Battles on the Cultural Front:
The (De)Labouring of Culture in Canada, 1914-1944

by

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in partial fulfilment of the requirements
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Abstract

Going beyond a focus on commissions and institutions which normally guides Canadian communication scholarship, the thesis makes a fundamental adjustment by considering communication and culture in relationship with labour. It suggests that this adjustment is necessary to identify a range of alternative practices of communication and culture that were otherwise marginalized and excluded in considerations of “the public” in state policy formulations. The thesis takes a political economy of communication approach that concentrates on the process of structuration to understand the public, not as audiences and consumers, but as collective agents in the making of culture. The thesis identifies and describes this making as a “labouring of culture,” manifested by a progressive political and cultural movement that was constituted by an amalgamation of immigrant organizations, socialist political parties, women’s, pacifist, educational, religious, and youth groups, their modes and means of communication, and their efforts to enable greater participation in decisions affecting their lives.

In sorting out the process of structuration and its construct hegemony, the thesis explains how this agency was constituted within and against dominant political economic and social structures, characterizing the points of intersection as the “cultural front,” and the “battles” as those of hegemonic contest resulting in dominant, alternative and oppositional practices of communication and culture. To explain how some practices of communication and culture became dominant and others became marginalized or excluded, the thesis demonstrates how the labouring of culture was constrained by contradictions within the movement, and was marginalized and excluded through the combined actions of various nationalist and religious groups, and principally the

Canadian government, such that communication and culture were “de-laboured” and “re-laboured” in accordance with state political priorities. In contributing to communication history, the thesis proposes that the state’s involvement in communication and culture, generally accepted as necessary to promote national unity and guard against the Americanization of culture, also worked to guard against a politicized labour culture, such that labour and politics were separated from communication and culture, thereby limiting democracy in Canada.

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List of Abbreviations

AAUC	Amateur Athletic Union of Canada
ACCL	All-Canadian Congress of Labour
AFL	American Federation of Labor
AFM	American Federation of Musicians
ALP	Associated Labor Press
CASD	Committee to Aid Spanish Democracy
CBC	Canadian Broadcasting Corporation
CBRE	Canadian Brotherhood of Railway Employees
CCCL	Canadian and Catholic Confederation of Labour (also known as CTCC)
CCF	Co-operative Commonwealth Federation
CCLA	Canadian Civil Liberties Association
CCLU	Canadian Civil Liberties Union
CCYM	Co-operative Commonwealth Youth Movement
CFL	Chicago Federation of Labor
CIO	Committee of Industrial Organizations
CIO	Congress of Industrial Organizations
CLAWF	Canadian League Against War and Fascism
CLDL	Canadian Labour Defence League
CLPD	Canadian League for Peace and Democracy
CPC	Communist Party of Canada
CRBC	Canadian Radio Broadcasting Commission
CTCC	Confédération des Travailleurs Catholiques du Canada
CYC	Canadian Youth Congress
CYL	Canadian Youth League
DDF	Dominion Day Drama Festival
DOCR	Defence of Canada Regulations
FCSO	Fellowship for a Christian Social Order
FOC	Finnish Organization of Canada
FOR	Fellowship for Reconciliation
FRC	Federal Radio Commission
FUL	Farmers' Unity League
FWSAC	Finnish Workers' Sport Association of Canada
ILP	Independent Labor Party
ILO	Independent Labour Organization
IOC	International Olympic Committee
IODE	Imperial Order of the Daughters of the Empire
LAWF	League Against War and Fascism
LSR	League for Social Reconstruction
NAC	National Archives of Canada
NFB	National Film Board
NHL	National Hockey League
NLC	National Library of Canada
NUWA	National Unemployed Workers' Association

List of Abbreviations (continued)

PAC	Progressive Arts Club
RCMP	Royal Canadian Mounted Police
RCWU	Relief Camp Workers' Union
SCM	Student Christian Movement
SCPC	Socialist Democratic Party of Canada
SLC	Students' League of Canada
SPC	Socialist Party of Canada
TLC or	
TLCC	Trades and Labour Congress of Canada
TTLC	Toronto Trades and Labour Council
ULFTA	Ukrainian Labour Farmer Temple Association
WEA	Workers' Education Association
WET	Workers' Experimental Theatre
WIB	Wartime Information Board
WIL or	
WILPF	Women's International League for Peace and Freedom
WLL	Women's Labour League
WSA	Workers' Sport Association
WSAC	Workers' Sport Association of Canada
WUL	Workers' Unity League
YMCA	Young Men's Christian Association
YMHA	Young Men's Hebrew Association
YWCA	Young Women's Christian Association
YWHA	Young Women's Hebrew Association

Chapter One: Investigating the Blind-Spots

It is a choice between commercial interests and the people's interests. It is a choice between the State and the United States. (Graham Spry, 1932).¹

Whither the People?

Graham Spry's synthesis of the fate of Canadian broadcasting has often been used to fashion the parameters of inquiry into the history of the relationship between communication and culture in Canada. Analyses have tended to focus on "commercial interests" in overviews of the cultural industries, or concentrate on "the State" in terms of institutions and policy making.² The state's involvement in the making of communication and cultural policy is generally assumed to have begun in the late 1920s with the Royal Commission on Radio Broadcasting (the Aird Commission) and further legitimized by reasons of national unity and cultural sovereignty. Debates have consistently focused on structures, such as the regulation of the cultural industries; the role and operation of institutions such as the Canadian Radio Broadcasting Corporation (CRBC) (1932), the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) (1936), the National Film Board (NFB) (1939); and particulars of royal commissions such as the Aird Commission (1929) and the Massey Commission (1951).³ With the advantage of hindsight however, these debates have been limited and restrictive. A current example of their

¹House of Commons Special Committee on Radio Broadcasting, *Minutes* 1932:45-6, as cited in Raboy (1990:40).

²See for example: Weir (1965); Peers (1969); Audley (1983); Raboy (1990); Singer (1995); and Dorland (1996).

³The Massey Commission, or the Massey-Levesque Commission, is the short form for the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences (Final Report 1951).

limitation is evident in today's international trade agreements where arguments for the protection of cultural sovereignty have become less salient. Moreover, as Babe (1995), Raboy (1990), Eaman (1994), Winseck (1998) and others have pointed out, discussions of Canadian state involvement in communication and culture have been limited by narrow conceptualizations of the "public" in public broadcasting, and by minimal public participation in decision-making more generally. They suggest that communication in Canada is less democratic than it could be, thus hindering the potential to develop alternatives to either state or commercial control.

Going beyond a focus on commissions and institutions that normally guide Canadian communication scholarship, the thesis makes a fundamental adjustment by considering communication and culture in relationship with **labour**. Focusing on the relationship between labour, communication and culture reveals a range of alternative ideas and practices (such as non-commercial media, political theatre, critical pedagogy, and public sports) advanced by a wide variety of groups that together constituted the formation of a "labour culture,"⁴ or more precisely a "labouring of culture," that is generally missing from historical views. The bulk of the thesis identifies and describes this "labouring of culture" as a progressive political and cultural movement constituted by the collective agency of a combination of immigrant organizations, socialist political parties, women's, pacifist, educational, religious, and youth groups, their modes and means of communication, and their efforts at enabling greater participation in decisions affecting their lives.

⁴ The term "labour culture" can be used synonymously with "popular culture," but because there are wide variations in conceptualizations of "popular culture" (Frith 1999a), the thesis suggests the concept of a labour culture as an indication that labour was a central component in all groups constituting it.

Explaining the constitution of this movement as a “process of structuration,” the thesis will further demonstrate how the labouring of culture was constrained by contradictions within the movement, and was marginalized or excluded through the combined actions of various nationalist and religious groups, and principally by the Canadian government, so that communication and culture were “de-laboured” and “re-laboured” in accordance with state political priorities. The thesis thus proposes that government involvement in communication and cultural policy, generally accepted as necessary to promote national unity and guard against the Americanization of culture, also worked to guard against a politicized labour culture. Specifically, the combination of particular regulations, policies and laws that were instituted (ranging from Custom’s Tariffs, to broadcasting policies, to the Criminal Code of Canada and the War Measures Act) effectively marginalized or excluded the politics of labour from communication and culture, so that culture was “de-laboured” and “re-laboured” in accordance with nationalism and corporatism resulting in a limited democracy.⁵

The Process of Structuration as a Theoretical Focus

To understand this “labouring of culture,” the thesis employs a political economy of communication approach that concentrates on the process of structuration in particular. As explained by Mosco, this provides us with a “substantive focus for thinking about characteristically social practices [like labour, communication and culture] without

⁵ For example, the structuring or “re-labouring” of culture in accordance with nationalism meant that workers were encouraged by the state to consider their work as a duty for the good of the economy, and by relation, the country. In accordance with corporatism, organized workers were considered to have economic interests analogous to business and industry, and thus could be similarly managed or supervised by the state.

suggesting that [it] provides the essential definition that captures the totality of the field” (1996:10). Put simply, the thesis takes a step back from dominant historical practices of labour, communication, and culture in order to explain the matrix of social structures, relations, and formations that yield or constituted these practices in the first place.

Current thought on the concept of structuration has generally been developed from the work of British sociologist Anthony Giddens (1984), referring to the process (elaborated much earlier by Karl Marx) whereby ‘history is made by people’ (agency) at the same time as it recognizes that this is ‘not under conditions of their own making’ (structures).⁶ This formulation recognizes that agency (the collective purposive actions of social actors) is not unrestricted given that people are embedded in social relations of class, gender and race, which are also structural (historical conditions not of their own making). Giddens’ theory of structuration concentrates on describing agency and structure as mutually *dependent* to explain the *reproduction* and maintenance of social systems. Mosco takes this a step further in understanding the relationship of structure and agency as mutually *constituted* to explain the *process* of production and reproduction, which involves the making, or *formation* of agency and structure. This moves away from thinking of agency as independent or structures as fully formed, to thinking about *how* they are formed in relation to each other. “Structuration therefore describes a *process by which structures are constituted out of human agency, even as they provide the very ‘medium’ of that constitution*” (Mosco 1996:212).

Understanding this “mutual constitution of structure and agency” suggests a way of explaining *why* labour, communication, and culture have come to be practiced (and

⁶ The phrase is originally from Marx’s analysis of historical change in *Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* (1852) as noted in Mosco (1996:212).

understood) in some ways rather than others. For example, scholars of the political economy of communication largely explain the continued divisions of labour, the commercial mass media, and consumer culture (dominant ways of practicing labour, communication and culture), as outcomes of *class power*.⁷ Scholars thus tend to work on identifying where and how class power congeals in structures such as public institutions and private corporations that in turn reinforce class dominance and corresponding social practices. While this explains part of the process behind why some practices are more dominant than others, it does not fully explain *how* they actually *become* dominant.

Distinguishing which practices become dominant and which practices become correspondingly marginalized or excluded, is the result of the ongoing formation of hegemony. Whereas structuration identifies a particular *process* (the “mutual constitution of structure and agency”), hegemony identifies the resulting *outcome*.

Again, drawing on Mosco, “structuration constructs hegemony,” in his words:

“hegemony is the ongoing formation of both image and information to produce a map sufficiently persuasive to most people that it provides the social and cultural coordinates that define the ‘natural’ attitude of social life” (1996:212). These coordinates may be understood as social practices or cultural “traditions,” or they may refer to a network of reinforcing ideas or conventions such as “the widespread acceptance of the marketplace as the cornerstone of a productive economy, of voting as the primary means of carrying out democracy, and of journalism objectivity as the product of two views on an issue of the day” (Goldman and Rajagopal 1991; in Mosco 1996:243). Constituted through power relations, the more these ideas and conventions are accepted or repeated without

⁷ See for example: H. Schiller (1981); D. Schiller (1981); Golding and Murdock (1991) and Mosco (1996:216-230) for an overview of this approach.

question or challenge, the more they appear “normal” or “common,” such they can become dominant and systemic over time.

The concept is expanded from the work of Antonio Gramsci who advanced the notion that hegemony describes how dominant groups ‘continually win consent’ and are able to achieve or maintain their power, in addition to, or in the absence of, direct coercion (Gramsci 1971; see Femia 1981). Since hegemonic dominance has to be won, it involves contest as well as consent, and thus is never automatic or stable. Recognition of this contest has given rise to related concepts of a “counter” or “popular” hegemony, which identify how subaltern groups continually question and challenge power in opposing and advancing alternatives to the dominant hegemony (Femia 1981; Mattelart 1983).

In sorting out the process of structuration and hegemony as its construct, this thesis describes the development of a counter hegemony in terms of the “labouring of culture”; correspondingly, it also identifies encounters with the dominant hegemony in terms of how culture was de-laboured and re-laboured by identifying the constituents of hegemonic contest (the agents and structures) in terms of “battles on the cultural front”.

The Cultural Front and the Labouring of Culture as Key Concepts

The concepts of the “cultural front” and the “labouring of culture” employed in this thesis are derived from Michael Denning’s (1996) social history – *The Cultural Front: The Laboring of American Culture in the Twentieth Century*. Focusing on the first half of the twentieth century and the 1930s in particular, Denning suggests that there were sustained challenges to the hegemonic strength of capitalism, liberal democracy,

and class, gender and racial divisions in the United States that arose out of a combination of the growth of international socialism, the rise of fascism, the threat of another world war, and the Depression. Denning collectively refers to both the sites and constituents of these challenges as “the cultural front” as “an attempt to theorize the relation of culture to politics” (1996:xix). Defining culture as “both the means of communication and the ways of life of communities and people” (1996:423), Denning distinguishes the constituents of the battlefield as consisting of an amalgamation of the “politics of allegiance” and the “politics of form”.

The “politics of allegiance” describes the formation of a number of different organizations and groups that come together in a network “with a common purpose” (Ibid). During the 1930s, the organized expression of this network was a social movement collectively known as the “popular front”. Historically the term identifies a formal coalition between left political parties which formed Popular Front governments in Spain and France in 1936 (Jackson 1988; Graham and Preston 1987). Facilitating a popular front was also a specific strategy of the Communist International (or Comintern) which sought alignment with political parties and various activist groups in many countries during this time in order to avoid any type of war and defeat fascism (Penner 1988; Manley 2002).

Denning identifies the constituents of the popular front in the United States as a variety of groups that came together to mobilize against war and fascism both nationally and internationally, and to enable a more democratic way of life in terms of civil rights (specifically in eliminating “labor repression” and racial oppression) and to bring about “a social democratic electoral politics” in the U.S. (1996:9). This was also constituted

and supplemented by the second component of the cultural front, which Denning calls the “politics of form”. Traversing the 1930s,⁸ the politics of form encompassed the cultural producers (artists, writers, journalists, and technicians, for example), their means of communication (such as the press, fictional novels, drama, films, etc.), and the venues necessary for production and exhibition.

Taken together, the politics of form and the politics of affiliation are the basis of a “laboring of culture” that Denning breaks out into five overlapping elements. The first was a “laboring of language” such that ‘labor’ was used frequently as a synonym for ‘working-class,’ ‘workers,’ and ‘proletariat’ “in the rhetoric of the period” ranging from the naming of organizations to identifications of the main subjects of fiction, films and songs, which facilitated (and helped to legitimize) a collective agency based on labour. Secondly, Denning notes an increase in ‘working-class’ participation in the production of arts, theatre, music and literature. That is, a generation of workers was able to go beyond the manual labour and factory work of their parents to enter into what was then distinguished as the “mental labour” of culture. This was related to the third and fourth elements that included the rise of unionization in the cultural industries and the recognition that culture itself was a form of labour. The fifth element involved the American government programs of the New Deal that facilitated workers’ participation in culture through production and educational programs such as the Works Progress Administration in areas of art, writing, music, and theatre.

⁸ The time period of the cultural front is not something that is easily pinned down. As Denning observes “The time of cultural history is not the time of political or labor movement history. Social movements announce themselves in manifestos; songs, plays, films, novels, and memoirs follow at some distance” (1998:335).

In bringing together the five elements of a “labouring of culture,” Denning suggests that although the dominant hegemony supporting capitalism, liberal democracy, or social hierarchies was not destabilized or replaced such that there was a successful counter-hegemony or hegemonic coup, the “laboring of American culture” restructured American culture in a way that hegemonic understandings and practices of culture were changed. That is, what had been hegemonically known as “culture” was no longer considered solely an intellectual pursuit but one of labour, the recognition of which facilitated unionization in the cultural industries and broadened what was considered ‘labour’ and who was ‘working class’. Additionally, through working class participation in education and the cultural industries, “mass” culture was labored whereby artists, writers, journalists and educators (as the working class) “owned” a part of mass culture and was its constituent.⁹ Denning thus demonstrates to previous social critics that the working class are not merely ‘cultural dupes’ (docile consumers of whatever product or ideology is manufactured); that “mass” culture is not homogeneous or completely commercially controlled; or that there is a rigid distinction between mass and popular culture that can be maintained. Although Denning notes that the result of this labouring was an “incomplete and unfinished struggle,” he claims that it left a lasting “working class imprint” on American culture (1996:xvii; 1998:334).

⁹ Denning does not clearly define what he means by “mass” culture, it may be synonymous with commodified culture, but since he refers to “mass” education as well, we can assume that he is referring to quantity here in terms of being relatively constituted by many people (working and “middle class”) rather than restricted to (or by) an elite or upper class.

Filling in the Gaps

While Denning's work has been critically acclaimed and debates will continue as to the meaning and extent of a labouring of culture in theory and practice,¹⁰ it raises a question of whether there was a similar labouring of culture in Canada. Recent scholarship in labour history recognizes the efforts of the Communist Party of Canada that aimed to facilitate a popular front (Manley 2002), however it is not clear whether there was a corresponding social movement to the extent that Denning suggests existed in the U.S. in the 1920s and 1930s. In addition, whether, or how much, of the "labouring" elements Denning identified were in formation in Canada (in any time period) has not been fully explored. Labour history of the interwar period in particular is admittedly lacking in a number of areas, as those written on the first half of the twentieth century have tended to focus on institutional and personal histories (such as the formation of trade unions, Canada's political parties and their leaders),¹¹ centering on "the politics of allegiance" rather than formations of communication and culture, or the "politics of form".

Substantial gaps in Canadian communication history also exist. As noted, most of the scholarship produced on the state's involvement in communication and culture has tended to begin with the Aird Commission and the establishment of the CRBC/CBC and NFB, and focuses on the promotion of nationalism and protection of cultural sovereignty. Scholarly analyses have gone into more detail in terms of the Commission's proceedings, and of specific groups that made presentations in front of the Commission and were later involved in government deliberations regarding the CRBC/CBC, revealing varying

¹⁰ Saba (2000); Faue (1998); Brown (1998); Glickman (1998); Quam-Wickham (1998); and Rachleff (1998).

degrees of elitism, paternalism, and nationalism underlying group submissions and government decision-making.¹² Additional scholarship has identified the complexity of decision-making *within* the CBC itself, indicating bureaucratic and economic reasons why diversity in programming (part of democracy in communication) was constrained or limited, (Vipond 1992; 1994; and 1999), and how CBC decisions actually encouraged American programming, thereby debunking the cultural sovereignty argument (MacLennan 2001). Another approach suggests that attention to the “symbolic environment” is necessary to expose the concerns for national security motivating the quest for cultural sovereignty, particularly in regards to state protection of elite culture against the purported invasion of a lower American mass culture (Dowler 1996; Dorland 1996a). Less explored in all of these analyses, however, is an identification of who was, or what part of the public were excluded in government deliberations and institutional developments, and little discussion of why they were excluded to begin with.

Reasons for this absence in communication scholarship are partly due to the absence of “the public” in government deliberations, as Roger Bird observes:

The Aird Commission had tended to hear from the organized, intellectual, social or financial elite. Many not heard from by the commission were at home, happily listening to music and the comedy shows on the U.S. stations whose signals reached them, or on Canadian stations linked by land lines or recorded in the U.S. (1988:57).¹³

Yet the assumption that the “public” was no more than audiences and consumers consequently limits analyses to studies of consumption or programming details, and does little to advance an understanding of public agency, and recognition of alternatives that

¹¹ See Morton (2000) for an overview and critique of Canadian labour history scholarship.

¹² For a recent analysis of the Aird Commission see Gasher (1998); also for the individuals and groups that presented at the Commission and were further involved in government deliberations to varying extents, see Faris (1975); Raboy (1990); Vipond (1994); and Riseborough (1995).

may have been excluded from these initial proceedings and from further government deliberations in the first place.

The study of historical alternatives is usually the exception rather than the rule, however, which suggests additional reasons why it is missing from communication histories, and why it is difficult to construct alternative hypotheses. Firstly, (as will be discussed in Chapter Two of the thesis) there are few studies that engage with the *relationship* between labour, communication and culture in theory (Schiller 1996). In addition, there is little written on media and culture other than consumer culture (and even for the interwar period in Canada this is negligible),¹⁴ and research on alternative uses of radio or press in Canada is scarce generally. Even histories of the commercial press from 1920 (and up to 1970) are limited and condensed,¹⁵ such that histories of alternative media in the interwar period are even more a rarity.¹⁶ The minimal discussion in Canadian communication history of the extent and role of working class organizations and immigrants (other than English or French) as also constituting Canadian culture and communication is significant.¹⁷ Despite the obvious misrepresentation of history in

¹³ As cited in Gasher (1998).

¹⁴ As underscored by Palmer (1992:230).

¹⁵ As Buxton and McKercher (1998) note, these tend to be descriptive overviews spanning large time periods, as in Kesterton (1967); Rutherford (1978); Fetherling (1990); and Kesterton and Bird (1995); for example.

¹⁶ The exceptions are Hoerder (1984;1987a; 1987b) which provides an overview of the labour press of North America but is minimal in Canadian coverage, and Verzuh (1988) which is largely a descriptive journalistic account, offering little contextual analyses. The immigrant press has largely been individually described, and these include the whole range of immigrant press – including nationalist, religious and socialist papers, see Kirkconnell (1940); Dashko (1982); and Pilli (1981) for example.

¹⁷ Tippet is an exception in that she recognizes immigrants other than English or French as cultural constituents, however she does not include labour or working class organizations and their press as part of “culture,” keeping with a traditional definition of culture as art, drama, literature and music (1990:34). She also suggests that immigrant associations were completely insular seeking to preserve traditions of the past (Ibid: 29), whereas more detailed analyses contradict this observation [see Patrias (1994), for example].

general, without this recognition, it appears (and adds credence to the dominant hegemony), that culture had to be “created,” whether by elite groups (such as the Royal Society of Canada, the Native Sons of Canada, or the Association of Canadian Clubs),¹⁸ by the state, or by private industry.

Canadian communication scholarship has also not paid much attention to the connections between the creation of state institutions, (like the CRBC/CBC and NFB), and government involvement in other areas of labour, communication and culture. As Winseck (1998) suggests, rather than commencing analyses on the basis of separate media (already divided into industries or institutions), a clearer picture of the indices of power and decision-making comes from uncovering connections between them. His research demonstrates that by the time the CRBC was established in 1932, the federal government had already been active in a number of areas regarding communication and culture setting regulations and policy for the telegraph and telephone which favoured industry economic priorities rather than public interests of accessibility and participation (Ibid; also Babe 1990; and Martin 1991). As will be related in this thesis, decisions restricting freedom of the press, freedom of speech, as well as freedom of assembly and association, also had precedents under the British North American Act (BNA) (1867), the Trade Union Act (1872), and the War Measures Act (1914).

Such restrictions over labour, communication and culture were carried on in sections of the Criminal Code of Canada, through directed police surveillance, and other laws and regulations that were applied to some groups and types of media and not others

¹⁸ As Vipond (1980) reviews, such associations were composites of an “English Canadian elite” including heads of business and industry, professionals, and academics who aimed to promote elite definitions of art, music and literature in order to facilitate a distinctly “Canadian” culture (see also Klinck 1965; and Thompson 1985).

through to the Second World War. Starting from the BNA Act of 1867 for example, the Customs Tariff covered “any kind of a treasonable or seditious” media coming across the border. At the discretion of the Custom’s Officer, media that was judged accordingly could be “destroyed” or “otherwise dealt with”;¹⁹ and as shall be discussed, this meant that many labour, working-class, or other so-called “seditious” newspapers, magazines and other material never made it into Canada (Keshen 1996). The implementation of delegated decisions such as these should not be considered separate from overall questions of communication and cultural policy in broadcasting or other areas, particularly as they reveal relationships among labour, communication, and culture that would otherwise appear to be unrelated.

Other gaps in Canadian communication history arise from the focus on the federal government as *the* major agent in policy formation rather than examining its agency as a producer of media, or studying other levels of government that are active in communication and cultural policy formation. By drawing attention to the federal government as a key producer of media we can see that promotion of national unity was not solely aimed at addressing battles between English and French ethnicity (as Raboy 1990:8 submits), but was also directed at the twenty per cent of the immigrant population who were neither. As shall be argued in the thesis, this was directly related to the management of social conflicts over labour as a whole. In addition, the singular focus on the federal government’s involvement in communication and cultural policy does not fully bring forward the significant actions of provincial and municipal governments

¹⁹ The quotations are directly from the Customs Tariff (1867) as reprinted in *National Revenue Review* annual reports (1935-1940) from the Department of National Revenue.

whose jurisdictions intersected federal deliberations on labour, communication and culture, *beyond* radio broadcasting.

This appreciation of other forms of structuring is also absent in Denning (1996). His focus on the labouring of culture does not adequately address reasons why the cultural front was “incomplete and unfinished,” and as one historian put it, Denning pays “inadequate attention to the question of power – specifically to the limited political power and institution building of the Cultural Front” (Glickman 1998:323). Attention to the process of structuration helps us to answer such questions, and in Canada, points to a de-labouring of culture that contributed to the “unfinished struggle”.

Methodology

Keeping the relationship between labour, communication and culture central in historical analysis requires an approach that is multi-disciplinary, drawing on the contested and overlapping fields of labour history, political economy, communication and cultural studies. The thesis first identifies theoretical divisions made between labour and culture which suggest a (de)labouring process evident in social theory and reviews a corresponding re-labouring of theory that forwards their relationship rather than their continued separation or essentialism. Focusing on the labouring/de-labouring process, the thesis reviews histories that exemplify this dynamic in Great Britain and the United States (just as their models of broadcasting were studied prior to the establishment of the CRBC/CBC), as a basis for understanding and comparison with battles on the cultural front in Canada.

Addressing the gaps in communication history identified earlier, the empirical work attends to the “labouring of culture” by identifying how labour was *articulated* (or joined and expressed) within and through the “politics of allegiance” and the “politics of form”. In focusing on the articulation of labour within and through the “politics of allegiance” (the groups that came together in the political and cultural movement), the thesis relies on general overviews of labour history in Canada²⁰ and combines these with several significant biographies,²¹ organizational histories, and case studies of constituting groups. These include political parties such as the Communist Party of Canada (CPC) and the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (CCF); immigrant associations such as the Ukrainian Labour Farmer Temple Association (ULFTA) and the Finnish Organization of Canada (FOC); union organizations such as the Trades and Labour Congress of Canada (TLCC) and the All-Canadian Congress of Labour (ACCL); women’s organizations like the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) and the Women’s Labour League (WLL); and religious and pacifist organizations such as the Fellowship for a Christian Social Order (FCSO). In addition, organizational files held at the National Archives of Canada (NAC) were consulted which included the records and documents of the CPC, the CCF, the FOC, and other organizations constituting the popular front such as the Canadian League Against War and Fascism (CLAWF), the Canadian Youth Congress (CYC), and the Canadian League for Peace and Democracy (CLPD), for example.

²⁰Such as: Abella 1975; Bennett 1987; Palmer 1992; Lipton 1966; Sefton-MacDowell and Radforth 1999; for example.

²¹ These include: Stanley Ryerson (Kealey 1982; 1982a), J.S. Woodsworth (McNaught 1999), Eugene Forsey (Milligan 1987), Margaret Fairley (Kimmel 1993), and Dorothy Livesay (Livesay 1977; and Thompson 1987), for example.

The above research was combined with original publications held at the NAC providing empirical evidence for the articulation of labour (identifying how labour was expressed) within and through the “politics of form”. This included original correspondence and original publications ranging from flyers and pamphlets to booklets and newspapers, in order to identify the writers, editors, and other contributors, and to provide overview analyses of alternative media content, as well as identifying the main venues of production and exhibition. In addition, as the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) maintained constant vigilance on the activities of what the federal government called “revolutionary organizations and agitators in Canada,” some important evidence of the range of organizational survives. The abridged reports, edited by Kealey and Whitaker (1993 to 1997), are published in the *R.C.M.P. Security Bulletins*, *The Early Years 1919-1929*, *The Depression Years, 1933-1938* (a five-volume set), and *The War Series, 1939-1941*, and have been frequently drawn upon as noted throughout the thesis.

Focusing attention on the state in the “de-labouring of culture,” whereby labour was disarticulated²² as politics was separated from culture under government legislation, regulatory processes and policy making, the archives of the CRBC/CBC were examined for details of government decision-making, and specific actions taken in broadcasting. Publications, reports, and files of specific federal departments were also consulted, including the (then) Department of National Revenue and its *National Revenue Review* for a record of publications banned, and the (then) Department of Labour and its *Labour Gazette* for annual submissions by trade unions to the government, as well as for

²² This disarticulation refers to the combination of the dismantling, disorganization, and de-legitimization of labour rhetoric and forms of collective agency, and is developed from Hennessy (1993).

evidence of government actions regarding labour in general and socialist political parties in particular. Specific laws, (such as the War Measures Act, the Criminal Code and the Defence of Canada Regulations), provincial acts and regulations [such as the Quebec Communist Propaganda Act, and the (Quebec and Ontario) Amusement Tax], and municipal regulations (governing streets and parks) were accessed for their wording and delineation of jurisdiction. In addition, parliamentary debates and political speeches regarding these laws, acts, and regulations were consulted, as was related coverage in commercial media such as *The (Toronto) Star*, *The Mail and Empire* and the *Montreal Gazette*. Also, in identifying the role of the state as an active producer of media, and in explaining the “re-labouring” process, government productions such as the *Labour Gazette*, films of the NFB, and activities of the Wartime Information Board and Bureau of Public Information were also reviewed.

Limitations of the Thesis

Understanding that the production of a thesis is also one of structuration, the thesis itself has particular theoretical and empirical limitations. Firstly, in taking a political economy of communication approach focusing on the process of structuration in particular, it does not claim to apprehend the whole social field; other processes – such as commodification and spatialization – are at work at the same time. Ideally, a more complete analysis would concentrate on their mutual constitution to better explain the making of communication and culture (understood as the dynamic of social processes, social relations and social practices). The focus on the *labouring* of culture thus means

that there is less attention to the role of industry and the *commodification* of culture,²³ particularly since this labouring involved opposition to commodification in areas such as media and sports for example. In keeping with this, the thesis does not provide an analysis of mass culture in Canada given that its focus is to explain how labour culture was marginalized or excluded while dominant practices of culture were being institutionalized. This also marks a departure from Denning's work. While he was able to illuminate the constitution of mass culture through a much larger and more longitudinal study, the thesis only concentrates on an analysis of labour culture. This is partly a result of the minimal amount of studies on the development of mass culture in Canadian interwar history generally, and the lack of study on the unionization of the cultural industries in particular, as well as being due to the volume of detailed work necessary for such a synthesis to begin with.

Further, while the thesis also engages with the process of spatialization [which refers to how certain agents (like governments or corporations) control, or manage time and space (see Mosco 1996:173-211)], it is discussed in the thesis mainly in terms of how this facilitated the *de-labouring* of culture. Rather than focusing on identifying all the ways the state constituted the structuring of communication and culture in Canada during this time, more attention is thus paid to the way state structuring constrained or disabled labour culture: through laws and regulations covering public assembly and public spaces (like streets, parks, and community halls); by controls over the national space through

²³Commodification describes the process whereby something valued for its use is transformed into something valued for its exchange (see Mosco 1996:140-172). In regards to 'something cultural' for example, while we might value sport for physical fitness and community activity, it is commodified when it is valued for how much money or other resources can be exchanged for it (whether this is in the form of advertising on team uniforms, professional sport teams, or corporate ownership of stadiums, and so on).

which regulated the movement of people (through immigration, citizenship, internment and deportation); as well as controls over which media could or could not cross its borders. This concentration on the *actions* of the state may also be a theoretical limitation in that the thesis does not then offer a *theory* of the state, that is, it does not explain why the state exists in the first place.

The empirical limitations involve both the subject(s) under study, and the time period of analysis. The first has to do with Canadian labour history as written on the subject of the “popular” or “united” front. As both of these terms were used extensively by the Communist Party of Canada (CPC), for some labour historians the popular front in Canada was limited to the actions of just the CPC, and by extension the Communist International (Comintern), and thus the role and participation of groups other than the CPC is still a central matter of debate (Palmer 1992; Manley 2002). While the thesis recognizes and criticizes the CPC as a major, if not *the* major, activist component, it does not set out to provide another history of the CPC, or to prove or disprove the extent of Comintern involvement. Similar to Denning, it approaches the popular front more broadly, as a convergence of collective agents – of labour, working-class, women’s, youth, religious and pacifist groups – in advancing that all of these groups contributed to the making (and un-making) of a counter-hegemony.

Setting the thesis’ time frame was correspondingly broad given the combination of the heterogeneity of the constituting groups; the uneven nature of Canada’s popular front development; the variations in cultural forms, sites of production, and exhibition; and the different sources and intensity of state actions. Unlike Denning, the thesis does not follow the labouring of culture throughout the twentieth century; it covers a thirty

year period roughly from 1914-1944, yet it is not restricted to these years in tracing the origins of the constituting organizations, or in identifying government legislation, regulation, and policies that were later amended, enforced, or removed which thus have a much greater life span. For the most part, however, the thesis concentrates on the interwar years, and the 1930s in particular, as this was the time when the labouring of culture in Canada was most active.

Lastly, while the thesis seeks to provide a history of the cultural front, given the above limitations, it must be recognized that it is only partial. Other absences will be identified (when relevant) within the main body of the thesis, and in the last chapter in suggestions for future research. This includes a brief discussion of comparisons between the formation and development of the American and Canadian cultural fronts. Although an identification of some of the similarities and differences between Canada and the U.S. will be discussed, a more complete comparison remains for future consideration.

Thesis Outline

This introductory **Chapter One** has given an overview of the thesis' problematic, its theoretical framework, and justification for the study. Major concepts were explained, as was its methodological approach and corresponding theoretical and empirical limitations.

Appreciating the relative absence of labour in communication and cultural studies, **Chapter Two** first presents a brief overview of what could be called a "de-labouring and re-labouring" of theory. It focuses on classic examples of how labour and culture were separated in theory, and of advancements in understanding their mutual

constitution. The greater part of the chapter attends to the process of structuration and the making of hegemony as demonstrated in media history. It thus pays particular attention to the labouring, de-labouring, and re-labouring process in media, which together can be thought of as a “labouring dynamic”. Specifically, it provides several examples of this dynamic from research on media history that has focused on the formation of *alternative media* characterized as the popular or working class press, the ethnic or immigrant press, and a women’s labour press. This includes research on labour broadcasting that also illustrates the labouring dynamic.

Drawing on this scholarship and employing the established theoretical framework, the remaining substantive chapters (three through six) explicate the constitution of the cultural front as condensed from the empirical research. **Chapter Three** provides an overview of the “politics of allegiance” identifying attempts to articulate labour through activism by facilitating a “united front” and then a “popular front,” consisting of groups already noted (such as labour unions, the CPC, the CCF, the FCSO, etc.) and the formation and development of popular front organizations like the Canadian League Against War and Fascism (CLAWF), the Canadian Youth Congress (CYC), and the Canadian League for Peace and Democracy (CLPD), for example.

Chapters Four and Five identify the constituents and complexities of the “politics of form”. **Chapter Four** concentrates on identifying and describing articulations of labour in sport, education, theatre, and literature. The chapter distinguishes what was alternative about these articulations (such as experiments with political theatre for example) or oppositional (in terms of being against the commodification of sports for example), and discusses the challenges and structures that inhibited or contained them.

Chapter Five supplements this by focusing on other publications of the cultural front, specifically the labouring of the production and content of the alternative press, including an immigrant labour press, a trade union press, a (political) party press, and the many radical booklets, pamphlets, religious and pacifist publications of the period. Such articulations of a labour culture were also present in the protests and parades through which alternatives and oppositions were publicly expressed and are thus also reviewed in this chapter.

Whereas Chapters Three through Five focus on the labouring of culture, **Chapter Six** concentrates on the simultaneous *de-labouring* and *re-labouring* of culture (the varied ways labour was disarticulated and re-articulated within a dominant hegemonic framework). It does so by first identifying the various dynamics of the politics of allegiance, attending to the contests and contradictions within labour culture that compromised the development of the popular front and by extension the cultural front. It then distinguishes the actions of groups and organizations that worked to disarticulate (counter, and de-legitimize) the alternatives and oppositional constructs expressed, thereby re-labouring culture by reinforcing (or at least not challenging) the status quo. Such agents included immigrant nationalist and religious organizations, various European governments, the Catholic Church, and the various levels of government in Canada. In particular, the thesis identifies specific laws, policies and regulations that helped to de-labour culture, providing several examples drawn from municipal, provincial, and federal actions that demonstrate where and how these laws and policies were implemented. This not only includes actions of the state in Canadian broadcasting, but in other areas involving freedom of the press, freedom of speech, assembly and association. Lastly, the

thesis explains how government ownership and control over communication (through institutions like the CBC, the NFB and the Bureau of Public Information) facilitated a re-labouring of culture (re-articulation of labour) according to state and industry priorities. The thesis concludes with **Chapter Seven** in offering an assessment of the cultural front according to normative principals of democracy, both in communication (access, diversity and participation in communication) and through communication (the use of communication to facilitate activism). This is followed by summary of the thesis, and suggestions for future research.

Conclusion to Chapter One

The necessity of making connections, of explaining the relationships between seemingly disparate phenomena is part of the purpose of theory. The process of structuration draws our attention to the relationship between labour, communication, and culture by explaining that how they are practiced and understood is a product of hegemony. Apprehending both the struggle for, and the making of, hegemony, the thesis identifies the sites and constituents of the battles on the cultural front, and grasps the specifics of this making by focusing on how culture was laboured, de-laboured and re-laboured, such that we can see the democratic possibilities of collective agency or the “people’s interests,” at the same time as appreciating the challenges and constraints by which this agency was reduced to the selection of “choices”.

Chapter Two: (De)Labourings in Theory and Media History

Structuring the Field

The construct of a *labouring* of culture implies that without this action, culture is a separate social practice and is categorically distinct from labour. It is a distinction that has been made both analytically and historically. The analytical distinction can be traced to the first postulations on culture by Matthew Arnold (1869) through variations of Marxism, and up to postmodern thought in which labour is currently viewed as irrelevant, or comparably insignificant for understanding the postmodern world. On the other hand, the field of British cultural studies was instituted on analyses that brought labour back into studies of culture and communication, and current work in the United States suggests that rather than dismissing labour as insignificant, what is required is a “labour theory of culture” to explain their relationship (Schiller 1996).

After briefly reviewing the classic origins of these analytical divisions and connections that have been made between labour, culture and communication in theory, the chapter concentrates on explaining how these divisions and connections have *historically* been made in media. In other words, rather than arguing that either labour, *or* communication, *or* culture is more essential than the other(s), this chapter seeks to explain how labour, communication *and* culture have been historically constituted with each other by focusing on their intersections as manifested in media. In keeping with the thesis’ theoretical focus, the chapter identifies these manifestations in terms of the “labouring of culture,” drawing from specific examples in media history that illustrate how the struggles to articulate labour in press and radio, whether as working class, immigrant and/or women’s labour, became alternative and marginalized. At the same

time, therefore, it identifies how the press and radio were “de-laboured,” both discursively (as labour was rhetorically disarticulated in commercial press content), and institutionally (in changes to media operations and government regulations), while simultaneously being re-laboured in accordance with dominant commercial and state priorities. As the thesis will later explain this (de)labouring process in a period of Canadian history, this chapter draws on media research from Great Britain and the United States as examples to specifically illustrate this labouring dynamic.

The De-labouring of Culture in Theory

The theoretical separation of culture from labour rests on a definition of culture advanced by Matthew Arnold (1869) in *Culture and Anarchy* as follows:

Culture seeks to do away with classes; to make the best that has been thought and known in the world current everywhere; to make all men live in an atmosphere of sweetness and light, ... This is the social idea; and the men of culture¹ are the true apostles of equality [Arnold 1875 (1st ed. 1869:44), in Jordan and Weedon 1995 :24]].

This conceptualization of culture has been termed “liberal humanist” (Ibid), “cultural conservativist” (Milner 1994) or “conservative culturalism” (Scruton 1982:108/9),² and illustrates Arnold’s understanding of human nature as wanting development through intellectual and moral pursuits that define “Culture.” In this view, culture is intended as prescription in order to develop rational thought and facilitate self-realization, as Jordan and Weedon explain:

¹ In this formulation, there was only one ‘true’ culture: Western or British; and one class of men: property-owning, educated, white males (Jordan and Weedon 1995:29-37).

[t]he idea that Culture is the path to Enlightenment and Self-realization is central.... People everywhere share a common (more or less developed) human nature. Culture, Arnold and other liberal humanists maintain, offers all individuals the means to realize this *human nature* to the full by developing their intellectual and moral life (1995:25).

This is contrary to an understanding of human nature as developed through labour or praxis, defined by Marx as “the free, universal, creative and self-created activity through which man creates (makes, produces) and changes (shapes) his historical, human world and himself [sic]” (Petrovic 1991:435). Labour is thus organic to culture and there is no opposition between them, nor is there a separation made between intellectual and manual labour. Whereas, in Arnold’s formulation, human nature is developed through “culture,” which is created in opposition to labour; culture therefore “seeks to do away with class” through the development of the “best self” or “whole man” made possible only through cultural (intellectual and moral) development. This separates culture from the political, economic and social spheres of society as “a corrective supplement.”³

Lloyd and Thomas suggest that Arnold’s view of culture places politics in the realm of the state, with culture as a necessary prerequisite:

...it is exactly from the distinction between the wholeness sought in culture and the division of labour characteristic of society in general that Arnold and others derive the notion that ‘culture suggests the idea of the State’. The ethical moment in each individual that Arnold terms the ‘best self’ suggests the state, and the state in turn is the collective representative of the ethical disposition (1995:275).

With culture ontologically prior to the state, the requirement of culture or the “best self” supports a representative model of democracy, as Lloyd and Thomas further explain:

The importance of the discourse on culture lies in its theorization of an extrapolitical, extraeconomical space in which ‘freedom’ and ‘the harmonious development of the

² The liberal or conservative elements in Arnold’s postulations on culture are debated, as he is considered liberal in terms of adhering to freedom of the individual, but conservative in his qualification that this freedom has to be limited or controlled by the state.

³ Lloyd and Thomas (1995:269) drawing from Williams (1963).

whole person' can be pursued as the very ground on which representative politics can be practiced (Ibid).

In this way, *self-representation* in politics (direct democracy) is supplanted by *self-realization* as a requirement that is only possible through culture rather than through labour, with politics defined as a representative democracy enabled through the state. This sets "culture" and its corollary "education" as necessary (intellectual) prerequisites for political participation. In the process, social class is removed from politics in the state (the manifestation of the collective "best self"), but returns in culture (an individual responsibility) in distinctions made between "high" and "low" culture. Put another way, while politics is considered a collective (and classless) endeavour, the responsibility for cultural (and class) betterment rests on the individual.

A qualitative judgment of culture is evident in Arnold's definition and was carried through in evaluations of culture as a rational and intellectual pursuit. Distinctions were made between "high" and "low" culture (Frith 1999a:244) that rested on the bases of social class (as well as gender and race), education, type of activity (both individual and collective), and moral values (Scruton 1982:110). Not to be "cultured" was to be part of the masses and thusly equated with low culture (or considered incapable of culture). Low culture was associated with the lives and activities of the "working class," the "labouring classes," or the "common" people. This separation facilitated a second distinction made between labour and leisure. Distinguished as opposites in both theory and practice, leisure was identified with culture and also judged or valued on the basis of moral and intellectual worth as related to social class, gender and race (Cross 1990).

These qualifications were justified on the basis of an idea of an authentic culture as separate from material life. As Milner suggests, evaluations of culture underlie the

beginning of a tradition of “culturalism,” a body of social theory based on a concept of culture

...as incorporating a specifically ‘literary’ sense of culture as ‘art’ with an ‘anthropological’ sense of culture as a ‘way of life’. And in each case, the claims of culture are counterposed to that of material civilization (1994:20).

The “material civilization” refers to civilization or culture wrought from a combination of ideas and practices associated with the philosophy of utilitarianism and the processes of mechanization and industrialization (Milner 1994:Chap.1-2). The culturalist’s view was a negative assessment of both; it was based on a positive or nostalgic view of an authentic culture (for example, evident in art, literature, and religious traditions) that was under threat. Depending on the theorist, and to varying degrees, these threats included mechanization and industrialism, excessive liberalism, mass production, and standardization. The uncontrolled results of which were alienation from tradition and religion (T.S. Eliot), anarchy of the mass (Matthew Arnold), and a standardized mono- or mass-culture (F.R. Leavis)⁴ (Milner 1994:22-35). These were all discussed in terms of intellectual effects, rather than in terms of the effects on labour (or exploitation of). In other words, although the labour process was identified as the problem (for example, mechanization, industrialization, standardization, etc.), the focus for the solution remained on the purported *results* of the process, rather than the processes themselves. The proposals of F.R. Leavis in particular, became hegemonic as “Leavisism” – “a view that the threat of mass culture and social conflict can be solved through education (specifically classical education and literary canon)” was operationalized by the British

⁴ Easthope and McGowan indicate that: “Writing after the Great Crash of 1929, conscious both of the threat of Soviet Marxism and the working class movement in his own country, Leavis defines a binary opposition between high and popular culture and calls on the canon and an elite able to respond to it as the only means to defend an increasingly embattled culture” (1992:256).

government in the 1950s and 1960s in its social and educational programs (During 1993a:3). This reasoning assumed a separation between what people do everyday (how they labour) and, how and what people think (education and culture).

The division between labour and culture also appears in social theory stemming from Marx's explanation of capitalism whereby labour is no longer equated with praxis, but is an exploited, self-alienating activity on which capitalism – or the mode of production – fundamentally rests. In order to understand the relationship of capitalism to legal, political, and cultural structures of society, Marx made a distinction between an economic base and a cultural and political superstructure [Marx (1859) 1974:182]. Given that the division of labour is the foundation on which the mode of production lies, Marxist theorists elaborating on this distinction understood labour to be part of the economic base, with culture and communication as part of the superstructure arising from that base, and debates continued over which had determining power (Althusser 1971; see Hall 1977; Williams 1977).

This separation was also made in Marx's related distinction between the working class (as a class in itself) and working class consciousness (as a class for itself), whereby the workers' consciousness of their exploited condition would manifest in working class activism that would lead the formation of a socialist revolution. The revolutionary potential of the working class was put in doubt in the early twentieth century with the rise and proliferation of the commercial media (the use of press and radio for propaganda), and the growth of a "middle class," as expressed by the critiques of the "Frankfurt

School” of Marxist scholars.⁵ In their view, mass-manufactured commercial culture destroyed creative authentic culture by creating a mass of consumers who were thereby “duped” into adhering to the requirements of capitalism, thus removing any revolutionary potential [Adorno and Horkheimer (1947) 1977], and Held (1980;1990). While their critical theory identified the process of commodification, their criticism inadvertently reinforced hegemonic separations between labour and culture, including depictions of the “the mass” as derogatory and prejudicial (whether applied to society, culture, or the media), at the same time as it discredited (or ignored) other formations of culture (or resistance).

The Re-labouring of Culture in Theory

Conceptions of culture associated with the “culture as civilization” tradition were challenged in the works of three early contributors to cultural studies in Britain. Called “cultural Marxists,” “left culturalists,” or “cultural materialists,”⁶ Richard Hoggart, Raymond Williams, and E.P. Thompson are credited with advancing views of culture that were distinct from versions of the cultural conservatism of Arnold and Leavis, as well as versions of Marxist theory that was economic determinist or overlooked other

⁵ The Frankfurt School refers to the collective work of group of German émigrés to the U.S., including Max Horkheimer, Theodore Adorno, and Herbert Marcuse (and others) who developed a Marxist critique of culture under capitalism.

⁶ All of these terms are controversial in terms of whether one privileged culture or materialism (or both) *consistently* in their works, which is subject to much debate [for example, see Prendergast (1995) and Kaye and McClelland (1990) on Raymond Williams and E.P. Thompson respectively, and Schiller (1996) on both].

formations of culture.⁷ Each of the three wrote in reaction to the silences of conservative histories in which the lives and voices of working people were absent (unless they were condescended to or condemned). They also addressed the experience and lives of working people *as culture*⁸ and contributed to filling both of these absences by writing “history from below” (Dworkin 1997). In contrast to the Frankfurt School’s view of the “masses” as devoid of political consciousness, to varying degrees, they were concerned with understanding the combination of politics and culture in everyday life in *working class culture* as examples and potentials of human agency. In their view, culture was not simply controlled by the ruling class (elite culture), mass-produced and homogenized (mass culture), but was “ordinary” and was thus contradictory and unpredictable (Ibid: 4). How they connected social relations (as categories, relations or formations) to social practices informs the thesis’ theoretical focus, advancing an understanding of the relationship between labour, communication and culture.

In *The Uses of Literacy* (1957), Richard Hoggart analyzed northern British culture by focusing on individual experience to understand culture as a particular *category* of experience, that is, as working class. Similar to cultural theorists before him, Hoggart lamented how cultural practices were changing as a result of the processes of

⁷ Specifically, their work is also identified with a transition from an “old” to a “new” labour history (Morton 2000; Sangster 2000, Kent et al. 1993). “Old” labour history is associated with orthodox Marxism that studies labour as industrial wage labour and concentrates on changes in labour processes at the *workplace*. This is also linked to an “old” left politics, which describes a politics that “made capitalism and the rights of labor its central concerns, adhered to party lines, and envisioned the industrial working class becoming the universal revolutionary class” (Bennett 1997:371). Hoggart, Thompson and Williams are associated with a “new” labour history, as the primary site of analyses shifted from the workplace to the *community* (Moody 1989:xii).

⁸ The association was critically important, as following the “culture and civilization” tradition, not to have culture was to be uncivilized or inhuman. As Payne suggests, “When one culture has eliminated what it considers not human, it identifies itself according to its own definition, as human. Cultural identification in such a context takes on ultimate power. ...To define “culture” is to define the human; to be excluded from the definition can have an ultimate cost” (1999b:129).

commodification and mass-mediated culture such that traditional social connections or communities were being altered (Turner 1990:47-51). Different than classical conceptions, labour was included in his descriptions, but it was taken as a given (as manual labour and as part of production), rather than studied in terms of how it was constituted with culture as a practice. His lament was centered on the loss of community and tradition more than it addressed the constitution of social relations. He thus maintained a separation of culture from labour, studying working class culture as a category in difference to high culture (or elite) culture.

In contrast to Hoggart's categorical view of class (and culture), E. P. Thompson advanced a relational and formational understanding of both. Following Marx's observation of both the structure and agency of social life, Thompson addressed *The Making of the English Working Class* [(1963) 1980], in which "the making" denoted the social agency of "the people," and, as he described it, their "class consciousness." The latter was understood as subjective, ideational *and* material, as manifest in the forming of institutions and organizations for political action, and in terms of being inseparable from productive relations [Thompson 1963 (1980:9)]. Thompson thus broke with orthodox Marxism and the view of the economic base as strictly a material relation. He linked social being and social consciousness in defining the economic (or mode of production) *as culture*.

In assessing the contributions of Thompson's work to social theory, Sewell (1990) suggests that Thompson provides the rudiments of a "theory of class formation" in his description of the interplay of structure and agency. Regrettably, Thompson did not explain this interplay theoretically enough for Sewell (in comparison to Giddens' theory

of structuration).⁹ Nevertheless, Thompson made a fundamental change to standard Marxist theory by disposing of the base-superstructure distinction that, according to Wood, has been “...more trouble than it’s worth” (1990:126). She recognizes two critical advances in Thompson’s work, the first derives from Marx’s theory of historical materialism in which

...a conception of the ‘economic’ not as a ‘regionally’ separate sphere which is somehow ‘material’ as *opposed* to ‘social’, but rather is itself irreducibly *social* – indeed, a conception of the ‘material’ as constituted by social relations and practices (Wood 1990:136).

This conception is significant, as Wood goes on to explain, because it recognizes that the economy or “the activity of material production is *conscious* activity” (Ibid: 141).

Although she does not associate this with a concept of labour, she quotes Thompson who is describing labour as both material and ideational:

Production, distribution and consumption are not only digging, carrying and eating, but are also planning, organizing and enjoying. Imaginative and intellectual faculties are not confined to a ‘superstructure’ and erected on a ‘base’ of things (including men-things); they are implicit in the creative act of labour which makes man a man (Ibid: 139).

Such conceptual shifts are important to an understanding of the relationship of communication, culture and labour; because they do not reproduce the capitalist division of labour (between intellectual and manual) or treat the economic as objective or separate from either politics or culture (Schiller 1996). As Dworkin observed, “the book’s celebration of working people’s spontaneous forms of protest alluded to an alternative

⁹ In addition, Sewell argues that Thompson failed to give enough attention to structures, because he assumed a classical Marxist distinction between objectivity and subjectivity: “both Thompson and his critics share the misconception that structures are ‘objective’ and therefore exist at a different ontological level than agents. If we accept Giddens’ position on structures, then any contrast between ‘objective’ and ‘subjective’ is purely methodological. ... Most Marxists implicitly equate structures with economic explanations and agency with ideological or cultural explanations” (1990:67).

politics” (1997:183), such that those scholars following Thompson focused on finding examples of the political actions of the working class attending to the demonstrations, protests, and institutions (like labour unions) that made up their political and cultural lives. Therefore, “the identity of the working class *as* working class always had a strongly political and conflictual component” (During 1993:3). For Thompson, culture was necessarily conflictual because there was no such thing as one “true” culture, but a struggle *between* cultures – “between ‘ways of life’” [Hall (1980:20) in Gruneau (1988a:26)].

Attention to this “alternative politics” is also evident in the work of Raymond Williams who brought explicit questions of democracy and communication into theories about the relationship of culture, class and labour. In *Culture and Society*, Williams begins to theorize the concept of a “common culture,” and highlights what he sees as differences between elite or conservative culture and a working class culture that turns on the principle of democracy. In contrast to what he describes as individualistic, divisive and hierarchical culture of “bourgeois society,” Williams sees working class culture as collective and democratic with values such as “solidarity” and “active mutual responsibility”:

The culture that it has produced ...is a collective democratic institution, whether in the trade unions, the cooperative movement, or a political party. Working-class culture, in the stage that it has been passing, is primarily social (in that it has created institutions) rather than individual (in particular intellectual or imaginative work) (Williams 1963:314).

In his later works, particularly *Communications* [(1962) 1976], Williams begins to accord a central place to communication, rather than culture (Schiller 1996). In contrast to the Frankfurt School’s view of the media as inhibiting and limiting, he sees political

change resulting from the use of communication for education and social integration.¹ As Turner suggests, the “long revolution” or social change that Williams advanced would happen because of communication:

The cultural revolution will be accomplished through, rather than in spite of, mass communications and institutions: reforms within the communication sector itself have the potential to democratize society (1990:60).

Bringing communication and culture together, Williams develops the concept of a “structure of feeling” to refer to the perceptions and values that are common to a culture in time, identifying different cultural forms as “archaic,” “residual,” and “emergent” (illustrating overlap and changes in culture through time) (*The Long Revolution* 1961). Also significant (for our purposes), Williams further develops on Gramsci’s concept of hegemony in identifying “alternative” and “oppositional” forms and practices of communication and culture. Whereas alternatives are different in some way from dominant forms and practices, and may seek to alter or change them, oppositional means and methods challenge, contradict, or subvert dominant forms and practices of culture and communication (Williams 1977:113; 1980).

Amongst the criticisms of Hoggart, Williams and Thompson’s work as a whole is that they did not escape qualitative judgments of culture, and a romantic nostalgia for traditional or folk culture was maintained due to their efforts to legitimize working class culture as “culture” (Turner 1990:41-55). Moreover, due to their reading of labour as working class, they did not analyze other social relations such as gender or race, nor did

¹ As Duncombe observes: “Raymond Williams, echoing John Dewey before him, once argued that the strongest weapon in the arsenal of democracy is communication – not as it is but as it should be: with multiple origins and open channels, and with its goal not to dominate, but to achieve “active reception and living response... [to develop] ... a ‘common culture,’ open to all and for all” (1997:185).

they recognize the un-democratic or regressive values that were also constitutional such as sexism or racism (see Dworkin 1997:176-181). Keeping these criticisms in mind, the re-labouring of culture exemplified in their (now classic) works made several important contributions in advancing an understanding of the relationship between labour, communication, and culture that also informs our understanding of the process of structuration.²

Firstly, they challenged dominant hegemonic notions of culture as being separate from labour or “classless,” to a version of culture that is inherently political, recovering a working class agency that, although structured by class, was articulated within and against it. In keeping with this, the “making” (or labouring) of culture implied a sense of ownership and control, or a notion of “belonging to the people” that is also inherently political, because it suggests a sense of social agency, and how that agency is expressed, as a justice or civil right, thereby connecting labour, communication and culture to democracy. As Sewell (1993) emphasized, Thompson’s work in particular makes a link between the formation of social class³ and the making of culture, which draws our

² The work of Hoggart, Thompson and Williams was pivotal to the study of labour, communication and culture, but rather than study the three together in relationship, social theory appears to have concentrated (or elaborated) on one at the expense of the other(s) (Schiller 1996). For example, although there is a growing number of exceptions (for overviews see Morton 2000 and Sangster 2000), major tendencies in research that foregrounds labour has focused on working class or trade unions and political parties, emphasizing the politics of allegiance more than the politics of form (Ibid). Similarly, those that focus on culture and communication tend to examine communication as texts or discourse with more emphasis on the politics of form (see Craig 1999; and Cloud 2001). Consequently, when communication has entered labour history, it has tended to be considered a matter of technology (a method of transmission), or a matter of discourse (Sewell 1993), such that the relation between labour, communication and culture as practices is neglected.

³ Furthering the depth of Thompson’s (and Marx’s) work, Katznelson suggests that to analyze social class as a formation means attending to “...four connected layers of theory and history,” those of structure, ways of life (social relations and social organization), dispositions [shared interests, experiences and values (similar to William’s structure of feeling)], and collective action (manifest in organizational and group activism) (1986:3-25).

attention to the relation between the formation of social relations and the making of social practices which is what the process of structuration seeks to explain.

This formational understanding guides scholars to identify *how* people articulate social relations whether this is expressed *progressively* (as working class, feminist, or anti-racist activism, or as variously combined in social movements), or *regressively* (in movements that seek to entrench social oppression (class power, misogyny or racism), as well as the contradictions and combinations which lie therein. This understanding is in keeping with Williams' concept of a "structure of feeling" that draws attention to the perceptions and values that express a labour culture; that is, we can identify the perceptions of labour, and values of labour that were articulated (expressed and joined together) as a labour culture. Moreover, Williams' inclusion of communication as "alternative" and "oppositional" forms and practices of culture, suggest these alternatives and oppositions can be also be identified in the modes and means of communication (in modes such as language, music, drama and art, and in means such as press, radio, theatre, etc.). However, research in the political economy of communication,⁴ has tended to neglect how social relations are produced, or (more accurately) form and interact in

⁴There are different kinds of theories and approaches to political economy (see Howlett, Netherton and Ramesh 1999; Mosco 1996), as well as various approaches to a political economy of communication (Mosco 1996). One of the ways these differences can be understood is how communication is conceived. In traditional political economy, communication tends to be understood in terms of technology or media [adhering to what James Carey calls a "transmission model of communication"]; whereas a political economy of communication understands communication, not simply as a technology of a transmission, but as *socially constituted*. This social constitution means that communication is understood as "the social process of exchange whose product is the mark or embodiment of a social relation" (Mosco 1996:72), and not simply as a means and method of transmission. The institutions, organizations, and industries of communication are therefore understood to be unlike others typically studied together in political economy, which means that social values like the public good, social justice and democracy are arguably more explicit than traditional analyses of political economy [see Bailie and Winseck (1997) for example].

enabling alternatives and oppositions to the extent that this approach has been referred to as “the lost paradigm” (Mattelart 1983).

In general, scholars of the political economy of communication have tended to study social relations in terms of categories or relations (such as elite or working class; “haves” or “have-nots”; or “information rich” and “information poor”).⁵ As a consequence, when labour, communication, and culture are studied together, they are usually analyzed in terms of class power regarding ownership and control, and focus on the constitution of structures, particularly institutions (such as the state and large corporations), and organizations (such as trade unions and non-government organizations) foregrounding processes of commodification and spatialization (Mosco 1996:212-245). In other words, the focus remains on how social relations are *reproduced*; particularly in the making of communication and culture, and how communication, labour and culture are associated with either consumption or production.

Renewing the lost paradigm of a formational approach to social relations means examining how these social relations are resisted or opposed without limiting explanation to imposed categories or structures; that is, while it recognizes structures that exist, it seeks to understand *how* agency is formed within and against them. The conceptual site of this aspect of structuration has been called “popular culture” which refers here to “a site of struggle between forces of resistance of subordinate groups in society, and the

⁵ An understanding of social relations of class, gender or race as *categories* [as elite, middle, or working class; of gender as female or male, or of race as black or white] leads research to identify distinctions between categories (such as class divisions on the basis of income differences or ownership of communication technology, or gender and racial divisions on the basis of biology and psychology, for example). A *relational* understanding of the social, examines the relationship between classes, or gender or races (identifying harmony, compromise or struggle), see Mosco (1996:216-241).

forces of incorporation of dominant groups in society” (or more specifically a process of opposition and negotiation, negation and incorporation) (Mattelart 1983). This understanding of culture as the “site of struggle” is also what Denning (1996) refers to as the “cultural front”. The “forces of resistance” can be material, physical, or symbolic and refer to the oppositional and alternatives forms and practices of communication and culture (as advanced by Williams). The “forces of incorporation” could be hegemonic but they could also be combined with actual coercion (through violence and state repression for example). One of the ways the ‘struggle between the forces of resistance of subordinate groups and the forces of incorporation of dominant groups’ has been analyzed in communication research is the study of alternative media (Downing 1984; Huesca and Dervin 1994; Mattelart and Siegelau 1983; Waterman 1993).⁶

Demonstrating resistance in substance and form, alternative media are an outcome of social relations, and evidence of collective agency. In general, alternative media are thought to explicitly articulate social relations; it challenges and questions existing relations, and encourages participation in media production and social activism (popular culture by or of the people) rather than consumption (popular culture for the people). It is thus overtly political. By definition, *progressive* alternative media express, enable, and promote social change, and they may also directly oppose the dominant hegemony⁷ which can be demonstrated by attending to its content, goals and methods of production.⁸

⁶However, just as the study of labour and culture has not been central in communication studies, scholarship of alternative media has also been minimal. Historical overviews of communications as a field have tended to focus solely on the mass (“mainstream” or commercial media), with scant recognition of alternative media (see for example, Czitrom 1982; Delia 1985; McQuail 1992; Hardt 1992; and Mattelart 1996).

⁷ Most alternative media is assumed to be progressive (it aims to alleviate or eliminate social oppression), but the genre may include media that facilitates regression. This media articulates and works to further entrench social domination, by, for example, encouraging sexism and racism

The struggle between forces of resistance and forces of incorporation can *specifically* be identified as a struggle between forces of a *labouring* of culture and forces of a *de-labouring* (or *re-labouring*) of culture. The second part of this chapter thus provides such specific examples to demonstrate this labouring dynamic by reviewing studies which illustrate how alternative media have been *laboured* both in content and production methods in (what has been called) the working class, immigrant and women's labour press. It reviews this process in radio as well, by attending to the policy battles in the United States and the struggle to sustain "labour radio". This part of the chapter also identifies the forces of incorporation (particularly government and commercial structuring) that facilitated a *de-labouring* process (separating labour out of communication and culture), enabling a *re-labouring* process that favoured the dominant capitalist hegemony.

(De)Labouring the Working Class Press

Following the trajectory of social history that aimed to recover a "working class" or "labour" history, studies of communication and labour similarly began with the study of the labour and the working class press. The *labouring of the press* rose in tandem with the *labouring of politics* as alternative political movements and trade unions emerged in Europe at the beginning of the Industrial Revolution. In their study of the labour press in mid-to late nineteenth century Britain, Lloyd and Thomas (1995) note that the labour press published in order to facilitate critical discussion and enable political participation that contradicted hegemonic notions both of politics and culture. Its purpose was thus

(in hate literature or religious fundamentalist publications) (Principe 1999; Berlet and Lyons 2000).

contrary to the view expressed by Arnold (and others following him), that separated culture from labour, and placed education and “culture” as necessary prerequisites to political participation in a representative democracy. As Lloyd and Thomas observed, there was no requirement for “culture” prior to political participation. The press aimed to facilitate “political knowledge,” so that “the common man” [sic] could effectively self-represent himself politically [sic], thus advocating a direct or participatory form of democracy.

Whereas the commercial papers at the time were also political and may have also laid claim to the “common man,” their content, production methods and relationship with the state meant that rather than facilitating this labouring process, they worked to de-labour the radical press as a competitor, and re-laboured the press according to their own priorities. Curran (1978) suggests that a primary difference between the labour press and the commercial press was made clear by the actions of the state. Through an analysis of the parliamentary debates of the time, Curran demonstrates a deliberate intent on the part of the commercial owners to control the rising strength of a “radical” press. He pinpoints the 1819 press laws, which required every newspaper to carry a stamp indicating tax payment, as the dividing line between the state-sanctioned newspapers, and the “unstamped” press, which was thus illegal. This marks a crucial point in communication history. Hegemonic press histories have suggested that the birth of a commercial press was the birth of “freedom of the press” meaning freedom *from* the state. More accurately, however, the commercial press *drew on the state* for the abolition of the stamp tax, and the call of “freedom for the press” was a rallying cry for the *commercial*

⁸ See for example: Waterman 1990; Hagen 1992; Wasko and Mosco 1992; and Mazepa 1997.

press intent on de-labouring and effectively eliminating the radical press and its associated organizations.

Although the objective of the Stamp Duty was to eliminate the radical labour press, the tax backfired. As Curran notes, the numbers and circulation of the radical press actually increased as a result of the sanctions taken against them, and because they were cheaper and thus more accessible. This marked the peak of the first, and most successful, of three phases Curran suggests that the radical press went through and illustrates how the radical press was laboured, and subsequently de-laboured. As was earlier noted, the first phase was marked by the intention to make connections between social class and labour, enabling a class-consciousness that found organized expression in the rising trade union movement. The radical press thus entered a successful second phase in tandem with increased unionization. However, the subsequent removal of the Stamp Duty by the state allowed the commercial papers to drop their prices and directly compete with the radical papers.

The commercial press (re)gained these advantages both from the removal of the tax, and from state sanctions allowing commercial development of the press. The commodification of the press also resulted in *de-labouring* of the *commercial press* and impacted on the relationship of communication to democracy. Where the partisan press, however 'biased', had been centrally political, addressing its readers as workers, voters and citizens, a commercial press constructed its readers as "consumers" (Croteau and Hoynes 2000:69). Advertising and commercial success took priority over readership and political activism. As Baldasty (1993) notes, this shift also had consequences for labour journalism such that the *production process* itself was re-laboured. As newspapers

sought to keep costs at a minimum, investigative journalism was curtailed and editorial staff reduced. A division of labour of the newsroom resulted in a “beat” system that thereby “de-emphasized news not covered by beats” and reduced explanation to specialized reports, and cheaper “patent inside” or “innocuous” syndicated news. Baldastry observes that where news as a commodity was primary, news as information and debate was secondary, which had an impact not only on the amount of coverage of labour issues, but also how labour and the trade union movement was portrayed in the media.⁹

The movement of the commercial press from “the realm of politics to the realm of business” was also illustrated in newspaper *content* (Ibid). Comparing the rhetoric of the commercial press to the radical press, Curran (1978) identifies fundamental shifts made in the commercial press content that de-laboured the press by removing questions of class exploitation. This de-labouring process was specific. In the commercial press, a key change was in the portrayal of *labour* as the source of wealth, to the portrayal of *profit* as the wellspring of the economy (which ignores profits made by exploiting labour). As well, the class-divided view of capitalist society inherent in the radical press was absent in the commercial papers, which recognized social division to be a natural result of individual differences.¹⁰ A *re-labouring*, or containment of labour, was expressed in

⁹ This change in production varied according to country and time period, and there were also variations in degree of coverage of labour as its own “beat” depending on the individual (city) newspaper. This process is described in more detail later in the thesis, it is meant here to illustrate that the re-labouring process was also economically driven.

¹⁰ This view of social class can be traced to the Physiocrats “school of economics” in 18th century France and carried through in the work of David Ricardo and Adam Smith whose doctrine of individualism and promotion of political liberalism and market economy overrode any collective or oppositional version of class, so that class was more a more-or-less technical term versus a social issue or relation. In their view, social cohesion and social stability would be a result of “laissez-faire economics: [that] which links the profit motive to an equilibrium mechanism which produces benefits for all” (Scruton 1983:429). In Adam Smith’s [(1776) 1937] *On the Wealth of*

content that emphasized inter-dependence between classes, as stressed on the basis of shared interests in the “necessity” of building a strong British nation, which thus helped legitimize state interests. Increasing nationalist and imperialist coverage of foreign affairs replaced symbols of class conflict with new symbols of membership in a superior race and world power, justifying class harmony. Thus, contrary to histories that suggest press freedom is “freedom from the state,” the re-labouring of the commercial press actually supported state priorities.

While the radical press strove to articulate the connections between labour and social class, to facilitate critical discussion and enable political participation, it was countered by de-labouring rhetoric in the now less expensive, more profitable, and more prolific commercial press. In addition to these rhetorical shifts, the relatively independent production of the radical press was under continual siege and illustrates how the radical press itself was “de-laboured” and “re-laboured”. Curran (1978) concludes that the last phase of the radical press resulted from a combination of the industrialization of the press and commercial advertising. From the 1850s onwards, the options of the radical press were limited. Their choices were to accept advertising and decline politically, close down completely, or seek financial support from particular unions or political parties. The re-labouring of the radical press under unions and political parties meant that the labour press was expected to support these particular unions and parties (thus incorporating a representative form of democracy) and concentrate on specific union or party matters rather than widespread social activism.

Nations, Smith considered the economic and social consequences of the division of labour (Swingewood 1991:21), however, he emphasized the ‘powerlessness’ of the labourer since ‘he had neither the time nor the education to understand or realize his own interests’, and as such would be taken care of by the ‘invisible hand’ that guides society.

Studies of the labour press in North America trace its origins to European immigrants who imported the goals, format, and style of the radical press to the U.S. and Canada; and although there are variations in time frames,¹¹ research suggests similar stages of development, peak, and containment or decline (or similar process of labouring, de-labouring or re-labouring under trade union and political party requirements) (Hoerder 1987; Bekken 1993; Verzuh 1988). Adding to our understanding of the labouring dynamic, Bekken (1993) notes a difference in the early twentieth century newspapers in the U.S.,¹² in that working class papers were not only interested in labouring content, but were conscious of who participated in its production.

The working class press stemmed from an alternative press ideology, one that sought to erase distinctions between newspapers and readers and to involve its supporters in every aspect of the newspaper from management and editorial decisions to reporting (Bekken 1993:152).

In addition to facilitating participation in the press, Bekken adds that the labour press was instrumental in struggles to establish an alternative political party, so that the labour press became the socialist press. However, the attempt to form a labour or socialist political party in the US was subject to inter-union political struggles that mitigated against its realization. Moreover, Bekken identifies a de-labouring process that illustrates the imposed constraints placed on the press by the state, ranging from cancellation of postal services to extreme punishment. For the range of socialist papers,

¹¹ Verzuh notes that the labour movement and the labour press in the United States “had a forty year head start” on the Canadian labour movement, so that historical comparisons between the countries must take this into account (1988:7). Further, since international (American) trade unions operated in Canada, their press was published at union headquarters in places such as “New York, Washington, Detroit, etc.,” and was imported into Canada which “restricted” access to the “already small potential” readership (LeBlanc 1971).

¹² Bekken’s case study focuses on the Chicago labour press, but he contends that the particulars can be generalized, and serve as examples of the larger labour movement, as “every major US industrial centre supported an array of labor organs, and working class publications could be

this included “mob violence, destruction of their presses, deportation of their editors, criminal libel and/or indecency prosecutions” (Ibid: 157-159).¹³ As will be further demonstrated in battles on the cultural front in Canada, these actions were more intense in some periods than others, particular during war time, and they were topped off by the anti-communism “red scares,”¹⁴ which kept the labour press (save for some of the established trade union press) from developing further.

Less overt state actions in the United States were evident in non-commercial or state-produced publications that sought to re-labour the press according to state priorities. Slack (1983) describes the content of the American Bureau of Education’s publication *The Americanization Bulletin* (1918-1919) which was directed at workers – particularly immigrant workers – and aimed at fostering social cohesion. She demonstrates how the government narrative of “worker” was tied to citizenship. Citizenship was not defined in terms of democratic participation in government decision-making, however, but in terms of participation in the American economy and responsibility for the “welfare of the country” (Slack 1983:43). The notion of the loyal worker was constructed to join self and collective interests together. In this way, the labour of the workers was tied to an understanding of production as necessary for the good of the country. As Slack writes: “This image, or myth, of the ideal patriotic American functioned as an attempt to transcend debate over the meaning of freedom in the lives of workers” (Ibid).

found wherever workers were organized to improve their conditions through political or union struggle” (Ibid: 152-3).

¹³ The mob violence was part of “red squads” and “vigilante groups,” that Bekken notes were organized by local chambers of commerce and boards of trades” (1993:158).

¹⁴ For an overview of the “red scares” in the U.S. in early twentieth century history see Murray (1955) and Heale (1998).

As we have seen in Curran (1978), this kind of re-labouring under nationalism was also prevalent in the commercial papers in Great Britain, so that we can begin to identify a pattern. The “rhetoric of nationalism,” which focused specifically on labour, served to give a different meaning (other than social class) to labour and workers’ collectivism. It was a dominant rhetoric that was both complemented and contradicted by an immigrant press also emerging in North America in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century (Harzig and Hoerder 1984; 1987a;1987b; and Bekken 1993).

(De)labouring the Immigrant Press

Illustrating an immigrant press that was as diverse as it was class conscious, Hoerder’s *The Immigrant Labor Press in North America 1840s - 1970s: An Annotated Bibliography, Volumes 1 and 2* (1987a;1987b)¹⁵ makes several advances in understanding the labouring process in the immigrant papers. Contrary to previous studies on immigrants and research on the ethnic press, which suggested that the differences in origins, language, and culture resulted in isolation, and a fragmented working class,¹⁶ Hoerder’s longitudinal project demonstrated that immigrant’s “experience as wage-earners”:

¹⁵ These publications are the results of a combination of the “Labour Migration Project” (LMP) and the Labour Migration Press Project (LMPP) in which a number of scholars and researchers took part in comparative studies between Europe and North America (Hoerder 1984).

¹⁶ Hoerder criticizes the oversimplification of previous typologies of the ethnic press, such as Robert E. Park (1922) *The Immigrant Press and its Control* (1987a:23-26), and points out several problems with Park’s research, not the least of which was his paternalistic stance and his biased assumptions that immigrants lived in “isolation from the American community” and were “provincial” and “exotic” (Ibid: 25). Hoerder eschews the simplistic categorization in Park (and in studies following Park), that assume differences between, what Park called the “propaganda press” and the ethnic commercial press. Research suggests that this typology obscured more than it revealed, as content was more similar than different, both ranging from “support of the system to vociferous criticism”. The LMPP’s research advances that finances provide a more valid indicator, and make a distinction between a “membership press” paid for by membership dues

...led to common experience that could bring workers of different backgrounds and interests into organizational alliances, to joint mass action and to common interpretations of class relations (Hoerder 1987a:10).

Hoerder's research also notes the range of politics and difference in the financial basis of the ethnic press between the socialist and trade union publications and the ethnic commercial papers. The commercial papers were also "class conscious," but in keeping with the nationalist rhetoric, work was not viewed as exploitation, but as a means of betterment to transcend "peasantry" or "working" class economic and social divisions, thereby proving their worthiness as patriotic citizens. As Hoerder explains, the left and trade-union publications were "an ethnic press directed at a group and a class in the process of formation" such that the major difference between the alternative or "radical" press and the commercial ethnic press was that, while they both addressed the working class,

The labour press had to face squarely the issues of class and ethnicity, of organization and work-place discrimination, of gender roles and discrimination against women, of class fragmentation and international solidarity (Ibid: 30).

This suggests that identifying a press as "labour" meant that it was not separated from other social relations, that is, it demonstrates that the labour press was not solely class-based, but was also the product of gender and ethnic relations.

Research on the development of the immigrant press in the US indicates peak periods of publication and circulation to be between 1911 and 1917, after which a

and distributed 'free' to all members of an association, club, etc. [and a] 'marketplace press' which includes both of Park's commercial and propagandist ethnic press. Hoerder also indicates that Park's narrow description assumed a "monolithic" socialist press that left out political variations and didn't appreciate the range of political responses: "The reformist social-democratic press is hardly mentioned because its mediating stand would disturb the black-and-white distinction advocating early socialism" (Ibid:27/8).

combination of de-labouring forces led to a substantial decline in publications.¹⁷ Hoerder does not go into any great detail, but identifies the combination of a series of “red scares” (as in Bekken 1993) which, coupled with economic struggles for funding (as identified in Curran 1978), were central to its decline. In addition, the immigrant labour press had to combat the de-labouring forces that were expressed in the conservative ethnic papers, which fought to discredit the radical papers and competed with them for working class readership. As will be further explained in the thesis, Hoerder suggests that in Canada, to combat these and other divisive forces, ethnic organizations joined together in advancing political allegiance, rather than ethnic differences:

Ethnic organizations receded in importance in favor of multiethnic unions and parties, particularly the Communist Party. In Canada a multiethnic “red unionism” of the 1930s led to a pragmatic industrial one in the 1940s. Ethnicity was still a factor in labor militancy but by the 1930s and 1940s it was of secondary importance (Ibid: 20).

Just as communication research expanded further into studies of the ethnic press, the “feminist turn” in labour history¹⁸ also led to research on the articulation of gender in the labour and “women’s” press. Scholars began to analyze intersections between class

¹⁷Hoerder identifies a gap in Canadian research, as circulation figures were not available sufficiently for the project to provide more than a combined US-Canadian figure indicating “1200-1300 separate publications” reaching upwards of 1300 between the years of 1911 and 1917 (1987b:30). He also suggests that “the most prolific groups [were] the German, Jewish and Italian workers” at this time, and that these numbers dropped off considerably between the 1920s and 1940s, presumably as bilingual and English papers were published and immigration waned. It isn’t completely clear if his identification of peak periods applies directly to Canada, as there are no separate figures given for Canada.

¹⁸ Addressing limitations in labor history and orthodox political economy, feminist critiques exposed the male-centered bias and exclusion of gender in social analyses and critical theory in general. In regards to labour this meant an expansion of research from what capitalism defines as labour (wage-labour) to include un-waged labour, such as domestic, volunteer, or child labour (see Sangster 2000). This led to expanded conceptions of labour that included non-industrial labour as well as women’s reproductive labour, and expanded (or reduced) areas of study from the workplace, to the community, to the home, and even the body (see Hennessy and Ingraham 1997 and Cloud 2001).

and gender in both content and production. This approach broadened analysis beyond the class-centered view of labour to illustrate an increasing political complexity.¹⁹

(De)labouring the Women's Press

In the late Victorian age, the sexual division of labour meant that women had less time and opportunity for political activism or other activities outside the home, or were discouraged from such work in general. In explaining how these differences were manifest in Great Britain, Waters (1990) suggests that while some socialist writers expressed the need to equalize the opportunities for political and social participation for women, in general, women were excluded from both. Thus the struggle to articulate labour in terms of gender was more complex and there was much more social pressure against their participation. The exclusion of women from media production was also experienced in the commercial press (Rex 1995; Lang 1999).²⁰ A distinct labour press by and for women was therefore even more rare.

Generally, both the commercial and the (male-centered) labour press included a "women's page" or "women's section" that addressed issues that were considered specific to women. A press specifically for women was, for the most part, in the form of commercial magazines that addressed women as homemakers and consumers, not as activists. In *Protest and Popular Culture: Women in the U.S. Labor Movement, 1894-*

¹⁹ Feminist critiques also questioned the limitations of "old" labour history's traditional sites of labour politics. Research on the male-centered workplace, union, and political party, were thus expanded to include women's political activities in same, as well as ladies' auxiliaries, consumer groups, and other (in)formal organizations, while culture and community were studied by focusing on the household and family.

²⁰ Women journalists and editors were a rarity in general. At the turn of the 20th century and for years after, even the few women in journalism were required to use pen names, as it was considered "unladylike" for a woman's name to appear in the commercial press (Rex 1995:5).

1917, Tiece identifies three significant rhetorical strategies prevalent in commercial women's magazines that provided interpretive frameworks for understanding working class experience and "framing women's labour and reform activities" such as strike action and suffrage (2000:18). According to her research and literature reviews, Tiece suggests that these strategies – universalization, domestication and naturalization – have changed little over the history of the press, such that they provide important indicators of how women's activism was de-laboured and re-laboured at the same time, thereby containing and limiting its potentials.

The first rhetorical strategy illustrating these de-labouring and re-labouring processes is evident in the "rhetoric of universalization". Tiece explains how class differences were acknowledged at the same time as they were transcended by appeals to taken-for-granted, "universal" human ideals and morality. With the goal of social unity also presented as a taken-for-granted aim, the argument constructed was that women workers should aim to improve their lives by individual cultivation of "certain ideals, such as positive attitude, good character, and a kind spirit".²¹ Appeals to morals and individual conduct fed into separations between manual and intellectual labour, that is, divisions that were made between labour and culture, or the workplace and community. The individual woman was thus responsible for her (and her family's) "culture," with her unpaid labour a *requirement* of that responsibility.

²¹ As Tiece further explains: "Universalization gains rhetorical consensus by focussing on values and ideals that appear to transcend the material and thus constitute a common humanity.... From the perspective of middle and upper class reformers, bettering the lives of those less fortunate involved a component of moral uplift, to which was tethered a host of upper-class values, including cleanliness, privacy, and social harmony.... [This allowed them to] address work and gender relations while remaining silent on the differences and conflicts upon which these relations rest" (2000:22/23).

Separating and justifying women's work in the home was also a component of the rhetoric Triage identifies as a "realization through domestication," whereby labour was considered a "duty" rather than a self-determined activity, or one that required monetary compensation. As Triage explains:

...the sentimental cloak that surrounded work in the family mystified this type of labor, making it a moral duty rather than a job that deserved economic compensation like any other form of work (Ibid: 52). ...The cult of domesticity privatized problems and issues that were public in origin, thus obscuring the social nature of work relations and family (Ibid: 142).

With social problems confined to the private sphere of the home, the responsibility for the comfort of the home and the improvement of life was shifted to the women as consumer (rather than as producer), which was reinforced in advertising.²² This de-labouring was strengthened by a third rhetorical strategy, "preservation through naturalization," which identified social inequality and social hierarchy to be "inevitable" and "unquestionable" (that is, as a result of "natural" causes), while discrediting, or altogether ignoring any challenges to the status quo (Ibid:56):

The omission of reference to female labor activists and wage-earning women's experience was wholly rhetorical, preserving the sexual division of labour and denying the possibility of cross-class identification between upper class readers and wage-earning women (Ibid: 79).²³

In comparison to the rhetorical strategies of universalization, domestication, and naturalization in the commercial press, Triage also examined a compilation of pamphlets, posters and speeches, etc. constituting a "women's labor press" to distinguish alternative

²² See also: Leiss, Kline and Jhally (1990).

²³ As shall be discussed later, the denial of the possibility of cross-class alliances is an effective deterrent to social change because it appears that different experiences of labour under capitalism (and patriarchy and racism for that matter) are unrelated.

or oppositional strategies,²⁴ and illustrates how the women's press was laboured. Similar to Curran's comparison of the commercial and labour press in Great Britain,²⁵ she identifies the difference, rather than commonality, between the commercial and labour publications. Like the studies conducted by Lloyd and Thomas (1995) discussed previously, Tiece found that the labour press consistently emphasized the necessity for self-control over labour as a means to life betterment, as tied directly to democracy. "Culture" (that is, spiritual or moral uplift) was not seen as providing any solution, and neither was participation in formal politics considered to be effectively democratic. As Tiece explains, women's labour publications and speeches

...spotlighted the factory floor or assembly line as the front from which to fight their battle. [In their view] ...a more democratic society was shaped by actions involving laboring bodies, men and women who engaged in strikes and walkouts. Improvements in physical conditions rather than spiritual condition was a *sine qua non* [sic] in the achievement of democracy (Ibid: 58).

This labouring of politics was effectively countered in the commercial press, as the combination of the rhetoric of universalization, domestication, and naturalization helped to detach material or economic conditions from formal politics by attaching democracy to morality and culture, not with labour and activism.

²⁴ A similar approach is taken by feminist scholars to identify alternative and oppositional articulations of social relations, distinguishing the formation of "subaltern counter-publics" (Fraser 1996:123) or "counter-public spheres" (Felski 1989:155). These have been used to address the limitations of thinking about *one* public or *the* public sphere [as in Habermas (1962) 1989]] to explain the formation of opposition and resistance. However, this specifically refers to a *discursive* space as if it was discrete from other structuring agents (like the state or media corporations) that also constitute the making (or unmaking) of this space.

²⁵ As perhaps indicative of the academic division of labour, Tiece does not reference Curran as she approaches the study of media from a background of rhetorical studies. In her review of the literature on "the few rhetorical studies that mention class or the labour movement" Cloud (2001) (citing ten in total, including two of her own) posits that "the emphasis on this literature remains on voice, identity, and cultural microstrategies in the workplace rather than on labor's agency in winning material improvements in the lives of workers. Class becomes one identity among others, and scholarly attention is focused not on how classes take material power but on how class as an identity is expressed in culture" (2001:1) (see also Cloud 2001).

In short, with a framework of democracy as spirit, the materiality of social ills went unrecognized and hence unchallenged. Where naturalization disciplined the body out of existence, universalization idealized human experience. In either case, the laboring body was ignored or remained invisible (Ibid: 58).

While the labour press countered this kind of rhetoric in part, in practice it was less articulated and varied according to the time period. As we have seen, the labouring process was not without its own contradictions. The agency of women was tempered by the structure of gender relations even within labour organizations. Allen's (1993) analysis of three newspapers connected to the Knights of Labor (published from mid-to late nineteenth century)²⁶ indicates that gender distinctions were made at the expense of women's participation in labour activities. Her essay suggests that although the Knights of Labor press was critical of capitalism and the exploitation of workers it did not extend its view towards women.²⁷ Women were 'marginalized and relegated to a domestic sphere', whereas a "rhetoric of manhood" (that is, of brotherhood and fraternity)²⁸ proved a constant union theme.

The separation of "women's" issues in the labour press couldn't help but be controversial. At the same time as it recognized that there were issues that affected women more directly, it contributed to gender divisions that were under construction in a

²⁶ Allen's research suggests that there was a wide range of "diversity and contestation" in discussions of political and social issues within the Knights of Labor. She shows that there were many differences between the views of union leaders and editorial content, the latter being, in her words, largely "prescriptive and ideological". This indicates that the editors chose to see the press strictly as a political instrument, one in which they took the liberty of publishing their own views, rather than facilitate wider participation.

²⁷ Also Weir submits that the rhetoric of the press and the leadership of the KOL were not followed up in their actions "...it was one thing to accede to an abstract platform upholding gender equality, it was quite another to accept women as comrades inside local assemblies..." or as leaders (1996:101).

²⁸ Weir's analysis of the KOL also suggests that although "patriarchy remained the social ideal for men of all classes," the rhetoric of manhood was also used to refer to "gender neutral qualities". In this sense, it was "a close synonym for 'reputation' or 'character' and allied to the chivalric ideal of the sacredness of one's word" (1996:36).

wide range of press created for, and to a lesser extent by, women in general. This included a suffrage press that avoided issues of class or race in general (Steiner 1993; and Solomon 1991),²⁹ and magazines designed for the woman as audience commodity. Thus the strength of the de-labouring and re-labouring of the women's press through the combination of the rhetoric of manhood, universalization, domestication and naturalization, was continually bolstered by the increasing commercial dominance of the media, so that these social relations were mediated in and through a more prolific and more powerful commercial press.

The acceptance of advertising for financial gain and the related increased ability to produce and distribute media strengthened the commercial press, and contained or subverted labouring alternatives and oppositions specifically.³⁰ As Curran (1978) demonstrated, the argument for "freedom of the press" was effectively used by the commercial press, and has since benefited the commercial press most extensively. Commercial dominance of the press has not been mitigated by state regulation, and the commercial press advantage has grown in tandem with an ever-increasing commodification of content and extension of corporate ownership and control (Herman and McChesney 1997).

Back when broadcasting technology was developed, commercial ownership of technological production combined with financial and other resource benefits, privileged

²⁹ Both Steiner's (1993) and Solomon's (1991) overview of the suffrage press indicates promotion of the possibility of "universal womanhood" such that social inequality was thereby avoided. The movement for the vote, however, also gave strength and motivation to the struggle for women's union organizing (Norwood 1990:141-143), even though the effectiveness of attaining the vote itself was debated.

³⁰ Current research findings are consistent in indicating an absence or negative portrayal of labour and the working class in commercially owned and produced media, whether in press, television, film or fiction; see Parenti (1986); Puette (1992); Pizzigati and Solewey (1992).

commercial dominance of yet another media. Nevertheless, alternatives were proposed and fought for to allow for greater range of diversity in use and development, that is, towards enabling a democratic media. These struggles were also studied in terms of policy debates and attempts by organized labour to participate in the use and development of broadcast media, and provide two more examples from media history in the U.S. that illustrates the labouring dynamic in radio.

(De)labouring Radio Broadcasting

Historical work in North America that investigates organized labour's involvement in radio broadcasting suggests that state regulatory processes in early policy formation was a major hindrance to the development of public ownership and control of media (McChesney 1995; Raboy 1990; Vipond 1992). Canadian policy encounters will be discussed later in the thesis, but in the United States, McChesney identifies the period between 1928 and 1935 as "the only period in US history... in which the structure and control of a major mass medium was subject to anything close to legitimate public debate" (1995:3). He describes the efforts of what he calls a "broadcast reform movement" made up of labour, education, and religious groups who presented opposition to the commercial development of broadcasting. Despite their proposals, however, the Federal Radio Commission (FRC) chose to see labour and other social organizations as "propaganda" groups who should "work through the auspices of the commercial broadcasters" (Ibid:14). This put the non-profit broadcasters at a disadvantage since the FRC was responsible for controlling access to radio hours and broadcast power allotments to stations, thus McChesney notes that the non-profits:

found themselves in a 'vicious cycle' where the FRC, noting the non-profit broadcasters' lack of financial and technical prowess, lowered their hours and power to the advantage of the well-capitalized private broadcasters, and thus made it that much more difficult for the non-profit broadcasters to generate the funds to become successful (Ibid: 8).

In addition, the commercial broadcasters were able to use their resources to their advantage in presentations before state committees and in convincing the (then separate) newspaper owners of the financial benefits of a commercial system. On the government level, efforts to incorporate state regulation in broadcasting were countered by emotive language wrapped in the rhetoric of patriotism. Equating "freedom of enterprise" with "freedom of speech," state regulation or division of the airwaves which would allow *non-profit groups* a certain percentage of frequencies, was met with charges of state interference. This was taken to the extreme in public accusations that regulation would lead to, or would be the equivalent of, complete state censorship and thus state control. Such an appeal was particularly effective in obtaining the support of newspaper owners who sought to protect their business interests by backing the commercial exploitation of radio. The commercial press supported the view that since 'radio was so new', it could only be the 'corporations with their resources and efficiency skills who could manage it' (Godfried 1997:15). These arguments were expanded and used in front of legislators by corporations who presented themselves as altruistic benefactors who would take it upon themselves to manage the air in order to serve the public good, which government regulation could assist. For the commercial broadcasters, Godfried contends that the cumulative effect of this "manipulation" was

...a radio industry and state regulatory agency that defined the public interest as convenience, and necessity in terms of private property rights and profits that had little interest in ensuring equal access to radio facilities for varying views and options (Ibid:77).

In accordance with this view, access to radio was considered a privilege, and corporate owners saw the airwaves as their personal property, justifying advertising as only 'natural' since the 'public was able to listen to it without paying taxes on it' (Ibid: 175).

The commercial broadcasters were thus able to manage both the debate and the information about the debates for a public increasingly becoming used to entertainment programming and generally unaware of the arguments put forth by the broadcast reformers. As McChesney concludes, however, despite a number of potentially insurmountable difficulties that continuously plagued the broadcast reform movement, the movement was able to stave off commercial ownership for a period of five years. With such overwhelming economic and political disadvantages, however, the commercial system was seen as superior and was developed further to the detriment of other alternatives.

Although this structuring placed alternative radio at a severe disadvantage, access to the airwaves was possible with financial, technical and organizational resources. The largest trade unions in the U.S. had access to these kinds of resources, but they chose to rely on the coverage of labour by the commercial media and buy airtime as necessary (Godfried 1997:15-16). Godfried suggests that this was due to the general acceptance by labour leaders that radio technology was "neutral," such that they did not make the connection between access and ownership and control. They also viewed radio as a means of transmission, rather than a means to facilitate critical discussion and enable political participation (Ibid). In addition, in 1920 and 1930's America, the American Federation of Labour (AFL), and president Samuel Gompers in particular, favoured

corporatism – cooperation with employers on the basis of shared economic interests³¹ – so they did not foresee any direct opposition or restrictions that would limit labour access or use to commercially owned media.

The attempt at a specifically labour-owned radio station in the U.S. was therefore a rare exception, as exemplified by the establishment in 1926 of station WCFL in Chicago, which was owned and operated by the Chicago Federation of Labour (CFL) (Godfried 1997). The labouring of radio was expressed in the initial goals of the station which were to “provide a ‘working class perspective’ on public affairs, and counteract what was regarded as the ‘anti-union’ bias of the commercial broadcasters” (Godfried 1997). Their objectives were threefold: to “contest” the development of radio solely towards capitalist ends; to facilitate labour movement expansion; and to nurture and cultivate a working class culture.

Contesting the development of radio solely for capitalist ends meant opposing private ownership of the airwaves. WCFL saw radio broadcasting and public access to it as a right, and not a privilege based on the ability to pay. They also had a different version of democracy than was presented by the commercial broadcasters. Returning to the policy battles, Godfried observes how the commercial broadcasters were able to sway federal regulators by expounding on the democratic benefits of radio which were deemed to lie in an ability to bring people from various locations together, to “promote cultural unity” and commonality through “English as a universal language” (1997:15). In this view, radio could be used for mass, ‘classless’ entertainment, which would help diffuse social conflict (Ibid). Commercial press editorials also claimed that radio could become a “democratic agent” to “obliterate class distinctions” and promote social harmony (Ibid).

³¹ On Gompers’ role in the American trade union movement see Buhle (1999).

While agreeing with the view that the use of radio could be a positive social force, the understanding of democracy as classless, unfettered access to entertainment was contradicted by the leadership of the CFL. Analysing station records, Godfried notes that for CFL leadership, the democratic use of radio lay in public access to radio time to debate issues that were important in their lives and to enable participation in decision making, including union and municipal levels. As a public resource, radio could foster democratic development through diversity of viewpoints, controversy, and airing of conflict that was underscored by a bar-none policy of “free speech”. Using radio both as “an organizing and news medium,” and as means to nurture and cultivate a working class culture, WCFL programming combined entertainment, education and information, with a decided emphasis on entertainment (Ibid:36/7). Fully seventy-five percent of programming was classified as “entertainment”; and WCFL enlisted the cooperation and help from unions in the entertainment industry together with local workers to produce live improvisations, dramatic skits, live and recorded music combining everyday themes with activism (Ibid).³²

The focus on labour politics and culture was pursued into the 1930s and 1940s; but in the decades following there was a consistent chipping away at the political goals of the station. As Godfried’s research demonstrates, the de-labouring of WCFL’s was precipitated by a decisive leadership change and disagreement over organized labour’s direction and involvement. Similar to the de-labouring of the radical press, the increasing acceptance of advertising encouraged commercial development and was to the detriment of any overtly political content. This was exacerbated by the lack of financial support

³² For example: “The American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers grant[ed] a free license to WCFL to broadcast all [their] copyrighted music” (Ibid37).

from major labour organizations such as the American Federation of Labor (AFL).

Fundamental changes were made in the operation and practices of the station (see Table 1 following), and, as Godfried notes, although these were not mutually exclusive, the small portion of labour programming that did remain 'contradicted station policy'.

Table 1
The Labouring and De-labouring of WCFL

<u>Labouring Alternatives</u>	<u>De-labouring Transformations</u>
Financial Base and Use of Financial Surplus	
Non-profit and supporter/union based Surplus to provide access for individuals, progressive groups, and to develop diverse programming.	Profit and advertising-based Surplus used to increase staff wages, and purchase entertainment programming.
View of Rank and File	
Direct contributors, participants, listeners.	Consumers, audiences, listeners.
Decision-Making	
Democratic, that is, major decisions made in consultation with CFL rank and file.	Elitist, management decisions justified by efficiency goals.
Measurement of Success	
Extent of participation in radio and labour movement and public awareness of labour, development of class consciousness.	Commercial ratings, profit margin, and size of advertising accounts.
Programming Content and Production	
Popular entertainment, Amateur, live shows, spontaneous innovation and diversity Workers and activist productions.	Mass entertainment. Professionalized, scheduled, standardized formats, advertising. Use of announcers and disc-jockeys.
Political Orientation	
Oppositional, resistant, class conflict Criticism of employers, capitalism and state. Radio as "voice of labor". Overtly political and class-conscious. Free Speech (bar none).	Corporatism, class alliances. Cooperation of employers and state. Radio as conduit for commerce. Politically "neutral" and community- conscious. Edited (controlled) speech.
Cultural Goals	
Affirm and legitimize working class consciousness. Radio as part of culture, efforts to cultivate working class community through collective leisure activities. Popular culture.	Identity defined under status quo. Radio as propaganda for labour as "good citizen," promote charity functions. Mass culture.

Source: As summarized from Godfried

As can be observed from Table 1, the labouring of radio operations – including financial management to support diverse programming, organized participation in decision-making and programming, and explicit political and cultural goals – was an alternative transformed through processes of commodification and structuration. Economic decision-making also intersected with class structuring, as working class agency that had been enabled by the station's priorities was contained, reduced, and arguably all but eliminated. The de-labouring process was uneven, and decisions were made at different times, but the route towards a completely commercial station was its planned destiny from the 1940s on, and its commercial fate was sealed when it was sold in 1978.

The studies that have been reviewed here on the alternative press and radio of the first half of the twentieth century are rare, and studies of other forms of communication, such as film, fiction, songs, and theatre in North America are rarer still. Commenting on Canadian film research, for example, Frank submits that there has not yet been *any* analysis of labour and working class themes in Canadian film history (2000:422). As he notes that, with a few exceptions, film history has been “largely nationalistic in spirit, rather like the older studies of broadcast history” (Ibid: 417). While there are now more studies being done on the *representations* of working class, or immigrant and women's labour, and/or race *in* film, literature, and art, for example,³³ investigation into alternative

³³This research examines commercial media for portrays or representations of workers and the working class (see for example Stead 1989; Walsh 1986; Ross 1999). Research findings are consistent in indicating a negative portrayal of labour and the working class in commercially owned and produced media as was noted earlier (ftn. 39).

media *practices* or *productions* has been scarce.³⁴ The inattention or almost total absence of labour and working class agency in histories of cultural practices whether in architecture,³⁵ photography,³⁶ film, poetry or theatre gets back to the analytical separations of labour and culture first made by Arnold; and the related distinction of communication and culture as intellectual pursuits, means that they have been valued accordingly. As Wright and Endres (1976) observed in Canada, working class poems and novels (if considered at all), were evaluated according to established literary canon and dismissed as inferior, and “immature” [see Frye (1965) for example].

This absence of the labouring of communication and culture (particularly in North America) is why Denning’s work is considered such an important contribution to social history. Denning’s inclusive concept of labour, broadens both an understanding of labour and of labour history, from a focus on labour as manual, industrial, and union-centered, to include labour as intellectual, cultural, and broadly political. The methodological implications of this are twofold. Firstly, other kinds of institutions and organizations, such as fraternal societies, art, theatre and writing groups, as well as government-sponsored programs, are included in his analysis, such that class politics is not limited to

³⁴ Such exceptions are film class, race and labour (Ross 1991; Pick 1993; Noriega 1992); and labour theatre (Bray 1990). Along with these more-or-less conventional cultural forms, there seems to be an increased recognition of the historical value of a wider range of forms to include, for example, union and left political lapel buttons (Beveridge 2000), or other labour paraphernalia such as: “banners, placards, floats, charters, photographs, pins, ribbons, regalia, posters, commemorative booklets, union labels” etc. (Heron 2000:188).

³⁵ See Hunchuk (2001).

³⁶ Pietropaolo notes the absence of photographs of labour in his quest to contribute to the Canadian Auto Workers Union’s photographic collection of their members at work. “It was a bold initiative, especially when you consider that in the history of photography very few books on workers have been done, anywhere. This is the height of irony, since our society is inundated with photographs. Think of all the photographs that you have seen in the last 24 hours: on billboards, in newspapers and magazines, images on television, posters in the subways and buses, in shop windows, at the airport, in your living room and in your family’s photo album. How many of these photographs depicted workers at work?” (Pietropaolo 2001:6).

the labour movement or specific political parties. Similar to the expansion of feminist labour history, groups other than specifically union or political organizations are recognized as politically and culturally active. Denning argues that the sum-total of their cultural politics demonstrates a developing framework of popular hegemony. Too often, these groups have been studied in isolation, or seen as unconnected because of a specific focus (for example, class, unionization, suffrage, or racial equality, etc.). Denning aims to point out that, following Gramsci, these different ways of doing and seeing connect to a class politics and can accumulate into a hegemonic bloc³⁷ capable of challenging the dominant hegemony.

Also conceptually, Denning's expanded view of labour is directly related to how he understands culture. Drawing attention to the *labouring* of culture, Denning recognizes that culture is a process of labour; even advancing that *culture is labour*: "an act of self-enrichment and self-development".³⁸ At the same time, neither labour nor culture is confined to one specific place, that is, to the workplace, the community, a particular trade union, or industry (Glickman 1998:132). He thus aims to identify the intersections of labour and culture wherever they occur, locating manifestations in the

³⁷ The concept of a hegemonic bloc is also from Gramsci, and identifies the intersection of hegemonic ideas and practices that become relatively stable in a particular time period. In periods of crisis, the strength of the hegemonic bloc may be challenged, and there are opportunities for reform or radical change. The interwar period that Denning focuses on suggests that this was a period of crisis that arose from a combination of the Russian Revolution, the First World War, and the Depression. In times such as these, the ideas and practices that support dominant political economic and socio-cultural structures may be challenged to the point where the hegemonic bloc is destabilized. The total sum of the challenges may themselves be sufficiently stable enough to produce an alternative map of common sense or popular hegemony, forming an alternative or popular hegemonic bloc.

³⁸ From Denning (1991:423), as pointed out by Glickman (1998:132); Glickman comments further on Denning's contribution to labour history: "[Denning] provides a fuller and richer conception of what counts as working class culture than any previous work of labor history... In particular, his examination of labor's influence on the arts and of the ways in which artistic and intellectual

politics of affiliation (that is, in unions, organizations, and institutions, etc.) and in the politics of form (in cultural products and producers including various art and artists, media and theatre productions, etc.).

This inclusive conceptual framework allows Denning to approach a period in American history that has previously been limited or restricted by the narrow lens through which historians have viewed and explained it. In labour history traditionally, the Popular Front has been viewed in isolation, as a limited, Communist Party led coalition restricted to labour unions and fledgling Communist and Socialist political parties. It was seen as politically and culturally (artistically) insignificant.³⁹ Similarly, studies of labour and working class organizations were limited to the labour movement alone such that other “labourings” were not identified or considered. Denning briefly explains why a popular hegemonic bloc was not realized given a combination and succession of federal and state policy changes, government-led red scares, wars, and other opposition. He critically adds that what remains important, however, is that in combination, the struggle was more frequent and broader in scope than previously thought. Moreover, this combination peaked at a period of crisis in American history (the inter-war, Depression era), posing a serious threat to the dominant hegemony, as the actions against it attest.

production came to be seen as a form of labor is both novel and key for an adequate understanding of labor history” (Ibid).

³⁹ Both Faue (1998) and Glickman (1998) suggest that Denning’s work challenges both “right and left critiques of the Popular Front as marginal, irrelevant, and ultimately conservative...” (Faue 1998:312).

Summary and Conclusion

This chapter began with classic conceptions of culture to identify how analytical distinctions were made between labour and culture in the commencement of a de-labouring of social theory,⁴⁰ and briefly reviewed British cultural studies that brought labour, communication and culture together as a category of working class culture and as a making (or labouring) of culture understood as working class agency. It drew from Thompson's formational understanding of social class (as contributing to a theory of structuration), and distinguished William's concepts of a "structure of feeling" and "alternative" and "oppositional" forms and practices of communication and culture to understand the ways this agency may be articulated. This was supplemented by Mattelart's notion of popular culture as the site of struggle between "forces of resistance and incorporation," as manifestations of the intersection of agency and structure, or as Denning describes it – the 'cultural front'.

The struggle between 'forces of resistance and forces of incorporation' was illustrated in specific examples drawn from media history as struggles over the control and regulation of press and radio; the democratic use and development of such media; as well as control over the rhetoric that articulated labour in relation to social class and gender in particular. Distinguishing the 'forces of incorporation', the chapter identified the 'de-labouring' process as a combination of: the process of commodification; of a regulatory process favouring commercial development; and of the rhetorical disarticulation of labour from social class and activism.

⁴⁰ See Schiller (1996), for an overview of how this separation has been continued in communication theory.

Although commodification was central in the motivation for the commercial development of media, both the commercial press and radio broadcasters were able to justify a continuance of their ownership and control by invoking democratic precepts of “freedom of the press” and “freedom of speech”. This did not refer to the use of the press and radio as a means of facilitating access and diversity of cultural and political expression and activism, but were applied solely to commercial freedom from the state, as a convenient use of that state. The views expressed by the American radio broadcasters that the democratic promise of radio was to reduce class conflict and promote social unity (as accepted by the regulators), implies an understanding of democracy as one of consensual politics, suggesting that democracy is a matter of hegemony, not a matter of participation in decision-making.

The re-labouring process involved a re-articulation (or re-attachment and re-organization) of labour in accordance with dominant discourses of universalism, naturalization, and nationalism, as well as a rhetoric of domestication that was particularly evident in the commercial press intended for women. Understanding the intricacies of the process of structuration and struggle for hegemony as exemplified by the labouring dynamic, the labour press itself was not without its own contradictions. These have only been hinted at in terms of gender relations and variations in labour politics, but they are also part of this process. In particular, both Curran (1978) and Bekken (1993) indicate how funding for the labour press was tied to trade union or political party priorities rather than democratic development of a social movement. Godfried (1997) also noted that while labour radio in the U.S. was not embraced by other

unions (particularly the AFL which would have the resources to support it), their in-action also contributed to the de-labouring and re-labouring process.

This overview has provided several examples of this labouring dynamic in media history which suggests a web of interconnectedness between labour, communication, culture and democracy; the next three chapters combine these insights with the study of the cultural front on much larger scale in Canadian history.

Chapter Three: The Politics of Allegiance

Articulating Labour in Political Economy

Our engagement with the battles on the cultural front in Canada begins in the first few decades of the twentieth century, as we apprehend an active structuration and labouring dynamic in progress. The articulation of labour had earlier taken form in the creation of organizations by workers who literally fought to participate in the decisions that were affecting their lives and were finally able to begin to do so by forming trade and labour unions. As their struggle continued in the twentieth century, labour was also expressed in the formation of socialist and communist political parties, and by other groups that viewed labour as a central component of the struggle to generate and enable democratic alternatives to social oppression as manifest in imperialism, war, capitalism, and fascism. Focusing on the politics of allegiance, this chapter identifies the origin and merging of these groups as a labouring of culture which challenged, and advanced alternatives to, the dominant capitalist hegemony and liberal and conservative versions of political democracy.

Specifically, the chapter describes the politics of allegiance in a series of attempts at building networks, or unified “fronts” that aimed to affect existing political economic and social structures on both national and international levels. The first effort at unity emerged out of anti-conscription battles around World War I, and aimed to combine trade unionism with political party representation in Canada. The second attempt at a “united front” in politics was a specific strategy of the Communist Party of Canada (CPC) during the 1920s and 1930s which was aimed at developing working class consciousness within a framework of Communist politics internationally. The third was a “Popular Front” that

materialized in left-wing coalition governments in France and Spain in 1936 demonstrating the possibility of popular front politics in government.

In Canada, and as used here, the popular front refers to the intersections of the CPC and a number of other groups that together contributed to a counter-hegemonic movement in the 1930s that was both a defensive front against war and fascism, and an offensive front attempting to achieve a more democratic society, the contours of which were defined by critiques of capitalism. This chapter thus goes beyond the analytical divisions made between labour and culture discussed in the previous chapter, to demonstrate that the labouring of culture was both a *political and cultural* movement. Although labour, culture and communication may be analytically separated, historically they were not distinct practices; on the contrary, the movement was about making the underlying social relations and connections between them (more) visible.

Challenges of Unity in a Divisive Structure

Before any united front could be imagined or proposed, existing social and organizational divisions need(ed) to be appreciated. In the early part of the twentieth century, the Canadian labour movement was small and fragmented;¹ and any social and political organizing was tempered by four major challenges. These included the formidable resistance of the Canadian political and business establishment, fractional

¹ Statistical accounting of annual trade union membership in Canada prior to 1940 indicates peak periods to be 1919 (378, 047) and again in 1938 (385,039), with an overall yearly average (1919-1939) of 312,046 (rounded up) (6,552,958 total 1930 divided by 21 years) (Dept. of Labour 1940:19). This ranged from approximately two to four percent of the working population of Canada (Ibid.1935:18). More than half of these were in international unions (affiliated and unaffiliated) with the TLC, which was by far the largest trade union organization in Canada (149,398 out of 322,473) (Dept. of Labour 1940:19).

divisions that emerged amongst and between labour organizations, the heterogeneous composition of the working class, and political party differences.

Contextually, even basic union organizing was a tremendous undertaking. For most of the first half of the twentieth century, articulating labour could be life-threatening, and picketing and striking were considered criminal activities. While the 1872 Trade Union Act “legalized” trade unions, it was not until almost *seventy years* later that federal government legislation was established to protect workers from being fired because of union activity (1939 Criminal Code amendment Section 502A) or refused employment because of union membership (1944 Dominion Wartime Labour Relations Regulation) (Dept. of Labour 1945:6/8).² Prior to this legislation,³ however, basic rights such as freedom of association and freedom of expression could be denied if these involved labour in any way.⁴ A consistently hostile, anti-union, and anti-socialist establishment used all means possible to disrupt or eliminate union organizing, including harassment, threats, physical violence and loss of employment. Such actions were supported by the various levels of state authority adding deportation, costly fines, as well as prison to a list of serious consequences. It was against such a restricted and

² This legislation was enacted after the government of the United States passed two acts securing labour civil rights. These were the 1933 National Industrial Recovery Act and the 1935 Wagner National Labour Relations Act which “safeguarded the right of the workpeople to join unions and required employers to negotiate with them” (Dept. of Labour 1945:8).

³ Abella also notes the passage of the federal government’s Order in Council PC 1003 in 1943, that “established government machinery to enforce collective bargaining and union recognition and to investigate and correct unfair labour practices” (1975:20). He suggests that this “became the foundation” for provincial labour legislation adopted across the provinces of Canada following the Second World War (Ibid: 21).

⁴ Prior to this legislation, trade unions were subject to the Criminal Code of Canada. “Trade unions were for some time regarded as criminal conspiracies, and some of their activities, such as picketing, have been considered criminal” (Dept. of Labour 1945:6). For example, the Industrial Disputes Investigation Act (1907) placed federal restrictions on the already limited option of strikes, and although it was declared “unconstitutional” in terms of encroaching on provincial law in 1925, its legal powers were extended in case of “national emergency” (Bennett 1987:76).

treacherous framework which unions had to organize, such that only a small percentage of workers belonged to trade unions.

Secondly, the challenge at the heart of labour organizing then (as it is now), involved questions regarding the scope or range of union activism desired or possible. Given that the division of labour and capitalism already structured the environment of union organization, just what the extent of activism should be was a matter of debate that was waged on three levels. While all labour unions recognized a division between capital and labour, how this was understood differed between a class-based analysis, where the relationship was seen as mutually antagonistic, and a dependency-based analysis, where the relationship was seen as one of mutual necessity and therefore one of compromise or harmony. This was connected to what was considered “labour” and who was doing the “labouring,” which followed divisions made between skilled and unskilled, waged or unwaged and unemployed workers, and well as immigrant, women’s, and youth labour. Further, it depended upon the level of organization that was considered necessary, by locality or industry, or on national or international levels. These differences remained at the heart of the divisions between Canadian labour organizations at all levels – local, provincial, and national – and were evident in central union organizations such as the Trades and Labour Congress (TLC) (est. 1886), the Confédération des Travailleurs Catholiques du Canada (CTCC) (est. 1921), and the All-Canadian Congress of Labour (ACCL) (est. 1927).

A third challenge in the context of movement development arose from the composition of the Canadian working class. Social relations of class dominance, patriarchy and racism were continually being (re)constituted through divisions of labour

and through variance in the flow of immigrant labour. Official (state) and unofficial (social) distinctions were made between: men and women, “preferred immigrants” (from the British Isles, the United States, and Western Europe), “foreigners” from Asia, Eastern and Southern Europe, and “alien enemies” in times of war (Avery 1979). This was compounded by differences in religion, language, and literacy levels. Employers frequently exploited all of these differences. New immigrants were brought in as cheap replacement labour, they were used to break strikes, and they were abused when the state added threats of, or actual, deportations as a strong-arm tactic against union organizing. Whereas skilled labour was predominantly white, male, and made up of “preferred immigrants”, a good portion of industrial labour was made up of male “foreigners” and “aliens,”⁵ with women and youth predominantly relegated to domestic and factory labour. Unemployment also followed patterns in the division of labour, as the phrase “last to be hired, first to be fired” was common, especially among immigrants. All of these divisions made a huge difference in collective organizing. While skilled labourers held the advantage both economically and socially (as white, skilled male workers), other workers were discriminated against; not only by employers and the Canadian government, but from within the labour movement itself. And when unions were organized according to skill or wage, they arguably contributed to entrenching these divisions. As we shall see, those who were excluded from union membership and shared one or another commonality organized their own collectives (such as groups, clubs and

⁵As noted by Avery and Ramirez, immigration statistics from 1921 indicate that twenty-two per cent of the total Canadian population was foreign-born, of which forty-six per cent were “other than British origin” (1999:896). The Canadian census of 1921 and 1931 did not make similar distinctions when compiling their labour statistics.

support networks), such that there emerged ethnic, youth and women's organizations adding to the politics of allegiance.

Lastly, these labour and social divisions were expressed in emerging labourist and socialist political parties. In the early 1900s, a range of political parties formed to address limitations in the two-party parliamentary system in Canada. Independent labour candidates ran in local elections, and a number of provincial and federal parties were established, including the Independent Labour Party (1916), and the Progressive Party (1919) (see Morton 1967). In accordance with the time, these tended to be white, male-centered organizations, and within the specific politics of each party, there were both conservative and radical variants. Generally, as Heron (2000) suggests, initial combinations of labour and politics in Canada was divided between a politics of labourism and socialism. Both aimed to address labour and the working-class, but each differed on what was considered solutions for class division and class conflict.

The justifications for a labourist-based politics were made on the basis of a right to participate in "the full promise of liberal democracy" (Heron 2000:316-321). While this demonstrated a class-consciousness, the labourist aim was not to overturn the class system, but to make it more "fair," "honest," "equitable" and "just" (Ibid:322-326). These values were also common in religious rhetoric, and throughout the range of the political spectrum, labour candidates overlapped with conservative and liberal politics. What made labourist politics different, however, was an insistence on the necessity of trade unions (Ibid: 325), and on this basis they were able to challenge the two-party system.

While labourism represented a break with dominant ideas and practices, it was also challenged by an emergent socialist politics. In the early 1900s, the Socialist Party of Canada (SPC) (1904), the Socialist Democratic Party of Canada (SDP) (1911), a number of immigrant socialist parties (Ukrainian, Russian, and Finnish), and a smattering of women's independent labour parties⁶ also came into existence. It was not a cohesive politics, however, as socialists differed on questions regarding the extent and role of labour organization, working class leadership, and political involvement. Heron (2000) explains that early socialism was divided between a "Marxist" socialism, that criticized trade unions as vehicles of class compromise, and an "ethical" socialism that was tempered by religion. The struggle between labourism and socialism(s) continued on both a regional and national basis until the beginnings of First World War (WWI) (1914-1918) when a call for a "united front" emerged. The basis of unity stemmed from an intensified critique of the relationship between labour, capitalism, and the state, as the federal government prepared to enter Canada in war.

The First Attempts: Uniting Labour and Political Organization

In a climate of anti-union hostility, employment volatility, labour union fragmentation, and social and political division, the basis for a nation-wide united front of labour came together as a result of opposition to military conscription. Calls for unity appeared in the Trades and Labour Congress (TLC), the national organization of the

⁶ References on the establishment of women's political organizations during this period see Rosenthal (1979), Strong-Boag (1979), Penner (1973), Heron (1981); as cited in Heron (2000:13).

skilled craft trades,⁷ [affiliated to the American Federation of Labour (AFL) (est. 1886)].⁸

While in the early 1900's, the TLC supported "independent" political representation and labour candidates, it had been along the lines of "pure and simple trade unionism" in accordance with the philosophy of worker-capital cooperation or "corporatism" advocated by the president of the AFL, Samuel Gompers (Ibid: 62-69).⁹ Recognizing that labour may be conscripted to fight the war, a growing consensus in TLC affiliates and at national conventions, was that war was an immoral, "capitalist" endeavor that should thus be fought by the capitalists (Robin 1968:119; Lipton 1978).¹⁰ While the TLC did not contest "voluntary assistance," an "anti-conscription" resolution was passed at the national convention in 1916.¹¹ It proposed that the government should "conscript wealth" rather than labour and leave the war to the British (Robin 1968:132).

⁷ The first unions to organize into an association for collective strength were unions that consisted of predominantly white, male, and skilled labour. Since skilled workers were the most difficult to replace, they held an advantage in the division of labour and they used this advantage to successfully organize the national TLC.

⁸ In addition, the TLC was affiliated to the International Federation of Trade Unions (est. 1901).

⁹ Corporatism was also favoured by the Canadian state, with the federal Liberal government (1909) establishing a Department of Labour to gather information and statistics on labour, later declaring its mandate to be "the promotion of industrial harmony" (Dept. of Labour 1940:12).

¹⁰ This anti-military and anti-imperialist stance was a continuance of stands taken in opposition to Canada's participation in the Boer War in 1899 [Lipton (1966) 1978:156] as noted by Spencer (1990:162)]. In his overview of the labour press (1870-1910), Spencer demonstrates an anti-war and anti-imperialism position that was taken by labour journalists based on both political economic and moral grounds. Labour journalists argued that patriotism and nationalism combined to circumvent international class-consciousness and class solidarity in favour of capitalism and the growth of what is now termed 'the military-industrial complex'. Morally, war could not be justified because public funds that could be used to alleviate poverty were used to finance "military production industries"; war was thus "murder ...sanctioned by the state" and evidence of the "immorality of the dominant culture" (Ibid: 161-163).

¹¹ *Proceedings of the Thirty-second Annual Convention of the Trades and Labour Congress of Canada* (1916:23) in Robin (1968:119). Abella also notes previous "anti-war" resolutions passed at TLC conventions in 1912 and 1913 (1975:8).

Independent provincial labour councils and industrial unions were also opposed to conscription, particularly in Quebec,¹² and unions debated the best course of action. For some, the solution was a general strike to disrupt the war-related industries in particular. From this standpoint, a strike was necessary since these industries not only supplied the materials for war, they profited, both from it, and from the public money that was being used to finance it. For others, that is, the majority of unions (particularly those in the TLC), the solution was political action composed of a united front of labor. In the majority view, while strikes may have their effect, the long-term solution was seen as one where labour could have a greater voice in political decisions. It was thus planned that a party should be established along the lines of the British Labour Party to run in the 1917 federal election (Penner 1987:74-78; Robin 1968). As Robin explains:

Socialists, trade unionists, farmers and other progressives were invited to sink their differences in a new partnership. The 'dominating political organization' in each province was urged to call a conference of 'the respective organizations entitled to partnership in such a Labor Party and proceed to cooperate for political action (Robin 1968:133).

The Canadian Labor Party existed mainly on paper, however, and the defeat of independent labour candidates who ran in the 1917 election, proved that the majority of Canadians were still supportive of the established political parties. As Abella notes, "...the rank and file were not prepared to follow [union] leadership. Patriotism was clearly more compelling than class" (1975:9). Considering that the rank and file "comprised only two per cent of the Canadian population in 1916" (Robin 1968:137), the loss was not surprising. Nevertheless, the fielding of labour candidates illustrated the possibilities of labour activism that went beyond the confines of industry or employer. As well, labour strikes and public demonstrations against conscription continued

¹² See Lipton (1978:171); and Bennett (1987:65/6).

throughout the war years despite the government's use of violent force to control dissent¹³ (Lipton 1978:Chap. 9; Kealey 1997).¹⁴ Such actions demonstrated that cooperation amongst the range of moderate to revolutionary politics was possible, and it breathed life into Canadian socialism and working class consciousness (Heron 2000:329). At subsequent conventions for the Canadian Labor Party, their overall objective was stated:

Generally, to promote the Political, Social and Economic emancipation of the people, and more particularly of those who depend upon their own exertions by hand or by brain for the means of life.¹⁵

While the aims of the Labor Party suggested both the self-realization of labour and a unity of intellectual and manual labour, the united front did not materialize. The CLP itself did not materialize until 1921, lasting for only eight years, and many factors contributed to its demise even before it was formally established. These included the continued fractions between corporatist, labourist, and socialist politics, regional divisions (between a more radical west and moderate central leadership), AFL "interference", and differences regarding actions to be taken against conscription (see Lipton 1978:Chap 9; Penner 1987:74-78; Abella 1975:9/10). Particularly decisive were the actions of the Canadian state that effectively countered political unity and labour movement development.

¹³ See Armstrong [(1932) 1974:226-230].

¹⁴ Keshen (1992) suggests that the intensity of the state's use of coercion was no less intense than the "management" of the news to facilitate public support of the war. He argues that "formalized news management" in the private, commercial media, in combination with "draconian" restrictions set by Canada's Chief Press Censor, ensured that there was little criticism and much "romanticizing" of the war and of the necessity of Canadian's fighting in it.

¹⁵ *Proceedings of the Thirty-fourth Annual Convention of the Trades and Labour Congress of Canada* (1918:45) in Robin (1968:143).

On the heels of the Russian Revolution (1917) and the anti-conscription demonstrations, the Liberals and Conservatives joined in a "Union" government¹⁶ to force through conscription, and enacted legislation that was the official beginning of a "Canadian Red Scare," banning any (suspected) left-wing formations. Building on the War Measures Act of August 1914,¹⁷ a series of Orders-in-Council were passed (from 1914-1918) that extended government control over communications (speech, press, and assembly) and left political organizations. These included the institution of a Chief Press Censor's Office (PC 1330, June 1915),¹⁸ which was enlarged to include telegraph and telephone monitoring (PC 2073, Sept 1915), a Censorship Committee (PC 146 Jan 1917),¹⁹ and later acts to contain "growing internal dissent" and criticism of government (PC 1241 May 1918) (Keshen 1996:66). A range of left political parties, labour and working-class identified political and cultural associations, and accompanying facilities, activities, and publications, were thereby declared illegal.

¹⁶ The Union government (1917 to 1920) was composed of Conservative and Liberals who favoured conscription in order to facilitate its passing in parliament. Lipton suggests that the term "union," was also chosen to suggest an association with labour, to garner the labour vote (1978:179). He cites a federal government advertisement in the *Industrial Banner*, [the] organ of the Toronto Trades and Labour Council" making the connection: 'Put the union label on union government' (*Industrial Banner*, 6 Dec 1917).

¹⁷ While Section 91 of the 1867 Constitution Act gives the responsibility of the federal government to ensure "peace, order and good government," the War Measures Act gives Cabinet (members are appointed by the Prime Minister), the power to establish and enforce any law or policy deemed necessary as decided by the government-of-the-day. The 1914 statute extends the power of government beyond normal parameters and is considered an emergency power used in times of crisis, such as civil unrest or war.

¹⁸ The press censor was authorized to "prohibit sources criticizing military policy, causing disaffection, 'assisting or encouraging the enemy, or preventing, embarrassing or hindering the successful prosecution of the war' ...[and] detailed instruction sheets regarding permissible commentary on particular war-related events were sent out to approximately 1,500 publishers... as well as federal, provincial and local constabulary services" [Keshen (1996:66), quoting PC 1330, 10 June 1915].

¹⁹ The Committee was composed of "the Secretary of State, Postmaster General, Solicitor General, Directors of Customs and Naval Service, along with the Ministers of Justice and Militia Defense" (Keshen 1996:66). This gave powers of censorship and seizure to the post office and

These marked the first of many times in the first half of the twentieth century that the state used the power of law-making to explicitly de-labour politics and place stringent controls on labour, communication, and culture. The War Measures Act was supplemented again in September 1918, when PC 2381 banned all publications in “alien” languages²⁰ as well as a number of English publications (both foreign and domestic),²¹ and PC 2384 banned the “unlawful” organizations.²² Commenting on these restrictions on civil rights,²³ Schmeiser explains that legally,

...no stone was left unturned. Any property belonging to such an organization could be seized by the police without warrant and forfeited to the Crown. A

customs office over any printed material, as well as films [PC 146, 19 January 1917 (Ibid.)], and recorded material [PC 1241, 18 May 1918 (Ibid.)]. See also Pilli (1982:85-92).

²⁰ These included “specifically the following languages: German, Austrian, [sic] Hungarian, Bulgarian, Turkish, Romanian, Russian, Ukrainian, Finnish, Estonian, Syrian, Croatian, Ruthenian, and Livonian” (PC 2381, 25 Sep 1918) printed in its entirety in Swyripa and Thompson (1983:190-6); see also ‘An Act to Amend the Criminal Code’ Statutes of Canada, 9-10 Geo.V, c.46. s. 1 (Schmeiser 1964:215) and Roberts (1988).

²¹ As noted by Keshen, most of the banned publications were from the United States, and were primarily ethnic and left-political and labour publications. In 1918, “Of the 253 sources banned in Canada, 222 came from south of the border, 164 were in foreign languages, and 93 advocated some variant of Marxism” (*Final Report of the Chief Press Censor for Canada*, 1918: 82) (1996:79).

²² These included “The Industrial Workers of the World, The Russian – Social Democratic Party – Revolutionary Group – Social Revolutionists – Workers Union; the Ukrainian Social Democratic Party, the Social Democratic Party, the Social Labour Party, Group of Social Democrats of Bolsheviki, Group of Social Democrats of Anarchists; The Workers International Industrial Union; Chinese Nationalist League; Chinese Labour Association”. Further, the Act allowed that any other organization identified by government as “unlawful” would be so as published in the *Canada Gazette* (PC 2384, 25 Sep 1918). PC 2384 is printed in its entirety in Swyripa and Thompson (1983:190-6).

²³ Avery (1983:82) notes that due to pressure from the TLC and a range of “ethno-cultural” newspapers, the federal government modified both Acts allowing for meetings and publication in languages other than English. This did not preclude the State from the use of internment camps for “enemy aliens” however. Also, while the Acts were modified on paper, municipal and provincial repression continued, and RCMP surveillance became standard operating procedure, both for the government, and for the groups who were aware they were being infiltrated and constantly watched. Further, as press censorship was officially lifted, Kealey notes that the RCMP were given a list of publications to continue surveillance including *BC Federationist*, *Calgary Searchlight*, *Camp Workers*, *Labor*, *New Democracy*, *One Big Union Bulletin*, *Ukrainian Labor News*, *Vapaus* [Finnish] and *Western Labor News* (Kealey 1997:301). RCMP press scrutiny continued through the first half of the twentieth century (as evident in RCMP Security Bulletins 1919-1941).

person was presumed to be a member of an unlawful association if he had attended its meetings, spoken publicly in its favour, or distributed its literature by mail or otherwise. Other subsections made it an offence for a person to act as an officer of an unlawful organization, to speak as its representative, to become a member, to carry any badge, to contribute to it, to solicit contributions, or to permit meetings on his property (1964:215).

These changes did not result in a general public outcry however, arguably as a result of wartime uncertainty and prevalent anti-“Bolshevist” hysteria.²⁴ Yet the powers that it gave the state basically legalized state coercion, and continued beyond wartime. The extent of how far this would de-labouring would be exercised was exemplified in the subsequent use of state-sanctioned violence against workers at the Winnipeg General Strike in 1919.²⁵

Whether or not working-class labour saw itself as a bona fide movement, in the view of business and state leadership, the General Strike was a confirmation of the movement’s existence and of the potential for revolutionary action, and reaction taken against it was immediate and violent.²⁶ Business leaders and all three levels of governing authority (municipal, provincial, and federal) combined to put an end to what they

²⁴ Avery (1983) suggests that general public opposition against such restrictions on civil rights did not occur because of the predominance of nativism during this time. The Act was seen to apply primarily to “foreigners” – their languages and their associations – rather than ‘legitimate’ Canadian citizens. Even though this was outright censorship, arguments for “freedom of the press” “free speech” and “freedom of assembly,” were muted. As example, Avery notes the conspicuous absence of any comment on the Acts in the major English language dailies, including the *Manitoba Free Press*, *Edmonton Journal*, and *The Vancouver Sun* (as surveyed from 20-28 September 1918) (Avery 1983:83).

²⁵ See Bercuson (1974) in particular.

²⁶ Abella suggests that although the strikers “wanted nothing more revolutionary than a living wage” many were convinced that the strike was the beginning of the drive for a “Soviet Canada” (1974:12).

perceived as no less than “an attack on the very existence of the system” (Palmer 1992).²⁷ Demonstrations and strikes were dealt with using police force, including physical violence, arrests and Criminal Code convictions (Kealey 1997).²⁸ The Criminal Code was amended to declare any revolutionary organization illegal, and the Immigration Act was also amended to ensure that any immigrant participating in like-activities could be deported (Pilli 1982:95).²⁹ The reaction was all the more poignant given the strength of capitalist prosperity through the first few decades of the twentieth century, through WWI and its aftermath (Palmer 1992), and such drastic actions brought public attention to the relationship between the state and business interests.

The Strike was further significant as organized workers in local, national, and international affiliated unions took united action with unorganized workers,³⁰ not only in Winnipeg, but in towns and cities across the country (Abella 1974:13). People were exercising their power, with the “withdrawal of their labour” (Penner 1977:28), and with

²⁷ As Abella further notes, this was apparent in the city of Winnipeg itself as a “Committee of One Thousand” made up of “prominent businessmen, professionals, government officials, clergymen, and the like,” worked against the strikers and was complemented by the actions of the federal government (Ibid).

²⁸ While the Winnipeg General Strike was the longest and most violent in terms of the use of military and police against labour in this “phase of Canadian working class history,” Kealey (1997) demonstrates that it was not unique to early twentieth century labour struggles (see also the articles in Abella 1974). In assessing the extent of “state repression” from 1914-1920, Kealey characterizes the Borden government’s actions as a “domestic war” against the working class in Canada, particularly against labour and immigrant “enemy aliens”. This refers specifically to government policies that were set covering a wide range of actions, including arrest, internment, registration requirements, disfranchisement, and censorship of press, speech and association (for the full texts of these policies see Swyripa and Thompson 1983:171-199, Appendix II).

²⁹ An Act to Amend the Immigration Act (6 June 1919, *Statutes of Canada* 1919, Vol I); An Act to Amend the Criminal Code (7 July 1919, Ibid.), see also *House of Commons Debates* 1919, Vol II (Spring/Summer) Pilli (1982:95, fn 33).

³⁰ The strike involved up to 35,000 workers for over six weeks (Bennett 1987:97; Penner 1973; Abella 1975; Bercuson 1974).

public demonstrations in the streets and city parks. For a second time in a short period, it demonstrated that united front politics was possible, suggesting the potency of labour solidarity and the potential of revolutionary syndicalism underlying movement development. At the same time that there was unity, however, there was also division. For some, the Russian Revolution had demonstrated the apogée of what was possible, encouraging advocates of social revolution and ‘dictatorship of the proletariat’. For others, a wiser course of action was democratic social reform exercised through parliament. Despite these differences, a united front of unions and political parties would again be attempted. While the first emerged from trade unions to political party organization, the second attempt was from the reverse.

Towards a United Front in a Divided Politics

The Communist Party of Canada (CPC) tried to create a “united front” that was much more encompassing and concentrated than the previous trade union efforts. Operating underground since 1921, and publicly since 1924,³¹ the CPC was not only a political party, but also included union organization, unemployed, immigrant, women’s, and youth organizations. The CPC initially attempted to build on the Canadian Labor Party (Buck 1952; Rodney 1968), but the Party already suffered from a failure of united front politics, and with the increased CPC involvement, there was an exodus of labourists

³¹ The CPC was founded in 1921, but was technically illegal under provisions of the War Measures Act. It operated behind “The Workers’ Party” until 1924 when it made itself public (Penner 1988:Chap 2).

(Heron 2000:331; Rodney 1968; Robin 1968).³² The CPC then turned its attention to linking civil rights and labour against war. Given the rise of Fascist Italy (in the 1920s) followed by Germany (in the early 1930s), a “united front” was proposed to fight against fascism. However, continuing divisions between trade union organizations, between socialist and communist politics, as well as the enduring divisions of labour and related social relations, meant that challenges to unity in Canada were formidable.

A major hurdle was a result of the CPC’s own policies. From the very beginning, when the CPC was chartered into the Comintern in 1921, it had established itself on the basis of sectarianism. While there were other organizations and leaders in Canada that the CPC could have drawn from or united with (such as the previously existing socialist parties and radicals from the OBU and the ILP to name a few), the Party was chartered without their participation (Penner 1988:47/8). The aim was to establish THE party first, and then to recruit members from these organizations, after, as Communists. The “united front” would supposedly thus become a communist front, in Canada, and over the world. In practice, however, the theory could not be operationalized, and it was arguably both arrogant and naïve to assume that such a straight-forward conversion would occur. It was additionally stunted by centralized and hierarchical decision-making, as membership in the Comintern meant that decisions made at Comintern Congresses were to be followed by national sections. The CPC were thus susceptible to extreme policy changes that were meant to apply regardless of national differences (Penner 1988:53). In particular, a

³²Buck (1952) suggests that the Communist Party considered the Canadian Labor Party as one of the primary vehicles to facilitate united front politics. As Sangster notes, however, with the increased leadership of the communists in the labor party, the labourists withdrew, “redirecting their energies to the regional and municipal ILPs and labour parties,” and concentrated on regional and provincial politics (1989:56).

policy made in 1928 on socialists was crucial: rather than being part of the opposition in the class struggle against capitalism, they were seen as compromising it (Ibid: 84-5).

Following Joseph Stalin's equation of socialism and fascism,³³ CPC members publicly denounced socialism (in their speeches and their press) as the kind of politics that *facilitates* capitalism, and eventually *results* in fascism, arguing that capitalism would not be destroyed or eliminated by reform alone.

In Canada, this made for bitter politics – not only did the communists and socialists see themselves in competition for the allegiance of the working class – the line between them had been heavily drawn, so that neither trusted the other. In addition, the CPC raised the ire of organized labour when it established the Workers' Unity League (WUL) and the Farmers' Unity League (FUL) in 1929 as “revolutionary unions” (Avakumovic 1975).³⁴ This was counter to both the TLC unions and the newly created (1927) national industrial organization, the All-Canadian Congress of Labour (ACCL).³⁵ As Manley (1994:170) suggests, “this action had the effect of driving the ACCL to the

³³ Penner (1988:84) notes that Stalin went so far as to equate social democracy with fascism in articles written for the *Communist International*. In the Sixth Congress of the Comintern (1928) Stalin introduced a policy of “class against class” “prohibiting electoral alliances with other parties on the left” (Jackson 1988:23). This direction of political “sectarianism” was followed by Communist parties internationally; this was later assessed as one of “Stalin’s major political blunders” (Penner 1988:87).

³⁴ Avakumovic explains the reasoning behind the CPC’s strategy: “The launching of the WUL was justified on the grounds that the leaders of the TLC and the ACCL had sold themselves to the capitalists. The WUL proved effective in the seven years that the WUL existed (from December 1929 until it was ‘liquidated’ by the Comintern in 1935/6), WUL membership ranged from 30 – 40,000 particularly in the ‘mass production industries’ (1975:73). See also Manley (1984).

³⁵ Coming together in 1927, the bulk of the ACCL consisted of the One Big Union (1919-1923), the Canadian Federation of Labour (1909-1927) and the Canadian Brotherhood of Railway Employees (CBRE), and the Electrical Communication Workers (Penner 1988:83/4). The ACCL took a more inclusive view of labour than the TLC, representing labour in both its skilled and unskilled forms, but rejected American or international affiliation (Palmer 1992), although a couple of the unions in the ACCL had been organized by the Communist Party of Canada (Penner 1988:4).

right” as Communist-linked labour leaders and unions were expelled from national memberships, and charges of dual unionism were used as a “pretext” to “purge the left” in both the TLC and the ACCL. Thus, rather than uniting labour and left politics, the “united front” strategy of the Communist Party was having the opposite effect.

Nevertheless, despite the hostility against them, the Communists were effective organizers and their labour horizon was wider and much more encompassing than either the TLC or the ACCL. Organizations that were Communist-linked either formally or informally, included the Canadian Labour Defense League (CLDL), the National Unemployed Workers’ Association (NUWA), Branch Neighborhood Councils, Ex-Servicemen’s Leagues, the Women’s Labour Leagues, the Communist Youth League and the Young Pioneers, as well as a wide range of ethno-cultural groups, the largest being the Ukrainian Labour Farmer Temple Association (ULFTA) and the Finnish Organization of Canada. These would all be central in organizing against war and fascism, as they were able to transcend the boundaries of the limited structure of organized labour in Canada, by including not only workplace, but community organizing across existing social and labour divisions.

Communist Organizations

The CPC’s strategy was to organize the working class in its entirety across Canada. While this included union organization it also involved the building of collective strength wherever and whenever necessary. Initially, the CPC made its greatest inroads in labour unions through the WUL and the FUL, but the Party substantially broadened its public profile with the activities of the Canadian Labour Defense League (CLDL). The

CLDL was formed in 1925 to establish, support, and defend people's lives and civil liberties as a result of the continued use of police force and state deterrents to labour protests (Petryshyn 1982). While similar labour-based organizations previously existed, they were created by labourist groups for "self-help" and "self-improvement", and were meant to demonstrate reliance *from* the state (Heron 2000:325). In contrast, the CLDL was required as a result of the actions *by* the state. Where the TLC and the ACCL were selective union organizations, the CPC combined civil defense, union organization and political party activism.

The CLDL was born out of the necessity to protect and represent union members who were arrested and charged by police. As Petryshyn explains, the CLDL was established as

...a 'non-partisan' organization which would initiate a broad campaign for funds to help pay the lawyers' fees and fines incurred and to provide relief for families of [those] imprisoned (Buck 1959:28) (Quoted in Petryshyn 1982:40).

This led to the setting of an official policy for the CLDL in October 1925,³⁶ and a bulletin was distributed to all the "influential labour bodies" across Canada, explaining that the League would provide "legal, financial and moral aid to the victims of the [class] struggle" regardless of their politics.³⁷

The CLDL continually held conferences and nation-wide fund raising drives, organized protests in the cities where workers were arrested, publicized background

³⁶This followed similar CP organizations such as the International Red Aid (Moscow) and International Labour Defense (ILD) that had been founded by the Communist Party of the United States (CPUSA) in June 1925.

³⁷"Attorney-General of Ontario, Communist Party of Canada. Public Archives of Ontario, Box 11, Envelope 11" in Petryshyn (1982:41).

information on the arrests and trials of workers, and gave “publicity ...to expose secret anti-labour activities, labour spy systems, etc.”³⁸ This aimed to draw attention, not only to state repression, but to the necessity of organizing collectively against these and other repressive actions whether by the state, or by employers or landlords. These were published in periodic bulletins and in pamphlets for public distribution, as well as in the CPC’s *The Worker*,³⁹ and in the League’s own publication *The Canadian Labour Defender*. Despite periods of financial deficit and continual anti-Communist campaigns waged by city police departments and the RCMP,⁴⁰ by “July 1931 there were 123 CLDL branches throughout the country,” of which “well over half” were made up of affiliated ethnic organizations. This included twenty-seven branches of minorities, including one Japanese and one Chinese Branch.⁴¹ Throughout the CLDL’s existence (1925-1940) Petryshyn suggests that the organization represented 6,000 individuals before the courts.⁴²

³⁸ CLDL (1927:239) *Labour Organization in Canada*, quoted in Petryshyn (1982:42).

³⁹ As will be further discussed in thesis Chapter Five, *The Worker* was established in 1921 to publicize the Party’s official views and visions of the future, and discussed political economic and social issues directly related to the working class in the framework of class struggle (Avakumovic 1975: Verzuh 1988).

⁴⁰ See Manley (1994:183/4) and Betcherman (1982), for examples of a range of actions taken to discredit the WUL on national, provincial, and local levels.

⁴¹ A report on the Toronto District Committee of the CLDL (1935) records 50 delegates in attendance, representing over 10,000 members in Toronto. These included the Ontario Workers’ Federation (5000 members), National Children’s Council (800 members), ULFTA (800 members), CCF (St. Paul) (200); as well as numerous mass (immigrant) and cultural associations (NAC MG28, V, Vol. 141, File 36).

⁴² Department of Labour reports suggest that these figures were not exaggerated. For example, Department reports indicate that in 1931 alone (not including any general arrests), “there were 180 adherents of the Communist Party either convicted or facing trial on various charges, including assault, sedition, unlawful assembly and inciting to riot” (Dept. of Labour 1932:190). The report also notes a continual vigilance on Communist Party activities and publications: “During the year 1931 Communist halls were raided in Vancouver, Edmonton, Quebec and Victoria, in which raids communist literature intended for propaganda purposed were seized” (Ibid).

To further facilitate working class consciousness and a labouring of culture, the CPC created a “National Training School,” “as well as provincial and local Workers’ Schools,” that provided a “systematic programme of Marxist education” (Manley 1994:180-7). The CLDL also established an “Athletic Club,” a Workers’ Sport League, “Stag-nights” for single males, dances, and “weekly educationals” on topical issues in trade unionism (Ibid). These social activities were also at the heart of fund-raising activities, as described by Liverledge:

Everybody belonged in some way to the CLDL, in contributing nickels and dimes, in helping with dances, and social, and card parties, to raise funds for defense, in petitioning for the release of labor prisoners (1973:21).

Another active organization of the CPC was the Women’s Labour Leagues (WLL) federated in 1924. The WLL applied, but was denied TLC affiliation, and was otherwise linked to similar women’s sections in the immigrant associations (Sangster 1989:45-54).⁴³ Describing the activities of the League, Sangster observes that the WLL combined feminism with a maternal hegemony. Members thus

divided their time between self-education and fund-raising. They held euchres and bazaars, sponsored May Day dances and anniversary festivals for the Russian Revolution, donating their proceeds to local Communist causes or to organizations like the Canadian Labour Defense League and initiated summer camps (Ibid).

Since maternalism was considered “natural” by both men and women at the time, women’s participation in politics was thereby mediated.⁴⁴ At the same time as it

⁴³ From estimates in its paper, *The Women Worker*, Sangster notes that by 1929, sixty such organizations existed (Ibid: 46).

⁴⁴The aims of the WLL were printed on their membership cards as follows “Protection of Womanhood, Care of Motherhood, Protection of Childcare, The General Welfare of the Workers, Co-operation in Place of Competition, and New Social Order. UNITY-SOLIDARITY-POWER”. NAC, Finnish Organization of Canada (FOC) Collection; MG 28, V46, Vol. 141, File 32.

facilitated women's political involvement, it also worked to "circumscribe women's political roles" in a limited (or structured) agency (Ibid: 48).

While there were other women's union organizations at the time, what was unique to the labour movement was the CPC's organization of the unemployed. In the early 1930s, the CPC established a National Unemployed Workers' Association (NUWA) which was organized through local Branch Neighborhood Councils. It was in the Branch Councils that the Party demonstrated the necessity of local community organizing and the effectiveness of working class solidarity, particularly as people affected by the Depression were unemployed and impoverished. Avakumovic notes that in 1932 there were forty-five Neighborhood Councils in cities and towns across Canada, which 'drew in those who couldn't be reached by the NUWA, including women, youths and children':⁴⁵

These grassroots organizations succeeded in forcing the municipalities to grant relief to unemployed and destitute families. In some instances the councils also engaged in direct action to prevent the evictions of tenants who were in arrears of their rent (Avakumovic 1975:75).

The NUWA was perhaps the clearest attempt at democratic organizing of a united front. The organizational form was based on facilitating the smallest unit of collective agency, called a "Block Committee"; this was composed of:

all the workers within a given block or similar area who agree with each other to

⁴⁵ The National Committee of Unemployed Councils (NCUC) recognized a difference in women's and youth's experiences, both as a result of widespread unemployment and as a result of marginalization within the unemployed movement. The Committee emphasized that "They have more reason to take part in the struggle than the male adult workers, as they feel the hardships more. Yet they are very often ignored or considered merely as auxiliary forces in the general movement of the unemployed, instead of being vitally interested. This leads to separatist tendencies which regard the women and youth as being concerned only in special women and youth problems, and leads to a diffusion of our forces. The setting up of separate organizations or women and youth is not always the best means to secure the fullest mobilization of the workers in the unemployed struggle" (NCUC 1933:21).

take joint action on the needs of any or all the unemployed in their area, irrespective of their adherence to the Block Committee or any other organization (National Committee of Unemployed Councils 1933:13).

Block committees, if they so elected or as was necessary in larger areas, could send delegates to the Local Unemployed Council, made up of Block delegates. The range of working class representatives on these Local Councils were to include

representatives from unemployed associations,⁴⁶ from flop-house, soup-kitchen, hostel and relief job committees, from various working class mass organizations, such as trade unions, or trade union unemployed committees or groups, language mass organizations, etc., which functions in its area... In many cases it will be possible to secure representatives from organizations such as Parent-Teacher Associations, Ratepayers' and Home-Owners' Associations, where these are of a working class character and composition, and see the need for a united struggle of the workers for immediate better conditions locally (Ibid).

Immigrant associations also created mutual aid organizations for financial assistance and comprehensive support. These were tied to social and cultural centres that were inseparable from the activities of the various organizations. Social activities blended with fund-raising campaigns whether it was for aid for families, newspaper funding, or to raise money for the organizations themselves. As shall be discussed more fully in Chapter Four, the largest of these were the Ukrainian Labour Farmer Temple Association, and the Finnish Organization of Canada, each establishing a considerable number of halls, schools, libraries, and sports associations across Canada. Separate women's and youth organizations were also created each with their own corresponding publications. Other primarily Eastern European groups, such as the Jewish Labour

⁴⁶ Palmer notes that these unemployment associations were mainly formed in the industrial areas of central Canada combining "Communists, socialists, and Tories" aggrieved at the government's inaction at unemployment relief (1992:244). These included "The Ontario Federation of the Unemployed, the Québec 'Front Populaire,' the Verdun Workingmen's Association and the East York Workers' Association". For a review of the East York Worker's' Association, see Schulz (1975).

Leagues, the Hungarian Workers' Society, as well as Russian, Polish, and Yugoslavian workers' associations, were similarly active despite differences in numbers. While such groups did not declare formal association with the Communist Party, mutual support was extended in terms of shared facilities and resources, and through social events and fund-raising activities.

The CLDL, the WUL, FUL, and NUWA all increased their memberships during the first half of the Depression,⁴⁷ such that business and state authorities were becoming nervous and police action was taken against the CPC. This marked a second time where state power was used to control labour, communication and culture, and this time it was concentrated on a very specific target. The offices of the Communist Party and the homes of Communist leaders were raided by the RCMP in August 1931. This government action was described in the yearly report of the Department of Labour as follows:

...eight communist leaders... were charged under section 98 of the Criminal Code with (1) being members of an unlawful association, (2) acting as members of an unlawful association, and (3) being parties to a seditious conspiracy, seven of them were sentenced to five years' and one to two year's imprisonment, and all the property of the Communist Party seized at the time the men were arrested and forfeited to the crown. ...It is understood that the Ontario indictment was the first proceedings in which the legality of the Communist Party as such was called into question, and it was stated that the result is virtually to declare that party an outlaw in the Dominion of Canada (Dept. of Labour 1932:189).

One member was deported, and the other seven were imprisoned in the Kingston Penitentiary. The CLDL immediately supported an appeal and an "amnesty campaign",

⁴⁷ As Avakumovic notes, there is a "lack of reliable statistics" given that Communist archives do not exist (they were seized or burned), however, he offers the following estimates in 1934: WUL 40,000 members (pp. 74), CLDL 43,000 (pp. 89); FUL 5,000 (1931); and CPC membership 5,500 (1975:90). RCMP reports are similar (as they may be quoting from CLDL reports) but they make a distinction in the CLDL between 17,000 active members and 26,000 supporters or sympathizers (RCMP Security Bulletin, Aug 1934).

and “launched a nation-wide campaign for the repeal of Section 98...[as well as] sections of the Immigration Act dealing with deportations (Petryshyn 1982:48/9).⁴⁸ A subsequent internal demonstration against conditions in the Kingston Penitentiary led to a further term of imprisonment for Tim Buck. The CLDL stepped up its campaign of demonstrations, protests, and petitions to government; at their Toronto National Convention in 1933 for example, it was reported that the CLDL had “distributed five million pieces of literature, both pamphlets and manifestos”.⁴⁹ By November 1933, the president of the CLDL, A.E. Smith presented Prime Minister R.B. Bennett “with a petition bearing 459,000 signatures, demanding the release of the prisoners, the repeal of Section 98...” nevertheless he refused to make any changes to the Code (Penner 1988:120; Betcherman 1982).

The campaign for the appeal of the sentences and the repeal of Section 98 gained further notoriety and momentum when the CLDL, ‘in conjunction with the Progressive Arts Club, presented a play called “Eight Men Speak” which told the story of the trial and imprisonment of the men and a murder attempt on Buck’s life in the prison’ (Ibid: 53). In 1933/4, the play traveled across Canada, but was banned in Ontario; the CLDL’s chairman A.E. Smith was charged with sedition for speaking at protests staged against the banning of the play (further discussed in Chapter Four). The adverse publicity from

⁴⁸ The CLDL had a form specifically for organizations to sign for the Repeal of Section 98, (see NAC MG 28, V, Vol. 141, File 37), and a separate petition to be signed by individuals. These asked for the release of the “eight working class leaders,” including “...all imprisoned for working class activities” as well as “...all held for deportation because of working class activities or through unemployment” (NAC MG28, V, Vol. 141, File 37).

⁴⁹ CLDL (1933:3) *Report on the First Representative National Convention of the CLDL*, Toronto, 14-17 July. This included 500,000 pamphlets and leaflets, and 50,000 postcards that were signed and sent to the Minister of Justice, as well as two petitions, one with 459,000 signatures, and the other with 200,000 signatures. Smith (1946) “The Years Marching On,” *Canadian Tribune*. 3 August 1946 (quoted in Petryshyn 1982:51/2).

the play and Smith's trial, together with a successful appeal against the Crown in Buck's case, eventually changed the government's position such that one by one, each of the men were released (Petryshyn 1982:58-9).

From a United to a Popular Front

Where the CLDL was already in position to defend labour and civil rights, when the spectre of fascism arose, the CLDL was instrumental in mobilizing and establishing a broad coalition across the political spectrum against it. This coalition was identified as a "front" and described as "united", "popular" or a "people's" front, and such terms were used interchangeably. The origins, however, stemmed from the shift in Communist policy. Where the "united front" strategy was to be organized from within to draw people into the Communist Party, the "popular front" was to join the Communist Party to as wide of a range of organizations as necessary to combat the capitalist-fascist movement, and to protect Soviet security.⁵⁰ As Horn explains, the defeat of the Communist Party in Germany by Hitler's National Socialists prompted the Comintern to direct Communist Parties everywhere to "seek cooperation with all anti-fascist groups, liberal, social democratic, or whatever in building a 'popular front' against fascism" (1986:66).

⁵⁰ Angus (1981:316-318) argues the 'class against class' policy of the Soviet Union had backfired in Germany; while the Communists were making enemies of the socialists, Hitler had capitalized on the rift to build up his political right. As he explains, for the Soviets, the popular front was a policy implemented by the "Stalinists" as protection against possible German aggression; and as evidence of this political and military strategizing, the Soviet Union joined the League of Nations in 1934. Where previously, the League had been seen as an alliance of imperialists, membership in the League allowed the Soviets to: "advocate ... for 'collective security' – against Germany ...so in every country, the Comintern's policies had but one aim: to support those sections of the capitalist class that favored alliances with the USSR, or that could be 'neutralized' on the diplomatic plane" (Ibid: 318).

The first thing that must be done, the thing with which to begin, it to form a united front, to establish unity of action of the workers in every factory, in every district, in every region, in every country all over the world.... The Communist International places no conditions for unity of action except one... that the unity of action be directed against fascism, against the offensive of capital, against the threat of war, against the class enemy [Dimitroff (1935:27) Seventh International].

Renton (1999) suggests that the popular front was a tactic of the Comintern, and was based on two crucial changes in Comintern policy in theory and in practice. In theory, Renton argues that prior to 1930s, the Comintern had a “left” view of fascism as another “trick” in the hands of the elite or capitalist ruling class used in the continuous movement to “smash the working class” (1999:55-56). Capitalism and fascism were thus one and the same. This meant that anyone or any party that did not seek to destroy capitalism was, in effect, fascistic, and hence the equation of social democrats with fascists. After the Seventh Congress of the Comintern, however, a “right” theory of fascism was favoured, one that viewed fascism as “autonomous” or “independent” from capitalism, “a movement whose rule depended on consent” (Ibid: 57). This coincided with an abandonment of Marxist communism to Stalin’s (and Bukharin’s) view of communism (Ibid). In practice, one of the central tenets of Marxism – of international revolutionary workers’ struggle – was replaced by the goal of “socialism in one country” – the Soviet Union (Ibid: 61). Since fascism was independent of capitalism, the immediate enemy was fascism, not capitalism. Given the rise of fascism, socialism “could only survive inside Russia, and therefore the key to the survival of socialism was to convert Russian society into one great military machine” to fight against fascism (Ibid). The Comintern, and thus Communist Parties worldwide, was therefore expected to support the needs and requirements of the Soviet Union, that is, “the needs of Stalin’s

domestic and foreign policy” (Ibid). The “united front from below,” a long-term goal of an international *working class* struggle against *capitalism*, and the idea that “workers’ have *no country*”, was substituted by a “popular front” – an international struggle of *all classes* against *fascism* – and the idea that workers’ have *one country* (the Soviet Union), such that fascism must be destroyed to protect an already existing socialism.

In Canada, major changes to Communist organization and policies were made to both political and labour organizing. Firstly, both the WUL and FUL were to be disbanded and joined to the TLC/AFL. The new policy was that revolutionary unionism should be approached from within established international trade unions. While the ACCL was arguably more suitable to Communist Party tenets, the TLC was larger and international in scope, and was thus considered a potentially stronger force. Secondly, the “class against class” policy that had alienated socialist organizations was repudiated in 1935 at the Seventh Congress as being historically contextual and no longer applicable. The CPC would thus make formal appeals to the social democratic party – the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation (CCF) (est. 1933) – to join in the struggle against war and fascism. In keeping with this policy, social democracy was also no longer considered unworkable. Instead of rejecting the existing parliament and Canadian electoral system as structures controlled by capitalists and supporting the capitalist system, engagement in elections and political procedures were advocated.

Nationalism⁵¹ and religion were also to be accommodated; Penner suggests that CPC goals were directed toward “abandoning the nihilistic attitude toward heritage and tradition, and doing more to bring out the progressive traditions of each nation” (Penner 1988:21). As he explains, this “meant that the Comintern would have to take heed of the different political climates in which the various Communist parties operated and could not demand uniform application of its directives as before” (Ibid). Manley further notes that “...the CPC, like Comintern affiliates everywhere, sought to broaden its appeal by becoming respectable, constitutional, and patriotic” (1995:11). The end result of these changes was to culminate in a network of allegiances strong enough to combat war and fascism. In keeping with its broader appeal, the network was named the “Popular Front”. And for the next five years, the CPC worked on facilitating and cultivating a series of alliances between political parties, labour unions, women’s, youth, ethnic and religious groups, in the hopes of forming both a defensive front for labour and civil liberties, and an offensive front against war and fascism.

The Popular Front: Connecting the National and International

The CPC’s goal of revolution, coupled with its tradition of sectarianism, exclusivity, socialist-bashing, and abeyance to Comintern directives, made their pleas for

⁵¹ Penner explains that although nationalism was traditionally considered divisive in communist politics, Communist leaders in Canada had supported nationalism as early as 1925 (1988:86). Tim Buck had then argued that Canadian independence would “...strip the capitalist government of their everlasting excuse of powerlessness, and bring the workers of the country face to face with realities. ...Buck declared further that Canada was falling under the economic determinism of Wall Street, as a result of American capital overtaking British capital as the major foreign investment in the Canadian economy.” However, as an example of the strength of direction from Comintern, Buck officially repudiated this deviation “under pressure from the party” that same year (Ibid:88)

a popular front difficult for any non-member of the Communist Party to trust. Moreover the building of a unified movement was set against a combination of a relatively unified business elite, the Catholic Church, and the state which upheld and continually reinforced an anti-Communist stance to the extent anyone (or anything) that could be even construed as communist, was often declared illegal. As the use of Section 98 demonstrated, the extent to which this was enforced depended upon the perceived degree of threat.

Nevertheless, the campaign against Section 98 was fundamental because it involved civil rights and gained public attention, so that support for its repeal was widespread. Yet, while the majority of the public were not members of the CPC or adherents to left politics in general, when the government used official legislation and brutality, they drew attention to underlying issues of democracy. Labour, communication and culture were increasingly linked in questions regarding freedom of association and free speech, national and international political economy, and moral questions of war.

With the emergence of a fascist government in Italy in 1922, and Hitler's Nationalist-Socialist government in Germany in 1933, fascism and the possibility of its spreading through any means possible, including war, became a grave concern - not only to the Communists - but to a broad range of people whose memories of the First World War were still prominent. The first World Congress Against Imperialist War was "initiated" by the Comintern, and held in Amsterdam in August 1932, and, according to Communist records, almost half of the 2,196 delegates were not affiliated with the Party (Penner 1988:133).⁵² Describing the Conference in Amsterdam, Penner notes the wide

⁵² The official breakdown reported was "2,196 delegates from 27 countries, of whom 1,041 had no party affiliation, 830 were Communists, 291 were Social Democrats, 24 Left Socialists, and 10 of the Communist Opposition" (Report of the Congress, American Committee for Struggle Against War, New York, p. 4), as quoted in (Penner 1988:133, fn 10:157).

range of participants and “distinguished sponsorship of world celebrities including Henri Barbusse, Romain Rolland, Madame Sun Yat-sen, Albert Einstein, Upton Sinclair, and Theodore Dreiser” (Ibid; Ercoli 1935:62). Further initiatives by Communist Parties worldwide, meant that conferences against war and fascism were called and national and local “leagues against war and fascism” were established.

In the fall of 1933, anti-war and anti-fascist leagues began to emerge in towns and cities across Canada. While the extent of Communist organization of these leagues is a matter of historical debate, it is clear that Communist members and sympathizers took an active role in encouraging and facilitating the collective discussions and were present wherever possible. Partly as a result of CPC affiliation and partly as a result of the activism of the combined movement, the activities of leagues were reported in weekly RCMP Security Bulletins to the federal government.⁵³ These Bulletins are evidence of the constant surveillance over any so-called “revolutionary organization” that has continued in Canada since the establishment in 1919 of the RCMP as a national police force.⁵⁴

Despite a general public suspicion of the Communist Party and hostility between organized labour and political groups, which was no doubt aggravated, if not intensified, by the official repression, a wide variety of previously unconnected groups were coming

⁵³ Through a combination of the Access to Information Act and the cooperation of the Canadian Security and Intelligence Service (CSIS), historians Greg Kealey and Reg Whitaker (1989 to 1997b) published the RCMP reports from 1919 to 1941, in their entirety (save for what was already deleted by the RCMP and CSIS). The next three chapters draw heavily from these documents as evidence of the activities of the CLAWF and other popular front organizations. Evaluating their accuracy, Manley emphasizes the point that the Bulletins were government reports “tailored to suit an audience of ministers and officials who would not have appreciated being the recipients of misinformation. Hence hopeful editorializing [on the follies of the CPC] is the exception rather than the rule” (1995:11).

together to debate and enact a range of activism. Each of these sought to reconcile the political economy (of labour and social class, of war and fascism) with their own politics, values, and histories. The groups that merged included a mixture of pacifist, religious and student groups, both small and large, on local, national and international levels. In combination, they contributed to a growing allegiance and a popular front in formation that intersected Communist organizations with an active peace movement and an embryonic youth movement. Thus the popular front that was initiated as a Communist party tactic combined with the growth of a movement.

Intersections with National and International Peace Movements

Not the heroism connected with warfare and destruction but that
which pertains to labour and the nourishing of human life.

Jane Addams, *Newer Ideals of Peace*⁵⁵

While pacifism had a long history in Canada, up until the World Wars and the conscription of labour, it was a pacifism that was based on non-violence as tied to religious beliefs. What was different in the peace movement of the 1930s was an increasing radicalism that made connections between violence and war, and *men and women's* labour, and civil liberties (that is, connections between culture, labour and communication). Studying the early history of pacifism in Canada (1900-1945), Socknat (1981) distinguishes between a sectarian, liberal and socialist pacifism as articulated in different groups struggling to reconcile pacifism with the realities of war and violence.

⁵⁴ Since the RCMP was established to extend state surveillance and control over any person or organization that was considered a threat to the government, Penner (1988:54) suggests that the RCMP was expressly "created as an instrument against radical political movements".

⁵⁵ Quoted on the title page of Bussey and Tims' (1965) history of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom 1915-1965.

The first, a “sectarian pacifism,” was represented by religious-based groups like the Mennonites, Hutterites, Tunkers, Doukhobors, and the Quaker-based “Society of Friends” (est. 1917) (see also Moffatt 1969). These were all based on a religious belief of “non-resistance” and “non-participation” in any conflict or confrontation, advocating a collective and non-violent culture based on these beliefs (see Socknat 1981:1-80). While religious beliefs also underlay a second approach, the “liberal” pacifists emphasized non-sectarian, rationalist and humanist ideals for peace, finding solutions to conflict not necessarily in passive non-violent withdrawal, but in law and international negotiations supporting progress through organizations like the League of Nations and the International Labour Organization (ILO) (Ibid:81-115).⁵⁶ Such groups ranged from smaller associations of a few hundred members like the Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR) (est. in Toronto, in May 1930),⁵⁷ to networks of women’s groups linked under the

⁵⁶ Both organizations proved less effective in practice, however. The limitations of the League of Nations were proved early in the 1930s, as it was unsuccessful in dealing with or preventing the territorial aggression of Italy, Germany, or Japan. Also, given that League would consider military sanctions against countries not belonging to the League it would have not satisfied the values of pacifism. Further, while the ILO was operational, no related labour legislation was secured in Canada during the first four decades of its existence (Kinsella 1982:20-22). This enduring question of the extent of federal and provincial jurisdiction over labour (specifically in terms of hours of work), was not resolved for decades, such that federal-provincial cooperation on progressive labour legislation only began to change in the 1960s (Ibid.).

⁵⁷ As Horn cites, the FOR’s “chief aim was ‘to create international, inter-racial, inter-class fellowship’ (from *Toronto Daily Star*, 9 January, 1931) (1980:31). Although the FOR was a branch of an international organization, Socknat notes that the only primary ties were through the American branch publications that were shared. These included the *Fellowship*, *The Christian Century*, and *The World Tomorrow* all published in the United States (Socknat 1981:356, see also pp. 356-377). The FOR had a “Race Relations Committee” dedicated “To improve racial and cultural relations through non-violent direct action” (NAC MG 28 IV I Vol. 363). It had branches in Vancouver, Calgary, North Saskatchewan, Winnipeg, Toronto and Ottawa, and published a regular newsletter called *Equal Opportunity* (Ibid.). The FOR was implicated in battles for freedom of speech in Toronto, and as such will be further discussed in thesis Chapter Six.

Women's International League for Peace & Freedom (WILPF), converging popular front politics.

The Canadian WILPF was formed as an offshoot of "an international group of women suffragists," who came together to establish an organization that combined pacifism with feminism in advocating social reform (Boutilier 1988; Pois 1999). The catalyst was the International Congress of Women at The Hague (1915) which aimed to "discuss possible solutions to the world war" from which the members forming the WILPF differentiated themselves from other women's and pacifist groups by insisting on a fundamental criticism of the causes of war (Boutilier 1988:31). The Canadian WILPF (also known as the WIL) was formed shortly after the Congress, and as the name of the organization suggests, their primary goal was to increase public awareness and activism for peace and freedom (Socknat 1981:250-260; Boutilier 1988:4).

Internationally, the WIL held annual Peace Conferences beginning in 1924, and in 1928, published a set of aims to "unite women of all countries, and of all parties and classes, who are opposed to war, exploitation and oppression" (Socknat 1981:209-218). Labour was central to these aims and considered key to solving social unrest and war, the Prague Peace conference of 1929, for example, linked democracy to labour:

In a true democracy, war and revolution will be obsolete and inadequate, for democracy is a system of life. Life means work and a system of work: and work, unostentatious work, is peace (cited in Bussey and Tims 1965:83).

While this was contained within a framework of class cooperation, they took a step further in advocating "cooperative movements for the democratic control of industry" and "equality of labour conditions" (Ibid) overlapping a number of socialist principles.

For the Canadian WIL, the “primary objective” was the “elimination of militarism” especially wherever militarism came in contact with youth. This was specifically directed against the manufacture and sale of war toys in industry, and against cadet training and history textbooks that glorified war in schools (Socknat 1981:218; Boutilier 1988:113-146).⁵⁸ Like the international association, the WIL also held annual “all day peace conferences,” and in combination with the anti-militarism activities, these attracted the attention and participation of a wide variety of women’s groups (Boutilier 1988:126-129). Formerly hesitant women’s groups became affiliates,⁵⁹ and by 1929, branches of the WIL were operating in Vancouver, Winnipeg, and Toronto. These groups ranged from the National Council of Women, the United Farm Women of Alberta (Socknat 1981:255), and included women members of the CCF and the Communist Party’s Women’s Labour Leagues (Buck 1952; Boutilier 1988; Sangster 1989).⁶⁰ In

⁵⁸ Anti-militarism was not an isolated or marginal movement in the interwar period in Canada or internationally. The Canadian WIL was particularly effective in the circulation of a petition called the “International Declaration of World Disarmament” (Socknat 1981:256-263) collecting “nearly 7,000 signatures” from the province of Saskatchewan alone (Bussey and Tims 1965:96). In total, “almost half a million Canadians” signed the petition (Granatstein and Hitsman 1977:123), adding to more than three million signatures worldwide (Bussey and Tims 1965:96).

⁵⁹ This hesitancy came from both sides of the political spectrum. On the one hand, Boutilier notes that conservative and liberal women’s groups were cautious of the WIL’s radical critique of capitalism and imperialism, especially as they had been linked to Bolshevism under the Canadian red-scare (1988:89). (Indeed, the WIL were included on the RCMP’s list of organizations to watch). On the other hand, the Women’s Labour Leagues (WLL) of the CPC also initially participated with some reservations. Sangster observes that the CPC’s paper *The Woman Worker* “initially urged its readers to reject the liberal pacifism represented by the United Nations Organization and the ...WIL” (1989:38). At the same time, however, the paper supported their campaigns against militarism in schools and participation in their anti-war activities (Ibid).

⁶⁰ Leadership in the branches are indicative of the mixture of political backgrounds, Boutilier notes that members of the Vancouver branch, for example, included Lucy S. Woodsworth (spouse of J.S. Woodsworth ILP/CCF), Laura M. Jamieson (past “president of Vancouver Women’s University Club”) “Helena Gutteridge, a trade union organizer of women workers, Kate Lane, a former national secretary of the Dominion Council of the YWCA, ...Dorothy Steeves, a Dutch pacifist suffragist and socialist” [and]...Mildred Fahrni, a member of the radical Student Christian movement” (1988:98).

close examination of the underlying class tensions in these combinations, Boutilier (1988:98) suggests that the Canadian WIL concentrated on middle class activities (for example on education rather than on labour) to “attract a broader audience”, and was more “feminist” than “socialist”. At the same time, however, they advocated a more radical kind of pacifism:

The pacifism embraced by these socialist and feminist women was not the vague, intermittently held maternalist belief in women’s peacefulness discernable in the pre-war liberal women’s movement. Instead, the social radicalism of their indictment of imperialism and capitalism as the main causes of war, and their ideological and organisational interaction with the political left in Canada, differentiated their pacifism from earlier progressive peace sentiment (Ibid: 35).⁶¹

While the WIL in Canada did not involve organized labour directly, a third approach to pacifism combined religion with “trade unionism and labour party politics” (Socknat 1981:108). This approach grew out of anti-conscription activism and a criticism of the causes of war, and was represented by religious groups such as the Fellowship for a Christian Social Order (FCSO) (est. 1934) (see Horn 1980:62-63).

The “social radicalism” advocated by the FCSO challenged both sectarian and liberal pacifist’s beliefs by connecting religion and pacifism to labour through a critique of capitalism and the “social and economic roots of war”. Socknat explains that

[b]y linking war with capitalism, they combined socialist anti-war critique with the radical Christian belief in the moral necessity of pacifism in any meaningful social revolution (Ibid: 139).

⁶¹ See also Socknat (1981:58).

The FCSO had roots in the social gospel movement in Canada,⁶² and included “radical Christian” groups which advocated “Christian socialism as a replacement for capitalism” (Ibid: 272). Baum suggests that the FCSO represented a fundamental change or “new theological movement” that superceded the more liberal and naïve social gospel of the 1920s, and directly challenged the papal encyclicals that had condemned socialism (1980). These encyclicals were by Pope Leo XIII (*Rerum Novarum*) in 1891 and Pope Pius XI (*Quadragesim Anno*) in 1931, and they were decisive for Roman Catholics and socialist politics worldwide. Each of these aimed to address social unrest and management of the working class. Both criticized political and economic liberalism, as well as capitalism, but rather than advocate changing the economic system, they suggested that the essential problem was one of moral and spiritual degradation, and reform was necessary through and by the state (Baum 1980:71-96). In examining the text of *Quadragesim Anno*, Baum suggests that although there were clear tenets belonging to socialism in the assessment of capitalism, socialism was condemned as evil and absolutely incongruent with Catholicism, both it and class struggle were “repudiated”. The results were predictable, in Baum’s words: “The very word ‘socialism’ began to frighten the Catholic people. Catholic men and women who belonged to socialist movements now had to choose between their religion and their politics” (Ibid: 91/2).

⁶² Baum explains the differences between the social gospel movement and mainstream Christianity, where the latter “tended to look upon God as the heavenly father who guided and protected his creation from above and who, in the minds of the people, became the protector of the existing order, the radical Social Gospel saw God present in history as its forward movement, manifesting divine power in the struggle of the poor and oppressed for emancipation. ...While the churches worshipped the God of order, the Social Gospel worshipped the God of justice who was a principle not of stability but social change” (1980:50-51). For an earlier overview of the social gospel movement in Canada (1914-1928) see Allen (1975).

In contrast, the FCSO rejected such a clear-cut dichotomy forcing an either-or choice between religion and politics. Instead they advanced the view that the two should be fused, and the basis of the capitalist system changed. These views were promulgated in a widely circulated book written by the FCSO called *Toward the Christian Revolution* (1936). The book suggested aligning Christianity with the working class to change the socio-economic system from capitalism to socialist Christianity. The organization itself had established a “statement of purpose” (April 1934) that included the abolition of private property (Horn 1980b:62). These ideas were also percolating in the conferences of the United Church of Canada (est.1925).⁶³ Although suggesting that it was “too radical” for the United Church to adopt nationally, Horn notes that it was central in local conferences, with the Toronto (1933) conference passing a resolution that “condemned capitalism as unchristian” (1980b:62). Such changes illustrated an intersection of ideas for social change, as Baum observes:

The theological foundation of the new movement was carefully worked out by the participants in a critical dialogue with neo-orthodoxy, existentialism and the Marxist critique of society (1980:50).

As the effects of the Depression took hold in Canada and the possibility of another war emerged, sectarian pacifist groups such as the Doukhabours, the Quaker’s Society of Friends, the WIL, and FCSO routinely included social and economic critique in their deliberations. This was a significant change to the pacifist movement as Socknat observes, because it demonstrated a

transition in the Canadian pacifist tradition ... from the old coalition of progressive reformers to a developing realignment of pacifists with the political left (Ibid:108).

⁶³ The United Church of Canada was formed by a combination of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, the Methodist Church, the Congregational Churches of Canada, and the General Council of Local Union Churches.

The broadening pacifist and religious critique drew a wide range of groups into considering radical social alternatives like those associated with the Communist Party and the fledgling socialist party, the CCF, such that liberalism, mixed with pacifism, mixed with feminism, mixed with socialism, mixed with communism.⁶⁴ This convergence occurred under the critique of war and fascism. One example of the degree of cooperation possible was advanced in a women's conference against war and fascism in Toronto in July 1934. The conference brought WIL, CCF (for example, Elizabeth Morton), and Communist Party members (for example Mrs. Tim Buck and Mrs. Sam Carr) together (Sangster 1989:96), and the result was the formation of a Toronto Women's Committee of a League Against War and Fascism (LAWF) (RCMP Bulletin No. 715, App III:17,18 July).⁶⁵

While women's committees were forming locally, in the summer of 1934, various student and youth groups were also beginning to organize their own leagues against war and fascism. These leagues were outgrowths of a growing youth movement in the 1930s, which were forming through critiques against capitalism, war and fascism, making up another major component of the popular front.

⁶⁴ The convergence initially became evident in a change in organizational leadership in individual groups. For example, in the WIL a number of CCF women were elected to leadership positions (Sangster 1989:96). This belied the incredible diversity of politics within the WIL that was socially marked by differences in class, gender and ethnicity, but also infused by regional differences. As Sangster observes, these made for contrasting standpoints in the WIL specifically and in women's politics in general: "farm women were more likely to come through the co-operative movement [and] working class women through the [unemployment and poverty] relief organizations. [In the WIL] [t]he final mixture of middle-class, working-class, and farm women in the CCF contrasted to the Communist Party's predominantly working-class and immigrant membership,..." (1989:38); making organizational decision-making challenging to say the least.

⁶⁵ At this conference, Elizabeth Morton was elected to be the delegate at the World Congress of Women AWAF later held in Paris in August 1934 (Ibid).

Youth Activism

The crisis of the Depression and threat of war brought an unplanned amalgamation of a wide variety of youth groups closer together (nationally as well as internationally), through efforts to contemplate similar issues of concern. Foremost amongst these were questions regarding capitalism, specifically war and fascism, labour, and social welfare. In Canada, each group had its own history: whether in politics, as members of the Communist Youth League (CYL)⁶⁶ or the Co-operative Commonwealth Youth Movement (CCYM) (est. 1934), in religion, as members of the Student Christian Movement (SCM) (est. 1921) and the YM/YWCA,⁶⁷ or as individual social activists. Influenced by the peace movement in the early thirties, for example, the SCM⁶⁸ circulated a petition amongst university students across Canada, collecting approximately

⁶⁶ Avakumovic (1975:122-4).

⁶⁷ The SCM was made up of YMCA, YWCA and a "Christian reform movement," and represented approximately 10 per cent of the students at Victoria College at the University of Toronto, and the University of Alberta, and smaller numbers at the "Universities of Manitoba, Dalhousie, McGill, and Mount Allison" (Axelrod 1989:130). Dale (1941:5) records the first National Conference of Canadian Students organized by the SCM in Toronto Dec 1922/Jan 1923. He also identifies a "Student Socialist Movement" as part of the SCM who "recognized the essential conflict between Christianity and the ethics of capitalist individualism" as well as the "pacifist protest movement" of which it was a part (Ibid.37). He notes that the 1937 National Convention in Winnipeg aimed towards Church recognition of "the rights of Labour to organize and to bargain collectively" as well as anti-racist goals and ambitions towards a "universal church" that would recognize and organize all kinds of denominations (Dale 1941:37-38).

⁶⁸ Axelrod (1990:133) notes that while the SCM was tolerated on campuses because of its religious and "moral development" basis, other more "radical" groups were closely monitored by the RCMP and internally by the Universities themselves. He gives the example of the McGill Labour Club, an "intellectual socialist group... whose publication, the *Alarm Clock*, was banned from the campus in 1933 by Arthur Currie, the McGill principal" [Axelrod cites, for example, letters from Arthur Currie to J.H.B. MacBrien, commissioner of the RCMP, 11 Feb. 1933; file no. 175/6540, CSIS files; *McGill Daily* 7 Dec, 1933; as well as Lewis (1981:28-29); Bedford, A.G. (1976:197)]. This was not an exception, however. Axelrod (1990:137-139) provides numerous examples of University administrators placing restrictions on free speech and freedom of assembly across Canada keeping students within the "bounds of propriety and good taste" so as to avoid "public criticism" of the university justified on the basis on not "antagoniz[ing] parties in office" who are in control of university finances (Ibid:138).

8,500 signatures supporting the “reduction” and eventual elimination of arms (Dale 1941:33). The petition was sent to Conservative Prime Minister R.B. Bennett in support of the 1932 Geneva Disarmament Conference (Socknat 1981:307).⁶⁹ Communist organizations were also active in organizing youth and students against war and fascism in particular. Early in 1933/4, meetings were on a local basis, initially combining the work of the CPC through the CLDL, Women’s Labour Leagues, and ULFTA, in Edmonton, Winnipeg, Ottawa and Montreal.⁷⁰

Combined with the efforts of the other youth groups, the first Youth Congress⁷¹ against war and fascism was held in Toronto, 4-5 August 1934. It brought together 600 participants, including 226 delegates representing a range from sixty-five to one hundred thousand members (Socknat 1981:337).⁷² Delegates included the YCL, the YM/YWCA, YWHA, CCYM, a mixture of other student groups, pacifist organizations and labour

⁶⁹ Throughout the early thirties, the SCM organized and sponsored peace activities similar to the WIL in organizing alternative Armistice Day Services, peace rallies on campuses, and a travelling “peace caravan” during the summer to “spread the gospel of pacifism, to political, social and religious group meetings in churches, clubs, and on street corners” (Socknat 1981:308).

⁷⁰ Demonstrations in Montreal were continually “dispersed” by Police, with the leadership being arrested, so that the Montreal youth LAWF met with the City to allow “free speech” in public parks. Although for the most part, this was denied, the City allowed demonstrations in four of all the city parks in Montreal (RCMP Security Bulletins No. 715, App V:8).

⁷¹ In his memoirs, Hunter (1988:53) suggests that the Youth Congress relied on the “support from the left-wing organizations and their newspapers” in getting the word out and rallying participation, as well as supplying badly needed facilities for meetings (recall that the RCMP was constantly vigilant, particularly in Toronto). Hunter includes the immigrant association halls in particular, including ULFTA, the Yugoslav clubs, German Workers’ Club, the Hungarian Independent Mutual Benefit Federation, the Bulgarian Club and the Jewish Labour League... “where [he] learned to speak loudly over competition from the choir and brass band playing in the next room” (Ibid: 54).

⁷² CYC Papers, Box 1, file 1, Continuing Committee of the Canadian Youth Congress and the Toronto Youth Council, *Why a Canadian Youth Congress?* (Toronto: April 1938); Memorandum on the Canadian Youth Congress Movement, n.d., Socknat (1981:379, ftn19/20). CYC papers: Hamilton. McMaster University Special Collection. While Socknat suggests the tally was around 65,000, RCMP report suggests that organizers’ estimations were as high as “over one hundred thousand” (RCMP Security Bulletin No. 719, App I:1).

unions,⁷³ who came together to discuss “unemployment, education and war” (RCMP Bulletin No. 758, Appendix 1:1, 17 June 1936). Among the largest organizations present were delegates from the amalgamated locals of the LAWF (representing 30,000 members), the CLDL (14,000), the Lumber Workers’ Industrial Union (11,500), the Finnish Organization of Canada (5,000), and the Workers’ Sport Organization (5,200) (RCMP Bulletin No. 719, Appendix 1:1). Youth Sections of the American, French, and International LAWF, spoke on the emergence and development of fascism, and the growth of international movements against fascism.⁷⁴

The push for a “united front” of youth organizations was encouraged by speakers such as: Stanley Ryerson,⁷⁵ Sam Carr (CPC), and Peter Hunter (a member of a “Marxian Youth Group” and youth delegate at the Paris World Youth Congress in August 1933). A “constitution” and a “manifesto”⁷⁶ were adopted and Peter Hunter was elected as Secretary of the newly founded Canadian League of Youth AWAFF (see Hunter 1988:20-

⁷³ In addition to the CPC and CCF youth groups, endorsers of the *Manifesto* included fourteen industrial labour unions [such as Millinery Workers’ Union, (AFL Montreal and Toronto), Industrial Union of Needles Trade Workers, Furniture Workers’ Industrial Union, Steel and Iron Workers’ International Union, Shoe and Leather Workers’ Industrial Union, etc.]; a whole range of immigrant Workers’ Clubs and youth groups; athletic clubs and cultural groups (notably the Progressive Arts Club), pacifist groups like the WILPF and Youth League of Nations Society, as well as civil rights organizations.

⁷⁴ Similar to the Women’s Congress, an international Youth Anti-War and Anti-Fascism Congress also took place in Paris, from which local leagues were raising funds for and electing delegates to attend (RCMP Security Bulletins 1933-4).

⁷⁵ Kealey (1982).

⁷⁶ The manifesto outlined Canadian government preparations for war and the reasons for its trade embargo against the Soviet Union, it explained how fascism “increases the danger of war” and strips all people of fundamental rights “to free speech, free assembly, free organization, free press”. It identified federal and provincial actions that were fascist in nature including the Relief Camps, the federal government’s “Special Powers Act” and Quebec’s Arcand Law and David Bills. It noted the growth of fascist organizations in Canada such as the National Christian Socialist Party, the Jeunes Ouvriers Catholique and the resulting racism and hatred associated with them, and it emphatically was against participation in war “We do not want to fight for the profits of munition [sic] makers and financiers who made millions in profits while thousands of young people died. Imperialist war, a war of conquest and rapine means death and ruin for us.

40). The manifesto included a ten-point “pledge” outlining the goals of the “sixty organizations of 150,000 members” whose representatives signed the manifesto, and adopted May 24th as the “National Youth Day of Struggle Against War and Fascism” [*Manifesto Canadian League of Youth against War and Fascism* (1934)]. The *Manifesto* was written in opposition to: all forms of militarism, forced labor camps, colonialism (specifically “of the Hindu people for freedom from British oppression”), and all forms of fascism abroad and in Canada (as evidenced by Section 98 and other civil rights restrictions). At the same time it pledged to support the “peace policies of the Soviet Union” and anti-fascist organizations everywhere, as well as to organize against fascism wherever necessary, in the “factories, mines, in the offices, clubs and unions, in the schools and on the farms...” (Ibid). Given the attendance and the resulting agreement, subsequent RCMP reports described it “as the best united front demonstration of youth ever witnessed in Canada”.⁷⁷

International organizations were also part of the initiation of a Students’ League of Canada (SLC)⁷⁸ which held a conference immediately after the youth congress in order to build a “students’ front”, complete with a newspaper of that name (RCMP Security Bulletin No. 720, Appendix 1:3). It adopted the *Manifesto* of the youth section of LAWF

WE WANT TO LIVE!”. (*Manifesto of Canadian League of Youth Against War and Fascism*, 1934:5-11, available at NLC).

⁷⁷ Penner (1988:135) notes that the CYC operated independently from the CLAWF, and also suggests that the CYC “bec[a]me the most successful united front initiative in this whole period” (Penner 1988:135).

⁷⁸ The Canadian Student League followed the “Communist-led National Student League” (est. 1932) in the U.S. “It held at least two conferences, where it attempted to unite university and high-school students in common organization favouring scholarships for the poor, freedom of speech and assembly, the abolition of campus officers’ training corps, opposition to fascism and fascist propaganda, and the creation of an economic system based on ‘use’, not profit” (Axelrod 1989:133).

and aimed to “increase awareness” of the movement in high schools (*Ibid*). Throughout the summer/fall of 1934, local leagues continued to meet, and anti-war demonstrations and outdoor public meetings against war and fascism were held in major cities, primarily in Western Canada. The following year, the SLC and the Youth section of the CLAWF organized a general “National Youth Day” (15 June 1935), and a National Congress of the Student Peace Movement (30/31 Dec 1935). These precipitated a national conference of youth in the following year, which established the Canadian Youth Congress (CYC) held on 24-25 May 1936 in Ottawa. Meanwhile in 1934/5, the World Youth Congress was getting organized in Geneva as an “offspring of the International Federation of the League of Nations Societies” (*Time Magazine* Vol. XXXII, 29 August, 1938:22). A second and much larger (international) World Youth Congress was held on Randall’s Island in New York City in August 1935. Attracting the attention of *Time Magazine*, it reported on the event:

...some 550 young men and women from the earth’s six continents... trampled across the field bearing red torches and the flags of 58 nations. The crowd of 23,000 cheered their foreign songs, their folk dances, their gymnastics, a collegiate shag performed by U.S. students. But it roared loudest when the spotlight fell on 13 delegates from Spain, jumped to its feet to chant the Loyalist anthem. For this was no Olympic sports festival but a pacifist rally,... After eight days of discussion, the delegates called on the democracies to unite against “aggressor” (fascist) nations, European Socialists splitting from their young U.S. comrades to support collective security⁷⁹ (*Time Magazine* Vol. XXXII, 29 August 1938:22).

⁷⁹ The article further noted that while the Dies’ Committee had been conducting their investigation of “un-American activities” in Washington, an ex-chairman of the American LAWF (J.B. Matthews) had “...testified that Communists were exploiting innocent bigwigs as ‘fronts’ for the Congress”. Included amongst those who had boycotted the event “on the grounds that it was Red,” were the Catholic Church, the Boy Scouts of America, and the countries of Fascist Germany and Italy. ” A later rebuttal by the President of Vassar College (Henry Noble MacCracken) who was “chairman of the J.S. sponsoring committee” was also included, as he “snorted ‘I think I have sufficient intelligence to know when I am being exploited’” (*Time Magazine*, 5 September 1938:13).

The first national Canadian Youth Congress held in August 1936, brought together 456 delegates from across Canada, representing 330 youth organizations (representing just under 340,000 members) in order to debate and establish a manifesto, and set of demands meant for government action. Detailed RCMP reports suggest that the CYC represented the successful culmination of the “united front” work of the both the CPC and the YCL (RCMP Security Bulletin 811, 17 June 1936, Appendix 1), and recorded the following groups in attendance (see Table 2 below).

Table 2
Organizations at the National Canadian Youth Congress
Ottawa,
23-25 May, 1936

Organization (Org)	No. of Orgs. Represented	Delegates
Church Groups	50	66
YMCA/YWCA/YMHA	38	50
Student Groups	31	45
Cultural and Recreational	23	32
Young Communist League	22	29
CCYM	20	30
French Canadian	18	25
Youth Councils	16	30
Liberals	7	10
Labour Unions	7	8
Children's Groups	7	9
Cooperatives	5	8
Unemployed	4	5
Conservative	4	5
Agrarian	1	2
Miscellaneous	77	102
Totals	330	456

Source: RCMP Security Bulletin 811, 17 June 1936, Appendix 1.

At this meeting, the Canadian Youth Congress issued a “Declaration of Rights of Canadian Youth” and a “Canadian Youth Act” (Sacknat 1981:339; Axelrod 1989:131, 1995:53).⁸⁰ The first was a holistic document explaining youth positions on labour, education, communication, and war; and the latter document was a submission to parliament of how the Bill of Rights could be implemented. The Youth Act proposed the establishment of a Canadian Youth Commission composed of an equal number of representatives of various youth organizations, specifically, one third each of “farm and labour”; general “youth”; and “social service, education, recreation and consumer organizations”.⁸¹ Accordingly, the Commission would work to implement the Act on matters of labour and education in particular, and report to the Minister of Labour annually.⁸² The Bill of Rights asked how youth could be expected to take responsibility for the future given the insecurity of unemployment, lack of housing, and lack of adequate safeguards for sickness and old age. It pleaded for fair opportunity across social divisions without bias of ethno-cultural, political, or religious affiliation. While it did not call for revolution of the system, it asked that the profit motive be eliminated and that labour be redirected toward self and collective realization. Excerpts from the text of the Bill of Rights of Canadian Youth (1936) include the following:

* We are desirous of helping our people. Greed rules the hearts and minds of men who deny us work and security;

⁸⁰ Axelrod (1995:53) cites *Declaration of Canadian Youth* CSIS files Accession #89-A-128. An American Youth Congress and “Declaration of the Rights of American Youth” was also constructed and promoted at the Seventh Congress of the Comintern (Kuusinen 1935:11-20). A copy of the original proposals of the Canadian Youth Act is available in the National Library of Canada (NLC) collection.

⁸¹ CYC Ottawa, May 23-25, 1936 (available at NLC).

⁸² From the original draft quoted in the RCMP Security Bulletin No. 808, App 1, 27 May 1934, and CYC Ottawa (as above).

*We desire work. We want work to do creative labour that will benefit the whole people of our country. We should like to build schools, hospitals, recreational centres. We want to replace slums...We propose to make jobs for youth by making it possible for all children to attend school...pensioning the old....

*We want economic security. To establish certainty of employment, we propose a redistribution of wealth and opportunity, so as to satisfy the needs of the whole people... we propose that greed should give way to consideration of public weal and that all should be in the first instance produced for the use of people and not in consideration of profit (RCMP Security Bulletin 808, App I:1, 27 May 1936).

Input from the variety of groups present was evident in the Bill. Despite the large number of church groups involved, however, there was no mention of a “God” in any of the text.⁸³ Instead the emphasis was on recreation and creativity, or “culture”:

*We propose the extension of recreational facilities. Knowing that a healthy mind is not possible without a healthy body...we propose that a means be provided for the establishment of recreational and community centers in all communities ...especially in the rural communities and Indian reservations.

*For the improvement of cultural life, we believe that financial aid and encouragement should be given to artists, sculptors, musicians and painters, etc. (Ibid).

Further parts of the Bill dealt with state authority. Although the Bill did not identify Section 98 and the Criminal Code directly, the Bill was “[m]indful of the British traditions of freedom of speech, assembly, organization and press” and addressed the underlying legal structure that enabled the Code (and procedures like it) to function by eliminating state powers exercised without parliamentary (public) decision-making, declaring dictatorships to be “illegal” (Ibid.). The Bill concluded by addressing war and fascism. It asked that the Canadian government ensure that the Covenant of the League

⁸³ Manley (1996:20) notes that the RCMP Bulletins suggest that the Bill was drafted by the communists (RCMP Security Bulletin 808, App I:1, 27 May 1936).). However, just as there is no mention of a “God” in the text, “capitalism” and “class” are also absent in name. Social differentiation is made on according to occupations and/or their parents’ occupations, using words like “needy,” “unemployed,” “farmers,” “small business,” and “professionals”. Other social divisions are acknowledged according to “sex, race, origin, colour, and creed” (Ibid.). Manley calls the document obviously “reformist” (Ibid.).

of Nations be followed, and work towards the goal of “total disarmament of all countries”; in addition, it opposed conscription and required that any decisions of war be made through public ballot.

While a second Youth Congress was scheduled for the following year, the variety of local leagues against war and fascism also pulled together to form a national organization. The first Canadian Congress Against War and Fascism was called for in the summer of 1934 and it brought together pacifist, religious, socialist, communist, international, national and local groups, establishing the Canadian League Against War and Fascism.

Canadian League Against War and Fascism (CLAWF)

The first Congress against War and Fascism was held over three days in Toronto from 6 - 8 August 1934. It brought together 315 delegates representing 203 organizations, with 221 “official observers” (RCMP Bulletin No. 728, App I:1). From conference organizers’ estimations, these delegates represented approximately 337,000 members⁸⁴ in total (tallied by adding up all the representative organization’s memberships) (Ibid).⁸⁵ Key speakers at the conference included Louis Perigaud

⁸⁴ Manley cautions that these figures should be “taken with a grain of salt” given that they are the sum total of the memberships of all the organizations present (1995;1996).

⁸⁵ In the CPC’s *The Worker*, editor Leslie Morris suggested that the conference made four crucial gains: (1) “for the first time in the post-war period revolutionary and reformist workers found they could, in harmony, work out a program which did not violate their personal political beliefs”; (2) “it was unanimous that the fight against war and fascism must take the form of the struggle against our own war-makers... in Canada. Precisely because the program is one of struggle could the communists enter the united front without any ‘ulterior’ motives”; (3) the [agreed] principles of arrangement are that each organization... retain full independence in propagating its own ideas, while violation of the program [of the CLAWF] could only be dealt with by the National Committee; and (4) “middle class elements, lead by Rabbi Eisendrath and Dr. Salem Bland, for the first time entered into discussions with the revolutionary and reformist workers for the purposes of arriving at some common ground”. Morris, Leslie “What Faces us now in the Struggle to Defeat War and Rising Fascism?” *The Worker* 17 Oct 1934:4.

(President of the World Committee AWF), Dr. Harvey Ward (President of the American Congress AWF), Leslie Morris (editor of the CPC's *The Worker*), Rabbi Maurice Eisendrath, Elizabeth Morton (WIL/CCF and Chair of the Women's LAWF), and A.L. Mosher (President of ACCL and CBRE) to name a few (*Ibid.*).⁸⁶ While the CPC was active in bringing the various organizations together, they remained in the background and refrained from any overt leadership positions.⁸⁷ Commenting on the respectful climate of the proceedings, a United Church delegate, Reverend Dr. Salem Bland, writing for the *Toronto Daily Star* under the pen-name "The Observer"⁸⁸ was encouraged by the first meeting:

It was perhaps the first definite attempt in this city to find common ground among the right and left wings of what may roughly be denominated as the radical group. Certainly it was the most successful attempt. Some of us who represent what may be called Conservative and Christian radicalism attended with considerable hesitation and misgiving. We had been present in a good many meetings where communists and Christian socialists and adherents of the CCF had met and had not known one where there was opportunity for free expression on both sides that had been free from clashes. ...I am bound to say that we found this first Canadian Congress Against War and Fascism a spirit which we have never found before (*Toronto Daily Star*, 10 October 1934:6).

The Congress attracted a wide variety of groups with various social, religious, and political backgrounds, making their choice of National Secretary a radical Christian by the name of A.A. MacLeod. The CLAWF letterhead proclaimed that the Canadian League was part of the World Movement Against War and Fascism, and that the aim of the national movement was to enlist and co-ordinate the support of trade unions, workers'

⁸⁶ Penner (1988:134) also includes "Left CCFers such as Fred Fish, Bert Robinson, E.A. Beder, and Arthur Mould ...[and] John Bruce, of the AFL's Plumbers' Union and of the TTLCC".

⁸⁷ Although in speaking, A.E. Mosher accused the communists for "using the congress for their particular propaganda". As the RCMP observer suggested "He made no impression" (RCMP Security Bulletin No. 728, App I:1).

organizations, church, women's and language groups, educators, writers, professional and liberals of all classes in a broad movement against War and Fascism (NAC MG28, Series V46, Vol 28, File 11).

The conference adopted an eight point "Plan of Action" outlining its activist aims including:

- * "a continual formation of local LAWF "to secure the support of all organizations and individuals seeking to prevent war, paying special attention to labour, farmer, veteran and unemployed organizations, and to middle class people";... [and aimed to] "enlist women and youth into the movement";
- * "to organize mass meetings, demonstrations, lectures, parades and similar actions in order to make popular this plan of action, and to publish leaflets, pamphlets, and journals to agitate and propagate for the widest struggle...";
- * "to work toward the stopping of the manufacture and transport of munitions and war supplies through mass demonstrations, picketing and strikes";
- * "to demand the transfer of all military expenditures to the relief of unemployed and the replacement of the present inadequate relief system by the creation of public works and a system of unemployment and social insurance";
- * "...to oppose the increasing use of armed police against the workers and farmers and to fight against the suppression of workers' rights, freedom of speech and assembly, and against the growing fascization of our so-called democratic government as expressed in Section 98, the Arcand and David Bills in Quebec and similar measures"; and
- * "to give effective aid to all anti-Fascist fighters in these countries where fascism is either established or threatening" (NAC, MG28, V46, Vol. 18, File 11).⁸⁹

During the conference, a National Executive was elected from representatives of the mixture of groups present, which was divided according to each of the provinces.⁹⁰

From the A.A. MacLeod papers,⁹¹ Socknat (1981:334) lists executive members such as:

⁸⁸Hunter (1988:53). Bland wrote the regular weekly column that appeared at the end of the front section of the *Toronto Daily Star* from 1927-1947 (Staples 1985:222).

⁸⁹ See also RCMP Security Bulletin No. 728, App I:1.

⁹⁰ Save for PEI and New Brunswick who were absent delegates to begin with.

⁹¹ A.A. MacLeod Papers, in the possession of Mrs. MacLeod (Toronto) (Socknat 1981).

“Dr. Salem Bland, the social gospel spokesman; T.C. Douglas and William Irvine, CCF MPs, John Line and J.W.L. Nicholson of the FCSO, and Peter G. Makaroff, the pacifist Doukhobor lawyer from Saskatoon.” National Council members included Mrs. Elizabeth Morton, Kenneth Woodsworth, and Fred Fish (CCF members), with international endorsements by Henri Barbusse, Dame Sybil Thorndike, and Rabbi Edward Israel, Professor Harry Ward (Union Theological Seminary NYC), Morley Callaghan (writer) and Richard Taylor (artist) to name a few (NAC MG28, V46, Vol. 28, File 11; and Vol. 18, File 9).

Aiming to fulfill the points in the program, local LAWF's continued organizing throughout 1934 and 1935 so that city conferences were held (in Montreal and primarily Western cities). A number of Canadian professors, clergyman, union leaders, local labour aldermen and mayors, including the leaders of affiliated organizations such as the WIL, the FCSO, FOR, and the international LAWF, made the line-up of speakers at these events. While indoor meetings and conferences ranged from 50-700 participants, open-air meetings attracted thousands. The biggest gatherings in 1934/5 were at anti-war rallies and meetings, with the largest attendance on “National Anti-War Day”, 1 August 1935, when five to six thousand people came out to Queen's Park in Toronto, with twelve hundred participants at Winnipeg and a thousand in Hamilton (Ibid) (these will be further discussed in Chapter Five).

CLAWF activities also overlapped with the activities of the Relief Camp Workers' Unions (RCWU); founded by the WUL. The Relief Camps had been established in 1932 as R.B. Bennett's Conservative government's solution to the

increasing numbers⁹² of men who were homeless and unemployed during the Depression (Howard 1985:18).⁹³ The camps made stark contrast to the American “New Deal” policies of the Roosevelt government, in, for example, the Works Progress Administration Program that included a Workers Education Program and a number of Federal Arts Projects (Denning 1996:Chap. 2). In reaction to the poor living conditions in the camps and the ‘slave wages’, the RCWU organized across the country and were prepared to present their demands to the federal government in the “On to Ottawa Trek”. The Trek started in Vancouver, but was stopped in Regina due to police intervention and violence in the “Regina Riot” in 1935 (see Liverledge 1973; Howard 1985). Adding to the anti-war demonstrations and peace rallies, the streets and parks of cities across Canada were increasingly sites of public activism and City officials used their jurisdiction over the issuing of permits for demonstrations and local halls and theatres to control access. Many planned demonstrations and parades were cancelled because of lack of permits and others still held were “dispersed by police”, rarely without injury to the demonstrators (also further discussed in Chapters Five and Six).

The Popular Front Materializes in Governments

While the organizing continued in Canada, international popular front allegiances were realized. Political cooperation between socialist, communist, and a variety of left

⁹² Numbers of people on direct relief (both urban and agricultural) averages: 1937 (965,907), 1938 (870,103), 1939 (808,040), 1940 (508,994) (Dept. of Labour 1941:129).

⁹³ One hundred and forty-four relief work camps were set up across Canada from 1932 to 1936 for make-work projects clearing land, and highway and building construction, for 20 cents a day including room and board. Critics of the plan argued that Bennett’s solution was made to separate the married and single unemployed to reduce their organization and possible militancy, and also represented the government’s lack of a coherent plan to deal with unemployment (Liverledge 1973:35, see also Howard 1985; Horn 1988).

and radical political parties, led to the election of a Popular Front government in Spain in February 1936, and in France in June of the same year (Jackson 1988; Graham & Preston 1987). Only a few months after the elections in Spain, a civil war ensued, as the right-wing “nationalists” (composed of the Roman Catholic Church, monarchy, landowners, and Spanish army) fought to displace the popular front coalition of “loyalists”.

International governments, including the Popular Front government of France, as well as Britain, U.S., and Canada refused to ‘take sides’ while the Soviet Union supported the organization of International Brigades made up of volunteers to support the Loyalists and help restore the democratically elected “Republican” government (Brome 1965; Thomas 1965). In Canada, international speakers were brought in to CLAWF gatherings both to laud the victory in France, and to mobilize for peace in Spain.

The lexicon of a “Popular Front” began to be used to mark the activities of the CLAWF, where in previous years (1934/35) it had been used synonymously with “united” or a “people’s” front. Although it identified a decisive change in Communist Party goals from a “united” to “popular” front strategy, it was used across an activist spectrum of organized labour, unemployed, and a wide variety of groups organized to help people on relief. In Montreal, in particular, the popular front appeared to the RCMP as a “movement” considering that previously disparate groups were coming together in public meetings and rallies, not only linking labour and the unemployed, but groups

organized for civil rights⁹⁴ and rights of minorities. The reports suggest an increase of visible minorities and people of color at popular front speaking platforms and rallies, such that an “Afro-Canadian League”⁹⁵ and minister of an “African Church”⁹⁶ are recognized as affiliates [RCMP Security Bulletins No.’s 795 (26 Feb) 797 (11 Mar), and 798 (25 Mar)].

Popular front allegiances continued to grow; and in February 1936, in Montreal alone, the RCMP notes that sixty-four organizations were affiliated under a “Popular Front” umbrella, which by March had increased to seventy-nine (Ibid). Across Canada, the conferences and demonstrations were complemented by a steady stream of publications circulated whenever possible (Chapter Five), including a monthly

⁹⁴ RCMP Security Bulletins first note the establishment of a separate (from the CLDL) civil rights organization originating in Edmonton in 1934 called the Canadian Civil Liberties Protective Association. According to the reports, the Association was established by the CPC and the CLDL to “obtain support of the business people of the city to campaign for the repeal of Section 98”. The report further notes that neither the CPC nor the CLDL “take any active part” in the Association (RCMP Security Bulletin No. 715, App II:5, 18 July 1934). Other civil rights organizations are noted, like the “Humanitarian Association” (Toronto) (No. 719, App I:1, 15 Aug 1934), L’Association Humanitaire (Montreal) and the Civil Liberties Union (No. 879 App 1:4, 22 Dec 1937), of these, the Civil Liberties Union is further discussed in Chapter Six of the thesis.

⁹⁵ In his overview called *The Blacks in Canada: A History*, Winks does not identify an “Afro-Canadian League” (1997). However, given that one of the delegates at the Popular Front rally in Montreal on 16 Feb 1936, was the editor of the “Negro-related” newspaper *The Free Lance* (published in Montreal 1934-1941), it is likely that the League was supported in this press. Winks notes that *The Free Lance* “was significant largely for its dedication to the idea of ‘Afro-Canadianism’” (Ibid: 404). Regrettably, although the existence of the paper is “attested to in *The United Church Missionary Review*, 11 (1935), 12i, 12n,” Winks was unable to locate any existing copies (Ibid. 405, fn 32). He also notes that of the two other Negro-related papers published during this time (1935), one in Montreal (*The Outcome*) and one in Toronto, *The Canadian Tribune*, the latter was “a white working-class paper published in the Negro district in Toronto which, before it grew silent in 1946, had turned well to the left politically” (Ibid). Unfortunately, only “a broken run of the *Canadian Tribune* (1940-46)” exists in the Toronto Public Library, nevertheless, it may provide a valuable insight into the constitution of class and race in Toronto during this period.

⁹⁶ This appears to be a generic name, however, one could speculate that it refers to the “Union Church of Montreal,” as this was “an all-Negro congregation” that was affiliated to the United Church; given that United Church locals participated in the CLAWF and other popular front alliances (Winks 1997:358).

publication of the CLAWF called *Fight*. The pamphlets issued by the CLAWF were very detailed and explanatory regarding the causes and ramifications of war and fascism internationally and in Canada. In one of the pamphlets called “The United Front against War and Fascism: What it means for Canadians,” an overview of the European and North American political economy was given regarding WWI and what was seen as an inevitable second world war. According to the writers of the pamphlet, the experiences of WWI compelled extra-parliamentary measures as the state was seen as captured by “Big Business”.

Only a united fighting front of all Canadian manual and intellectual workers can smash their criminal schemes and prevent the widespread ruin, misery, destitution and death which another war will mean to the great mass of people of our country (CLAWF 1937?:10).

Contradicting the capitalist division of labour, the linking of mental and intellectual workers was seen as the central feature of the United Front as a “world movement of toiler and thinkers” (Ibid:18). The pamphlet also underscored that the “menace of fascism” was directly connected to communication and culture as evidenced by the practices of Italy and Germany:

Fascism destroys human liberty, fascism destroys culture, and, if allowed to persist, will destroy civilization as well. All civil liberties, all democratic rights have been abolished in Italy and Germany. Freedom of thought, of the press, of assembly, for which man has waged a persistent struggle for centuries, all those liberties whose attainment is written in the blood of generations of great men, have been swept from the face of the earth by fascism at one barbarous stroke. Italy has been culturally dead since the advent of fascism in 1922 (Ibid:11).

In addition, the League pin-pointed specific racist and sexist practices inevitable under fascism in Germany and Italy, including the slogan of “Back to the kitchen” as used by both Hitler and Mussolini to “drive women from industry and to render them once again dependent economically upon men” (Ibid:15). In all, many of the claims made in the

pamphlet were backed up with statistics, careful evaluations of specific government policies, and quotations from government and military leaders; these were not mere slogans or inflated propaganda.

The combination of the circulation of numerous pamphlets and the involvement in public demonstrations was having its desired effect. Throughout the spring and summer of 1936, thousands attended open-air meetings, again, particularly in Toronto and Montreal. As the Spanish civil war intensified, so did the efforts to find peaceful solutions, as was evident in the organization of a "Universal Peace Conference" held in Geneva in September 1936,⁹⁷ to which twenty Canadian delegates attended (Peck 1988:5).⁹⁸ Without the weight of international government support however, the conference was ineffective in mobilizing any effective state actions (Ibid). The CLAWF then changed its name and altered its pacifist focus, as people decided to put their lives on the line to fight against fascism.

League for Peace and Democracy and Committee to Aid Spanish Democracy

The name change from the CLAWF to the Canadian League for Peace and Democracy (CLPD) in early 1937 was a small adjustment to the popular front organization. The CLPD continued to emphasize that the fight for democracy was international, at the same time it needed to be waged in Canada. While speakers at public

⁹⁷ Hoar (1969:6) describes the event: "Fearful that the Spanish civil war might spill across Europe and envelop the civilized world, over five thousand representatives from thirty-two nations and innumerable trade unions, women's clubs, youth groups, veteran's associations and diverse political parties gathered...[with the] ...objective to create a permanent coordinating bureau for the many peace movements then current". The conference closed with "an inevitable sports rally" (Ibid.) to which a number of Canadians attended as participants from the variety of organizations affiliated to the CLAWF and the Canadian Youth Congress.

⁹⁸ From Hoar (1969:8).

meetings and mass rallies decried the injustice of the Spanish civil war, they also linked them with the restrictions and assaults on civil rights in Canada. Following on the CLAWF's program, parallels were drawn between the fascist governments of Germany and Italy, and the repressive actions of the Canadian federal, provincial, and local governments. These ranged from the use of the Criminal Code, to the enactment of the Quebec Padlock Law, to the actions of municipal authorities and police, and included recognition of the development of fascist and nationalist groups in Canada (as will be discussed later in Chapter Six).

A greater change was in the extent of activism advocated. While the emphasis on peace and democracy was there in name, the prevailing sentiment was militaristic, and people were willing to give their lives for the struggle against fascism. Early in 1937, over five hundred Canadian volunteers had left to join the International Brigades and fight for the Loyalists, later forming the Mackenzie-Papineau Battalion⁹⁹ made up of approximately 1,200 Canadian volunteers (Hoar 1969:14; Ervin 1972; Beeching 1989). Meanwhile, the Canadian government again exercising control over labour, revised and updated the "Imperial Foreign Enlistment Act", which "...made it a criminal offense for any Canadian to enlist 'in the armed forces of any foreign state at war with any friendly state'" (Hoar 1969:14; Frohn-Nielsen 1982). To support the battalion in Spain, another organization was formed, called the "Friends of the Mackenzie-Papineau Battalion", which organized public rallies and speaking engagements for those with direct experience in the Spanish civil war. The "Friends of the Mac-Paps," as they were called, was formed in 1937, with a Catholic priest (Rev. Father R.H. Thomas as National Chairman),

⁹⁹ The "Mac-Paps" as they were known, were named after the leaders of the 1837 Upper and Lower Canada rebellions against British control (Hoar 1969).

and listed international sponsors such as Ernest Hemingway, Upton Sinclair, and H.G. Wells (NAC MG28, V46, Vol. 18, File 21).

These final adjustments made a difference to the pacifists affiliated to front organizations. The decision to engage in and support the Loyalists in the civil war split pacifist groups according to the depth of their convictions. Not being able to reconcile peace with violent confrontation, some of the groups belonging to the WIL in particular, dropped their official affiliation with the League, although many local associations and individuals continued to work on its projects.¹⁰⁰ Explaining the choice, Socknat suggests that:

...pacifists were tempted to support the fight for international justice at the expense of their pacifist beliefs. Although an indirect endorsement of international violence, the call to aid Spanish democracy succeeded in attracting considerable support within the peace movement. Leading liberal and socialist peace advocates joined with the League for Peace and Democracy to establish the Canadian Committee to Aid Spanish Democracy under the honorary chairmanship of Rev. Salem Bland (1981:336).

Members of the Committee to Aid Spanish Democracy (CASD) initially included Communists such as Tim Buck, and members of the CCF, including Graham Spry (Hoar 1969:9/10) as well as a number of trade union leaders.¹⁰¹ Again, although the CPC was

¹⁰⁰ Socknat (1981:335) cites the McNaught Papers, E. 95(4) and the Report of the WIL National Convention, June 1937.

¹⁰¹ The CPC lists the following members: Chair: Reverend Ben Spence of the United Church and "prominent member of the Ontario Provincial Council of the CCF"; Secretary: Norman Freed of the CPC, with Spry and Buck serving as vice-chairs. Members of the National Committee included "representatives of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, International Ladies Garment Workers, International Association of Machinists, Toronto district TLC, WILPF, the League for Peace and Democracy, and the CPC", amongst "many others" (CPC 1971:18). On the National Committee, these included CCF National and Provincial Council members, Labor Leagues, a whole range of language associations (NAC: MG 28, V46, Vol. 142, File 14:15), for list of names of the 24 people on the National Executive see (NAC:MG 28, V 46, Vol. 18, File 18).

largely responsible for the organization of the Committee, the variety of members made it – as characterized by Horn (1969:9) – an “enterprise of non-partisan humanitarians”. The CLPD and the CASD were separate organizations, however, and were differentiated as follows:

The League is a permanent organization and has definite and vitally important work to do in the creating, arousing and mobilizing opinion in Canada for Peace and Democracy and to bring that opinion to bear upon Governmental action and relating it to like opinion in other countries.

The Committee is a temporary organization to meet an emergency. There are certain humanitarian projects which it is establishing and maintaining in Spain. It seeks to raise funds for these specific purposes (*Proceedings of a Conference called by the Committee to Aid Spanish Democracy*, NAC MG 28, V46, Vol. 142, File 14:26).

The humanitarian aspect of the Committee may have attracted more participants because of the extent of activism required could be managed within a comfort zone requiring less than overt political actions. Manley (1997:3) notes that the CPC

...provided opportunities in one or another of its ‘fronts’ for a growing and socially diverse periphery of Canadians, not yet ready or willing to become members, to express in practical ways their concern for a more democratic Canada and a safer world. The Popular Front mobilized them around a myriad group of actions. Solidarity with Republican Spain, for example, could be expressed by gathering 100,000 cigarettes or knitting socks for the lads at the front, by donating time – one group of garment workers contributed new suits to be raffled – or simply money.¹⁰²

As example, the campaign for the 1937 Christmas parcels for the volunteers of the Mac-Paps was very successful considering it was in the height of the Depression. More than ‘\$15,000 worth of shoes, 800 hand-knit socks, cigarettes, tobacco and chocolate’ was

¹⁰² The “100,000 cigarettes” campaign was organized by the Friends of the Mac-Paps, and a “Committee of Youth Organizations” who collected money to send the cigarettes, sweets, socks, and shaving cream to send to the Battalion. The by-line on the front of the pamphlet made the appeal: “They defend world democracy... What are you doing for them?,” and on the reverse “Let the smoke from Your Cigarettes Cheer the 1200 Canadian Boys Defending Democracy in Spain” (NAC MG 28, V46, Vol. 142, File 18).

sent, so that every volunteer received a care package (Friends of the Mackenzie-Papineau Battalion, January 1938, NAC MG 28, V46, Vol. 142, File 18). In addition, the CASD reported that in just two and a half years (1936 to mid-1939), the “gross financial aid rendered by Canadians to the various child and civilian needs [in Spain] amounted to nearly one hundred thousand dollars” [CASD *a stitch in time* (Ibid: File 15)].

The name change from the CLAWF to the CLPD (and CASD) varied across the country, likely according to local decisions. A notable change was in the venues for CLPD and CASD activities. Prior to 1936, immigrant halls and local theatres were common places of indoor gatherings however, these were becoming too small for the size and the type of crowds the meetings were attracting. CLPD and CASD activities, presumably to attract the participation of a different social class, moved to more “upscale” facilities. Commercial hotels were increasingly used, and in Toronto, Massey Hall became almost standard. As an international event, the Spanish civil war arguably attracted more public attention than the CLAWF had, as did the experiences of the volunteers from the Mac-Paps and the humanitarian efforts of Dr. Norman Bethune, particularly in the commercial dailies (Peck 1988; Stewart 1973). For example, as specific evidence of the broader interest – despite the general aversion and risk of being associated with anybody or anything that could be considered “communist” – the editor of the *Moscow Daily News*, Dr. Louise Strong, was invited by the British Columbia

Institute of Journalists to speak in Vancouver in March 1937, attracting an audience of a thousand (RCMP Bulletin No. 850, App I:3, 7 April 1937).¹⁰³

Popular Front activities were not solely concentrating on Spain, however. Japan's invasion of China in July 1937, meant that the efforts of the CLAWF and the CLPD were enlarged to include a Chinese LAWF. Speakers from China were sponsored for tours across Canada and they emphasized the link between capitalism and fascism in Italy, Germany, Spain, and Japan. Later the CLPD formed a separate "committee" to concentrate on aid to China specifically (Penner 1988:135). Subsequent gatherings called for a boycott of goods made in any of these countries and included the endorsement of TLCC, AFL affiliated, and CIO unions (RCMP Bulletin No. 872, App I:5, 5 Oct 1937). The CLPD built on the successes of the CLAWF, as the first national congress of the CLPD held in Toronto in November 1937, brought 169 delegates together, representing 114 organizations. A later public meeting held the same day, had 2,200 in attendance (RCMP Bulletin No. 877, App I:1, 30 Nov 1937). In subsequent CLPD meetings in Winnipeg, Edmonton, and Vancouver, attendance ranged from one to three thousand.

With the Spanish civil war in full swing, and the backing of Italian and German fascists of General Franco's nationalist armies in Spain, by 1938, the numbers of people attending CLPD and CASD activities just kept getting larger. By this time the organizations had successfully established and financed a mobile blood transfusion service, hospitals, children's homes and supplied food, milk and clothing to people in

¹⁰³ Dr. Strong was brought back again by the CLPD to speak in Vancouver on 27 Feb 1939, but it wasn't recorded how many people came to hear her speak [RCMP Security Bulletin No. 886, App II:1(5)].

Spain. However, given the increased public demonstrations, the actions of the provincial and municipal governments and the measures taken against them also became major causes of concern. In Vancouver in February 1938, three thousand people gathered in the Orpheum Theatre to listen to speeches by members of the CLPD and criticisms of the exercise of government censorship against the film "China Strikes Back" that was banned by the B.C. government. In May, seven thousand gathered outdoors in Vancouver to protest against the violent actions taken by the Vancouver police against a group of unemployed men who had occupied the post office and art gallery to draw attention to their plight. In Toronto, ten thousand people gathered in Maple Leaf Gardens in July, to show their opposition to fascism in Canada, as organized by the CLPD.¹⁰⁴ It was, to date, the largest gathering of people against fascism and it demonstrated the extent of support for peace and democracy that was at the heart of the movement of the popular front.¹⁰⁵

Conclusion

The articulation of labour within and against the dominant political economy was initially manifest in the organization of labour unions and the emergence of Socialist and Communist political parties in Canada. Although these organizations represented a small

¹⁰⁴ The rally was in opposition to a meeting of fascists at Massey Hall, as called by the leader of the (Canadian) National Social Christian Party, Adrien Arcand (in thesis Chapter Five). While the fascist meeting had about eight hundred in attendance, the 10,000 who showed up at Maple Leaf Gardens attracted the attention of the American *Time* Magazine. The former U.S. ambassador to Germany, William E. Dodd was a main speaker at the meeting who "described Germany under Adolf Hitler". As the *Time* article put it, the fascist newspaper *L'Illustration Nouvelle* published in Québec was the "semi-official organ of Premier Maurice Duplessis' Provincial Government". It further noted that Arcand "and his Jew-baiting, corporatist teachings" were met with approval in Toronto "Canada's most conservative spot" (*Time* Vol. XXXII, 18 July, 1938:19).

¹⁰⁵ It wasn't the first time this many people had gathered for political purposes. In December 1934, ten thousand workers had "packed [the] Montreal Stadium to hear Tim Buck" speak. According the RCMP bulletins, "half of which were French Canadians" (Bulletin No. 739, 9 January 1935).

percentage of Canadian workers, they were at least able to gain increased representation at their workplaces, and formally enter politics on local, provincial, and federal levels. Thus the ideas and practices associated with dominant conservative and liberal versions of the division and management of labour, and of democracy as limited to formal politics were challenged and altered, thereby labouring existing political and economic structures.

The initial attempt to strengthen working class participation in decision-making and transcend divisions of labour and political economy by establishing a union linked political party, was weak and ineffective. However, the CPC's efforts at building a "united front from below" was relatively successful in organizing not only the employed (or skilled), but the unskilled, the unemployed, and women and youth in cities and neighborhoods across Canada, extending the labouring of culture into areas beyond the formal structures of trade unions and political parties. Yet, the CPC's change to a popular front policy meant that this labouring did not develop further, but at the same time, the change in policy overlapped with an expanding critique of capitalism that was emerging from a wide range of social and cultural organizations. Each of these organizations could be considered parts of independent movements themselves, such as those based on pacifism or religion, for example. However, a significant development in the era of the popular front was that these groups were beginning to make connections between their collective histories, their values and beliefs, their ideas and practices, and forms of unified activism.

Just as trade unions opposed war and profiteering in their battles against conscription, the fledgling peace movement in Canada saw labour as essential in enabling and ensuring peace. Religious groups also sought to break from the hegemonic focus on

individual morality and intersected with socialist critique of the immorality of capitalism. This suggests that the “labour movement” was not restricted to unions and political parties, or that the “peace movement” had nothing to do with labour or socialism.¹⁰⁶ Rather than critiquing specific parts of the social whole, these groups were beginning to critique the social totality such that their collective agency overlapped in opposition to war, and in enlarging the understanding and practice of democracy beyond a form of politics to a form of society. Their amalgamation in popular front organizations and national conferences points to a growing political movement and counter hegemony in formation.

Into the mid-to-late 1930s, the politics of allegiance was showing growing signs of success, particularly in the urban centres, given the numbers of people who participated in the organized rallies, demonstrations, and protests. The central popular front organizations – the CLAWF, the CLPD, the CASD, and the Friends of the Mac-Paps – were gaining support and were continually active across Canada. This was by no means the extent of the labouring of culture, however. Although this chapter focused on the labouring of areas in the structured political economy, the articulation of labour in areas considered “cultural” was occurring at the same time. The next chapter will explain these efforts to enable working class participation in education, sports, “theatre” and “literature” as further manifestations of the labouring dynamic.

¹⁰⁶ Analytical distinctions between “old” and “new” social movements suggests that “old” movements (established prior to the 1960s) were strictly concerned with economic material conditions, that they were not democratic but bureaucratic, and that there was no consideration of other kinds of oppression or politics other than class [see Buechler 2000 for an overview]. As discussed in this chapter and as will be evident in subsequent chapters, the assumptions of what is “new” about social movements have been based on how the “old” movements were structured (or de-laboured and re-laboured) into the dominant hegemony, not on why and how they were formed initially.

Chapter Four: The Politics of Form

Articulating Labour as Culture

The interwar years in Canadian history have been characterized as a time of Canada's "coming of age" (Thompson 1985:158). The participation of Canada in the First World War was considered to signify its maturing as a nation, and it was advocated by "English Canada's intellectual community" that a necessary requirement in making this maturity complete was the creation of a distinctly Canadian culture (Ibid; Vipond 1980). Exhibiting a view of culture akin to the conservatism of England's Matthew Arnold and F.R. Leavis, the character of this Canadian culture was defined as morally and intellectually superior to American popular culture, which was then considered low and debased in comparison (Ibid). Working class culture was thereby excluded by definition; this was reinforced by an emphasis on nationalism, social unity and morality that together or alone, became the prerequisite qualification(s) for private or government sponsorship of artists and their productions (Thompson 1985:158-192).

Enabling working class agency in such an environment meant that battles had to be continually waged on a number of fronts, as private funding and state policies (by design or by default) delineated the boundaries of what could legitimately be considered 'culture' and what was correspondingly considered 'political,' whether in the performance arts, or in other areas regarded as cultural such as education. Focusing on the politics of form, this chapter identifies a number of alternatives and oppositions to this structuring as advanced and enabled by a number of immigrant organizations and other collective initiatives, aimed at facilitating working class participation in areas traditionally associated with culture, particularly in theatre, sports, and education. These

endeavours included a concentrated effort to (re)write Canadian history that recognized political and cultural struggle as constituting this history. This chapter also explains how government political and economic decisions impacted on the extent of “labouring” possible, ranging from the regulation of immigrant organizations, to decisions on education, through to state-sponsorship of the performance arts, which, in total, contributed to the making of a firm distinction between politics and culture that became hegemonic.

The Labouring of Immigrant Culture

In the first three decades of the twentieth century, immigrants made up an average of twenty per cent of the population of Canada, and of these approximately 900,000 were identified as skilled and unskilled workers.¹ Immigration was facilitated by the Canadian government to fulfill labour and agricultural goals, however, there was little in the way of support structures to assist in their daily lives once they arrived. Immigrants in the first waves of twentieth century² tended to be widely dispersed, isolated, and marginalized, not only by distance, but also by language, custom, appearance, and social class. The newly arrived associated with those who spoke the same (or similar) languages, settled in (or came from) the same locale or region, and shared similar employment, or unemployment, especially during the Depression. Their very survival depended upon

¹ In the first three decades of the twentieth century, immigrants made up about twenty per cent of the population in Canada. Figures derived from the Census of Canada suggest that between 1911 and 1941 (inclusive), the average ethnic distribution in Canada was, in percentage: 53.9 British, 28.7 French, 16.1 Other, and 1.3 Indian and Eskimo [sic]. Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism (1969:19).

² The federal government allowed 1,804,000 new immigrants to Canada (between 1911 and 1921), and 1,166,000 (between 1922 and 1931), while restricting the flow (1932-1941) to only 140,000 (Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism 1969:28).

forming organizations to attend to collective well-being and assist the newcomers.³ An immigrant culture formed on the basis of these associations and in the process of adapting to, or alternately resisting the conditions of the Canadian social environment. Whereas nationalist and religious organizations aimed to facilitate integration and adaptation (Chapter 5), an immigrant labour culture emerged on the basis of the latter. Rather than adapting to the status quo, the organizations that were politically “radical,” worked to fundamentally change the conditions in which they found themselves. They were partly based on organizations in the European homeland (almost all of which were banned there), and partly based on interpretations of the political economic and socio-cultural conditions in Canada.

The extent of political activism engaged in by the organizations varied according to specific goals. As explained earlier, although Ukrainian, Finnish and Russians formed socialist political parties, political representation was not realized. In the early part of the twentieth century, this was partly due to differences in socialist politics contributing to the demise of the Socialist Party of Canada (SPC) and later the Socialist Democratic Party of Canada (SDPC) (see also Laine 1981a). It was also due to the federal government’s establishment of the War Measures Act, banning socialist parties, immigrant associations, and their press and languages as “unlawful” and “alien,” thereby discouraging engagement in citizenship and formal politics. The effect was significant.

³ If immigrants had not formed their own organizations, they would, for the most part, have been excluded from any sort of citizenship and community participation. For example, Laine (1981a:3) emphasizes that for the Finnish diaspora in Canada “...it was no matter of choice for this community but one of necessity to create its own cultural environment in which its members could participate as complete human beings”. See also Laine (1981b).

In the early 1920s immigrant organizations were not called “socialist” or “communist,”⁴ instead, the titles chosen identified the organization based on language, country-of-origin and/or labour, to suggest organizational autonomy and mark a separation of the “political” from the “cultural”. The idea was to officially avoid the political denotation to diminish the possibility of banning, ostracizing, or confiscation of properties.⁵ The largest and most active associations formed were the Ukrainian Labour Farmer Temple Association, the Finnish Organization of Canada, and a number of smaller groups, including Jewish, Hungarian, Polish, German, Italian, and Jugo Slavian groups, as immigrants from Europe each formed their own “worker’s clubs” and activist organizations.⁶

While all of the immigrant organizations differed in language, organizational goals, and other complexities, many shared a number of organizational characteristics as

⁴ Pilli (1982:37) describes the details, as the SDPC was able to get the order banning the Party rescinded because it was an “official Canadian party” (PC 1786, 13 November, 1918; and Rodney 1968:18, Laine 1981a:98-99), but while the Party was able to resume operations, the bulk of the affiliated organizations, like the FSOC were not, thereby crippling the party.

⁵ Using the Finnish organizations as example, the Finnish Socialist Organization of Canada (FSOC) (est. 1911) changed its name to the Finnish Organization of Canada (FOC) (officially incorporated in 1925). Pilli (1982:38;1981:25) explains that the FSOC “obtained permission to found a new Finnish Organization” from “negotiations” with the “Director of Public Safety” (C.H. Cahan who was appointed by Prime Minister Borden to be responsible for identifying and suppressing radicalism). The leaders of the FOC assured the government that their activities would not be explicitly political, thus “Finnish activity in conjunction with the Party was forbidden.” (Ibid). It was also important to the members to retain some independence from party politics and thereby safeguard its own properties [Laine (1981a:100), also Pilli (1982:139-140)]. As far as the government was concerned, the FOC agreed that it would “educate the Finnish immigrants as members of Canadian society, teach them English, and pass on information on the law and customs of Canada: thus the new organization would be cultural, rather than political, in nature” (Pilli 1982:38, fn. 51; Wilson 1977:105-112).

⁶ Membership figures vary for the organizations depending on immigration numbers, and are not necessarily reflective of participation in organizational activities. While in the largest organizations, membership ranged from four to over six thousand dues-paying members (for example see Avery 1981:70; Krawchuk 1996:42; Yuzyk 1953:111), in the smaller organizations (for example Germans, Hungarians, Jugo Slavs) membership was 500 or less.

well as employing similar means and methods of attending to collective political economic and socio-cultural needs. Primary among these was the formation of insurance, “mutual aid” or “benevolent” associations. These support organizations aided those affected by sickness, injury, or death, as well as loss of employment, and provided financial, food, shelter, and social support, particularly during the Depression. Depending on the size and concentration of similar language groups, the mutual aid societies were either part of a main organization, or run separately from it. Although the main organization was officially “cultural” in both goals and orientation, the aim was to facilitate working class participation in all of its activities, such that official distinctions made between “politics” and “culture” was in contrast to actual practices.

Whereas the extent of immigrant organizational affiliation with formal party politics and with organized labour was unofficial and subject to continual debate, the goal of working class and labour solidarity in general, was not. The central and defining feature of the immigrant organizations that were radically inclined was their identification as workers and as members of the working class. As illustrated in Table 3 (following), this is evident in the names chosen for the organizations, which were based on “labour,” “workers” or “workers and farmers,” as well as language.

Table 3(1)
Immigrant Labour Organizations in Canada
(1900-1945)

Formal or Informal⁷ Political Affiliation	Organization	(Years in Existence)
	Finnish	
Communist	Finnish Organization of Canada	(1923-1940)
Socialist	Finnish Workers' and Farmer's Federation of Canada	(1931+)
	Hungarian⁸	
Communist	Workers' Clubs	(1931-1934)
	Workers and Farmers' Club	(1934-1939)
	Canadian Hungarian Mutual Benefit Society	(1927-1934)
	Canadian Federation of Democratic Hungarians	(1939+)
	German⁹	
	German Workers Education Society	(1929)
	Association of German-speaking Workers	(1929)
	Zentralverband deutschsprechender Arbeiter (Central Association of German Speaking Workers)	(1930-1934)
	German Workers and Farmers Association	(1932-1937)
	Deutschkanadische Volksbund (German-Canadian League)	(1937-1941)
	Jewish¹⁰	
Trotskyist, Bundist, Anarchist, Zionist and Communist	Arbeiter Ring [Workmen's Circle]	(1908-?)
	Jewish Women Workers' Association	
Zionist	Poale Zion (Labour Zionist)	
	Pioneer Women's Organization	(1925) ¹¹
Pro-Soviet	Organization for Jewish Colonization in Russia (ICOR)	(1924-)
	Jugo Slav¹²	
Communist	Yugoslovensko Prosvetni Klubovi (Yugoslav Cultural Club)	(1927-?)

⁷ These are not rigid categories, at best they illustrate a tendency in political affiliation, some stronger than others and, which fluctuated, depending on the time period, and depending on the degree of organizational independence desired. With the possible exception of the Communist Party and its organizations (which itself went through a number of significant policy changes) left politics was in continual formation, and not a fixed doctrine. While there might be agreement on the necessity eliminating social class, for example, how that was to be achieved was subject to continual debate.

⁸ Patrias (1994).

⁹ Grenke (1995).

¹⁰ Frager (1992).

¹¹ Draper and Karlinsky (1998)

¹² Tomovic (1982).

Table 3(2)
Immigrant Labour Organizations in Canada
(1900-1945)

Formal or Informal Political Affiliation	Organization	(Years in Existence)
	Polish	
	Polskie Towarzystwo Robotniczo-Farmerskie (Polish Workers' and Farmer's Association)	(1931-1935)
	Polski Towarzystwo Ludowe w Kanadzie (Polish Peoples' Association of Canada)	(1935+)
	Polish Democratic Organization	
	Ukrainian¹³	
Socialist	Ukrainian Free Thinkers Association	
	Ukrainian Labour Association	(1930-1939)
Communist	Ukrainian Labour Temple Association	(1920-1924)
	Ukrainian Labour Farmer Temple Association (ULFTA)	(1924-1940)
	Workers' Benevolent Association	(1922-1940)
Independent	Association of Ukrainian Canadians	(1943-1946)
Pro-Soviet	Association of United Ukrainian Canadians	(1946+)
	Others	
	Independent Mutual Benefit Federation (IMBF)	(1934-?) ¹⁴
	Canadian National Union of Ex-Servicemen	(1921-1931) ¹⁵
	Working-Class Ex-Servicemen's League (WEL)	(1931)
	Workers' Sport Association of Canada	(1928-1937)

¹³ Krawchuk (1996).

¹⁴ Grenke (1995).

¹⁵ Lonardo (1995).

More than in name, working class solidarity was also stressed in organizational goals, regardless of size. For example, Eklund describes the basis of the Finnish

Organization of Canada:

Ever since its foundation, it has been a matter of honour for the Finnish Organization of Canada to justify its principles and its whole existence by emphasizing that it is an inseparable part of the Canadian organized working class. The fathers of the organization stressed from the very beginning that it was not their intention to found and maintain a separate nationalist organization, set apart from the Canadian working class movement (1987:11).¹⁶

Since formal political affiliation had once been outlawed by the Canadian government, and given the demise of the Socialist Democratic Party of Canada there wasn't a socialist party to fill the void until the founding of the Worker's Party cum Communist Party of Canada (CPC). Also, since organized labour followed labour divisions (according to occupation, gender and race), for the most part it appeared that the only established organizational alternative was the Communist Party and many of the largest organizations supported the Party in theory and practice to varying degrees (Patrias 1994:161).¹⁷ This didn't mean that all left immigrant associations were pro-communist. Socialist politics was in active formation and, depending on the organization and time period, specific goals included the advancement of socialist-democratic, socialist, Trotskyist, communist and pro- or anti- Soviet positions. These were debated nationally (in regards to Canada and usually

¹⁶ The same principles were emphasized even in the smallest organizations, even if lacking formal organizational status and permanent buildings. See for example, the statements of Jonas Yla, editor of the Lithuanian labour press in Canada in Harney (1982b:132).

¹⁷ The details of the extent of union-immigrant relations are specifically addressed in Frager (1993), Patrias (1994) and Krawchuk (1996). Each historian emphasizes that for the most part, immigrants were on the margins of organized labour in the TLC. The only organization that consistently worked within and amongst the language organizations was the CPC. Thus the sections of the immigrant associations that worked to organize labour largely did so within the communist-led FUL and WUL.

the homeland) and internationally (towards creating an international worker-state, or a world unbounded by nation-states¹⁸).

The extent of association with the CPC and the degree of agreement with Comintern directives, were subject to debate and tension within the organizations,¹⁹ especially as Russia's discriminatory and oppressive policies in Eastern Europe adversely affected relatives remaining in the homeland who were subjected to them. While some remained pro-communist (such as ULFTA and the FOC), in other cases, this created such dissension that a group would break away and form a separate organization. Such was the reason for the establishment of the Ukrainian Labour Association (est. 1930), which was primarily defined by its anti-Soviet stance (Marunchak 1970), and the Finnish Workers' and Farmers' Federation of Canada (est. 1930/1) which was also formed to be independent of any formal political (that is, particularly Communist) affiliation (although it supported the CCF after it was formed in 1933/4) [Laine (1981a:101); Lindstrom-Best (1982); and Pilli (1981;1982)]. The range of "socialisms" was also evident in organizational form in the Jewish labour movement, which was a combination of three main organizations, the Arbeiter Ring (Workmen's Circle) formed by three socialist variants (Bundists, Trotskyists and Anarchists), a Labour Zionist organization,²⁰ and the pro-communist Labour League (Frager 1992).

¹⁸ For example, the Ukrainian socialist newspaper *Chervonyi prapor* (Red or Scarlet, Flag or Banner) (1907-9), and *Rabochiy narod* (Working People) (1909-1918) advocated a "citizenship of the world" (Kolasky 1990:12), which is similar to what we now call a "global civil society".

¹⁹ Although some of the leaders of the immigrant associations participated in CPC governance, the organizational membership for the most part, were not "fully integrated" into the CP. While agreeing in principle with communist theory it appears that each organization acted independently (Avery 1981:78/9; and 83, also Laine 1981:100).

²⁰ As Frager (1993:15) explains, the Labour Zionists "believed in the creation of a socialist state in Palestine" and the Bundists "were non-Zionists, [and] believed in a centralized form of socialism".

For the most part, the majority of the organizations had antecedents in the country-of-origin, maintaining communication between them and others within concentrated areas of the diaspora (particularly with similar socialist and language groups in the United States). Organizational structures were carried over from their homeland (the Ukrainian organizations), copied from existing religious or socialist organizations (the Finns), or were modeled after trade-union structures. Participation in organizational decision-making was gender-biased and age-related, but this did not exclude significant women's and youth participation. In the larger organizations in particular, separate women's and youth sections were formed as branches of the main organization.²¹ Members were expected to contribute to the goals of the organization, having specific responsibilities based on historical gender and age divisions.

Women did the work essential to the organizations' existence and daily functioning, particularly in fund-raising and social activities (Swyripa 1993:165, from Hunchuk 2001:69). Yet feminist goals tended to be superceded by commitments to a class politics, which was common to left politics in general at this time (see Sangster 1989; Strong-Boag 1979 and Prentice et al. 1988; cited in Frager 1992:111). However, feminism was not absent from the activist agenda. As Patrias (1994), Lindstrom-Best (1992), Swyripa (1993), Sangster (1989), and others have pointed out, women's equality in pay, access to birth

²¹ There were exceptions however. As Draper and Karlinsky (1998) explain, in the Jewish labour movement, women who were dissatisfied with being "second-class citizens" in the Labour Zionist organization, formed their own labour Zionist group called the Pioneer Women's Organization (est. 1925). "Its purpose was to educate children in the Labour Zionist tradition and promote women's participation in building the Jewish state" (Ibid:192).

control and abortion were part of the organizational agenda and debated in the press,²² if not articulated specifically in organizational objectives.²³

Labour Temples

The labouring of neighborhoods was facilitated by these organizations through their central houses, community homes and halls – called “labour temples” – that served as political economic and socio-cultural centres in areas of major working class settlement.²⁴ The labour temples accommodated the wide variety of activities including sewing circles, card games, informal socials, dances, speeches and rallies, as well as libraries and schools, sport facilities and various combinations thereof.²⁵ Of existing buildings, a standard working class house may have been converted into a labour temple, such that there was little on the exterior to differentiate it from the rest of the neighborhood houses, save for all the

²² For CPC specifics, see Sangster and Hobbs (1999).

²³ For example, Patrias observes from her readings of the Hungarian press that men were encouraged to help with the housework “to make their households more ‘democratic’,” thereby freeing women’s time up for greater participation in “political activism” (1994:205). This was in contrast to the nationalist and religious organizations, where women’s role as procreator and homemaker were continually reinforced rather than questioned (Ibid: Chap. 5).

²⁴ A systematic study of the number, location, size and architecture of the labour temples across Canada has yet to be done (Hunchuk 2001). Given that they were a common and necessary part of working class life, however, they were present in all the cities of immigrant concentration across Canada and in areas of major settlement (Ibid).

²⁵ These centres commonly had antecedents in Europe. For example, Hunchuk traces the origins of the Ukrainian labour temples as descendents of the “*chytalnia*, or reading room “common to mid-19th century Ukraine,” which was a combination “cultural-educational and political centre” (2001). As she explains: “In Canada, it evolved into two main types: the *narodne dim*, or people’s home, which was, generally, independent but nationalistic and right-centrist in political orientation, and the *robotnyche dim*, literally, a ‘workers’ home;’ more commonly a Labour Temple, which was dedicated to pro-communist policies and social activism” (Ibid:2). The understanding of the labour temple as home or “cottage” was also part of Finnish heritage, as the “Torppa” was considered a social activist centre and “home away from home” (Eklund 1987:60; 211; see also Laine 1981a:96). The combination of politics and culture was also emphasized in the naming of the Jewish labour halls, as Labour *Lyceum*’s – places of discussion and learning (Frager 1992).

communal activities that went on there (Hunchuk 2001).²⁶ In other cases, rentals were chosen that were centrally located, or halls were newly built by volunteers with funds raised through sponsoring associations. While only a few labour temples were recorded at the turn of the twentieth century, by the 1930s they were well established both in urban and rural areas of concentrated settlement. The Jewish halls (in Toronto, Montreal and Winnipeg) were first built to house unions and provide them with a centralized meeting place and expanded from there. The Labour Lyceum in Toronto was situated in the heart of the garment district and acted as a combination labour college, arts academy, and recreation centre meant to complement “the informal socializing at the union halls” (Frager 1992:40-41).²⁷ The FOC’s labour temple was one of the earliest built in Port Arthur/Port William Ontario in 1908, with later halls in Sudbury, Toronto and Vancouver. As early as 1921 there were seventy “workers’ halls” mostly in urban areas in Northern Ontario, Quebec and B.C. (Laine 1981a:97; Eklund 1981a:11). By the 1930s, ULFTA reportedly had over a hundred labour temples (Krawchuk 1996:76; Wertschmann 1987:344; Luciuk and Kordan 1989:18),²⁸ with other estimates at double that figure (Isajiw 1982:72; and Avery 1991:226; in Hunchuk 2001:59/60). Of these, the Ukrainian labour temple in Winnipeg was a huge building covering a whole city block, containing a ‘one-thousand-seat auditorium, administration offices, a school, library, and print shop’ [Kisilow (1986) in Hunchuk (2001:80)].

²⁶ This was as much by choice as by financial restraint. As the labour temple served as a “group home” and was integral to the community, its location and building type was appropriate for its use. On the other hand, exterior designs or painted signs were a luxury drawing on limited funds that were needed elsewhere (Hunchuk 2001).

²⁷ See also Patrias (1994:159) for similar activities at the Hungarian workers’ halls.

²⁸ Luciuk and Kordan list figures for all of the Ukrainian organizations (religious, nationalist and communist) and report that ULFTA had “113 Labour Temples with 201 branches and 10,000 members” (1987:18). These were located across Canada, save for the Maritimes where Ukrainian settlement was minimal.

Labour temples were the hub of organizational and fund-raising activities, as well as providing shelters, drop-in centres, and a general “home-away-from-home” environment.²⁹ In keeping with the promotion of working class solidarity, smaller language groups, labour unions, and other progressive groups used the larger organization’s facilities for meeting-places, strike headquarters, and rallying points for various marches and parades, ranging from daily organizing to major undertakings (Bercuson 1974:9; Bray 1987:39; Radforth 1998:309; Winseck 1998:142).³⁰ These included significant actions like the Winnipeg General Strike, the On-to-Ottawa treks, Hunger Marches, Anti-War Days, May Day and Labour Day parades, as well as Popular Front rallies (Ibid; Krawchuk 1996:46 and 76; Hunter 1988). During the years of the Spanish Civil War, the labour temples also served as “collecting point[s] for supplies for the Mackenzie-Papineau Battalion” (Bray 1990:40) as well as recruiting centres for the Battalion (Momyrk 1991).

In addition to housing the organizational headquarters, the labour temples doubled as public libraries and schools for the teaching and development of language and literacy skills (both in their mother-tongue and in English). A provincial government language-ruling against bilingual schools (in Manitoba 1917) set a precedent, and disallowed the teaching of any language but English in “public” schools which meant that any bilingual language

²⁹ The Jewish Arbeiter Ring also organized activities beyond the Labour Lyceum. Frager notes that a number of summer camps were established just outside of Toronto in the 1920s, providing a place “where workers could socialize with each other while vacationing with their families” (1993:53).

³⁰ Radforth emphasizes the importance of the Finnish labour temple to the Lumber Workers Industrial Union of Canada in Northern Ontario: “The Finnish halls served as meeting places for strike committees, workshops for preparing propaganda, and bases for flying squads of pickets. Employers saw Finn halls as the nerve-centres of agitation, the heart of enemy territory. When strike committees were at their most provocative, they would insist that employers come to negotiate at the Finn hall rather than some public building or other neutral ground. As a point of honour, employers always refused to meet at the Finn hall” (1998:309).

teaching had to be done in the labour temples and other immigrant community centres.³¹

While the federal government had ensured immigrants fulfilled their role as able-bodied labour, little was done to assist in language acquisition skills (Eklund 1987:25). Immigrants were thus expected to fulfill roles as labourers, rather than necessarily participating in decision-making processes as citizens. Activities in the labour temples filled this void. In general, a comprehensive approach was taken to education. This included the development of citizenship skills (organizational administration, leadership training, and educational work), communication and media skills (teaching, public speaking, editing and reporting for the press), and “cultural” work (plays, writing of poetry, stories, songs, and music) (Krawchuk 1996; Wier 1957; Kolasky 1990; Patrias 1994; Frager 1992; Eklund 1987a; etc.). These were not considered separate skills with separate goals, but were integrated, to encourage, facilitate and maximize participation in socio-cultural and political activities alike (Ibid).

Specific programs at the labour temples included afternoons and evenings with guest speakers, and topical debates about the local, regional, and (inter)national political economy.³² Bray notes for example, regular “Open Forum” discussions on Sunday nights at the ULFTA hall in Vancouver which provided an opportunity for any “progressive

³¹ For example, the Jewish Arbeiter Ring established a network of schools called “Peretz Shuls” to teach “...children about secular East European Jewish culture and about socialism and the labour movement” (Frager 1992:53).

³² In some of the organizations, concentrated efforts were made at scheduling talks and meetings, or casual drop-in times according to worker’s schedules. For example, the FOC instituted a “maid’s day” to accommodate Finnish female domestic workers, and “arranged social occasions, gymnastic practices, theatre rehearsals, and dances” as well as maintaining an “open house” as a space available away from the employer (especially for those who were ‘live-in’ maids) (Lindstom 1992:97). Others were not so gender-conscious; Frager notes that in off-hours, the Toronto Jewish Labour Lyceum was an informal social club primarily for men, “women were included in the more formal social and cultural events, such as the lectures and concerts that took place in the auditorium...” (1993:40/41).

speakers... to discuss subjects of interest to 'all working people'" (1987:42).³³ It was also common to combine speeches with orchestra, choirs, drama or other entertainment as part of a whole evening (Ibid: 41-42). The focus of the temples was collective activism, and, for many of the participants and immigrants who had not previously been politically active, the temples were the place of their radicalization. The term "hall socialism" was used to characterize such newcomers whose involvement was more likely based on their "network of friends and acquaintances" rather than on an explicit decision to act on their experiences in capitalist society (Momryk 2002).³⁴ While an individual's reasons for joining organizations differed, the aim of organization was not to make a distinction between politics and culture as such. As Bray explains:

... 'concert meetings' acted as a drawing card, attracting workers who might be reticent to attend more overtly political meetings. Yet the political content was an integral element, as many of these events were organized around a specific theme or issue. And advancement of the movement became a motivating force in their organization (1987:35).

Drama Circles and Theatre Groups

Central attractions at the labour temples were the numerous plays, recitals, dances, and picnics.³⁵ It was common for all immigrant organizations to have at least one "workers' drama circle," theatre group, choir, orchestra and gymnastic group that gave regular

³³ *BC Workers' News* January 15, 1935, from Bray (1990:72, ftn 50).

³⁴ As Pilli suggests, for example, "...it is possible that the [explicitly] non-political functions of the FSOC were more important for many ordinary Finnish members" (1982:37). Kostianen uses the term "hall socialism" to refer to "the affiliation of Finnish immigrants to the socialist movement because of its cultural and social functions" [Ibid citing Kostianen (1978:35-36)].

³⁵ It is difficult to estimate how many non-members attended these events. RCMP Bulletins note when attendance included "French Canadians" and members of "higher classes" and "colored people". At minimum, music, song and dance recitals were not language-specific and their accessibility likely attracted those living in or near the neighborhood. Similar language groups would also attend each other's plays or discussions, as it was not uncommon for Slavs and Jews to speak or to understand a mixture of Ukrainian, Polish, and Russian, for example (Turek 1962:30).

scheduled performances.³⁶ Of the larger organizations, ULFTA had over 200 orchestras, six brass bands and numerous choirs that would also perform at annual ULFTA conventions, May Day and Labour Day celebrations, as well as being on labour picket lines (Lysenko 1947:208). In the beginning, ULFTA arts programs were developed by those who had previous experience in Ukraine, drawing on a number of published works (poems, novels, plays, etc.) written in the Ukrainian language (Krawchuk 1996:331-333). The Girl's Mandolin Orchestra was particularly popular and, since the music was not explicitly political, they were able to perform in English commercial theatres, and thus were a reliable source of ULFTA funds. Krawchuk notes that the organization took advantage of this public exposure whenever possible to talk to the audience about ULFTA and their subsequent youth organizations.

Disagreements and conflicts between variants of socialism that surfaced in the main organizations tended to be muted, or at least were secondary when it came to the artistic and performance activities of the labour temples (Sundsten 1982:84). Labour movement unity was at the forefront of the Jewish Arbeiter Ring (Frager 1992:53), and was particularly evident in the case of the Finnish workers' theatre, which was very prolific in staging plays in the various FOC halls. Surveying the FOC's Fort William and Port Arthur locals between 1921 and 1938, for example, Eklund notes that nearly 200 of "about 500 plays" performed during this time "were full length," which averages "about twelve full length and many shorter plays" per year (1987:280). Not all the plays were imports from Finland; FOC records indicate that "over 200 plays" were written by Finnish-Canadians between 1900 and

³⁶ It was standard to have more than one however, even the smaller Polish Workers' and Farmers' Association (with 3000 members across Canada, Radecki 1979:72) had "seven amateur groups, six orchestras and four choirs" (RCMP Bulletin July 1936, No. 817: Kealey and Whitaker 1996:311/312).

1940 (Ibid). These were recorded in FOC collections as it maintained a “lending library” so that the plays could be produced and distributed amongst FOC and other drama groups, including the socialist Finnish groups in the U.S. (Sundsten 1982:82). ULFTA was equally prolific, with traveling drama troupes spread over wide areas. Examining ULFTA records for the labour temples in Alberta, for example, Balan counts seventy-nine plays in three years at Vegreville (1926-1929); three to ten plays per year at Lethbridge (1930-1939); and eighty-three plays in one year (1930) staged in different halls across 15,000 square km’s of Ukrainian bloc settlements in Alberta (1991:96). He notes that wherever there was an ULFTA-affiliated hall in rural or urban centres, there were dramatic performances, particularly at the largest labour temple in Winnipeg where such activity was constant:

When one considers that an estimated 750 persons attended each performance, a staggering total of more than 161,000 tickets had been sold for live theatrical presentations in the temple’s first half-decade [1919-1924] existence. Since there were also 69 concerts during the same time span, most of which drew capacity crowds, the combined attendance figure for cultural events – at the ULFTA audience alone – was in the neighborhood of 230,000 (Balan 1991:104).

Throughout the 1920s and 1930s, a standard theme in drama at the labour temples was “everyday life” that did not ignore social relations of class, gender and race, or take them as given. Rather, plots focused on class struggle, strikes, the Depression, labour (in the factory and in the household), pacifism and anti-clericalism, and addressed them in plays ranged from serious tragedy to farcical acts (Sundsten 1982:83; Laine 1981). In commenting on the importance of theatre to the Finnish labour movement in particular (which can safely be generalized to the labour movement as a whole), Sundsten writes that:

Above all its value is to be found in the fact that it deals with problems of current interest in the society, points to the injustices and shortcoming of society and in its own way incites people to demand improvements and justice for individuals and groups (1982:84).

In this way, the plays were more likely to instill a sense of participation, not only in the production, but also in what the plays were about. In the FOC, participation was encouraged through acting and “collective directorships” so that “each actor took his or her turn to direct a play and be responsible for stage management” (Ibid: 81). ULFTA also established a “Workers’ Theatre Studio” which was a permanent workshop for directors, set designers, and other specialties in the production of plays (Balan 1991:104). Balan suggests that the reason behind the workshops was competition from the Ukrainian nationalist and religious groups so that issues of quality became more important (Ibid). Crucial to the production and exhibition of the plays (even more so than the orchestras and choirs) was ownership of the venue or hall, providing inexpensive facilities for rehearsals and performances without the costs and risks of the commercial halls. Also important was the ownership of publication, distribution and exhibition centres that were also less restrictive or profit driven (Sundsten 1991:78 and 89 ftn 2). Balan further notes that alternative bookstores were helpful in script circulation and the exchange of costumes, props and other theatre supplies (1991:90). The labour temples and bookstores were relatively well established by the time there were developments in workers’ drama in the English language, and provided needed support in terms of experience, equipment, and exhibition space.

Workers’ Experimental Theatre

We played in workers’ halls, outdoors on trucks or on bandstands in parks. We played for trade unions, Workers’ International Relief, the unemployed councils, CLDL branches, Labor Leagues, Ukrainian, Finnish, Macedonian and other ethnic organizations, May Day celebrations, [and] concerts of cultural enrichment (Ryan 1981:31).

As a member of the Workers' Experimental Theatre (WET), Toby Gordon Ryan was always on the move. The mobile theatre troupe that she belonged to traveled and performed at the places of labour, community, and activism. The WET was a branch of the Progressive Arts Club (PAC), established in 1928 in Toronto, in recognition of the dearth of a proletarian aesthetic and a desire to affect a Canadian cultural production that was by and for the working class (Wright and Endres 1976, 1976a; Ryan 1981; Tippet 1990). The PAC drew its inspiration from international agitprop drama troupes in the U.S., Great Britain, and the Soviet Union, but was not affiliated to any particular international group or political party (Ryan 1981; Endres 1976; Souchotte 1987). The PAC initially consisted of thirty-five members and was divided into three groups, one each for writers, artists, and theatre workers" (Endres 1976a:xxii). The writers included "Toronto worker" Oscar Ryan,³⁷ E.C. Smith (who later became leader of the Mac-Paps), Dorothy Livesay, and Stanley Ryerson. They contributed to the alternative press including the CPC's *The Worker*, the CLDL's *Labour Defender*, the *Forum*, and later established a radical literary journal called *Masses* (Ibid: xxiii; 1976:65/6). The artists included sculptors, cartoonists, and others who "designed, drew and printed posters and handbills for numerous demonstrations and rallies" as well as contributing to the artwork of the labour press in general (Ibid).

The PAC was founded on the principle of producing 'politically conscious' work, particularly theatre. Just like the immigrant dramatic groups, the plays were meant to be recognizable and understandable, as well as inspiring and motivating. As Endres describes, this was

theatre which attempts to move its audience to promote social change. Whether this takes the form of attempting to convince audiences of the evils of war, capitalism,

³⁷ As characterized by Smith (1933:68).

racism and so on, or of exhorting them to leave the play and join a picket line, 'political' here means consciously Marxist or left-wing (1976:8).

Initially, the PAC aimed to produce "agitprop," plays that were a combination of agitation and propaganda that extended or erased the conventional structures of theatre.³⁸ This involved altering characters, plot lines and endings. Conflict, normally illustrated as intra-personal or interpersonal in conventional plays was almost always demonstrated as between classes, with characters representing a social class or a social force like religion or capitalism.³⁹ The PAC's repertoire was, at the beginning, as simplified as the makeshift stages and costumes, depicting the capitalists (as the bad guys) and the workers (as the good guys)⁴⁰ who were able to win over the capitalists by uniting together in solidarity and action. Another distinction of workers' theatre was the "mass recitation" where everyone in attendance was encouraged to participate in the plays and vocalize their participation, both to symbolize their participation in the movement and "to make the working class consciously aware of their collective strength" (Ibid).

The "mobile agitprop troupe" included a portable 'theatre' consisting of a carload or two of actors and minimal props. The latter was partly due to limited resources, and partly because speed was of the essence given the inevitable police harassment that accompanied active performances (Ibid: xviii). As Endres suggests, the mobile agitprop theatre was part

³⁸ See Endres (1976:55-60) for a history of the term and its practice in Europe and North America; also Denning (1996:57)

³⁹ Smith provides an example of an agitprop play called *War in the East*, written by "an undergraduate of the University of Toronto"; the "short, four-scene play, deal[s] with the attack on Manchuria and Jehol by the Japanese imperialists. In the first scene of this [play] the stylized characters, Mikado, Capitalist, War Lord, and Priest wear masks which aid the slight costumes (top hat, priest's cassock, and so forth) in showing that they represent forces rather than individuals" (1933:68).

⁴⁰ Endres comments that the simplicity of the plays should not mean their dismissal historically, as this formula of 'good versus evil' was effectively used and standardized in Hollywood films of the time, then depicted as cowboys vs. Indians; or more recently Americans vs. Russians, or currently as humans vs. aliens, etc. (1976:59).

of a larger “street culture” created in part by unemployment during the 1930s and complemented by the marches, parades, and demonstrations that were active there (Chapter Five). Through their personal appearances and reports of them in the labour and literary press,⁴¹ the Toronto troupe inspired the formation of a number of other Clubs in Vancouver, Winnipeg, Windsor, London, Montreal and Halifax (Irvine 1999:187).⁴²

The Workers’ Theatre gained public notoriety in 1933/4, when the play *Eight Men Speak* was scheduled to appear in a Toronto theatre. Collectively written by PAC members, the play was based on the arrest and conviction of eight members of the CPC, and the attempt on Tim Buck’s life in the Kingston penitentiary. The play’s only performance was to a sold out crowd of 1500 in Toronto that was subsequently banned by the provincial police.⁴³ Theatre owners contemplating showing the play in other cities were also told that their license would be revoked (Endres 1976:4; Ryan 1981; Souchotte 1987:116).⁴⁴ As was noted earlier, further controversy was added when CLDL and PAC member E.C. Smith was arrested for making a “seditious utterance” in speaking out against the ban, and the resulting mass protest that ensued (Endres 1976:73; Petryshyn 1982:54/55).⁴⁵ After the successful appeal of Tim Buck coupled with widespread and increasing public support of both the PAC

⁴¹ For example, the CPC’s *Worker* carried advertisements for participants in the back pages of its paper and reported on performances, as did the *Masses* which ran a regular column reporting “news of Agitprop troupes across the country” (Endres 1976:66).

⁴² Smith also notes a “similar organization” to the WET called the “Rebel Arts Guild” which, in conjunction with the WET played to 3,500 people in Stratford Ontario, which Smith claims was “the largest gathering that ever collected under one roof in that city.” (1933:69).

⁴³ *Toronto Star* January 13, 1934:3. This was not unique to the play, as shall be discussed further in Chapter 6, municipalities used their licensing control to restrict political activity (particularly anything that could be construed as communist) (Petryshyn 1982:43).

⁴⁴ In Winnipeg, for example, the police demanded to see the script before the play could be presented which the PAC refused; subsequently, both the provincial and municipal government banned the play. Further, a meeting planned by the PAC in the Winnipeg civic auditorium in order to “discuss their views” was also denied by city authorities. *Toronto Star* (1 May 1934:42; 14 May 1934:1,14).

⁴⁵ *Toronto Daily Star*, 31 January 1934; *Mail and Empire* 5 February 1934, cited in Petryshyn (1982:55).

and the CLDL,⁴⁶ the federal government decided that it was best to remove the object of unity, and eventually, one by one, the prisoners were released.

The play marked the “height of Agitprop” in terms of publicity and activism, and workers’ drama clubs across Canada continued to grow (Endres 1976a). Writing in *The Canadian Forum* in 1933, E.C. Smith noted that the PAC was “communicating with over sixty towns, villages and cities in Canada” and that of all the “plays, sketches and mass recitations” that had been played, “approximately 70 to 80 per cent” were “written by Canadians” (1933:68; Endres 1976:xxv). This was not meant to indicate that the nationality of the writer(s) was a qualification, but to demonstrate that the plays were written about social problems in Canada and were meant to motivate activism on municipal, provincial or national levels (depending on the issue), in Canada, as well as internationally.⁴⁷

In Toronto, a “Workers’ Theatre Festival” was held in March 1934, and was successful in incorporating plays in a number of different languages, plus “twelve international conferences ...and fourteen different cultural organizations” (*Toronto Star*, 17 March 1934:19). However, with the increase in popularity, also came pressures to produce more diverse works. As the troupe’s repertoire became more familiar and participants became increasingly sophisticated, there was concentrated effort to produce new plays that established a quality in performance that didn’t compromise their political basis. This was part of a debate that was carried on in Canada and internationally wherever there was workers’ theatre and was part of the overall movement towards a popular front

⁴⁶ The increase was reflected in CLDL membership that grew from 10,000 to over 17,000 in 1933/4 (Petryshyn 1982:53/4, from CLDL’s National Convention Reports).

⁴⁷ For example, Smith notes a ‘realist’ drama written by H. Francis called *Looking Forward*. The play focuses on a family on relief in Canada, which starts out with the family “particularly the father,” being resigned to making do with “over-ripe groceries from the Pogeys house, and ends up with the determination to demand a decent unemployment insurance scheme” (1933:69).

(Endres 1976:74-79). The move to incorporate and cooperate with “intellectuals and artists” or people experienced in dramatic technique, complex performance, and exhibition, drew the theatre groups away from the streets and into the theatre. It was enough to plunge the PAC theatre productions into a period of dormancy for over a year and a half (Endres 1976:79). Emerging in 1935, the Worker’s Experimental Theatre became the Theatre of Action as a stationary theatre group producing plays for public audiences, and selling “block tickets” to labour unions (Ibid: 78). As Endres notes, this marked a substantial change from Agitprop:

The workers theatre movement learned from one of the basic mistakes of sectarianism – a slogan, no matter how correct, just isn’t enough. Artistic genres evolve from the need to solve a complex of social and aesthetic contradictions, and in solving them give rise to new ones. The basic contradiction of Agitprop, perhaps nowhere as simply manifested, was between propaganda and art. As soon as the form began to take aesthetic questions seriously, it lost its primary function as propaganda, and by definition ceased to be Agitprop. Although features of Agitprop such as the mass recitation could be, and were, incorporated into the new form, the stationary workers’ theatre marked a qualitatively new stage in consciously political theatre (Ibid).

The official launching of the Theatre of Action repertoire began with Clifford Odets’s *Waiting for Lefty*. The play was such a success that the Vancouver troupe won the regional Dominion Day Drama Festival (DDF) award and was as successful at the national DDF taking first prize.⁴⁸ Describing the details of the production, Bray (1987:Chap 5) notes that the Vancouver PAC extended their reach across the progressive spectrum, advertising in CCF and CPC papers as well as at the local ULFTA labour temple.

The ULFTA was a natural source for recruiting the cast since its extensive theatre, music, and dance programmes attracted large number of young people and its central downtown location acted as a focal point for much of the city’s

⁴⁸ Given that the PAC members were all unemployed or on relief, they had to raise money on the streets to pay for their trip. Irony compounded irony when the troupe was asked to dine in Ottawa on Parliament Hill at the invitation of then opposition leader R.B. Bennett. The group took award for the best play in English and the troupe played in the cities along the railway line on their way back to B.C. (Ryan 1986:Part II; Bray 1987:Chap. 5).

left-wing activity. The contact proved most fortunate since the ULFTA provided both free rehearsal space, which was welcome give *Lefty*'s limited prospects for commercial success... (Bray 1987:83).

The emphasis of the play – which was “militant and pro-union” ending “with an uncompromising call to strike” – was considered to be ill-timed by a group of businessmen (called “the Citizen’s League”) and employers (the “Shipping Federation”) (Bray 1987:90-95). Given the climate of labour unrest and threat of a strike by the Vancouver waterfront workers, they moved to have the play censored (Ibid).⁴⁹ However, like the action against *Eight Men Speak*, the attempt at censorship increased the play’s notoriety and the PAC incorporated the presence of police into their advertisements while staging it throughout the Vancouver area with capacity attendance (Ibid:94-5).

The success of *Lefty* motivated political theatre across the country, and in Vancouver, the Relief Camp Workers’ Unions and the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation (CCF) established drama groups⁵⁰ to “educate members and the general public about socialist ideals” (Bray 1987:33). Other active drama groups in Vancouver also included the “Women’s Labour Leagues, the North Vancouver Dramatic Arts Section of Workers’ International Relief, Japanese Theatre Groups, ...and the Workers Training School” leading Bray to identify a “social theatre” well under development (Ibid). Indeed, a “festival of social theatre” was held in September 1936 attracting both CCF and PAC drama groups with a range of mostly original plays on subjects such as “socialist theory” and humour; anti-war;

⁴⁹ *The Commonwealth*, November 22, 1935; Butterfield, James (1935) “Common Ground” *The Vancouver Province* November 22, 1935; and *The Vancouver Sun*, May 5, 1935, cited in Bray (1987:117, fn 34-36).

⁵⁰ The CCF called their drama group in Toronto the “Morris Players” or the “Morris Club,” after British socialist William Morris whose stated purpose was “to accumulate and present plays on social themes” (*New Commonwealth* 16 March 1935:5). They introduced their first “political play” - “The Brains We Trust” which was written by CCF M.P. William Irvine to be played at Margaret Eaton Hall in Toronto (Ibid).

fascism; and the Spanish Civil War (Ibid:132-3). In addition, anti-war plays such as *Private Hicks* and *Hostage* as well as Irwin Shaw's *Bury the Dead* were presented at meetings of the CLAWF and Friends of the Mac-Paps (Ibid: 136-142). The CCF set up a "script exchange programme" [similar to the Finnish Organization of Canada's play library] through the *Federationist*, and the PAC established a summer school and "weekly dramatic classes" to develop their participants and repertoire (Ibid).

Meanwhile, back in Toronto, the Theatre of Action helped establish theatre schools in five cities (above) and a number of well-known Canadian actors taught there: Lorne Greene, Sidney Newman, Johnny Wayne and Frank Schuster were all Theatre of Action associates (Ryan 1986; Endres 1976;1976a:81). Endres notes that the school aimed to eliminate the "star system" and "took great pains to train its members in all areas of the theatre,"⁵¹ pioneering the "Stanislavski method" of acting⁵² in Canada (1976a:81-2). Although no longer the "mobile troupe" of the early 1930s, the PAC still staged plays at large rallies and picnics, such as those for the Canadian League Against War and Fascism and benefits for the Mac-Paps for example. Other activities were the social evenings organized to be a combination of entertainment and political satire; for example, in Winnipeg the PAC scheduled "beer and skits" evenings at the permanent theatre, with

⁵¹ Smith notes the formation of "Workers' Theatre supporter clubs" which were intended to "bring forward the greatest possible number of vital suggestions about the plays, sketches and so forth, so that all can learn from it, writers, audiences and actors. This method is not usually practiced by other dramatic organizations in Canada, and must be considered a new and important step in the development of our drama" (1933:69).

⁵² As was initiated by Konstantin Stanislavski (director at the Moscow Art Theatre), actors are instructed "not to emote in the traditional manner of stage conventions, but to speak and gesture in a manner one would use in personal life" (Mills 1995:1).

themes such as “Joe Worker” and anti-fascist diatribes (Ryan 1986). In Toronto in 1938/9, political cabarets⁵³ were set up at “secret locations” which included a repertoire of songs mixing satire with hardships of labour, largely penned by Frank Gregory whose song *We Get Along* – a false lament about being “socially insignificant”- became the theme of the cabaret (Ryan 1981). Ryan also notes the heavy influence of American songs imported from Tin Pan Alley and the blues.

By 1940, the Theatre of Action had produced at least twelve full-length plays over five years including *Bury the Dead*, John Wexley’s *Steel*, Tretiakov’s *Roar China* and John Steinbeck’s *Of Mice and Men* (Endres 1976:80-1; Souchotte 1987). Shaw’s *Bury the Dead* was ironically the last play the Theatre of Action produced. Explaining her role in the Toronto PAC, Toby Ryan suggests that the Second World War had created so much tension within the group and disagreement as to the direction their future endeavors should take, that she, and others left the group. Tippettt offers that an additional reason for the PAC’s demise had more to do with a realization that:

...change was not going to be brought out by writing poems, by performing agitprop skits, or by publishing literary journals. Leftists therefore began to focus more and more of their energy on restructuring the political, economic and social order by legal means (1990:33).

Moreover, the constant harassment by the RCMP showed no signs of relenting and was accorded new strength with the federal government’s enactment of the War Measures Act in 1939. Souchotte suggests that the demise of workers’ theatre was precipitated earlier however, and points to the change in venue as decisive:

Had the original decision to be a ‘portable theatre’ which could play trade union halls, workers’ clubs, and community centres been continued, Theatre of Action might have attracted a wider working class audience. Instead, the necessity of

⁵³ Souchotte (1987:126).

finding accommodation in such attractive, but bourgeois spaces as Hart House Theatre and Margaret Eaton Hall brought with it a standard middle class clientele (1987:120).

The change in place was also accompanied by a change in focus. Judging from developments in Vancouver, an important turn also occurred when workers' theatre started to compete with traditional theatre at the DDF. As Bray suggests:

Once *Lefty* entered the cultural arena as a play and cultural artifact, it invited judgement of both its artistic and theatrical merits, and its content. In addition, it encouraged the audience to separate or disengage the message of the play – its contents – from its dramatic presentation (1987:112).

This separation allowed the “audience” and “judges” in turn, to separate and admire the dramatic elements of the play while criticizing its “propaganda” as a negative and undesirable quality of drama. This separation was encouraged by the federal government through its involvement in amateur theatre that rewarded technique through the sponsorship of contests on a national level (the DDF), which attracted the provincial government's interest in theatre. As Bray notes, the recognition of a growing public interest and participation in plays, prompted the provincial government of British Columbia to become involved in supporting community drama groups (1987:164-7). While government resources were a welcome addition, the emphasis on technique and ‘return’ to traditional play structure de-laboured the plays and destabilized the workers' theatre movement.

Where the earlier focus had been on performance as a means of encouraging the audience to take action – a way of changing the world – now the stress was on theatre as an activity leading to personal growth – a way of changing the participants. The plays remained acerbic, but now their criticism was deflected from the fundamental injustices and inequalities of the system to focus instead on the foibles of individual interpersonal relationships. This transformation undermined the very *raison d'être* of social theatre, coopting its energy and leaving it virtually emasculated. As this trend continued, interest in social theatre waned, and by 1939, it had virtually disappeared in Vancouver (Ibid: 167).

Workers' Sports

Just as workers' drama and experimental theatre had tried to develop new forms and practices of performance art, there were also a number of concentrated and collective efforts to develop alternatives and opposition to elite, individual, professional and commodified sports. To develop a "workers' sport," these efforts had to combat an already existing structuring of "leisure" and "sport". Particularly since the Industrial Revolution, leisure and sport were activities that were defined as distinct from labour (Cross 1990). While labour suggested extrinsic necessity and toil, leisure was intrinsic and associated with freedom itself. The early history of sports and leisure *for* the working class is marked by movements to "organize" sport (in terms of rules, teams, officials, etc.) and to "rationalize recreation" in terms of curbing excessive drinking, unruliness, or rowdiness (Cross 1990). Both were intended as a means of social control to provide or facilitate moral, spiritual and physical development (Ibid). In contrast, sport *by* the working class focused on physical and spiritual development intended to be both accessible and political: accessible in terms of time available to participate, and of establishing free or public facilities, and political in terms of agitating for such access and participation linked to the labour movement in general (Kidd 1990).

In Canada during the 1920s and 1930s, the various approaches to organized sport were manifest in four different organizations: the Amateur Athletic Union of Canada (AAU) (est. 1919), the Women's Amateur Federation of Canada (1926), the National Hockey League (NHL) (1917) and the Workers' Sport Association of Canada (WSAC) (1928) (Kidd 1990). Of the four, the NHL led the drive to commodify sport in Canada by encouraging the construction of the "professional" (male) athlete, supporting the development of large

commercial facilities for paying spectators, promoting both through media and public relations campaigns, and by obtaining financial support from businessmen and corporations (Ibid).⁵⁴ In contrast, the amateur federations eschewed the payment of wages for sport, viewed sport as necessary for individual improvement and social order, supported competition on local, regional and (inter)national levels on the basis of nationalism, patriotism and/or militarism, and fought to establish a set of governing rules that included “strict sanctions against professionalism” (Ibid:i).

Formed both as an alternative and opposition to sport *for* the people, the Workers’ Sport Association aimed to discredit professionalism, as well as nationalism, militarism and individualism; it lobbied for free public access and facilities, and worked to integrate working class participation in sport to promote collectivism and “to advance the possibilities of revolutionary change” (Ibid: 382; see also Tester 1986).⁵⁵ Workers’ sport clubs in Canada had their antecedents in the workers’ sport movement in Europe, a combination of the Communist-run “Red Sport International” and the “Socialist-Workers’ Sport International” (Kidd 1990:361; 1985:80/1). With a four million strong membership, separate “Workers’ Olympics” were held every three to four years from 1921 to 1937 as both alternative and opposition to the International Olympic Committees’ (IOC) Olympic Games (Ibid: 360-364). While entry into the IOC Olympic Games was based on national identification,

⁵⁴ The NHL was assisted in its endeavor by the federal government when “Hockey Night in Canada” was showcased on CBC radio as sponsored by Imperial Oil Ltd. As Kidd notes, the infamous “three star selection” was established to link the best players of the game with the oil product of the same name (1990).

⁵⁵ Toward this end, the WSA’s listed objectives included the following: “support for the activities and struggles of the labour movement”; battle against “boss” and “industrial” sport leagues and organizations; “...unity of all worker sportsmen [sic] regardless of race, nationality or creed,” and “...the enactment of legislation providing for increased athletic facilities, in the form of athletic fields, gyms, swimming pools, parks and playgrounds for the working class” (WSA 1932:1).

individual performance and restricted competition, the Workers' Olympics stressed international solidarity and had no limits on either participation or performance.⁵⁶ At the IOC Olympic Games, non-competing participants were treated as spectators and consumers, with the requisite flying of national flags and playing of the national anthems of the individual winners. In contrast, the Workers' Olympics included activities such as children's sport festivals, games for "tourists and citizens," and "dramatic performances" integrated with revolutionary songs and "mass exercises" in the stadium (Ibid:363).

Workers' Sport Association (WSA) antecedents in Canada were the Finnish sport clubs formed in the first decade of the twentieth century, and the Finnish Workers' Sport Association of Canada (FWSAC) formed in 1925 (Tester 1986; Kidd 1985:80). In the early 1920s, the Young Communist League (YCL) also took the initiative to organize workers' sport clubs across Canada and published in the *Young Worker* instructions on how to establish local workers' clubs. In 1928 a national organization called the Workers' Sport Association of Canada (WSA) was formally established as a coordinating agency, and initial affiliates included twenty independent workers' clubs, the YCL, the Canadian Labour Party, the FWSAC and ULFTA (Kidd 1985 81). Membership in the CPC (or any other organization for that matter) was not a prerequisite; however, Kidd suggests that:

Most associations restricted membership to workers and socialists, defined by occupation or union or party membership (or parent's status) and stressed the importance of creating and supporting the working class for itself (1990:357).

⁵⁶ Kidd notes that in 1931, the Workers' Olympics had approximately 100,000 participants, of these 25,000 were females (1985:80; 1990:354). In contrast, there were only 107 females out of 1,408 competitors in the IOC's 1932 Olympic Games (1990:80).

Toward this end, in the early 1930s, the WSA supported independent “workers’ sport clubs” that already existed or were formed in isolation from any “bosses” or “bourgeois” organizations, including those of the YM/YH/YWCA’s, the AAU, Boy Scouts, and employer-sponsored sports teams (WSA 1932). The idea was to create a completely autonomous, *workers’* sport organization. The WSA ‘had their own governing structures and rules, held their own events, raised their own funds (often through trade union contributions), and conducted instructional classes for participants and leaders, including summer camps for children’ (Kidd 1990:356). The type of “sport” activities were wide-ranging in both instruction and performance, including choral singing, gymnastics and acrobatics, football, soccer and baseball, boxing and wrestling, as well as organized swimming parties, picnics and hikes (Kidd 1990:368; 1985:81). Local associations would often give regular “concerts” at their clubs and at the labour temples which usually consisted of skillful gymnastics, comedy routines and night club-style performances (Kidd 1990:370). They would also participate en masse in the parades, rallies and marches of the labour movement (on May Day, Labour Day, Hunger Marches, etc.).

At their peak in 1933, the WSAC had 5,000 members in over 50 clubs stretching from Nova Scotia to Vancouver Island of which the majority came from the Finnish workers’ sport clubs⁵⁷ (Kidd 1990:373).⁵⁸ Kidd suggests that the WSA leadership directed club policy to work against the philosophy of “sports for sport’s sake” in general, such that members needed to “constantly remind themselves that these activities had an ultimate,

⁵⁷ The Finn clubs were separately organized under the Finnish Workers Sport Association of Canada (FWSAC) (est. 1925) until amalgamating with the WSAC in 1932, and were the largest, most well-established clubs predating the YCL/CPC and the WSAC (Eklund 1987; Pilli 1982: 212-3; Kidd 1985;1990).

⁵⁸ From the CPC’s *The Young Worker*, July 19, 1933; a year earlier the WSAC’s National Convention (1932) counts a membership of 4,000 (WSA 1932a:1).

external purpose” (1990:392). This purpose was directed towards developing a “class for itself” so that initially the WSA’s relationship with other sport organizations was strategically adversarial. In keeping with this, for example, they were against the commodification of sport, and any club or person engaging in any competition involving “material reward” was automatically disqualified (WSA 1932:2). In addition, the WSA was against government funding of sport organizations or facilities other than those that were public. In the view of the WSA, the main reason behind Canadian government sponsorship of commercial, national and religious sport organizations was preparation for war.⁵⁹ This further underscored the need to agitate against patriotism and militarism, and for increased government funding for public sport facilities.

In 1935, the WSA changed its sectarian and oppositional policy and practices towards other sport organizations like the YMCA’s and Boy Scouts. To demonstrate this change, it made three visible modifications. Firstly, the organization was renamed the Canadian *Amateur Sports Federation*’ thereby dropping the “workers” from its title. Secondly it renamed its monthly journal *Spartak* to *Sports Parade* with a mandate of attracting “young people” in general.⁶⁰ And lastly, the red and white uniform of the WSA was changed to all white, to signify collectivism that countered divisions of labour. As

⁵⁹ The reason behind the necessity to agitate for public funds was explained in the WSAC’s national convention resolutions, as follows: “The factory teams, YMCA’s, and childrens’ [sic] section of such organizations are being instilled with increased patriotism and appeals made to “defend the fatherland in case of war.” The Canadian government, while cutting down on relief to the unemployed, is spending millions for armaments and has granted thousands of dollars to bourgeois sport organizations, while at the same time it is closing down public parks, amusement and recreation centres, etc. to “cut down expenses” (WSA 1932a).

⁶⁰ *Spartak* was published in English, but also included “material” in the Finnish language (Pilli 1982:213)]. As Manley suggests, while *Spartak* had been fashioned as a “Class against Class-style journal,” *Sports Parade* “aimed to reinvent itself as a body open to young people ‘who do not care to join the present workers’ movements’” [NAC FOC Collection, Vol. 59, File 37 cited in Manley (2002:65)].

explained in *Sports Parade*, this was modeled after a conception of physical education espoused in the Soviet Union; one which aimed for

...a more integral unity with life and a closer harmony between the aims of the playing field and those of work and culture; so that no gulf can separate the athlete, scientist and worker, as the leader in public activities, the athlete and scientist may be one and the same man (Brown 1935:5).

The *workers'* clubs, now called *athletic* clubs, were referred to as “universal” or “cosmopolitan” rather than working class (Kidd 1990:407). Although these changes were made to signify inclusiveness, as Kidd suggests, it resulted in exacerbating underlying divisions within the movement as a whole. Individual members refused to cooperate with groups like the YM/YH/YWCA’s against whose versions of recreation and sport they had fought against (1985:86). In addition, with the increased scope of activities and resources required for popular front coalition building in general, affiliated organizations were stretched too far and too thin and appeared to “lose interest” on the sport and recreational front. On the other hand, there were also members who resented what they viewed as a constant instrumentalist emphasis, and supported a “sport for sport sake” philosophy. Adding considerable energy to the ferment were continual RCMP harassment and arrests of key leaders in the movement throughout its existence providing good reason why the “sports for sport’s sake” philosophy would be preferable.⁶¹ While independent workers’ sport clubs continued, the national organization was dissolved.

Where Finnish workers’ sport clubs had been effectively organized before they joined the WSA, in 1937 they renewed their organizational autonomy (Ibid: 409; Tester 1986:13). Although they were not restricted to Finns, the organization also dropped the

⁶¹ None of the activities of the workers’ sport clubs were without RCMP surveillance, whether they were meetings or sports days and picnics. See for example (RCMP Security Bulletins No. 718, App 11:7 8 Aug 1934; No. 745, App IV, 20 Feb 1935; No. 751, App IV, 3 April 1935; etc.).

“worker” from their title to rename it the Finnish Amateur Sports Federation (Tester 1986:9). Remaining workers’ clubs further divided into those who eschewed any overt political affiliation and those who carried on with the principles of the workers’ sport movement. Kidd concludes that the movement was pulled apart by this opposition, and it was enough to discourage the movement as a viable alternative:

The Canadian workers’ sport movement failed because it could not effect a ‘balance between propaganda and serious athletics’. This prevented it from reaching its target audience – young, English speaking workers – and discouraged existing members (1985:86).

For those workers’ clubs that still existed, a further and final blow came in 1940 when the Canadian government outlawed affiliate organizations like the FOC and ULFTA and seized their facilities in 1940 (Tester 1986:13) (thesis Chapter 6). This meant that the halls, the gymnasiums and sports fields used by the workers’ clubs were also closed, taking away their training and production facilities (Ibid; Eklund 1987:344). While some of the Finnish sports organizations were allowed to continue (that is, those which officially renounced political intentions), the resulting lack of facilities, organizational structure, leadership, or funds, etc., meant that the attempted “movement” was effectively dismantled, and all designated *workers’ sports*” ceased.

Workers’ Education

Education for all ages was under development in Canada during the early part of the twentieth century, so that institutional forms, governmental responsibilities, and approaches to pedagogy were all in the process of formation. Education for workers specifically, developed in the form of adult “vocational” schools in English and French only, and as private institutions with federal government financial support (Patterson 1970:362). Federal

government goals had early on been established to facilitate “cooperation” in the ‘production of knowledge’ between government and industry specifically, with the formation of the National Research Council (1916), the Technical Education Act (1919), and the Department of Labour. The task of the latter in particular was to promote this cooperation, and in the mid-1920s, the Dept. of Labour criticized a tendency of vocational schools to concentrate on academic preparation rather than fulfilling industry requirements.⁶² Urging vocational schools to join with industry in setting programs, the Department suggested that the schools should recognize the commercial press as playing an important role in promoting educational-industrial relations:

Vocational schools throughout the Dominion owe a debt of gratitude to the newspapers for their willing and sympathetic co-operation in helping the people to understand the aims and methods of technical and vocational schools (Dept. of Labour 1925:72).

While vocational schools were recommended for workers’ self-improvement to fulfill their roles in industry, university education was out of reach both financially and psychologically. The progressive education movement advocated in the United States by pragmatists like John Dewey, was debated and experimented with in Canada in the 1930s, and although recognized as potential for development in education, did not take hold in any significant way [Patterson (1970:373-379); Titley 1990;1990a; Welton 1987a].⁶³ On the

⁶² The report criticizes the technical school’s inclusion of “courses leading to university,” and “failure to cooperate with industry,” suggesting an adjustment: “Where such courses are regarded as of more importance than the industrial and commercial courses, those in charge are losing sight of the immediate objective of vocational education, which is to fit pupils for suitable employment...” (Dept. of Labour 1925:72).

⁶³ Titley notes that the traditional emphasis on “authoritative pedagogy,” religious morals, “mass” education, and standardized curriculum was challenged by a progressive effort for more “democratic” education”. While ideas like ‘cooperation, egalitarianism and freedom’ were advocated (particularly during the interwar period) they were not practiced to any significant extent. The combination of skewed governmental priorities around the two World Wars combined with a lack of teachers, resources, or any other kind of support, meant that it was discarded before it had a chance to develop [Ibid; Welton (1987); and Patterson (1970:373-380)].

other hand, emphases on positivism,⁶⁴ scientific management,⁶⁵ and industrial requirements were applied across the academic divisions of labour from the hard sciences to home economics. Divisions of labour between mental and manual work, as well as gendered divisions, were thus complemented or perpetuated by the school system.

In such a structured milieu, the Workers' Educational Association (WEA) (est. 1913) aimed to address the division of manual and intellectual labour and to contribute to the development of critical thinking. Although started in Britain, Australia and Canada as an "experiment in social control" (Radforth and Sangster 1981:42), WEA goals grew to include the facilitation of critical pedagogy in offering inexpensive non-credit university-level courses for members of the working class (Ibid: passim; Benjamin 1999; Comor 1987).⁶⁶ Deviating from the initial idea behind the WEA – to bring 'culture to the labouring man' through a "liberal" education and to indoctrinate loyalty to Empire – the WEA took advantage of its "education for citizenship" motto to maintain teaching, administrative, and financial support from elite groups such as the University of Toronto, the Carnegie Foundation, and the federal government. This allowed it to expand the curriculum and teaching base to "democratize education" for citizenship of a more radical (or participatory) sort (Radforth and Sangster 1981:51).

⁶⁴ Discussed in Benjamin (1999:47-60).

⁶⁵ Norton (1980) explains how the development of techniques such as intelligence tests complemented standardized curriculums and teaching methods. As she argues, the influence of the ideas of social Darwinism and scientific management was significant in the early twentieth century and groups like the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching were instrumental in facilitating their incorporation into education.

⁶⁶ As Benjamin aptly puts it "The focus for the WEA's tutors became teaching *how* to think, instead of *what* to think, and this was revolutionary – since it drove workers to look to resist and eliminate injustices" (1999: 28).

WEA organizers initially made the connection between labour, communication and culture, by recognizing the anti-labour bias in commercial newspapers as one of the main “educators” of the public:

Alfred MacGowan [an activist in the International Typographical Union⁶⁷] argued that since public opinion was molded by a daily press ‘biased against labour’ workers ‘should be taught to do their own thinking’ (Radforth and Sangster 1981:51).

Towards this aim, the WEA offered courses such as Civics, Drama, Marxian Economics, History, Journalism, Public Speaking, Political Philosophy, Rhetoric and Trade Union Law (see Benjamin 1999:35). WEA leaders avoided formal affiliation with a specific labour union or political party, however, fearing that divisions within the labour movement and political schisms would be detrimental to enrolment. Moreover, overt political association in particular would be a guaranteed death-knell in terms of university administration and government funding control that had been based on maintaining separation of (socialist) politics and culture. The effort to appear as strictly a cultural and social reform institution was made evident in the WEA’s constitution:

The established policy of the WEA is the preservation and extension of the democratic structure of our society to the end that it may continue to work for and provide educational and cultural avenues through which the working class may be helped to gain greater happiness, security and dignity. The WEA is absolutely non-partisan in any organizational differences that may exist in the labour movement. This is fundamentally necessary if it is to carry on its task. The WEA does, however, seek to find a common denominator in all problems affecting the workers and to promote education among the working class (WEA Minutes, September 1931, Ontario Archives; quoted in Benjamin 1999:45).

The WEA thereby walked a fine line between three structuring agents: (1) the constraints of a conservative university and government (responsible for administration and principle funding); (2) the ‘competition’ of large organized unions (that were also beginning to develop in-house educational programs); and (3) to a lesser extent, members of the working

class who were ever suspicious of elite paternalism as a result of the WEA's association with 'bourgeois' universities and the Carnegie foundation (Radforth and Sangster 1981).⁶⁸

Despite these and other challenges, the WEA managed to work within these structures growing from a small unit in Toronto to expand across Canada. Membership in the WEA increased exponentially during the years of the popular front, from 230 members in Toronto in 1930, to 1,513 members and 15 districts in 1934 and 2,194 members in 29 districts from Vancouver to Halifax in 1938 (from WEA Annual Reports, Radforth and Sangster 1981:59). Also during the Depression, the WEA took advantage of the facilities of the labour temples to conduct free classes and "special public meetings" for the unemployed (Ibid: 61/2). Like the labour temples, the WEA established a summer camp, a "player's club," a journalism and photography club, and an orchestra, choir and drama club (Ibid: 63; Benjamin 1999:44; Comor 1987). In Toronto, a house on the university grounds was found for the National Centre of the WEA, allowing public lectures, guest speakers and social evenings supported by the WEA Women's Auxiliary (Ibid).

In addition, the WEA published two regular journals, *The Link*, which reported on national and local WEA activities and courses, and *The Labour News*, an in-house student publication. From WEA Minutes and her review of both these publications, Benjamin suggests that they exemplified the goals of the WEA in promoting critical pedagogy. Where *The Link* included articles on philosophy and critical theory of education, power, and

⁶⁷ Radforth and Sangster (1981:49).

⁶⁸ Although the Carnegie foundation had been responsible for the funding and development of libraries and educational programs in Canada and elsewhere, its benevolence had been historically tainted as a result of the Carnegie's labour practices; as Masters observes in his overview of the labour press: "Andrew Carnegie ranked among the most despised industrial philanthropists. Labour papers decried his charitable actions arguing that a few generous deeds could never compensate for the inhuman methods by which he had obtained his wealth... Carnegie libraries were built with blood" (Masters 1970:25)

knowledge in addition to WEA activism, *The Labour News* focused on information about the institutionalization of labour.⁶⁹ In addition, WEA Bulletins written by teachers at the WEA⁷⁰ were published quarterly on labour and social legislation (Ibid: 104-6). By 1935, the WEA formalized its labour activism by branching out into the areas of labour law and legal support with the establishment of the Labour Research Institute (1934), which oversaw the Industrial Law Research Council (1935) that “held seminars on legal issues, prepared dozens of pamphlets by legal experts... [and] served as a think-tank and pressure group for law reform” (Radforth and Sangster 1981:65; Comor 1987:19).

The WEA is further considered an innovator in the facilitation of adult long-distance education and use of media such as film, slides and radio to provide classes and the promotion of discussion groups (Ibid:64/5; Patterson 1970:364/5). Recognizing the importance of media ownership, they purchased their own film production and exhibition equipment and “established a [labour] film library that was widely used by unions and other organizations” (Radforth and Sangster 1981:65; Comor 1987:21). Radio was also beginning to be used by religious groups and provincial governments as a means of education (Faris 1975), and in 1937 the WEA launched a *Workers’ Educational Series* that only lasted nine programs until it was cancelled by the CBC.⁷¹

Such expansion and labour activism drew the ire of the University of Toronto's administration which also resented the WEA's push for increased autonomy, and resulted in

⁶⁹ These included: “interpretations of current restricted labour legislation”; “a financial section dealing with corporate financial statements, government taxation, wage rates, standards of living and instructions on the understanding of statistics”; as well as the current political economy and “labour problems” in Canada (Benjamin 1999:76).

⁷⁰ Professors such as J. Finkelman, F.C. Aude, N.A.M. Mackenzie, and Boris Laskin [future Chief Justice of the Supreme Court – Klee (1995:109)].

⁷¹ Klee notes that the programs had drawn the complaints of business leaders, but the reason that the CBC gave for cancelling the programs was its “inferior technical quality” (1995:110).

the charge that the principal organizer (Drummond Wren) was a “communist” (Radforth and Sangster 1981:65).⁷² Although this resulted in a 75 per cent reduction in WEA funding by the University of Toronto in 1939, it didn’t exterminate the organization (Ibid; Comor 1987:21). The cooperation of labour was somewhat of a necessity during wartime and the federal government continued grant support for the WEA into the 1940s. This allowed the establishment of the weekly *Labour Forum* on CBC in 1942, but as Klee explains, the show only lasted nine months before the WEA was expelled from the programs,⁷³ and the *Labour Forum* was “ushered into the arms of the state’s Wartime Information Board and its Committee of Industrial Morale (thesis Chapter Six) (1995:108). Continued crises as a result of volatile government funding coupled with an “inability to secure the cooperation of union leaders”⁷⁴ to both use and support the WEA, meant that it was too weak to face further charges. The second major wave of ‘red scares’ in the 1940s and 1950s eventually led to its demise (Ibid: 68-75).

Another initiative in labour education,⁷⁵ possibly in recognition of the limitations of the WEA, was a separate “Labor College” founded in 1937 in Toronto by CPC associated

⁷² This accusation that Wren was a Communist (because of his “radical” approach) was also the opinion of Eugene Forsey, the TLC and ACCL, and members of government (see Klee 1995:119).

⁷³ Klee suggests that the WEA’s expulsion was supported by the TLCC and the Canadian Congress of Labour, “to stifle Communist involvement in the broadcasts” (1995:108).

⁷⁴ Into the 1940s, Welton suggests that the approach of union leaders was increasingly “bureaucratic” and “authoritarian,” in his opinion: “The union leadership...was just as fearful of a critically educated membership as were the professors at the end of the First World War. The undermining of autonomous workers’ education points to the need to analyse the structural preconditions for learner-centred and legitimated transformative education” (1987a:10).

⁷⁵ Other initiatives in adult education during the interwar period were promoted by the Canadian Association of Adult Educators (CAAE) (est. 1935) (Armstrong 1968, Selman 1981, Faris 1975). The CAAE was formed “to act like a clearing house for ideas for those involved in the work of adult education” (Mirth 1995:8). More specifically, it advocated access to education for rural areas in particular, and use of radio for long-distance courses. In cooperation with the Canadian Federation of Agriculture, its National Farm Radio Forum (1941-1953) and later “Citizen’s Forum” (1943-1952) experimented with two-way communication in community and national problem solving (see Faris 1975; and Welton 1986).

activists. Its goal was to provide for labour movement education that combined theory and practice:

A basic principle underlying teaching at the Labor College is the close connection between working class theory and practice, for we believe that 'practice without theory is blind; theory without practice is sterile' (Toronto Labor College Information Bulletin, NAC MG 28, Series V46, Vol. 18, File 15).

Courses offered were similar to the WEA in content including: introductory Marxism, political economy and trade unionism, as well as journalism, public speaking and "leaflet, shop paper and poster preparation". There was also a course in "Elementary English" designed for "foreign-born" workers. Courses were offered in the evening at a cost of \$2.50 per course, and were taught by a number of activists, artists and writers associated with the CPC including Beatrice Ferneyhough, Oscar Ryan, Bert Kenny, Joe Wallace, and John Weir. The College began with "no endowment" and no organizational sustainer, and was meant to run on tuition fees and funds raised for the school and library. It's not clear how long the college lasted, but considering how many activities the teachers were engaged in, it's amazing that they found the time to volunteer to teach, let alone fund-raise during the midst of the Depression.

The Labouring of Literature and Canadian History

The teachers and writers involved in the WEA and Labour College were part of a literary movement intent on combining their skills at writing with progressive social activism. In his dissertation on radical literature in Canada, Watt notes that the view of intellectuals or artists as "aloof" and "individualistic" was still largely in place in Canada until the 1920s (1957:253). The shift to what he calls "a literary and political turn to the left" became pronounced during the Depression, as "intellectuals swung away from the role

of ‘escapist’ or ‘pure’ subjective art towards the opposite role of art as propagandizing for and symptomatic of social revolution” (Ibid: 252). In slight contrast, Doyle argues this was less a turn than a continuance; the difference was mainly based on how the critique of capitalism was approached. Where earlier anti-capitalism could be categorized as “conservative” or “romantic,”⁷⁶ writers in the 1930s were engaging with social realism and socialist realism that was mixed with variations of feminism, pacifism, and religion in keeping with the activist amalgamation of the popular front. Preferring the term “progressive” to categorize a range of alternative stories, novels, songs and poetry written in English, Doyle (2002) casts a wider net to demonstrate a longer “tradition” in Canada than previously recognized (by Watt 1957; Frye 1965; or Irr 1998 in particular).

A main goal of radical, Marxist, or progressive writers in the 1930s and beyond, has been an effort to demonstrate that a history of activism exists in both actions and texts. Stanley Ryerson’s *The Birth of Canadian Democracy* (1937), begins with the 1837 rebellions against colonialism and imperialism to illustrate that rebellion (or revolution), was not something that was ‘communist’ or ‘foreign’ to Canada, but an integral part of its history (Doyle 2002:158). Illustrating this theme in texts, Margaret Fairley’s anthology *Spirit of Canadian Democracy* (1945) also aimed to demonstrate that writing about oppression in relation to labour, civil rights and war for example, was also not new to the 1920/30s, but part of a heritage that can be traced to the seventeenth century in Canada (Ibid; Kimmel 1993). Fairley’s goal was to demonstrate that the history of Canada, its people, its “culture”

⁷⁶ As defined by Doyle, up until the 1930s, conservative and romantic anti-capitalism tended to be the most prevalent in alternative prose. Both harboured “an idealized nostalgia,” and placed faith in progress and technology in the case of the former, or led to “pessimistic conclusions” in the case of the latter (2002).

was one rooted by and connected through social struggle.⁷⁷ Kimmel suggests that Fairley's anthology identified

‘the activism and expression of the people’ as *the* common thread in Canadian history. It most often appeared as the tendency to organize for struggle. The books’ theme in large part mirrored particular struggles in Canadian and world politics during the 1930s (1993:40).⁷⁸

Following Ryerson and Fairley's lead, Doyle also expands the literary horizon to identify works that critically engage in labour and social struggle in general, revealing a consistent “anti-capitalism” view specifically. Contrary to standard literary histories that tend to focus on book publications, Doyle discovered that the history of radical writing in Canada is to be found in the labour press.

Beginning with the *Ontario Workman* (1872), Doyle notes that regular content included short stories, poems, and serialized novels, that at first, tended to be mainly “escapist literature” (2002:32). Such publications included the work of “ordinary working people” (Davis 1976;1978), as well as the publication and distribution of short stories and poems that were more radical in nature [for example Colin McKay *Poor Man's Rock* (1920)]

⁷⁷ In the late 1920s, Fairley was on the editorial board for the *Canadian Forum*, and in 1936 she joined the CPC. A self-described “Marxist historian,” in Fairley's opinion, Canadian cultural identity lay not in the high moral ground, but “in the people's counter-hegemony [which] was ...the most effective way of settling Canada's cultural identity and of establishing national independence. It was also, as Fairley argued throughout her career, plain to see if Canadians only looked for it ‘It is the labor of Canadians which is creating our nation, and it is our labour which is the basis of culture’” Fairley (1954) “Create and Cherish Canadian Culture” opening message to the Fifth Anniversary program of the International Cooperative Cultural Group in Manuscript Collection Vol. 1, File “Her Writing Notes,” (4), quoted in Kimmel (1993:41).

⁷⁸ Fairley does so again in *The Selected Writings of William Lyon Mackenzie 1824-1837*, (1960) to advance that in his critique of British imperialism, oligopoly, and restricted education, Mackenzie's prose is in the tradition of Thomas Paine. In Doyle's view, Fairley intended to illustrate that this tradition is one where journalism is considered “a literary art...as a creative means of political expression,” which should be built upon and extended (Ibid.:19), rather than a view of journalism as a detached “profession” as a means to supply detached, or objective information.

and *Inverted Pyramid* (1924)] (also see McKay 1996). Early examples include Phillip Thompson's *The Politics of Labor* (1887) and the *Labor Reform Songster* (1892); Wilfred Gribble's *Rhymes of Revolt* (1913), and Gustavus Myers' *History of Great American Fortunes* (1909/10) and *A History of Canadian Wealth* (1914) (Ibid: 36-51). Excerpts from Gribble's and Myers' works were printed in the Socialist Party of Canada's *Western Clarion* (1905-1920), for example, which promoted and sold alternative books through their offices. The CPC's *The Worker* also included Myers on their list of books,⁷⁹ and it was common for the labour press to act as a promotion and distribution network (Ibid: 38, 51). The more prolific radical writers also wrote for and/or edited the labour press, and Doyle notes that for radical poets in particular, the "partisan press" was "the sole outlet" for their work (Ibid: 63).⁸⁰ While radical writers continued to be part of the labour press (Doyle 2002:61-70), a distinctive alternative "literary" press emerged that specifically engaged with the relationship between culture and propaganda, art and politics, and labour and communication.

Literary Journals: *The Canadian Forum*, *Masses* and *New Frontier*

Prior to the 1920s, most of the progressive literature was written "outside the university" (Ibid: 53) as the university was primarily a conservative institution that was seen and preferred to see itself as apolitical (thesis Chapter 6). An early exception to the lack of criticism existing inside the university was *The Rebel* (1917-20) published at the University of Toronto in which both student and faculty contributed "critical studies of classic literary

⁷⁹ Kealey suggests that Gustavus Myers' "muckraking" book, "undoubtedly influenced Canadian progressives more than any other work" (1982a:134)

⁸⁰ This was the case for Dorothy Livesay's work; Irvine notes that: "from 1932-1944, Livesay depended entirely upon the periodical publications to reach her audience" (1999:185).

works” (Doyle 2002:53). This was the precursor to the *Canadian Forum* established in 1920 at the University to provide a ‘forum’ for political and social critique focused on the “arts and letters,” and which was decidedly nationalist in their commitment to *Canadian* writers specifically (Granatstein and Stevens 1972:xiii). The *Forum* pledged no allegiance to any specific party, but did favour intellectuals associated with (or members of) the CCF, particularly when the magazine was owned (from 1936-42) by the Canadian League for Social Reconstruction (LSR). The League itself was composed of a number of university-educated social-democrats, including F.R. Scott (Horn 1986), J.S. Woodsworth (McNaught 1959), Eugene Forsey (Milligan 1987), and Graham Spry (Horn 1980) who were all regular contributors to the *Forum*. The League was particularly active between 1932 and 1942 in advocating social reform through their involvement in and with the CCF, as well as through their publications and in the pages of the *Forum*. Irving describes their view as follows:

The League put great trust in government planning, social engineering and the rational construction of society. ...Although the League’s aim was a radical reconstruction of society, its favoured methods reflected the democratic approach to socialism. Change would come about through parliamentary reforms; the methods of Marx were to be avoided (1981:12-13).⁸¹

From this standpoint, common themes in the *Forum* included debates over the form of Canadian nationalism or “independence” from both British and American domination, the role of government in industry and international political economy, and the political

⁸¹ Frank Underhill explained the goals and objectives of the LSR in *Canadian Forum* June 1932 as follows: “We...look to the establishment in Canada of a new social order which will substitute a planned and socialized economy for the existing chaotic individualism and which, by achieving an approximate economic equality among all men in place of these glaring inequalities, will eliminate the domination of one class by another”. Such steps included ‘public ownership of utilities, communication, and other monopolistic industries; nationalization of banks; agricultural cooperatives; social legislation to secure the worker adequate income and leisure; public organized health; graduated income tax; federal economic planning; and international trade regulation’ (Underhill 1932 in Granatstein and Stevens 1973:98-9) see also Underhill’s outline of the goals of the CCF which are almost identical (Ibid: 105-6).

leadership of W.L.M. King (Prime Minister in 1921-1930 and 1935-48) (Granatstein and Stevens 1972:xiv-xv). The editorials focused more on government policy, but in combination with the poems and short stories, there was a definite tone in the journal during the 1930s; one that

...captured the depressing spirit of the times, and the undercurrent of anger was very clear. Rage at the capitalist system was evident on every page of the *Forum*. The sense of injustice that hung over the land found its major expression here in the writings of Frank Underhill ["the *Forum*'s most published author and Professor of History at the University of Toronto"] (Ibid: xiv,70).

Watt (1957) contrasts the *Forum* with another literary journal that was established in 1932 called the *Masses*. The monthly journal was modeled after a "magazine of labour news and social criticism" of the same name published in New York (1911) [and later *New Masses* (1926)].⁸² The American-published *New Masses* had been prevented from entering Canada by "custom officials,"⁸³ and so its censorship was responsible, in part, for the creation of the Canadian magazine (Irvine 1999:187). The Canadian *Masses* was formed by a group of working class and unemployed artists and writers as the journal of the Progressive Arts Club (PAC) (Doyle 2002:38/54; Irvine 1999:187).⁸⁴ Most historians associate the PAC directly with the Communist Party, but Doyle notes that it was "not officially sponsored by the CPC and not restricted to Party members" attracting a wide range of people interested in "left-wing politics" (Ibid). The PAC formed to develop Canadian art, drama and literature, but specifically aimed to produce work by and for the working class (Wright and Endres 1976;

⁸² Irvine suggests that the PAC and *Masses* were "contemporaries of the John Reed Clubs (JRC) in the United States (1999:187). The JRC's were "informal and self-organized clubs of young writers, supported by the [Communist] Party [of the U.S.] at some distance" as motivated and integrated through the magazine *New Masses* (1926-1948) (Denning 1996:203-6).

⁸³ Irvine cites *Masses* (1933) "Cultural Reaction in Germany" 1(8):1-2; and "Cultural Reaction Continues" 1(10):3.

Tippett 1990; Irvine 1999; Parker 1994).⁸⁵ In its first issue *Masses* asserted its view of itself and of art in general:

It is young. It is dissatisfied. It strives. It searches. It works.... It rejects the theory that art can have nothing in common with politics, that art functions only by and for art. It asserts that all art, whether by the conscious will of the jingo intellectual, or by the self-styled aloofness of the ivory tower recluse, is under capitalism ... propaganda, or more precisely a vehicle of propaganda [*Masses* April 1932, quoted in Parker (1994:33)].

Recognizing the division of labour between workers and intellectuals, it offered a challenge to “any honest intellectual” to “lead their art to the cause of the working class” (*Masses* May/June 1933; Ibid: 34). It aimed this challenge at the CCF and writers in the *Canadian Forum*, while committing itself to do “pioneer work in the field of Marxist criticism” and advancing “the formulation and popularization ... of Marxist theory on art and culture” in Canada (*Masses* “10 Day Campaign” NAC MG 28, V46, Vol. 18, File 4:1). Citing Murphy (1991), Irving suggests that such examples illustrate an early “stage” in the development of “proletarian culture” in the US and Canada in the late 1920s/early 1930s. He observes that it was “commonly characterized by the term ‘leftism,’ one aspect of which was the tendency toward proletarian sectarianism, while the other was the propensity toward anti-bourgeois propaganda”(1999:189).

⁸⁴ Founding members included “Oscar Ryan; actress Toby Gordon; cartoonist and painter Avrom Yanovsky; and journalist E. Cecil-Smith (later commander of the Mackenzie-Papineau Battalion)” (Doyle 2002:89).

⁸⁵ Literary supplements were also published by Hungarian and Jewish immigrants (see next chapter Table 4), and the publishing company (Vapaus) produced a “literary magazine” in 1935 called *Liekki* (Flame) published as a weekly beginning in 1936 (Pilli 1982:202). In keeping with the aim of the popular front, the parameters of the magazine were to be “‘as broad-minded as possible’, so as to be acceptable to as wide a readership as could be achieved, with the proviso that fascist propaganda was banned” (Ibid.:210). It was thus meant as “entertainment,” with “light short stories and poems,” devoid of “political content” save for “statements in favour of anti-fascism” (Ibid: 211). Also by varying the content, the paper was able to get “newspaper” status, that is, second class mailing rates from Canada Post to keep costs down, which helped extend publication until 1940 (Ibid).

In principle, *Masses* contrasted with the *Forum* in its promotion of militant activism, however, Doyle argues that in practice the two were not entirely dissimilar. In his opinion, despite their intentions, the writers of *The Masses* weren't able to "become adept at incorporating their political theory into realist fictional idioms" (Ibid: 102). In addition, *Masses'* contributors continually struggled over definitions of, and relationship between, art and politics that was illustrated in a running debate over the two years of its publication (1932-1934) (Ibid: 92-102). The challenge was that in seeking to facilitate a distinctive working class or proletarian "culture" it was considered just as necessary to define what proletarian art and culture were *not* in order to clear a space for its articulation, whatever its form. Irvine further explains:

An aggressive demand for autonomy of proletarian writers, artists, and intellectuals could only guarantee for *Masses* a reciprocal autonomy of proletarian readers. This autonomy would translate into a self-imposed entrapment of the Canadian proletariat producing and consuming only among themselves. At this moment in the history of proletarian culture, then, we witness the proletarian artists and intellectuals of *Masses* assigning themselves a culture of their own (1999:189).

To foster this development, the production and content of *Masses* was a combination of editorial critique, information circular, and venue for a variety of written and visual expressions of social relations during the 1930s. In a thesis describing the content of *Masses*, Parker notes that these included a range of activism – labour, social protest, civil rights – which was recorded, expressed and encouraged, including criticisms of "ethnic and racial elitism" (1994:34). In her opinion, the expression of the range of social oppression marked a change in literary content. While political culture was still interpreted within a category of social class, the subject, or representative of oppression was enlarged. Parker suggests that

The worker, earlier portrayed as either an anonymous representation of all workers or a particular rebellious one (though in both examples still clearly urban, male and 'blue collar') evolved into a more varied and complex character. Moreover, female social workers, male teachers, 'colored girls', and 'Indians' were treated as subjects in both literature and art. In the 1930s, the cultural left explored issues of segregation, marginalization and ghettoization (Ibid: 2).

This evolution of understanding additional forms of oppression was evident in the range of speakers and participants during Popular Front rallies against war and fascism in particular (thesis Chapter 3). Parker (1994) also suggests that there was a notable increase in the publication of women writers during the popular front period. This was evidenced in particular by a new radical literary journal produced in April 1936 called *New Frontier: A Canadian Monthly Magazine of Literature and Social Criticism* (see also Doyle 2002:104; and Irvine 1999:205/6). The magazine was to exemplify the goals of the popular front both in production and content,⁸⁶ and avoid the sectarianism of *Masses*.⁸⁷ As Irvine submits:

With the widening of authorship and audience that accompanied *New Frontier*'s support for the Popular Front, the magazine's advance toward the incorporation of progressive (liberal and left-wing) members of the middle class indicated not its retreat from the working class but its reorganization of proletarian authors and audiences into new relations within English Canadian magazine culture of the 1930s (1999:206).

This policy apparently facilitated the participation of women writers in the journal. Women made up half the editorial board, and with writers such as Dorothy Livesay serving as regional editor and contributing to the magazine, Parker (1994) argues that this encouraged

⁸⁶ As a *New Frontier* editorial pronounced in the September 1936 issue: "the People's Front has proven itself the only force capable of fighting off the fascist reaction and clearing the way for the forces of progress. For Canadians the lesson of Spain is clear, the only hope for democracy, peace and progress in this country is a People's Front, including all sections of the working and middle class" (cited in Peck 1988:73).

⁸⁷ Irvine suggests that the adversarial nature articulated in *Masses*, and by writers such as Livesay, has been historically downplayed (at times even by Livesay herself) as not as "valuable" as *New Frontier* because of its sectarianism. He characterizes this as an "antileftism" that is evident in the "literary culture of the Popular Front" (1999:206), so that while there was a "reorganization" or opening toward middle class, there was also an implicit denial of past secular expressions.

more women to contribute to the journal and produce their own work. In an overview of the content throughout the *New Frontier*'s short life-span,⁸⁸ Parker claims that "no magazine in Canada published as many articles, poems, short stories and plays written by women, not even *Chatelaine*" (Ibid: 46). In the journal, women explored relationships between marriage, work, and exploitation, as well as socialism and feminism, such that there was "a gradual shift toward women-centered political consciousness" (Ibid: 79). The increased participation of women writers was also evidenced in a number of published works on the Depression including for example, Ruth I. McKenzie "Proletarian Literature in Canada" (1939); Irene Baird *Waste Heritage* (1939); and Dorothy Livesay's collected works.⁸⁹

Literary Styles: Reportage and Social(ist) Realism

In addition to change in production and content, Watt suggests that the writers who wrote for both the radical literary and labour press were responsible for the development of a new literary genre in Canada called "reportage" (1957:264). As he submits, skillful writers like Dorothy Livesay developed the technique so that they could control both realism and ideology of the reportage (see Annex A). Watt distinguishes between two kinds of reportage – one that "aims at a detailed realistic descriptiveness, however startling and vivid the subject" and the other (Annex A) is "in addition, implicitly

⁸⁸ It lasted until October 1937, after seventeen issues (Parker 1994; Doyle 2002; Peck 1988:73).

⁸⁹ Livesay published her biography and work covering the 1930s later in *Right Hand, Left Hand* (1977). Livesay was a writer and activist member of the YCL, the CPC (1932-37), the WUL and the CLAWF (Parker 1994:Chap. 5; Irvine 1999:199). She contributed to the *Canadian Forum*, wrote for *Masses* and *New Frontier*, and was one of the few writers from this period who is considered a literary "success" by "bourgeois" critics. For example see Beattie (1965:252-2) for a biography that focuses on her adherence to literary canon rather than her activism. This is indicative of other writers of this period (such as F.R. Scott and Earle Birney), whose "profound commitment to socialist politics...has been typically ignored or glossed over in almost all interpretative accounts of their work"(McDonald 1999:214).

or explicitly revolutionary in its ideology” (1957:264). He suggests that the two types were exemplified in the pages of the *Forum* and *Masses* and *New Frontier*. Where, for example, the poems in the *Forum* identified with the plight of the unemployed or the poverty of the working class with a combination of brutal realism and sympathy, the work in the *Masses* and *New Frontier* was based on the promotion of activism. Where the former would be a story *about* the exploitation and oppression of working class life, the latter would advocate changing it. Following Livesay, Doyle makes a similar distinction between social realism and socialist realism (2002). The largest majority of anti-capitalist prose written in English in the 1930s tended to exhibit social realism, and while they were able to describe, empathize, and express anger, they “offered no solution” [Livesay (1976:17) as quoted by Doyle (2002:119)].⁹⁰ Despite differences in ends, the means had an impact on Canadian literature; and Watt submits that the reportage was most effective in establishing a form that could not be ignored or dismissed by referring to past literary tradition. In his words:

After the 1930s, the choice or the rejection of realism, in particular, was less likely to be a matter of experience or lack of it, or of social pressures but [one] of artistic motivation, for realism hand in hand with radicalism had had its emancipation (1957:273).

The focus on realism was particularly evident as more Canadian writers took up the cause of the Loyalists during the Spanish Civil War. Livesay submits that the War inspired Canadian writers to “express social concerns” more than “any single event of the 1930s” (1977:255, in Doyle 2002:145; also Vulpe and Albari 1995). This was reflected in the

⁹⁰ Again following Livesay, Doyle suggests that Ted Allan’s (1939) *This Time a Better Earth* exemplifies socialist realism. It is the “only Canadian novel about the Spanish Civil War” that recognizes its full horror, but is still able to envision a process of ‘rebuilding’ as even the title suggests” (2002:122-3).

content of the progressive literary journals in particular, as contributors such as Livesay, A.M. Klein, and A.M. Stephen expressed their support through their poems (Vulpe and Albari 1995). The difference in social and socialist realism prevailed, however. In comparing the coverage of the Spanish Civil War in the *Forum* and the *New Frontier* Peck suggests that:

Although the *Forum* supported Loyalist Spain throughout the war, one might say it gave strong intellectual and rational support, compared to the political and emotional dedication to the cause as demonstrated by *New Frontier* (1988:72).

The boundaries of intellectual and rational support were expressed in a series of poems by A.M. Klein published in the June 1938 issue of the *Forum*. In “To One Gone to the Wars,” Klein expresses his admiration for a friend who was fighting in Spain, and expresses his “shame” or frustration at the limits of his own intellectualizing:

‘Tis you who do confound the lupine jaw
And stand protective of my days and works,
As the street-fight you maintain the law
And I in an armchair – weigh and measure Marx.⁹¹

The Depression took its toll on the alternative literary journals, and both the *Masses* and *New Frontier* had a short lifespan. The exception was the literary journals of the immigrant labour press, which were better situated as supplements to regular papers. A further exception was the *Canadian Forum*, whose longevity was likely due to a combination of its middle class subscribers and the personal financial contributions of its board members (Granatstein and Stevens 1972:xiv). Besides the expense, it was difficult to find commercial publishers that were willing to take the risk both financially (in the publication of Canadian authors for a limited Canadian market), and politically, in the publication of anti-capitalist work (Doyle 2002:96; Horn 1978:89). Most of the alternative

⁹¹ Granatstein and Stevens (1972:162); also Doyle (2002:144).

prose was published in short stories⁹² and prolific “proletarian writers” like Joe Wallace⁹³ published in the literary and labour press. As discussed earlier, this was both a matter of necessity (it was the only place they *could* publish) and one of principle in participation with, and support of, the labour press. The mere existence of the labour press thus provided both a method of participation and a means of articulation of labour culture.

Conclusion

The battle to articulate labour, both conceptually and in practice, was difficult and complex. On each site of the cultural front, the challenge was to keep politics and culture together while communication and culture were being structured under different and developing regimes of “sport,” “education,” “literature” and “theatre,” as activities distinct from labour and as separate from politics. At the same time, however, within the organizations themselves there was pressure to make a distinction between politics and culture. Politics became associated with instrumentality and culture with the activity itself, where one was extrinsic, and purposeful, the other was intrinsic and neutral. Once this distinction was made it complemented the dominant hegemony and facilitated a re-labouring of culture under state or commercial control.

⁹²Doyle suggests that this genre was also preferred by radical writers as “the novel tended to retain a historical identification with bourgeois individualism” (2002:96).

⁹³Joe Wallace (1880-1975) was in Watts’ words “the only consistently dedicated and genuine proletariat poet to produce an appreciable body of work during this period” (1957:261). His poetry was published across the labour press; he wrote articles for *Canadian Railway Employees’ Monthly* (Halifax), he was editor of a weekly socialist newspaper in the early 1920s, and a regular contributor to the CPC’s *The Worker*, editing a column called “Between the Lines” (Doyle 2002:64-69). His work was also recognized by the Canadian government such that in 1940, Wallace was “thrown into a Petawawa internment camp (later transferred to a Hull jail) as a Communist” (Watt 1957:261).

Analyzing counter-hegemony in the making, we can see that the organizations formed began as oppositions to an undemocratic structuring of culture in general. Specifically for example, the Workers' Sport Association was opposed to commodification, patriotism and nationalism, with an alternative vision of sport as a labour of collectivism (rather than nationalism), of solidarity (rather than patriotism), and with public (rather than commercial) sports and related facilities. A major thrust of the WSA was for public participation, accessibility and unrestricted facilities. Sport itself was democratized as encompassing a wide range of activities not limited by age, gender or individual performance defined according to timing and efficiency of effort exerted (as in scientific management) or profit requirements. It was up against a common vision of "sport for sport sake" promoted by both commercial and amateur sport organizations as a politically neutral activity. The individualism, commercialism, or nationalism masked by this claim of "sports for sport sake" was not otherwise challenged, as they did not contradict the dominant hegemony in the larger political economy.

On another site of the cultural front, the Workers' Educational Association (WEA) aimed to labour education and to enrich democracy in Canada by extending and expanding public education through various forms of communication and through the specific development of critical thinking to facilitate decision-making. Like the Workers' Sport Association, however, such initiatives by the WEA were limited by a developing and restrictive institutional structure. When the WEA tried to facilitate (potentially oppositional) critical thinking by adopting alternative methods of critical pedagogy, it was thwarted by movements for standardized education that was similar to, and arguably fit in with, the scientific management of labour. The limitation of public schools to English (or later

French) also inhibited the participation of immigrants in the institutionalization of education in Canada, and impeded the development of democratic communication in Canada.

Excluded from so-called public education and other institutions by language and varying degrees of official and social oppression, immigrant organizations were particularly attuned to socio-cultural exclusion in general, and took a more holistic approach in facilitating working class participation in the wide range of activities at the labour temples. These were established early in the century, and provided a major impetus and model that enabled the labouring of culture. The ownership and control of autonomous organizations, facilities and publications was central in facilitating the development of a labour culture that was not dependent on government or commercial institutions. This meant that labour culture had the conceptual and material space (although limited and restricted by law) to facilitate and develop the variety and scope of working-class participation in both in decision-making and in creative work. These activities were inclusive; central activities at the labour temples did not require membership such that they functioned as community centres and nodes of labour activism across union organization and other collective activities. These ranged from social activities such as dances or concerts, to major collective actions such as strikes and marches, May Day and Labour Day parades, and protests against war and fascism, for example.

On the artistic front, efforts to recover and demonstrate a radical "tradition" in opposition to the view of artists as "aloof," "intellectual" or "individually subjective," was somewhat successful through publication, but this was only possible through the alternative press. Although there were only a few literary journals, there was a constant stream of publications that came out of the alternative publishing companies, including the labour

press (union, immigrant and party press) and the many booklets, pamphlets and flyers that explained theory (Communist, Marxist, social democratic, radical Christian, and so on), providing both critique and an additional means and method of enabling working class participation in communication. In the next chapter then, the background and substance of the expansion of the alternative press and other forms of communication will be explored, when labour culture took itself out into the parks and streets, and where encounters with the dominant hegemony were made most visible.

Chapter Five: Intersections between the Politics of Form and the Politics of Allegiance

Expansions and Contradictions in Labour Culture

Judging from conference minutes, budget reports, and funding appeals of the left-wing organizations reviewed here, the publication and distribution of an alternative press was a distinct priority. Daily newspapers, pamphlets and flyers were published in English, French and a number of other immigrant languages, and were widely distributed in the 1930s. Another key form of articulating labour was people's physical participation in parades and demonstrations, picnics and celebrations. Here, the movement went beyond structures of organized politics and institutionalized culture to re-claim public spaces as political-cultural spaces, which included streets, parks, and other government lands as sites of collective agency. The first part of this chapter reviews these forms of communication, beginning with a description and summary of the varieties of alternative press (from newspapers to pamphlets), followed by an overview of the public forms of protests and celebrations that together articulated labour in the 1930s.

The second part of this chapter marks a turn in the thesis towards identifying some of the relationships impeding the labouring of culture and hindering the popular front. Focusing on the intersection between the politics of allegiance and form, it identifies and examines the cracks and contradictions stalling and inhibiting the movement's momentum, as was evident in the relationship within and between labour political parties and trade unions, for example. It also scans the right-wing elements of labour culture that served to subvert and contradict progressive developments, thereby complementing and adding strength to the dominant hegemony. This directs us to the

last chapter where the structuration of this dominant hegemony will be further considered.

Part I: Expansions of Labour Culture in Print and in Public

Expansions in Print

The priority placed on communication and information within labour culture was partly a result of necessity, and partly a result of a common view that self-control over production, distribution and exhibition was essential for activism. In the first place, commercial papers in general likely refused to accept advertising from radical organizations and abstained from allowing announcements of rallies or demonstrations given that such practices could be construed under Section 98 as aiding a revolutionary organization.¹ Further, as previously noted, coverage of labour and radical organizations was largely negative, whether in keeping with an anti-labour or anti-communist stance,²

¹ As noted earlier, given that the content of the commercial press of this period has not been analyzed in depth, this can only be surmised. However, as Rutherford observed, the “apparent satisfaction of the bourgeois citizenry with their lot” combined with the first red scare and fear of Bolshevism in the 1920s, marked a turn in the commercial press to a “mood of anxious conformity” (1978:68); so that publicity for anything considered radical would be considered too much of a bother or risk. In addition, Thompson notes that commercial papers were very wary of appearing partisan in any way “to avoid alienating their advertisers and consumers of the products...” (1985:185), or the corporate owners of the newspapers themselves [see Sotiron (1997)]. On the other hand, for the range of organizations reviewed here, the cost of publicity in the commercial press would also likely have been a barrier, although this too is speculative.

² For example, in the 1935 federal election campaign, the CCF complained that the commercial press in Ontario was deliberately excluding reports of CCF candidates, speeches and proposals. “Certain newspapers, including the *Star*, *Globe*, *Mail and Empire*, and *Evening Telegram* have consistently refused to report the speeches of the C.C.F. candidates who were attempting to explain to the public the platform of their party insofar as civic politics are concerned. ... These newspapers ... have condemned in no uncertain terms the C.C.F. policies. They have referred to the men who espouse the course of the C.C.F. in this campaign as being dangerous, visionary – as taking dictation from Moscow – as being agents of the Soviet Government and communist organizations” (“The Press and the C.C.F.” *New Commonwealth* 26 Jan. 1935:5).

or by a tendency of the media to focus on conflict and chaos.³ This meant that labour organizations had to produce and distribute their own information, as well as provide an additional means of communication for people who were scattered across the country. Ranging from mimeographed bulletins to a daily newspaper, the alternative press of the 1930s included: (1) the immigrant press; (2) the many publications of the trade union press; (3) the newspapers of the CPC and CCF, (4) a number of “radical” (anti-capitalist and anti-war) religious and pacifist publications, and (5) thousands of pamphlets addressing unemployment, hunger, war and fascism, and other social crises. With the exception of the radical religious and pacifist press, this combination made up what Hoerder (1987a) calls the “labor press”.⁴

The Immigrant Labour Press

Just as some of the immigrant organizations were derived from socialist organizations in Europe, the labour press in Canada had its own European and American antecedents (Verzuh 1988). Each language-group aimed to write its own publications regardless of whether there was a supporting organization or not. Some of the papers were directly associated, or “organs” of the sponsoring organization, while others depended upon organizational funding, but operated independently. In some cases the

³ This has been deducted from current research (Hackett and Zhao 1998, Karim 2000, Winter 1997) rather than research on the press of the time.

⁴ Hoerder defines a labour periodical to include the following: (1) “labor union papers... produced by an organized body, whether unions or clubs...”; (2) “radical periodicals” (for example articulating working class opposition and activism); and (3) “reform papers” those which were produced for wage earners by members of other social classes... who sought to improve or instruct them. Whereas periodicals in our first category ‘labor union’, were produced *by* the class and the second *for* the class in the sense of taking its side, this last group consists of periodicals directed toward the working class with an eye to ‘bettering’ it from the standpoint of non-working class values” (1987a:8-9).

organization established the press, and in others the press precipitated the organization.⁵

Initially, some of the papers were hand-written,⁶ then mimeographed, and, where finances and numbers allowed, printed using a typeset machine. The labour temples usually housed printing facilities, and where financially possible, formal publishing companies were established to produce a range of printed material including books, dictionaries, newspapers, pamphlets, plays, journals, newspapers, calendars, almanacs, posters, etc.⁷

By the early 1920s, the larger organizations founded or supported publishing companies.

The Finnish Publishing Co. Ltd. operated independently of the FOC although the organization was a major shareholder (Pilli 1982:61). Ukrainian labour publishers were several, including the Ukrainian Socialist Publishing Co. (1909-1918), New World Publishers (1915-1935), Ukrainian Labour News Publishers (est. 1918), the Proletarian

⁵ Rather than the press evolving out of the main organization, Patrias (1994:157/8) explains that the Hungarian organizations formed out of "the need to create a solid financial base" for their paper. Having relied on American organizations and the American Hungarian labour press, which was banned in 1929 ["as a result of a successful campaign by [Hungarian] anti-communists" (Ibid)], Canadian Hungarians established their own press and workers' clubs. Even in the midst of the Depression, by 1934, there were twenty-six in operation across Canada. Fund-raising for the press, through "dinners, dances, teas, picnics, and dramatic performances" was a priority (Ibid).

⁶ Lindstrom-Best (1984) describes the handwritten "fist press" as the early origins of the Finnish press in Canada.

⁷ This was a combination of purpose, demand, and financial necessity. As Patrias notes, for example, in order to facilitate working class consciousness, the Hungarian Workers' Society printed alternative calendars and almanacs, marking days not according to religion or commercialism, but with "momentous events in the history of radical and labour movements" (1994:216). In contrast, financial necessity appeared to take precedence in the Finnish Publication Co. Pilli lists the variety of activities that supplemented their income: "It ran a stationer's and a bookstore, selling books ordered from Finland or the United States or published by the [FOC] itself; it handled transfers of money to Finland, and sold tickets for ships; and it carried out jobbing printing for private individuals on the printing press. It published the literary works and writings of significant immigrant writers...and socialist songbooks and pamphlets on social theory; as well as a humorous magazine... and various occasional publications" (1982:81). In total, this accounted for close to half of the company's income (Ibid: 82).

Culture Publishing Company (est. 1921) and the Worker-Farmer Publishing Association (1924-1940) (Krawchuk 1996:319-320). Most were situated in Winnipeg, and up until the late 1930s, Winnipeg was *the* centre of labour publication in North America (followed by New York, Toronto, Edmonton, Cleveland Ohio and Scranton Pennsylvania) (Hoerder 1987:31,349; also Lysenko 1947; Krawchuk 1996:305-310).⁸

Smaller organizations used the presses of the larger organizations where and when possible, and supported each other's fund-raising activities. Archival records of the FOC indicate, for example, that there were many and continuing requests for financial assistance for alternative press in many languages (including English). Every request was replied to and supported by a financial contribution however small, even during the Depression when finances could be particularly strained. This suggests that other labour papers were not considered "competition" like the commercial or nationalist and religious presses were, but were viewed as essential in articulating the many facets of working class life.⁹

The establishment of a language press was considered absolutely essential for a number of reasons (Park 1922; Kirkconnell 1940; Turek 1962; Harney 1982a; Hoerder

⁸ Earlier, larger and concentrated immigration to the United States meant that, for particular groups, the language press was better established there than in Canada (exceptions were the Ukrainians). This made for a somewhat awkward relationship, as the press in Canada would be paid for selling subscriptions for the press in the US, even as it was difficult to get subscriptions for their own press (Pilli 1982:195). Nevertheless, as Kostianen (1982:39/40) suggests, in the Finnish case, the relationship was more beneficial than it was competitive. The American papers came to the financial rescue and moral support of the Canadian papers, particularly around the First World War, when the FSOC was banned.

⁹ For example, FOC archives of 1935 indicate financial contributions to the Italian anti-fascist press *Il Lavoratore*, the *B.C. Workers' News* and Proletarian Publishing Company; a loan to the CPC's *Daily Clarion*, and financial support for the establishment of *Always Ready*, a radical children's magazine (NAC File MG 28, V 46, Vol. 18, File 11-14).

1987a).¹⁰ First, it was one of the few published sources that articulated the social experiences of immigrants in their primary language. While the Canadian government had made the effort to translate brochures and advertisements for immigration from Europe in their native language, the same did not apply once they arrived in Canada (Eklund 1987:26). Thus, at a very basic level, the press was necessary to explain practical information such as immigration regulations, the kinds of government institutions and their operations, general laws, labour and farming policies and practices, etc. (Park 1922; Kirkconnell 1940; Turek 1962; Hoerder 1987a). Secondly, it was necessary, particularly for the first wave of immigrants, in helping to develop literacy and a sense of collective experience and activism. The “imagined community”¹¹ amongst and across the language-groups was developed and refined through the writing and the reading of the press as it was read collectively – formally and informally – within the labour temples and reading clubs, as well as within private homes (Swyripa 1999). Thirdly, it was only within the pages of the *labour press* where an oppositional class-consciousness was articulated. While all variations of the immigrant press “had to address a class,”¹² the immigrant labour press advanced alternative and oppositional ideas and practices. When able to pass the press censors, a variety of publications were imported from Europe and from the U.S, but rarely did they apply directly to the political economy of Canada or their region of settlement so that regional and local papers were

¹⁰ Hoerder (1987a:27) lists five “functions” of the “ethnic press” as a whole, most which point to the necessity of the press as information source, but also as “interpreter” of political economic and socio-cultural contexts, both in countries-of-origin and –immigration, and as a method for the articulation of group interests in countries of the diaspora.

¹¹ Anderson (1983).

¹² Hoerder (1987a:35) points out that the majority of immigrants, particularly in the first half of the twentieth century, were working class, the immigrant press had no choice but to attend to this class as their “audience”.

required.¹³ In sum, the labour press constituted a small minority compared to the English- and French- language commercial dailies and the nationalist and religious language press,¹⁴ which, each in its own way aimed to discredit the oppositional content or obliterate the production and distribution of the labour press entirely.

Although a systematic content analysis and comparison across the immigrant labour press has yet to be done, from observations compiled from a range of sources on the “ethnic” or “immigrant” press in Canada (Kirkconnell 1940; Daschko 1982; Turek 1962; Levendel 1989), and the immigrant labour press in particular (Pilli 1982; Hoerder 1987a; and passim in Kolasky 1990; Krawchuk 1996; Swryipa 1999; Grenke 1995; Frager 1993; and Patrias 1994) there were some content similarities regardless of political orientation.¹⁵ Standard fare included the above practical information as well as some

¹³ As Pilli (1981a:23-24) and others (for example Turek 1969) have pointed out, the importation of the language press published in the U.S. was a mixed blessing. While the U.S. papers also articulated social relations in the language-of-origin, it was also a competitor for the Canadian publications. Indeed, one of the ways language groups would raise funds for their own paper was by becoming an agent for an American publisher and sell subscriptions or advertising. Ironically however, press censorship at the border actually assisted the birth of more socialist publications here, because others were not legally available.

¹⁴ Eklund notes for example, that the impetus behind the Finnish labour newspaper *Vapaus* (est. 1917), came from a combination of the continuing press censorship and confiscation of American- and Finnish- Socialist papers at the Canadian border, but was especially necessary in order “to counter a [Finnish] nationalist publication” in Canada (1987:189).

¹⁵ Early analyses by Kirkconnell (1940) are based on unreliable sources (*Canadian Almanac*, and *McKim's Directory of Canadian Publications*). As to the first source, Pilli's (1982) analysis of the Finnish press circulation (from FOC business manager reports) in comparison to the *Canadian Almanac* figures (1919-1939) indicate large discrepancies between subscriptions, with the *Almanac* consistently over-estimating (Pilli 1982:194). McKim's directory was also skewed since it was dependent on self-promotion of circulation, given that its purpose was to attract advertisers (Turek 1962:44-45). Moreover, the value of circulation rates is debatable, as they are more of a measurement for advertisers, rather than a measure of success for the radical press. While financial considerations are necessary, circulation has never been the ultimate aim of the alternative press by definition. Rather, a likely overall measurement of success is accessibility and exposure, i.e. optimum participation in all the activities of the press whether this was fund-raising or contributing for the press. Nevertheless, it appeared that circulation and subscription rates consistently superceded organizational membership. Over the period 1919-1940, *Vapaus* had a steady publication rate of over 4,000 (Pilli 1982);, whereas ULFTA's *Ukrainian Labour News* was publishing 10,000 copies in 1929 (Marunchak 1970:494-5).

poetry, short stories, letters, songs, community activities, announcements, etc.), moral advice (against gambling and alcoholism, but also in negligence of civic responsibility and education), and news from the homeland and the diaspora outside of Canada. Also prominent were editorials and strategies of the sponsoring organizations and, depending on size of immigrant population, organizational and financial success, newspapers and magazines were published on a bi-monthly, monthly, weekly or daily schedule.

Although overall content structure was similar, the immigrant labour press differentiated itself from nationalist, religious and commercial immigrant press by its association with a politics of social class. Fundamentally, the immigrant labour press interpreted the conditions of place both in Canada and in their homeland according to the national and international exploitation of labour. This was reflected in the names chosen for the press which were premised by the publishing language combined with “workers,” “working people,” or “labour” press (see Table 4 following of papers published in Canada). This suggested a commonality shared by immigrants in both their position as workers and in their agency as working class, despite language differences, as Patrias’ assessment of the Hungarian workers’ organizations suggests: ...proletarian leaders apparently saw no contradiction between promoting the

preservation of the Hungarian language and encouraging collaboration with workers from other ethnic groups. ...Hungarians were mobilized through the Benefit Federation and through the Workers’ clubs to become involved in the struggle of the working class alongside people from other ethnic groups, as well as the Canadian-born (1994:208).

Table 4(1)
Immigrant Labour Press in Canada
(1915-1940+)

Organizational Affiliation	Press	Existence	(Frequency)
	Bulgarian		
	<i>Proletarsko Delo</i> (Proletarian Action)	1931-1933	(sm)
	<i>Edinstvo</i> (Unity) (Toronto)	1933-1941	(w)
	<i>Novo Vreme</i> (New Time) (Croatian)	1941-1957	
	Finnish		
Finnish Socialist Org of Canada	<i>Tyokansa</i> (umlaut o) (<i>The Working People</i>)	1907-1915	
Finnish Organization of Canada	<i>Vapaus</i> ('Liberty' or 'Freedom')	1917-1974	
		(5/w to 1928) (6/w to 1940; 5/w to 1972)	
Popular Front ¹⁶	<i>Vapauden Viiri</i> (<i>The Free Banner</i>)		
	(Sudbury)	1937-1940	
Finnish Workers' and Farmer's Federation of Canada (socialist)	<i>Vapaa Sana</i> (The Free Word')	1931-1981	(2/w, 3/w)
	<i>Liekki</i> (The Flame) (Literary Journal)	1935-1974	
	<i>Metsätyöläinen</i> (The Lumber Worker)	1925-1935	(m)
FWSAC	<i>The Unemployed Worker</i> (Vancouver)	1929-1931	
	" " (Toronto)	1931-1934	
Finnish Workers' Sport Association of Canada	<i>Spartak</i> (all in English)	1933-1934	(m)
	German		
German Workers and Farmers Association	<i>Deutsche Arbeiter Zeitung</i>		
	(German Workers or Labour News)	1930-1937	
German-Canadian League	<i>Deutsche-Kanadische Volkzeitung</i>		
	(German-Canadian People's News)	1937-1937	
	Hungarian		
Worker's and Farmers Clubs	<i>Kanadai Magyar Munkas</i>	1927-1967	
	(Canadian Hungarian Worker)	(2/w 1935, 3w1940)	
	<i>Pioneer</i> (literary supplement)	1928-1929	
	<i>Ano</i> (The Woman)	1939-1955	(m)
(Popular Front)	<i>The Defender</i> (Toronto)	1936-1937	
	Icelandic		
(socialist)	<i>Vorold</i> (Springtime or New Generation)	1918-1921	
	Italian		
	<i>La Voce operaia</i> (The Workers' Voice)	1933/4-1934/5	
(anti-fascist)	<i>Il Lavoratore</i> (The Worker) (Toronto)	1935-1938	
(popular front)	<i>La Voce degli italo-canadesi</i>	1938-1940	

¹⁶ Hoerder notes that this paper was "planned as a cultural, theoretical and internationally-minded quarterly; [that included] articles, poems, translations and comics" (1982a:240).

Table 4(2)
Immigrant Labour Press in Canada
(1915-1940+)

Organizational Affiliation	Press	Existence	(Frequency)
	Jewish		
(socialist)	Workers' Newspaper (Montréal)	1917-1918	(w)
	New Times	1918-1920	
	The Yiddish Word (Winnipeg)	1917-1968	(m)
	The Jewish Worker	1919-1922	
	Raw Earth	1922-1929	
United Clothing Workers	The Clothing Worker (Montréal)	1932-?	
(communist)	<i>Der Kampf</i> (The Struggle)	1924-1939	(m)
	<i>Der Weg</i> (The Way) (Yid and Eng)	1939-1940	(w)
(pro-soviet)	<i>Kanader ICOR</i> (The Canadian ICOR)	1934-1936	(m,ir)
Jewish Workingman's Circle	Labour (Montréal)	1922-1923	(m)
Jewish Proletariat Workers	Proletarian Literature	1935-?	
	Jugoslavian¹⁷		
Serbian Workers Educational	<i>Borba</i> (Struggle) (Croatian and Serbian)	1930-1936	(sm,w,sw)
Croatian Workers Educ. Assoc.	<i>Pravda</i> (Justice)	1936-1940	(bw, 3xm)
	Serbian Herald	1936-1940	
Croatian Educ. Assoc.	<i>Slovodna Misao</i> (Free Thought)	1936-1940	(3/w)
Federation of Croatian Cdns	<i>Novosti</i> (News)	1940-1948	(3/w)
	Lithuanian¹⁸		
Lithuanian Workers' Assoc.	<i>Darbininku Zodis</i> (The Workers' Word)	1932-1936	(m, w)
	<i>Liaudies Balsas</i> (The People's Voice)	1936-1976	
		(2/m,2/w, w, bw)	
(socialist)	<i>Kanados Lietuvis</i> (Canadian Lithuanian)	1929-1930	
	Norwegian and Danish		
(socialist)	<i>Norrøna</i> (Norse News)	1910-1920	
(labour-independent)	<i>Daneborg</i>	1893-1932	
" "	<i>Forum</i>	1919-1924	
(christian socialist)	<i>Friends of Freedom</i>	1922-1924	
	Polish		
Polish Workers' and	<i>Budzik</i> (Alarm Clock)	1931-1932	
Farmers' Association	<i>Głos Pracy</i> (Voice of Labour)		
	Winnipeg	1932-1940	(sm, w)
Polish Peoples' Assoc.	Toronto	1937-1940	(2/w)
Polish Democratic Org.	<i>Kronika Tygodniowa</i> (Weekly Chronicle)	1941-	
Socialist Polish Labor Cmtee	<i>The People's Right</i> (Polish and English)	1943-1945	
	Russian		
Russian Workers of Canada	<i>Kanadsky Gudok</i> (Canadian Whistle)	1931 -1940	(m, sm,w, sw)
	(Bread and Freedom) (Toronto)	1918-1924	

¹⁷ Tomovic (1982).

¹⁸ Harney (1982b).

Table 4(3)
Immigrant Labour Press in Canada
(1915-1940+)

Organizational Affiliation	Press	Existence	(Frequency)
Slovakian¹⁹			
	<i>Nase Slovo</i> (Our Word)		
Slovak Progressive Assoc.	<i>Robotnicke Slovo</i> (The Workers' Voice)	1932-1936	(bw,w,sw)
Slovak Cultural Assoc.	<i>Robotnicke Slovo</i> (Workers' Word)		
(communist) (Slovak and Czech)	<i>Hlas L'Udu</i> (Voice of the People)	1936-1940	(w)
Ukrainian			
	<i>Chervonyi prapor</i> (Red or Scarlet, Flag or Banner)	1907-1908	
Ukrainian Socialist Democratic Party (USDP)	<i>Rabochniy narod</i> (Working People)	1909-1918	
(USDP)	Workers' World (Toronto)	1916-1918	
Ukrainian Labour Assoc.	<i>Pravda I volia</i> (Truth and Liberty)	1929-1932	(w)
(socialist)	Forward (Toronto)	1938-1940	(bw,w,bw)
(socialist)	<i>Farmers'kyi holos</i> (Farmer's Voice) (Edm)	1932-1934	
	(Voice of Labour) (Wpg)	1922-1924	
(Trotskyite)	Labour News (Toronto)	1933-1938	(bm)
Ukrainian Labour Farmer Temple Association	<i>Ukrains'ki robitnychi visty</i> (Ukrainian Labour News)	1919-1937	(w, bw, d)
	<i>Narodna hazeta</i> (People's Gazette)	1937-1940	(d,w)
	<i>Robitnyysia</i> (Working Women)	1924-1937	(sm,m)
	<i>Farmers'ke zhyttia</i> (Farmer's Life)	1925-1940	
	<i>Svit molodi</i> (Youth's World)	1927-1930	(m)
	<i>Boyava molod or Boiava molod</i> (Militant Youth)	1930-1932	
	Proletarian News (Wpg)	1932-1933	(m)
(communist)	New World (Montréal)	1928-1929	(m)
(pro-Soviet)	(The Truth) (Wpg)	1936-1938)	(w,bw,w)
Combination			
Steelworkers Organization Committee Lodge 1817	<i>The Melting Pot</i> (Oshawa) (English, Polish, Ukrainian, and Hungarian)	1939-1940	
Canadian League for the Advancement of Colored People	<i>Dawn of Tomorrow</i>	1923-1931+	(w,m, irr)

Source: Unless otherwise noted, sources are Harzig and Hoerder (1985); Hoerder (1984; 1987a; 1987b), and McLaren (1973).

¹⁹ Kirschbaum (1967:292/3).

As the immigrant associations were not formally affiliated with the CPC, press affiliation was also informal, however, most of the pro-communist press carried the motto “Workers of the World Unite,” the manifesto of the CPC since 1921.²⁰ Prior to the popular front policy, communist-leaning papers tended to draw heavily on the writings of Marx and Lenin to explain current events, and included long theoretical pieces (Pilli 1982:185-190). They were also prone to extol the virtues of Comintern and the Soviet Union without criticism, and denounce anyone or anything that was not in keeping with Communist policy. Indeed, deviation from the party line meant expulsion from the Party itself (for example, Maurice Spector, editor of the CPC’s *The Worker* was expelled for supporting Trotsky²¹). Other less dogmatic papers preferred to emphasize “independence,” “truth,” or “freedom” in addition to working class or labour unity (see Table 4; also Harney 1982a). Although all of the papers were focused on labour, a few of the immigrant labour papers were specifically trade union papers in industries with greater immigrant concentrations. For example, the Jewish *Clothing Worker* was published in Montréal 1932 by the United Clothing Workers of Canada; *The Lumber Worker* was published in Finnish as an organ of the Lumber Worker’s Industrial Union (1925-1935),²² and *The Melting Pot* was published in English, Polish, Ukrainian and Hungarian by the Steelworkers in Oshawa in 1939 (Hoerder 1987a:219; and Hoerder 1987b:71;638).

Where the larger organizations had separate women’s and youth sections, they also had a women’s and youth press. For radical Finnish women in Canada, this was

²⁰ Buck (1952:23). This was not a guaranteed indicator of support for the CPC, however, as the Trotskyite paper, the *Ukrainian Labor News* published in Toronto (1932-1938) also laid claim to the byline (Hoerder 1987b:367).

²¹ Avakumovic (1975:54-55) and Rodney (1968:136-146) in Pilli (1982:140).

very much by choice; Lindstrom (1992:156-160) explains that they desired their own “sex-segregated activity” in separate organizations from the FOC, and in keeping with this, they also completely supported their own newspaper *Toveritar* (Lindstrom and Seager 1985). The paper was published in the U.S. but subscribed to in Canada “to the saturation point:”

...Canadian circulation numbers were spectacular – over three thousand in 1930 when the paper was banned in Canada. If three thousand Finnish-Canadian women paid to subscribe to the paper, it can be assumed that at least as many more women (mothers, daughters, friends) had access to it. In addition, *Toveritar* was found in all Finnish halls, reading rooms, and libraries. ...[A]t least half of the Finnish women in Canada had regular access to a radical women’s weekly, and a quarter of them received their own issue. No women’s paper in Canada (popular or political) can claim to have so ably [been produced and distributed] (Lindstrom 1992:156).

After *Toveritar* was banned from coming across the Canadian border in 1930, a “women’s page” was inserted in *Vapaus* the paper associated with the FOC (Ibid). However, it was not the same as having an entire newspaper by and for women, particularly as it had critically “addressed male dominance” and labour organization among the female domestic workers (Ibid: 99-100).²³

Labour press editors as a whole were almost always male, and while ULFTA also had its own women’s paper *Holos robinytsia* (Voice of the Working Woman, est. 1923 as a monthly) throughout its lifetime its editors were also male.²⁴ Initial goals of the *Robinytsia* reflected a paternalistic bent as they aimed to “give women an education

²² See Radforth (1998:304) in particular.

²³ Nevertheless, the paper was active promoter of women’s contributions. Lindstrom suggests that as part of the Women’s Labour Leagues of the CPC: “...Writing to the paper was an assigned duty, part of the vigorous self-improvement program. ...No fewer than one hundred and twenty-two communities across Canada had their female correspondents who diligently wrote to the paper” (1992:157).

which they, through no fault of their own, were unable to acquire” (Krawchuk 1996:308). Nevertheless the paper published its pledge “to faithfully serve the interests of working women and proletarian culture” (Ibid). Of the *Robitnytsia* issues examined in the early 1930s,²⁵ the content typically reflected the “class versus class” position of the Comintern (thesis Chapter 4). It was written with a religious-like fervor in supporting a communist system and holding Soviet workers as “heroes,” and the Soviet Union as the “promised land”. Those who weren’t communists were considered “enemies”.

ULFTA’s monthly youth magazine *Svit molodi* (Youth World), changed to *Boyova molod* (Militant Youth 1930), was similar in following Communist policies and style in the early 1930s. Included in its aims was to “teach the youth of the Ukrainian workers and needy farmers of Canada to struggle together with other Canadian labour youth against capitalism; to fight against Ukrainian nationalism and fascism” (Krawchuk 1996:312). Of the issues examined (August 1930 to August 1931),²⁶ the paper concentrated heavily on youth labour and organizing, participation in Communist youth organizations, and stories of exploitation of workers in Canada and the US. The latter included a special issue on the lack of rights of “Negro” workers in the US (see Annex B), while other issues highlighted Soviet youth achievements and Soviet policies. In the later issues of the paper, there were short stories and crossword puzzles, jokes and riddles published. Although the name change in 1930 to *Militant Youth* was a result of a reader’s contest (Krawchuk 1996:312), the paper’s content apparently proved “too militant,” such

²⁴ Its name was changed to *Robitnytsia* (Working Woman) in 1924, and it published as a semi-monthly from 1924-1932, and back to a monthly until 1937 (Krawchuk 1996:308; Hoerder 1987b:368).

²⁵ NLC has microfilmed reels, translation by Ukrainian Canadian Mike Ryndzak of Ottawa, Ontario.

²⁶ As above footnote and translation.

that subscriptions decreased and the paper folded in 1932 (Momryk 1999). This may have been one of the signals to the Communist Party that a focus on purely political activism, dogmatic narrowness and sectarianism was not gaining any converts to the party.

The shift from a labour-defined to a “popular” movement during the mid-1930s was reflected in the title change of papers. The word “people” or “peoples” was substituted for labour in order to appeal to a wider constituency (for example, the *Ukrainian Labour News* changed to the *People’s Gazette*, the *German Workers’ News* changed to the *German-Canadian People’s News*; the *Lithuanian Workers’ World*, change to the *People’s Voice*). This was an important change, and appeared necessary for two reasons. First, the words “labour” or “workers” were associated with the Communist Party in particular and with activism in general. Both were discredited primarily by the dominant hegemony, whether through the commercial press or through government censorship, as the identification “labour” was associated with trouble-making at the very least, or (as was noted earlier) was considered precursor to violent revolution at the extreme. Secondly, the communist’s prioritizing or claim-staking on “workers” everywhere, meant that this association was affected by Communist Party politics, which could be negative in the case of secularism and other divisions within the movement, or positive when they were successful at union organization, for example. Thus, the word “people” appeared to avoid both these negative associations, and to demonstrate, particularly in those papers that were pro-Communist, that the Communist Party and the labour movement as a whole were not restrictive. As Manley notes, for example, the

rallying cry at the FOC's 1935 convention was "Away From Sectarianism! Out Among the People!"(2002:63).²⁷

In keeping with popular front politics, the change to the "people" was part of the goal of unity against war and fascism and occurred early in the 1930s.²⁸ It was also to emphasize that the movement was for democracy in general. Drawing on the historical roots of "the people," (Martin-Barbero 1993) from the French and American revolutions (Hoerder 1987:17), and the 1837 Canadian rebellions after which the Mackenzie-Papineau Battalion was named (Ryerson 1937; Horn 1980), "the people" signified the right to autonomy and activism. It was meant as a claim to fully participate in decision-making, that is, in democracy. Where some of the organizations (ULFTA and FOC) only changed the names of their press, some of the smaller organizations changed both (Table 4). The Polish Workers' and Farmers' Association changed to the Polish Peoples' Association of Canada (1935), the German Workers' and Farmers' Association became the German Canadian League (1937), and the Hungarian Workers' Clubs changed to the Canadian Federation of Democratic Hungarians (1939). Historian John Manley suggests that these changes illustrated a turn towards a "'defense of national cultures' and that language groups "reconstituted themselves to stress national rather than class identities" (2002:63). Yet the national-language link (German, Hungarian, Polish, etc.) – which had been there originally – was retained, what was different, however, was the "Canadian" addition. Arguably this had less to do with "defending national cultures" than it did in signifying an acceptance of the nation-state (Canada), as necessary in the defense against

²⁷ From NAC FOC Collection.

²⁸ Eklund notes, for example, that in 1931, "the FOC convention declared its new programme with the slogan 'Against Hunger, Fascism and War'"(1987:229).

fascism, and as unavoidable in the absence of violent revolution. Alternately, Grenke suggests that for the German clubs in particular, the change in the name of the paper was specifically strategic, underscoring that the fight for democracy was a fight for communism:

German-Canadian [sic] labour radicals felt... that as the threat against communism was concentrated in Germany, it was especially up to them to oppose Hitlerism and fascism. They had in fact adopted this position immediately after Hitler's rise to power. The change in name merely was a tactical move intended to help the workers' movement attract other members of the German-Canadian community to a policy it had pursued since 1933 (1995:89-91).

Other notable changes occurred in the content of the labour press. The pro-communist papers in particular adjusted their tone and style such that their militant stance and emphasis on the 'class war' was toned down. The aim was still to encourage and facilitate activism, but the language used was less dogmatic and emphatic. Pilli notes that this was apparent in the Finnish *Vapaus*, specifically from 1935 to 1939 when its policy was to 'popularize' the paper:

'Populism'...meant the pruning of Marxist terminology, and an overall moderation of the paper's radicalism in order to win support from less radicalized sections of the population.... In the second half of the 1930s, the main emphasis in the political content in *Vapaus* was on the attempt to create unity within the working class and to co-ordinate its forces in the struggle against hunger, war, and fascism (1982:190/1).

The immigrant labour associations and press did not disregard ethnicity or nationalism, however. They were intimately tied to the homeland through language, through relatives remaining there, and through the newly arrived immigrants. Ethnic and national identification could be expressed depending on events both in the homeland

and in Canada, and particularly when relatives in the country of origin were persecuted based on ethnicity or as a result of nationalism. For example, the brief existence of an independent Ukraine (1917-1921), followed by subsequent waves of Russification and Polonization, and Stalin's imposed famine in the early 1930s, were potent combination for national defense motivating Ukrainian identification across the political spectrum (Weir 1957:22; Swyripa 1999). In addition, the growing gap between communist theory and Stalin's practices placed the Comintern and communism in general, in serious question. The apparent failure of the CPC and ULFTA to formally recognize or officially criticize these actions resulted in entrenching divisions between Ukrainian socialists and communists, which were articulated in two papers published in Toronto. These were manifest in the *Robitnychi Visti (Labour News)* (1933-1938) which was Trotskyite, and *Vpered (Forward)* (1938-1940); the latter retained communist principles but was critical of the Comintern and the CPC, publishing articles that were "sharply critical of pro-Soviet leaders and supporters of Stalin's road to socialism" (Hoerder 1987b:367; and 373). Similarly, Finnish socialists who were critical of Comintern's practices broke away from the FOC in 1931 to produce a newspaper *Vapaa Sana (The Free Word)*, which was also decidedly anti-communist (Hoerder 1987).²⁹

On the other hand, events in the homeland and Canada could provide the impetus for further cooperation between socialists and communists. As noted earlier, this was also the case, particularly with German Canadians and Italian Canadians. The rise of

²⁹ Lindstrom-Best suggests that the name of the paper was chosen to indicate freedom from political control and censorship in general, and from Communist Party control in particular (1982:49). Although it encouraged support of the CCF when the party was established in 1933, the paper aimed to "safeguard its political neutrality" so that it avoided political polemics from then on (Ibid: 51). This partly explains why the paper was able to avoid censorship, so that its challenges were mostly financial until its demise in 1981.

fascism in both Germany and Italy led to an increasing general awareness of fascist tendencies in Canada. Where capitalism had been, or was part and parcel of the criticism in the labour press throughout its existence, the combination of a number of changes in Canada in the 1930s suggested that fascism was becoming a more widespread threat to democratic life. The cumulative history of the government practices in Canada – the internment operations, continuing mail and press censorship, RCMP spying and harassment, the implementation of Section 98 and the arrest of the Communist leaders – topped off by a rise in organized fascist activities, were all interpreted as evidence of a nascent fascism in Canada. Just as the radical German organizations took specific responsibility for anti-fascist crusades, self-identified Italian “anti-fascist” clubs and an associated press emerged.³⁰ Differences between socialists and communists that had previously split the Italian left, receded as they came together to fight against fascism (Principe 1985:43).³¹ Out of these clubs, three relatively successive anti-fascist newspapers were published in Toronto [see Table 4(1)].³² The last of these, *La Voce degli italo-canadesi* (est. Sept 1938) signified a policy of coalition building as part of the popular front, such that its constituents included “professionals and businessmen” with

³⁰ The first of these was *Il Risveglio Italiano* (*The Italian Awakening*), which was established in Montréal in 1926 (Hoerder 1987c:25). The subsequent orders for deportation of its editor and suppression of the paper four months after it first published, only confirmed any doubts of where the Canadian government’s sympathies lay (Ibid and Principe 1985:43). Principe notes that the only reason that the editor was spared deportation was “the result of a petition signed by several thousand people; nonetheless, the paper had to stop publication” (Ibid).

³¹ These clubs met for debate, conducted English classes and formed small drama groups; cooperating with “other militant anti-fascist groups include[ing] Local 253 of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America, the Italian section of the ILP, Il Circolo Femminile Anit Garibaldi and the Italian branch of the United Workers of America (Principe 1985:43).

³² The Italian papers also drew on the autonomy and activism demonstrated in the 1837 rebellions in Canada, links were made between Mackenzie and Papineau and the Italian “heroes” of the Risorgimento (men by the names of Mazzini and Garibaldi) (Principe 1985:43).

the paper advocating democracy as opposition to fascism in its editorials. It did not last very long however.

Two weeks later after the signing of the Nazi-Soviet non-aggression pact of August 1939, and the outbreak of World War Two, *La Voce* aligned itself with the communist position of non-intervention in what was considered to be a capitalist war. As a result most non-communists withdrew their support, and in spring 1940, the paper was closed by Canadian authorities (Principe 1985:46).

As shall be discussed later in Chapter Six, this was the fate of a good number of immigrant labour newspapers, publishing houses and printing facilities, not to mention the organizations and labour temples, as well as the publishers, organizers and other activists who were interned.

The Labour Press in English and French

As with the many facets of labour culture, a thorough documentation and analysis of the labour press in English and French during the interwar period has yet to be done. Regrettably the only study found that intersected with this period is incomplete and relies on a combination of advertising reports (McKim's) and sporadic letters from trade union editors (Elliott 1947). Other than recognizing some of the aims of the papers, Elliott provides little analysis of content. The other source on the labour press is a reference book; Hann et al.'s (1973) *Primary Sources in Working Class History 1860-1930*, provides a list of labour newspaper titles in the 1920s and 1930s catalogued according to chronology and region; combined with Elliott's work (and *excluding* those of the CPC and CCF), these are listed in Table 5 (following).

Table 5(1)
The Labour Press in English and French
Published in Canada through the 1930s

Region and City	Name (and Affiliation)	Existence	Frequency
Maritimes			
Sydney	<i>Labour Leader</i> (Independent)	1919-1942	weekly
	<i>Steelworker and Miner</i> (Independent)	1933-1948+	weekly
Halifax	<i>Canadian Railways Employee Monthly</i>	1914-1948+	monthly
	<i>Nova Scotia Miner</i>	1929-1932	not recorded
Québec			
Montréal	<i>Canadian Running Trades Journal</i> (Cdn Assoc. of Railwaymen, Enginemen, Conductors, etc.)	1931-1934	not recorded
	<i>Charpentier Mensuier</i> (Québec Prov. Council of the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners)	1925-1936	monthly
	<i>Federated Railwayman</i> [Railway Employees Union, No. 4 (AFL)] (1 of 8 pgs in French)	1925-1948+	monthly
	<i>Justice</i> (Internat. Union of Women's Clothing Workers – TLCC)	1937-1948+	monthly
	<i>L'Aiguilleur</i> (Amalgamated Clothing Workers)	1938-1948+	irregular
	<i>L'Homme Libre</i> (young French Cdn workers)	1937-1948+	monthly
	<i>L'Imprimeur</i> (Fed. of Cdn Printing Workers)	1936-1948+	monthly
	<i>Le Monde Ouvrier</i> (<i>The Labor World</i>) ³³ (Québec Fed. of Labour) (Bilingual)	1916-1948+	weekly
	<i>Printing Workers' Courier</i> (Internat. Unions of Québec – TLCC) (Bilingual)	1937-1948+	not recorded
	<i>Postal Tribune</i> (Cdn Postal Employees)	1938-1948+	monthly
	<i>Tramway</i> (Syndicate of Tramway Employees)	1927-1948	monthly
	<i>Needle Worker</i> (Industrial Union of Needle Trade Workers of Canada)	1933-1935	not recorded
	<i>Travailleur</i> (Catholic Syndicats) (French)	1924-1948+	monthly
	<i>Vie Syndicale</i> (Catholic Confed. of Labour)	1924-1948+	monthly
	<i>Syndicat</i> (Catholic Synicate of Québec)	1938-1941	monthly
Ontario			
Brantford	<i>Canadian Cooperator</i> (Cooperative Union of Canada)	1910-1947	monthly
Hamilton	<i>Labour News</i> (Independent)	1909-1948+	weekly
Oshawa	<i>Oshawa Labour Leader</i> (indep – coop with WEA, UAW and Oshawa trade unions)	1938-1941	monthly
Ottawa	<i>The Canadian Unionist</i> (ACCL)	1927-1948+	monthly
	<i>Communication Worker</i> (Electrial Cmn Workers of Canada)	1926-1934	not recorded
	<i>Labour Review</i> (CFL)	1935-1948+	monthly
	<i>Trades and Labour Congress Journal</i> (Trades and Labour Congress of Canada)	1922-1948+	monthly
Toronto	<i>Building Worker</i> (Amalgamated Bldg Workers of Canada)	1934-1937	monthly
	<i>Canadian Chemical Worker</i>	1939-1948+	weekly
	<i>Carpenter's Monthly Bulletin</i>	1925-1931	monthly
	<i>Canadian Labour Press</i> (Independent) ³⁴	1918-1948	weekly

³³ This was the "oldest bilingual labour paper in Canada" (Elliott 1948:224).

Table 5(2)
The Labour Press in English and French
Published in Canada through the 1930s

Region and/or City	Name (and Affiliation)	Existence	Frequency
Windsor	<i>Canadian Trade Unionist</i> (CFL)	1921-1935	monthly
	<i>Changes to Labour Review</i> (Independent)	1935-1936	monthly
	<i>Labour Advocate</i> (Independent)	1930-1932	monthly
	<i>Labour Leader</i> (Independent) ³⁵	1919-1942	s-monthly
	<i>Ontario Firefighter</i> (Provincial Fed. of Ontario Firefighters)	1922-1931	monthly
	<i>Postal Journal</i> (Dominion Postal Clerks)	1922-1937	monthly
	<i>Rural Mail Carrier</i>	1939-1944	monthly
	<i>Searchlight</i> (Cdn Seaman's and Fishhandlers')	1937-1948	not recorded
	<i>Toronto Garment Worker</i> (United Garment Workers of America – TLCC)	1938-1948+	monthly
	<i>Typographical Bulletin</i> (Toronto Typographical Union, No. 91)	1922-1948+	monthly
	<i>United Automobile Worker</i> (Cdn Edition)	1939-1948+	missing
Manitoba Winnipeg	<i>OBU Bulletin</i> (One Big Union)	1919-1934	weekly
	<i>Railway's Journal</i> (Canadian Association of Railwaymen)		monthly
	<i>Railway Mail Clerk</i> (Dominion Railway Mail Clerks' Federation)	1925-1948+	monthly
	<i>Railway Review</i> (Nat. Union of Railwaymen)	1932-1948+	monthly
	<i>Sporting News</i> (independent – supported ACCL)	1927-1934	weekly
Alberta Calgary	<i>Canadian Miner</i> (Mine Workers' Union of Can)	1930-1933	s-monthly
	<i>Railway Mail Clerk</i> (Dominion Railway Mail Clerks Federation)	1925-1948+	monthly
British Columbia Vancouver	<i>BC Labor Truth</i> (National Labour Council)	1934-1935	monthly
	Then (Western Cdn. Fed of Labour)	1935-1948+	monthly
	<i>BC Lumberworker</i> (International Woodworkers)	1935-1948+	monthly
	<i>Fisherman</i> (Organized Fishermen and Shoreworkers)	1937-1948+	weekly
	<i>Guild Annual</i> (Cdn Merchant Guild TLCC)	1939-1948+	annual
	<i>Heavy Lift</i> (Van. Waterfront Workers)	1933-1934	not recorded
	<i>Labor Statesman</i> (Vancouver TLC)	1924-1948+	monthly
	<i>Organizer</i> (Amalgamated Post Workers)	1920-1937	monthly
	Changed to <i>Civil Servants Digest</i>	1937-1948+	monthly

Source: Hann et al. (1973), Elliott (1947 and 1948), unless otherwise specified.

³⁴ "Founded on the belief that the 'trade union and employers' interests are identical" (Elliott 1948:225).

³⁵ Founded in the interests of "international trade unionism" by-line: "Freedom and democracy for the organized labour movement can only flourish under highly competitive economics" (Ibid: 226).

As Table 5 suggests, Montréal, Toronto and Vancouver were well-served by the labour press as related to the number of unions and overall membership strength. Thus the major labour papers that survived the Depression were those of the largest trade unions. Of the independents that also survived, these accepted advertisements and espoused a corporatist philosophy in their banners. Amongst the largest union papers were those of the Trades and Labor Congress of Canada (TLC) *Canadian Congress Journal* (est. 1921); the All-Canadian Labour Congress (ACCL) *The Canadian Unionist* (est. 1927); and the *Canadian Railway Employees Monthly* (est. 1909) sponsored by the Canadian Brotherhood of Railway Employees (CBRE) that were all published in English. The CBRE owned a printing plant in Ottawa 1918 called the Mutual Press Ltd. for labour publishing and also supplied the printing requirements of the CCF.³⁶ Of the issues examined from these papers (1935-1940), all were monthlies in a magazine format and carried advertising from industry, provincial and federal departments of labour and commerce, and small businesses (totaling approximately five to twenty-five per cent of print space depending on the issue). Other than the small business ads (for staples such as food and clothing), by far the majority of the ads addressed the male worker as strong,

³⁶ According to former National Secretary and Treasurer of Canadian Railway Transport and General Workers (the later generation CBRE), the Mutual Press was bought by the union because it could not otherwise get printing done through the commercial printing houses (see Mazepa 1997:33-36). When the CCF held its first convention, declaration and principle aims of the party were published in *The Monthly*, and it supported the party's printing requirements in subsequent years (see also Greening and Maclean 1961:89).

heroic and patriotic,³⁷ necessary for the success of industry and the Canadian nation as a whole.³⁸ None of the papers appeared open to “worker correspondents” or had any large feedback section save for reports or comments from particular districts or locals. The large majority of the articles were written by union leadership, and taken from international unions like the International Labor Organization (ILO) in the case of the TLCC, or from British labour or socialist publications in the case of the ACCL or CBRE. Each included reprints or summaries of articles reprinted from international labour papers and the commercial press without added comment. The TLC paper also included reprints of speeches from parliament or articles written by federal ministers addressing organized labour.

Each national union journal had a women’s and a children’s page; the women’s page was filled with seasonal recipes and children’s health information (in the TLCC’s journal) added by fashion tips (in the ACCL’s journal). Save one or two rare

³⁷ Ads by heavy industries like mining and steel stressed that they were “100% Canadian,” addressing the labourer as a strong, skilled, and linked to “his” industry in a personal romanticized relationship (for example an ad addressing the steel workers proclaimed “‘Men of Algoma’ Romance! Drama! Danger! Few branches of modern industry demand so much of Courage, Knowledge, Experience and Skill as does the making and fashioning of Steel” *Canadian Congress Journal* 1936, “Building a Great Industry ...100% Canadian Dominion Foundries and Steel, Ibid). Labour’s place within the system was depicted as a necessary or unquestionable duty, which was emphasized in connections between production and consumption, capitalism and patriotism. Constant appeals were made to “Buy Canadian” (for example: “You do your part to build a greater nation when you demand the products of Canadian industry”; “SUPPORT ...the Empire in which you live BUY ‘British Empire’ Goods”; and “...Help to Keep Canadian industry busy. Busy industries mean full pay and comfort at home”) (Ibid January 1937). These ads were paid for directly by companies, but also appeared as captions printed by the union(s) itself.

³⁸ Throughout the issues examined, the federal government ran continual half- and full- page ads explaining departmental functions, with captions such as “Harmony in Industry” (Federal Dept. of Labour) and “Canadian Labour’s Part in Commerce” (Federal Dept. of Trade and Commerce), both underscoring the value of unions “...guided by *sane* labour leaders” (emphasis added). Also constant were advertisements for beer and cigarettes recognizing the challenge of long hours and hard work, offering both as the well-deserved “reward” at the end of the day.

exceptions,³⁹ as a rule, neither journal had articles contemplating women's work or wages in any capacity. In both, the "kiddies" pages included stories and poems of fable and fantasy. Short stories, poems or jokes were mostly non-existent in the ACCL's and CBRE's journal, whereas the TLCC used poems and small jokes as occasional filler. Poems stressed the necessity of optimism and perseverance, trust in unions and collective support, and hope in economic advancement. Excerpts from these poems include for example:

If

If you have faith in those with
 whom you labor,
 And trust in those with whom you
 make a trade;

 If you believe in friend and next door
 neighbor
 And heed examples pioneers have
 made;
 If you expect the sun to rise tomorrow;
 If you are sure that somewhere skies
 are blue –
 Wake up and pack away the futile sorrow
 For better days are largely up to you
 "If" (author unknown).

Smilin' Through

When dark clouds seem to lower,
 And the horizon looks blue,
 When you think you haven't got a chance
 And no one's left that's true.
 All the world seems dark around you
 Gone are friends you knew,
 That's the time to keep a-Smilin',
 And go forward Smilin' Through.
 (author unknown)

Company Unionism

Come into our Company Union,
 Said the Spider to the Fly.
 It's the finest little Union

³⁹ A content analysis would be necessary to ascertain this.

That ever you did spy.
 The cost to join is nothing;
 The things you get; the same.
 It's like a regular Union
 Until you know the game.

....
 When speaking of the Company,
 You must say "we" and "us."
 This makes you feel important,
 Although not worth a cuss.
 We call you our "co-workers";
 You're as happy as can be,
 If you stay away from Unions
 And just refuse to see.
 (Gequel in Pattern Makers' Journal)

The TLC's *Canadian Congress Journal* emphasized its separation from politics in issues related to union business and especially when criticizing controversial government policies. The TLC's policy was to avoid political party association in general, making an explicit distinction between politics and economics, as P.M. Draper, President of the TLC, and editor of the *Journal*, explained:

...in Canada, unlike the policy in Great Britain, unions in the main have followed a non-political policy. Their activities have been confined to the social and economic field, and they have not sought to act as a united force in political activity. Yet they have influenced legislation for the workers and the main purpose of the TLCC, is to further action for Labor in the legislative field by contacting governments. But in all, we are strictly economic in character. Also the great body of trade union opinion in Canada is definitely anti-radical. We see no place in the Canadian picture for Communism, nor indeed for Fascism or Nazism, or any sort of dictatorship (Draper 1936:9-10).

The *Journal* did not directly attack communism or socialism, nor did it recognize the CPC or CCF in any of its editorials, thereby avoiding "politics" by limiting its engagement to the government-of-the-day's practices (such as laws or government policies) rather than its underlying ideology. Even though the TLCC (and the ACCL) was officially anti-Communist, whenever government policies were criticized, and when resolutions at conventions advocated "radical" policies, both unions took pains to

emphasize that any such positions should not be misunderstood as support for communism.⁴⁰

Where the TLCC aimed to avoid direct political controversy, articles in the ACCL's *The Canadian Unionist* advocated the direct participation of unions in politics, discussed variants of socialism in theory, and was consistently critical of the TLCC and the "anarcho-Communist" unions. Sharing union leadership and editorship with the ACCL, the CBRE's journal was a smaller version of *The Canadian Unionist* focusing on railway employees in particular. As far as the ACCL/CBRE was considered, both the TLCC and Communist-organized unions were treated with equal contempt, each were considered to be "foreign"-controlled threats to the national (Canadian-only) labour movement. The TLCC was referred to as the "emasculated subsidiary" of the AFL, which itself was considered a "capitalist institution" and "Yankee" union, that was bent on undermining and exploiting Canadian labour for selfish (that is, employers' and AFL leadership's) ends.⁴¹ It blamed the TLCC for lack of workers' power in Canada, and blamed the "anarcho-Communists" for the "failures" of major strikes in Canada [e.g.

⁴⁰ Each aimed to avoid any association with communism, particularly as it was frequently used as an accusation (in the commercial press and by liberal and conservative politicians and employers) to undermine any progressive trade union actions. For example, in an article entitled "Civil War in Spain" the TLCC deemed it necessary to qualify its support of the elected Spanish government in its own journal as follows: "Since the adjournment of the Montréal convention of the Congress, a number of newspapers located in certain sections of the Dominion, as well as correspondents writing for the Press, have endeavored to leave the impression that the action of the convention in adopting a resolution in support of the Spanish Government commits the Congress to Communism. Nothing is further from the truth than such a public declaration. ... The Trades and Labour Congress of Canada is not now, nor ever has been, during the fifty-two years of its existence, a supporter of communism; neither it is in favour of fascism, nazism [sic], or any other form of dictatorship" [*Canadian Congress Journal*, September XV(9)].

⁴¹ For example "The March of Labour" Editorial; "One More Betrayal," *The Canadian Unionist* 9(1) June 1935:7-8 and 14; and "Trouble Brewing: An Alien Alliance [sic] that Bodes Ill for Canada" Editorial (Ibid: March 1936:257).

Winnipeg General Strike and the Relief Camp Workers' March (the On-to-Ottawa Trek)].⁴²

In 1936, when industrial labour organizing increased and unions were beginning to join the Congress for Industrial Organizations (CIO), the ACCL was adamant in denouncing its internationalism, with leaders referring to the CIO as “an alien challenge” or “mob unionism”.⁴³ For the ACCL, a particular bone of contention was the international affiliations of the *communications*’ unions.⁴⁴ Of those that had been organized prior to the 1930s, almost all were connected to American unions.⁴⁵ For example, the Canadian Actors Equity Association was affiliated with the American Actors Equity Association (est. 1913)⁴⁶ as was the (American) Federation of Musicians in Canada (AFMC).⁴⁷ The International Alliance of Theatrical Employees (est. 1898) was part of the International Alliance of Theatrical Employees and Moving Picture

⁴² This is one of several examples where the ACCL focused their criticism on internal labour organization rather than the actions of the employers, government or police. For example, see the editorial “The March of Labour,” and “They Killed a Policeman” in *The Canadian Unionist* Vol. 9(2) 1935:5 and 37.

⁴³ These were expressed by ACCL leadership in the *The Canadian Labour Review* July 1937; and Oct 1937:272-273.

⁴⁴ A survey and analysis of communications’ unions formed in Canada during this period has yet to be done. See “suggestions for further research” in the thesis’ concluding chapter.

⁴⁵ The exception appears to be a journalist union formed at the newspaper *Le Droit d’Ottawa* in 1922, which lasted until 1929 (Demers 1988). Demers further suggests, that the primary reason for the lack of unionization in the pressrooms of the 1920s through to the 1940s was a fear held by many journalists of reprisal or of identification as a communist. “The Québec premier Maurice Duplessis openly charged union membership with the task of purging their ranks of “would be communists”” (Ibid: 32).

⁴⁶ Regrettably, the NAC does not have records of the Association until the 1950s (see NAC MG 28 I Vol. 352).

⁴⁷ Canadian musicians were employed in movie theatres and later in radio. They started their own locals and affiliated to the AFM in 1901 (Johnston 1997). The AFMC was involved in major battles with commercial cinemas in 1928 (after *The Jazz Singer*), when sound projectors using recorded music were placed in theatres across Canada and thousands of musicians were put out of work (Johnston 1997:78-9). In radio, Johnston notes that the AFMC tried to “ban the use of all recordings during prime time and pressurized broadcasters for a closed shop” (Ibid: 78-9).

Machine Operators in the United States (est. 1893).⁴⁸ In addition, Canadian locals of the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America were the “first to affiliate with the CIO”⁴⁹ in the spring of 1937 at the Westinghouse plant in Ontario.⁵⁰ The ACCL marked with pride the breakaways from international communication unions and the formation of Canadian unions (such as the Electrical Communication Workers of Canada, the Newspaper Printers’ Association in Calgary⁵¹ and Winnipeg,⁵² and the Winnipeg Cinemen Organization,⁵³ for example).

The ACCL’s annoyance with the international affiliations was exemplified by an incident in Calgary in April 1935 when a local of the American Federation of Musicians (AFM) refused to play without payment at a broadcast of the King’s Jubilee. Rather than acknowledge the worker’s right to be paid under Depression times, the ACCL and the local commercial press both interpreted the stand as unpatriotic, disloyal, and an example of the “form of American domination permeating our public life”.⁵⁴ In place of the AFM, the Canadian Federation of Musicians stepped in to play for free and the ACCL touted them as saviours of Canadian broadcasting. To support this claim, the ACCL charged that an earlier bid by the AFM for a “closed shop” at the CRBC was further proof of American control since it appeared that a possible strike would cut off the July 1st celebrations when the Prime Minister was scheduled to speak.⁵⁵ In their view, these

⁴⁸ NAC has files from 1893-1934 of annual conferences held in the U.S. (see NAC MG 28 I 96).

⁴⁹ NAC Finding Aid No. 1207 “Labour, Travail”.

⁵⁰ The ACCL focused its criticism on the structure of the union, while it said nothing about the ownership of Westinghouse.

⁵¹ “Printers on the March” *The Canadian Unionist*, 9(2) 1935:37.

⁵² “The Newspaper Printer’s Revolt” *The Canadian Unionist*, 9(2) 1935:44,46.

⁵³ “Winnipeg Cinemen Organization” (Ibid: 67).

⁵⁴ “Whose Country is This?” Editorial *Calgary Herald*. 12 April 1935 reprinted in full in *The Canadian Unionist* 9(1) June 1935: 21.

⁵⁵ See also “How Uncle Sam Wields the Baton in Canada’s Place of Entertainment” *The Canadian Unionist* 10(6) June 1936:10,12.

examples and others⁵⁶ indicated no less than an American *union* bid for control over communication in Canada:

Had the National Musicians' Union not existed last summer, for instance, radio broadcasting in Canada would have fallen into the hands of the American Federation of Musicians, and a great agency of public enlightenment might never again been free from its insidious and subversive influence. One cannot estimate at what price and under what handicap radio propaganda for the national Labour movement and for free Canadian institutions would then have been possible ["The March of Labour" Editorial, *The Canadian Unionist* Vol. 9 (2) July 1935:27].

Being against international unionism whether controlled by Americans⁵⁷ or "anarcho-communists," the ACCL found itself in a dilemma when the WUL and FUL were disbanded and later when the CIO was expelled from the AFL. An opportunity arose to increase the ACCL's ranks that were substantially weak in comparison to the TLCC. Given that some of these unions had been "controlled" by communists and were internationalist, but were now by default left without national affiliation, the leadership was faced with decision that compromise would be required if the ACCL wanted to expand its ranks. Those who refused to compromise formed a breakaway group and revived the Canadian Federation of Labour (CFL).⁵⁸ The CFL was reestablished and immediately began publishing its newspaper, *The Labour Review*, in December 1936. Building on past criticisms made in the ACCL's journal, again blaming failures of left

⁵⁶ Such as regarding theatrical performers and musicians from the American union working in Canada and their alleged efforts to bar Canadian union members from working at Canadian "theatres and other places of entertainment" (Ibid).

⁵⁷ For a critique of international control of a specific communications union see Zerker (1982) on the relationship of the Toronto Typographical Union with the International Typographic Union. See also Lipset, Trow and Coleman (1956) whose thesis on the ITU suggests a more democratic approach.

⁵⁸ For the disaffected leadership's position and the resulting establishment of the CFL, see the editorial "The Collapse of Congress – a Plain Statement of Facts," *The Labour Review*, 1(1) December 1936:14-18.

activism everywhere on the communists,⁵⁹ *The Labour Review* continued the tradition with articles such as “Why Canadians Spurn Communism,” and equated communism with fascism as both dictatorships. The TLCC also made this equation without making any distinction between theory or ideology, and practice. In the view of both TLCC and CFL leadership, communism was the same as fascism - inherently dictatorial and anti-democratic.⁶⁰

Despite the official denunciations of communism by the ACCL and the TLCC (and the CBRE), however, all papers supported the cooperative stance of the Canadian Youth Congress (even recognizing the Young Communist League’s participation) carrying favourable articles on each of the CYC’s conferences⁶¹ (with the TLCC endorsing “all possible cooperation and assistance” for the CYC).⁶² In addition, all three unions denounced any intrusion into civil rights in general, despite government and commercial press pronouncements that this indicated tie-ins of union policy with communism. This included supporting the repeal of Section 98, advocating federal disallowance of the Québec “Communist Propaganda Act” (the “Padlock Act”), and

⁵⁹ CFL leaders had also treated the CLAWF with suspicion as a Communist plot (*The Canadian Unionist* 9(10) October 1935:132). It also saw the formation of the Popular Front government in Spain as a failure, with the resulting civil war as “further evidence of the disastrous effect of a Labour movement’s association with groups which are in such a hurry to transform society that they have no patience for preliminary transformation of public opinion” [*The Canadian Unionist* 10(3) August 1936:59].

⁶⁰ Adler and Patterson (1970) trace this as a movement – called “red fascism” – that was also prevalent in the United States during the 1920s and 1930s. Regrettably (for our purposes) their focus is not on explaining its origins, but on how “red fascism” was carried into the Cold War period and how it “significantly shaped American perception of world events,” and was used to justify anti-Soviet policies.

⁶¹ For example: *The Canadian Unionist* 11(6) June 1937:4, and annual reports on the CYC’s progress until 1940.

⁶² *New Commonwealth*, 21 May 1938:1.

calling for the curtailment of state powers under the War Measures Act enacted in 1939 (thesis Chapter Six), which were advocated within the TLCC's journal especially.⁶³

While the national trade union papers were able to continue publication as supported by union finances and government and industry advertising, the smaller labour papers were challenged financially (lack of resources available to the press in general – including payment for their own labour – and a difficulty of securing advertising specifically). This partly explains why only the larger papers sustained publication after the 1930s. An additional reason was the repressive climate for labour or any publications of “radical” nature, which also likely affected publications negatively [just as Bekken (1993) described in the U.S. context (thesis Chapter 3)]. Continual police surveillance, harassment of correspondents and editors, and periodic raids (Section 98 of the Criminal Code was still in place until 1936) made publishing challenging, to say the least, while also affecting finances. RCMP surveillance and the possibility of being blacklisted by an employer as a result of subscribing to a (radical) labour paper (let alone contributing to one) meant that subscriptions that were obtained were needed to support free circulation. The repressive climate is exemplified in the following RCMP report on a communication union's paper in 1934:⁶⁴

The paper reports that subscriptions allow free copy circulation[,] which is necessary to reach the readers: “With intimidation and espionage so rife, it would

⁶³ For example see *Canadian Congress Journal*, “Section 98, VALE!” X(6) June 1936:23; “Civic Liberty” XVII(1) February 1938:12; “Freedom of Speech, Press and Assemblage” XVII(3) March 1938:9; and “Terrorism under Padlock Law” XVIII(2), February 1939:8.

⁶⁴ Reports of labour press activity were included in RCMP Bulletins recording circulation figures, fund-raising activities, changes in editors, and successes as well as publication failures. While the reports are not consistent enough to provide any significant method of quantification, they do illustrate the extent of effort required and the challenges of the paper's editors who were under constant surveillance and considerable strain – both financially and personally. For example, see RCMP Bulletin reports for 1934: No. 711, App V; 716, App II:10; 717 App I:2[6]; No. 722, App I:1[5]; No. 729 App II:7 and II:10; No. 731 App V, and so on.

be a bold man today who would admit having anything to do with the Communication Workers' League or the Link-up. But due to the fact that unpaid copies are sent out, no one need fear to mention the Link-up and discuss articles appearing in it. 'Somebody sends it to me through the mails'...(RCMP Bulletin No. 715, App 1:3, 18 July 1934).

Such intimidation did not extinguish production, however. In addition to the trade union papers, there were countless shop mimeographs and bulletins as well as the small press of other kinds of labour organizations. These included papers of organized unemployed workers, war veterans, and relief camp workers across Canada; such as: *Voice of the Unemployed* (Provincial Workers' Council, Vancouver); *Edmonton Unemployed Gazette*; *Alberta Relief Camp Workers' Bulletin*; *Red Deer Rank and File Miner*; *The Agitator* (Relief Camp Workers' Union⁶⁵); and *The Rank and File Veteran* (RCMP Bulletins 1935; Kealey and Whitaker 1995; Hodgson 1935:5]. These were likely one-to- two pages of crudely produced mimeographed sheets, but nevertheless, they were copied to the extent that resources would allow, and passed from hand to hand (Ibid: Hodgson). There were also many experiments with different kinds of journals and periodicals, and the CPC insisted that all affiliated unions and organizations produce their own press.

⁶⁵ This is from a study of the Relief Camps in Canada and the U.S. by Tanner (1965:86). Tanner contrasts the radical papers circulating in the Canadian camps with the U.S. public relations campaign that promoted and praised similar camps in the U.S. There, the government-sponsored an in-camp newspaper called *Happy Days*. As Tanner describes, it was full of stories proclaiming the camps "successful," and identifying individuals who were becoming "men" by "pull[ing] their weight" and "doing useful work" through the wonderful government plan that had made it all possible (Ibid: 110-113). Tanner argues that one of the reasons the camps in Canada were so despised was a result of the Canadian governments' public relations' "failure" in promoting them.

The Party Press

The Communist Party Press

The Communist press in Canada began with *The Workers' Guard*, and *The Communist*, which were replaced by *The Worker* first published 1922, and was made possible largely as a result of the successful fund-raising efforts of immigrant workers (Buck 1952:23;27). Other CPC papers included the *Canadian Labor Monthly* (1928-1929) (Doyle 2002:80); *Canadian Labour Defender* (1930-1935) (Petryshyn 1982); *The Women Worker* (1926-1929) (Sangster and Hobbs 1999);⁶⁶ the WUL's "*Unity*" and the FUL's *Furrow* (to 1935); as well as *The Young Worker* (1924 -1936) as published by the CPC's Workers' Publishing Company. Press support was a requirement of membership in the CPC, as was submission to the "discipline of the party" (Buck 1952:23;27).

In keeping with the CPC's popular front policy, the CPC established the *Clarté* in Montréal and published in French (and occasionally in English) (1935-39) (Charpentier 1992; Fournier 1978). Its masthead indicated it was a popular front initiative as a "journal d'opinions et d'actions populaires," and committed "au service du front populaire des droits du peuple" (Doyle 2002:156). In reviewing its contents, Fournier concludes that it was a popular front paper given that half the articles concentrated on political economic analyses, with the rest of the articles attending to activism, social critique and discussion of unemployment and social benefits, with only ten per cent of the contents referring directly to the CPC (1978:277). *The Worker* also marked a change to the popular front policy, and reflected its increase in publication to a daily newspaper,

⁶⁶ "Finnish women tried to support the paper, which had a small following among trade unionists and intellectuals but virtually no readership among ordinary English speaking women" (Lindstrom 1992:159).

when its name was changed to the *Daily Clarion* in 1936. As Tim Buck described it,

“The name change was more than a party achievement – it was evidence of the growth of the united front”;⁶⁷ he quotes the CPC conference report marking the publication:

The measure of achievement that the establishment of a daily paper reflects is tremendous. It is not merely the manifestation of the increasing strength of the revolutionary movement, but also of the broadening character of the labour movement as a whole. It reflects the fact that revolutionary workers no longer live to themselves in a narrow sect, but live, move and have wide influence in every phase of the labour movement (CPC 1936:75).

The policies of the CPC can be charted through the pages of *The Worker* and *Daily Clarion*. The early aversion to the CCF was still evident in 1934/35 as many an article criticized the actions, policies and speeches of its leaders. Articles were addressed directly to J.S. Woodsworth (national leader) or Graham Spry (Ontario provincial leader) in a style that questioned their pronouncements, scorned their actions, and taunted them personally for a reply to challenges. Although calls for a “United Labor Front” came out in early 1934, the paper did not tone down its criticism of the CCF until late 1935. What was more consistent, however, was its militant and aggressive stance against capitalism and capitalists. Although this militancy would wane somewhat in the mid-1930s, the style and approach of *The Worker* was unfailingly critical whether in articles or editorial cartoons. In analyzing the latter, Vokey (2000) compared the editorial cartoons in its pages to the *Star* and *Telegram* in Toronto in the 1930s. As he suggests, the radical

⁶⁷ The establishment of a daily newspaper during this time was a remarkable accomplishment, particularly for a Communist paper. Many commercial papers ceased to exist in the 1930s and many others were bought out or consolidated (Thompson 1985:185). Thompson notes that there were only one hundred dailies in Canada in 1931, down from 138 in 1913 (Ibid).

class-conscious and anti-capitalist view of *The Worker* was depicted in cartoons where the elite, appearing as controlling, grotesque, glutinous men in business suits, were mocked and shown as evil, “criminal,” and heartless, which was meant to incite anger and protest (Vokey 2000:148). This was emphasized in slogans such as “‘FIGHT OR STARVE’ and ‘ORGANIZE AGAINST HUNGER’” accompanying the graphics (Ibid: 149). The working class, on the other hand, was either depicted as weak, poverty-stricken and malnourished (particularly when a family life was represented), and engaged in backbreaking work, or as strong and ‘heroic’ (Ibid).⁶⁸

Standard to the paper were reports, analyses and critical comment on international and national political economy, and actions for and against labour that focused solely on the working class (that is, on manual and industrial-based occupations, including the labour of women, children and “Negro’s” [sic]).⁶⁹ In addition, the paper had regular columns of book – and movie – reviews and a new column on sports (in 1935) that all

⁶⁸ In contrast, social class was primarily absent from the cartoons of the *Star* and *Telegram* or were “at best ambiguously defined” avoiding any reference to structural inequalities, and depicting the occasional “power baron” as “corrupt” (Ibid: 148). When portrayed at all, the working class was viewed from a paternalistic standpoint as an “unsophisticated, uneducated mass totally dependent on the ruling class” (Ibid: 151). Even though the majority of the people in Toronto were being affected by the Depression, Vokey observes that neither of the commercial papers addressed social issues such as “the degradation of unemployment and relief, wage cuts, and evictions [which] were almost solely the domain of the cartoons found in the leftist papers” (Ibid:156). He claims that both papers supported the status quo, and aimed to “put a positive spin on the Depression,” while condemning radicalism. Similar to the text of other commercial papers of the time, communists were depicted as “evil, unchristian, foreign agitators whose sole purpose was to destroy all sense of order and morality in Canada” (Ibid: 167).

⁶⁹ A more thorough analysis is necessary, but the paper did not appear to discuss ethnicity or race other than when recognizing “negro” workers in particular.

provided critical analysis.⁷⁰ For example, in the introduction of the new sports section, the writer criticized the lack of coverage of amateur or workers' sports (whether regional, national or international), and a general neglect to expose greed within professional and amateur sports (*The Worker* 5 Feb 1934:5).

For the most part, articles were not attributed to any particular writer, and when an author's name was attached, they were either written by leading organizers of the CPC, or by "worker," "miner," or "farmer" correspondents. According to one of the editors, the content for the paper came by mail and telegram from a wide variety of sources, international and national, as well as being "brought in by workers from the hostels and local neighborhoods". This led *The Worker* to proclaim that -

This paper isn't written at 98 Church Street Toronto – not on your tin type. It's written with a stub of a pencil, using a pail bottom for a table in a camp on Vancouver Island – it's written under a flickering gas lamp on a Saskatchewan farm – it's written by calloused miner's hands that have just dropped the pick in the pits at Stellarton, N.S. – it's written by the little sweatshop girl, tired and weary after long hours in an eastern Canada needle shop. ...it's written in the spirit and fight of the worker who knows that he is being gypped and is willing and ready to do something about it and also to organize his fellows to act. ("Wide Correspondence Throbs With Struggle" *The Worker* 7 March 1935:1).⁷¹

In the early years, advertising space took a total of approximately one and a half inches in six full pages of text interspersed with sporadic photographs [mainly of violence

⁷⁰ For example, Hollywood films were reviewed for their elements of "bourgeois propaganda" analyzed according to the directing, plot, actors, etc., and how, for example, the film represented Russia, workers and capitalists. When warranted, movies were also appreciated to a point, for example "David Copperfield" was relatively well-received given the underlying "social conscience and social message" of Dickens, some of which came through in the movie (*The Worker* 2 March 1935:5).

⁷¹ In the same issue editor Oscar Ryan describes how each letter to *the Worker* is read by the paper's editors and sorted. "If the contribution is unsuitable, it is set aside for a future letter to the writer. If it is in any way suited it is re-read and hammered into a story. ...Often it has to be rewritten and it may be necessary to write in the 'lead'" and remove "repetitive or unnecessary parts" and so on. ("Four Million Copies Have Come off Press: How Each Issue of 'The Worker' is Produced" *The Worker* 5 March 1935:5).

against workers, but also photos from the Soviet Union and Europe (from worker-correspondents living there)]. Simple graphics made announcements of rallies, lectures and speeches, or picnics, dances, and film-screenings, and were common, whether sponsored by unions or by organizations like the WUL, CLAWF, or the Young Workers, the venues of which varied, but generally were at labour temples in the city (Toronto or Winnipeg). A regular 6x6 inch feature called "Sing as You Fight" offered radical lyrics to familiar songs (including hymns) accompanied by a synopsis of the background of the song chosen. For example:

[This] song aptly mirrors the feelings of the unemployed workers in the bread lines. It has become quite popular since the capitalist system took a high dive back in 1929. Maybe not so romantic as those little ditties about the mo-oo-onlight and the ro-oo-oses, but anyhow it has a dang sight more bed-rock reality in it. ...How about treating the Relief Officer to it next time you're down at the pogeey.

Soup Song (sung to the tune of "My Bonnie Lies Over the Ocean")

I'm spending my nights at the flophouse
 I'm spending my days on the street
 I'm looking for work and I find none
 I wish I had something to eat.

CHORUS

Soo-up, Soo-up. They give me a bowl of soo-up
 Soo-up, Soo-up. They give me a bowl of soo-up

I spent twenty years in the factory
 I did everything I was told
 They way I was loyal and faithful
 Now even before I get old

CHORUS

I saved fifteen bucks with my banker
 To buy me a car and a yacht
 I went down to draw out my fortune
 And this is the answer I got

CHORUS

I fought in the war for my country
 I went out to bleed and to die
 I thought that my country would help me
 But this was my country's reply

CHORUS

(*The Worker* 17 Jan. 1935:5).

Fund-raising amongst an impoverished working class in the midst of a Depression was a formidable undertaking, but the campaign towards a daily newspaper was taken up with earnest in the early 1930s – and it was remarkably successful.⁷² As was earlier noted, the change of name to the *Daily Clarion* marked the change in frequency as well as a change in the CPC's policies towards facilitating a popular front. A marked change in content was also evident. The paper's banner was now "Canada's Leading Labor Paper,"⁷³ and new columns added were called "With Our Women" and a children's page called "the Clarionettes". The editorials were slightly less militant, but the biggest or more obvious change came in the "cultural" sections. The sports column all but eliminated its criticism of bourgeois sports and sportswriters, and carried coverage of commercial (primarily male) sports of hockey, football, and soccer. Although there were occasional reports of labour organizing within sports, the section was similar to the commercial press in including sports statistics (from bowling and horseracing for example), and ads for wrestling and boxing matches. The movie column retained merely

⁷² As was earlier noted, ownership of a daily newspaper was challenging even for the largest commercial dailies where the trend was increasingly becoming consolidation. In addition, both the largest immigrant labour papers – ULFTA's *Narodna hazeta* (seven times a week) and the Finnish *Vapaus* became dailies (six times a week), so it wasn't that the money was coming solely from the more successful or largest immigrant organizations since they also had their own fundraising to do.

⁷³ This was changed again in early 1937 to *Daily Clarion* "Champion of Peace, Freedom and Democracy."

a trace of its critical stance, and how much it had changed was epitomized in 1937 when the paper published photographs of the Oscar winners for best actors (*Daily Clarion* 6 March 1937).

In recognizing (and thereby indirectly legitimizing) commercial forms of entertainment, a column called “Dial – Log” listed times and radio stations for programs such as the “Guy Lombardo Orchestra” and the “Jack Benny Show” on American radio networks. The children’s page no longer attacked standard fairy tales and offered alternatives, but included “traditional” children’s folklore, crossword puzzles and magic tricks, all absent of critical comment. The women’s section still engaged with discussions of labour organizing, birth control, and activism as the *Woman Worker* had done (see Sangster and Hobbs 1999), but it also included recipes and fashion tips. With the change to the daily, advertising also increased and included businesses for union-made goods and the workingman’s “reward” – cigarettes and tobacco. The *Daily Clarion* was also not above selling its readers to advertisers, reconciling ethics with necessity, as an appeal to advertisers suggested:

“The Proof of Advertising is in the Results!”

The Clarion’s 10,000 readers, owners and supporters represent the financial purchasing field for reliable products composed, in the greater part, of working class people who read the Clarion with confidence, this greater reader field realize that they would publish nothing unworthy of its principles and that to support those who support the paper is to strengthen their own voice (*Daily Clarion* 26 Dec. 1936:6).

In keeping with the modification of the *Daily Clarion*,⁷⁴ the *Young Worker* (the paper of the YCL) changed its name to the *Advance* and then the *New Advance* in 1935. The goals of the paper were directed at discussing the relationship between youth and labour, particularly organized labour (NAC File MG 28, V 46, Vol. 18, File 15). Contributors represented the range of those associated with the youth wing of the popular front. Like the inter-union, inter-political party cooperation that appeared in the Canadian Youth Congress, articles for the paper included those written by the President of the TLCC, a labour leaders on youth and unions, and discussions of peace demonstrations. In keeping with the times, and its “cultural side,” the magazine offered “a swell short story,” feature articles on recreation from the YMCA, and regular columns on commercial movies, and book reviews (Ibid). Similarly, a children’s magazine was launched in 1935 called *Always Ready* published in Toronto by the National Children’s Council (NCC) generally made of CPC affiliates. The letterhead of the NCC proclaimed its goal as “Co-ordinating the Children’s Work of All Militant Working-Class Organizations in Canada”.⁷⁵ What was unique about this publication was that it was not intended to be a press written for children, but by children; and priced “within the means of children” (Ibid). This was similar to the Ukrainian children’s publication *Militant Youth* that had folded in 1932. While the life expectancy of a working class children’s magazine was dubious at best

⁷⁴ In June 1939, the CPC decided to cease publication of the nation-wide newspaper to better serve the regions, and the *Daily Clarion* became the *Clarion* to serve Ontario and Québec, the *Mid-West Clarion* to serve the prairie provinces, and the *People’s Advocate* that was published in Vancouver [CSIS No. 13(2), A(6) April-June 1939, in Kealey and Whitaker (1989)].

⁷⁵ (National Children’s Council letters June 1935, NAC: MG 28, Series V 46, Vol. 18, File 10).

during the Depression, the Always Ready still managed to get enough financial support to publish through the late 1930s.

The Press of the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (CCF)

The CCF's newspaper – *New Commonwealth* – was established in 1934 in Toronto, as a result of financial support of “the League for Social Reconstruction, and three hundred CCF members, in co-operation with the *Weekly Sun*.”⁷⁶ As “the official organ” of the CCF (Ontario Section), it was composed by volunteers⁷⁷ who reported on conventions and events across Canada, and published CCF leadership's engagement and commentary on particular federal and provincial government policies. The CCF paper addressed its constituents as *members* of the CCF (and their families) in announcements for picnics, fund-raisers and other events. This was different than the CPC's press which addressed the working class as a whole. From 1934 it was published every Saturday⁷⁸ in a six- to eight- page newspaper format, with early circulation rate of about 5,500; commenting on its content, CCF historian Gerald Caplan stated that “it rarely transcended its origin as a hack sheet for the converted” (1973:69).

The paper was not limited to party activities alone, however, and it engaged with current events, primarily in Canada, but also in trade union and socialist activities in the U.S., Britain and Europe. It included reports on the activities of the WEA, the Canadian Youth Congress, labour unions, and articles on religion and pacifism, and also wrote

⁷⁶ The *Weekly Sun* allowed the CCF access to its production facilities, it “lent” the CCF “its mailing equipment, office equipment, desks, [and] typewriters” (*New Commonwealth* 19 Jan 1935:2).

⁷⁷ (*New Commonwealth* 19 Jan 1935:2).

⁷⁸ Even if Saturday meant publishing on Christmas Day (for example 25 December 1938).

articles in rebuttal to *The Worker* and in defense of speeches given by CPC leaders criticizing the CCF.⁷⁹ In the late 1930s, regular columns included “Youth in Revolt,” “The Quaker Preacher” and “One Man’s Opinion,” as well as reviews on books and (non-critical) current commercial movies, with fillers of jokes and poems. The books reviewed were primarily non-fiction written by Canadian socialists (with titles such as *Why You Should be a Socialist*), as well as fiction written by American writers such as Upton Sinclair and Aldous Huxley.

In April 1935, the CCF procured a printing plant so that it was able to increase production of the paper and of other pamphlets, posters, tickets, etc.⁸⁰ It immediately added ten pages to the paper expanding its news section, and including a “women’s page,” a sport section, letters to the editor, and regular columns on book and movie reviews. The women’s page, called “Fairly Feminine,”⁸¹ commenced with a column next to fashion photographs, but the photograph was soon replaced by reports on a range of women’s activism, such as: the Women’s International League Against War and

⁷⁹ It is obvious that editors of the alternative press read each other’s papers and the leaders of both parties addressed each other in taunts and arguments within the pages of their respective papers. Also, the CCF requested and received complementary subscriptions to the *Daily Clarion* (Letter CPC Business Manager O.C. Doolan to David Lewis CCF: November 24, 1935 MG28 Series IV:I, Vol. 362), and there was evidence of CPC ads in the CCF press. The *New Commonwealth* also came to the defense of the CPC’s *Clarté* as banned under the Padlock Act: the CCF referred to it as the “French Popular Front weekly” and quoted the CPC in stating that it was not an “official organ” of the CPC (13 Nov 1937:1).

⁸⁰ *New Commonwealth* 20 April 1935:3.

⁸¹ Explanation for the title was given as follows: “We have given this column a heading that is meant to have a double meaning. In the first place, most women are rather backward about expressing their ideas in print, especially in competition with the masculine point of view. So, if there is anything in the theory that there is a peculiarly feminine approach to a subject, we think it only ‘fair’ that there should be a distinct department for the purpose. We ourselves are rather inclined to doubt the truth of the theory, but we are quite open to persuasion by readers who support it”. The “second part of the double meaning” was explained that the fairness would be extended to any male readers who wanted to contribute or discuss topics appearing in the column (*New Commonwealth* 18 May 1935:7).

Fascism, the WILPF's Disarmament Petition, and women's labour organizing in unions and consumer boycotts. Short poems by women were also occasionally included (usually reprints from other publications) ranging from poems in the "don't worry, be happy" style (common to the TLCC's paper), to poetry about activism, for example:

Contrast

I saw a slender, frail girl
 Buffeted by the wind
 Carrying a banner
 Picketing, Picketing
 in the fight for a living wage

Society saw an army
 Terrible with banners,
 And sent in six policemen
 Beefy, oxlike
 To defend its ramparts

Florence Reeder in "Common Sense" (*New Commonwealth* 20 July 1935:9)

The "Stage and Screen" section reviewed current plays in Toronto and Soviet and American movies.⁸² Fascism and the threat of another war was a major topic in 1934/5 and large graphics were striking in its depiction (see Annex C and D). After 1936, the paper changed artists and tone to include humorous cartoons poking fun at the fat capitalist (in a tuxedo) and his equally rotund wife (in long gown) in various complaints about their "hard life" using similar caricatures as *The Worker*. Column space for "letters to the editor" was minimal for the first few years. However, in 1937 the paper began devoting a full page to "Our Readers' Open Forum" as submitted, but it was otherwise

⁸² The Soviet Union exported a large number of plays and movies that were shown in theatres in Toronto – particularly at the "Strand Theatre" which appeared to be the only exception in defying the warnings against such "propaganda". Ads for Soviet films and plays continually appeared in both the *Daily Clarion* and the *New Commonwealth* (for example "Ten Days that Shook the World," "Potemkin," "Diary of a Revolution" and "Law of the Jungle").

rare that anyone other than CCF leaders and other well-known organizational leaders had any input into the paper. The exception to this was poetry that was included in a regular section called “Golden Treasury” of poems that ranged from basic rhymes on topical concerns to poems from well-known socialists. For example:

The Socialist’s Lament

There once was a man named “Maurice”
 Who extended great powers to the police,
 He brought in the “Padlock”
 To curtail civil talk
 And Fascists did reap vast increase.

There was also a fellow called “Mitch”
 Who caused Liberal leaders to hitch
 First with “Repudiation”
 And next with “Cancellation”
 And then the CIO in the ditch.

...
 We are told they are men good and true,
 With only our interests in view,
 But our liberties go,
 And the next thing we know
 We’ll be flies in “Fascist-made glue.”
 J.W. Dundas (*New Commonwealth* 8 Jan 1938:3).

Reflections

I wonder what the dead would say
 If they could come back for just a day
 To find starvation, rampant, rife
 Oppression, exploitation, strife.
 a starved, subdued and servile mass
 a bold and callous Ruling Class
 I wonder what the dead would say
 If they could view the scene today;
 the hunger, sorrow, woe and want;
 The onerous of Class and Cant
 If they could view the scene again
 The Dead would say ‘we died in vain’
 ...
 I wonder what the dead would say,

If they could view the scene today,
 the Freedom and The Liberty
 the Justice and Democracy
 For they which 'twas said they gave their all
 't would surely prove a bitter gall'
 I wonder what the dead would say
 I wonder – yes – and well I may
 for I was there and saw them die
 and know the grounds on which they lie,
 Alas I feel these millions – Dead –
 would amongst the Reddest Red
 Author unknown (*New Commonwealth* 8 Sept 1934:2)

How Capitalism Works Five and Fifty

If fifty men did all the work
 And gave the price to five
 And let those five make all the rules,
 you'd say the fifty men were fools –
 unfit to be alive.

...

Not be their own superior force
 Do five on fifty live
 but by election and assent
 And privilege and government,
 Powers that the fifty give.
 If fifty men are really fools
 And five have all the brains
 the five must rule, as now we find,
 But if the fifty have the mind
 Why don't they take the reigns?

Anon (*New Commonwealth* 15 Sep 1934:3).

The longer format did not last for long, however, likely as a result of resource challenges as continual, emphatic appeals were made for necessary increased support. The CCF also had seven regional papers across Canada, including: the B.C. *CCF News* (6 page weekly); the Alberta *People's Weekly* (8 page weekly); *Saskatchewan Commonwealth* (12 page weekly); *Manitoba Commonwealth* (8 page fortnightly), Ontario *CCF News* (8 page fortnightly); Québec *Le Canada Nouveau* (1943-45); and

N.B., N.S. and P.E.I *Maritime Commonwealth* (4 page bimonthly) (McHenry 1970:93).⁸³

To coordinate news exchange between the papers, the CCF established the “Co-operative News Service”⁸⁴ also in 1935.⁸⁵ In addition, the paper exchanged news with unions and news services in Europe and the U.S., including: “the International Federation of Trade Unions, Amsterdam; the Trades Union Congress and Labor Party, London, England, The Labor and Socialist International, Basil [sic]; the Socialist Party of America, and the Trans Atlantic Information News Service, New York (*New Commonwealth* 19 Jan 1935:2). The regional papers also subscribed to the Associated Labor Press (ALP)⁸⁶ a news service that aimed to provide a link to all labour papers in Canada.

The Associated Labor Press (ALP)

The Associated Labor Press (ALP) was established by a small group of labour editors in the summer of 1933 to provide a “centralized news bureau for the working class press in Canada” (NAC: MG 28, Series V46, Vol. 18, File 7). Similar to the organization of commercial news bureaus, the ALP functioned as a nodal point for the collection and dissemination of articles written for, and appearing in, the labour press

⁸³ McHenry does not provide any dates that these were established, but it would be safe to say that they were all up and running by 1935 as the *New Commonwealth* notes seven CCF papers.

⁸⁴ In January 1944 the news service was replaced by the Cooperative Press Association (CPA). It was financed by the CCF by using a “quota assessment on CCF papers using the service” (McHenry 1976:94). Initially the service supplied only CCF papers, but later subscriptions included those from *Canadian Congress of Labour News*, *Canadian Brotherhood of Railway Employees Monthly*, *Steel Laborer*, *Packinghouse Worker*, and the *United Auto Worker* [see NAC Finding Aid No. 1207 “Labour, Travail” (no pp.)].

⁸⁵ Verzuh refers to the “Co-operative Press Associates” dating from the 1940s (1988:124), which is likely the same organization. He suggests that the CPA was replaced in 1982 by the *Labour News* “a national news service” (Ibid). Today, trade union papers have the option of joining the Canadian Association of Labour Media (CALM).

⁸⁶ Specifically, *The Commonwealth* and *The Federationist* (Bray 1987:53).

across Canada.⁸⁷ In general, it stated that its aim was to act as a “‘clearing house’ of news covering every phase of the class struggle in Canada” including “theoretical articles” (Ibid). Such stories were collected from the national and international labour press and sorted according to a priority based on activism and press category. Specifically, it was advanced that the ALP was necessary in order to promote solidarity in activism “so that the greatest mass support may be rallied when necessary” in particular campaigns or strikes (Ibid). Otherwise, “regular news” would be standard as told “from a revolutionary viewpoint” with the exception that some selections would be tailored according to the subscriber’s needs [e.g. “*The British Columbia Logger* ... will receive special material on lumbering and the struggles of lumber workers thru-out [sic] the world...”] (Ibid).

In full operation by January 1935,⁸⁸ subscribers were asked for an annual fee depending on paper size, which was to cover all necessary expenses and the full-time wages of only two people.⁸⁹ Unless the news was urgent, for the most part, the bureau sent and received articles through the daily mail and, when necessary or as requested, used telegraph services, as paid for by the subscriber. The idea was that each press would prioritize and share their stories for submission to the bureau, and have access to

⁸⁷ In the 1930s in the U.S., Bekken notes the existence of “four news services available to working class newspapers”. One of these – the “Federated Press Service” – was independent, however, it was “forced from the field” as a result of the AFL-CIO merger, “and the resulting purge of the left-wing unions” (1993:157).

⁸⁸ RCMP Bulletin No. 739, App V:18.

⁸⁹ As the ALP editor explained, “The whole cost of ALP is borne by the member papers who pay from \$2.50 for the smaller papers to \$25 per month for the larger papers for news alone, and up to \$20 per month for cartoon and art service (Hodgson 1935:5). Like the labour press, the ALP is an area for further research. I have not yet been able to ascertain how long the service existed or identify what led to its demise. I suspect that, considering the enormity of the task, (with only four workers responsible) the service was not able to sustain necessary resources and energy requirements for very long. It was also subject to RCMP surveillance (1936 RCMP Security Bulletin No. 809, App. I:8; No. 819; App. I:2; and No. 826, App. I:2).

international and national working class news “no matter where it is located” (Ibid).⁹⁰

This included mailings from India, England, Denmark, USSR and the United States (Hodgson 1935:5). The editor of the service suggested that based on estimates of circulation according to commercial standards (a ratio of five readers to every one subscriber) in 1935 the “militant” labour press in Canada (*excluding* the national trade unions and the CBRE) had a total of 625,000 readers. In his opinion, this was a conservative estimate since, in his words,

...each issue of the working class press reaches a far larger number than five. Copies of *The Worker* for example, often reach as many as 75 and 100 workers. In distant lumber camps the workers often cut the paper into pieces, passing each section around in turn among the men. Study groups are organized on the basis of the articles and in this way the influence of the workers’ press, judged by the standards of the capitalist press, has much greater influence than even the circulation figures would indicate (Hodgson 1935:5).

An additional way of appreciating the circulation of the labour press is to survey the variety of papers that were available within a particular location. As offered by Bray, a survey of all the alternative publications available in one city (Vancouver) allowed her to make the observation that:

...the progressive press during the 1930s in Vancouver was particularly prolific, producing publications which ranged from those oriented to the work-place, such as the B.C. Lumber Worker, The Elevator Worker, Ship and Dock, Pacific Coast News, and the Heavy Lift, through publications with a issue-oriented focus, such as The Unemployed Worker, The Relief Camp Worker, or the Longshoremen’s Strike Bulletin, to more broadly focussed papers, such as The Challenge, The Commonwealth, and the B.C. Workers News. (Bray 1987:53).

⁹⁰ The prospectus also requested that these and other initial plans were in their nascent stage and that critique by editors was necessary, so that the bureau could be “turned into a smoothly functioning arm of the movement and be of great value to the working class press”. A future expansion of the bureau was also proposed to include a “separate research department” and a “mat” service; but I didn’t find evidence of them.

There were thus a greater number of papers available in a particular area (and therefore easily circulated within it) so that there was access to a range of papers. This also draws our attention to recognizing that an “issue-oriented focus” meant there was a variety of print media that was available and distributed across Canada beyond regular newspapers.

Pamphlets, Booklets, and Other Print Media

Supplementing regular publications were the many and frequent flyers, pamphlets, posters, almanacs, calendars, books, etc., which were advertised in the newspapers, distributed by hand on the street, and posted in the labour temples, union halls, and on street corners.⁹¹ Of these, RCMP surveillance of pamphlet distribution was standard for any large demonstrations or mobilization efforts, and RCMP Bulletins note for example:

- *2,000,000 leaflets for the Repeal of Section 98 in Toronto;
10,000 leaflets and 100 posters of same in Montréal [RCMP Bulletin No. June/July (1934)];
- * 50,000 Ontario Hunger March Manifestos distributed in Toronto by the Ontario Hunger March Committee. [RCMP Bulletin No. 715, App IV:7 (1934)];
- * 10,000 circulars calling for the abolition of sales tax and clearing of slums in Québec distributed by the CPC [RCMP Bulletin No. 839 App II (1936)];
- * 20,000 French and English leaflets entitled “War or Peace, You Must Decide” distributed by the CLAWF and CPC in Montréal. [RCMP Bulletin No. 848 App II (1936)]; and

⁹¹ Access is obviously subject to availability, but the study of working class almanacs and calendars is another project begging for research. In 1934, the CPC advertised “The Workers’ Calendar” as follows: “Profusely illustrated with photographs, drawing and cartoons, packed full with information on working class holidays and struggles throughout the world, and at the same time the least expensive calendar you can buy” (*The Worker* 12 Dec 1934).

* 150,000 appeals for aid for Spanish Loyalists and Canadian volunteers (distributed by CPC). [RCMP Bulletin 858 (1936)].

In addition to these volume-distributions, a large number of Canadian produced and imported pamphlets were available at the labour temples and through the CCF, CPC and labour union newspapers.⁹² Where the publication of books was expensive and virtually impossible at commercial publishing companies (which were likely wary of political content, unwanted RCMP attention, and the limited Canadian “market”), the less expensive and easily distributed pamphlet or booklet was more common (Weinrich 1982; Doyle 2002).⁹³

Publishing and distribution could be accomplished through the labour press and the language-based publishing companies. These pamphlets were usually on a specific topic or issue, such as political economy and labour, e.g. Adams (1932) *The Day Shelter for Unemployed Men Montréal: A Social Experiment*; Losovsky (1932) *The Workers’ Economic Struggle and the Fight for Workers’ Rule*; McGuigan (1932) *After Capitalism – What? Why Not?: A New and Definite Plan*; and Harris (1934) *The New Deal in Canada* (Weinrich 1982:113-182). Canadian writers were published through the presses of the CPC or the CCF and organizations such as the CLAWF or CLDL. These included

⁹² Where copies of these pamphlets and posters exist in various files at the NAC, most every publication carried the label, i.e. the “union bug,” indicating that it had been published by unionized labour.

⁹³ As lamented by Weinrich, actual physical evidence of the extent of such publications is not available. He reasons that they were of poor paper quality to begin with, but moreover, given the amounts that were shredded, burned, or otherwise destroyed – either by the police or by people not wanting to be caught with it – little is available in library archives. As an example of the magnitude of destruction, he offers that out of a CPC publication of thirteen thousand of Tim Buck’s pamphlet *The Road Ahead*, after ten years of researching pamphlets across Canada, Weinrich has only been able to lay his hands on six copies and only “knows of a dozen or so more”. This leads him to suggest that “the survival rate bears no relation whatever to its distribution and impact at the time of publication” (1982:x).

authors such as: A.M. Stephen (1933) *Marxism: the Basis of a New Social Order*, and (1934) *The Materialist Conception of History* (both published by the *BC Clarion*); *Hitlerism in Canada* (1936) (published by CLAWF); and *Fascism: the Black International* (1936).⁹⁴ Others included Oscar Ryan's (1934) *The Sedition of A.E. Smith* (published by the CLDL) "Eight Men Speak" (by the PAC) and Norman Bethune's (1937) *Crime on the Road: Malaga-Almeria* (Ibid). The CCF published and distributed a large number of works by their own members including a play by W. Bruce Hutchinson (1936) *Alice in Blunderland*,⁹⁵ F.R. Scott's *Efficiency of Socialism*, and Fred Henderson's *The Case for Socialism and Money Power and Human Life*.⁹⁶

In other cases an organization would act as the collection and distribution point for pamphlets on a specific issue or campaign. For example, the *Information Bulletin* of the Canadian Committee to Aid to Spanish Democracy listed stock literature such as: *Spain's Democracy Talks to Europe*; *Spain: Battleground of Democracy*; *Listen In: radio address given in Madrid by Dr. Norman Bethune and Prof. JBS Haldane*; and *The Crime of Francisco Franco*. During the 1930s, the CCF reprinted from the House of Commons *Hansard* on specific issues and sessions of parliament when CCF members were active, such as "A National Health Policy" (H.E. Spencer, M.P.), "Co-operative Commonwealth and Unemployment Insurance" (J.S. Woodsworth); and "Dominion Elections and Relief Camps" (Angus MacInnis and J.S. Woodsworth). It also carried pamphlets written by British socialists such as G.D.H. Cole's *A Plan for Britain, Banks and Credit*, and

⁹⁴ Doyle (2002:154-155).

⁹⁵ Bray (1987) discusses the play's production in Vancouver.

⁹⁶ Weinrich also notes the publication of pamphlets of poetry, for example Rowley (1939) *Poems of Struggle*, and Williams (1939) *The Open Road and Other Poems* that are not mentioned in Doyle (2002), who does not include pamphlet publications.

Socialization of Banking, Stafford Cripp's *The Choice for Britain*, and "Nationalism" *Fascism in Britain*, and John Strachey's *Fascism Means War*.⁹⁷

Pamphlets were not the only form of media that was distributed, however, as photographs, cartoons, sheet music, and gramophone recordings were also available. The CCF offered *The Rebel Song Book* and sheet music for the CCF's "Anthem." The CPC advertised *The Pioneer Song Book*, complete with lyrics, music and "attractive illustrations" as a history of labour songs from Britain, the U.S. and Canada. The CASD's *Bulletin* offered such titles as: "The Spanish War in Pictures," "30 Cartoons of the War," and "stirring Spanish music and war songs" (NAC MG 28, File IV-I, Vol. 363). The CASD also printed a number of posters and organized collections of posters and photographs for exhibition in Montréal (CASD MG 28, Series V46. Vol. 142, File 14). Art displays and poster exhibitions on socialism were also part of the Canadian Youth Congress conferences, and like the poets and writers who wrote in the labour press, individual artists also exhibited "socialist realism" in their work.⁹⁸

Art sales were particularly important as fund-raisers. An exhibition and sale of the work of modernist Canadian painter and architect Fritz Brandtner was held in Montréal (1937/38) in aid of Spanish orphanages and the CASD (Duffy and Smith 1982).

⁹⁷ These were some of a long list of titles available in 1935 through the CCF's main office in Toronto. Some titles were available for one cent, but prices were normally around five to ten cents a copy. Books were more expensive at \$1.50 to \$2.00 a copy [the most expensive being *Woodsworth, Social Pioneer* (Oliver Ziegler) at \$2.00] ("Literature for the CCF" *New Commonwealth* 24 Aug 1935:2).

⁹⁸ Palmer notes for example, that an artist-activist Leonard Hutchinson, who was a "curator of the Hamilton [Ontario] art gallery during the 1930s...opened up the basement to vagrants and used his woodcuts and prints to address obvious social issues that were identifiable in their titles: 'Breadlines' and 'Protest'" (1992:258).

As was noted in the last chapter, such exhibitions attracted the 'upper class,' which could thus indirectly participate in a 'charitable' or less demanding environment than a public demonstration for example. The CASD also offered instructions on how to organize an art sale; and information on participation and organizing was standard in many of the alternative pamphlets and bulletins. This ranged from instructions on running art sales and exhibitions, to organizing workers' sport clubs or unemployed councils in local neighborhoods, to participating in organized politics as a campaigner or candidate.⁹⁹

Radical Religious and Pacifist Publications

In addition to the labour periodicals, there was a wide range of radical religious and pacifist publications that were also part of the alternative media available in Canada during the interwar period. A "radical christian" newspaper published in New York City, called *The World Tomorrow* was edited by "renowned theologian, Reinhold Niebuhr"¹⁰⁰ (Penner 1978:134), and circulated across the country. As Socknat suggests, the journal

had become the leading exponent of the pacifist-socialist alignment among radical Christians, [and] ...although [it was] published in the United States, the journal maintained an international flavor with regular foreign correspondents, including Canadian contributors such as Agnes Macphail and Jack Duckworth" (1981:335).

Although its circulation was limited in comparison to the conservative religious press, it was still considered threatening enough to be censored by the Canadian government at

⁹⁹ For example, the CCF offered training courses for political campaigners and candidate hopefuls for a registration fee of 50 cents. Prior recommended reading on socialism included. *Why This Socialism* (Sir Stafford Cropps), *The Case for Socialism* (Fred Hendersen), and *Who Owns Canada?* (Sask. CCF Research Bureau), etc. (see *New Commonwealth* 16 March 1935:5).

¹⁰⁰ Niebuhr had been the "chairman of the Fellowship for a Christian Social Order in the United States" until 1934 when he resigned in disagreement with "its pacifist membership" who would not "declare full allegiance to the class struggle" (Socknat 1981:344).

the border (Socknat 1981:200). Meanwhile, book-length critiques of capitalism and polemics regarding the relationship of socialism, religion, and pacifism were published in Canada by organizations such as the LSR, the FSCO, the SCM, etc. (thesis Chapter 3). For example, the League for Social Reconstruction printed *Democracy Needs Socialism* (1938), and the Fellowship for a Christian Social Order published *Our Battle for Peace; The Conscience of the Rich Confronted by the World Crisis; Christian Action and the Profit System; The Demands of God Today* (“God Demands Socialist Economic Planning”)¹⁰¹ and *Toward the Christian Revolution* (Scott and Vlastos 1936). As Socknat suggests, the latter book

was a symposium of radical Christian thought which spanned the spectrum from liberal utopianism to a new radical realism. In one important respect, the authors promoted socialism as a natural derivative of Christian social ethics (1981:278).

Anti-capitalism was a persistent theme in the United Church deliberations particularly in the early 1930s. In 1932, it published a report called *Christianizing the Social Order* both as a critique of capitalism and as a suggestion of possible alternatives. Bray observes that the report criticized capitalism as “destroying the initiative, freedom and security of vast multitudes of people...” and as “...putting money interest above the human interest”.¹⁰² While these were not necessarily widely circulated, Bray suggests that: “critical pronouncements from religious authorities added an element of credibility to working-class aspirations and experience, and endowed their stance with the lustre of moral suasion” (1987:68).

The relationship of capitalism, socialism, religion and the church was also in question, and the United Church published works debating it [for example: Bowles

¹⁰¹ Weinrich (1982:182).

¹⁰² (McGeer Papers, Vol. 6, Speech, Oct. 13, 1935) quoted in Bray (1987:76).

(1932) *Some Reflections on the Present Attitude of the Church Towards the Social Economic Order* and Thomas (1934) *Christian Churches and Economic Conditions*].¹⁰³ Also engaging in these polemics was Canadian writer Morley Callaghan (National Council member of the CLAWF) who wrote novels that explored a relationship between Marxism and Christianity in works entitled: *Such is My Beloved* (1934) and *They Shall Inherit the Earth* (1935) (Doyle 2002:115-118).¹⁰⁴ The pamphlet form was the most common however, with works such as: Taylor et al. (1933) *The Church's Attitude Toward Society*; Roberge (1934) *Shall we have Socialism, Christianity and the Golden Rule, or Capitalism, Christianity and the Rule of Gold?*; Springelt (1934) *The Bible vs Karl Marx et al.*; and the CCF's William Irvine's (1935) *Can a Christian Vote for Capitalism?* (Wienrich 1982).

From experiences of the First World War, a few books were published that engaged with pacifism and "anti-war realism" in fictional works such as: O.W. Fraser's *Songs of Siberia* (1919?), Thomas McGuire's *Over the Top* (1927), and Yale Harrison's *Generals Die in Bed* (1930) (Doyle 2002:74-81). There were also numerous anti-war pamphlets published during the 1930s, such as: Drew (1933) *Salesmen of Death: the truth about war makers* (published by Women's League of Nations' Society), the

¹⁰³ This engagement of the United Church was also evident in its journal *The New Outlook*, and some of the articles penned by members of the FCSO were reprinted in the TLCCC's *Canadian Congress Journal* [for example XIV(3) March 1935:9].

¹⁰⁴ These were the kind of works criticized by Dorothy Livesay as "demonstrating a middle-class view by emphasizing spiritual fulfillment over social awareness" (Doyle 2002:118). In other words, while the work criticized capitalism, the problem was defined as one that was spiritual rather than material, and thus the solution was found in religion and moral change rather than overall social change.

WILPF's pamphlet (1933) "*Shall Civilization Perish?*"; Halldorson (1939) *Women! Do you want to end Depression and War?*; and Morgan (1940) *The Origin and Development of Fascism* (published by the WEA) (Weinrich 1982). These supplemented the many CLAWF, CLPD and CYC publications directed against war and fascism (Ibid). The CLAWF published a monthly called *Against War and Fascism*, and a pamphlet called *Will Canada Escape Fascism?* In addition, international members of the Leagues Against War and Fascism included many American and European writers, whose names appeared as part of CLAWF letterheads and were listed as "suggested reading" in the CPC's various papers, including Henri Barbusse, Upton Sinclair, Ernest Hemingway and H.G. Wells. The CLAWF published George Poudroux and Viscount Cecil of Chelwood's (of the International LAWF) "*War is Not Inevitable*" and MacLeod and Ward's (Chair's of the CLAWF and American LAWF) *Spain's Democracy Talks with Canada* (Ibid).

As was noted above, alternative publications required alternative distribution networks,¹⁰⁵ and these ranged from the larger organization level (like the CPC or the CCF) to the radical bookstores¹⁰⁶ and the small one-person distribution centre. For example, the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) (thesis Chapter 3) published and distributed their own magazine *Pax International* (Strong-Boag 1987:184) as well as numerous pamphlets using their organizational and personal contacts which focused on 'demilitarizing the school system' (Boutilier 1988:125).¹⁰⁷ In

¹⁰⁵ That is, networks that were alternative to commercial or government distribution centres.

¹⁰⁶ Bookstores were frequent advertisers in both the CPC and CCF papers.

¹⁰⁷ WILPF publications included, for example: *War Toys: A Crime Against Children* (n.d.), *What Can I Do For Peace? An Appeal to Teachers* (n.d.), Byers, Isa M. (1929) *Military Training in Canadian Schools and Colleges*, Byers I.S. (n.d.) *Report of the Canadian History Textbook Survey*, and *World Federation Takes a Stand on Military Training* (1929).

the 1930s, it increasingly drew attention to the connections between political economic structures and war in denouncing fascism.¹⁰⁸ The WILPF's "Peace Library" was open to the public (Ibid), as was the Quaker "Society of Friends" peace library in Toronto, distributing books and pamphlets on pacifism across Canada (Bray 1987:311). Records suggest that in 1938, for example, the Quaker library had distributed "approximately 1055 copies of articles and 116 books" (Ibid). Pamphlets on pacifism were also passed through the "Associated Literary Service," a small but active one-man operation – J. Stanley Allen, the "pamphleteer of Canada" – who circulated pacifist literature throughout Canada in the 1930s (Socknat 1981:278).

The threat of a second world war meant that there was a sense of urgency underlying these efforts. As was discussed in the previous chapter, the combination of war, the Depression, hunger and fascism, made for potent inspiration as Canadian writers and artists searched for ways of articulating them in prose and performance art. These forms were limited, however, particularly in comparison to the publications, advertising, and public relations of commercial, other religious and governmental organizations, as will be discussed shortly. Yet, there was another form of alternative communication that was less limited by ownership and used to communicate solidarity as well as dissent. This was the many marches, parades, and rallies that took place in public spaces such as streets, parks, and on government grounds. It was here where participants confirmed the

¹⁰⁸ As a small women's organization the WILPF came from a relatively weak position of power; its more radical members had to manage their activism and criticism of political economic and social structures so as not to alienate the less radical members and associates in the WILPF network (like the League of Nations Society, and Women's Missionary Society for example) (Strong-Boag 1987). Thus a lot of interpersonal networking had to be done to ease members and associates into more active roles. In the mid-late 1930s, the WILPF focused their attention on the battle against fascism, but did so by stepping up their advocacy for peace by "pursu[ing] familiar educational and lobbying strategies," which turned out to be "ultimately ineffective" (Ibid).

movements' existence and made it the most visible, and, as shall be covered in the next chapter, it is here where restrictions and repression were also most revealing.

Expansions of Labour Culture on the Streets and in the Parks

The street occupies a central place in the democratic imagination. It is a public urban space, a place where people meet and congregate, where they rally, protest, march, picket, shout through megaphones, convey various forms of information, and simply enjoy their 'freedom just to be, to have a place in public',¹⁰⁹ (Bakan 1999:88-9).¹¹⁰

Strikes, Anti-War Days, and Peace Rallies

As an alternative form of communication (Endres 1976; Davis 1986; Bray 1987; Bakan 1999) the congregation of people in public spaces, physically, visually and acoustically demonstrates group participation and draws public attention. Taking strikes out onto the street in the form of pickets and demonstrations is common in the history of the labour movement as a testament of collective action, solidarity and power, as well as being a method of publicity. It is also a matter of necessity, since workers can be locked out, and anyone can be prohibited against picketing or protesting on private property by law (whether in the 1930s or today). Localized strikes are made visible by pickets and protests that are not necessarily limited to one particular group or union. In the 1930s, major strikes involving thousands of people protesting in the streets included: the 1931 Coal Miner strike in Estevan, (with protests carrying through Saskatchewan and Alberta), the 1934 Lumber Workers' Industrial Union strike in Vancouver (3,500 people); the 1937

¹⁰⁹ Bakan is quoting Hopkins (1996:70).

¹¹⁰ As Davis reminds readers, this "ideal" is nevertheless a historically structured space: "Precisely because parades were such a powerful mode of communication, the range of meanings they could be used to communicate was constrained by society and politics. Constraint on meaning was effected through custom, opinion, example, the law, and, sometimes, force" (1986:6).

Seamstresses strike (5,000) in Montréal, as well as the United Auto Workers strike (4,000) in Oshawa; and 10,000 striking Dominion Textile workers in towns and cities in Québec (Lipton 1978; Bennett 1987; Abella 1974;1974a).

In the midst of the Depression, thousands also took to the streets to protest unemployment, poverty, hunger and war. It was one of the ways that people otherwise excluded from the democratic process in Canada were able to demonstrate their frustration at their social and political exclusion as well as their commitment to solving the exigent problems.¹¹¹ In 1934 a “Hunger March” in Toronto had twenty-five hundred marchers culminating in to six thousand at Queen’s Park, where speakers included City Aldermen and CPC members (RCMP Bulletin No. 718, App I August 1934). Various organizations of the unemployed demonstrated in cities across Canada and planned to meet nation-wide in Ottawa at the On-to-Ottawa Trek, which was violently halted by the state in Regina (Liverledge 1973).¹¹² Protests against unemployment and poverty were not completely deterred by the violent experience of the On-to-Ottawa Trek, however. Local unemployed groups continued their efforts,¹¹³ and when Prime Minister Bennett separated the single unemployed men from the movement into Relief Camps, the CPC

¹¹¹ As noted by Grunis, participants in the political process in Canada have several options (for example directly as voter, candidate, task force – or political party – member, or indirectly, through media, interest or lobby group) (1976:17). However, these all are limited or restricted in some way, particularly by ownership of, or access to, resources. Grunis suggests that “demonstrations open the way to groups of meagre resources to participate in the political process” precisely because it requires few resources in comparison [Ibid; also citing Etzioni (1970)].

¹¹² *New Commonwealth* reported that eight thousand people had come out to Queen’s Park to rally against Prime Minister Bennett’s authorized use of violence, that included a cross section of organizations such as the CCF, CPC, ILP, WILPF, LSR, Churches, unions, and youth groups. The rally was accompanied by “the CCF orchestra and Communist brass band [who] played throughout” (13 July 1935:1).

¹¹³ For example In July 1936, a thousand paraded against poverty in Winnipeg as organized by the Single Men’s Unemployed Association (RCMP Bulletin No. 814, App II), three hundred in Edmonton (No. 816 App II July 1936).

helped organize Relief Camp Workers Unions (Struthers 1983), and fund-raisers and concerts were held in support of their organizing and strike action. Tag Days were also frequent way to raise funds for the unemployed (RCMP Bulletin No. 832 App 22 Nov 1936).

The anti-conscription demonstrations starting before the First World War were followed through by “No More War” demonstrations in the late 1920s and through the 1930s as organized by the CPC and others. The demonstrations complemented pacifist organizations (like the WILPF) in their drive to demilitarize schools, but according to the RCMP reports, for the CPC in particular, they were meant to support Canadian independence from British imperialism and demonstrate opposition to “class war” (RCMP Bulletin No. 333, App. 1, January 1926). Since the CPC was limited in communication resources (compared to the commercial dailies and the government for example), the goal was to take the precepts of Communism into the streets to reach the public and demonstrate strength in collective action (Penner 1988:99). A fully fledged campaign was launched in 1928/9 when the Comintern declared August 1st (marking the day Germany declared war on Russia in 1914)¹¹⁴ as “anti-war day”¹¹⁵ and the CPC took their protests against imperialism and militarism out into the streets of Vancouver, Winnipeg, Toronto and Montréal.

In cities where anti-conscription demonstrations and large strikes occurred, any public demonstration that was (or could be) linked to labour, the CPC, or left politics in general, were considered dangerous and subversive. While most were under constant

¹¹⁴ Betcherman (1982:59).

¹¹⁵ The Comintern had predicted that capitalism would reach a crisis like the stock market crash of 1929, and surmised that the only way out of the Depression would be an imperialist war, likely one started against Russia, so it was against this that they mobilized (Betcherman 1982).

RCMP surveillance,¹¹⁶ when activism was in the streets it was under municipal jurisdiction. Similar to the methods used against strikers, physical police force in the form of police wielding batons and whips while on motorcycles and on horseback was used to discourage congregation and make arrests (Betcherman 1982; Hunter 1988; Abella 1974; Lipton 1978; Penner 1988; etc.). Whereas violence was intimidating for any participant or observer (not to mention life threatening), such visible police actions drew the attention of the commercial media and increased public scrutiny. It also made a crucial link between labour, communication, and culture as the demonstrations were linked with rights for free speech. As Penner notes in Toronto, “the violence of the Toronto police in attacking these gatherings and arresting and mistreating participants brought an unexpected measure of public support for the right of Communists to free speech” (Penner 1988:99). The “free speech fights” of Toronto would be carried on in cities across Canada where municipal governments used or constructed laws against the use of public properties. As shall be further discussed, the full extent of the law was also used provincially and federally to control public gatherings and separate politics from culture in the 1930s. Indeed, the direction of the state in this period was epitomized by then Prime Minister R.B. Bennett as the “iron heel of ruthlessness”.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁶ All organizations previously mentioned (trade unions, WILPF, YM/YH/YWCA, and United Church of Canada, etc.), plus any activities and any hall used for “radical” political activities were monitored; even as small as an anti-war play given by high-school students in Winnipeg, “Destruction of a Squadron” Parkdale Institute (RCMP Bulletin No. 827, App. II Oct 1936).

¹¹⁷ This is a notorious quote from Prime Minister R.B. Bennett who, in a speech to a Conservative convention in Toronto, called on “every true Canadian to put the iron heel of ruthlessness to a thing of that kind”. The “thing” in this case referred to “communist and socialist organizations...from foreign lands that seek to destroy our institutions.” Cited in *Canadian Unionist* IV December (1932:113) quoted in Young (1971:257), Caplan (1973:16), and *The Mail and Empire* 10 November 1932:1 (Penner 1988:100).

Despite such repression and danger, and also because of it, the anti-war theme was carried on in efforts around “Youth Day” which were directed towards “anti-militarism,” and protests became larger in the “Anti-War Days” that went beyond the CPC. Armistice Day was the most likely day to organize alternative parades to the traditional military and government-led services. “Peace Parades” were thus held on November 11th to draw attention particularly to the horrors of war and discuss pacifist alternatives.¹¹⁸ In 1934, for example, the *New Commonwealth* published an account of an alternative Armistice Day parade that took place in Toronto, a seldom seen and vivid example of anti-war and anti-militarism (see Annex E). City officials had allowed the parade, but ten CCF floats were “barred” due to their linkage of “war to capitalism and fascism” (*New Commonwealth* 17 Nov 1934:5).

Initially, Anti-war Days in the summer were small in number; for example, in 1935 the National Anti-war Youth Day organized by the Canadian League Against War and Fascism (CLAWF) drew fifteen hundred to Queen’s Park, and “approximately” six hundred in Winnipeg (RCMP Security Bulletin No. 761, App I, June 1935). In Montréal the CLAWF organized a “mass rally” where one thousand people listened to speakers and participated in the Progressive Arts Club’s mass recitation of an anti-war play called “Troops” (Ibid: No. 756, App VI, May 1935). These were precursors to the 1935 August 1st anti-war demonstrations where five to six thousand attended an “open-air meeting” in Toronto at Queen’s Park, and twelve hundred paraded in Winnipeg (Ibid: No. 767, App. I).

¹¹⁸ For example, RCMP Bulletins note the “Peace Parade” on 11 Nov 1935, when “pacifist speeches” were given by Rabbi Eisendrath (CLAWF) and Mrs. Anna Sissons (National Secretary of the WILPF) (No. 782, App II).

The following year, "Peace Rallies" were organized by the CPC in Vancouver with five thousand in attendance (Ibid: No. 803, App I, April 1936), and by the CLAWF in Toronto with three thousand attending (Ibid: No. 809, App 2 June). Closer to the end of the decade, the CPC and the Canadian League for Peace and Democracy (CLPD) continued to organize peace rallies in Toronto, Montréal, Winnipeg, and Vancouver, but the numbers of people attending were reportedly one thousand or less. It appeared that the largest crowds came out to protest *against* war and fascism in comparison to those *for* peace. For example, the largest rally against fascism in Toronto occurred in July of 1938, when ten thousand people gathered in Maple Leaf Gardens to demonstrate their opposition to fascism in Canada and internationally. The demonstrations against fascism did not mean that the movement was simply defined by its opposition, however.

Picnics and Parades

While the strikes and rallies were protests against labour exploitation and social oppression in general, picnics and parades also placed emphasis on the public demonstration of labour collectivism, social solidarity and celebration. Labour, communication and culture traditionally "went public" through these activities held in the streets and parks that combined speeches and fund-raising campaigns with social and sporting activities. The weather being a factor in outdoor activities, picnics were held throughout the spring and summer months. In June 1934, for example, 5,500 people participated in a huge picnic and jamboree, combining a fund-raiser for the CPC's *The Worker*, a staged production of the PAC's play "The Bearded King of England," baseball games and a sports' day (RCMP Bulletin No. 714, App II:V11). The CCF also organized

picnics that included sports and games (complete with prizes such as one ton of coal, \$12 and \$8 grocery orders, and sugar and tobacco).¹¹⁹ Also in 1934, three thousand people came out to a “basket picnic” in Stanley Park in Vancouver topped off by CCF speeches and the CCF’s thirty-five member orchestra.¹²⁰ These picnics were annual affairs, and the CCF celebrated its fourth annual in 1938 when “softball, gymnastics, phrenology” together with “an evening concert and popular sing-songs” received top billing.¹²¹ The CPC sponsored “International Picnics” in Toronto. Trucks and buses were scheduled to transport people to and from the workers’ clubs and labour temples across the city to the “Finnish Camp Grounds” on the city’s outskirts where people engaged in festivities of sports, song and dance (*The Worker* June 1935). While a number of picnics were held throughout the summer, the largest demonstrations of labour solidarity and support for left-wing politics was during the May Day (see Table 6) and Labour Day celebrations.¹²²

¹¹⁹ *New Commonwealth* 28 July 1934:3; 8 Sept. 1934:7.

¹²⁰ *New Commonwealth* 25 August 1934:1.

¹²¹ *New Commonwealth* 21 May 1938:5.

¹²² For a very brief history of May Day and Labour Day see Bennett (1987:53 and 57).

Table 6
Participation in May Day Parades in Major Cities in Canada¹²³
(1935-1939)

Year	City	Attendance	Location
1935	Vancouver	10,000 30,000	City Street Parade Stanley Park
	Toronto	9,000 Two Parades	Parade and Maple Leaf Gardens
	Winnipeg	5,000	Market Square
	Montréal	5,000	Mount Royal Arena
	Edmonton	2,000	Not Reported (N/R)
4 May (delayed due to snow)	Edmonton	2,000	Not Reported (N/R)
	Toronto	20,000 28,000 8,500	Parade Queen's Park Maple Leaf Gardens
	Montréal	3,500	Mount Royal Arena
	Hamilton	1,000	Not Reported (N/R)
	Winnipeg	5,000 8,000	Parade Mass Meeting
1937	Toronto	10,000 7,000	Queen's Park; Maple Leaf Gardens
	Montréal	1,500	Mount Royal Arena ¹²⁴
	Windsor	1,000	N/R
	Winnipeg	4,500	N/R
	Edmonton	1,680	N/R
1938	Vancouver	5,000	Stanley Park
	Toronto	11,000	Queen's Park
	Timmins	1,000	N/R
	Lakehead	1,600	N/R
	Winnipeg	4,500	N/R
1939 (30 April)	Calgary	3,400	N/R
	Edmonton	3,000	N/R
	Toronto	6,000 4,000 7,000	Maple Leaf Gardens March Meeting
	Winnipeg	4,000	N/R
	Vancouver	2,400 3,500	Parade Meeting

Source: All figures are from RCMP Bulletins 1935-1939.

¹²³ May Day parades were held in towns and cities across Canada. The table only records those held in major cities where participation was one thousand or more.

¹²⁴ The parade had been "forbidden by the Police Chief" (RCMP No. 855, App I, 13 May, 1937).

Where the general public may have been intimidated or actually restricted from participating in more overt forms of activism, and where other forms of communication were limited, the numbers of people who came out to the May Day parades, in the mid-1930s in particular, are illustrative of public participation. Such festivities would usually start out with parades and marches through the city streets and end up with a rally at a central area, usually a city park. May Day and Labour Day parades were all pomp and circumstance, combining huge posters and banners, ribbons and flags of participating organizations including trade unions, immigrant associations, and uniformed members of the WSA. Women with baby carriages would march together en masse and in gathering around a park bandstand, would 'circle the wagons' as a hopeful deterrent against police interference or violence when socialist speeches were given (Hunter 1988:61). In analyzing the Vancouver "Monster May Day Parade" of 1935, Bray further suggests that the incorporation of traditional symbols was intentional:

By couching their appeals in terms of flags, patriotism, motherhood, and the British values of tolerance and political dissent, parades coopted traditional values and cultural forms to lend respectability and credibility to messages of protest. In this way, parades lent a lustre of legitimacy to working-class concerns and were a major element in the culture of resistance (Bray 1987:48).

As can also be observed from Table 6, the greatest number of people came out in Canada's largest cities, with the most participants in the May Day celebrations of 1935 in Vancouver and 1936 in Toronto. While these numbers illustrate overall support, their fluctuations also indicate schisms between the groups and organizations that participated. The divisions manifest in the local organization of May Day, were also part of the divisions mitigating against the possibilities of the popular front.

Part II: Contradictions in Labour Culture

The Communist Party and the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation

The relationship between the CPC and the CCF had early been impaired by the CPC's "class versus class" policy where Communists had accused the CCF of being class collaborators rather than aiding social revolution. Taking this as evidence of the CPC's adherence to Comintern's directives, members of the CCF had reason to doubt and distrust the CPC's appeals for cooperation in a "United Labor Front".¹²⁵ Party strategy, policy and leadership may have remained separated; however, both parties shared common concerns and similar goals, such that overlap was inevitable. Events such as May Day and realities like the Spanish Civil War brought the parties together whether it was desired or not.

Although the Vancouver May Day of 1935 was evidence of inter-party, inter-union cooperation and demonstration of solidarity in principle, the Toronto May Day of the same year illustrated division. Even though the parades ended together in Maple Leaf Gardens, rather than one jointly organized parade, the Toronto parade of 1935 had been sponsored separately by the CCF and the CPC (CCF 1936a). According to the leadership of the CCF's Toronto Regional Council, this was nothing short of a failure given that it illustrated disunity rather than solidarity and contradicted the whole idea behind May Day (CCF 1936a).¹²⁶ The following year a committee made up of these organizations set to

¹²⁵ Manley notes that there was a drastic switch in the CPC's attitude that was almost immediate, where the CCF had been socialist "enemies," they were now called "trustworthy comrades" [1996:8].

¹²⁶ As the Toronto CCF executive reasoned: "It is the one day of the year when, forgetting differences and emphasizing agreements, men and women of every shade of radical opinion can march together to show the strength of the anti-capitalist forces in the country." (CCF 1936a).

rectify this by holding a May Day Conference at the Labour Temple (likely ULFTA's) as called for by the Toronto Regional Council of the CCF (Ibid). As a result, the jointly organized May Day was Toronto's largest with RCMP estimates at 28,000 participants (RCMP Bulletin No. 805, App I, 6 May 1936). Speakers at Maple Leaf Gardens included Tim Buck (CPC), Tom Mann, D. Nesbitt and Rev. Bruce Spence (from the CCF), and G. Watson from the Toronto Trades and Labour Council (TTLC) (Ibid).

While this combination of political and labour organizations should have indicated the possibilities of cooperation, the Toronto Council was shocked by the reaction of the CCF's Provincial Executive who promptly expelled the Council's leaders (Ibid). Despite a well-argued and well-evidenced appeal that questioned the very principles of socialism, democracy and other ideals that the CCF espoused, the Provincial Council stood firm, as did the CCF's national leadership (Woodsworth 1936). Reasons for the expulsion were not that the Toronto Council had participated in May Day itself, but that they had cooperated with the Communist Party, and in doing so, had indicated support for the popular front. As a letter from the Provincial Council explained, the joint-action

did create the impression that unity had been established between the C.C.F. and the Communist party. The impression was utterly false, since the two organizations are fundamentally too far apart to ever unite, but the harm was done. It could only be undone by the official withdrawal of the C.C.F. from this particular May Day demonstration (CCF 1936).

Further, the Toronto Council was being charged for going against the CCF Constitution and conferring a semblance of respectability and legitimacy on the CPC:

The only safe rule, consistent with the national party of the C.C.F. is to refuse to mention the Communist Party, when dealing with its officers or members either in print or on the platform, and to abstain from all dealings of any sort with the Communist organization (Ibid).

The “rule” had been set early when the CCF was first established to distinguish itself as a separate party from the Communist Party. It was also to avoid all the negativity associated with the CPC and left politics in general as promulgated in the commercial press and by the Liberal and Conservative parties [Young (1971:256), Lipset (1971:136/7); Skebo (1967:78-9); Caplan (1973:16-7; 30)].¹²⁷ Moreover, as Felix Lazarus argued in the pages of a two-month running debate over the “United Front” in the *New Commonwealth*, the CCF needed to avoid the Communists in order to avoid state repression. As Lazarus put it:

...if the commies were admitted, the CCF would be flooded, as the Communist Party is today, with RCMP spies, stool pigeons, provocateurs and so on. ...The American Socialist Party, has not yet recovered, and may never recover from the 1922-23 period of the Red Scare in the U.S. when the Socialist Party was similarly flooded with all the riff-raff of the underworld. You can't dismiss this danger with a flip of the hand. It may sound romantic when read in a book, or to “Parlour Bolsheviks” but to people who are trying to organize a mass movement in Canada, it is tantamount to suicide (*New Commonwealth* 16 Jan 1936:8).

For the most part, the party remained focused on long-term electoral success and was not interested in forming any alliances, whether on a national level with the CPC or provincial level with the Social Credit Party of Alberta, for example (Young 1971; Moore 1991:68; Avakumovic 1975:102).¹²⁸

The litmus test of the congruence of CCF policies and practices in the 1930s was the advent of the Spanish Civil War as argued by Moore (1991). Moore argues

¹²⁷ Each seemed to take every opportunity to equate communism with socialism and both with anarchy and/or foreign control from Moscow [as above (Ibid) for numerous examples]. At the same time, the Attorney General of Ontario appealed to the churches to fight atheism and the CCF which is “probably directed from Moscow” *Toronto Star* 6 Dec, 1932 (in Young 1972:156). Whereas Mackenzie King “repeatedly charged that only by coercion and force could a socialist government maintain itself in power” *Toronto Star*, July 24, 1933 (Caplan 1973:40).

¹²⁸ CCF passed a resolution on maintaining independence and “on relations with other organizations”. *New Commonwealth* 15 August 1936:3.

that the threat of fascism and the war divided the CCF leadership between those who supported the popular front initiative and those who would remain opposed regardless of how many CCF members directly participated in popular front organizations. While the CCF convention of 1936 did not endorse a popular front, it did officially support the Loyalists in Spain;¹²⁹ and CCF members took leadership positions in popular front organizations. For example, T.C. Douglas, William Irvine and Elizabeth Morton were founding members in the CLAWF; and Rev. Ben Spence and Graham Spry formed part of the executive of the Committee to Aid Spanish Democracy.¹³⁰ In addition, William Irvine argued in favour of a united front by submitting that given the seriousness of the threat of fascism to Canada, it would be small sacrifice to lose a socialist party, rather than lose Canada to fascism (Irvine 1936).¹³¹

The unity goal was taken to heart in British Columbia, where the CCF's Provincial Secretary, A.M. Stephen (also member of the CLAWF and CASD) supported cooperation with the CPC (Moore 1991:70-1).¹³² Moore suggests that the "Spanish issue" appealed to CCF members both ideologically and practically as the Civil War was seen both as a "naked class war" (the nationalists were capitalists and the republicans were workers) and as a war of democracy ("The government of Spain in defending itself was defending democracy") (Ibid: 55).¹³³ Thus it was reasoned that helping the Spanish government to defend itself "would also contribute to the advance of socialism and

¹²⁹ "National Council and Executive Minutes" National Convention of the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation, 3-5 August 1936. CCF Paper NAC – quoted in Moore (1991:48).

¹³⁰ Noting Spry's involvement in the CASD, even though he was "partisanly [sic] anti-communist" (Hannant 1998:119), Potvin suggests that the CASD "was the only significant CPC-CCF united front effort in Canadian history" (1992:122).

¹³¹ The appeal was published in *The Canadian Railway Employees Monthly* September, 1936:205.

¹³² Moore cites *The Federationist* 8 July 1937.

¹³³ *New Commonwealth* 22 August 1936.

defense of democratic principles,...Canada as well as Spain would be the benefactor” (Moore 1991:56). This was also the interpretation expressed by the CPC, and it formally appealed to the CCF to form a popular front coalition,¹³⁴ but was repeatedly denied on a national level in keeping with CCF policy.¹³⁵

Already in position as a Member of Parliament, J.S. Woodsworth was not about to form any coalition with the CPC; and other prominent CCF leaders (like F.R.Scott and Angus MacInnis) were in agreement.¹³⁶ The party had long been viewed as a competitor, and according to the CCF, its “public image” as foreign and controlled by Moscow had changed little.¹³⁷ Members who had explicit Communist sympathies could be, and were – like A.M. Stephens in B.C. – expelled from the CCF (Moore 1991:64,71). As a “Canadian party” primarily concerned with “Canadian” issues, the CCF suggested that it understood the “psychology” of the Canadian electorate thereby demonstrating a tendency towards nativism itself (*New Commonwealth*). Leaders of the CCF also feared a Communist take-over of the CCF and viewed communism as a foreign power under direction from the Comintern. This was not dispelled by CPC practices as personal experiences suggest. In keeping with their long-term goals, members of the CPC reportedly never ceased to campaign for communism in seeking to convert members to an international party (Moore 1991:66).¹³⁸ The CCF and CPC “rivalry” also continued as

¹³⁴ See letters from Sam Carr to J.S. Woodworth October 19, 1936 (NAC MG IV:I, Vol. 362).

¹³⁵ See J.S. Woodworth to National Executive of the CPC, Letter, 10 April 1935. (NAC, J.S. Woodworth Papers, MG 27 Series III, C7, Vol. 6, File 9).

¹³⁶ Moore cites a number of original correspondences (1991:65/66).

¹³⁷ As a letter from G.H. Williams Pres. of Saskatchewan CCF put it “The fact of the matter is of course that the big bulk of the electors do not trust the Communist Party and are afraid of the bogey of Communism. If the CCF were to be tied up to it, they would also distrust the CCF and fear it also. These facts may be unpalatable to some but that does not remove them” (NAC MG 28, Series IV:I, Vol. 362). See also Caplan (1973:40-45) for CCF leadership opinions of the CPC.

¹³⁸ Graham Spry as cited by Horn (1972:703).

industrial unionism and the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) was beginning to become established in Canada (Berger 1982:142).

Disunity in Organized Labour

In 1935, the CPC's recommended dissolution of the unions belonging to the Workers' Unity League and Farmers' Unity League into the Trades and Labour Congress of Canada (TLCC) aggravated a rivalry between the national union organizations in Canada. As discussed earlier, the All-Canadian Congress of Labour (ACCL) had long been in opposition to the CPC, and there were historical divisions between it and the TLC – AFL alliance. Calling the CPC unions “anarcho-Communists,” and the American Federation of Labor (AFL) “foreign” and “alien” with the TLC as “its emasculated subsidiary,” the ACCL fought the formation of the CIO in Canada,¹³⁹ and divided the Canadian labour movement in two distinct halves: national and international unions:

On the one hand are the organizations which constitute the national Labour movement – the All-Canadian Congress of Labour and the Federation of Catholic Workers association in the National Labour Conference. They stand, as Canadian institutions, for home rule in industry and in all public affairs, including labour relations.

On the other hand is the congeries of foreign-controlled branch unions, looking alternately to Washington and to Moscow for instructions and guided by men whose own interest in Canada is what they can get out of it, or how they can bring in the Communist terror by sabotaging the national economy. Against this sinister combination, against the menace of a foreign dictatorship over Canadian industry, the national labour organizations are the first line of defense [*The Canadian Unionist* Vol. 9(10) March (1936:258)].

Nevertheless, for a short time, the prospects of an internationally organized-labour unity grew in strength with the increase of industrial unions affiliated with the CIO. Where the

¹³⁹ “Trouble Brewing: An Alien Alliance [sic] That Bodes Ill for Canada.” [*The Canadian Unionist*, Vol 9(10) March 1936:258].

majority of unionization had been limited to the skilled trades, the organizing of industrial workers breathed new life into the labour movement both in the U.S. and Canada. The split between international and national unions seen by the ACCL as the dividing line, was not the main issue in the U.S., however. AFL leadership resisted the mix of industrial workers with the skilled trades and the CIO's more militant stance in advocating strike action as unsuitable to the traditional corporatist stance of the AFL. The subsequent expulsion of the CIO from the AFL in 1937 was followed by AFL pressure on the TLCC to do the same (Lipton 1967:261-2; Abella 1973:28).¹⁴⁰ Yet, for the next three years the TLCC retained the unions of the CIO despite their "communist" links in order to facilitate labour movement strength and unity in Canada.¹⁴¹ However, as Roberts and Bullen suggest, "the TLC could not stand up to the AFL's threat to withhold dues of Canadian craft unionists" and therefore the TLC "expelled the CIO forces in 1939" (1984:111).

Meanwhile, also as earlier discussed, the ACCL was having difficulties of its own. Having only twenty per cent of the strength of the TLC, it saw a chance of survival in a merger with the CIO unions (Abella 1973:44-5).¹⁴² The merger took some time to work out (Ibid) but eventually the largest unions in the ACCL, the CFL and some of the CIO unions joined to form the Canadian Congress of Labour (Berger 1982:142). Given

¹⁴⁰ Upon expulsion the CIO changed its name from the Committee for Industrial Organization to the Congress of Industrial Organizations (Heron 1996:65).

¹⁴¹ Editorials "Suspension of C.I.O. Unions" [*Canadian Congress Journal* Vol. XVIII(2) February 1939:7].

¹⁴² Statistics indicate that in 1937, membership of the ACCL totaled 28,048 or 21% of the TLCCC's membership of 131,705; in 1938 ACCL membership increased slightly to 30,855, whereas the TLCC increased to 160,378. With less than a quarter of the TLCC membership, it behooved the national union to be more conciliatory in their approach [Statistics are from tables in: Ministère du Travail du Canada, Direction de l'Économie et des Recherches (1970) *Croissance du Syndicalisme au Canada, 1921-1967*. Ottawa: Information Canada, as cited in LeBlanc (1971:109)].

the ACCL/CFL's prior history of anti-"anarcho-communism" however, the more radical leaders were the "minority in the new organization" (Ibid) and "the social democrats manoeuvred to assure themselves a majority [forcing] the communists into the permanent role of outraged opposition" (Heron 1996:73). The old rivalry between the CCF and the CPC continued within the new organization and remained a hindrance to labour movement unity (Abella 1973:29-31; Berger 1982:141-3; Horowitz 1968:77-79),¹⁴³ as would the continued control of the clerics and the Catholic Unions in Québec (Heron 1996:65). Such continual strife weakened the strength of the labour movement in Canada and divisions between radicals and conservatives could be taken advantage of by employers and unsympathetic governments [particularly since there was as yet, no effective federal legislation protecting workers from being fired for belonging to a union (Heron 1996:66)]. In addition, there were other groups (besides the employers and governments in Canada) that complemented the dominant hegemony and worked against left unity and the formation of a popular front movement.

Nationalist and Religious Formations of Labour Culture

Ethnicity in Formation

Divisions within and amongst organized labour, and differences between the CCF and CPC political parties, were also evident in the radical immigrant associations. These divisions were exacerbated by immigrant nationalist and religious organizations whose versions of "labour" and of "culture" competed with radical interpretations and

¹⁴³ Abella explains how this rivalry "came to a head" in the United Auto Workers in 1938, between those supporting "unity" and those supporting "progressive" (that is, anti-communism) causes. He suggests that where the CPC "as well as most rank and file Canadian workers were supporting the 'unity' caucus, union leadership concentrated their efforts on the latter" (1973:30).

worked to dissuade any notion of radical labour activism or any movement towards a popular front. As noted earlier, immigrants were brought in or allowed to come to Canada as labourers. A mixture of employers and politicians justified specific immigration by assigning particular “cultural” attributes to immigrants that suggested their suitability for settlement, population growth, and usefulness as labour. For example, Ukrainians were praised for their physical strength, hardiness, and willingness to work.¹⁴⁴ Finnish immigrants were also described as stout, honest, and hard working employees, and as ‘god-fearing folk, accustomed to hardship and toil, obliged to battle in order to live’.¹⁴⁵ Both *identified by* and *identifying with* their labour, immigrant labour culture formed on two different bases. For the socialist and the communist organizations, labour in their homeland and in Canada was a source of exploitation and connected to a class politics of emancipation. In this way, labour culture was intimately connected to political and collective struggle. On the other hand, for nationalist and religious organizations, labour was required for advancement as both a source and symbol of individual strength and worthiness to the Canadian government, to “God,” or to both.¹⁴⁶

In accepting labour conditions as a given, or at least as a necessary compromise, immigrant nationalist and religious organizations did not challenge the existing Canadian political economic structures. Each accepted the status quo and chose to work within the

¹⁴⁴ As immigration was debated in parliament 1896, Liberal immigration minister Clifford Sifton advocated immigration from Eastern Europe in particular (The Siftons also owned several newspapers). His racist view of immigrants as labourers and breeders is evident in his statement to parliament: “I think that a stalwart peasant in a sheepskin coat, born on the soil, whose forefathers have been farmers for ten generations, with a stout wife and half-dozen children, is good quality”. “Siftons’ Sheepskins” became a slogan in the next election (Lysenko 1947:31).

¹⁴⁵ [Orr (1970:np) quoted in Eklund (1987:19)].

¹⁴⁶ For example the motto of the *Ukrains’kyi Robitnyk* (Ukrainian Toiler) (1934-1954) was “On the foundation of Christianity the Ukrainian toilers shall build a prosperous future” (McLaren 1973:165).

boundaries of the capitalist political economy and existing government institutions as constituted through liberal and conservative parties. Rather than viewing social class as a crisis and working to eliminate class inequality like the socialists and communists aimed to do, the nationalist and religious immigrant organizations worked within the class system in promoting upward mobility and integration into the dominant Canadian political economy. Generalizing this view, economic and social discrimination would be overcome through education and adherence to hard work and an acceptance of Canadian government policies and practices. Political differences were less a matter of the politics in Canada, than they were over organized religion and over what kind of government was desirable for the homeland-state; and these differences were reflected in the names of the organizations. For example: the Ukrainian Nationalist Federation (est. 1932) was for an independent republican Ukraine, and those who supported monarchy rule founded the United Hetman Organization (est. 1934). Religious-nationalist organizations included the Greek Orthodox "Ukrainian Self-Reliance League" (a combination of separate organizations beginning in 1928), and the Ukrainian Catholic Brotherhood (1932). Like the left-wing immigrant organizations, national halls and churches were built complete with schools, libraries, orchestras, drama clubs, as well as having a national and religious press.

All of the immigrant groups from Europe had their nationalist and religious variants with the organizations receiving financial support, communication materials, and leadership from established governments in the homeland, as well as the Church. Many of these were formed in the 1930s as governments in Finland, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Poland, and Yugoslavia, as well as the Roman Catholic Church sought to counter the

growth of radicalism (particularly Communism) in Canada and garner support for their own regimes from immigrants and from the Canadian government.¹⁴⁷ For example, to ensure continued patriotism in Canada, the Hungarian government supplied nationalists with a number of different communication forms including books on Hungarian history and crafts, “dance manuals, periodicals, flags, maps and even films” (Patrias 1994:143). In particular, the Hungarian paper *Kanadai Magyar Ujság* (est. 1924) was “controlled” and “subsidized by the Hungarian government” from 1929 on (Patrias 1994:137; Magocsi and Dreisziger 1999:667). It also sent and sponsored a number of nationalist speakers who would tour areas of Hungarian settlement throughout Canada (Ibid:133-148). In the same way, the Polish government “sponsored” the production of, and distributed “free of charge,” a number of periodicals sent to nationalist and religious organizations (Turek 1962:42), as well as subsidizing nationalist organizations in Canada (and in other countries of the diaspora) (Avery and Fedorowicz 1982:13). Likewise, the Finnish government supported the nationalist Central Organization of the Loyal Finns in Canada (COLFC) (est. 1931) with the expressed purpose: “to change Finnish political image in

¹⁴⁷ Swyripa and Thompson (1983) note, for example, that for the Ukrainian nationalist and religious organizations, acceptance of Canadian institutions was part of attaining specific organizational goals. It was expected that Anglo-Canadians, and the Canadian government especially, would be sympathetic to an independent Ukraine as desired by the nationalists, and would also accept their religious practices since they did not deviate from the existing norm. In keeping with this, Ukrainian nationalists aimed to prove their loyalty to Canada by general compliance with governing infrastructures and by a “neutral politics” (Ibid). No official political affiliation was therefore allowed with any organizations based in Eastern Europe (Swyripa 1999:1290). As further proof, nationalists supported the Canadian military effort in both wars, and condemned the pacifist orientation of the socialists and communists to the point of reporting them to the authorities as well as “ostracizing” them – both from the community and within the pages of their press (Wsevolod and Makuch 1984:354). Further, nationalists refused to acknowledge either socialist or communist views in their press as any acknowledgement would at best confer legitimacy, or at worst be construed by the RCMP and the Canadian government as an expression of sympathy (Momryk 1999).

the country, to increase employment opportunities and to destroy communism in Canada” (Lindstrom 1999:520; 1992:136).¹⁴⁸

Nationalist and religious organizations were further able to draw on “customs” and “tradition” to facilitate a formation of ethnicity in Canada that was heavily dependent on symbolic forms, against which the communists and socialist fought. Patrias (1994) for example, notes that for Hungarian immigrants, there was a struggle between the “proletariats” and “patriots” – leaders of the different immigrant organizations – who sought to forge a distinct culture. For the ‘patriots’ this meant building a ‘traditional’ culture, centered on folklore in poems, plays and novels depicting an idyllic peasant or rural past, as well as church-organized activities, and handicraft work. For the ‘proletariats’ this meant that a systematic attack had to be waged on these ‘traditions’ and ‘customs’, in order to attune immigrant awareness as to the causes of their exploitation and oppression on which these traditions had been based. Patrias explains, for example, how the ‘proletariats’ worked to change the meaning of social ceremonies like weddings by substituting for the clergy, a proletariat writer, poet, or leader of one of the Communist-affiliated organizations to speak at the event. Other changes included the marking of calendars and almanacs with “momentous events in the history of radical and labour movements,” and “Red Sundays” when association members went door-to-door to discuss the labour press and campaign for its support (Patrias 1994:214-216).

Being less adversarial and politically controversial, the nationalist and religious press could more easily court the support of the majority of immigrants. Further, due to

¹⁴⁸ This was to dispel the image of Finns as radicals in the view of employers and governments in Canada, which was harming employment opportunities for Finns. Lindstrom notes that “The COLFC gave the RCMP and Canadian employers’ lists of left-wing Finns, and some Loyal Finns used their membership cards in an attempt to get jobs” (1999:520; 1992:136).

common experiences of political economic and social insecurity in Canada, the broader stance and acceptance of religion in the press and the organizations provided welcome security in both tradition and custom. This was developed in the national halls and emphasized in folklore and folk arts such as needlecrafts. In an analysis of Eastern European immigrant culture, Brunet and Palmer note, for example, that folk arts were often learned in Canada “rather than having retained them” (1988:213-215). Folk art was thus symbolic not only for inter-group identification, but functioned as a cultural display for others. It also symbolized a measure of success in having the “leisure” to devote to arts and architecture as opposed to the “uncultured” peasant-workers of the past (Hunchuk 2000). In addition, Brunet and Palmer also suggest that “part of a functioning folk culture is shown by periodic attempts to ‘purify it’ or make it authentic” (1988:214). Thus, the architecture of gold-domed churches and thatched huts associated with Ukrainian ethnicity, for example, were not, as interpreted by the communists and socialists evidence of oppression and poverty, but symbols of perseverance, hardiness, and contributions to Canadian nation building. Linked to a romanticized past in Ukraine, these would serve as foundations and proof of an authentic culture worthy of inclusion in the Canadian cultural mosaic.

In tandem with the nationalists, organized religion in general was based on respect for authority, religious tradition, and paternalism. The Roman Catholic Church, in particular, supported affiliated organizations and press that was expressly conservative and anti-communist. Press ownership was considered paramount to the success of the

Catholic Church¹⁴⁹ which was evidenced by the formation of the “Canadian American Catholic Press Association” in 1911, and the subsequent founding of a number of Catholic journalism schools in the United States (Baumgartner 1967:61).¹⁵⁰ It was operated with standard guidelines for content and editorship, and was bound to submit to the authority of the church in all matters (Ibid: 61; Isidore 1959). The combination of religion, nationalism and anti-communism was especially effective in Québec in the 1930s, where fully “ninety-nine per cent of French Canadians identif[ied] themselves as Catholic” (Frenette 1999:569). Fortified by the papal encyclicals, the church was able to preach its tenets through three communicative forms: the pulpit, the press (e.g. *L’Action catholique* 1907-), and the unions such as the Canadian and Catholic Confederation of Labour (CCCL) and Union Catholique des Cultivateurs (UCC) (est. 1924).

The Canadian Catholic organizations and press were also supplemented and supported by the Catholic Church in Europe. In 1933, for example, the Polish Roman Catholic Church established the Stowarzyszenie Polaków w Manitobie [Association of Poles in Manitoba and (later expanding to) Canada] and supported the *Gazeta Katolicka* (Catholic Weekly 1908-1951) which was used to criticize radical politics, and extol the virtues of “morals and ethics” (Radecki 1999:1065; Turek 1962:104). Nationalist pride and religious morals formed the basis of the national halls and church activities and were specifically aimed at youth in liaisons with conservative Canadian organizations. Polish

¹⁴⁹ As expressed in a message from Pope Pius X to Catholic leaders: “In vain you will build churches, preach missions, found schools; all your works, all your efforts will be destroyed if you cannot at the same time wield the defensive and offensive weapon of a press that is Catholic, loyal and sincere” (Isidore 1959:18).

¹⁵⁰ With such important beginnings, the Catholic Press in Canada is another area for future research to track the networks and connections between countries, linking with the U.S. research (Gottlieb 1996; Lora and Longton 1999).

branches of the Boy Scouts and Girl Guides were established in Ontario and across the prairies (Radecki 1979:74), and there was even a Polish chapter of the Imperial Order of Daughters of the Empire (Ibid). Where the emphasis on authority, hierarchy, conservatism, nationalism, and religion cultivated a bulwark against socialism or communism, it was also taken to the extreme by an emerging fascist movement in Canada.

Fascist Organizations and their Press

Fascists demanded and imposed absolute conformity according to their motto –chi non é con noi é contro di noi (he who is not with us is against us). Those who did not join were alienated and pilloried (Principe 1999:25).

Combining “homegrown” anger, aggression and violence with international tenets of fascism, fascist groups emerged in Canada in the mid-to-late 1920s each with its own regional composition (Betcherman 1975; Wagner 1981; Robin 1992; Principe 1999; Renton 1999). These ranged from the smallest “Dominion State Party” or “whiteshirts,” which had connections with a fascist party in the Southern United States (Betcherman 1975:79), to the Québec nationalists, and British-, German- and Italian- supported fascist parties. Early evidence of fascism in Québec was with L’Ordre Patriotique des Goglus (est. 1929) led by journalist Adrien Arcand (Ibid:passim; and Robin 1992:87-124). The Goglus evolved into “Le Parti National Social Chrétien” (The National Social Christian Party) or the “blueshirts” in 1934, and aimed to be *the* fascist party in Canada as the “National Unity Party of Canada” in 1937 (Betcherman 1975:38-39 and passim; Robin 1992:266). Initially, it mixed anti-communism with Italian fascism [which combined anti-union and anti-socialism with corporatism and Catholicism (Principe 1999)] with

Nazism (specifically including anti-Semitism, violence, and an idolization of Hitler) (Wagner 1981; Betcherman 1975). These views were promulgated in a number of journals published in Québec, such as *L'Action Nationale* (est. 1933), a weekly whose “first issue named the enemies liberalism, communism, socialism, bolshevism and behind all of these the Jews,” as well as *Le Fasciste Canadien* (the party’s bulletin, then magazine), and the newspaper *Le Patriote*.

Another fascist party with Canada-wide ambitions was the Canadian Nationalist Party that drew on British imperialism and mixed it with the corporatism of Mussolini (Betcherman 1975:65-75). Active in Manitoba, its paper *The Canadian Nationalist*, received propaganda from the “Nazi Foreign Press Service” and was supported by the Mennonites across Western Canada, particularly because of their anti-communist stance (Ibid). Also functioning in the West was the Canadian Union of Fascists (CUF) or “blackshirts” (Wagner 1981:77-78,104; Robin 1992:192). Drawing on the British Union of Fascists headed by Oswald Mosley (Renton 1999:2,6,63), the CUF was established in Winnipeg, but also had branches in Ontario, Saskatchewan, and B.C.. The CUF’s newspaper *The Thunderbolt* received propaganda from the German Nazis as well, and “solicited subscribers for Mosley’s papers *Action* and *The Blackshirt*; together with Arcand’s *Le Fasciste Canadien* they had complete access to the “fascist library” (Robin 1992:192-3; Betcherman 1975:107). A number of Swastika Clubs also emerged in Ontario (1933-35) and joined together to form the Swastika Association of Canada in 1938 as headed by Joseph C. Farr (Ibid).

In addition to these more-or-less self-propelled Canadian fascist clubs, the already established fascist governments of Italy and Germany added substantial resources in

support of the range of fascist organizations and press in Canada. As noted earlier, while some form of European government-support for nationalist immigrant organizations in Canada was not unusual, what was significant in the 1920s and 1930s was the increase in resources, particularly communication resources, allotted to ensure efficient promulgation of the fascist worldview in Canada. For example, the “Nazi Party’s Foreign Press Service” and the “Nazi Propaganda Agency” were very active in Canada in supplying pamphlets, newspapers, films, radio addresses, and articles translated (both in English and French), “free of charge” specifically for “native Canadian fascist movements” (Wagner 1981:55;62;66;79).¹⁵¹ Its anti-communism and anti-semitism was a central part of the Deutsche Bund für Canada (DBC) (est. 1934) and was particularly strident in the DBC’s own *Deutsche Zeitung für Canada* (*German Newspaper for Canada*) (est. 1935) (Ibid).¹⁵² As Wagner suggests, the production, translation, distribution, and propaganda system as a whole was very efficient in supplying fascist groups throughout Canada¹⁵³ and in reaching the “five out of the seven” German language papers in Canada (1999:106):

...this sympathetic press, which circulated overwhelmingly among western Germans, represented the most effective means which Nazi supporters possessed of reaching the masses of Canada’s Germans. In terms of circulation it meant that some 70,000 German-Canadians were being encouraged to identify with, or to speak out in defence of, Nationalist Socialist Germany (Wagner 1999:114).

¹⁵¹ The materials were transported via the “North German Lloyd Steamship Company which maintained agents in [Canada’s] largest cities” (Wagner 1981:61).

¹⁵² Through the organization Volksbund für das Deutschtum im Ausland in Germany (est. 1933), the German government “sponsored visitors to Canada, published Canadian-related features in its journals, encouraged its representatives to write articles for Canadian German-language press and Canadian Mennonite papers” (Wagner 1981:48).

¹⁵³ See also “Arcand’s Denial of Foreign Tie Proved False” (*New Commonwealth* 9 April 1938:1). The CCF paper identifies a list of “about 300 books, pamphlets, leaflets and newspapers” printed largely in Germany, but also in Great Britain and U.S., calling it “evidence that a powerful propaganda machine financed by foreign governments aim to replace British traditions with totalitarian, Fascist rule.”

Similarly, the fascist government in Italy had also set up Italian consulates in Canada¹⁵⁴ and had specific departments to “propagate the image of fascist Italy” through the Italian “Under Secretariat of Press and Propaganda” renamed the “Ministry of Popular Culture” in 1935, and the “International Press Service” (Principe 1999:27;66).¹⁵⁵ Both produced favourable reports on the “successes” of corporatism, the “anti-Bolshevik” and anti-socialist policies, and the social effects of military order and discipline (Ibid). These were not only promulgated in the Italian press, but were also picked up by the Canadian commercial press,¹⁵⁶ particularly in Québec, where the pact between Mussolini’s government and the Roman Catholic Church was seen as a favourable model (Principe 1999:52; Betcherman 1975:31).¹⁵⁷ In addition, Canadian politicians such as Prime Ministers, R.B. Bennett¹⁵⁸ and W.L. Mackenzie King,¹⁵⁹ and provincial leaders

¹⁵⁴ Sturino (1999:802).

¹⁵⁵ For example, Sturino notes that: “In the mid-1930s the fascist government had established *case d’Italia* (Italy houses) in both Toronto and Hamilton, premises that doubled as vice-consular offices and community centres. Activities sponsored by the authorities ranged from the *Dopolavoro* (After-work) recreational organization, which included hockey teams, to the *Balilla*, [and] a youth group... whose members were eligible for a free trip to Italy. In Toronto most of the major community associations, including the Sons of Italy lodges and the encompassing *Comitato Intersociale*, came under the sway of the Italian vice-consulate”(Sturino 1999:802).

¹⁵⁶ Both Principe and Betcherman cite numerous articles in commercial papers, either as direct reprints of Italian or German propaganda articles, or as praising, or without criticism of fascist regimes, particularly in Québec and Ontario [for example particularly *La Presse*, *Le Canada* and *Le Devoir* (Principe 1999:66)].

¹⁵⁷ The “Conciliation Pact” was signed in 1929, and, as Principe suggests, was seen as positive reinforcement of both Catholicism and fascism. The Pact “received the full support of both the Canadian Roman Catholic clergy and lay leaders across the country; [and] ...effectively transformed Italian-Canadian Roman Catholic parishes into centres of fascist propaganda” (1999:52). As Betcherman also notes, this was further supported as Pope Pius XI also “signed a concordant with the New Germany in the summer of 1933” (1975:31).

¹⁵⁸ In the 1930 federal election, Bennett enlisted the journalist skills of Adrian Arcande in support of the Conservative government platform in Québec (Betcherman 1975:28-29). Although Bennett ceased to have formal contact with Arcande, the fascist leader did not abandon his support of Bennett (Ibid:12;28;30).

¹⁵⁹ Indeed, Mackenzie King paid a congenial visit to Germany in 1937, and his government nearly sold Anticosti Island on the Canadian east-coast to Hitler in May 1938 [Eayrs (1960:71-2); Wagner (1981:122); and Principe (1999:31,51)], see also *Debates in the House of Commons*, Vol. III, 1938 (pp. 3269).

such as M.L.A. Tascherau, and M. Duplessis were also in admiration of the fascist government's approach to social management and control [Eayrs (1960:71-72), Betcherman (1975:10, 28-29, 85); Wagner (1981:122-24); Principe (1999:31,51-3)].

While there were variations in fascist ideology in Canada, a large part of the strength of the fascist organizations came from their simplistic explanation of unemployment and economic depression (Renton 1999). Fascists drew on both socialism and organized religion to provide what appeared to be a natural explanation and solution to social inequality. It purported to share with socialism a critique of "big business" but fell short of criticizing capitalism as a system. In the fascist view, the excesses of capitalism and social inequality were not due to the system or a specific class, but a particular race or ethnicity – the "Jews". At one range of the scale, as early espoused by the Québec Goglus, for example, employment could be solved building on the "Achat Chez Nous movement" whereby Jewish businesses were boycotted (Betcherman 1975:4,7,23,33; Robin 1992:108). Taken to extreme (as it was by the German Nazis), the "solution" was to eliminate Jewish people altogether by murder and extermination.

Fascists also drew on religion to equate Jews with communism. People who identified themselves, or were identified as Jews were purported to be historically prone to revolution and were equated with the communists; in being considered anti-clerical and "godless," and (so the reasoning went), could also be blamed for moral and social degradation (Wagner 1981; Betcherman 1975). This was the line that was constantly repeated in the fascist press, broadcast through speeches, and demonstrated with violence

against Jewish workers, labour unions and any Communist-related organizations.¹⁶⁰ The link between morals and communism was a persistent theme throughout the 1920s and 1930s and was evident beyond the fascists.

Although fascist organizations and their press in Canada were actively producing what is now called “hate literature,” they were able to operate relatively free of Canadian government and RCMP harassment.¹⁶¹ As Wagner explains, the Deutsche Bund für Canada functioned without restraint because they had early recognized the Canadian governments’ requirement of the separation of politics and culture (Wagner 1981:67). Thus, the DBC established itself as a “cultural” organization that aimed to ‘unify all Germans in Canada’ and thereby deliberately planned to avoid arousing suspicion (Ibid: 145). Further, governments in Canada did little or nothing to curb the hate propaganda that was being produced. As Betcherman suggests, in the 1930s Manitoba was the only province that was able to pass a law that somewhat restricted such publications.¹⁶² A similar attempt was made in 1937 in Ontario, but was fought by the commercial press on the grounds that it went against the principle of “freedom of the press” (Betcherman

¹⁶⁰ For example, Principe observes that the Italian fascist press gained credibility because of its systematic style and “homogenous” content. In order to give the impression that everyone supported fascism, it ‘ignored everything except fascist activities’ and “reported nothing but the proceedings of fascist meetings, fascist celebrations, and fascist successes and glories” (1999:36). Much of fascist resources were accorded to the press, and given that violence on the scale practiced in Italy was not yet supported in Canada, in lieu, the press was viewed “as the powerful and most dangerous weapon of every battle” (Ibid). [This view of communication (i.e. the press and theatre) as a “weapon” was also prevalent on the left](Endres 1976).

¹⁶¹ In their estimation of the amount of RCMP investigation and reporting on fascist groups in Canada as recorded in the RCMP Bulletins, Kealey and Whitaker note that “the Canadian Nationalist Party ...received some limited attention, but on at least one occasion they were roundly applauded for their vitriolic opposition to the left” (1997:8).

¹⁶² The law was called the “Manitoba Defamation Act” which “allowed any member of a racial or religious group that was being defamed to sue for an injunction against the publisher or author”. The “conviction” was that “the publisher had to cease publication of the libels” (Betcherman 1975:71). The Manitoba government also “amended the Newspaper Act whereby the publisher’s name was mandatory on all pamphlets and handbills” (Ibid).

1975:105).¹⁶³ With such experiences on the provincial level, nothing was done on a legal level federally (indeed, it wasn't until 1970 when Canada had adequate laws against the production of hate propaganda) (Ibid: 71).

On the contrary, whenever considerations of the "Jewish question" arose, it had the opposite effect of intensifying anti-Semitism.¹⁶⁴ This bolstered the fascist movement which, as Betcherman suggests, was adding to its arsenal by playing on a "fresh fear and suspicion" as a result of the success of Popular Front governments and the growth of a popular front movement internationally and in Canada (1975:85). For Canadian governments at all levels, given the experience of anti-conscription demonstrations, strikes, Hunger Marches, etc., the earlier reports of Mussolini's and Hitler's "successes" seem to fit in well with the state's aim of "peace, order and good government". As we shall see, just how far the Canadian state was willing to go to ensure this order, was made apparent on municipal, provincial, and federal government levels.

¹⁶³ For these arguments, see *Globe and Mail* November 8, 1937 and November 9, 1937 in particular.

¹⁶⁴ In Québec, there was a proposal to add a Jewish School Commission the likes of the Roman Catholic and Protestant School Boards (Betcherman 1975:8). The "David Bill" as it was called, did not become effective as Québec was especially wary of recognizing any other minority in Canada other than French (or alternately English in Québec) (Ibid). Further, the "Bercovitch Bill" meant to curb hate propaganda, was seen a request for "special treatment" for Jews and the fascists used this to illustrate that Jews were propagating social inequality (Ibid:13-14).

Conclusion

Throughout Canada in the 1930s, the combination of the numerous publications and public demonstrations both expressed and demonstrated the political and cultural development of the popular front. The ownership of publishing companies by political parties, unions, and immigrant organizations, coupled with the establishment of the Associated Labor Press and the Cooperative Press Association, indicated that the labour press was becoming more established and labour news was increasingly being exchanged across Canada and internationally. As well, the countless numbers of alternative booklets and pamphlets that were in circulation illustrates the range of in-depth analyses, critique and theories that defined the contours of the movement, identifying areas of overlap and activism of the popular front. The establishment of the CPC's *Daily Clarion* at the height of the Depression was a remarkable achievement given the challenges of keeping a commercial newspaper viable during this time. It suggests that the constituents and readership of the *Clarion* went well beyond the confines of the Communist Party even though it was a personal risk to have any copy of the CPC (or any such alternative) publication in one's possession, let alone subscribe.

A brief overview of the labour press, and the religious and pacifist publications as a whole, illustrates that the issues they discussed were not restricted to union and political party activity (even though the TLC proclaimed its interest was solely 'economic', and the *New Commonwealth* only addressed its 'members', for example). Expressions of labour were also evident in poems and songs printed in the newspapers, and in the music and song books, almanacs and calendars in which oppositional and alternative ideas and

practices were articulated, not only in print but in the music, plays and songs that were an integral part of the strikes and protests, picnic and parades.

Attending to the intersections of the politics of form and politics of allegiance, the conflicts and contradiction of Canada's labour culture are revealed. These included the battles between the leadership of the CCF and the Communists, as well as other forms of socialism that were marginalized by party and international politics. These overlapped with local trade union politics and significant divisions between national and international trade unions, suggesting that the priority was placed on organizational structure and survival over labour unity and activism. In particular, the articulation of labour was subsumed under nationalism by the ACCL, as the ACCL incorporated dominant hegemonic rhetoric to advance its own organizational position. In addition, the CCF's and CPC's focus on party dogma and either/or positions, made unity of left politics in Canada seem impossible. While their members worked in popular front organizations towards cooperation and democratic decision-making, separate and deep trenches were being dug by organizational hierarchies on the cultural front.

Such divisions were taken advantage of, and reinforced by nationalist and religious groups, whose articulation of labour was not oppositional or alternative, but complemented the conservative and capitalist dominant hegemony. While it has been common to identify the CPC as being 'controlled' or supported from Moscow, many European governments were also supporting Canadian immigrant nationalist and religious organizations supplying them with financial and media support to promote their own nationalist and anti-communist agendas. Unlike the CPC, the nationalist and religious groups were able to intersect with conservative groups in Canada – the Catholic

Church among them – to strengthen their situation, as they did not explicitly oppose existing class (and gender) relations. As will be demonstrated, these de-labouring and re-labouring forces were legitimized and reinforced by the actions of three levels of Canadian governments, through a range of legal, policy, and regulatory controls on communication and culture.

Chapter Six: De-Labouring and Re-Labouring Culture in Canada

Labour, Communication, Culture and Civil Rights

It is unwise if not practically impossible to attempt any extended discussion of freedom of association separate and apart from freedom of speech and freedom of the press. The three are inseparably connected, constitutionally and otherwise, they will stand or fall together (Schmeiser 1964:221).

Whether in the early part of the last century or today, civil rights in Canada are considered part of a liberal democracy and something of an inheritance of the “British tradition.” The battles for freedom of the press over a law against censorship of hate propaganda in the 1930s (discussed in the previous chapter) would seem part of this equation, if it weren’t so much in conflict with the many restrictions on communication, labour, and culture during this time. Some of the major restrictions were in the form of government policies at all levels (municipal, provincial and federal) which can be seen as nodal points of hegemonic struggle. That is, one of the ways hegemonic struggle can become visible is through government policy – when governments take action or inaction – on, in our case, labour, communication, and culture.

This chapter will identify and examine some of these nodal points where governments made policy decisions that reveal intersections between labour, communication and culture, and civil rights. From the municipal to the federal level, these range from the free speech fights in Toronto and Montréal, to the Québec Padlock Act, to the Defence of Canada Regulations of the federal government. While these are somewhat well-known examples in Canadian history, included are several lesser-known examples in the 1920s and 1930s of state policies on film production, exhibition, and distribution, and radio broadcasting that together, combined to de-labour culture. In

reviewing the state's agency as regulator, the chapter will also identify the federal government as producer and distributor of communication whose activities in the late 1930s and into the Second World War aimed to manage social conflict and promote social unity, thereby re-labouring culture according to state and industry priorities.

Struggles in the City: Toronto and Montréal

On the municipal level there were many battles over access to public streets, public parks, and government grounds as labour expanded spatially. Restrictions over these spaces were a matter of municipal and provincial administrative control by the issuing of permits, the creation of city by-laws, and management of schools and "amusement" halls.¹ Control was also administered through an overlap of the civil power, which included the utilization of police intimidation and direct confrontation. Increased use of state authority drew increased public scrutiny, although the intensity was greatest at the state level. Representations of Communists, particularly in the commercial press in Toronto,² as violent "foreigners"³ and "Bolsheviks" who were a threat to God and country prevailed. The combination of the fear of "foreigners" and "radicals" in general, came to a head in late January 1929 when the Toronto Police Chief acted on authority of the Board of the Police Commission to "ban all '*Communist*' meetings in

¹ See Grunis for the full wording of the "Toronto Parks By-law" prohibiting public speaking or parades in a Toronto city park without a permit, and the similar "Vancouver Parks By-law" which gives unrestricted authority to the Board of Parks and Recreation for approvals or denials of such permits (1976: Chap. 1:34-5).

² In a master's thesis examining the editorials of twelve of the English commercial press in Canada in the 1930s, Breeze concludes that papers in central Canada [particularly the *Toronto Globe, Mail and Empire*, (later *The Globe and Mail*), and the *Montréal Gazette*], were the most consistent in viewing communism as a threat and in seeking to "have it eliminated" (1971:119). In her opinion, Communism was used as the "scapegoat" during the Depression (*Ibid*).

³ See Skebo for specific examples of "Canadian nativism" as drawn from Toronto's commercial newspapers of the 1930s (1967:74-76).

languages other than English” (Penner 1988:99-100; Betcherman 1982:Chap 1; Buck 1952:92-3; Skebo 1967).⁴

To demonstrate the seriousness of the Commission’s intentions, a subsequent meeting of the CPC was confronted with a large number of “observers” and a canister of tear gas. According to the *Toronto Star*, it was “the first time in the history of the police in Toronto that a ‘tear’ gas has been used” (Knowles 1929:2). While the rest of the large commercial dailies in Toronto declined comment, the *Toronto Star* questioned the legitimacy of the actions, primarily by quoting from authority figures such as the Police Chief and Commissioner, and presidents of the Native Sons of Canada and the Knights of Columbus.⁵ They all agreed that the actions were warranted and justified, as languages other than English “encourage[d] conspiracy,”⁶ and that it was “just as proper to use tear bombs as it is to go in and hit the people on the head with a baton” to be rid of the “foreign element”.⁷ Although it was denied, The *Toronto Star* speculated that the Police Commission got its idea from a Toronto Board of Education by-law which prohibited “the use of its schools for speeches or lectures on political or religious matters” as well as

⁴ The wording on notices posted in all public halls in Toronto banned public meetings in languages other than English (or French as it was later emphasized). It was worded as follows: “You are hereby notified that if any Communistic... meetings...held in a public hall, theatre, [or] music hall ...are carried on in a foreign language... the license for such public hall etc. shall be immediately thereafter cancelled” By order of the Board of Police Commissioners. Reprinted in *Canadian Labour Defender* May 1930 (cited in Skebo 1967:31;121 fn.5).

⁵ The *Toronto Star* in particular continued to question the actions of the police and communicative rights of free speech and freedom of assembly, accusing such denials as not being the “British” way (given that in London’s Hyde Park free speech was the norm). Throughout the early thirties as public demonstrations against unemployment and hunger were denied city permits, the paper questioned the refusals as going against the “true Liberal attitude” (for example *Toronto Star*, 17-24 July 1934).

⁶ As the president of the Native Sons of Canada, Dr. Cotton proclaimed: “...If these people are not willing to use the language of this country then let them stay out. They all should be required to learn and read the English language before they are admitted to the franchise” (Knowles 1929:2).

⁷ Y.N. Phelps of the Knights of Columbus (Knowles 1929:2).

meetings in other languages besides English (Ibid). As Penner notes, however, “the violence of the Toronto police in attacking these gatherings brought an unexpected measure of public support for the right of Communists to free speech” (1988:99).

Although municipal actions against the Communist Party were tolerated (that is, there were no massive public demonstrations or authoritative calls for the Police Chief to resign),⁸ public attention had at least been drawn to the violation of free speech commonly known as part of “British” and therefore Canadian heritage. Additionally, there was noted criticism in one of the commercial presses (*Toronto Star*) regarding the abuse of civil rights, and the extent of police power became an issue in the ‘December 1930 municipal election’ (Horn 1980a:31). Rather than changing their tactics however, the Toronto police continued their level of surveillance and violence throughout the early thirties⁹ such that their activities increasingly went beyond “Communitic” meetings (Betcherman 1982: Chap. 1; Skebo 1967:31-34).

Casting the net widely to capture any kind of dissent, Toronto Police were actively involved in monitoring the use of public halls for meetings – one of which the Fellowship for Reconciliation (FOR) had tried to book, but was denied. Challenging this restriction of access and to the right of free speech in particular, the FOR requested that Toronto Police Commission engage in a public debate on the issues, and justify its

⁸ See Horn as to some possible reasons as to why public dissent was minimal (1980a:27-31). As he suggests: “Canadians by and large saw communists as a menace to Canada, the British Empire and the Christian religion. Few cared that the civil liberties of these subversive troublemakers got short shrift” (Ibid: 41).

⁹ For example, as the *Mail and Empire* headlines for August 14, 1929 proclaimed” “Baton and Feet Used Freely as City Police Rout Reds. Communists and Curious Spectators Suffer as Draper’s Men Charge Queen’s Park with Horses, Motorcycles and Wooden Clubs” (also cited in Skebo 1967:31).

actions. The request was refused.¹⁰ In protest, no less than sixty-eight University of Toronto professors signed a letter sent to the four major commercial dailies in Toronto.¹¹ The involvement of English, white, male intellectuals created an “instant furore” and sides were drawn. Supporting the FOR and the right to free speech were the Toronto District Labor Council, the Trades and Labour Congress, the United Church’s *New Outlook*, and the “Labor Party of Toronto” (Horn 1980a; Skebo 1967:37-38). On the side of ‘law and order’ were the police and the municipality, as well as the University of Toronto and commercial-press establishments (as also reinforced by the existence of Section 98 of the Criminal Code). Noting the articles and letters to the editor denouncing the professors’ actions, Horn cites Sir John Aird, then president of the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce and former head of the Royal Commission on Radio Broadcasting,¹² who suggested in an editorial “that the professors ought to ‘stick to their knitting’” (1980a:34).¹³ The opinion that the professors had overstepped their boundaries¹⁴ was

¹⁰ *Canadian Forum* February 1931:168 (Cited in Skebo 1967:122 fn.13).

¹¹ The text of the letter was as follows “The attitude which the Toronto Police Commission has assumed towards public discussion of political and social problems, makes it clear that the right of free speech and free assembly is in danger of suppression in this city. This right has for generations been considered one of the proudest heritages of the British peoples, and to restrict or nullify it in an arbitrary manner, as has been the tendency in Toronto for the last two years, is short-sighted, inexpedient, and intolerable. It is the plain duty of the citizen to protest publicly against such curtailment of his rights, and, in doing so, we wish to affirm our belief in the free public expression of opinions, however unpopular or erroneous” [*The Toronto Star*, January 15, 1931: 1, “University professors pen public protest against Police Board”]. See also Horn who cites the original letter found at the NAC in the Frank Underhill papers “Free Speech” File (1980:27)].

¹² See Raboy (1990:23-29).

¹³ “University Professors and Free Speech” *Mail and Empire*, 19 January, 1931. Although undoubtedly cast as an aspersion suggesting the frivolous nature of academic study, the reference to knitting would later become a reality as the CASD (ironically?) sponsored a National Knitting Competition to raise funds for the evacuation of Spanish children from Spain to France in 1938 (NAC: MG 28, Series V46, Vol. 142, File 15).

¹⁴ Horn further argues that formal and informal restrictions on academic freedom really didn’t change until the 1960s, as professors were expected to be non-partisan or “conservative,” such that radical views were generally “unwelcomed” (Horn 1980a).

fortified by the University of Toronto's Board of Governors and throughout the commercial dailies. In a survey of the mainstream press,¹⁵ Horn notes that only the *Toronto Star* "welcomed the FOR resolution" (Ibid: 32). While the result was "no real break in police policy,"¹⁶ students of the University of Toronto voted their approval of the stand of the professors,¹⁷ and some of the professors who had penned the note went on to found the League for Social Reconstruction (LSR) "the first organization of left wing intellectuals in Canadian history."¹⁸

The League for Social Reconstruction (LSR or the League) was established in 1931/2 as an intellectual and educational organization, as was noted earlier. Although it referred to itself as non-partisan, membership overlapped with the CCF including Frank Underhill, F.R. Scott, J.S. Woodsworth, Graham Spry and Eugene Forsey, some of who also belonged to the FCSO. Founded in the midst of the Depression, its first pronouncements aimed to address the economy in particular, and later included civil and minority (French-Canadian) rights (Horn 1980b:28/9). These would be worked into the CCF's "Regina Manifesto" (1933), which called for the "protection of civil liberties" and

¹⁵ See Skebo for specific articles in the Toronto commercial papers (1967:38-40).

¹⁶ Indeed, Skebo notes that: "The Police Commission's policy was not restricted to Communist meetings alone. On the contrary, from 1929 until 1933, a number of organizations – particularly those adhering to pacifist principles or displaying radical tendencies on social and economic issues – experienced the effects of the policy" (1967:32); these included, for example, the FOR, FCSO, the Independent Labor Party, and the "Rationalist Society" (Ibid:121, fn. 9).

¹⁷ See Skebo (1967:128 fn. 39).

¹⁸ "Concern for the civil liberties of dissenters was one of the motives drawing together the men and women who founded the LSR. That concern continued to be one of its chief preoccupations during the ten years of its existence" [Horn (1980a:44) and (1980b)].

aimed to address the repeal of Section 98¹⁹ that had been used ‘against Tim Buck and other communists and radical labour organizers’ (Ibid: 45). However, also as noted earlier, the defense of civil liberties, particularly when involving “communists” was a delicate matter. For similar reasons as the CCF had disassociated itself from the CPC, the League for Social Reconstruction also officially disassociated itself from the CCF. As Milligan notes, the LSR did not affiliate with the CCF because it wanted to focus on its “public education role,” and because “affiliation would necessarily alienate certain individuals, notably civil servants and those in official positions who would be of inestimable value to the League” (1987:230). Further, any “association with the word ‘socialist’ would alienate the Roman Catholic Church” (Ibid).²⁰

The Catholic Church in the Local

The “iron heel of ruthlessness” that was expressed federally through the RCMP and municipally through the Toronto Police Commission, appeared more subtly through the machinations of the Catholic Church.²¹ The election of the Popular Front government in France and Spain in 1936 made a considerable impact as Popular Front

¹⁹ Section 98 also had subsections that covered owners of halls or “of any building who knowingly permits therein a meeting by an unlawful association... or any assemblage of persons who teach ... of force, violence or physical injury ...shall be guilty of any [sic] offence under this section and shall be liable to a fine of not more than five thousand dollars or to imprisonment of not more than five years...” [*Crawkshaw’s Criminal Code of Canada* (1924:115-116); cited in Skebo (1967:34;124 fn. 23)].

²⁰ Milligan cites “Minutes of September 26, 1932 Executive of the Montréal Branch of the LSR, Scott Papers” (1987:230, fn. 73).

²¹ The Catholic Church had long been a supporter of Section 98, as explicitly expressed through the Confederation of Catholic Workers in their annual proposals to government. Even after it was repealed, the union continued to advocate strict enforcement of the Criminal Code and reinstatement of Section 98 [see for example *Labour Gazette* XXXVI (1936:158)].

governments were seen as threatening to the Roman Catholic Church. In Toronto, the Archdiocese had already been actively doing its own policing of radicalism in cooperation with the Toronto police and the RCMP.²² As Maurutto explains, the Church exercised its own form of social control by “deploying a variety of means, ...including the surveillance and infiltration of socialist groups and a pervasive moral and educational campaign aimed at newly arriving immigrants” (2000:37). These included the following: full reports on all suspected radical activities in the labour temples, bookstores, and private homes; the monitoring of labour organizations; a production of “blacklists” of “films, books, and magazines promoting socialist ideals”; publication and distribution of the *Catholic Worker* (to counter the CPC’s *Worker*), as well as the establishment of church halls in the neighborhoods of the labour temples (Ibid: 43-45). This draws our attention to the contradiction between the charitable status of organizations (classified as “non-political” by the government) and the political economic overlap of their operations. Maurotto further notes how the Church was able to access and monitor the unemployed and people on relief directly as “voluntary agencies” responsible for government screening for social welfare.²³ As she concludes:

This administration of relief by volunteer agencies on behalf of the state points to how charity operates as a mixed social economy. The state was not directly involved in moral regulation; yet it clearly provided the legal infrastructure for Catholic benevolent agencies to interfere in private lives (Maurutto 2000:44).

²² Maurutto identifies a number of RCMP confidential files that were “among the Archdiocese files. The files chronicle the range of communist activities throughout Canada and particularly focus on the [supposed] vulnerability of immigrant groups, specifically Ukrainians and Finns” (2000:40). The Church even published the list of immigrant associations that people should avoid in their paper *The Catholic Register* (Ibid).

²³ Maurutto explains that due to a change in government regulations – the Division of Social Welfare – “every welfare recipient had to first apply through a private agency”. This not only supplied the Church with detailed personal information, but the personal contact could be used to ingratiate the recipient to the “moral reform efforts of the Church” (2000:44).

The Roman Catholic Church's anti-radicalism came to a head in Montréal in October 1936, when the Canadian League Against War and Fascism (CLAWF) and the Committee to Aid Spanish Democracy (CASD) sponsored a delegation made up of members of the (former) Popular Front government to speak at a rally there. Among the speakers was a Luis Sarasola, a Basque Franciscan priest who was speaking for the pro-loyalist government and against General Franco's armies (Milligan 1987:270; Charpentier 1992:86). The Catholic Church in Montréal took immediate action to stop the rally and sent an "official statement" to all the main commercial dailies "denouncing" Sarasola as an "apostate," who "had no right" to speak "as a representative of the Catholic Church" (Charpentier Ibid). Adding commentary, the commercial papers suggested that Sarasola's "...attitude toward the situation in Spain was contrary to the 'solemn declarations made by his Holiness, the Pope'" (*Montréal Gazette* October 23, 1936:1), and that he was acting as a brainwashed "puppet of the Spanish Popular Front" (*Le Devoir*, 23 Oct 1936:3).²⁴ The effects were as immediate; a "delegation of angry students from the University of Montréal descended on City Hall and demanded that the public meeting be forbidden" where upon the City complied. "That evening, about 2500 youthful demonstrators paraded through the streets of Montréal shouting 'A bas le communisme,' 'A bas les apostats' and 'a bas les Juifs,'" (Charpentier 1992:90).²⁵ And, finding one of the escorts of the delegation (a Professor Hemmeon from McGill

²⁴ Also see *La Presse* "La ville ferme toute porte aux amis du Frente Populaire," 23 Oct 1936:1; *L'illustration* "La Ville permettra-t-elle l'assemble'es des loyalistes espagnal 'a l'Aréna?" 23 Oct 1936:3; *Le Devoir* "Sarasola bein interdit," 23 Oct 1936:3; *Montréal Star* "Spanish Meeting Banned by Order of City Officials," 23 Oct 1936:2; *Montréal Gazette* "Local Diocese warns Catholics Against Spanish Loyalist Priest," 23 Oct 1936:1; in Charpentier (1992:106).

²⁵ *Montréal Herald*, "Organized Riots Defeat Attempts at Public Speech," 24 Oct 1936:1; *McGill Daily*, "Mob Throws Rocks Finally Attacks Professor," 26 Oct 1936:1; *Montréal Herald* "Newspaper Plant, Brokers Offices visited by Mob," 26 Oct 1936:31 (Ibid: 107).

University) the mob physically attacked him. He managed to escape, but the demonstration carried on throughout the streets of Montréal until later dispersed by city police (Charpentier 1992:89-91).²⁶

Although such extremes were denounced by the student newspaper *The McGill Daily*,²⁷ in general their actions had been encouraged by the Catholic Church and were not criticized by the major commercial newspapers (Ibid). Such endorsement would remain consistent with the election of the Union Nationale government in the province of Québec as headed by Maurice Duplessis in 1936.²⁸ The action was also catalyst for the formation of the Montréal branch of the Canadian Civil Liberties Union that came from this “illegal suppression of the right of free public meeting” [CCLU (Montréal Branch) *Bulletin* February 2 1938:1].

The Canadian Civil Liberties Union

In the meantime, the fight to repeal Section 98 was continuing at the local level, and a “Canadian Civil Liberties Protective Association” organized in Edmonton in 1933 (RCMP Bulletin No 715 App II:5). Similar to the Canadian Labour Defence League (CLDL), but independent from it, the Association reportedly sought “to obtain the support of business people of the city to campaign for the repeal of Section 98” (Ibid). Noting its establishment at the same time as assessing the limited effectiveness of both

²⁶ See also Axelrod citations of the *Montréal Gazette* on 23, 24, 26, 27 Oct 1936; and *McGill Daily* 23 and 26 Oct 1936, that suggest the activities were topped off by an even larger “anti-communist, pro-Catholic” demonstration at the end of that same week (1990:142).

²⁷ *McGill Daily*, “Mob Uprisings in Montréal Endanger Canadian Freedom,” 26 Oct 1936:1 (in Charpentier 1992:107).

²⁸ Motivation for the formation of the Montréal branch of the CCLU came from this “illegal suppression of the right of free public meeting” [CCLU (Montréal Branch) *Bulletin* February 2 1938:1].

the CCF and the League for Social Reconstruction in defense of civil rights, in 1934, F.R. Scott contacted the American Civil Liberties Union and notified it of the intention to set up a Canadian Civil Liberties Union (CCLU) (Milligan 1987:252;269). The association fought its battles by first organizing at the local level. By 1938 there were three main branches of the CCLU with one in Vancouver, Toronto and Montréal, reporting a total membership of 1,112.²⁹ Again, similar to the Canadian Labour Defense League, it was an activist organization that aimed to publicize and defend violations of civil rights;³⁰ its Constitution stated that:

The object of the Union shall be to maintain the traditional democratic rights and civil liberties, freedom of speech, freedom of press, freedom of assembly and association, the right of labour and other civil liberties, and to take legitimate action in the furtherance of this objective (CCLU "National Constitution").³¹

In carrying out these aims the Union gives legal assistance in cases involving issues of civil liberty, it employs the weapon of organized protest and it seeks to give publicity to violations of civil liberty in every way possible (CCLU 1938).

The constitution linked labour, communication and culture since civil rights were seen as having little meaning without labour rights.³² The struggle for these rights became acute in Québec, and the organization concentrated its energies on combating the laws of the provincial government of Maurice Duplessis.

²⁹ CCLU *The Bulletin* No. 7, January 1939:1 in (NAC MG28, IV-I, Vol. 146).

³⁰ While it shared its activist principles with the CLDL, the CCLU appeared to be smaller and less holistic. It focused its energies on defense and protest, and was able to pay less attention to actual support of families of people who had been imprisoned or who were on relief.

³¹ NAC MG 28, IV-I, Vol. 146.

³² As Milligan notes, for example, in Eugene Forsey view, "each Canadian's liberty was already restrained by virtue of being 'individually dependent for income' either by having to sell a crop or secure a particular form of employment" [Forsey in LSR (1935) *Social Planning For Canada* (pp. 225) cited in Milligan 1987:246).

Struggles in the Provinces

The Québec Padlock Law and the Alberta Press Act

Maurice Duplessis was in power less than a year when he instituted “An Act to Protect the Province Against Communistic Propaganda” in 1937, also known as the “Padlock Act” or “Padlock Law” (Chapter 52, R.S.Q.). The Act wouldn’t have necessarily been required, but given that Prime Minister King made good on an election promise to repeal Section 98,³³ Québec’s “answer” was to compose its own version of sedition.³⁴ Further, the increased militancy of a succession of strikes in Québec, such as the Seamstress strike (5,000 workers) and the Dominion Textile Workers’ (10,000 workers) added to the provincial government’s urgency (Roberts 1950:10). The Padlock Act was sweeping, allowing home searches without warrants, confiscation of personal properties, closures of buildings without court orders, and cessation and seizure of publications (CCLU 1939). Specifically:

Section 3 provided: ‘It shall be illegal for any person who possesses or occupies a house within the Province, to use it or allow any person to make use of it to propagate communism or bolshevism by any means whatsoever’;

Section 12 provided: ‘It shall be unlawful to print, to publish in any manner whatsoever or to distribute in the Province any newspaper, periodical, pamphlet, circular, document or writing whatsoever propagating or tending to propagate communism or bolshevism.’; and

³³ The federal government’s abolition of Section 98 was very popular, and, according to the Trades and Labour Congress, key in the Liberal’s success at the polls. The TLC also noted, however, that even though the infamous section had been removed, the extent of the laws remaining in the Criminal Code was still substantial enough to prosecute individuals and “radical” groups (*Canadian Congress Journal*, August 1936:23).

³⁴ As argued by CCF M.P. J.S. Woodsworth in the House of Commons, when Duplessis introduced the bill in the Québec legislature, the Premier had justified it on the basis that “there was no means of preventing communist meetings” since Section 98 had been repealed. In accordance with this reasoning then, the bill should have automatically been made *ultra vires* by the federal government since it was a blatant attempt to “legislate in the field of criminal law” normally under federal jurisdiction (*Debates* March 30, 1937:2290).

Section 14 allowed that ‘the Attorney-General could order the confiscation and destruction of any newspaper, periodical, pamphlet, circular, document or writing, printed, published, or distributed contrary to section 12’.³⁵

The Act thus directly attacked freedom of speech, freedom of the press and freedom of assembly and association. Conspicuously, ‘the Act did not define either ‘communism or bolshevism,’³⁶ yet it was left unchallenged³⁷ by the federal government as “the Dominion government refused either to disallow it or to refer it to the Supreme Court for an opinion on its constitutionality” (Horn 1980:13; Milligan 1987:279-282). J.S. Woodsworth disputed the Act in the House of Commons (once in March 1937 and again in May 1938),³⁸ but to no avail. Speaking for the Liberal government in support of the Act, Minister of Justice Ernest Lapointe cited the Papal Encyclical of Pope Pius XI in suggesting that a “league against Communism” should be formed to educate the public,³⁹ and that “all Canadian citizens should unite to preach the true doctrine.”⁴⁰ The federal government’s inaction on the Québec Act was all the more curious given its swift and immediate actions that disallowed another provincial act having to do with communication – the Alberta Press Act. Whereas the Québec Act remained part of Canadian law for the next *twenty years*, the Alberta Act was struck down in *less than eleven days*.

³⁵ “Communist Propaganda Act, Statutes of Québec, 1937, I Geo. 6, c. II,” reprinted in Schmeiser (1964:202).

³⁶ Horn notes that the “task of definition was left up to the attorney general (Duplessis himself), or to his designates” (1980:13).

³⁷ Further, “The act had the open support of the Roman Catholic hierarchy and the press, including the two English-language newspapers in Montréal, and the tacit support of the business community” (Horn 1980:13; also see Horn 1986:67).

³⁸ House of Commons *Debates* (March 30 1937:2290-2296) and (May 30 1938:3368-3382).

³⁹ The Minister’s speech with this headline was reprinted in the ACCL’s *The Labour Review* Vol. 1(5) April (1937:122-3).

⁴⁰ House of Commons *Debates* (March 30, 1937:2294-5).

The Albert Press Act or “Press Bill” was composed in 1937 by the Social Credit government in Alberta. As “An Act to Ensure the Publication of Accurate News and Information,” it was proposed in order to provide the provincial government prior approval of any newspaper publications on the subject of the government.⁴¹ In brief, the Act stipulated that any policy or action attributed to the government in the press be verified as accurate by the government,⁴² and whatever was published regarding the government, be fully referenced. The Premier of Alberta reportedly also suggested that newspapers be licensed to ensure accuracy in print (Adams 1976:161).⁴³ Otherwise, the government had the power to suspend the publication of the newspaper and the person responsible for writing or publishing it.⁴⁴

Adams (1976) suggests that the Press Act was primarily instituted because of the commercial press’ (particularly *The Edmonton Journal*’s) criticisms of the Social Credit’s policies and the Premier’s unpopularity with the dailies. The Premier and members of his cabinet had publicly criticized the press as ‘agents of orthodox finance’ who “heed[ed] the dictates of the money barons”; proposing that it was not a free press to start with (Adams 1976:160/1). Although it was never enforced (the Alberta Lieutenant-Governor sent the Act to the federal government for prior ruling), it was heralded as a travesty and violation of freedom of the press and free speech, especially by the *Edmonton Journal*,⁴⁵

⁴¹ Statutes of Alberta, 1937, 3rd Session, Bill 9; in Schmeiser (1964:198).

⁴² The Alberta government may have gotten the idea of requesting prior approval for publication from the federal government’s radio regulations. As will be discussed later, Regulation 90 of the Broadcasting Act required certain scripts to be submitted to the government for prior approval of broadcasts.

⁴³ Adams draws solely on the most vocal critic of the Premier’s policies, *The Edmonton Journal*, from which this is also drawn (*Edmonton Journal*, 1 June 1936:1) in Adams (1976:161).

⁴⁴ For the Act’s text see Schmeiser (1968:198-199) and Adams (1976:163-165).

⁴⁵ For its “editorial performance” on the issues, *The Edmonton Journal* won the Pulitzer Prize that year (Adams 1976:156).

as well as the commercial dailies. In addition, it was denounced by the “Canadian Press, Canadian Daily Newspapers Association, and the Canadian Weekly Newspapers Association” – all which filed “factums” to the Supreme Court of Canada (Tollefson 1976:175).

The Press Act was legally disputed at the same time as another Alberta act also came under challenge at the federal level, and in legal arguments, the two became linked. The “Social Credit of Alberta Regulation Act” was one that aimed to change the banking system in Alberta.⁴⁶ After an immediate and brief consideration, the Supreme Court of Canada ruled that the Social Credit Act was *ultra vires*,⁴⁷ and it was further decided that the Press Act was as well since they were both beyond provincial jurisdiction.⁴⁸ As both Adams (1976) and Schmeiser (1968) note, however, although the ruling disallowing the Press Act referred to free speech and freedom of the press, it did not explicitly put these into law. This may have had something to do with the Québec Padlock Act.

As a result of the federal government’s inaction on the Padlock Act, the Canadian Civil Liberties Union (CCLU) now had a formidable battle ahead of them. It collected a long list of all the organizations that were officially opposed to the Act, which included

⁴⁶ Also known as the “Bank Act,” it aimed to organize the Banks under the provincial directorates that would ensure that banking “policies would be shaped to suit the Alberta producers rather than bank shareholders” (Milligan 1987:282-3).

⁴⁷ The Act was declared illegal because “its objectives were illegal – that is, the instituting of a new economic system was illegal – the means to further its goals through the control of the press were also illegal” (Adams 1976:169).

⁴⁸ Tollefson doubts the legal validity of the ruling as the conclusion (that one was inapplicable because of the other) didn’t necessarily follow (1976:183). As he argues, it can “perhaps be queried whether certain members of the Court regarded not only the Bill but the Alberta government of the day with extreme distaste, which led them to use emotionally charged terms such as ‘freedom’, ‘Democracy’ and ‘parliamentary institutions’ in place of the colorless language of precedent and reason which normally characterizes judgments of superior courts” (Ibid). For this and many other reasons, he submits that, unlike the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States of America, there was no legal safeguard over freedom of the press in Canada (Ibid:188).

religious and political organizations, trade unions, student and youth organizations and many others.⁴⁹ It sent a petition to the Governor-General-in-Council in January 1938 arguing that it “violates fundamental principles of the Canadian constitution” (CCLU 1938). The CCLU pointed out that the issues of the Alberta Press Bill and the Québec Padlock Act were similar enough to both be included in Canadian law having to do with free speech, freedom of association and/or freedom of the press. While the case against the Press Act was “justified on the bases of freedom and democracy” as submitted by the commercial papers and their associations (Tollefson 1976:172), the fight against the Padlock Act had no similar resources or support.

Comparing the time it took for the two Acts to reach federal government, the CCLU notes that the Alberta Acts were assented on August 6th 1937, with the “official copies” reaching the federal government on August 10th. *Without any petitions for disallowance*, they were nevertheless recommended by the Minister of Justice for disallowance the same day, and one week later the Acts were disallowed, a total of eleven days. In contrast, the Padlock Act was assented on March 24th 1937, and was protested at the House of Commons on March 30th, the province took a few months to send the “official copy” so that it didn’t reach the federal government until July 8th. Although the Québec CCF asked for disallowance on August 20th and numerous petitions for disallowance continued from November 1937 to May 1938, no action was taken by the

⁴⁹ These included: religious groups (for example Montréal Ministerial Association, Presbytery of the United Church of Canada, FCSO, Faithful Circle of the King’s Daughters); political organizations of the CCF and CCYM Provincial Councils and Montréal Labour Party); a range of union locals, numerous members of immigrant associations, McGill University alumnae clubs, the LSR, neighborhood clubs and other women’s clubs which also opposed the Act [see CCLU (Montréal Branch) *Bulletin* (2 Feb 1938:4-5) at (NAC MG 28, Series IV-I, Vol. 146)].

federal government [CCLU (Montréal Branch) *Bulletin* May 21st 1938:2; NAC MG28, Series IV-I, Vol. 146].

Appealing to the National Executive of the CCF, Eugene Forsey (of the CCLU) advanced the proposition that the discrepancy between the two was so blatant that the CCF should fight it in the courts and in parliament and lay the contradiction bare in terms of its demonstration of class power (Milligan 1987:283-286). The CCF chose parliament as the battleground and disallowance of the Padlock Law was thus forced into a second debate at the House of Commons in May 1938. J.S. Woodsworth reiterated the view that, in practice, the Act was applied well beyond its purported boundaries and a wide variety of individuals and groups who were considered “radical” in the slightest manner were captured and harassed by virtue of its ambiguity. Woodsworth listed the numerous accounts of what he called “acts of terrorism”.⁵⁰ These included the seizures of “liberal” and CCF newspapers and pamphlets; cancellations of speeches of the CCF, the CCLU and the Canadian League for Peace and Democracy (CLPD); and cessation of CCF/CLPD parades. Provincial and municipal police also raided United Church halls, Jewish cultural centres and libraries, and private residences, particularly a large number

⁵⁰ Beyond the intimidation, insecurity and fear likely spread by the sudden raids on private homes, halls, and bookstores, a specific target of the police raids were the printed materials, that is, books, files and copies of the labour press that were seized. Under the Act, these could be destroyed without question, so the CCLU tried to keep track of the targeted publications through information from the Attorney-General’s Department. In the first six months the tally was: “532 ‘Communistic’ books seized; 5,000 copies of *Clarté* and 1,500 copies of the *Daily Clarion*”. Also, “including seizures that were not officially noted [were] 250 copies of *Kamf* (Toronto Jewish weekly) and *Freiheit* (New York Jewish daily) [CCLU *Bulletin* 21 May 1938:1 (NAC MG 28, Series IV-I, Vol. 146)]. J.S. Woodsworth also cited this CCLU research in parliament.

of “trade union officials whose homes have been raided” (*Debates* May 1938:3382-3).⁵¹ In the CCLU’s estimation, while the 124 official raids on so-called “communists” was appalling, it also illustrated that, if out of a provincial “population of nearly 3,000,000” the police could only find 124 “communistics,” the “Red menace” was a “myth” (CCLU *Bulletin* 21 May 1938:1). Also given that the persons “arrested” were never officially charged, the law could not be challenged in the courts, and thus it could function as a very effective scare tactic without being tested.

The Québec Communist Propaganda Act, which was even more sweeping and less specifically defined than the Alberta Acts, remained part of Québec law until 1957. It was successfully challenged – not on the basis of civil or communicative rights – but as a matter of jurisdiction over property (a landowner had lost rent because his tenant had been accused a communist).⁵² The Padlock was not an aberration, however. Historically, it was an extension of previously existing censorship powers that had earlier been granted by the provinces.

So far there has been no overt action under the law. There may not be in the future. To a large extent it will be unnecessary. The mere threat of padlocking held over the heads of hall owners, or for that matter owners of ordinary houses or apartments, or the proprietors of newsstands, will be enough to enable the

⁵¹ These included, for example, members of the Québec Federation of Unemployed, Plumbers Union of the Montréal Trades and Labour Council, Amalgamated Clothing Workers, Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel and Tin Workers, CCF organizers, president of Butcher’s Union, Jewish Workers’ Library workers, and business agent for the CIO, and so on [see *Debates* May 30 1938:3383; see also CCLU (Montréal Branch) *Bulletin* 2 Feb 1938:1-3].

⁵² “*Switzman v. Elbling and A.G. of Québec...* (1957) S.C.R. 285, 7 D.L.R. (wd) 337, 117 C.C.C. 129, in Schmeiser (1964:202). It appears that the law was struck down, not on the issue of either free speech, freedom of association, or freedom of the press, but because its jurisdiction was meant to cover both property and civil rights, whereas the Supreme Court ruled that the “statute was in relation to criminal law,” so it was declared invalid on that basis (Ibid:219). Meanwhile, the Québec government tried another approach in creating the “Québec Labour Relations Act” that “prohibited [suspected] Communist organizers or officers in trade unions”. Statutes of Québec, 1953-4, c. 10, S. 1. (Ibid: 221).

Attorney-General to suppress critics or opposition of any kind without anyone but the victims knowing anything about it ("Editorial" *Canadian Forum* XVII(196) May 1937:42-3).

Structural Limitations and Censorship of Film

The Padlock Act was directed specifically against publications, as the production of films was not a central part of the alternative media of the labour unions, left-political parties, or the immigrant organizations during the 1920s and 1930s. The required resources, equipment, and expertise alone were largely prohibitive such that socialist films produced in the U.S. and the Soviet Union in particular were exhibited when possible.⁵³ But if production was challenging, distribution and exhibition were also very limited. By 1930 commercially owned theatres (including vaudevilles) were already controlled by American corporations and Famous Players in particular (*Labour Gazette* 1932:131; Pendakur 1990:79-94; Morris 1978:175).

A government-commissioned report surveying the scope of Famous Players' networks noted that: "of the 299 chain theatres in Canada, controlled by owners of three or more theatres, 207 were controlled by the Famous Players company" (*Labour Gazette* 1932:131). Famous Players were accused of price fixing, film "protection" agreements, "blind and block bookings," etc., which effectively put a stranglehold on film exhibition so that they "were stated to control at least 95 per cent of the distribution of films in

⁵³ Advertisements in the CCF's *New Commonwealth* and the CPC's *The Worker/Daily Clarion* featured Soviet-made films at the Strand Theatre in Toronto, for example.

Canada” (Ibid). Save one legal challenge,⁵⁴ the federal government did nothing to curb American ownership or promote independent domestic production (Morris 1978:179).⁵⁵

With the commercial venues all but sealed off, alternative film production was also restricted on the public, that is, government, side. Both federal and provincial governments did produce and sponsor their own films, which was “unique” to Canada, but rather than encouraging or facilitating independent film production, both were focused on the promotion of trade, industry and tourism (Ibid: 127). We will return to the federal government’s production of film later, but given titles like the British Columbia Educational and Patriotic Film Service, and “Fishing Just for Fun,”⁵⁶ early provincial films were limited in scope. The provinces’ interest in film was more in the exhibition and distribution since the licensing and regulation of theatres was under its jurisdiction, and each province had its own film censorship bureaus.

In addition, moral and social reform associations had formed in the early 1900s as self-appointed watchdogs for the public’s viewing of film (Dean 1981:20). By 1915 almost every province had laws controlling the entire line of film distribution and exhibition – from the licensing of theatres – to requiring that films be stamped indicating

⁵⁴ The companies were charged under the federal government’s Combines Investigation Act but were cleared because even though the contracts may have illustrated a similar pattern (of prices, booking arrangements, etc.) each had been negotiated individually with theatre owners, so there could be no charge of “fixing”. The rest of the charges hinged on this decision and thus Famous Players were cleared of all charges and allowed to secure their dominant position in the Canadian film market (see “Report of the Deputy Minister: Motion Picture Industry” *Labour Gazette* 1932:131-134).

⁵⁵ According to Pendakur this was due to a prevailing colonial mentality: “The politicians from the dominant political parties looked to Great Britain for cultural inspiration and leadership. They saw Canada as a mere consumer of imperial culture rather than the producer of an indigenous culture. The economic imperatives of continentalism, advocated by the dominant parties, gave no expression to nationalism” (1990:93).

⁵⁶ Thompson (1985:179).

ensor passage (Ibid). In the first place, if the organizers managed to secure a license,⁵⁷ and if they asked for any payment (over nine cents) for speeches, plays, or musical evenings, etc., or if they paid any of the speakers or performers, the hall was subject to a provincial “amusement tax”. In Québec, the “Amusement Tax Act” (1925) required ten per cent of the revenue with the exception of those “solely for patriotic, agricultural, religious or charitable purposes”.⁵⁸ This effectively excluded any hall where “politics” was part of the venue, since it could not be classified as patriotic, agricultural, religious or charitable. If in doubt, the classification was up to the “municipal officer in charge,” and the surveillance and enforcement was up to “any officer authorized by the chief of police of the municipality or any officer of the provincial police”. Thus a police officer could enter the hall at any time - the time or frequency of which was unlimited.

The Ontario Amusement Tax (est. 1927 with revisions in 1932 and 1935) was more expansive as the hall owners were “required to have their records available... at all times, for inspection” (*The Amusements Tax Act*, Chap. 32, R.S.O. amended 1935, Para. 17). This gave complete access to police and “all officials and inspectors of the Amusement Revenue Branch” (Para. 24) and it allowed officials to “enter... and seize and remove all books and records” as deemed necessary (Ibid). Again, there were

⁵⁷ This alone could be an arduous task. Finnish Organization of Canada files indicate, for example, that there were battles over building and property value assessments which municipalities might price beyond the value of both. In Sudbury Ontario, the FOC had to fight assessments in the courts and pay for expensive lawyers to argue for a fair assessment. An inflated assessment would translate into high taxes and insurance rates. Together, these could put an additional drain on resources, and effectively stall or eliminate its opening as a public hall (see NAC MG 28, V 46, Vol. 18).

⁵⁸ A copy of the Act was included in the FOC file (Ibid).

exceptions: “church, patriotic, charitable or educational organizations” (Para 2),⁵⁹ none of which applied to overtly political organizations, labour temples or anti-war, anti-fascist leagues.⁶⁰

Provincial censorship laws were even more sweeping. While the commercial companies had been successful at defending their oligopoly, provincial law held firm on censorship, and censors could ban entire films or sections thereof. The federal government also held jurisdiction over film censorship during the First World War under the Chief Press Censor. The Press Censor sent out “regular edicts” to ‘radio and newspapers across the country’ requiring media conformity within the parameters set by the War Measures Act and the Criminal Code (Ibid: 25). After the war, the attention to “foreign” and “political” content somewhat waned, but did not disappear. In Manitoba Skinner notes that “as early as 1928, the Board had been receiving memoranda from the R.C.M.P. on the content of Soviet films which were scheduled for distribution throughout the prairie provinces” (1987:4). Particular attention was paid to any revolutionary theme, although board reaction varied. For example, Manitoba banned *Battleship Potemkin* (“which deals with a successful mutiny by sailors of the Black Sea fleet”) (Ibid), and Ontario “banned four Russian films in one year due to ‘suspected Communist

⁵⁹ Although further research is required to ascertain how often the halls were “inspected,” it appears that the “Amusement Tax” was a convenient way of gaining access to the labour temples both for surveillance purposes and for harassment. Given that both the Ontario and Québec Amusement Tax showed up in the files of the FOC together with letters from lawyers to the municipalities, the labour temples were not treated simply as taxpayers (NAC MG 28, V46, Vol. 18, File 31).

⁶⁰ It is also curious that the *Census of Canada, 1931* only listed 20 “legitimate theatres, music halls” and 146 “dancehalls, studios and schools” (emphasis added). This appears to exclude the thousand or so labour temples and halls, which under provincial and municipal regulations were classified as halls for tax purposes. *Census of Canada, 1931*, Vol. XI, table 1A.

propaganda’,” but passed *Ten Days That Shook the World* (a film directly about the Russian Revolution).⁶¹

Russian films were not the only productions closely scrutinized. While a majority of films censored were classified as morally reprehensible or socially indecent, films that could be construed as critical, radical, or “communistic” were also banned. These included “propaganda” films such as *The Grapes of Wrath*, *Of Mice and Men*,⁶² and *All Quiet on the Western Front*.⁶³ During the Spanish Civil War, a number of anti-fascist films were produced that faced banning in Canada (and in some U.S. states) (Ibid). Some were banned outright; for example, the Québec Censor Board refused to let *Spain in Flames* play anywhere as “allegations that it was disrespectful to the Catholic Church and incited religious hatred were accepted by the provincial censor” (Ibid). It was likely a result of such limitations, that the Committee for Aid to Spanish Democracy (CASD) announced in 1937 that it had purchased a “film projector” and “loud speaker” for exhibition of a film produced by Norman Bethune called *Heart of Spain* (CASD Report 26 August 1932).⁶⁴ Although the CASD does note with success that *Spain in Flames* had been shown in a commercial theatre in Ontario,⁶⁵ Skinner indicates that it was a general rule that ‘sensitive’ films were commonly not “screened commercially, and even when they were, they were consigned to small, specialist theatres” (Ibid).

Not limited to film, the Acts covering censorship in the provinces also covered any publications related to the film. Thus, while only parts of a film might be censored,

⁶¹ Dean (1981:35).

⁶² Dean (1981:34).

⁶³ Skinner (1987:4).

⁶⁴ NAC MG 28, Series IV:1, Vol. 363.

⁶⁵ Ibid NAC file.

any publicity having to do with the film could also be completely disallowed. For example, in Ontario, the Theatre and Cinematographers Act (1938) Section 90 (a) provided that

All posters, heralds, handbills, cuts, newspaper and periodical advertising, banners, slides, photographs, lobby displays, and all other advertising matter in connection with films and film displays, shall be submitted to the Censor of Advertising, who shall thereupon approve or disapprove thereof, and shall indicate in such manner as the Board may require that the film has or has not been approved for universal exhibition (NAC MG 28 Series I-103, Vol. 77).

Thus, even though a group like the CASD might escape the censors by producing their own films and showing it in the labour temples, for example, they could be otherwise be restricted by the above requirement. In other words, since the regulation allowed the government to seize all publicity, if the publicity was disallowed, then it was an easy next step to justify censorship of the film, either way, exhibition and distribution could thereby be controlled at both ends.⁶⁶

Whether as a holdover of the censorship from the First World War, or as part of an overall conservative moral climate,⁶⁷ or simply to avoid controversy, government film censorship was accepted as “normal” and not challenged in the commercial media. Dean notes, for example, a special report in *Macleans* magazine that justified film censorship on the (ironic) basis that such films “infringed upon ‘our democratic beliefs’” (*Macleans*

⁶⁶ For example, recall the Workers’ Theatre and Rebel Arts Guild production in Stratford Ontario that Smith suggested drew the largest crowd “ever collected under one roof in that city”; it was advertised “by one or two placards, and by word of mouth” (1933:69). Smith further underscored the challenges that the workers’ drama groups had to work under: “For all these performances, it must be remembered, rehearsals are carried on under the greatest difficulty. Even now, when a headquarters has at last been secured, they must rehearse in a small room about 20 by 12 feet” (Ibid).

⁶⁷ The moral and social reform organizations did not disappear with the establishment of provincial censor boards. They were vigilant in their own surveillance and distributed “blacklists” to churches and newspapers. For example Dean notes the “Toronto League of Decency and the Canadian Federation of Catholic Alumnae that “sent lists of approved movies to newspapers” (1981:33).

15 June 1940:10,38-40; in Dean 1981:34). Films such as *The Grapes of Wrath* were considered to be “propaganda films,” as was representation of social unrest. The report stated unequivocally that: “pictures of riots and strikers were ‘always cut out of any newsreel brought into Ontario’” (Ibid). This was significant since newsreels had to pass the Ontario censor prior to distribution throughout Canada. When the War Measures Act was again activated in 1939, film censorship was expanded to include “*all foreign films*” save “those from France” with the exception of *Beau Geste* (Dean 1981:36).⁶⁸ As we shall see, this banning of “foreign” media was not an exception.⁶⁹

Struggles on the Federal Level

Historical recognition of federal government censorship activity is traditionally assumed to be confined to the First and Second World Wars. Just like the Padlock Act, however, government control of labour, communication, and culture was not an aberration, nor was it exercised only under exceptional conditions of world war. As has been previously noted, Section 98 notwithstanding, the federal government already had constant weekly reports as a result of the monitoring of any suspected activist person(s) and/or organization since the establishment of the RCMP. Meanwhile, a number of other departments were also engaged in surveillance and control that suggests a much broader network.

⁶⁸ Emphasis added.

⁶⁹ Morris (1978) and Dean (1981) both lament that a large part of the early history of government and commercial film production is incomplete; Dean notes that just like the early film production, the details of film censorship in Canada “has simply vanished” (1981:47).

Censorship at the Border: Postal and Customs

Even earlier than the film censorship boards, the federal government monitored any publications coming across the border through federal Customs under the Department of National Revenue. Under the British North American Act (BNA), the Customs Tariff (1867) allowed inspectors to examine, classify, and prohibit goods judged according to particular criteria. Such regulations with regards to media were as follows:

(1) Item 1201, Schedule C of the Customs Tariff (1867), classifies as prohibited goods: books, printed paper, drawings, paintings, prints, photographs or representations of any kind of a treasonable or seditious, or of an immoral or indecent character; and

(2) Section 13 of the Customs Tariff Act reads: The importation into Canada of any good enumerated, described or referred to in Schedule C to this Act is prohibited; and any such goods imported shall thereby become forfeited to the Crown and shall be destroyed or otherwise dealt with as the Minister directs.

The extent to which these were enforced depended on the time period and what was considered “treasonable or seditious.” Like film censorship, control was a matter of degree, ranging from words, sentences, or paragraph-deletion, to the official banning of books and/or series of publications (magazines or newspapers). A lot of the publications were simply sent back or seized outright; and, as noted in Chapter Five, this was partly responsible for the establishment of radical newspapers in Canada since the papers published in the U.S. were no longer available. Regrettably, like film censorship there are few records that provide details as to the classification, titles and amount of censored publications (Ryder 1999).⁷⁰ Those that were banned outright were issued an “Official

⁷⁰ They may exist, but I was only able to find and isolate the file groups for the official memoranda and custom seizures *prior* to the 1920s and 1930s; these include NAC RG 16, Series A-3, Vol. 787, 833, 864-869, 871-877, 890.

Memorandum,” but these only provided the titles of the publications and nothing more.

A slightly better source of evidence is the annual reports indicating the “Record of Examiner of Publications” of the Department of National Revenue that listed the official number of publications examined. Of these, only the year of 1938 provides details of the extent of censorship. The report notes that of 800 books and magazine examined, 56 received Official Memoranda (that is, 39 Magazines and 17 book *titles* were officially banned), whereas 26,639 magazines and 581 books were otherwise seized. Of the 43,521 “others” that were seized but not officially banned (no Official Memoranda) 3,917 were “treasonous or seditious” publications that were destroyed at the border [*The National Revenue Review* Vol. XII(6):5].

Like film censorship, the issue of media control at the border was not a major issue in the commercial press. On the contrary, given the repressive climate and acceptance of censorship, commercial papers like the *Toronto Globe* applauded the work of the Department of National Revenue and asked that “loyal citizens” do their part in reporting immoral and seditious publications wherever they found them, including those published in “foreign languages”.

...That organizations or individuals outside the country make a business of sending such literature here is known, but it is doubtful that even the vigilance of the Department is sufficient to check much of it. General interest on the part of loyal citizens would be of invaluable assistance if it were invoked and used to supply further information.

...It is hoped that citizens at large will interest themselves more effectively than ever this year in helping the Department to check up on undesirable and prohibited imports. Cannot something be done also to clean out homemade stuff which is just as bad, and punish the offenders?⁷¹

⁷¹ *Toronto Globe* “Treasonable and Indecent Publications” (February 1936), reprinted in *The National Revenue Review* Vol. IX(4) February 1936:4.

With precedents already set regarding censorship of film and print media, when the federal government was considering the regulation of radio, control over its use and development was also a central part of state policy making.

Free Speech and Radio Broadcasting

Labour's involvement in radio was initially in the form of TLC and ACCL submissions to the Aird Commission (see Raboy 1990:25-6). Both favoured public ownership in the form of "a federal commission that would own, control, and operate all broadcasting stations" [NAC, Files of the Royal Commission on Broadcasting, vol. I:227-9-9/10, cited in Raboy (1990:25 and 363 fn 39)]. This included a proposal for the complete elimination of private ownership of broadcasting,⁷² which the unions argued was justified in order "to ensure freedom of speech on questions of public interest" (Ibid and 1990:363 fn 40).⁷³ The ACCL and the TLC reiterated these proposals to the Special Committee of the House of Commons on Radio Broadcasting in 1936, calling both for public control and for non-profit operation of broadcasting as a national system. Again they proposed the elimination of private broadcasting, as well as the elimination of

⁷² Raboy notes that the Commission questioned the "fairness" to capital of this proposal, illustrating again the government's position prevalent in the Dept. of Labour, of the supposed balance of interests between capital and labour, or capital and the public in general. The "labour spokesman" W.T. Burford replied: "Why should the public of Canada be called upon to compensate for having established an advertising medium?" (as cited in Raboy 1990:26).

⁷³ The emphasis on freedom of speech had long been part of the platform of the range of early progressive organizations from the beginnings of the agrarian political parties such as the United Farmers, to organized labour. Together with proposals for the nationalization of transportation and communication systems in the early 1900s, ownership concentration and control over newspapers were growing concerns so that by 1921, the platform of the Progressive Party, was calling for public disclosure of newspaper ownership (Morton 1967:305). Further, labour unions like the ACCL, and both the CCF and CPC political parties criticized, and referred to the commercial press as the "capitalist press." Organized labour's proposals regarding radio were thus part of this recognition of the limitations of commercially owned and controlled communications.

advertising on the radio (as the spokesman for organized labour announced, “the time has come for the removal of radio from commercial exploitation”) [(Brief submitted to Commission, cited in *The Canadian Unionist* 9(12) May 1936:327-8) see also (*Canadian Congress Journal* XV(6) June 1936:21)].⁷⁴ After the CBC was established in 1936, the ACCL expressed some disappointment that the private stations remained, but was satisfied that national radio was now institutionalized, which, in their opinion, meant that “free speech” was now safeguarded.⁷⁵

Controversial Broadcasting

State control of broadcasting and ownership of the CBC did not automatically translate into increased air time for labour unions, left political parties, or radical immigrant organizations, nor did it give license to freedom of speech in general. While unions were able to express their opinions on the ownership and control of the broadcasting system, access to it and programming (specifically for labour), were less of

⁷⁴ This was different than both the private broadcasters and the Canadian Radio League’s proposals, neither of which rejected advertising (Dewar 1982). As Dewar argues, private broadcasters sought Canadian government “intervention” to limit direct advertising from American stations, and newspaper owners advocated a limit on radio advertising because of competition. Although some members of the Radio League aimed to eliminate advertising altogether, their official position (or compromise) was to lobby for a limit on the amount of advertising allowed rather than an outright ban.

⁷⁵ As an editorial in *The Canadian Unionist* concluded: “The triumph of national radio service over the scuttlers [sic] of public enterprise is a victory for freedom of speech in Canada” [Vol. 10(3) August 1936:57]. In their enthusiasm to celebrate its nationalization, they failed to appreciate its underlying economic structure, as Johnston observes, “control of radio broadcasting would be structurally implicit in the way it was financed” (1997:186), and Vipond (1995).

an immediate issue.⁷⁶ Also given the private broadcasters' goal of securing sponsorship and advertising contracts, they were less likely to risk providing access to radical groups of any kind. Further, given the overall climate of conservative opinion, allowing 'radicals' access to state-owned radio was too controversial, particularly when the dominant hegemony was the promotion of national unity as the accepted rationalization for state regulation and a state-owned broadcaster.

Limitations on "political" or "controversial" broadcasting were set early in Canadian radio history. They were given precedent by the federal government in 1928 by the denial of licenses to four radio stations owned by the International Bible Student Association (IBSA) (later known as Jehovah's Witnesses) (Penton 1976:100; Weir 1965:101; Vipond 1992:202). According to Penton, although the controversy focused on one station in Saskatchewan (that had allowed the Ku Klux Klan two hours of airtime), all IBSA stations were refused licenses because of the criticisms made by the Jehovah's Witnesses against the Catholic Church (Ibid: 97). He further notes that although over 400,000 people signed a petition in protest,⁷⁷ and labour leaders, government opposition members and MP's criticized the action, the decision stood firm (Ibid: 97-101).⁷⁸ In addition, after one of the leading speakers of Jehovah's Witnesses (one Judge

⁷⁶ Save for the "Labour Forum" (thesis Chapter 4), labour access was minimal, whether this was because of the structure of the various Commissions (union representation was absent on all the Commissions and on the Board of Governors), or because of the kinds of questions that were asked, or it simply wasn't considered by the unions' themselves.

⁷⁷ The petition simply asked "Are you in favour of free speech on the air?" to which 458,000 people replied "yes" (Weir 1965:102). In the House of Commons, J.S. Woodsworth defended the Bible Students on the basis that both the Catholic Church and the Anglican Church were also prone to criticize non-believers and other religious faiths in their press and from the pulpit, so the IBSA were not an exception. Thus, if the government was not going to suppress the communication of the other churches, the IBSA should have the same rights (Weir 1965:102). House of Commons *Debates* 1928, Vol. II, pp. 1951, Vol. III, pp. 3664-6.

⁷⁸ Ibid *Debates* cited in Penton (1976:335-6, fn. 15-17).

Rutherford), continued to buy airtime and criticize the Catholic Church and links between it, the government and business, in January 1933 the CRBC notified radio stations that speeches from such a “foreign, anti-social agitator” be sent to the Commission for prior approval (Ibid: 102).⁷⁹ A little over a year later, existing broadcasting regulations – Regulations 90 and 91⁸⁰ – were revised⁸¹ to deal with controversial (that is, “religious” or “political”) broadcasts.

While Regulation 91 required the submission of radio scripts for examination and pre-approval by the Commission, Regulation 90 echoed the wording from the War Measures Act during the First World War in stipulating that:

No broadcasting station may broadcast any speech, printed matter or programme containing defamatory, libelous, printed matter or programs containing defamatory, libelous or obscene statements with regards to persons or institutions or statements of a *treasonous character or intended to promote change by unlawful means and which might lead to a breach of the peace*, or an advertising matter containing false or deceptive statements [emphasis added NAC RG 41, Vol. 257, 11-40-1-7 (Part 1)].⁸²

As Section 98 was still in place until 1936, the question of what was considered “treasonous” or “intended to promote change by unlawful means” was broad enough to give station managers cause for concern. Given that the CPC arguably fell within these parameters, buying airtime was challenging to say the least. Nevertheless after Section 98 was lifted, the CPC made its “first Communist Party radio talk in the history of Ottawa” on 7 Jan 1937,⁸³ and was able to secure airtime in a few cities after that, usually

⁷⁹ Debates 1932-3, Vol. III, p. 2619.

⁸⁰ See Bird (1988:130-1) cited in Vipond (1994).

⁸¹ They had initially been established to deal with huckstering in the advertising of patent medicines and the promotion of business stocks on the radio (see Weir 1965:186-7).

⁸² See also [“Free Speech on the Air” *Canadian Unionist* 9(5) October 1935:33].

⁸³ RCMP Security Bulletin [No. 840 App II:IV(10) 20 Jan 1937].

only during municipal, provincial and federal elections.⁸⁴ These were the exception rather than the rule, however.⁸⁵

The CPC's paper *The Worker* denounced incidences of radio censorship whenever they occurred. Although they complied with the Regulation to submit texts beforehand [there was no choice in the matter (Vipond 1994)], in the 1935 federal election year, the CPC was denied airtime by private broadcaster (CKNC) even *before* the script was submitted for approval ("Carr Radio Speech Ban Protested" *The Worker* 26 Jan 1935:1,4).⁸⁶ According to *The Worker*, the 'problem' wasn't just the CPC – it was the content itself that was being censored. These included radio addresses having to do with labour. In May 1935, for example, a series of (five) fifteen-minute broadcasts planned as a prelude to May Day were refused by the "station manager" ("Refuse Radio for May Day Talks: Ottawa Hand Seen" *The Worker* 2 March 1935:2). A speech planned by Tom Ewen of the WUL on the miners' strike in Sudbury was also refused ("Ewen Banned

⁸⁴ RCMP Security Bulletins note occurrences in Alberta at CJCA Edmonton (on which the CPC had a series of talks on the United Front in April 1937)[Bull. No. 850 App 11(9)]; as well as CJCI Edmonton on which the CPC had a weekly broadcast [No. 895, App I:III (10) 6 July 1938], and a one time air on CJOC North Lethbridge [No. 850 App 11(9) 7 April 1937]. In Winnipeg, the CPC set up a "Radio Committee" to organize CPC sections and regions for a weekly 15 minute series on CJRC beginning in Nov 1938 [No. 905, App I(4) in November 1938]. The station was criticized by the CPC for not letting an "uncensored" speech by the local ILP candidate on the air (No. 891, App I:IV 13 May 1938), but it aired speeches if passed and paid for [Civil Security Intelligence Service (CSIS) No. 13(2) A(6), 25 Apr 1939]. During the municipal elections in Toronto CKCL allowed all three communist candidates a total of 25 minutes of airtime (CSIS No. 1 March 1939).

⁸⁵ Ironically, R.C. Calder of the Civil Liberties Union was denied airtime on CKCL to talk about the Québec Padlock Law. As the RCMP reported: "The president of the privately-owned broadcasting station refused the privilege because he considered Calder's address was not in the interest of the public" (RCMP Bulletin No. 885, 2 Mar 1938).

⁸⁶ The requirement for speech submission was directly targeted at controlling radical organizations, like the CPC. As Vipond notes "Liberals, Conservatives, and other 'recognized leaders' were never asked to submit speeches for checking; Communists always were" (Charlesworth to Maxted, 1935, July 24). She also observes "perhaps most reprehensibly," 'the Commissioner used deceptive measures to evade charges of censorship and avoid public criticism' (1994).

From Air" 27 Jan 1936:1), and a Hospital Employees Union was twice refused airtime in Toronto (CKCL). *The Worker* complained that: "Despite assurances by Gladstone Murray Chairman of the CBC, that unionists have a right to use the radio if they pay for the time, the Hospital Employees Union has again being barred from the air by station CKCL" (*The Worker* 8 Jan 1937:1).⁸⁷

The CCF was also not immune to being denied airtime. In August 1934, Graham Spry was prohibited from going on the air on station CKCL to give a speech in the Toronto by-election ("Radio Speech Stopped" *New Commonwealth* 25 Aug 1934:1). The station manager blamed the radio commission, and the radio commission responded that the responsibility was with the radio station. This was the "Catch-22" of the regulation, as it provided the justification for station managers to deny controversial broadcasts, but the state took no responsibility in "forcing" the station to comply, and therefore could not be directly (or legally) charged with censorship or denial of freedom of speech. As broadcast historian Mary Vipond put it:

...one great (political) advantage of the bipartite nature of Regulations 90 and 91 was that it gave both the Commission and the private station managers the opportunity to duck responsibility by pointing the finger at the other when accused of censorship (1994).

⁸⁷ To supplement the radio broadcasts, it was common to print and distribute copies of speeches, whether it was from the CPC or the Prime Minister. For example, the Conservative Party printed five pamphlets of. "The Premier Speaks to the People: The Prime Minister's January Radio Broadcast Issued in Book Form" ("Letters in Canada" *University of Toronto Quarterly* No. 3, April 1936:443). Also when CPC speeches were banned, they used the banning as added interest to the copy; at the same time however, danger was added given that people could be charged for having it in their possession.

In the meantime, the CCF in Saskatchewan had managed to pay for a fifteen-minute per week slot,⁸⁸ and there were constant appeals in the *New Commonwealth* for funds not only for their publications, but also for the purchase of radio time:

Radio talks must be provided for regularly. We must be prepared to flood the province with FREE literature and propaganda, and not make people pay to read our literature (*New Commonwealth* 1 Sept 1934:3).

This was particularly important for election campaigning. In 1935 the “Voice of the CCF” had a 10:30 p.m. broadcast, three times a week, and nightly the week before the election. Airtime had been bought on Toronto station CFRB and secured through funding by “donations from members, representative trade unions, League for Social Reconstruction, churches, university men, social workers, as well as CCF Units”⁸⁹ (reprinted *New Commonwealth* 24 August 1936:1). Given the already strained financial conditions of the CCF and the CPC, airtime in the 1930s was a luxury (Vipond 1994).

The federal government did make allowances for election periods, however, so that established political parties (*excluding* the CPC) could have free access to broadcasting.⁹⁰ The challenge for the Commission was how to allow the CPC on the air without being charged as a “communist institution” by its critics on the one hand, or restricting them to the point of drawing criticisms of censorship, on the other. Vipond submits that although the CPC did not enjoy unfettered or unrestricted access to the radio,

⁸⁸ CCF’s airtime was noted as an example by Frank Turnbull, a western Conservative Member of Parliament who appealed to Prime Minister Bennett to make use of the radio and establish a “campaign to show that ‘the Conservative Party is the outstanding opposition to socialism’ in the country” (cited in Nolan 1985:181).

⁸⁹ This gives an indication of the effort and the range required in raising funds to buy airtime.

⁹⁰ This was calculated to match airtime with party majority. For example, in 1940, the parties agreed to 12¾ hours of free time on the CBC of which Liberals (in government) got 5¼ hrs, Conservatives 4¾ hrs, CCF 1½ hrs, and Social Credit 1¼ hrs (*Variety* 14 Feb 1940). Press clipping is on file at (RG 41, Vol. 435, File 27-4-2, Part 2).

when they could afford it, the existence of the CRBC⁹¹ at least allowed for broadcasts that might otherwise not be provided. In her estimation,

Judged by today's standards of fairness and free speech, the Commission receives a failing grade. Judged simply by the standard of successful resolution of a particularly tricky problem in the context of the 1930s, censorship was one of the areas in which the Commission did what the government wanted it to do without inflaming the passions of too many critics. It was certainly far more successful in that respect than its predecessor, the Radio Branch, had been (Vipond 1994).

After the CBC was established in 1936, an emphasis on “fairness” and “balance” continued to appear in regulations and publicity. A “Statement of Policy With Respect to Controversial Broadcasting” or “white paper” was issued in 1939 that provided a set of rules for “Party Political Broadcasting During a Dominion Election Campaign” (Peers 1969; CBC 1939). It underlined that the goal of CBC was to continue its

general policy of encouraging fair and adequate presentation of controversial questions which are of public interest and concern and ...full discussion of the principal contending points of view on national issues... [as] part of the democratic process” (CBC 1939:Sec A2).

Section D covering “Non-Party Controversial Broadcasts,” included item 34: “The CBC does not believe in or practice censorship,” which was elaborated in item 35:

The CBC is opposed to and shall resist attempt to regiment opinion or to throttle freedom of utterance. It believes in the fullest use of the air for forthright stimulating discussion on all controversial questions. It believes that the best safeguard of freedom of discussion is a policy which permits the largest possible opportunity for the expression of varying and opposite opinions.

At the report’s end, the conclusion again underscored equitable access:

⁹¹ Vipond’s (1994) article includes an analysis of the Commission’s practices in regards to Regulations 90 and 91 as applied to the CPC’s radio access. In particular, she examines the CRBC’s files that provide details of how Regulations 90 and 91 were executed. Specifically she notes the alterations made in a talk by Tim Buck on his experience in prison under Section 98, and a 1935 election speech by him in Toronto, that provides interesting details of what was allowed, edited, or deleted. Of the original speech that was submitted, approximately two-thirds remained after the Commission was through with it.

The policy outlined has been adopted in an effort to ensure that the vast and incalculable medium of broadcasting will remain at the disposal of the nation, regardless of considerations of party, section, class, or creed [NAC CBC File RG41, Vol. 257, File 11-40-1-7 (Part 1)].

But while the ink was not yet dry on the White Paper, plans on how to censor and control communication, culture and labour in the event of war, were actively in the making.⁹²

And the dissimilarities between the *policy* of free speech (as well as freedom of association and freedom of the press) and the government's *practices* were more acutely exposed.

“Foreign Language” Broadcasting

As has been reviewed, the threat of war was a consistent theme expressed throughout the alternative media since the First World War. A second world war had long been the dreaded forecast of socialists worldwide; and one of the major impetuses behind the popular front organizations of the CLAWF, the CASD and the Canadian League for Peace and Democracy, was its prevention. The Canadian government was also aware of the possibility, and it was thus not unusual that it would start making plans for wartime governance in the late 1930s.⁹³ What was unusual, were the decisions that were made regarding broadcasting and how these decisions appeared to have come about.

⁹² For example, Raboy notes that in 1938, in anticipation of conflict and to incorporate technological change, the Radiotelegraph Act of 1913 was updated. As he explains: “the new Radio Act introduced an additional power for the governor in council, to ‘make regulations for the censorship and controlling of radio signals and messages in case of actual or apprehended war, rebellion, riot or other emergency’ (Canada, Statutes and Bills, The Radio Act, x. 3(I)d. cited in Raboy 1990:66; 369:ftn 66).

⁹³ Prime Minister Mackenzie King stated that the impetus for war preparedness came from the Minister of National Defence in 1937 who suggested it was necessary to “provide for internal security and guard against sabotage, destruction of vital military and economic establishments, and against hostile propaganda” [from speech delivered by King entitled “Canada Enters the War” House of Commons 8 September 1939, reprinted in King (1941:16-17)].

One such decision that had major repercussions, until well after the war, was the policy on foreign language broadcasting.

Given the number of immigrants who spoke neither French nor English, access to radio was an obvious necessity. Eventually enough sponsors and organizational funds allowed the purchase of airtime to broadcast in a range of languages. In 1939, an informal survey suggested that there were a number of stations across Canada that broadcast in languages other than French or English (see Table 7).

Table 7
List of Cities with Radio Stations Broadcasting in
Languages other than English or French
1939

Province	City	Language Group
BC	Vancouver	Scandinavian
Alberta	Edmonton	Ukrainian, German, Scandinavian
	Calgary	Scandinavian, German,
	Lethbridge	Unreported
Saskatchewan	Prince Albert	Ukrainian
	Saskatoon	Ukrainian
	Regina	German, Scandinavian, Hungarian
	Watrous	Unreported
Manitoba	Brandon	Unreported
	Winnipeg	Ukrainian, Polish, Icelandic
Ontario	Port Arthur	Finnish
	Windsor	Italian
	Sudbury	Finnish
	Toronto	Italian, Ukrainian, Finnish
Québec	Montréal	Italian, Hungarian

Source: Map supplied in NAC – CBC Radio Files RG 41, Vol. 435.⁹⁴

⁹⁴ The map appears to be the product of a request made by CBC to Fred Rogers CKOC “to prepare and submit facts and figures about foreign-speaking populations in Canada and areas that they were located” [recalled in CBC letter to Col. Landry Radio Censor dated 30 Oct 1939, NAC CBC Files RG 41, Vol. 154, 9-34 (Part I).] It is not known how long language-broadcasts had been on the air, or if the map is entirely accurate, it is offered simply as an illustration of the existence of language broadcasts. As another area of further research, a study would need to be conducted on a station-by-station basis. I was also not able to find a specific regulation on “foreign language” broadcasting until 1939.

As Table 7 indicates, it was common in the areas of major immigrant settlement to have broadcasting in the range of languages of people living in the community. In January 1939 however, the government began to get letters complaining about “foreign language” broadcasting. The date is significant, since neither Great Britain nor Canada had declared war as of yet (and would not do so until September 1939). It also appears that the motivation for the complaint had been in discussion for at least a year earlier (or was a carryover from the City of Toronto’s banning in 1929), as the first letter from the Canadian Corps Association demonstrates:

The Canadian Corps Association strongly urges that immediate legislation be enacted to prevent any language other than French or English being used on any Radio Station in Canada. We have discussed the matter with M. Hillary Sedwick, President of Canadian Broadcasting Association and he is in entire agreement [NAC Canadian Corps Assoc. letter to C.D. Howe, Minister of Transport, 5 Jan 1939, in CBC Files RG 41, Vol. 154, 9-34 (Part 1)].

A month later, the Canadian Legion sent a letter to the General Manager of the CBC, also suggesting that the banning of all foreign languages was immediately necessary. Being a little more explicit than the Corps Assoc., the Legion⁹⁵ offered that even though texts were submitted in English so that “permission” was granted beforehand, the speakers could not be trusted to follow the text:

they... depart very definitely from the English version and swing into speeches which are decidedly disloyal and are calculated to stir up controversy and sectionalism. ...these practices should be curtailed in the best interests of the country at large... in view of the apparent inability to control such abuses, the use of only English and French be permitted by the Canadian Broadcasting

⁹⁵ The Canadian Corp Association and the Canadian Legion were also active in mobilizing anti-communist campaigns. RCMP Bulletins observe that in the Toronto municipal elections of 1939 these two organizations, together with “the United Canada League” and the “Board of Trade” conducted a “vigorous counter-campaign”. As the report concluded, the campaign was: “no doubt ...greatly responsible for the largest vote being polled in the history of the City of Toronto, and the defeat of Tim Buck, J.B. Salsberg and John Weir may be directly attributed to the aggressiveness of this campaign” (CSIS Summary 1, Jan-Mar 1939:2).

Corporation (Canadian Legion of the British Empire Service League letter to Gladstone Murray, General Manager of CBC 14 Feb 1939, Ibid: CBC File).

A similar letter from the Imperial Order of the Daughters of the Empire (IODE) was devoid of any specific context or example, but recommended similar action (IODE letter dated 9 June 1939 to Gladstone Murray, Ibid CBC File). On 10 September 1939, Canada entered the Second World War, and on 13 September 1939,⁹⁶ the CBC announced a momentous decision.

CBC Circular No. C-3 dated 13 Sept 1939

Item 2. Foreign Language Broadcasting. Spoken word broadcasting in Canada in languages other than French and English are prohibited until further notice.

Save for musical selections and the title of the song, there were no exceptions – not even for Christmas or New Years' greetings. Complaints to the CBC resulted in the allowance of Gaelic and Welsh (CBC Circular C-67, 13 May 1940 Ibid: CBC File) as it was argued that they were “distinctly British in nature”. Another year later, after several pleading letters from religious organizations, religious broadcasts were allowed on upon prior authorization, but only if “the entire service will originate within the church precincts” (CBC Circular C-198, 22 Oct 1941).⁹⁷ Also, after requests for Canadian government-

⁹⁶ Even before the circular, broadcasting in languages other than English and French were already being removed from the air. As indication of the feelings of powerlessness, few letters of complaint were sent. One of these came from the Consul General of Poland asking that a “Polish Varieties Program” be allowed to stay on the air, and that the loss of sponsors would finish the program, but it was denied (Ibid).

⁹⁷ One of these was from C.S. Booth, a lawyer and elected M.P. from Winnipeg North, who justified the necessity for church services in Ukrainian as follows: “The Ukrainian Churches are one of our main bulwarks against Communism in the West, and we should assist them to the fullest possible extent. ...Further, the older generation of Ukrainians in rural points have little opportunity to learn English, and a church service in English would mean little to them. At the present time, subversive influences (particularly Communist) are at work throughout our country districts, and it is therefore [sic] particularly undesirable that we should cut these people off from the church – the agency best able to combat such influences.” Letter C.S. Booth to Maj. Gladstone Murray, CBC 2 April, 1940, (NAC CBC File RG 41, Vol. 154, File 9-34, Part 1).

assistance from “representatives of the governments of Belgium, the Netherlands, Poland, Norway and Czechoslovakia” for specific broadcasts that would aid “in their work of recruiting and training their own nationals in Canada for service overseas,” the regulation was again amended.⁹⁸ Exempted were “foreign language broadcasts directly initiated, sponsored, or approved by Dominion Government departments, or initiated by the [CBC]” (Ibid: C-198).⁹⁹ Other than these exceptions, for the remainder of the war, broadcasts in languages other than English in French were not allowed on the nation’s airwaves.¹⁰⁰ Even after the ban was lifted, station managers were still wary of allowing any other languages on the air.¹⁰¹ It was clear from their letters that, in their understanding, it wasn’t the language that was necessarily the issue, but that the broadcast might be “political.”¹⁰² Illustrating the chauvinism and climate of fear and suspicion that was still acute in 1945,¹⁰³ the CBC supervisor of Station Relations put it in cultural terms:

⁹⁸ Letter from J.T. Thorson, Dept. of National War Services to Col. R.P. Landry, Radio Broadcast Censor, 24 Oct 1941 (NAC CBC File RG 41, Vol. 154, File 9-34, Part 1).

⁹⁹ Also exempted was the selling of “Victory Loans” so that the government could conduct the war loan campaign in any language as necessary (CBC letter to J. Radford and D. Manson 26 May 1941).

¹⁰⁰ See also *Radio Censorship Handbook* Paragraph 6 (Ottawa 1941:7)

¹⁰¹ For example, in 1944, a letter from a station manager in Kirkland Lake Ontario asked for approval of the “Slovenian Choral Society” for a Christmas broadcast. He assured the CBC that it would not be political, with the justification that he had personally contacted the local detachment of the RCMP, who had told him that “this organization is definitely not politically active” (Letter from Manager CJKL to Supervisor of Station Relations CBC Toronto, dated 12 Dec 1944, NAC CBC File RG 41, File 154, 9-34).

¹⁰² In 1947, in an additional letter to a station manager who had requested permission for a Polish program called “Rosary Hour” in Windsor, the CBC reiterated that save for special occasions, “broadcasting in Canada should only be in conducted mainly in our two official languages. ... There is no special censorship by this division, but the station manager is expected to carry out his responsibility under the Regulations and should keep on file both the English translation and the actual text of the broadcast” (Letter George Young, Broadcast Regulations to Station Manager Margaret Pratt, 29 Oct 1947, NAC CBC File RG 41, Vol. 154, File 9-34.)

¹⁰³ The last year of the CBC file on foreign language broadcasting, in 1953, station managers were still writing to the CBC for permission to broadcast programs in a “foreign language” (Ibid).

While it could be argued that the cultural characteristics, arts and handicrafts, etc. [sic] of racial groups should be preserved and encouraged, I am of the opinion that broadcasting in Canada should, as far as possible, be confined to our two official languages. It is a natural and psychological fact that when one is listening to a foreign tongue he may be a bit suspicious of what they are saying despite the fact that generally there are no grounds for such suspicion.

...We have always discouraged stations from foreign language broadcasting and it is my considered opinion that we should continue to do so (CBC Internal Memo From: Supervisor of Station Relations to Assistant General Manager 4 Oct 1945).

Expanding Definitions of Controversial Broadcasting

The regulation requiring station managers to examine and approve texts prior to broadcasting continued after Canada entered the war, and the CBC specified exactly what kind of "talks" should be subject to closest scrutiny. A loose description from the CBC to station managers was given in September 1939 (CBC Circular C-3),¹⁰⁴ and once the government had set up its separate Censorship Co-ordination Committee,¹⁰⁵ the details were clarified in subsequent directives.¹⁰⁶ When the regulations applied to "foreign languages" and radical (that is, pacifist, anti-war, anti-conscription, labour

¹⁰⁴ The details are in CBC Circular C-3: "I do not need to point out that it is particularly necessary to scrutinize talks dealing with war, international affairs, domestic politics, racial and minority problems. I would suggest that talks on these subjects full particulars are especially necessary in order to obviate reference back to the station concerned for complete details. Stations were also required to submit their program logs 'not later than seven days following' broadcasts.

¹⁰⁵ The Committee was headquartered in Ottawa with one English and one French office, regional offices were located in Toronto, Montréal, Halifax and Vancouver, and censors were available 24/7, even "at their residence numbers" (Censorship Co-ordinating Committee Handbook 1940:22 Appendix B). The chief censor was Walter Thompson (publicity director for Canadian National Railways); Col. O.M. Biggar took over until January 1944, when the then "chief press censor," Wilfred Eggleston, was promoted to the position (Kerr 1982:48).

¹⁰⁶ Although Radio Broadcasting Censorship was authorized under the DOCR (Nos. 11,12,16, 17,39,39B) in 1939, authority was earlier established in 1927 "by virtue of the power conferred by the War Measures Act, Chapter 206 of the Revised Statutes of Canada" (Ottawa 1941:5).

unions, and so on) it had a minimum amount of coverage in the commercial media.¹⁰⁷

But when Québec Premier Duplessis was required to submit election speeches prior to the provincial government election in 1939, he refused. The irony that the author of the Padlock Act was now complaining about censorship was not lost on the commercial media.¹⁰⁸ However, the CBC surveyed the commercial print media in Québec and Ontario for their reaction, and only found one newspaper “unfavourable to the Censorship Regulations.”¹⁰⁹

Given the general acceptance of wartime censorship regulations, the CBC became more specific about what kinds of “talks” needed to be cleared by the Censor.¹¹⁰ Understandably, “matters associated with the war” and any military-related talks were on the list, as were the now “traditional” concerns about “propagandistic” talks. Also included was a carryover from 1937 when the CBC “banned abusive comment on racial

¹⁰⁷ As Kerr suggests, most of the members recruited for the Press Censorship Committee were from the commercial media and “censorship was accepted as an unpleasant, but unavoidable necessity by most of Canada’s newspapers...Criticism of the censors was muted not only by the newspapers’ agreement on the necessity of censorship, but also by their realization that ill-judged actions by the censors were due more to ignorance in the face of novel circumstances than any malicious desire to stifle the press” (1982:46-7). See also “Radio Banned if Meetings are Political” *Globe and Mail* 28 Sept 1939, “Censorship on the Radio and the Québec Elections” *Ottawa Journal* 29 Sept 1939; “Radio and Politics” *The Gazette* 28 Sept 1939; and “Radio for National Service” *The Citizen* 28 Sept 1939.

¹⁰⁸ For example see clippings (NAC CBC File RG 41, Vol. 435, File 27-4-2-1, Part 1).

¹⁰⁹ The following newspapers were found to be “favourable to the Censorship Regulations” - *Le Canada*, *Le Jour*, *Le Nouvelliste* (Three Rivers) *Le Soleil* (Québec) *The Gazette* and the *Star* (after the campaign got started) and *Le Droit* (Ottawa)” the exception was *L’Evenement-Journal*. See (CBC Internal Memo from V. Beatrice Belcourt 21 Nov, 1939; in NAC CBC Files RG 41, Vol. 435, File 27-4-2-1, Part 1).

¹¹⁰ “Radio Broadcasting Censorship Summary of Directives Issued September 6, 1939 – April 15, 1940” (NAC CBC File RG 41, Vol. 237, Files 11-29).

and religious questions” (Raboy 1990:64),¹¹¹ so it was not unusual that all of these would be included. New, however, was the inclusion in Paragraph 1(d) “capital and labour relationships,” and 1(e) “international affairs,” which made the de-labouring process official.¹¹² A previous circular to station managers cautioned them to handle “with great care” suspected texts of “subversive or treasonable utterances” given that broadcasters could “make themselves liable to a charge of disseminating such material contrary to Defence of Canada Regulations (DOCR) Regulation 39” (CBC Circular C-124, 22 Oct 1940). Subject to interpretation and to such implied ominous consequence, the definition of what was “subversive” likely became expanded; it was fortified by an understanding that internal state security was also increasing.¹¹³ A CBC Circular informed station managers that the RCMP has “asked that no broadcast reference be made to the arrival of increased strength of RCMP at any given point or to new distribution of the forces”. For radio stations already under the watch of the RCMP (particularly CKCL Toronto and CJRC Winnipeg), this was likely added incentive.

The regulation that discussions of “capital and labour relationships” required prior clearance by the Censors placed a decided constraint on left politics and news. While the CPC was arguably “used to” extended surveillance and censorship, in 1939, the CCF was also experiencing the restrictions more acutely. As an article in *Saturday Night* reported,

¹¹¹ The regulation stated: “No one shall broadcast abusive comment on any race, religion or creed,” and was put into effective 1 Nov 1937, see (NAC CBC Files RG 41, Vol. 257, File 11-40-1-7, Part 1).

¹¹² Ibid “Radio Broadcasting Censorship Summary...”.

¹¹³ In an article explaining the various forms of censorship in today’s context, Marlin notes that official censorship begets broader forms of self-censorship. “A few brushes with the official censor will suffice, following which the censor is no longer necessary” (1999:290). For an example, he offers a quote from Second World War correspondent Charles Lynch: “We were a propaganda arm of our governments. At the start the censors enforced that, but by the end we were our own censors. We were cheerleaders” (cited in Marlin 1999:290).

the radio censorship regulations had resulted in the cancellation of four of the CCF's usual broadcasts in Vancouver: "One was of a political character. One was an educational feature, with a Socialist tinge [and] two were straight newscasts, which naturally featured C.C.F. activities." (*Saturday Night* Toronto 28 Oct 1939).¹¹⁴ Despite the protest to the Prime Minister by the national chairman of the CCF (MJ Coldwell), the broadcasts were not allowed and subsequent news broadcasts had to pass the censor's prior approval (*Ibid*).

Subjecting material coming from the alternative press services, the Cooperative Press Association (CPA) and the Associated Labor Press (ALP), to prior approval would obviously destroy the "timeliness" of news (*Ibid*). It would also reduce, if not eliminate, most critical comment from the press and the airwaves, and it extended the de-labouring process to the commercial media. Whether it was the amount of paperwork required, the risk involved (RCMP surveillance, government disfavour, and/or legal liability), not to mention courting the wrath of advertisers and sponsors, station managers likely made the decision to curtail, if not eliminate any controversial broadcasting save for what was pre-approved or brought to them over the newswires.¹¹⁵ Of these, the government recognized and provided an exception for "news supplied by recognized agencies". In the CBC's instructions, the news services that were exempted from submitting scripts were those of "the Canadian Press, Transradio, British United Press and Christian Science Monitor" as well as "all news of sports and sporting commentaries" (Summary NAC RG 41, Vol. 237, File 11-29). And if the radio and press censorship didn't go far enough, specific

¹¹⁴ Found in (NAC CBC File RG 41, Vol. 435, File 27-4-2, Part 2).

¹¹⁵ In the case of press censorship, just as in the First World War, the overstepping the boundaries was minimal; and other than banning the more radical newspapers outright, the government only had to fine a few commercial newspapers, and "...the penalties were light" (Kerr 1982:49).

newspapers and particular organizations were banned outright under the Defence of Canada Regulations.

Defence of Canada Regulations (DOCR)

Is it not strange that the first thing which Canada yielded on entering a war which is being fought for democracy was democratic liberty? Why must we cease to be democratic when fighting for democracy? (*The Canadian Unionist* December 1939:174).

In March 1938, the federal government established a committee to “prepare emergency legislation” and issue a report in case of the country’s entry into war (Dreiszigler 1988:2). “The report became the basis of the Defence of Canada Regulations [DOCR] proclaimed by the Canadian government on 3 September, 1939” (Ibid). For the second time in as many decades, the War Measures Act was activated, giving authority to the DOCR and “enabling the Cabinet to govern the country without reference to Parliament” even *before* Canada officially entered the war (Ibid). Initially, the DOCR was relatively limited as to the identification and treatment of “enemy aliens,” specifically non-Canadian citizens or non-naturalized immigrants who were citizens of enemy countries. In less than a year, however, the parameters were enlarged to include “individuals who were suspected of harbouring anti-state plans or sentiments” (Ibid: 3).

Just who these individuals were exactly, and what evidence would be required caused some consternation until the government turned to the RCMP. Given that RCMP reports could be sketchy at best, Keyserlink suggests that it was recommended that the DOCR should not only be broadened to include naturalized immigrants and Canadian citizens, but it should give the state the power “to not require any hard evidence”

(1988:57-8).¹¹⁶ Naturalized immigrants and Canadian citizens thus also became “suspects” requiring “preventive detention,” and over two thousand “aliens,” naturalized-immigrants, and Canadian citizens were sent to internment camps across Canada.¹¹⁷ A number of labour leaders and labour press editors were also interned or arrested under the DOCR. These included leaders of the Canadian Seaman’s Union, United Auto Workers, Canadian Fishermen and Food Handlers Union of Nova Scotia, United Electrical Workers, Mine, Mill and Steel Workers, a union negotiator for the CBC’s Associated Technical Employees union, and so on (Whitaker 1999:152-155).

The signing of the “Nazi-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact” in 1939 provided reason for escalation, and any organization that could be related to the Communist Party of Canada was outlawed therewith. Fascist organizations also appeared on the list, but the majority of the organizations were left-oriented (Whitaker 1986) (see also Table 8 following). These included all radical immigrant organizations, whether or not they had been active in fighting fascism or approved of the Pact, or whether formal links with the CPC could be proved. Proof of individual membership was not required, as under DOCR 39C(2) any individual “who advocates or defends the acts, principles or policies of such illegal organization” was also “considered guilty of an offense against this regulation”

¹¹⁶ For example, as Keyserlink suggests in the case of “Germans and German Canadians on the RCMP list,” both “could be arrested and detained without trial” [NAC DEA G1, Vol. 1964, f. 855-D, Advisory Internment Committee Minutes, 3 Sep 1939, cited in Keyserlink (1988:58, fn. 33)].

¹¹⁷ Under DOCR Regulations 21, 24 and 25, the list from 4 Sep 1939 to 18 Aug 1945 included 847 “pro-Germans,” 782 Japanese, 632 Italians, 133 communists, 27 NUP members (fascists), and two “Miscellaneous” [NAC RG 18, Box 5, C116-19-4 cited in Young (1988)].

(Canada 1940:47).¹¹⁸ This included ‘attending any meetings, public speeches in defense of them, or any distribution of such literature’ [DCOR 39C 3(a-c) Ibid].

Table 8
List of Organizations Illegal under
Defence of Canada Regulations
Section 39C (1)(a)
1940

The Auslands Organization of the National Sozialization Deutsche Arbeiterpartei
 The Deutsche Arbbeitsfront
 The Canadian Society for German Culture (Deutscher Bund fur Kanada)
 Canadian Union of Fascists
 The Communist Party of Canada
 The Young Communist League of Canada
 The Canadian Labour Defence League
 The League for Peace and Democracy
 The Ukrainian Labour Farmer Temple Association
 The Finnish Organization of Canada
 The Russian Workers and Farmers Club
 The Croatian Cultural Association
 The Hungarian Workers Club
 The Polish People’s Association
 The Canadian Ukrainian Youth Federation

Source: Government of Canada (1940) *Defence of Canada Regulations (Consolidation)*
 Ottawa: J.O. Patenaude, I.S.O. Printer to the King’s Most Excellent Majesty.

¹¹⁸ The British and American maxim of “innocent until proven guilty” was reversed under the DOCR. “With regard to preventive detention, habeas corpus, the right to legal counsel, and normal trial procedures were all set aside” [Whitaker (1986:138); also citing Cook (1974:38)]. See also “Memorandum on [DOCR] and the Censorship Regulations” by David Lewis, who does a paragraph by paragraph comparison of the Canadian and British Regulations that illustrates the extremes of the DCOR (NAC MG 28, Series IV-1, Vol. 151). The British Statutory Rules and Orders (1939) are in the same file.

To safeguard any future additions, DOCR Section 39(1)(b) held the right of adding to this list at any time through an announcement in the *Canada Gazette* (Canada 1940:47). In the beginning of July 1940, all organizations related to Jehovah's Witnesses found themselves declared illegal "as a subversive movement" even though they had publicly stated that they did not support "Hitlerism, Fascism and Communism" (Penton 1976:131).¹¹⁹ The Canadian Youth Congress was also placed on the list in 1942, joining the Canadian League for Peace and Democracy as another popular front organization that was banned (Whitaker 1986:143; Axelrod 1995:53).¹²⁰ All in all, Whitaker suggests that over thirty groups were declared unlawful throughout wartime (1986:138). The banning of the organizations was only part of the DOCR's range, however; also declared illegal were a number of CPC and radical immigrant press (see Table 9).

¹¹⁹ Penton cites "*Gazette de Canada*, Canada Gazette, Vol. 74 (July-September, 1940), p. 87, under 'Arrêtes en Conseil', dated Thursday, July 4, 1940." (1976:344 fn 11).

¹²⁰ As a popular front organization, the CYC was already suffering from schisms within the movement. Axelrod explains that while CYC leadership aimed to facilitate interaction so that "left" ideas would be considered, a rift emerged on questions of private property and religion, which was decisive when a resolution favouring anti-conscription passed in 1940, and a number of organizations withdrew from the CYC (1995:56/57). Further withdrawals were assisted by RCMP "raids" on CYC offices, and published statements "denouncing the 'youth councils' in Canada as 'communist,'" (Ibid: 59). Axelrod further notes that the loss of the YMCA was particularly damaging as the group withdrew "claim[ing] the organization was 'not Christian, not democratic, and not Canadian'" (*Montréal Gazette*, 15 April, 1941). The YMCA's withdrawal notwithstanding, "the CYC was declared an illegal organization [in 1942] and "compelled to disband" (Ibid).

Table 9
Newspapers Banned in Canada under Defence of Canada Regulations
June 1940

Title	Language	City
<i>Hlas L'Udu</i>	Slovak	Toronto
<i>Jiskra</i>	Czech	Toronto
<i>Glos [sic] Pracy</i>	Polish	Toronto
<i>Pravda</i>	Serbian	Toronto
<i>Vapaus</i>	Finnish	Sudbury
<i>Farmers'ke zhyttia [sic]</i>	Ukrainian	Winnipeg
<i>Narodna hazeta [sic]</i>	Ukrainian	Winnipeg
<i>Slobodna Misao</i>	Croatian	Toronto
<i>The Canadian Tribune</i>	English	Toronto
<i>The Advocate</i>	English	Vancouver
<i>The Midwest Clarion</i>	English	Winnipeg

Sources: [NAC Pierre Casgrain Papers Vol 10, Censorship File (Part 3) Memorandum of Censors to Casgrain 8 June 1940, and NAC Wartime Information Board (WIB Records) Vol. 22, File 23-22. R.W. Baldwin to Walter Herbert 16 June 1941] in Young (1988:47 fn4).

Significantly, fascist newspapers such as *Le Patriote*, *The Canadian Nationalist*, and *Deutsche Zietung fur Kanada* do not appear on this list. Nevertheless, as was earlier noted, press censorship was not just restricted to the media of suspected communist organizations. As in the First World War, the range of communications technologies (cable, telegraph, telephone and radio) also came under DOCR jurisdiction, and the Postmaster General and Secretary of State were given censorship authority over a range of media. From postcards - to photographs - to film (developed or not), anything that “would or might be prejudicial to the safety of the State or the efficient prosecution of

war” could be seized and censored (DOCR 14 and 15).¹²¹ These were sweeping powers, and, as the Canadian Civil Liberties Union noted

Section 15 allows the Secretary of State the most arbitrary power of censorship, control and suppression of the freedom of the press and the film, and the freedom of criticism, and permits no submission of his decision to control or revision by the courts. It gives the power to prevent the publication of any criticism unless it suits the convenience of the Ministry (CCLU 1940:4).

Given that DOCR 39C 4(a-b) also authorized the “Custodian of Enemy Property” the right to the “control and management” of any banned organizations’ properties there was no limit to what could be done to them. For the Ukrainian Labour Farmer Temple Association (ULFTA), this meant that the ‘RCMP confiscated the libraries, closed down the print shops and editors’ offices of the Worker-Farmer Publishing Association, and either shredded or burned their books’ (Krawchuk 1996:69). This included the combined properties of

108 labour temples, 210 orchestras, 190 drama groups, 150 folk dance schools, six brass bands, various embroidery groups, sports clubs, classes in English, children’s clubs, etc., and ...some 60,000 volumes [the total of ULFTA’s libraries] (Ibid: 76).

Any property that remained intact was sold to groups that ULFTA had considered its “opponents” including Ukrainian nationalist organizations and the Ukrainian Orthodox Church (Krawchuk 1996:70; Kordan and Luciuk 1988:93). For other organizations on the list the experience was not quite as severe, for example the assets of the Finnish Organization of Canada were not sold to nationalist Finns (Laine 1987:xvii; Eklund 1987:231). However, like ULFTA, all radical immigrant associations remained classified as “unlawful” *until 1943*, even though the Canadian government’s justification that they

¹²¹ Whitaker notes that: “by March 1941, 325 newspapers and periodicals had been banned, of which nine had been published in Canada. Of the foreign publications, no less than 173 came from countries other than Germany or Italy” (1986:138).

were enemies of the state had no validity given that the Communist government of the Soviet Union had been allied to Canada *since 1941*.¹²²

Re-labouring Culture through the Bureau of Public Information

While radical organizations were being outlawed, publications censored, and labour leaders were being arrested and interned, other government organizations were established to manage communication, culture and labour in a more palatable way. The Bureau of Public Information was established in 1939 (under the Minister of War Services) to promote unity among all Canadians as a nation working together in the war effort officially instituting a re-labouring process. As Young (1986) explains, the Bureau aimed to accomplish this in three related ways. On the one hand, the actions of Canada were promoted as evidence of an independent nation, acting separately (from the United States) while at the same time being the essential “linchpin” between the U.S. and Great Britain (Ibid: 123).¹²³ The Bureau focused on distinguishing particular battles where Canadians soldiers acted relatively independently, and suggested that Canadians should take pride in all of these as accomplishments.¹²⁴ On the other hand, the Bureau “sought to awaken a sense of patriotic fervour that would arouse all citizens and would minimize differences of opinion within the country” (Ibid: 122). The most basic way to do this was

¹²² Even then, the regulation could still be widely applied. The DOCR was amended in 1943 so that membership in an illegal organization was no longer considered to be a crime so long as one did not *act* as an agent or member of such an organization (Order-in-Council PC 1266, Debates 1943 Vol. V, p. 5202).

¹²³ Young cites WLM King, “Canada-United States Joint Defence: The Ogdensburg Agreement” CBS, p. 171 (House of Commons’ speech, 12 Nov 1940): WIB “Canada and Lend Lease,” *Reference Papers*, 8 (12 June 1943) (1981:131 fn 13).

¹²⁴ In keeping with Canada’s independence, it was suggested that when the Soviet Union became an ally in 1941, that Canada should be commended for “her” goodwill and assistance to Russia (Ibid:122-3). Young identifies a few ways this was approached, but how government propagandists reconciled Canada-Soviet relations when the USSR had been defined as the communist enemy, would make for an interesting study on its own.

to identify “the enemy” as one that was common to “us” (all good Canadians), versus “them” (all evil enemies). The Bureau thus “portrayed the enemy as the antithesis of the real Canadian”:

Canadian propagandists portrayed the war as a struggle reaching biblical proportions, an eschatological battle, that reduced the latitude for public questions about Canada’s participation. ‘If we do not destroy what is evil,’ warned Mackenzie King, ‘it is going to destroy all that there is of good’ (Young 1981:122).¹²⁵

Lastly, the Bureau had to bring these two hands together to promote unity within the country. As Young explains, the government was particularly intent on defining Canadian citizenship that integrated immigrants into a common “national ‘way of life’” (1981:123). Towards this effort, the Bureau published a series of pamphlets – in various languages and distributed free of charge – “dealing with, or intended for, Canada’s foreign-born population” (Dreisziger 1988:5-6).¹²⁶ The most well-known of these was written by Bureau member Prof. Watson Kirkconnell¹²⁷ called *Canadians All: A Primer for Canadian National Unity* (Ibid, Young 1981:123), which was also made into a series of radio broadcasts aired on the CBC.¹²⁸

¹²⁵ Young cites: WLM King “Canada at Britain’s Side” in WLM King, *Canada at Britain’s Side* (CBC) [sic], Toronto: Macmillan, (1941), p.1 (text of radio broadcast, 1 Sept 1939); [also King 1941:10] and Ibid, ‘Italy Enters the War,’ CBC pp. 123-4 (broadcast 10 June 1940, and so on); see Young (1981:131 fn 4).

¹²⁶ Dreisziger notes that the Chief Custodian of Enemy Property recommended that the government use the printing presses confiscated by the department in order to print in the various languages (1988:8), citing (NAC RG 44, Vol. 36, copy of letter from E.H. Colman to E. Lapointe, 19 Aug 1940; and RG 25, G1, Vol. 1964, File 855-E-39).

¹²⁷ Prof. Kirkconnell was considered an expert on the ethnic press, and had written a book in 1939 called *Canada, Europe and Hitler*, of which the last chapter was a review of the ethnic press in Canada. At the end of his survey of over forty periodicals in fourteen languages in which he read and summarized the views of “Anglo-Saxon and French” (pp. 107-115) and “The European Canadians” (pp. 116-188), he concluded that the ethnic press was “quite astonishingly, united and loyal” (Kirkconnell 1939:188) see also Hillmer (1988:xvi).

¹²⁸ Young cites NAC Wartime Information Board (WIB) Records, Vol. 19, File 10-A-47, script “Canadians All” 7 May 1941 (1988:48 fn 16).

The theme of *Canadians All* was carried on by a group of Polish nationalist and religious organizations in 1942 that supported an 80-100 page annual magazine of the same name. It was filled with re-labouring affirmations of Polish contributions to Canada in the form of pioneering, industrious labour, and patriotism. While both founding organizations stated that they were partisan, and “not-political,” both officially rejected radicalism and communist membership (see “Association of Poles in Canada” 1942:23; and “Federation of Polish Societies” 1942:25). *Canadians All* was well supported by commercial advertising¹²⁹ and by provincial¹³⁰ and federal government ads that praised and congratulated Polish and other immigrants for their “contribution” to Canada and on their economic integration, as did businesses and industry ads that recognized their “Polish friends.” The graphic on the cover of the first issue is curiously absent any traditional depiction of labor however. In contrast, a woman stands on top of the globe held in balance by a soldier and a businessman (Annex F). While the soldier holds a rifle, the businessman is crowned by the woman; in his left hand he holds a voter’s ballot, and

¹²⁹ Freedom and democracy were consistent themes in advertising emphasizing immigrant labour and cultural contributions to Canada and/or social unity among ally members. For example as an ad from the Canadian Co-operative Wheat Producers Ltd put it: “Polish settlers have brought many gifts to Canada. They are hard working, thrifty, and intelligent. They are gay and musical people with an artistic talent as shown by their beautiful handicrafts” (1943:8); and “Coca-Cola is as welcome to those in Moscow or Manhattan as it is in Montréal ...coke stands for the *pause that refreshes* – has become a symbol of democratic friendliness to people around the world” (1943:backcover)

¹³⁰ For example as an ad from the B.C. Dept. of Trade and Industry put it: “To Our Polish Citizens” – They have won their place in B.C.’s economic scheme, and have earned their share in the prosperity which this Peace, we hope, will bring to us all” (1943:53); and a Government of Ontario ad: “They Chose Well ...Bringing with them the cultural background and native skill of their respective homelands, they quickly fit into this new free life and thrive on the vigorous labour which results in direct benefits to themselves...with amazement they learn that they too, may share in the profits of the vast and diversified industry which have flourished as a result of Ontario’s natural resources” (1944:3).

in his right - a scroll which reads "government of the people for the people by the people" followed by "freedom of speech, press and assembly" - ironic considering the number of immigrant newspapers and organizations that were still on the Canadian government's censor list.

Continuing to press for social unity, in 1941 the Bureau of Information set up a separate "Nationalities Branch" to deal with "the foreign-born," that came to be known as the "Committee on Cooperation in Canadian Citizenship" (Dreisziger 1988:21, Young 1981:123). Wary of the schisms within and between left and right factions in the immigrant communities, the Committee aimed to reduce or eliminate them.¹³¹ It also wanted to counter any radical or extreme views within the pages of their press. The pamphlets and radio broadcasts produced by the government was one approach, but the Bureau also needed to know what was published in the immigrant newspapers, and also aimed to establish a link between it and the Anglo- and Francophone press.

¹³¹ For example, aiming to provide impetus for unity amongst the Ukrainian right-wing, nationalist and religious groups were told to put aside their differences by the Department of War and Services and unite behind the Canadian war effort (Woycenko 1967). To wit, they supported a 1943 plebiscite on overseas conscription (Swyripa 1999:1292). Swyripa notes that this marked "the first time Ukrainians were considered welcome into mainstream organizations and activities" (Ibid). Political and religious divisions amongst Ukrainians in Canada, that, in the first few decades of immigration were considered insurmountable, were smoothed over and organizations now calling themselves "United" or "Ukrainian-Canadian" began to appear. In the same year, encouraged by the Canadian government, the "Ukrainian Canadian Citizen's Committee" held its first congress having been formed out of the representatives of five nationalist and religious organizations: the Ukrainian Catholic Brotherhood, Ukrainian National Federation, Ukrainian Self-Reliance League and United Hetman Organization (Luciuk and Kordan 1989:18; also Kordan and Luciuk 1988:88). As Woycenko describes, this "solidly male" organization was both paternalistic and undemocratic (1967:197-214). The executive was limited to the representatives of these five organizations without election. Woycenko further observes that this was tolerated for the sake of unity, but the leadership had secured its position of dominance by eliminating criticism and ensuring censorship in all Ukrainian newspapers.

Gathering its information, the Bureau liaised with the Dept. of National Revenue and collected from press censors the summaries of the content of the immigrant press.¹³² In addition, Young suggests that when the Bureau of Information became the Wartime Information Bureau (WIB) in 1942, the government paid for “private patriot organizations” to gather rumours circulating within the immigrant community and pass them to the WIB.¹³³ From these two sources, the WIB was able to produce its own information packages (or “rebuttals”) and distribute them amongst the immigrant press and English and French commercial media (Ibid: 40-1). The system worked reasonably well for about a year when the rumour-mill’s accumulation of inaccuracies – infused (and confused) with its own propaganda – caused the cancellation of the private contract. The WIB’s lack of understanding and appreciation of the complexities of the real ideological and material differences within and between immigrant groups, as well as within and between the Anglo and Franco- speaking population contributed to the demise of its “unity” programs. Also confounding the WIB and the Committee’s goals were a number of internal schisms and ideological differences (not to mention tendencies of nativism and racism), such that the unity program was considered a failure.¹³⁴

¹³² Recall that the Dept. of National Revenue had press control through the Customs’ Branch and through the press censorship office. As Young suggests that “the press censors insisted that the periodical readers plough through all Canadian radical and Soviet newspapers. Even after the Soviet Union joined the allies in 1941, such ideologically-based newspapers, either English or foreign language, were not trusted” (1988:33).

¹³³ Young cites NAC WIB Records Vol. 12, File 8-2-2, Minutes of Committee on Morale 19 June 1942; Ibid, Olive to Vining, 30 Nov 1942, Ibid, Vol. 5 File 2-1-2-2, Submission 30 Dec 1942.; and Ibid, File 8-5-1C “Lists of Rumours” 30 Jan 1943 (1988:41).

¹³⁴ Surveying the amount of government interest and effort put into the program, Dreisziger notes that “more was done to involve ethnics in Canadian life in 1940 and 1941 than had been done in the nearly three-quarters of a century since Confederation. There can be no doubt that without the war there would not have been the bureaucratic machinery in Ottawa to deal with the ethnics in the 1940s or the following decades” (1988:23). Indeed, after the war, the Nationalities Branch of the War Service was transferred to the Dept. of Secretary of State and in 1950 became the Dept. of Citizenship and Immigration (Ibid:21).

Re-labouring Culture through the National Film Board (NFB)

Arguably more successful was the federal government's social unity program for labour-integration that aimed to gain support for the government's national economic policies for the 'good of the country' as a whole. In keeping with the Liberal government's framework of industry-government-labour cooperation, the newly established National Film Board (NFB) produced and exhibited films about labour for exhibition to workers across Canada. As was noted earlier, both the federal and provincial governments had been sponsoring the production of films since the early 1900s, but these were focused on promoting trade, commerce, immigration and tourism (Morris 1978:127-174). In 1923 the federal government had established the Canadian Government Motion Picture Bureau that produced films and distributed them abroad.¹³⁵ With titles such as "The Seasons of Canada" (1930), "The Story of Nickel" (1935), "Big Timber" (1935), however, labour was not the main subject of the films for export.¹³⁶ Rather, Canadian land and resources advertised to sell to businessmen, foreign investors, tourists, and immigrants as farmers and settlers.

The Bureau also made films that were specifically meant for distribution and exhibition within Canada, however; the more famous of which were docudramas of the First World War (*Lest We Forget* and *Salute to Valour*) and *The Royal Visit* (Morris 1978:173/4). Less well known are the films that were specifically directed at labour.

¹³⁵ Ironically(?), the same shipping company that carried German and Italian fascist propaganda films to Canada (North German-Lloyd), also showed the Canadian government's travelogues on board their vessels (Backhouse 1974:19).

¹³⁶ Commenting on such productions, the *Ottawa Citizen* suggested that: "If life in the Dominion is as these films represent, we might expect Canadians to engage only in fishing, golf and the observation of wild animals. There are practically no industries, very little work and no working people" [(*Ottawa Citizen* 4 June 1938) cited in Backhouse (1974:15-16)].

During the Depression years the Bureau produced a number of films for exhibition and distribution in the relief camps and unemployed workers across Canada. As Backhouse suggests:

This novel use of films as an approach to their problems carried with it an implication of deeper concern by the government, and did much to counter the despondency that naturally existed in the camps (1974:23).

The films likely did much to counter the alternative press that aimed for a similar distribution.

The focus on labour in government films would continue in the late 1930s and into the years of the Second World War. In a "Report on Canadian Government Film Activities," documentary filmmaker John Grierson suggested that what was required in government film production was to continue to develop the Bureau as "a powerful instrument of government propaganda policy" (Report 1937:19; in Backhouse 1973:27; also Pendakur 1990:77). When the Bureau was absorbed into the National Film Board (NFB) (est. 1939), with Grierson as its head, the NFB produced a steady stream of films where labour was both the central subject and intended audience. Such films supported military recruitment, praised industrial workers for their "contribution" to the war industries, promoted government-industry-labour cooperation, and, encouraged women's labour in factories in particular. NFB produced film-titles included "Women are Warriors" (1942), "Inside Fighting Canada" (1942), "Women Don Slacks and Hair-Nets"; as well as "Industrial Workers," "Workers at War No. 1" and "Industry Wages War" (all released in 1943).¹³⁷ The films ranged from one to twenty minutes and were

¹³⁷ For example such Bureau and NFB productions included: "On Guard for Thee" (1940); "Hero of the Atlantic" (1941); and "Letters from Camp Borden" (1940).

intended as shorts or newsreel footage to be shown in commercial theatres before feature films.

The re-labouring of culture through films was supplemented by a series of talks given to workers and free pamphlets published by the government. Young notes that initially, the Dept. of Munitions and Supply initiated the campaign by trying to “shame” workers into rejecting “self-interests,” blaming such selfishness (such as demands for wage increases, and absenteeism) for less than efficient production (1981:128). When the “workers walked out of this Department’s talks by the hundreds,” the Wartime Information Board (WIB) took over and launched a more positive campaign that praised the efforts of both the industrial worker and returning soldiers and emphasized their importance to the “nation’s” economy (Ibid). Young notes that the publicity emphasized that

Labour had overcome the tremendous initial German advantage in armaments in one of “the greatest military and INDUSTRIAL achievements in history”. To overcome alienation, the Board strongly promoted the merits of factory labour-management committees, “joint ventures for the promotion of their common purposes”. Continuous consultation between workers and managers would increase the workers’ sense of importance and lead to efficiency, reduced absenteeism, better employee welfare and increased output (1981:128).¹³⁸

This attention to labour was part of a larger campaign aimed at integrating returning soldiers into the workforce, and was further bolstered by government proposals on a list of health and welfare programs ranging from children’s allowances to old age pensions (Ibid: 129). Young argues that the Liberal government’s fear that the CCF

¹³⁸ Emphasis in original. Young cites WIB, *Labour Facts*, 1:II (2 Dec 44); Industrial Cooperation Board and Wartime Information Board, *Victory in the Making* (Ottawa: King’s Printer).

would become stronger federally [coupled with a desire to control social unrest] was potent combination motivating Liberal support of social programs (Ibid: 130). Further, younger members of the Liberal party forecasted the future by referring to “the ‘people’s world’ that would follow the ‘people’s war’” (Ibid: 126). Indeed, when the Liberal government called an election in 1945, it “chose for its slogan the theme which the Wartime Information Board had promoted for two years: Building a New Social Order for Canada” (Ibid).

Whither the Popular Front?

This new social order was one that was to be void of any possibility of a popular front coalition, let alone a popular front government. For the CPC it had ended even before Stalin signed the “Non-Aggression Pact” with Germany. As Penner observes, by 1939 the CPC had abandoned what little effort remained in the attempt to build a coalition with the CCF (1988:154/5). Instead, the CPC leadership had thrown its support behind the Liberals in what was seen to be the only feasible alternative - a Liberal government strong enough to ward off fascism. Further, when Stalin signed the Non-Aggression Pact in August 1939, the CPC did another about-face; their popular front against war and fascism simply became *any* front against war. For the CPC’s many critics, the abrupt turnaround was conclusive evidence that the CPC was controlled from Moscow (Manley 2002:81), and confirmed that they should never be trusted. The CPC’s dropping of its anti-fascist and anti-war framework, was exactly opposite to what the Canadian federal government was campaigning for. The Liberal government now became the identified crusader against world fascism and the proof was its declaration of war in September 1939.

If the popular front wasn't completely destabilized because of the CPC's abrupt reversals, divisions between unions, or schisms between the CCF and CPC, the Defence of Canada Regulations (DOCR) placed a severe constraint on any kind of radical coalition or mass mobilization. The potent combination of controls – ranging from censorship, seizure and destruction of media, to regulations prohibiting strikes and the internment of labour leaders, to the outlawing of radical immigrant organizations and the banning of their press – made for an effective deterrent against any alternative or oppositional articulations of communication, labour or culture. In addition, there was yet to be any government legislation that secured a workers' right to belong to a union; that is, there was no law or regulation that prevented employers from firing someone for union activism or membership. Although people who were active in the movement continued to rally against such drastic measures, and the measures themselves were not received without criticism and resistance, for the most part, the regulations of the DOCR were accepted by the majority of the population as a necessity of wartime. And for those many groups and organizations that had been anti-labour or anti-communist to begin with, the measures were welcomed and supported (if not encouraged in the first place).

As for the Canadian public who did not belong to a union or other labour organization, and was not active in politics or belonged to a political party, the message was clear: the Canadian government was not going to tolerate any organized dissent. Given the experience of the War Measures Act in the First and Second World War, the repercussions were severe enough to dissuade even the most dedicated activist. This did not mean that dissent was extinguished, however (it never is). CPC leadership who avoided detention and arrest went underground to continue their quest for a representative

Communist Party in Canada. Overall union membership would more than double from 1939 to 1946 partly due to the concentration of wartime employment in industry (Sefton-MacDowell 1992). The year 1943 was pivotal for organized labour, as “one out of three trade union members were involved in strike activity,” and the newly formed Canadian Congress of Labour (CCL) formerly affiliated with the CCF (Ibid 576;578). The CCF made two major gains in the provinces as it was elected as the official opposition in Ontario in 1943, and formed the provincial government in Saskatchewan in 1944. Taken together, the CCF’s electoral gains, the increase of labour unrest, and the CCL-CCF affiliation, motivated the federal government to pass its legislation on collective bargaining and the right to organize in 1944.

While these represented major gains in the political economic structures of Canada, by 1944, the cultural organizations of the popular front had been all but eliminated. As has been reviewed, the Workers’ Sport Association, Workers’ Experimental Theatre, and the Canadian Youth Congress (CYC) were no longer in existence. However, activists who had been members of the CYC continued to represent labour in the government-sponsored Canadian Youth Commission (a co-opted and watered-down version of the CYC), and likely consoled themselves that at least they were participating in some kind of government decision-making, however controlled. The WEA survived into the 1940s, but did not develop further, and while the Canadian Civil Liberties Union took on the enormous fight against the DOCR and worked to free individual internees it was not established as a permanent organization in Canada.¹³⁹

¹³⁹ The Canadian Civil Liberties Association was (re-)established in 1964.
<http://www.ccla.org/his/index.shtml>.

The biggest changes that occurred were in the radical immigrant organizations. In the early forties, ULFTA's energies were solely concentrated on getting the Canadian government to return and compensate them for destroyed and confiscated properties. In this endeavour, they received a wide range of support from people and groups who were active in the popular front organizations. They were successful up to a point, receiving some financial compensation but no other kind of redress or apology (Krawchuk 1996; Swyripa 1999). Beginning in 1941, ULFTA reincarnated as the Association of Canadian Ukrainians (ACU). The Soviet Union's shift from Hitler's partner to Canada's "gallant ally" positively affected the status of the ACU that was both pro-Communist and pro-Soviet (Kolasky 1990:xxv). Once in the margins, it now laid claim to being the legitimate representative of Ukrainians in Canada, and for a brief period (1941-1945) its membership increased substantially until the Red Scare was rejuvenated in the Cold War.

The fortunes of the Finnish Organization of Canada followed a similar pattern to ULFTA's. They were never able to recover from the loss of resources and members as a result of their banning under the DOCR (Laine 1987:xvii). "Surrogate organizations" called the Ad Hoc Committee to Legalize the 'illegal FOC' – the Finnish-Canadian Democratic League and the Association of Finnish Democrats – were established in the early forties with sustaining memberships until again, the Red Scare delivered near-fatal blows, such that only a few branches of the FOC remain today. As to other immigrant organizations, with few resources and a smaller membership base, their choices were similarly constrained, and the range and diversity of the labour press was further diminished.

Whereas the immigrant press *as a whole* had once been active, diverse, and explicitly political, reflecting a wide range of political and socio-cultural aspirations, and religious denominations, their press after the war was far less so (Yuzyk 1953). How much the goals and directions of this press were altered, and how the Canadian government's attitude towards it had changed, was reflected later in the formation of the Ethnic Press Federation in 1958. Addressing a press that the state had deliberately and continuously impeded, the then Canadian Minister of Justice (E.D. Fulton) summed up its expected role in his statement "the ethnic press could become a valuable instrument at the service of Government and its programme of nation-building" (Kirschbaum 1985a:5).

Chapter Seven: Democracy and Hegemony

Democracy in and through Communication

This last chapter evaluates the constitution of the cultural front according to normative principles of democracy explaining why there was not a labouring of culture in Canada to the extent Denning suggests existed in the United States, and why the formation of a popular hegemony was curtailed. These principles can be thought of as facilitating democracy in and through communication (Hagun 1992). Evaluating the extent of democracy in communication calls for an assessment of the levels of access to communication, of participation and diversity in production, the degree of debate and criticism enabled, and the extent to which social divisions and hierarchies were addressed by the organizations and groups constituting the cultural front. An evaluation of the extent of democracy through communication considers the effectiveness of communication in facilitating activism for progressive social change.

This final assessment is organized in line with three aspects of the labouring process [as suggested by Denning (1996)], involving firstly, a labouring of language; secondly, an enablement of working class participation in cultural production; and thirdly, a combination of the unionization of cultural workers and government support (or lack) of cultural production. This is followed by the conclusion and summary of the thesis, with suggestions for further research in contributing to future studies of the relationship between labour, communication and culture.

The (De)labouring of Language

Expressing both opposition and resistance in the naming of organizations, in speeches, and the range of publications (including flyers, petitions, manifestos, pamphlets, booklets and newspapers), the labouring of language was evident in the use of “labour,” “workers,” or the “working class,” as opposed to “capital,” “employers,” the “elite” or “bourgeoisie”. This vocabulary was part of enabling a counter-hegemony in which “labour” was used as a verb to signify solidarity and collective activism. The shift from “labour,” to the use of “people,” was part of a larger effort to reclaim the history of struggle in Canada as one for democracy, and suggested a shift from counter-hegemony (based on labour and class conflict) to a popular hegemony (based on labour as linked with civil rights). The emphasis on democracy was in the rhetoric of the popular front and by extension the cultural front, as manifest in organizations against war and fascism (CLAWF), for civil rights (CCLU), for critical pedagogy (WEA), and public sports (WSA), or as written in progressive literature [e.g. Stanley Ryerson’s *Spirit of Canadian Democracy* (1937)].

This rhetoric of democracy was reinforced by efforts to facilitate democracy in communication by enabling working class participation in media production. Access to the means of communication production was appreciated mostly in the publications, as printing facilities were shared, funding for other alternative press was supported, and left-leaning booklets, pamphlets and international publications in general, were reviewed, promoted, and distributed by the labour press. As well, courses on public speaking and journalism were given at the labour temples, through the Workers’ Educational

Association and at the Labor College. Worker-correspondents contributed to the CPC publications and were as vital to the composition of the immigrant labour press.

Even as contributions to the labour press were encouraged within the papers, these contributions were not unrestricted. That is, there was a general lack of editorial self-criticism within the labour press, and this was common across the labour spectrum. Trade union papers were written and edited primarily by union leadership, and were devoid of criticism of union policies, having little or no input from their membership. Similarly, although the CCF discussed particular party actions, these were also limited to the confines of leadership decisions. Although there was open debate on the question of joining the popular front, deviations from CCF policies could mean denial of access to publishing facilities and ultimately the party itself (as experienced by A.M. Stephens for example). This was taken to the extreme by the CPC as there was no criticism of the Comintern or Stalin's policies or actions in their press, and members were also expelled from the party for expressing opposing views. The range of articulations of labour was thereby managed and contained within organizational hierarchies, and labour rhetoric remained a discourse of directed opposition.¹

As to the extent to which counter-hegemony and a labouring of language could be promulgated, the alternative press was the most consistent means. It was a constant challenge to publish, however, given the small and fragmented nature of progressive activist groups, the stressful and hostile operating environment, and the continual and exhausting requirement to secure funding. Radio was less accessible to the public, and

¹ This avoidance of self-criticism is common throughout the labour press and is still a matter of debate today. It is argued by labour leaders (and editors) that such criticism would only serve to undermine their legitimacy and credibility, given the amount of criticism already promulgated by employers and other groups, as well as in the commercial press.

less used; the CPC, the CCF, and the WEA appeared to be the only organizations that could afford the luxury, or deemed it important enough to commit resources to the (then) new media of broadcasting. Although the TLCC and ACCL both advocated a non-commercial public radio system in front of Canadian government policy makers, further research is required as to the usage of radio by unions that may have occurred on a local basis.² Local station records and histories would also have to be reviewed to ascertain if any of the progressive immigrant organizations were among the language programs broadcast in particular cities. Given the restrictions on labour or “controversial” broadcasting by the CBC, however, labour rhetoric was all but silenced in Canada. Further articulation of labour in film was also exclusive due to expense and restrictions on distribution and exhibition (whether by government censorship or commercial theatre ownership), so that there were few original productions other than those on the Spanish Civil War specifically.

As the labouring of language was largely limited to the labour press, the de-labouring of language had a much wider and more powerful momentum. Progressive labour rhetoric was negated, and then re-articulated within dominant discourse as reinforced by explicit (coercive) state actions. With the First World War, this involved the use of the War Measures Act and numerous government laws and policies that restricted labour organizing, outlawed socialist and communist parties, and limited immigrant and other organizations to “cultural” activities. This substantially impeded a supportive labour politics as socialism was treated as illegal and foreign in early

² This appears unlikely however, as MacLennan’s (2001) detailed research on radio broadcasting programming in the 1930s does not indicate any category of labour programming. Even if we speculate that labour could be included in her category of “talk and information” programs, in

twentieth century Canada. The linking of labour and politics (attempted in the first united front) was also attacked in dominant discourse as socialism and communism were negatively mixed with “labour” as dangerous, suspicious or immoral, in accusations by business leaders, the Catholic Church, liberal and conservative politicians, and the commercial media. Socialism did not appear in dominant discourse as a viable, legitimate or democratic alternative, but something to be feared and guarded against.

As labour politics and activist organizations were de-laboured, socialist alternatives were further negated by a re-labouring of language which interpreted labour not as an autonomous self-activity, or as exploited, but as a positive contribution to the benefit of society and a necessary duty to sustain the nation’s wealth and health. Employers and the state recognized workers as having special or separate interests in accordance with corporatism, and contained these interests using a rhetoric that emphasized workers’ responsibility, necessary compatibility with industry, and a “natural” harmony of economic interests, which was not countered by the largest trade union organization – the TLCC. Corporatist rhetoric appealed to labour as a source of national pride and evidence of their full participation and worthiness in the country’s social life. This was especially emphasized during wartime when the full cooperation of labour was essential, so that labour was tied to patriotism and nationalism – not only in print – but on radio and in government film productions. This was similar to the re-labouring process identified in Great Britain in the nineteenth century by Curran (1978) and nationalist rhetoric in American government publications as described by Slack (1983). It was also particularly effective as propaganda in suggesting that cooperative,

comparison to music, sports, variety, religious programming and others, labour programming would likely be negligible.

hard-working (and non-unionized) labour was the best way immigrants could prove their loyalty to Canada and worthiness in becoming citizens. These were complemented and bolstered by nationalist and conservative religious organizations in their press (and from the pulpit) in all languages as supported by the Catholic Church, and by European governments that were either anti-socialist or anti-communist, or both.

Working Class Participation in Cultural Production

Analyzing counter-hegemony in formation, we can see that on each site of the cultural front, organizations formed in opposition to the undemocratic structuring of culture in general, and aimed to facilitate working class participation in a full range of activities and activism. The Workers' Sport Association was opposed to individualism, patriotism and nationalism, as well as the commodification of sport, aiming instead to advance a version of sports as collective labour, of international solidarity, and with public (rather than commercial) sports and recreational facilities. Support for public facilities and public recreation was also called for by the Canadian Youth Congress in their "manifesto" presented to the Canadian government. On the educational front, the WEA focus on critical pedagogy was directed towards enabling working class participation in decision-making in general, as well as to extend and expand public education through various forms of communication. Taking a holistic approach, immigrant organizations enabled participation in communities across Canada through their educational programs, courses on government operations, and myriad of other activities at the labour temples.

Ownership and control of autonomous organizations, community hall facilities, and publications was central in facilitating the development of a labour culture in Canada that was not dependent on government or commercial financing, or directly linked to government or commercial institutions. The labour temples were particularly important as they functioned as autonomous community centres and accessible nodes of labour activism across the spectrum of union organization and other collective events and cultural activities. They were not completely autonomous however, as de-labouring actions by governments impeded the development of the labour temples as independent community centres. These included municipal battles over hall licenses, permits for parades and property assessments, police raids and harassment under the provincial amusement tax, and closure under the Quebec Padlock Act, among others. Ultimately the closure and confiscation of the labour temples at the start of the Second World War by the federal government demonstrated the dominant hegemonic view that there was just too much “politics” in these “cultural” organizations.

At the same time, however, even within the autonomous organizations themselves there was pressure to make a distinction between politics and culture. Politics came to be associated with instrumentality of action, and culture with the activity of expression; where action was extrinsic and purposeful, the expression was intrinsic and neutral. Once this distinction was made it complemented the dominant hegemony and directly facilitated a de-labouring of culture. In addition, the discursive transition from “workers” to “the people” in cultural production ended up legitimizing rather than opposing elite and commercial structurings of culture. Some changes were more subtle than others. For example, while the Communist Party of Canada was able to secure a daily newspaper,

instead of continuing to criticize commodified culture, the *Daily Clarion* endorsed commercial sports and radio programs, children's fairy tales, and Hollywood Films thereby equating the popular with consumption. When workers' theatre participated in the government sponsored dramatic contests (federally through the Dominion Day Drama Festivals, and provincially through community theatre) the emphasis was on individual performance, technique, quality, and other "traditional" dramatic structures, which co-opted all the collective and participatory and elements of workers' theatre. This was accompanied by the change of venues from the streets, labour temples and trade union halls, to upscale theatres and commercial halls whose admission was out of working class reach (both socially and financially). While the aim was to increase participation of the middle classes it was done at the expense of working class participation and thereby contributed to the de-labouring process.

Working within and against the class structure, labour culture was also constituted by social divisions of gender, race and ethnicity. As reviewed in Chapters Three through Five, there were several concentrated efforts to facilitate the participation of women in organizations and the press, with publications by and for women, and by women taking leadership roles in several organizations of the popular front. Although exploitation of the labour of women was seriously debated and actively worked against, it was primarily advanced within an understanding of waged labour as the defining center. As historians have shown, and as is observable in press graphics (including the cartoons), the "worker" was almost always male, generally physically strong and fighting (except when weakened by hunger), and responsible for family support. In the labour press, women's pages that included recipes, fashion, and child-rearing tips also illustrated that dominant hegemonic

domestic and sexual roles were not challenged, or at least contradicted. Although more research is required, the exceptions seemed to be in the plays where gender roles were experimented with and critiqued through a combination of realism and humour (as were divisions between variations of socialism).

Struggling against racism and its additional forms of nativism in Canada was less a priority in the movement, but not absent in the various forms of communication, or overall political and cultural goals. As immigrants were used as cheap(er) labour and replacement workers by businesses and the government, racism was facilitated or aggravated (particularly against Asians) and was used by employers to divide the labour movement. Both Chinese and Japanese branches of the Canadian Labour Defense League did exist however, as did a Chinese League Against War and Fascism emphasizing connections between imperialism and fascism beyond Germany and Italy. The support of India's liberation from British rule was also advocated in popular front activities, as was opposition against world slavery, and continued violence against "Negroes" particularly in the U.S. In popular front rallies, RCMP bulletins note several occasions where "coloured" people were on the speakers' platform, a rare occurrence considering the prevalent racism of the times.

Unionization and State Support of Cultural Production

The labouring of culture in terms of unionization in the communication and cultural industries in Canada began in the nineteenth century in the printing, telecommunication and electrical trades, and extended to performance, musical and film production in the early twentieth century. Unionization efforts started with the initial

development of the communication and cultural “industries,” which themselves were an outcome of the processes of commodification and spatialization. A transition from live music and live performance to the use of recorded music and motion pictures (for sale and resale in the commercial theatres and on the corporate airwaves across North America) was resisted and fought against, not only by individual unions such as the many musicians’ unions, but by national organizations like the TLCC and the ACCL.

Although much more research needs to be done in this area, most of the artist’s unions established in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century Canada became locals of American-based unions. Given that by the 1930s, North American cultural production was predominantly controlled and owned by American companies or subsidiaries, these locals had a difficult time, not only of influencing Canadian productions, but in leveraging any kind of labour power in Canada. Coupled with the All-Canadian Congress of Labour’s (ACCL’s) official rejection of international unionism, developing unity between communication and cultural unions was challenging in such an adversarial climate. Nevertheless, as Denning (1996) suggests, unionization in such traditionally “intellectual” or “cultural” occupations, meant an expansion beyond what was considered labour or working class, thereby challenging the division of labour between manual and intellectual labour, and between middle and working class. How this was specifically articulated in Canada, however, needs to be further researched in tandem with studies of union organizing, not only in telecommunication and media, but in other areas such as education.

In the United States, Denning (1996) argued that working-class participation and unionization in the cultural industries was crucial in democratizing what he calls mass or

commercial culture. It is not clear if unionization in the cultural industries in Canada had any significant affect on commercial production and content. This was partly a result of the small size of the industry (in comparison with the U.S.), and the limited amount of Canadian writers, performers and artists in general; however, Canada also lacked the state-sponsored production initiatives to clear opportunities for independent artistic production and growth during the thirties. Unlike the U.S., neither Conservative nor Liberal governments (federal or provincial) did much, if anything, to facilitate workers' participation in cultural production comparable to those developed in the U.S. by the Work's Project Administration (as instituted by President Roosevelt and the Democrats).³ On the contrary, as has been discussed in the previous chapter, the Canadian state preferred to direct its own productions.

Returning to the Cultural Front

As has been demonstrated, the labouring of culture in Canada is best appreciated as an action precipitated by an amalgamation of a number of groups that understood labour, communication, and culture as interrelated and essential components in movement(s) for a participatory democracy. Although this was not completely new historically, it was much more concentrated in the 1930s given that so many different groups overlapped both nationally and internationally, and there was such a mixture of people and groups sharing the same platforms at public rallies, participating in parades and conferences, submitting joint proposals to government, and forging a range of communication and cultural alternatives to counter exclusionary and divisive social

³ See Denning (1996) Federal One: Federal Art Project, Federal Music Project, Federal Theatre Project and Federal Writers Project.

practices. Whether in unions, women's, youth, religious or pacifist groups, labour was not considered a distinct social practice, nor was it separated from their common goals. That is, questions and actions of labour were not just the purview of unions, nor were questions and actions for peace only initiated by pacifists. Articulations of labour were evident in the labour press, the critiques within pamphlets and booklets, and were stated in organizational goals and objectives. While these many separate groups had varying histories of origin, a range of different beliefs and considered priorities, the commonalities between them illustrate a convergence over several central issues and common points of activism, none of which excluded labour. This suggests that scholarly works that focus solely on the labour movement as solely concerned with trade unionism, or make a clear distinction between "old" and "new" social movements, miss or misrepresent the history of social struggle and impose rigid distinctions that did not actually exist.

Through the First World War, the fight against war was initially framed against conscription, that is, against the forced use of labour. This activism against a state-imposed control over labour was a crucial part in the formation of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. While the WILPF's feminism and peace initiatives have been historically emphasized, their quest for freedom was also tied to questions of labour. They were not an exception in this regard; the right of controlling one's own labour was considered essential in the fundamental freedoms as expressed by the freedom of association (the right to organize in unions), and intimately connected to the freedom(s) of expression, of press, and of speech. The significance of this connection was evidenced by the actions of the Canadian government when the War Measures Act

was instituted in both the First and Second World Wars. The Act encompassed and aimed to suppress or control all of these freedoms as they were deemed to be intimately connected, and variations were continued in Section 98, and in other laws under the Criminal Code of Canada that included the criminalization of unions.

The anti-war movement became particularly active in the mid-1930s as other groups forming for collective activism began making links between practices of labour and politics, culture and economy, together with imperialism, war, fascism, and capitalism. Religious groups such as the Fellowship for a Christian Social Order (FCSO) and groups within the United Church of Canada started to criticize capitalism and connect the *causes* of war, social inequality and oppression, rather than focusing solely on the results (such as poverty, hunger and violence). In suggesting that what was needed was a Christian revolution, the FCSO aimed to address the quality of life, that is, of labour and the overall living environment, rather than passing moral judgements on the quality or lack of “culture” in Canada.

The threat of another world war was a major concern not only for the Communists who had predicted the possibility, but for those who had experienced the First World War and a new generation who feared its realization in the future. As recognized by the RCMP, the Canadian Youth Congress (CYC) was perhaps the best expression of the popular front movement as a convergence of a wide range of groups including unions, pacifist groups, political and religious organizations, and many other activists. The CYC’s manifesto included all forms of social, economic, political and cultural oppression. Their action-plans demanded the institutional enablement of public participation in government decisions that was bound up with a redirection of labour

towards self-realization, creativity and public benefit. The Canadian League Against War and Fascism (CLAWF) also brought different groups together under the goal of realizing a popular front, and like the CYC, it was an internationally connected movement that worked to build linkages between the national and international, and between politics, economics and culture in terms of fundamental freedoms and civil rights.

Making such linkages between politics, economics and culture emerged around the First World War in laying out the possibility of a united front that would bring labour unions together with political parties. By the 1920s, however, politics had already been hegemonically and structurally separated from economics as a distinct and unrelated practice. Working within this structure into the 1930s, many an organization, whether it was on the scale of the national union of the TLCC, or the smaller WEA, emphasized that it was non-partisan, so that any linking of politics with labour and economics, or education and culture, was discredited as having incompatible and suspicious motives. The national trade unions and CCF and CPC political parties did little to dispel or work against this view as each worked towards their own agenda.

Political schisms between the CPC and the CCF, between the TLCC and ACCL, were particularly debilitating as each group drew on the dominant discourse to discredit the others in competing for membership and organizational survival, and thereby reinforced this discourse. Whether it was the CCF distancing itself from the 'foreign' Communists, or the ACCL in using nationalist rhetoric to discredit international unions, much damage was unintentionally done to the linking of labour to politics. In addition, the CPC's policy change in the late 1930s which embraced liberal democracy and all but

abandoned a critique of capitalism, occurred at the exact time that so many other organizations were coming together over a critique of capitalism as linked to fascism, and thus another key opportunity was lost in advancing a labouring of culture in Canada. Exacerbated by another world war, such schisms and confusion marking the politics of allegiance entrenched organizational divisions, rather than transcending them in order to build an effective movement. As such, the labouring of culture was subject to the setting of its own organizational limitations.

Conclusion

The necessity of making connections between seemingly disparate phenomena is part of the process of building an effective political and cultural movement. In Canada in the interwar years, attention to the relationship between labour, communication and culture formed the basis of a counter-hegemonic movement whose collective agency advanced a labouring of culture. Understanding the labouring of culture as a process of structuration, we saw how this agency was inhibited by the setting of organizational limitations as well as by restrictive practices within the movement that contained its own democratic development. Nevertheless, as has been evident in examples throughout the thesis, and particularly in Chapter Six, the most consistent and effective adversary of the labouring of culture in Canada was the Canadian state.

In particular, the difference between the published policies of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation and its controlling and censoring practices not only demonstrates democratic discrepancies, but it suggests a different way of viewing the state's involvement in communication and culture in Canada that is otherwise historically

obscured. Working class participation in the production of communication and culture was not only challenged in broadcasting, but on a number of fronts through a de-labouring/re-labouring process that was consistent and sustained, from the first few decades of the twentieth century through to the Second World War. While the labouring of culture defined a counter-hegemonic movement that was struggling to advance democracy in Canada, the actions of the state ensured that it remained on the margins.

Thesis Summary

Investigating the history of the relationship of communication and culture in Canada, the thesis began by making an analytical adjustment to consider communication and culture in relationship with labour. It suggested that this adjustment was necessary in order to advance on traditional historical analyses that had focused on the cultural industries, Royal Commissions, or individuals and groups involved in government decision-making, to identify a range of alternatives to either state or commercial control. Inquiring as to what were the “people’s interests,” as distinguished by Graham Spry in 1932, the thesis took a political economy of communication approach that concentrated on the process of structuration in order to understand the public, not as audiences and consumers, but as collective agents in the making of culture, and to identify how this agency was constituted within and against dominant political economic and social structures.

The larger part of the thesis identified and described this mutual constitution in terms of a “labouring of culture,” whereby labour was articulated in and through the collective agency of a number of different groups which together formed a political and

cultural movement or counter-hegemony in formation. Identifying the manifestations of this counter-hegemony in alternatives and oppositional forms and practices of labour, communication and culture, the thesis attended to both the “politics of allegiance” and the “politics of form”. The politics of allegiance identified the origins and intersections of a number of organizations and groups that converged around labour as connected to war, imperialism, fascism and capitalism. Tracking attempts to advance this convergence in first a “united front,” and then a “popular front” in Canada, Chapter Three (of the thesis) identified an activist alignment in the formation and activities of groups such as labour unions, political parties, immigrant associations, women’s, youth and religious groups, that came together in popular front organizations such as the Canadian League Against War and Fascism, the Canadian League for Peace and Democracy and the Canadian Youth Congress.

Whereas the “politics of allegiance” focused on the range of interventions in the dominant political economy, the “politics of form” identified the various alternatives and oppositions that were advanced in areas traditionally associated with culture and communication. Chapter Four thus described the labouring of education, sports, theatre and literature that worked to democratize these practices in terms of enabling access, participation and activism, and Chapter Five provided an overview of specific forms of communication in and through which a counter-hegemony was articulated in the labour press, in religious and pacifist publications, as well as in public demonstrations on the streets and in the parks.

Understanding this labouring as a hegemonic contest or battles on the cultural front, the thesis focused on the constituents and the sites of battle between the forces of

resistance and the forces of incorporation to identify how culture was laboured, as well as de-laboured and re-laboured. By way of explaining how it is that some practices of communication and culture become dominant, and others become marginalized and excluded, Chapter Five marked a turn in the thesis in identifying additional challenges and contradictions in the “politics of allegiance” and the “politics of form” within the movement. It also identified conservative articulations of labour as exemplified by the agency of religious and nationalist groups whose versions of labour did not contradict, but reinforced the dominant hegemony and served to undermine and de-legitimize alternatives. Distinguishing the Canadian government as the major agent in the de-labouring and re-labouring process, Chapter Six of the thesis provided several examples of how this de-labouring process was enabled and facilitated by municipal, provincial and federal regulation, ranging from legislation and policing of public spaces, limits to forms of assembly and association, and controls over speech in terms of press and radio broadcasting in particular.

Suggestions for Future Research

Alternative Media in Canada

As was noted in Chapter One, “thorough and systematic histories of Canadian print media and journalism”⁴ are wanting, particularly in alternative media. There are more studies of the labour press at the turn of the twentieth century (such as Masters 1970; Bell 1975; LeBlanc 1971; Lennon 1981; Verzuh 1988; and Spencer 1990); and Elliott (1947; 1948) provides a listing and condensed description of the labour papers until 1948, however, most of the papers listed in thesis Table 5 and in Hann et al. (1973),

remain waiting for analyses. Further, there is little research to identify which papers survived (beyond 1948) or how they may have evolved, other than a brief overview in Verzuh (1988). If studies on the labour press are in need, there also has not been *any* thorough study of other forms of alternative press in Canada,⁵ whether radical or conservative.

Without such research, social historians are reduced to lifting specific quotes or articles from the press as evidence, or to selecting specific ideas and practices (where research exists, in say, the U.S.) as representative, while the overall content and contextualization of the paper in Canada is lost. It also leads to assumptions and reductive categorizations that can be inaccurate. In addition to content analyses of the alternative press, it is necessary to examine how they were organized and produced, that is, to identify what made them alternative or oppositional. There is also precious little information on the alternative publishing houses, bookstores and distribution networks that provide the vital infrastructure of the alternative press, which together suggest other possible alternatives to state or commercial control.

Unionization in the “Cultural Industries”

The absence of labour in communication and culture studies in general has been underscored by Mosco and Wasko (1983), Hardt (1992), Hardt and Brennan (1995) and Mosco (1996). In addition, Hardt (1992) calls our attention to how this absence has been used to support the dominant views of freedom of the press as a matter of state constraints on newspaper owners and content while ignoring the production of the paper

⁴ Buxton and McKercher (1998:125).

and its contents by news-workers who remain “anonymous” (1992:20-21).⁶ Labour processes in media production have hardly been studied in specific industries in Canada (exceptions are Martin 1991 and McKercher 2002), and most of the work on unionization of labour in communication and cultural industries in Canada has focused on the International Typographic Union (Demers 1988; MacDonald 1967; Zwerker 1982; and Purdy 1991).

Further research could start with the National Association of Broadcast Employees and Technicians (est. 1933) whose members were employed by the CRBC and CBC (NAC MG 28 I 501). In the 1930s, local radio artists’ associations were formed across Canada, and in the early 1940s they amalgamated with the “Union des Artistes de Montréal,” “Société des Artistes de Montréal,” and “Société des Artistes de Québec,” to establish the Association of Canadian Radio Artists (ACRA). This union later became Association of Television and Radio Artists (ACTRA) in 1953 (NAC Finding Aid No. 1207 “Labour, Travail”). Regrettably, the National Archives of Canada’s union archives are few in general, and the NAC doesn’t have any records of the ACRA prior to 1940,⁷ but this doesn’t mean that they don’t exist. In addition to identifying and describing these struggles for organization in these industries, their study would give us insight as to whether there was any linking of intellectual and manual labour, or a labouring of culture as identified by Denning (1996) in the U.S., which would be particularly interesting in the case of unionization in the CBC.

⁵ Verzuh (1989) who gives another descriptive overview of the alternative press during the 1960s, and Winter (1997) who lists the alternative press currently available in Canada.

⁶ As Hardt emphasizes “The production of information, the process of indoctrination of journalists and their exploitation as cheap labor, are part of a barely visible foundation of American journalism history (1992:20-21).

⁷ NAC Finding Aid No. 1207 “Labour, Travail” (no page numbers appear on the document).

Censorship of Media in Canada

As the goal of the thesis was to identify the labouring of culture in Canada, censorship in the first half of the twentieth century was only discussed to the extent that it facilitated a de-labouring process. However, as noted by several of the essays in Petersen and Hutchinson (1999) there remains a lot of work left to be done on the extent of censorship of communication and culture in Canada, whether through government control or by limits placed on news-workers, particularly in the first half of the twentieth century. As is noted in the thesis, the deliberate confiscation and censorship of American and other “seditious” labour papers coming across the border provided the incentive for an immigrant labour press in Canada, the question remains of whether this was the case for all types of alternative media in Canada.

Further, the justifications for censorship and the context of its exercise against the absence of an equivalent to the United States’ First Amendment, has not been fully analyzed in Canada. This relates to the CBC’s ruling in 1940 which required that any talks on “capital and labour relationships” required clearance by the Censor, as well as the official barring of languages other than English and French on the nation’s airwaves. Lastly, while research on the ethnic press in Canada exists to various extents, there is no mention of radio programming that demonstrates that English and French were not the only languages on the “public” airwaves. The momentous decision of the CBC to disallow broadcasting in languages other than English or French should be explored more fully in the context of how it continues to have an impact on the dominant views of the constitution of “culture” in Canada.

ANNEX A
Reportage Example

Corbin – A Town Fights for its Life

Pushing its way through the dusty mountain roads of the Crow's Nest Past, Alberta, the car spurts up an incline, slows to a stop. From an office at the side of the road an officer steps out, red-faced and bull-necked, wearing the uniform of the British Columbia Provincial Police.

'Where you from?'

'Coleman,' the driver beside me answers.

'What's your name?' The officer jots down the answers in a notebook. Then he searches the driver's face, with a puzzled look. 'Coming back tonight?'

'Yes'

'Going far?'

'Corbin'

'Corbin eh? Who are you going to see there?'

'My sister'

The officer gives us the once over, appraisingly. 'O.K. You can try it. But the road's in bad shape'.

The car darts forward. We lean back smiling. Plenty of other cars from the mining towns of Alberta have never got across the boundary. Leaders of the Mine Workers' Union of Canada are on a blacklist. This isn't Germany, but British Columbia, April, 1936.

Dorothy Livesay (in *New Frontier* 1936).

ANNEX B
October 1930 Cover Page
The Militant Youth

БОИЮВА МОЛОДЬ

[The MILITANT YOUTH]

MASKED MOB DRAGS
NEGRO FROM JAIL AND
SHOTS HIM TO DEATH

MOB LYNCHES
N.C. NEGRO WORKER
IS LYNCHED BY
MOBILE MOB

TWO NEGROES IN
TENN. TEXAS

WORKERS ROUSED
TO FURY OVER
IND. LYNCHINGS

THOUSANDS SEE
TWO LYNCHED
IN INDIANA

KILL NEGRO AND
BURN HIS BODY

LYNCHED

NEGRO WORKER

TEXAS LYNCHERS
BURN 3 BLOCKS
OF NEGRO HOMES

LYNCH 65 YEAR
OLD WOMAN

Stop Lynching!

ANNEX C
"And This is Called Civilization"
New Commonwealth 26 October 1935:7

ANNEX D
"War, Imperialism"
New Commonwealth 27 July 1935:6

Annex E
Armistice Day Parade
Toronto 1934

The Armistice Day Parade

Not the Glamour of Peace-time Soldiering But the Tragedy of War

Designed to show the futility and tragedy of war, for two and a half hours, the parade marched passed the saluting point, where the salute was taken by Private George Arbuthnot D.C. M. amputation case who lost both legs at Arras. Two hundred amputees and other wounded in the war occupied the saluting point. War scenes, floats depicting the horrors of gas attacks, a crashed aeroplane crackling with mock flames, an advanced casualty clearing station where nurses and doctors tended the wounded...a long trailer with sixty feet of trench, half full of water occupied with dead and wounded, and giant maps revealing the world threat of war were among the startling symbols of past and coming struggles shown to the enormous crowds.

Mother and Youth Lead

The parade was led by Mrs. R.A. Elliott who lost three sons... She walked in front of a group of two hundred young men of seventeen to twenty years dressed in gym clothes. They were all the picture of health. Behind them several hundred motor cars draped in black and deep purple came the mothers, fathers, and wives of those who were killed in 1914-1918.

Next War?

The floats depicting the world situation graphically told the story of approaching wars. A huge map marked black and red divided the world into democracies and dictatorships and was marked "Did we make the world safe for democracy?" The last floats in the sections told the story of the armament trusts.

Twenty floats followed, each showing a war-time cemetery, with crosses. The caption on each truck read: "We made a million of these. Must we make any more?"

One of the last sections of the parade was completed with the startling contrast of platoons from peace-time regiments in peace-time uniforms. The major, military officials and other dignitaries marched behind the regiments.

A realistic note of the parade was give by machine guns, mounted on mock armoured cars, firing at intervals into the air. Aeroplanes flew over the parade at low level. The entire note of the parade was solemn, moving. There were no martial strains, no glittering uniforms, no glorification. No flags were carried, and while Canadian war experiences were featured, due tribute was paid to the greater sufferings of Britain, France, Germany, Austria, Russia and other nations.

Some Floats Barred

Ten floats entered by the CCF tracing the causes of war to capitalism and fascism were barred by the civic authorities, despite the protests of the organization committee behind the parade. Protests against the parade are planned by a number of patriotic organizations.

(Excerpt from *New Commonwealth* 17 Nov 1934:5).

ANNEX F
Cover Page *Canadians All* 1942

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