s departure. Mackenzie warned Lewis “it is not a time for Neville Chamberlain tactics,” and predicted “that the so-called middle of the Party would not last, or be effective, three months if the Waffle were in control and that the Unions certainly would not stay under this kind of situation.” Mackenzie reminded Lewis that “you and the Party still need many of us who have become labelled the sell-outs and lunatic right wing fringe. David, that support is no longer automatic.” Mackenzie warned that a forced compromise with the Waffle would lead union leaders to conclude “some of us don’t belong and we have to find another political way.”62 Not long before, David Lewis had chided the Waffle over the inconsistency between its rhetoric and its actions represented by its failure to organize workers. Ironically, the Waffle’s modicum of success in attracting support from workers in international unions had now generated a backlash that threatened to whip the group out of the NDP.

Moderates among the party leadership, including John Harney, Walter Pitman and Ed Broadbent, desperately sought a solution to the impasse. Broadbent developed an alternative which they believed would accomplish the goal of ridding the Ontario NDP of the Waffle challenge while still affirming the right of dissenting caucuses to exist within the party.63 John Brewin explained that “a form of compromise was accepted which was

61 Williams quotation in Smith, Unfinished Journey, 440.
62 Bob Mackenzie to David Lewis, Cliff Scotton, Larry Sefton, June 7, 1972, File 446-4, Waffle-NDP fonds, LAC.
63 Morley, Secular Socialists, 218; Morton, The New Democrats, 134.
no compromise at all... There was a change in wording which meant that my father and a whole bunch of people who fell in the centre could say that they accepted it. And yet the trade union caucus at the council could be persuaded that the compromise didn’t water down the fundamental recommendation at all.”

The Riverdale riding association passed Broadbent’s resolution three days before the Provincial Council meeting:

(1) The present structure and behavior of the Waffle cannot continue; (2) It is contrary to the spirit and meaning of the constitution of the ONDP for any group within the party to assume a public identity with a name distinct from that of the party. The Waffle is such a group and has such a name; (3) Groups of members within the party are, of course, free as they have always been, to co-operate and caucus so long as their role remains non-public and consistent with the principles of the NDP.

Despite the forceful language of points one and two, Stephen Lewis had to work hard to persuade Lynn Williams and the USWA leaders that the Riverdale resolution could actually force the Waffle’s ouster from the Ontario NDP. The Provincial Executive obliged by placing the Riverdale resolution first in the order of debate, ahead of compromise resolutions from the Peterborough, Beaches-Woodbine and Carleton-East riding associations. An increased number of Steelworker delegates was responsible for a union delegation larger than usually attended Provincial Council. Lewis described meeting with union delegates the night before the vote:

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64 Brewin quotation in Smith, *Unfinished Journey*, 441.
65 Riverdale resolution, Minutes of the Provincial Council, June 24-25, 1972, Series 13 Executive and Council Minutes, File 4 Executive and Council Minutes 1970-72, New Democratic Party Ontario fonds, QUA.
67 The delegates to the June Provincial Council consisted of Executive – 26, Riding – 152, Youth – 8, Caucus – 2, Area Council – 7, Union – 113. Of the union delegates, 50 were from the USWA and 20 from the UAW. The number of union delegates had jumped considerably at the previous Provincial Council in March at Oshawa in anticipation of a showdown with the Waffle over the Hamilton-Mountain resolution, but their numbers swelled further at Orillia. The delegates to the March Provincial Council consisted of Executive – 26, Riding – 124, Youth – 8, Caucus – 2, Area Council – 4, Union – 94. Of the union delegates, 38 were from the USWA and 24 from the UAW. This represented a considerable increase from the number of union delegates who attended the Provincial Councils held in December 1971 (23 union
The night before the council meeting, at the beer-drinking hall where the dance was after the executive meeting, the trade union delegates were brought into the backroom in groups of between fifteen and twenty. Pilkey was there, Lynn was there, Bob McKenzie was there. They would talk to the delegates to explain the change in the report and why it was acceptable to them… I was at the hall from 9:00 PM until 3:00 in the morning. 68

The Waffle and party moderates alike made desperate appeals to New Democrats ahead of the expected showdown in Orillia. Walter Pitman and John Harney wrote an open letter to members on the eve of Provincial Council urging them to reach common ground and proposing a resolution which would allow the delegates to choose between two compromise proposals – one outlined rules of behaviour for internal party caucuses, and the other created an associate membership status – rather than removing the Waffle. 69

Mel Watkins also wrote to delegates prior to the meeting to explain the Waffle’s willingness to compromise by securing approval from party bodies such as riding associations or the OYND before undertaking any public activities and refraining from holding press conferences to promote policies that contradicted the NDP. Watkins addressed tensions between union leaders and the Waffle, expressed regret at the Waffle’s contributions over the “present impasse,” and clarified that the group’s support for Canadian autonomy in the labour movement “did not intend to split or damage any existing labour organizations that have the support of their members.” 70

Five resolutions dealing with the Waffle were presented simultaneously at the Provincial Council, but the executive’s decision to hear first the Riverdale resolution ensured that it shaped the debate. Confusion ensued when speakers supporting the

delegates) and February 1971 (21 union delegates); in comparison there were 97 delegates from riding associations at the December 1971 Council. See Minutes of the Provincial Council, February 20-21, 1971, December 4-5, 1971, March 18-19, 1971, and June 24-25, 1972, Series 13 Executive and Council Minutes, File 4 Executive and Council Minutes 1970-72, New Democratic Party Ontario fonds, QUA.

68 Stephen Lewis quotation in Morley, Secular Socialists, 218.

69 Walter Pitman and John Harney to New Democrats, June 21, 1972, File 446-4, Waffle-NDP fonds, LAC.

70 Mel Watkins to Provincial Council Delegates, June 19, 1972, File 446-4, Waffle-NDP fonds, LAC.
Riverdale resolution, including Gordon Vichert, MPP Michael Cassidy, and MP Andrew Brewin, described it as a compromise while Bob Mackenzie, a Steelworker official, explicitly attacking the Waffle as “a cancer,” interpreted the Riverdale resolution as the means to remove the group, and said “it will give us the tools to do the job.” Pauline Jewett, a former Liberal and star NDP candidate federally who opposed the resolution, argued that even compromise proposals endorsed by the Waffle were too conservative and would damage the party’s claim that it protected internal democracy. The implications of the Riverdale resolution soon became clear. Watkins pleaded with the party to “draw back from the brink,” while Gerald Caplan mounted an “almost frenzied” attack on the Waffle. Stephen Lewis’s speech proved to be the final nail in the Waffle’s coffin. Described by Waffle sympathizer Michael Cross as “a masterful performance, an affirmation of his socialist credentials, a persuasive argument, a threat of resignation, all wrapped up in a rhetorical tour du force,” Lewis attacked the Waffle for existing in clear violation of the party’s constitution. He declared “I, too am a socialist who wishes to fight for a free Canada, but without the Waffle forever an encumbrance around my neck.” The question was called and the Riverdale resolution passed by a vote of 217 to 88. In his report the following day, Lewis described his personal feelings of “immense relief” at the weekend’s events, urged the Ontario NDP to focus on preparing for the

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71 “Proposals for limiting radical faction were too conservative, ex-Liberal says,” Globe and Mail, June 26, 1972.
72 Ibid.
74 Ibid.
76 Minutes of the Provincial Council, June 24-25, 1972, Executive and Council Minutes series: Box 5, File 3 (Executive and Council Minutes 1968-70), New Democratic Party Ontario – 5064, QUA.
upcoming federal election, and expressed his hope that Waffle supporters whose primary allegiance was to the NDP would remain in the party.\footnote{Report of Provincial Leader, Minutes of the Provincial Council, June 24-25, 1972, Series 13 Executive and Council Minutes, File 4 Executive and Council Minutes 1970-72, New Democratic Party Ontario fonds, QUA.}

The determination of David and Stephen Lewis’s opposition to the Waffle warrants added comment. Their role in opposing the Waffle earned them a special enmity from some leftists, as Mel Watkins description of “how to identify a Waffler” in Maclean’s attests: “You walk right up to him and whisper, ‘Stephen Lewis.’ If his eyes go all slitty, he’s Waffle.”\footnote{Maclean’s April 1971, 22.} Two factors in particular likely account for the Lewises’s determination to oppose the Waffle.

A history of conflict with Communists loomed large in the Lewis family, and in the polarized political atmosphere of the Cold War the Waffle likely appeared like a defeated enemy arisen from the ashes. Cameron Smith emphasizes this aspect in his biography of the Lewis family. One of the three quotations Smith uses to open his biography of the Lewis family is from Doris Andras, David’s sister: “we fought communists all the time.” Smith emphasizes the importance of David’s father Maishe’s involvement in the Jewish Labour Bund in the early 20\textsuperscript{th} century and he passionately described during his farewell speech to the 1975 NDP convention the experience of his father being arrested and threatened with execution by the Bolsheviks in 1919 during the Polish-Soviet War “for no other reason” than being a Menshevik.\footnote{David Lewis, Speech to NDP Convention, 1975, http://www.cbc.ca/archives/entry/david-lewis-says-farewell-at-the-1975-ndp-convention Smith explains that Lewis was “virulently opposed to the Moscow line of communism – after all, these were the people who almost killed his father, who instituted the Red Terror,” Unfinished Journey, 236.} Furthermore, communists in unions were, in David Lewis’s view, one of the major obstacles to union affiliation with the CCF, and he worked tirelessly to rid the labour movement of their
Their defeat and ostracization was a key factor in the establishment of the CLC in 1956 and the NDP in 1961. Clifford Scotton explained “I think David saw the Waffle as another manifestation of the Trots, the Commies, or whatever, so he would go back to the old battle. David felt that you were either with us or against us.”

The presence of “red diaper babies” such as James Laxer and Steve Penner alongside ex-Communists such as Bill Walsh and Al Campbell and Trotskyists likely sounded alarm bells for David Lewis. The Lewises’s biographer argues “what the Waffle did was touch a nerve still raw with memories of thirty years of bruising struggle.”

David Lewis recalled that the Waffle reminded him of the struggle with the Socialist Fellowship in the BC CCF in 1950 and claimed “the consequences were not new or surprising, but they were none the less painful.” He also suggested that Stephen, unaccustomed to “the poisonous antagonisms of internal strife on an organized scale,” was “outraged by the fratricidal animosities which deformed relationships and crippled the will to constructive thought and work during the Waffle period.”

In addition to the Lewises’s concern that the Waffle was a recurrence of past internal struggles, it is clear that both David and Stephen Lewis also faced considerable pressure from labour leaders to rid the party of the Waffle. David Lewis’s determination to secure union affiliations to the CCF and the joint CLC-CCF effort to create the NDP drew on his knowledge of the British Labour Party. He viewed the labour connection as

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80 David Lewis describes himself as “in the forefront against communist disruption,” in The Good Fight, 298. Smith writes “in all the battles against Communists David was centrally involved” and describes his pivotal role in the twenty-year-long struggle between the pro-CCF USWA and the communist Mine-Mill in Sudbury. Smith, Unfinished Journey, 306-26. See also Horowitz, Canadian Labour in Politics, 85-131.

81 John Brewin concurred, saying “David and my father and others tended to see the Waffle as the old-style type of Communist assault on the party… it was yet another impulse of the left that needed to be put down.” Scotton and Brewin quotations from Smith, Unfinished Journey, 426.

82 Smith, Unfinished Journey, 427.

83 Lewis, The Good Fight, 387.
essential to the NDP’s future prospects. Stephen realized the importance of union leaders and delegates to the party’s internal power structure prior to his successful leadership run in 1971 when labour support proved crucial to his victory. It is unlikely that either could have imagined a NDP without its union allies.

Despite initial press reports that it was acting in defiance of the Provincial Council, the Ontario Waffle planned a conference in Delaware, near London, in August of 1972 to determine its options. But first, at a two-day meeting during July in Gravenhurst a group of key Wafflers delivered papers and developed proposals for the formation of a Waffle movement separate from the NDP. Among those in attendance were Watkins, Laxer, Maeots, and John and Pat Smart, all original authors of the Waffle Manifesto. They were joined by long-time Waffle activists Ellie Prepas, Bruce Kidd, Paul Craven, Dave Neumann, Linda Hay, and Julia Bass. The outcome of the Gravenhurst gathering was a proposal to split the Waffle from the NDP and form a Movement for an Independent and Socialist Canada (MISC).

Two of the Waffle’s constituent groups – the Red Circle and the League for Socialist Action (LSA) – promptly objected to the MISC proposal. The Red Circle was the name given to a group of Wafflers that included Steve Penner and Jackie Larkin who were greatly influenced by developments in the international Trotskyist movement and had become increasingly critical of Laxer’s and Watkins’s leadership. Penner, Larkin, Varda Burstyn and Joe Flexer insisted the Ontario Waffle remain within the NDP and abide by the party’s requirements that policy differences not be aired in public, while at

85 Towards a Movement for an Independent Socialist Canada: Two-Day Meeting, July 29-30, Gravenhurst, Ontario, 1972, Box 2, File 11, New Democratic Party Waffle collection, MUA.
the same time continuing its efforts to shift the party towards more socialist positions. The LSA viewed MISC as potentially counterproductive since the existing polarization in the NDP over the Waffle “gives our movement greater possibilities to intervene than ever before.” LSA supporters predicted MISC would become a “dwindling pressure group composed of bickering academics and professionals, without real roots in either the economic or political movements of the workers.” They encouraged the Waffle to imitate the LSA by becoming actively involved in the campaign for legalized, accessible abortion and the anti-war movement.

In the lead-up to the Delaware conference, Waffle members circulated a number of proposals, two of which represented irreconcilable positions that ultimately polarized the two-day conference. Advocates of splitting from the NDP and creating a Movement for an Independent and Socialist Canada, dubbed ‘Option Three,’ included Laxer, Maeots, Watkins, Kelly Crichton, the Smarts, Dave Neumann, George Gilks, Esther Mathews, Corileen North and Ellie Prepas. They deemed it no longer viable to remain part of the NDP since despite the Waffle’s best efforts the ONDP “decisively rejected the right of a left caucus to exist inside the party” as well as “the politics of independence and socialism.” Continuing to organize within the NDP would only lead to mass

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86 Joe Flexer, Harold Lavender, Varda Burstyn (Kidd), Donna Coombs, Mike Orenstein, Brett Smiley, “A Fighting Strategy for the Waffle,” n.d. [1972], Box 1, File 7, New Democratic Party Waffle collection, MUA.
87 Gary Porter to LSA branch organizers, NDP coordinators and members at large, July 12, 1972, File 32-1 Ross Dowson fonds, LAC.
expulsions. Tellingly, the MISC paper identified “three streams of thought within the Waffle.” The first stream, with which the authors identified, were those committed to independence and socialism who saw the NDP as a base for the struggle. The second stream comprised committed New Democrats who understood the Waffle as a “ginger group” on the party’s left wing. The third stream, which the authors considered a small minority, consisted of various “left tendencies,” such as Trotskyists, committed to exposing the “bankruptcy of social democracy” or believing themselves a “vanguard” within the Waffle. With the NDP no longer a viable base in the struggle for independence and socialism, the question looming over the paper was whether a majority of Wafflers would identify with the first “stream of thought” and choose to break from the party or if the group consisted primarily of left-wing but committed New Democrats and Trotskyists.

Despite accusations to the contrary, the Waffle was not a Trotskyist group. Nevertheless its intention of shifting the NDP to the left was attractive to Trotskyists schooled in the tactic of entryism and the group certainly counted Trotskyists among its supporters from the early stages. The tactic of entryism, embraced by the LSA/YS, entailed Trotskyist activists entering social democratic parties and social movements with the aim of winning new adherents to revolutionary socialism. As discussed in Chapter Two, Trotskyist activists made important contributions to New Left protest movements in

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89 “The Movement Option: Towards the Building of Canadian Independence and Socialism,” File 32-3, Ross Dowson fonds, LAC.
90 Ibid.
91 Bryan Palmer explained the strategy: “In order to expand the possibilities of activism by like-minded revolutionaries, as well as win recruits from other organizations, Trotskyist groups could enter into bodies, such as the French Socialist Party, work within them and, as the inevitable sharpening of political differences took place, consolidate those adhering to a revolutionary program within a revitalized Trotskyist organization.” In Bryan Palmer, “A Tate Gallery for the New Left: Portraits, Landscapes, and Abstracts in the Revolutionary Activism of the 1950s and 1960s,” Labour/Le Travail 75 (Spring 2015), 236.
the 1960s, including the anti-Vietnam War movement. The LSA’s efforts in the NDP had been less successful. Thirty young Trotskyists were expelled from the NDP in 1963, virtually wiping out the YS contingent in the NDY and forcing members to avoid identifying with the LSA. A 1965 article in the *New Democrat* titled “Canada’s Screwball left” denounced the LSA/YS and Trotskyism as “parasites on the body of other political parties.” Another dozen YS members were expelled from the NDP in 1967 and the persistent expulsions led LSA leader Ross Dowson to exercise and advise caution in LSA/YS interactions with the Waffle.

Trotskyists were active in the Waffle almost from its inception. Regula Modlich, for instance, attended the group’s fourth meeting in Kingston on July 26, 1969 and the *Workers Vanguard* inadvertently published the Waffle Manifesto prior to its intended public release. As discussed in previous chapters, the New Brunswick Waffle was almost entirely the construction of the Trotskyist Fredericton YS. Furthermore, several Wafflers adopted a Trotskyist analysis as a result of their activism in the NDP. John Warnock complained to John Richards: “It is too bad that Thompson, Brown, Kopperud and Kouri joined this LSA with all that fanfare… They have nothing to gain from LSA; they will be the best people in it.”

The LSA central office instructed members how to approach the Waffle’s internal debates. Prior to the Ontario Waffle’s Delaware conference LSA secretary Gary Porter informed “branch organizers, NDP coordinators and members at large” that they should oppose the proposal to split and form the MISC. Porter explained “the situation presents

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94 See, for example, Webber “For a Socialist New Brunswick,” M.A. Thesis, 74-5, 121-2.
95 Letter from John Warnock to John Richards, September 28, 1970, File II.3 Correspondence 1968-1971, John Richards Papers, SAB (Saskatoon).
us with a unique opportunity to move in, rally the force in the Waffle and the party as a whole that want to carry the fight and lay the ground work for another left formation or ‘socialist caucus’ broader than the socialist caucus” that existed from 1965-67.\footnote{Gary Porter, “Re: Developments in the NDP and Waffle,” July 12, 1972, File 32-1, Ross Dowson fonds, LAC.}

However, the LSA never achieved much influence within the Waffle. In 1972 LSA political committee member Dick Fidler complained that “everywhere we are excluded from Waffle executives and campaign committees.”\footnote{Dick Fidler, Letter from Central Office LSA/LSO, 1972, File 31-17, Ross Dowson fonds, LAC.} James Laxer remembers the Trotskyists as “quite a small minority” in the Waffle. He explained “there might have been meetings where they were 20 or 25 percent. But we always knew who they were and they never had their way in anything… one thing I would not agree with is ever using the Trots as a way to talk about what the Waffle really stood for.”\footnote{Laxer quotation in Smith, \textit{Unfinished Journey}, 429.}

In fact, the Waffle leadership’s hostility to the Trotskyists helps explain the Waffle’s reluctance to participate in coalitions with social movements in which the LSA played a leading role.\footnote{Gary Kinsman explained “the LSA and YSA majority had a position that if you organize people on a single issue, even at a level of lowest common denominator, as long as you have people involved in mass actions somehow it will radicalize them. I was no longer convinced that this really worked.” In Deborah Brock, “‘Workers of the World Caress’: An Interview with Gary Kinsman on Gay and Lesbian Organizing in the 1970s Toronto Left,” \textit{Left History}, accessed October 10, 2017, www.yorku.ca/lefthist/online/brock_kinsman.html}

As Fidler explained, “the elements who constitute the Waffle leadership and determine its policies are hostile to the mass campaigns we project… they have explicitly rejected proposals to work in or support the anti-war coalitions and the organized movement for abortion law repeal.”\footnote{Dick Fidler, Letter from Central Office LSA/LSO, 1972, File 31-17, Ross Dowson fonds, LAC.}

However, the Trotskyist influence on the Waffle was not limited to the LSA. The appeal of an ideology providing a revolutionary Marxist framework that nevertheless
engaged with mainstream social democratic political parties and unions and simultaneously connected New Left activists to an international socialist movement with a credible anti-Stalinist history proved strong. Other Wafflers, such as Steve Penner and Jackie Larkin, adopted a Trotskyist analysis which led them to advocate a “stay and fight” position in the summer of 1972 and form the Revolutionary Marxist Group in 1973. And, as we shall see, a York-based study group that took over the remnants of the Ontario Waffle in December 1974 was strongly influenced by the Trotskyist analysis of the International Socialists.

As the internal debate over the Waffle’s response to the NDP ultimatum crystallized around the MISC plan, the Red Circlers, including Penner and Larkin, championed a “stay and fight” proposal known as ‘Option Five.’ They criticized attempts by the Ontario Waffle to appeal to party centrists, such as during the debates preceding the ONDP Provincial Council in Orillia, a strategy that “retreated politically and diluted our position.” They were convinced the Ontario Waffle continued to garner support from rank-and-file New Democrats and urged the group to persist until at least the next provincial convention. Furthermore, they argued that MISC as envisioned would result in the group’s separation from workers in “ politicized union locals” who remained affiliated with the NDP.  

At Delaware, after the morning was spent debating procedural questions the discussion revolved around Options Five and Three. Speaking on behalf of Option

101 Joe Flexer, Varda Burstyn (Kidd), Jackie Larkin, Harold Lavender, Susan Kent, Donna McCombs, Mike Ornstein, Steve Penner, and Bret Smiley, “The Argument for Option Five,” Box 1, File 4, New Democratic Party Waffle collection, MUA.

102 London Conference Minutes, August 19 and 20, 1972, Box 1, File 4, New Democratic Party Waffle collection, MUA. The main procedural disagreement revolved around who should be allowed to participate and vote in the conference – elected delegates, or all members of the Waffle. Supporters of Option Three, who had elected pro-MISC delegates prior to the conference, successfully opposed proposals
Five, Varda Burstyn maintained that “our defeat at Orillia was only a tactical defeat… we reject the proposal to withdraw from the struggle.”

Supporters of Option Three disagreed, insisting they were not withdrawing from the struggle but merely facing reality: the ONDP’s decision at Orillia essentially prevented the Waffle from organizing effectively within the NDP. Laxer and Watkins, while personally committed to forming a new movement, emphasized that MISC supporters would not need to give up their NDP memberships and a future reconciliation might still be possible if the NDP turned leftward. Furthermore, they explained MISC would not be a political party, although left open the possibility it might become one in the future.

After an afternoon of acrimonious debate, the delegates voted 89 to 49 in favour of the Waffle leaving the NDP to form MISC. The minority committed to the “stay and fight” option issued a statement to the press indicating they would remain as a ‘Left Caucus’ within the NDP and strive to have this role validated at the NDP Convention in December. On the second day of the conference Option Three supporters reconstituted themselves as the Ontario Waffle Movement for an Independent Socialist Canada and passed a motion denying membership to delegates who had not voted with the majority and chose instead to remain as a ‘Left Caucus’ in the NDP. Four Wafflers, all supporters of Option Three,

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103 London Conference Minutes, August 19 and 20, 1972, Box 1, File 4, New Democratic Party Waffle collection, MUA.
104 Jonathan Manthorpe “Waffle withdraws from Ontario NDP, militants remain to try to oust Lewis,” Globe and Mail, August 21, 1972.
105 London Conference Minutes, August 19 and 20, 1972, Box 1, File 4, New Democratic Party Waffle collection, MUA. The final vote was 89 to 49 in favour of Option Three.
106 Press Release – Left Caucus Formed in NDP, 1972, Box 1, File 4, New Democratic Party Waffle collection, MUA.
had previously been nominated as NDP candidates in the upcoming federal election.\textsuperscript{107} All four, including Laxer and Watkins, resigned their candidacies after the conference.\textsuperscript{108} Following a ten-minute adjournment, the conference reconvened as the Organizing Committee of MISC. Much of the ensuing discussion revolved around criteria for membership in the new movement. Wafflers, wary of a possible takeover by other left groups such as the Canadian Liberation Movement, the Communist Party, the Canadian Party of Labour, and the League for Socialist Action, passed a motion stating

\begin{quote}
The Movement for an Independent Socialist Canada shall invite residents of Ontario who share its aims and purposes to join it. Its membership shall not be open to members of other left groups who operate closed or unacknowledged caucuses in its midst.\textsuperscript{109}
\end{quote}

MISC’s structure closely resembled that of the Waffle prior to the split. Local groups were established with a minimum of six members, the largest being three Toronto groups and one in Ottawa.\textsuperscript{110} Prior to adjournment at Delaware, plans were made to hold a founding convention in Sudbury within three months, and an Ad Hoc Secretariat appointed until a regionally representative ProTem Committee could be established to organize the convention.\textsuperscript{111} The new movement was born.

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\item The four Waffle-NDP candidates were Jim Laxer, Mel Watkins, George Gilks and Ellie Prepas.
\item London Conference Minutes, August 19 and 20, 1972, Box 1, File 4, New Democratic Party Waffle collection, MUA.
\item Minutes of the Organizing Committee of the Movement for an Independent Socialist Canada, August 1972, Box 1, File 4, New Democratic Party Waffle collection, MUA. In the future, the Waffle would impose more stringent membership criteria, in which local groups were given the power to accept or deny prospective members. John Bullen notes “the extreme irony” in the Waffle’s decision to ban internal caucuses in Bullen, “The Ontario Waffle,” M.A. Thesis, 152.
\item The three Toronto groups were East Metro, North Metro and West Metro. Laxer and Maeots were members of the East Metro group, Watkins and Crichton were members of the North Metro group, while the Smarts and the Mathews were members of the Ottawa group. The executive and council were elected on the basis of regional representation proportionate to the number of members in each local group.
\item The Ad Hoc Secretariat consisted of four Toronto Wafflers – Hilary Armstrong, Maggi Boyce, Richard Comber and Dan Heap. Minutes of the Organizing Committee of the Movement for an Independent Socialist Canada, August 1972, Box 1, File 4, New Democratic Party Waffle collection, MUA; The ProTem Committee included Dave and Elfreda Neumann (Brantford), Paul Middleton (Hamilton), Jim Gaskell and Rosemary Warskett (Kingston), Mary Campbell and John Crook (London), John Smart and
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Whereas in Ontario the NDP sought to rid itself of the Waffle and in
Saskatchewan the Waffle sought to rid itself of the NDP, in British Columbia Wafflers
had largely been absorbed into the party mainstream. The west coast New Democrats
were also regularly targeted with accusations of radical socialism by their well-
entrenched political opponents. W.A.C. Bennett had been the Social Credit premier of
British Columbia for nearly twenty years when, in August 1972, he continued his
tradition of calling a summertime election every three years and sent British Columbians
to the polls. This time, however, the seventy-two-year-old Bennett faced a serious
challenge from a trio of younger party leaders – forty-one-year-old New Democrat Dave
Barrett, thirty-five-year-old Liberal David Anderson, and thirty-two-year-old Progressive
Conservative Derril Warren. Warren in particular attracted a large measure of media
attention which his party used to portray him as leader of the free enterprise party in
British Columbia and natural successor to Bennett. Intra-party division and its
lackluster campaign further hindered Social Credit’s hitherto tried-and-true two-part re-
election strategy of championing provincial economic growth while warning voters of the
dangers of socialism.

Esther Mathews (Ottawa), Sam Sharpe (Sarnia), Steve Wojcik (St. Catherines), Steve Flott and Hilary
Armstrong (North Metro), Mel Watkins and Margaret Rolfe (West Metro), Jim Laxer and Joey Noble (East
Metro). Protem Committee, Ontario Waffle Movement for an Independent Socialist Canada, File 446-29,
Waffle-NDP fonds, LAC.

112 Bennett’s boast that a lifetime of teetotalling, non-smoking clean living meant that twenty-five years
could be subtracted from his age did not help alter his image of being old and out of touch.

113 Della Roussin, “Political Legitimacy and Regime Change: The 1972 British Columbia Election,” M.A.
replicate Peter Lougheed and the Alberta PCs’ success in overthrowing a long-standing Social Credit
government the previous year.
The labour strife that dominated British Columbia during the spring and summer of 1972 also complicated the political scene. Municipal workers across the Lower Mainland struck for seven weeks between April and June, while fallers in the logging industry continued striking over the summer even after the rest of the IWA’s 28,000 woodworkers had ended their two-week walkout. Also that summer, building-trades unions defied back-to-work legislation during a three-month-long strike that resulted in the prosecution of union leaders and a strike by longshoremen in August that halted shipping across the province. Unions, enraged by some of the most restrictive labour legislation in the country, were committed to defeating Bennett’s government. The BC Teachers’ Federation (BCTF) formed a Political Action Committee to coordinate teachers’ efforts to topple Social Credit after the government introduced legislation limiting salary and budget increases in the education sector. The British Columbia Government Employees Union (BCGEU), CUPE BC, and even the traditionally conservative Teamsters likewise campaigned to end Bennett’s long run in power.

With the free enterprise parties divided and organized labour decidedly militant, the NDP campaign focused on the folksy, populist appeal of its leader Dave Barrett. The NDP platform, “A New Deal for People,” recycled the title from the Saskatchewan NDP’s 1971 campaign, and included planks highlighted in successful elections there and in Manitoba, including public auto insurance, environmental protections, and higher education spending.

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114 According to one study “for the four months leading up to the election, labour stories either led or were part of the first segment of CBC’s evening news more than fifty per cent of the time.” Ibid., 41.
115 Ibid., 21-24.
116 Ibid., 24-30.
117 Ibid., 17-19.
royalties for resource extraction industries. A BC NDP advertisement linked its criticism of rising unemployment to foreign ownership, explaining “raw materials from primary resources leave our province creating thousands of jobs in foreign countries. Many of those secondary industries could be developed right here in British Columbia.”

The NDP campaign focused on opposing Social Credit and avoided emphasizing the possibility that social democrats might form the government. Barrett’s personality helped to assuage concerns surrounding his party’s supposed inherent radicalism. He recalled how during his first campaign, operating on a shoestring budget, “nobody saw me as a threat. I was just a social worker, a little overweight, maybe, but quite jolly. A funny little guy.” Certainly Barrett’s humour helped in deflecting Bennett’s attacks. When the premier suggested that Marxists lurked in the NDP, Barrett joked “which one: Groucho, Harpo or Zeppo?” And when Bennett brought up Barrett’s support for the Waffle Manifesto, Barrett responded to a TV reporter:

When he talks about waffles, I talk about pancakes. When the premier said I was a waffle, I said he was a pancake. He said I was a double waffle. I said he was a stack of pancakes. Now he says there are waffles in our caucus. I say there are pancakes in his group. It’s sheer nonsense. The premier wants to avoid the issues. However, if he keeps this up, knowing how he feels about Quebec, I’m going to call him a crêpe Suzette.

Nearing the end of the campaign Bennett claimed “the socialist hordes are at the gates of British Columbia,” and warned voters of the dangers in electing the NDP. But the premier’s desperate fear-mongering was too little too late. On August 30, 1972, the “socialist hordes” rode to victory taking thirty-eight of the Legislature’s fifty-five seats with thirty-nine per cent of the popular vote.

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120 “NDP Advertisement”, Vancouver Sun, August 25, 1972, 10.
121 Barrett and Miller, A Passionate Political Life, 57.
122 Barrett quotations in Meggs and Mickleburgh, The Art of the Impossible, 45.
123 Les Odum, “Socialist hordes’ are here, says Bennett,” Vancouver Sun, August 22, 1972.
The British Columbia Waffle’s absorption into the NDP began when Barrett and his caucus and party supporters signed the Waffle Manifesto in the summer of 1969 in part to signify their opposition to Tom Berger’s leadership of the BC NDP. Barrett subsequently admitted to signing the Manifesto as a means of stimulating debate within the party, and Wafflers recalled his initial indecisiveness over the matter at the 1969 federal NDP convention. MLA Eileen Dailly recalled that the Manifesto “seemed harmless to me” when she signed it in 1969. Left-wingers had maintained a substantial and influential minority position in the BC CCF/NDP, and several served lengthy terms in elected office. Even party moderates such as Grace MacInnis and Robert Strachan had called for the nationalization of the Canadian steel industry and the BC Telephone Company in the 1960s. Barrett’s triumph over Berger and his labour supporters at the 1970 BC NDP convention had coincided with the election of a left-wing slate to every executive position, including Waffle supporters Paddy Neale, Dawn Carrell, and Harold Winrob. Mike Lebowitz, an economist at Simon Fraser University and Waffle supporter, had assisted in developing policies for the party in 1969. And the BC NDP hired Hans

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124 The Saskatchewan Waffle claimed that Barrett stated on several occasions that he voted for James Laxer instead of David Lewis on the last ballot at the 1971 leadership convention. Saskatchewan Waffle Press Release, August 31, 1972, File I.22 Saskatchewan Waffle-NDP, 1972, John Warnock Papers, SAB (Saskatoon).
125 Carol Sigurdson described to Judy Steed, “the Waffle had a meeting room at the convention… and I’ll never forget seeing Ed Broadbent standing in the doorway, with one foot on the inside of the room and one foot on the outside, as if he was wondering ‘Which way am I gonna go?’ Dave Barrett did the same thing.” Fred Gudmundson explained, “What I saw in Barrett and Broadbent was a complete vacuum as far as theory was concerned. They’re guided by humanitarian instincts and the herd instinct.” Steed, Broadbent, 152-153.
Brown, formerly Tommy Douglas’s executive assistant and a Waffle supporter, as the party’s provincial secretary and campaign manager for the 1972 election campaign.  

The BC NDP therefore reacted less defensively to the Waffle challenge than did its Saskatchewan and Ontario counterparts, and Wafflers there demonstrated a willingness to work with moderates in the party. A Waffle caucus decided on the eve of the BC NDP’s 1971 convention not to challenge Barrett for the party leadership despite their reservations about his coolness to both unions and extra-parliamentary action. Harold Steves, an active Waffler and NDP candidate, warned the caucus that allying with the BCFL to challenge Barrett would only allow a more moderate party leader to emerge, arguing “if you think Dave Barrett is right-wing just wait till you see who they put up.” The caucus overwhelmingly defeated the proposal to run a Waffle candidate for leader by a show of hands, and rejected with a chorus of boos a second proposal to ally with the BCFL in a joint slate for executive positions, but still passed a motion censuring Barrett for his “right-wing, anti-labour” positions and his unwillingness to support the unemployed movement. Nevertheless, several Wafflers endorsed by Barrett were elected to positions on the party executive. Wafflers were pleased with policy resolutions passed by the convention, including a recommendation that corporations developing natural resources in the province open their books to demonstrate they were operating in the public interest, as well as place workers’ representatives on decision-making bodies, with nationalization the consequence of non-compliance. The LSA complained that British Columbia was split into three groups but “insofar as the Waffle projects itself in

130 Ibid., 49.
133 Ibid.
the NDP, it is identified with the present right wing leadership of the party led by Barrett.”

Several signatories to the Waffle Manifesto, all Barrett allies, were appointed to cabinet positions, although none had maintained an active connection to the Waffle since 1969. Conversations with BC activists Nowakowski, Steves, and Dave York led Caroline Brown, from the Saskatchewan group, to report that Wafflers in BC were “more entrenched in the party” than in other provinces, but since the left had not consolidated “under one umbrella… the Waffle hasn’t been operating as the Waffle.”

In the immediate aftermath of the 1972 election some Wafflers were excited at the prospect of a new provincial government. John Warnock claimed Barrett agreed with the Waffle that “Canada should cease being just a resource base for the American industrial empire,” and concluded the election results indicated “the people of Canada are ready for a political party clearly committed to Canadian independence.”

Ken Novakowski reported to Caroline Brown that “4-5 of the elected MLAs in BC were Wafflers, and 5-6 more were Waffle sympathizers,” and informed John Richards “there is no doubt that Barrett’s government is miles ahead of Blakeney or Schreyer.”

According to Novakowski, the true test of the Barrett government’s radicalism would be its willingness to nationalize the province’s forestry industry. Yet after just three months of the Barrett administration, BC Wafflers had grown concerned over the direction it was taking, and in

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134 Letter from Central Office LSA/LSO, 1972, File 31-17, Ross Dowson fonds, LAC.
135 Alex Macdonald became Attorney General and Minister of Trade and Commerce, Norm Levi was assigned Minister of Welfare and Social Services, Eileen Dailly appointed Minister of Education, Jim Lorimer became Minister of Municipal Affairs and Gordon Dowding became Speaker.
138 Report from BC, Waffle Steering Committee Meeting Minutes, September 10, 1972, Waffle papers, SAB (Regina); Ken Novakowski to John Richards, November 27, 1972, File III.21 Waffle – British Columbia, 1972-75, John Richards Papers, SAB (Saskatoon).
particular its unwillingness to replace civil servants associated with the previous Social Credit government. NDP MLA Harold Steves, for one, continued to associate publicly with the Waffle while at the same time cooperating with fellow backbenchers and non-Wafflers Rosemary Brown and Colin Gabelmann in opposing several government decisions. Novakowski claimed no Wafflers attended the 1972 BC NDP convention.

Despite the Waffle’s absence, convention delegates passed a resolution proposing a new ministry for women’s equality. But Barrett dismissed the idea, and thereby launched an internal party struggle over his government’s commitment to women’s equality that led in February 1973 to the BC Status of Women Council giving the premier the Male Chauvinist Pig Award as “most sexist politician.” Going forward, Wafflers such as Hilda Thomas and Sharon Yandle focused on the BC NDP’s Women’s Rights Committee (WRC), which published a newsletter, Priorities, and kept pressuring the government to adopt feminist policies. The WRC successfully elected all nine of its candidates to the party’s provincial executive at the 1973 BC NDP convention, and discovered in Rosemary Brown (Vancouver-Burrard) a talented spokesperson on the government’s backbenches. The conflict over the BC NDP’s approach to women’s equality became the fight that was to consume the left and sideline the Waffle in coming years.

The year 1972 proved to be a pivotal year for the Waffle in the NDP. The Waffle’s ouster from the Ontario NDP proved the beginning of the end for the group. Despite the Ontario Waffle leadership’s willingness to compromise and the desire of

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140 Novakowski to Richards, November 27, 1972, File III.21 Waffle – British Columbia, 1972-75, John Richards Papers, SAB (Saskatoon).
some party moderates to avoid a purge, or at least a public bloodletting, union leaders were intractable in their determination to rid the party of its radical and noisy left wing. The debate over how to respond to the Ontario NDP’s decision exposed pre-existing ideological divisions and split the Ontario Waffle at its August 1972 conference. Although a majority followed Waffle leaders Laxer and Watkins out of the NDP and into a new Movement for an Independent and Socialist Canada, a substantial minority determined to “stay and fight” in the party forming a Left Caucus to organize for upcoming party meetings. Meanwhile, in British Columbia the Waffle had largely been absorbed into the party’s mainstream when the NDP won the August 1972 provincial election and formed a government for the first time in that province. Despite the election of a pro-Waffle MLA and a strong left-wing tradition within the BC NDP, the Waffle did not maintain an active presence on the west coast and left-wing criticism of the Barrett government emerged from the women’s movement instead. Wafflers in both Manitoba and Saskatchewan could have warned their radical counterparts in BC to be prepared for disappointment. Frustration in both provinces over their NDP governments’ adoption of moderate reforms in place of comprehensive socialist programs caused the Waffle in Manitoba to dwindle and the group in Saskatchewan to debate whether it would be best to initiate its own departure from the party or wait to be purged.
Chapter Nine

“We are all tottering past the crucial age of thirty and into the senility of middle age:” Leaving the NDP, 1972-73

After the Waffle’s ouster from the Ontario NDP in the summer of 1972 the group spent much of the ensuing year-and-a-half immersed in internal debate. Without the group’s primary purpose of transforming the NDP, Ontario Wafflers focused much of their energy on researching and publicizing the deindustrialization of the province’s manufacturing heartland, a situation they attributed to the high levels of American ownership. In Saskatchewan, despite publishing a highly critical analysis of the NDP’s first year in government, the Waffle remained divided over whether to leave the party and advocated nationalization of the province’s oil and gas industries. The ineffectiveness of those Ontario Wafflers who chose to “stay and fight” within the NDP by forming a Left Caucus could only have served to dishearten the Saskatchewan Wafflers further. They would eventually make the break in October 1973 amidst plans to form their own socialist party the following year. By the end of 1973, in the two provinces in which the Waffle still existed – Ontario and Saskatchewan – Wafflers had broken all ties with the NDP.

During the summer of 1972, following the controversial battle with the Waffle in Ontario but before the BC NDP’s surprise electoral victory, the national NDP’s prospects in the upcoming federal election appeared dim. A party survey conducted earlier in the year revealed that under David Lewis’s leadership there appeared to be little potential for improvement over the NDP’s 1968 election results.¹ In addition, the party was struggling to attract media attention apart from the Waffle, leading Lewis Seale to complain “you couldn’t turn on CBC radio without hearing about the Waffle, which had superb media

Worse still, the Quebec NDP and its president Raymond Laliberté released a platform for the federal election entitled *Il faut prendre le pouvoir partout* that seemed to confirm his party’s separatist sympathies by stating Quebeckers alone had the right to determine their own future in Canada. David Lewis formally repudiated the Quebec NDP platform and persuaded the provincial party to hold a special convention in September at which it accepted the federal party’s alterations and revised the offending passages of the platform.³

Despite these initial difficulties, Lewis hit on a winning theme early in the campaign attacking corporations that had taken advantage of government subsidies, grants, and tax loopholes despite making large profits. With great relish he labeled them “corporate welfare bums.”⁴ The federal NDP research staff uncovered numerous examples of prominent companies enjoying “corporate rip-offs,” enabling Lewis to release new revelations to the press daily.⁵ The “corporate welfare bums” campaign drew significant media attention and re-energized party activists who had become disheartened by the internecine struggles of the previous three years.⁶

The NDP platform called for Canada to recover its economic independence and end American plundering of its natural resources. The party opposed a continental energy deal, but endorsed full employment, public ownership of the oil and gas

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² Seale quotation in Smith, *Unfinished Journey*, 472.
industries, and the establishment of a prices-review board. In addition, the NDP was for
equal pay for equal work, paid maternity leave, expanded daycare, family planning and
birth-control information, a ban on all nuclear testing, and Canada’s withdrawal from
NATO and NORAD. During the final weeks of the campaign, with media interest in the
“corporate welfare bums” exposés dwindling, Lewis turned to other issues, such as the
NDP opposition to the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline proposed for the Northwest Territories
which he tied to the issue of foreign ownership. Lewis told audiences “we in the NDP
have been concerned about our political and economic independence for many years.”
He emphasized the party’s commitment to ending direct grants to foreign corporations
and tax concessions to resource industries and introducing a screening agency to review
and possibly disallow foreign takeovers. The NDP also promised to create a Canadian
Development Corporation to provide “major investment in industries that will create jobs
for Canadians,” and to “slow down resource development and export until the provinces
and federal government have adopted a realistic energy and resources policy… requiring
that the resources be fully processed in Canada.”

The Waffle approached the 1972 federal election campaign with some
ambivalence. Cy Gonick dismissed Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau as a reactionary and
acknowledged that “corporate welfare bums is a good slogan, but it’s a good liberal
slogan.” He claimed the NDP would expunge the Waffle to enable David Lewis to shift
the party rightward into the centrist vacuum abandoned by the governing Liberals.
Ken Novakowski, who ran as the NDP candidate in Burnaby-Richmond-Delta, a riding the

7 Whitehorn, Canadian Socialism, 91.
8 David Lewis speech to nominating convention in Don Valley, October 2, 1972, Series 18 Social Action
NDP held from 1962-1968, was the only self-identified Waffler to stand for election. His campaign was co-chaired by Wafflers drawn from across the country, including Caroline Brown in Saskatchewan, Paul Barber in Manitoba, Tom Pocklington in Alberta, and the recently elected BC MLA Harold Steves. Novakowski’s team solicited funds from Waffle supporters, explaining that because “Ken remains as the only ‘Waffle’ candidate in the country, we feel it is imperative that he be elected to represent a Waffle position in the House of Commons and in the federal caucus.”

His campaign literature focused on protecting the Fraser River from pollution, building public transit, preventing foreign domination of the Canadian economy and halting the rise in food prices. Novakowski lost to PC candidate John Reynolds by 1440 votes despite increasing the NDP’s raw vote and finishing ahead of the Liberal incumbent Tom Goode.

One month after meeting at Delaware, the Ontario Waffle Movement for an Independent and Socialist Canada made plans to stage a counter-campaign during the federal election. Although the Ontario Waffle did not run candidates, it did draw considerable attention via public meetings, rallies in Ottawa and Toronto, and the door-to-door distribution of its counter-campaign literature, to issues it claimed the other political parties were ignoring. It highlighted foreign ownership and the “crucial trade talks” involving the Auto Pact renegotiations that followed the ‘Nixon Shock’; wage and price controls; the peacetime imposition of the War Measures Act during the 1970 October Crisis; the government’s handling of the relationship between English Canada

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10 “Wafflers for Novakowski,” September 12, 1972, Box 2008-017/001, File 9, Paul Barber and Kim Malcolmson fonds, YUA.
11 “Novakowski Campaign Leaflet,” n.d. [1972], Box 2008-017/001, File 6, Paul Barber and Kim Malcolmson fonds, YUA.
and Quebec; and the status of women.\textsuperscript{12} Laxer, Watkins, and Ellie Prepas attended a press conference that turned hostile as reporters questioned the relevance of the Waffle’s “campaign… for no one.”\textsuperscript{13} According to a report from its Kingston group, the Waffle’s election strategy confused voters as well.\textsuperscript{14} The Windsor Waffle supported the NDP locally while simultaneously distributing counter-campaign literature.\textsuperscript{15} Both Laxer and Watkins, despite their criticisms of the party, announced they would vote NDP come election day.\textsuperscript{16} However, the Ontario Waffle made its hostility towards Stephen Lewis clear. At a Waffle rally in Ottawa on the second anniversary of the institution of the War Measures Act, Robin Mathews criticized the lacklustre election campaign saying “Pierre takes his two children, Margaret and Justin, Stanfield takes whichever daughter is available and David Lewis pays Stephen to stay at home.”\textsuperscript{17} Several hundred people attended the rally which ended in a shouting match between Waffle supporters and members of the Canadian Liberation Movement.\textsuperscript{18}

The Saskatchewan Waffle planned its own counter-campaign, including holding local meetings, producing a four-page tabloid emphasizing the need for public ownership and resource development, and holding a press conference.\textsuperscript{19} The Saskatchewan Wafflers distributed the tabloid in Regina, Saskatoon, Moose Jaw, Prince Albert, North

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\textsuperscript{12} Ontario Waffle, Statement on Federal Election, September 1972, Box 1, File 4, New Democratic Party Waffle collection, MUA. The Nixon administration’s desire to renegotiate the Auto Pact to remove Canadian production safeguards was well known.

\textsuperscript{13} Terrance Willis “Wafflers outline how they’ll campaign, but for no one,” \textit{Globe and Mail}, September 22, 1972.

\textsuperscript{14} \textit{Ontario Waffle Bulletin}, November 1972, Box 1, File 4, New Democratic Party Waffle collection, MUA. Local Waffle groups in Hamilton, Brantford, London, Sarnia, Thunder Bay, St. Catharines, Toronto and Ottawa also distributed counter-campaign literature door-to-door.

\textsuperscript{15} \textit{Ontario Waffle Bulletin}, November 1972, Box 1, File 4, New Democratic Party Waffle collection, MUA.


\textsuperscript{17} “Laxer criticizes established parties for not campaigning on the use of War Measures,” \textit{Globe and Mail}, October 16, 1972.


\textsuperscript{19} Waffle Steering Committee Meeting Minutes, September 10, 1972, File II.31 Meetings, c. 1972-1983, Saskatchewan Waffle fonds, SAB (Regina).
Battleford, Swift Current and Estevan, mailed it to rural supporters, and held public meetings in Saskatoon, Regina, Kenosee Lake, North Battleford, and Swift Current. A rally in Moose Jaw days before the election featured speakers Carol Gudmundson and James Laxer. Yet despite the Saskatchewan Waffle’s criticisms of the NDP during the campaign, it continued to “offer voting support” to the party.

Although David Lewis deplored the Waffle’s decision to run an anti-campaign instead of taking a “constructive, positive position,” the election result suggested the NDP was not significantly affected by the Ontario departure of its former left wing. Despite drawing only a small increase in its share of the popular vote, the NDP added nine seats to its 1968 total, electing thirty-one MPs and holding the balance of power in the House of Commons. Trudeau’s Liberals only barely surpassed Stanfield’s Progressive Conservatives, 109 to 107. The NDP added two seats in Toronto, two seats in northern Ontario, and retained the seven seats it had held in Ontario at dissolution. The major gains came in British Columbia, where the NDP won thirty-five percent of the popular vote and eleven of the province’s twenty-three seats, a gain of six including Waffle Manifesto signatory Paddy Neale replacing left-winger Harold Winch in Vancouver East. The results in Saskatchewan were mixed. Although the NDP retained

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22 The NDP won 17.8% of the popular vote in 1972 compared to 17.0% in 1968. The Liberals won 38.4% of the popular vote and 109 seats, the PCs won 35% and 107 seats, and Social Credit won 7.6% of the popular vote and 15 seats.
23 Duffy, *Fights of Our Lives*, 244-245.
24 Terry Grier (Lakeshore), John Harney (Scarborough West), John Rodriguez (Nickel Belt) and Cyril Symes (Sault Ste. Marie) were the new additions from Ontario.
25 Nels Nelson (Burnaby-Seymour), Stuart Leggatt (New Westminster), Mark Rose (Fraser Valley West), Harry Olussen (Coast Chilcotin) and Tom Barnett (Comox-Alberni) were the new additions from British Columbia.
four seats and added Eli Nesdoly in Meadow Lake, three incumbents were defeated. After the election Waffler Lloyd Robertson suggested that John Skoberg (Moose Jaw), a Waffle sympathizer, had suffered from the party’s polarization, alleging “The right-wing brass would not support him for his views. The left wing would not support him for he had not joined the Waffle. He lost.”

In the aftermath of the election, Waffler Lorne Brown’s post-election analysis attributed the NDP’s floundering in Saskatchewan to its lack of a coherent agricultural policy and an unenthusiastic membership divided between Blakeney and the Waffle. Other commentators concurred with Cy Gonick’s earlier assessment that the NDP had moved too far right in an effort to win votes from the middle class. Gonick also contended the NDP had been largely sidelined by the French Canada-versus-English Canada debate, which “overwhelms all other issues.”

The Waffle also criticized Saskatchewan’s NDP government for being insufficiently socialist. Despite the government adopting another Waffle-backed policy – a publicly-owned provincial oil company – the group expressed disappointment over the limited progress made on this and other initiatives, further prompting its break with the party. Approximately one hundred Saskatchewan Wafflers attended a weekend conference at Fort San in October 1972 at which they adopted a new constitution permitting non-New Democrats membership in the Saskatchewan Waffle for the first time.

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26 John Burton (Regina East), John Skoberg (Moose Jaw), Rod Thomson (Battleford-Kindersley) lost their seats in Saskatchewan.
27 Lloyd Robertson to Rob Dumont, October 12, 1973, File III.24 Waffle – Correspondence, John Richards Papers, SAB (Saskatoon).
29 Leo Johnson, “What Shape is Canada In: Thoughts on the Election Results,” Canadian Dimension (January 1973), 7-8.
time, and developed an organizational structure independent of the NDP. The new format included a president and vice-president, which Don Mitchell and Sonja Gehl were elected to fill.\textsuperscript{31} John Richards, Joe Roberts and Rob Dumont comprised a task force on the nationalization of the oil industry, and a second task force was formed to envision agriculture as “part of an integrated over-all socialist development policy” which could not be “co-opted politically and rendered meaningless by social democrats in the manner in which the land bank concept was mutilated by the NDP government.”\textsuperscript{32}

The Saskatchewan Waffle’s primary focus during the fall and winter of 1972/73 was preparing and distributing a critical evaluation of the Blakeney government’s first year in office, titled \textit{The Blakeney Government – One Year After}. The document described the Saskatchewan NDP’s 1971 election platform as the “most radical… the party had put forth since the 1930s,” but questioned whether the government had lived up to its promises.\textsuperscript{33} It criticized the government for ignoring northern development, for subsidizing private industry rather than pursuing public ownership, for continuing to seek foreign investment despite its campaign commitment to reduce foreign ownership of the province’s natural resources, and for relying exclusively on the civil service and a few senior cabinet ministers instead of left-wing party activists. \textit{One Year After} also dismissed the government Land Bank as flawed for including an option-to-purchase clause; far from being “a major experiment with a new land tenure system,” the Land Bank would not prevent rural depopulation and preserve family farms. While the

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\textsuperscript{31} \textit{Waffle Newsletter}, October 1972, File II.35 Newsletters, c. 1971-1979, Saskatchewan Waffle fonds, SAB (Regina).
\textsuperscript{32} \textit{Waffle Newsletter}, October 1972, File II.35 Newsletters, c. 1971-1979, Saskatchewan Waffle fonds, SAB (Regina).
\textsuperscript{33} Saskatchewan Waffle, “The Blakeney Government One Year After,” File II.1 Allan Blakeney 1972, Saskatchewan Waffle fonds, SAB (Regina).
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document urged the Blakeney government to nationalize provincial energy resources through the Saskatchewan Power Corporation and also to nationalize the food processing industry, it concluded that “although the Waffle should continue to work within the NDP on issues of policy, it should spend less energy in direct confrontations with the party establishment for control of party institutions such as provincial council and executive. We cannot win the struggle for a socialist political party until more Saskatchewan people want socialism.” 34 The Waffle neither challenged Blakeney’s leadership nor played an active role at the Saskatchewan NDP convention in November 1972. 35

There was by no means unanimity among the Saskatchewan Waffle over the desirability of splitting from the NDP. Some rural and union Wafflers in particular were “less persuaded of the need or possibility of successfully leaving the NDP.” 36 One expressed concern that “the Regina leadership are working toward a clandestine, elitist organization” that would leave the Waffle “a Trotskyist group without the NDP connection.” 37 The Waffle Steering Committee therefore postponed plans for holding another conference until it had hired an organizer, and discouraged its members from participating at the NDP national convention scheduled for July 1973. Don Mitchell pressed the Steering Committee for action on the grounds that “ambiguity among Waffle supporters about whether to leave the NDP” had to be resolved since the “present course

34 Saskatchewan Waffle, “The Blakeney Government One Year After,” File II.1 Allan Blakeney 1972, Saskatchewan Waffle fonds, SAB (Regina).
37 Lloyd Robertson to Rob Dumont, October 12, 1973, File III.24 Waffle – Correspondence, John Richards Papers, SAB (Saskatoon).
is producing isolation and impotence.”\textsuperscript{38} Mitchell’s message sparked a response. The Saskatchewan Waffle planned a conference for October 1973 in Moose Jaw to decide the issue. In the meantime, Mitchell was to meet privately with sympathetic individuals in the NDP to discuss a possible break from the party.\textsuperscript{39}

The Saskatchewan Waffle continued advocating for a publicly-owned oil company. Although the Blakeney government had already introduced legislation to that effect, the Waffle feared the likelier outcome would be joint-venture partnerships with private companies rather than a fully nationalized provincial oil industry. The Steering Committee instructed MLA John Richards to hold a press conference during debate on the Speech from the Throne to launch the Waffle’s campaign. To further promote its views the Waffle distributed “SaskOil – It Can Be Done!” buttons and bumper stickers, held a series of open meetings at Regina, Saskatoon and Swift Current, visited NDP constituency associations and met with the Regina Labour Council and Saskatoon Environmental Society.\textsuperscript{40} Although Liberal leader Dave Steuart attacked the crown corporation as a ploy by the Blakeney government to appease the Waffle, the Saskatchewan Oil and Gas Corporation established in May 1973 did not come close to fulfilling the Waffle’s demands.\textsuperscript{41} As John Richards later explained, its “actual mandate was to undertake a modest program of exploration.”\textsuperscript{42} As with the Land Bank, what the Waffle perceived as the government’s half-measures in energy nationalization policy further disillusioned its members.

\textsuperscript{38} Waffle Steering Committee Meeting Minutes, March 18, 1973, File II.31 Meetings, c. 1972-1983, Saskatchewan Waffle fonds, SAB (Regina).
\textsuperscript{39} Waffle Steering Committee Meeting Minutes, April 28, 1973, File II.31 Meetings, c. 1972-1983, Saskatchewan Waffle fonds, SAB (Regina).
\textsuperscript{40} SaskOIL Campaign – Summary of Activities, Waffle Steering Committee Meeting Minutes, March 18, 1973, File II.31 Meetings, c. 1972-1983, Saskatchewan Waffle fonds, SAB (Regina).
\textsuperscript{41} Saskatoon Star-Phoenix, April 12, 1973.
\textsuperscript{42} Pratt and Richards, \textit{Prairie Capitalism}, 258.
Over the winter of 1972/73, the Waffle’s remnant in Ontario pursued the different paths chosen at the Delaware conference. Those who had supported “stay and fight” attended the Ontario NDP’s Provincial Council at Toronto in September 1972, but had little impact on the proceedings. Varda Burstyn was defeated in her bid for a seat on the NDP Federal Council, but was elected to the ONDP Provincial Executive. Three months later, just as the Ontario NDP convention was set to begin, Stephen Lewis declared the Waffle “episode is over and done with in the life of the party” and predicted a healthy debate on innovative policy proposals at the meeting. The Left Caucus nevertheless challenged the NDP leadership at the convention, leading a Globe and Mail reporter to describe “long delays due to procedural hassles, challenges to the chair and demands for counted votes.” A Left Caucus amendment to ban parent labour organizations from appointing delegates to NDP conventions or councils in the name of their affiliates caused some confusion, but passed. Lewis moved the decision be reconsidered, telling delegates “I don’t think you realize what you’ve done.” The following day Gordon Vichert as chair retroactively ruled the Left Caucus’s amendment out of order. The Left Caucus also had little success challenging the party establishment’s slate of candidates for the Provincial Executive. Only Steve Penner was elected as member-at-large to the twenty-six-person Executive, a significant drop from

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43 Steve Penner, Varda Burstyn (Kidd), Ralph Cook and Barry Weisleder were all delegates. Ulli Deimer and Harold Lavender, two members of the Old Mole group at the University of Toronto, also attended as delegates. Minutes of Special Provincial Council, September 9, 1972, Series 13 Executive and Council Minutes, File 4 Executive and Council Minutes 1970-72, New Democratic Party of Ontario fonds, QUA
44 Ibid.
46 Vianney Carriere, “Restyled Waffle delays review of policies by NDP convention,” Globe and Mail, December 9, 1972. She reported that the Left Caucus drew about 100 of the 1000 delegates.
the five Wafflers chosen by the ONDP convention two years earlier. The Left Caucus suffered a further blow when the Provincial Council passed a recommendation immediately preceding the convention dissolving the Ontario Young New Democrats, which had always provided a solid base of Waffle support throughout its existence. ONDP Provincial secretary Gordon Brigden described the OYND as “an essentially insignificant force which from time to time had representation in the councils of the party which was far in excess of its numbers.” He accused the OYND of working against the aims of some riding associations and questioned why the party should continue to provide financial support to an organization “which has been of no benefit to the party and which from time to time has proved to be largely a political embarrassment.”

After departing the NDP, the Ontario Waffle’s primary focus was deindustrialization. During November 1972, in preparation for its first major strategy discussions since breaking with the NDP, members heard two alternative visions. First, James Laxer argued the recent election of a Liberal minority government “is ideal from the point of view of the development of the Waffle movement… NDP members of parliament will refrain from voting no-confidence in the government and may back Liberal measures completely inadequate to deal with Canada’s problems.” Laxer identified critical issues confronting Canada – specifically, the renegotiation of the Auto Pact and a continental energy deal – and proposed the Waffle mount “massive campaigns

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48 Ibid. A leadership challenge by taxi driver Douglas Campbell saw the protest candidate, not affiliated with the Left Caucus, attract 124 votes, while another 184 delegates spoiled their ballots. Stephen Lewis easily retained the leadership with the support of 752 of the 1,060 delegates.


in opposition.”51 His plan centered on industry-by-industry research studies which would enable Wafflers to connect with workers, and on an energy policy conference scheduled for spring 1973 in Toronto. Furthermore, “in the next year and a half we should seek to achieve sufficient size to allow us to choose whether to become a political party.”52 John Smart, a key figure in the Ottawa Waffle, shared Laxer’s optimism. While identifying different priorities more reflective of eastern Ontario’s circumstances, he likewise recommended a strategy dependent on research task forces and public meetings. Smart cautioned “[it will be] easy for us to become another mini-left group devoted exclusively to internal discussion and to ever more refined histories and theories of socialism.”53 His warning took two years to come to fruition but was altogether prescient.

The Waffle Council’s adoption of Laxer’s plan for a large-scale resources and deindustrialization campaign was not without controversy. An alternative perspective was offered by activists in the West Metro group who urged taking a strong stance in favour of “workers’ control,” and de-emphasizing large-scale province-wide campaigns in favour of local, grassroots-based campaigns. They maintained:

The predominantly middle class, academic background of Wafflers makes them feel more confident about their ability to plan meetings, conferences and educational events, write speeches, newsletters, press releases, etc., but makes them less confident, even fearful about their ability to establish personal relationships with the working people of Canada.54

51 Ibid.
52 Ibid.
53 John Smart, “A Strategy,” November 1972, Box 1, File 4, New Democratic Party Waffle collection, MUA.
54 Dan Meany, Margaret Rolfe, Roger Rolfe, John Watson, Brian Tomlinson, “The Waffle and Workers’ Control,” Box 1, File 10, New Democratic Party Waffle collection, MUA; Joey Noble, Roger Rolfe, Margaret Rolfe, Graham Lowe, Suzanne Noble, Paul Craven, Gladys Watson, John Watson, Brian Smith, Helen Smith, Fay McLeod, “A Multi-Level Strategy for Building the Waffle Movement,” Box 1, File 4, New Democratic Party Waffle collection, MUA.
The Council meeting passed watered-down versions of the West Metro proposals which had also garnered the support of the Ottawa group. But in the coming months little further action was taken to incorporate themes of workers’ control and locally-based campaigns into the Waffle’s overall strategy. Instead, divisions over developing a strategy for the resources and deindustrialization campaign continued into the new year.

At a campaign committee meeting in February 1973, some members presented a plan “drawn up the night before by a core of leadership people in Toronto,” for a series of rallies and meetings to be held around the province. At a subsequent meeting called by the Ottawa Waffle the differences remained unresolved. Finally, at a Waffle executive meeting in March, the decision was made to adopt the comprehensive approach advocated by Laxer, Watkins, and others among the Toronto-based leadership.

Although attention was paid to eastern Ontario and measures established for local elements within the campaign, the resources and deindustrialization campaign that eventually materialized in November bore a close resemblance to Laxer’s original proposal.

After several months of internal debate but otherwise little activity since its formation, MISC initiated an ambitious twelve-part public lecture series in Toronto in early 1973. Speakers including James Laxer, John Hutcheson, Tom Naylor, Mel Watkins, and Robin Mathews addressed such themes as “The Evolution of Canadian

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55 “Minutes of the Provincial Council Meeting of the Ontario Waffle,” November 25-26, 1972, Box 1, File 4, New Democratic Party Waffle collection, MUA. It should be noted that a commitment to workers’ control had been an element of Waffle policy since the group’s formation.

56 West Metro Waffle “A Letter of Resignation to all Ontario Wafflers,” Box 1, File 6, New Democratic Party Waffle collection, MUA.

57 Ontario Waffle Executive Meeting Minutes, March 24, 1973, Box 1, File 5, New Democratic Party Waffle collection, MUA. Handwritten notes on the back of this document further indicate the extent of the debate, saying “Ottawa is obstructionist and unprincipled… Laxer is only partly democratic… a sane policy is neither Ottawa or Laxer.”
Capitalism,” “Class and Income Distribution in Canada,” and “Canadian Resources and Underdevelopment.” Some of the lectures were based on research projects the Ontario Waffle conducted into the extent of American ownership of Canadian manufacturing and resource industries and the loss of jobs in southwestern Ontario manufacturing centres. The well-attended lectures were later edited by Robert Laxer and published as (Canada), Ltd.: The Political Economy of Dependency. The collection focused on the Ontario Waffle’s thesis of deindustrialization, Canada’s history of economic dependence on foreign investment and resource extraction, and the Canadian manufacturing industry’s reliance on American branch plants. The Ontario Waffle’s interpretation of this history as well as recent events held that deindustrialization in Canada would follow upon strengthened manufacturing in the United States, thereby further reducing Canada to a mere dependent of the United States valued only for its exploitable natural resources, oil in particular. As a result, the Wafflers concluded the Canadian working class employed by American-owned manufacturers and resource extraction industries would be crucial to the development of Canadian independence and socialism – which in practice primarily meant workers represented by the USWA and UAW.

Ottawa Wafflers explained “these

58 The Political Economy of Canada course series Pamphlet, January-April 1973, Box 1, File 5, New Democratic Party Waffle collection, MUA.
60 A heated debate occurred in the letter pages of Canadian Dimension following a generally positive review of (Canada) Ltd. by political science professors Leo Panitch and Reg Whitaker which nevertheless harshly criticized Robin Mathews’s contribution. Panitch and Whitaker claimed that Mathews “is essentially a nationalist and not essentially a socialist,” a claim which brought angry responses from Wafflers who supported Mathews’s emphasis on cultural nationalism. By the time the debate ended in 1975, Mathews explained he had not been a member of the Waffle “for some time now.” See Leo Panitch and Reg Whitaker, “The New Waffle: From Mathews to Marx,” Canadian Dimension, April 1974, 51-56; Gavin McEwen, “Panning Panitch and Whitaker,” Canadian Dimension, June 1974, 57; George Martell; Marya Jiamengo-Hardman; J. Malzan, “More Panning of Panitch and Whitaker,” Canadian Dimension, July 1974, 2, 69-70; Leo Panitch and Reg Whitaker, “They Defend Themselves,” Canadian Dimension, July 1974, 70-72; Jim Harding, “He Defends Himself,” Canadian Dimension, July 1974, 72-73; Cy Gonick, “We Defend Ourselves,” Canadian Dimension, July 1974, 73-74; Pat Smart, “Another left hook
workers in the major industries are concretely experiencing the effects of American imperialism, through increasing plant shutdowns, lay-offs, and lack of new industrial development." In November 1973 the Ontario Waffle embarked on its resources and deindustrialization campaign, holding public meetings in London, Kitchener-Waterloo, Brantford, St. Catherines, and Hamilton where the oil crisis, Canada’s status as a resource base for the United States, and the deindustrialization of southwestern Ontario were discussed. The meetings, usually featuring Laxer and Watkins along with a local Waffler and trade unionist, typically were attended by 100 to 150 people.

By May 1973 when the first national Waffle meeting in over a year opened at Regina, the group was only active in Ontario and Saskatchewan. In both provinces the members continued to wrestle with the question of whether or not to make a final decisive break from the NDP by challenging it electorally. In Manitoba and British Columbia, the popularity of premiers Schreyer and Barrett stifled the Waffle’s ability to mount a challenge from the left. Three Manitoba Wafflers, Paul Barber, Michael Mendelson and Harvey Goldberg, explained that the group in that province “has ceased to exist as an organized entity” although former Wafflers continued their activism “in a variety of special interest groups,” including producing a “socialist newspaper” titled *Prairie Dog Press*. The apparent popularity of the Manitoba NDP’s moderate course in government, and the Waffle’s inability to influence the party’s direction there led many

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61 Marilyn Hindmarch, Pat Smart, Barbara Eady, John Smart, Sharleen Treleaven, David Orenstein, “A Movement Strategy: Towards a Democratic Socialist Party,” Box 1, File 14, New Democratic Party Waffle collection, MUA.


63 Minutes of National Waffle Meeting held at Regina, Saskatchewan, May 5-6, 1973, File III.28 National Waffle, John Richards Papers, SAB (Saskatoon).
Wafflers to lose hope “of ever accomplishing anything in the NDP.” They revealed that Cy Gonick had decided against running for re-election, not least because he “personally can’t stand” participating in a government dominated by one man, Premier Ed Schreyer.

Although no one from British Columbia attended the meeting, Caroline Brown reported on the situation in that province based on her discussions with BC Wafflers Harold Steves, Ken Novakowski and Dave Yorke. She described Wafflers in BC as embedded in the NDP and explained “it is impossible to consolidate the left under one umbrella.” She also conveyed that Dave Barrett “is operating on his own without reference to the party,” and that he was a “clever operator who uses radical socialist rhetoric at constituency meetings but pursues a conservative course in Victoria.” As in Manitoba, BC Wafflers saw little possibility for an organized Waffle presence either inside or outside the NDP. Two Alberta Wafflers reported that their provincial organization had disbanded in August 1972 as a result of the Ontario Waffle’s decision to leave the party, but remained as an informal left wing of the NDP.

The Ontario Waffle’s report, presented by Linda Hay, described its focus on deindustrialization and ongoing study of plant shutdowns in Ontario since 1966, as well as an examination of the proposed Mackenzie Valley Pipeline. Hay noted the political plans of Wafflers in the Steelworkers, including Cec Taylor’s intention to run for the presidency of USWA Local 1005 on a ‘United Steelworkers of Canada’ platform. She

64 Ibid.
65 Handwritten notes, National Waffle Meeting, May 5-6, 1973, File 7, Kim Malcolmson and Paul Barber fonds, YUA.
66 Minutes of National Waffle Meeting held at Regina, Saskatchewan, May 5-6, 1973, File III.28 National Waffle, John Richards Papers, SAB (Saskatoon).
67 Ibid.
68 Ibid.
also reported that the Waffle women’s caucus met at every Waffle meeting, and had recently supported striking stewardesses at Wardair.\textsuperscript{69}

Don Mitchell conveyed that the Saskatchewan Waffle was still debating over whether to continue working within or make a decisive break from the NDP. He credited its SaskOil campaign with persuading the government to create a crown corporation, but lamented that instead of nationalizing the industry “so far all they have done is establish an exploration company.” Mitchell acknowledged that a major debate over the Waffle’s future loomed, but felt “sentiment leans towards a split with the NDP and formation of a new party.” He also argued that challenging the NDP electorally would be “the acid test” of any new socialist party.\textsuperscript{70}

Linda Hay reported that Ontario Wafflers remained active in the NDP, but admitted most in the group believed a new socialist party was necessary. Consequently they were considering running candidates in the upcoming federal election. Unlike the Ontario and Saskatchewan contingents, Manitoba Wafflers harboured reservations about challenging the NDP electorally. The four provincial groups’ respective attitudes toward the upcoming federal NDP convention in Vancouver accurately reflected their opinion of the party generally – Ontario Wafflers did not plan on attending, Manitoba and Saskatchewan Wafflers expressed indifference, and British Columbia’s Wafflers were very interested. Although the attendees at the Regina gathering complained about poor communications among the provincial Waffle groups, little was done to rectify the problem.\textsuperscript{71}

\textsuperscript{69} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{70} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{71} Ibid.
Despite their deep disappointment over the directions Manitoba’s provincial NDP government had been taking, that province’s Wafflers predicted – accurately as it turned out – that the Schreyer team was poised for re-election in June 1973 after a controversial term in power. The government had, for example, faced down intense opposition from the private insurance industry and implemented public auto insurance in 1970. It had amalgamated Greater Winnipeg, created a community-based system of municipal governance, and expanded public housing.\textsuperscript{72} Furthermore, it had implemented agricultural reforms including a land-lease program targeted at younger farmers, nationalized the troubled Churchill Forest Industries, instituted labour reforms, established a Department of Northern Affairs, and continued its predecessor’s expansion of Manitoba’s infrastructure.\textsuperscript{73} Through it all, Schreyer had maintained his personal popularity as premier. The NDP campaigned largely on its record, while promising a dental-care program for children, more money for public transit, and a publicly-subsidized prescription drug plan.\textsuperscript{74}

Cy Gonick, as expected, declared he would not be seeking re-election in Crescentwood. Gonick described his time as a MLA in the NDP government as “interesting but frustrating.” He explained how he had been unable to advance his own priorities, including halting the takeover by multinational corporations of Manitoba’s economy, facilitating a major redistribution of income, creating better and cheaper housing and recreational facilities, improving health care and education for the poor and working class, opening community health clinics, implementing greater worker’s control

\textsuperscript{72} Howard Pawley, \textit{Keep True: A Life in Politics} (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2011), 57.
\textsuperscript{73} Christopher Adams, \textit{Politics in Manitoba: Parties, Leaders, and Voters} (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2008), 120.
\textsuperscript{74} Wiseman, \textit{Social Democracy in Manitoba}, 129.
in industry, humanizing the school system, and ensuring public ownership of resource industries. Gonick applauded the government’s creation of public auto insurance, its expansion of public housing and its agricultural reforms, but argued “most of the changes we have brought about have been too mild, partial and temporary in nature to make a dent in the gross inequalities which exist in our society.”

Waffler Una Decter, chairperson of the Manitoba Welfare advisory board, sought the nomination to replace Gonick as the NDP candidate in Crescentwood, indicating she shared his objectives but intended to pursue them “with a little more optimism than Cy.” However, Harvey Patterson, president of the Winnipeg Labour Council, defeated Decter for the nomination. Patterson was narrowly elected in Crescentwood after two judicial recounts when the returning officer broke a tied vote in his favour, but the result was declared void after an investigation into the ballot-counting process and he lost the resulting 1975 by-election. Schreyer’s NDP retained office with an increased share of the popular vote and thirty-one of the province’s fifty-seven seats.

With the Waffle now extinct in Manitoba, its Ontario remnant struggled to remain relevant to avoid a similar fate. Stephen Lewis described the Ontario NDP’s first Provincial Council meeting since the December 1972 convention as “a real turning point” and claimed “acrimony was jettisoned; the party was in good spirits; debate was argumentative in the best sense.” Lewis proclaimed “it feels good now to be leader,” but ironically he resurrected a major theme of the early Waffle when he argued

76 Ibid.
79 The NDP won with 42.31 percent of the popular vote. The Progressive Conservatives, led by Sidney Spivak, increased their share of the popular vote to 36.73 percent but won only twenty-one seats. The Izzy Asper-led Liberals retained five seats despite a decline in the popular vote to 19.04 percent.
The party must surely immerse itself in the enveloping spread of social activism throughout Ontario amongst groups who fight expressways, who oppose the deposit of garbage in our countryside, who resist indiscriminate high-rise development, who resist strike-breaking, who fight to preserve the Escarpment or Algonquin Park, who manage to change the boundaries of regional government. It is no longer credible to pay homage to direct action while watching it from afar.  

Yet the Ontario Waffle remained separate from the party, and the Left Caucus while attracting support from outside Ontario had little impact on the NDP. The federal NDP convention at Vancouver in July 1973 proved to be the last straw for the Left Caucus. David Lewis drew loud applause from delegates on the first day of the convention with his response to Left Caucus member Barry Weisleder who had criticized the party’s support of Canadian participation in the International Commission of Control and Supervision in Vietnam. Lewis reminded delegates the NDP caucus had opposed “the war in Vietnam before this young man knew Vietnam existed.” David Lewis and the federal caucus enjoyed widespread support throughout the convention as delegates endorsed major planks in their strategy for minority government: a resolution calling on Parliament to establish an effective prices review board, doubling old-age pensions to $200 a month, and providing six percent residential mortgages. The Left Caucus’s attempt to amend a comprehensive energy policy resolution by including nationalization of all resource industries was defeated by a wide margin. John Richards was not affiliated with the Ontario-based Left Caucus but he spoke in favour of its amendment, arguing the NDP should affirm the principle of “complete public ownership of all

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resource industries.” Instead, delegates passed the original resolution calling for a government-owned Canadian petroleum corporation to operate in competition with private industry, federal aid for provincial oil and gas crown corporations, a national energy planning board, federal and provincial energy marketing boards, postponement of the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline, public ownership of the oil sands in Alberta and Saskatchewan, and the recognition of aboriginal land rights.

Mississauga taxi driver Douglas Campbell, who had unsuccessfully sought to defeat Stephen Lewis for the leadership of the Ontario NDP in December 1972, now challenged David Lewis to head the national party but was defeated by 719 votes to 76. The Left Caucus supported Varda Burstyn’s candidacy for party President, but incumbent Donald MacDonald easily won 648 to 164. The Left Caucus did not contest any of the vice-president seats, and none of its fourteen candidates were elected to the twenty open positions on the Federal Council. Neither was the Left Caucus significant in the convention’s decision to organize a national conference on women’s rights despite the opposition of some of the party leadership. All told, the convention strongly endorsed David Lewis’s position as leader and the federal caucus’s role in the minority Parliament.

Disillusioned members of the Left Caucus, including Steve Penner, Joe Flexer, Bret Smiley and Barry Weisleder, joined a group of University of Toronto student activists named the Old Mole in the summer of 1973 in forming a new organization, the

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84 Ibid.
85 Ibid.
86 “Lewis 719, Campbell 76 in NDP Vote,” Globe and Mail, July 21, 1973. In comparison to the Ontario NDP convention seven months prior, only forty-five ballots were spoiled in the leadership vote.
87 Ibid.
Revolutionary Marxist Group (RMG). Interpreting the overriding theme of Canadian left politics over the preceding four years as “the historical isolation of North America from the main convulsions of the world revolutionary process” and concluding “the vanguard throughout this continent remains the prisoner of the parochialism and empiricism which are the main ideological pillars of the North American bourgeoisie,” the RMG’s founders looked internationally for inspiration and example. They found it in the Trotskyist Fourth International which they claimed had recently transformed “from a federation of propaganda circles to an international combat organization.” Thirty-one delegates attended the RMG’s founding convention in October 1973, joined by former members of the LSA. Delegates differed over whether the RMG should concentrate its activities on infiltrating union locals, or engage with “struggles of students and teachers around the institutional contradictions of capitalist education, mobilizations against political and legal repression, and movements in solidarity with struggles in Quebec and internationally (Cambodia, Chile, etc.).” Although the convention adopted the latter position, delegates elected to the Central Committee were representative of both camps. The RMG proclaimed itself “proud of the seriousness and political level of the intense

90 “Statement of the Political Committee,” *The Old Mole*, July-August 1973, Box 7, File 8, Revolutionary Marxist Group fonds, MUA.
91 Ibid.
92 The LSA split into three groups in 1973 over its stance on nationalism and its orientation toward the NDP. The Revolutionary Communist Tendency supported Belgian Ernest Mandel in a split in the Fourth International, while the majority in the LSA supported the Socialist Workers Party (US). The Revolutionary Communist Tendency left the LSA the day before the RMG’s founding convention. The third group, a minority led by former leader Ross Dowson, split with the LSA shortly afterwards over the LSA’s rejection of Canadian nationalism, and formed a new Trotskyist organization, the Socialist League, in February 1974. Interested readers can find many of the original documents of these and other debates of the Canadian sectarian Marxist left on the Socialist History Project website at www.socialistshistory.ca.
debate which has just concluded” – so much so that it committed to the immediate publication of pamphlets outlining the convention’s dueling resolutions.93

The RMG and Ontario Waffle were among the groups that actively supported striking workers in late 1973 at the Artistic Woodwork plant in north Toronto. The Ontario Waffle had continued to support striking workers in its ongoing effort to engage with the working class, including taking part in the strike of primarily female employees at Dare, Inc. in Kitchener in early 1973. The Artistic Woodwork strike attracted so many supporters from among the broader New Left in Toronto that the numbers picketing eventually dwarfed striking workers.94 When police determination to keep the plant open and protect private property clashed with picketers’ will to prevent the plant from operating, violent outbursts ensued, resulting in numerous picket line arrests, including that of Dan Heap.95 The strike attracted significant media attention and continued into November 1973 before pressure from media coverage, mass picketing, and provincial and municipal governments led to a negotiated collective agreement and an end to the strike.96 James Laxer joined the picketers in early September alongside Toronto city councillors John Sewell and Dorothy Thomas and spoke at a strike support rally in November.97 Historian Ian Milligan described the Artistic Woodwork strike as an opportunity for New Leftists who had turned “towards Marxism and the working class as

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93 “Democratic Centralism and the Leninist Organization: Founding Convention of the RMG,” The Old Mole, November 1973, Box 7, File 8, Revolutionary Marxist Group fonds, MUA.
95 Ibid., 54-59.
96 Ibid., 65.
a necessary component of social change” to put their politics into practice on the picket line. The strike became a personal touchstone for many New Leftists’ subsequent activism, especially among those who went on to careers in the labour movement.

The experience of supporting striking workers at Artistic Woodwork also proved pivotal in the political development of a group of York University undergraduates active in the Waffle. Influenced by left-wing and Marxist professors including James Laxer, John Hutcheson, Virginia Hunter, and Robert Albritton, the students along with disgruntled members of the Waffle Labour Caucus created a study group, open by invitation only, committed to analyzing capitalism, socialism, the state, and the Waffle. Tired of the perceived “family compact” leadership of James and Robert Laxer, the study group declared the political atmosphere of the Ontario Waffle “tense and frustrating,” an opinion resulting in their decision to operate “underground.” Abbie Bakan, one of the group’s original members, provided an insider’s glimpse:

In this little socialist study group, comprised at its peak of about thirteen people, there was a desperate thirst for political clarity… the study group members soon became influenced by Lenin and considered themselves to be working under the principles of ‘democratic centralism’… in practice, however, the main activities of the group were simply collective discussion.

The group’s members concluded that the Waffle was not an appropriate vehicle for advancing their theory of a socialist revolution, and instead began identifying with a British left tendency, the International Socialists, voraciously reading articles produced by its leading members such as Tony Cliff. This imported analysis embraced the ideas of

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98 Milligan, “The Force of All Our Numbers,” 38. He explains, “Artistic became an opportunity to fight the system and act out the Marxist sociology of the time.”
99 Ibid., 69-70.
101 Ibid.
the Bolshevik Party during the early years of the Russian Revolution and rejected Stalinism, describing the Soviet Union as “state capitalist.” The Artistic Woodwork strike, in addition to influencing the ideological development of the York-based study group, proved significant for the Ontario Wafflers whose presence on the picket line represented their final significant non-electoral attempt at activism in coalition with other like-minded groups.

While the Ontario Waffle attempted to re-establish itself as an activist force outside of the NDP, the Saskatchewan Waffle determined by the fall of 1973, after eighteen months of debate, that its moment for leaving the party had arrived. The Saskatchewan Waffle issued a pamphlet in August by John Warnock entitled “A Socialist Alternative for Canada” criticizing the NDP for failing to take “action on the question of Canadian independence,” abandoning its roots as a “political movement” to become “just another political machine,” and warning that the party was “tightly controlled by a small self-perpetuating elite.” Warnock distinguished between the NDP’s social democracy and the Waffle’s socialism in calling for the creation of a new socialist party. The Saskatchewan Waffle steering committee prepared for a conference at Moose Jaw in October when the membership would decide on the Waffle’s future. Prior to the conference, members of the Saskatchewan Waffle met with Allan Blakeney at the legislature, but the premier explained he had “nothing earthshaking to propose” and

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102 Ibid.
indicated he was not prepared at that time to commit to any policies that might placate the group. Blakeney told the Wafflers there was still a place for them in the NDP, which should act as the “great mother church” of the left. Don Mitchell reiterated Waffle differences with the NDP, contending the government needed a working-class basis to its policies and should focus on wealth redistribution. All agreed the split should focus on policy differences, not personalities. John Richards asked about the possibility of a “principled reconciliation” if the Waffle left the party, but Blakeney expressed uncertainty and encouraged the group to “look over the NDP and see what you think” before splitting.\(^\text{106}\)

Nearly three hundred people, including two hundred Waffle members, attended the Moose Jaw conference. A resolution to withdraw from the NDP and “work to establish a new socialist party in Saskatchewan at a founding convention in the spring of 1974” that was amended to remove the date and add the commitment that “a major external education and organizational program be aimed at developing a large socialist base within the province” was carried with only a handful of delegates opposed.\(^\text{107}\) Members of other parties were to be barred from membership in the new socialist party. The conference elected Don Mitchell as president, Sonja Gehl as associate president, Cathie Cox as treasurer, and a ten-person steering committee.\(^\text{108}\)

A panel discussion at the conference addressed the role MLA John Richards should perform in the legislature as the Waffle’s spokesperson outside of the NDP

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\(^{106}\) Blakeney and Waffle meeting notes, October 5, 1973, File III.27 Waffle – Manitoba, 1971-73, John Richards Papers, SAB (Saskatoon). Wafflers Don Mitchell, Ailsa Rands, Paul Beach, John Richards, Al Bichoff, Ron DeLatley, Glen Maguire, Sheila Kuziak and Sonja Gehl attended the meeting with Blakeney and Alex Taylor. See also Sheila Kuziak’s recollection of the meeting in Gruending, *Promises to Keep*, 101.


\(^{108}\) Ibid.
caucus. Fred Gudmundson summarized the discussion, explaining Richards “should emphasize ideological questions concerned with articulating a socialist alternative.”\textsuperscript{109} In early November 1973 Richards announced his departure from the NDP caucus. His personal difficulty in deciding to leave the NDP stood in marked contrast to the enthusiasm most of the Saskatchewan Waffle leadership felt for a definitive break from the party and government. Richards had long struggled with the dual challenge of being a Waffle spokesperson while remaining a member of the NDP government. He had used his position to criticize the University of Saskatchewan’s administration, to attack high pharmaceutical drug prices and to call for a publicly-funded plan to cover their costs, and to express the Waffle’s demand for public ownership of the oil industry. But in such cases he had faced questions of whether he spoke for the government or himself.\textsuperscript{110}

Richards had grown increasingly frustrated with the Blakeney government’s lack of progressive action. In May 1972 he had voted against a bill allowing the government to extend forgivable loans to industries, a measure Richards decried as “welfare to industry.”\textsuperscript{111} Further difficulties arose when Department of Public Health officials took exception to an article Richards had published – albeit anonymously – in \textit{Next Year Country}.\textsuperscript{112} As for the potash industry, the issue which had drawn Richards back into Saskatchewan politics in 1970, the government would take little action until after he had

\textsuperscript{109} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{111} “Richards votes against bill,” \textit{Saskatoon Star-Phoenix}, May 5, 1972.
\textsuperscript{112} Meeting of NDP Executive, University Constituency, January 12, 1973, File III.14 New Democratic Party – Saskatoon-University – Minutes, 1971-73, John Richards Papers, SAB (Saskatoon).
left the NDP. Shortly after the Waffle released *One Year After*, its critical summary of the Blakeney government’s first year in office, Richards reported to his constituency association that the party had accomplished little and he described the “emptiness of the caucus debates.” However, he did point to the establishment of a Department of the Environment, a survey of drug prices, support for community health clinics, and access to legal abortions as positive developments. When he announced in July 1973 his decision not to continue as legislative secretary to Health Minister Walter Smishek, Richards explained to his constituency association that he could no longer remain in the hypocritical position of criticizing the government while continuing to work within it.

The government’s resource development policies were a major source of disagreement: “I think the government has failed to elaborate any substantial socialist strategies to deal with corporate exploitation of our natural resources and rural decline.” Specifically, Richards criticized the SaskOil program as a means for entering into joint ventures with private oil companies rather than fulfilling the party policy of nationalizing the oil industry, and condemned the government for failing to live up to its election commitment to “challenge and end the control over the industry exercised by a cartel of multinational fertilizer companies.”

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113 The government introduced a new “reserve tax” on potash in October 1974 and created the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan as a crown corporation in February 1975. The government partially nationalized the potash industry in its next term after a major dispute with private industry and the federal government. See Richards and Pratt, *Prairie Capitalism*, 259-275 and Allan Blakeney, *An Honourable Calling: Political Memoirs* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press), 141-150.

114 Minutes of the Annual Convention of Saskatoon University NDP Constituency, October 14, 1972, File III.14 New Democratic Party – Saskatoon-University – Minutes, 1971-73, John Richards Papers, SAB (Saskatoon).


As the Waffle moved closer to breaking with the NDP, Richards wrote a friend in St. Louis and lamented “I have been depressed about politics for the last six months.”

Although Richards recognized that the Waffle would soon leave the NDP, he explained:

I fear left schisms and it is with sadness that I see myself becoming estranged from many good people in the New Democratic Party. However the NDP seems totally committed to administering the status quo, and totally unwilling to bend— even in a social democratic fashion—people on to new directions. It is quite probable that, on its own, the Waffle will falter and die, but those of us involved feel that we must try— we all grow old, and we lack oriental patience. We are all tottering past the crucial age of 30 and into the senility of middle age.  

Richards’s announced departure from the NDP on the heels of the Saskatchewan Waffle’s decision thus came as little surprise. Nevertheless he described the action as “painful,” indicating that he still respected Blakeney, the cabinet ministers, and party activists. Ultimately, however, Richards concluded he could no longer remain in a party that had consistently rejected, both provincially and federally, the left-wing course advocated by the Waffle.

In the immediate aftermath of its decision to leave the NDP, the Saskatchewan Waffle focused on municipal elections taking place across the province. The Moose Jaw Waffle had been active in municipal politics since its 1970 takeover of the Civic Reform Association from traditional New Democrats. Allied with labour, the Civic Reform Association ran a slate of ten candidates for Moose Jaw city council in 1973—all unsuccessfully—although hostility from New Democrats angry over the recent split lingered. John Conway reported that the Civic Reform Association had a base of support

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117 John Richards to Tsui Blanchard (“friend at Washington U, St. Louis”), August 15, 1973, File II.4 Correspondence, 1972-76, John Richards Papers, SAB (Saskatoon).
In the community numbering close to two thousand.\textsuperscript{119} In both Saskatoon and Regina, the Waffle campaigned for candidates against NDP-backed candidates. In Saskatoon, in conjunction with activists from the Métis Society, native women, and legal aid clinics, the Waffle supported three candidates for council: Nora Thibodeau, Mary Arpin and Vicki Wilson. Rose Bishop and George Smith ran in Regina, emphasizing public housing, free public transit and attacking slum landlords.\textsuperscript{120} Although none of the above named candidates in Saskatoon and Regina attracted more than twelve percent of the vote, the local Waffle groups were pleased with the result of their initial foray into electoral politics in direct competition with the NDP.

In December 1973 the Ontario Waffle met in convention to discuss becoming a political party and fielding candidates in the federal election expected the following year. As is discussed in the next chapter, this decision was crucial to the group’s future. Despite falling short of a membership of one thousand that some considered as the minimum necessary for holding a founding convention, the Ontario group pushed forward.\textsuperscript{121} One hundred and fifty delegates attended the Toronto convention, in addition to seventy observers and members of the press. The convention’s focus was transforming the Ontario Waffle Movement for an Independent and Socialist Canada into a new “mass party for Canadian independence and socialism.”\textsuperscript{122} A resolution presented jointly by the

\textsuperscript{119} Waffle Steering Committee Meeting Minutes, October 23, 1973, File II.31 Meetings, c. 1972-1983, Saskatchewan Waffle fonds, SAB (Regina).
\textsuperscript{120} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{121} The membership of 635 in December 1973 was the highest the Ontario Waffle would achieve. Nearly two-thirds of the membership lived in Toronto and Ottawa.
\textsuperscript{122} East Metro Waffle, “Towards the Formation of a New Party For an Independent Socialist Canada,” \textit{Advance}, November 13, 1973, Box 1, File 8, New Democratic Party Waffle collection, MUA.
East Metro and Ottawa groups that stated “the objective conditions are right” became the basis for the group’s activities over the coming months.¹²³

The debate, for once, lacked ferocity. Most Ontario Waffle groups favoured creating a political party and running candidates in the next federal election. Only the Kitchener-Waterloo group was against the idea, deeming it premature, unwise, and likely to limit further the Waffle’s ability to establish alliances and win support amongst other activists. Claiming as evidence the Waffle’s lack of cooperation with other labour groups in plans for a May Day celebration and a similar go-it-alone streak in demonstrations over the military coup in Chile, the Kitchener-Waterloo naysayers warned that creating a new party would do “serious harm” to the future of a broad movement for independence and socialism. The majority, however, were not persuaded, and voted 115 to thirteen in favour of a new political party.¹²⁴ The convention also agreed to replace the Waffle News, published by the Ottawa Waffle, with the journal Advance, which the York Waffle had been publishing since August, as the movement’s primary forum for internal discussion and debate.¹²⁵

The Ontario Waffle’s decision to form a political party represented its final break with the NDP. As Mel Watkins explained, the move was “a way of communicating to ourselves and to the public that the Waffle is unambiguously disconnected from the NDP.”¹²⁶ The decision by the federal NDP to prop up the minority Liberal government led Watkins to conclude “the NDP is bankrupt… no more than the left wing of the Liberal party,” while James Laxer, appropriating Lewisian rhetoric, claimed “the NDP

¹²³ Minutes of Waffle Convention, December 8-9, 1973, Box 1, File 6, New Democratic Party Waffle collection, MUA.
¹²⁴ Ibid.
¹²⁵ Ibid.
has become an encumbrance around the necks of the workers of Canada.” The Waffle criticized in particular NDP support of Liberal energy policies, insisting that the proposed national petroleum company would foot the bill for research and exploration while foreign oil companies reaped the rewards. The convention voted unanimously in favour of nationalizing without compensation all Canadian energy companies, inspired in part by a May 1973 Gallup poll which indicated forty-eight percent of Canadians supported some degree of nationalization of Canada’s energy resources. Yet the federal election the following year would demonstrate just how misplaced was the Waffle’s optimistic view of its prospects outside the NDP.

Late in 1973 the Waffle in Ontario and Saskatchewan lost two key figures – Mel Watkins and John Warnock. Following the Ontario Waffle’s December 1973 convention, Watkins became adviser to the Indian Brotherhood of the Northwest Territories to assist it in preparing a submission to the Berger inquiry into the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline. The media attention and respect accorded Watkins, and the public recognition resulting from the 1968 Watkins Report, had made him one of the most prominent Waffle spokespersons. He had been the first choice of many as the Waffle candidate for federal NDP leader in 1971. Although he did not officially resign until August 1974, Watkins’s absence from the Ontario Waffle was keenly felt as it entered its next and ultimately final phase. Coincidentally, in November 1973 Saskatchewan Waffler John Warnock announced his resignation from the editorial board of Next Year

127 Ibid. Laxer is making a thinly-veiled reference to a line from Stephen Lewis’s speech a year prior which demanded the Waffle disband or leave the ONDP.
128 Canadian Institute of Public Opinion, “Most People Think We Should Nationalize Energy Resources,” May 16, 1973, Gallup Report (Toronto: Canadian Institute of Public Opinion, 1973). Thirty-six percent of respondents preferred that private enterprise own and operate Canada’s energy resources, such as oil and gas. Twelve percent of respondents were unsure, while four percent qualified their responses.
Country, a decision consistent with his determination to reduce his involvement in the Saskatchewan Waffle. As he explained to the Next Year Country editorial board, in addition to needing to focus on his family and research, Warnock had begun “questioning my own political work.” Along with his objections to some of Next Year Country’s editorial decisions, Warnock was frustrated over the Saskatchewan Waffle’s 1973 Moose Jaw conference. He explained, “I am growing tired of going to endless Waffle conferences, to discuss problems with the same hard core group. There must be more to political activity than distributing campaign literature door to door.” Warnock maintained that the Waffle would not “amount to anything until it builds a base in the working class movement,” and indicated his plans to engage in activism with a group of ex-Wafflers in Saskatoon “who are actually working with trade union people. For many reasons, the waffle has not been able to do that.”

After the Waffle lost its bid to remain within the Ontario NDP in June 1972, its members spent much of the following year-and-a-half absorbed in discussions about their future purpose and direction. Recognizing its failure to transform the NDP into a socialist party focused on preserving Canadian independence, the Waffle struggled to regroup. The Waffle’s participation in the 1972 federal election is illustrative of the resulting confusion, for both the Ontario and Saskatchewan groups ran a counter-campaign criticizing the NDP yet voted for the party anyway and individuals supported a Waffle-identified candidate running for the NDP in BC. Provincial elections in British Columbia in 1972 and Manitoba in 1973 demonstrated that the Waffle no longer acted as

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130 Warnock to Ailsa Rands, November 7, 1973, File I.3 Next Year Country, John Warnock Papers, SAB (Regina). This letter represented Warnock’s third, and final, attempt to resign from the board.
131 Ibid.
132 Ibid.
an organized left wing of the NDP in either province. Throughout 1972 and 1973 Wafflers debated a variety of options – remain within the NDP despite overwhelming evidence that the party would reject Waffle policy prescriptions; break from the NDP and act as a social movement while reluctantly supporting the party electorally; or split definitively with the NDP and challenge it in elections. The strategic and lengthy debates that occurred in Ontario and Saskatchewan especially over the Waffle’s future directions both exacerbated existing ideological divisions within the two groups and created new ones. Furthermore, these internal debates occurred amidst a rapidly evolving New Left milieu. Ideological and organizational divisions within both the women’s and labour movements, and an intellectual turn towards Marxism alongside a renewed emphasis on the working class, all significantly influenced the Waffle. By the end of 1973, when the Ontario group decided to field candidates in the upcoming federal election, the Waffle existed only in Ontario and Saskatchewan, and in both provinces had broken definitively with the NDP.
Chapter Ten

“Marx out of the closet:” Outside the NDP, 1973-75

At the December 1973 Ontario Waffle conference, James Laxer reportedly declared that the time had come to “take Marx out of the closet.”\(^1\) After splitting from the NDP, the Waffle in Ontario and Saskatchewan adopted a Marxist analysis that prioritized the working class – which in practice meant the unionized working class – as the agent for socialist politics and radical change. Although this shift attracted those academically-inclined activists interested in debating how best to apply a Marxist analysis to Canada in the 1970s, it simultaneously alienated others not drawn to such esoterica and thereby limited the Waffle’s ability and willingness to collaborate with various other left-wing social movements. The Waffle’s embrace of Marxism would have ramifications for its relationships with the women’s, labour, and farmers’ movements, as well as affecting its approach to electoral politics. As will be seen, the failure of the Ontario Waffle’s 1974 federal election campaign to garner significant support, and the consequent lost opportunity for communicating its ideas to a broader public, led the Waffle to re-evaluate its strategy. The weakness of the campaign and resulting fears over its future became touchstones for opposition to the Ontario Waffle’s leadership. Furthermore, the emphasis on Marxism resulted in many Wafflers re-evaluating their group’s commitment to Canadian nationalism, and produced contentious ideological debates that split the Ontario and Saskatchewan Waffles into tiny sectarian fragments. Radical student members of a study group based at York University grew particularly vocal in their denunciation of Waffle electoral strategy and its nationalism; their plan to take control of the Ontario Waffle came to fruition when its leadership

\(^1\) Abbie Bakan and Philip Murton attest that Laxer made this statement in their 2006 article “The Origins of the International Socialists.”
resigned en masse in October 1974. Although the Saskatchewan Waffle continued to
meet, publish, and debate for another ten years, by 1976 it had devolved into a small and
primarily academic discussion group resembling the Committee for a Socialist Movement
that had preceded the creation of the Waffle in that province. Meanwhile, a sizeable left
wing remained in the NDP despite the Waffle’s departure, and the party did not shift
sharply rightward in the mid-1970s.

The Waffle’s ideological shift towards rigid Marxism occurred as a result of
several factors. First and most importantly, leading Wafflers became disillusioned with
the NDP as a potential vehicle for the creation of an independent and socialist Canada.
Their experience of three years of activism within and without the party, driven by the
overriding aim of transforming the NDP into a party committed to independence and
socialism and engaged with extra-parliamentary social movements, had sapped the
enthusiasm inherent in the Waffle Manifesto. Repeated defeats in policy votes and
officer elections at party meetings, an inability to push provincial governments in
Manitoba, Saskatchewan and British Columbia sufficiently leftward, and their expulsion
in Ontario convinced the majority of Wafflers of social democracy’s limitations for
confronting capitalism in Canada. Secondly, Wafflers’ heightened emphasis on the
working class drew on their perception of workers’ increased militancy during the early
1970s, as demonstrated by the Quebec Common Front in March and April 1972 and the
labour movement’s opposition to wage controls. Thirdly, the shift was influenced by the
Ontario Waffle’s conviction that the changing economic circumstances of the 1970s,
particularly the protectionism of Nixon’s New Economic Plan and the 1973 oil crisis,
would accelerate the deindustrialization of Canada’s manufacturing heartland and return
the country to its traditional dependence as a supplier of natural resources, oil especially, to the United States. Finally, the Waffle’s embrace of Marxism was part of a broader trend among the international New Left. The Canadian student movement had not been alone in facing criticism for its lack of a rigorous analysis of society’s ills and necessary remedies. The appeal of a systematic analysis purporting to demonstrate objectively capitalism’s inevitable collapse and the means of replacing it with socialism was strong. As a result, the 1970s witnessed a tremendous resurgence of Marxism in various guises throughout the international New Left.

The Waffle’s focus on women’s issues underwent a transition after it departed the NDP. In addition to their activism in local women’s liberation movements, Waffle women had worked with other feminists within the party to urge action on a variety of women’s issues. After their split from the party, Waffle women in Ontario and Saskatchewan focused increasingly on the problems of working women; however, in doing so, they limited their opportunities for connecting with a broader feminist movement in building a socialist-feminist framework. This was partly a response to changing circumstances within Canadian second-wave feminism. A brief lull in organizing and activism had followed the 1970 Abortion Caravan, and when the women’s liberation movement re-emerged a few years later it represented a broader range of feminist issues and priorities. A “radical caucus” of women’s liberationists and female unionists, including Waffle sympathizers Grace Hartman and Madeleine Parent, had coalesced at a 1972 ‘Strategy for Change’ conference organized by the National

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2 See, for example, James Harding, “An Ethical Movement in Search of an Analysis.”
Action Committee on the Status of Women (NAC). But as historians and activists Nancy Adamson, Linda Briskin and Margaret McPhail explain:

Gradually this unity of radical women was broken. Those who would later form the radical-feminist current turned towards the creation of social and political alternatives to the existing society and concentrated particularly on the issue of violence against women. Those who would form the socialist-feminist current turned to theoretical discussion and tended to concentrate on workplace issues.4

Many women focused on organizing women’s centres and bookstores, rape-crisis centres and battered-women hostels as well as providing counselling services and birth control information. At the same time other women’s liberationists emphasized the plight of working women; as the number of female unionists soared, feminists increasingly organized within the labour movement or in independent unions.5 As the Waffle turned toward Marxism, female Wafflers’ emphasis on working women represented the beginnings of a socialist-feminist analysis and practice that developed fully in the late 1970s. However, given the Waffle’s limited resources, both human and financial, and its focus on workers generally rather than women workers specifically, the women’s question was largely subordinated to issues of class and Canadian independence.

4 Nancy Adamson, Linda Briskin, Margaret McPhail, Feminist Organizing for Change, 65; See also Meg Luxton, “Feminism as a Class Act: Working-Class Feminism and the Women’s Movement in Canada,” Labour/Le Travail 48 (Fall 2001), 80; Judy Rebick, Ten Thousand Roses: The Making of a Feminist Revolution (Toronto: Penguin Canada, 2005). This is not to suggest that ideological division amongst women’s liberationists emerged solely after 1972. For example, radical feminists split from the Toronto Women’s Liberation Movement (TWLM) in 1969 to form the New Feminists. The following year activists focused on the issue of legalized abortion and strongly influenced by the LSA/YS formed the Toronto Women’s Caucus and a group of self-declared “revolutionaries” focused on Third World solidarity left the TWLM to form the Leila Khaled Collective.

5 The concept of socialist-feminism was still nascent in the early 1970s. As Adamson, Briskin and McPhail explain, “for socialist feminists the split between socialism and feminism was to be the major challenge, both theoretically and practically, in the years to follow. In these early years women were socialists and feminists but had little, if any, sense of socialist feminism,” Feminist Organizing for Change, 50. The number of employed women increased by seventy-nine percent between 1965 and 1975, but the number of women union members increased by 144 percent in the same period, although much of this growth was the result of the unionization of public sector workers. Luxton, “Feminism as a Class Act,” 70; Julia Smith, “An ‘Entirely Different’ Kind of Union: The Service, Office, and Retail Workers’ Union of Canada (SORWUC), 1972-1986,” Labour/Le Travail, 73 (Spring 2014), 23-65.
Waffle women worked with women’s liberation groups across Canada in the campaign to secure the right to safe, legal and free abortions, and were among the central figures in the Abortion Caravan. Wafflers had also worked with other feminists within the Ontario NDP pressing the party, successfully as it turned out, to adopt policies prohibiting employment discrimination on the basis of sex, and introducing a government-funded houseworker’s allowance, improved childcare facilities, changes to divorce law, and abortion on demand.6 They failed, however, to make substantial changes to the NDP’s structure either federally or provincially, as the party consistently rejected proposals for mandating gender parity among party officers. Gender parity, as well as the provision of childcare at its meetings, soon emerged as established norms in the Ontario Waffle after MISC was formed. In Saskatchewan the Waffle accepted structural parity in principle, but it was not always practiced until enshrined in the group’s constitution in 1972.7

The first hint of a new direction came almost immediately after the Ontario Waffle’s split from the NDP. Krista Maeots, in her paper “Organizing Women” presented at the August 1972 Ontario Waffle conference at Delaware, declared abortion campaigns would not be “the main route to building a socialist consciousness among women,” and criticized the tendency of some “middle-class” groups to focus on personal issues. Maeots called on the Waffle to lead the way towards a “mass-based socialist women’s liberation movement.”8 In Ontario, however, the forum for this approach

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6 “Feminists in NDP want to see half of party’s responsible posts in hands of women” Globe and Mail, October 5, 1970.
7 Carol Bruce, Joy Elkin, Judy Hudson, Sally Mahood, Marilyn Patterson and Martha Tracey, “Towards a Strategy for Waffle Women,” February 1974, File II.12 Conferences and Conventions 1974-83, Saskatchewan Waffle fonds, SAB (Regina).
8 Krista Maeots “Organizing Women,” Box 1, File 4, New Democratic Party Waffle collection, MUA. Maeots was undoubtedly responding to the ongoing debates within the women’s liberation movement. A
remained the Toronto Waffle Women’s Group, as it had during the NDP years. Meetings held at members’ homes during the fall of 1972 led to a “Conference on Women Working: At Home or At Jobs.” The broad scope can be contrasted with the group’s later less encompassing efforts. In addition to providing a history of women in the labour movement and a panel on organizing women, the conference featured speakers on women on welfare and the single parent family, women and the law, and the role of women in the media and the arts.\(^9\) For Waffle women the conference was noteworthy as “probably the first time in the history of women’s liberation meetings [that] serious discussion took place on the issue of women and the trade union movement.”\(^10\)

A further opportunity for developing this focus on working women occurred in December 1972 when Art Kube of the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) suggested to the Waffle Women’s Group that it organize female white collar workers.\(^11\) The extensive discussions of the proposal that followed included concerns that the CLC might attempt to tone down the Wafflers’ socialist message to its members. Ultimately, while some of its members appear to have participated as individuals in a CLC organizing drive at the North American Life Assurance Company, the Waffle Women’s Group did not engage in a full-scale program organizing white-collar female workers on behalf of the CLC. The

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\(^9\) “Conference on Women Working at home or at jobs,” 1972, Box 1, File 4, New Democratic Party Waffle collection, MUA.

\(^10\) “West Metro Waffle Meeting,” November 21, 1972, Box 1, File 4, New Democratic Party Waffle collection, MUA.

\(^11\) “Toronto Waffle Women Expanded Executive Meeting,” December, 14, 1972, Box 1, File 4, New Democratic Party Waffle collection, MUA. Kube, a CLC director and former Steelworker, attacked the Waffle in a speech at the 1971 NDP Convention.
group did provide volunteer strike support for female flight attendants involved in a two-month-long labour dispute at Wardair.\(^\text{12}\) In addition, it held evening educational workshops in Toronto. But the Waffle did not highlight the Women’s Group throughout 1973. A group of West Metro Wafflers complained in a resignation letter that “the point is not that the women’s issue is a low priority in the Waffle; rather it is no priority at all.”\(^\text{13}\)

At the December 1973 Ontario Waffle convention, the women’s plenary session concluded “that working women are in the best position to bring about change for all women in society.”\(^\text{14}\) Waffler Virginia Hunter’s article “Women and Socialism” delineated the essential differences between radical and socialist feminists’ analyses of women’s oppression. Unlike Wafflers and other socialist feminists, radical feminists held that sex, rather than class, was the primary contradiction in society.\(^\text{15}\) While other Waffle women agreed with her analysis, not all were convinced that the Waffle Women’s Group strategy should preclude working with radical or liberal feminists. In fact, the Kingston Waffle argued that Waffle women did have a role to play in the abortion

\(^{12}\) Furthermore, the Waffle engaged in strike-support actions for female workers at Dare, Inc. in Kitchener throughout 1973. However, support for the Dare workers, who originally struck over unequal pay increases for men and women at the cookie-making plant, was carried out by the Waffle as a whole, and was not a project of the Women’s Group.

\(^{13}\) “Minutes of Waffle Convention,” December 8-9, 1973, Box 1, File 6, New Democratic Party Waffle collection, MUA. Emphasis in the original.

\(^{14}\) “Women and Socialism,” \textit{Advance}, November 13, 1973, Box 1, File 8, New Democratic Party Waffle collection, MUA. The program included demands for 24-hour child-care, a shorter work day, equal pay for work of equal value, organizing women, and a $4.00 per hour minimum wage.

\(^{15}\) Virginia Hunter, “Women and Socialism,” \textit{Advance}, November 13, 1973, Box 1, File 8, New Democratic Party Waffle collection, MUA. Activists and scholars identified three strains of feminism in the 1970s. The central tenet of “liberal feminism is equality of opportunity… the liberal-feminist vision includes a redistribution of opportunity in order to give women access to the power and opportunities of men.” In contrast, “radical feminists identify women’s unique capacity to give birth to children as central to both women’s experiences and to the material basis of their oppression… radical feminists identify fundamental emotional, social, and political differences.” The nascent concept of “socialist feminism,” with which the Wafflers identified, sought to intertwine the categories of gender and class in their analyses of women’s oppression. Adamson, Briskin and McPhail, \textit{Feminist Organizing for Change}, 10-11.
struggle – a campaign which Wafflers had largely abandoned after concluding that abortion-on-demand was not an issue with the potential to transform women’s consciousness.\textsuperscript{16}  

In Saskatchewan the majority of Waffle women agreed that their focus should be on the working class and the struggles of working women. The Saskatchewan Waffle held a women’s conference at Moose Jaw in February 1974. As Martha Tracey recalled, “by that point women who saw themselves as radical feminists weren’t there, so women in the Waffle had made a choice, and their choice was not to see men as the enemy but to look at more of a class analysis.”\textsuperscript{17} Conference presentations accepted the premise of emphasizing working women, and considered the desirability of establishing a separate women’s caucus within the larger group. Six Moose Jaw Wafflers – Carol Bruce, Joy Elkin, Judy Hudson, Sally Mahood, Marilyn Patterson and Tracey – who self-identified as “scientific socialists” in their paper “Towards a Strategy for Waffle Women,” connected women’s liberation to the destruction of capitalism. They claimed “it is clear that women have not been equal participants in the Waffle,” and argued for the creation of an ongoing women’s caucus to educate and advocate within the Waffle. They urged the Waffle to undertake a public campaign on the “two related issues of female participation in the labour force and child care.”\textsuperscript{18} In contrast, Sylvia Pusch, Isabel Andrews and Elaine Nystrom argued against forming a separate women’s caucus. They contended that although the Moose Jaw Wafflers had adopted a Marxist framework they

\textsuperscript{16} Kingston Waffle, “Marxism, Feminism and the Waffle,” \textit{Advance}, July 17, 1974, Box 1, File 8, New Democratic Party Waffle collection, MUA.  
\textsuperscript{17} Martha Tracey interview with John Warnock, September 24, 1989, Audio Tape, 1970-1989, R-11903B, Saskatchewan Waffle fonds, SAB (Regina).  
\textsuperscript{18} Carol Bruce, Joy Elkin, Judy Hudson, Sally Mahood, Marilyn Patterson and Martha Tracey, “Towards a Strategy for Waffle Women,” February 1974, File II.12 Conferences and Conventions 1974-83, Saskatchewan Waffle fonds, SAB (Regina).
erred by espousing the “feminist approach, that of viewing the formation of a socialist women’s movement in isolation from the working class as a whole.” Pusch, Andrews and Nystrom asserted that “there cannot be a strategy for the emancipation of women apart from a strategy for the proletariat as a whole,” and a Waffle “strategy should center around the self-organization of women and women proletarians within the proletariat as a whole.” Although they pushed for the Waffle to campaign for child care and abortion, they maintained that single-issue campaigns drew the “attention of women inwards to themselves rather than outwards to an identification with their class as a whole.”

Sheila Kuziak reported to the Saskatchewan Waffle Steering Committee that Waffle women had withdrawn from the abortion campaign coordinating committee established a few weeks before in Regina.

The focus on working women led key Wafflers, including Pat Gallagher, Sheila Kuziak, and Denise Kouri, to organize Saskatchewan Working Women as a coalition of union and community-based feminists in the late 1970s and 1980s, but this activism remained outside the parameters of the Waffle. Despite the Blakeney government’s relative inattention to women’s issues during its first term, the Saskatchewan Waffle rarely criticized the government for failing to address the major policy goals of the women’s movement. As will be seen, feminists and leftists in BC by contrast routinely criticized the NDP government there for its inaction on women’s issues, although not under the guise of the Waffle.

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20 Waffle Steering Committee Meeting Minutes, May 26, 1974, File II.31 Meetings c. 1972-1983, Saskatchewan Waffle fonds, SAB (Regina).
21 For a brief discussion of SWW see Chapter Five.
22 For example, there is barely any mention of women’s issues in One Year After, the Saskatchewan Waffle’s extensive critique of the Blakeney government’s first year in power.
The Waffle’s ideological shift also affected its position vis-à-vis the labour movement. During its NDP period the Ontario Waffle had antagonized leaders of Canadian branches of some major international unions, the USWA and UAW in particular, by criticizing the limited autonomy granted the Canadian sections, attacking the union leadership’s moderation, and working with left-wing caucuses of the international as well as independent Canadian unions, most notably affiliates of the Council of Canadian Unions (CCU). The Ontario Waffle had lent its support to two prominent strikes by the CTCU, the CCU affiliate led by union organizers Kent Rowley and Madeleine Parent, at Texpack in 1971 and at Artistic Woodwork in 1973. However Mine-Mill’s decision to withdraw from the CCU in April 1972, which two Wafflers prompted, harmed the relationship between the Ontario Waffle and the CCU. The Ontario Waffle’s embrace of Marxism following the split from the NDP and commitment to the deindustrialization thesis further divided it from the independent Canadian labour movement. In Saskatchewan, where there were no CCU locals or a manufacturing base employing large numbers of industrial workers, the deindustrialization thesis was not easily applicable and the ideological shift to Marxism resulted in the Waffle focusing its energies on organized workers unfettered by the practical complications experienced by their Ontario counterparts.

In the immediate aftermath of its departure from the NDP, the Ontario Waffle’s uncertainty over whether it should organize within international unions or support a fully-independent Canadian union movement contributed to a divide between the Toronto and Ottawa Waffle groups. In a paper on “Trade Union Organizing” presented at the July 1972 Gravenhurst meeting that preceded MISC’s formation, union activist Dan Sunstrom
recommended that the Waffle establish caucuses within international unions to advocate for Canadian independence and socialism.\textsuperscript{23} Conversely, Robin and Esther Mathews’s paper “On Labour and Practical Strategy,” circulated shortly after the Delaware conference, endorsed the Waffle working towards the establishment of independent unions.\textsuperscript{24} A letter to \textit{Canadian Dimension} complained that “with the flip-flopping of the Waffle on the question both before and after Orillia, practically the only group in Canada to support the independent union movement has been the corporate-dominated Committee for an Independent Canada, a paradox which lends weight to the charges of company unionism.”\textsuperscript{25}

A dispute in British Columbia throughout 1972 brought new urgency to the debate over international versus independent unions. In Kitimat, a company town dominated by the aluminum giant Alcan, workers at the Alcan plant broke away from the USWA to form an independent union, the Canadian Association of Smelter and Allied Workers (CASAW). This ultimately successful severance from a major international union inspired others committed to the idea of an independent Canadian union movement. Kent Rowley and the CCU had supported the Kitimat breakaway and the divide it engendered with USWA was among the reasons for Mine-Mill’s departure from the organization. The Ontario Waffle Labour Committee, however, adopted a more cautious approach. The minutes of its May 12, 1973 meeting indicate only that an

\textsuperscript{23} Dan Sunstrom, “Trade Union Organizing,” 1972, Box 1, File 4, New Democratic Party Waffle collection, MUA.

\textsuperscript{24} Robin Mathews, “On Labour,” 1972, Box 1, File 4, New Democratic Party Waffle collection, MUA. Another paper presented in October 1972 argues that the Waffle should avoid both “left caucuses” within international unions and “narrow sectarian or ego-inflated moves leading to adventurism or arid rhetoric, e.g. the generalized call for Canadian workers to leave US dominated unions en masse without providing a serious alternative; raiding of existing unions or shrill abstract calls for Canadian unionism.” Unidentified author, “Prospects and Strategy for Canadian Labour,” Box 1, File 4, New Democratic Party Waffle collection, MUA.

informal exchange of views took place” over the issue of breakaways and the CLC response.  

Prior to this discussion Robert Laxer had expressed strong opposition to breakaways, and supported working within international unions. In a February 1973 paper he argued “the attempt to find the solution to new anti-imperialist struggles by way of short-cut organizational solutions is mechanical and uncreative.” Five months later the Ontario Waffle Labour Committee had largely adopted this position. Its policy, passed at the July 1973 council and endorsed at the December 1973 convention, categorically stated:

While the Waffle recognizes the frustrations that lead rank-and-file members to support local breakaways, it acknowledges that the preferable route for the Canadian members of so-called international unions is to remain united while they carry out the transformation of their unions into independent Canadian unions.

Although the complex internal politics of the Canadian labour movement clearly influenced the Ontario Waffle’s labour policy and strategy, the position adopted at the July council and December convention reflected the group’s emphasis on the Canadian working class in the “key manufacturing and resource based industries of Ontario” as critical components in the creation of an independent and socialist Canada. As a result of the Waffle’s internal confusion and eventual commitment to working within international unions, Rowley and Parent rejected the Waffle’s suggestion that it and the

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26 “Ontario Waffle Labour Committee – Summary of Meeting May 12, 1973, Waterloo,” Box 1, File 4, New Democratic Party Waffle collection, MUA.
27 Bob Laxer “Trade Unions as Working Class Organizations,” February 1973, Box 1, File 4, New Democratic Party Waffle collection, MUA.
28 “Labour Policy of the Ontario Waffle,” 1973, Box 1, File 5, New Democratic Party Waffle collection, MUA.
29 Unidentified author, “Prospects and Strategy for Canadian Labour,” Box 1, File 4, New Democratic Party Waffle collection, MUA.
CCU establish formal ties.30 The Waffle approached other potentially sympathetic unionists at CUPE and the Confederation of National Trade Unions in Quebec, but none were open to a formal affiliation.31 The Waffle’s concern over deindustrialization also precluded allying with environmentalists, according to Robert Laxer, who declared “our allies do not include people who advocate limits to growth – for under the guise of being concerned with the environment such a view is in fact support for de-industrialization of Canada.”32 In addition, the Waffle Labour Committee in 1974 began publishing North Country, a news magazine for Ontario workers. Three issues were produced before the Waffle’s dissolution, with each edition featuring articles by Wafflers and union activists on strikes and workers’ struggles around the province.

Despite the absence of a large industrial working class in Saskatchewan when the Waffle there turned to Marxism between 1972 and 1974, it adopted an analysis that placed workers at the centre of its political strategy. Pat Gallagher asserted at its August 1974 conference that the group decided it would form “an open Marxist party with a working class base” and focus its organizing efforts on the trade union movement.33 Indeed, individual Wafflers did just that in the coming years, including Shelia Kuziak with the Alliance of Canadian Cinema, Television and Radio Artists (ACTRA) from 1974 to 1989, Don Kossick with the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union in 1975, and Gallagher herself as an executive assistant with the Saskatchewan Federation

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30 Ontario Waffle Executive Meeting Minutes, March 24, 1973, Box 1, File 5, New Democratic Party Waffle collection, MUA.
31 Ibid.
32 Bob Laxer, “National and Class Struggles in English Canada and Quebec: The Waffle and Alliances for Independence,” Advance, April 15, 1974, Box 1, File 8, New Democratic Party Waffle collection, MUA.
of Labour in 1976.\textsuperscript{34} Not surprisingly, the Waffle’s Marxist analysis prioritizing the working class hindered its existing relationship with the NFU. The Waffle and the NFU had cooperated closely during Don Mitchell’s bid for the Saskatchewan NDP leadership in 1970, and the Waffle had also attracted a number of NFU activists, including president Roy Atkinson, to its cause.\textsuperscript{35} Furthermore, the Waffle had supported NFU policies pushing NDP governments in Saskatchewan and Manitoba to adopt an agricultural strategy for combating corporate domination of farming and food production.\textsuperscript{36} However, as Don Kossick recalled, as the Waffle turned increasingly towards Marxism its prevalent view became “the farmers were reactionary, that they weren’t necessarily the group to work with in terms of progressive politics, and there was a lot of reading and analysis of Lenin and populism and so on.”\textsuperscript{37} At the national Waffle meeting in May 1973, Lorne Brown reported that the Saskatchewan group had grown disappointed with the NFU. He explained how the Waffle initially perceived the NFU as a potential ally, but now realized it had “confused the NFU’s left populism with a socialist thrust.”\textsuperscript{38} The NFU had adopted a non-partisan approach to its advocacy, and Brown reported that “at the moment the NFU leadership views the Waffle with suspicion.”\textsuperscript{39} By December 1975, the Saskatchewan Waffle’s agricultural committee was


\textsuperscript{35}National Farmers Union list, n.d., File I.9 NFU-Waffle, John Warnock Papers, SAB (Saskatoon). Wafflers Lorne Brown, Don Mitchell, John Conway, Gerry Sperling, Doug Daniels, John Warnock and Pat Gallagher are all listed as providing resources to NFU local area co-ordinators on the document.

\textsuperscript{36}Press Release, April 30, 1971, File III.1 Manitoba Waffle, Saskatchewan Waffle fonds, SAB (Regina).


\textsuperscript{38}Minutes of National Waffle Meeting held at Regina, Saskatchewan, May 5-6, 1973, File III.28 National Waffle, John Richards Papers, SAB (Saskatoon).

\textsuperscript{39}Ibid. Shortly after John Gallagher, former editor of the NFU’s newspaper the \textit{Union Farmer}, became full-time editor of \textit{Canadian Dimension}, Joe Roberts complained to the Saskatchewan Waffle steering committee that the left-wing magazine had adopted a “consistent anti-Waffle line.” Publisher Cy Gonick’s own disillusionment with the Waffle undoubtedly contributed to \textit{Canadian Dimension}’s increasingly
considering “how the Waffle relates to the question of agricultural production in a manner consistent with our developing Marxist and working class analysis.” Their analysis divided farmers into three classes – capitalist agribusinessmen, petite bourgeois independent commodity producers, and wage earners – and encouraged Wafflers with farmer contacts to initiate a campaign explaining workers’ ongoing opposition to the imposition of wage controls. As Kossick observed, “the Waffle’s tension, or movement towards a centralized Marxist-Leninist model in a sense blinded it from recognizing other forms of organizational structures that could have mobilized workers or farmers in terms of coalitions.”

Much as the Waffle’s evolving ideology influenced its approach to the women’s, labour, and farmers’ movements, so did its increasingly strict Marxist analysis shape fierce internal debates over participation in the 1974 federal and 1975 Saskatchewan elections. The Waffle played an important role in the “new nationalist” movement, discussed in Chapter Three, that influenced the Trudeau Liberals’ adoption of several economic nationalist measures during the 1972-74 minority government. Nevertheless, internal criticisms of the Ontario Waffle’s strategy following its disappointing performance in the 1974 election concentrated on the allegation that the campaign emphasized Canadian nationalism to the exclusion of the group’s socialist message. By contrast, the debate within the Saskatchewan Waffle over the 1975 provincial election critical coverage of the Waffle. Waffle Steering Committee Meeting Minutes, September 22, 1974, File II.31 Meetings c. 1972-1983, Saskatchewan Waffle fonds, SAB (Regina).


there focused on the question of whether there was any strategic value to be gained from participating in electoral politics.

Although Trudeaumania and Pierre Trudeau’s ascension to power occurred during a period of “peak nationalism” in 1967-68, the new prime minister was in fact a committed anti-nationalist.42 Nevertheless, under pressure from the NDP and at the urging of the Liberal Party’s left-nationalist wing the Trudeau government embraced a series of economic nationalist policies. Liberal left-nationalist politicians, professors and members of the media such as Walter Gordon, Beland Honderich, Abraham Rotstein, Eric Kierans and Peter Newman often shared platforms with leading Wafflers, accorded the socialists media coverage alongside mainstream nationalists, and warned their fellow Liberals that an overtly nationalist NDP, under the Waffle’s influence, would appeal to voters concerned about high levels of foreign ownership. During his first term in office, Trudeau took little action on foreign ownership other than to appoint an “understaffed, low-priority task force” on foreign investment chaired by Windsor MP Herb Gray.43 As a result of the government’s inaction, Walter Gordon warned, “the NDP is likely to steal a good portion of the vote if the Liberals fail to bring in a strong policy to deal with economic independence.”44 Gordon, no longer a MP, nevertheless rejected the Waffle’s

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42 Paul Litt explains that “Canadian nationalism was central to Trudeaumania” in his illuminating discussion of the Canadian Sixties, nationalism, the media and Trudeau. See Litt, Trudeaumania, 14-43. Although both Walter Gordon and his ally Beland Honderich, publisher of the Toronto Star, supported Trudeau’s leadership bid, Trudeau refused to endorse either the Watkins Report or Gordon’s economic nationalist proposals during the 1968 leadership campaign and subsequent federal election. Azzi, Walter Gordon, 164; Clarkson and McCall, Trudeau and Our Times, 86-7; Anthony Westell, “New Nationalists May Push Trudeau to the Left,” Toronto Star, November 29, 1969. See also Wright, Trudeaumania, 182-3 and Litt, Trudeaumania, 245.

43 Clarkson and McCall, Trudeau and Our Times, 102. The authors describe Trudeau as “weary of all the attention American economic and cultural domination was drawing in the press.”

calls for public ownership, and urged the Liberal government to adopt instead his more moderate proposals for limiting foreign ownership.45

According to Christina Newman, Gordon and the economist Abraham Rotstein were dismayed that the Waffle “was the only organized independentist movement in the country.” Along with Peter Newman, editor-in-chief of the Toronto Star, they established the Committee for an Independent Canada (CIC) in September 1970 to “provide a focus for nationalists with ideas less radical – though no less passionately held – than those of the Wafflers.”46 They portrayed the CIC as a mainstream, non-socialist alternative to the Waffle’s emphasis on nationalization as the primary means for achieving Canadian economic independence from the United States.47 The CIC included as members such prominent public figures as the politicians Judy La Marsh and Pauline Jewett, writers Farley Mowat, Hugh MacLennan, Pierre Berton and Al Purdy, publishers Jack McClelland, Mel Hurtig, and Beland Honderich, journalists Claude Ryan and Adrienne Clarkson, and academics Robin Mathews, George Grant, Kenneth McNaught, Denis Smith, W.L. Morton and Lloyd Axworthy.48 Historian Stephen Azzi described the CIC’s statement of purpose, in contrast to the Waffle, as “intentionally vague, in an attempt to win as many members as possible.”49 Despite Newman’s and Gordon’s active speaking schedules promoting the organization in the fall of 1970 and spring of 1971, and

47 Azzi, Walter Gordon, 177-8. Azzi quotes Mel Hurtig describing the Waffle as “immediately antagonistic towards us” and Eddie Goodman arguing “it is my opinion that they [Waffle] cause irreparable harm to nationalist movement in Canada… I think they regard us as their enemies and so they should.”
48 Ibid., 177.
49 Ibid., 179.
the CIC’s success gathering 170,000 signatures on a petition opposing foreign ownership, it quickly declined in prominence after its initial burst of activity.\(^{50}\)

Gordon’s close connections with the *Toronto Star* – he was a director and member of its board from 1970 to 1979 – furthered the newspaper’s support of Canadian left-nationalism in the 1960s and 1970s. Certainly the *Star*’s coverage of the Waffle and the CIC enhanced the public prominence of both groups.\(^{51}\) In his study of the newspaper’s support for economic nationalism, Donald MacIntosh concluded that between Gordon and the *Star* “his cause was its cause.”\(^{52}\) The *Toronto Star* gave prominent coverage to opponents of foreign ownership such as Rotstein, Watkins and Laxer, and adopted a left-nationalist editorial position. MacIntosh argues:

> The *Star*’s long preoccupation with foreign ownership is an excellent illustration of an attempt by a mass circulation newspaper not only to set one aspect of the political agenda but to change the public’s viewpoint. There can be no doubt that the *Star* by the persistent prominence it gave the issue did, in effect, attempt to structure the way in which its readers perceived foreign ownership by the events it chose to report, its editorials and its interpretative articles... The *Star*, in its campaign to change its readers’ views on foreign ownership, came very close to suggesting that foreign ownership was responsible for most of Canada’s economic problems.\(^{53}\)

Peter Newman, in recalling his decision to accept the editor-in-chief position at the *Toronto Star*, explained “I was after a platform where I could preach my nationalistic convictions... what mattered to me was that the *Star* was the house organ of Canadian nationalism, and as its editor, I would be in a position to advance my crusade.”\(^{54}\)


\(^{53}\) Ibid., 28.

\(^{54}\) Newman, *Here Be Dragons*, 262.
In addition to the *Toronto Star*, the Waffle received high-profile coverage in mainstream magazines such as *Maclean’s, Chatelaine,* and *Saturday Night.* When Newman left the *Toronto Star* to become editor of *Maclean’s* in 1971, he remained a committed nationalist and ensured that like-minded voices were prominent in the revitalized magazine. In explaining the nationalist inclinations of prominent Canadian journalists such as Newman and Pierre Berton, the historian Paul Litt asserted that “nationalism endowed their ‘beat,’ Canada, with meaning and purpose, and their voices were influential in the national conversation.”

Leading Wafflers’ familiarity with print, radio and television assisted their efforts to convey a message of independence and socialism. Wafflers such as Laxer, Krista Maeots, Don Mitchell, John Conway and Don Kossick had extensive experience with university student newspapers, and several others were employed by various media outlets in the early 1970s. Kelly Crichton, for example, was a reporter for both CBC and CTV before becoming a producer at CBC Television, and Gerry Sperling was a

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58 The press, admittedly, found the Waffle’s internal debates rather less newsworthy than their showdowns with the NDP and labour leadership. After the ONDP Council in Orillia, a reporter complained “for the press, Waffle caucuses are interminable. Leader James Laxer had intimated no impulsive decisions were likely, and the journalists filtered away from the crowded hall.” Philip Sykes, “Officially dead, the Waffle girds for its biggest battle,” *Toronto Star*, June 26, 1972.

59 Conway, Mitchell and Kossick all cut their activist teeth as editors of the *Carillon*. 
freelance broadcaster with CBC-Regina. Maeots began a successful career as a CBC Radio producer in 1971.\textsuperscript{60}

In addition to the increased media attention devoted to the issue, public opinion polls between 1970 and 1974 suggest that new nationalists, with the Waffle prominent among them, had persuaded many Canadians that American domination of the economy endangered their economic sovereignty and way of life. A November 1970 poll indicated sixty-two percent of Canadians believed there was already enough US capital in Canada (compared to twenty-five percent who said they would like more), a substantial increase from the forty-six percent that expressed concerns over American ownership in 1964.\textsuperscript{61} A year-and-a-half later, sixty-seven percent said there was sufficient US capital in Canada compared to twenty-two percent who desired more.\textsuperscript{62} Responses to a poll asking if Canadian dependence on the US was a “good thing or not a good thing for Canada” showed a similar trend: thirty-four percent viewed dependence as a good thing down from forty-eight percent in 1963, while a majority (fifty-three percent) decried Canadian dependence on the United States, a rise of nine percent since 1963.\textsuperscript{63} By 1974, fifty-seven percent of respondents believed the Canadian way of life was too heavily influenced by the US, a jump of thirty percent since 1956.\textsuperscript{64}

Liberal left-nationalists, apprehensive about the Waffle’s influence, NDP popular appeal, and shifting public opinion, conspired to drive the Trudeau government in the


\textsuperscript{61} “Enough U.S. capital in Canada, now, say 6 in 10,” \textit{The Gallup Report}, November 28, 1970. A month earlier, 46% of respondents approved of buying back majority control of US companies in Canada even if it meant reducing our standard of living compared to 32% who disapproved. “‘Buy Back Canada’ despite possible lower standards of living,” \textit{The Gallup Report}, October 14, 1970


\textsuperscript{63} “Majority now say dependence on US is bad for Canada,” \textit{The Gallup Report}, August 26, 1972.

direction of economic nationalism despite the prime minister’s personal reluctance. McCall and Clarkson claim that in the aftermath of the Nixon Shock in 1971, a “crucial point in Canadian history, Pierre Trudeau’s stubborn anti-nationalism was a serious impediment to new planning,” but pressure from within the Liberal party as well as the NDP during the minority parliament of 1972-74 forced his government to act. It created the Foreign Investment Review Agency (FIRA) which required potential investors to demonstrate how a foreign corporate takeover would be of significant benefit to Canada, and the Canadian Development Corporation (CDC) to facilitate Canadian government investment in domestic businesses. A massive increase in the price of oil compounded by the OPEC boycott following the Yom Kippur War of October 1973 led the Trudeau government to accept NDP demands for a national energy policy, a state oil company, and a continued freeze in oil prices. However, when the government with Progressive Conservative support also passed corporate tax cuts and introduced a budget in early 1974 that reflected none of Lewis’s demands the NDP withdrew its support.

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65 Clarkson and McCall, Trudeau and Our Times, 97, 111. Both Walter Gordon and Eric Kierans, the former postmaster-general and minister of communications in Trudeau’s cabinet, supported the NDP in the 1972 federal election because of its willingness to address the issue of foreign ownership of the Canadian economy. See English, Just Watch Me, 182; Eric Kierans, Globalism and the Nation-State (Toronto: CBC Enterprises, 1984), Appendix C contains his letter of resignation from cabinet; Jamie Swift, Odd Man Out: The Life and Times of Eric Kierans (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 1988), 303. Kierans was hired by the NDP government in Manitoba to write a Report on Natural Resources Policy in Manitoba which, when released in 1973, called for the “staged take-over of the mining industry by the government of Manitoba,” a recommendation that was not enacted by the Schreyer government. James McAllister, The Government of Edward Schreyer: Democratic Socialism in Manitoba (Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1984), 69. Mitchell Sharp, the secretary of state for foreign affairs, advocated during the 1972 election a “Third Option” of increasing trade with Europe and Japan as an alternative to economic domination by the United States. Clarkson and McCall, Trudeau and Our Times, 107.

66 English, Just Watch Me, 194-8, 218-9, 226; Aivalis, The Constant Liberal, 90-7; Morton, The New Democrats, 159.

67 Lewis had insisted the budget include government subsidies to keep mortgage rates low and a large increase in corporate taxes. Despite the NDP’s success in pushing the minority Liberal government to increase family allowances and old age pensions, create a Food and Prices Review Board, and introduce electoral and party finance reforms, the 1972-74 period had been challenging for the NDP caucus. Repeatedly divided over whether to support government polices or force an election the federal caucus also
John English described the Prime Minister as having “feigned fury” at the opposition for causing the election, but Trudeau later admitted that he, Turner and House Leader Allan MacEachen engineered the defeat to ensure a return to the polls on the Liberals’ terms. 68

The NDP’s dilemma was how to claim responsibility for the minority government’s progressive policies while justifying its decision to force the election. With inflation growing at an exorbitant rate, much of the campaign focused on the PC’s endorsement of wage and price controls. 69 The NDP slogan “who controls Canada?” initially targeted corporations as the primary cause of inflation, but when that strategy flopped the campaign shifted focus to attacking the PC’s proposed wage and price controls, which the Liberals also opposed. 70 Otherwise, the NDP election platform highlighted the rapidly rising cost of living and the party’s promises to empower the Food and Prices Review Board to restrain price increases, create a two-price system for crucial commodities, and introduce a ceiling on mortgage rates. On energy policy the NDP opposed a continental energy deal, promising instead to strive for Canadian self-sufficiency in oil production by 1980, keep oil prices low, increase research into renewable energy sources, and delay the proposed Mackenzie Valley pipeline in order to assess its impact on Native peoples. 71

During the 1974 federal election campaign the Waffle attempted to formulate an approach to electoral politics distinct from the NDP. In Saskatchewan, it initially disagreed with provincial NDP governments over energy policy and wage and price controls. Morton, The New Democrats, 147, 160; Smith, Unfinished Journey, 474-6; Whitehorn, Canadian Socialism, 92.

68 English, Just Watch Me, 233.

69 Morton, The New Democrats, 166-7, Whitehorn, Canadian Socialism, 92.

70 Smith, Unfinished Journey, 477; Whitehorn. Canadian Socialism, 92.

71 Whitehorn, Canadian Socialism, 92.
Humbolt, but eventually decided not to given the “low level of interest” and the group’s predominantly provincial focus. Instead the Saskatchewan Wafflers published a pamphlet explaining their stance on national policy issues and held rallies in Prince Albert on natural resources, in Saskatoon on abortion and the Wheat Board, and in Regina on inflation. The Ontario Waffle decision to run candidates left some of its erstwhile supporters torn. Saskatoon Waffler Gerry Kowalenko, in Ottawa during the campaign, explained:

I’ve decided to work for the NDP in the upcoming federal election. I could not work for [Waffle candidate] Bela Egyed in Ottawa Centre – but I could not work against him – so I have decided to work in my own riding… which, while hopeless, will at least mean that I won’t have to work against the Waffle.

James Laxer’s second book Canada’s Energy Crisis received largely favourable reviews and generated much needed publicity for the Waffle in the lead-up to the 1974 election campaign. At a press conference held prior to Turner’s federal budget unveiling in May, the Waffle announced plans to field four candidates, two of them women, who would campaign on four main issues: foreign ownership of the economy, and energy resources in particular; the oppression of women; the stagnation of Ontario manufacturing; and the need for an independent Canadian union movement. A Globe and Mail reporter sarcastically proclaimed that “the Waffle, the left wing that the New Democratic Party amputated in 1972, is flapping back into electoral politics.” One week later the Waffle identified its candidates, now reduced in number to three: James

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72 Waffle Steering Committee Meeting Minutes, May 26, 1974, II.31 Meetings, c. 1972-1983, Saskatchewan Waffle fonds, SAB (Regina).
73 Gerry Kowalenko to John Richards, May 22, 1974, File II.4 Correspondence 1972-1976, John Richards Papers, SAB (Saskatoon).
76 Ibid.
Laxer in York West, Bela Egyed in Ottawa Centre, and Mary Campbell in Middlesex-London-Lambton. Despite running candidates against the NDP, the Waffle demonstrated some ambivalence in its stance toward its former party comrades.

Middlesex-London-Lambton was selected because the Waffle anticipated the NDP would field strong or left-wing candidates in the neighbouring London ridings. York West was thought promising because of its high concentration of working-class voters, and Ottawa Centre chosen because of the likelihood it would generate significant media attention. The Ottawa Waffle believed it was accorded coverage worthy of a “fourth major party” - including an Ottawa Citizen profile of Bela Egyed published alongside that of the Liberal, Conservative and NDP candidates in Ottawa Centre – in comparison to other parties such as Social Credit or the Marxist-Leninists that also had candidates in the riding. Generally, however, Waffle candidates received little press coverage, and certainly less than they did during the 1972 counter-campaign.

The Waffle conducted its campaigns similar to the NDP, distributing leaflets in door-to-door canvasses and identifying supporters whom it subsequently encouraged to vote on election day. With limited financial and human resources to draw upon, and believing its best electoral prospects were disillusioned and working-class voters, the Waffle focused on polls where the NDP had performed well in previous elections. Its platform highlighted the dangers deindustrialization posed to Ontario and advocated

77 “London Election Report,” Advance, September 23, 1973, Box 1, File 8, New Democratic Party Waffle collection, MUA.
78 “Ottawa Election Report,” Advance, September 23, 1973, Box 1, File 8, New Democratic Party Waffle collection, MUA. In fact Bela Egyed did receive significant media coverage from the Ottawa Citizen. The Waffle was the focus of several articles in the paper and was likely accorded more media attention than its eventual result justified. Elsewhere, however, press coverage was not as generous. Frank Howard, “Looking at Ottawa-Centre,” Ottawa Citizen, July 6, 1974; Frank Howard, “In Ottawa Centre,” Ottawa Citizen, June 11, 1974; “Quality of representation focus of heated talks,” Ottawa Citizen, June 28, 1974.
79 The Waffle spent approximately $5000 in each campaign. “Proposed Campaign Budget,” File 13, Box 1, New Democratic Party Waffle collection, MUA.
extending women’s rights in the workplace, nationalizing all resource industries owned by multinational corporations, and increasing the minimum wage and old age pensions. The NDP for its part largely ignored the Waffle throughout the campaign. Neither its leader David Lewis nor the NDP candidates in York West, Ottawa Centre, and Middlesex-London-Lambton commented in the media about their rivals to the left.\(^{80}\)

An improved Liberal campaign, the election’s twin foci on Trudeau’s leadership and wage and price controls, and the lack of a campaign message with the resonance of its previous “corporate welfare bums” tagline, proved the NDP’s undoing in 1974.\(^{81}\) Reduced to 15.4 percent of the popular vote, the party’s caucus was nearly halved. Three Toronto seats, including David Lewis’s riding of York South, fell to the Liberals, but the biggest losses occurred in British Columbia where the party’s popular vote dropped to twenty-three per cent from thirty-five per cent in 1972.\(^{82}\) Lewis had attempted during the campaign to distance the federal NDP from Dave Barrett’s provincial government, but still lost nine of the eleven seats it had won in BC in 1972.\(^{83}\) Lewis accepted


\(^{81}\) Dorothy Allen, a 22-year-old in Saskatoon explained that she and her husband planned to vote for the Liberals because “I don’t like Stanfield’s personality and I really don’t like that David Lewis. If they got rid of him I might vote for them because I like the NDP Waffle.” Richard Cleroux, “3 Saskatchewan voters differ on the best man,” *Globe and Mail*, July 2, 1974.

\(^{82}\) In addition to Lewis, Terry Grier (Lakeshore) and John Harney (Scarborough West) lost their seats in Toronto. The party lost three seats in Saskatchewan – Bill Knight (Assiniboia), Alf Gleave (Saskatoon-Biggar), and Meadow Lake (Eli Nesdoly) – and one in Manitoba – Doug Rowland (Selkirk).

\(^{83}\) Dave Barrett and William Miller, *Barrett: A Passionate Political Life* (Vanouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 1995), 92. The defeated MPs were Paddy Neale (Vancouver East), Nels Nelson (Burnaby-Seymour), Mark Rose (Fraser Valley West), Harry Olaussen (Coast Chilcotin), Randolph Harding (Kootenay West) and Frank Howard (Skeena). Dennis Mulroney, Leonard Friesen and Don Barker failed in their bids to succeed Grace MacInnis (Vancouver Kingsway), Barry Mather (Surrey-White Rock), and Tom Barnett (Comox-Alberni), respectively.
responsibility for the debacle and in the election aftermath announced his resignation as party leader and retirement from political life.\textsuperscript{84}

The election results were profoundly disappointing for the Ontario Waffle. In all three ridings its candidates finished fourth behind the NDP, garnering a mere fraction of the NDP’s vote totals.\textsuperscript{85} In the electoral post-mortem, numerous Wafflers offered comments, criticisms, and suggestions for future activities. Doris Jantzi, an executive member from Toronto, and Bela Egyed argued “we were wrong about the timing for the formation of a socialist party.”\textsuperscript{86} Ellie Prepas’s assessment was even harsher. She informed John Richards:

I think it’s fair to say that the Ontario Waffle will have great difficulty recovering from their federal election activities. Their already diminishing credibility has all but been wiped out here in Southern Ontario. I must say that the events of the last couple of years have been very discouraging from the perspective of social change in Canada, but more particularly for me, for social change in Ontario.\textsuperscript{87}

The disenchantment amongst Wafflers was widespread and captured in a paper “Lessons of the Toronto Waffle Election Campaign” written by the York Waffle’s study group.\textsuperscript{88}

The document, which was sent to all Wafflers following the election, was “strategically

\textsuperscript{84} Smith, \textit{Unfinished Journey}, 478.
\textsuperscript{85} “1974 Election Results” \textit{Globe and Mail}, July 9, 1974. Bela Egyed finished with 877 votes in Ottawa Centre, behind the NDP’s Irving Greenberg (6,739), PC Hugh Segal (12,138) and Liberal Hugh Poulain (15,308). In York West James Laxer won 674 votes behind New Democrat Freda Hawkins (10,139), PC John Hanna (13,734) and Liberal James Fleming (28,075) but ahead of Communist Party candidate George Harris (134). Mary Campbell won 180 votes behind New Democrat Leroy Wright (5,382), PC Bill Frank (17,905), and Liberal Larry Condon (20,703) in Middlesex-London-Lambton. The Waffle candidates fared better than their former comrades in the RMG, for whom ex-Waffler Bret Smiley received only forty votes in Toronto Greenwood, the fewest of any candidate in the country. A \textit{Globe and Mail} reporter indicated that angry exchanges between members of the RMG, the CPC (M-L) and Communist Party candidates provided “a stimulating, if confusing, preliminary bout at many otherwise dull candidates meetings.” John Slinger, “Fringe candidates lose their deposits,” \textit{Globe and Mail}, July 10, 1974.
\textsuperscript{86} Doris Jantzi, Linda Hay and Bela Egyed, “Paper on Strategy,” 1974, Box 1, File 7, New Democratic Party Waffle collection, MUA.
\textsuperscript{87} Ellie Prepas to John Richards, August 9, 1974, File II.4 Correspondence, 1972-76, John Richards Papers, SAB (Saskatoon).
\textsuperscript{88} Dave McNally and Treat Hull, “Lessons of the Toronto Waffle Election Campaign,” 1974, Box 3, File 14, New Democratic Party Waffle collection, MUA.
signed by two members only… hoping this would minimize the defensive and repressive response of the leadership that arose with every hint of debate.”

It did not, and the ensuing debate marked the beginning of the end for the Ontario Waffle.

The internal debate over the Waffle’s election strategy focused on one fundamental issue – the York group’s belief that the Laxer campaign had emphasized Canadian independence at the expense of socialist principles. A Laxer leaflet with the slogan “a vote for Jim Laxer is a vote for Canadian Independence” was presented as evidence. Although Laxer’s, Egyed’s and Campbell’s other campaign materials contained the slogan “for an independent and socialist Canada,” the critics were not placated. Their perception of the purportedly undemocratic and ad hoc manner in which Laxer’s materials had been developed only enhanced their displeasure.

Laxer’s supporters lashed back at the York critique. Some thought it inappropriate that “Lessons of the Toronto Waffle Election Campaign” was distributed via an unauthorized mailing to all Wafflers. Others focused on its negative tone, deeming it “long, heavy, and hard to read,” but most reacted against the charge that the Waffle leadership had “sold-out” socialism in favour of promoting Canadian independence.

The debate over which goal should be foremost – Canadian independence or socialism – was hardly new to the Waffle. Some leftists praised the Waffle’s efforts to develop a “reasoned critique of Canadian capitalism” after leaving the NDP. But John Smart explained “the articulation of a class analysis in the Ontario Waffle in the winter of

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89 Bakan and Murton, “The Origins of the International Socialists.” The two co-signers were Dave McNally and Treat Hull.
91 Ibid.
92 Mary Campbell; Linda Hay; Bela Egyed. “Letters” Advance, September 23, 1974, Box 1, File 8, New Democratic Party Waffle collection, MUA.
93 Cross, The Decline and Fall of a Good Idea, 17.
1973 (and after) interested a small number of young academic Marxists in the Waffle in a new way… seeing Marxism coming into its own in the Waffle some people have been misled into thinking that the Waffle was dropping independence/nationalism.” In February 1974, Robert Laxer presented a paper calling on the Waffle to develop alliances with non-socialist Canadian nationalist individuals and organizations, such as the economist and former Liberal cabinet minister Eric Kierans, or the Committee for an Independent Canada. A number of Wafflers, including those in the York study group, criticized and rejected this analysis. The debate became the last straw for James Laxer and others among the Waffle leadership.

Members of the York study group intended to dominate and transform the Waffle by working within it. Looking back from the vantage point of 2006, Bakan explained “the hope was to steer a course to the left, and reverse the pattern of declining morale and loss of members that had characterized the Waffle experience since its break from the NDP.” Her recollection conflicts with another document written at the time, “For Internal Discussion Only – from AB to the comrades in Study Group (I.S., Can., Ltd.).” The author, who almost certainly was Abbie Bakan, described the York group’s strategy:

At first, before we knew how the Waffle struggle would develop, we wanted to be consolidated and at least 50 before we began to act and exist independently. We saw the Waffle as an arena in which we could develop our politics and win

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94 John Smart, “Reflections After the Waffle Summer Camp,” Advance September 23, 1974, Box 1, File 8, New Democratic Party Waffle collection, MUA.
95 Bob Laxer, “National and Class Struggles in English Canada and Quebec: The Waffle and Alliances for Independence,” Advance, April 15, 1974, Box 1, File 8, New Democratic Party Waffle collection, MUA. Mel Hurtig and George Grant were featured on one of Laxer’s election leaflets as prominent endorsers of the Waffle campaign.
96 Rob Albritton, “Nationalism in the Anti-Imperialist Struggle,” 1974, Box 1, File 14, New Democratic Party Waffle collection, MAU.
97 Bakan and Murton, “The Origins of the International Socialists”. In fact the Waffle’s membership grew, slowly but steadily, through the first year of its existence outside the NDP, before beginning to decline after reaching a peak of 635 in December 1973.
aimless revolutionaries to our ideas. Then, having accomplished that, we would split and turn to the class.98

This would be the strategy that guided the study group in the latter half of 1974 as it took the lead in criticizing the Waffle’s apparent electoral foible of emphasizing Canadian nationalism to the exclusion of socialist dogma. By the fall of 1974 the study group, as ‘AB’ wrote, “recognized ourselves as all that was left, saw our opposition as easily shed, and proceeded to go for broke.”99

The nationalism debate lasted throughout the summer of 1974. By September, James Laxer, now thoroughly exasperated, presented to the Ontario Waffle executive a statement designed to silence his critics and develop a program of activities for the group going forward. Accusing them of “mini-left, anti-nationalist sectarianism,” Laxer labeled his opponents the “Americanized new left” more interested in sterile debates than “the compelling need to give socialist leadership to the nationalist movement.”100 Laxer’s defenders at times veered into an increasingly hostile anti-Americanism. John Smart’s paper prepared for the October Council meeting made a point of distinguishing which critics (and members of the York study group) were American citizens, implying this characteristic alone was sufficient to discredit their complaints.101

The showdown occurred in October at the Waffle Council meeting in Ottawa. Laxer’s foes had previously circulated a position paper entitled “Towards an Alternative Strategy” in response to the Laxer statement recently adopted by the executive. Virginia

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98 “For Internal Discussion Only – from AB to the comrades in Study Group (I.S., Can., Ltd.),” n.d., Box 1, File 10, New Democratic Party Waffle collection, MUA. The “class” in this context can only refer to the working class.
99 Ibid.
100 “Strategy Statement Adopted by the Ontario Provincial Executive on September 14,” 1974, Box 3, File 13, New Democratic Party Waffle collection, MUA.
Hunter, writing in *Canadian Forum*, suggested Laxer’s limited effort in organizing for the meeting might have indicated that he had already abandoned the movement, at least emotionally.¹⁰² Most local Waffle groups, including all three in Toronto, rejected the executive strategy in favour of the “Towards an Alternative Strategy” document. As Hunter recounted, “many of us knew days, even weeks, earlier that Laxer wanted nothing less than complete submission on the part of his opponents or he would leave the movement.”¹⁰³ Similarly, the Ottawa Waffle threatened to leave the movement if the executive report was not adopted. And so it was. The Waffle Council rejected the executive strategy, and Laxer and his supporters promptly departed the meeting and the movement. A month later, they officially resigned from the Waffle executive.¹⁰⁴ In a letter mailed to Wafflers the Laxer faction justified their decision:

> It was clear… that there were people in the Waffle with fundamental disagreements with the past policies and activities of the Waffle… in its present state the Waffle cannot make a useful contribution to the politics of our country…we do not intend to participate in a sterile debate within the Waffle.¹⁰⁵

The remaining Wafflers made plans for a December convention in Toronto, at which the York study group completed its takeover of the Waffle. A few long-time Wafflers, including Virginia Hunter, walked out of the convention once they realized the new group’s commitment to socialism had little to do with the Waffle’s origins.¹⁰⁶ The “Revolutionary Socialist Programme” produced by members of the York study group argued that “the struggle must be devoted to mobilizing the working class as part of an

¹⁰³ Ibid.
¹⁰⁴ Corileen North, handwritten note, 1975, Box 3, File 13, New Democratic Party Waffle collection, MUA. They also turned over the key to the Waffle’s post office box and mailing address. The Canadian International Socialists continued to use PO Box 339 as its mailing address in 2018.
¹⁰⁵ Doug Campbell, Mary Campbell, Linda Hay, John Hutcheson, Doris Jantzi, Kaza Kaplan, Jim Laxer, Dave Neumann, Elfrieda Neumann, Sam Sharpe, Cec Taylor, “Dear Waffle Member” December 2, 1974, Box 1, File 13, New Democratic Party Waffle collection, MUA.
¹⁰⁶ Hunter, “Why I Left the Waffle.”
anti-imperialist, socialist movement.” Only a tiny remnant, about twenty-five members, was left. Hunter’s comment that they were soon “swept away by the kind of love for the working class that only middle-class children can feel,” illustrated the deep divisions separating the York study group from the former Wafflers.

The few remaining Wafflers quickly established contacts with the International Socialists in the United States, resolving in February 1975 that “we should put our Waffle past behind us and move on.” The Waffle, they concluded, had been too much like the NDP, too left nationalist and too focused on labour bureaucrats. Initially adopting the name ‘Independent Socialists (Ontario)’ as “a concession to a lingering commitment to left nationalism,” the group soon broke even this final tie to its Waffle past by renaming itself the International Socialists and publishing a newspaper, *Workers’ Action.* The Ontario Waffle Movement for an Independent Socialist Canada was no more. After Laxer visited John Richards following his resignation from the group he had helped found, Richards wrote “I am delighted that Laxer has finally seen the light about the increasingly sectarian nature of the Ontario Waffle… it was a pleasure to see him talking relatively rationally about the irrelevance of much of the sectarian Marxism being propounded by the Waffle, both in Ontario and in Saskatchewan.”

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107 Bonnie Benedik, Rob Albritton, Dave McNally, Steve Wojcik, Myer Siemiatycki, Don Lake, Nancy Shanacy, Abbie Bakan, Harvey Pinder, Michael Mitchie, Ray van Eenouough, “Revolutionary Socialist Programme,” Box 1, File 7, New Democratic Party Waffle collection, MUA.


109 Hunter, “Why I Left the Waffle.”

110 Don Lake to Abbie Bakan, January 14, 1975, Box 1, File 14, New Democratic Party Waffle collection, MUA; Steve Wojcik, “Perspectives on Transforming the Ontario Waffle,” Box 1, File 14, New Democratic Party Waffle collection, MUA.

111 Bakan and Murton, “The Origins of the International Socialists.”

112 John Richards to Ellie Prepas, November 4, 1974, File II.4 Correspondence, 1972-76, John Richards Papers, SAB (Saskatoon).
Meanwhile in Saskatchewan, John Richards’s desire to seek re-election in Saskatoon led to an intense debate within the provincial Waffle over the strategic and ideological purpose of electoral participation. As the Saskatchewan Waffle, influenced by Joe Roberts, Lorne Brown and John Conway, adopted a rigid Marxist-Leninist analysis it questioned the strategic value of electoral participation and ultimately rejected Richards’s coalition-based approach to campaigning. After splitting from the NDP and waging municipal campaigns in Regina, Saskatoon, and Moose Jaw in 1973, the Saskatchewan Waffle undertook an internal education program in early 1974 aimed at providing “the membership with the theoretical background necessary for a debate on party and electoral tactics prior to the founding convention of a new political formation.”¹¹³ The internal education program received a mixed response. It was criticized as “too heavy,” and Caroline Brown claimed the program not only failed but also made some Wafflers feel like “they have no skills, a low level of consciousness” which led to feelings of alienation from the organization.¹¹⁴ Conversely, Pat Gallagher argued the internal education program successfully familiarized the membership with “basic socialist concepts necessary to adopting a Marxist analysis of class and political economy” preparatory to the group’s decision to form an explicitly Marxist party.¹¹⁵

John Richards’s experience as an independent MLA illustrated the conflicting impulses of the Saskatchewan Waffle after its split from the NDP. Uncertain about seeking re-election as an independent candidate in the next provincial election, he sought

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clarification from the Saskatoon Waffle about its future directions. The “lengthy and intense debate” within the group during early 1974 sent Richards contradictory messages. A straw poll revealed a majority in favour of his running again, a motion that the group reject electoral politics “at this stage in its development” passed, and another a motion refusing to support Richards’s candidacy was defeated. The Saskatoon group then tabled a motion approving Richards’s re-election bid without using the Waffle label until the provincial leadership had decided whether or not he could run as a Waffler. Richards confided to a friend that although he did not expect to be re-elected he still believed “electoral politics can be a useful way of raising issues, and I am moderately pleased at what I’ve been able to do since 1971.” Nevertheless, he also admitted “I get fits of depression where I think all this politics is going nowhere and I’m wasting my time.”

By departing the provincial NDP caucus Richards became isolated in the legislature. He was unable in April 1974, for example, to find a seconder for four of his motions, including one calling on the provincial government to oppose the recently filed application for construction of the Mackenzie Valley pipeline. Having previously encountered the same problem when he sought to introduce a motion on the potash industry, Richards’s frustration erupted into a heated exchange with Speaker Fred Dewhurst, who admonished the Waffle MLA for being “vulgar and rude.” Richards believed that NDP backbenchers who otherwise would have seconded his motions had been pressured by their caucus not to do so, a tactic he described as a “heavy-handed

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117 John Richards to Ben, March 15, 1974, File II.4 Correspondence, 1972-76, John Richards Papers, SAB (Saskatoon).
attempt to squash the fly.” Ostracized by the NDP, Richards had little chance of finding support from the Liberal opposition which he had dismissed as “incompetent.” Liberal MLAs complained about Richards’s attempt to question the government over its future development plans for Saskatchewan’s woodlands after an article in Next Year Country alleged overcutting of the province’s forests.

Cy Gonick, who knew firsthand the challenges of being isolated in the legislature, sympathized with Richards’s situation. He wrote to Richards:

I was sorry to see you in such rough shape. I know what it’s like because I’ve been there myself. I don’t like what I see about the Waffle. They sound to me like a Marxist-Leninist sect—totally out of touch with the concerns of ‘the masses’ and increasingly incapable of communicating with them. I detect a slavish and mechanistic application of Marxism which can only isolate them further—and a gross intolerance of other points of view.

Richards agreed with Gonick’s assessment of the Waffle’s increasingly “sectarian tendencies” in Ontario and Saskatchewan, but remained hopeful for “a return to more rational socialist politics.” He admitted to “operating increasingly independently of the Waffle because it is incapable of undertaking any active outgoing politics that involve people,” which he attributed to the Waffle’s recent ideological rigidity preventing it from forming coalitions with extra-parliamentary social movements. Richards explained:

It is easy to dismiss the NDP’s issues as ‘social democratic reformism’, but they are no more reformist than most issues posed by trade union collective bargaining, poor people’s groups, native organizations, etc. I would argue that it is only by posing ‘reforms’, working with groups to achieve them, that one can

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119 Ibid.
120 Ibid.
121 “Richards’ inquiry into future of Sask. forests unsuccessful,” Saskatoon Star-Phoenix, April 11, 1974.
124 Ibid.
credibly pose the socialist case regarding major contradictions in capitalist society.125

Despite Richards’s qualms about the provincial Waffle’s strategy, members of the Saskatoon group encouraged his re-election.126 Richards, believing in the tactical value of election campaigns for highlighting important issues, building coalitions among progressives, and educating the public about socialist measures, agreed.127 At a meeting chaired by former CCF cabinet minister Joe Phelps and attended by more than 100 people, Richards launched his campaign on March 29, 1974, more than a year before the provincial election was called.128 Launching the campaign before the Waffle finalized its stance on electoral politics generally and participation in the next provincial election specifically sparked a reaction from the Steering Committee. Although its members officially endorsed Richards’s candidacy, they sought a meeting with the Saskatoon local “to resolve the dilemma” and committed to measures “to ensure this type of situation does not arise again.”129 Even after President Don Mitchell and Associate President Sonja Gehl met with the Saskatoon group the question of the Waffle’s position on electoral politics remained undecided. In an “open letter” to the Saskatchewan Wafflers, Ken Collier and Richards pleaded with them to resolve the issue immediately. They urged their comrades to expand beyond purely abstract theoretical discussions and to debate and resolve such practical matters as the criteria to be used when choosing

125 Ibid.
126 Gerry Kowalenko to John Richards, May 22, 1974, File II.4 Correspondence, 1972-76, John Richards Papers, SAB (Saskatoon).
129 Waffle Steering Committee Meeting Minutes, April 6, 1974, File II.31 Meetings c. 1972-1983, Saskatchewan Waffle fonds, SAB (Regina).
constituencies, the degree of independence to be granted individual candidates, and whether they must run as exclusively Waffle candidates. Collier and Richards warned, presciently as it turned out, that “without an electoral presence, we fear the socialist ideas of the Waffle will achieve few public outlets and the Waffle will condemn itself to being a study group wherein committed socialists come together to debate their respective positions.”

At a strategy conference held at a camp on the shores of Lake Diefenbaker in August 1974, the Waffle attempted to formulate its plans for the next provincial election. A paper prepared by sixteen contributors questioned why the Waffle should participate in elections. Pointing to the 1973 overthrow of Salvador Allende’s socialist government in Chile as evidence, it contended “socialism cannot be legislated in with the use of the ballot box.” Even as a tactic for raising consciousness or promoting specific reforms the benefits of electoral participation were in doubt, as attested by the Saskatchewan Waffle’s failure to advance its policy agenda despite electing one of its own as an MLA in the governing party. Declaring contesting elections to be nothing more than “right opportunism,” the sixteen insisted the Waffle could maintain a public presence without electing its members to public office. The Moose Jaw Waffle, which included John Conway and Don Mitchell, presented a contrasting view by arguing participation in elections “is consistent with but not central to the development of a broader socialist movement to ultimately gain state power.” Claiming that “the debate has centered too

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much on whether or not we run candidates and not enough on setting out a positive overall approach to the election,” it proposed the Saskatchewan Waffle plan a province-wide campaign complete with public meetings, pamphleting, and a media strategy. The Moose Jaw group encouraged their counterparts in Prince Albert, Regina and Saskatoon to join them in running candidates, subject to ratification by the Steering Committee.132

Richards complained the debate over electoral participation indicated a “failure to tolerate disagreement and exaggeration of the significance of strategic decisions.” It had resulted in members who were at least nominally Wafflers critically labelling one another as “social democrat,” “objectively reactionary,” “sectarian,” “opportunist,” and “vanguardist.” Regardless, he defended his decision to seek re-election and explained the usefulness of electoral participation. A precondition for conducting an election campaign, Richards contended, is that it have sufficient backing from “those whose struggles we support” in order to be seen as a “valuable common activity” and thereby “rise above the level of sectarian irrelevance.” He emphasized the need to form coalitions with other activists and social movements, and not to “elevate the refusal to compromise to a moral absolute.” In Richards’s estimation the Waffle’s choice was clear: “either we opt for a miniscule Marxist vanguard organization or a more ideologically eclectic mass organization.”133 Unfortunately the conference failed to settle the debate and within a month Richards stopped attending Steering Committee meetings. By November 1974 John Conway had concluded that “clearly everyone rejects Richards’ idea of federation politics,” and one month later Richards told a friend that


the Waffle had by this time changed its nature and become far more dogmatic in its ideology and approach to politics. It strove to define itself as a ‘revolutionary Marxist’ organization that spurned participation in bourgeois institutions such as parliamentary electioneering. From being an organization somewhat eclectically interested in a wide range of groups (labour, farm, women, native people) and issues, it decided to concentrate on the ‘working class’. Processes of sectarianism have splintered the Waffle both in Ontario and Saskatchewan.\(^\text{134}\)

Most Saskatoon Wafflers ceased participating in the provincial group, devoting their energies instead to supporting Richards’s “Independent Socialist” reelection campaign.\(^\text{135}\)

While the Waffle in Ontario and Saskatchewan wrestled with their position on feminism and socialism after splitting from the NDP, female party members continued to advocate key polices of the women’s liberation movement. This internal pressure from the women’s movement along with leftists in the BC and Ontario parties indicated the departure of the Waffle and its offspring Left Caucus was not the death knell of left influence on the NDP in the mid-1970s. The 1973 federal NDP convention had voted to hold a national women’s conference the following year, a Waffle proposal that delegates to the 1971 federal NDP convention had previously defeated. The conference was held in Winnipeg in July 1974 following the federal election. But first, a BC NDP Women’s Conference took place in May 1974, at which the BC NDP Women’s Rights Committee, energized by premier Dave Barrett’s refusal to establish a provincial ministry for women’s equality, passed a comprehensive analysis of socialism, women’s liberation and the NDP’s policy on women’s rights.\(^\text{136}\) The BC NDP Women’s Rights Committee in turn sent a large delegation to the national women’s conference in July, determined to


\(^{136}\) Meggs and Mickleburgh, The Art of the Impossible, 245.
raise support for a female leadership candidate to succeed Davis Lewis as party leader.\textsuperscript{137} Rosemary Brown, a keynote speaker at the Winnipeg conference, urged the NDP to embrace the cause of women’s liberation, stating bluntly that “true equality of women is the cornerstone of socialism” but male New Democrats still considered women’s liberationists the “nut fringe” of the party. Brown warned that failing to support feminist goals would cost the NDP dearly, for “women have decided that they are no longer going to support any government that isn’t committed to women’s rights… But socialist women can’t swing their votes. We must swing our party.”\textsuperscript{138} Prominent participants at the conference, which had the added legitimacy of federal NDP sponsorship, could hardly be associated with the party’s “fringe.” Speakers included former MP Grace MacInnis and London Mayor Jane Bigelow. Nancy Eng, a federal NDP vice-president and chair of the party’s Participation of Women Committee was also a leading supporter.\textsuperscript{139} One of the event’s organizers, the ex-Waffler Hilda Thomas, described it as a “feminist-socialist conference… although there are different views about feminism there is a general agreement that the NDP belongs in the women’s movement.”\textsuperscript{140}

While the conference attendees were by no means unanimous in their interpretations of feminism and socialism, they did endorse a series of radical and extensive recommendations. These included affirmative action legislation guaranteeing women equal employment opportunities at any company or institution in receipt of public funds, maternity leave, a homemakers’ bill of rights modeled after the Veterans’ Bill of Rights, the extension of Canada Pension Plan benefits to women not employed outside

\textsuperscript{137} Brown, Being Brown, 150, 154
the home, free 24-hour government-subsidized child care, the extension of medicare to cover prescription drugs, more federal research into birth control and family planning education, and the elimination of sexism from television and radio advertising and programming as well as the school system. Delegates also demanded the NDP publish a booklet on women’s health, and its federal caucus oppose the recent criminal conviction of Dr. Henry Morgentaler for performing abortions and push for the decriminalization of abortion.¹⁴¹

In essence, the national conference endorsed the radical BC Women’s Manifesto, which political scientist Lisa Young described as “a blistering condemnation of the treatment of women in Canadian society and a thinly veiled attack on the NDP provincial government in British Columbia’s record on issues of importance to women.”¹⁴² David Lewis objected to the attacks on the BC government and the “unnecessarily strident language” of the BC Women’s Manifesto.¹⁴³ However later that year the NDP Federal Council, despite approving a statement which dropped the critique of the BC government and replaced “oppression” of women with “discrimination” against women, committed the party to supporting the relatively radical policy recommendations of free child care, maternity leave, decriminalization of abortion, improved access to birth control, and changes in labour and pension laws. Young contends that in so doing the federal NDP “endorsed the key elements of the feminist policy agenda.”¹⁴⁴ The BC NDP Women’s Committee also convinced the conference to support a female leadership candidate for the federal NDP. After both Grace MacInnis and Nancy Eng declined invitations to run,

¹⁴² Young, Feminists and Party Politics, 138.
¹⁴³ Ibid., 139.
¹⁴⁴ Ibid. Young also argues that the NDP’s women’s organizer, Anne DeWitt, became a feminist advocate within the party following a 1974 debate on the federal party executive.
the influential Victoria Socialist NDP Women’s Caucus encouraged Rosemary Brown to accept the challenge. Brown agreed, launching her campaign before any other candidates had declared.

Although Barrett and his supporters had effectively absorbed the Waffle into the mainstream of the BC NDP by the 1972 provincial election, this did not preclude lefist elements within the party from criticizing his government. Barrett’s refusal to create a ministry for women’s equality clearly rankled, and his tepid and brief endorsement of Brown’s candidacy for the federal NDP leadership exposed further the divide between the BC women’s movement’s most prominent spokesperson and the Premier. Waffler Harold Steves and former BCFL political action director Colin Gabelmann also occasionally clashed with the government in the legislature, and leftist critics were vocal members of the BC NDP Vancouver Area Council, but none challenged Barrett’s leadership during his first two years in office. Left challengers did emerge at the BC NDP convention in Kamloops held over the Labour Day weekend in the aftermath of the disappointing federal election results. Hans Brown, the 1972 provincial campaign manager and Waffle supporter, used the party’s newspaper The Democrat not only to announce his resignation as provincial secretary, but also to chastise the Barrett government for paying insufficient attention to the party and its activists leading up to the convention. When the BC NDP executive submitted a report to the convention condemning the government for failing to fulfill its commitments to party policy, the

145 Brown, Being Brown, 156.
146 Avakumovic, Socialism in Canada, 265; Meggs and Mickleburgh, The Art of the Impossible, 234-238.
147 Meggs and Mickleburgh, The Art of the Impossible, 227-228.
media predicted a showdown. But successful organizing by Barrett supporters before the convention led to delegates rejecting the executive report by a vote of 368 to 202. Allies of Barrett and the government repeatedly carried votes throughout the convention, and won every spot on the provincial executive. Nevertheless, delegates adopted, albeit over Barrett’s objections, the BC Women’s Manifesto drafted by the provincial NDP women’s conference in May and supported by the national NDP women’s conference in July. The Women’s Rights Committee was pleasantly surprised by the outcome since, as ex-Waffler Sharon Yandle recalled, “we had come prepared to lose.”

The convention’s support led to a thaw in the icy relations between Barrett’s administration and the women’s movement, particularly after some activists were brought into the government. Still, as Rosemary Brown recalled, many women’s groups, believing the NDP viewed them with “hostility and distrust… decided to sit out the [1975] election and explore options other than electoral politics in the search for equality and justice for women” as an expression of their disenchantment with the Barrett government.

BC’s women’s groups were not alone on the left criticizing the NDP’s moderation. Despite the Waffle’s ouster in 1972 and the departure of the Left Caucus the following year, tensions between leftists and the Ontario NDP leadership remained.

Stephen Lewis was caught by surprise when twenty-eight delegates to the 1974 ONDP

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convention in Sudbury, including two members of his caucus, signed a document urging
the party to halt its “drift towards moderation” and instead move into the “vacuum on the
left” of Canadian politics. MP John Rodriguez and MPPs Jan Dukszta and Floyd
Laughren made clear this call represented neither a challenge to the party leadership nor
the Waffle reincarnated. Laughren explained “in no way should this be construed as the
son of Waffle,” while Dukszta declared “the Waffle is dead and buried.”

Despite Dukszta’s assurance that the appeal was not “a divisive document” but “an analysis
within the family,” Lewis responded unenthusiastically before eagerly describing a
second statement by the two MPPs as “a complete retraction.”

The party also passed a
natural resources policy committed to public ownership that met with Lewis’s approval,
and he urged riding associations to seek out female candidates to run in the upcoming
provincial election.

With the Waffle gone, Lewis revisited an issue from the previous
election campaign by seeking to differentiate the Ontario NDP’s image from that of the
labour movement by elaborating upon significant policy differences between the party
and unions. Although Lewis’s effort to place some daylight between himself and
union leaders undoubtedly appeared disingenuous to Wafflers, their absence from the
Ontario NDP in 1974 clearly did not mean the party was free of leftist critics.

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In Saskatchewan, where the Waffle had rejected John Richards re-election bid and Wafflers in Saskatoon had decamped in order to support his independent campaign, ideological and strategic unity continued to elude the group. Conflicts over the internal politics of the Métis Society of Saskatchewan, the contentious departure of two separate Trotskyist groups, the importance of nationalism, and control of the left newsmagazine *Next Year Country* absorbed much of the Saskatchewan Waffle’s attention and energy during 1974 and 1975. Little interested in the provincial election campaign that resulted in the NDP government’s re-election, the Saskatchewan Waffle offered no support to John Richards, its erstwhile MLA, whose re-election bid as an independent socialist failed despite mustering a respectable fourth-place finish.

The Waffle in northern Saskatchewan included a number of community planners hired by the newly established Department of Northern Saskatchewan (DNS). Waffler Ken Collier recalled a ‘Wednesday night group’ that included Native and Métis Society activists who met regularly to discuss Waffle position papers and the failures of the DNS. The second issue of *Next Year Country* featured an article entitled “The True North: DNS – Re-Occupying the Colony,” which criticized the minister, Ted Bowerman, and his deputy, Wilf Churchman. Denunciations continued until another scathing critique in May 1974 led to the DNS firing planners sympathetic to the Waffle. According to Ken Collier, the “Wednesday night group ultimately became the organizing mechanism

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around which the support for those people who were being dismissed got picked up.”

The Waffle also struggled to navigate the complicated politics of the Métis Society of Saskatchewan. Métis Society leader Jim Sinclair was a persistent critic of the Blakeney government, and Waffle leaders attending Métis Society meetings were received with reactions ranging from “enthused to non-committed to perhaps some displeasure.” Further confusing matters, Sinclair clashed with former Métis Society leader Howard Adams, an outspoken author and activist, over the latter’s claims that Sinclair was improperly spending Society funds. During the dispute, which ended with Adams’s ouster as a Métis Society director, he identified as a Waffler. Don Mitchell and Sonja Gehl wrote to the Métis Society on behalf of the Waffle to repudiate Adams and reassure the Society that their group had “no role to play in the internal politics of the Métis Society.” Regardless, in September 1974 the Waffle Steering Committee reported on its “deteriorating relationship” with the Métis Society.

Divisions within the Saskatchewan Waffle became increasingly pronounced as a handful of its members began identifying with the Trotskyist Revolutionary Marxist Group (RMG) that emerged from out of the ashes of the Left Caucus and the LSA. They produced an 8,500-word manuscript embracing Trotskyism, decrying the Waffle’s nationalism, and declaring “the concept of socialism in one country (never mind one province!) is a reactionary utopian ideal which leads to the concrete abandonment of

162 Waffle Steering Committee Meeting Minutes, November 24, 1974, File II.31 Meetings c. 1972-1983, Saskatchewan Waffle fonds, SAB (Regina). Don Mitchell discovered that the Métis Society of Saskatchewan was focused on the upcoming provincial election.
163 Gruending, Promises to Keep, 120-122.
165 Waffle Steering Committee Meeting Minutes, September 22, 1974, File II.31 Meetings c. 1972-1983, Saskatchewan Waffle fonds, SAB (Regina).
proletarian internationalism.”\textsuperscript{166} Delegates at the Saskatchewan Waffle’s Annual General Meeting in November 1974 responded by passing a constitutional amendment specifying that members of the Waffle “shall belong to no other political party or sectarian group,” thereby making possible the expulsion of the RMG converts.\textsuperscript{167}

The Saskatchewan Waffle continued to vacillate over its plans to hold a founding convention for a new Marxist political party in the spring of 1975. On the one hand, Pat Gallagher, newly acclaimed as the Waffle’s co-president, argued that unresolved debates over the purpose and structure of the party and the role nationalism would play in it were detrimental to creating a new organization in such short order.\textsuperscript{168} On the other hand, John Conway, who advocated a Leninist ‘vanguard party’ structure without a nationalist emphasis, urged the Waffle to “get on with it” and hold a founding convention as soon as possible regardless of the lack of internal agreement.\textsuperscript{169} Ultimately the Steering Committee passed a motion presented by Ken Collier and Don Mitchell, the Saskatchewan Waffle’s other co-president, to hold a founding convention in April 1975 ahead of achieving consensus on policy matters.\textsuperscript{170}

In the lead-up to the convention, debate continued over the purpose and structure of the party. Some leading Wafflers embraced the ideological certainty that can accompany Marxist sectarian politics. Lorne Brown, during a debate with John Conway

\textsuperscript{167} Saskatchewan Waffle Annual General Meeting Minutes, November 8-10, 1974, and Waffle Steering Committee Meeting Minutes, November 24, 1974, File II.31 Meetings c. 1972-1983, Saskatchewan Waffle fonds, SAB (Regina).
\textsuperscript{170} Waffle Provincial Steering Committee Meeting Minutes, January 5, 1975, File II.31 Meetings c. 1972-1983, Saskatchewan Waffle fonds, SAB (Regina).
over whether nationalism was a progressive or regressive position, declared “one of the important differences between Marxists and idealists is that the former base their political strategy on a concrete analysis of objective conditions rather than wishful thinking, guess work, dogmatic assumptions or moralism.” Larry Kowalchuk decried the “academic intimidation, personal attacks, externalized debates, lack of attendance at meetings and irresponsible levels of tardiness” typical of Wafflers, himself included. Conway complained that the Regina Waffle had “been locked in an increasingly incapacitating debate on the national question.”

Debate at the April convention crystallized over two rival manifestos. The Blue Manifesto, promoted by Conway, would have the Saskatchewan Waffle deemphasize Canadian nationalism and form a Leninist vanguard party to pursue its revolutionary goals. The Yellow Manifesto, supported by Lorne Brown and Joe Roberts, emphasized Canadian nationalism as well as class conflict and rejected a Trotskyist strategy for the Waffle. The convention adopted the Yellow Manifesto, and Conway claimed its supporters had directed “vicious and slanderous charges” at the Blue caucus, demonstrating the increased polarization within the Waffle. In the convention aftermath Brown and Roberts, while conceding the debate was “sometimes more heated than enlightened,” lauded the outcome as giving the Waffle a new statement of principles, a revised constitutional structure, and a clearer direction going forward. Now the Waffle

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174 Joe Roberts, “An Introduction to Trotskyism with Comments on Trotskyist Lines in the Waffle,” Waffle Newsletter, Special Issue 1975, File II.35 Newsletters c. 1971-1979, Saskatchewan Waffle fonds, SAB (Regina); The manifestos’ names referred to the colour of paper they were printed on.
could focus on three fronts: agitation in the labour movement, intensive investigations into agriculture and northern Saskatchewan, and exploring relations with socialist formations elsewhere in Canada, all pointing to the goal of forming a Marxist party nationally. Roberts, who replaced Conway as editor and primary contributor to the *Waffle Newsletter*, steered the publication in a new direction. Whereas previously the *Newsletter* had focused principally on internal Waffle debates over policy and tactics, under Roberts’s editorship the *Newsletter* added coverage of the international Marxist left. In the first issue he edited, for example, Roberts and Camilo (a pseudonym) wrote critical reviews of articles by the Belgian Trotskyist Ernest Mandel and French existential-Marxist André Gorz on workers’ control. It also included a reprinted article by the Canadian Communist Party that critiqued the Saskatchewan Waffle’s recent convention.

Describing itself as a “pre-party formation,” the Saskatchewan Waffle effectively declined to participate in the provincial election of June 1975. Absent the Saskatoon Wafflers, most of whom supported John Richards’s re-election bid, the pre-party formation consisted of two small groups in Prince Albert and Moose Jaw and a larger group in Regina, all concerned principally with internal education and debate. Numerous Wafflers expressed frustration at the group’s direction. In January 1975, when the Regina Waffle did not protest the provincial government’s legislation ordering striking members of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) back to work,

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176 *Waffle Newsletter*, June 1975, File II.35 Newsletters c. 1971-1979, Saskatchewan Waffle fonds, SAB (Regina). Roberts responded to the CP’s critique in the following issue of the newsletter.
Conway complained “once again, events pass us by.” Ken Collier, in a letter describing his impression of the April 1975 convention, commented “there were times during the academic infighting that I turned my thoughts to earlier, real experiences in the peace movement, in unions, in the NDP, and in jobs.” Recalling the Wafflers’ inability to engage effectively in the wave of union resistance to wage controls imposed by the federal government and supported by the Blakeney government provincially, Don Kossick lamented “they got so caught up in the debates over the proper way of running a Leninist structure that they missed all those mobile things that were happening all around them.” In retrospect, Ron de la Hay admitted

I think the study we did was good, for those of us who were interested in that, but to just let it dominate our activity and not achieve anything else was a mistake. It didn’t really do much good to have all these ideologically correct people around if nothing comes of it. There has to be the action as well as the theory.

In the Waffle’s absence the Saskatchewan NDP’s re-election campaign was low-key, emphasizing the accomplishments of the Blakeney government’s first term, the Premier’s competence as an administrator, and the province’s right to control its natural resources. The government hoped to benefit from the recent boom in prices for wheat, oil and potash as well as anger over a recent court ruling favouring federal jurisdiction in the inter-provincial and international trade of potash. The party touted among its accomplishments the Land Bank, FarmStart loans, new community colleges, a rebate program on land taxes and home property improvements, dental insurance for children,

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182 Gruending, Promises to Keep, 134.
subsidized daycare, and the creation of a provincial Ombudsman and human rights commission. During the campaign the NDP promised continued improvements to life in rural Saskatchewan and to diversify the provincial economy through further resource development. Its platform, *New Deal ’75*, promised “New Democrats will continue to act to see that Saskatchewan people get the greatest possible benefit from our resources… This may well involve new approaches to public ownership, to joint ventures between the government and private enterprise, and to resource royalties and taxation.” Liberal leader David Steuart took direct aim at the Land Bank, attacking it for artificially inflating land prices, and accused the NDP of seeking to create a system of state farming. Although Saskatchewan voters re-elected the NDP to a reduced majority with thirty-nine MLAs, its losses included fifteen per cent of the popular vote and eight rural seats since 1971. Historian Dennis Gruending concluded the lesson for the NDP caucus “was that the Land Bank was unpopular.” The Liberals retained fifteen seats and suffered an eleven per cent decline in their popular vote to 31.7 per cent. The PCs, under leader Richard Collver, gained seven MLAs and 27.6 per cent of the popular vote after being shut out of the legislature since 1967.

Even without making the provincial election their priority, members of the Saskatchewan Waffle participated by distributing an election supplement to *Next Year Country* in Regina, Moose Jaw and Prince Albert. Despite the Waffle rejecting his

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183 Ibid.
186 Gruending, *Promises to Keep*, 110.
approach to electoral politics, John Richards sought re-election as an “Independent Socialist” candidate in the new riding of Saskatoon Centre, which contained much of his former constituency. His campaign committee consisted almost entirely of former Saskatoon Wafflers, including John Piper, Rob Dumont, Don Kerr, Jill Sargent and June Bantjes. Although former Ontario Waffle leader James Laxer spoke at a Richards fundraising event, no support was forthcoming from the Saskatchewan Waffle. John Warnock recalled the Saskatoon group “felt really badly done by the Waffle because the Waffle wouldn’t support them because they considered Richards to be a social democrat.” Richards described the aims of his campaign as winning re-election and ensuring the “survival of the creative, dynamic left tradition in Saskatchewan politics” by raising public awareness of women’s rights, the plight of the poor, inadequate housing, high-rise developments in Saskatoon, and “colonialism in northern Saskatchewan.” Richards’s election advertisements portrayed him as an independently-minded left opposition to the NDP. One such advertisement explained “Like any large organization the NDP makes mistakes, hides things, accumulates power. It needs all the PRODDING and UNSETTLING it can get.” Another urged “At least keep Socialism in the debate in Saskatchewan.” The NDP MLA Paul Mostoway, faced with the dissolution of his riding of Hanley, ran against Richards in Saskatoon Centre. The Saskatoon Coalition for

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188 Meeting of the Committee of Fifteen, July 29, 1974, File III.17 Saskatoon-Centre, 1974-75, John Richards Papers, SAB (Saskatoon).
Life endorsed Mostoway who supported the elimination of legal abortions in Saskatchewan. Richards, by contrast, made support for abortion and women’s rights a central theme in his campaign. Mostoway narrowly won, just 359 votes ahead of the Liberal Doug Knott. Richards finished fourth with over fifteen per cent of the vote, behind Progressive Conservative Morris Cherneskey.

Current and former Wafflers as well as the Métis Society supported two other independent candidates in the 1975 election, coordinating a fundraising event with Richards. Frank Tomkins ran in the northeastern riding of Cumberland, losing to the NDP’s Norman MacAuley and finishing fourth with just over ten per cent of the vote. Rod Bishop, who ran as a socialist candidate, lost to New Democrat Fred Thompson in the northwestern riding of Athabasca, finishing third with twenty-one per cent of the vote.

The Saskatchewan Waffle assessed the election campaign and results at a Provincial Council meeting in June 1975. Conceding that Richards’s campaign “presented a clear picture of why voting for an independent candidate may have some legitimacy in defending the interests of protest groups,” it attributed his lack of working-class support to his failure to offer a class analysis or clear Marxist position. Lorne Brown maintained that the NDP lost seats because farmers, workers and Native peoples

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193 Saskatoon Coalition for Life advertisement, File III.8 Elections – 1975 Campaign, John Richards Papers, SAB (Saskatoon).
194 The results in Saskatoon Centre were Mostoway (NDP) 3117, Knott (Liberal) 2758, Cherneskey (PC) 2284 and Richards (Ind.) 1492. Saskatchewan. Chief Electoral Officer of Saskatchewan. Report of the Chief Electoral Officer: Eighteenth General Election 1975. Saskatoon, 1975.
197 Larry Sanders, “Provincial Council Meeting in Prince Albert, June 21 and 22,” Waffle Newsletter, Summer 1975, File II.35 Newsletters c. 1971-1979, Saskatchewan Waffle fonds, SAB (Regina). The Saskatchewan Waffle argued that Richards had received support primarily from the university community, and claimed that workers only voted for the NDP in order to keep out the Liberals.
were no longer united by a desire to defeat a right-wing Liberal government. He claimed “there was no party presenting policies clearly in the interest of the working class” in 1975, and criticized the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour (SFL) for its moderation.\(^{198}\)

Despite Joe Roberts’s enthusiasm for the labour movement’s militancy demonstrated by its resistance to wage controls and his encouraging of Wafflers to engage in the SFL campaign, internal divisions rather than organizing continued to preoccupy the Saskatchewan Waffle for eight months after the provincial election.\(^ {199}\) The Saskatoon Waffle had not existed since 1974 when most of its members supported Richards’s re-election campaign and shared his bitterness over being rejected by the Waffle leadership. Ten members of the International Socialists (IS) briefly reconstituted the Saskatoon Waffle in 1975 before abandoning it later that year. According to Roberts’s calculations, “now two manifestations of ideological and political error have purged themselves from the Waffle: the right opportunism of Richards’ electoralism and the left adventurism of the Saskatoon ten’s workerism.”\(^ {200}\) Although Conway had been similarly critical of “Richards’ idea of federation politics,” he and the Blue caucus expressed dismay at the IS members’ departure.\(^ {201}\) Conway argued that the Saskatchewan Waffle erred by ignoring developments in Ontario over the previous two years, specifically the creation of the RMG and IS, both Trotskyist organizations, and urged Roberts to stop “Trot-baiting.”\(^ {202}\) A few months later, in February 1976, Conway

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\(^{198}\) Ibid.

\(^{199}\) *Waffle Newsletter*, V.2, N. 1, 1976, File II.35 Newsletters c. 1971-1979, Saskatchewan Waffle fonds, SAB (Regina).


\(^{201}\) *Waffle Newsletter*, January 1975, File II.35 Newsletters c. 1971-1979, Saskatchewan Waffle fonds, SAB (Regina).

and eleven other members of the Blue caucus resigned from the Saskatchewan Waffle, criticizing its errant positions on nationalism and workers’ control, its “tailism,” and its new, more rigorous membership procedures.203

The divisiveness that continued to beset the remnants of the Saskatchewan Waffle found further expression in its conflict with the editorial board of the leftist magazine, \textit{Next Year Country}. After the April 1975 convention, Lorne Brown and Joe Roberts had expressed hope that \textit{Next Year Country} could be integrated “more effectively into the work and politics of the Waffle.”204 In late 1975, the Saskatchewan Waffle leadership in Regina sought to exert greater control over the newsmagazine, which had operated at arms-length from the Waffle since its inception three years earlier. Although the magazine had been closely associated with the group, not all of its editors or editorial board were Waffle members. John Deverell had served as co-editor since 1973, initially with Murray Dobbin and subsequently with Martha Tracey. The editorial board along with Deverell and Tracey were sued in late 1975 by a developer over a story John Piper published in \textit{Next Year Country} titled “Lots for Lots in Hub City” claiming to expose “private profiteering on land development with civic government assistance,” further undermining the editors.205 Four Wafflers, including Sheila Kuziak and Pat Gallagher, both of whom were members of \textit{Next Year Country}’s editorial board, described “ill-concealed antagonisms” and Waffle criticisms of the magazine’s ideologically “flaccid character.” Kuziak and Gallagher were in the minority at an editorial board meeting

\begin{itemize}
\item \textit{Waffle Newsletter}, V. 2 N. 3, 1976, File II.35 Newsletters c. 1971-1979, Saskatchewan Waffle fonds, SAB (Regina).
\end{itemize}
which rejected the Waffle’s recommendation that the board membership consist exclusively of Wafflers.\textsuperscript{206} Martha Tracey, Don Mitchell, and editorial board member Don Kossick described \textit{Next Year Country} as a “popularly-oriented left news magazine,” and were adamant that non-Wafflers be allowed to sit on the editorial board. As they explained, the editors were occasionally faced with the “dilemma of publishing a news story where no \textit{specific} Waffle policy exists.” They did “not see this as a problem.”\textsuperscript{207} Joe Roberts countered that “the ability to struggle with the political question from a Marxist standpoint is the underlying reason for a desire to reform the Board.”\textsuperscript{208}

At the Saskatchewan Waffle’s Provincial Council in December 1975, the delegates passed a Steering Committee resolution demanding tighter control over \textit{Next Year Country} by requiring the editorial board members be Wafflers, its editorial policy be consistent with the April 1975 Manifesto, and the newsmagazine led readers “to a greater understanding of class conflict and of imperialism in contemporary Saskatchewan and Canadian society.”\textsuperscript{209} The Waffle Provincial Council elected a new editorial board, and Pat Gallagher replaced Martha Tracey as editor.\textsuperscript{210} In an interview with Tracey, John Warnock noted that the magazine’s subscribers peaked at 2500 before falling to half that number after becoming an “arm of the Waffle.”\textsuperscript{211} Don Kossick recalled that “a group of us were accused of muckraking journalism… we got just flayed for that.” Their

\textsuperscript{210} Ibid. Tracey and Don Kossick remained on the editorial board.
\textsuperscript{211} Martha Tracey interview with John Warnock, September 24, 1989, Audio Tape 1970-1989, R-11903B, Saskatchewan Waffle Fonds, SAB (Regina)
determination to include a “very strict Marxist analysis” resulted in feeling like “you had to finish every article with a last paragraph saying the proper Marxist response should be the following” which “drove immense amounts of creativity away.” Tracey remembered how publishing the magazine became “an end in itself,” and that “it was really hard to tolerate the debate, the political attack, on Next Year Country.” She became “really bitter” over the Waffle’s decision to exercise greater control.

By 1976 the Saskatchewan Waffle had become a small, insular organization with a strict Marxist analysis, engaging primarily in struggles with other Marxist sectarian groups. Joe Roberts complained that the Regina Waffle’s participation in the 1976 May Day protests had been “sabotaged effectively” by rivals such as the CP and CPC (M-L), and later instructed Wafflers preparing for the CLC’s National Day of Protest on October 14, 1976 that they “will be expected to emphasize critiques of the state, the limits of trade unionism in facing the crises of capitalism, and the need for a revolutionary party.”

Assessing the group in December 1976, Roberts declared that after eight years “the Waffle is the oldest continuous radical political organization in Canada.” He described it as being at the second stage of development, transforming from a radical populist reformism based primarily in the petit bourgeoisie, to a proletarian ideological line with a working-class base. Roberts’s unfortunate choice of phrase (“let a hundred flowers bloom”) for an article reflected the popularity of Mao amongst the international sectarian

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Marxist left. In response, Don Mitchell lamented that the Waffle had deteriorated “from a position of political relevance in the Province to one of inward study and isolation… the leading elements in the Waffle today are substantially the same as those of the late sixties who formed the Committee for a Socialist Movement.”

Despite the Waffle’s departure from the NDP and its descent into conflict-ridden study groups in Ontario and Saskatchewan, a vocal and visible left-wing minority remained within the party in the mid-1970s. Some of the Waffle’s New Left causes and policies, especially those advocated by the women’s movement, became largely accepted by the NDP mainstream in the aftermath of the Waffle challenge. These developments influenced the leadership race precipitated by David Lewis’s resignation following the 1974 federal election. The federal caucus appointed Ed Broadbent as NDP interim leader after Tommy Douglas declined the position. However, Broadbent, frustrated by the Federal Council’s rejection of his proposal to create a central treasury to fund an independent federal party organization, and annoyed by efforts to recruit higher-profile candidates such as premiers Schreyer, Blakeney and Barrett into the role, announced in January 1975 that he would not seek the leadership.

Rosemary Brown had already decided to vie for the job after the 1974 national NDP women’s conference committed to endorsing a female candidate. The first Black

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215 A declaration by Mao: “the policy of letting a hundred flowers bloom and a hundred schools of thought contend” initially encouraged criticism of his Communist regime but ultimately served to identify critics subsequently oppressed by force in the anti-rightist campaign that followed in 1957. This would not have been apparent to Roberts, who was not alone on the left in borrowing phrases from Mao. There are further indications of the influence of Maoism on the Saskatchewan Waffle. The same issue of the Newsletter featured an article “On the Death of the Greatest Contemporary Revolutionary” from “friends in China.” And Roberts explained that the new constitution identifies “explicitly the role of criticism and self-criticism within the working methods of the Waffle.”


woman elected to a Canadian provincial legislature, Brown would also be the first Black woman candidate for the leadership of a major Canadian federal political party. Ex-Waffler Hilda Thomas was one of the leading members of Brown’s campaign committee, and headed the group of women who designed Brown’s policy platform.\footnote{Brown, Being Brown, 164.} Using the slogan ‘Brown is Beautiful,’ Brown rallied women and leftists within the NDP to her cause with her advocacy of socialism and feminism. Her candidacy’s momentum soon unnerved party and union leadership alike. Brown was taken aback by the depth of antipathy her campaign generated among some NDPers until a subsequent conversation with David Lewis provided context: “my leadership campaign attracted the support of party members who wanted to change the direction of the party in profound ways, party members who were the survivors of old internal struggles waged around the Waffle and other factions in the party, long before my arrival.”\footnote{Ibid., 148. Desmond Morton described Brown uncharitably as “a second Jim Laxer, with more fire, fewer facts and a dependence on trite platitudes that troubled even some of her own followers.” See Morton, The New Democrats, 172. In contrast, Meggs and Mickleburgh describe Brown as a “brainy, articulate feminist” and depict her as “the most serious challenger to Barrett’s leadership” in the BC NDP. See Meggs and Mickleburgh, The Art of the Impossible, 60, 239.}

Although two other candidates declared – John Harney and MP Lorne Nystrom – the popular response to Brown’s radical message drove party leaders, including Douglas, Lewis, Schreyer, Blakeney and Barrett, to persuade Broadbent to reconsider entering the race.\footnote{Morton, 170-172.} Supported by ten of fifteen caucus colleagues, Broadbent was immediately the front-runner. He focused on updating the NDP’s image for a new generation, explaining “the party’s base is no longer a person who fears the Depression and unemployment… In the advanced capitalist society, the NDP’s constituency is the man or woman who may be well off but who is still being screwed by the system – whether it be wages versus profits,
the high mortgage interest rates that keep him from getting a home or lack of job satisfaction.”

A fifth candidate, Toronto taxi driver Douglas Campbell, was not considered a serious contender.

Broadbent’s victory, although widely-expected, was not a sure thing given larger-than-expected support for Brown at the convention and the unusually low number of union delegates in attendance. Harney finished fourth with only 18.4 per cent of the vote on the first ballot and was dropped from the slate after the second ballot. Broadbent and Brown each drew approximately one hundred of Harney’s supporters on the third ballot, with Nystrom picking up another seventy. Nystrom failed to generate momentum as the anti-Broadbent candidate, and most of his supporters turned to Broadbent after he was dropped before the fourth and final ballot.

**Federal NDP Leadership Election – July 4-7, 1975 (Winnipeg)**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Ballot</th>
<th>Second Ballot</th>
<th>Third Ballot</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ed Broadbent</td>
<td>Rosemary Brown</td>
<td>Lorne Nystrom</td>
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<tr>
<td>536</td>
<td>413</td>
<td>345</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rosemary Brown</td>
<td>Ed Broadbent</td>
<td>Rosemary Brown</td>
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<tr>
<td>413</td>
<td>586</td>
<td>397</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lorne Nystrom</td>
<td>Rosemary Brown</td>
<td>Lorne Nystrom</td>
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<td>345</td>
<td>397</td>
<td>342</td>
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<tr>
<td>John Paul Harney</td>
<td>John Paul Harney</td>
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<td>Douglas Campbell</td>
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<td>1,618</td>
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**Fourth Ballot**

| Ed Broadbent          | Rosemary Brown     |
| 984                   | 658                |

**Total** 1,642

Brown, excited by the relative success of her candidacy and the other candidates’ emphasis on socialist and feminist policies, did not hesitate to declare her second place finish “a real victory. We’ve managed to shift the party to the left somewhat.”

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The left wing’s continued influence was not limited to the federal NDP. Despite the earlier animosity between Stephen Lewis and the Waffle during 1971-72, Donald MacDonald claimed that “by the 1975 [Ontario] election, Jim Laxer was a member of an informal advisory group throughout Stephen’s campaign.”\(^{223}\) Although Desmond Morton asserted “every feature of the campaign, from Lewis’s issues of conserving farmland and improving industrial safety to the election colours – a warm shade of brown – had been chosen for their reassuring qualities,” moderation was hardly a factor in the Ontario NDP’s ascension to Official Opposition in 1975.\(^{224}\) Much as his father had done in the 1972 federal election, Stephen Lewis discovered an issue that resonated – in this case, rent control – and flogged it relentlessly throughout the campaign. In addition, the party’s efforts at organizing ethnic communities paid off with the election of four Italian NDP MPPs in 1975. Also benefitting from a much improved caucus research staff, the Ontario NDP increased its popular vote slightly to 28.9 per cent, but doubled its representation in the legislature to thirty-eight members.\(^{225}\)

The provincial NDP in British Columbia had absorbed the challenge from the left wing of the party. The Barrett NDP government introduced public auto insurance and rent controls, created an Agricultural Land Reserve to protect farmland from development, raised the minimum wage, banned the strap in schools, and banned mining and logging in an expanded provincial park system. It also hiked royalties for resource extraction industries, introduced a Human Rights Commission, and prohibited

\(^{223}\) MacDonald, *The Happy Warrior*, 160.  
\(^{224}\) Morton, *The New Democrats*, 177.  
\(^{225}\) Smith, *Unfinished Journey*, 458-460.
discrimination in housing and employment. But the party’s tenure in power was not without controversy and missteps, such as Barrett’s intervention in a scandalous dispute over egg production quotas infamously dubbed “the Chicken and Egg War.” The premier’s relationship with union leaders, which had never been strong, was further strained when the BCFL opposed revisions to the government’s Labour Code in 1975. The ill will worsened when the government passed back-to-work legislation to end a nearly three-month strike by pulp-mill workers in October 1975. In the meantime, the Social Credit party under the new leadership of Bill Bennett positioned itself once again as the province’s sole defender of free enterprise against the NDP. The previously-coddled mining industry was apoplectic the Barrett government imposed new royalties that threatened job losses as investment pulled out of the province. An unintended consequence of the move endangered NDP fortunes in mining communities in the BC interior. When Barrett called a snap election in late 1975, he “requested a mandate for my leadership in a national fight against inflation,” and promised to extend the province’s freeze on prices of essential commodities unless the Trudeau government took action on prices as well as wages. The NDP campaign centered on Barrett’s populist defence of his government’s policies against criticisms from corporate executives and Bill Bennett. Although Social Credit was caught off guard for the election and suffered its

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228 Ibid., 108-110, 272-274. W.A.C. Bennett had masterfully orchestrated his son’s ascension to the leadership of the Social Credit party and Bill drew attention when he got himself expelled from the legislature during the 1975 budget debate. The defections of Liberal and Conservative MLAs to Social Credit furthered the impression of Bill Bennett as the only possible challenger to Barrett. “One of two B.C. Tory MLAs joins Socreds,” *Globe and Mail*, October 26, 1974.
229 Ibid., 249-259
230 Barrett and Miller, *Barrett: A Passionate Political Life*, 111
share of embarrassments during the campaign, it benefited from money, momentum, and the collapse of support for the Liberals and Conservatives.\(^{232}\) Despite drawing nearly the same popular vote as in 1972, the NDP lost twenty seats as Social Credit returned to power with a majority government. Waffle MLA Harold Steves and Premier Dave Barrett each lost their seats.

After departing the NDP the Waffle in 1974 and 1975 shifted sharply, and acrimoniously, towards adopting a strict Marxist analysis that emphasized the importance of class divisions above all else. The ideological shift was due to a number of factors, primarily Wafflers’ disillusionment with the NDP and social democracy as a means for bringing about radical change. Wafflers were also influenced by changing circumstances and international developments in economics and politics, including renewed American protectionism, the energy crisis, Canadian worker militancy, and the popularity of varieties of Marxism (such as Maoism and Trotskyism) amongst the international New Left. Certainly there was no agreement within the Waffle on which specific Marxist analysis to follow. James Laxer and the Ontario Waffle leadership emphasized a deindustrialization thesis that linked class and nationalism. In Saskatchewan, Joe Roberts, Lorne Brown and many other Wafflers embraced a Maoist-influenced Marxism. Numerous others in both Ontario and Saskatchewan, including the members of the RMG, the IS and John Conway, adopted a Trotskyist analysis. The shift toward Marxism fatally hindered the Waffle’s capacity to attract non-academic, non-Marxist supporters.

As the movement dwindled, bitter arguments over ideological divisions prevailed. By the end of 1975, the Waffle as a national movement was dead. Three Waffle-NDP MLAs, Cy Gonick, John Richards, and Harold Steves, no longer held their seats or

\(^{232}\) Ibid., 309-314.
identified publicly with the Waffle. The Waffle’s offspring in the sectarian Marxist left, including the Saskatchewan Waffle, the RMG, and the IS, continued to debate and agitate for socialist politics for many years to come. As for the NDP, by the end of 1975 it had largely recovered from the Waffle insurgency that challenged the party leadership from 1969 to 1972. Yet despite the Waffle’s absence the NDP did not turn sharply right either federally or provincially in the immediate aftermath. Neither was the party’s left wing significantly weaker than during the Waffle period. Indeed, leading Wafflers such as James Laxer once again assumed prominent roles within the party over the ensuing decade. The Waffle, an often acrimonious expression of the New Left within Canada’s social democratic political party might be gone, but its continuing reverberations on the left in Canada for years to come was evidence it would not soon be forgotten.
Conclusion

The study of the Waffle reveals a dynamic movement marked by incongruity. As a movement active almost exclusively in the early 1970s that expressed the New Left ideals of the “Sixties,” the history of the Waffle indicates a “Long Sixties” of political radicalism and activism that extended until 1975. National in scope yet provincially distinct, an expression of the Canadian New Left yet challenging to New Left ideals and commitments, dedicated to transforming the NDP from within yet alienating party adherents, the Waffle not surprisingly leaves a deeply contested legacy.

Noteworthy differences existed among the four largest provincial Waffle groups. Ontario, the only province where the party acted to rid itself of the Waffle, contained the largest provincial section of the NDP and was home to many of the Waffle’s founders and most prominent spokespeople. As a result, the media tended to cast the Ontario Waffle as representative of the movement nationally when in fact there was generally little coordination among the provincial groups. Southern Ontario’s role as the country’s industrial heartland meant the Waffle in that province focused their activism and analysis primarily on the organized working class in urban manufacturing centres. The existence of pro-Waffle caucuses in two major NDP-affiliated unions – the USWA and UAW – along with the Ontario group’s flirtation with the CCU and criticism of international union leaders ultimately caused conflict between Wafflers and pro-NDP labour leaders. This conflict, plus the antipathy the loudly vocal and highly critical Waffle engendered amongst an Ontario NDP leadership frustrated over its third-party status and inability to overtake the Liberals in the 1971 election, ultimately led to the Waffle’s ouster from the party in that province.
The Ontario experience was not representative of the Waffle in other provinces. In Manitoba, the Waffle already had the support of a backbench MLA in the newly-elected NDP government when it emerged on the political scene in late 1969. However, the Manitoba NDP had won its first provincial election largely on the back of its leader Edward Schreyer, whose personal popularity and centrist approach to governing muted left opposition within the provincial party. The Manitoba Waffle dwindled as its members, disillusioned with the NDP as a vehicle to achieve socialism, grew dubious about the possibility of establishing a new party to the left of the NDP.

Although Wafflers were similarly disappointed with the NDP government in Saskatchewan they drew different conclusions than their counterparts in Manitoba. The Waffle leadership in Saskatchewan was drawn primarily from an intellectual cadre of leftists strongly influenced by Marxism, including Joe Roberts, John Warnock, Lorne Brown and John Conway, who had constituted the Committee for a Socialist Movement that predated the Waffle. Furthermore, the CCF/NDP’s history of electoral success in Saskatchewan and the Waffle’s albeit limited success in influencing the provincial NDP’s 1971 election platform suggested the Waffle could encounter a base of support for socialist measures that did not exist in other provinces. When the Saskatchewan Wafflers lost faith in the NDP government, they chose to establish a new party that better reflected their Marxist principles.

Although British Columbia had the strongest tradition of leftism within the CCF/NDP, the Waffle in that province was largely absorbed into the party’s mainstream. Several factors account for this oddity. No organized group of left intellectuals comparable to the CSM existed in BC prior to the Waffle’s formation. Also, the BC
NDP reacted less defensively to the Waffle challenge than occurred elsewhere. Dave Barrett’s supporters, in opposition to the labour leaders who previously dominated the party, allied with Wafflers to take control of the BC NDP and several Wafflers were incorporated into senior levels of the party leadership. Barrett’s personal popularity among New Democrats, like Schreyer in Manitoba, also helped to limit the Waffle’s appeal in the province and assimilate the group.

At first glance it might seem contradictory to characterize the Waffle as an expression of the Canadian New Left, especially since Wafflers at times intentionally distanced themselves from the New Left. Furthermore some New Left activists, such as James Harding, directly criticized the Waffle, and Myrna Kostach recalled that “the new left was decidedly unhappy” with the Waffle Manifesto’s “involvement in the polices and practices of a social democratic parliamentary party” and with its “appeal, in the name of anti-imperialism, to ‘national unity.’” However, by adopting a broader definition of the New Left which includes women’s liberationists, left-wing nationalists from Quebec and English-Canada, and young workers alongside the student and anti-war movements, the Waffle’s position is clarified. Clearly, the Waffle brought many of the activists and ideas comprising a broadly-defined New Left into the NDP.

The Waffle struggled at times to live up to the New Left ideals contained in its Manifesto. Writing in 1981, Dan Heap criticized the group’s elitism, arguing that “many Wafflers soon passed over grassroots organizing in ridings and locals as being too slow.

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1 For example, Gerald Caplan’s invitation to the meeting that produced the Waffle Manifesto was addressed to those “who feel that we’re significantly left of the NDP but not happy to simply embrace all of the jargon and tactics of the New Left.” Gerald Caplan to Giles Endicott, February 6, 1969, Box 2009-047/001, File 6 Waffle – History, 1969-1972 (1 of 2) Giles Endicott fonds, YUA. Near the end of the group’s existence James Laxer depicted his critics in the Ontario Waffle as the “Americanized New Left,” as described in Chapter Ten.

Little sustained effort was given to mobilizing the working class and its allies in action, to win short-term goals and prepare for larger battles. Our main focus was on convention battles over policy statements and party office.”

Neither did the Waffle’s practical commitment to feminism always align with its rhetoric. Early in its existence gender parity in the Waffle was more honoured in the breach than in the observance. Female Saskatchewan delegates to the Waffle’s national conference in August 1970 “strongly disapproved of the fact that two male ‘heavies’ were invited” to represent the province in a strategy meeting of the national steering committee without consulting the Saskatchewan delegation. Pat Smart described the conference while explaining the decision to establish a Waffle women’s caucus:

My memory of it is that the men were “hogging the mics”… talking with great relish and at interminable length about all the issues and that the women – even the strongest and most articulate of us like Krista, Kelly Crichton, Jackie Larkin and Caroline Brown – couldn’t get a word in edgewise. So we got together at the end of the morning and decided to form a caucus… insisting on gender parity in all Waffle bodies and a high profile for women’s issues in all Waffle events and publications.

But Smart also believed “there was a commitment by both men and women in the Waffle to putting the idea of gender equality into action in our own lives.”

A sense of generational conflict also pervaded the Waffle’s struggles within the NDP. The presence of young radicals with a commitment to the principles of the New Left but little background in the party contrasted sharply with those New Democrats and unionists who had devoted years of dedicated and often tedious service building the CCF/NDP into a viable political challenger for power in several provinces. Consequently

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3 Heap, “The Waffle – the recipe?” 43.
5 Pat Smart, “Growing into feminism in the Waffle,” Canadian Dimension, January 2010: 40-3.
6 Ibid.
some New Democrats understandably questioned the New Leftists’ commitment to the party. For many New Democrats, advancing the cause of the left and improving the party’s fortunes were virtually inseparable concepts. This attitude, in conjunction with the experiencing decades of internecine struggle with Communists in the labour movement, produced a bunker mentality that often treated nonpartisan leftists as untrustworthy. Wafflers, “mostly young, middle class and recent converts to radicalism,” according to Desmond Morton, “had no share in the painful struggles that kept the NDP and the old CCF alive and growing.”7 As Giles Endicott, an early Waffler who subsequently opposed the group explained, “I was a party hack. My whole life was bound up in the structure of the party. I tried to persuade Laxer and Watkins that we must not be seen to be creating a party within a party. They didn’t seem to realize the damage they could do to the organization. But then, neither of them was a party person and they really didn’t care about the party.”8 Such concerns were exacerbated when generational differences devolved into personal attacks that supplanted ideological critiques. Cy Gonick recalled that “Wafflers were also rowdy and headstrong. They could also be arrogant towards others in the party, relentless and even abusive in their eagerness to nail down points of order and win debates.”9 Stephen Lewis accused the Waffle of having “nothing to do with democratic socialism and everything to do with acting out a pathological aggressiveness.”10

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7 Morton, “Reconciling the extremes within the NDP,” Toronto Star, March 8, 1972.
9 Gonick, A Very Red Life, 252.
10 Lewis quotation in Steed, Ed Broadbent, 141-2. Michele Landsberg went further, describing the Waffle’s motivation as “entirely Oedipal. These were out-of-control bad boys who just wanted to screw Daddy and wreck the house. However sophisticated their political analysis, this was their emotional force.” Quotation in Smith, Unfinished Journey, 425.
The Waffle’s legacy in Canadian political history remains contested some fifty years after its founding in 1969. Activists and NDP members alike continue to debate whether the Waffle, with its brand of left nationalism and embrace of New Left social movements, exerted a positive or negative influence on the NDP and the Canadian left in the years following its demise. In a documentary aired on the Cable Public Affairs Channel (CPAC) in 2017, long-time left-wing and feminist activist Judy Rebick voiced the opinion of many ex-Wafflers when she argued “by driving them out they [the NDP] were cutting their heart out. They cut out the vibrancy and the passion in the party by driving out the Waffle and I think it was a huge, huge error.”\(^1\) Stephen Lewis disagreed, and directly attributed the party’s subsequent political successes to its 1972 decision to disassociate from the Waffle:

Judy Rebick is a friend… but palpably she’s wrong, as history has proved her wrong. It was not long after we got rid of the Waffle that we formed the Official Opposition in Ontario for the first time in thirty or more years and I think set the groundwork for the eventual government in Ontario in 1990. And all of the work that is done, you know, when you form a government in British Columbia and Saskatchewan and Manitoba and Nova Scotia, in Ontario, you’re building the party, and ultimately you get the right leader in the right place at the right time, like Jack Layton, and suddenly you catapult into the level of the Leader of the Opposition federally. All of that, I think, would have been lost if we had not got rid of the Waffle.\(^2\)

This dissertation concludes by examining the contested legacy of the Waffle in six areas: its role in the new nationalism of the 1970s; its influence on developments in both the labour and women’s movements; its impact on the radical left and the New Canadian Political Economy tradition, and its descendants on the left of the NDP.

\(^2\) Ibid.
The Waffle undoubtedly contributed to the surge in left-wing Canadian nationalism during the early 1970s. Historian Sean Mills has observed that “today, debates rage about the role of the ‘nation’ in political struggles. Many rightly point out the ways in which nationalism acts as a means of exclusion, both in Canada and elsewhere. Yet, in the 1960s, nationalism was generally seen as a progressive force.”

The Waffle’s insistence that Canadian economic independence from the United States could not be achieved without socialism helped define Canadian nationalism as a left-wing gospel for a generation. As discussed in Chapter Ten, the attention the Waffle’s left-wing nationalism received directly influenced the formation of the moderate CIC by Liberal-leaning nationalists such as Walter Gordon, Peter Newman and Abraham Rotstein. Furthermore, the CIC and left-nationalist pressure pushed a reluctant Pierre Trudeau to implement measures to protect Canada’s economic independence, including creating the CDC, FIRA, and Petro-Canada. Several years later, James and Robert Laxer urged support for the Trudeau government’s National Energy Program. The Laxers headed the Committee for the Canadianization of the Petroleum Industry (CCPI) in the early 1980s, which counted among its supporters one-time Waffle critic and CLC president Dennis McDermott alongside former nationalist rivals Mel Watkins, Charles Taylor, Walter Gordon, and Mel Hurtig. One could argue that progressive nationalism was the dominant concept and overriding issue on the Canadian left at least until the decisive 1988 federal election, fought primarily over the issue of free trade with the United States.

Support for the CCPI’s economic nationalism from prominent union leaders reflected a significant development in the Canadian labour movement in the decades

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following the Waffle’s dissolution. As other scholars have demonstrated, the Canadian labour movement underwent a “seismic shift from continentalism to nationalism” during the 1970s.\textsuperscript{14} Many of the measures Wafflers demanded to protect the autonomy of Canadian sections of international unions were eventually accepted as the labour movement underwent a gradual process of Canadianization and, even more significantly, union leaders adopted nationalist rhetoric in defense of Canadian workers.

Despite the Waffle’s decline, the 1974 CLC convention reflected the group’s continuing influence. CUPE leaders, including Waffle supporters Grace Hartman, joined with those of the BCGEU, CUPW, PSAC and CBRT to prepare a reform slate of candidates for the CLC executive elections and produce a program emphasizing “Canadian autonomy, industrial democracy, social unionism, effective servicing, and the rationalization of jurisdictional structure.”\textsuperscript{15} Although the “reform movement that wasn’t” faltered, the convention still endorsed a watered-down proposal from the CLC executive for measures to ensure the autonomy of Canadian sections of international unions despite vocal opposition from the building-trades unions.\textsuperscript{16} As Gil Levine argued in retrospect, the “Canadianization issues raised by the Waffle and the Reform Caucus have had some effect” in the Canadian labour movement.\textsuperscript{17}

Certainly the Canadian labour movement’s leadership embraced nationalism in the late 1970s and 1980s. Miriam Smith contends that the federal government’s imposition of wage controls in 1975 in an effort to combat inflation “constituted state interference in ‘free’ collective bargaining” which led the CLC to a “fundamental
reappraisal of strategy and policy that resulted in the turn to a post-Keynesian economic program and, eventually, to economic nationalism itself.” Smith believes that the shift in strategy and program that began in 1976 culminated in the CLC’s 1982 economic program which “stressed economic nationalism, an understanding of the distorted character of the Canadian economy, and a preference for strong state policies.” Thus, the CLC’s opposition to the Mulroney government’s proposed Free Trade Agreement with the United States and its participation in the nationalist Pro-Canada Network was consistent with the Congress’s opposition to continental economic integration. The CLC’s embrace of nationalism thus represented a significant shift from its steadfast opposition to the Waffle.

Stephen High maintains that Canadian unions achieved greater success in the 1980s implementing worker-friendly responses to plant shutdowns, such as advance notice of closures and severance pay, than did their counterparts in the US, largely because they proclaimed a nationalist ideology and sought a political solution. As High explains, “despite tensions between the sometimes dogmatic left-nationalists in the NDP and internationalist-minded trade union leaders, both groups eventually came to draw on Robert Laxer’s concept of deindustrialization.” He further demonstrates that union leaders “increasingly relied on nationalist oratory and the deindustrialization thesis to legitimate their demands for increased legislative protection for Canadian workers.”

Large Canadian sections of international unions in the years to follow also embraced

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19 Ibid., 50. Smith connects “foreign investment and the distorted character of Canadian manufacturing.”
20 Ibid., 54.
22 Ibid., 178 and 169.
nationalist rhetoric to justify splitting from their American comrades. In 1985, the Canadian section of the UAW broke away to form the Canadian Auto Workers (CAW).  

Sam Gindin, a researcher for the CAW, in explaining the “pre-history” of the split wrote that the “Waffle… could be defeated, but it could not be ignored.” Significantly, former Wafflers who were subsequently active in unions and organized groups such as Saskatchewan Working Women pushed the labour movement to embrace Canadian nationalism, feminism and worker militancy.

The Waffle served as a touchstone for the radical left in Canada in the 1970s. Many former Wafflers, exasperated with the NDP’s moderation, became leading members of Marxist organizations that proliferated in the aftermath of the Waffle’s exit from the party. Both the Revolutionary Marxist Group (RMG) and the International Socialists (IS) stemmed directly from the Waffle, although debates within the international Trotskyist movement also influenced their ideological orientation. The prominence of the Waffle meant that debates over its brand of left-nationalism and aim of transforming the NDP dominated the Canadian left in the early 1970s. The long-standing Trotskyist party, the LSA, whose members had been active in the Waffle, split apart over those issues. The Revolutionary Communist Tendency broke with the LSA in 1973 and

23 See Sam Gindin, *The Canadian Auto Workers* and Bob White, *Hard Bargains: My Life on the Line* (Toronto: McLellan and Stewart, 1987), 267-318. Increased public sector unionization has been primarily responsible for the larger proportion of Canadian unions within the national labour movement.


25 In fact, the Waffle had an influence beyond the left or even the centre of Canadian politics. The authors of *Challenging Perspectives: Twenty-five Years of Influential Ideas* claim that the neo-conservative Fraser Institute was formed, in part, to respond to the left-wing challenge represented by the Waffle. Meggs and Mickleburgh describe MacMillan Bloedel vice-president Patrick Boyle working with J.V. Clyne to establish the right-wing think-tank to combat the Waffle’s perceived influence on the NDP. *Challenging Perceptions: Twenty-five Years of Influential Ideas: The Fraser Institute, 1974-1999, A Retrospective* (Vancouver: Fraser Institute, 1999); Meggs and Mickleburgh, *The Art of the Impossible*, 331-332.
joined with the Old Mole and Red Circle groups to form the RMG. After the LSA rejected the idea of working within the NDP and adopted a position opposing Canadian nationalism, Ross Dowson, who had served as the party’s executive secretary from its founding until 1972, left the organization in 1974 to form the Socialist League (known after 1978 as the Forward Group). The RMG published a periodical, the *Old Mole,* and ran three candidates in the 1975 provincial election in British Columbia. The RMG and its “sister organization” in Quebec, the Groupe Marxiste Révolutionnaire, united with the LSA in 1977 in establishing the Revolutionary Workers League/Ligue Ouvrière Révolutionnaire (RWL/LOR) and began publishing *Socialist Voice* and *Lutte Ouvrière.* Although some members of the RWL continued working with the NDP, the organization focused on activism within industrial unions. The RWL ran a single candidate in the 1977 Manitoba election, four candidates in the 1980 federal election, and five candidates in the 1984 federal election. Otherwise it offered critical support for the NDP in English Canada and called for a new labour party in Quebec, where the RWL endorsed separatism.

The International Socialists organization that emerged from the York-based study group within the Ontario Waffle MISC had, by early 1975, rejected any “lingering commitment to left nationalism,” explaining in *Workers’ Action* that “as the crisis of

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28 Sara Diamond received twenty-two votes in Burnaby North, where NDP MLA Eileen Dailly was reelected with 10,430 votes. Gary Cristall and Steve Penner received thirty-one and forty-one votes, respectively in Vancouver East, where both NDP MLAs Alex MacDonald and Bob Williams held their seats with 15,918 and 15,396 votes, respectively. The LSA candidate in West Vancouver-Howe Sound fared little better on election day, receiving thirty-four votes. Elections BC, *An Electoral History of British Columbia 1871-1986.* [Victoria, BC]: Elections BC, 1988. http://www.elections.bc.ca/docs/rpt/1871-1986_ElectoralHistoryofBC.pdf
Canadian capitalism set in the bankruptcy of the Waffle’s nationalist position became clear.”\(^3\) In addition to emphasizing internationalist socialism, the IS rejected both the NDP and a “parliamentary road to socialism,” instead urging its members to “lead in the construction of a class struggle, rank and file opposition” within the union movement. IS members were involved in the campaign to legalize abortions as part of the Ontario Coalition for Abortion Clinics in the 1980s, and Abbie Bakan and Dave McNally remained leading figures in the organization for many years thereafter.\(^3\)

Although the clandestine nature of Trotskyist organizations makes determining their impact difficult, both the RWL and IS, although small in number, played a notable role on the Canadian left in the decades following the Waffle’s disintegration. For example, Varda Burstyn, a former Waffler and member of the RMG, approached women’s organizations about planning the first march in English Canada celebrating International Women’s Day in 1978.\(^3\) Burstyn explained the event was successful because “a lot of the women who were part of that original organizing committee really wanted to have some way to act. They didn’t want to just go to the NDP, which wasn’t feminist enough or socialist enough. They wanted to have a way to show themselves and the world the power of socialist feminism.”\(^3\) Not all left activists remember the Trotskyists in a positive light. Susan G. Cole recalls socialist feminists in the RMG and LSA “saw lesbianism as bad for feminist organizing” in the late 1970s.\(^4\) Nevertheless, Trotskyist activists were involved in the burgeoning gay rights movement of the 1970s.

\(^4\) The IS positions on the NDP and where activists should focus their priorities have changed since the 1970s. As of 2018, the group continues to function, although neither McNally nor Bakan is affiliated with the IS.
\(^3\) Rebick, *Ten Thousand Roses*, 117
\(^4\) Ibid., 121.
Members of the LSA actively participated in Toronto Gay Action, the Gay Alliance Towards Equality (GATE) and the Coalition for Gay Rights in Ontario. An RMG Gay Caucus joined the National Gay Rights Coalition, and RWL activists helped organize the Stop Anita Bryant Coalition in Toronto in 1978. Judy Rebick notes that “these far-left groups declined significantly as the decade progressed, with much of their female leadership going into the women’s movement and the union movement.”

Historian Joan Sangster suggests that “quantifying the impact of new communism is difficult, since this remains a largely undocumented recent history… new communist organizing has been understudied, and I would argue underestimated, given the number of campaigns and issues – reproductive choice, non-traditional work, organizing in the public sector, and so on – in which these leftists were involved.” Future historians may well find this to be fruitful, if fractious, territory.

Former Wafflers’ subsequent activism in the women’s movement was in keeping with the Waffle’s history. Its advocacy within the NDP of major policies of the women’s liberation movement had been a source of significant division among the Waffle, the party, and labour leadership. In addition to appealing to the NDP to support abortion on demand, improved access to child care, government-funded houseworkers’ allowances, prohibitions on gender discrimination in employment, and amendments to the nation’s divorce law, the Waffle also insisted, albeit unsuccessfully, that the party adopt gender

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35 Brock, “‘Workers of the World Caress’: An Interview with Gary Kinsman on Gay and Lesbian Organizing in the 1970s Toronto Left.” See also Gary Kinsman and Patricia Gentile, The Canadian War on Queers: National Security as Sexual Regulation (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2010), 272-287, which focuses on RCMP surveillance of the radical left organizations.
36 Rebick, Ten Thousand Roses, 18.
parity for its executive and council. Varda Burstyn later criticized the NDP’s approach to feminists and the Waffle, arguing

The NDP’s decision not to tolerate the Waffle in 1972 bears special mention for it was a fundamental and suicidal watershed for that party. With the exclusion of its left-wing, the NDP leadership also excluded a whole layer of women’s liberationists who had laid the groundwork for the NDP program through a series of convention struggles in and around the Waffle. The loss of this layer of women and the rejection of militant feminism that this implied (with the exception of BC) was a horrendous political error. If the NDP leadership had had any political foresight – let alone integrity – it would have seen that feminism, broadly speaking, was the most important political movement of the period… as it was, the party missed the boat.38

While acknowledging that Wafflers left the party, political scientist Jill Vickers maintains that many feminists who supported the Waffle’s positions on women remained in the NDP after 1972.39 In 1974, shortly after the Waffle departed the NDP, the party adopted a watered-down version of the radical BC Women’s Manifesto, thereby endorsing key components of the feminist policy agenda.40 Furthermore, Rosemary Brown’s surprisingly strong challenge for the federal party leadership in 1975 engaged feminists and leftists alike. By the early 1980s, the NDP had accepted the concept of gender parity on the party executive and council. In 1982, the ONDP adopted an affirmative-action resolution, brought forward by its Women’s Committee, mandating gender parity in the party’s governing bodies.41 In 1983, the federal NDP adopted a similar gender parity program. Although feminists continued to struggle within the NDP, most notably in the 1980s with several NDP provincial governments over support for abortion clinics,

40 Young, Feminists and Party Politics, 139.
41 Sylvia Bashevkin, Toeing the Lines: Women and Party Politics in English Canada (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985), 87.
feminist activists became instrumental in shaping party policies and structures and feminism emerged as a key component of the NDP’s agenda in the post-Waffle period.

Beyond their influence on the NDP, the activism of feminist ex-Wafflers in unions contributed to the labour movement’s embrace of feminism and the development of a Canadian form of socialist-feminism. In addition to organizing small independent feminist unions, female activists reshaped the labour movement in the 1970s and 1980s. Meg Luxton has demonstrated how “union-based, working-class feminism” became a “key player” in the women’s and labour movements and the Canadian left at that time. The Waffle’s advocacy of government-funded wages for housework reflected the ongoing theoretical debates amongst early Canadian women’s liberationists. Feminist scholars Adamson, Briskin and McPhail explain that “the debate on wages for housework was an important theoretical and strategic turning point for many socialist women” who realized women’s liberation could be approached from a Marxist perspective. In explaining “the emergence of different feminisms” in the 1970s, Adamson, Briskin and McPhail point to the development of socialist-feminist theory and practice in the early 1970s. They describe Saskatoon Women’s Liberation as the “first self-conscious socialist-feminist organization in Canada.”

Canadian socialist-feminism enjoyed its most successful period in the late 1970s and early 1980s, when feminist authors made significant theoretical contributions and “the emerging socialist-feminist analysis

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43 Meg Luxton, “Feminism as a Class Act,” 63-88.
44 See page 224, footnote 81 for further discussion of the wages for housework debate.
45 Adamson, Briskin and McPhail, Feminist Organizing for Change, 69.
46 Ibid., 67-9.
47 Ibid., 70.
recognized the importance of making allies within the women’s movement and with other important social movements."^{48} These developments led some to claim that the distinguishing characteristic between the women’s liberation movement in Canada and the United States “was and is socialism.”^{49} In addition to these contributions to socialist-feminist theory, Wafflers organized Saskatchewan Working Women as a coalition between female unionists and community-based feminists in the late 1970s and 1980s.

The Waffle’s primary intellectual heritage was within the “New Canadian Political Economy” (NCPE) school of thought that thrived in the 1970s.^{50} Gregory Albo describes the NCPE as the Waffle’s “intellectual offspring.”^{51} Drawing on the work of Harold Innis, the NCPE characterized Canada as a “rich dependency” with an economy overly reliant on the export of “staple” natural resources to the United States and disadvantaged by its weak manufacturing base. Chris Hurl and Benjamin Christensen, two scholars who examined the history of the NCPE school, noted “it was between the academy and a Left political milieu that the NCPE took shape.”^{52} They explained “the revival of political economy through this period is often associated with efforts to establish an ‘independent socialist’ Canada, manifested in the Waffle.”^{53} Specifically,

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51 Albo, “Canada, Left-Nationalism and Younger Voices,” 164.


53 Ibid., 178.
they describe the NCPE as “linked largely to core members of the Ontario Waffle.”

The emergence of the NCPE in the early 1970s, shepherded by Waffle activists-turned-academics, combined the politics of left nationalism with economic and historical analyses of Canada. As Hurl and Christensen explain, “scholars drew influence from an earlier generation of political economy scholarship in Canada and combined it in creative ways with Third World theories of underdevelopment, elite theory, social history, and Marxist theories of the state.”

Publishers such as New Hogtown Press, which was established to publish research reports by the CUS but turned to scholarly publishing in the mid-1970s, was joined by New Star (est. 1969), Black Rose (est. 1970), Between the Lines (est. 1977) and Fernwood Books (est. 1978) in spreading awareness of the NCPE.

Even as these energetic scholars established the NCPE as a legitimate academic area, many struggled to remain “politically engaged through the late 1970s with growing professional and family commitments.” In the late 1980s Mel Watkins had lamented the ongoing division between academics in the NCPE school and the NDP:

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54 Ibid., 188.
55 Ibid., 170.
56 Ibid., 181.
57 Ibid., 187. Even divisions within the NCPE reflected divisions within the Waffle. Speaking for younger scholars who had not been politically active in the early 1970s, Gregory Albo observed that “tensions at political meetings, political codes, and even individual rivalries, often date back to some Waffle episode in which we had no part.” Moreover, “we have been enticed by the formative political and cultural experiences of the ‘Class of 68’ and the Waffle in particular, but also overwhelmingly excluded from its nostalgic codes, alliances and antagonisms.” Albo, “Canada, Left-Nationalism and Younger Voices,” 167. Emphasis in original. In academia, former political allies sometimes became intellectual opponents. After losing his re-election bid in 1975, John Richards returned to graduate school and began working with Larry Pratt, a professor at the University of Alberta, on a book about the economic development of Saskatchewan and Alberta. Pratt explained, “we were struck by the similarities between the Blakeney NDP in Saskatchewan and the Lougheed Conservatives in Alberta. That was the first thing. The second was that we were both disenchanted nationalists.” Pointing out that an Ontario-centric left nationalist analysis failed to account for developments in those two prairie provinces in the 1970s, Richards explained “with Prairie Capitalism, Larry and I were countering the excesses of Canadian nationalist discourse in the 1970s.” Pratt described the reception of the book by former Waffle leaders: “we got called down to a meeting at York University. Mel Watkins was there and Jim Laxer was there and Danny Drache was there, Phil Resnick; all the big pooh-bahs of left nationalism. The book had just come out, about a month before, and they laid it on the line: it was a fundamentally flawed book, a dangerous book. We had transgressed the party line. I didn't
In 1976, people created their own political economy group within the Learned Societies. There’s now a journal that’s been founded by this group, a very successful journal called Studies in Political Economy. Almost everybody involved in it has been to the left of the NDP, has not been in the NDP, and has been more Marxist than the NDP. So the NDP doesn’t even relate to it. But I see that partly as a phenomenon that is a result of the complete break between the intellectual community and the NDP. And I think that is sad.”

Indeed, the dearth of left intellectuals within Canada’s social democratic party has been an important result of the Waffle episode.

In the immediate aftermath of the Waffle’s tumultuous four years within the NDP, party loyalists were quick to equate criticism of either the NDP or the international union leadership with the departed Wafflers. Terry Morley, a former ONDP executive member pursuing graduate studies in political science, in his review of Irving Abella’s Nationalism, Communism and Canadian Labour for the Canadian Journal of Political Science criticized the book as a “Waffle-inspired tract… currently fashionable academic nationalism which finds beauty and truth only in ultra-leftist movements.” Such antagonisms could diminish somewhat with the passage of time. Political scientist Reg Whitaker explained how “David Lewis, no friend of the Waffle, years later remarked to me in exasperation at the party’s me-too performance over the constitutional debate in the

know whether to laugh or cry.” Richards did not continue to study Canadian political economy after Prairie Capitalism. He explained, “I was not interested in fighting with C. B. Macpherson’s ghost. I was not interested in fighting with the quasi-Marxist political economists, as represented by Mel Watkins or Jim Laxer. They are bright people, but I think they exaggerated the cultural differences between Canada and the United States.” Quotations from Jeremy Mouat “Thinking about Prairie Capitalism: Interviews with Larry Pratt and John Richards,” Aurora Online, 2004, http://aurora.icaap.org/ 58 Quotation in Smith, Unfinished Journey, 443.

59 Terence Morley, review of Nationalism, Communism, and Canadian Labour: The CIO, the Communist Party, and the Canadian Congress of Labour 1935-1956, by Irving Abella, Canadian Journal of Political Science, 6, no. 4 (December 1973): 679-80. Abella responded in a letter, claiming “I am not a member nor even a supporter of the Waffle, as should be readily apparent to any intelligent reader of the book. Indeed, if Morley had done any reading over the past year since the book appeared he would have noted that in their reviews and speeches, Waffle leaders were critical of the book’s implications – and rightly so given their ideology.” Irving Abella and Terence Morley, “Exchange,” Canadian Journal of Political Science, 8, no. 1 (March 1975): 146-7.
early 1980s. ‘When the Waffle left the NDP, most of the brains left with them.’”\(^{60}\)

Desmond Morton, a leading opponent of the Waffle, admitted that “what the Waffle left behind in the NDP was a serious generation gap in the party’s intellectual wing and a nervous awareness of the dangers of policy discussion.”\(^{61}\) The idea that their departure cost the NDP dearly in intellectual and activist heft not surprisingly resonated with former Wafflers. Mel Watkins, for one, believed the party’s efforts to dissolve the Waffle in Ontario “turned off a generation of activists.”\(^{62}\) Cy Gonick concurred, claiming “the NDP paid a high price when it expelled the Waffle. It turned off a generation of activists and never did regain the intellectual vigour that made the NDP a lively venue for a time.”\(^{63}\) Nevertheless, many Wafflers, both prominent and grassroots, eventually drifted back to the NDP in subsequent years. James Laxer joined an informal advisory group to the ONDP during the 1975 provincial election, and he was policy director for Michael Cassidy’s successful left-wing bid for the ONDP leadership in 1978.\(^{64}\) Laxer also served briefly as the federal NDP research director, a stint which ended in controversy in 1983.\(^{65}\) Former Wafflers Dan Heap and Steven Langdon both served as NDP MPs under Ed Broadbent, and Jack Layton, who attended Waffle meetings while a graduate student at York University, became leader of the federal NDP in 2003. Mel Watkins, who twice ran for the NDP in the 1990s, explained “I came to the view, particularly after [President Ronald] Reagan was elected, that it was a luxury to imagine that you could be to the left of the NDP.”\(^{66}\) John Smart, who ran for the federal


\(^{61}\) Morton, NDP: Dream of Power, 155.

\(^{62}\) Quotation in Smith, Unfinished Journey, 443.

\(^{63}\) Gonick, A Very Red Life, 253.

\(^{64}\) MacDonald, Happy Warrior, 159.


\(^{66}\) Quotation in Smith, Unfinished Journey, 444.
NDP in Ottawa Centre in 1979 and 1980 (where he was opposed by former Waffler Robin Mathews, leader of the short-lived National Party of Canada), explained that he continued working for the NDP despite the knowledge “that it is neither a socialist party nor a nationalist party and that it is not likely to change in either of those directions in the near future.”

Observers doubtful of the NDP’s willingness to entertain serious internal policy discussions and debate often cite the Waffle era as evidence. Wayne Roberts and George Ehring, two leaders of the party’s left wing in the 1980s, dubbed the NDP the “No Dissent Party,” maintaining “the Waffle incident was only the latest and most obvious proof that Democratic isn’t the NDP’s middle name.” The Waffle’s tumultuous period in the NDP has served as both inspiration and warning to left activists who have subsequently challenged the party leadership, including various iterations of the Left Caucus, the Coalition for an Activist Party in the ONDP in the 1980s, Svend Robinson’s leadership bid in 1995, the New Politics Initiative in 2001, and the Leap Manifesto in 2016. Explaining his support for the Leap Manifesto at the 2016 NDP convention in

68 Ehring and Roberts, Giving Away a Miracle, 11.
69 The Leap Manifesto was drafted in 2015 by a cross-section of social movement activists representing “Indigenous rights, social justice, food, environmental, faith-based and labour movements.” The Leap Manifesto, released prior to the 2015 federal election, described Canada’s record on climate change as “a crime against humanity’s future” and proclaimed “there is no longer an excuse for building new infrastructure projects that lock us into increased extraction decades into the future,” arguing instead that “a rapid transition to renewable energy could be the occasion for an equally rapid redistribution of wealth and justice for Indigenous and other marginalized communities.” According to prominent Leapers the document was not aimed specifically at the NDP and the party is not mentioned in the Manifesto. Avi Lewis, in particular, has been anxious to discredit the notion that Leap represented “the NDP’s left flank attacking [then leader Tom] Mulcair,” claiming they “lost control of that narrative” in the media. Indeed, once riding associations began advocating for the party to adopt Leap as policy, party organizers worked with both Mulcair’s office and the Alberta NDP, who hosted the 2016 federal NDP convention in Edmonton, to include a resolution which provided the party with an opportunity to debate the Leap Manifesto in riding associations while acknowledging it as a “high-level statement of principles that speaks to the aspirations, history and values of the party.” However, the Alberta NDP, which had adopted a pro-pipeline stance, fiercely opposed the Leap resolution, which passed amidst much confusion as to its actual meaning. The peculiar emotional and ideological brew in Edmonton that weekend also resulted in
Edmonton, Stephen Lewis argued:

The Leap Manifesto is a radical document; of that there’s no dispute… But that, I would argue, shouldn’t dispatch the Manifesto to obscurity. I’m attracted to the idea that it could become a centerpiece of constituency debate over the next couple of years… the kind of proposition that re-energizes and re-animates, through the lens of a determinedly left-wing analysis, a social democratic party that’s searching for renewed vision… An intense exchange of views on all the issues raised in the Manifesto can only be healthy. What kind of a party are we that would run from internal controversy when we seek a re-definition of who we are and where we’re headed?70

Many former Wafflers could only have nodded in agreement.71

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70 Mulcair’s surprising defeat in a leadership review and subsequent energy focused on the leadership race instead of the promised internal debate over Leap. Avi Lewis later explained “we never intended it to blow up the NDP convention.” See Jonathon Gatehouse, “Avi Lewis on the ‘ideological battle’ over the Leap Manifesto,” Maclean’s, April 12, 2016; Lawrence Martin, “NDP’s Leap is the Waffle reborn,” Globe and Mail, April 12, 2016; Jeffrey Simpson, “NDP faces another debilitating battle for its soul,” Globe and Mail, May 6, 2016. See Roberta Lexier, “Challenge from Within: The NDP and Social Movements,” Party of Conscience: The CCF, the NDP and Social Democracy in Canada, eds. Roberta Lexier, Stephanie Bangarth and Jonathan Weier (Toronto: Between the Lines, 2018) for an analysis of subsequent left challenges within the NDP.

71 It is worth noting that James Laxer criticized the Leap Manifesto, arguing that it failed to address adequately economic inequality and thus was not a “manifesto of the left.” James Laxer, “Why Leap isn’t a manifesto for the people,” Maclean’s, April 13, 2016.
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### Appendix A) A snapshot of the NDP in September 1969

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th># of MPs</th>
<th># of MLAs (provincial party leader)</th>
<th># of MLAs (provincial party leader) and % of popular vote (election date)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>British Columbia</td>
<td>8 MPs</td>
<td>12 MLAs (Thomas Berger)</td>
<td>33.9% (August 27, 1969)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alberta</td>
<td>0 MPs</td>
<td>0 MLAs (Grant Notley)</td>
<td>15.9% (May 23, 1967)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saskatchewan</td>
<td>6 MPs</td>
<td>24 MLAs (Woodrow Lloyd)</td>
<td>44.35% (October 11, 1967)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manitoba</td>
<td>3 MPs</td>
<td>28 MLAs (Edward Schreyer)</td>
<td>35.56% (June 25, 1969)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ontario</td>
<td>6 MPs</td>
<td>20 MLAs (Donald MacDonald)</td>
<td>25.9% (October 17, 1967)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quebec</td>
<td>0 MPs</td>
<td>0 MLAs (Robert Cliche)</td>
<td>- (June 5, 1966)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Brunswick</td>
<td>0 MPs</td>
<td>0 MLAs (vacant)</td>
<td>0.1% (October 23, 1967)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nova Scotia</td>
<td>0 MPs</td>
<td>0 MLAs (Jeremy Akerman)</td>
<td>5.2% (May 30, 1967)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prince Edward Island</td>
<td>0 MPs</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newfoundland</td>
<td>0 MPs</td>
<td>0 MLAs (vacant)</td>
<td>1.8% (September 8, 1966)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Our aim as democratic socialists is to build an independent socialist Canada. Our aim as supporters of the New Democratic Party is to make it a truly socialist party.

The achievements of socialism await the building of a mass base of socialists in factories and offices, on farms and campuses. The development of a socialist consciousness, on which can be built a socialist base, must be the first priority of the New Democratic Party.

The New Democratic Party must be seen as the parliamentary wing of a movement dedicated to fundamental social change. It must be radicalized from within and it must be radicalized from without.

The most urgent issue for Canadians is the very survival of Canada. Anxiety is pervasive and the goal of greater economic independence receives widespread support. But economic independence without socialism is a sham, and neither are meaningful without true participatory democracy.

The major threat to Canadian survival today is American control of the Canadian economy. The major issue of our times is not national unity but national survival, and the fundamental threat is external, not internal.

American corporate capitalism is the dominant factor shaping Canadian society. In Canada American economic control operates through the formidable medium of the multinational corporation. The Canadian corporate elite has opted for a junior partnership with these American enterprises. Canada has been reduced to a resource base and consumer market within the American empire.

The American empire is the central reality for Canadians. It is an empire characterized by militarism abroad and racism at home. Canadian resources and diplomacy have been enlisted in the support of that empire. In the barbarous war in Vietnam Canada has supported the United States through its membership on the International Control Commission and through sales of arms and strategic resources to the American military-industrial complex.

The American empire is held together through world-wide military alliances and by giant corporations. Canada’s membership in the American alliance system and the ownership of the Canadian economy by American corporations precluded Canada’s playing an independent role in the world. These bonds must be cut if corporate capitalism and the social priorities it creates is to be effectively challenged.

Canadian development is distorted by a corporate capitalist economy. Corporate investment creates and fosters superfluous individual consumption at the expense of social needs. Corporate decision-making concentrates investment in a few major urban areas which become increasingly uninhabitable while the rest of the country sinks into underdevelopment.

The criterion that the most profitable pursuits are the most important ones causes the neglect of activities whose value cannot be measured by the standard of profitability. It is not accidental that housing, education, medical care and public transportation are inadequately provided for by the social system.

The problem of regional disparities is rooted in the profit orientation of capitalism. The social costs of stagnant areas are irrelevant to the corporations. For Canada the problem is compounded by the reduction of Canada to the position of an economic

colony of the United States. The foreign capitalist has even less concern for balanced development of the country than the Canadian capitalist with roots in a particular region.

An independence movement based on substituting Canadian capitalists for American capitalists, or on public policy to make foreign corporations behave as if they were Canadian corporations, cannot be our final objective. There is not now an independent Canadian capitalism and any lingering pretension on the part of Canadian businessmen to independence lack credibility. Without a strong national capitalist class behind them, Canadian governments, Liberal and Conservative, have functioned in the interests of international and particularly American capitalism, and have lacked the will to pursue even a modest strategy of economic independence.

Capitalism must be replaced by socialism, by national planning of investment and by the public ownership of the means of production in the interests of the Canadian people as a whole. Canadian nationalism is a relevant force on which to build to the extent that it is anti-imperialist. On the road to socialism, such aspirations for independence must be taken into account. For to pursue independence seriously is to make visible the necessity of socialism in Canada.

Those who desire socialism and independence for Canada have often been baffled and mystified by the problem of internal divisions within Canada. While the essential fact of Canadian history in the past century is the reduction of Canada to a colony of the United States, with a consequent increase in regional inequalities, there is no denying the existence of two nations within Canada, each with its own language, culture and aspiration. This reality must be incorporated into the strategy of the New Democratic Party.

English Canada and Quebec can share common institutions to the extent that they share common purposes. So long as Canada is governed by those who believe that national policy should be limited to the passive function of maintaining a peaceful and secure climate for foreign investors, there can be no meaningful unity between English and French Canadians. So long as the federal government refuses to protect the country from American economic and cultural domination, English Canada is bound to appear to French Canadians simply as part of the United States. An English Canada concerned with its own national survival would create common aspirations that would help tie the two nations together once more.

Nor can the present treatment of the constitutional issue in isolation from economic and social forces that transcend the two nations be anything but irrelevant. Our present constitution was drafted a century ago by politicians committed to the values and structure of a capitalist society. Constitutional change relevant to socialists must be based on the needs of the people rather than the corporation and must reflect the power of classes and groups excluded from effective decision-making by the present system.

A united Canada is of critical importance in pursuing a successful strategy against the reality of American imperialism. Quebec’s history and aspirations must be allowed full expression and implementation in the conviction that new ties will emerge from the common perception of “two nations, one struggle.” Socialists in English Canada must ally themselves with socialists in Quebec in this common cause.

Central to the creation of an independent socialist Canada is the strength and tradition of the Canadian working class and the trade union movement. The revitalization
and extension of the labour movement would involved a fundamental democratization of our society.

Corporate capitalism is characterized by the predominant power of the corporate elite aided and abetted by the political elite. A central objective of Canadian socialists must be to further the democratization process in industry. The Canadian trade union movement throughout its history was waged a democratic battle against the so-called rights or prerogatives of ownership and management. It has achieved the important moral and legal victory of providing for working men an effective say in what their wages will be. At present management’s “right” to control technological change is being challenged. The New Democratic Party must provide leadership in the struggle to extend workingmen’s influence into every area of industrial decision-making. Those who work must have effective control in the determination of working conditions, and substantial power in determining the nature of the product, prices, and so on. Democracy and socialism require nothing less.

Trade unionists and New Democrats have led in extending the welfare state in Canada. Much remains to be done: more and better housing, a really progressive tax structure, a guaranteed annual income. But these are no longer enough. A socialist society must be one in which there is democratic control of all institutions which have a major effect on men’s lives and where there is equal opportunity for creative non-exploitative self-development. It is now time to go beyond the welfare state.

New Democrats must begin now to insist on the redistribution of power, and not simply welfare, in a socialist direction. The struggle for worker participation in industrial decision-making and against management “rights” is such a move toward economic and social democracy.

By strengthening the Canadian labour movement, New Democrats will further the pursuit of Canadian independence. So long as Canadian economic activity is dominated by the corporate elite, and so long as workers’ rights are confined within their present limits, corporate requirements for profit will continue to take precedence over human needs.

By bringing men together primarily as buyers and sellers of each other, by enshrining profitability and material gain in place of humanity and spiritual growth, capitalism has always been inherently alienating. Today, sheer size combined with modern technology further exaggerates man’s sense of insignificance and impotence. A socialist transformation of society will return to man his sense of humanity, to replace his sense of being a commodity. But a socialist democracy implies man’s control of his immediate environment as well, and in any strategy for building socialism, community democracy is as vital as the struggle for electoral success. To that end, socialists must strive for democracy at those levels which most directly affect us all – in our neighbourhoods, our schools, our places of work. Tenants’ unions, consumers’ and producers’ co-operatives are example of areas in which socialists must lead in efforts to involve people directly in the struggle to control their own destinies.

Socialism is a process and a programme. The process is the raising of socialist consciousness, the building of a mass base of socialists, and a strategy to make visible the limits of liberal capitalism.

While the programme must evolve out of the process, its leading features seem clear. Relevant instruments for bringing the Canadian economy under Canadian
ownership and control and for altering the priorities established by corporate capitalism are at hand. They include extensive public control over investment and nationalization of the commanding heights of the economy, such as the key resources industries, finance and credit, and industries strategic to planning our economy. Within that programme, workers’ participation in all institutions promises to release creative energies, promote decentralization, and restore human and social priorities.

The struggle to build a democratic socialist Canada must proceed at all levels of Canadian society. The New Democratic Party is the organization suited to bringing these activities into a common focus. The New Democratic Party has grown out of a movement for democratic socialism that has deep roots in Canadian history. It is the core around which should be mobilized the social and political movement necessary for building an independent socialist Canada. The New Democratic Party must rise to that challenge or become irrelevant. Victory lies in joining the struggle.

Appendix C) The Marshmallow Manifesto (1969)

For a United and Independent Canada

New Democratic policy seeks to make and keep Canada free to realize the full potential and greatness of her people.

The live issue which concerns New Democrats, and Canadians generally, is to make us free to create the future of our economy and society; to redress the inequalities both within and between regions; to broaden and deepen the role of our people in the decisions which affect their lives; to redesign our cities; to improve the quality of life for all Canadians; to build a modern and efficient economy free of control of private corporate power, whether foreign or domestic; and to play a truly independent and meaningful role in the world.

The New Democratic Party is convinced that this cannot be achieved without the philosophy and policies of democratic socialism. The struggle for Canada’s independence is one with the struggle for a better society. It is a struggle for human equality and self-fulfillment. To win this struggle, there must be Canadian control of the economy, public control of investment and other priorities, democratic social planning to use our resources for the enrichment of the human condition.

The urgent fact which concerns us is that our future as Canadians is now in peril. There are too many among us whose self-interest lies in the disintegration of our country. Our right of economic self-determination, the foundation of our future, is deeply undermined. The control of our industry and our resources has passed to alarming degree into foreign hands.

The erosion of our national independence has reached alarming proportions. Effective measures to reverse the trend are necessary now before foreign control of our economic life reaches the point of no return.

The facts of foreign control in Canada are stark and threatening. The rising rate of take-overs, the growth of foreign ownership in many of our major industries, the imposition of foreign laws on Canadian subsidiaries, and Canada’s increasing dependence on American markets and practices have placed unacceptable limits on our freedom to pursue independent policies for the welfare of the Canadian people.

In our present society, the future shape of our economy is determined mainly by the major investment decision taken by large corporations. And for Canada this has meant, to an important and growing extent, decision by corporations owned and controlled by American interests. The inevitable result has been a branch-plant manufacturing industry much less efficient that it should be, a natural resources industry largely serving the U.S. market, inadequate industrial research and development, restrictions on our foreign exchange policies, and investment decisions which take little account of the priorities and needs of Canadians.

All this has happened openly. Those who hold power in Canada, the politicians and businessmen who have run this country, have presided publicly over the devastation of our environment, the dissolution of our national goals and the disappearance of our autonomy. Their outworn economic philosophy led them to welcome Canadian dependence on American corporations and to offer increasing concessions in return for
continued good-will. Canadian business and industrial circles found in profitable to follow this course.

While Continentalism has been the policy and practice of Liberal and Conservative governments, in marked contrast, Canadian independence and Canada’s survival as a free nation have been and are the determined goals of the New Democratic Party.

Old party spokesmen are fond of decrying concern for Canadian independence as anti-American. Nothing shows more clearly how little they understand the feelings of Canadians. Anti-Americanism is as barren and negative a concept as is anti-French or anti-English or anti any other country or people. Canadians have always known this.

What New Democrats seek is to make and keep Canada free to realize her full potential and greatness. We must regain control of our national future, not because of sentimental patriotism but because it is the only foundation on which we can build a better society.

To achieve this end, New Democrats will use all the means available in a modern economy: expansion of public investment and public ownership, government planning, investment controls, a just tax system, purposeful monetary policies freed from the restraints of a fixed exchange rate, and necessary laws to limit and regulate foreign investment and subsidiaries in Canada.

From its inception, the New Democratic Party has proposed a massive, publicly-owned Development Corporation to give Canadians a strong new voice in the growth of their country and to provide government with an operating instrument having a large pool of capital for public investment in accordance with the essential social priorities. We also propose a national commodity field throughout the world, so as to reduce Canada’s unhealthy dependence on one unregulated market. Finally, we recognize that only our own efforts, through a serious commitment in carefully chosen areas of science and technology, will secure our industrial future.

Using not only one but all available means, the New Democratic Party calls on Canadians to free their country from foreign domination of its economy, of its cultural development and of its international policies. However, we believe that the survival of Canada depends even more on national programmes for people – in housing, beauty and comfort in the cities, comfort and security on the farms, income maintenance, education, recreation and a host of other areas.

We have a noble myth in Canada of our capacity to accommodate cultural difference. For too long, however, disparity of income and opportunity has been the price of diversity. The result has been a persistent sectionalism, most conspicuously in French Canada, but apparent throughout Canada – in the Atlantic Region, in Northern Ontario and in the West. The survival of Canada depends on removing regional and all other inequalities and building a true foundation for one united country in which the position and responsibilities of every region and, particularly, those of Quebec, are fully recognized within Confederation.

Millions of Canadians share our faith in Canada and our determination to strengthen and enrich Canada’s independence and place in the world. We call on them to join with us in the great common enterprise of saving our country. This is the challenge of the seventies and to this challenge the New Democratic Party rededicates itself.
Appendix D) The Ontario Waffle Manifesto (1970)

For a Socialist Ontario in an Independent Socialist Canada

As democratic socialists, we seek to build a socialist Ontario in an independent socialist Canada. As members of the New Democratic Party, we seek to make it the key instrument of that struggle.

There is much to be done. We live today in a corporate capitalist society. Its failure are increasingly evident. The combination of unemployment and inflation undermines the security of working people. Labour is treated like a commodity, with giant corporations unilaterally closing plants and replacing workers in the name of “progress”, while the power of the state is used to repress unions. Our resources are alienated into the hands of private capitalists, who are typically foreign, and the benefits that should accrue to local communities are drained abroad. The land is despoiled, the air we breathe and the water we drink is polluted. The educational system is designed to favour the privileged few while training the many to play social roles that have been prepared for them. There is widespread discrimination against women. The poor, the immigrant and native minorities are systematically excluded from our economic, political and cultural institutions and from affluence and power. Toronto, as the dominant metropolis of the provincial economy, takes its tribute from its hinterland, and notably from resource-rich Northern Ontario. The government is little more than a committee that administers on behalf of the corporations.

Nor is that all, for Ontario is but a link in a long imperial chain. The Ontario economy has been integrated into the American corporate system. Corporate capitalism within the American empire funnels wealth to the large shareholders in the American metropolis. Toronto corporate middlemen run the branch office for New York in appropriating much of the profits of the Canadian economy for American owners. The system of corporate empire results in investment being centred in a few favoured urban areas while the hinterland us exploited for resources and allowed to sink into economic stagnation and underdevelopment. Economic imbalance results for much of the country including large parts of Ontario. Between 1960 and 1967, Canadian subsidiaries and affiliates (about half of which are in Ontario) sent two billion dollars more to the United States in the form of profits, royalties, license and management fees, than they received from parent corporations in the form of capital imports. Ontario is now the vehicle for the exploitation of much of the rest of Canada – we must end this domination of all Canadians by Ontario-based corporations.

So it is that today the continuing Americanization of Ontario not only turns Ontario into a branch plant society; it poses the chief threat to the achievement of Canadian independence and Canadian socialism. To build a vital socialist movement in Ontario would be to take a long step toward building an independent socialist Canada.

The means to build a socialist Ontario are at hand. The necessary powers to plan, to bring the economy under public ownership and control, and to develop our natural
resources for the public good already lie within the Province of Ontario. The use of these instruments awaits the development of socialist consciousness in factories, offices, campuses, and neighbourhoods.

* * * * *

In fundamental opposition to our goals is the Ontario government’s present serving of corporate interests. We must not let the continuing increase in government activity mislead us into thinking that we are moving, albeit gradually, toward a social order in which the people will get a larger say. Rather, the needs of an advanced technological society are integrating the government more closely with the corporation. What is now called “planning” by the government involves only the further buttressing of the system of private capitalism, and reinforces the holding of power by those who already wield it. They are satisfied to supply the support systems – hydro-electricity, highways, trained manpower – needed for the expansion of corporate activity.

In the face of the increasing power of American multi-national corporations, the present Ontario government not only does nothing to resist, but instead actively promotes the foreign take-over. Ontario businessmen and the old-line parties who represent their interests have given up any serious pretensions of an independent status for this country. Our human and natural resources are treated as enticements to investors, mostly American, to locate in Ontario. In recent years, the Robarts Government has subsidized through grants and forgivable loans such giants corporations as Union Carbide, Allied Chemical, Kraft Foods and General Foods. In this fashion, the taxes of ordinary people are used to subsidize the corporate elite and to reduce yet further domestic control of our economy. Rising unemployment and a full sharing of American inflation are among the results of foreign ownership; (the present system is unable to cope with the most straight forward demand of working people).

As democratic socialists, we must dedicate ourselves to fighting with all the means at our disposal this sell-out and give-away of Canada’s largest province. To the present reality of Americanization and capitalism, we must pose the alternative of independence and socialism. In order to rid ourselves of the control of our society by American corporations and their local allies, we must insist on nothing less than the diffusion of power to the vast majority of citizens not now included in decision-making. The means for the repatriation of our economy and for the winning of power for the people are known. They include extensive public control over investment and the nationalization of large corporations in the key sectors of the economy.

To bring presently privately-owned corporations under public ownership would be to bring our economy directly under democratic control. To create new Crown corporations is the most effective means to create both more jobs and more creative jobs. All public enterprises must be run such a way as to give control in decision-making to workers and the community.
Socialist planning will make it possible for us both to half and reverse the Americanization of the economy and to combat underdevelopment in disadvantaged regions. Crown corporations should be located in such areas so as to create a balanced variety of jobs, and to ensure that development serves the area and is not simply geared to quick profits for a distant head office. Such Crown corporations must be administered by people in the locals areas rather than by an impersonal bureaucracy at Queen’s Park.

* * * * *

Our present society is characterized by gross inequality in the distribution of income and wealth and by a monopoly of power in the hands of the few. Much remains to be done to redistribute income through an equitable system of taxation and a humane system of welfare. But these are no longer enough. Socialism means the gathering back of power into this country so that it can be put in the hands of ordinary men and women. What is required is nothing less than the building of a truly democratic society.

Across Canada we desire a new set of social and working relations in which the people themselves actually decide local issues in the factory, office neighbourhood and school. Socialist democracy means both the control of the immediate environment by those affected and the control of the larger provincial and national communities by the people as a whole. Social movements such as those of workers, farmers, students, tenants, women, and minority groups are central to this social transformation. Socialists must involve themselves in the organization of tenants’ unions, welfare recipients’ groups and producers’ and consumers’ co-operatives.

The New Democratic Party must be the vitalizing centre that gives these social forces a common perspective, a sense of solidarity and an organization for united action. Only in this way can power be taken away from the tiny elite which now monopolizes it. Only in this way can capitalism be replaced by socialism.

* * * * *

The distorted priorities of the present system are nowhere more evident and more dangerous than in the destruction of the natural and human environment of this province. We can no longer afford to be sanguine about our “open” spaces and our “limitless” resources, or imagine that the world’s largest lakes and rivers can be killed by pollution, that immense timber stands can be mined out of existence, that rich resources can be turned into slag heaps and foul air. We have seen unregulated urban sprawl eat away at the province’s best agricultural land. The existence of tens of thousands of lakes has not guaranteed their recreational use for the public good. The reckless exploitation of the natural environment of this province now imperils our future for all time to come.

The impending energy resources deal between the Canadian government and the United States gives particular urgency to the case for new resource policies. Such an agreement, negotiated by a Liberal government in Ottawa, aided and abetted by a Conservative government in Ontario, could result in the alienation in perpetuity of Ontarians from their
resources. An immediate objective of New Democrats must be to stop any deal which treats Canadian resources simply as continental resources. We must oppose such an extension of American imperialism by all the means at our disposal – through action at the provincial level as well as the federal, and by direct political action as well as in the legislature.

In the cities, our human environment has suffered from the government’s primary concern with the promotion of profit and the pursuit of growth without respect to social costs. Poor public transportation, inadequate housing, and the lack of parks and recreational facilities make it evident that human well-being is no the present aim of urban design. The automobile industry in particular and its attendant jungle of expressways has already given us unplanned urban sprawl and now threatens the habitability of the inner city.

Only by replacing a government controlled by profit-seekers with a government controlled by the people can we make the preservation of our natural environment and the re-fashioning of our urban environment for human habitation attainable goals.

* * * * *

In our present capitalist society, the people themselves are seen as a resource. Corporations use the state to provide them with trained manpower. Immigrants are treated as a pool of cheap labour to be exploited. Their entry into Canada is determined more by the state of the capitalist labour market and the manpower needs of the corporations than by human considerations. Mindless talk of cultural diversity and the vertical mosaic obscures the reality of ghettos and of pervasive barriers to the achievement of equality of condition.

As the education system becomes increasingly integrated with corporate activity, people are taught to accept their lot as producers and consumers within the American empire. Our young people are taught to be competitive and individualist toward each other, and to be passive and obedient toward the school system, their employers and the state. Through their taxes, working people finance an educational system geared to maintain corporate interest and to educate privileged income groups.

The industrial dependence on institutions of higher learning is causing both corporations and governments to use their influence and control to make universities and colleges better instruments for strengthening the capitalist system along continentalist lines. We now have a branch plant system of higher education the better to service our branch plant economy.

Canada is unique among the developed nations of the world in terms of the number of foreigners who teach in our universities. Fewer than fifty per cent of professors teaching in the Arts and Science faculties of many Ontario universities are Canadian citizens. The social sciences as developed in the United States have become instruments to extend American control by eroding our value systems and our national consciousness, and by
creating tastes and attitudes that make us passive consumers of North American civilization.

Democratic socialists must seek a system of education in Ontario that is critical and Canadian and that is governed by students, teachers, and representative members of the community.

* * * * *

The overwhelming section of the population that works for a wage or salary must play the key role in transforming our society. New Democrats who are trade unionists must continue the struggle to organize the majority of the working people who remain unorganized. All New Democrats who are trade unionists must oppose the Robarts Government’s direct suppression of the labour movement. While corporations combine to set prices and to exercise monopolistic control of markets, workers are prevented by state injunctions from using their organized power.

Socialists must reject the concept that there are “management rights” in the industry which are non-negotiable. They must be articulate and support new rights for working people: the right to a job, and with shorter hours and higher pay; the right to benefit from technological change without threat to income or security; and the right to control the product of their own labour through the popular democratic management of industry.

The labour movement in Canada and in Ontario is presently fragmented among too many unions, in part because of the present nature of international unionism. Canadian sections of international unions must have full autonomy, and mergers must be sought between unions in Canada.

* * * * *

Farmers like trade unionists have long struggled to control their own environment. At present in Ontario farmers are losing that fight. Farmers are not working for themselves so much as for the benefit of the great food monopolies, farm implement companies and other corporations which exploit both the farmer and the consumer. Socialists must commit themselves to improving the standard of living and the quality of life of rural Ontario. These objectives can be reached by ensuring that agriculture is carried on in the interests of the farmer and the community as a whole. Industries related to farming such as food processing and farm implement manufacturing must be brought under public or co-operative ownership. Agricultural marketing must be rationalized and prices maintained by means of produced controlled marketing boards.

The movement to end the exploitation of women must be vigourously supported by socialists. The oppression of women stems from the definition of a woman as wife and mother to the exclusion of all else. Discrimination operates against women in the educational system and the work place. Women are discouraged from seeking higher education and are channeled into the lowest paying and most meaningless jobs. The
overwhelming majority of working women are unorganized and suffer discrimination not only from management but also from their fellow male workers.

The New Democratic Party must provide its full support to the struggle for the liberation of women and must support independent women’s organizations which are fighting oppression.

* * * *

In the face of accelerating continentalism, the growth of social movements and the increasing support for the goals of independence and socialism are reasons for hope. The new awareness of the people regarding Americanization and the new consciousness of the social and human costs of capitalism must be given political expression at once if we are to halt the destruction of Canada.

We must not be deterred by those who will try to dismiss us by labeling us “anti-American”, for those who do so profoundly misunderstand. Our complaint is not against the American people and the progressive movements in that country, but against the American corporate, political and cultural domination of Canada. Our colonial condition makes necessary an anti-imperialist struggle, if we are to achieve socialism and independence.

Finally, in our efforts to oppose the present regime at Queen’s Park, we can afford to have the people misled by partial solutions that would result in neither independence nor socialism. We must not settle for state capitalism or for welfare capitalism. The New Democratic Party must dedicate itself to the building of a socialist Ontario in an independent socialist Canada.

From _For a Socialist Ontario in an Independent Socialist Canada_, personal files.

For a Socialist Saskatchewan in an Independent Socialist Canada

Introduction

Many of the richest pages of Canadian history have been written by the struggles of the people of Saskatchewan. Whether one speaks of the struggle for political and economic self-determination led by Louis Riel or the continuous struggles of the farmers to obtain a secure life and a fair return on their crops, again and again the courage and progressiveness of the people of Saskatchewan is expressed in their fight in the interests of the majority of the people of the province – workers and farmers. Again and again peoples’ movements in Saskatchewan have confronted the abuses, limitations and inadequacies of capitalism – an economic system based on the exploitation of the many by the few in the pursuit of profit and imperialism – the characteristic of capitalism in which the people and resources of one region or nation are exploited for the benefit of another region or nation.

In the depths of the Great Depression these same people founded the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (CCF). In 1933 the CCF’s first national convention adopted a far-reaching socialist manifesto calling for the eradication of capitalism. Thus from diverse expressions of the struggle of people against capitalism emerged a united socialist movement.

Over the next decade the movement struggled in the interests of the working people of the province – farmers and workers. In 1944 through political action at every level of the community, the CCF movement swept to an overwhelming electoral victory. The movement had become a profound part of the social fabric of the Saskatchewan community.

But over the years the sense of being a movement was lost. The ‘prosperity’ and political conservatism of the fifties forced the CCF to retreat from an aggressive and courageous espousal of socialism to a more conservative reformist posture. This process culminated in the formation of the New Democratic Party (NDP) in 1961 which decisively set the movement on the traditional course of a parliamentary party.

Times have changed. The political mood of the people has changed. The ‘prosperity’ of the fifties and early sixties has been exposed for the hoax it was. Poverty, unemployment and depression once more confront us. New threats face our people – pollution, the distant but immediate threat of nuclear annihilation, permanent and hidden poverty, urban sprawl, repression, etc. Today people are moving forward toward more active and intense politics = the politics of survival.

Today we face new problems for which we must find new socialist solutions. The chief source of the problems remains the same capitalism. In the thirties capitalism as a system collapsed. Only a global war could restore it and only a continuing Cold War could prop it up. Today we face monopoly and corporate capitalism in which the old failings are magnified and intensified. Rampant individualism and private profiteering, price fixing, the intervention of the state on behalf of the corporations and the elimination of competitors are common features in our irrational economy. The goals of the system remain the same – pursuit of profit for the few at the expense of the many. And today, in Canada and in Saskatchewan, we face American imperialism in which the resources and
skills of our people are not only exploited for the profit of the Canadian corporate elite but also for their American senior partners. Thus the priorities of our economy are doubly distorted.

In Canada this will come to mean that we will be more and more a colony of the American economy serving the needs of that economy as a resource base and consumer market.

In Saskatchewan, as the economic depression depends, this will come to mean that our province will be further depopulated, the rural economy further eroded, and our land taken over by American or Canadian corporate capitalist farms, further extending the monopoly control of the food chains. Many of us will be reduced to the status of seasonal employees on the land we once owned and cultivated. The cash income of the farmers, on which so much of our city and town population depends, will leave the province as corporate profits, throwing our cities and towns into deeper depression. Many more of us will be driven to the urban centres to make do as best we can.

It is a question of the survival of Canada as a nation. It is a question of the survival of Saskatchewan as a decent human community.

Mere reforms of capitalism are not enough. We must build a socialist Saskatchewan in an independent socialist Canada. Nothing less will do.

We of the New Democratic Party must accept this challenge and must rekindle and cherish the socialist heritage of the CCF and strive to apply it to the conditions we face today. The NDP must become a socialist movement. It must again realize that the building of such a movement is built primarily among the people – on farms, in factories, offices, trade unions, universities and in the streets. We must come to realize that within a hostile capitalist society only supreme effort and diligent work will allow the socialist heritage we have had passed on to us, to be nurtured, and to become victorious.

Supporters of the Waffle Caucus seek the preservation and successful extension of this socialist heritage in Saskatchewan and Canada. Aware that adequate socialist solutions will not be found in one province but nationally, we commit ourselves to the support of the national movement for and independent socialist Canada.

All supporters of this document are members of the NDP. We are committed to the NDP; to work within it and so to convince it to select the road of a grassroots socialist movement over the futile course of a traditional parliamentary party. We will publicly, openly, and democratically organize and debate our positions among our party’s members and supporters. We are convinced that this free and open debate will be a turning point for the movement.

Toward a program of socialist planning

A socialist NDP will introduce comprehensive social and economic planning. A planning agency will be created with authority to develop, with the cooperation of constituency-level, popularly selected groups, development plans for the several regions of Saskatchewan. Comprehensive planning must provide for all sources of government revenue including receipts from crown corporations and other income earning public functions, license and other fees, income from investments and various taxes and royalties. It will be a primary objective of a socialist NDP to reduce reliance on revenues on income and property tax and to maximize reliance on proceeds from publicly
controlled enterprise. As more experience is gained the party must be prepared to extend its direction over added sources of investment now considered private.

Planning for development will cover all present public services such as education, health, welfare, power, roads, and communication. But it will also be extended to include a broad definition of development, including but not restricted to urban development, jobs, ecological conservation and housing.

Within this broad context, we would make the following more specific proposals regarding the Saskatchewan economy and the development of social services and more tangible democracy.

A) The Regional Economy

“Regional disparity” is not an historical accident. The underdevelopment of the prairie economy is a consequence of capitalist planning. The purpose of the national policy from 1850 to 1930 was to establish a population base in the West and to build a network of commercial trading centers, railways and ports necessary for: (1) extraction of primary resources and food staples; and (2) the protected marketing of British manufactured goods. Eastern Canada acts as a funnel for wealth from the prairies which now ends up the hands of American capitalists.

Regional development must be part of a new national policy based on socialist planning.

Saskatchewan is a rich producer of food, and has abundant reserves in petroleum, potash and other mineral resources. Our total economy depends on our ability to generate and retain wealth in these key areas.

We propose an integrated program of development in the seventies which seeks to retain in Saskatchewan the productive wealth of our key industries thereby expanding supporting services and secondary industry. Expansion in health care, education, recreation, electrical and telephone services only become possible when agriculture can be made profitable for the producers and when profits from primary sources are distributed within the region.

Capitalist planning produces the opposite results. Foreign based monopolies take the profits from agriculture, oil, and potash but contribute little to services and secondary industry. Even public capital goes to support private industries (such as the Prince Albert Pulp Mill) while hospitals and schools are closed down and workers in the public sector take relative wage cuts. Fewer teachers teach larger classes at lower real wages; qualitative improvement in education becomes impossible. Small businessmen and professionals within the province are forced out of business while international chain stores expand their profit margins. As production in all sectors reaches an all time high, urban unemployment increases, the rural area is depopulated, people of every age and description are forced to leave the province.

A socialist NDP would adopt the following general approach to regional development:

1) All sectors of the economy will be integrated into a planned program.
2) Productive wealth will be retained within the region necessitating ownership in key areas of food production and resource industries.
3) Industrial planning and production must be democratically controlled by those working within and or affected by the industry with ultimate authority in the broader community.

4) Community control will be built into all services and social institutions such as education, health care facilities, recreation, crown corporations etc.

More concretely still, we propose the following program for a socialist NDP in the seventies.

I) Agriculture

Our central objectives in agricultural planning are: (1) to preserve and expand the rural community; (2) to maintain the farm family as the basic social unity in a larger community structure; and, (3) to establish democratic control by the farmers and workers in the agricultural community over all facets of food production.

In order to meet these objectives, a socialist NDP will propose the following program for agriculture for Saskatchewan and Canada:

i) **Guaranteed farm income** – Farm income will be separated from produce and livestock prices. Farmers will bargain collectively for income with government on an industry-wide basis. Income levels will be based on need and the productive potential of land. Farm commodities will become a public responsibility from the time they are produced with market and pricing policies designed to cover costs of farm income payments, costs of services to the community, and the purchasing of farm land by the crown.

ii) **Halt corporate farming** –立法反对企业侵入农耕和无偿获得国外或企业拥有的土地。

iii) **Support for co-operatives and young farmers** – Enact legislation on land tenure which places maximum limits on single holdings. Begin a program of crown land assembly by: (1) providing the crown with the initial option to purchase retiring land at assessed value; and, (2) purchasing land from farmers who wish to release their capital fixed in land. Such land will be put to preferential use by licensing to young farmers or farmers desiring co-operative or collective operations. Such land would remain under title of the crown and would be rent free. Such a policy will sustain the rural population at present levels and encourage repopulation by eliminating the huge capital outlay in land required presently.

iv) **Rationalize the food industry** – A socialist NDP is committed to public ownership because capitalism has been exploiting producers and consumers alike. In no area is this systematic exploitation more pronounced than in the corporate food industry. The food industry therefore will be taken into public ownership and rationalized so that food processing and marketing (where possible) takes place in the region of production. Phony advertising and phony competition in retail operations will be eliminated, and the artificial profits between producer and consumer destroyed.

II) Resource Development Policy
A program for resource development must reverse the trend of exploitation for private profit and redirect proceeds to social needs and the furthering of human and ecological values. Within provincial authority the possibility for achieving this objective is severely limited. Any program of extractive industries must be based upon and judged against its social and ecological consequences. Considerations of economic benefit or loss, threats to long-term conservation, pollution, degree of community control, and the interests of the local people must be weighed. No provincial government has yet assessed these factors in determining its policies. A socialist NDP will make this assessment of the potash, oil and pulp and paper industries and in assessing future development proposals. A socialist NDP will ensure that our vast northern riches are developed for the benefit of the people and not for foreign or domestic private profit. As a general principle, we must seek to develop resources through public ownership so that we have a just return of wealth, real control over industry policies, and can encourage and develop industrial democracy.

B) Building Peoples’ Power

In order to build socialism, we must erect practical economic and social structures that put power in the hands of the people in an ongoing fashion. If we do not do this, we will merely substitute the authoritarian top-down state bureaucracy for the authoritarian top-down corporation. In order to achieve a socialist democracy, a socialist NDP will adopt the following perspectives and policies.

I) Labour policy

Throughout its history, the labouring classes of this region have suffered exploitation in the extreme at the hands of foreign based capital. Wage slavery and poor working conditions in the mines, mills and railways of Western Canada caused labour to organize and take militant action. Today in the midst of yet another depression, poor conditions and punishing attitudes prevail. Anti-labour legislation has been enacted which denies working people their basic rights – the right to organize without fear, the right to bargain, and the right to strike in support of their demands. A socialist NDP government will be a partisan government in support of the worker and farmer majority in their efforts to achieve basic rights.

A socialist NDP committed to true industrial democracy will not only recognize these rights, but will acknowledge and support new rights for the working man: (1) the right to benefit from technological change in industry without threat to income or security; (2) the right to control the product of his own labour through the democratic management of industry; and (3) the right to employment with shorter hours and higher pay as surpluses in productive labour emerge.

A socialist NDP will protect and support the working man. Immediately this means:

i) The repeal of restrictive amendments to the Trade Union Act and new legislation guaranteeing freedom to organize without employer interference;

ii) The repeal of Bill 2; an extension of the right to strike during the life of the contract when new circumstances arise which are not settled by
negotiation; and legislation enabling workers to bargain over traditional “management rights;”

iii) Legislation requiring notice by employers of changes in plant operations which threaten jobs. The implementation and effects of all such changes should be subject to negotiation including the right to re-training and/or transfer or severance pay;

iv) An increase of the minimum wage to $2 per hour regardless of age, sex, or geographical location of work place.

II) The liberation of women

The oppression of women is essential to the continued smooth functioning of capitalism. This oppression focuses on the definition of a woman as wife and mother to the exclusion of all else. 

The most graphic demonstration of oppression is the denial to women of control of their own bodies through knowledge of, and access to, birth control techniques and free abortions.

Work performed in the home by a woman is not regarded as socially useful labour by society and, consequently, is viewed as secondary and supportive to work performed in the market place where one works for wages.

The education system actively contributes to discrimination against women. Working class women are discouraged from seeking higher education, and women who enter university are channeled into traditional women’s occupations.

Working women find themselves performing two jobs – as housewives and as cogs in the labour force. As workers women are discriminated against by management and fellow workers. They are paid the lowest wages for the dirtiest, most degrading jobs. In vast majority non-unionized, they exist as a pool of unskilled labour to be brought into the work force, or rejected, at the whim of the employers. At the same time, they remain an alternative source of labour to the male labour force, keeping all wages down.

The NDP shares with the union movement a complicity in active discrimination against women in their own ranks. This must cease. If we are to work together as equals – men and women – and socialists we must reform the party structures to eliminate discrimination. Yet, the struggle against the oppression of women must be carried by the women themselves organizing around their problems and demands.

A socialist NDP committed seriously to the liberation of women will: build structural equality within the party itself; support independent women’s organizations to fight their oppression; enact laws to provide free birth control and abortion; provide free government supported child care; eliminate sexual discrimination in hiring, job classifications and job training; guarantee equal pay for equal work; eliminate sexual stereotyping in the educational system; and recognize the productive labour done in the home with a living wage paid from the public purse.

III) Social services

Welfare in the capitalist society is nothing more than a program of expediency designed to ease the pain of the suffering of people and the conscience of the exploiters. It degrades human beings, and, therefore can have no place in a socialist society. Social
services must become instruments of liberation increasing the freedom, independence, and integrity of the people concerned.

First, good health in a socialist society is a basic right of all. In no way can it be treated as service administered on the ability to pay. A socialist NDP will expand the medicare system to include all forms of related health services. It will implement a social medicare program for preventive medicine and the development of community clinics.

Second, a socialist NDP believes that all members of society have a right to adequate, decent housing. Furthermore, they have a right to live in a community which has been planned and organized to serve their needs rather than the profits of land speculators, builders, and real estate parasites.

Third, a socialist NDP will ensure that basic income payments to the poor, the unemployed, the aged and the physically handicapped will be integrated into community development and action programs controlled and administered by the people themselves. Social services must not mean bureaucratic invasion and control.

IV) The Indian and the Métis

Racism in Canada has created a colony within a colony. The native people of this continent have had to face two levels of exploitation. One, at the hands of a distant imperial power; and one, at the hands of an immediate white society which seized the wealth of their lands and threatened the defeated victims with cultural annihilation. Capitalism and racism combined have ensure that these people are the first victims to suffer chronic unemployment, underemployment, and inhuman living conditions.

A socialist NDP government in Saskatchewan must help the native people of this land achieve self-determination and self-preservation. The policy of assimilation as advanced from Ottawa threatens to complete the process of cultural and economic genocide. To meet this threat, Indian and Métis people must be granted the right to a viable economic existence which will provide the real opportunity to preserve their independent culture and history.

A socialist NDP government will bargain without prior conditions with the native community to reach a just settlement. The rights and privileges extended in treaties made with Indian nations will be unconditionally guaranteed at modern economic standards. The dismantling of the expensive and rigid Indian Affairs Department is a necessary step towards autonomy for Canada’s Indians. Real changes for Indians will only come through their control over their own lives and resources. This is the essence of a democratic socialist society – the development of individual and group identities within the framework of broad regional and national purposes. The survival of the native peoples of Canada demands a socialist society, and a socialist movement in Saskatchewan requires the involvement and leadership of the native people.

V) Education policy

Education in a capitalist society, by using public resources to provide advantaged education for children of middle and upper-income families, perpetuates the existing class system. By stifling the development of social criticism it both destroys the creativity of students and assures passive obedience to capitalist rule. Its values are the values of capitalism: competition, obedience, passivity and individualism.
Educated workers are essential to modern capitalism, yet education produces no direct profits to corporations. Hence, educational spending remains a reluctant priority and in times of economic crisis suffers particularly. At such times, quality education, even in traditional terms, is curtailed.

The Saskatchewan educational system is stifled by central control. Bureaucratic regimentation is the most formidable barrier to creative learning. Students, teachers and the community at large must directly become involved in educational decision making. Schools must become resource centers for the entire community. Province-wide curriculum planning must be balanced with more local control over teaching methods, curriculum, and school administration.

Far from conducting dispassionate research in the interests of “pure science,” our universities serve as handmaidens to monopoly corporations. Their research serves the corporate interests, and thousands of their graduates are forced to leave the province in search of employment. Yet working people, not corporations, finance in greater proportion the cost of higher education. The university must serve the interests of the working people.

Specifically, a socialist NDP will seek to organize and implement the following program:

i) Reduction of size of the central authority of the Department of Education providing more power and finances to local community controlled bodies.

ii) Elimination of tuition fees and provision of stipends for all students beyond the age of family dependence; such provisions to be automatically implemented for all post secondary students.

iii) Enabling democratic control at all levels of education by: (1) eliminating the business controlled Board of Governors of the university and replacing it with a body representative of working people to work in consultation with students and faculty in all areas of decision-making; (2) granting autonomy to the university at Regina and any future campuses or junior colleges; (3) establishing a student-centered teaching approach in primary school to facilitate the development of democratic, humanistic, and autonomous personalities; (4) entrench the right of students and faculty to organize and to be politically active without fear of reprisal.

iv) Compensating working people, Indian and Métis, the poor, and women for the failure of the university in the past to respond to their interests by: (1) providing privileged admissions’ policies for children of poor and particularly Indian and Métis families; (2) providing stipends and free day care for student mothers; (3) providing complete public access to all university records pertinent to the university’s research activities and to all negotiations between the government and the university; and within the university, as related to fiscal matters; (4) providing research facilities and personnel on a priority basis to working people and their organizations, and all oppressed minorities.

Conclusion

The issues our people and our party face are issues of survival. They call for a fundamental socialist transformation of our society. They, therefore, call for a
factual re-orientation of the NDP. We must again make our party a socialist movement – a peoples’ instrument in their struggle against capitalism, racism, chauvinism and imperialism.

We are aware that the layers of crises which we must confront cannot fully be dealt with by the socialist movement of one province. But we do believe that we can again light the spark and lead the way in Saskatchewan. By building our movement here, we build the national movement. By succeeding here, we give hope and inspiration to our brothers and sisters across the country.

The seventies is a decade of decision for Saskatchewan and Canada. We can choose socialism and self-determination; or we can choose the fate of a colony of the American Empire. We must choose socialism.
Appendix F) Ethics Approval Notice

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This is to notify you that the University of Western Ontario Research Ethics Board for Non-Medical Research Involving Human Subjects - NREIB has reviewed and approved according to the Tri-Council Policy Statement, Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans and the applicable laws and regulations of Ontario has granted approval to the above-named research study on the approval date noted above.

This approval shall remain valid until the expiry date noted above assuming timely and acceptable responses to the NREIB's periodic requests for surveillance and monitoring information.

Members of the NREIB who are named as investigators in research studies, or declare a conflict of interest, do not participate in discussions related to, nor vote on, such studies when they are presented to the NREIB.

The Chair of the NREIB is Dr. Riley Vanier. The NREIB is registered with the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services under the IRB registration number #HHS0001191.

This is an official document. Please retain the original in your files.
**VITA**

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