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Competing Perspectives on the Knights of Labor:
with special reference to South-Central Ontario, 1883-1886

By
Greg Graves, B.A.

A thesis submitted to
the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
in partial fulfilment of
the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts
Department of Anthropology and Sociology

Carleton University
Ottawa, Ontario

July 10, 1990

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The undersigned recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies
and Research acceptance of the thesis

COMPETING PERSPECTIVES ON THE KNIGHTS OF LABOR:
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submitted by Greg Graves, B.A.
in partial fulfilment of the requirements for
the degree of Master of Arts

Thesis Supervisor

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Carleton University

August 8, 1990

Abstract

The Noble and Holy Order of the Knights of Labor was the leading labor organization in North America during the late-nineteenth century. The entire history of the Knights in Canada spans approximately thirty years (1875-1907). In the early to mid-1880s the Order expanded rapidly throughout the cities, towns, and villages of Ontario. After the mid-1880s, the number of local assemblies across Ontario began to decline. A significant percentage of the Ontario work-force was drawn to the Knights over the course of their history.

The Knights were the first North American union to organize workers based on an all-inclusive style of membership. All workers, regardless of skill level, gender, ethnicity, and religion were welcome into the Noble and Holy Order. Historians and social scientists have advanced several competing perspectives on the Knights of Labor. This thesis evaluates the positions that the competing 'labor schools' have advanced on the Order, with special reference to south-central Ontario in the 1880s.

The evaluation of the competing labor schools is based on a content analysis of the late-nineteenth century labor press. The main sample selected for this thesis is Hamilton's Palladium of Labor (1883-1886). A combination of primary and secondary data sources are examined in order to build support for one of the competing perspectives that has been advanced on the Knights.

List of Tables

Table	Description	Page
1a	Number of front page articles	149i
1b	Average number of articles	149ii
2a	Number of labor/non-labor articles: Plot I	150i
2b	Number of labor/non-labor articles: Plot II	150ii
2c	Number of labor/non-labor articles: Plot III	150iii
3a	Support for labor schools: Histogram	151i
3b	Support for labor schools: Best Line Fit	151ii
4	Degree of employee/employer interest	166i
5	Working-class cultural events	169i
6a	International conditions of labor	172i
6b	Origins of countries	172ii
7a	Attacks on chinese immigration	174i
7b	Motivation for attacks on chinese	174ii
8a	Labor programmes	175i
8b	Types of labor programmes	175ii
9	Attacks on monopolies	179i
10a	Labor involvement in politics	183i
10b	Type of political involvement	184ii
10c	Level of government	188i
11	Muckraking techniques	189i
12a	Strike actions	196i
12b	Union participation in strikes	197i

Appendix A: Knights' Declaration	230
Appendix B: Content Analysis Instrument	233
Appendix C: Palladium: Random Selection	236
Bibliography	238

List of Tables

Table	Description	Page
1a	Number of front page articles	149i
1b	Average number of articles	149ii
2a	Number of labor/non-labor articles: Plot I	150i
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2c	Number of labor/non-labor articles: Plot III	150iii
3a	Support for labor schools: Histogram	151i
3b	Support for labor schools: Best Line Fit	151ii
4	Degree of employee/employer interest	166i
5	Working-class cultural events	169i
6a	International conditions of labor	172i
6b	Origins of countries	172ii
7a	Attacks on chinese immigration	174i
7b	Motivation for attacks on chinese	174ii
8a	Labor programmes	175i
8b	Types of labor programmes	175ii
9	Attacks on monopolies	175iii
10a	Labor involvement in politics	183i
10b	Type of political involvement	184ii
10c	Level of government	188i
11	Muckraking techniques	189i
12a	Strike actions	196i
12b	Union participation in strikes	197i

Preface

Initially, it had been intended that this thesis include a primary analysis of the Knights of Labor over the course of their entire history in Ontario (1875-1907). However, the scope of this type of analysis is well beyond the limits of the current thesis. A simple content analysis of a single labor newspaper (Hamilton's Palladium of Labor) is by itself an extremely time consuming task.

There is a wide range of primary sources of data available to researchers studying labor in the late-nineteenth century. The most comprehensive list can be found in Gregory Kealey and Russell Hann, eds., Primary Sources in Canadian Working Class History, 1860-1930 (1973). Labor newspapers were selected as one option from several available sources. Alternatively, a number of methodological approaches could have been applied to the current study. A content analysis was chosen as an appropriate methodology.

What is suggested, therefore, is that caution is exercised when interpreting the results from the data collected from the labor press. Several other types of research techniques and data sources are available to researchers interested in evaluating the perspectives advanced in this thesis. Future research could be directed to examining alternative approaches.

Introduction

In Canada, as elsewhere, some of the boundaries separating the disciplines of sociology and history were further eroded in the 1970s and 1980s. The innovative style of research adopted by social historians has directly contributed to the process of dismantling interdisciplinary barriers.¹ In particular, it is within the field of nineteenth century working-class studies that social historians and sociologists often share a similar orientation to the literature. This trend is in sharp contrast to the types of alliances formed in the area of labor history prior to the 1970s. During this period, writers were generally divided along disciplinary lines and schools of thought. It is within this broader context that the current thesis attempts to further bridge the gap between sociological and historical approaches to the study of the Canadian working-class.

At the substantive level, this thesis explores the thousands of working men and women who joined the Noble and Holy Order of the Knights of Labor in Ontario during the late nineteenth-century. This international labor organization had been formed in United States in 1869. Jonathan Garlock has found that, if one looks beyond peak membership at a single point in time, over three million members enrolled in the American Knights over the course of their history.² The Order officially entered Canada in 1881.³ In the next three years the Knights were organized from Halifax, Nova Scotia to

Nanaimo, British Columbia.

Eugene Forsey has argued that, for a time, the Knights were the leading labor organization in the United States and Canada.⁴ The Knights had their greatest foreign impact in Ontario where they reached their height of influence during the 1880s. Peak membership figures suggest that at least 21,800 workers joined the Knights in Ontario over the course of their thirty year history.⁵ The majority of their members were concentrated in the urban centers of the province, cities like Toronto and Hamilton, but the Knights also spread out to the less densely populated regions of Ontario.

In addition to organizing a significant part of the workforce, the Order fundamentally altered the manner in which workers were drawn into the ranks of North American unions. In an attempt to overcome the divisions that had limited trade unions in the past, the Knights opened their membership to all workers, skilled and unskilled, women and men, and several ethnic and religious groups that had previously been excluded from labor representation. This all-inclusive style of membership represented a decisive break with past trade union practices.

Several competing labor 'schools' separate the historical scholarship on the Knights of Labor. This work is far too extensive to outline in the course of these introductory remarks, but the basic thrust of the historical interpretations is easily identified. The task of detailing

the various labor schools is undertaken in chapter one. Research conducted in the United States and Canada before the 1970s generally dismissed the Order as a backward and utopianist movement.⁶ In the 1970s a second generation of Canadian labor scholars re-examined the primary data on the Knights in Ontario and found evidence of a united, working-class movement.⁷ Finally, a separate group of Canadian labor historians challenged the Ontario findings. They argued that non-class divisions, such as ethnicity, religion, and gender, fragmented instead of united the working-class in the late nineteenth-century.⁸

The purpose of this thesis is to test the validity of the competing arguments advanced about the Knights of Labor. The issues which separate the competing labor schools are detailed, considered, and subjected to an empirical test.⁹ This evaluation is mainly concerned with the Canadian writings on the Knights focused in south-central Ontario. In addition to testing the various schools, the research technique is designed to measure several features of the rank and file activities of the Order. The thesis is divided into four chapters.

Chapter one begins with a historiography of labor studies on the Knights of Labor. Studies on the American Knights can be traced back to the late nineteenth-century. In Canada, there has not been such a long history of professional research on the Order. As recently as 1980, Bryan Palmer

argued that the Knights of Labor were "virtually unstudied."¹⁰ Nevertheless, there still remains a sufficient amount of research to incorporate the main assumptions held by the combating labor schools into a primary research design.

Chapter two attempts to locate the Knights within the context of the development of early labor organization in Ontario. The evolution of trade union organization that predated the Knights of Labor, for instance, directly influenced the forms of labor organization and resistance mounted in the 1880s. Special attention is directed towards outlining the tradition of working-class resistance established in central Canada in the 1870s during the struggle for the nine hour day. These early developments are critical features which must be explored and integrated into the research design. The chapter concludes with an examination of the shifts in the industrial economy of Ontario during the late nineteenth-century and its impact on the Knights.

An overview of the methodology for the current study is outlined in chapter three. This overview includes a section which is devoted to explaining how the competing labor schools are measured objectively through the design of a content analysis. This survey technique is applied to a sample of Ontario labor newspapers. The methodological rules guiding the application of the content analysis are fully

considered in the third chapter.

The final chapter consists of an exploratory analysis of the written content of the data collected from the labor press. The results from this analysis are used to build tentative support for one of the competing labor schools. This is combined with an examination of the data collected from the remaining sections of the content analysis. The areas explored includes working-class cultural events, labor politics, and workers' struggles.

1. For an excellent example see Gregory Kealey, ed., Class, Gender, and Region: Essays in Canadian Historical Sociology (St John's, 1988).
2. Jonathan Garlock cited in Gregory Kealey and Bryan Palmer, Dreaming of What Might Be: The Knights of Labor in Ontario, 1880-1900 (Cambridge, 1982), 63.
3. There was an earlier assembly of the Knights that entered Canada on a secret basis in 1875.
4. Eugene Forsey, Trade Unions in Canada, 1812-1902 (Toronto, 1982), 138.
5. Ibid., 65.
6. See Walter Licht, "The Knights of Labor Commemorated and Reconsidered," Journal of Interdisciplinary History, 16 (Summer 1985), 117-123.
7. See Kealey and Palmer, Ibid.
8. See David Bercuson, "Through the Looking Glass of Culture: An Essay on the New Labour History and Working-Class Culture in Recent Canadian Historical Writing," Labour/Le Travailleur, 7 (Spring 1981), 95-112.
9. This is in response to the challenge presented by a leading Canadian social historian. See Gregory Kealey, "Labour and Working-Class History in Canada: Prospects in the 1980s," Labour/ Le Travailleur, 7 (Spring 1981), 93.
10. Bryan Palmer, "Working-Class Canada: Recent Historical Writing," Queen's Quarterly, 86 (Winter 1980), 608.

Chapter One

Historiography

A lively debate emerged with the publication of Gregory Kealey's and Bryan Palmer's Dreaming of What Might Be: The Knights of Labor in Ontario, 1880-1900 (1982).¹ Kealey and Palmer argue, "that the Knights of Labor represented the most important moment in the history of Ontario labour until the coming of the Congress of Industrial Organizations in the late 1930s."² Furthermore, the Knights entry into Ontario in the 1880s led to essential changes in the traditions of working-class resistance. These authors claim that as "the first truly mass uprising of labour, [the Noble and Holy Order of the Knights of Labor] broke decisively from the limitations of earlier nineteenth-century efforts and it established the foundations upon which future organizations of the entire working class could proceed."³

The scholarship of Kealey and Palmer differs substantially from past traditions. Their research on the working-class in the late nineteenth-century has made a substantial contribution to re-shaping Canadian social history.⁴ Their exhaustive analysis of nineteenth-century records has led them to explore materials that were not previously examined. The interpretive framework adopted by Kealey and Palmer has served as a catalyst in challenging previously held assumptions concerning the Knights of Labor.

Several distinguished scholars in the field of Canadian labor history have strongly objected to the methodology and theory employed in Dreaming of What Might Be.⁵ It has been argued that the hostile nature of these types of reviews are politically motivated.⁶ These non-Marxist writers appear to be reacting to the book's candid identification with the Marxist historical writings of E.P. Thompson in Britain and Herbert Gutman of the United States. It is necessary to outline the historical context of this current debate in order to provide a balanced appraisal of the competing positions.

North American historians began examining the organization of the Knights of Labor during the height of their movement in the 1880s. Richard T. Ely started the American historiographical tradition on the Knights that covers over one-hundred years of research.⁷ Overall, labor historians in the United States have dismissed the Knights of Labor as "utopianist, confused, impractical, backward-looking, reformist, petit-bourgeois, anti-skilled worker, and out of touch with the narrowly materialistic aspirations of American workers."⁸

In Canada, there has not been a long tradition of research on late nineteenth-century labor. The first studies on the Knights of Labor in Canada relied heavily on the American historiography.⁹ In fact, the earliest labor studies in Canada were modelled on previously established works from

the United States.¹⁰ Later research has broken from these early practices and has established a distinctively Canadian scholarship. An examination of the Canadian literature over the past sixty years reveals, "differences of approach, method, and conception."¹¹

The criterion adopted for distinguishing these various approaches has been aptly identified by Gregory Kealey, "Canadian working-class history from its inception has borne the weight of conflicting ideological discourse."¹² Based on this description, the concept of ideology can be employed as an indicator for determining the various schools of thought. Indeed, ideology provides a rationale through which researchers embrace certain types of methodological and theoretical approaches. Before proceeding to that discussion, it is important to set up a framework for an evaluation of the Knights' role in the working-class history of the late nineteenth-century.

It is not the goal of this thesis to construct a precise delineation of the boundaries separating Canadian labor studies into neatly packaged schools of thought. This could lead to an unrealistic and rigid description of an eclectic group of writers. For this reason, the various schools are identified according to a set of loosely defined boundaries. This provides the framework for an evaluation of the Knights in Ontario.¹³

Canadian labor history has been characterized by two distinct generations of writers. A further division has separated each generation. The labels used to describe the various approaches are adopted for critical rather than complimentary purposes. Each of the names selected is found in the text of the debates on Canadian working-class history.

The two variants within the first generation will be referred to as the "institutional" and "political" schools. These two approaches isolate trade union activity from all other aspects of working-class life.¹⁴ These approaches have concentrated on labor's institutional history and involvement in movements of political protest, respectively. The second generation of scholars are divided between "positivists" and "new labor historians". The positivists usually avoid the use of theory in their approach to the study of labor history. On the other hand, the new labor historians have emphasized the importance of theory in the understanding of working-class culture.

The purpose of this exercise is to evaluate the positions held by the four labor schools. A historiography of studies on the Knights of Labor is introduced in order to satisfy the objective of properly defining the boundaries separating the various writers. Once the positions of the respective schools have been identified, they are incorporated into the design of a content analysis. A late nineteenth-century labor newspaper, the Hamilton Palladium of

Labor (1883-1886), serves as the primary data source for this study. The survey instrument of the content analysis is designed to measure the degree to which the assumptions held by the various schools are represented in the front pages of the Palladium. Before proceeding to that analysis, it might be useful to clarify what the major writers have said over the past century on issues relating to the Knights.

American Historiography

The Knights of Labor have received ample attention from American labor historians and economists. The first writing emerged shortly after the Knights reached their peak organizational strength in the mid-1880s. Until quite recently, this work has generally been presented from a negative standpoint.

The origins of the first substantial body of work on the Knights began in 1886 with Richard T. Ely's book The Labor Movement in America. Ely's thesis differs markedly from the mainstream of work that has been offered by subsequent generations of American writers. His understanding of the relationship between shifts in economic production and the growth of the Knights of Labor led to a positive assessment of the movement. Despite a slow start due to the Knights' cloak of secrecy, Ely held that the Order was "established on truly scientific principles, which involved either an intuitive perception of the nature of industrial progress, or

a wonderful acquaintance with the laws of economic society."¹⁵

Ely was impressed by the Knights' principle of uniting all workers regardless of differences based on skill level, sex, and ethnic background. He saw a possibility for the Order to adapt to the changes in productive forces. "The invention of new machinery and the improvement in technical processes have weakened the position of unions composed exclusively of mechanics of a single trade." This was based on the observation of a "deskilling" of craft workers: "changes in manufactures are rendering entire classes of skilled mechanics quite useless."¹⁶

In the late nineteenth-century, Ely was joined by Carroll D. Wright in emphasizing the unique organizational structure of the Knights during this early stage of Knights' analysis.¹⁷ In reference to the British International Association of Workingmen, he pointed out that the Knights represented the second great attempt to organize labor on a broad basis in which all trades were recognized.¹⁸ Gregory Kealey and Bryan Palmer have argued that Wright posed a question that was to dominate the literature on the Knights:

[The Order] stands today as an organization representing the opposite of the trades-union, and is bending all its energies to preserve the broad principles of harmonious interworking of all interests, as against the trades-union idea, which comes closer to human nature, of the preservation of individual interests. Which idea will survive and become the leading fundamental element of the future great labor organization is the problem.¹⁹

These few words accurately reflected the manner in which debate became structured along dichotomous lines separating one of two fundamental ideas about labor organization.

Institutional School

Thirty years after these preliminary investigations, a new body of work on labor relations appeared. The rising professionalism of academic study during the early twentieth-century has been referred to as the Progressive reform period.²⁰ The tone of academic study on labor was greatly effected by the social unrest that characterized the violent industrial conflicts of the late-nineteenth-century. The failures of strike actions by American workers during this time shifted public opinion against such actions as revolutionary. These progressive writers reacted to public sentiments with an increasingly conservative approach to their research. Before proceeding to that discussion, it might be useful to examine one of the few dissenting writers of this period.

Recent accounts on working-class history have identified the progressive reform theory of John R. Commons and his followers as belonging to the institutional school.²¹ During the early twentieth-century this approach to labor history received widespread support from American historians.²² Commons sought to depict "plain and simple trades unionism"

as the major and best development in North American working-class life.

Commons was writing shortly after the industrial unionism of the Knights of Labor had been usurped by the "pure and simple" business unionism of the American Federation of Labor (AFL). His personal friendship with the leader of the AFL, Samuel Gompers, colored how he viewed the role of the trade union movement. As a consequence, "Commons' social vision was motivated by the desire to preserve the capitalist system of private ownership of the means of production by granting organized labor its rights as a competing and cooperating interest group within the system."²³ This perspective was quite unlike the general philosophy espoused by the Knights of Labor.

Maurice Isserman has argued that Commons fully shared Gompers' opposition to any movement that sought to divert workers away from demands of "wage and job" consciousness.²⁴ Kealey and Palmer argue that Commons and his associates established in a few brief words what was to become the standard interpretation of the Order.²⁵ According to Commons, the Knights of Labor were nothing more than a backward-looking utopianist outfit awaiting demise from the pressures exerted by the trade unionism of the AFL.

University of Chicago labor scholar Robert Hoxie was one of the first to substantiate the views of John R. Commons.²⁶ Shortly after Commons' theories began to dominate the field,

Hoxie's research added further credibility to progressive reform labor theory.²⁷ The direction of Hoxie's studies continued to probe the fundamental conflicts between the forces of "idealistic unionism" (the Knights) and "business unionism" (the American Federation of Labor).²⁸ Hoxie looked upon this conflict as the motivating factor in the development of unionism in the United States.

Accordingly, the growth of American unionism follows a path of evolution based on principles similar to social-Darwinism:

We start with the business type. Where this fails the tendency is to degenerate into friendly societies. We have then business unionism as a minor aspect, uplift as the major aspect. Finally, business unionism goes on, uplift unionism is a settled thing, and the revolutionary type begins to come to the front. The history of unionism thus shows two opposite tendencies, toward harmonization and unification of structural types, and the fanning out, separation, and distinction of functional types.²⁹

The deterministic nature of Hoxie's argument continued when he addressed the organization of the Knights of Labor, "In the effort to solve the trade union problem of control we must know what type of organization can and what type cannot be maintained....[the Knights] had elements of temporary success but on the whole was found unfit."³⁰ His thesis maintained that the inevitable failure of the Order was due to their utopian outlook which failed to grasp the narrow materialistic concerns of the wageworker.

It has been argued that once Hoxie substantiated this view as a major interpretive school of American labor studies, Selig Perlman became its most famous disciple.³¹ His contributions to Commons' History of Labour in the United States (1926) and his own A Theory of the Labor Movement (1949), cemented the Hoxie-Commons thesis into orthodoxy.³² Perlman's book examined how trade union practices influenced the values and beliefs of American workers. Perlman developed a theory concerning a psychological profile of the American worker that was applied to the traditional dichotomy separating industrial versus trade union interests.

Commons and Perlman conveyed an implicit distrust towards the value systems of first generation immigrant workers. However, they did support the interests espoused by second generation American workers. These second generation workers are represented by the AFL while the first generation referred to the Knights. They viewed the collectivist notion of wage and non-wage concerns of first generation immigrants as dangerous and possibly revolutionary.³³ Commons and his associates have argued that these ideas did not "fit into" the principle of the individual acquisition of wealth held by first generation of American workers.³⁴

Perlman's A Theory of the Labor Movement briefly discusses the political and strike activities of the Knights. Both actions are rejected in terms of the authors adherence

to the AFL's principles of American business unionism. For instance, he argues that the Knights' protests failed because they were imported from foreign countries that could not understand the psychological interests of individual acquisition of wealth held by American workers.

Perlman viewed the strike activities of the Knights as poorly conducted and a product of their co-operative and political idealism.³⁵ His dismissal of working-class politics is based on an adherence to the AFL principle that politicians should be left "severely alone" and labor "must be governed by labor pure and simple."³⁶ For Perlman, the co-operative efforts of the Knights of Labor were a failed experiment that permanently discredited the whole idea of workers organizing on broad based principles.³⁷

Proposing that workers simply rejected the Knights on the basis of an incompatible set of values and beliefs does not address the actual conditions of labor relations during the 1880s. Perlman's theory of labor rests solely on assumptions of the individual American workingmen without any sustained analysis of labor's relationship to the state or capital. It does not explain why the men and women who were drawn to the Knights consistently engaged in political and strike activities. It is somewhat surprising that Perlman's own description of the late nineteenth-century acknowledges the volatility of class relations during this period:

[The Great Upheaval] signalled the appearance on the scene of a new class which had not hitherto

found a place in the labour movement - the unskilled. All the peculiar characteristics of the dramatic events of 1886 and 1887, the highly feverish pace at which organizations grew, the nation-wide wave of strikes, particularly sympathetic strikes, the wide use of the boycott, the obliteration, apparently complete, of all lines that divided the labouring class, whether geographic or trade, the violence and turbulence which accompanied the movement - all of these were the signs of a great movement by the class of the unskilled, which had finally risen in rebellion... The movement bore in every way the aspect of a social war. A frenzied hatred of labour for capital was shown in every important strike.³⁸

Perlman's description of this violent upheaval of labor does not explain how these conditions fit into the principles of business unionism espoused by the AFL. Kealey argues that Perlman failed to ask why capital found it necessary to fight the Order so aggressively because it would undercut his earlier dismissal of the Knights as something less than a working-class organization.

In order to understand the decline of the Knights and the ascendancy of the AFL it is necessary to extend the analysis beyond the narrow confines of intra-class relations surrounding American workers. For example, questions must be asked about the considerable resistance manufacturing associations mounted against labor at this time. Nicos Poulantzas has pointed out that class relations are relations of power:

Once class relations are formally divorced from power relations, a host of falsely posed problems become the subject of inconclusive historical debate. Most common are those in which a subordinate group does not manifest any explicit or measurable collective consciousness of exploitation

or oppression. In such a situation, a sociological approach is apt to imply that such groups collude in their subordinate position and then provide psychologistic interpretations of their behaviour.³⁹

This description aptly applies to the theories of Commons and his followers. Their focus on an American workingman's psychology remains at the level of intra-class relations and ignores a sustained analysis of inter-class relations (labor, state, capital). In Poulantzas language, "the class relations are divorced from power relations" thereby producing false results. This is further supported by Kealey's assertion that the Commons-Perlman thesis denies the existence of an organized working-class in the 1880s by ignoring questions on why capital found it necessary to fight the Order so aggressively. Perlman also failed to examine state responses to the political activities of the Knights.

A number of writers substantiated the Perlman thesis well into the 1950s. Two of these proponents are Lloyd Ulman in the field of labor economics and Gerald Grob in labor history. Some brief remarks will be made on these Perlman supporters before examining Norman Ware's positive analysis on the Knights of Labor.⁴⁰

Lloyd Ulman examined the economic and structural significance of the Knights in his 1955 study on The Rise of The National Trade Union.⁴¹ In that study he compared the theories of Commons-Perlman to the alternative thesis developed by Norman Ware. Ulman's evaluation of the theories

was based on his criticisms on the manner in which the Knights organized workers into their ranks.

This involved a relatively simple process of organization. Individual members joined either mixed assemblies (diverse occupational affiliations) or trade assemblies (adhering more rigidly to specific craft categories). Ulman argued that these combinations contributed to the decline of the Order.

For Ulman, divisions separating skilled and unskilled workers resulted in serious conflicts between the mixed and trade assemblies. Ulman supported Perlman's contention that the weaknesses of the unskilled workers retarded the pace of growth for skilled workers. The fundamental interests of the skilled were viewed as opposed to those of unskilled workers. Therefore, any concept of working-class solidarity failed because of the position of skilled workers, "they knew [as skilled crafts] that it was best to avoid certain entangling alliances, and it was for this reason that they insisted upon trade autonomy and thus came into conflict with the mixed districts."⁴² This fundamental conflict constitutes Ulman's basis for rejecting Ware's positive assessment of the Knights.

Ulman should be credited with marshalling a more sophisticated argument than that of the earlier writers. However, his focus was locked into the mode of past "psychologistic" models of interpretation. Within this

approach, individual economic self-interest is used as the ultimate measure of labor conflict. For Ulman, divisions between skilled and unskilled are consistently understood in terms of the economic motivations of individual trade unionists.

Ulman's model overstates the impact of conflicts within the Knights and relies too heavily upon the interpretive force of that old companion of North American economic analysis, self-interest.⁴³ His analysis ignores the ways in which outside forces contributed to the Order's decline. The major battles between the skilled and unskilled took place in terms of attacks on the Knights from outside trade unions. Furthermore, this alone tells only part of the story, "The decline and defeat of the Knights, indeed the brevity of their movement, does not diminish their significance. The profound restructuring of capitalism that ensued in the wake of the great depression of the 1890s successfully created a new phase of capitalist development in which different working-class strategies emerged from a recomposed labor movement."⁴⁴

In 1961 Gerald Grob published Workers and Utopia: A Study of Ideological Conflict in the American Labor Movement 1865-1900.⁴⁵ This book does not deviate widely from past studies on labor history. In fact, Commons is credited as the primary source of theoretical inspiration. The ideological dimension of Grob's study is best summarized by his

assumption that unions are simply a microcosm of a larger whole, and that American unionism has developed in a particular fashion: "The cultural standards that unions mirrored primarily reflected materialistic concerns."⁴⁶

Labor is therefore portrayed as a competing interest group within the capitalist system. Grob goes on to argue that the "middle-class psychology" of the American laborer led to the rejection of the alien ideas of radicalism in favour of a conservative policy concerned with higher standards of living and greater job security:

Since workingmen had adopted a middle-class value system and psychology that depicted a harmonious society unmarked by a class struggle and emphasizing equal opportunity for all, it would have been difficult for trade-union leaders to appeal to their followers on a class basis (even if an individual like Samuel Gompers privately expressed his belief in the existence of a permanent wage-earning class). Instead the unions appealed to the membership in terms of material gains and advantages, and thus never came into overt conflict with the workers' dreams of rising to a middle-class status.⁴⁷

Grob's thesis reiterates the common themes characteristic of writers from the institutional school. His focus on the leadership level of the Order ignores the actions of its rank and file membership. A brief illustration of the conditions of labor relations in the United States during this period will help clarify this dilemma.

The peak of American labor agitation occurred in Chicago in 1886, when police fired into a crowd of strikers at the McCormick Reaper Works, killing and wounding several men. The

next day a bomb was thrown into a crowd of police-officers during a labor demonstration. Several police-officers were injured and eight were killed. The Haymarket tragedy gained international attention with the hanging of several anarchists after a lengthy trial.

The Haymarket tragedy represented a period of working-class challenge to the dominant values of capitalism.⁴⁸ Grob does not address how these types of actions mirrored cultural standards directed to the narrow material concerns of the American workers. He fails to explain how the actions "fit into" the AFL's program depicting harmonious class relations. Grob argues that in the end, "labor leaders had no choice but to build organizations suitable for workers who thought of themselves as expectant capitalists and adapted to a society in which business values had permeated American culture."⁴⁹

The chronological examination of the American historiography of American labor studies reveals an interesting pattern. The institutional school of American labor history is dominated by the theories of John R. Commons. In all of these studies the AFL is depicted as the best development in North American working class life. The AFL's business unionism was better able to represent the psychological values and interests of the American middle-class consciousness. On the other hand, the Knights represented a deviation in American labor history. They are characterized as confused, utopianist, anti-skilled worker,

and out of touch with the [narrowly] materialistic aspirations of American workers.⁵⁰

There are some exceptions to the traditional assumptions held in the American historiography. Norman Ware's economic studies on the Knights of Labor differ dramatically from previous research.⁵¹ Ware described the Knights as a working-class movement. He viewed the Knights as just that "sort of One Big Union of which Karl Marx would have approved, if - and this is a large 'if' - it could have been transformed into a political organization under socialist leadership."⁵²

This endorsement may have reflected a consideration of the key role Marx played in the leadership of the International Association of Workingmen in Britain from 1864 to 1872. The "International" tried to organize all workers regardless of vocation and increasingly assumed a socialist character oriented towards political action (under the guidance of Marx and Engels). From this perspective the Knights can be seen as a North American counterpart to the British International. This assessment rested on Ware's argument that the Order was a more thoroughly working-class organization than any other general labor body before or after 1886.⁵³

Ware strongly disagreed with the economic determinism that had characterized the mainstream of research on the Knights: "There was nothing inevitable about the failure of the Knights and the success of the Federation. Explanations

of both can be found in the circumstances of men."⁵⁴ He held that setting up boundaries between reform and business unionism obscured the actual development of labor in the United States. Ware identified three main patterns of formation in the evolution of the American labor movement:

pure and simple trade unionism, reformism, and politics. But no single organization or group of organizations has confined itself to any one of these. All that can be said is that a certain union or group is or was predominantly one thing or another.⁵⁵

The fact that the structure of the Knights' organization allowed for a versatile combination of all types of workers was viewed as a distinct advantage by Ware. It incorporated features of both industrial and trade unionism, at the same time allowing for political action.

Ware accurately identified the manner in which the Knights chose to respond to shifts in the forces of production due to the rapidly industrializing nature of the American economy:

Emphasis on the principle of solidarity is the beginning of understanding the Knights of Labor. Strange and grandiose names and titles, rituals, secrecy, forms of organization, even activities, were secondary. The Order tried to teach the American wage-earner that he was a wage-earner first and a bricklayer, carpenter, miner, shoemaker, after; that he was a wage-earner first and a Catholic, Protestant, Jew, white, black, Democrat, Republican, after.⁵⁶

Kealey and Palmer argue that despite the tangible strengths of Ware's approach, his book also has its difficulties. The most glaring deficiency can be understood

in terms of the lack of documentary materials available to Ware in the 1920s. Ware's account was limited by his focus on the personality of the Knights' leadership.⁵⁷ Finally, he ignored the Order's considerable efforts at the level of electoral politics.⁵⁸

Ware had a few supporters in the 1940s and 1950s who continued to examine the role of leadership within the movement.⁵⁹ This research attributes the ultimate decline of Knights to internal difficulties associated with a weak leadership. Although this research was useful from a biographical standpoint, it did not contribute substantially to an overall understanding of labor relations at the turn of the century because of Ware's limited use of outside sources.

The rebellious movements of social and political protest that swept across America in the 1960s influenced a new generation of writers. Fundamental questions were raised regarding the way in which labor had been studied in America. A qualitatively and quantitatively different field of research developed under the title of Social History. Parameters were redefined so that the investigation of labor's past was no longer restricted to historians and economists. Social scientists from a variety of disciplines entered into the debate.

Herbert Gutman and David Montgomery were the two leading proponents of the a new social history in America.⁵⁹ They credited a great deal of their inspiration to the British

Marxist historian, E.P. Thompson.⁶⁰ This "bottom up" approach has drawn attention away from union and party conventions to community studies and intensive investigations of the daily conditions of the workplace. Kealey and Palmer identify their work with this tradition and historians, attempting to bring these recently developed insights and modes of investigation to bear on the Knights of Labor in Ontario.⁶¹

Canadian Historiography

The most significant development marking the American historiography on the Knights of Labor took place in the early twentieth-century. A new consensus on the Knights was established through the writings of John R. Commons. For the purposes of the current study, Commons and his followers were characterized as belonging to the institutional school of labor history. Questions will now be raised concerning the impact this school has had on Canadian labor historians. Developments unique to the English-Canadian historiography of the Order will also be discussed.

Bryan Palmer has noted that until quite recently, "the Canadian labor historian has been a rare animal."⁶² Labor studies in the early years (the 1920s) primarily concentrated on the records of trade unions from the twentieth-century. It was not until a much later date that serious attention was directed to the working-class history of the late nineteenth-century.⁶³ The earliest efforts to study the Knights of Labor

in Canada coincided with the growth in labor-relations legislation (which barely existed before 1940). As a result, it not surprising to find that this relatively recent endeavour has been influenced by academic theory south of the border. Furthermore, this type of relationship appears logical considering the fact that the Canadian Knights of Labor reported to central headquarters in the United States. Communications between the two countries was quite close.

Some of the key features underlying the various schools of thought on Canadian labor history will be outlined in order to provide a framework for evaluation of the Knights. Gregory Kealey has argued that Canada's unique position in the western political economy has caused researchers to ignore working-class history until quite recently.⁶⁴ The transition of control from an outpost of France to a colony of Britain led to a country that evolved largely in reaction to the revolutionary path chosen by our southern neighbors. The middle of the nineteenth century saw the dismantling of the old British Imperial system. This combined with new industrial aspirations and huge railway debts to propel a largely unwilling colonial populace in Canada towards Confederation.⁶⁵

The desire for economic and political solidarity was pinned on the hopes of the National Policy as early as 1879.⁶⁶ This policy was developed by the Conservative government of Sir John A. Macdonald in response to the growth

of Ontario's industrial market. Macdonald's strategy of high protective tariffs for the home industry can be traced back to as early as 1872.⁶⁷ It was also closely tied to a demand for reserves of skilled labor in order to adequately supply the markets of the manufacturing centers.⁶⁸ Kealey provides an overview of the new nation state which quickly evolved from a national policy, "consisting of a transcontinental railway, high protective tariffs, and a liberal immigration policy. Rapid indigenous industrialization occurred in the late nineteenth century but gave ground quickly before the massive penetration of American capital in the early twentieth century."⁶⁹

It was out of this context that early English-Canadian historians became fascinated with questions concerning Canada's distinct national identity. This Canadian national history "prominently found expression in the industrial heartland of Ontario and found few echoes in the colonized east or west of the country."⁷⁰ The nationalist approach was attacked by respected historians concerned with the "limited identities" of Canada's past.⁷¹ In an address to the American Historical Association in 1969, the famous Canadian historian J.M.S. Careless, "attacked the old nationalist and whig 'from colony to nation' school of Canadian historical writing and instead argued for a confrontation with region, class, and ethnicity as the key themes of Canadian development."⁷²

This call signalled the beginnings of an entirely new labor history in Canada. One of the initial reasons that this plea received serious attention during the late 1960s was related to the continual refusal by Canadian historians to treat the concept of class as an analytic category. Despite sincere intentions, the old nationalist school was unable to meet the challenge of revitalizing their agenda. Instead, the challenge was mounted by a group of young academics interested in developing a new field of social history.

Attempts were made by these young writers to bring the ordinary working people back to the center of Canadian history. Questions concerning a definition of this new social history were answered by Gregory Kealey and Peter Warrian in 1976: "The major contribution of the 'new' history has been to redefine 'labour history' as 'working-class history'."⁷³ The generation of Canadian scholars following in this direction are referred to as new labor historians.⁷⁴ Before proceeding to that discussion, it is necessary to detail the course of events in Canada leading up to this challenge.

Institutional School

The American institutional school of trade union history inspired by John R. Commons was imported into our country by Canadian sociologist and economist Harold A. Logan.⁷⁵ In Canada, the term institutional has been applied to characterize the work of Logan and his followers. This label

is intended to reflect this school's narrow scope of inquiry. Interpretation has exclusively focused on the attempts of labor to organize, and the evolution of state and business responses to such efforts. This approach has minimized the importance of rank and file union activities and the experiences of ordinary workers.

An examination of Logan's earliest work supports the claims by the new labor historians that he isolates trade union activity from all other aspects of working-class life. Logan's History of Trade-Union Organization in Canada (1928) exhaustively details the evolution of trade union formation in Canada. The study begins with a survey of the emergence of loosely knit associations of skilled workers in the early nineteenth century.⁷⁶ A series of trade union developments are chronologically covered with a final analysis on the decline of the One Big Union in the early twentieth-century. It is somewhat curious that the Knights of Labor are acknowledged with only cursory remarks. This is despite the fact that they organized a considerable percentage of the work-force during this period.⁷⁷ Logan ignored the Knights' organization of workers who existed on the periphery of the labor market; the unskilled, women, and ethnic and religious groups.

Gregory Kealey and Russell Hann argue that Logan did not approach the excesses of his American counterparts in celebrating business unionism but the focus still remains on

the institutional expression of trade unionism.⁷⁸ This glides over a great deal of working-class life taking place outside the union hall:

The men and women who organized these unions were actors themselves and not the passive components of institutional growth. The outcome of their activity was one of a variety of historical options and the choices which they made cannot be understood apart from the cultural and ideological resources they brought to these endeavors.⁷⁹

Political School

Logan produced a second major study on Canadian trade union development in 1948.⁸⁰ Writers belonging to the second major approach within the early Canadian historiography were influenced by this work. "The other major approach can be described as the 'political school' and views the major contribution of the Canadian working class as its participation in revolutionary or reforms politics."⁸¹ Kenneth McNaught was drawn to Logan's work because it supported the social democratic contingent of the political school and firmly rejected the faction of writers associated with the Communist Party of Canada.⁸² This second group of writers stressed the militancy of working-class actions. A confrontation between these two political groups caused both parties to assume defensive and rigid positions. During the cold war, many social democratic intellectuals began to equate Marxism with Stalinism:

...as this link was forged and reforged over time, it became impossible to draw distinctions among

various Marxisms, and difficult for many within the social democratic tradition to differentiate between Marxism as an analytic approach to society and history, and Marxism as an identifiable political practice associated with the Communist Party.⁸³

Both the social democrats and communists concentrated on the alliances that labor forged with movements of political protest. The experiences of the Knights of Labor pre-dated any kind of coalition with any clearly structured form of social democracy. In addition, their actions did not constitute the type of revolutionary practices that Communist Party advocates viewed as important. Therefore, the political school has tended to treat the history of the Knights of Labor as antiquated and relatively unimportant.

By the late 1960s the nationalist call for attention to region, class, and ethnicity received critical attention from a second generation of researchers interested in studying the working-class. Not unlike the institutional/political division found in the earlier research, the field of social history is divided between two factions. The first group of historians are labelled as positivists because of their adherence to a methodology that concentrates on facts and keeps theory to a minimum. Conversely, a second group of social historians are referred to as new labor historians for their tendency to embrace the culturalist theories of the British marxist historian, E.P. Thompson.

Positivist School

The positivists emerged in the late 1960s and early 1970s as "a professionally trained cadre of historians whose dissertations and subsequent first books addressed themselves to various aspects of the history of Canadian labor."⁸⁴ This period represented a starting point for a more concerted effort to study labor history in Canada. This group has been referred to as "realists" because of their claim that politics does not effect their scholarship.⁸⁵

The positivists have responded to the challenges of studying labor history outside of the confines of national identities.⁸⁶ Accordingly, many of these studies have examined the regional and local character of Canadian labor. Otherwise, this work is quite similar to earlier studies conducted by the institutional school.

Kenneth McNaught has characterized the writings of the positivists in the following manner: "The work of detailing the institutional evolution of Canadian labour, of recovering the story of forgotten strikes and other actions on the economic front, of piecing together the worker's approaches to politics and parties has, meanwhile, gone forward - often benefiting from the trendy concern with culture and locality."⁸⁷ The last remark disparagingly refers to the efforts by new labor historians to stress the relevance of

earlier periods of labor formation from a community studies perspective.

David Jay Bercuson has been one of the leading writers of the positivist approach . This group has vehemently opposed the creation of a synthesis of working-class history based on a concern with the international literature. Bercuson argues that the Marxist theories of E.P. Thompson in Britain cannot be imported to the Canadian experience. Bercuson believes that American culturalist theorists⁸⁸ learned this lesson in the 1960s:

[In the United States] the importance of writing history from 'the bottom up' is extolled, as it is in Britain, but there is less concentration on working-class culture as a factor unifying the working class. Perhaps this is because there is some acknowledgement that there is no American working-class culture as such and the variety of ethnic origins of the American working-class make a cultural analysis confusing and essentially meaningless.⁸⁹

The idea of ethnic, regional, and gender divisions negating the effects of class was first developed in the United States. Stephen Thernstrom advanced this idea based on his quantitative research of American labor history. Thernstrom followed in the practices of the institutional school by concentrating on the economic motivations of individual workers. He argued that the constant migrations of workers (geographically and by occupation) contributed to an essential instability of working-class life in America. For Thernstrom, this prevented the appearance of any class movement which could meaningfully challenge the

economic motivations of individual workers.⁹⁰ There have been periods of working-class division in American labor history but this was not always the case.

Premier among the culturalist group in the United States has been David Montgomery, who has warned against such deterministic approaches: "it is folly to think of immigration and ethnicity solely in terms of barriers to class consciousness." The author goes on to discuss the relative cultural homogeneity during the period in which the Knights' power was strongest, "Ethnic loyalties have provided important solidarities among workers, and sources of reform and revolutionary ideologies as well. It is now widely agreed that Irish nationalism played a decisive role in the labor reform ideology of the 1870s and 1880s."⁹¹ Studies on the Knights in Canada in the 1880s produced similar findings.⁹²

Irving Abella is another important writer in the positivist school. His work on the arrival of the Congress of Industrial Organizations in Canada explores the occurrence from the perspectives of the central figures in the events. For Abella, "The average union member play[ed] an unimportant role in the affairs of his union."⁹³ It was nationalism and not socialism that contributed passion to this monograph and its major political point was a critique of international unionism.⁹⁴

It is beyond the scope of the present study to detail a history of all the writers belonging to the positivist

school. The key feature that bonds these writers together, however, has been a complete adherence to the institutional approach.⁹⁵ A corollary to this assumption concerns the nature of the data that this group has used. Bryan Palmer has catalogued the main types of data used by the positivists, "Twentieth-century evidence is top-heavy with royal commissions, 'official' union correspondence, prime ministers' papers, RCMP files, and justice department collections."⁹⁶ Palmer found that this data locks the researcher into a particular understanding of working-class experience: "So total is this generation's immersion in these sources and this context that they occasionally seem incapable of looking back to a time when national institutions and leaders, traditional political activity, and central events were not the only questions to address: when east was not necessarily conservative, and the radical west had not yet emerged."⁹⁷

New Labor History School

Writers belonging to the new labor history school have attempted to fill this void. There is a general agreement from all sides of the debate that Gregory S. Kealey's and Peter Warrian's 1976 collection, Essays in Canadian Working-Class History, signalled the arrival of what will be referred to as the new labor history school.⁹⁸ This monograph was an important starting point for an entirely new labor history.

Their attempts to bring ordinary people back from their long exile on the margins of Canadian history was a task that could be accomplished by concentrating on the pre-World War I period. This involved reconstructing a more rudimentary database composed of less official nineteenth century sources.⁹⁹

After locating Essays in Canadian Working-Class History as a starting point for a conceptualization of the new labor history, David Bercuson cited the following passage as a representative definition of the new labor history school:

The major contribution of the 'new' history has been to redefine 'labour history' as 'working class history.' Thus, labour history ceases to be simply a category of political economy, a problem of industrial relations, a canon of saintly working class leaders, a chronicle of union locals or a chronology of militant strike actions.¹⁰⁰

The main problem with Bercuson's presentation of the new labor history is that it only tells part of the story. Bercuson has restricted the full meaning of working-class history by ignoring the complete definition from the original text. Correspondingly, the new labor history school appear to be excluding the larger issues of unions and labor politics.¹⁰¹

Returning to the point in the original passage where Bercuson has left off, the statement goes on to say that:

Instead it becomes part of the history of society. Workers are no longer seen as isolated figures engaged only in trade unions, strikes, and radical politics: instead they are studied in a totality that includes their cultural backgrounds and social relations, as well as their institutional

memberships and economic and political behaviour. In addition they must be seen neither as a class in complete social segregation nor as an undifferentiated mass. A class exists only in relation to another class and the new social history studies these relationships.¹⁰²

An entirely new dynamic is now revealed. New labor historians are in fact interested in several features of working-class life pioneered by the institutional writers: strike action, political activities, and union structure. Their research extends beyond the conventional, however, in terms of the time frame they study and the theoretical models they apply.

The new labor historians have analyzed the Canadian working-class based on a system of dividing historical experiences according to specific time frames. There was little previous work in Canada which would help answer these questions.¹⁰³ In Essays in Canadian Working-Class History (1976) it was suggested that a new periodization would be based on Canadian economic development.¹⁰⁴ From the beginning, questions were asked about the changing conditions of the social relations of production during the various stages of capitalist development.

The lack of research on this subject in Canada led the new labor historians to the British marxist historical tradition and its subsequent impact on the development of U.S. social history. The call for a new labor history in the United States necessarily involved a demand for periodization. This process was used to explain the changing structural relationships between wage labor and capital

accumulation; for example, by examining how workers engaged in united movements of struggle in the 1870s and 1880s against the programs of "scientific management" used by employers.¹⁰⁵ David Montgomery summarized the task of the synthesis as: "one of integrating our knowledge of the relations of production, social consciousness, and the working-class presence through a conception of social change, which enables us to identify the basic characteristics which have distinguished one epoch in the workers' experience from another."¹⁰⁶

The new labor historians have separated Canadian working-class history in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries into four periods. The first period of primitive accumulation occurred before the 1850s and pre-dated the Knights experience in both Canada and the United States. These years of unquestioned staples dominance are referred to as pre-industrial capitalism.¹⁰⁷ This study concentrates on the second period of economic development, industrial capitalism, which covers the years from the 1850s to the 1890s. The transitional nature of the Canadian political economy during this era had a critical impact on the manner in which labor evolved. A more complete consideration of how labor and capital reacted to these changing relations and the manner in which the state mediated these struggles will be discussed in the next section.

The final two periods dividing the twentieth century are largely on the periphery of the activities of the Knights. Monopoly capitalism replaced the older forms of competitive capitalism in the third period of Canadian capitalist development from the 1890s to the 1920s. The new labor historians refer to the fourth period as crisis and reconstruction (1930 to present).¹⁰⁸ It was during these later periods that workers looked back on the Order as a model of inspiration.¹⁰⁹

Finally, the new labor historians have embraced the Marxist theories of E.P. Thompson of Britain. His most famous statement on the English working-class is found in his classic study, The Making of The Working Class:

The finest-meshed sociological net cannot give us a pure specimen of class, any more than it can give us one of deference or of love....The relationship must always be embodied in real people and in a real context....class happens when some men, as a result of common experiences (inherited or shared), feel and articulate the identity of their interests as between themselves, and as against other men whose interests are different from (and usually opposed to) theirs. Their class experience is largely determined by the productive relations into which men are born - or enter involuntarily.¹¹⁰

The Knights of Labor in Ontario

Gregory Kealey's and Bryan Palmer's Dreaming of What Might Be: The Knights of Labor in Ontario, 1880-1900, remains as one of the few efforts in recent years to examine the Knights in Canada.¹¹¹ Their introduction notes that: "In sort, the Knights of Labor in Ontario created, for the first

time, what Lawrence Goodwyn has called a movement culture of alternative, opposition, and potential. In the breadth of their vision, the scope of their organization, and their unique refusal to collapse the cause of workers into this or that reform or amelioration, or restrict entry to the movement to this stratum or that group, the Knights of Labor hinted at the potential and possibility that are at the foundation of the making of a class."¹¹² This final section of this chapter details the English-Canadian historiography on the Knights of Labor in Ontario before the publication of this major study by Kealey and Palmer.

A few preliminary efforts were undertaken in the 1930s and 1940s to create a general information base on the Knights in Canada. J.I. Cooper studied the political activities of the Knights in the 1887 Canadian federal election.¹¹³ A series of monographs by Fred Landon were written in the late thirties and early forties evaluating the importance of the Knights to twentieth century labor formation. He compared the resurgence of strike actions by the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) in the 1930s to the series of struggles waged by the Order in the 1880s. Landon claimed that the leadership collapsed as a result of the negative publicity labor received after the violence associated with the Haymarket Affair took place. In addition, he argued that the leadership was unable to cope with the rapid growth in

membership in the mid-1880s, consequently, strike actions failed.

Landon's explanation suffers because of the limited sources he used in forming his conclusions.¹¹⁴ The author was led to believe that the main cause for the Knights' downfall was the poor leadership of Terence V. Powderly. However, this perspective fails to account for the ideological, political, and social inhibitions that severely constrained the Knights in the late nineteenth-century.¹¹⁵

Douglas R. Kennedy wrote his Masters thesis on the Knights in 1945. It was later published as a book after his death in 1956.¹¹⁶ His study was based on a framework similar to the research developed by Norman Ware in the United States. His discussions of politics, strikes, and decline also found that the primary cause of the Knight's failures could be understood in terms of a weak leadership. Although this book covered materials previously not considered in the Canadian context, Kennedy relied heavily on leadership as a total explanation. Proper evaluation of the Knights must consider a wider range of experiences, including the transitional nature of the political economy.

In 1949 Victor O. Chan completed a thesis on the Knights of Labor in Ontario and Quebec.¹¹⁷ His analysis greatly surpassed the work that Douglas Kennedy had advanced only four years earlier.¹¹⁸ Chan's thesis was based on a broader range of primary and secondary sources, including a review of

the 1880s labor press. Kealey and Palmer credited Chan for his insightful observations concerning the Knights' unique position in a transitional political economy.¹¹⁹ This allowed Chan to transcend the narrow confines of past interpretations on the Knights. Issues surrounding the economic and social conditions of the period assumed a primary position in this analysis. For example, the failures of several Knights' co-operative ventures were no longer viewed as a result of weak leadership. Chan was able to explore how competition from larger and more powerful manufacturers often destroyed these smaller ventures. After noting the conflict between Knights and trade unionists, the author completed his thesis with these closing remarks:

Reflecting conditions that were essentially transitory and unsettled, the leaders could have no clear-cut policy, no definite objective. Lacking such a policy, the Order consequently failed to present itself as a rallying point for the working-class, and became an easy prey to other corroding influences as the opposition of capital and social disinterestedness.¹²⁰

Frank Watt's, "The National Policy, the Workingman, and Proletarian Ideas in Victorian Canada," was one of the most innovative and possibly the best work to emerge during a period when mainstream labor studies dominated the field.¹²¹ This study provided an in-depth analysis of the radical labor press and its role in stimulating class-conscious social ideals among Ontario's working-class. These ideas remained largely ignored by mainstream historians until Russell Hann

revived this type of inquiry in one of the early statements of the new social history.¹²²

Finally, in the 1960s Bernard Ostry wrote two articles on "Conservatives, Liberals, and the Labour".¹²³ These articles are both carefully researched and raise some relevant issues. The main weakness of Ostry's approach has to do with the manner in which he structured state-labor relationships. It has been argued that based on this perspective, workers emerged only to be manipulated as victims of the all too powerful federal leaders.¹²⁴ In addition, the focus on institutions such as the Trades and Labor Congress (TLC) force important local events into the background. The growth of the Knights of Labor received only brief notice, "Instead workers shuffle onstage to deliver a brief before the arrival of Samuel Gompers' AFL, Canadian workers embraced business unionism."¹²⁵ Ostry's statement does not accurately reflect the conditions of the 1880s because the major battles between the Knights and business unionists did not solidify until the mid-1890s.

The Knights did not receive any major attention in the English Canadian academic field until the emergence of the new social history. The new approaches that these theorists brought to the general area of labor studies was applied specifically to the Knights in Ontario. Two students from the Canadian Studies Institute at Carleton University responded to the challenges issued by the new labor history school of

social history with some provocative research on the Order.¹²⁶

The results of Karen Dubinsky's study on the position of working-class women in the Knights tends to contradict David Bercuson's contention that gender rendered class ineffective. The programs that were organized to address inequalities among the sexes served to bring women into the ranks of organized labor, creating resistance to the capitalist exploitation which usually affected women more severely than men.¹²⁷ This process tended to mediate the relations between gender and class as opposed to destroying class consciousness.

Ron Verzuh's M.A. thesis, "Proletarian Spirits: A Social History of the English-language Labour Press," furthers the cause by examining the Canadian working-class from a community-studies approach, extensively reviewing the nineteenth-century labor press. The evidence he gathered suggested that the labor press before the 1870s operated with a paternalistic and politically naive view that the solution to workers' social woes was individualistic. With the coming of the Knights, labor papers took on the role of social advocates. Verzuh's studied all of the major English labor newspapers published in the nineteenth century. This led to his assessment that the labor press did play a social role in the development of a mass working-class culture.¹²⁸

Summary

Over the course of examining the historiography of American and Canadian labor studies some definite patterns have emerged. The evolution of labor research in both countries has led to conflicting ideological positions. The divisions separating perspectives on the Knights of Labor can be traced to the development of labor studies in the United States. The idea that the values and beliefs of the American worker coincided closely with the capitalist ideal of the individual acquisition of wealth permeated the writings of Commons, Perlman, Hoxie, and Grob. For these scholars the Knights were backward-looking utopianists.

A variation of the institutional theme was imported into Canada during the post-World War II era. These writers followed the lead of their American counterparts by portraying the working-class movement as a player among several interest groups competing within the capitalist system. The Order came to be characterized as a liberal reform movement attempting to extend the benefits of the existing system to the unorganized. Furthermore, the use of class as an analytic category was firmly rejected by the Canadian historians. A lineal progression of ideas continued to influence a second generation of Canadian scholars.

The positivists made conscious efforts to re-examine to regional and local context of Canadian labor through a plethora of research. Their positivist methodology was based

on a style pioneered by the quantitative approach of Stephen Thernstrom in the United States. These writers displayed an aversion to theory and vehemently opposed the use of class as an analytic construct. Working-class experience was generally restricted to the twentieth century.

The vacuum that was created by ignoring the ordinary workers of the nineteenth century was filled by the writers of the new labor history school. Their knowledge of an international tradition of Marxist writings led to attempts to build a new synthesis of labor history. This was based upon an analysis of labor's reactions to the shifts in the relations of production in the evolution of the capitalist system. The search for a historical precedent of the contemporary working-class world was traced back to the late nineteenth-century. Gregory Kealey and Bryan Palmer reconstructed the series of struggles that were led by the Knights of Labor. Their thesis basically argued that the Knights represented a movement capable of mobilizing the working-class and challenging the existing power holders.

The positivists have led the attack against the idea of a nineteenth century organization of workers based on class formation. This school has predominantly examined labor relations in the twentieth-century based on an institutional style. For these writers, the working-class movements of the nineteenth-century were pre-history. They have argued that non-divisions of ethnicity, gender, religion, and region have

rendered class analysis meaningless. In a number of cases their rejection of Thompsonian theory appears to be based on lack of familiarity or misunderstanding of the original text.¹²⁹

What is suggested, therefore, is a further examination and evaluation of the competing labor schools based on a primary research technique of the late nineteenth-century historical records. This should lead to a clearer understanding of the Knights' proper location in Canadian working-class history.

1. Gregory S. Kealey and Bryan D. Palmer, Dreaming of What Might Be: The Knights of Labor in Ontario (Cambridge, 1982).

2. The Congress of Industrial Organizations was an American-based international organization that entered Canada in 1937. They campaigned to organize both skilled and unskilled workers and re-established the tradition of independent labor politics in Canada.

3. See Gregory Kealey and Bryan Palmer, "The Bonds of Unity: Some Further Reflections," Histoire sociale - Social History, 31 (May 1983), 178.

4. Their work has been highly regarded by their academic peers. For example, Bryan Palmer's A Culture in Conflict: Skilled Workers Respond to Industrial Capitalism won a runner up notation in the Canadian Historical Association's Macdonald Prize competition for best book in Canadian history in 1979. Kealey's Toronto Workers Respond to Industrial Capitalism, 1867-1892 (1980) won the same prize the following year. See Gregory Kealey, "The writing of social history in English Canada," Histoire sociale - Social History, 10 (1985), 360.

5. David Bercuson, review of, "Dreaming of What Might Be: The Knights of Labor in Ontario, 1880-1900," Business History Review 57 (1983), 589-591; Ramsey Cook, "The Making of Canadian Working Class History," Historical Reflections (Spring 1983), 115-125; Michael Piva, "The Bonds of Unity: A Comment," Histoire sociale - Social History 16 (May 1983), 162-172; and Laurell MacDowell, review of, "Dreaming of What Might Be: The Knights of Labor in Ontario, 1880-1900," Ontario History (June 1984), 187-190.

6. See Gregory Kealey, "Labour and Working-Class History in Canada: Prospects for the 1980s," Labour/Le Travailleur, 7 (1981).

7. Richard T. Ely, The Labour Movement in America (New York, 1969 [1886]).

8. See Walter Licht, "The Knights of Labor Commemorated and Reconsidered," Journal of Interdisciplinary History, 16 (Summer 1985), 118.

9. Harold Logan was the first to advocate importing the institutional school of trade union history into Canada. This school was modelled on the work of John R. Commons in the United States. A full treatment of this subject is provided in the course of the discussion.

10. This work was imported into Canada in the mid-1940s. See Bryan Palmer, "Working-Class Canada: Recent Historical Writings," Queen's Quarterly, 86 (Winter 1986), 594.

11. See Ibid., 594.

12. Gregory Kealey, "Labour and Working-Class History," 93.

13. Chapter three detail the application of the survey design used in evaluating the competing schools of labor studies.

14. These schools were first elaborated on by Gregory Kealey and Russell Hann, eds., Primary Sources in Canadian Working Class History, 1860-1930 (Toronto, 1973), 10-11.

15. Richard T. Ely, Ibid., 75.

16. Ibid., 76.

17. Refer to Carroll D. Wright, "An Historical Sketch of the Knights of Labor," The Quarterly Journal of Economics, 1 (January 1887), 137-68.

18. The principle instance of a labor organization based upon this broad principle was the International Association of Workingmen. Marx and Engels played a key role in the formation and leadership of the "International", which started in London in the autumn of 1864. Ibid., 138.

19. Ibid., 168. See also, Kealey and Palmer, Dreaming, 4.

20. Several accounts have been outlined concerning the rising professionalism of academic study during the progressive labor reform period. Lafayette G. Harter has argued that this group was basically founded on an elitist sense of corporate responsibility as opposed to egalitarian sentiments. For a critical account on this period, see his book John R. Commons (Corvallis, 1962).

21. This label was first attached to Commons in the early 1970s. See Kealey and Hann, eds., Ibid., 10.

22. Commons and his associates pioneered and dominated the field of American labor history from the 1920s to the 1950s. He wrote a relatively small amount of labor history yet traces of his theory are still found in the writing of American labor history. Refer to John R. Commons, et al., History of Labor in the United States (New York, 1926 [1918]).

23. See Maurice Isserman, "God Bless Our American Institutions: The Labor History of John R. Commons," Labour History, 17 (1976), 310.

24. Ibid., 310-311.

25. Kealey and Palmer, Dreaming, 5.

26. See Ibid., 5.

27. Hoxie's only book was published shortly after his death and was partially edited by John R. Commons. Refer to Robert Hoxie, Trade Unionism in the United States (Chicago, 1917).

28. Ibid.

29. See Ibid., 89.

30. Ibid., 89.

31. Kealey and Palmer, Dreaming, 6.

32. Ibid., 6.

33. These views are supported by Harter, Ibid.

34. Ibid.

35. Kealey and Palmer, Dreaming, 6.

36. See Martin Robin, Radical Politics and Canadian Labour (Kingston, 1968), 67.

37. Selig Perlman, A Theory of the Labor Movement (New York, 1970 [1928]), 192.

38. The term "Great Upheaval" was used by American historians to characterize the countless strikes that occurred in the 1880s. See Kealey and Palmer, Dreaming, 7.

y9. An excellent treatment dealing with the relationship between sociology and history can be found in an article by Gareth Stedman Jones, "From historical sociology to theoretical history," British Journal of Sociology 27 (1976), 295-305; Poulantzas was cited on 303.

40. In terms of the entire post-1886 historiography on the Knights, Norman Ware's positive analysis is a unique exception to the mainstream of American labor studies. See his book The Labor Movement in the United States 1860-1895: A Study in Democracy (New York, 1959 [1929]).

41. Lloyd Ulman The Rise of The National Trade Union (Cambridge, 1955).

42. Ibid., 371. See also Kealey and Palmer, Dreaming, 8-9.
43. Kealey and Palmer, Dreaming, 9.
44. It should be noted that although this last statement refers to developments in Canada, it can still be applied to Ulman's work. Following the decline of the Order in the United States, the reconstruction of working-class strategies also relied on the past experiences of labor in the 1880s. Furthermore, Ulman's style of institutional analysis gained acceptance in Canada during the 1940s. See Kealey, "The writing of social history," 361.
45. Kealey and Palmer argue that without a doubt Workers and Utopia has been the single most influential study of the Knights of Labor in recent years. See "The Bonds of Unity," 370.
46. Gerald Grob, Workers and Utopia (Chicago, 1961), vii.
47. Samuel Gompers was the AFL's leader. Ibid., 169.
48. For a recent account of the 1886 riots and bombings in Chicago, see Paul Avrich, The Haymarket Tragedy (Princeton, 1984).
49. Gerald Grob cited in Kealey and Palmer, Dreaming, 10.
50. See Walter Licht, Ibid., 118.
51. Kealey and Palmer's have decribed Ware as one of the most perceptive student of the Knights of Labor. See Dreaming, 10.
52. Kealey and Palmer, "The Bonds of Unity," 372.
53. Ware, Ibid.
54. Ibid., xii.
54. Ibid., xiii.
55. Norman Ware cited in Kealey and Palmer, Dreaming, 11.
57. Ibid., 11.
58. See also, Kealey and Palmer, "The Bonds of Unity," 372.
59. The majority of these studies centered on the personality of the figure who assumed the major leadership role for the Knights, Terence Powderly. For a good example of writing in this area, see Harry J. Carman, "Terence Vincent Powderly - An Appraisal," Journal of Economic History, 1 (1941), 83-87.

59. For a representative sample of Herbert Gutman's research, see Work, Culture and Society in Industrializing America (New York, 1976); for an interesting survey covering the main assumptions of the new social history, see David Montgomery, "To Study People: The American Working Class," Labor History, 21 (Fall, 1980), 485-512,

60. Gutman held that the cultural approach he pioneered in American labor history could be traced to its roots with the work of Edward Thompson in England. The Making of the English Working Class (1963), has been regarded as one of the most influential pieces of historical writings in the English language published since 1960. For further elaboration, see Gregory Kealey's discussion of culture in the article, "Labour and Working-Class History," 67-94.

61. Kealey and Palmer, Dreaming, 12.

62. Palmer argued that until the 1940s, working-class history, when it was written, was often the product of labor economists, trade union advocates or political scientists. See "Working-Class Canada," 594.

63. The publication of Primary Sources in Canadian Working Class History, 1860-1930 by Gregory Kealey and Russell Hann, eds., signalled a shift away from the sporadic and marginal character of writing on labor history towards a wave of published work.

64. Refer to Gregory S. Kealey, "The writing of social history," 347-365.

65. Ibid., 347.

66. Frank Watt argued that the majority of Canadians accepted the principles of the National Policy as early as 1879. In fact, both labor and manufacturing organizations in the mid-1870s were generally supportive of the program of economic nationalism. See Frank Watt, "The National Policy, the Workingman, and Proletarian Ideas in Victorian Canada," Canadian Historical Review, 40 (1959), 1-26.

67. See Donald Creighton, "George Brown, Sir John Macdonald, and The 'Workingman'," Canadian Historical Review, 26 (December 1943), 375-376.

68. This area will receive further attention in the subsequent discussion on the nine-hour movement.

69. Kealey, "The writing of social history," 347.

70. Kealey, "The writing of social history," 348.

71. Palmer, "Working-Class Canada," 598.
72. Careless cited in Kealey, "The writing of social history," 348.
73. Gregory Kealey and Peter Warrian, eds., Essays in Canadian Working Class History (Toronto, 1976), 7.
74. The new labor history school has been led by writers such as Gregory Kealey, Linda Kealey, Craig Heron, Bryan Palmer, Russell Hann, Ian McKay and Peter Warrian.
75. Bryan Palmer holds that Logan was the first advocate of J.R. Commons to introduce the need for an institutional school of trade union history in Canada. Palmer identifies Harold Logan's Trade Unions in Canada (Toronto, 1948) as his first serious review of trade union development. See Palmer, "Working-Class Canada," 594.
76. Harold Logan, The History of Trade Union Organization in Canada (Chicago, 1928).
77. A great deal of controversy surrounds the problem of determining the exact percentage of workers organized by the Knights. This is related to the relatively primitive methods of data collection that were exercised during the late nineteenth century. As a result, precise numbers and percentages are often hard to determine. Nevertheless, the most reliable figures for Toronto and Hamilton in 1886 suggest that twenty percent of the workforce belonged to the Knights' membership. See Michael J. Piva, *Ibid.*, pp.167-172; and a response from Gregory Kealey and Bryan Palmer, "The Bonds of Unity: Some Further Reflections," Histoire sociale - Social History, 16 (May 1983), 173-187.
78. Kealey and Hann, eds., *Ibid.*, 10.
79. *Ibid.*, 10.
80. See Logan, *Ibid.*
81. Kealey and Hann, eds., *Ibid.*, 10.
82. See Palmer, "Listening to History," 50. Writers within the political school were sharply divided along lines according to political loyalties. The first group was exemplified by the work of Kenneth McNaught, Martin Robin and Gad Horowitz. Their aims were directed along the lines of the moderate socialism of the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation. The second faction was more radical and associated their aims with the Communist Party of Canada. Charles Lipton and William Bennet were two leading advocates of this school. See Kealey and Hann, eds., *Ibid.*
83. Palmer, "Listening to History," 51.

84. Kealey, "The writing of social history," 353-354.

85. Kealey argues that this denial of politics is in fact a political statement in itself. For as E.H. Carr usefully warned in the mid-1950s, "To denounce ideologies in general is to set up an ideology of one's own." Carr cited in Kealey, "Labour and Working-Class History in Canada," 92.

86. The is in relation to J.M.S. Careless' 1969 call for attention to region, ethnicity, and class mentioned at the beginning of the Canadian historiography section.

87. McNaught, Ibid., 155.

88. Most notably this work has been associated with Herbert Gutman. Gutman and others have focused on three main areas of American working-class history: 1) The social relations peculiar to industrial production, 2) the changing and conflicting forms of social consciousness created by people in their efforts to cope with those relationships, and 3) the impact of workers' consciousness and activities on the rest of society. See David Montgomery, "To Study People: The American Working Class," Labor History, 21 (Fall 1980), 485.

89. David Bercuson, "Through the Looking Glass of Culture: An Essay on the New Labour History and Working-Class Culture in Recent Historical Writing," Labour/Le Travailleur 7 (Spring 1981), 98.

90. See Montgomery, Ibid., 505.

91. Ibid., 507.

92. See Kealey, "Labour and Working-Class History," 78-79.

93. Abella cited in Palmer, "Working-Class Canada," 600. Palmer was referring to Abella's book, Nationalism, Communism, and Canadian Labour: The C.I.O., the Communist Party and the Canadian Congress of Labour, 1935-1956.

94. Kealey, "The writing of social history," 354.

95. Palmer, "Listening to History," 51.

96. See Palmer, "Working-Class Canada, 600.

97. Ibid., 600-601.

98. Kenneth McNaught, David Bercuson, and Bryan Palmer have all traced the origins of this movement to this 1976 collection of essays. A preliminary statement on a conception of working-class history was provided in an archival guide for researchers

interested in the nineteenth century. See Kealey and Hann, eds., Ibid.

99. This involved studying labor and commercial newspapers, local records, early government documents. See Kealey and Warrian, eds., Ibid., 7.

100. Kealey and Warrian cited in Bercuson, "Through the Looking Glass of Culture," 95.

101. Kealey, "Labour and Working-Class History," 69.

102. Kealey and Warrian, eds., Ibid., 7-8.

103. Notable exceptions were the Marxist writers, such as Stanley Ryerson or Claire Pentland. For example, see H. C. Pentland, "The Development of a Capitalist Labour Market in Canada," Canadian Journal of Economic and Political Science, 25 (1959), 450-461.

104. Kealey and Warrian, eds., Ibid., 8-9.

105. Montgomery, Ibid., 492.

106. Ibid., 512.

107. Palmer, "Listening to History," 68.

108. Kealey, "Labour and Working-Class History," 75.

109. Gregory Kealey presents a detailed outline of the periodization of Canadian working-class history in, "Labour and Working-Class History," 70-74.

110. E.P. Thompson, The Making of The Working Class (London, 1963), 9.

111. For another recent attempt that seriously details the efforts of the Knights in Canada; see Eugene Forsey, chapter seven "The Knights of Labor, 1875-1902." In Trade Unions in Canada, 1812-1902 (Toronto, 1982), 134-166.

112. Lawrence Goodwyn's book, Democratic Promise: The Populist Movement in America (New York, 1976); as cited in Kealey and Palmer, Dreaming of What Might Be, 17.

113. Cooper was a graduate student working on a Knights' M.A. thesis at the University of Western Ontario in 1933. See Kealey and Palmer, Ibid., 13.

114. His explanations relied heavily upon on a number of meetings held with past union officials. The fierce wars fought among union leaders during the Knights existence may have clouded the

objectivity of the information that was offered. As Kealey and Palmer have shown with their discussion on "The underside of the Knights", battles among union leaders within the union partially contributed to the decline of the Order. However, it was not the determinant factor that Landon has advanced. See Ibid., 173-200. See also, Fred Landon, "The Knights of Labor: Predecessors of the C.I.O.," Quarterly Review of Commerce, 4 (Autumn 1937), 133-139.

115. This refers to the transformation of the Canadian political economy from competitive to monopoly capitalism. The Knights had little past that could tell them how to oppose the monopolistic drift in the economic sector; it had little past that could direct it toward an appreciation of the importance of the state and the nationalization of political life. Ibid., 379-398.

116. Douglas R. Kennedy, The Knights of Labor in Canada (London, 1956).

117. See Victor O. Chan, "Canadian Knights of Labor with Special Reference to the 1880s," (Masters thesis, University of McGill 1949).

118. It is worth noting that until recently, the Chan thesis has remained almost unknown when compared to Kennedy's book.

119. Kealey and Palmer, Dreaming, 14.

120. Chan, "Canadian Knights of Labor," 205.

121. The full citation for Frank Watt: "The National Policy, the Workingman, and Proletarian Ideas in Victorian Canada," Canadian Historical Review, 40 (1959), 1-26. These claims are supported in Kealey and Warrian, eds., Ibid.

122. Hann examined the writings of labor journalist Phillips Thompson in Ontario in the 1880s. Thompson assumed a prominent position among journalists of the day in promoting an alternative ideology for the working-class. These issues will be re-addressed in Chapter four of the current thesis. See Russell Hann, "Brainworkers and the Knights of Labor: E.E. Sheppard, Phillips Thompson, and the Toronto News, 1883-87," in Kealey and Warrian, ed., Ibid., 35-57.

123. Bernard Ostry, "Conservatives, Liberals and Labour in the 1870s," Canadian Historical Review, 61 (June 1960), 93-127. See also, his later article, "Conservatives, Liberals, and Labour in the 1880s," Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science, 27 (May 1961), 141-161.

124. Kealey and Palmer, Dreaming, 15.

125. Ibid., 15.

126. See Karen Dubinsky, "The Modern Chivalry: Women and the Knights of Labor in Ontario, 1880-1891," (Masters thesis, Carleton University 1982). See also, Ron Verzuh, "Proletarian Spirits: A Social History of the English Language Labor Press in Canada to 1900," (Masters thesis, Carleton University 1984). Verzuh's thesis has recently been published as a book, Radical Rags: The Pioneer Labour Press in Canada (Ottawa, 1988).

127. See Dubinsky, Ibid., 203.

128. See Verzuh, Ibid., especially his conclusions.

129. David Bercuson offered the Webster's New Dictionary of the American Language as his main source of evidence to reject the use of Thompsonian working-class culture in the Canadian context. Certainly any serious attempt to critique the applicability of Thompsonian theory in Canada should extent beyond one's quick reach to the dictionary on the bookshelf. See Ibid., 97.

Chapter Two

The Knights and Their Times

There was over fifty years of union activity in Canada prior to the growth of the Knights of Labor in the 1880s. Working conditions were particularly harsh in the first half of the nineteenth-century. The laissez-faire market was at its height as mercantile and commercial interests ruthlessly competed for their share of the staples trade. According to Eugene Forsey, any attempt to thwart these interests was forcefully guarded.¹

The isolated and local character of union activity in Ontario before the 1850s eventually gave rise to the more centralized and internationally structured unionism of the 1870s.² These formative years of union growth exerted a considerable influence on the manner in which the Knights organized and operated. Several of the shifts in the relations of production taking place during these early years have been debated among writers belonging to the competing labor schools. This chapter is therefore devoted to examining the early years of labor developments during the Knights' era. The key features of this early period are later incorporated into the research design testing the competing labor schools (see chapters three and four).

The first section of this chapter begins with a discussion on the early years of union growth in Ontario and evaluates its impact on the Knights. The chapter goes on the

explore the rise of industrial capitalism in late nineteenth-century through an examination of aggregate data on Ontario's economy. The last section details the organization and size of the Knights of Labor in Ontario.

During the discussion on the Canadian historiography of labor studies it was pointed out that the current project focusses primarily on the second period of working-class history (industrial capitalism from 1850-1890).³ Several of the struggles waged by labor during this time can be understood in terms of the transitional nature of the economy in south-central Ontario. The upheaval of Ontario's workers in the late nineteenth-century was also influenced by earlier transitions in the province's political economy.

The era of labor relations, new labor historians refer to as pre-industrial capitalism, covers the years from 1800 to 1850. As a leading writer of this school, Bryan Palmer has shown that a coherent sense of periodization includes the years prior to the 1850s: "They were the years of primitive accumulation in which the social relations of labouring life, the nature of political rule, cultural developments, and investment and exchange patterns were all (often unwittingly) setting the stage for a new industrial capitalist order to break the fetters that a staples economy had erected everywhere."⁴ The experiences of workers adjusting to the productive relations in this early phase had a direct influence on the lives of the Knights.

The rank and file members of the Knights of Labor were raised in the early and mid-nineteenth century. The fact that these workers' lives intersected both periods of working-class history (pre-industrial and industrial capitalism) allowed them to reflect back to a time of primitive accumulation. They drew on these experiences as they adjusted to the new rules of industrial society.⁵ Gregory Kealey argues that many of the devices that workers utilized to fight against the onslaught of industrial capitalism were adapted from the culture and experience of pre-industrial society.⁶

Pre-Industrial Capitalism (1800-1850)

Throughout the first half of the nineteenth-century Ontario's economy remained predominantly rural and agriculturally based. The requirements of an economy sustained by the export of staples eventually demanded the creation of a transportation infrastructure.⁷ The construction of a canal and railway system at the end of this period produced the transitional conditions necessary for an integrated economy in Ontario. This included the growth of manufacturing, the cultivation of a domestic market and the urbanization of the population. H.C. Pentland has shown that these factors provided the balance of demand for a capitalist labor market in Canada.⁸

The closeness of personal ties that existed between employer and worker in the small shops of early nineteenth century were gradually eroded as the economy shifted towards large-scale production. The growing urban areas witnessed the rapid spread of wage-employment and the beginnings of a subdivision of skilled labor.⁹ With this increasing division of labor came the collective action of workers in Ontario.

The first workers to organize unions in Ontario were predominantly composed of skilled craftworkers (controlled by men).¹⁰ A semblance of trade union organization can be traced back to the late 1820s. As early as 1827, Hamilton and York (later Toronto) were both centers of printers', foundryworkers', and building trades workers' organizations.¹¹ Others unions forming in the 1820s and 1830s belonged to such trades as carpenters, shoemakers, coopers, bakers, tailors, stonemasons and cabinet-makers.¹²

The trade unions of this era were dominated by British and American immigrants. The knowledge these workers possessed of trade unions stemmed from their experiences in the more sophisticated economies of Britain and the United States.¹³ The leadership role played by these workers was a critical factor in building the early unions of Ontario. It is important to stress, that the strength of trade organization before the 1850s was weak. The life span of the typical union was short and membership levels were low.

The unions of the early nineteenth-century were dominated by an elite class of skilled craftsmen who were clearly separated from the masses of unorganized and unskilled laborers. Moreover, this elite class were divided among themselves. Each of the respective unions operated with little or no communication between the various trades. These workers were unable to mount an effective and unified struggle against their employers due to these fragmented conditions.

An alternative type of collective action by workers in pre-industrial society developed in response to the building of transportation facilities.¹⁴ The labor reserves required for the completion of the province's canal projects was supplied by the immigration of unskilled laborers from Ireland.¹⁵ The employment of large collectives of workers on the various construction sites gave these men the power to challenge their employers in a series of violent struggles. The intolerable working conditions that workers were forced to endure was the catalyst that led to a series of strikes. These struggles were unorganized, localized, fragmented, and incapable of forming any immediate working-class institutions.¹⁶

The main component that highlights the weaknesses inherent in the first movement of workers in Ontario (1800-1850) can be understood in terms of their fundamental lack of working-class unity. The ability of workers to resist in the

pre-1850s period was inhibited by the deep divisions that separated skilled workers from unskilled labor. These early developments influenced the Knights' strategy of organizing both skilled and unskilled workers into local and district assemblies.

These rifts caused a considerable amount of isolation between organized trade unions. For instance, Steven Langdon's review of the records of the Toronto Typographical Society (TTS) from 1845 to 1851 indicated that there was no contact between the Society and any other Toronto union.¹⁷ Workers were unable to view themselves as a distinct class. Under these circumstances, trade unionists were generally of the position that the interests of the employer and the employee were the same. Gregory Kealey has referred to this philosophy as the producer ideology.¹⁸ The subsequent discussion on the Nine-Hour movement of the 1870s demonstrates the extent to which this ideology inhibited the struggle for working-class unity.

Industrial Capitalism (1850s to 1870s)

The deficiencies associated with the trade unions of the pre-industrial era did not seem to inhibit the growth of organized labor during the 1850s to early 1870s. Important economic benefits were generated with the advancement of technology in the transportation industry. The impact generated from the canal construction of the 1830s and 1840s

was far surpassed by the important role railway building assumed in the fifties.¹⁹ The construction of transportation and market facilities stimulated an increase in the size of the cities of Ontario. Gregory Kealey refers to a number of benefits: "the first Canadian railway boom of the early 1850s went far toward producing an integrated home market, the first large-scale mechanized manufactories, and a bourgeois commitment to a strategy of industrial development for the Canadas."²⁰

The railways provided the market for a second wave of imported labor, "What the Irish did for the unskilled market was done for the skilled market, in substantial degree, by the English and Scottish who immigrated in the 1850s."²¹ British immigrants assumed an active leadership role in the skilled trades which had an important affect on the building of craft unionism in the 1850s. These workers were well versed in the art of struggle and possessed considerable knowledge concerning the organization of craft unions. Their understanding of the relationship between politics and labor would prove useful in forthcoming decades.

The drive towards mechanization forced the trade-oriented unions into direct conflict with their employers. Technological innovations in the manufacturing sectors of the early 1850s allowed employers to lower costs by hiring unskilled laborers to perform tasks previously exclusive to the skilled craftsman.²² The spread of this labor market

forced several unions to defend their trades in a series of strikes. The various trade groups across the province initiated a series of battles against their employers in 1853 and 1854: "they were drawn into a general 'wage-movement' that saw at least forty strikes involving bricklayers, tailors, shoemakers, printers, bakers, tinsmiths, stonecutters, and masons."²³ Some have argued that this shifted working-class relations into a more unified movement.²⁴

The late 1850s witnessed the emergence of international unions. The impetus for this change can be understood in terms of the transformations taking place in Ontario's economic sector. The growth of factory production placed larger collectives of workers in the urban centers of central Canada. The introduction of new technologies forced workers to share similar conditions which in turn produced a singular demand for decent wage and job security.

Internationals represented an important break from the local and isolated nature of the trade unions of the past. Increased mobility and competition between Canadian and American workers created the environment allowing locals on both sides of the border to join forces. The first of these internationals appeared in the metal-working sector. Several local unions in central Canada joined the American-based International Moulders Union (IMU) in 1859.²⁵ Toronto printers were also pioneers in their early affiliations with

American-based internationals.²⁶ British-based internationals were also active during this time. In the machinery sector, various locals of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers were organized across Ontario and Quebec.²⁷

An increase in communication between the various international unions stimulated further improvements, such as the establishment of a series of city-based trades assemblies.²⁸ Led by the Hamilton Trades Assembly in 1863, these organizations expanded throughout the province over the next decade. These advancements in centralization were sometimes overshadowed by fluctuations in the economy which often caused a tenuous existence for many unions. In addition, unions were still unable to organize a coherent strategy of working-class political action.

In the late 1860s and early 1870s labor institutions made significant progress. Langdon identified the five most important developments:

First, existing locals grew larger. Second, further central Canadian and international links developed among employees in particular sectors. Third, city workingmen's assemblies emerged in central Canada. Fourth, unionism consequently spread much more widely, including among semi-skilled and unskilled workers. And fifth, links were formed among all central Canadian working people, in the 1872 Nine-Hours Movement, the Canadian Labour Protective Association and the Canadian Labour Union (CLU).²⁹

This sequence of inter-related events were indicative of Ontario workers' increasing awareness of the polarized state of class relations in Canada. Similar conditions and demands by several distinct trades revealed the extent to which

workers' interest were shared and sometimes in direct conflict with their employers. Workers clearly demonstrated this phenomena during the struggle for the shorter working day in central Canada; otherwise known as the Nine-Hour Movement of 1872. The residual effects of the strikes fought across the province directly influenced a subsequent upheaval of labor, organized by the Knights of Labor, in the following decade.

Before examining the strikes of the early seventies in more detail, some brief comments should be made on a few other developments influencing labor relations during this period. The first involves the disintegration of workers' control previously maintained by skilled craftsmen across Ontario. Gregory Kealey demonstrates that there was a great deal of power exercised by skilled artisans in the workplace in regards to wages, hours, and restrictions of production.³⁰ The rise of factory production and mechanization served to destroy the power these workers shared. Kealey argues the issue of control was closely linked to the struggle for the reduction of hours throughout the late nineteenth-century.³¹

With the spread of industrial production in the early seventies, the Canadian state began to play a more active role in labor-capital relations. Governmental policies effecting property relations in Canada stretch back over the previous four or more decades. The consequences of these actions are summarized by John Battye in his examination of

the Nine-Hour pioneers, "Capital accumulation, and its concentration in certain hands, was the result of legislative measures which had run the gamut of land companies, canal construction, railway development and, finally, the beginning of a system of protective tariffs designed to assist the new industrialist."³²

This sequence of events, culminating with a strategy for the protection of the home market, eventually led to the federal Tories passage of the National Policy of 1879. Donald Creighton suggests that the governmental policy for the development of an indigenous industrial base stems back to the early seventies.³³ The industrial strategy of the National Policy was closely tied to a demand for reserves of skilled labor in order to adequately supply the markets of the manufacturing centers.

The federal Conservative party of Sir John A. Macdonald understood the balance required to satisfy the needs of both labor and capital from the beginning of the seventies. The events acting as the impetus to a national strategy can be traced to the Nine-Hour Movement of 1872. It was during this time that labor, capital, and state grew increasingly aware of their inter-relationship. For a short time, a unified working-class emerged out of central Canada with a new political consciousness.

The story of the Toronto printers's strike and the nine-hour agitation has been identified as one of the most

important events in Canadian labor history.³⁴ The general features of the movement are well known and have been covered according to several interpretive frameworks.³⁵ However, a chronology of the movement can be traced to earlier events taking place across the province.

The Canadian Nine-Hour Movement was modelled on the demands for a shorter working day by skilled craftworkers from the United States and Britain. In the United States agitation for the eight hour day began in the late 1860s. However, the movement exerting the strongest influence on workers in central Canada took place outside of North America. British workers struck for the nine-hour day in 1871.³⁶ The five month struggle of the Newcastle engineers mobilized both organized and unorganized labor. These events were closely examined by Canadian workers.

The Toronto printers' 1872 strike against Globe proprietor George Brown³⁷ is the most extensively documented event in nineteenth-century labor history.³⁸ This action was aided by the establishment of a city trade organization in 1871. The Toronto Trades Assembly (TTA) was a city workers' organization composed of unions from several skilled trades.³⁹ The TTA was responsible for the founding of the first lasting labor newspaper in the province, the Ontario Workman. Morden Lazarus has noted that the Trades Assembly campaigned for the shorter working day shortly after organizing and took its cue, "from the British Nine Hour

League, also founded in 1871, and a similar movement in the United States."⁴⁰ Similar labor institutions began to take root in Hamilton during this period.

The number of union locals continued to rise across central Canada in the early seventies. A concurrent development included a strategy to coordinate the collective efforts of workers in the battle for the shorter working day. Delegates from various trade unions in Hamilton established Nine Hour Leagues. "Based on the Newcastle model, the League membership was to include both union and non-union men."⁴¹ The collective efforts of workers crossed both craft and city lines. Leagues were active in Toronto, Hamilton, Montreal, and several smaller Ontario cities.

Out of this movement by working people emerged the first Canadian labor institution with a potentially national basis.⁴² Delegates from four central Canadian cities established the Canadian Labor Protective and Mutual Improvement Association in Hamilton in 1872. In the following year, the Association's national outlook was embodied in the Toronto founding of the Canadian Labor Union (CLU). For a period of time, all of these labor institutions served to centralize the labor movement in Ontario.⁴³

John Battye's discussion of 'The Nine Hour Pioneers' extends the traditional boundaries of analysis beyond the confines of Toronto to include Hamilton, Montreal, and several centers throughout Ontario.⁴⁴ For Battye, the

movement began during the mass meeting of workers at the Mechanics' Institute in Hamilton.⁴⁵ Speakers at the meeting stressed the idea that there was no fundamental conflict between the interests of workers and employers.

James Ryan, a machinist with the Great Western Railway Company, initiated the motion for a decrease in the length of the working day. Shortly after the meeting the plan was formalized with the founding of the Hamilton Nine Hour League. Attempts were made to unite workers in the struggle across Ontario and Quebec.

The skilled workers of Toronto were moving toward the nine-hour day at the same time as the workers in Hamilton.⁴⁶ The first mass meeting in Toronto was held in the Music Hall in mid- February. The motions prepared by the Toronto Trades Assembly were presented by Cooper John Hewitt.⁴⁷ It was argued that the producing classes had not shared in the wealth created through advances in production and technology. A shorter working day was therefore viewed as a right. Delegates argued that social benefits could derive from a shorter day; including intellectual cultivation, moral reform, family growth, and self-respect. This plan was endorsed with a motion that workers would produce as much in nine hours as in ten. Kealey points out that a sense of internationalism pervaded the motions and shaped a working-class mentality:

When they alluded to the events in England and the United States, they identified their own struggles

with their fellow workingmen there. They clearly rejected their opponents' constant refrain that Canada, as a new country, was an exception to old-world experiences.⁴⁸

For Kealey, this world view contributed to the evolution of Canadian working-class consciousness and the development of mature organizational forms.

Meanwhile, Hamilton's employers organized themselves in response to the workers' agitation. On February 13, 1872 the capitalists of the city passed a resolution unanimously opposing the principle of the nine-hour day.⁴⁹ Workers responded to this challenge in the following week. A walk-out at the Wilson, Bowman and Company's sewing machine works was precipitated by the dismissal of John Bland.⁵⁰ The company fired Bland for his actions in the nine-hour agitation. Although Bland was eventually reinstated several other unionists were dismissed. Workers continued to organize and spread the message of the Nine-Hour Movement.

Battye traces support for the movement in Montreal and several other small cities across Ontario. A concerted plan of action developed between Montreal, Hamilton, and Toronto. A strategy for shared financial support between these centers was put into place. According to Battye, the failure of this co-ordinated effort was due to weaknesses in Toronto.⁵¹

The nine-hour agitation in Toronto centered around a long-standing dispute between the Toronto Typographical Union (TTU) and George Brown, the publisher of the Globe. Sally Zerker has re-examined this feud based on a more

comprehensive search of archival records.⁵² Brown's early introduction of technological innovations at the Globe left workers frustrated with the destruction of skilled jobs. Zerker traces the rivalry between the printers' union and Brown back to 1843.⁵³ Her overall survey of the printers' records revealed that Brown consistently attempted to pay wages below union scale. Brown's opposition to trade unions led to his persistent effort to organize employers against the TTU. The main feature that stands out in the records of the printers' union is, "the workers' anger towards and resentment of George Brown."⁵⁴

In February of 1872 Toronto Typographical Union No. 91 entered into a series of negotiations with the Globe in order to secure the nine-hour day. During the bargaining sessions George Brown secretly organized the Master Printers Association.⁵⁵ Unable to reach an agreement, the union sent an ultimatum to the master printers for the implementation of the shorter work week. Shortly after this time the ultimatum was rejected and the TTU walked out on strike.

Brown's attempt to gain public support involved the use of editorials in the Globe, including the publication of the employers' manifesto. Brown argued that economic conditions in Canada were unlike other countries where the demand for the shorter day was being fought. "We have no such class as those styled capitalists in others countries, declared the

Globe roundly. The whole people are that capitalists of Canada...."⁵⁶

Unfortunately for Brown, the events unfolding disproved his theory of a classless society. James Beaty's Leader was the only dissenting employer in the field of Toronto's capitalists.⁵⁷ As the leading Conservative newspaper, the struggle took on new political dimensions. Beaty's support of the union gradually translated into working-class support for the federal Tories.⁵⁸

Brown's threat of legal action against the strikers was met on April 16 when twenty-four members of the TTU were arrested on charges of conspiracy. A mass demonstration (men, women, and children) at Queen's Park the day before the arrests indicated that public support was on the side of the movement and against the archaic laws of conspiracy. The legislatures of Canada had not yet tabled legislation effecting trade unions. English statutory protection of trade unions did not apply to Canada. The authority of English common law was therefore in effect.⁵⁹ Furthermore, case law dictated that combinations of workers could not agitate for the purpose of reducing work hours.

In the court case before Magistrate McNabb a combination had been proven and the strike was an admitted fact.⁶⁰ It appeared that the fate of the workers was doomed because the burden of proof by the prosecution supported an illegal combination. However, the course of events were substantially

altered due to the political maneuvering of Sir John A. Macdonald.

The Prime Minister was concerned with a recent Conservative loss at the provincial level. Ontario Premier John Sanfield Macdonald was defeated by the Liberals under Edward Blake. A Liberal momentum at the provincial level was viewed as a threat to the upcoming federal elections. However, the Liberal party's close association with George Brown was seriously damaging their reputation.

It has already been noted that Macdonald's plan for high protective tariffs stems back to the beginning of the 1870s. This industrial strategy was influenced by the conflicts taking place between the labor and capital in the early seventies.⁶¹ The Prime Minister was keenly interested in any developments occurring in the industrial center of Toronto. His main contact in the city was James Beaty, editor of the Conservative newspaper the Leader. This relationship alerted Macdonald to the growing strength of organized labor. Creighton argues that Macdonald "had been presented, as if by magic, with a policy which would at once gratify the working men and discomfit the Liberals."⁶² This refers to the Prime Minister's plan to grant legal status to trade unions.

Macdonald introduced two bills modelled on British statutes. The passage of the Trade Union Act in May of 1872 removed the threat of outdated measures of common law. On the other hand, the accompanying Criminal Law Amendment Act

continued to restrict unions. This act made it illegal for unions to combine for the purpose of intimidation. The passage of these acts freed the Toronto printers from prosecution and shifted working-class support in the hands of the Tories.

In the month after the strike workers in Toronto returned to the Music Hall in a tribute to Macdonald for his passage of the Trade Union Act. During the evening the Prime Minister delivered a speech on labor-capital relations expanding on the Tory producer ideology. At the close of the speech he made reference to a new equality between labor and capital. After establishing equality, "Then will come the question of arbitration for the adjustment of disputes, then will come concession, and then will come that real friendly feeling and unity of action between employer and employed without which the industry of no country can be permanently prosperous."⁶³ With the support of organized labor the federal Tories defeated the Liberals in the forthcoming election of 1872.⁶⁴

The significance of the 1872 election can be understood in terms of a campaign that focused on the industrial future of the nation. The protection of home industry through the National Policy received considerable attention by the federal Tories. In addition, labor began to assume an active role in politics. The first alliances of labor and established politics emerged with the appearance of Tory-

Labor candidates.⁶⁵ Workers were also active in lobbying for labor reforms.

A serious impediment to the growing maturity of the working-class movement emerged soon after the election. The national economy was struck with the full force of economic depression by 1873. Ideals of labor-capital equality were shattered as unions concentrated on protecting their legislative gains. The network of unions built up over the nine-hour struggle were in serious retreat. By the end of the decade, the Canadian Labor Union, the Toronto Trades Assembly and the Ontario Workman were no longer in existence.

The initial successes of the nine-hour agitation served to establish an institutional basis for working-class resistance. Langdon notes that local unions grew in size and improved communications through the establishment of city and national labor organizations. The battles that were fought on the streets of Toronto, Hamilton, and Montreal served to establish legislative gains for labor. The Ontario Workman gave workers their first opportunity to outline their agenda to the public. Most importantly, "labour leaders obtained experience in the arts of struggle - negotiation with employers, explanation to an often hostile press, and motivation of those who looked to them for leadership."⁶⁶

The subsequent retreat of organized labor in the 1870s did not result in any long term paralysis for labor. The residual effects of this earlier movement had a direct impact

on the Knights of Labor in the 1880s. A complete review of these effects is beyond the scope of the present analysis.⁶⁷ Therefore, only the main features will be outlined in the current discussion.

The Knights made serious efforts to eliminate past barriers dividing labor. Organization was no longer exclusive to skilled craftworkers. The Knights were the first to organize workers that had previously existed on the periphery of the labour market: the unskilled, women, and other groups marginalized by virtue of religious affiliation or ethnicity.

The internationalism expressed in the 1870s was also incorporated into the local and district assemblies of the Knights. Their international base extended to Britain, Ireland, France, Belgium, Australia, New Zealand, and Hawaii. Many of the workers active in the nine-hour agitation later joined the Knights. For example, "John Bland, formerly an activist in the 1872 struggle at the Wilson, Bowman and Company's sewing machine works, whose dismissal precipitated the first strike in the Canadian Nine-Hour Movement, represented LA [local assembly] 1852 at the third session of the Canadian TLC [Trades and Labor Congress], convened in Hamilton in 1887."⁶⁸ Trade Unions active in the 1872 struggle re-organized with the Knights in the 1880s. For instance, the Knights of Labor organized both the Knights of St. Crispin and the International Moulders Union in the 1880s.

The Knights were active in re-establishing a national labor institution after the demise of the Canadian Labor Union. This was accomplished in 1883 with the founding of a new national central body, the Canadian Labor Congress (CLC). The Knights sent eight of twenty-nine delegates to the CLC's first convention. The CLC changed its name to the Trades and Labor Congress of Canada in 1886. The Knights controlled the TLC in its early years, "Their Assemblies had an absolute majority of delegates at most of the conventions between 1886 and 1894 and they held the presidency from 1888 to 1892."⁶⁹

Finally, several of the causes that the working-class movement struggled for in the 1870s were incorporated into the Preamble and Declaration of Principles of the Knights of Labor (Appendix A). This included the demand for a shorter working day, objections to assisted immigration, and advancements to the financial, educational, and moral wealth of labor. Moreover, the limited demands for legislative reforms proposed in the 1870s were advanced by the Knights so as to include a concerted plan of political action at all levels of government.

It is important to locate the nine-hours struggle within the context of the shifting political economy of the late nineteenth-century. The 1870s witnessed the expansion of manufacturing units in Ontario and can be considered as the period when large scale production first began to take root.⁷⁰ The spread of factory production resulted in a

deterioration of working conditions. These developments provided the stimulus that provided the first outburst of united working-class action in Canada.

These new economic directions altered the political landscape of the country. Confederation allowed the state to assume a more active role in the development of the national economy. The federal government's strategy of protective tariffs soon led to a significant growth in the industrial base of Ontario.⁷¹ Further examination of the economy in the late nineteenth-century should provide a clearer understanding of how the Knights were influenced by these conditions.

Economic Development (1870s to 1890s)

The early industrial growth of the Canadian economy in the late nineteenth-century has been summarized in the following manner:

Between 1870 and 1890 the industrial sector tasted the fruits, both bitter and sweet, of this great transformation: establishments capitalized at \$50,000 and over increased by about 50 percent; employment in manufacturing rose by 76 percent and output in constant dollar terms by 138 percent; railway mileage increased from 3,000 in 1873 to over 16,000 in 1896; manufacturing's place, in terms of value-added, rose from 19 percent of the Gross National Product in 1870 to 23.5 percent in 1890; the rate of real manufacturing output climbed from 4.4 percent in the decade 1870-1880 to 4.8 percent in 1880-1890 (although it slipped to 3.2 percent in the 1890s).⁷²

The Knights of Labor arrived on the scene during a record period of economic growth (1880s). "Throughout the decade

industrial output expanded at a compound annual rate of 4.8 percent, one of the highest at any period in the nation's history, and the highest of any decade marred by prolonged economic depression."⁷³

T.W. Acheson's study on the social origins of the Canadian Industrial Elite during the early 1880s refers to "the amazing growth of the manufacturing potential of industry, a development which more than tripled the number of mills, spindles, looms and capital investment in half a decade."⁷⁴ By the mid-1880s the expansion of production in a wide variety of manufactures had proceeded to a level where the nation had the capacity to provide for all domestic needs in these areas. Acheson classifies these principal manufacturing interests as: leather products, food products, musical instruments, wood products, paper products, textiles and iron and steel.⁷⁵

According to Acheson, this "amazing growth of manufacturing potential" was directed by a few hundred entrepreneurs.⁷⁶ During this period of competitive capitalism, employers responded to periodic troughs in the economy by cutting back labor's wages.⁷⁷ Bryan Palmer has argued that cutting wages was the most useful method by which competitive capitalist could recapture some of the losses resulting from deflation, "thus allowing larger amounts of capital to be sunk back into production."⁷⁸

The following table gives a general view of manufacturing in Canada between 1881 and 1891, with a statement of the percentage of increases:

<u>Table 1: Manufacturing growth in Canada</u>	1881	1891	% of growth
% of establishments...	49,923	75,768	51.8
Capital invested.....\$	165,302,623	353,856,817	114.0
# of employees.....	254,935	367,865	44.0
Wages paid.....\$	59,429,002	99,762,441	67.0
Value of products.....\$	309,676,068	475,445,705	53.5

Source: Census of Canada, 1891.

Aggregate data (see Table 1) reinforces evidence the level of industrial growth in Canada: the number of manufacturing establishments rose by over 50 percent; capital invested more than doubled between 1881 and 1891; the number of employees and wages paid each increased at a considerable rate; and finally, the value of products increased by 53.5 percent over the course of the decade.

Industrial production in Canada was dominated by Ontario throughout the late nineteenth-century. A survey of Canadian census data confirms this view; Ontario did over 50 percent of the entire manufacturing output of the country between 1871 and 1891.⁷⁹ Quebec contributed to roughly thirty percent of the manufacturing output during this period while the remaining provinces represented less than fifteen percent.⁸⁰

Technological innovations introduced during this time had a strong impact on the province's industrial economy. For instance, the replacement of waterpower with steampower

greatly improved the output of manufacturing developments across Ontario.⁸¹ The strategy adopted with the introduction of the National Policy led to the completion of a new transportation network. During this period railway replaced roads and waterways as the primary means of transportation. The rapid increase of railway mileage across the country was closely linked to the expansion of manufacturing between the years of 1870 to 1890.⁸²

The larger concentration of industry in the cities and towns of Ontario was also encouraged by building of a railway network. The urban development of the province rapidly shifted in the mid-to-late nineteenth century. The urban population as a whole rose from 133,463 to 375,848 between 1851 and 1881. The majority of communities with a population of 500 and over more than doubled during this period.⁸³ After 1881, the urban population of the province continued to increase at a rapid pace. The proportion of urban centres rose from 31.5 percent of the entire population in 1881 to 38.7 percent in 1891.⁸⁴

The discussion on the economic growth in Ontario to this point has been limited to an examination of the industrial sector. A broader perspective must be presented in order to avoid overestimating the force of industrial development in the late nineteenth-century. The following table indicates the position of manufacturing sector in the context of the overall economic structure of the province:

Table 2: Economic
Structure in 1881

	Ontario %	South-Central Ontario %
Agriculture	48.3	44.2
Manufacturing	20.6	22.1
Commerce	7.1	8.1
Domestic	5.3	6.2
Professional	3.7	3.9
Not classified	15.0	15.5

Source: Jacob Spelt, Urban Development in South-Central Ontario (Toronto, 1972), 108.

Table 2 shows that close to half of Ontario's population was engaged in agriculture production in 1881. This compares to 20.6 percent of the work-force engaged in manufacturing and 7.1 percent in commerce. The remaining groups make up roughly one quarter of the occupational sectors.

A final word of caution should be mentioned in relation to Ontario's industrial growth. The transitional nature of the economy (pre-industrial to industrial capitalism) contributed to an uneven level of industrial development. Handicraft forms of production still coexisted with thoroughly mechanized processes.⁸⁵ As Jacob Spelt has shown, the change-over from small establishments to large modern plants did not set in until after 1890.⁸⁶

The figures for South-Central Ontario display a slightly more industrialized market that was strongly influenced by the urban centers of Hamilton and Toronto. Most of the railway lines built after 1881 radiated out from Toronto.⁸⁷ Hamilton and Toronto combined to hold 20 percent of Southern

Ontario's industrial employment although they had only 6.5 percent of the region's population.⁸⁸

Gregory Kealey's examination of industrial capitalism in Toronto from 1867-1892 closely examined the effects of the National Policy tariffs on the local economy. One of his most outstanding findings reported a 36 percent increase in the number of factories shortly after the introduction of the tariffs (between 1878-1884).⁸⁹ A similar pattern emerged at the same time in Hamilton. The city of Hamilton saw "unprecedented industrial expansion in the early 1880s."⁹⁰

This growth of factory production in Toronto and Hamilton compared favorably to the rest of the province. Canadian Census data shows a tripling of industrial establishments between 1881 and 1891 in Toronto while the rest of the province increases by only 40 percent. Factory production in Hamilton also rose sharply during the 1880s.⁹¹

Organization and Size of the Knights of Labor in Ontario

The revival and growth of industry in Ontario was met with a similar development in the area of union organization. There was a tremendous increase in the number of local and international unions entering the province during the 1880s. This numerical rise of unionism was accompanied by more sophisticated approach to organization; workers had come to realize that local conditions could be improved through communications with fellow unions.⁹² Thus, representatives of

unions active in a particular city began forming local councils. This brought workers into greater contact with councils located outside their respective city or town. Councils eventually formed at the national level, witnessed by the founding of the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) in 1883.⁹³

A new wave of working-class resistance developed in response to the shifts in the relations of production taking place between the 1870s and the 1890s. The closeness of personal ties between employer and employee in the small firms of the 1870s was slowly disappearing. The rapid increase in manufacturing during the 1880s and 1890s shifted the relations of production towards an impersonal labor market.⁹⁴ This was most pronounced in the urban sectors of the economy, where the growth in factory production destroyed the paternalism that existed between employers and workers in the previous decade.

The growth in factory production during this time increased the social costs of labor in areas such as unemployment, health care, and safety demands.⁹⁵ During the 1884-86 depression, workers were left in a particularly vulnerable position; this was because the late nineteenth-century pre-dated the development of the "social welfare state" in Canada.⁹⁶ The strains that developed due to this transformation in social and productive relations led to rising conflicts between capital and labor.

2

MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART
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STANDARD REFERENCE MATERIAL 1010a
(ANSI and ISO TEST CHART No. 2)

It is possible to isolate four specific features that caused labor to organize and resist against their employers. First, the spread of factory production and the introduction of new technology allowed employers to replace many of the highly paid tasks that were previously performed by skilled craftworkers with unskilled labor. Second, the failure of the Nine Hour Movement to achieve the goal of reduced hours of labor forced workers to continue to produce for long hours. In addition, employers reduced wages during times of deflation as a method of recapturing their losses.⁹⁷ Finally, workers were unable to protect themselves against the rising social costs of labor associated with factory production; including abuses of female and child labor, unemployment, poor sanitary conditions, unsafe machinery, and housing shortages.⁹⁸ Chapter four discusses how labor responded to these conditions through an examination of the labor press.

This upsurge of working-class resistance was dominated by the Knights of Labor. In Eugene Forsey's Trade Unions in Canada 1812-1902 it is argued that "the most spectacular feature of the decade [1880s] was the growth of the Noble and Holy Order of the Knights of Labor (KOL)."⁹⁹ The Knights of Labor organized a greater number of workers than any other union in Ontario during the 1880s.

The entire history of the Knights in Canada spans approximately thirty years (1875-1907). The Knights first arrived in Canada in 1875, at Hamilton, when they organized

Local Assembly (LA) 119. Little is known about LA 119 because the Knights were organized on a secret basis in the early years. This arrival had faded into obscurity by the end of the decade.¹⁰⁰ The real history of the Knights in Ontario begins in 1881, after the decision was made to allow the name and objects of the Order public.¹⁰¹ The removal of the cloak of secrecy resulted in a surge in membership.

In the early to mid-1880s the Order expanded rapidly throughout the cities, towns, and villages of Ontario. After the mid-1880s, the number of local assemblies across Ontario began to decline. The Knights managed to form LAs in every city of the province over the course of their history. Their impact on the smaller communities of the province was even more impressive: "of the forty-seven Ontario towns with a population of at least 3,000 in the 1880s, fully thirty-eight, or 81 percent, witnessed the formation of an LA."¹⁰²

The majority of the Canadian Knights were concentrated in Ontario.¹⁰³ The essential history of the Knights in Ontario can be isolated to a relatively short time. The number of workers joining the Knights in Ontario reached its peak in 1886 and then deteriorated, rapidly in some locales, more slowly in others. Towns close to the American border (Brockville and Hamilton, for instance) declined earliest while areas in the northwest and eastern Ontario achieved prominence later.¹⁰⁴

Before proceeding to a more detailed examination of the growth and size of the Knights in Ontario, it might be useful to explain how the Order was organized. The organization of the Knights of Labor was based on a democratic structure. Three separate assemblies ruled the membership in accordance with a written constitution and declaration of principles (see Appendix A).¹⁰⁵

The Local Assembly (LA), District Assembly (DA), and General Assembly (GA) were the three primary organizational units of the Order. Each successive assembly (LA, DA, GA) was granted increasing levels of authority and performed various functions. The LA was the basic unit in the Order. It was at this level that rank and file members joined the Knights. The constitution adopted for the LAs declared that "the Local Assembly is not a mere trades-union or beneficial society, but that it is more and higher, gathering into one fold all branches of honorable toil, without regard to nationality, sex, creed, or color, not founded simply to protect one interest or to discharge one duty, however great that one interest or the one duty may be."¹⁰⁶

According to the articles of the constitution for the LAs, a minimum of ten members were required for the formal recognition of the unit. The LA either consisted of ones divided by craft professions (trade assemblies), or membership was comprised of both skilled and unskilled workers (mixed assemblies). Regulation of dues and

assessments were controlled by each LA. A number of elected officers were responsible for collecting dues and governing the assemblies.¹⁰⁷ The LAs had the autonomy to address all grievances, misdemeanors, and violations of the laws of the Order through their own courts.¹⁰⁸

In the hierarchy of the Order, the DA was a higher body than the LA. The constitution for the DA was composed of ten articles. The first article provided that a DA could be formed with at least five LAs. Local assemblies appointed one delegate in the DA for every one hundred members they had enrolled, and one for each additional one hundred members or major fraction thereof.¹⁰⁹ The offices and courts of the DAs were similar to those of the LAs. The DAs in Ontario were always mixed in form and representative of specific geographical/territorial units.¹¹⁰

The General Assembly was the most powerful body in the Knights of Labor. The constitution of the GA consisted of twenty articles. GAs met annually and were presided over by elected representatives from the District Assemblies. Originally each DA was allowed one delegate in the GA for each one thousand members they had enrolled, and one for each additional one thousand members or major fraction thereof. This figure was raised to three thousand in 1886 due to the large growth in the membership of the Order throughout North America.¹¹¹

The leading officer of the Knights of Labor was referred to as the General Master Workman (GMW). The LAs of Ontario frequently communicated with the GMW and the General Executive Board at their headquarters in Philadelphia.¹¹² The Order, then, was a highly centralized body yet at the same time egalitarian.¹¹³

The majority of the LAs were found in the rapidly expanding industrial cities like Toronto and Hamilton, however, the Knights also penetrated the provinces's towns, villages, and tiny hamlets.¹¹⁴ Gregory Kealey and Bryan Palmer are the only researchers to extensively document the exact location and number of LAs across Ontario.¹¹⁵ These writers have detailed a tremendous growth in the number of LAs in the 1880s.

The first open LA to enter Canada in the 1880s organized in Hamilton in 1882.¹¹⁶ Twenty-nine new LAs were formed in Ontario during the same year. The rate of increase continued to rise until it peaked in 1886 with 160 LAs. The rate of growth dropped to 26 by the next year and did not reach above 6 LAs for the remainder of the decade. By 1890 only 64 LAs existed in Ontario.¹¹⁷

There was a wide range in the number of workers belonging to individual LAs. For example, some LAs contained the minimum constitutional requirement of ten members while other units grew to as large as a thousand members.¹¹⁸ These statistics show that there was a fair amount of organized

activity by the Knights of Labor. The questions that remain to be addressed, however, concern the actual numbers of workers drawn to the Order and the percentage of the work-force organized.

Producing a comprehensive figure on the number of workers who joined the LAs of Ontario is a difficult task. Several writers have commented on the volatile nature of the Knights' membership.¹¹⁹ The number of workers joining fluctuated greatly during the peak periods of enrollment.¹²⁰ Therefore, a static count on the number of workers belonging to the Knights would not take into account the masses of workers passing through LAs.

Adding up the peaks of particular locals across the province over the course of the history of the Knights results in a total membership figure of 21,800; this represented 7.1 percent of the non-agricultural work-force in Ontario.¹²¹ The Knights organized a significant percentage of the work-force in the 1880s which compared favorably to the level union activity before World War II.¹²² Earlier in the discussion it was noted that the industrial cities of Toronto and Hamilton led the province in the percentages of LAs organized. Therefore, it is not surprising to find that the Knights organized over 20 percent of the non-agricultural work-force in each of these cities by 1886.¹²³

Summary

The final sections of this chapter have discussed the early rise of industrial capitalism in Ontario and the tremendous growth of organized labor that accompanied these developments. The revival of industry and organized labor in the 1880s transformed social and productive relations in the large cities of Ontario. The Knights of Labor stood at the centre of these developments.

The record period of industrial growth between the 1870s and the 1890s was stimulated by the federal government's protective tariff strategy. Canadian manufacturing increased by 51.8 percent over the course of the decade. But it is important to note that this was contained within a predominantly agriculturally based economy. In addition, the nature of industrial growth in these early stages was uneven; independent commodity production co-existed along with the more sophisticated mechanized processes. Later discussion will elaborate on how the Knights were inhibited by the transitional economy.

The Knights of Labor organized a substantial proportion of Ontario's work-force in the 1880s. However, it is difficult if not impossible to fully translate the significance of the Knights based on quantitative data alone. The Order literally touched the lives of thousands of workers. The lessons learned from the 1870s allowed the

Knights to broaden the definition of trade union activity. Their constitution extended the role of the LA beyond the narrow economic concerns of a "mere trades-union". Groups previously marginalized outside the confines of traditional labor organization were permitted to join into the ranks.

Several areas extending beyond the problems involved in an appreciation of the numbers drawn to the Knights are considered in chapters three and four of the thesis. The historical record from the late nineteenth-century is re-examined in order to test the validity of how the competing labor schools have characterized the organization of the Knights of Labor. This testing includes an examination of primary data collected from the years in which the nine hours struggle was at its height. Finally, several of the rank and file activities of the Knights are examined.

1. See the introduction to Eugene Forsey, Trade Unions in Canada: 1812-1902 (Toronto, 1982).

2. A clarification should be made concerning use of the term Ontario. Strictly speaking, the province of Ontario is something of a misnomer so far as the earlier part of the period is concerned, since down to confederation the territory was known as Upper Canada. A review of the literature reveals that writers use either of these terms when discussing labor in the early nineteenth-century. This chapter makes use of the term Ontario in order to be consistent.

3. This section refers to the scheme of periodization developed by Gregory Kealey. Four major periods of Canadian working-class history were outlined. The first period covers the years before 1850 and is characterized as pre-industrial capitalism. This is followed by industrial capitalism, 1850 to 1890; monopoly capitalism, 1890s to 1929; and crisis to reconstruction, 1930 to present. See Gregory Kealey, "Labour and Working-Class History in Canada: Prospects in the 1980s," Labour/Le Travailleur, 7 (Spring 1981), 70. Similar frameworks have been devised by other writers belonging to the new labor history school. For instance, see Bryan Palmer, Working-Class Experience: The Rise and Reconstruction of Canadian Labour, 1800-1980 (Toronto, 1983).

4. Bryan Palmer, "Listening to History Rather than Historians: Reflections on Working Class History," Studies in Political Economy, 20 (Summer 1986), 68.

5. See Gregory Kealey and Peter Warrian, eds., Essays in Canadian Working Class History (Toronto, 1976), 8.

6. Ibid., 9.

7. This is an oversimplified presentation of Canada's staples led growth. It is beyond the scope of the present discussion to engage in a detailed description on the complex formation of the labor in a mercantile/commercial economy (1800-1850). The work of Harold Innis extensively details the development of staples production in Canada. It is still useful to briefly summarize the key features of economic growth that led from the production of staples to a national transportation network. Innis's analysis of the market force was based on the principle difference between metropolitan and peripheral development. Prior to 1850, the British empire continued to dominate the unstable peripheral economy of our country. This uneven economic relationship led to the exploitation of a succession of staples (such as fish, fur, squared timber, and wheat). Canada's dependance on an external market required the development of a transportation infrastructure to export these raw materials. In a staples

economy, the gradual development of the working class reflects the productive forces of each successive staple. See Daniel Drache, "The Formation and Fragmentation of the Canadian Working Class: 1820-1920," Studies in Political Economy, 15 (Fall 1984), 43-51; for a critical reply to this article, refer to Palmer, *Ibid.*, 64-69.

8. H.C. Pentland argues that the transition towards a capitalist labour market began in the 1830s and its essential structure was in place by the 1850s. His sketch of the rise of the capitalistic market included: (1) the development of a regular demand for labour; (2) the sources of labour supply; (3) the barriers to workers' escape from the market. See his article, "The Development of a Capitalistic Labour Market in Canada," Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science, 25 (1959), 455-456.

9. Kealey and Warrian, eds., *Ibid.*, 70.

10. For Steven Langdon the organization of skilled workers in the 1820s and 1830s was one of two significant types of collective developments in pre-industrial Ontario. He also refers to the series of violent struggles led by Irish workers on the canals of Ontario and Quebec. Further elaboration of these features are undertaken in the course of the current discussion. Refer to his publication, The Emergence of the Canadian Working Class Movement, 1845-1875 (Toronto, 1975), 3-8. For a more extensive discussion on this topic in its earliest form, see Steven Langdon, "The Political Economy of Capitalist Transformation: Central Canada from the 1840's to the 1870's," (Masters thesis, Carleton University 1972).

11. Gregory S. Kealey and Bryan D. Palmer, Dreaming of What Might Be: The Knights of Labor in Ontario, 1880-1900 (Cambridge, 1982), 45.

12. A comprehensive discussion of these early skilled trades can be found in Forsey, *Ibid.* In his introduction Forsey outlines five periods of union formation in Canada.

13. See Harold Logan, The History of Trade Union Organization in Canada (Chicago, 1928), 1-2.

14. This is also identified by Langdon as a significant sort of collective action by workingmen. See his monograph, Emergence, 5.

15. Palmer, Working-Class Experience, refer to his introduction.

16. The process began when Irish workers arrived and supplied the required labor market for the construction of the Rideau Canal (1826-1832). See Pentland, *Ibid.*, 460. After this development, a series of violent and spontaneous strikes took place on several canals in the 1830s and 1840s. For example, "Irish labourers struck and rioted on the Welland canal works in 1842, protesting the fact that only 575 of 2,000 available workers had been hired for the season." Refer to Langdon, *Ibid.*, 5. These strikes reached their peak in the 1840s.

17. Langdon, Emergence, 6.

18. Kealey and Palmer, *Ibid.*, 178.

19. A number of writers have noted what an important factor railways began to play in the 1850s. For instance, see Logan, *Ibid.*, 3-4.

20. Kealey and Palmer, *Ibid.*, 52.

21. Pentland, *Ibid.*, 460-461.

22. Steven Langdon refers to the introduction of the cylinder press in the printing trade by Toronto's Globe. There is also the example of the struggle that began in 1851-2, with the introduction of the steam-sewing machine. Members of the Toronto Tailors' Protective Society destroyed the machines, "fearing for their craft." See Emergence, 7.

23. Kealey and Palmer, *Ibid.*, 52.

24. See for instance, Langdon, Emergence, 7.

25. Stuart Jamieson, Industrial Relations in Canada (Toronto, 1957), 6.

26. Morden Lazarus, Years of Hard Labour (Don Mills, 1974), 7.

27. Langdon, *Ibid.*, 8-9.

28. Forsey, *Ibid.*, see introduction.

29. Langdon, *Ibid.*, 12.

30. For an interesting discussion on the power of skilled workers' to control several areas of production, see Gregory Kealey, "Honest Workingman and Workers' Control: The Experience of Toronto Skilled Workers, 1860-1892," Labour/Le Travailleur, 1 (1976), 32-68.

31. Kealey and Palmer, *Ibid.*, 140.

32. John Battye, "The Nine Hour Pioneers: The Genesis of the Canadian Labour Movement," Labour/Le Travailleur, 4 (1979), 25.

33. Donald Creighton, "George Brown, Sir John Macdonald, and The "Workingman"," Canadian Historical Review, 26 (December 1943), 375-376.

34. Robert H. Babcock, "A Note on the Toronto Printers' Strike, 1872," Labour/Le Travailleur, 7 (Spring 1981), 127.

35. The list of writers covering the strikes of 1872 is extensive. A representative sampling includes: Donald Creighton, "George Brown," pp.362-376; Bernard Ostry, "Conservatives, Liberals, and Labour in the 1870's," Canadian Historical Review, 41 (1960), 93-127; Sally Zerker, "George Brown and the Printers' Union," Journal of Canadian Studies, 10 (1975), 42-48; Steven Langdon, Emergence, 12-28; John Battye, *Ibid.*, 25-56; Gregory Kealey, Toronto Workers Respond to Industrial Capitalism 1867-1892 (Toronto, 1980), 124-138.

36. The extensive coverage the British workers received in the Canadian press was followed with particularly close attention by workers in Ontario and Quebec. See Battye, *Ibid.*, 27.

37. For twenty years Brown had played a central role in the Liberal party of Canada.

38. The list of writers centering on this event as the pivotal movement of workers in the nine hour struggle includes: Logan, *Ibid.*, Creighton, *Ibid.*, Ostry, *Ibid.*, and Zerker, *Ibid.* See Kealey, Toronto Workers, 128.

39. The membership of this body included: the Coopers, the Knights of St. Crispin (shoemakers), the Bakers, Cigar Makers, Iron Moulders, and the Typographical Union. Gregory Kealey has argued that the leadership of the TTA was in keeping with the skilled ranks of the early trade unions of Canada: "...[the TTA] reflected its artisan roots; the president was John Hewitt of the Coopers International Union, the recording secretary was J.S. Williams of the Toronto Typographical Union, and the corresponding secretary and treasurer were H.L. Beebe and James Dean, respectively, of the Knights of St. Crispin. Also represented on the executive were the local branches of the Cigarmakers and the Iron Moulders Unions." See Gregory Kealey, Toronto Workers, 128.

40. Lazarus, *Ibid.*, 8.

41. Battye, *Ibid.*, 29.

42. Langdon, Emergence, 13.

43. Wallace Clement has warned some writers against the danger of overstating the strength of the workers' movement at the time of the nine hour struggle. He notes that almost all of the union institutions highlighted in Steven Langdon's Emergence (the Canadian Labour Union, the Toronto Trades Assembly and the Ontario Workman), had disbanded before the end of the 1870s. See his recent publication, The Challenge of Class Analysis (Ottawa, 1988), 179.

44. Battye, Ibid.

45. On Saturday, January 27, 1872 several trades met at the Mechanics' Hall. On the platform were the presidents of the various trade unions of the city, as well as employers. Ibid., 27.

46. Battye argues that workers in Toronto progressed at a somewhat slower pace. Ibid., 31.

47. Gregory Kealey outlines these motions and the main themes advanced during the meeting. See Toronto Workers, 129-132.

48. Ibid., 130.

49. Battye, Ibid., 34.

50. Kealey and Palmer, Ibid., 140.

51. Battye argues that the TTA was unable to fulfill the leadership role required with the absence of a central League in the city. The cautious behaviour of the Assembly revolved around a leadership catering to the needs of a membership composed exclusively of organized trades. Ibid.

52. Writers before Zerker relied on a more limited search of the primary data. Refer to Sally Zerker, Ibid., 42-48.

53. Ibid., 42.

54. Ibid., 48.

55. Brown's history of conflict with trade unions reached a high point during the early months of 1872. He imported blackleg printers, hired a detective to spy on the union, and finally sought the opinion of a leading lawyer in order to prove illegality on the part of the TTU. See Ostry, Ibid., 97.

56. Creighton, Ibid., 367.

57. James Beaty was a Conservative politician of some standing and the proprietor and editor of the daily Leader. Ibid., 368.

58. Kealey viewed the Leader's support of the union's demands as political opportunism because of the paper's earlier attack on the leaders of the Nine Hour Movement. See Toronto Workers, 132.

59. Ibid., 133.

60. Creighton, Ibid., 371.

61. Ostry has argued that the National Policy and the Trade Union Act (TUA) of 1872 were closely linked. The National Policy, he argued, was a strategy for developing manufacturing in central Canada. A key ingredient to this plan included the adequate supply of a skilled labor force. Canada required a strong flow of skilled labor from Britain in order to fully develop the domestic market. This plan was being undermined, however, because the legal rights that trade unions had won in Great Britain were not yet available in Canada. For Ostry, then, the TUA became a necessary antecedent to the National Policy itself. Creighton saw the relationship of the two policies in terms of Macdonald's ability to wean labor support away from the Grits. See Paul Craven and Tom Traves, "The Class Politics of the National Policy, 1872-1933," Journal of Canadian Studies, 14 (Fall 1979) 16-17.

62. Ibid., 373.

63. Sir John A. Macdonald cited in Ostry, Ibid., 114.

64. Trade Union support for the Tories was not unconditional. For example, the TTA and the Ontario Workman delivered a series of criticisms concerning the need to repeal the Criminal Law Amendment Act.

65. Kealey, Toronto Workers, 137.

66. Battye, Ibid., 56.

67. Other components of this relationship are revealed in the following chapter.

68. Kealey and Palmer, Ibid., 141.

69. Lazarus, Ibid., 11.

70. See James Rinehart, The Tyranny of Work (Don Mills, 1975), 31.

71. Jacob Spelt discusses the examples of industrial expansion due to tariff protection that had previously been identified by Innis and Leach. See Urban Development in

South-Central Ontario (Toronto, 1972), 166-167.

72. Kealey and Palmer, *Ibid.*, 29.

73. T.W. Acheson, "The Social Origins of the Canadian Industrial Elite, 1880-1885," in David S. Macmillan, ed., Canadian Business History: Selected Studies 1497-1971 (Toronto, 1972), 144.

74. *Ibid.*

75. See Tables 1-2 on page 145 of Acheson's study. *Ibid.*

76. His study was primarily concerned with this elite of 168 industrialists who directed the manufacturing sector of the economy. *Ibid.*, 144.

77. Economic historians have located these years of deflation at around the years 1879/1880, 1885, and 1888. See Bryan Palmer, Working-Class Experience, 98.

78. *Ibid.*

79. See Census of Canada, 1891.

80. A detailed view of manufacturing output by the province of Ontario is presented in the following table:
Ontario is presented in the following table:

<u>Table 1: Ontario</u>	1881	1891	% of
<u>Manufacturing</u>			growth
% of establishments...	23,058	32,028	39.0
Capital invested.....\$	80,950,847	176,603,339	118.0
# of employees.....	118,308	165,326	40.0
Wages paid.....\$	30,604,031	49,207,710	60.7
Value of products.....\$	157,989,870	240,100,267	52.0

Source: Census of Canada, 1891.

81. The level of economic development across the province was uneven, nevertheless, manufacturing was spread out across Ontario. For example, Kealey and Palmer have noted that more than 50 percent of the manufacturing in the 1880s was located in Canadian communities with populations under 10,000. *Ibid.*, 35. See also Spelt, *Ibid.*, 123.

82. Kealey and Palmer, *Ibid.*, 38.

84. Furthermore, it rose to 42.9 percent in 1901 to 52.5 percent in 1911. See Ibid., 179.

85. Kealey and Palmer, Ibid., 36.

86. Spelt, Ibid., 170.

87. Ibid., 158.

88. See Warren Bland, "The Location of Manufacturing in Southern Ontario in 1881," Ontario Geography, 8 (1974), 13. Census data shows that the populations of Toronto and Hamilton rose by 88.4 and 36.2 in the 1880s, respectively.

89. Gregory Kealey, Toronto Workers, 31.

90. See Bryan Palmer, A Culture in Conflict: Skilled Workers and Industrial Capitalism in Hamilton, Ontario, 1860-1914 (Montreal, 1979), 17.

91. Toronto and Hamilton each registered strong industrial growth based on a range of indicators. For example, capital invested increased by over 100 percent in Toronto and almost doubled for Hamilton. For a more detailed reference, see the tables presented by Kealey, Ibid., 32 and Palmer, Ibid., 17.

92. This lesson was learned through the experiences of workers in the 1870s. During this period, local trades assemblies were able to influence the federal Conservative government to remove legal restrictions on trade union activities.

93. The CLC's name was changed to the Trades and Labour Congress of Canada (TLC) at their national convention in 1886. Lasarus, Ibid., 11.

94. Several writers have discussed this phenomena; see for example Langdon, Emergence, 4.

95. A number of researchers have documented these conditions in Ontario. For a good example of the conditions in Toronto during this time, see Gregory Kealey, Working Class Toronto at The Turn of The Century (Toronto, 1973), 1-27.

96. See Elizabeth Wallace, "The Origin of the Social Welfare State in Canada, 1867-1900," Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science, 16 (August 1950), 383-393.

97. Bryan Palmer, Working-Class Experience, 98

98. This is only a partial list.

99. This is in reference to the entire country. See Eugene Forsey, Trade Unions, 138.

100. LA 119 was the only assembly to organize in Canada before 1881. See Ibid.

101. See Carroll Wright, "An Historical Sketch of the Knights of Labor," Quarterly Journal of Economics (January 1887), 138.

102. Kealey and Palmer, Ibid., 61.

103. Over 78 percent of the Canadian LAs in 1886 were located in Ontario. See Forsey, Ibid., 141.

104. Ibid., 63.

105. The Knights Preamble and Declaration of Principles was drafted during their annual General Assembly at Reading, Pennsylvania, January 1, 1878. Source: Journal of United Labor Public Archives of Canada, M-368C.

106. See Wright, Ibid., 159.

107. Article four named and defined the duties of the officers: the master workman (presiding officer), worthy foreman (vice-president), worthy inspector (door-keeper), almoner (relief officer), financial secretary, recording secretary, worthy treasurer, statistician (to collect data on the conditions of the trade), assistant unknown knight (to gather information about proposed members), judge advocate, judge, and clerk of court. See Victor Chan, "Canadian Knights of Labor with Special Reference to the 1880s," (Masters thesis, McGill University 1949), 9.

108. The Constitutions for the LAs, DAs, and GAS of the Knights of Labor can be found at the Public Archives of Canada.

109. Chan, Ibid., 11.

110. Kealey and Palmer, Ibid., 59.

111. This is from article one of the Constitution of the General Assembly (Source: Public Archives of Canada, M-3676). See also, Chan, Ibid., 12.

112. The weakness of the Canadian nation state in the 1880s resulted in Ontario Knights having far more interest in and contact with Knights of Labor headquarters in Philadelphia than they did with their comrades in British Colombia or even Quebec. Kealey and Palmer, Ibid., 16.

113. The LAs exercised a large measure of autonomy in the overall structure of the Order. Ibid., 59.

114. The Knights of Labor established LAs in all Ontario towns with populations exceeding 5,000 in 1881 and/or 1891. The concentrated strength of the Order in the larger industrial cites is revealed by the fact that Ontario's five largest cites in the 1880s (Toronto, Hamilton, Ottawa, London and Kingston) contained forty-six percent of all the assemblies. Ibid., 59-61.

115. These writers also provide the most accurate figures on the number of workers drawn to the Knights in Ontario. Ibid., 57-91.

116. Hamilton painters formed Alliance LA 1852. Most writers view LA 1852 as marking the beginning of the Knights entry into Canada. See Forsey, Ibid., 138.

117. See Table 2.9 in Kealey and Palmer, Ibid., 73.

118. Gregory Kealey and Bryan Palmer, "The Bonds of Unity: The Knights of Labor in Ontario, 1880-1900," Histoire sociale - Social History, 14 (November 1981), 383.

119. See for example, Forsey, Ibid., 143; or Kealey and Palmer, "The Bonds of Unity," 388.

120. Forsey reports on wide variations in the membership of individual LAs, for example, in the years 1883-85 LA 2132 rose from 25 to 141 and then back to 47; in the same years LA 2586 rose from 27 to 134 and then back to 72. See Forsey, Ibid., 143-144.

121. Kealey and Palmer point out that these figures establish that the Order's organizational achievements were significant and in fact rivalled those of a later and better known period (1900-1930). Note that the figure of 7.1 is a slightly modified version of the traditional non-agricultural work-force. The authors simply excluded occupations from the census tables that did not reflect the Knights' membership. See their article, "The Bonds of Unity, 177-189.

122. The following data compares the Knights of Labor membership between 1881 and 1891 to the general level of trade union membership in Ontario from 1901 to 1931. These figures are based on the percentages of the non-agricultural work-force organized. Knights: 1881-6.68, 1891-5.38; General trades: 1901-6.11, 1911-8.45, 1921-12.11, 1931-8.20. See table 1 from Ibid., 179.

123. Ibid., 182-183.

Chapter Three

Methodology: Content Analysis

There were four schools of thought identified during the discussion on the historiography of labor studies in North America: the institutional, political, positivist, and new labor history. Since the major contributions of the Knights of Labor did not involve an alliances with social democracy or participation in revolutionary practices, one finds that this period is generally considered to be pre-history by the political school.¹ Consequently, this school has not been included in the evaluation design of the present chapter.

The various assumptions advanced by the institutional, positivist and new labor history schools are incorporated into the content analysis designed for this thesis. This survey technique is applied to the collection of primary data (labor newspapers) and subjected to a quantitative analysis the objective of which is to find special qualities in the data, such as repetitive patterns.² This methodology also involves an evaluation of the political and strike activities of the Knights of Labor.

It is not a reasonable aim to apply sophisticated models of regression or factor analysis to a data base that is best characterized as elementary in nature. What is required is an adaptable technique that is economical and relatively simple to perform. A content analysis satisfies these criteria. Furthermore, experts argue that content analysis has become a

central technique in historical research, either within a particular period or with trends over time.³

The following chapter is divided into two sections. The discussion begins with consideration of the theoretical and substantive assumptions that are used for the design and testing of the content analysis. This involves the task of integrating the main assumptions offered by the various schools of labor studies into the actual design of the research instrument. The second section presents an overview of the methodology employed for a content analysis involving the Knights of Labor.

Theoretical and Substantive Assumptions

Adopting a methodology that offers an alternative to the conventional analysis of secondary literature has a number of advantages. Writers associated with the new labor history school of labor studies have explicitly called attention to the need for the quantitative analysis of data from the late nineteenth-century.⁴ In their first collective statement dealing with labor from an earlier period of working-class history, the new labor historians supplied an excellent catalogue of primary data source materials.⁵ These records have served as a preliminary guide in determining the universe of primary materials available for the current research design.

Critical distinctions must be drawn when one characterizes the manner in which historians and social scientists have approached the study of labor in Canada. Researchers belonging to the new labor history school gathered primary data on labor that differs substantially from the types of materials studied by writers associated with the institutional, political, and positivist schools.⁶

The new labor historians stressed the importance of reconstructing primary data on Canada's working-class. This reconstruction is non-traditional in nature.⁷ The main sources of available materials for the nineteenth-century working-class experience are labor newspapers, records of labor organizations, local records, and other quantifiable data. These materials are in sharp contrast to twentieth-century records which are "top heavy with royal commissions, 'official' union correspondence, prime ministers' papers, RCMP files, and justice department collections."⁸

One of the most critical distinctions to be understood in relation to the various schools of labor concerns the emergence of two markedly different data bases. These differences are directly related to developments in the methodology of collecting quantifiable labor data. The Canadian government did not assume an active role in gathering empirical data on labor in the nineteenth-century. Despite the fact that the Knights lobbied the government to set up a labor department that could assume a monitoring

function, there was no immediate positive response. The first report of the federal government on the "relations between capital and labour" was not completed until the late 1880s.

A systematic analysis of labor statistics was implemented by the early stages of the twentieth-century. At this time, government and business intensified their efforts to apply a scientific methodology to the analysis of labor. The greater precision associated with gathering labor data in the twentieth-century altered the manner in which these records have been studied. Professional historians belonging to the positivist school have rigorously examined the primary data records from this later period. Investigators studying nineteenth century labor conditions in Canada are faced with a more problematic data base.

The new labor historians have charged the positivists' preoccupation with the twentieth-century period, "writes out of the historical record the entire nineteenth-century experience, as well as violent years of employer opposition to unionism in the pre-war period and countless struggles of the war years."⁹ Attempts to uncover the experiences of ordinary workers including their cultural backgrounds and social relations, have been addressed through the application of research techniques to the less sophisticated data material of this period. This approach also encompasses areas traditionally studied: trade union organization, politics, and strikes.

Writers following in the Canadian historiographical tradition of the institutional school have disregarded working-class culture. This resulted from their preoccupation with the main events in Canadian history and the political and institutional questions.¹⁰ Their focus on the main figures, events, and issues effecting labor organizations over the past century is directly related to the limitations of the twentieth-century data sources. The experiences of the ordinary workers of the nineteenth-century has generally been ignored by academics following the traditional approach.

It may be useful to briefly review the key assumptions of the respective schools in order to help define the construction of category boundaries. The institutional school of labor studies was inspired by John R. Commons in the United States and imported into Canada by Harold Logan. These writers have portrayed the working-class as a player among several interest groups within the capitalist system. According to this interpretation, both the employee and employer shared a mutual goal for the individual acquisition of wealth. Their examinations focused on labor's attempts to organize and the evolution of reaction to such efforts from the state and business. The following question is designed to represent the position of the institutional schools: "How many of the articles refer to a middle-class consciousness among workers?"¹¹ Middle-class consciousness is being

operationally defined as the expression of a common interest in the economic system between workers and employers.

In the 1960s a separate group of historians responded to the call for increased attention to region, class, and ethnicity as key themes in the development of Canadian labor history. These writers have been labelled as positivists because of their aversion to theory in favour of an empiricist approach. They have continued to focus on the institutional evolution of Canadian labor and the economical and political issues concerning unions in the twentieth-century. The positivists differed from past practices through the increasing emphasis they placed on region as a crucial variable in Canadian labor development.

Proponents of the positivist school have argued that non-class divisions among workers in nineteenth-century Ontario have rendered the concept of a unified working-class meaningless. For instance, David Bercuson has argued that religion, ethnicity, and region served to divide workers instead of uniting them along class lines.¹² Positivists have primarily focused on ethnic divisions among Canadian workers. The main question outlining the stance of the positivist school was therefore framed: "How many of the articles comment on ethnicity dividing instead of uniting working-class interests?"¹³

In the mid-1970s a group of Canadian scholars demanded that labor history be redefined as working-class history.¹⁴

Social historians following in this tradition have been referred to as new labor historians. The new labor historians have been labelled as "romantics" because they have often embraced a cultural approach for their work in Canadian labor history.¹⁵ The origins of culturalist theory can be traced to E.P. Thompson in Britain. Critics charge that the importation of foreign models which emphasizes the role of workers and class conflict in history is romantic and exaggerated.¹⁶ The question that was formulated to reflect the new labor historians interpretation of Knights asks the coder to search for evidence of working-class consciousness in each newspaper article. This construction of class consciousness refers to phrases or sentences that indicate a separation of interests between workers and employers.¹⁷

Labor newspapers serve as the most useful recording units for the current study. Many investigators have cited the advantages of using newspapers as a communication source for a content analysis of historical records.¹⁸ The use of commercial newspapers was considered but rejected because they were not viewed as representative of working-class interests. Commercial papers targeted audiences that were far broader than the working populations attracted to the labor press.

Two of Toronto's leading newspapers in the 1880s, the Globe and the Mail, had direct links to the federal Grit and Tory parties. Coverage of labor conditions were not the prime

editorial mandate of these types of papers. This was in sharp contrast to the labor newspapers which were often official organs of the Knights and strongly devoted to covering labor issues. Labor newspapers were communication tools used by unions to speak directly to a working-class constituency. Examining labor newspapers serves the important task of allowing the researcher to draw inferences to a specific working-class population.

The fact that the labor newspapers themselves are cultural artifacts of the late nineteenth-century aids in broadening the scope of inquiry outside the narrow concerns of the institutional structure of unions. Kealey and Palmer argue that the labor press acted as a mirror of an emergent working-class culture.¹⁹ Ron Verzuh argues that Dreaming of What Might Be: The Knights of Labor in Ontario, 1880-1900 (1982) by Gregory Kealey and Bryan Palmer is considered the general authority on the Canadian Knights.²⁰

A component of the content analysis will attempt to delineate the values, beliefs, attitudes and traditions of the people connected to the labor press. This includes the positions expressed by the authors of these newspapers and the workers who had their positions articulated through the pages of the press. This study also measures the degree to which the labor press altered social conditions through their demands for changes to areas such as education, housing,

health, employment, social security, and other social measures.

There is a general agreement from experts on the Knights that the Hamilton Palladium of Labor was the most significant labor publication during the 1880s period of labor upsurge.²¹ As an official organ of the Knights of Labor, the Palladium published from 1883 to 1886 under the editorship of William H. Rowe. This was during the time that the Knights were at the peak of their power. Ron Verzuh's research on the English-language labor press suggests that the Palladium was instrumental in contributing to the Knights' growth.²²

The volume of relevant materials applicable to a content analysis of the Knights in Ontario is enormous. It is beyond the scope of the current project to effectively analysis such a wide range of data. The Palladium was selected as the most representative single sampling item. Comparisons will be made between the test results of the Palladium and other labor newspapers examined through the secondary literature.

Overview of Methodology

The process of applying a content analysis to a range of communication sources serves as a basis of inference, the objective of which is to extract thematic data from the original sources. The themes uncovered in the current study are considered to be representative of the working-class

population of south-central Ontario in the 1880s. The discovery of these themes are accomplished through a quantitative analysis of the actual language appearing in the Palladium.

One of the most widely accepted definitions of this method was framed by Bernard Berelson in 1952:

Content analysis is a research technique for the objective, systematic, and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication.²³

There is a diverse range of definitions for content analysis, nevertheless, they all reveal a broad agreement on the requirements of objectivity, the use of systematic procedures and generality.²⁴ In Berelson's definition, the word "communication" refers to the available data. For this inquiry, the written materials of a series of labor newspapers is viewed as a unified body of communication.

The assumption of objectivity stipulates that each step in the research process must be carried out on the basis of explicitly formulated rules and procedures.²⁵ The rules for the current design have been developed according to the historiography on labor studies. The concepts derived from the literature have explicitly guided the manner in which the categories were constructed.²⁶

Specific definitions for conceptions of working-class have been formulated according to the logic of the arguments marshalled by the opposing schools of labor history. Questions concerning the relationship between labor and

capital can easily be delineated based on the specific assumptions of the respective schools of thought. The main concepts offered by the three school of thought have been defined in such a way that they can be measured.

The definition for the institutional school expressing common interests between workers and employers is measured by the use of indicators. For example, if an article refers to resolutions passed by central labor organizations stating that the interests of the workers and employers are one and the same then this would constitute evidence in support of the institutional writers.

Consider the positivists' contention that ethnic divisions acted as a barrier to any meaningful expression of working-class consciousness in the late nineteenth-century. The question therefore directs the coder to search for evidence of ethnicity dividing instead of uniting working-class interests. Indicators such as details of sectarian violence between the Protestant-Catholic members of the Knights would support the position of the positivists.

Writers belonging to the new labor history school have argued that the Knights contributed to a unified, working-class movement in the nineteenth-century. The question depicting the new labor history position examines the concept of working-class consciousness. The Thompsonian definition of working-class conscious as largely determined by the

productive relations into which men (and women) are born - or enter involuntarily, applies to this question.²⁷

To measure the concept of consciousness, the term is operationalized in order to indicate a separation of conflicting interests between workers and employers. The coder searches for evidence in each article referring to a division of labor in which workers view themselves as belonging to a group distinctive from their employers. The researcher carefully examines the articles in order to search for indicators of this concept. If an article discusses the actions of capitalists as oppressive and details the conditions under which workers must suffer, then the coder circles the category for working-class consciousness.

Berelson has also specified that a content analysis must be systematic. In order for comparisons between successive issues of the Palladium to be valid, the same procedures for documenting must consistently be applied to the content of each separate newspaper. This condition is basically a corollary to the characterization of objectivity.²⁸ The third objective of generality requires that the findings have theoretical relevance.²⁹

The current design employs a number of systems of enumeration for gauging the data. This includes measuring the intensity of the data, locating the origins of the articles and testing for the presence or absence of qualities in the

documents. The enumerated data is aggregated and later presented in a series of tables and graphs.

In some cases, it is not possible to analyze the data through the use of numbers. This limitation can be overcome through the use of qualitative techniques. This simply refers to data that cannot be satisfactorily described by numbers and must be described by words. The present study relies on direct quotations from the text of the newspapers as the qualitative technique for understanding the data.

Berelson's final point directing the investigator to examine the manifest content of the data refers to the practice of restricting the analysis to documenting only materials that explicitly appear in a text. The meaning implied by the written content that do not actually appear in the newspapers directly, is referred to as the latent content. At the coding stage of research, one is limited to recording only the manifest items which appear in the document. The latent content of a document is reserved for the interpretation stage, at which point the investigator attempts to draw meaningful conclusions from the data.³⁰

Before considering sampling design and category construction, the issue of validity should be addressed. The validity of any study is closely interrelated to its reliability.³¹ Careful consideration and examination of the measurement instrument will help ensure correspondence between what a measuring device is supposed to measure and

what it really measures. This process, also referred to as face validity, has most frequently been relied upon by content analysts.³² The current design addresses research problems in which the questions can be answered directly from a description of the attributes of the content.

It must be asked whether the labor newspaper is measuring what it is supposed to measure. More specifically, are these newspapers accurately portraying the values, beliefs, ideas and traditions of the working-class in the late nineteenth-century? Several writers have suggested that the labor newspaper played a significant role in the lives of Ontario's working-class in the late nineteenth-century.³³ Most recently, Ron Verzuh's critical assessments of both labor press content and historians opinions led to his conclusion that the press did play a social role in the development of a mass working-class culture.³⁴

Sampling

The process of determining the universe of materials applicable to a content analysis usually involves a multistage sampling design. Labor newspapers have been identified as the universe of materials relevant to the content study and Hamilton's Palladium has been designated as the sample. By selecting the Palladium as the main source of data, the first stage of selecting a communication source

from which generalizations are to be made has been accomplished.

The time frame of the sample is restricted to the years that the Palladium published. The first available issue of the paper has been traced to the summer of 1883.³⁵ The final year of publication for the paper was 1886, however, the exact date of the last issue remains uncertain. The Palladium was a weekly newspaper that circulated in South-central Ontario every Saturday morning. The large majority of issues have been preserved on microfilm (156).

A simple random sample is not an appropriate sampling method for this study. All known issues of a universe must be available in order to perform random sampling. This is not the case for the current study because several issues of the Palladium are not available. In addition, a universe of less than two-hundred newspapers is not very large for this type of technique. One of the leading experts in the area of content analysis, Ole R. Holsti, has suggested that a purposive sample be used under these circumstances. This allows the investigator to draw a sample that reflects the qualitative and quantitative aspects of the sources which are deemed important.³⁶

A purposive sample is ideal for the current analysis because the first stage of sampling has not reduced the volume of data to manageable proportions. When one multiplies the total number of issues (156) by the number of pages in

each tabloid (8), the investigator is left with over a thousand pages of material. For this reason, we have chosen to reduce the data further by sampling within documents.

The front pages of the Palladium covered the most important labor issues of the day. Front page editorials by labor correspondent Phillips Thompson detailed the manner in which the aims and principles of the Knights could be implemented into action. Applying the content analysis to only the front pages of the Palladium indicates that the cover stories accurately represent the overall direction of reporting in this newspaper.

Holsti discusses a back and forth strategy that operates when sampling for a content analysis. This process closely mirrors the manner in which the current design operates. The first sampling stage consists of collecting information for the first thirty issues of the Palladium. At this point, some preliminary observations are made about the general direction of the data.

It was found that the results of a content analysis performed according to the procedures outlined above do not vary markedly between weekly issues of the newspaper. Accordingly, the remaining issues are further reduced by sampling from every fifth newspaper. Out of an available one hundred and fifty-six newspapers, fifty-five were sampled for analysis. This approach is supported by studies of several experts in the field. For instance, alternative methods of

sampling newspaper headlines in Pravda were compared with data for the entire month:

The results [Mintz, 1949] revealed that every-fifth-day samples (fifth, tenth, fifteenth, twentieth, twenty-fifth, and thirtieth day of each month) and odd-day samples did not differ significantly from the figures for the entire month...These findings were supported by another study, in which every-sixth-day samples provided sufficiently accurate results for most research purposes (Davis and Turner, 1951).³⁷

The number of articles appearing on the front page of each of the Palladium were recorded and each was distinguished as either a labor related or non-labor related article. Also, the title and authorship of each article was recorded. This information is useful at the interpretation stage when judgement is needed concerning the types of items that have been found in the samples.

There are no specific guidelines directing the researcher to an exact sample size for a content analysis. General rules of inquiry state that sampling error can be reduced by increasing sampling size. The current sample size is extremely large when compared to a general range of acceptable standards for scientific inquiry. National samples that are considered to be representative of the Canadian population consist of samples that are only a small fraction of the universe. Furthermore, the methods used for this purposive sample are modelled on experimental studies in the field.³⁸

A qualification should be made in regards to the relatively small circulation size of the Palladium. Exact figures are not available for the number of readers who subscribed to the weekly labor press. It has been estimated that the circulation of the Palladium greatly surpassed earlier efforts with a press run of 5,000 to 7,000.³⁹ This can be viewed as a significant accomplishment given that "other more conventional journals of opinion at various times, such as the Canadian Monthly and National Review in the 1870s and the Canadian Forum in the 1920s, had small circulations, often less than two thousand, yet are considered valuable tools in understanding the assumptions that their writers and readers, as well as the times, held."⁴⁰

Finally, content analysis requires that a minimum of two separate samples be examined. The Palladium is the sample that reflects the concerns of workers in the 1880s. The earlier discussion on the Nine Hour Movement in the 1870s helped determine the selection of a second newspaper. During that time, workers founded the Ontario Workman (Toronto, 1872) in order to bridge communications between the various unions in their demand for the nine hour day.⁴¹ A secondary review on the literature discussing the Workman should satisfy the requirements of an alternative information source.⁴²

Category Construction

Designing three separate questions that represents the main assumptions of these opposing groups is an important component of the overall design. The institutional, positivist, and new labor history schools have each presented distinctive conceptions of the Knights of Labor. This improves the reliability of the category construction because each of boundaries separating these schools can readily be distinguished. The coder must decide which question is best reflected in the content of each newspaper article reviewed. The data will be aggregated in order to determine which position appears most frequently in the articles.

The selection and definition of categories into which the content units are to be classified is the most critical step in content analysis.⁴³ The final draft of a research instrument was achieved through a trial and error method. This involved testing the early designs through a series of test runs on random issues of the Palladium.

The final instrument for the current study is three pages in length and consisting of thirty-five questions. It is divided into three coding categories: Workers' Ideology, Political Activities, and Workers' Struggles. A copy of the research instrument is located in Appendix B.

The first five questions in the research instrument cover areas relating to the sampling design of the study. The remaining questions explore the possible types of workers'

ideologies that are covered on the front pages of the Palladium. The first three questions for the ideology category (6,7,8) have already been discussed in regards to testing the fundamental assumptions of the institutional, positivist, and new labor history schools of labor study. The remaining questions for this category search for evidence of a working-class culture among the readership of the Palladium.

Questions nine through twelve focus primarily on testing the theories formulated by writers belonging to the new labor history school. These writers have completed the overwhelming majority of research on the Knights conducted over the past ten years.⁴⁴ Their conception of the working-class is probed from economic and cultural dimensions.

The new labor history school and others have directed attention to the rapidly expanding industrial economy of south-central Ontario in the 1880s. This led to increasing divisions between workers and employers as skills became diluted with the introduction of new technologies and capital was consolidated into fewer and fewer hands. Several questions address the level of exploitation existing between capitalists and wage-workers at this time.

Question nine asks for evidence of working-class culture. The cultural dimensions examines the values, beliefs, ideas and traditions of the people associated with the Knights. Kealey and Palmer have argued that the all

encompassing nature of the Knights allowed workers to express themselves outside the confines of a formal labor organization. The final question in this section searches for evidence of wage-workers uniting together in labor parades, picnics, demonstrations, or other expressions of working-class cultural solidarity.

The next section is devoted to studying the coverage of political activity by the Palladium. The political activities of the Knights should reveal the class interests of Ontario workers through the challenges that were mounted towards established politics. The questions in the political category attempt to thoroughly cover all possible areas of Knights' involvement in politics.

The final category constructed for the content analysis details the strike activities and other struggles that involved the Knights. Kealey and Palmer have argued that turbulence, strikes, and class conflict all played an important role in the history of the Knights of Labor in Ontario.⁴⁵ A wide range of strike action are detailed in order to test the validity of the claims of the new labor historians. Alternatively, two questions incorporate the ideas advanced by the positivists that divisions (ethnic, religious, gender) crushed any unified movement by the working-class.

Summary

The purpose of the third chapter has been to provide the reader with a clearer understanding of methodological tools used for testing the competing arguments advanced on the Knights of Labor. A content analysis of the 1880s Hamilton newspaper the Palladium was selected as an appropriate research method. It was argued that the assumptions of the various schools of labor thought discussed in the first chapter could be incorporated into the technical design of the research instrument.

The format of the definitions and indicators of the concepts devised for the content analysis can be found in Appendix B. The technical rules applying to the design of the content analysis serve as the bridge for testing the theories on the Knights. The proper application of the methodology permits interpretations of the data that are valid, reliable, and representative.

The extent to which the content analysis measures what it is supposed to measure (the school with the most convincing argument on the Knights) is dependent on explicitly following the rules designed for the content analysis. The use of one coder at all the stages of the research allows for a clearer application of these rules. Using a single coder avoids the problem of lack of agreement associated with the pooled judgement of coders. Finally, this

design has closely followed the controls characteristic of sampling for content analysis in order to ensure a representative study.

The interpretation of the meaning implied by the written content of the data will help to provide tentative support for one of the three schools of labor thought (institution, positivist, or new labor history). The degree to which the Knights of Labor were capable of stimulating an emergent working-class culture will also be tested through the analysis of the aggregated data. Finally, further evaluation can be directed towards understanding the significance of the struggles that were waged by the Knights through their political and strike actions. These tasks will be addressed in the final chapter of the thesis.

1. See discussion in Gregory Kealey and Russell Hann, eds., Primary Sources in Canadian Working Class History, 1860-1930 (Kitchener, 1973), 10-11.
2. See Therese Baker, Doing Social Research (New York, 1988), 261.
3. For instance, see Ole R. Holsti, Content Analysis for the Social Sciences and the Humanities (Reading, Mass., 1969), 127-149.
4. See Gregory S. Kealey, "Labour and Working-Class History in Canada: Prospects in the 1980s," Labour/Le Travailleur, 7 (Spring 1981), 67-94.
5. Refer to Kealey and Hann, eds., Ibid.
6. The earlier chapter covering a historiography of labor studies in the United States and Canada characterized writers based on four differing schools of thought. These labels have been used by various writers as a method of critically assessing the importance of selected works on the Knights of Labor. The choice of using institutional, political, realist, and romantic as appropriate labels was made after an extensive review of the literature. Refer to chapter one for a fuller discussion on this subject.
7. Kenneth McNaught, "E.P. Thompson vs Harold Logan: Writing about Labour and the Left in the 1970s," Canadian Historical Review, 63 (1981), 144.
8. Bryan Palmer, "Working-Class Canada: Recent Historical Writing," Queen's Quarterly, 86 (Winter 1980), 600.
9. Ibid., 601.
10. Ibid., 598.
11. See Appendix B, refer to question seven from the content instrument.
12. David J. Bercuson, "Through the Looking Glass of Culture: An Essay on the New Labour History and Working-Class Culture in Recent Historical Writing," Labour/Le Travailleur, 7 (Spring 1981), 95-112.
13. See Appendix B, refer to question eight of the content instrument.
14. Gregory S. Kealey and Peter Warrian, eds., Essays in Canadian Working Class History (Toronto, 1976), 7-8.

15. See Kealey, Ibid., 92-94.
16. See Gregory Kealey, "The writing of social history in English Canada, 1970-1984," Histoire sociale - Social History 10 (1985), 360.
17. See Appendix B, refer to question six from the content instrument.
18. For instance, see Ole R. Holsti, Ibid., 127-149.
19. Gregory Kealey and Bryan Palmer cited in Ron Verzuh's "Proletarian Spirits: A Social History of the English-language Labour Press in Canada to 1900," (Masters thesis, Carleton University 1984), p.3. This is an excellent study that exhaustively reviews the labor press during a critical phase in Canadian labor history.
20. Verzuh, Ibid., 137.
21. Ibid., 99. Kealey and Palmer have also stressed the important role the Palladium played in the history of the Knights. Refer to Gregory Kealey and Bryan Palmer, Ibid.
22. See Ibid., 128.
23. Berelson cited in Holsti, Ibid., 3. This definition also appears in several introductory methodology texts for the social sciences. For example, refer to John B. Williamson, et al., The Research Craft: An Introduction of Social Sciences Research Methods (Boston, 1982) 261.
24. See Holsti, Ibid., 3.
25. Ibid., 3.
26. Category construction is discussed in the last section of this chapter.
27. See Thompson cited in Wallace Clement, The Challenge of Class Analysis (Ottawa, 1988), 28.
28. See Williamson, et al., Ibid., 262.
29. Holsti, Ibid., 5.
30. Ibid., 13.
31. Reliability improves that objectivity of the research and refers to the degree to which a measurement procedure produces similar outcomes when it is repeated. Holsti discusses the pooled judgments of coders and the degree of agreement between coders. This problem is overcome in the

current study because a single coder is used for all the content instruments. For a safety measure different instruments were repeatedly applied to the same article. The agreement of results between instruments was very high.

32. Holsti, Ibid., 142.

33. For example, see Frank Watt, "The National Policy, the Workingman, and Proletarian Ideas in Victorian Canada," Canadian Historical Review, 40 (1959), 1-26; Ramsey Cook, "The Professor and the Prophet of Unrest," Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada, 13 (4th Series, 1975), 227-250; and Russell Hann, "Brainworkers and the Knights of Labor: E.E. Sheppard, Phillips Thompson, and the Toronto News, 1883-1887," in Gregory Kealey and Peter Warrian, eds., Essays in Canadian Working Class History (Toronto, 1976), 35-57.

34. Verzuh, Ibid.

35. The first available issue is cited as August 11, 1883. The last available issue of the Palladium still on record is December 11, 1883. This does not include the short time period when The Labor Union published as a predecessor to the Palladium of Labor. This three and a half year time span of known publication coincided with a peak period of union growth in Hamilton. See Verzuh, Ibid., 116.

36. Holsti, Ibid., 130.

37. Refer to the discussion of sampling in Ibid., 127-135.

38. This refers to the newspapers studies previously discussed. Ibid., 133.

39. This strong circulation rate was supported by extensive public advertising. Forty percent of the eight pages of Hamilton's Palladium received public notice. No other labor paper in the nineteenth century was able to reach an equivalent level of advertising. See Ron Verzuh, Radical Rag: The Pioneer Labour Press in Canada, (Ottawa, 1988), 51.

40. Wayne Lennon, "Striking The Balance: The Labour Press and the National Question In Ontario and the Maritimes, 1872-1913," (Masters thesis, Carleton University 1981), 6.

41. See Lennon, Ibid., 10.

42. It is beyond the scope of the present analysis to design and implement a second content analysis. A survey of the issues covered by the Ontario Workman relies on secondary data analysis.

43. Williamson, et al., Ibid., 273.

44. For example, Gregory Kealey and Bryan Palmer, Dreaming of What Might Be: The Knights of Labor in Ontario, 1880-1900, has already been cited as an authority in this field.

45. Ibid., 330-375.

Chapter Four

Exploratory Analysis

The methodology employed in the content analysis of the Hamilton Palladium of Labor (1883-1886) has already been dealt with in chapter three. The current discussion focuses on an exploratory analysis of data results gathered from the survey of the Hamilton labor press. The analysis is broken down into three separate sections (Appendix B). The first part is designed to evaluate the validity of the arguments advanced by the competing labor schools on the organization of the Knights of Labor. The second section examines the challenges the Order mounted in the realm of politics. The last series of questions from the content analysis measure the number of struggles waged by labor in the workplace. Attention is also directed towards comparing the primary data results from the content analysis to another source of original material, Toronto's Ontario Workman (1873-1875).

Comparing the Palladium to the Workman should help satisfy the criteria of the content analysis that stipulates that a minimum of two separate samples be examined.¹ Moreover, the interpretation of the meanings implied by the written content of two labor newspapers has wider applications. Much of the previous literature on the nineteenth century labor press has confirmed that working-class aspirations were expressed through this medium.² The content analysis can therefore perform the function of

empirically testing the nature of the relationship between organized labor in the 1870s and the 1880s.

The Ontario Workman

The Ontario Workman was the first official labor newspaper to publish in Canada. It was founded on April 18, 1872 in response to the demand for the nine hour day in Toronto. During this time, the struggle between the striking printers and the commercial press had reached its peak. The Master Printers Association (MPA) had successfully organized against the Toronto Typographical Union (TTU) by having the leaders of the nine hours movement arrested on charges of conspiracy.³

On May 7, 1872 the fortunes of the workers dramatically shifted when the Conservative government of Sir John A. Macdonald legalized unions in Canada by passing the Trade Union Act (TUA). This action freed the workers charged with seditious conspiracy and the striking printers gradually returned back to work.⁴ More importantly, the legal safeguards won by trade unions with the passage of the TUA created an environment in which the Workman could freely operate (and without fear of reprisal).

For a short time, skilled workers were able to build a communications network among the various trade assemblies across Ontario. The Workman received endorsements from the Toronto Typographical Union, the Toronto Trades Assembly

(TTA) and the country's first national labor body, the Canadian Labor Union (CLU). In Toronto, the Workman performed the role of articulating a labor strategy that reflected the viewpoints of the respective trade assemblies and their working-class readership.⁵

James S. Williams was the printer who founded the Workman during these tumultuous times. He performed a dual role as the editor of the Workman and president of the Toronto Trades Assembly. Williams was one of the thirteen members of the "Vigilance Committee" of the TTU charged with conspiracy and thrown in jail at the height of the 1872 strike. He and the 12 other organizers of the Toronto printers' strike spent at least some of their time in jail planning the founding of the Workman.⁶ Frank Watt's pioneering research on the early Canadian labor press found evidence of class-conscious social ideals among some working men (and presumably women). These ideals ran contrary to the nation-building aspirations of the main political parties.⁷ The information Watt gathered on events recorded in the Workman gave support to his claim that labor newspapers reflected the workers growing consciousness of themselves as a class, and of their organizations.⁸

The idea that the Workman represented a growing sense of working-class consciousness is partially reflected by the theme expressed in the paper's weekly motto, "The equalization of all elements of society in the social scale

should be the true aim of civilization."⁹ The Workman sometimes presented a viewpoint that seriously challenged the current state of relations between employers and employees. Their emphasis on workers' rights could be distinguished from George Brown and the Globe's celebration of the principles of laissez-faire individualism.

However, the Workman's efforts to document and identify with the causes of the workers, the overall tone of the paper was basically conservative. In Ron Verzuh's Radical Rags: The Pioneer Labour Press in Canada (1988), the author contends that politically, the Workman straddled the line between radicalism and conservatism.¹⁰ It should be stressed that this line was predominantly on the conservative side, as Williams himself was a outspoken supporter of the Sir John A. Macdonald's government.¹¹

The editorial mandate of the Workman was guided by the transitions taking place over the course of the nine hour agitation. The 1872 strike began as a local conflict between George Brown's Globe and the Toronto Typographical Union. Brown's relentless attacks on the TTU elevated the struggle from the local to the national level. This offensive included his secret plans to organize and mobilize fellow employers against the printers (by means of the MPA), the Globe's use of scab labor, and the hiring of private detectives which led to the arrests of the leaders of the strike. However, Brown's legal battle against the printers was quickly overshadowed by

the enactment of the Trade Union Act of 1872. At this stage, the Workman was well aware of the impact that labor had on national politics in Canada.

The fact that striking printers were unable to force employer concessions on their hours of work influenced the manner in which the Workman pursued topics relating to the labor question. Their strategy primarily involved what the Palladium later referred to as "temporary projects for the amelioration of existing evils and measures which seem to be immediately practicable..."¹² The call for shorter hours and higher wages was at the forefront of this campaign. The programme also included the Workman's lobbying efforts for legislative corrections to health and safety regulations, the exploitation of women and children in the workplace, and assisted immigration. As well, the Workman found plenty of space for paternalistic preaching on the evils of alcohol and tobacco.¹³

Some of the remaining topics discussed in the Workman dealt with more comprehensive solutions in the struggle for "the equalization of all elements of society". Kealey has discussed the sense of internationalism that shaped the working-class mentality in the early 1870s.¹⁴ This theme was expressed by the leaders and members of the Toronto Trades Assembly and the Canadian Labor Union.¹⁵ As an official organ of the TTA and the CLU, the Workman reflected what Wayne Lennon has referred to as an idealistic internationalism.¹⁶

Newspaper accounts identified the Canadian workers own struggles with those events taking place in Britain and the United States. The evidence supporting Kealey's claim that workers in Toronto "identified their own struggles with their fellow workingmen...[in Britain and United States]," can be found in the origins of the nine hour movement itself; in chapter two it was noted that British and American Nine Hours Leagues served as a model for the Canadian workers.¹⁷

The Workman's main political strategy was confined to their aim of improving existing labor legislation. As a consequence, they offered only limited support for Macdonald's labor legislation. Williams was particularly concerned about the passage of the Criminal Law Amendment Act (CLAA) which accompanied the Trade Union Act.¹⁸ This second measure (CLAA) was framed in a manner that severely restricted the freedom of trade unions to demonstrate against their employers. Reservations were expressed in May, 1872 when the Workman reproduced a draft copy of the proposed legislation and called upon its readers to accept the TUA and do all in their powers to have Criminal Law Amendment Act, repealed.¹⁹

The Workman's attempts to force amendments to the Criminal Law Amendment Act were soon destroyed as a result of a severe economic depression that struck the nation between 1873 and 1879. Nevertheless, the Workman did provide a forum through which workers could lobby for changes to Canada's

earliest labor legislation. The legal and political struggles fought during the nine hour movement made workers more aware of the divisions separating employers and employees. As a result, new series of labor demands appeared in the pages of the Workman accompanying the traditional call for shorter hours and higher wages.

The cynicism and distrust that the Workman expressed towards electoral politics was a common theme that appeared in all of the late nineteenth-century labor press. Politics was generally viewed as a necessary evil but this did not prevent labor involvement in electoral politics.²⁰ Williams realized the importance of supporting labor reform candidates (Conservative and Liberals) as a means of achieving legislative gains.

Bernard Ostry has reported that property qualifications often prevented workers from voting during the 1870s.²¹ Williams was aware of these deficiencies and often commented on the need to extend suffrage rights to workers.²² The election of D.J. O'Donoghue as the first labor representative (Liberal) in the Ontario Legislature in 1874 alerted Williams to labor's electoral potential. Support for labor candidates became a preoccupation for Williams after the election of O'Donoghue.²³

The Workman was the first newspaper to combine labor advocacy with political action. Unfortunately, the potential for protecting the rights of workers by means of legislative

reforms was not fulfilled in the 1870s. The depression of 1873-9 forced the organized labor movement into a period of retreat throughout Canada. By the end of the decade the Ontario Workman, the TTA, and the CLU were no longer in existence.²⁴

Frank Watt has characterized the general ideology of the Workman as one of acceptance of the social and political order of the day.²⁵ This claim is supported by a consideration of the issues that dominated the pages of the newspaper; they consisted of moderate proposals such as shorter hours, higher wages, and health and safety regulations. The labor events and issues covered in the Workman appealed specifically to skilled workers. This approach was sometimes combined with a more progressive analysis of the divisions separating employers and employees as the economy moved towards industrial urbanism.

The Palladium of Labor

The labor press lay dormant in Ontario until the revival of the national economy and the resurgence of organized labor in the early 1880s. During this time, the rapid growth in the size and strength of the Knights of Labor directly contributed to the rebirth of the labor press in Ontario. The leadership of the Knights assumed an active role in supporting the labor press and their rank and file members formed the market necessary for the survival of an

alternative newspaper industry.²⁶ Ron Verzuh's extensive historiography on the Canadian labor press has identified at least five Knights-endorsed labor weeklies that published in Ontario between 1882 and 1889.²⁷ The most successful newspaper among this group was Hamilton's Palladium of Labor which, in Verzuh's opinion, was "destined to become the cream of the 19th-century labour journals."²⁸

The Palladium immediately distinguished itself from the conservative tone of the Workman. The Palladium's weekly banner stated that it was a "Journal Devoted to the Interests of Workingmen and Workingwomen." This theme reflected the all-inclusive philosophy held by the Knights of Labor. The Palladium and the Knights strongly advocated the practice of uniting all workers, regardless of gender, ethnicity, religious affiliation, or skill level. The egalitarian stand taken by the Knights towards gender relations can be found in article thirteen of their Declaration of Principles (Appendix A). This principle was translated from theory into practice when the Knights founded several local assemblies composed entirely of women.²⁹

As had the Workman ten years earlier, the Palladium reported on the immediate aims of labor, including demands for shorter hours and higher wages. In most other respects, the Palladium went far beyond the traditional approach of labor journalism. Editorials abandoned the notion of a reciprocity of interests between workers and employers in

favour of a radical assault on the inequalities inherent in the capitalist system. For example, in one instance the Palladium warned that, "The frightful increase of the proletariat class - those who have nothing to depend on but the Labor of their hands and are driven by necessity to sell that Labor for what they can get is the most melancholy omen for the future."³⁰ The Palladium advocated the use of an assortment of collectivist doctrines as a means of altering the existing social and political order.³¹

Like the Workman, the Palladium shared the typical workers' suspicion of politics.³² In most other respects, the similarities between the newspapers ended with this common distrust of politics. The main feature that differentiated the Palladium from the Workman was the former's ideological perspective. More specifically, the "Palladium was aimed directly at encouraging a more class-conscious and aggressive attitude in the urban workers of Hamilton."³³ The Palladium abandoned the Workman's moderate aims of legislative reforms in favour of a more comprehensive programme of direct political action. The political strategy detailed in the Palladium was clearly independent of the established Conservative and Liberal parties.

The Palladium's contribution to a plan of political action is measured empirically through the use of a content analysis.³⁴ A key section of the content analysis attempts to measure the wide range of political activities that are

discussed in the Palladium (Appendix B). The "Political Activities" section of the content analysis examines a number of areas, including the Palladium's coverage on independent labor candidates, attacks on political corruption, support for labor reform candidates (Grit or Tory), and lobbying efforts for legislative change.

The content analysis sampled the entire universe of available Palladium issues, beginning on August 11, 1883 and ending on December 18, 1886.³⁵ The Palladium's three years of publication coincided with the Knights peak period in size and strength. During this time, the Knights were actively involved in a several types of labor activities, ranging from independent labor politics to strike action and co-operative ventures.³⁶

The articles published in the Palladium were often theoretically oriented.³⁷ A unique group of intellectuals were responsible for the analytical approach developed in the 1880s labor press. Russell Hann used the term "brainworkers" when describing this collective of learned artisans and self-taught journalists.³⁸ The significance of Hann's research "lies in its insights into the strengths of the brainworkers of the 1880s, their commitment to popular education and elevation of public opinion, [and] their ultimate vision of a more humane social order."³⁹

T. Phillips Thompson is widely regarded as one of the most influential "brainworkers" of the late nineteenth-

century.⁴⁰ Thompson was a self-taught journalist who cultivated his skills working for several commercial newspapers in south-central Ontario before joining the Palladium in 1883. He earned the respect of his peers and was eventually appointed to a seat on the editorial board of Toronto's Globe in the early 1880s. Thompson's work on a number of special investigative assignments for the Globe eventually led to his disillusionment with the commercial press.

His coverage on the Irish Land League agitation in 1881 brought him into contact with the land reform theories of Henry George. Thompson confessed to Henry George, whom he had interviewed during his stay in Ireland, "that he felt that his well-paid position in a relatively plush editorial chair at the Globe provided him with little more than a comfortable vantage point at the 'edge of the storm' of the social unrest engulfing most of the Western world."⁴¹

Shortly after his experiences in Ireland, Thompson abandoned the commercial press. William H. Rowe, editor of the Hamilton Palladium, appointed Thompson to the position of chief political correspondent in 1883.⁴² Thompson immediately developed an accessible style, constantly linking routine labor issues into a broader critique of the political economy. Thompson was already an active member of the Knights of Labor by the time he joined the Palladium.⁴³

Thompson and Rowe both shared a fascination for the theories of Henry George. In numerous articles, Thompson applied the principles of George's scheme of land nationalization and single tax theories directly to Canadian political economy. He repeated a theme that had already been championed by the Toronto Trades Assembly in 1872; wealth was created by the labor of the producing classes, and the workers had a right to share in this prosperity.⁴⁴ Based on the writings of George, Thompson went on to argue that workers were being exploited by the collection of rents and profits by monopoly owners of land or money. The single tax proposed fundamental modifications to the Canadian system of government. This scheme called for the abolition of the ownership of private property to be replaced by taxation solely on land values. Thompson referred to this plan in a number of editorials, for example:

THE FREEDOM OF THE SOIL: Free land means free men.
Land ownership in the long-run means man ownership.
To abolish landlordism is to knock the bottom out
of the whole monopoly system.⁴⁵

Thompson continued to explore the theories of George as they applied to Canadian political economy throughout his stay at the Palladium. This was combined with an eclectic blend of other radical and socialist doctrines.⁴⁶

Thompson produced an outstanding volume of work while at the Palladium. On average, his articles covered roughly half the front page space of the Palladium. His voracious reading of the classic books, essays, pamphlets, and novels of the

era were synthesized to produce hundreds of thoughtful commentaries.⁴⁷

Thompson maintained a degree of anonymity by writing his articles under various pseudonyms. He began writing an editorial column entitled "Our Social Club" soon after his arrival at the Palladium in 1883. This club consisted of a fictitious gathering of self-educated workers discussing a number of issues related to labor.⁴⁸ Thompson was the "principle promoter of the project" and was referred to under the alias of "Alfred Freeman".⁴⁹ The remaining characters represented the views of various working-class perspectives; this included the role of "a free thinker, a middle class social reformer, a Tory, and a Grit..."⁵⁰

The members of "Our Social Club" engaged in a series of lively debates that covered issues such as the National Policy, Chinese immigration, international unionism, land monopoly, currency reform, female suffrage, and other topics relating to the labor question. For instance, on the subject of Canada's relationship to Britain, "Harcourt" commented that "Canada will never have a progressive government until she shakes off the incubus of British connection with its aristocratic governors, tinsel titles, civil service dudes, and imported notions of social caste."⁵¹

Thompson continued to develop these themes in his weekly Palladium columns written under the pseudonym "Enjolras" (a character in Victor Hugo's Les Miserables). This series began

immediately after "Our Social Club" finished. Thompson continued to write under the pen-name Enjolras until the Hamilton Palladium ceased publication near the end of 1886.⁵² The collective works that Thompson produced during his years at the Palladium later formed the basis of his book, The Politics of Labor (1887).

Content Analysis: Summary of Results

The content instrument is divided into three sections under the following sections: Workers' Ideology, Workers' Struggles, and Political Activities (Appendix B). The exploratory analysis details each of these areas in chronological order. The data aggregated from the content analysis is presented in a series of bar graphs and scatterplots in the course of the discussion.

This study has incorporated the positions of the institutional, positivist, and the new labor history schools into the design of the content analysis. Three questions were framed in order to operationalize the positions held by each of the labor schools (Appendix B). If an indicator was found in any of the articles supporting one of the school's positions, then the coder circled a single positive response for that school.

Examples of indicators are provided during the discussion of the actual data results. The aggregated data for the three schools is based on a simple frequency count.

It is important to briefly review how the debate on the Knights emerged over the past century. The significance of the Knights was repeatedly dismissed by the institutional school and most other labor historians up until the 1970s. At this time, the new labor historians re-examined the primary sources of data from the late nineteenth-century; their research discovered the importance of the Knights as a unified, working-class movement. However, the positivists attacked the new labor historians and claimed that non-class divisions such as ethnicity, religion, and gender fragmented instead of united the working-class in the late nineteenth-century.⁵³ An evaluation of these competing perspectives makes up a critical component of this research design.

The evaluation of the theoretical assumptions of the various schools is somewhat limited if measured only with the use of a single question for each of the three labor schools. For this reason, the other sections in the content instrument examine a number of aspects relating to the rank and file activities of the Knights. An examination of the political and strike actions of the Knights should allow for a more balanced assessment of the overall strengths of the respective schools.

Format of the Palladium

The earliest section of the content design asks questions about the overall design of the Palladium. Tables 1a and 1b

Table 1a: Number of articles on the front pages of the Palladium

Table 1b: Average number of articles on the front pages of the Palladium

provide a count on the number of articles appearing on the front pages of the Palladium. The average number of articles appearing on the front pages was 4.2. The single articles written each week by Thompson took up the greatest space (roughly 50%) and were entirely devoted to labor topics. The remaining articles were usually shorter in length and reported on a greater variety of labor and non-labor subject matter. These articles were written by the staff at the Palladium or borrowed from alternative labor newspapers; in some cases, articles were reproduced from the commercial press.

Over 85% of the Palladium's coverage was devoted to labor topics while the other 15% of the stories consisted of general news coverage.⁵⁴ The actual ratio of labor to non-labor articles (3.6 to 0.6) is found in Table 2a. The scatterplot on Table 2b demonstrates the large degree to which the labor issues dominated over general news coverage. Finally, the best line fit on Table 2c shows that the number of labor articles increases over time while the non-labor articles remains fairly constant.

The Palladium had a tendency to present an odd mixture of frivolous and serious topics in a single issue. For example, the premier copy of the Palladium began with a report on an international exhibition of hot air balloons in France and went on to examine the historical inequalities of

Table 2a: Number of labor/non-labor articles on the front of the Palladium

Mean of Labor Articles: 3.6 Non-labor: 0.6

Table 2b: Number of labor/non-labor articles on the front of the Palladium

Mean of Labor Articles: 3.6 Non-labor: 0.6

Table 2c: Number of labor/non-labor articles on the front of the Palladium

Mean of Labor Articles: 3.6 Non-labor: 0.6

class relations in Canada.⁵⁵ The overall emphasis remained, however, on problems relating to labor.

Support for Three Labor Schools

The level of support for the three labor schools is documented in Tables 3a and 3b. The earlier discussion on the historiography of labor studies on the Knights revealed that common themes could be identified for each of the schools under consideration. For the purposes of measuring these themes quantitatively, operational definitions were constructed for the institutional, positivist, and new labor history schools. The content instrument contains three questions that represents the main assumptions of each of the labor schools (Appendix B). The institutional question is based on research done in both Canada and the United States.

The total number of articles in support of the three schools is presented with the aid of a bar graph in Table 3a. There was 231 articles surveyed out of which 130 could be tied to one of the labor schools; this accounts for 56% of all Palladium articles sampled.⁵⁶ The distribution of the aggregated data looks quite unusual. The new labor school has the overwhelming number of positive responses (129) accounting for over 99% of the total. There was very slight support for the positivist school with 1 positive response while the institutional school went unrepresented. A further examination of the data results from the content analysis

Table 3a: Total number of articles in support of the three schools

Table 3b: Number of articles supporting
the position of the various schools

should help explain why the institutional and positivist school recorded such abysmally low levels of support.

John R. Commons and Selig Perlman were the main proponents of the institutional school in the United States. The institutional school "sought to depict 'plain and simple trade unionism' as the major and best development in North American working class life."⁵⁷ A succession of Commons-Perlman disciples (for example, Ulman and Grob) continued to examine unions as competing interest groups operating within the capitalist system. Based on this model, the Knights were rejected as backward-looking and utopianist.

The institutional school had already established a long tradition of scholarship in the United States when it was imported into Canada in the late 1920s by Harold Logan. The Canadian approach continued to isolate trade union activity from all other aspects of working-class life, thereby minimizing the rank and file union activities of the Knights of Labor. Logan adopted a similar theoretical and methodological style to his American counterparts. For example, his reconstruction of trade union life in Canada was based on data sources directly related to the trade union institution, such as official government reports and the records of labor organizations.

In chapter one it was argued that there was a deterministic nature to the American institutional debate, the Knights failed simply because they deviated from the

AFL's path of "pure and simple" business unionism. Although the Canadian institutional school did not approach the excesses of the American school in celebrating business unionism, they still remained committed to the same basic type of analytic strategy.⁵⁸

The Palladium failed to offer any support for the what proponents of the institutional school have referred to as a "middle-class psychology". There was not a single instance in which a Palladium article suggested to its readers a reciprocity of interest between employers and employees.⁵⁹ On the contrary, the Palladium assumed an anti-capitalist stance which explicitly identified the members of the Knights as belonging to the proletarian class. The editorial staff consistently engaged in graphic descriptions of the divisions between employers and employees:

The devilish and bloodthirsty spirit of capitalism as established in a hundred of instances in which workingmen have been slaughtered by its armed hirelings, because they refused to submit to robbery and degradation, has naturally engendered a feeling of bitter resentment, which finds vent in acts that we cannot approve, but which we must admit are the natural and inevitable consequences of the outrages perpetrated upon Labor.⁶⁰

It is difficult to resolve how these type of statements could possibly support the position of the institutional school. This description of labor-capital relations is not atypical of language used in the Palladium.

The charge that the Knights were backward-looking and utopianist is too imprecise and too narrow. Raised in the

early to mid-nineteenth-century, the Knights often looked back to the simpler times of independent commodity production. It could be argued that the Knights were backwards in the sense that they remembered happier times for workers; that they could draw on their past experiences when the closeness of personal ties between the worker and employer contributed to a more harmonious workplace. But this argument fails to consider the degree to which the Knights still remained decidedly immersed in present-day issues. For example, the weekly editorials in the Palladium launched into fierce attacks on unhealthy work environments, the deteriorating standard of living for workers, and the exploitation of women and children in the workplace.

Although utopian strains could be found in the doctrines advocated in the Palladium, these lofty ambitions they shared with the Knights were carefully grounded in a coherent plan of political action. The Knights organized independent electoral campaigns at all levels of government. The section of the content analysis entitled "Political Activities" measures the Palladium's coverage of a series of challenges that were mounted against the traditional political consensus. The institutional writers generally ignored the Knights' attempts to implement their principles through political action.

Table 3a shows that the level of support for the positivists is only a slight improvement over the

institutional school. These results are particularly disappointing in light of the fact that the positivists have raised the strongest objections to the theory and methodology of the new labor historians. The central critique by the positivists was based on the assumption that ethnic divisions prevented the expression of a unified, working-class movement in the late nineteenth-century.⁶¹

The Palladium rarely spoke of ethnic divisions exerting a negative affect on the unity of the Knights of Labor. There was only one edition of the Palladium which met the criteria in support of the positivist school. In an early edition of the fictitious symposium of self-taught workingmen, "Our Social Club", three of its members debated the effects of ethnic "prejudices". The Knights were warned of the serious damage that could be caused by any sort of division. One of the members, "George Lane", referred to victims of cruel prejudice, "The Irish especially have had hard work to make headway against it, and this should teach them generosity to others."⁶² The tone of the discussion was to make the readers aware of the problem, "We are too much in the habit of looking upon our fellow workers as competitors or rivals especially if they are foreigners. Whereas we ought to realize that the interests of Labor, all the world over, are identical."⁶³ In the same discussion the Grit supporter, "Murdoch", offered a final warning, "The game of capital is always to pit the workingmen of one country against those of

another." "Murdoch" argued that as a result of these deceptions, the capitalist class was able to extract excess profits from labor by exaggerating the threat of foreign competition. For the members of "Our Social Club", this type of fragmentation within the working-class was linked into a broader critique of the capitalist system.

Serious doubts have been raised concerning the validity of thinking of ethnicity solely in terms of barriers to working-class consciousness. David Montgomery has pointed to research in the United States which runs contrary to the arguments forwarded by the positivists, "Ethnic loyalties have provided important solidarity among workers, and sources of reform and revolutionary ideologies as well. It is now widely agreed that Irish nationalism played a decisive role in the labor reform ideology of the 1870s and the 1880s."⁶⁴ The contributions of Irish ethnic loyalties to the growth of the Knights of Labor in Canada was recorded in several weekly editions of the Palladium; the editorial staff solidly endorsed the Irish land reform theories of Henry George. This Irish connection was celebrated in public on August 4, 1884 when the Knights brought Henry George to Hamilton as the guest speaker in front of an estimated crowd of 10,000 supporters.⁶⁵

However, like the Workman before it and most later pioneer labor newspapers, the Palladium was openly hostile towards Chinese immigration. The Knights objected to the

importation of Chinese labor because it was perceived as a threat to the security of the domestic labor market. They argued that the government's immigration policies encouraged the capitalists to exploit the cheap reserves of Chinese workers thereby increasing unemployment for the Knights. A Palladium article from 1883 reported on a meeting of Knights in San Francisco and Oakland which resolved:

That the heartless tyranny of the proprietors of the Wellington coal mines, in driving the white miners from their works and their helpless families from their little homes and substituting wifeless, childless, and soulless Chinamen in their places, is an act of barbarity and inhumanity on the part of the owners...⁶⁶

The Palladium reports in the following year assumed a more radical tone, "The decent portion of the community has to RELY UPON A POPULAR UPRISING all over this broad country against the common enemy [the Chinese], and we trust that the press will do its share to produce this uprising, since legislation will not help us any."⁶⁷ In Hamilton, the widespread opposition to the Chinese culminated in an October 1884 demonstration attended by ten assemblies of the Knights of Labor.⁶⁸

At first glance, it may appear that the anti-Chinese agitations satisfies the criteria necessary to support the positivist school. Although the evidence of racist slurs in the Palladium is morally reprehensible, it failed to exert a negative effect on the unity of the all-inclusive Knights. Ironically, these actions contributed to working-class

solidarity; for example, research conducted by Kealey and Palmer has found that the exclusion of the Chinese tended to unite skilled and unskilled members of the Knights across North America.⁶⁹

The new labor historians have argued that, "the complexity and heterogeneity of the Canadian working-class experience does not deny the existence of a working class."⁷⁰ The positivists have argued that the short life-span of the Knights detracted from any meaningful expression of working-class resistance.⁷¹ The new labor historians have replied that the workers of the late nineteenth-century did not possess an articulate revolutionary option, "Yet, what has emerged from this work has been an image of a class surprisingly united - one in which divisions of ethnicity, skill, religion, and even sex were recognized, debated, and for a few years in the 1880s, at least, were overcome."⁷²

Gregory Kealey and Bryan Palmer have played a critical role in shaping the direction of research associated with the new labor historians. Their 1982 publication, Dreaming of What Might Be: The Knights of Labor in Ontario, 1880-1900, follows in the tradition of the new labor history school. Their approach can easily be distinguished from the previous research in the field, in both its methodology and theory. The activities of the Knights are examined in terms of a limited chronology (primarily the 1880s) and restricted region (mainly Hamilton and Toronto).⁷³ This subject-area is

applied to a rigorous examination of a wide array of non-traditional data sources (for example, newspapers and local records). This strategy directs attention to the rank and file activities of the Knights rather than to the leadership, official edicts, and organizational structure.

The entire conceptual framework of Dreaming of What Might Be can also be distinguished from the previous research in the field. Theoretical concerns are extended beyond an examination of the political and economic endeavors of labor so as to include the area of working-class culture.⁷⁴ The presentation of the Knights as a united movement of working-class resistance is based on a dialectical relationship between residual and emergent culture:

We can recognize, for theoretical purposes, the distinction between this residual class culture, marking off worker from employer, directing us toward two very different ways of life, and the emergent, movement culture, represented by the Knights of Labor, that embraced a new organizational form, uniting previous divided segments of the working-class, proclaiming the potential of a new social order.⁷⁵

The level of abstraction used by Kealey and Palmer is complex and involves the use of Marxist culturalist theories from Britain and the United States.⁷⁶

It is not possible to adequately subject all of the components of the term "working-class culture" to an empirical test. The requirements of a content analysis demand that abstract concepts be broken down into simple, observable procedures. But some abstract concepts relating to human

values and behaviours are too complex to be expressed fully and sufficiently in simple operational terms.⁷⁷ Kealey and Palmer have noted the tremendous interpretive problems associated with defining culture in their book. For these writers, a specific view of culture "is perhaps too eclectic and imprecise a term to capture sufficiently rigorously its particular components."⁷⁸ This thesis must recognize the dangers of attempting to measure the cultural component of the late nineteenth-century labor movement based on a single operational question.

Kealey and Palmer chose to scrutinize the material aspects of culture in order to avoid studying the all-inclusive aspects of this phenomena. More specifically, they outlined the Knights of Labor "contribution to the creation of a movement culture through an examination of a range of cultural forms and accomplishments..."⁷⁹ Some of these areas can be incorporated into the design of the content analysis. For example, the content analysis measures the Palladium's coverage of a range of working-class cultural events (demonstrations, parades, dances) which made up the "low culture" of the Knights' activities.⁸⁰ Moreover, the labor press itself was intimately related to "high culture" of reform thought, expressing a distinctive element of the working-class ideology.

An important theme which is found throughout the pages of Dreaming of What Might Be concerns the centrality of class

conflict. For instance, Kealey and Palmer discuss the challenges the Knights' mounted against capital and the state through a series of strikes, boycotts, co-operatives, and political action. The area of class identification was selected to represent the position of the new labor history school. More specifically, the content analysis measured the number of times the following question was confirmed in the pages of the Palladium: "How many of the articles refer to a working-class consciousness (that is, as indicating a separation of conflicting interests between workers and employers [Appendix B])?"

It has already been noted that, based on the class identification question, the Palladium articles were strongly representative of the new labor history school. The bar graph (Table 3a) shows the degree to which the new labor history school dominates over its two other contenders. A review of the 129 positive responses for the "working-class consciousness" question would fail to serve any useful purpose because it would be far too repetitive. The number of positive responses is therefore reduced to a random selection of the writings from the Palladium which serve as indicators in support of the new labor history school (Appendix C).

The general ideology of the Palladium reflects what Kealey and Palmer have referred to as the marking off of worker from employer (residual class culture). The content analysis is also designed to test the notion that the Knights

embraced a new organizational form, uniting previously divided segments of the working-class (emergent movement culture).

Table 3b presents a plot of the number of articles supporting the position of the various schools. The plot for the new labor history school shows a positive linear fit. This means that as the number of positive responses increases, the date of publication for the Palladium increases (over time). The lowest level of support for the new labor history school was found in the earliest editions of the Palladium while the later publications of the newspaper registered the highest level of positive responses. This suggests that, with time, the editorial staff at the Palladium grew increasingly confident in discussing the workers' opposition to their employers. Their confidence must have been affected by the tremendous growth in the size and strength of the Knights over the course of the publication of the Palladium.

Appendix C contains a random selection of the writings in the Palladium which serve as indicators in support of the new labor history school. This series of direct quotations is ordered chronologically by issue of the Palladium and cover a variety of topics relating to the labor question. All of these examples refer to the conflicting interests of workers and employers. This theme is reflected in 129 of the articles surveyed, accounting for over half of the front page articles

in the Palladium (56%). The empirical evidence derived from the content analysis provides tentative support for what Kealey and Palmer have referred to as "residual class culture" (marking off worker from employer).

The Knights' conscious awareness of the divisions separating worker from employer evolved out of years of struggle. There were roughly fifty years of union activity in Canada before the arrival of the Knights in 1875, from the isolated and local character of unionism in the late 1820s to the centralized and international character of trade unions in the 1870s. The struggles that were waged during this period served to establish the trade union as a permanent fixture in the Canadian political economy.⁸¹

The residual effects of the earlier movements of organized labor in Canada had a direct impact on the Knights. Chapter two detailed the manner in which trade unions fought to establish a tradition of working-class resistance in Ontario. This began with the fragmented and spontaneous strike actions of Irish laborers in the 1830s-1840s, and culminated with the more consolidated and centralized strike actions of Ontario workers in the 1870s. The strike actions taken by Ontario workers in 1872, known as the nine hours movement, had the greatest impact on the Knights of Labor. Several prominent members of the Nine Hours Leagues of 1872 would later play key roles in the organization of the Knights in the 1880s.⁸² In addition, the Knights helped to re-

establish a series of central labor councils which were destroyed in the wake of the economic depression of the 1870s, including the founding of a national labor body, the Trades and Labor Congress (TLC) in 1883.⁸³

The Knights of Labor also realized the importance of an independent labor press for the 1880s. The official labor press was pioneered by the leaders of the nine hour movement with the publication of the Ontario Workman in 1872. Hamilton's Palladium of Labor (1883-1886) was the second Knights-endorsed labor weekly to begin publication in Ontario after the demise of the Workman. The evidence from the content analysis suggests that the Palladium benefited from the class conscious social ideals expressed in the Workman but rejected its conservative tone.

The overwhelming support for the "working-class conscious" question in the content analysis reflects the Palladium's decisive break from the past practices of laborism in the 1870s. The articles in the Palladium were ideologically opposed to the Workman's paternalism and notion of a reciprocity of interests between workers and employers. The Palladium explicitly presented the Knights as drawn together in opposition to the capitalist class.

Kealey and Palmer were particularly interested in how the all-inclusive membership of the Knights enabled the union to unite previously divided segments of the working-class; they referred to this process as the emergent, movement

culture. The Palladium attempted to overcome the Workman's narrow appeal to skilled workers; their weekly editorials consistently called for a unified working-class movement based on the organization of all elements of society, regardless of skill level, ethnicity, religion, and gender. For instance, one article entitled "The Labor Question" stated, "In what we have to say for our laboring class we expect to have and ought to have the sympathy and support of laboring men everywhere and of every color."⁸⁴

Was there any evidence to suggest that these expectations for sympathy were not met? According to the responses to the positivist position, there was very little evidence suggesting ethnic barriers among the Knights of Labor. The design of the content analysis also included questions concerning how a range of divisions (ethnic, religious, race, gender) may have effected the political and strike actions of the Knights (Appendix B).⁸⁵ There was not a single report in the Palladium which discussed the political and strike actions of the Knights being retarded by ethnic, religious, race or gender factionalism.

An alternative question was framed in order to further examine how the Palladium depicted the relationship between capital and labor. Question fourteen asked, "On a scale from one to ten, with one meaning worker/employer interests are closely related and ten as greatly separated, what overall direction did the front page lean towards?" (Appendix B). The

plot from Table 4 demonstrates that the workers' interests were most often depicted as being sharply opposed to those of their employers. These results are consistent with the earlier findings from the Palladium.⁸⁶

Working-Class Culture

The empirical evidence from the content analysis so far has indicated tentative support for the relevance of the residual class culture and emergent movement culture concepts as they apply to the Knights of Labor. The "movement culture was most visible in the Ontario experience of the Knights of Labor, where ritual and procession, symbolism and soiree, combined to proclaim the unity of all labor, a cultural undertaking of opposition and challenge that distinguished the 1880s from the previous decades of labouring people's experience."⁸⁷ Some of these material aspects of culture can be further explored with the use of content analysis.

As a force of opposition, the Knights would often challenge whole segments of the dominant culture. Bryan Palmer has argued that: "Established religion, for instance, suffered serious setbacks in this era, and there is evidence that in many communities the Knights of Labor usurped the traditional role of the church, community members gathering on evenings to hear a labour 'sermon'."⁸⁸ When church leaders denounced the causes of labor reform championed by the Knights, abrasive rebuttals could often be found in the

Table 4: Degree of employee/employer interest

Series 1

Likard Scale: 1: Closely related .. 10: Greatly separated

Palladium. For instance, Phillips Thompson responded to the church's objections to labor's opposition to assisted immigration in a combative tone:

If [Rev. Dr. Wild] takes any note at all of passing events - and if he does not he is not fit to preach - he must know that employment is exceedingly scarce in all parts of Canada - that wages being reduced - that many industries are in a condition of stagnation, and that hundreds of those who have been imported at the bidding of the capitalist cannot now find employment and are glad even to obtain shelters in jails and poor houses....It is not necessary to say that there are few workingmen in Dr. Wild's Bond Street congregation, and there ought to be still fewer. He is an impudent theological quack whose only study is how to say something sensational and rent his pew to advantage.⁸⁹

Thompson concluded his editorial by observing that, "it is no wonder that workingmen don't go to church."

One of the main features which drew new members to the organization of the Knights was its mystical appeal. When the Noble and Holy Order of the Knights of Labor were founded by Uriah S. Stephen in Philadelphia (1869), the ritual of the Order was written in a secret work, the *Adelphon Kruptos* (AK). Stephen brought into the ritual of the Knights many of the features of speculative Masonary (a fraternal society), especially in the forms and the ceremonies observed.⁹⁰ During initiation ceremonies, the AK stipulated that the practices of Secrecy, Obedience, and Mutual Assistance be observed by all new members. The initiation rites for Knights involved the repeating of a secret oath and an elaborate opening service in which the furniture in the room was fixed in

certain positions.⁹¹ The whole proceedings of the meetings were marked at intervals by the making of secret signs, words, and handclasps.⁹²

These ritualistic and symbolic practices served Stevens' intention of drawing wage-workers into a united organization in order to resist the exploitation of labor by the large combinations of capital.⁹³ Stevens retired as the leader of the Knights in the late-1870s and was replaced by Terence V. Powderly in 1879. At a general convention of the Knights of Labor in 1882 the name of the Order was made public and the oath was deleted from the initiation pledge substituting for it a simple promise.⁹⁴

When the Knights of Labor officially entered Canada in 1881, the secrecy, ritual, and symbolism of the Order continued to attract new members.⁹⁵ Kealey and Palmer have argued that workers were drawn to this elaborate ritual for many reasons: "On the grounds of form alone it must have been thoroughly familiar, for many nineteenth-century Canadian workingmen belonged to fraternal societies."⁹⁶ Although the oath of secrecy and the name of the Order was made public by 1882, most of the ritualism and symbolism was retained. The AK continued to exert a powerful effect on the Knights in the 1880s: "Reverberating throughout the AK was the centrality of class pride, the awareness of worth of the workingmen and women."⁹⁷

The Palladium provided ample coverage of a number of working-class cultural events. Table 5 shows that 17 of the 55 editions of the Palladium made direct reference to some form of cultural event. The types of events that were measured have been detailed in question nine from the content analysis; they include: a) Picnics, b) Demonstrations and Parades, c) Dances, hops, and balls, and d) "other" (Appendix B). Over 35% of the front pages sampled made reference to a cultural event. This evidence suggests that the editorial staff at the Palladium had a clear understanding of the significant function culture played in the lives of the Knights.

There was no coverage on labor picnics in the Palladium but the new labor historians have discussed how this type of activity forged a culture of solidarity among workingmen and women.⁹⁸ For example, Victor Chan has described how the Knights heightened public awareness of organized labor by gathering up to 4,000 people at a single picnic.⁹⁹

The labor demonstrations and parades sponsored by the Knights also had an important social impact. The editorial staff at the Palladium devoted a fair amount of attention to the labor demonstration or parade.¹⁰⁰ The first available issue of the Palladium provides coverage on a demonstration of Knights in Hamilton in 1883.¹⁰¹ This event was held at a time when Knights were striking against Jay Gould's telegraph monopoly. Thousands of skilled and unskilled workers gathered

Table 5: Discussion on working-class cultural events

to celebrate the anniversary of the founder of the Knights, Uriah Stevens.¹⁰² David Healey, a labor reformer, spoke of the need to educate workers as a means of resisting the increasing monopoly of capital. These types of events displayed the Knights' strength in public and helped to spread the message of labor reform.

Festivals, dinners and worker's balls performed an important social function but were also used as a means through which women workers could be recruited into the Knights.¹⁰³ This method of organization was in contrast to the men who usually organized as a result of a struggle against their employers.¹⁰⁴ The Knights of Labor were the first union to successfully organize women workers. In fact, there were several local assemblies composed entirely of women in both Hamilton and Toronto. The content analysis did not, however, record any coverage on festivals, dinners, or balls in the Palladium.¹⁰⁵

A major oversight in the design of the content analysis was the failure to examine the role of women workers in the Knights of Labor. Further revisions of the content analysis could measure the number of times the Palladium defended the rights of women to organize and participate in union affairs. Based on the general survey of the written materials from the content analysis, it was still possible to observe evidence of strong support for the position of women in the Knights. The Palladium believed in the unity of the Knights,

"regardless of race, creed, nationality or sex..."¹⁰⁶ Evidence of the special attention the Palladium directed towards women could be found in the newspaper's weekly banner which read, "A Journal Devoted to the Interests of Workingmen and Workingwomen." Furthermore, the Palladium repeated the key principle of "equal pay for equal work" in its attempts to secure legislative protection for women in the workplace and suffrage rights in the political arena.¹⁰⁷

Karen Dubinsky has produced the most extensive research on the relationship of women to the Knights in Ontario.¹⁰⁸ Dubinsky concluded that the Order represented a meaningful advance for working-class women. The Knights' recognition of women workers is described as revolutionary in Dubinsky's thesis:

Their endorsement of female suffrage eclipsed other labor organizations by over a decade, and led to other instances of concern for women's lack of social and political power. During the few occasions women went on strike for better pay or working conditions, the Order was always supportive. The Order also went to quite unprecedented lengths by supporting a somewhat autonomous caucus of women within the organization...¹⁰⁹

Dubinsky cautioned that the Knights were sometimes capable of duplicating patriarchal ideas and practices with respect to women. This was observed in the sexist humour used in the Palladium.¹¹⁰ Nevertheless, the most important contribution of this movement culture was the message of labor solidarity, overcoming divisions that had historically separated workers (for instance, by gender, ethnicity, and skill).¹¹¹ For

Kealey and Palmer, these actions represented a further challenge to the dominant culture of the late nineteenth-century.

Closely related to the principle of the unity of all workingmen and workingwomen was the internationalism expressed by the Knights. The all-inclusive philosophy of the Order was implemented institutionally in several countries; as local assemblies were organized in Canada, the United States, Great Britain, Ireland, Belgium, Australia, New Zealand, and Hawaii.¹¹² The bar graph on Table 6a shows that there was extensive discussion of the international conditions of workers throughout the 55 editions of the Palladium.

The origins of countries discussed in the Palladium can be found in Table 6b. The content analysis found references to every one of the countries in which the Knights organized an international assembly. The close relationship existing between the Knights in Canada and the United States is substantiated by the results from the content analysis. Table 6b displays a frequency score of 21 for the United States, which represents close to the 40% of total number of positive responses.¹¹³ This is not surprising given that Kealey and Palmer found the, "Ontario Knights had far more interest in and contact with Knights of Labor headquarters in Philadelphia than they did with their comrades in British Columbia or even Quebec."¹¹⁴

Table 6a: Discussion on the international conditions of labor

Table 6b: Origins of the countries
discussed internationally

In the 1880s, the "idealistic internationalism" of the Ontario Workman was replaced with the more practical approach of the Palladium. The editorial staff could report on the international conditions of labor with the recognition that local assemblies had been formed in at least six countries outside of Canada. The Knights in Ontario identified their struggles with those waged by workers outside of Canada on a number of occasions. The most famous example has already been cited, the Irish Land League Reforms. The Irish connection was manifested when Henry George travelled to Hamilton to address a huge demonstration of 10,000 workers.

The treatment of Canada's Chinese immigrants was mentioned in relation to the evaluation of the positivist school. It was found that the Knights' demands for anti-Chinese legislation did not impair the unity of the working-class movement in the 1880s.¹¹⁵ There was evidence, however, of the Knights making severely racist attacks made on the Chinese. The manner in which the Palladium straddled the line on this issues was revealed in an 1883 editorial:

There are good reasons for opposing Chinese immigration, but we should not give our enemies a handle by appealing to race antagonism. The Chinese question is not a question of race nor of morals--it is simply an economical question.¹¹⁶

The question from the content analysis measured the number of attacks on immigration that were motivated by racism or based on economics (Appendix B, #20). The attacks led against the Chinese often included reference to assisted immigration from

Europe.¹¹⁷ For this reason, these two categories were combined in the content analysis.

Table 7a shows 16 cases of attacks on Chinese and assisted immigration; this accounts for roughly 30% of all the Palladium issues sampled. Table 7b reveals that in 3 cases the motivations were explicitly racist while 6 of the articles referred to economics as the key factor against immigration.¹¹⁸ There was an even mix in the complaints against Chinese and other forms of immigration. The racist slurs made against the Chinese in the Palladium referred to the race as the "yellow peril", "heathens", and other derogatory name calling. The majority of the articles reported on the economic problems associated with immigration. For example, Thompson assessed the situation in the following manner, "There is plenty of unemployed men and women in the United States and Canada already, without any addition being made through the lying and scheming of Government emigration agents."¹¹⁹ This theme was carried on in several issues of the Palladium and was strongly endorsed by the Knights of Labor.¹²⁰

Labor Programmes

In addition to legislative reforms, the Knights proposed more fundamental changes to Canada's political economy and drew on a number of radical doctrines in order to support their goals. In general, the Knights viewed the free market

 

3

MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART
NATIONAL BUREAU OF STANDARDS
STANDARD REFERENCE MATERIAL 1010a
(ANSI and ISO TEST CHART No. 2)

 

Table 7a: Attacks on Chinese and assisted immigration

Table 7b: Motivation for attacks on Chinese and assisted immigration

economy as destructive towards laboring interests.¹²¹ Russell Hann has shown that the Knights adopted a strategy that, "was broadly international in character and sought humane control over the means of production rather than simple amelioration of particular conditions through the 'old trade union method of isolated action on the part of each individual class of worker'."¹²²

Table 8a presents a bar graph on the number of times labor programmes that challenged the capitalist system were recorded in the content analysis. There was 29 examples of labor programmes found in separate editions of the Palladium. Table 8b details the four main types of programmes discussed: single tax theories, co-operative ventures, socialism, and government intervention in the economy. There was 13 instances in which the Palladium articles referred directly to Henry George's single tax theory. The other labor programmes accumulated scores of 9 for the socialist and government intervention categories and 10 for those articles discussing cooperation.

The Knights viewed George's theories on the single tax as a solution to the increasing monopoly of land in Canada. One column in the Palladium, reporting on Henry George's visit to England, refers to the rapid spread of land agitation around the world:

The nationalization idea is making converts everywhere, not merely among those who feel the pressure of the existing system but among the comfortable class who are beginning to realize the

Table 8a: Labor programmes challenging capitalism

Table 8b: Types of programmes

injustice of social conditions and to see that even in their own case there is no true happiness or permanent security while those beneath them in the social scale are the victims of oppression.¹²³

Land nationalization and the single tax were offered as the great solution to the evil of monopoly. "The Irish land agitation has been of immense influence in leavening the thoughts of millions on both sides of the Atlantic," claimed the Palladium, and "The principle which prompts the Irish people to resist landlordism and caste oppression is the same as prompts the Labor Reformers in America to band themselves together against the encroachments of monopoly." The universal appeal of the theory fit well with the international philosophy of the Knights.

The majority of the support for Henry George was found in the early issues of the Palladium.¹²⁴ The pattern matches what some researchers have described as Thompson's lessening enthusiasm for Henry George and increasing acceptance of socialist theories.¹²⁵ The accounts of socialist theories found in the content analysis were more evenly spilt between early and late editions of the Palladium. It should be noted that the widespread acceptance of socialist ideals was not recorded in the labor press until the 1890s.¹²⁶ The main point to be recognized, however, was that both the Knights and the Palladium grew increasingly tolerant of theories which fundamentally challenged the capitalist principle of wage-labor.

The idea of the co-operative venture was a less radical solution than the single tax or consideration of socialism. The principle of co-operation could be found in the written laws of the Knights of Labor. (Appendix A). Members of local assemblies contributed to a co-operative fund that was used to employ Knights at labor-run factories and stores. In the 1880s, there were several co-operative enterprises operating throughout Ontario. Co-operative stores were founded in both Toronto and Hamilton.¹²⁷

In 1884 the Palladium asked, "The co-operative principle has proved a success in Toronto and London, and there is no reason why Hamilton should be behindhand [sic] in the matter."¹²⁸ The Knights responded to this challenge by starting up a labor-owned grocery store in the following year.¹²⁹ The Knights favoured the abolition of the wage system and viewed cooperation as a means of achieving such a goal. The practice was also supported in the Palladium:

On account of the increased demand for Labor, it will give the toilers a better opportunity to put into operation that system of co-operation which will ultimately supercede the wage system which now enslaves them, the system which will give man that liberty and freedom which will not encroach on the rights of his fellows, enabling him to conform to nature's law...¹³⁰

The Palladium endorsed the principle of co-operation in over 16% of the editions sampled. But it was never presented as a panacea to the capitalist system because the monopoly would remain intact under cooperation.¹³¹

The Knights strongly advocated the principle of government intervention in the economy. The Palladium offered a fair amount of support for this subject, as demonstrated in Table 8b. This support stemmed from the Palladium's promotion of article 15 from the Knights Declaration of Principles (Appendix A). The members of "Our Social Club" debated the possibility of the government controlling the private sector of the Canadian economy.¹³² "Harcourt" contended that it was not likely to happen in the next dozen years:

But I think that very considerable advance will be made in this direction very shortly. I would make a beginning for instance with railroad and telegraph companies which owe their existence to the will of the people. The rights granted by the people should be resumed and all such undertakings conducted as public works. Then I would regulate the protected industries, fixing a minimum wage. The establishment of a national currency would be another step in advance.¹³³

This gathering of self-taught workers concluded their discussion by examining what they regarded as a more comprehensive strategy, land nationalization. The amount of coverage the Palladium devoted to the principle of government intervention remained constant over the newspaper's three year history. Overall, the labor programmes proposed by the Knights were more reformist than revolutionary.

Attacks on Monopolies

The Knights viewed all forms of monopoly (land, money, and transportation) as constituting the greatest evil of the capitalist system.¹³⁴ Knights of Labor newspapers reinforced

this conviction with their extensive coverage on the damages caused by monopolies.¹³⁵ The editorial staff at the Palladium were deeply committed to uncovering examples of harm done to workers by the actions of land speculators, bankers, and railroad and telegraph monopolists.

The results of the content analysis found that 80% of the front page editions of the Palladium made a direct reference to some form of monopoly. The bar graph on Table 9 shows that the Palladium launched into attacks on monopolies in 44 of the 55 issues studied. For the newspaper's editor, William H. Rowe, "there was no greater enemy to the cause of social justice than the monopoly."¹³⁶

The Palladium continued to repeat the key message that land and money monopolies laid at the foundation of the country's "industrial difficulties" throughout its three years of publication.¹³⁷ The immediate aims proposed by the Workman a decade earlier, such as shorter hours, higher wages, and temperance, were regarded as only temporary solutions in the 1880s. For instance, although the Knights championed the principle of the eight hour day it was still approached with caution because:

It would not stop the exactions of the land monopolist, the usurer or the railroad robber. But it would go a great way towards giving Labor something like a fair proportion of its earnings.¹³⁸

The pattern of the data in the content analysis suggests that the Palladium chose to link the immediate aims pioneered by

Table 9: Palladium issues
attacking monopolies

the labor press in the 1870s into the broader schemes proposed by the Knights in the 1880s. This position was reflected in an editorial by Thompson entitled "Temperance Reform":

Were liquor absolutely unattainable the extortions of the land monopolist, the usurer and the profit-manager would still drain the greater portion of the earnings of Labor. The withholding of equal opportunities and natural rights would still leave the many at the mercy of the few who dictate the terms of existence. Temperance will never of itself bring the millemium [sic].¹³⁹

The Knights therefore advocated the implementation of Henry George's programme of labor reform so that private property could be abolished. "No form of robbery is more cruel, heartless and insidious than landlordism," wrote Thompson in a typical column. Article 15 of the principles of the Knights of Labor demanded a national currency in order to combat the excessive profits made by the money monopolists:

Our present banking system is nothing more nor less than legalized robbery. What this country wants, and what it must have before it can even become a prosperous nation, is a currency issued by the Government, based on the solvency of the country, and issued to the people through the means of Government distributing offices at a rate of interest sufficient to cover the cost of issue and distribution and nothing more.¹⁴⁰

Finally, the Palladium proposed that government control be extended to the "giant" railroad and telegraph monopolies.¹⁴¹

Political Activities

The Knights of Labor engaged in several types of political action in order to fulfill the requirements spelled

out in their Preamble and Declaration of Principles. Their peak period of political activity coincided with the Order's greatest years of size and strength in Hamilton (1883-1887). The Knights sponsored labor candidates in all of the municipal, provincial, and federal elections which took place at this time.¹⁴²

The new labor historians were the first group of scholars to engage in an exhaustive examination of the political activities of the Knights in Ontario. Previous research on labor and politics in the late nineteenth-century has concentrated mainly on the major labor councils, such as the Trades and Labor Congress in the mid-1880s, and their lobbying efforts at the provincial and federal levels.¹⁴³ In Dreaming of What Might Be: The Knights of Labor in Ontario, 1880-1900 (1982), Kealey and Palmer established how the Knights gained effective control over the TLC in 1883 and shortly thereafter, the local assembly of the Toronto Trades and Labor Council (TTL).¹⁴⁴ West of Toronto, the Knights formed an independent electoral organization at the municipal level known as the Hamilton Labor Political Association (HLPA).¹⁴⁵

Moreover, the community studies approach of the new labor historians has resulted in the discovery of a fascinating account of independent labor politics at the municipal level. Kealey and Palmer have provided researchers with detailed reports on the lives of the Knights who ran

successful independent labor campaigns. The stronghold of independent autonomous political action was Hamilton, where the HLPAs' presence led to the election of a number of Knights to alderman's posts.¹⁴⁶

The Order was also tremendously active in supporting independent labor candidates at the provincial and federal levels of government. The editorials in the Palladium suggest that this type of political activity did not go unnoticed by the Tories and Grits. Although there were no victories in Hamilton or Toronto, the races were often close. The Knights were successful in pioneering a tradition of independent labor electoral politics in Canada.

Several quasi-independent labor candidates from Toronto and sometimes Hamilton were elected on Liberal and Conservative platforms at the provincial and federal levels of government. Martin Robin has identified the those workers running under the banner of the established parties as Lib-Labs or Tory-Labs.¹⁴⁷ This strategy translated into electoral successes for two Toronto Knights running as quasi-independent (Lib-Labs) candidates in the mid-1880s.¹⁴⁸

The content analysis was designed with the intention of measuring the diverse set of political activities in which the Knights were engaged in the 1880s. Question 14 (Appendix B) asked the coder if there is evidence of the Palladium reporting on several types of political action; this included independent labor candidates, quasi-independent candidates,

or support for labor reform candidates (Grit or Tory), and lobbying.

Unfortunately, the facts surrounding the events of the various elections between 1883 and 1886 were not reported on in the front pages of the Palladium. The materials studied for the content analysis deviated sharply from the traditional journalistic style of answering the who, what, where, when, and why of a given news event. Instead, the editorial mandate of the Palladium was directed towards a more analytic and theoretical approach. Rowe and Thompson were more comfortable with uncovering the social inequalities inherent in the capitalist system than they were with reporting on the intricacies connected with a municipal election in Hamilton. The application of a content analysis to the Palladium's format made it difficult to replicate the some of the detailed information presented in the works of the new labor historians.

Nevertheless, the methodology employed for this study still allowed for the collection of a considerable amount of evidence concerning the general area of labor and politics. Table 10a demonstrates that politics was in fact a central theme in the front pages of the Palladium studied. The question which asked, "Are there any statements dealing with labor's involvement in politics?" (Appendix B), received 47 examples of positive responses as compared to only 8 cases of negative responses in all of the Palladium editions sampled.

Table 10a: Discussion of labor involvement in politics

The various types of political involvement covered in the Palladium are broken down in a bar graph on Table 10b. Over half the materials sampled fell into the category of "other" (28). This category consisted of general political commentary and primarily involved the Palladium's demands for the federal government to implement the Knights of Labor Declaration of Principles. The remaining types of categories from Table 10b involved labor's direct participation in politics. The highest percentage of positive responses for this area of political action went to the independent labor candidates with a score of 8. In terms of a total percentage of the Palladium issues sampled, roughly 18% were devoted to the cause of promoting independent labor representation. There was only 1 example of quasi-independent labor candidates discussed in the materials studied. The Knights' approval for labor reform candidates from the established parties (Grit or Tory) were recorded in 4 instances. Finally, the lobbying efforts of the Knights were discussed on 4 separate occasions.

In relation to general political demands, Rowe and Thompson stressed the importance of workers' participation in Canadian politics and demanded full manhood and womanhood suffrage rights on a number of occasions.¹⁴⁹ There was a diverse set of political demands made during the Palladium's three years of publication. Some of these areas, such as government control of railways and telegraphs, have already

Table 10b: Type of political involvement

been discussed. The newspaper also petitioned the provincial and federal governments for: a bureau of labor statistics, a Factory Act, compulsory arbitration, land reforms, and other immediate labor aims.¹⁵⁰

A sentiment of distrust permeated most of the Palladium's coverage of the established political parties. "What is it to us which party stands or falls so long as they both show their shameful subservience to the interests of capital and their contemptuous disregard for those of Labor," wrote the Palladium in a typical column.¹⁵¹ The call for political independence was offered as an alternative to the old parties: "They are neither of them worthy of our support, and the shrewd politicians who think they can manipulate the Labor vote should be given to understand that workingmen can no longer be fooled by the pie-crust promises, nor cajoled by their hollow hypocrisy."¹⁵²

The Palladium made several provocative comments regarding independent political action. The early issues discussed the concept of labor representation as a possibility, recognizing that, "Labor [was] organized for political action and that both parties know that they cannot afford to ignore the Labor vote."¹⁵³ In this same article the readers are asked, "If change has been effected by a few thousand votes cast independent of party in Hamilton and Toronto, what might not have been done in the way of practical reforms by a united Labor vote throughout the

country?" After sufficient time had passed in which the Knights implemented their plans, a later column reported:

Two years ago there were but two parties in the political arena in Hamilton, now there are three, and not the least in importance is the new-comer. Men who have been life-long Grits or Tories, now find it to their interest politically, to pander to the Labor party. This state of affairs has been brought about by the organization, and unity among the workers.¹⁵⁴

The Palladium also realized the pioneering role the Knights of Labor performed in the realm of politics, "Heretofore in the vast majority of Trades Unions, politics of every kind have been tabooed; but the day has arrived with some, and is rapidly approaching with others when the objection in Trades Unions to the decisions on the well being of the workingmen will be a thing of the past."¹⁵⁵ Throughout their tenures at the Palladium, Thompson and Rowe continued to promote independence as a logical alternative to the old parties which they viewed as catering to the capitalist class.

The content analysis found a slight level of support for the quasi-independent candidate. The only article that discussed a worker running under the banner of an established party referred to labor relations in Britain.¹⁵⁶ A greater number of cases discussed the strategy established by the TLC whereby labor would vote as a block for the old party candidate who pledged the most in ridings where there were no labor candidates.¹⁵⁷ In Toronto, the lobbying efforts of the TTLC resulted in a mayoralty victory for the pro-labor reform

candidate, W.H. Howland.¹⁵⁸ The Palladium reaffirmed the TLC's strong support for Howland on several occasions.¹⁵⁹

Two of the four endorsements for reform minded candidates found in the Palladium cautioned the workers. Thompson offered a solution to the problem of when there was no independent labor candidate on a ballot:

What is to hinder him [the worker] from voting Labor Reform whether there is a candidate in the field or not? Any man who can write can do it. You get your ballot paper...[and] simply write 'For Labor Reform' or any other short, significant inscription that will convey the idea, and drop it in you ballot box.¹⁶⁰

The Knights were particularly concerned with the established parties control over the integrity of labor candidates:

And among the wrecked reputations with which the turbulent sea of politics is sewn none are more hopelessly shattered than those who for a paltry pittance or a broken promise have thrown away their opportunities of usefulness in the futile attempt to climb to political positions on the shoulder of their comrades.¹⁶¹

This warning mirrors what Kealey and Palmer have described in the post-1886 years, when, "the Order plunged into the sordid conflicts of partyism that revealed just how thoroughly the established political culture could emasculate the thrust for independent labor politics."¹⁶² There was one example found in the Palladium of a charge of dishonesty against two labor leaders who accepted patronage positions from the federal Conservatives.¹⁶³

The last category from Table 10b concerns the lobbying efforts of the Knights. The Palladium discussed a number of

labor organizations and their attempts to secure rights from the federal and provincial governments. The last meeting of "Our Social Club" celebrates the Hamilton Labor Political Association's effectiveness in mobilizing the local working-class constituency.¹⁶⁴ During this meeting, the members of the Club decided to end their current association and instead gather with their fellow workers at the HLP. Freeman informed the others, "All political action is merely the means to an end. That end is or should be the triumph of the principles which form the political platform."¹⁶⁵ Throughout the discussion each character stressed the need for independent political action and the evils of partyism.

Table 10c presents data on the level of government explicitly discussed in the Palladium. The greatest attention was paid to the federal level of government. The local level accumulated the next highest level of discussion. There was not a great deal of discussion on the provincial level of politics. The internationalism of the Knights was expressed in the references made to politics in the United States and Britain. Due to the fact that most of the articles did not discuss the specifics associated with a given political event, several of the responses were categorized as "no comment".

Closely related to labor's involvement in politics was the muckraking techniques employed by the Palladium. Ron Verzuh found that Rowe was one of the first Canadian

Table 10c: Level of government primarily discussed

Remaining issues: no comment

journalists to adopt this method by hiring an unnamed writer to uncover alleged abuses in cotton mills.¹⁶⁶ Question 19 from the content analysis asked for evidence of the "Use of muckraking techniques?" (Appendix B). Table 11 shows that there were 14 examples of muckraking in the Palladium. The examples discovered in the content analysis primarily concerned alleged abuses of political powers by the established parties.¹⁶⁷

The strongest attacks were made against the vice-regal system in Canada. "It is a flagrant wrong that an imported Governor General should," as pointed out in the Palladium, "cost the people of Canada about \$120,000 per annum, and that Ontario should pay a figure head Governor about \$23,000 a year."¹⁶⁸ A subsequent editorial asked, "Can it be that the widespread unpopularity of Lansdowne's appointment has extended the privileged classes of that centre of social snobbery and political corruption and infected even the Ottawa aristocracy with an honest contempt for the vice-regal rack-renter and extortioner?"¹⁶⁹ In relation to the Privy council's control over Canadian legislation, "Harcourt" remarked:

The great evil in my mind is the subserviency to British opinions which prevents us adopting legislation suitable to our own requirements, and in accord with democratic ideas. Then, too, the whole structure of society is permeated with the pernicious notions of caste and class supremacy which are imported from England.¹⁷⁰

Table 11: Palladium's use of
muckraking technique

Similar sentiments were expressed in regards to the Palladium's demand for the abolition of the Senate.

The Palladium also condemned the control monopolies exercised over the old parties. "We have nothing to hope from either of the present political parties. They are both dominated by capitalism."¹⁷¹ Thompson made reference to specific politicians:

Mr Blake [federal Reform leader], as a Chancery lawyer, identified with heavy corporation and capitalistic interests. Both he Mr. Mackenzie [former Reform P.M.] are concerned in loan companies, and their intimate associations are all with the money grabbing, shystering, speculating class.¹⁷²

The Palladium expressed an extremely high level of distrust towards the established parties in all of the cases studied.

The final questions from the political section of the content analysis (17 and 18) asked if the Palladium reported on a number of types of legislative gains or losses on behalf of the Knights (Appendix B). There was only one instance of a reference to a possible legislative gain found in all 55 samples. The paucity of information collected for these questions was partially a result of Rowe's unorthodox style of journalism. Moreover, the Palladium had ceased publication before any significant labor legislation was passed into law at either the provincial or federal governments.

A review of the secondary literature suggests that the Knights did make tangible gains at all levels of government in the later part of the 1880s. The actions undertaken by the

Knights represented organized labor's first attempt to push for changes outside the confines of Toryism and Gritism. As has been noted, the Knights greatest political strength was made at the municipal level; a number of independent labor candidates were elected as aldermen. Palmer has summarized the local results: "early closing, union wages and jobs in corporation work, just assessment rates, opposition to bonusing capital's consolidation, and responsible public transit were just a few of the issues that were, on occasion, resolved in favour of labour."¹⁷³

The one instance in which the Palladium reported on a possible legislative gain, they reported on the single most important piece of legislation passed on behalf of labor:

The question of factory legislation is still exciting a great deal of discussion. The organs of both parties are using it as a means of influencing the workingmen politically, and a vast amount of misleading claptrap is being vented by the Grit and Tory press on the subject. The facts are simply that the Dominion Government for many years promised such legislation, but so far has failed to give it. The Ontario Government in its turn, 'went them one better,' but having it passed it failed to put it in force.¹⁷⁴

This evaluation of the legislation has been confirmed by the work of labor historians in the twentieth century.¹⁷⁵ Eugene Forsey has documented the political wrangling over jurisdiction which took place between the provincial and federal governments in relation to the proposed legislation. There were seven attempts to table the bill, at the federal level, before it was eventually passed into law by Ontario

Premier Oliver Mowatt in 1886.¹⁷⁶ There is general agreement that the pressure the Knights exerted on Macdonald and Mowatt strongly influenced the passage of the bill which protected women and children in the workplace.¹⁷⁷

Regardless of the few legislative gains at the federal level, the Knights still managed to capture the attention of the national politicians. With the Dominion elections fast approaching in 1886, Prime Minister Macdonald "worried that the Conservative party was not 'in a flourishing state'. The 'rocks ahead' which threatened the Tory 'ship' were 'Riel, Home Rule, the Knights of Labor and the Scott Act'."¹⁷⁸ The increasing strength of trade unions, especially the Knights of Labor, was a rising concern for the government. Shortly after the time of this statement, Macdonald decided to appoint a Royal Commission on the Relations of Labor and Capital (1886). For Gregory Kealey, "The appointment of the Labor Commission was clearly an attempt to salvage the working class vote for the Conservative party and must be seen as an attempt to deal with the vigor and nascent political strength of the Knights of Labor in Canada."¹⁷⁹

The greatest legislative gains made by labor in the 1880s occurred at the provincial level of government. Premier Mowatt's Liberal administration succeeded in passing a considerable amount of social legislation.¹⁸⁰ The combined efforts of both the provincial and federal governments accounted for: "factory acts, bureaus of labor statistics,

arbitration measures, suffrage extension, employers' liability acts and improved mechanics' lien laws."¹⁸¹

The realm of independent labor politics declined sharply after the elections of 1886/7 largely because of the control the established parties exercised over working-class autonomy through patronage and concessions.¹⁸² The mediation of class relations in the political sphere did not translate, however, into the area of labor and capital relations during the 1880s. Craig Heron's examination of "Labourism and the Working Class" between the 1880s and the 1920s led to his observation that, "...labourist interventions into local politics invariably occurred in the context of intensifying industrial conflict."¹⁸³

Workers' Struggles

Research on the struggles the Knights waged against their employers in the 1880s has been conducted primarily by those writers belonging to the either the institutional or new labor history schools.¹⁸⁴ The institutional school has concentrated on the anti-strike stance held by the leadership of the Knights.¹⁸⁵ Their notion of a "middle-class" psychology led them to emphasize the Knights' willingness to arbitrate disputes with their employers. Examples of this position were frequently reproduced in the Palladium in the form of Grand Master Powderly's warnings to the rank and file members of the Knights.

The Order's official policy was to strike as a last resort, after all other options, including arbitration, were fully exhausted. The Palladium provided coverage to the Order's spokesmen who spread this message of caution to workers at mass meetings across Ontario. For example, in an address delivered by R.F. Trevellick in 1886, the speaker advised his audience of the negative consequences of strikes:

Not until every effort to settle the matters in dispute by the aid of reason and common sense have been exhausted do we resort to the strike. By uniting we compel recognition and earn the right to demand arbitration.¹⁸⁶

However, in this same lecture Trevellick conveyed the activist side of the Knights: "If an employer discharges a man because that man is a Knight of Labor, then we retaliate upon him in a way that effectually spoils his business."¹⁸⁷ These words succinctly identify the manner in which industrial conflict was viewed by the Knights of Labor. For the cautious tone frequently expressed by Grand Master Workman Powderly and the General Executive Board in the United States failed to translate into a pattern of inactivity on the part of the rank and file members of the Knights in Canada.

The leadership of the Knights mistakenly assumed that employers would enter into negotiations with their workers whenever a given dispute arose. But as Douglas Kennedy has shown, the practice of arbitration proved useless when the employer failed to recognize the legitimacy of the union.¹⁸⁸

In those instances, the local assemblies had sufficient autonomy to pursue the justice they desired in ways they saw fit.¹⁸⁹ Credit must be awarded to the new labor historians for discovering this unique relation that existed within the Order; in many cases, the rank and file members entered into strikes without the permission of the hierarchy of the Knights. In fact, the Ontario Knights were involved in all of the major Ontario strikes of the 1880s and early 1890s, which accounted for at least 9 strikes in Hamilton and at least 20 strikes in Toronto.¹⁹⁰

The Knights' motivation for strike action also depended on factors quite separate from the basic right to organize. The large number of domestic strikes involving the Knights of Labor is meticulously documented in Eugene Forsey's Trade Unions in Canada, 1812-1902 (1982). Many of the struggles were fought over the mundane issues of wages and hours of work. There were also cases in which skilled workers belonging to the Knights struck to maintain the control they exercised over their work environment through shop rules and regulations. In all of the cases, the Knights demonstrated a willingness to strike in order to advance the cause of labor reform.

It would be impossible to chronicle all of these strikes in the closing section of this chapter. But two of the most spectacular strikes of the decade appear in the results of the content analysis. The first took place in 1883 when the

Knights joined forces with the International Brotherhood of Telegraphers and struck against Jay Gould's telegraph monopoly. "This was our [Canada's] first nation-wide strike and the only genuinely international strike we have ever had," wrote Eugene Forsey, "It was a strike for equal wage increases in Canada and the United States and for equal pay for men and women."¹⁹¹ The second mass strike occurred in Toronto in 1885. Toronto Street Railway (TSR) owner Frank Smith's failure to recognize his workers as belonging to the Knights of Labor resulted in a long and bloody battle in the spring and summer of 1885. An evaluation of the importance of these two strikes is undertaken during the analysis of the data results.

Table 12a contains a bar graph displaying the number of times that strike action was discussed in the separate editions of the Palladium. In the 55 editions of the Palladium sampled, there was discussion of strikes in 21 issues; a separate question found 4 examples of coverage on boycotts.¹⁹² Based on the number of issues studied, there is a fairly high percentage of reports devoted to the area of industrial conflict. It should be pointed out, however, that the separate editions of the Palladium did not provide a large amount of front page space to the topics of strikes and boycotts.

When the results from the content analysis are compared to alternative research conducted on the early Canadian labor

Table 12a: Discussion of strike actions

press, a discrepancy arises. After acknowledging the Knights' official opposition to strikes and boycotts, Ron Verzuh concluded that, "Despite this official stance, however, the boycott and strike were often used in the war against social oppression, and the Palladium provided ample coverage of such activities at home and abroad."¹⁹³ This description provided by Verzuh may differ from the current research because he examined the entire universe of available materials as opposed to front page samples within the Palladium.

Table 12b lists the types of unions that participated in the strikes discussed in the Palladium. The largest amount of attention was directed towards reports on trade unions not belonging to the Knights of Labor. There was 10 examples of reports on trade union strikes which took place in the United States and Britain. The strikes fought by the combined forces of Knights and skilled trade unions scored the next highest level from Table 12b with 8 positive responses. Three editions of the Palladium reported on strikes led by the Knights alone while the remaining 4 issues of the newspaper simply referred to the general concept of industrial conflict without making reference to a specific event. This type of information was classified under the category of "other".

The amount of actual coverage that the Palladium devoted to the strike actions of trade unions not belonging to the Knights was fairly sparse. Although this group was mentioned most often among the four categories of possible selections,

Table 12b: Union participation in strikes

the coverage usually consisted of a one line descriptions of strikes taking place outside of Canada. For instance, an 1885 editorial by Thompson reported that, "As soon as one strike is settled another begins. The Cleveland rolling mills are running again but the St. Louis car drivers are on a strike."¹⁹⁴ In another typical column the reporter mentioned that in the United States, "The Pottstown nail feeders are still on strike," and that, "There is a strike among the chain makers of Akron."¹⁹⁵ The United States was discussed in 80% of the cases while the remaining 20% referred to strikes in Britain. For example, a Palladium column on "Our English Correspondence" simply mentioned, "The miners employed in the Furners mines of Barrow and Hermanite Steel Company have struck against the addition of two hours to the working day."¹⁹⁶

Bryan Palmer argued that, "in the Order's earliest years in Canada, it grew because it was willing to organize class forces larger than itself, marshalling numerous trade sectors or industrial groupings for a particular struggle."¹⁹⁷ There were 8 instances in which the Palladium discussed these types of arrangements between the Knights and trade unions. The columns dealing with the subject of labor combinations (Knights and craft unions) provided a more detailed analysis than in the previous category. For example, the 1883 continent-wide strike against the monopolistic telegraph companies owned by Jay Gould was discussed in three editions

of the Palladium. The strike began on July 16, 1883 after the Brotherhood of Telegraphers demanded higher wages and shorter hours and Gould refused to comply. When the Knights rallied to join in with the striking telegraphers their cause was promoted in an early edition of the Palladium, "Let us all organize and consolidate into Trade Unions and amalgamated Trade Unions."¹⁹⁸ This editorial went on to stress the importance of organizing large forces of workers to battle against Gould. The philosophy expressed in the Palladium was accompanied by concrete results as over 1,000 workers participated in the Canadian telegraphers' strike alone.¹⁹⁹ In addition, the strikers were able to mobilize widespread public support in the early stages of the struggle. But Jay Gould's monopoly was far too powerful for the strikers and by mid-August of 1883 the telegraphers withdrew from the Knights in defeat.

One indicator of the Palladium's attitude towards striking workers was revealed in a series of editorials by "Enjolras" in 1886. During this period, labor agitation for the eight hour day had reached its peak in the United States with the famous Haymarket riots in Chicago. The final events unfolded very suddenly in May of 1886 when police fired on a crowd of strikers at the McCormick Reaper Works, killing and wounding several men. When a bombing killed eight policemen the next day at a labor demonstration, several labor leaders were charged with murder.²⁰⁰ The widespread public

condemnation of the anarchists that followed in the wake of the Haymarket aftermath did not prevent the Palladium from taking a lonely stand in defending the labor leaders. For example, the column "Mercy for the Anarchists" clearly stated the Palladium's viewpoint:

When the Palladium pointed out the scandalous injustice of the conviction of seven Chicago anarchists now under sentence to death, our remarks created not a little antagonism, even in quarters where we had a right to expect sympathy [for instance, among the labor press]. The position which we then took on the question has been fully justified by the actions of the General Assembly of the Knights of Labor, who pass a resolution appealing for mercy for the condemned men.²⁰¹

This editorial went on to attack the "capitalistic press" for not recognizing that, "the anarchism of the bomb-throwers is the natural result of the anarchism of Jay Gould, P.D. Armour and Pinkerton, of the methods pursued by the monopolists, either in open defiance of the law, or by perverting the law in their favour."²⁰² A second editorial by Thompson still defended the principle of the eight hour day even after the seven men had been hanged.²⁰³

The third category from Table 12b consists of the three positive responses that were recorded of the Knights' direct involvement in strikes. Two editions of the Palladium dealt with one of the most dramatic examples of the Knights' right to organize, the Toronto Street Railway (TSR) strikes in the spring and summer of 1886. The first conflict between Frank Smith and his employees at the street railway company erupted over the workers' refusal to sign an iron-clad agreement

preventing them from joining the Knights. When the company locked-out the Knights of Labor employees in March of 1886, the non-union men walked out "en masse" with their fellow workers.²⁰⁴

Smith's attempts to run cars during the strike was met with stiff resistance from the workers and the general public. Hostile crowds surrounded and derailed cars, bricks were thrown at scab labor, horses were unhitched, and sympathetic coal drivers blocked the way for the street cars.²⁰⁵ The actions of the Knights and their public supporters effectively shut down the street railway industry at this time. A public letter sent from Mayor Howland to Frank Smith condemned the anti-strike actions of his company and the Palladium thanked the pro-labor Mayor in a half page editorial:

Why did the brave and outspoken letter of Mayor Howland, of Toronto, to the President of the Street Railway monopoly call forth such bitter denunciation from the self-assumed friends of 'law and order'....Simply because he was courageous enough, logical enough[,] to put the responsibility for civic disorder and turbulence where it rightly rested - to say to the monopolist, 'you have in the first place provoked this popular uprising by your own act.'²⁰⁶

The endorsement the Knights gave to Howland in the earlier municipal elections proved to be a valuable tool in first breaking the strike deadlock. Two committees of alderman were appointed to settle the dispute between Smith and the Knights. These mediated efforts appeared to resolve the conflict and the men returned back to work. But the president

of the TSR refused to honour his agreement that he would take everyone back unconditionally and the workers resorted to a second strike.

The Toronto street railway strike of the summer of 1886 was far less successful than the first episode. The Knights decided to boycott the TSR lines and set up their own co-operative street railway venture. This was because the leadership was inhibited by the crowd violence of the first strike and preferred a more peaceful solution. This strategy was supported by the municipal government which called for law and order during the second conflict.²⁰⁷ However, the resources available to the Toronto Knights could not match Frank Smith's powerful street railway monopoly. Despite some initial successes, the co-operative venture folded in July of 1886. A fall editorial in the Palladium lamented the severe financial burdens caused by the Gould railway strike in the United States and the TSR strikes in Toronto.²⁰⁸

There were several other cases in which the Knights organized with workers other than skilled workers in Hamilton and Toronto. For example, the Knights led a number of smaller strikes involving women and unskilled workers. The ultimate defeat of the Knights in the majority of these struggles does not diminish the significant accomplishments they achieved in a relatively short time. The Order was able to unite thousands of workers across North America in massive displays of working-class resistance. Groups that had previously

existed on the periphery of trade union representation (women and the unskilled) joined the Knights to strike against harsh working conditions. The public sympathies displayed in several of the local struggles (for example, the TSR) contributed to a strong vehicle of opposition against the powerful monopolists. Finally, the workers cultivated a sense of working-class identification during the demonstrations, lectures, and parades that accompanied many of these strikes. The effectiveness of the Hamilton and Toronto Knights as a striking machine after 1886, however, was badly diminished as their membership figures declined and their ability to organize was badly weakened.

Summary

The purpose of this exercise has been to objectively and systematically analyze the content of the written materials from the front pages of the Palladium between 1883 and 1886. A research strategy was specifically designed to test the validity of the competing arguments about the Knights of Labor. On the basis of the evidence collected from the content analysis, there is strong support for the contention that the Knights contributed to a united movement of working-class opposition. This theme is closely aligned with the research first conducted by the new labor historians. The positivists' rebuttal that non-class divisions impeded the unity of the Order received a minimal level of support in the

content analysis. Finally, the position of the institutional school was not represented in a single front page article appearing in the Palladium.

The selection of the Ontario Workman as an alternative data source has aided in demonstrating how the working-class in Ontario progressed between the 1870s and 1880s. Skilled workers were first attracted to the labor press in the 1870s during a period of burgeoning trade union strength and intensifying industrial conflict. The Workman embarked on a style of journalism which expressed the skilled workers growing awareness of themselves as a class, and of their trade union organizations. This tendency was diluted, however, by the overall conservative tone of the Workman. Their moderate programme of labor reform sought to correct social inequalities within the current economic system, but did not directly attack the capitalist system itself. The eventual demise of the Workman in 1875 did not signal the end to the labor press in Ontario.

As the Workman had a decade earlier, the Palladium was founded in response to growing strength of organized labor in Ontario. The 1880s revival of the labor press across Ontario was intimately related to rise of the Knights of Labor. This had a definite effect on newspapers such as the Palladium. The results from the content analysis suggest that the Palladium retained the radical tone expressed in the 1870s labor press but clearly moved beyond the Workman's limited

demands for labor reform. The Palladium broadened the appeal of working-class organization by making itself accessible to groups that had previously been ignored by the trade union movement. Independent of Gritism or Toryism, the Palladium embraced an eclectic blend of radical and socialist doctrines. These were combined with labor programmes directed towards altering the Canadian political economy.²⁰⁹ The Palladium was explicitly antagonistic towards the capitalists system.

The most difficult subject to objectively measure has undoubtedly been the area of working-class culture. For theoretical purposes, the new labor historians introduced the concepts of "residual and emergent" culture as they applied to the Knights. Partial support for these concepts was found in the written materials from the content analysis. For example, the Palladium consistently accentuated the differences between workers and employers (residual class culture) and also promoted the unity of all workers based on a new organizational form (emergent, movement culture). The measures obtained from the content analysis offer support for the culturalist theories advanced by the new labor historians.

Further attempts were made to document the material aspects of the cultural practices and events associated with the Order. The labor records from the late nineteenth-century provide ample coverage to ritual, symbolism, and secrecy

practiced in the local assemblies across North America. These esoteric activities attracted thousands of new members to the Knights of Labor. Moreover, there was a fair amount of data accumulated in the area of cultural events. For instance, the labor demonstration performed the practical function of mobilizing public support in favour of the Order during periods of heightened industrial conflict. The content analysis was more easily applied to these concrete aspects of working-class life when compared to the abstract areas of "residual and emergent" culture. Further research would require a more extensive examination of how the international culturalist theories, advanced by the new labor historians, apply to the Canadian context of the Knights.²¹⁰

The information collected from the sections of the content analysis which examined the Palladium's coverage of labor programmes and attacks on monopolies produced some interesting results. A direct link was established between the types of labor programmes that were outlined and the forms of monopoly they were designed to abolish. For instance, the national currency was designed to abolish money monopolies. These specific plans for an increased level of control over the means of production are closely related to the alternative vision of a new social order expressed in the general philosophy of the Knights of Labor.

The 1880s marked the first period in Canadian working-class history when organized labor engaged in an independent

course of political action. The principle of independent political action was supported in the Palladium on a number of occasions. Although there were few direct electoral victories in Hamilton and Toronto, the Knights ran several close races and did manage to capture the attention of the established political parties.

In addition to sponsoring independent labor candidates, the Knights were active in a wide range of political activities during the mid-1880s. The content analysis recorded a substantial number of positive responses in the general area of labor's involvement in politics. The Palladium attempted to articulate the class interests of Ontario workers through a broad range of issues. For example, Phillips Thompson led spirited attacks on the vice-regal system in which the national government's lavish spending on the Governor General was contrasted to the deteriorating living conditions faced by Ontario workers. Alternatively, Editor William H. Rowe made a concerted effort to promote the political interests of all workers, as evidenced by his demands to extend suffrage rights to women. In terms of direct political action, the Palladium discussed the Knights' endorsement of pro-labor candidates, such as Mayor Howland of Toronto, which proved to be useful during the TSR strike of 1886. The combined evidence from this section of the content analysis suggests that urban workers of Ontario established themselves as a political force during the mid-1880s.

The final section of the content analysis was designed to measure the level of opposition the Knights of Labor mounted against their employers through strikes, boycotts, and lockouts. The materials studied in the content analysis indicate that strikes played an important role in the history of the Knights in Hamilton. Of the two labor schools to have examined this area, the data results support the findings of the new labor historians. Roughly 40% of the materials studied commented on some form of strike action.²¹¹

It should be noted, however, that the Palladium's coverage on the anti-strike stance held by the leadership of the Knights is in partial agreement with the findings of the institutional school. But this school's approach was limited to an examination of the hierarchy of the Order and failed to take into account the autonomy the local assemblies exercised in regards to strike action. The outcome of this relationship between the local assemblies and leadership of the Order was recorded in the content analysis.

The Palladium covered several of the 17 strikes that involved the Knights in Hamilton and Toronto between 1883 and 1886.²¹² Although most of these strikes ended in defeat it was shown that the Order mounted considerable opposition against their employers on several occasions. For example, the Knights combined forces with thousands of trade unionists across North America in their struggle against Jay Gould's telegraph monopoly.²¹³ In a number of the smaller strikes,

women and unskilled laborers were offered representation for the first time in Canada. For a brief period, these actions contributed to building a united movement of working-class resistance.

1. It is beyond the scope of the present analysis to design and implement a second content analysis. A survey of the issues covered by the Ontario Workman relies on secondary data analysis and a brief review of the primary data on the subject.

2. For example, John Battye, "The Nine Hours Pioneers: The Genesis of the Canadian Labour Movement," Labour/Le Travailleur, 4 (1979), 25-56. See also, Ron Verzuh, Radical Rags: The Pioneer Labour Press in Canada (Ottawa, 1988).

3. As noted in chapter two, there were no laws that protected workers rights to organize, the common law supported the position of the owners.

4. John Battye examined the strike in relation to the nine hour movement in central Canada (Nine Hour Leagues were established in Hamilton, Toronto, and Montreal). His study on the "Nine Hour Leagues" demonstrated that their goal of the shorter day was not achieved. Workers were forced to settle for meager pay raises without the benefits of shorter hours. Battye noted that skilled railway workers were an exception, they were the only long-term beneficiaries of the movement. See his article, *Ibid.*, 25-56.

5. *Ibid.*, 56.

6. Ron Verzuh, *Ibid.*, 19.

7. Frank Watt, "The National Policy, the Workingman, and Proletarian Ideas in Victorian Canada," Canadian Historical Review, 40 (1959), 1.

8. *Ibid.*, 4.

9. Verzuh, *Ibid.*, 57.

10. Verzuh, *Ibid.*, 26.

11. J.S. Williams was a vocal Conservative supporter and was often in personal communication with Sir John A. Macdonald. This relationship is clearly outlined by Bernard Ostry in, "Conservatives, Liberals, and Labour in the 1870s," The Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science, 41 (June 1960), 118.

12. Palladium of Labor, May 9, 1885.

13. Verzuh, *Ibid.*, 24.

14. Gregory Kealey, Toronto Workers Respond to Industrial Capitalism, 1867-1892 (Toronto, 1980), 130.

15. Ibid., 30.

16. Wayne Lennon, "Striking the Balance: The Labour Press and the National Question In Ontario and the Maritimes, 1872-1913," (Masters thesis, Carleton University 1981), 16.

17. Other all-encompassing social solutions included improvements to the education system for workers, male and female suffrage, and co-operative stores and ventures. These areas receive further elaboration during the discussion on the content analysis.

18. The Workman was openly critical of the Criminal Law Amendment Act characterizing it as "as redundant, harsh, and oppressive." See Gregory Kealey, Ibid., 137.

19. Ostry, Ibid., 112.

20. On the role of the labor press in elections, see Verzuh, Ibid.

21. Ostry, Ibid., 117.

22. See Verzuh, Ibid., 30.

23. Ibid., 30.

24. The Workman was published from 1872 until 1875.

25. See Watt, Ibid., 16-17.

26. In chapter three it was pointed out that this industry was usually short-lived due to relatively low circulation levels (averaging 2,000).

27. Verzuh, Ibid., see especially chapters 4 and 5.

28. Ibid., 50.

29. Karen Dubinsky has undertaken the most extensive research on the subject of women and the Knights of Labor in Canada. See her manuscript, "The Modern Chivalry: Women and the Knights of Labor in Ontario, 1880-1891," (Masters thesis, Carleton University 1985).

30. Palladium of Labor, October 25, 1884.

31. The Palladium drew on a variety of theorists; some of which included the English Chartists, Bellwryite socialists and the Irish social reform theorist, Henry George. The Palladium's use of these theories receives further attention in the course of the discussion on the content analysis.

32. Watt, Ibid., 11.

33. Ibid., 10.

34. The methodology for the content analysis is outlined in chapter three.

35. The Palladium originally published under the title of the Labor Union, stating that it was "A Weekly Journal Devoted to the Interests of All Classes of Labor." Half a year later, editor William H. Rowe had changed the name to the Palladium of Labor. See Verzuh, Ibid. Over 90% of the original Palladium issues are currently available on microfiche.

36. Co-operative stores and factories were financed and operated by organized labor as an alternative to strike action. Article four of the preamble and declaration of principles of the Knights of Labor called for, "The establishment of co-operative institutions, productive and initiative." Refer to See Appendix A. In practice, co-operative were often founded in response to a strike against a particular trade.

37. This refers to the front page articles studied in the content analysis.

38. See Russell Hann, "Brainworkers and the Knights of Labor: E.E. Sheppard, Phillips Thompson, and the Toronto News, 1883-1887," in Gregory Kealey and Peter Warrian, eds., Essays in Canadian Working Class History (Toronto, 1976), 35-57.

39. Bryan Palmer, "Working-Class Canada: Recent Historical Writing," Queen's Quarterly, 86 (Winter 1980), 602.

40. Several writers have commented on the significant impact Thompson made in the field of labor journalism. For instance, Ramsey Cook held that, "Thompson deserves a title as one of the fathers of Canadian radicalism." See his article, "The Professor and the Prophet of Unrest," Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada, 13 (4th series, 1975), 240. See also Pat Craven and Tom Traves, "The Class Politics of the National Policy, 1872-1953," Journal of Canadian Studies, 14 (Fall 1979), 19.

41. Hann, Ibid., 39.

42. Thompson worked simultaneously at the Toronto News. See Hann, Ibid.

43. A great deal of biographical information has been collected on Thompson's life; see Hann, Ibid., 40. See also, Cook, Ibid., 235-249.

44. Kealey refers to this theme as the "labour theory of wealth". See Ibid., 130.

45. Palladium of Labor, May 9, 1886.

46. Other examples supporting this claim are discussed in the content analysis section.

47. Hann, Ibid., 36.

48. Our Social Club began on September 8, 1883 and ran for twelve issues until November 24, 1883.

49. Palladium of Labor, September 8, 1884.

50. These characters were all examined in the Palladium; the original reference to the characters was found in Hann, Ibid., 40.

51. Palladium of Labor, November 3, 1883.

52. Verzuh, Ibid., 52.

53. The positivist also discussed other areas dividing the labor movement in the late nineteenth-century. For instance, in terms of skill level.

54. The average number of labor articles was 3.6 while the average number of all types of articles was only slightly higher at 4.2. (Table 2a).

55. Palladium of Labor, August 11, 1883.

56. The total number of articles was calculated by multiplying the average number of articles (4.2) by the number of issues sampled (55). Thus, the 130 articles in support was divided by total average of front page articles (231); the final percentage equals 56%.

57. Gregory Kealey and Russell Hann, eds., Primary Sources in Canadian Working Class History, 1860-1930 (Toronto, 1973), 10.

58. Due to the overall similarities between the American and Canadian schools only one question was formulated in the content analysis to reflect both approaches.

59. This is based on the articles sampled from the newspaper's front pages. The actual question from the content analysis asked "How many articles refer to a 'middle-class' consciousness among the workers (i.e. common interest in the system expressed between workers and employers) [Appendix B]."

60. Palladium of Labor, November 6, 1886.
61. The exact wording in the content analysis asked, "How many of the articles comment on ethnicity dividing instead of uniting working-class interests [Appendix B]."
62. Palladium of Labor, October 6, 1883.
63. Ibid.
64. David Montgomery, "To Study People: The American Working Class," Labor History, 21 (Fall 1980), 507.
65. Cook, Ibid., 239. See also, Palladium of Labor, August 9, 1884.
66. Palladium of Labor, December 8, 1883.
67. Palladium of Labor, August 16, 1884. It should be noted that this coverage originated from the Chicago Herald and was reproduced in the Palladium.
68. As the demonstrators marched along the streets of Hamilton the workingmen pelted mud at Chinese laundries on their route, and gathered to hear speeches condemning the government's use of Chinese labor on the construction of the CPR. See Kealey and Palmer, Ibid., 150-151.
69. Gregory Kealey and Bryan Palmer, Dreaming of What Might Be: The Knights of Labor in Ontario, 1880-1900 (Cambridge, 1982), 150.
70. Gregory Kealey, "Labour and Working-Class History in Canada: Prospects in the 1980s," Labour/Le Travailleur, 7 (Spring 1981), 89.
71. See for example, Bercuson, Ibid.
72. Kealey, Ibid.
73. This framework does not exclude this book's examination of regions outside of Hamilton and Toronto and alternative time periods.
74. The scope of working-class cultural activities examined was broad; for instance it included the Knights involvement in ritualism and symbolism, cultural events (demonstrations, dances, picnics and parades), gender relations, brainworkers, and workers' poetry to name a few.
75. Kealey and Palmer, Ibid., 278.

76. For a interesting overview see Kealey, Ibid., 80-91.
77. See George Theodorson and Achilles Theodorson, A Modern Dictionary of Sociology (New York, 1969), 284.
78. Kealey and Palmer, Ibid., 278.
79. Ibid., 278-279.
80. Reference can be made to the entire discussion of the Knights contribution towards forging a culture in Kealey and Palmer, Ibid., 277-329. In this thesis, the area "working-class cultural events" is found in the section of the content analysis which follows the questions on the support for the three labor schools and is referred to in a subsequent discussion.
81. Specifically, the Trade Union Act in 1872 recognized trade unions as a legal institution in Canada. See chapter two for a fuller discussion on the nine hours agitation of 1872.
82. For instance, John Bland represented a Hamilton-based local assembly of the Knights at the national labor council, the Trades and Labor Congress, in 1887. In the 1870s, Bland's dismissal from the Wilson, Bowman and Company's sewing machine works precipitated the first strike of the Canadian nine-hour movement. See Kealey and Palmer, Ibid., 140.
83. The TLC essentially operated as a replacement for the Canadian Labor Union of the 1870s. It should be noted that the TLC was the forerunner to the Canadian Labor Congress of 1883.
84. Palladium of Labor, October 20, 1883.
85. See questions 21 and 32.
86. Question fourteen was designed to determine if the earlier results could be replicated using an alternative approach. The likert scale set up in question fourteen was based on a subjective evaluation of the combined Palladium articles.
87. Bryan Palmer, Working-Class Experience: The Rise and Reconstitution of Canadian of Canadian Labour, 1800-1980 (Toronto, 1983), 106.
88. Palmer, Ibid., 108.
89. Palladium of Labor, January 12, 1884.
90. See Carroll D. Wright, "An Historical Sketch of the Knights of Labor," Quarterly Journal of Economics, 1 (1887), 142.

91. The AK set out the practices of the opening services: "A Globe being placed on the outside of an Outer Veil; a copy of the Sacred Scripture closed, and a box or basket, containing blank cards on a triangular Alter, red in color, in the centre of the vestibule; a Lance on the outside of the Inner Veil; or entrance to the Sanctuary, over the wicket; that the initiated may know that an Assembly of the * * * * are in session." Cited in John R. Commons, et al., A Documentary History of American Industrial Society (New York, 1958), 20. The stars represents the symbol for a District Assembly, three stars was designated for the Local Assembly. The secret oath taken by the new members promised, "I -- --, do truly and solemnly swear, (or affirm) that I will never reveal, by word, act, art, or implication, positive or negative, to any person or persons whatsoever the name or objects of this Order, the name, or person of any one of a member thereof, its signs, mysteries, arts, privileges or benefits: now or hereafter, given to, or conferred on me, any words spoken, acts done, or objects intended; except in a legal, authorized manner, or by special permission of the Order granted to me. Ibid., 21.

92. Commons, et al., Ibid., 20-24.

93. Wright, Ibid., 141.

94. Victor O. Chan, "Canadian Knights of Labor with Special Reference to the 1880s," (Masters thesis, McGill University 1949), 4.

95. Ibid., 3.

96. Kealey and Palmer, Ibid., 286.

97. Ibid., 287-288.

98. See for example, Bryan Palmer, A Culture in Conflict: Skilled Workers and Industrial Capitalism in Hamilton, Ontario, 1860-1914 (Montreal, 1979). See also Ibid.

99. Chan, Ibid., 96.

100. Five articles refer to labor demonstrations.

101. Palladium of Labor, August 11, 1883.

102. Kealey and Palmer, Ibid., 293.

103. See Ibid., 316-326.

104. See Palmer, Ibid., 126.

105. The "other" category of the content analysis consisted primarily of worker's poetry (men and women). The poetry often addressed the social inequalities forced onto working men and women.

106. Palladium of Labor, November 20, 1886.

107. Suffrage rights for women was frequently mentioned in the Palladium, see for example, "Our Social Club" on October 20, 1883. The first edition following "Our Social Club" argued that "Every labor reformer whatever his pet phase of progression should be willing to aid in any movement which seems to be in the general line of advancement - be it a strike for higher wages - an agitation for manhood or womanhood suffrage - a co-operative store - ...in fact any sort of scheme or movement which seems calculated to rouse public opinion and set men and women to thinking about their rights." Palladium of Labor, December 1, 1883.

108. Dubinsky, Ibid.

109. Ibid., 203-204.

110. See for instance, Palladium of Labor, January 12, 1884.

111. Palmer, Working-Class Experience, 111.

112. Eugene Forsey, Trade Unions in Canada, 1812-1902 (Toronto, 1982), 138.

113. Great Britain received a similar level with 17, France 6, Scotland 4, Belgium 4, while Spain and Ireland each accumulated 1.

114. Kealey and Palmer, Ibid., 16.

115. The persistent and vocal efforts by the Knights to exclude the Chinese was responsible for the federal government's 1885 decision to impose a "head tax" of \$50 dollars on each Chinese laborer landed in Canada. Unfortunately for the Knights, these actions had severely damaging long-term effects on ethnic relations in Canada. See Chan, 16.

116. Palladium of Labor, October 6, 1883.

117. The Palladium denounced assisted immigration, which it saw as a plot to keep down wages and flood the colonies with the surplus populations of Europe. See Lennon, Ibid., 26.

118. The remaining 7 articles were classified as "no comment".

119. The statement appeared in a column written by Thompson entitled "Bric A Bats".

120. Bernard Ostry has argued that organized labor was united in their demands for an end to Chinese and all assisted or pauper immigration in the 1880s. See his article, "Conservatives, Liberals, and Labour in the 1880s," Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science, 16 (May 1961), 143.

121. This has been supported by the results of the content analysis which suggest an anti-capitalist and pro-labor stance on the part of the Palladium.

122. Hann, Ibid., 49.

123. Palladium of Labor, January 19, 1884.

124. Over 76% of the positive responses appeared in the first year of the Palladium's publication.

125. See Gene Howard Homel, "Fading Beams of the Nineteenth Century: Radicalism and Early Socialism in Canada's 1890s," Labour/ Le Travailleur, 5 (Spring 1980), 7-32. This trend was also discussed by Chan, Ibid., 104.

126. Verzuh, Ibid., 136.

127. Forsey, Ibid., 163. See also Palladium of Labor, 1883-1886.

128. Palladium of Labor, February 23, 1884.

129. Forsey, Ibid., 163.

130. Palladium of Labor, March 14, 1885.

131. See Chan, Ibid., 99.

132. Palladium of Labor, November 10, 1883.

133. Ibid.

134. The Preamble to the Declaration of the Principles of the Knights of Labor supports this claim. Refer to Appendix A. In addition, the survey of the Palladium revealed the centrality of the monopoly issue.

135. See for instance, Verzuh, Ibid., especially chapter 4.

136. Verzuh, Ibid., 118.

137. See for instance, Palladium of Labor, June 12, 1886.

138. Palladium of Labor, December 12, 1883.
139. Palladium of Labor, January 12, 1884.
140. Palladium of Labor, June 21, 1884. This quote was selected for illustrative purposes and was not used in the actual sample from the content analysis. There were, however, instances of sensational attacks on the banking system from the issues sampled. For example, one article described a bank clerk driven to suicide, "by the abuse and oppression of sordid despotic employers." Ibid., September 20, 1884.
141. For example, see Palladium of Labor, April 12, 1884.
142. Palmer, Ibid., 119-123.
143. For a representative example of this style of research, refer to Ostry, "Conservatives, Liberals, and Labour in the 1870s," Ibid.; and his subsequent work, "Conservatives, Liberals, and Labour in the 1880s," Ibid.
144. It should be noted that these labor councils were based on coalitions between the Knights and local trade unions. See Kealey and Palmer, Ibid., especially 98-99, and 204-215.
145. Craig Heron, "Labourism and the Canadian Working Class," Labour/Le Travail, 18 (Spring 1984), 53.
146. For instance, in the 1882 municipal elections, shoemaker Robert Coulter and coppersmith George Collis led the Knights to a number of alderman's posts. See Palmer, Ibid., 120.
147. Robin, Ibid., 6-7.
148. For a detailed examination of the provincial elections between 1882 and 1887 see Ibid., 241. See Heron, Ibid., 52.
149. For instance, Palladium of Labor, September 29, 1883 (male) and October 20, 1883 (female).
150. Government intervention included control over a number of private institutions. Some of which included, "ownership and management of railroads, telegraphs, banks, insurance companies, etc..." Palladium of Labor, December 11, 1886.
151. Palladium of Labor, April 12, 1884.
152. Ibid.
153. Palladium of Labor, October 27, 1883.
154. Palladium of Labor, December 8, 1883.

155. Palladium of Labor, June 27, 1885.
156. Palladium of Labor, February 2, 1884.
157. Kealey and Palmer, Ibid., 231.
158. Ibid., 214-215.
159. For instance, see Palladium of Labor, April 3, 1886.
160. Palladium of Labor, October 10, 1885.
161. Palladium of Labor, December 5, 1885.
162. This period, running from 1887 until 1894 is not covered in this thesis. It marks the beginning, however, of the years in which the Knights gradually disappeared from the Canadian labor movement. Kealey and Palmer, Ibid., 247.
163. Palladium of Labor, October 10, 1885.
164. Palladium of Labor, November 24, 1883.
165. Ibid.
166. Verzuh, Ibid., 122-123.
167. A few attacks were also made on scandals involving the church.
168. Palladium of Labor, December 15, 1883.
169. Palladium of Labor, December 22, 1883.
170. Palladium of Labor, November 3, 1883.
171. Palladium of Labor, May 8, 1886.
172. Palladium of Labor, May 8, 1886.
173. Palmer, Ibid., 124.
174. Palladium of Labor, October 2, 1886.
175. For example, Bernard Ostry, "Conservatives, Liberals, and Labour in the 1880s," Ibid. See also, Eugene Forsey, "A Note on the Dominion Factory Bills of the Eighteen-Eighties," Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science, 13 (1947), 580-584.
176. The bill was delayed as a result of political battles over jurisdiction.

177. Ostry, *Ibid.*, 142, and Gregory Kealey, ed., Canada Investigates Industrialism (Toronto, 1973), see the introduction.
178. Sir John A. Macdonald to Sir Charles Tupper, cited in Gregory Kealey and Bryan Palmer, "The Bonds of Unity: The Knights of Labor in Ontario, 1880-1900," Histoire sociale-Social History 14 (Nov. 1984), 397.
179. Gregory Kealey, ed., Canada Investigates, xi.
180. Ostry, 145.
181. Palmer, *Ibid.*, 124.
182. *Ibid.*
183. Heron, *Ibid.*, 49.
184. The positivist school has not done a great deal of direct research on this earliest period of working-class life. See Bryan Palmer, "Working-Class Canada: Recent Historical Writing," *Ibid.*, 600-601.
185. Refer to the discussion on the institutional school in chapter one. Selig Perlman examined the strike actions of the Knights in relation to what he saw as the union's weak leadership.
186. Palladium of Labor, September 5, 1885.
187. *Ibid.*
188. Douglas Kennedy, The Knights of Labor in Canada (London, 1956), 69-70.
189. Kealey and Palmer, Dreaming, 332.
190. Kealey and Palmer, "The Bonds of Unity," 401. See also *Ibid.*, 111 and 167.
191. Forsey, Trade Unions, 139.
192. This was based on question 29 from the content analysis.
193. Verzuh, *Ibid.*, 125-126.
194. Palladium of Labor, November 7, 1885.
195. Palladium of Labor, February 23, 1884.
196. Palladium of Labor, June 12, 1886.
197. Palmer, *Ibid.*, 126.

198. Palladium of Labor, October 6, 1883.
199. Forsey, Ibid., 139-141.
200. For a detailed account of the famous Haymarket riots and bombings in Chicago, see Paul Avrich, The Haymarket Tragedy (Princeton, 1984).
201. Palladium of Labor, November 6, 1886.
202. Ibid.
203. Palladium of Labor, June 12, 1886.
204. Kealey and Palmer, Dreaming, 118.
205. Forsey, Trade Unions, 148-149.
206. Palladium of Labor, April 3, 1886.
207. Forsey, Trade Unions, 148.
208. Palladium of Labor, October 2, 1886.
209. For example, the Palladium endorsed the Knights of Labor Declaration of Principles. The abolition of the wage system and private property were vigorously supported in the weekly editorials.
210. The new labor historians have adopted this approach in their study on the Knights of Labor in Ontario. An excellent discussion on the utility of working-class culture in Canadian research can be found in, Gregory Kealey, "Labour and Working-Class History," 80-92.
211. Lockouts and boycotts were recorded at a less frequent rate.
212. Kealey and Palmer, Ibid., 112 and 167.
213. See Forsey, Trade Unions, 139-141.

Chapter Five

Conclusion

The current thesis has attempted to respond to some of the issues left unresolved in the recent debates on Canadian working-class history. This process has been aided by the interdisciplinary style of research promoted within the field of social history. The purpose of this thesis has been to test the validity of the competing arguments advanced on the Knights of Labor. The issues which separate the competing labor schools were detailed, considered, and subjected to an empirical test. Special attention has been directed towards fully examining the research conducted on the Knights of Labor in Ontario.

The evaluation of the competing schools was based on a content analysis of data from a restricted time frame and region. The survey of the Hamilton Palladium of Labor between 1883 and 1886 produced some interesting results. The data results indicated that working-class opposition thrived in south-central Ontario during the mid-1880s. Overall, the data collected from the areas of cultural events, labor programmes, politics, and strikes all supported this characterization. Furthermore, the selection of Toronto's Ontario Workman as a alternative data source helped to demonstrate how the Knights broke decisively from the limitation of earlier nineteenth-century efforts. For a brief period, the Knights were successful in uniting thousands of

workers into an all-inclusive organization.

Of the three labor schools tested, the overwhelming level of support was recorded for the new labor historians. The two leading proponents of this school, Gregory Kealey and Bryan Palmer, were the first Canadian scholars to engage in a sustained analysis of the Knights in Ontario. They found that the Order was responsible for organizing a significant proportion of the Ontario work-force in the 1880s.¹ More importantly, were the range of social, cultural, political, and economic campaigns that the rank and file members engaged in during this period. There was very little evidence collected from the content analysis which ran contrary to their assessment of the Knights as a united movement of working-class opposition.

In chapter one it was shown that the leading members of the positivist school have devoted a great deal of time and attention towards attacking the new labor historians' assessment of the Knights of Labor. Based on the results from the content analysis, these attacks have been futile. There was no substantial evidence collected from the materials studied which indicated that non-class divisions seriously impeded the unity of the Knights.

These results are somewhat surprising given that the positivists are responsible for the largest volume of attacks on the new labor historians. Their critiques have taken the form of book reviews and short articles appearing in a number

of scholarly journals.² In general, writers belonging to the positivist school have not based their criticisms on direct research on the Knights in Ontario.³ Their major works are based on examinations of labor relations in Western Canada during the twentieth century. On the basis of the accumulated evidence, it could be argued that these attacks are simply uninformed commentary and do not reflect a diligent searching of the primary sources from the nineteenth century. For example, David Bercuson, a leading positivist, has argued that the existence of gender and ethnic divisions are two telling repudiations of the working-class experiences of the Knights in the 1880s. Bryan Palmer has replied to this contention in a recent article:

[Bercuson's] argument here is tautological and ahistorical, for the point is surely historical context: classes, as structural entities, exist in capitalism and, as social and cultural expressions, are made, unmade, and remade in particular historical periods. Bercuson seems innocent of this basic understanding and, in his attempt to argue that ethnic divisions inhibited class, leaps from the divisions between Irish Protestants and Catholics in the pre-1850s period to the post-1900 clash of immigrant and English-speaking cultures.⁴

The institutional school was the third position tested by means of the content analysis. This school has not been directly involved in the recent debates on the Knights of Labor in Ontario. The American institutional writers produced their major works on labor history during the post-World War II era. The leading writers of this school, John R Commons, Selig Perlman, and Robert Hoxie, had a major impact on a

dominant tradition in Canadian historical scholarship. There was only a minimal level of support for the institutional school's negative assessment of the Knights found in the primary materials studied.

The content analysis confirmed the existence of a range of social, cultural, and political activities which ran contrary to the institutional school's characterization of the Knights. For example, evidence suggesting the importance of independent political action figured prominently in the front pages of the Palladium, but was absent in the monographs of the institutional school. Commons and his followers ignored these rank and file activities in favour of an examination of union structure, and the central figures and events connected with the Knights. The institutional school was particularly concerned with examining the Order during their years of decline.

On the basis of the results from the content analysis, it is impossible to fully evaluate the factors associated with the decline of the Order in south-central Ontario. The membership of the Hamilton and Toronto local assemblies were at their height during the years in which the Palladium published (1883-1886). In chapter two it was noted that the Knights deteriorated after 1886, rapidly in some locales, more slowly in others. The Knights had spent themselves as a social and political force in south-central Ontario by the early 1890s.⁵ The content analysis did not include a sample

of materials from this critical period of decline because of the time constraints involved in a primary research design.

The institutional and new labor historians have advanced a number of often competing theories to explain the Order's demise. The institutional school emphasized the internal conflicts the Knights experienced in the 1890s. They argued that Grand Master Workman Powderly's leadership was too weak to slow down the more powerful forces of the AFL's style of business unionism. This assessment seems to be partially correct when applied to the Knights of Labor in south-central Ontario. For example, Palladium reported on the tremendous financial burden caused by the strike against Frank Smith's street railway company and its damaging effects. The cautious tone adopted by the Toronto DA 125 in the wake of this economic disaster brought the Knights into direct conflict with the international craft unions.⁶

However, this school failed to examine the broader questions at the level of inter-class relations (labor, state, capital).⁷ For example, there was a high level of employer hostility exhibited during several of the strikes taking place in the 1880s not account for by Commons and his followers. The new labor historians have filled the void in examining the external factors contributing to the Order's disappearance.

The new labor historians demonstrated how the Knights were inhibited by the rapidly evolving Canadian political

economy:

This movement culture of alternative peaked...at precisely that moment, the 1880s, when the experience -economic, social, cultural, political- that had ushered it into being was on the brink of transformation....While the depression of the 1890s, the nationalization of politics, the increasing prominence of ethnic allegiances, and the crisis of leadership unfolding in the upper echelons of the Knights of Labor all played a part in insuring the ultimate defeat of the Noble and Holy Order, the demise of the Knights and the victory of the AFL was anything but a settled issue in the 1880s.⁸

This final reference to the AFL was made in relation to the now famous Berlin convention of the Trades and Labor Congress in 1902. The TLC amended its constitution so as to exclude from its membership national and international unions that did not accept the jurisdiction of the AFL. This decision marked the end of the Knights of Labor in Canada.

The results obtained from the content analysis indicate that there is strong support for the new labor historians based on the content analysis of the Hamilton Palladium of Labor (1883-1886). It is important to interpret these results with caution. The examination of the competing labor schools is based on a single primary source of data and research technique. A complete analysis of the competing labor schools would involve a further exploration of the data and research options. To those students interested in studying the Knights of Labor, there are several levels of inquiry that remain to be uncovered.

1. See Gregory Kealey and Bryan Palmer, "The Bonds of Unity: Some Further Reflections," Histoire sociale - Social History, 16 (May 1983), 173-187.
2. Refer to chapter one for a survey of many of these journal articles.
3. Michael Piva is one of the only of the writers to critique the new labor historians based on a cursory examination of the primary data from the 1880s. Piva charged that Kealey and Palmer exaggerated the percentage of the work-force organized by the Order in, "The Bond of Unity: A Comment," Histoire sociale - Social History, 16 (May 1983), 162-172. For a convincing reply, see Kealey and Palmer, *Ibid.*
4. Bryan Palmer, "Listening to History Rather than Historians: Reflections on Working Class History," Studies in Political Economy, 20 (Summer 1986), 56.
5. Gregory Kealey and Bryan Palmer, Dreaming of What Might Be: The Knights of Labor in Ontario, 1880-1900 (Cambridge, 1982), see especially chapters three, four, and ten.
6. Kealey and Palmer, *Ibid.*, 127-134.
7. See chapter one from the current thesis.
8. Kealey and Palmer, *Ibid.*, 382.

Appendix A: Preamble and Declaration of Principles of the
Knights of Labor

The Order laid its foundations on a code of principles, and all of its aims and policies were intimately related to their constitution. The preamble to the declaration of principles refers to the alarming development and aggressiveness of capitalists and corporations, that left unchecked would result in the pauperization of the toiling masses. The organization of the industrial masses into the Order of the Knights of Labor was offered as the mechanism of control against unjust accumulation and the power for evil of aggregated wealth. This was to be achieved through a system of co-operative effort, calling on all who believe in securing "the greatest good the greatest number," to aid and assist the Knights.

The declaration of principles adopted at Reading, Pennsylvania in 1878 remained largely intact over the course of the history of the Knights of Labor. The majority of the articles listed were formulated with the objective of setting them forth into legislation. The following list is a reproduction of the original aims:

I. To make industrial and moral worth, not wealth, the true standard of individual and national greatness.

II. To secure for the workers the full enjoyment of the wealth they create, sufficient leisure in which to develop their intellectual, moral, and social faculties; all the benefits, recreation and pleasure of association; in a word, to enable them to share in the gains and honors of advancing civilization.

III. The establishment of Bureaus of Labor Statistics, that we may arrive at a correct knowledge of educational, moral, and financial condition of the laboring masses.

IV. That public lands, the heritage of people, be reserved for actual settlers, not another acre for the railroad speculator; and that all lands now held for speculative purposes be taxed to their full value.

V. The abrogation of all laws that do not bear equally upon capital and labor, and the removal of unjust technicalities, delays, and discriminations in the administration of justice.

VI. The adoption of measures providing for the health and safety of those engaged in mining, manufacturing, and building industries, and for indemnification to those engaged therein for injuries received through lack of necessary safeguards.

VII. The recognition by incorporation, of trades-unions, orders, and such other associations as may be organized by the working masses to improve their condition and protect their rights.

VIII. The enactment of laws to compel corporations to pay their employees weekly in lawful money for the labor of the preceding week, and giving mechanics and laborers a first lien upon the product of their labor to the full extent of the wages.

IX. The abolition of the contract system on national, State, [sic] and municipal works.

X. The enactment of laws providing for arbitration between employers and employed, and to enforce the decision of the arbitrators.

XI. The prohibition by law of the employment of children under fifteen years of age in workshops, mines, and factories.

XII. To prohibit the hiring out of convict labor.

XIII. That a graduated income tax be levied.

And we demand at the hands of Congress: --

XIV. The establishment of a national monetary system, in which a circulating medium in necessary quantity shall issue direct to the people, without the intervention of banks; that all the national issue shall be full legal tender in payment of all debts, public and private; and that the government shall not guarantee or recognize private banks or create any banking corporations.

XV. That interest-bearing bonds, bills of credit, or notes shall never be issued by the government; but that, when need arises, the emergency shall be met by issue of legal-tender, non-interest-bearing money.

XVI. That the importation of foreign labor under contract be prohibited.

XVII. That, in connection with the post-office, the government shall organize financial exchanges, safe deposits, and facilities for deposit of the saving of the people in small sums.

XVIII. That the government shall obtain possession, by purchase, under the right of eminent domain, of all telegraphs, telephones, and railroads; and that hereafter no charter or licence be issued to any corporation for construction or operation of any means of transporting intelligence, passengers, or freight.

XIX. To establish a co-operative institution, such as will tend to supersede the wage system, by the introduction of a co-operative system.

XX. To secure for both sexes equal pay for equal work.

XXI. To shorten the hours of labor by a general refusal to work for more than eight hours.

XXII. To persuade employers to agree to arbitrate all differences which may arise between them and their employees, in order that the bonds of sympathy between them may be strengthened, and that strikes may be rendered unnecessary.¹

¹ Preamble and declaration of principles cited in Corral D. Wright, "An Historical Sketch of the Knights of Labor," Quarterly Journal of Economics 1 (Jan. 1887), 157-159.

Appendix B: Content Analysis of the Hamilton Palladium of
Labor

VOLUME NUMBER DATE

1 How Many articles are on the front page? 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
other__

2 What is the title of each article?

1) _____	2) _____
3) _____	4) _____
5) _____	6) _____
7) _____	8) _____

3 What/Who is the source of the article?

1) _____	2) _____
3) _____	4) _____
5) _____	6) _____
7) _____	8) _____

4 How many articles are labor related? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6
7 other__

5 How many articles are non-labor related? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6
7 other__

WORKERS' IDEOLOGY:

6 How many of the articles refer to a W-C consciousness? 0 1 2 3
4 5 6 7 8 other__ (that is, as indicating a separation
of conflicting interests between workers and employers).

7 How many of the articles refer to a "middle-class"
consciousness among the workers? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 other__
(that is, a common interest in the economic system expressed
between workers and employers).

8 How many of the articles comment on ethnicity dividing instead
of uniting w-c interests? 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 other__

9 Discussion concerning a working-class cultural events?
1 Yes 2 No If yes, what type of events were K's sponsored:
a Picnics b Demonstrations or Parades c Dances, hops, balls
c) other__

10 Is there any discussion of the conditions of working people
internationally? 1 Yes 2 No 3 If yes, where__

11 Examples of Knight's sponsored programmes that challenge
the existing conditions of capitalism? 1 Yes 2 No
If yes, what type? a Single Tax (land nationalization)
b Co-operative systems c Socialist doctrines
d Gov't intervention of the economy e Other

12 Examples of attacks on all forms of monopoly (land, money, and transportation)? 1 Yes 2 No

13 On a scale from one to ten, with one meaning worker/employer interests are closely related and ten as greatly separated, what direction did the overall front page lean towards #____

Political Activities

14 Are there any statements dealing with labor's involvement with politics? 1 Yes 2 No If yes, continue thru to 4e:

- a Independent labor candidates
- b Labor/established Party coalition
- c Lobby actions by the K's
- d Endorsement of labor reform candidate (Tory or Grit)
- e Other_____

15 If politics was discussed, at which level(s):

- 1 Local 2 Provincial 3 Federal 4 More than one 5 All three
- 6 No Comment 7 Other_____

16 If politics discussed, at which level predominantly?

- 1 Local 2 Provincial 3 Federal
- 4 Two combinations_____
- 5 All three 6 No comment 7 Other_____

17 Discussion of political gains? 1 Yes 2 No If yes, what type?

- a Independent victories
- b Lib-Lab Tory-Lab wins
- c Legislative gains due to labor efforts
- d Examples of the established parties attempting to gain worker support (for ex., through speeches, or campaign promises)
- e An above combination_____
- f No Comment
- g Other_____

18 Discussion of pol. loses? 1 Yes 2 No If yes, type:

- a Independent victories
- b Lib-Lab Tory-Lab wins
- c Legislative gains due to labor efforts
- d Examples of the established parties attempting to gain worker support (for ex., through speeches, or campaign promises)
- e An above combination_____
- f No Comment
- g Other_____

19 Use of muckraking techniques? 1 Yes 2 No

- 20 Attacks on the Government's immigration policy? 1 Yes 2 No
If yes, a Pacist attack? b Economically motivated attack
c combination of both d No comment e other _____
- 21 Discussion of divisions within the K's impeding pol. action
(for ex., gender, ethnicity, race, religion) 1 Yes 2 No

Workers' Struggle

- 22 Any type of strike action discussed? 1 Yes 2 No 3 No comment
If yes, go to questions B to G; if no skip B to G.
- 23 More than One strike? 1 Yes 2 No If yes, how many? 2 3 4 5 6
7 More # _____
- 24 What type(s) 1 K's authorized
2 Led by a different union _____
3 A combination _____
4 Other _____
5 No comment
- 25 Where was the strike held? 1 T.O. 2 Hamilton
3 Ontario 4 Other Province 5 U.S. 6 International
7 A combination _____ 8 Other _____
9 No comment
- 26 Was their violence? 1 Yes 2 No 3 No comment
- 27 Was there police intervention 1 Yes 2 No 3 No comment
- 28 Was the strike(s) supported by the general public
1 Yes 2 No 3 No Comment
- 29 Did any of the articles discuss boycotts? 1 Yes 2 No 3
If Yes, 4 How Many? _____
- 30 Was there any discussion of manufacturers locking out workers?
1 Yes 2 No 3 If yes, how many # _____
- 31 Discussion of ethnic divisions impeding the K's uniting around
a given strike action? 1 Yes 2 No
3 If yes how many separate cases # _____
- 32 Other types of divisions exerting a negative effect on the
advance of Knights' struggles (for ex., gender divisions,
race, ethnic, or religious): 1 Yes 2 No 3 If yes how many
separate examples # _____

Appendix C: Palladium of Labor: Random Selection of
Articles in Support of New Labor History School

1. The big corporations and monopolies care nothing for the rights of the people. Let them have it all their way a few years longer, and the laboring people will wake up some fine morning and find that the only right they have left them is the glorious right to clothe themselves in sackcloth, subsist on rations of bran bread and sawdust pudding, sleep in a borrowed haystack, and earn those luxuries by working for three cents a day, taking his pay in second-hand postage stamps. Organize, educate and agitate (September 29, 1883).

2. THE RICH AND THE POOR - Day by day the power of wealth is asserting itself as superior to law. Day by day the evidence increases that the rights of the poor man are being gradually impaired and that the privileges of the rich man are growing more and more defiant of law and destructive justice (October 27, 1883).

3. ...in the great struggle of Labor against the abuse of Capital, a sound policy is necessary to ensure the emancipation of Labor. Capitalists are crafty and shrewd; the[y] attack workmen on all available occasions... (November 24, 1883).

4. THE ROBBERY OF THE WORKERS, by unequal methods of distribution - the accumulation of wealth in the hands of large capitalists by means of usury and extortion (December 15, 1883).

5. Do they [the commercial press] fancy that at this stage of the discussion the can delude workingmen into supposing that either free trade or tariff protection is worth fighting for, that the whole vast question between Labor and Capital is to be settled by raising or lowering the tariff wall? Do they really imagine the toilers would ignore, the vital issue of a fairer distribution of products to join in their never ending wrangle about protection... (January 19, 1884).

6. Every relic of class distinction, every social movement based upon the permanent [sic] inferiority of our section of the community to another should be fought by all means in our power. Snobbery in its various manifestations is the great bulwark of capitalistic injustice (January 26, 1884)

7. WORKINGMEN, don't be deceived by the capitalistic press, into the idea that "protection" of the laborer will be accomplished by either the Grit of Tory parties. If there is any class of people that will be "protected" it is the manufacturers, your wages will always be reduced as near as possible to the amount necessary to keep you alive, in order

that you may serve your bosses (March 1, 1884).

8. It is not without cause that Anarchism makes converts. When justice is perverted to become the instrument of oppression, when law is prostituted to the interests of the wealthy and powerful, when all the social forces seem ranged against the aspirations of the disinherited class for a brighter and freer existence, it is not to be wondered at that even so repulsive doctrine finds it enthusiastic advocates...It is monopoly and injustice which are the parents of anarchy (July 12, 1884)

9. The intrinsically false and absurd character of our present relations between Labor and Capital must strike every reflective mind....that even the defenders of social inequality themselves in their more candid moods acknowledge that the system is unnatural and opposed to common sense and justice (November 29, 1884).

10. The condition of the laboring masses everywhere - the long hours of toil, scanty wages, wretched homes, which are the lot of Labor in our large cities in the very midst of luxury and abundance - these testify as strongly as even the heartless gloating over the miseries of war - to gross inhumanity and malevolent greed of the money power (April 18, 1885).

11. It seems there are other laws beside those of supply and demand that ought to enter even into the business dealings of employers of Labor and their workpeople when it is pointed out that wealth producers are not the wealth enjoyers - that whilst heads of great firms live in luxury, their employee are frequently underpaid, and only maintain a decent level of wages by the threat of strikes and the arts of Trades' Unionism (October 10, 1885).

12. Anarchism is a monster, but Capitalism is its parent....There is only one way to destroy anarchism, and that is to destroy the conditions under which it flourishes (June 12, 1886).

13. One of the evils which have borne especially hard upon the laborers of the country, particularly those employed in manufacturing industries, is the system of "scrip", or store-order payment of wages. It is an evil against which they inveighed with more bitterness perhaps than any other one of the many ills under which they have suffered, and the Labor organizations of the country have been unit[ed] in demanding the passage of laws which would protect them against this iniquitous system of robbery, for it is nothing else (December 11, 1886).

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