NO COMPROMISE - NO POLITICAL TRADING:

The Marxian Socialist Tradition in British Columbia

by

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ABSTRACT

At the turn of the century, socialist groups of several different hues were active in British Columbia. Out of this variegated skein emerged the Socialist Party of Canada. For almost two decades it dominated left-wing politics in B.C., wielding extensive power in the labour movement and leaving behind it an ideological legacy which eventually filtered into the fledgling CCF.

This study documents the conditions which led to the SPC's ascendancy, discusses its relationship with the early labour movement and examines the extent of Marxist influence on later socialist developments in the province. The dissertation employs an historical approach, supplementing library resources with correspondence and interviews with members of the old SPC.

When reformist attempts of the late nineteenth century failed to improve conditions for the B.C. worker, labourism lost out to radicalism. The SPC was national in name only, for its doctrinaire Marxism evcked a significant response only in the unique political, industrial and social milieu of British Columbia. The rapid resource exploitation which gave rise to empires early in the province's history created a classical Marxist situation in some areas. The absence of party alignments in the early years of socialist activity, plus a following of radical immigrants from Britain, the U.S., and eastern Canada afforded the Marxists a large audience to which they addressed themselves with tireless propaganda efforts. Many SPC members were active in the labour movement as well, and were able to prevent the formation of a labour party for many years. When other parties finally did form with labour support, they were much farther to the left

than were earlier labour parties. In large part this was due to the ambitious education program which characterized the socialist movement from its inception and ultimately became the Marxist's chief raison d'etre. Candidates were run solely for educational purposes. Once elected, however, SPC legislators found themselves in a balance of power position for a time and consequently their legislative accomplishments were considerable.

The failure to adapt to Marxist theory to changing B.C. circumstances ultimately cost the Party credibility. Unable to withstand internal pressures or to respond to the political challenges of World War I, inflation, conscription, labour unrest, and the Russian Revolution, the SPC was gradually replaced by other groups on the left. However, the Party's adherence to a one-plank no-compromise platform did preserve the Marxist ideal in the province for later socialist groups.

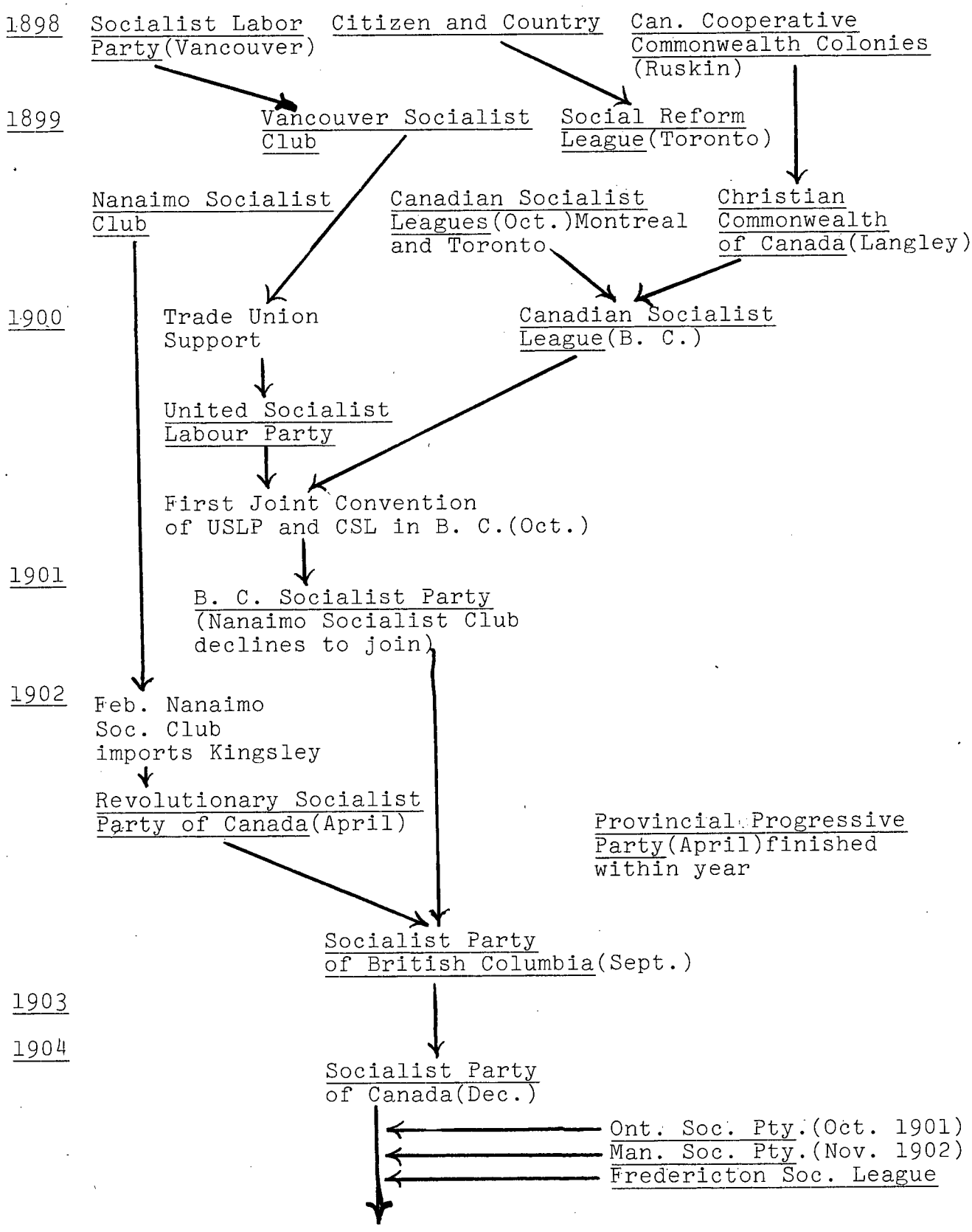
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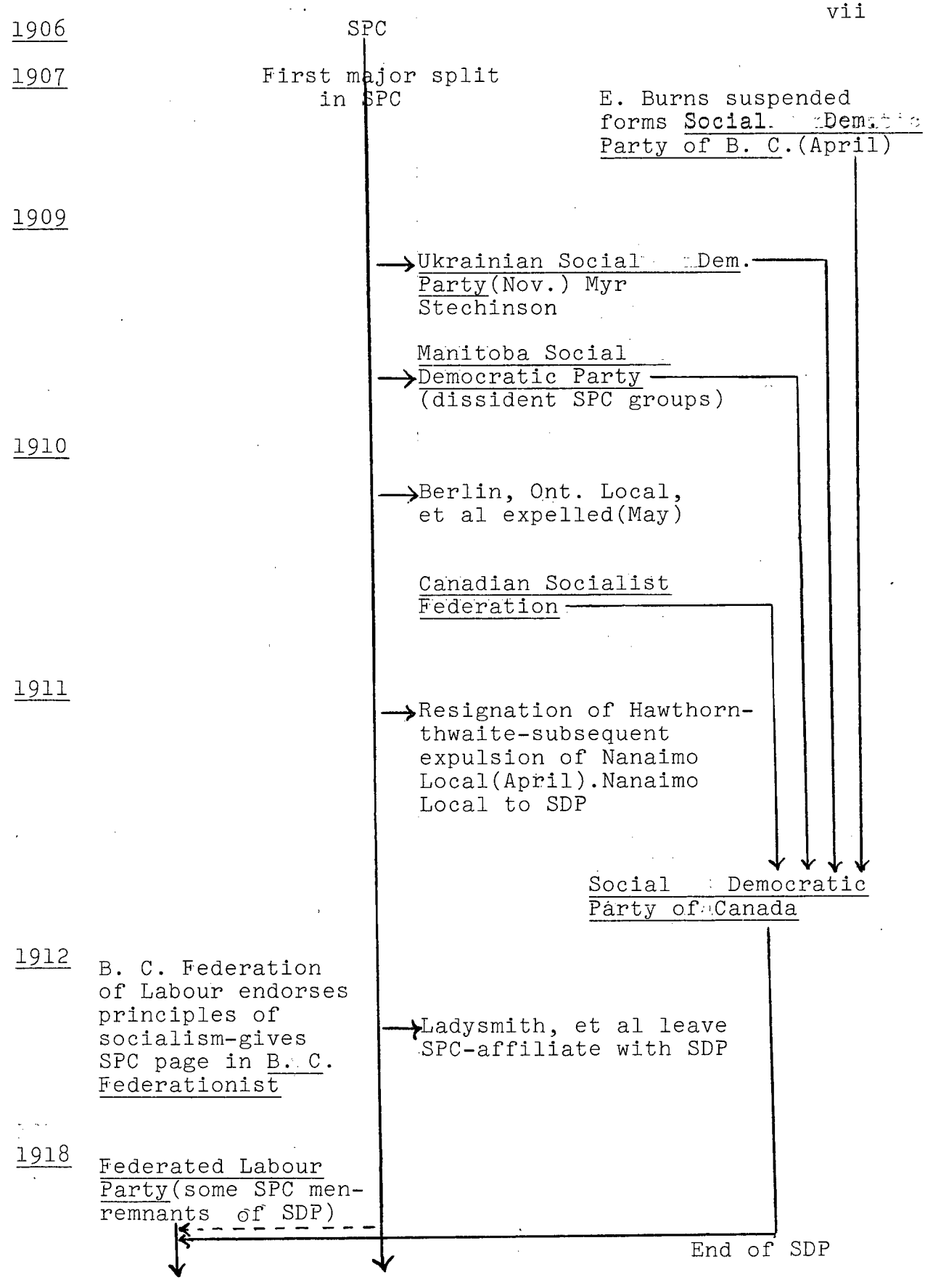
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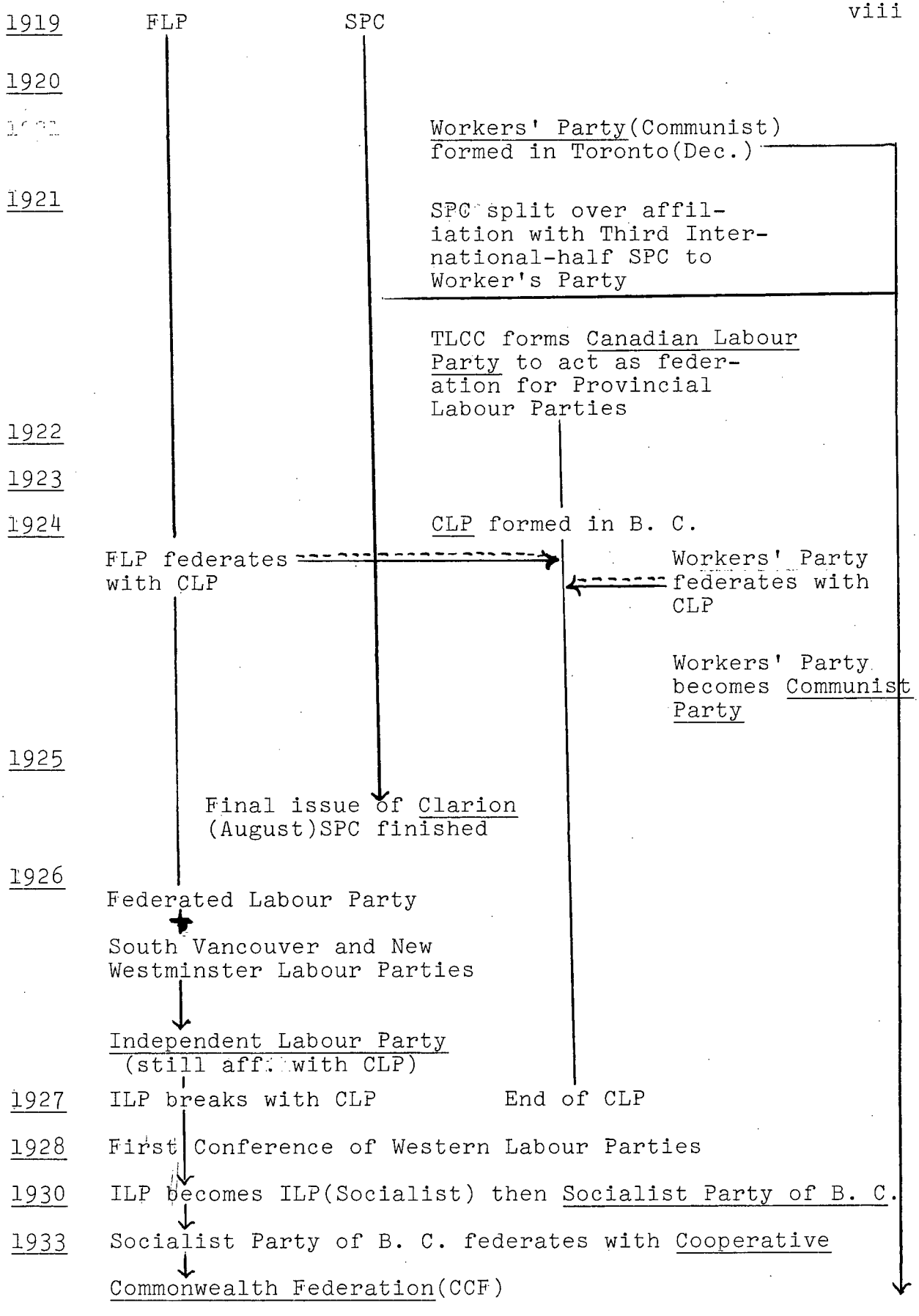
ABBREVIATIONS

AFL	American Federation of Labor
ALU	American Labor Union
BCSP	British Columbia Socialist Party
BCFL	British Columbia Federation of Labour
CCC	Cooperative Commonwealth Federation
CLP	Canadian Labour Party
CSL	Canadian Socialist League
DEC	Dominion Executive Committee
FLP	Federated Labour Party
ILP	Independent Labour Party
IWW	Industrial Workers of the World
MMLPA	Miners' and Mine Labourers' Protective Association
NDP	New Democratic Party
OBU	One Big Union
PEC	Provincial Executive Committee
PPP	Provincial Progressive Party
RSPC	Revolutionary Socialist Party of Canada
SDPC	Social Democratic Party of Canada
SLP	Socialist Labor Party
SPA	Socialist Party of America
SPBC	Socialist Party of British Columbia
SPC	Socialist Party of Canada
STLA	Socialist Trades and Labor Alliance
TLC	Trades and Labour Congress of Canada
UBRE	United Brotherhood of Railway Employees
UMWA	United Mine Workers of America
USLP	United Socialist Labor Party
VTLC	Vancouver Trades and Labour Council
WFM	Western Federation of Miners.

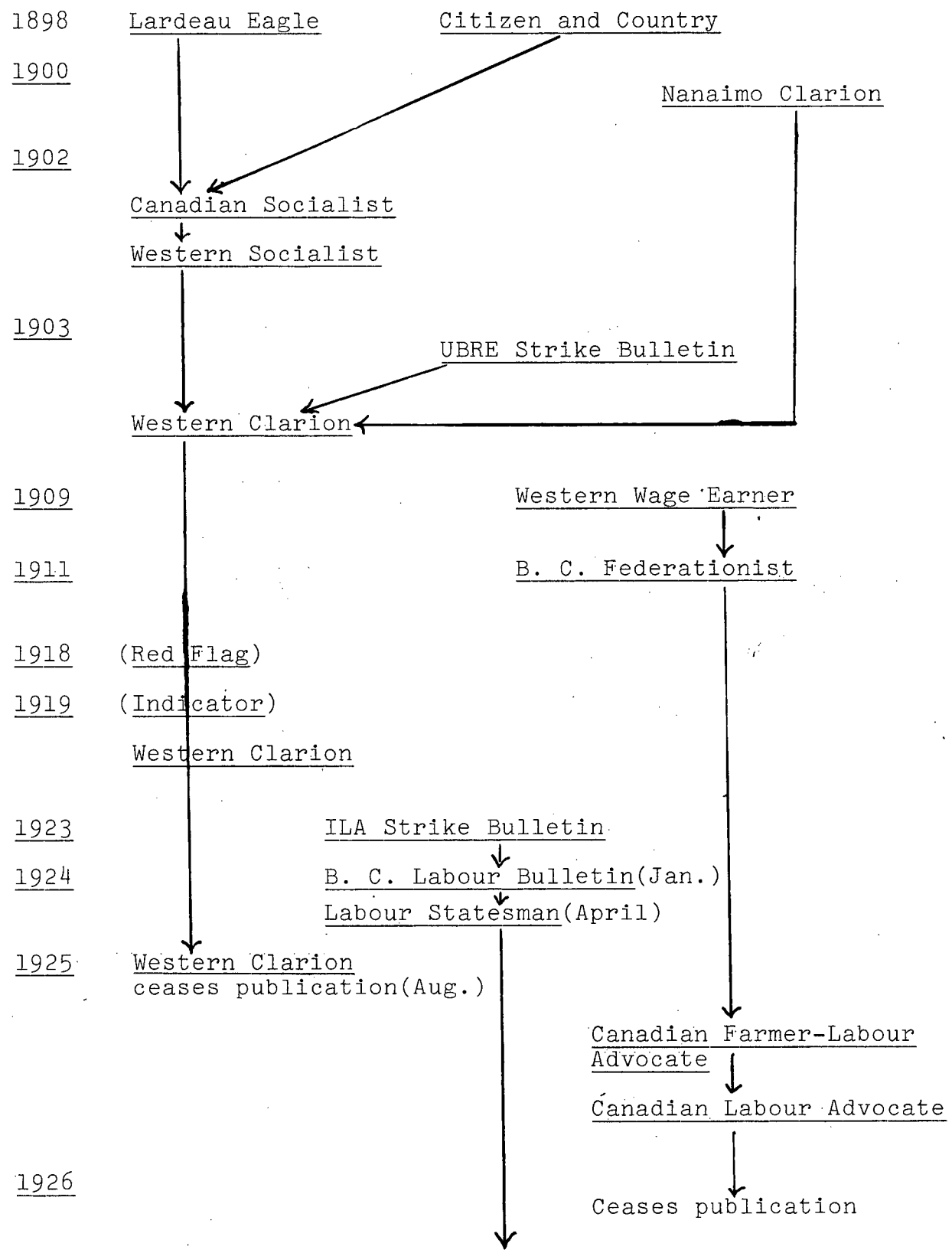
GENESIS OF SOCIALIST PARTIES IN B. C.




1906
SPC
1907
First major split in SPC
E. Burns suspended forms Social Dem. Party of B. C.(April)
1909
Ukrainian Social Dem. Party(Nov.) Myr Stechinson
Manitoba Social Democratic Party (dissident SPC groups)
1910
Berlin, Ont. Local, et al expelled(May)
Canadian Socialist Federation
1911
Resignation of Hawthornthwaite-subsequent expulsion of Nanaimo Local(April).Nanaimo Local to SDP
Social Democratic Party of Canada
1912
B. C. Federation of Labour endorses principles of socialism-gives SPC page in B. C. Federationist
Ladysmith, et al leave SPC-affiliate with SDP
1918
Federated Labour Party(some SPC men-remnants of SDP)
End of SDP


1919
FLP
SPC
1920
1921
Workers' Party(Communist) formed in Toronto(Dec.)
SPC split over affiliation with Third International-half SPC to Worker's Party
TLCC forms Canadian Labour Party to act as federation for Provincial Labour Parties
1922
1923
1924
CLP formed in B. C.
FLP federates with CLP
Workers' Party federates with CLP
Workers' Party becomes Communist Party
1925
Final issue of Clarion (August)SPC finished
1926
Federated Labour Party
South Vancouver and New Westminster Labour Parties
Independent Labour Party (still aff. with CLP)
1927
ILP breaks with CLP
End of CLP
1928
First Conference of Western Labour Parties
1930
ILP becomes ILP(Socialist) then Socialist Party of B. C.
1933
Socialist Party of B. C. federates with Cooperative Commonwealth Federation(CCF)

GENESIS OF SOCIALIST AND LABOUR PRESS IN B. C.



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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The final issue of the Western Clarion of 1925 is characterized by nostalgia and regret. While the members of Canada's leading Marxist party could look back on a generation of activity and leadership, resulting at times in success, they had to face the unhappy truth that their longed-for revolution had not materialized. As Jack Harrington, a prominent partisan, wrote,

> From the prophetic preaching of capital's collapse and exhorting to the revolution we have passed through and beyond back to a period void and empty of any revolutionary outlook.[1]

After more than twenty years of proselytizing in the industrial areas of the West and the other population centers of Canada, the Socialist Party of Canada (SPC) was disbanding. For a good portion of the past two decades, the party had been the dominant force of Canada's Left, its political successes outstripping those of both labour and the various brands of non-Marxist socialism.[2] In 1925

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[1] Western Clarion, July-Aug., 1925. Official organ of the SPC, hereafter referred to as the Clarion.

[2] See Chapter VI, pp. 251-269.

however, it was clear that the Left of the future belonged to others. From a membership in the thousands, the SPC had dwindled to a small group of political ascetics. Those of the working class who sought a left-wing alternative now marched to the beat of a different drum.

This is the story of the Marxist phase in the history of the Left in B. C., an attempt to unravel the tangled skein of socialist groups in order to help explain the influence of Marxist socialism on the politics of the province. In No Power Greater Paul Phillips describes the growth of the labour movement in B. C. and makes reference to socialist influence in the unions; Martin Robin in Radical Politics and Canadian Labour in Canada deals with socialism and labour in Canada; Ronald Grantham in Some Aspects of the Socialist Movement in B. C., 1898-1933 provides some descriptive material. The purpose of the present study is to do for socialism what Phillips has done for the labour movement, to add to the descriptive work begun by Grantham and to use this material to support some explanatory propositions and reflective observations.

To an important degree the descriptive work in this area has not yet been done, and consequently there has not been an adequate basis for explanation, understanding and further scholarship. For example, had the basic story of

the early socialist movement in B. C. been available to William Rodney when he wrote his history of the Communist Party of Canada, he would have appreciated British Columbia's Marxist experience and the origin of the various socialist groups in the province and would, hopefully, have avoided such erroneous statements as "British socialism and trade union practices were epitomized in Canada by the SPC...."[3]

Unlike the United States, Canada does have an on-going socialist tradition. With few exceptions,[4] however, investigations of this tradition have been limited to the CCF/NDP. Perhaps scholars have dismissed the Marxist socialist movement as an eccentric or unimportant political cult whose members mistakenly endeavoured to apply their outmoded doctrines to a new and different era.[5] Whether

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[3]William Rodney, Soldiers of the International (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1968), p. 8. There are a number of errors in the first chapter, "Roots of Canadian Socialism," which serve to give a confused picture of the extent of Marxist influence prior to the beginnings of the Communist Party of Canada.

[4]Ronald Grantham, Some Aspects of the Socialist Movement in British Columbia, 1898-1933 (M. A. Thesis, U.B.C., 1942); Paul Fox "Early Socialism in Canada" in J. H. Aitchison, ed., The Political Process in Canada (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1963); Martin Robin, Radical Politics and Canadian Labour (Kingston: Industrial Relations Centre, Queen's University, 1968.)

[5]Or perhaps, because academic resources have been

or not these early Marxists were out of tune with their time, to ignore them is to imply that they had no significant popular support, that their grievances against society were not relevant, and that they had no lasting political importance.

It is true that at no time in its existence was the SPC a real threat to the political status quo. This is not to say that its influence was unimportant. Some of its members were elected to the British Columbia and Alberta legislatures and were instrumental in having a substantial amount of legislation passed.[6] From 1912 to 1915 socialists were the only opposition members of the B. C. Legislature. In 1912 the party obtained the official endorsation of the B. C. Federation of Labour, and at no time was it without the support of a number of local labour councils. It was active in free-speech and civil-liberties battles. Thus it can be argued that in these and other ways the party helped make the Left more visible and the working class more identifiable to the ruling elites. To appreciate its

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limited, they have been spent in other areas of study. In general, the Left in Canada has been more fully studied than have either the Liberals or Conservatives.

[6]These matters are discussed in later chapters.

contribution to the political culture of Canada, to understand the complete socialist heritage in the dominion, and to discover some of the reasons for Marxism's failure to win the support of the Canadian working class, it is essential that the SPC and groups related to it be studied. Their significance lay not in their ability to gather a large following, but in their influence on the politics of the time and in their role as carriers of ideas which influenced later important political developments in Canada, including the CCF.[7]

When Karl Marx was writing in Britain, that country was at the zenith of liberal laissez-faire hegemony. It was an era of wonderment with new industrial developments, and of uncertainty and animosity at the rapid disappearance of many of the old ways. Like the liberal philosophers and economists of his age, Marx worshipped before the altar of science and technology. At the same time, however, he fulminated against an alienating industrialization. What Marx

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[7]The name and the philosophy of the Socialist Party of Canada were taken up by another group in Winnipeg in 1930, and although this group still exists, its membership has never risen above a few dozen. The group is not included in this study. The Independent Labour Party (Socialist) in B. C. also took the name in 1932 shortly before federating with the CCF.

saw was the displacement which occurs during the transition of a society from its preindustrial to its industrial stage. What he believed to be the final stages of capitalism was, in fact, the demise of laissez-faire capitalism. By the time Das Kapital was published, modern industrial society-involving labour unions, state regulation and social legislation-was already on its way. Marxism addressed itself to the brief period during which the State withdrew from involvement in the regulation of trade and commerce, and the workers, unorganized and helpless, faced industrialists who were buoyed up by classical liberal philosophy and backed by the power of the State. "Every society," suggests Adam Ulam, "reaching for industrialization and modernization, has its 'Marxist' period, when some of the ideas of Marx are relevant to its problems and are reflected in the everyday sentiments of the masses of people..."[8] By the time of Marx's death, however, Britain had passed this period. The extension of social democracy, the growth of trade unions, the development of legislation in the field of commerce, the rise in the over-all standard of living-all these had taken the spring out of the radical protest which had been

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[8] Adam Ulam, The Unfinished Revolution (New York, Random House, Vintage Books, 1960), p. 7.

demonstrated in pre-1850 Britain by the Chartists and on the Continent by the 1848 uprisings. When socialism finally came to Britain, it was class conscious but not revolutionary. Neither was it anti-industrial. It demanded only a fairer distribution of the fruits of technology.[9]

A similar development took place in British Columbia. Because the "Marxist situation"[10] existed in some areas of the province, many of the inhabitants of those areas deemed Marx's ideas to be relevant to their problems. It was the continuing electoral support from these areas that enabled the SPC to grow beyond the dissident few for almost two decades. Understandably, the party leaders viewed this

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[9] Ibid., passim, argues that Marxism has in it two elements: first, an anti-industrial element which stems from the transition from an independent, unregulated, pre-industrial society to a dependent, regulated, industrial society; and second, faith in the power of science and technology to change mankind. He argues further that it is the first element which gives Marxism its revolutionary quality and that, once the transition from one society to another has taken place, the strength of Marxist socialism wanes and is replaced, if at all, by a different kind of socialism.

[10] i.e. The situation resulting when capital is

support as the beginning of a class consciousness which would ultimately spread throughout the nation. With hindsight, of course, it is easy to see how mistaken they were, but to party theorists at the time the economic, political and social situation seemed a clear indication that the time was fast approaching when the proletariat would turn against the bourgeoisie. The comments of W. W. Lefeaux in 1908 are typical: "Personally," he said, "I consider that the revolution is well under weigh [sic]...Why should we give this present system more than ten years longer to live?"[11] Others were even more confident.

To such observers it appeared impossible that the capitalists or their "executive committee", the government, would discover that they could live with unions, state regulation, and a more equitable distribution of the wealth. As conditions gradually began to change, the SPC continued to offer an unchanging cure. They misread the significance

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concentrated in the hands of a few who control large numbers of workers. In B. C. the situation was created by the existence of a few wealthy entrepreneurs aggressively exploiting the province's natural resources. See p. 16 F.F.

[11] Clarion, July 11, 1908.

of the unions and their tendency to produce bourgeois behaviour in the very people whom the party was endeavouring to "educate." They failed to perceive the changing public attitude towards unions and they underestimated the impact of government legislation which was gradually alleviating some of the worst conditions for the workers. In spite of such signposts, the party continued to regard the society of the twenties as essentially unchanged from pre-war society or from that of the turn of the century, all of which were seen as congruous with Marx's mid-nineteenth century society. In short, they failed to grasp a crucial aspect of Marx's theory--that of the dynamism of history--and therein lay a principal reason for the party's failure to appeal to a large following. Though Marxian socialists had been exhorted to form the vanguard of the working class and to "have over the great masses of the proletariat the advantage of clearly understanding the line of march,"[12] the SPC failed utterly to see that the roadbed had shifted and the working class was taking a different route. In consequence, the party faithful ended up talking only to themselves.

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[12] Lewis S. Feuer, ed., Marx and Engels: Basic Writings on Politics and Philosophy (Garden City, N.Y., Doubleday and Co., Anchor Books, 1959), p. 20

In British Columbia the Marxist socialist trandition was represented chiefly by the Socialist Party of Canada. The party taught that the type of social organization which prevailed during any particular period was determined by the relationship between the productive forces of the time.[13] Further the party maintained that, as technology caused these relationships to change, the type of social organization also changed--through a dialectical struggle between the class representing the old social order and the class representing the new social order. In Marxian analysis the victory always goes to those representing the new order, since the outcome is determined by the productive forces (sometimes referred to as the material conditions) of society. Since, according to Marxian analysis, this phenomenon can be verified through the empirical study of history, Marxism is also referred to as scientific socialism or revolutionary socialism, since the outcome is always a complete change in social structure.

To the SPC "revolution" meant peaceful revolution

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[13] In simple terms "productive forces" are the means used to create wealth, e.g. a shovel, a field, a machine, etc. The relationship of the user to his tools refers to ownership or the lack of it.

although the party did not discount the possibility of some bloodshed when capitalism was in its final throes. It was the party's intention to work within the Canadian constitutional fabric and to secure revolution by teaching the masses about Marxian economics and class antagonism and by participating in the democratic political process. The protagonists of "scientific" socialism in British Columbia thus remained at least partly true to their parliamentary heritage.

The SPC represented the non-revisionist school of Marxists-they were revolutionary rather than evolutionary socialists.[14] They held that the capitalist system should be allowed to proceed to its ultimate demise as predicted by Marx and that socialists should not meanwhile endeavour to ease the pain of the working classes by working for ameliorative measures. The party believed that mitigating the condition of the working man within the capitalist system would merely serve to delay the arrival of the revolution however peaceful they hoped it would be. This position was central to many of the difficulties encountered by the party.

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[14]The classic work outlining evolutionary socialism is Eduard Bernstein, Evolutionary Socialism (New York, Schocken Books, 1961)

"No compromise-no political trading"--this was the watchword of the SPC. But the world of politics in democratic states is a world of compromise; competing parties give up certain of their demands in return for governmental support for other of their demands. The only time there is no need for compromise is when one group feels it has sufficient power to enforce its will on the other groups without diluting its power. Sharing power ultimately means compromise, while exclusive power makes compromise unnecessary. What impelled the SPC in B. C. to think it could afford a "no compromise" stance was the belief that the historical process which underscored its Marxian ideology would ultimately lead it to the attainment of exclusive power. With missionary zeal the Marxists took strength from being part of a world-wide movement,[15] and were able to carry on no matter how difficult the circumstances, knowing that finally they would be victorious. Seeing themselves as part of a global movement, they could find encouragement in socialist successes in Europe or the

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[15]The sense of world-wide kinship enjoyed by Marxists has given them a source of strength not available to other political parties and is one of the important elements accounting for the long life of these groups even when circumstances at home do not appear propitious to a Marxist victory.

United States even when faced with defeat themselves. Electoral successes around the world, whether victories or gains in votes, were always reported in the party organ, the Clarion, and accompanied by predictions of world-wide victory. Thus to the SPC there was no need to participate in the give and take of day-to-day political bargaining; although this stance might lose them battles now, the war would be won in the end. Unlike the Liberals and Conservatives, their goal was not to win power now, but to win it eventually, wholly and for all time.

These early Marxists did not express any ideologically innovative ideas. In part this may have been due to the fact that the SPC leaders were not middle-class intellectuals trained in analytical thinking as were those who comprised the membership of the Fabian Society and later the League for Social Reconstruction. As far as can be determined, all of the SPC leaders came from humble beginnings: most had been able to learn a trade and had some degree of schooling, but none went as far as university. They were largely self-educated--men with little formal education or social advantages, but with some extraordinary talents and a remarkable degree of devotion to the

creation of the "just society" as they saw it.[16] E. T. Kingsley, for example, subsidized the Clarion for years out of earnings from his printing business; he was also an excellent speaker and a skillful editor. Without him and a handful of others like him, it is doubtful that the SPC could have continued to exist; certainly it could not have exercised such a long term influence on the politics of the Left in B. C. had it to depend on the "ordinary working slave" for party leadership and for editorial skills and financial backing for the Clarion.[17]

Parmeter Pettipiece was another stalwart like Kingsley: trained as a printer, he was also a journalist,

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16 While SPC leaders showed little imagination regarding ideology, they were certainly resourceful in other ways. Kingsley had lost both legs while working for an American railroad, but in spite of this handicap he managed to travel thousands of miles on speaking and organizing tours, sometimes under the most adverse conditions.

During the free speech battles, when the SPC was denied equal rights with the Salvation Army to speak on street corners, party members constructed a raft and addressed a crowd in English Bay from this vantage point.

17 See Appendix 13 which shows the continuing influence in left-wing B. C. politics of some of the main political actors from 1900 to 1933.

a good orator and an outstanding organizer. After selling his printing business to Kingsley, he worked as an organizer or business agent for a number of unions, was at one time the provincial organizer for both the B. C. and Alberta sections of the Canadian Trades and Labour Congress, and was editor of the Federationist from its inception until 1919 when he went to the Province as a printer. His various jobs enabled him to travel around the country, taking the SPC message to workers wherever he went. There were others too, who with religious fervour made the SPC cause almost their full-time work. Apart from the governing party, the SPC probably had more full-time politicians in its ranks than any other political group in the province.

The party prided itself on being one of the two truly Marxist parties in the world--the other being the Socialist Party of Great Britain (SPGB)--and refused to join the Second International because too many of the parties belonging to it were not pure Marxist in their ideology. The writings of the SPC leadership all adhered slavishly to what they knew of Marx's thinking.[18] They

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[18] Much of what Marx and Engels wrote was not available in English at the time and certainly Marx's material written prior to 1848, which has resulted in so much reinterpretation of some of his ideas, was not available.

did not approve of Eduard Bernstein's efforts to guide the Social Democratic Party of Germany toward evolutionary socialism; they disagreed with DeLeon's belief that Marxists must endeavour to take control of the work place simultaneously with endeavouring to take political control; and they rejected the syndicalism of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW). Marx had predicted that, as the capitalist system wore on, the number of proletariat would increase while the bourgeoisie decreased until the point where the proletariat could easily assume control of government and the economy. Since Marx assumed that this process would happen fairly quickly, he made few suggestions concerning what the proletariat should do while waiting for the capitalist system to break down. Because the process was not happening as quickly as predicted, people like Bernstein and DeLeon tried to give some supplementary guidance for action during the waiting period. The SPC leaders, however, made no such contribution. Assuming that the Marxist plan was unfolding as predicted, they were content to see their role meantime as an educational one.

What the SPC did not understand about Marx was that he was not describing a specific event of change within the capitalist system, but was making a general

analysis of how change would come about within such a system. Both Marx and Engels acknowledged that there were unique economic, social and political conditions in societies,[19] and from this acknowledgement it follows that Marxist parties would have to develop approaches suitable to their particular situations. The SPC and its leaders froze Marxism in nineteenth century England, failing to see that capitalism in Canada in their time was not a carbon copy of nineteenth century English capitalism, and making no attempt to develop Marxist ideology to suit the economic situation in British Columbia or Canada. It is true that conditions in the mining areas of the province were similar to the classical Marxist situation, but the SPC did not make allowance for the different class consciousness of the unionized and non-unionized workers nor for the fact that in most parts of Canada there were more petite bourgeoisie than there were proletariat.[20]

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[19]Marx himself criticized the German Philosophers for using socialist and communist literature from France. He wrote, " [they forget] that when the writings immigrated from France into Germany, French social conditions had not immigrated along with them. In contact with German social conditions, this French literature lost all its immediate practical significance..." Karl Marx and Frederich Engels, "The Manifesto of the Communist Party," Lewis Feuer, ed., Marx and Engels: Basic Writings on Politics and Philosophy (Garden City, N.Y., Doubleday and Co., Anchor Books, 1959), p. 33.

[20]See Leo A Johnson, "The Development of Class in

This failure to grasp the uniqueness of British Columbia society often impelled the party to propose Marxist solutions where a Marxist situation did not exist--for example, with the farmers in the Okanagan area.

The party had come into being during the first five years of the century, spawned by certain factors in British Columbia that made the province uniquely suitable in Canada for the nurturing of socialism. The period covering the last quarter of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century was a period of radical agitation in both Europe and North America. In Europe the period produced the great Social Democratic Party of Germany, The Social Democratic Party of Russia (formed in 1898 with Lenin as one of the top theoreticians) and a host of other socialist parties throughout the

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Canada in the Twentieth Century, "Gary Teeple, ed., Capitalism and the National Question in Canada (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1972), p. 147. Johnson says this phenomenon is very important since the main struggles in Canada have been between the petite bourgeois and capitalist classes. He says, "that so long as this struggle holds centre stage and no great political or economic errors are made by the capitalist protagonists, the growth of working class consciousness will be slow--particularly when a majority of strongly unionized and highly paid workers enjoy a standard of living conducive to property ownership, a high standard of commodity consumption, and the attainment of other externals of petite bourgeois status."

Continent. The influence of these parties or their offspring is still felt in the governments of Europe. In the United States the period produced the Socialist Party of America, the muckrakers with their telling polemics against the system, numerous socialist novelists including Jack London and Upton Sinclair, heretic academic analysis by men such as Thorstein Veblen and Charles Beard--but no lasting socialist presence. But in British Columbia the influence of the socialist movement appears to have penetrated the political culture of the people for a time. Until the last decade the province still contained the most radical labour unions in the country and the most radical branch of the CCF/NDP.[21] Why should this be so?

In the history of industrial man it is a truth universally acknowledged that an area possessing abundant natural resources must be exploited. Nowhere is the truth of this proposition more evident than in British Columbia. Professor E. R. Black describes as "The Politics of Exploitation" this provincial preoccupation with economic

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[21] The political stance of a number of Quebec trade unions during the last few years indicates that they are now more radical than B. C. unions.

development and utilization of natural resources.[22]

Though Black's analysis concerns the politics of post-World War II British Columbia, it would be difficult to coin a more synoptic term to describe the overriding concern of all B.C. governments, since colonial days, with rapid material development, and the close relationship between government and industry which persisted until the present government was elected in 1972.

From the beginning of settlement by people of European stock, British Columbia was not primarily a gathering of pioneers in the sense of individuals occupying pieces of land to carve out a future for themselves and their families. The geography, the nature of the province's natural resources, and the pre-eminence of the Hudson's Bay Company precluded, to a large extent, the individuality possible in other parts of Canada. So long as the territory was controlled by the Hudson's Bay Company, all economic activity came under the surveillance of the Company. Almost all supplies and people came to the area

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[22] E.R. Black, "British Columbia: The Politics of Exploitation", R. Shearer, ed., Exploiting our Economic Potential (Toronto, Holt, Rinehart and Winston of Canada, Ltd., 1968), p. 23.

in ships which docked at Victoria, and this made it easier for the Company to enforce the monopoly it had been granted in perpetuity by the British government in 1849. That same year Vancouver Island gained the status of a colony, and James Douglas, Chief Factor in the West for the Hudson's Bay Company, was appointed Governor in 1851. He held both the position of Chief Factor and that of Governor until 1858, when he was also appointed Governor of the mainland colony of British Columbia and finally resigned his post with the Hudson's Bay Company.

The experience of this colonial period under a governor who was more an employee of the Hudson's Bay Company than a Crown administrator, and later under other governors who only reluctantly accepted the institution of an executive council, combined with the fact that Vancouver Island and later the lower mainland were the chief points of entry to and supply of the province, set the scene for extensive governmental involvement in decisions affecting the province's development. Douglas' initial responsibility was to administer for the benefit of the Hudson's Bay Company. As Governor, he continued to act as though he were administering a private

company.[23] During the whole of the colonial period, all important decisions emanated from Victoria.

A facilitating factor in this centralized control was the nature of immigration into the province during the colonial and post-colonial periods. The first great influx of people came during the gold rush which began in 1858 and finally petered out in the Yukon in the 1890's. Prospectors moved northward in their search or returned to their homeland; very few remained to set up permanent communities. With little interest on the part of these ephemeral communities in becoming involved in decision-making, the job naturally fell to Victoria.

An even more important factor contributing to control by Victoria was the nature of the province's wealth--a factor which led to Victoria's also becoming the financial center of the province. Since the province's wealth lay in her natural resources--fish, timber, minerals--and since the government controlled these, those interested in exploiting these resources found it profit-

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[23]Margaret A. Ormsby, British Columbia: a History (Vancouver, MacMillan Company of Canada, 1958), See the account in Chapters 5 and 6.

able to settle in Victoria so as to be in close touch with government decisions. This trend continued in the post-colonial period, when British Columbia came under the sway of a few wealthy entrepreneurs--merchants, landholders, industrialists--who had by 1886 "prospered during the days of railway construction, taken up residence in Victoria and then closed ranks."[24]

It was inevitable that this growing elite should assume control of the provincial legislature and govern, not in the interests of the people of the province, but in their own self-interest. As Professor Ormsby puts it, "in a small community like British Columbia, where business men and large property owners sat in the House and where every prominent business man was known to the legislators, it was difficult for a premier, who himself had extensive investments, to refuse requests made by his political associates."[25]

An example of this early symbiotic relationship between government and industry is the case of Robert Dunsmuir and his son James, whose influence runs like a

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[24]Ibid., p. 304.

[25]Ibid., p. 307.

thread through the fabric of early B. C. history. Much of the development of unionism and the growth of socialist philosophy in the province occurred in reaction to the influence of such interests. Dunsmuir was British Columbia's first great financial baron.[26] A miner when he arrived from Scotland in 1851 to work for the Hudson's Bay Company in the Nanaimo mines, it was not long before he turned his back on a working-class life. In 1855 the Company gave Dunsmuir the right to operate as an independent coal producer on a thousand acres of land near Nanaimo.[27] With his mine, plus the rich coal fields which he discovered at Wellington in 1869 and the 1,900,000 acres of land (including mineral rights) which his company received as a subsidy for building the Esquimalt-to-Nanaimo Railroad,

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[26] For detailed accounts and other references to the Dunsmuirs see Ormsby, British Columbia: A History, pp. 215-365 passim; Harold Griffin, British Columbia: The People's Early Story (Vancouver, Tribune Publishing Co., 1958); Paul Phillips, No Power Greater: A Century of Labour in British Columbia (Vancouver, B. C. Federation of Labour, Boag Foundation, 1967).

[27] The only recorded explanation which I have found for this gift appears in Harold Griffin, British Columbia: The People's Early Story, p. 46, which says Dunsmuir obtained the grant of land as a reward for not going on strike with the Nanaimo miners over wages and working conditions. Considering the shortage of miners due to the discovery of gold in California, and the great need for coal, it is not an entirely implausible story.

Dunsmuir gained a virtual coal monopoly on Vancouver Island. By the 1880's his railway, coal mines, land holdings and fleet of ships to service his empire, combined to make Dunsmuir the first in a long line of industrialists in British Columbia. Although his relations with the legislators were excellent, he moved to further strengthen these ties by standing for the Nanaimo Riding and being elected in 1886 to the British Columbia Legislative Assembly. Ironically, he defeated a candidate from the Workingmen's Protective Association, which had been formed in 1879 to "devise means for the amelioration of the conditions of the working class of this Province in general."[28] A further irony lay in the fact of Dunsmuir's election in a predominantly coal mining area, where he fought labour unremittingly and used Orientals for strike-breaking and as cheap labour. His son James also entered politics and was Premier from 1900 to 1902 and Lieutenant Governor from 1906 to 1909.

The concentration of capital and the close government connections with the big industrialists, of which the Dunsmuirs are only one example, contributed to the

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[28] Phillips, No Power Greater, p. 9.

nourishment of radical politics in some areas of British Columbia. The combined power of government and corporation was difficult to successfully oppose. Dunsmuir's anti-labour stance resulted in bitter, lengthy and bloody strikes in the Dunsmuir operations in 1877, 1881, 1883 and 1887, and many other shorter work stoppages.[29] Twice the government sent in the militia.

In addition to struggles over wages, weight tampering (the men were paid on a piece-work basis), overcharging at the company store, compulsory buying from the company store, etc., there were continual struggles concerning safety conditions. British Columbia had an unenviable reputation for mining disasters[30]--small wonder when the statistics for accidents in B. C. are examined: 1879, explosion in Wellington--eleven men killed; 1881, explosion in Wellington--sixty-five killed; 1884, Wellington explosion--twenty-three killed; 1887, explosion in Nanaimo--148 killed; 1889, explosion in Wellington--seventy-five killed; 1909, explosion in Extension--thirty-two killed. These figures are especially shocking in

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[29]In contrast, the much smaller British owned firm the Vancouver Coal Company enjoyed industrial peace from 1880 to 1901.

[30]For a story on this reputation see the Clarion Jan. 12, 1970, p. 1.

light of the fact that at any particular time during this period, there were probably no more than four thousand men employed in British Columbia's coal mines.[31] Furthermore, although there were other mines in operation in the province, all of these accidents occurred in the Dunsmuir operations.

During his legislative career James Dunsmuir contributed further to the development of class consciousness in the mining areas of British Columbia. While Dunsmuir was Premier, J. W. Hawthornthwaite[32] managed to have an amendment to the Coal Mines Act passed, requiring competency certification for miners working at the coal face. The Dunsmuir government, however, failed to enforce the legislation.

Such flouting of the law was not uncommon during this early period of B. C. history. During McBride's first government (1903-1907), Parker Williams, one of the Socialist Party M.L.A.s,[33] introduced an amendment to the

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[31]Phillips, No Power Greater, p.9.

[32]Elected by acclamation on a Labour ticket in a February 1900 by-election, he subsequently ran on the Socialist Party ticket and was a member of the Legislature from 1900 to 1911 and from 1918 to 1920.

[33]Hawthornthwaite (Nanaimo), Parker Williams

Coal Mines Regulation Act requiring the posting in conspicuous places of mine plans, to enable faster escape in the event of emergency. Although the amendment was carried, it was still necessary to institute legal proceedings against the Dunsmuir interests to force them to comply with this sensible and humanitarian measure.[34]

Thus by the early 1900's it was clear that the battle lines were not only formed but were also more or less permanent. The presence as Premier of a man whose mines had a scandalous safety record, who had pioneered the use of strike-breakers in the province and had flouted the labour legislation of the land, provided ample fuel for the radical fires.

Of significance also was the nature of British Columbia's resources, which required only large amounts of capital and labour to ready the fish, furs, minerals

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(Ladysmith), John McInnis (Grand Forks). With William Davidson (Slocan) who was elected on an Independent Labour ticket, they held a balance of power which enabled them to obtain the support of the McBride group for a substantial amount of labour legislation. The legislative activity of the Socialist Party members is discussed in greater detail in Chapter VI.

[34] Clarion, Jan. 12, 1907, p.4.

and timber for market. In the province's earlier history, fur trapping, fishing and placer mining had been labour intensive industries, not requiring large amounts of capital.[35]

As the river and stream beds became depleted, placer sluicing gave way to lode mining which required extensive investments in exploration and construction before any pay-off could be realized. Even placer mining grew more expensive when it became necessary to construct hydraulic facilities for gold deposited below the river beds.[36] The mining of copper, lead and zinc is highly capital intensive too. These metals, along with silver, were discovered in large amounts in the Kootenay-Boundary area, and beginning about 1890 this region soon became prominent as a producer of wealth for the province. British

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[35] This is the only period when we find any similarity between the nature of employment in British Columbia and that of her sister western provinces of a later period -- that is, there were large numbers of independent entrepreneurs.

[36] In 1906, C.D. Mason, City Solicitor of Atlin, told a reporter of the Vancouver Daily Province, "Individual mining on the well known creeks is almost a thing of the past and big hydraulic companies are acquiring placer claims from the miners at good figures." Canadian Annual Review, 1906.

Columbia became "a 'company province' dotted by company-owned or company-based towns."[37] In his concise history of mining in British Columbia, A. F. Flucke describes how quickly this growth occurred:

> When we look at British Columbia directories for 1891 we find Nelson listed as having a population of 150, plus two or three hundred transient miners. Names such as Grandforks, Greenwood, Phoenix, Rossland, New Denver, Sandon, Slocan, Kaslo and Fernie, are not even listed...By 1898 it is a different story ...Nelson has jumped to a thriving city of 5,000, Fernie and Grandforks have 1,500 each, Greenwood has 2,000, Kaslo 2,500, Revelstoke 2,500 and Rossland is bursting with 8,000 people...In 1882 Kootenay had a mining population of eleven placer miners; by 1900 there were 32,000 people settled in the area.[38]

The first miners and capital came from the United States,[39] since transportation from the south was more

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[37]Thomas Michael Sanford, The Politics of Protest: The Cooperative Commonwealth Federation and Social Credit League in British Columbia (Ph.D. Thesis, University of California, 1961), p. 42.

[38]A. F. Flucke "A History of Mining in British Columbia", Transactions of the Eighth B. C. Natural Resources Conference (Victoria, 1955.)

[39]This American group of immigrants was a significant part of the B. C. population, particularly in the Kootenay-Boundary area. Excluding the native-born Indians and the Asiatics, the American-born made up 8-10% in 1901. In absolute numbers the American-born in B. C.

convenient than from the province, where connecting railways and roads were not yet built. Geographically, the Kootenay-Boundary area is an extension of the mountain states south of the border. At an earlier date, miners had moved into Montana, Nevada, Colorado and Idaho, and it was now logical for them to move northward,[40] bringing with them ten years' experience of bloody labour battles

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over the decade 1891-1901 increased 10,597, from 5,567 to 17,164, while during the same period the British-born increased less, proportionately (10,527, from 20,103 to 30,630), Canada Year Book, 1911, pp. 14-15; 1912, p. 47. (The percent figures are approximations since it is difficult to isolate the native Indian population figures in the Census data.)

[40] International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers' Records, U.B.C., Angus MacInnes Collection, Box 151 and 158, hereafter referred to as Mine, Mill Records. All through these records there is evidence of men having worked on both sides of the border. The influence of Americans is also reported by Harold Kingsmill, A History of Rossland and the Trail Creek District (Studen and Perine, Rossland, n.d.), pp. 9-24, quoted in Isobel Bescoby, Some Social Aspects of the American Mining Advance into Cariboo and Kootenay (U.B.C., M.A. Thesis, 1935). "The 51 leading citizens of Rossland in 1897 (consisting of claim owners, merchants, and professional men) gave their origin as Ontario fifteen, United States of America [sic] twenty-eight, Europe and other Canadian provinces eight. Practically all the Europeans had had experience in American mines and many of the Ontario men had previously prospected in California, Montana, Idaho, or Washington," p. 78. Bescoby's work gives a good picture of the intermingling of British and American traditions and people in the Kootenay mining area.

and their union. It has been said that "American capital, American men, and American money made Kootenay in the first place."[41] Professor Ormsby notes too that this region was peopled predominantly by American citizens. She comments that Bryan's presidential campaign of 1896 aroused more interest there than did Laurier's campaign the same year.[42]

With the development of a government-subsidized railroad into the area, Canadians and immigrant Britons[43] also flocked into the region. Imbued with the values of unionism, these immigrant tradesmen and miners brought to

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[41]Howay, F. W., Sage, W.N. and H. F. Angus, British Columbia and the United States, (Toronto, Ryerson Press, 1942), p. 298.

[42]Ormsby, p. 316

[43]Like the American group, the British-born were a significant group in early B. C. society. Again excluding the native-born Indians and the Asiatics (these were special groups which existed on the fringes of society), the British-born made up about 20% of the population in B. C. in 1881; about 30% in 1891; and in the census of 1901, about 20%. For Canada as a whole the comparable figures are approximately 12%, 12% and 7% respectively. Canada Year Book, 1911, pp. 14-15; 1912, p. 47. (The per cent figures are approximations, since it is difficult to isolate the native-born Indian population in the Census data.) See Chapter VIII, footnote 3 for table giving the birth-place in percentages of the population of British Columbia, 1881-1921.

British Columbia the ideals of the Fabians and the Marxism of Hyndman's Social Democratic Party. In contrast to most of the British who had earlier gone to the United States and eastern Canada before the advent of the union and populist political movements, the British who later came to British Columbia tended to be either craft unionists from urban centers or miners from the radical mining areas of Scotland and the north of England.[44] Already convinced of the worth of unions, these men, if they could not find a union when they arrived in British Columbia, would soon start one. Wallace Lefeaux greatly praised the British who moved into the province, commenting that unions seemed as important to the tradesmen as did their

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[44] For example, J. G. (Geordie) Morgan and John T. Mortimer. Morgan was a Scot who had belonged to Hyndman's Social Democratic Federation before coming to Canada. He helped to organize the Socialist Party of Manitoba in 1902 and shortly after moved to Vancouver, where he was active in the Plumber's Union, held various posts in the SPC and became a noted teacher of Marxian economics, with classes as large as 150. Letter from Hugh Falkner, Aug. 29, 1964, in possession of the author. Mortimer, also a Scot, had been a member of the Canadian Co-Operative Commonwealth, Branch No. 10 at Winnipeg, in 1898. He was an active unionist, a key organizer of the movement which succeeded in getting A. W. Puttee elected to the House of Commons on November 7, 1900. After moving to Vancouver in 1902, he held a number of key posts in the SPBC and the SPC. Clarion, Dec. 12, 1908.

tools.[45]

Augmenting the influx of Americans and British were many immigrants from continental Europe who carried with them socialists threads from the large Marxist parties in their home countries to weave into the rough fabric of their new homeland.

The early placer miners were self-employed, but the miners at the turn of the century worked for wages in dangerous conditions. Moreover, they were isolated in homogeneous communities deprived of the moderating influences of church and family in established communities. All these were conditions which tended to develop group consciousness and impel workers to seek radical solutions to their problems.[46]

There was also the attitude toward employers which the American miners had developed in brutal battles with mine owners south of the border. In the mountain

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[45] Wallace Lefeaux, interview, July, 1966.

[46] C. Kerr and A. Siegel, "The Inter-Industry Prospensity to Strike", A. Kornhauser, R. Dubin and A. M. Ross, eds., Industrial Conflict (New York, McGraw-Hill, 1954.)

states the WFM[47] had been unable to use conventional bargaining procedures because they were never strong enough to stand up to the combined opposition of the owners and government.[48] As a result, conventional trade union tactics were replaced by violence, and, under the finfluence first of Bryan and then Debs, by political action. These tactics did not fit with Gomper's American Federation of Labour (AFL) conservative unionism, and consequently the WFM left the AFL in 1898. They then formed the Western Labor Union, an industrial union, and

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47 Useful studies of the WFM are: Melvyn Dubofsky, We Shall be All: A History of the Industrial Workers of the World (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1969); Vernon Jensen, Heritage of Conflict: A History of Labor Relations in the Nonferrous Metals Industry to 1930 (Ithaca, N. Y., Cornell University Press, 1930); Allen D. Orr, The Western Federation of Miners and the Royal Commission on Industrial Disputes in 1903 (M.A. Thesis, U.B.C., 1967); John H. M. Laslett, "Syndicalist Socialism and the Western Federation of Miners", Labor and the Left: A Study of Socialists and Radical Influences in the American Labor Movement, 1881-1924, eds., John H. M. Laslett (New York, Basic Books, 1970).

48 Laslett, "Syndicalist Socialism and the WFM," p. 242, says that at the height of its power, the WFM had no more than 10% of the mining industry organized. The situation in B. C. was different: at one point about 60 per cent of the industry was organized by the WFM.

in 1902 converted it into the American Labour Union (ALU) in order to challenge the AFL on a national, rather than merely a regional, basis.

Thus, when the American miners arrived in British Columbia, the cultural baggage they carried included not only populism and radicalism,[49] but also a faith in industrial unionism and political action, and little expectation of obtaining fair treatment from their employers. Given that much of the capital and many of the mine managers too came from the United States, it is not surprising to find many of the same confrontations occurring in the metal mining area of British Columbia as those which had taken place in the Western United States.[50] When the WFM first became established in British Columbia, it behaved in much the same way as a

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[49] Populism is a political ideal having emphasis on direct rule and participation by the people. Radicalism is any kind of political action calling for complete change of some aspect or all of society.

[50] A number of lives were lost and much property destroyed during the WFM's battles with the mine owners. See Chapter V,

conventional union - bargaining for better wages and working conditions, backing candidates who supported labour,[51] operating a medical plan, and even setting up hospitals.[52] But the industrial-frontier milieu of British Columbia, combined with employers who refused to recognize the legitimacy of unions, soon pushed the WFM toward political action. Since their union in the United States was led by socialists,[53] it was logical that the miners in British Columbia should choose to support the Socialist Party of B. C. as the only active political group which appeared to sympathize with their needs.[54]

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[51] See Chapter III, pp. 93-94.

[52] Mine, Mill Records, Box 157, Angus MacInnis Collection, U.B.C.

[53] See Chapter IV, p. 145.

[54] These are the miners who comprised the membership of the SPBC locals established by Cameron in 1902. See Chapter IV, p. 119 ff.

In the fishing industry changes similar to those which occurred in mining took place: ownership was consolidated, leading to the concentration of people around major fishing grounds, which in turn facilitated closer communication of political ideas and union organization. During the post-colonial period, fishing and fish processing had been carried on primarily by individuals or small companies. Salmon salting and curing began on the Fraser in 1864 and salmon canning in 1870. In 1882 there were thirteen canneries on the Fraser; in 1895 there were thirty-one on the Fraser and seventeen elsewhere in the province. During the five year depression, 1893-1898, the industry, geared as it was to the world market, was vulnerable and bankruptcies were common. This, coupled with a labour shortage due to the Alaska and Yukon gold rush, encouraged greater mechanization of canning operations and more efficient fishing methods, calling for more capital and amalgamation into larger units. By the time the depression ended, half a dozen firms processed almost half the annual catch.[55]

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[55] J.J. Deutsch, et al, Economics of Primary Production in British Columbia, Vol. III, (Vancouver, B.C. 1959), pp. 18-20.

The enormity of such consolidations and the degree to which industry in British Columbia was capital-intensive can be seen in Table 1, which compares manufacturing in British Columbia to that of Ontario and of Canada as a whole. It can be seen that the amount of capital per firm in British Columbia is almost twice that for Ontario and Canada in 1900, over twice as much in 1905 and almost three times as much in 1910. In such circumstances it is easy to see how British Columbia could come under the hegemony of a few wealthy entrepreneurs whose aggressiveness in taking wealth from the province laid the foundations on which to build socialist criticism in British Columbia.

Very early in its development, then, although it was still a frontier in the sense of having unlimited horizons to discover, British Columbia became an industrialized[56] frontier —— a highly organized, capital-intensive and rationalized labour economy. This meant that the population divided into the "we-they" adversary relationship of employer and employee much earlier in its history than was the case with the other provinces of Canada -- a

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[56] "Industrialized" here refers to resource extraction, not to manufacturing.

TABLE 1

CAPITAL INVESTMENT COMPARISONS

	No. of Manufacturing Establishments*	Total Amount of Capital Investment*	Average Capital Investment per Establishments**
		1900	
Canada	14,650	$ 446,916,487	$ 30,500
Ontario	6,543	214,972,275	32,900
B.C.	392	22,901,892	58,400
		1905	
Canada	15,796	$ 846,585,023	53,600
Ontario	7,996	397,484,705	49,700
B.C.	459	53,022,033	115,516
		1910	
Canada	19,215	$ 1,247,583,609	64,900
Ontario	8,001	595,394,608	74,400
B.C.	651	123,027,521	189,000

* From the Canada Year Book, 1912, p. 82. Establishments of five or more employees.

** It is possible these average figures are slightly exaggerated since new industries show a higher investment rate than do established ones. However, the figures do show a high growth rate for Canada and Ontario too, so the average Capital Investment per Establishment is probably not much distorted, if at all.

fact which had implications for the type of radicalism that grew up in British Columbia as compared to the rest of Canada. On the prairies, for example, the "we-they" of prime importance was the West vs. Eastern financial influences.[57] The important difference was that the rest of the country first evolved as a nation of small landowners, whereas British Columbia did not. While other Western protest movements drew on "progressivism" and Fabian Socialism tinged with populism, in British Columbia, where "wage-slaves" abounded, the class analysis of Marx appeared to be more relevant.

The geographical isolation of British Columbia's mining, fishing and lumber communities also had a significant effect on political developments in the province and more specifically on the development of socialism. Situated

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[57] The political protest movements of the West are well documented: J.A. Irving, The Social Credit Movement in Alberta (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1959); S.M. Lipset, Agrarian Socialism; The Cooperative Commonwealth Federation in Saskatchewan (Berkley: University of California Press, 1950); C.B. Macpherson, Democracy in Alberta (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1953); W.L. Morton, The Progressive Party in Canada (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1950); P.F. Sharp, The Agrarian Revolt in Western Canada (Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1948); W.D. Young, The Anatomy of a Party (Toronto, University of Toronto Press.)

in rugged mountainous terrain or on remote ocean shores before the advent of radio or telephone, the workers felt acutely isolated. Coupled with this were the pervading economic vulnerability of the B.C. economy to world business cycle fluctuations, the periods of mass unemployment due to the province's extreme specialization in resource industries, and the dominant power of one employer, all of which contributed to workers' insecurity. Many men in such communities turned to religion, alcohol or prostitutes.[58] Others hungered for new institutions which might provide them with a sense of security and new ideas which held out some hope for the future. Little wonder that many embraced the unions, which provided the former, and socialism, which promised the latter.

Professor Frank Underhill,[59] in attempting to isolate the reasons for the lack of a distinctive Canadian

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58 See James H. Gray, Red Lights on the Prairies (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1971) and Booze (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1972).

59 Frank Underhill, lecture in Canadian History course, U.B.C., July, 1952.

radical ideology, places much importance on the predominantly agrarian life of early Canada. Canadians, he says, had no idea of the meaning of "rich" and "poor" in urban life because their life was essentially rural. Consequently, he argues, they were not interested in economic democracy (economic equality), but only in political democracy. The unique case of British Columbia makes it difficult to substantiate this hypothesis for Canada as a whole, for in the small urban communities of British Columbia economic issues were an important concern, contributing to the growth of more radical socialist ideas than those in the predominantly rural areas of Canada. The lack of a broad family farm base as a source of sustenance to which workers could return during periods of unemployment also encouraged union militancy and support for socialism.

Isolation from the mainstream of Canadian affairs also contributed to British Columbia's uniqueness among the provinces. Before the completion of the C.P.R., entrance to British Columbia was by sea and from the United States. Most of the early miners coming into the Kootenay-Boundary area were Americans. News arrived via American newspapers and travellers coming through Pacific Coast ports such as San Francisco. Many of the early settlers had connections

with the United States which gave them an interest in American affairs, though they could not influence them. The Rocky Mountains effectively cut off travel from the rest of Canada, and even after completion of the C.P.R. the trip was arduous, expensive and time-consuming. News came from the East less frequently than from the South and, because the East was so remote, news from there seemed less relevant. Since British Columbians could not influence events in the United States and had little desire to influence national Canadian events interest in British Columbia politics was paramount. It is noteworthy that in its more than one hundred years of existence Canada has never had a principal political leader or policy-maker from British Columbia. Typically, among British Columbia socialists the influence of American radicals was much greater than any influence coming from Eastern Canada. British Columbia's concerns with Confederation were primarily material ones.

In 1871, as in 1971, the "good life" for British Columbia essentially meant material well-being. The province's relations with Ottawa have always been marked by financial disputes: first the trans-Canada railway and the naval dock at Esquimalt, then McBride's many visits to Ottawa to negotiate better financial terms for British

Columbia, later Pattullo's recalcitrance regarding the Rowell-Sirois recommendations, and in more recent times the Social Credit government's constant accusations that Ottawa was "draining the golden goblet of British Columbia." As Sage points out, after completion of the Canadian Pacific Railroad, federal politics played little part in British Columbia politics.[60] Unlike the prairie provinces, where the farmers were acutely affected by Ottawa's tariff policies, British Columbia's miners, fishermen and lumberjacks were less affected by Ottawa's actions than by the exploitation of entrepreneurs aided and abetted by the provincial government in their drive for industrial empire. Political wars in the province were fought on British Columbia issues, while in other parts of the country national issues were more often thrust into provincial politics. In British Columbia the federal system of government actually helped the Left by providing a distinct political arena in which support for the Left was relatively strong. In the provinces where national issues impinged on

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60 Walter N. Sage, "Federal Parties and Provincial Political Groups in British Columbia, 1871-1903," The British Columbia Historical Quarterly 12 (April, 1948), pp. 151-169.

provincial politics, however, federalism tended to have a deleterious effect on the growth of socialism, since regional views of national issues frequently crossed class lines.

The prominence of local issues, however, did mean that the most able men tended to be in provincial politics, a fact which made it more difficult for the socialists to make political gains.[61] From 1903 to 1915, McBride was premier of the province. He demonstrated great political aptitude, seeming to know to what extent he should court labour, how vociferously he should censure Ottawa, when to support the Socialist Party's proposed bills and when to borrow their ideas. He constituted a formidable opponent: with men of lesser ability in provincial politics, the socialists would undoubtedly have had greater influence.

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[61] The most able socialists were already concentrated provincially because, due to the large federal constituencies, they could not get elected nationally. Thus, had Canadian national issues attracted the best Conservatives and Liberals, the socialists would have enjoyed a weaker opposition in B.C. The SPC always ran candidates in federal elections and the Clarion often covered national and international events, but in day-to-day political warfare the party was essentially a B.C. party. Under a federal system, however, "socialism in one province" (particularly socialism of the SPC variety) would not have been possible. This problem is discussed further in Chapter IX.

The slow process of transplanting federal parties to the provincial level in British Columbia also helped the socialists to recruit a political following.[62] Although political campaigns were fought on a group basis from the time British Columbia entered Confederation, party politics with its attendant party discipline in the legislature did not take hold until Richard McBride formed the first all-Conservative government in 1903. Prior to this time the two opposing groups vying for political power at the provincial level included both Liberals and Conservatives. Since the workers were not mobilized into the old line parties prior to industrialization, the socialists had the opportunity to win their allegiance--an opportunity which was not available to socialists in the Maritimes, Quebec and Ontario. In these areas the two old-line parties were appealing for votes before industrialization and before workers became much aware of Marxian socialism. British Columbia, however, was moving into industrialization at the very time the socialists were

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62 For a review of B.C. politics during this early period see Walter N. Sage, "Federal Parties and Provincial Political Groups in British Columbia, 1871-1903"; Edith Dobie, "Some Aspects of Party History in British Columbia, 1871-1903," Pacific Historical Review (June, 1932), pp. 235-251; E.B. Mercer, Political Groups in British Columbia, 1883-1898, (M.A. Thesis, U.B.C., 1937).

appearing on the scene and just when provincial politics along federal party lines were beginning. As a result, socialists did not find that their only source of support was among Conservative or Liberal converts; they could appeal to workers who were not yet committed. The importance of this phenomenon and of the socialization process is discussed further in Chapter IX.

It is against this background, then, that the growth and influence of socialism in British Columbia must be viewed, for it was these social, economic, political and cultural factors, unique in Canada, which nurtured a more radical brand of socialism in British Columbia than in the rest of the country: the nature and abundance of the province's natural resources leading to concentration of capital and the rapid growth of company towns; early centralization of control by Victoria coupled with a symbiotic relationship between government and industry; a particular type of immigrant bringing populist and radical ideals from the United States, and unionism, Fabian and Marxist ideals from Britain and other parts of Europe. Augmented by the lack of an agrarian base, the province's geographical and political isolation from the Canadian

mainstream, the belated establishment of federal parties on the provincial scene and dynamic socialist leadership in the province, the stage was set for a different kind of socialist drama than that which appeared on other provincial scenes.

By no means, of course, is it intended to imply that the entire province was a hotbed of socialist support. Most of the workers' votes during this period still went to the Conservatives and Liberals. In the multiple riding of the City of Vancouver the socialist candidates always shared the bottom of the poll with any labour or independent candidates who ran, although in the provincial elections of 1903, 1907, 1909 and 1912 the socialists' percentage of votes cast in the ridings outside Vancouver and Victoria was approximately 8, 21, 25 and 25 per cent respectively.[63] Only in the coal mining communities of Vancouver Island and the metal mining communities of the Kootenay area did the workers support the socialist cause to a significant degree. But there was sufficient support in these areas to sustain the SPC over a number of years and to buttress its members' belief that British Columbia was on its way to a Marxist salvation.

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[63] See Chapter VI, pp. 252-269.

The significance of the early socialists in British Columbia lay not in their numbers, their electoral success nor their legislative accomplishments (although the latter were considerable, considering the number of members actually elected),[64] but in their educational activities, their influence on the unions, and in the number of SPC members who carried the socialist ideal into other political endeavours after the demise of the party. These contributions are referred to throughout this study and discussed further in the concluding chapter.

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[64] Chapter VI, pp. 269-276.

CHAPTER II

ROOTS AND BEGINNINGS

Economic development in British Columbia quickly accelerated following the completion in 1885 of the Canadian Pacific Railway, which connected the Pacific Coast with Central Canada and thereby provided the communication chain necessary to furnish money, labour, materials, markets and the flow of ideas. The initial boom, however, was short-lived. The American financial crisis of the 1890's reverberated in British Columbia, resulting in an industrial slump which lasted from 1893 to 1898. Unemployment grew, soup kitchens were set up in Vancouver churches, and the province endured five bleak years of hard times.[1]

It was during this last decade of the nineteenth century and the boom period following the five-year slump that socialist ideas which had their intellectual roots in Europe came to British Columbia via Eastern Canada and the United States. Up the Pacific Coast came men such as E. T. Kingsley from California; across the border from the mountain

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[1]Margaret A. Ormsby, British Columbia: a History, p. 313. But the value of mineral output during the slump held its own and then increased rapidly. In 1894 it was about $4.2 million, but this had grown to $20.1 million by 1901. Annual Report of the Minister of Mines, 1923, Province of British Columbia (Victoria; 1924), p. A7.

states came members of the Western Federation of Miners (WFM), bringing with them a radical philosophy developed during a series of prolonged and vicious battles with management and government. From over the Rockies came men and such newspapers as the Citizen and Country, bringing news of Christian Socialism, Henry George's Single Tax, the Cooperative Commonwealth of Louis Gronlund, and that embodiment of dissension, Daniel DeLeon's Socialist Labour Party.

This chapter uncovers the intellectual roots of British Columbia socialism and traces the history of the first active groups.

Clearly, no exact point in time can be said to mark the arrival of socialism in British Columbia as its influences were borne by immigrants from other parts of Canada, from Great Britain and the United States. From the beginning, the socialist movement in British Columbia embraced a variety of doctrines, parties and movements. It would be a simple matter to ascribe labels and assign origins on the basis of the type of socialism--Fabian, Christian and Reform socialist would be listed as coming from Eastern Canada and Great Britain, for the most part, while the radical Marxist orientation would be credited to Germany via the United States--but this would be a false classification since revolutionary socialism in British Columbia frequently

spoke with a British accent.

Until 1903 there were no political parties representing different ideologies as such in the British Columbia legislature.[2] Rather it was a case of political opportunism: each political grouping, which sometimes involved different coalitions of the same group of men,[3] bid for power on the basis that it could do the same things as the others, only better. As noted in Chapter I, the group of men governing the province were chiefly merchants and entrepreneurs; working class representatives were not included. It is not surprising then, that even before the advent of a socialist party in British Columbia, the workers sought access to the legislature in order to protect their interests. It is during this early period that we see the origins of a militant labour movement, which throughout its history has given varying degrees of support to the socialist movement in the province.

In 1886 the Workingmen's Protective Association ran candidates in Victoria and Nanaimo on a platform which spelled out the class struggle and called for regulations

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[2]W. N. Sage, "Federal Parties and Provincial Political Groups in B. C. 1871-1903", B. C. Historical Quarterly, 12, (April, 1948). P. 151. For further discussion of this point see Chapter III.

[3]Ibid, p.152.

in mine safety, a general nine-hour day, amendments to the workmen's lien law, taxation of land speculators in order to reserve public lands for settlers, and the exclusion of cheap Oriental labour. Four years later the Miner's and Mine Labourer's Protection Association succeeded in having the first labour representatives elected to the legislature --Thomas Forrester and Thomas Keith.[4] The Association had been formed in Nanaimo in 1887 to promote the eight-hour day for underground workers, union recognition, and the limitation of Chinese immigration. In the 1890 election they added Henry George's Single Tax to their platform. In every provincial election since that date, there has been someone elected to the legislature on either a Labour or Socialist ticket.[5]

Thus when socialism came to British Columbia, bringing a message of unbounded beneficence and a promise to the working class of better working conditions, it was clearly not in alien territory. "Far from finding 'virgin, yet fertile ground' in

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[4]Phillips, No Power Greater, p. 22. Ormsby, British Columbia: a History, p. 306.

[5]For a good history of labour and labour politics in early British Columbia, see Thomas Robert Loosmore, The British Columbia Labour Movement and Political Action 1879-1906 (M.A. Thesis, U.B.C., 1954). While the story of labour political action is not the story of socialism, it was through appealing to labour that socialism derived its strength. If labour was militant, the militancy and socialism fed on one another.

British Columbia," as Saywell puts it, "socialism found fertile soil well-tilled and developed by its predecessors."[6] On this soil were cast the seeds of Marxism, of populism and radicalism, and of Christian and idealist socialism as well.

In December, 1898, Arthur Spencer, a C.P.R. employee who had obtained a job transfer to Vancouver, and a member of the Socialist Labour Party (SLP) in London, Ontario,[7] held a

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[6]Loosmore, B. C. Labor, p. 108.

[7]The Socialist Labour Party of the Dominion of Canada was organized in Ontario in 1894 and had several strong branches there as well as in Montreal and Winnipeg. A section had been organized in Halifax but was never active. A local established in New Westminster in 1896 survived a few months and was even confident enough to publish its own newspaper, The Pathfinder, for a few issues. The People, November 12, 1899. For more on the early activity of the SLP, see, "The History and Policy of the SLP" a series of articles which appeared in the Voice beginning in February, 1896, written by Henry B. Ashplant of London, Ontario, who was the National Secretary.

The SLP contested every municipal election in both Toronto and London between 1898 and 1904. See the Clarion, October 29, 1904.

The platform of the SLP in London included the restoration to the people of land, the means of production, transportation and distribution, and the establishment of a cooperative commonwealth "organized as a class conscious body aware of their rights and determined to conquer them by the control of public power." Citizen and Country, March 25, 1899.

Paul Phillips, No Greater Power, connects the SLP in the United States with the Canadian body without indicating on what he bases his assumption, though it is correct. The platform and constitution of the Socialist Labor Party of the

meeting in the Sullivan Hall, thus sparking the formation of the Vancouver Branch of the SLP. With twenty-two charter members, this was the first group to actively propagate socialism in B. C.

The SLP was Marxist, doctrinaire, and led by one of the most controversial figures in American socialism--Daniel DeLeon. From its inception in 1877 the party had experienced varying degrees of political success and failure and was continually haunted by that spectre of ideological movements--fission. Its complete political history in the United States[8] is not germane here, but in tracing the intellectual well-springs of socialism in British Columbia some information about the background of the SLP will be helpful. In the 1880's only about ten percent of the membership of the SLP in the United States were native

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Dominion of Canada, as amended Sept. 2, 1901, is reproduced in Appendix 1. It is similar to that adopted by the SLP of the United States in 1889 except for some slight variations to adapt it to the Canadian context. The document makes reference to adopting the national organ of the SLP of the United States as its own until such time as the Canadian party should be in a position to establish one. Thus the parties were doctrinally identical, but it has not been possible to find any information to indicate official organizational connections or financial or organizational support coming from the U. S. body. There is no provision in the constitution for the payment of dues to the American body or for joint conventions.

[8]See Howard H. Quint, The Forging of American Socialism, Origins of the Modern Movement (Indianapolis, Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1953, American Heritage Series, 1964.)

American.[9] When Morris Hillquit joined the party at the end of the decade he commented on the "Amrican section" of the party: "We did not even appreciate the exquisite humour of a political party of the United States establishing a solitary 'American section' in the metropolis [New York] of the country."[10]

The SLP never did adjust to life in North America. As Quint said,

> DeLeon...never understood the American tradition emphasizing social mobility as opposed to class antagonism, compromise and pragmatic give and take rather than unbending, doctrinaire, revolutionary determinism, and individual freedom of choice and dissent instead of dictation from arbitrary authoritarian leadership.[11]

In opposition to the American Federation of Labour (AFL), the SLP set up the Socialist Trades and Labour Alliance (STLA), an industrial union intended to serve as the labour arm of the SLP, which believed that a successful socialist state could not be realized unless the people were industrially as well as politically organized. "As

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[9]Daniel Bell, Marxian Socialism in the United States (Princeton, New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 1967), p. 25. About 25 per cent of the American population were non-immigrants at the time. The Statistical History of the U. S. from Colonial Times to the Present. n.d.

[10]Morris Hillquit, Loose Leaves from A Busy Life, N.Y. 1934, p. 44.

[11]Quint, The Forging of American Socialism, p. 174.

the Socialist Labour Party fought in the political arena against capitalist charlatans, so would the Socialist Trades and Labor Alliance struggle against the fakirs of the established unions in the field of labour organization."[12] This put the SLP in direct opposition to Samuel Gompers and the AFL policy of "rewarding your friends." It also necessitated dual unionism, which turned many of the existing trade unions and their members away from the SLP. Moreover, it meant abandoning the policy of "boring from within," a favourite tactic of socialists attempting to gain control of, or influence in, AFL unions. In 1896 DeLeon succeeded in swinging SLP support over to the STLA[13] and as a result many socialists left the party.

After the split in 1899, when Morris Hillquit and Job Harriman led a faction out to join Eugene Debs in forming the Socialist Party of America (SPA), the SLP was never again a significant factor in American political life.

Since industrial unionism often goes hand-in-hand with a class analysis of society, it is usually associated with

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[12]Quint, The Forging of American Socialism, p. 163.

[13]The STLA never amounted to anything, claiming at the most no more than 30,000 members between 1895 and 1905, when it merged with the IWW. See Quint, The Forging of American Socialism, p. 164.

socialist ideas. The SLP's advocacy of industrial unionism presaged future conflicts between the labour and socialist movements in British Columbia and Canada.

Although it was the SLP in B. C. which first set out consciously to "organize the working class into a class conscious political party to emancipate themselves, to make them aware of themselves, aware of their rights and determined to conquer by taking possession of the political powers,"[14] their policies met with the same failures here as they had in the United States. When the STLA was formed in June, 1899,[15] it was not apparent to the union men that there was any need for it in British Columbia. Since there was a body of union opinion that favoured political action, existing unions were already providing a forum for those whose analysis of the political and economic system coincided with that of the SLP and the STLA. In April, 1900, the Vancouver Trades and Labour Council (VTLC) rejected the application of the STLA to send delegates to Council meetings.[16] The STLA took umbrage at this and proceeded to emulate its American counterpart in vilifying the labour leaders. For example, a resolution con-

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[14] Independent, March 9, 1901, a letter to the editor from the Press Committee of the SLP.

[15] Citizen and Country, October 7, 1899.

[16] Independent, April 21, 1900. Report of minutes of Vancouver TLC fortnightly meeting.

demning the VTLC for its action in the June 9, 1900 provincial election stated:

> We condemn the actions of the Trades and Labour Council politicians in upholding a platform for labour that is a compromise with cockroach business interests...we again call upon the rank and file of the working class to repudiate their fakir leaders....Working men unite! More disasters confront you while following your present leaders and while organized in your pure and simple plan."[17]

No significant number of working men accepted the invitation, however, and the STLA influence in British Columbia was even less than that of its political counterpart, the SLP.

Another factor which militated against the SLP was its insistence on eschewing "immediate demands," because this was considered political opportunism which watered down the class struggle. "No compromise," wrote Henry Ashplant, SLP secretary, "is the divine method endorsed by the SLP of Canada."[18] In the future the Socialist Party of Canada (SPC) was to suffer because it held the same doctrine.

William Bennett was correct when he commented that the SLP in Vancouver "never amounted to anything in the working class life of the city."[19] The only candidate the

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[17] Independent, June 23, 1900. Letter to the editor from C. H. King, Recording Secretary, Pioneer Mixed Alliance Local of the STLA.

[18] Citizen and Country, March 25, 1899.

[19] William Bennett, Builders of British Columbia, (Vancouver, B. C. Broadway Printers, 1937), p. 135.

party ran in British Columbia to "take possession of political power" was William Griffiths in 1903, who ended up at the bottom of the poll. By 1907 the Western Clarion commented that Griffiths was one of the two followers of DeLeon left in Vancouver.[20]

Although the SLP was only a small faction in the political life of British Columbia, it is worth mentioning because it was the first group on the British Columbia scene to advocate revolutionary socialism. In so doing, it managed to introduce some of the problems resulting from such a doctrine.

In an indirect way, the SLP also contributed to the beginning of the Socialist Party of British Columbia. A group of union men who were members of the SLP could not accept the STLA. On November 23, 1899, they split off to form the Vancouver Socialist Club.[21] With some additional

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[20] Clarion, April 27, 1907. In 1905 when the American SLP helped form the IWW, the Canadian SLP groups became IWW locals. When DeLeon split with Bill Haywood and the IWW to form the Workers International Industrial Union the Canadian groups followed suit. This small group was never a significant factor in B. C. politics or labour circles. When the WIIU, along with a number of other groups, was banned through government Order in Council in 1918, there was only one known existing local in Canada and that was in Toronto.

[21] The impetus to split from the SLP came from the United States where large groups were leaving the SLP for the same reasons that members of the Vancouver Socialist Club were leaving. In the U.S., members who "jumped" from the SLP were

members from the United Fishermen and Machinists unions, the Vancouver Socialist Club then became the United Socialist Labour Party (USLP) which was later to become one of the founding groups of the B. C. Socialist Party. The USLP was officially organized on April 25, 1900, for the purpose of working for "the emancipation of the working class from landlordism and capitalism."[22] During its brief existence it proved to be a lively and capable group. Their first task was to organize the first May Day labour gathering ever held in Vancouver. The meeting was chaired by Frank Rogers, vice-president of the Fishermen's Union, assisted by John Dodd, general secretary of the VTLC, and was a resounding success-the total enrolled membership of the USLP skyrocketed to 145 by May 2. A provincial election had been called for June 9 and the USLP had endorsed Will MacClain of the Machinists Union as their standard-bearer and the first Socialist candidate in B. C. By election day the membership of the USLP had further increased to 250.

The group's activity did not end with the election. At a meeting on June 18, a committee consisting of Alan Boag,

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known as Kangaroos. The Vancouver group also looked on themselves as a "kangaroo party." Interview with Ernest Burns,' Angus MacInnis Collection, Box 53, U.B.C. See also the Daily News Advertiser, May 15, 1900.

[22] Citizen and Country, July 13, 1900. For the complete manifesto of the USLP see appendix 2.

Will MacClain, J. McKeny, John Neelands, Christian Peters and P. Webster was struck to build a socialist hall. Boag owned property in the 800 block Westminster Avenue (now Main Street) on which he had an iron and brass foundry.

Within one month the hall was built on this land, financed by scrip issued on the Guernsey Market House plan.[23] The hall was used for many years by Labour and Socialist groups.

Although it was the SLP and the USLP who were primarily responsible for the Marxist orientation in early British Columbia socialism, not all socialists of the time were Marxian socialists. Parallelling the struggle in the United States for reforms to ameliorate the intolerable conditions under which so many people existed, and to provide prosperity and security, various groups in Canada also started organizing. Social reforms begged solutions from many sources: from Edward Bellamy's Looking Backward, Robert Blatchford's Merrie England and Henry George's Progess and Poverty: from the tenets of Christianity and from the wave of populism and progressivism rolling across the United States at the time.

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[23]In such plans scrip was issued to suppliers and workers in lieu of money and was subsequently redeemable through the receipt of goods and services from the issuing organization, making it unnecessary for the issuing group to borrow money to finance the project.

Merrie England, with its combination of reform and utopian socialism, was one of the most popular propaganda pieces. First published in England in 1895, it soon appeared regularly as recommended reading in all the socialist papers, both in the United States and Canada. Looking Backward was an even greater success, both from a literary point of view and as a social commentary. Within a few years of its first publication in 1888, a number of Nationalist clubs along the lines advocated by Bellamy had formed in Ontario and other parts of Canada.[24] In the United States "162 Nationalist Clubs were formed to teach Americans that the wish was father to the fact."[25] The Citizen and Country for April 15, 1899, listed 19 different reform groups in Ontario which had been formed during the 1890's.[26] There were groups in other parts of Canada too--notably the Cooperative Commonwealth groups in Manitoba and British Columbia--but the movement of ideas, as with people, at this time was decidedly from east to west. By 1900, however, Citizen and Country had noted the beginning of a vibrant social consciousness in B. C.: "If these

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[24] Citizen and Country, July 27, 1900.

[25] Ira Kipnis, The American Socialist Movement 1897-1912 (New York, California University Press, 1952), p. 44.

[26] Citizen and Country, April 15, 1899.

Westerners keep up their present gait," it commented, "we're liable to have the sun (of socialism) rising in the west and setting in the east."[27] The prediction was to come true within a very few years and would hold true for many years to come.

One of the earliest Ontario groups which branched out to B. C. was the Canadian Cooperative Commonwealth (CCC) which had been started by Dr. J.C. Spence[28] with the formation of cooperative communities as one of its objectives. In 1896 the CCC established the Ruskin Cedar Mill on the Fraser Delta, a short-lived venture in cooperative enterprise which was forced into bankruptcy in 1899. Named[29] for the English author, critic, and apostle of the cooperative movement, the cooperative was based on the plan outlined in Bellamy's work. In 1898 there were reportedly eighty persons involved in Ruskin, with room for an additional forty; assets exceeded liabilities by $35,000; there was a post office and a good school. Everyone worked an eight-hour day, each receiving the same amount of pay.[30] But this idyllic situation was not to last. One of

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[27] Ibid., Feb. 8, 1900.

[28] The Voice, April 8, 1898.

[29] G.P.V. Akrigg and Helen B. Akrigg, 1001 British Columbia Place Names (Vancouver, Discovery Press, 1970)

[30] The Voice, April 8, 1898.

the members, H. M. (Annie) Charlton, says the Ruskin Co-operative went into bankruptcy because of the failure of the Stave River to flood in the spring of 1899 and bring down the winter cut of logs needed to fill orders on hand. "That calamity seemed to show that cooperation by groups was not sufficient and that we must gain control of government so we could make laws to free ourselves from the money power."[31]

But the formation of cooperatives was not the only purpose of the CCC (of which Dr. Spence had established ten branches by 1898.) The organization also carried on a campaign of education and agitation for political action. Their most important political demands were:

1. Public ownership of all industries controlled by monopolies, trusts and combines.
2. Public ownership of all means of transportation, communication and other public utilities.
3. Public ownership of all mining industries.
4. Reduction of the hours of work in proportion to the progress of production.[32]
5. All useful inventions to be free to all, and the inventor remunerated by the public.

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[31]H. M. (Annie) Charlton, My Story of the History of the Movement up to Now, written in 1939 or 1940. Published in 1955, by O. Lee Charlton in a collection of Mrs. Charlton's own prose and poetry and some of her favourites by other authors. Angus MacInnis Collection, U.B.C.

[32]This demand, if implemented, would result in a static standard of living, which of course is not what the CCC wanted.

6. The issuing of all money by the government directly to the people.

7. The introduction of the initiative, referendum.... and proportional representation.[33]

Though the cooperatives set up by the CCC were short-lived, as was the CCC itself, many of the original members were active participants in the B. C. socialist movement for years afterward. Annie Charlton and her husband carried their ideas into the Canadian Socialist League, the B. C. Socialist Party, the Socialist Party of B. C.,[34] the Social Democratic Party, the Federated Labour Party, and finally, the CCF. George Dales, a member of Branch No. 10 in Winnipeg, became editor of the Voice in Winnipeg after J. W. Puttee was elected to the House of Commons as Canada's first Labour M. P., and was later a director and editor of the Western Clarion in Vancouver. Another former CCC member, J. T. Mortimer, was later both a provincial and a federal candidate for the SPBC, as well as a member of the Executive Committee and an organizer.

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[33]The Voice, April 8, 1898. Report of a speech by Dr. J. C. Spence at a Winnipeg meeting.

[34]The BCSP should not be confused with the SPBC which it preceded. The former was organized under the umbrella of the Canadian Socialist League (CSL) and later joined with the Revolutionary Socialist Party of Canada (RSPC) to become the SPBC. Some of the literature of the BCSP confusingly refers to the group as the Socialist Party of B. C.

J. M. Cameron, an active member of the Ruskin colony, came to the SPBC via the Christian Commonwealth of Canada and the Canadian Socialist League (CSL). He developed his ideas further by working as an organizer for the SPA in Seattle and for the American Labour Union in Victoria.

One of the important elements in the continuity of socialist thought in British Columbia was this body of men and women who acted as leaders and catalysts through many years of changing social circumstances and political opportunities. Their significance to the politics of British Columbia will be discussed further below.

There was also a strand of Christian socialism woven into the British Columbia tapestry. When the Ruskin cooperative failed in the spring of 1899, J. M. Cameron moved from Ruskin to Ladner, where he set up a branch of the Christian Commonwealth of Canada to advance the cause of Christian socialism. By this time Cameron had abandoned the aim of setting up cooperative colonies separate from the rest of society; instead he took to propagating socialist and Christian ideals, which he thought were identical and would lead to the restructuring of the entire society.[35]

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[35] "...socialists want an ideal form of government and...Christianity and socialism are identically the same [sic]. We socialists ought to always stand out prominently for the

It is not entirely clear how well organized the Christian Commonwealth was in British Columbia. From reports in the Citizen and Country we know that Thomas Robinson, formerly of Ruskin, was holding meetings in New Westminster and that Cameron was organizing in Port Moody, where the Charltons had moved after leaving Ruskin. A report from J. M. Cameron states that "there are several branches of the Christian Commonwealth in various localities in British Columbia" and that the grand council of the Christian Commonwealth was to meet during Christmas week to discuss the question of "cooperating with the CSL...as they realize it is only through unity that socialists can make their work felt."[36] At this meeting they must have decided to abandon their name, since we learn that on January 25, 1900, Branch No. 6 of the Canadian Socialist League[37] had been organized in Port Moody with O. L. Charlton as secretary and J. M. Cameron as president and organizer. One of their first speakers was Will MacClain, a member of the Vancouver Socialist Club.

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cause of Christ and Humanity and then it will not be long before we see signs of that peace on earth and good-will toward men which Christ came to proclaim." - Citizen and Country, Aug. 12, 1899.

[36] Citizen and Country, December 30, 1899.

[37] Other branches were: No. 1, Montreal; No. 2, Toronto; No. 3, Toronto; No. 4, London; No. 5, Malton. - Citizen and Country, February 2, 1900.

Further influences on British Columbia socialism came via the CSL. In the summer of 1899, two meetings were held, one in Montreal and one in Toronto, to discuss socialist principles and, by coincidence, both groups took the name Canadian Socialist League.[38] These two groups, along with the Social Reform Club, met in Toronto on October 20, 1899 and established a Canada-wide organization with the main purpose of uniting the efforts of all groups in Canada working for improved social conditions and for the cause of socialism. They adopted a constitution which stated the aims of the CSL were to promote the union of effort among individuals and groups seeking to promote socialism and to improve the social conditions of the people. Membership was to be open to all persons who accepted the platform and without regard to colour, creed or sex. The platform called for abolition of the senate, the referendum and initiative, proportional representation, public ownership of railways, telegraphs, waterworks, electric power distribution and other public franchises, land nationalization with occupancy being the only title to land, the use for public purposes of community produced values, a national currency and government banking system, public ownership of all

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[38] Clarion, October 29, 1904. The Montreal group, the paper reports, had previously all been members of the Socialist Labour Party, but it is not known who was instrumental in organizing the meeting. The Toronto meeting was called by G. Weston Wrigley, as was the subsequent October meeting of both groups.

monopolies and ultimately all the means of production, distribution and exchange, and abolition of the patent laws governing inventions with the aim in view of having labour-saving machinery introduce a shorter work day.[39]

Thus we see that Marx was not the inspiration for Canada's first national socialist organization. Rather the platform and constitution drew from the panaceas of the Henry George Clubs, Nationalist Clubs, Social Reform Leagues, Direct Legislation Leagues, and other of the nascent groups referred to earlier. Faith abounded that the society could be mended and that all people--rich and poor, owner and renter, entrepreneur and labourer--could be induced to co-operate to attain a common goal. This was not the socialism of class analysis but the utopian socialism of evolution.

> The Canadian Socialist League...endeavours to link the present conditions with the ideal of the future by remedying the social wrongs that are oppressing the people of today rather than awaiting a great social revolution which will abolish society as it stands and replace it with a disorganized society led by men who have been teaching class hatred. Socialism to be lasting must come as a result of social evolution rather than by bloody revolution.[40]

News of the organization of the CSL and its purposes

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[39] Citizen and Country, October 28, 1899.

[40] G. Weston Wrigley, Citizen and Country, May 4, 1900.

spread quickly via the columns of Citizen and Country, and in the November 25, 1899 edition it was announced that enquiries had been received from as far away as Revelstoke, Kaslo, Lardeau, Sapperton, Slocan and Rossland, and that a branch of the League had been formed in Golden. The idea of an umbrella organization which would facilitate the communication and cooperation of the various reform and socialist groups was appealing so long as not too much attention was being given to doctrine. Before this stage was reached, the League had formed 62 branches across Canada. The importance of the CSL to the growth of socialism in B. C. was that it provided a means of communication by which doctrine could be discussed. At one point it also provided funds for an organizer to travel throughout B. C., what is now Alberta and Saskatchewan, and Manitoba, forming CSL branches.

The organ of communication was the weekly newspaper Citizen and Country, which began publishing on April 15, 1898. In addition to furnishing news of the activities of reform groups about the country, its pages were filled with articles on direct legislation, proportional representation, adult suffrage, Senate abolition, land nationalization, taxation of land values, a national currency, government banking, prohibition of the liquor traffic, nationalization of the liquor trade, government insurance, the eight-hour work day, unem-

ployment, international free trade, disarmament, Canadian independence and Christian Socialism. The first executive of the Citizen and Country were: The Reverend William S. Rowe, president; E. H. Hilborn, vice-president; G. W. Wrigley, R. N. Price, and J. T. McBride, directors; and George Wrigley, Sr., editor. It is interesting to note the role some of these men had played as social critics and reformers, and their influence in the development of a socialist movement in Canada.

Rowe was a Methodist minister who left Toronto in May, 1900, to take up a pastorate in Victoria. Within a year he had organized CSL branches in Victoria and Sandon, but he failed to keep pace with the doctrinal changes taking place in the B. C. movement.[41] George Wrigley, an Ontario man, was a member of the Canadian Press Association and at various times editor of the Wallaceburg Record, Canadian Labour Courier (St. Thomas), Drumbo Record, Canada Farmer's Sun (Toronto), and the Royal Templar (Hamilton). He was also a founding member of the People's Party of Ontario in September, 1900. His son,

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[41]He came under very heavy attack from B. C. socialists when, in 1903, he accepted an appointment to act on the federal Royal Commission investigating strikes by the United Brotherhood of Railway Employees and the Western Federation of Miners. Rowe had been a Christian Socialist, but by this time the movement in B. C. had become Marxist and revolutionary, viewing such cooperation with the government in strike investigations as a betrayal of the working class.

George Weston Wrigley, gained experience in publishing radical and protest papers by helping his father publish the Canada Farmer's Sun, organ of the Patrons of Industry. He was also a member of the Typographical Union and had served as financial secretary of the Toronto Trades and Labour Council in 1895-96. To him must be given a great deal of the credit for the spread of socialist ideas during this early period. He spent much of his time endeavouring to establish a Canadian socialist movement, writing and travelling extensively to speak in many of the larger settlements of Canada. He was one of the organizers of the CSL in 1899, and by January, 1902, there were more than sixty branches in various parts of the country. Through his activities in the CSL the Citizen and Country became the chief Canadian organ for the promotion of ideal, Christian or utopian socialism, and Ontario became the center of the movement.

The importance of the Citizen and Country can be seen from what happened when the newspaper was moved to Vancouver: the idealist movement in eastern Canada quickly petered out and British Columbia became the center of socialist thought in Canada. Wrigley moved to Vancouver with the paper[42] and

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[42] In Lardeau, a mining community in the B. C. Kootenay area, Parmeter Pettipiece had been publishing the Eagle. Wrigley and Pettipiece combined their forces, renamed the

began the metamorphosis which changed him from his earlier espousal of reform measures and Christian Socialism to advocacy of revolutionary or Marxist socialism.

During its approximately four years of publication, the Citizen and Country had an average circulation of six thousand. It quickly became the means by which the heterogeneous socialist and social reform groups, whether organized under the umbrella of the CSL or not, communicated with one another and with subscribers outside any of the organized groups. The largest group of subscribers, outside of the Toronto area, were in British Columbia[43] and Manitoba. The paper reflected the concern of the CSL that Christianity and socialism should go hand in hand. For example, one of the regular columns, "The Brotherhood of Man", always began with the following:

> Definitions: Modern civilization is crushing the life and soul out of the people. There is a reason for this and there must be a remedy. Political economy--the Science of Production and Distribution of wealth--has not been studied by the people as it ought to be.

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result the Canadian Socialist and moved it to Vancouver. The Canadian Socialist later became the Western Clarion which published almost continuously until 1925. For the story of these papers, see Chapter V, pp. 174-177

[43] About fifteen percent of the Citizen and Country's subscribers were in B. C. Citizen and Country, May 4, 1900.

> The Church: stands for good citizenship and more than any other organized body establishes right relationships between man and God and man and man. But the most eminent Christians of the day assert most vehemently that the Church has put theology so far in advance that sociology has been to an alarming extent overlooked and neglected.
>
> Socialism: places sociology on the same plane with theology. If a man's relations with his fellow man be not based on principles of justice, his theology is a myth. To be a Christian means to practice both these principles. Socialists as frequently neglect Theology as Christians neglect Sociology. In Christian Socialism the most exaulted manhood may be developed.[44]

Thus it can be seen that there were a great many contributions to the arena of social reform in B. C. The Marxism of the SLP, the cooperatism of the CCC, the Christian and ideal socialism propagated by the Citizen and Country of the CSL--all these made some contribution, as did the many reformist ideas of the Henry George groups, the populists, and others.

As the Marxist socialist ideal emerged in the province pockets of support were provided by the immigrant tradesmen and miners from Britain and the United States.[45] Much later (1933) many of these same people would give their allegiance

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[44] Citizen and Country, March 11, 1899. Also in subsequent editions.

[45] See Chapter 1, pp. 30-34.

to the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation (CCF). Meanwhile, their hope for a better life was kept alive during this period by the Socialist Party of Canada.

CHAPTER III

CHANGING POLITICAL ALIGNMENTS: 1900-1903

The British immigrants who settled in British Columbia brought with them not only the values of unionism and socialism, but also certain notions concerning full citizenship--notions which they did not find reflected in the industrial-frontier milieu of British Columbia. These ideas gradually spread through parts of the province, and coupled with rising material expectations resulting from the rapid economic development of the time,[1] they gave birth to a new awareness among the working class that independent political action was necessary. Coincident with this new political awakening the traditional alliance of governing elites began to break down and a process of political realignment began. The provincial election of June, 1900 convinced the socialists in the province that they were going to become a permanent part of the B. C. political scene.

In a representative parliamentary democracy it is assumed that competitive forces in society will find their

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[1]The B. C. Workman of July 22, 1899, commented that, since workers had fallen behind in wages during the depression, it was "natural...that at such times of inflation the workers should ask for a share of this bounty."

expression through elected elites. If the demands of any one sector--rich, poor, Indians, etc.--are not represented among the elected elites, then for that sector, democracy is non-existent. For the citizen, the salient feature of democracy is his right to participate in the political and societal process-a right which must be protected from infringement by the State, individuals or organizations.

T. H. Marshall's comments are useful in extending this discussion of the role of the citizen in a democracy:

> I shall be running true to type as a sociologist if I begin by saying that I propose to divide citizenship into three parts. But the analysis is, in this case, dictated by history even more than by logic. I shall call these parts, or elements, civil, political and social. The civil element is composed of the rights necessary for individual freedom--liberty of the person, freedom of speech, thought and faith, the right to own property and to conclude valid contracts, and the right to justice. The last is of a different order from the others because it is the right to defend and assert all one's rights on terms of equality with others and by due process of law. This shows us that the institutions most directly associated with civil rights are the courts of justice. By the political element I mean the right to participate in the exercises of political power, as a member of a body invested with political authority or as an elector of the members of such a body. The corresponding institutions are parliament and councils of local government. By social element I mean the whole range from the right to a modicum of economic welfare and security to the right to share to the full in the social heritage and to live the life of a civilized being according to the standards prevailing in society. The institutions most closely connected with it are the educational system and the

social services.[2]

In looking at the development of the citizen's role in England, Marshall ascribes each of the above elements to a century: "civil rights to the eighteenth, political to the nineteenth, and social to the twentieth."[3]

Since the political culture of British Columbia derived largely from Britain, it might be assumed that the accumulated experience of Britain in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries would be reflected in the province at the turn of the century. In general terms this is true, but in the industrial-frontier context of British Columbia there were noticeable exceptions in the civil and political components of full citizenship. De jure, minorities had all the civil rights referred to by Marshall, but none of the political rights.[4] De facto the minorities were harassed interminably by white workers and by employers too: white workers feared that the Chinese and Japanese would usurp

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[2]T. H. Marshall, Citizenship and Social Class, (Cambridge, 1950), pp 10F. Quoted in Ralf Dahrendorf, Society and Democracy in Germany (N.Y.: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1967, Anchor Books, 1969), p.66, emphasis in original.

[3]Ibid., Marshall, p. 14, Dahrendorf, p. 66.

[4]The Following information comes from T. H. Qualter, The Election Process in Canada (Toronto: McGraw-Hill,

their jobs; employers could induce the Orientals to work harder by exploiting their fear of deportation. Although by law these minority groups enjoyed civil rights, in their daily lives they endured many injustices. Unions and union members also felt the effects of minority position, since at the turn of the century less than ten per cent of the working force was unionized. In many industries workers lost their jobs because they were union members. They were often blacklisted, making it difficult for them to locate work of any kind. The government too contributed to the insecurity of minority groups. A number of times the militia was used against strikers.[5] Moreover, every session of the B. C. legislature included long discussions about the dangers accruing to civilized society from the presence of Chinese, Japanese and East Indians, and each year a law was passed to

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1970). British Columbia had no property qualifications for the franchise and all adult male natural-born British subjects were eligible to vote. P. 40. "Until 1945 the right to vote in B. C. Provincial elections was still denied to 'every Chinese, Japanese, Hindu or Indian,' although the Japanese who had served in the Canadian forces in the first World War were not so disqualified. The right to vote as a reward for military service was gradually extended to the other groups who suffered racial discrimination, although it was not until a new Provincial Elections Act was introduced in 1953 that all references to race were finally dropped in British Columbia. P. 10.

[5]Paul Phillips, No Power Greater (Vancouver, 1967). In this study Phillips describes the frequent use of the militia to break strikes. See too Stuart Jamieson, Times of Trouble: Labour Unrest and Industrial Conflict in Canada,

limit or restrict immigration of these groups into B. C.[6]

Under such conditions civil rights were tenuous. Political rights also were circumscribed by uneven districting and sex,[7] and by voter registration regulations requiring two months' residence in an area, making it less likely that people in highly mobile occupations such as fishing, logging and mining would be on the voters' lists.

But it was the weakness of the third element of full citizenship--social rights--that made the civil and political rights of the time to a great extent inoperable. In British Columbia, as in England, at the beginning of the twentieth century the "underclass" was awakening to the need for a more equitable distribution of wealth and for workmen's compensation, old age care, support for the poor, compulsory education for all, laws protecting labour from exploitation, control of crown land alienation--in short, as Marshall says,

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1900-66 (Ottawa, Information Canada, Task Force on Labour Relations, Study No. 22, 1968). Peter Silverman, A History of the Militia and Defenses of British Columbia (M.A. Thesis, U.B.C., 1956), documents four separate cases where the militia was used to break strikes.

[6]The federal government disallowed all the B. C. legislation aimed at restricting immigration.

[7]The franchise was obtained by women in British Columbia in 1917.

"from the right to a modicum of economic welfare and security to the right to share to the full in the social heritage and to live the life of a civilized being according to the standards prevailing in society." Through bitter experience some sections of the working class in British Columbia came to realize that, although by law they had most of the civil and political rights of the day, full citizenship was unrealizable without social rights.[8] Gradually the workers began to use their political rights to obtain social rights, and the more social rights they obtained, the more they were able to exercise their political rights to advantage.

During most of the first thirty years when British Columbia was in Confederation, "special interests--of railway industrialists, coal-barons, wholesalers and importers, and lumber and salmon canning capitalists"[9] were the dominant influence in government circles. Labour had tried to obtain some power in Victoria, but without lasting success and with-

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[8]Testifying before the Royal Commission on Industrial strife in B. C., a Cumberland clergyman referred to the lack of economic and political freedom for workers in the company towns and said that life in the coal mining area had "become really pregnant with all that an American or an Englishman dislikes." Canada, Sessional Papers, Volume XXXVII, No. 13 1904, "Evidence Taken Before the Royal Commission to Inquire into Industrial Disputes in the Province of British Columbia." Dunsmuir's repressiveness and far-reaching influence into everyday life is described throughout the testimony.

[9]Ormsby, p. 318

out policy-making or policy-influencing power.[10] The large and quickly growing working class had no elites competing on their behalf in the legislature, and thus representative democracy was for them non-operative.[11] At the same time, the traditional alliance of governing elites began to break down, so that during the five year period 1898 to 1903 there were no less than six different ministries. The stage was set for a realignment of forces, and a growing number of the working class were determined to figure in this realignment.

Until the provincial election of 1903, party politics did not play a large role in British Columbia. As Sage points out, the leadership of the groupings which did exist was fairly durable,[12] but sometimes the same person could be found in the

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[10]The two M.L.A.'s from the M.M.L.P.A. elected in 1890 either were not re-elected or did not run again in 1894, but Robert McPherson, representing the Nationalist Party, did get elected at this time. Not only were labour representatives confined to the opposition, but they were a lone voice within the opposition.

[11]This was a point to which Will MacClain, USLP candidate in the June 9, 1900, provincial election, made frequent references, obviously believing he expressed the feeling of the working class. "In New Zealand the plain people--the farmers and wage-earners--are represented in the government; bankers and lawyers do not form the majority of legislators," he said. Independent, June 9, 1900.

[12]W. N. Sage, "Federal Parties and Provincial Political Groups in British Columbia 1871-1903," B. C. Historical Quarterly, 12, (April, 1948), passim. Sage reports that there was

cabinet of either group. Among the backbenchers party discipline was very loose: the situation was analogous to that described by Dahl in referring to the standard patterns of oppositions in the American congressional system:

> Oppositions are typically opposed only to specific policies or the personnel of Government. Thus it is nearly always impossible to refer precisely to "the Opposition", for the coalition which opposes the government on one matter may fall apart, or even govern, on another. To say where "the Government" leaves off and "the Opposition" begins is an exercise in metaphysics.[13]

In British Columbia the system worked satisfactorily as long as provincial politicians were united in their fight against the federal government over the guarantees given at the time B. C. joined Confederation. After completion of the Canadian Pacific and Esquimalt and Nanaimo railroads, however, B. C.'s political leaders were able to turn their attention more fully to matters completely within their own jurisdiction. Although they were all drawn from the professions, industry

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no clear relationship between federal parties and provincial groups. In general ideological terms, however, the Smith, Robson, Davie, Turner and Dunsmuir ministries were related to the Conservatives, and the DeCosmos, Walkem, Beaven, Semlin and Martin ministries were related to the Liberals.

[13]Robert A. Dahl, "The American Oppositions: Affirmations and Denial," Robert A. Dahl, ed., Political Oppositions in Western Democracies (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966), p. 34. This may be a slight exaggeration, but the point to be made is that the government could not depend on the consistent support of its backbenchers. Party discipline in contemporary terms was non-existent.

and business--a fact which helped them to cooperate--other matters divided them. The rivalry between the Mainland and the Island burst forth anew when in John Robson's redistribution bill of 1895 Vancouver was not given sufficient representation to suit local politicians. Also angered by the treatment accorded Vancouver were the growing working and commercial classes, many of whose number came from outside the province,[14] who wanted greater participation in government, but found that most of the worthwhile offices were held and filled by the Vancouver Island clique. Hence, during the last five years of the nineteenth century, members of the Vancouver commercial class and men from other parts of the mainland as well appeared on the Victoria scene and began to challenge the status quo.

As the June 9, 1900, election approached, the political situation was one of the most confusing ever to have existed in the province. Not only was there no clear division between competing groups; within these groups there were various

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[14]For example, T. W. Acheson, "Changing Social Origins of the Canadian Industrial Elite, 1880-1910," Business History Review, XLVII, No. 2 (1973), notes that in his sample of Western Canadian capitalists for the period 1905-1910, none was born in Western Canada. Martin Robin, The Rush for Spoils, and Margaret Ormsby, British Columbia: a History, discuss the Vancouver Island-Mainland competition of this period.

factions.[15] Lieutenant-Governor T. R. McInnes, who had helped to create the confusing situations,[16] probably saw things more accurately at this time than he had on previous occasions. To Governor General Minto he wrote, "There has not been, to my knowledge, a Governor in Canada who has had such an utterly amorphous and self-seeking pack of politicians from which to

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[15]For example, before Martin became premier in 1900 he had been a Liberal and Attorney General in the Semlin government. Carter-Cotton was also a member of the Semlin cabinet and a Liberal too. During the election Martin ran as a leader of his own government party with supprt from two Liberals; Carter-Cotton ran, not for the Liberals, but for the Provincial Party. The Independent, June 9, 1900, p. 1, attempts to sort out these divisions by listing all the candidates in table form. On the government side, they show thirty Martin supporters and two Liberals (the only ones running under the name.) On the opposition side are listed nineteen Conservatives, eighteen Provincialites, eighteen Turnerites, five Independent Labour Party and one Socialist. Thomas Robinson wrote, "Our political mix-up here is not unlike the famous boarding house hash-hard to tell which is head or tails." Citizen & Country, May 18, 1900.

[16]For his role in the preceding twelve months Lieutenant-Governor T. R. McInnes was dismissed by Laurier on June 20, 1900. McInnes had become embroiled in B. C. politics by dismissing Semlin when he was not able to obtain majority support in the legislature after being premier for two years without a working majority. Martin, whom McInnes had called to form a government, failed to put together a working coalition and was only able to get five men to participate in his cabinet. After asking Martin to form a government, McInnes proceeded to prorogue the house. When he appeared to read his speech, all the members except Martin and the Speaker left. Martin was allowed to go for three months without meeting the legislature. For further details see J. T. Saywell, "The McInnes Incident in British Columbia," BCHQ, Vol. 14, 1950, pp. 141-66; J. T. Saywell, The Office of the Lieutenant-Governor (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1957.)

seek a stable government as myself."[17] At the same time he wrote to Sir Wilfred Laurier, "The trouble is that at present we have about as many leaders, or would-be leaders, as followers. I need not go over the names of those in the old House who considered themselves pre-eminently qualified to become premier--it would include about one third of them."[18]

In this faction-riddled situation[19] the politicians perceived that they would have to broaden their support base. As the province had emerged from the hammerlock of the long recession, it had moved into one of its greatest growth periods. The labour-intensive mining industry in the Kootenay and Boundary areas gave birth to thriving towns, populated in the main by Americans, where previously only prospectors had roamed.[20] The growing working class was important not only in

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[17]Ormsby, p. 323.

[18]Ibid., p. 323.

[19]Truman's hypothesis that severe disturbances inevitably produce associations to stabilize group relations would be seen to hold true in B. C. over the three-year period 1900-1903, when party politics finally took hold at the provincial level. David Truman, The Governmental Process, p. 61.

[20]The Western Federation of Miners had moved into the area to organize the metal miners in 1895. By the end of the century they had eleven unions formed into a District Association with 3,000 members. Ferguson Eagle, February 4,

terms of numbers, but also in its influence on the existing economic and social structure of the province. Settlement in British Columbia was now no longer confined to Vancouver Island and the Lower Mainland, and it was to the outlying areas that the political elites now turned for electoral support.

At the same time, Labour and labour leaders dissatisfied with their limited success after years of striving looked around for means of obtaining their demands through political channels. The series of weak provincial governments had provided little control on the power and influence of the millions of dollars of capital flowing into the province. Nor had governments perceived the sacrifices--in terms of working conditions, health and pay[21]--made by the workers in the

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1900. Many of the miners were Americans who had come north from Colorado, Idaho and Montana. They were imbued with the populism of the "Silver States" and with the radicalism born of the many battles they had fought with the mine owners south of the border. Not too far in the future these same men would provide pockets of support for the Socialists. See Chapter V.

[21]Frequent references to living and working conditions in the metal and coal mining camps can be found in the American Labour Union Journal and the Miners' Magazine as well as occasionally in the Western Clarion and other small community papers such as the Sandon Paystreak. They were company towns at their worst, with the company owning everything including the one store. Whole families lived in one-room dwellings which were usually without services because the companies were

coal and metal mining areas in order to support this booming era.

An important factor in bringing the mining communities to political life was the passage of an eight-hour day law for underground miners during the 1899 session of the Legislative Assembly.[22] The Mine-Owners Association immediately pledged to make the law inoperable. The measure had passed only narrowly and the miners knew that the statute was vulnerable, since anything voted in could also be voted out. They were therefore ready to enter the political arena to protect this important gain. The importance of this law to the miners was demonstrated by the declared intention of the Western Federation of Miners to sustain the eight-hour law "even if it means

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not required to provide them as long as they could prevent incorporation as municipalities. Except for underground workers, the hours of work for years were ten hours a day, six (and sometimes seven) days per week.

[22]The law had been forced through. The 1898 election had left Ralph Smith, a former coal miner and now business agent of the Nanaimo Miners Union, who had been elected as a representative of the Nanaimo Labour Party, and two members sympathetic to labour--McPherson and McKechnie--in a balance of power position. Semlin, the Premier, had seventeen seats, while the Opposition had eighteen. Under these circumstances the three labour sympathizers were able to persuade the government to pass the eight-hour law in return for a promise of support for other government measures.

closing all the mines."[23]

As a result of all the foregoing factors, for the first time in their history, the working class in British Columbia found three separate groups seeking their support: the already-established elite, the labour politicians, and the socialists. Clearly the election of June 9, 1900, was to be a watershed in British Columbia politics.

As mentioned earlier, the traditional ruling groups were split more seriously in early 1900 than ever before. and were therefore in need of new sources of support. Martin, the Premier at dissolution, appealed most overtly for labour support, both in his speeches and in his advertising campaign. His series of advertisements in the Independent, the official organ of the Vancouver Trades and Labour Council, was intended

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[23] Rossland Industrial World, January 20, 1900. It is ironic that in February, 1901, in order to protect the eight-hour day, the Rossland local accepted the contract system for the miners and a wage reduction for the muckers. Under the contract system the men were actually forced to compete with one another because they had to bid on sections of work. Furthermore, as a consequence of the wage reduction certain mines--mainly the Centre Star, War Eagle and LeRoi--gained a competitive edge over the other mines, making the members of unions at other mines resentful and placing pressure on union solidarity. The Rossland local did not go on strike because the men feared it might annoy the legislators and impel them to revoke the eight-hour law. Miners' Magazine, Sept., 1901.

to appeal to the labour vote.[24] Martin pledged that any government formed by him would abolish the $200 candidate deposit, re-enact all disallowed statutes containing anti-mongolian clauses, discourage the spread of the use of cheap oriental labour, continue to attempt to enforce the eight-hour law passed in 1898 and if this failed to put it to referendum at the next election, to retain the resources of the province for the people by putting an end to speculation, to have railways constructed and operated by the government, and to remove from the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council any power to make substantive changes in the law.[25]

The Liberal-Conservative Party appeal for the working-men's vote consisted of support for the eight-hour law and adoption of the principle of government ownership of railways in so far as the circumstances of the province would permit.[26]

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[24]The series ran in the Independent, weekly from May 5, 1900 to June 9, 1900.

[25]Not the Lieutenant-Governor as stated by Robert T. Loosmore, The B. C. Labour Movement and Political Action, 1879-1906 (M.A. Thesis, U.B.C. 1954), p. 102, but the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council, which is the Cabinet. In this plank Martin was trying to put limits on government by Order-in-Council.

[26]The Independent, from a series of advertisements appearing weekly, April 28, 1900 to June 9, 1900.

There was substantial freedom of action for individual candidates, some of whom made their own moves to obtain labour support. For example, in return for League support, Richard McBride, the Conservative candidate in Dewdney, endorsed the platform of the Canadian Socialist League (CSL) when it was presented to him by J. M. Cameron. (Port Moody, in the Dewdney riding, was the center of the League's activities at that time.) As part of its election campaign, the League had circulated the following pledge extensively throughout the province:

Elections 1900

(Canadian Socialist League Election Pledge)

The undersigned, as elector in _____Riding, hereby pledges himself not to vote for any candidate who refuses to subscribe to the attached Labor Platform and Candidates Pledge.

Labor Platform and Candidates Pledge

The undersigned, a candidate for election to the B. C. Provincial Legislature, hereby endorses the following labor platform:

1) Proportional representation, based on adult suffrage. No candidate's deposit to be required when nomination endorsed by 100 electors.

2) Referendum on all questions that 10 per cent of the members may demand to have submitted to the people.

3) Employment for the unemployed at living wages, and eight-hour day on all public works. Union label on all government supplies.

4) Public ownership of all monopolies.

5) School books to be supplied free, or at first cost.

6) Exempting of improvements from taxation.

and pledges himself to use all lawful means to have these measures placed on the statutes of the province.[27]

Later in the campaign McBride denied signing the pledge and it was necessary for Cameron to make copies of the signed pledge for circulation and verification. That McBride was not entirely in agreement with the six points of the pledge was demonstrated by his later performance as a member of the Dunsmuir government and as premier. Why then did he sign the pledge? It can only be assumed that Cameron had convinced him that socialist and labour strength in the riding was strong. At a later date McBride did cooperate with the socialists in the legislature, but this was strictly expedience--he needed their support to say in office.[28]

Taking advantage of the confused political situation,

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[27] The Independent, April 21, 1900.

[28] I cannot agree with Loosmore, p. 111, or with the Opposition of the day that there is evidence indicating that McBride was sympathetic to labour, and certainly he held no brief for the socialists, although he and Hawthornthwaite had a good working relationship. The period of McBride's premiership can be compared with that of W.A.C. Bennett. Both were periods of rapid industrial growth, necessitating improved and enlarged transportation facilities. McBride built railways and roads, and Bennett built roads and railways. McBride's, and Bennett's, greatest contribution to labour can be seen as industrial expansion.

capitalizing on the increased number of union men in the province and on the small sucess Ralph Smith had obtained as the lone labour representative in the House, and no doubt also sensing the winds of change, organized labour entered the political arena in some areas of the province.[29] In Nanaimo and Vancouver they fielded their own candidates, while in the Kootenay-Boundary area they adopted the well-known tactic of the American Federation of Labour and the example of the Ontario unionists, giving their support to candidates of other parties who pledged themselves to support labour interests.

A further significance of the election of June 9, 1900, was the fact that, for the first time in British Columbia politics, a socialist entered the race. Running in the Vancouver riding, Will MacClain was a candidate of the United Socialist Labour Party (USLP), of which he had been an organizer that spring.[30]

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[29]The Victoria Daily Colonist, June 3, 1900, noted that this was the first B. C. campaign in which "labor issues are presented to the voters."

[30]Little is known of MacClain's earlier activities other than that he had been in the British navy for twelve years. William Bennett, Builders of British Columbia (Vancouver, Broadway Printers, 1937), p. 137, says he "jumped" his ship in Seattle but the Province, June 11, 1900, p. 3, says he received an honourable discharge. He arrived in British Columbia sometime in 1899 and soon became active in labor activities. He was an organizer

Unlike socialist demands, which differed in both tone and content from those in other provinces, the political demands of labour were not unique to this coastal province.[31] In their similarities the labour platforms across the country reflected the growing phenomenon of continental communication links.[32] In general labour called for a legal workday of not

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of the fishermen's strike in 1900, and along with Frank Rogers and Ernest Burns, had been a prime mover in getting the Japanese, Indian and white fishermen to cooperate. For the full story of this strike see Ralston, Keith, The 1900 Strike of Fraser River Sockeye Salmon Fishermen (M.A. Thesis, U.B.C., 1965). MacClain was president of the Machinists Union, and within the year he had been instrumental in having the weekly hours in the Canadian Pacific Railway Vancouver shops reduced from 60 to 54, with an increase in take-home pay. He was also on the Vancouver Trades and Labour Council, and consistently fought labour's attempts to set up political arms in the form of labour parties.

[31]The one demand that was unique to British Columbia, and for that matter the Pacific Coast, reflected labour's concern with the immigration of Chinese and Japanese workers, a problem which was to concern labour until W. W. II.

[32]The Rocky Mountains may have helped to isolate British Columbia economically, but they did not prevent communications or the flow of ideas. This is not to say that B. C. was part of a "global village", but the progressive ideas of the Populists and latterly of the American socialist movement were well known west of the Rockies. In addition to the influence of the Citizen and Country referred to earlier, there were also radical journals in the southeastern mining area, such as the Sandon Raystreak and the Ferguson Eagle (later the Lardeau Eagle), and the miners' own publications--Miners' Magazine and the American Labour Union Journal--both edited by American socialists, as well as labour papers such as the Independent in Vancouver and the Rossland Industrial World, official organ of District No. 6 of the Western Federation of Miners, and the Nanaimo Clarion. Although these

more than eight hours, a minimum wage on public works, government ownership of telephone, telegraph and railway lines, direct democracy through the initiative and referendum, abolition of the contract system on public works, abolition of the $200 candidates deposit, single tax, free compulsory education with free materials, and no more public land to be alienated to corporations or individuals except on a lease basis. Aside from the public ownership planks, the labour platforms bore little evidence of socialist influence. The capitalist system was acceptable--what they wanted was a more equitable share of its products.

The platform on which Will MacClain stood was not solely the socialism of Marx, nor was it purely the radical politics of the American West. Although the immediate demands were similar in content to those of the Independent Labor Parties, they differed in tone. As Loosmore says, "They have a flavour of economic and political theory not found in the pragmatic demands of the 'pure and simple' unionists."[33] The

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papers were mainly carriers of local news, they also devoted considerable space to news from other parts of the world. The Nanaimo Herald was sympathetic to labour, and the daily press itself (e.g. the Daily News Advertiser and the Daily World in Vancouver, the Daily Colonist in Victoria, and the Nanaimo Free Press) gave coverage, if not always unbiased, to political events outside the province.

[33]Loosmore, p. 119.

socialism of the U.S.L.P. was "revolutionary" in that it called for "the adoption of a social and industrial system that will put an end to profit", and "idealist"[34] in that its program included immediate demands. The original group who started the U.S.L.P. had been former members of the Socialist Labour Party (<u>supra</u>, p.61, Ch. 2), and this is evident in that large portions of the platform were taken verbatim from the platform of the Socialist Labour Party, a platform which in turn had been taken from the American S.L.P.

This, then, is the origin of the Marxist element in the U.S.L.P. platform. In addition to calling for the same changes as did the Independent Labour Party candidates, the U.S.L.P. brought these additional demands to the British Columbia political scene: the Dominion to have exclusive right to issue money; the transfer from provincial to federal jurisdiction of the natural resources of the country; the abolition of patent rights (inventors to be paid outright by the government); progressive income and inheritance taxes

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[34] "Indealist" is the term used by the revolutionary socialists to describe those people who wanted to change the capitalist system but who at the same time called for measures which would improve the system until such time as the complete change could be brought about. From an interview in August, 1966, with Wallace W. and Stanley Lefeaux.

(not the single-tax still so popular with labour); repeal of all pauper, tramp and conspiracy laws; employment of the unemployed by the public authorities; equalization of male and female wages for like work; abolition of the Senate; proportional representation; all election days to be legal holidays; administration of justice to be free; and abolition of corporal and capital punishment.

As the election results later indicated the important issues in the election so far as labour was concerned were the eight-hour law and the anti-Mongolian question. Apparently this became obvious to the U.S.L.P. as the campaign progressed, because they later included, for the first and last time, the following anti-Mongolian plank in their platform:

> The United Socialist Labor Party of B.C. would always stand for truth and justice and liberty. A true democracy of happy workers, freed from the abuse of greedy corporations, who are bringing thousands of Japs and Chinese to the Province of British Columbia to take the places of the white British workers of this fair province, and in so doing are simply taking the bread and butter out of the mouths of the wives and children of the workers of this city and province. Therefore we appeal to the workers of this city to help us in our noble fight against unscrupulous hirelings of the capitalist class and in doing this you are helping to protect your wives and families, homes and fire-sides. Better wages, shorter hours of labor and a minimum wage of $2.50 a day for all unskilled labor.[35]

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[35] Independent, June 2, 1900. Loosmore, p. 116, erred when he said that the U.S.L.P. did not campaign on an anti-Mongolian plank.

That a conscious effort was being made to secure the vote of the working man was clearly visible in the influence of socialism on the various party programs. The editor of the Slocan Drill observed:

> Practical ethics of socialism are making great headway in the west...every platform in sight in our own provincial lumber year is full charged with...commendable material. Our politicals are imbibing the socialist ozone in large doses, for they know it is the elixir of life to this and coming generations. Public franchises for the public and freedom for all are powerful levers with the masses.[36]

A week later the Slocan Drill was again anticipating heaven-on-earth in British Columbia after the election:

> More practical socialistic ideas are expressed today in the multitudinous platforms before the provincial electors than ever saw the light before in the west. Everywhere the aim seems to be to give the people anything and everything that comes under the head of public franchise and ownership. If all the propositions are carried out by the incoming legislature we shall have a perfect Elysium in British Columbia.[37]

But Utopia as defined by the Slocan Drill was not to be attained so easily. Although the new ideas of the labourites and socialists were to leave their mark on the British Columbia political scene in perpetuity, on June 9 the electors went to the polls and supported those candidates who had

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[36] Independent, May 19, 1900. Reprinted from the Slocan Drill.

[37] Independent, May 26, 1900. Reprinted from the Slocan Drill.

campaigned for the bread-and-butter issues of the eight-hour day, full employment and the limitation of Oriental immigration. Will MacClain, with 683 votes[38] was at the bottom of the poll in the Vancouver riding. Nonetheless, his effort, as the first socialist candidate, was looked upon with some pride: "He had more votes than any successful candidate outside Vancouver, Victoria, Rossland, Nelson and Nanaimo. Twenty-seven men of the thirty-eight were elected with fewer votes than were given to MacClean [sic] the Socialist."[39]

Dixon and Williams, the VTLC candidates, shared the bottom of the poll with MacClain, obtaining 853 and 716 votes respectively. Two conservatives, Garden and Tatlow, and Premier Martin plus a supporter, Gilmour, were victorious in Vancouver. In the Kootenay area, where the metal miners and the other unions had followed a policy of endorsing candidates sympathetic to labour, the four men who were returned supported the eight-hour law and the exclusion of Orientals. They were Green, Taylor and Houston of the Pro-

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[38]Vancouver was a multiple riding with four seats. Total votes cast was 4,248. C.P.G., 1901, p. 412. Total voters registered was 7,940. Letter from Deputy Chief Electoral Officer of B. C., Feb. 3, 1971.

[39]Independent, June 30, 1900. This was due to the small size of the other ridings and the statement itself has no meaning other than as propaganda.

vincial Party in Slocan, Revelstoke and Nelson respectively, and Smith-Curtis, a Martin supporter, in Rossland. Ralph Smith in Nanaimo obtained a thumping majority--753 to 86--over his Martinite opponent, Yates.[40]

From the gallimaufry of the election results (Turner supporters, fourteen; Provincial Party, nine; Conservative Party, six; Martin supporters, six; Liberal Party, one; and Independent Labour, one) James Dunsmuir was called upon to form a government. Twenty-five of the legislators pledged to support him for one year in an attempt to bring some stable government to the troubled province. In terms of party affiliation on the federal level, the results were prescient of the thirteen years of Conservative Party rule in British Columbia, beginning with McBride's introduction of party politics in 1903. All party affiliations are not known, but in general terms the Turnerites and the Conservatives supported the national Conservative Party, while supporters of the Provincial Party, Martin and the Liberals gave their allegiance to the national Liberal Party, as did Ralph Smith. Obvious exceptions were John Houston and R. F. Green of the Provincial Party, who were Conservatives federally, and

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[40]All results are from the Canadian Parliamentary Guide, 1901, pp. 409-410.

Richard Hall, a Turner supporter, who supported the Liberals on the federal scene. Viewed this way, the results of the 1900 provincial election may be read as Conservatives-twenty-one, Liberals-sixteen.

Martin's platform, including his appeal to labour, was repudiated.[41] He had been foolish enough to attack Ralph Smith in his home town of Nanaimo,[42] and the labour and socialist press responded by calling Martin an opportunist, accusing him of currying the labour vote only at election time.[43] Part of Martin's failure was probably related to his connection with the McInnes Incident".[44] Since the population of the metal mining areas was predominantly of American origin, the questionable affair possibly generated a degree of anti-monarchy feeling.

In general terms, it is possible to say that everyone got something from the election. Business could look

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[41]The exception was in the Rossland area, where the miners re-elected Smith-Curtis, Martin's Minister of Mines.

[42]The World, May 30, 1900. Martin called Smith a liar.

[43]See Citizen and Country, Independent and Nanaimo Herald during the period preceding the election.

[44]Supra, footnote 16.

forward to twelve months of stable government because Dunsmuir had the committed support of twenty-five members of the newly-elected legislature; labour had elected five of the men to whom they had given support; and the socialists were optimistic because of the showing of the first socialist candidate to run in the province.[45]

As has been seen, the working class at the turn of the century was beginning to be viewed as a force whose demands, if not implemented, must at least be acknowledged. There was, however, a portion of the working class who were

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[45] Reporting from Vancouver, Ernest Burns wrote in the Social-Democratic Herald, June 16, 1900 (published in Chicago):

> " The recent elections in B. C. were prolific in many surprises. None, however, created so much consternation in the minds of the old party politicians as the enormous Socialist vote as evidenced by the poll in Vancouver. For the four seats in Vancouver three Labour candidates were nominated, two by the Trades Council and one by the United Socialist Labour Party of British Columbia. The vote of our comrades was as follows: Joseph Dixon (Ind. Lab.) 856; F. Williams (Ind. Lab) 728; Will MacClain (Socialist) 684, as against an average of 1600 votes polled for the successful candidates. Roughly we polled twenty per cent of the vote cast. If we could have contested all four seats our vote would have been easily twenty-five per cent of total. This is the first time that candidates have been run on a Socialist platform in British Columbia and if such a showing can be made on the first attempt, success is surely near at hand."
>
> --from Ernest Burns' scrapbook, Box 53, Angus MacInnes Collection, U.B.C.

not content to work through political channels alone in order to secure the third element of complete citizenship of which Marshall speaks--the social element. Labour was beginning to realize its strength, and in the period between 1900 and World War I, labour-management relations reached a level of animosity not since seen in British Columbia.[46] Not until the post-World War II period was a nearly comparable period reached again.

This is a difficult phenomenon to measure, but some indication of the nature of these relationships may be seen by comparing the percentage[47] of the labour force involved in strikes or lockouts. In 1901, 12.4 per cent of the labour force was affected; in 1903, 14 per cent; while the highest World War I figure was 7.5 per cent in 1918. In the inter-war period the figure never rose above 6 per cent, and in the two highest post-World War II periods, 1946 and 1952, the

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[46]The growth of unionism during this period was an important contribution to the development of socialism and it will be frequently referred to. But this is a study of the political side of the development of socialism and the detail of relevant union activity has been omitted. For this information refer to Paul Phillips, No Power Greater.

[47]Such percentage figures could be misleading unless the distribution of strikes throughout the work force and the length of the strikes are also considered. When these factors are taken into account, however, it is apparent that the percentage figures do correlate with the impact of the strikes on the economy.

percentage of the work force involved was 11.0 and 10.6 respectively.[48] In comparing these early figures with the later ones, some measure of the impact of this strife upon both the people and the economy can also be obtained. Further insight into the effect on the working men in particular can be gleaned by recalling that the unions were nascent structures without strike funds, and that the militia were frequently called out to maintain law and order-as the official sources said-or to protect the strike breakers-as the strikers themselves held.

Though the growth of unions was not an unbounded blessing for the Marxists, the high tension generated in labour ranks during this period and the perceived encouraging results of the June 9, 1900, election provided a nexus for socialists and labour political reformers, who began to consider the possibility of forming one united political party as a vehicle for obtaining their political ends.

Clearly, at the turn of the century, there was a

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[48]These calculations were made from data obtained from the Labour Gazette, 1901-1951; Strikes and Lockouts in Canada, 1952-1965; Census of Canada, 1951, Vol. 4, Occupation and Industry Trends in Canada. In the years where Census data was not available, straight line estimates of the labour force were made.

growing awareness among British Columbia's political elite that the working class was a potential political force. At the same time the working class itself was attempting to walk, rather than crawl, toward full citizenship status. What is of interest here is the involvement of the socialists in this phenomenon. Before looking further at the extent and method of their involvement, however, it is necessary to see how the socialist ideology grew to dominance among the various groups discussed in Chapter II.

CHAPTER IV

COMING TOGETHER: LABOURISM TO SOCIALISM

Following the June, 1900, election a number of incidents occurred in the province which gave further impetus to political action and organization by the developing socialist[1] and other reform groups. The 1900 and 1901 Fraser River Fishermen's strikes and the 1901 Rossland Miner's strike not only provided opportunities for direct socialist involvement, but also facilitated cooperation among the diverse socialist groups in the province, leading to the formation of the British Columbia Socialist Party. At the same time many workers became increasingly dissatisfied with the reform politics of labour. When the attempt to establish a party to represent all reform groups in the province failed the way was opened for the socialists to move into the void on the left of B. C. politics.

In the largest strike ever, to date, outside the mining industry, the Fraser River Fishermen's Strike of 1900 closed the industry down from late June to July 31. Some

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[1]The term "socialism" is often used very loosely; specificity of meaning is not one of its attributes. It is sometimes used as a synonym for the welfare state, but usually has some connotation of government ownership. As

eight thousand Indian, Japanese and white strikers were involved. Frank Rogers and Will MacClain, both of the United Socialist Labour Party (USLP), offered their services to the fishermen and soon became leading lights in the struggle.[2] From this time on radical socialists would be involved in many B. C. strikes and in return for their efforts in the economic sphere many workers would give political support to the socialists.

During this period the Vancouver Trades and Labour Council indirectly entered the political arena. The Council had backed two candidates in the recent election and, having no further desire to involve itself directly in political action, it encouraged the formation of the Vancouver Independent Labour Party (VILP). When Laurier called a federal election for November 7, 1900, the VILP followed the example of the province's labour groups in the past and supported

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used here, it means ownership and control of the means of wealth production by the people. In a broader sense it is the scientific socialism of Marx.

[2]For the complete story of this strike see Keith Ralston, The 1900 Strike of Fraser River Sockeye Salmon Fishermen (M.A. Thesis, U.B.C., 1965) For a shorter account see Paul Phillips, No Power Greater, pp. 34-37. Also see Stewart Jamieson, Times of Trouble, pp. 133-140.

the Liberal candidate, Reverend George R. Maxwell.[3] The USLP nominated Will MacClain. Although he campaigned he was late in filing his papers and hence his name did not appear on the ballot.

A month before the federal election the Canadian Socialist League of British Columbia, one of whose goals was to encourage cooperative action on the part of socialist and reform groups, had been able to interest the USLP and the Nanaimo Socialist Club[4] in holding a joint convention.[5] It was held in the Socialist Hall on Westminster Avenue, Vancouver, in the first week of October, 1900.[6] Cooperative action was agreed upon and J. M. Cameron was elected secretary with the responsibility of maintaining communication among the groups in the future. All groups agreed to support the following platform:

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[3]Loosmore, p. 127: Phillips, p. 32

[4]The origin of the Nanaimo Socialist Club is discussed later in the Chapter.

[5]This convention later became known as the First Annual Convention of B. C. Socialists.

[6]Ronald Grantham, Some Aspects of the Socialist Movement in British Columbia, 1898-1933 (M.A. Thesis, U.B.C., 1942) p. 11, is in error when he says it was the Socialist Labour Party and the USLP who held the joint convention.

1. The means of production, distribution and exchange, including the land, to be declared and treated as collective common property.

2. The production and distribution of wealth to be regulated by the community in the common interest of all its members.

3. All officials or administrators to be elected by equal, direct adult suffrage and to be maintained by the community.

4. Legislation by the people in such wise that no project of law shall become binding until accepted by all the people.

5. The abolition of a permanent militia and the establishment of a national citizen force; the people to decide on peace or war.

6. All education, higher no less than elementary, to be compulsory, secular, industrial and free to all alike.

7. The administration of justice to be free to all.

8. The Dominion to have exclusive right to issue money.[7]

The convention urged all workers to join their respective unions, to assist in strengthening the trade union movement and to educate people along economic and

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[7] Citizen and Country, October 12, 1900. Items 5 and 8 deserve some explanation to put them into context. 5: The militia had been used to break up a number of strikes in the mines and had just recently been used to break the Fishermen's strike. Also, the Boer War was in progress and the socialists had already taken a stand against the jingoism this engendered. 8: The Bank of Canada was created by the Conservative Government of R. B. Bennett. Prior to this, money could be created by the various banks in Canada. It should be noted that Item 1 went further than the CSL's previous platform (supra. Chapter 11) in that it called for the common ownership of the means of production.

political lines. It will be recalled that some of the original USLP members had at one time belonged to the Socialist Labour Party (SLP), whose platform repudiated organized labour and urged workers to join the Socialist Trades and Labour Alliance (STLA), the union wing of the SLP. Moreover, the consistent attacks of the SLP on the labour movement and their general vituperation had given socialism a poor image. Thus the convention's appeal to the workers to join their own unions was based partly on an attempt to rebuild the socialist image and partly on a repudiation of the SLP, which had consistently attacked both the CSL and the USLP.[8]

In the ensuing twelve months two lengthy and violent strikes enabled the socialists involved to radicalize many of the workers and to agitate among them for political action. Frank Rogers, of the USLP, led the fishermen out on strike over fish prices in July, 1901. Again the strike involved about eight thousand workers, and a good deal of sympathy for the strikers' position was apparently aroused

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[8] The Vancouver Daily Province, June 5, 1900, for example, reports a rough and tumble battle on June 3 at a MacClain election meeting. While Griffiths, an SLP member, was attacking the USLP for not representing international socialism, a battle broke out between the supporters of the two men.

among the citizens of the lower mainland.[9] It is possible, however, that this sympathy stemmed more from racism than from support for the union cause. The Fishermen's Union was not able to convince the Japanese fishermen (who held about half the licenses)[10] of the correctness of their cause, and the violence which occurred was between the union men and the Japanese, who were regarded as strike breakers. Further evidence as to the racist nature of some of the strikers' support is provided by the legislation which was passed in the B. C. House in 1903, giving special protection to white fishermen.

Another strike occurred in the Rossland mining area in July, 1901, when approximately a thousand miners walked off their jobs. MacKenzie King, then Deputy Minister of

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[9]Wm. Bennett, Builders of British Columbia, p. 58. In a court case against Rogers and some other union men Bennett reports that Bowser, the Attorney-General, in asking for a change of venue, said, "The City of Vancouver from which the jury panel is drawn, is thoroughly union, and the union juries must necessarily be very much affected by the sympathies of the prisoners who are union fishermen" and further, "The Crown could not get a fair trial." In New Westminster the Crown fared no better--the others got off and Rogers' trial was put forward but never called. It has not been possible to verify Bennett's information.

[10]The Japanese held 1,958 out of a total of 4,722 licenses. Another 1,090 licenses were in the hands of the canners and they used a majority of Japanese fishermen. Jamieson, Times of Trouble, p. 138.

Labour in the federal government, was sent out to investigate and reported that there appeared to be three main reasons for the strike:

> (1) the assistance, by means of a sympathetic strike, of the members of the union at Northport,[11] who went on strike sometime previous;
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> (2) the settlement of the demand for an increase in the wages of muckers from $2.50 to $3.00 per day at Rossland; and
>
> (3) to end future discrimination by the company against members of the union.[12]

The Rossland strike did not end happily for the union: the companies brought in strike-breakers from the U. S. and by October the strike was broken. The operators flagrantly broke the Alien Labour Law by bringing in scabs from the United States, but federal government agencies ignored this flouting of the law.[13] According to the Western Socialist, this made the miners "ripe for socialism." The union was sued for damages and the courts awarded $12,500 to the two companies involved.[14] In the legislature, however, labour fared better. On June 20, 1902, the Trade Union Act was

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[11]This is Northport, Washington, where the smelter was owned by the same company operating two mines at Rossland.

[12]Labour Gazette, 1901, p. 363.

[13]Western Socialist, Dec. 1, 1901.

[14]Phillips, p. 33.

amended to protect unions against injunctions in certain instances and to protect union funds from liability. Phillips says that the Act itself was a "triumph for labour" and "like the Taff Vale case in England, it also tended to act as a spur to political action."[15] Labour had been shown what could be accomplished by having sympathetic members sitting in the legislature.[16]

In the year following the First Annual Convention of B. C. Socialists,[17] locals under the umbrella of the CSL were maintained or organized in Victoria, Nanaimo, Ladysmith, South Wellington, Vancouver, Port Moody, Ferguson, Slocan, Revelstoke, Nelson, Silverton, New Denver, Sandon, Kaslo, Grand Forks and Rossland. On October 3, 1901, the Second Annual Convention of B. C. Socialists was held, again in the Socialist Hall in Vancouver. As at the previous convention, there were CSL delegates from Victoria, Nanaimo, and the Kootenay area, as well as from the Vancouver area, USLP delegates from Vancouver, and Nanaimo Socialist Club delegates.

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[15]Phillips, p. 34.

[16]See Chapter III, passim, for balance of power as result of June, 1900, election.

[17]Supra, p. 2.

This convention went further than simply pledging cooperative action. The CSL and USLP agreed to unite[18] and took as their name the B. C. Socialist Party (BCSP),[19] naming the Lardeau Eagle[20] as the official organ of the party. They elected O. Lee Charlton (who had moved from Port Moody to Victoria to become a labour organizer) president; Ernest Burns[21] of Vancouver, secretary; Thomas Robinson of New Westminster, treasurer; and J. M. Cameron,[22] organizer. The executive

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[18]The Nanaimo Socialist Club had changed its views from the previous year and now could not agree with the other two groups on either the proposed platform or constitution for the new party.

[19]The B. C. Socialist Party should not be confused with the Socialist Party of B. C. which was formed a year later. Confusion of names did not seem greatly important, judging from the fact that some of the BCSP members (and some of their literature) referred to the group as the SPBC.

[20]See Chapter V, pp. 174-176.

[21]Ernest Burns was well-versed in Marxist philosophy and radical politics. A Briton, he had long associated with H. M. Hyndman, had been an executive member of the Social Democratic Federation, knew Marx's family and had worked with Bryan in Washington State before coming to Vancouver.

[22]Cameron had moved rapidly to the left since his days as a member of the Ruskin Colony (Chapter II). After the 1900 socialist convention he had worked for a few months as an organizer for the Socialist Party of America in Washington State, and during this period had absorbed a great deal of Marxist philosophy.

were charged with the responsibility of putting together a constitution for the organization of the BCSP and a party platform, both of which were to be voted on by the locals and discussed further at the next annual convention.

The formation of the BCSP was a significant event in the history of the Left in B. C., for it marked the first step on the part of the various socialist groups in the province toward committing themselves to common goals and uniting under one banner. The moves made toward union at this convention and completed at the following convention represented an accomplishment by the socialists which the labour political groups were unable to replicate until the 1920's.[23] Purpose and a centralized organization gave the radical Left a decided advantage over labour.

To unify the various groups was not a simple matter and to develop a platform to which they could all agree was even more difficult. The increased number of socialist groups over the previous year, from many different parts of the province, meant that the ideological spectrum had widened. In addition to the various brands of socialism included under the CSL banner, there was now the evolutionary Marxism of the USLP and the revolutionary Marxism of

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[23]See Chapter VIII.

the Nanaimo Socialist Club (for, while the latter did not join the BCSP in 1901, it was hoped by the other groups that they could be encouraged to do so the following year.)[24]

The task of formulating a platform was further complicated by the fact that the Ontario CSL groups, who organized as the Ontario Socialist League on November 1, 1901, wanted the British Columbia group, for the sake of uniformity across the Dominion, to adopt their platform of

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[24] A. Ross McCormack in "The Emergence of the Socialist Movement in British Columbia," B. C. Studies, No. 21, Spring, 1974, page 15, says the Nanaimo group had joined the BCSP in 1901, but this is incorrect. Representatives were at the 1900 and 1901 conventions but remained outside the organization until the fall of 1902.

Revolutionary Marxists were those who believed that the only plank in a socialist party's platform should be the one advocating the ownership of the means of production by the people. Any other goals they believed, such as those advocating better working hours, pensions, etc., would, if achieved, only work to ameliorate the effects of the capitalist system and delay the day of revolution. The term revolution was not used to mean change by force, but only referred to the complete change in the system which would take place when Marxists were elected to power. Both the revolutionary and evolutionary groups in the SPBC believed that change in the system should come about through constitutional means.

Evolutionary Marxists believed in the ultimate goal of ownership of the means of production by the people, but they believed that this would take some time and in the meanwhile the party should try to advocate changes in the system which would make the lot of the workers easier. The revolutionary groups were known as "impossiblists" and the evolutionary groups were known as "possiblists."

general demands to which it was suggested that the B. C. group add their own provincial demands.

In the end the executive put together a composite platform which they hoped would take all these varying viewpoints into consideration. The preamble, which had been adopted by the convention, was taken from the Socialist Party of America (SPA). The general demands included all the planks, national in nature, of the Ontario group, and the provincial demands included all local reforms and matters under provincial jurisdiction.[25] The proposed platform and constitution were sent to the various locals, who were to vote on them and return the results to the executive committee by January 31, 1902.[26]

Following the convention Cameron, who had now been made organizer, went into the interior of the province[27] to

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[25] See appendix 3 for complete constitution and demands. Reprinted from the Lardeau Eagle, Feb. 20, 1902.

[26] The Balloting was never really completed. The party members were asked to accept the platform and to fight for the incorporation of their ideas in the platform at the next convention. See Chapter V.

[27] Cameron's trip was financed by contributions from existing locals plus $5.50 from the Northport Socialist Society in Northport, Washington, and $150 from the Ontario Socialist League.

set up new locals under the banner of the BCSP which would still affiliate with the CSL. He met with phenomenal success in the mining country, establishing or strengthening locals at Revelstoke, Ferguson, Slocan, Silverton, New Denver, Sandon, Kaslo, Nelson, Rossland, Trail, Grand Forks, Greenwood, Phoenix and Ymir.[28] In the new year he moved eastward, establishing locals in Calgary, Maple Creek and Winnipeg,[29] which was No. 62.

Part of Cameron's success can be attributed to the fact that he did not go into virgin territory, which was noted with some alarm by supporters of other parties. The News Advertiser warned the Liberal Party of the growth of socialism in the area and suggested that since "large numbers of the miners are naturalized Americans of Populist views, they scarcely need conversion to socialism." Commenting on the growth of socialism in British Columbia generally, the paper went on to say:

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[28] Lardeau Eagle, Feb. 13, 1902. Nelson, Grand Forks and Rossland locals each had over forty members. Lardeau Eagle, Jan. 30, 1902. Cameron's organizing trip was well-timed, coming as it did right after the devastating Rossland Miner's strike.

[29] The CSL was not new to Winnipeg workers. The Voice frequently reprinted Wrigley's articles from Citizen and Country, and within the Winnipeg Labour Party there had been moves to have it affiliate with the CSL. Cameron had the able help of two men who would later become leaders in the SPBC and later still the SPC--J. G. (Georgie) Morgan and John T. Mortimer.

> The socialism that is amongst us naturally feeds and grows upon the fact, that in the quite recent past wholly inordinate concessions of public rights and property have been made almost unrestrictedly by National, sometimes by Provincial governments, to companies, combines and individuals who have too frequently failed to give anything like adequate value to the community in return.[30]

But it was not the Liberals and Conservatives alone who were threatened by the growing acceptance of socialist ideas in the province. In the Nanaimo mining area particularly, labour politicians too had cause for concern. The area had been represented by reform or labour representatives in the B. C. Legislature as early as 1890.[31] In the elections of 1898 and 1900 Nanaimo sent Ralph Smith to the provincial legislature on an Independent Labour ticket. Although Smith had held various union positions and been elected President of the Trades and Labour Congress of Canada (TLCC) in September, 1898, he was never a straight labour candidate and kept in close touch with the Liberal Party. Shortly after his election to the provincial House on June 9, 1900, he resigned his seat to run as an Independent Labour candidate for the federal election of November

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[30] News Advertiser, October 1901.

[31] See Chapter II, p. 54.

7, 1900. He was victorious although he did not win the coal mining areas of the riding. While in Ottawa, Smith continually gave support to the Laurier Liberals. Essentially Smith was a conciliator, always seeking compromise, never pressing his demands beyond the point of negotiation. While in the Provincial House he successively supported the governments of Semlin, Martin and Dunsmuir. In doing so, he earned the reputation among many of the Nanaimo coal miners as a political opportunist--an important factor in labour's loss of appeal in the Nanaimo coal mining area. Since Smith was seen as an opportunist, and since he was the most prominent labour politician,[32] the socialists were able to exploit this by equating labour politics with compromise and opportunism.

Other factors in the coal mining areas of Vancouver Island gave the socialists political advantage. Ladysmith and South Wellington were Dunsmuir company towns. Nanaimo was dominated politically and economically by the mine owners. The miners' work was difficult and dangerous and they had many outstanding grievances. They had failed to obtain satisfaction in their many previous attempts through

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[32]In the June 9, 1900, election campaign, Smith acted as liaison officer and advisor to the scattered labour groups and spoke on behalf of many of them around the province.

relatively moderate routes of reform and labour politics. This inclined them to listen now to other suggestions for more thorough-going remedies. Among the miners were many British socialists, such as James Pritchard,[33] who were able to articulate the injustices of the economic system within which the workers lived. While in the more urban areas of the province British immigrant workers had brought with them a background of craft unionism which encouraged elitism, those who went to the Nanaimo coal mines had come from a background of industrial unionism, independent political action and experience in the Social Democratic Federation. It was clear to them that the conventional craft union tactics of bargaining and obtaining concessions were in-

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[33]Pritchard was a Lancashire coal miner who later became very active in the SPC. He consistently supported the scientific socialism of the party and insisted on maintaining the purity of the membership. Fred Faulkner, an early member of the Socialist Party of Canada, in a letter to Prof. Walter Young on Aug. 23, 1964, recalls Pritchard speaking at a nomination convention for E. T. Kingsley. "We are all socialists now," he said, "but what was needed were real socialists, not gas and water reformers. The platform of the SPC was wide enough to hold all who were socialists, and narrow enough to exclude all who were not." As for those who could not accept this position, he concluded, "Damn them, we don't want them!" James Pritchard should not be confused with W. A. Pritchard, who later was very active in socialist and labour politics in B. C. and in 1931 was elected Reeve of Burnaby. See Dorothy G. Steeves, The Compassionate Rebel (Vancouver, Boag Foundation, 1960), regarding the schism that developed between W. A. Pritchard and Ernie Winch in the O.B.U. and later in the C.C.F.

effectual when dealing with operators who deemed unions illegitimate restrictions on their freedom[34] and who used blacklists and scabs to break the organizations.

These peculiar circumstances in the Vancouver Island mining area encouraged the development of a strong class-conscious movement[35] and paved the way for the mining area to become "the battleground of a civil war between capital and labour." (As it later developed, the electoral successes obtained in this area misled the ideologues of the Socialist Party of Canada to believe that their revolutionary doctrine was above criticism and this was one of the causes for the decline of the party at a later date.)

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[34]James Dunsmuir justified his anti-union tactics by saying that he wanted the management of his own works and this would not be possible if he recognized the unions. Canada, Sessional Papers, Volume XXXVIII, No. 13, 1904, "Evidence...." pp. 240-246.

[35]The Washington State wing of the Socialist Party of America was of the "impossiblist" variety. During these formative years it took an interest in the socialist movement in B. C. and reported on many B. C. political events in its paper, the Seattle Socialist. J. D. Curtis, secretary of the state party, travelled throughout the Island and the Kootenay-Boundary area in the summer of 1901. When in Nanaimo, he reported that the miners there "are pretty well leavened with socialism." Socialist, Sept. 1, 1901. He was impressed by what he saw in the rest of the province too and wrote that "there is no large political unit on the American continent so favourably situated to win the first Socialist victory." Socialist, July 7, 1901.

For some time the West had been looked upon as a place where socialism might gain a real foothold.[36] The SLP had established a local in Vancouver in 1898,[37] and when the membership grew to about fifty in 1899, they felt positive enough to try to extend their influence by capitalizing on the growing socialist sympathy in the coal mining area of Vancouver Island. The exact date is not known, but sometime in 1899 the SLP in Vancouver sent speakers to Nanaimo and organized a small local. Again it is not clear what the exact sequence of events was, but it appears that the schism which occurred within the SLP in the United States, resulting in the formation of the SPA, and within the Vancouver group, resulting in the formation of the Vancouver Socialist Club and subsequently the USLP, also occurred in Nanaimo, resulting in the formation of the Nanaimo Socialist Club. (Apparently there was a close connection between the

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[36] The Voice, Jan. 25, 1896: "The west is of all places the most likely part of Canada for the rapid growth of socialism." The British Columbia Workman, June 10, 1899, predicted that soon "the instruments of production shall be the common property of the people and shall be used and governed by the people, for the people." The Montreal Herald, in reporting on the 1899 Trades and Labour Convention, said, "The leaven of socialism has been working among western working men." Quoted in The Voice, Sept. 29, 1899.

[37] See Chapter II, p. 55.

Vancouver and Nanaimo groups. Will MacClain spoke to the Nanaimo Club at least once,[38] as did Ernest Burns.[39])

Some of the socialist representatives at the first convention of B. C. socialists in October, 1900, came from the Nanaimo Socialist Club. By the second convention the following year, the Nanaimo membership had grown to the extent that there were eighty-four voting on the constitution and platform presented by the executive committee. This increase in the number of miners in the Nanaimo Socialist Club reflected to some extent the growing schism between the leadership of Ralph Smith and the miners. The schism was encouraged by J. W. Hawthornthwaite, the man credited with swinging the miners' vote behind Smith on previous occasions and elected by acclamation to the B. C. Legislature to fill Smith's seat after he resigned to run for the federal House in 1900. The move of Hawthornthwaite to the left first reached public attention in a Labour Day speech in September, 1901, in which he was reported to have said that "the remedy

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[38]The Vancouver Daily Province, June 7, 1900.

[39]He was involved in a debate with Ralph Smith, Burns holding that it was heredity and environment that determined the actions of men and Smith that it was the moral state of man and therefore to bring about change it was necessary to encourage moral improvement. Nanaimo Herald, Dec. 18, 1900.

which would eventually be applied to social ills was socialism, pure and simple."[40] He carried his battle outside the party in an interview with the Nanaimo Free Press, in which he stated that he did not believe there was such a thing as a Liberal-Labour group, which he said was only a temporary coalition in the House to attack Dunsmuir. The Labour Party, he said, was formed to attack class and economic issues, and so long as Smith and other members of the party insisted on being tied to the Liberals, these issues would receive short shrift because the Liberals were not really interested in the working class. He also attacked Smith for his compromising stance.[41] The battle continued between Hawthornthwaite and the socialists on the one hand and the Liberal-Labour people on the other until it came to a climax in 1902 and was resolved in favour of the socialists, who by now were in control of the miners' union. While in Europe in the spring of 1902, Smith wrote to the Miners' and Mine-Labourers' Protective Association (the Coal Miners' Union) asking that he be delegated to

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[40] Independent, Sept. 7, 1901.

[41] Ibid., Jan. 4, 1902, reprinted from the Nanaimo Free Press.

attend the TLCC convention to be held that year in Berlin, (now Kitchener), Ontario. Instead of acting on the request, the union tabled it[42] and in August went even further by disaffiliating from the TLCC.[43] In November they affiliated with the WFM, who at that time were organizing the coal miners in the Crow's Nest Pass area and whose American section had endorsed socialism at its spring convention.[44]

When the Nanaimo Socialist Club representatives came to the Second Annual Convention of B. C. Socialists, the rapid change from labour politics to Marxist socialist answers was reflected in the confidence of their position. They rejected the suggestion that the constitution of the proposed party be made up partly from the preamble of the SPA constitution, since it was not a revolutionary statement. Rejected too was the attempt of the executive committee to formulate a composite document.

The following year the Club, encouraged by the division taking place in the ranks of the Nanaimo Labour Party, moved to strengthen its position by enlarging its membership. To assist in organization, in February, 1902, they brought E. T.

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[42] Canadian Socialist, July 12, 1902.

[43] Nanaimo Free Press, Aug. 18, 1902.

[44] Canadian Socialist, June 20, 1902.

Kingsley, a former member of DeLeon's SLP and a doctrinaire Marxist, up from Oakland, California. He approved of neither DeLeon's STLA nor the legitimate craft trade union movement, both of which, he said, were able to work only towards palliatives that in his opinion merely delayed the advent of true socialism. Kingsley and the Nanaimo Socialist Club were highly compatible and his initial one-month stay was extended indefinitely.[45]

In April, 1902, the Club changed its name to the Revolutionary Socialist Party of Canada (RSPC). If adherence to Marxist principles is used as the criterion for socialism, then Nanaimo can be considered to be the cradle of socialism in Canada.[46] The statement of principles and the platform adopted by the new party is of interest to the later development of socialism in Canada. The platform is

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[45] To support himself he ran a fish store for a time and then later became a printer.

[46] For comments on the origins of socialism in Canada see: Paul Fox, "Early Socialism in Canada", The Political Process in Canada, ed., J. H. Aitchison (Toronto, University Press, 1963.); Ronald Grantham, Some Aspects of the Socialist Movement in British Columbia, 1898-1933 (M.A. Thesis, U.B.C., 1942); Thomas Loosmore, The British Columbia Labour Movement and Political Action 1879-1906 (M.A. Thesis, U.B.C., 1954); Martin Robin, Radical Politics and Canadian Labour 1880-1930 (Kingston, Ont., Industrial Relations Centre, Queen's University, 1968); F.A. Engelmann and M. Schwartz, Political Parties and the Canadian Social Structure (Scarborough, Ont., Prentice-Hall, 1967).

reproduced here, but the entire document is in appendix 11: Platform of the Revolutionary Socialists Party of Canada.

1) The transformation as rapidly as possible of capitalist property in the means of wealth production (natural resources, factories, mills, railways, etc.) into the collective property of the working class.

2) Thorough and democratic organization and management of industry by the workers.

3) The establishment, as speedily as possible, of production for use in lieu of production for profit.

4) Candidates for public office upon the ticket of the Revolutionary Socialist Party shall, by the acceptance of such nomination, stand pledged to the unqualified support of the principles and program herein set forth. They shall, in case of election, use every legitimate means within their power, to further such principles and program, and contest and prevent if possible, the adoption of any measure in contravention thereto.

The Revolutionary Socialist Party of Canada proclaims itself the political exponent of working class interest. It will deviate neither to the right nor the left of the fine line laid down in its platform. It will neither endorse or accept endorsement. It has no compromise to make.

The pathway leading to our emancipation from the chains of wage slavery is uncompromising political warfare against the capitalist class, with no quarter and no surrender.[47]

There was a significant difference between the

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[47] Independent, May 24, 1902. Reprinted from the Seattle Socialist. The article went on to attack the suggested platform of the B. C. Socialist Party as "a radical platform without socialist influence."

program of the RSPC and that of the BCSP. Both groups professed to be Marxists and to that extent they left Christian Socialism and moved toward an economic analysis of society. The RSPC, however, differed from the BCSP in that it eschewed all palliatives for patching up the system until the proletariat could win control. In the parlance of the time, proponents of the RSPC view were known as "impossiblists" and the idealists as the "possiblists". Differences between the two socialist groups, however, were not as difficult to overcome at this time as were the differences between socialist and labour followers.

As mentioned earlier, the high tension generated in labour ranks during this time[48] and the encouraging results of the June 9, 1900, election[49] had led some socialists and labour political reformers to consider the possibility of forming one united political party as a vehicle for obtaining their common political ends. This view was particularly prominent among labour politicians because, other than the speaking tours taken by Ralph Smith during the election,

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[48] Supra, pp. 1-5.

[49] See Chapter III, p.101 and footnote 45 same chapter.

there was nothing to unify the various Independent Labour Parties throughout the province. Although the socialists in the CSL had from the beginning professed that "In Unity There is Strength,"[50] their growing confidence as a result of the mushrooming of locals in B. C., the obvious weakening of some of the Independent Labour Parties and the formation of the BCSP was now leading them to believe that socialism was the one correct position. Though the supercilious attitude of the B. C. socialists toward the reformism of the labour parties had not yet reached its zenith, it was strong enough to inhibit any enthusiasm for uniting the various labour and socialist groups in common cause. While the diverse Independent Labour Parties in the province had experienced successive ups and down in the months following the 1900 election, the socialists' continued successes had strengthened their determination not to remain an exiguous group on the periphery of British Columbia politics. In

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[50]"This only we desire in the matter that whatever body is formed should be friendly to Trades Unionism and be broad enough to take in all who favour Socialist principles and action--rich and poor--men of every calling--the whole people as soon as they can be induced to cooperate to secure a common benefit." Citizen and Country, Mar. 20, 1900, "Believing that 'in union there is strength' and that 'they that clasp hands shall conquer the lands' we stand ready at all times to cooperate with other social reformers to secure amelioration of the present intolerable industrial conditions." Citizen and Country, Mar. 30, 1900.

addition to having Cameron in the field organizing, the locals of the BCSP were beginning the weekly public education (propaganda) meetings that were to become their raison d'etre. The Slocan local, for example, planned and publicized their meetings six to eight weeks in advance. A sample program of debates for the late fall of 1901 included the following:[51]

November 19: Is the course of events in New Zealand advancing the cause of Socialism?

November 26: Should the franchise be immediately extended to women?

December 3: Should Socialists, as an organized body, fuse with any other party, politically to gain partial and temporary reforms?

December 10: Would land nationalization, known as single tax, effectively and permanently free the proletariat from their present condition of serfdom or wage slavery?

December 17: Can the trade and labour unions accomplish their object, except through the medium of the ballot and by the introduction of socialism?

December 24: Is compulsory arbitration just? Does it fulfill its purpose?

The Greenwood local also held weekly public meetings in the City Hall, the use of which was free because half the

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[51] Independent, Nov. 23, 1901.

local Council were socialists.[52] In Vancouver, meetings were held every Sunday night in rooms over Ernest Burns' Second Hand Store at 132 Powell Street.[53]

As socialist activity increased, so did the socialists' mood of confidence and feelings of self-righteousness.[54] This meant that any overtures for the amalgamation of the forces of the Left had to come from the side of labour. George Bartley, editor of the Independent, semi-official organ of the VTLC, started the ball rolling by proposing in an editorial that a convention be held to bring together the forces of political reform in the province, and that the initiative for such a convention be taken by either the VTLC or the Vancouver Independent Labour Party.[55] The Parliamentary Committee of the VTLC took up the idea of uniting

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[52] Lardeau Eagle, Mar. 6, 1901.

[53] For an example of the content of these meeting see the March, 1902, program in the Independent, March 1, 1902.

[54] Purity of belief, and not growth for growth's sake, was already apparent. George Broadly of the Nelson local was expelled for having said he could support Martin and the Liberal party platform regarding labour. Lardeau Eagle, March 6, 1902.

[55] Independent, Sept. 14, 1901.

all reform forces, did a study on the matter and suggested in their report that, since unions represented about ten per cent of the workers, they "favoured political action on a more broad and progressive basis, whereby all who hold similar views and ideas can join together [sic] in common cause."[56] The Vancouver Independent Labour Party carried on from here, calling an open meeting for February 18, 1902, to discuss the possibility of socialist and labour forces uniting under one political banner. Though the socialists in the Vancouver area agreed to attend, it was not with any degree of enthusiasm. A member of the executive committee of the BCSP wrote:

> I was approached by a number of Independent Labour Party men. They were going to hold an open meeting and would welcome all socialists, if socialists would not try to run everything their way. I replied that the fault of all their Independent Labour Parties in the past had been that they were never independent, but always the tail of the Liberal Party. I said, however, that if they held a meeting we would attend and see what they were going to do, but unless they had advanced far enough to make the abolition of the wage system their ultimate aim they could expect nothing but opposition from us.[57]

There were "several hundred persons" at the February 18

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[56] Ibid., Nov. 23, 1901.

[57] Independent, Feb. 15, 1902.

meeting, which was held in the Labour Hall on Homer Street. According to newspaper reports[58] the meeting was amicable. After much discussion and the reading of both the BCSP and Labour Party Platforms, agreement was reached on appointing three men from each group to form a committee, charged with drafting a common platform to be submitted at a later date to a joint convention. The amicability of the attending socialists[59] may have misled the newspapers, for compliance was certainly not the mood of all the party members. In a letter to the Independent, James Boult, a former member of the SLP and well trained in DeLeon invective, commented on the optimistic newspaper reports

> Now gentlemen, this is contrary to the facts.... you have captured the wrong bunch of suckers this time, so you had better try some other kind of bait, you have caught a handful of chaff, but the grain is not within your reach. Socialists cannot fuse with other parties, neither can they marry a will-o-the-wisp.[60]

Outside the Vancouver area Bartley's suggestion to explore the possibility of union between labour and socialist forces was taken seriously by a number of groups. The

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[58] Vancouver Daily Province, Feb. 19, 1902, Independent, Feb. 22, 1902.

[59] Ernest Burns, John Dodd and John Morton were reported as having been speakers. Burns and Dodd always did have labour leanings.

[60] Independent, Feb. 22, 1902.

Kamloops Federal Labour Union No. 18 suggested Kamloops as the location for such a meeting, but did not offer to organize it.[61] In January, 1902, it was reported that the Independent Labour Party in the Kootenay mining area was giving consideration to calling a convention which would be "broader and more representative than any previous caucus" and that the "Socialists as well as the trades unionists would be invited."[62] Finally District Association No. 6 of the WFM took the initiative and invited all labour, socialist and reform groups to attend a convention in Kamloops on April 14 and 15, 1902, immediately following their own convention. The objectives of the convention, according to the open letter issued by the WFM were:[63]

1. To unite and harmonize all labour organizations and reform bodies in the province together [sic], for purposes of political action.

2. To adopt a provincial platform and promulgate a policy for the guidance of organized labour and other reform bodies in future political campaigns.

3. To do any or all other things which in the judgement of all the convention will in any way protect or promote the interests of those represented.

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[61] Sandon Paystreak, Jan. 1902. Also the Independent, Feb. 22, 1902.

[62] Independent, Oct. 26, 1901.

[63] Ibid., May 10, 1902, reprinted from the Citizen and Country.

There was no doubt the time was propitious for a convention to discuss the possibility of uniting all groups on the Left into one political body. The unsettled labour conditions for the past two years (as evidenced by the Rossland Miners' strike and the Fraser River Fishermen's strike) as well as the unsettled political conditions of the past six years had served to make a large number of people insecure and unhappy about the way the province was heading, both politically and economically. This encouraged people to come together in various groups in search of ways to ameliorate their feelings of unease.[64] The convention at Kamloops was attended by sixty-three delegates from unions, socialist organizations and other reform bodies, making it a meeting of "the most representative character." In fact, another meeting so representative of the diverse reformists in the province would not be held again until the 1920's. Though the times did appear to call for unity, the split between the labour reformers and the socialists was not to be healed at Kamloops. The convention had been called by unionists and was dominated by them. Represented were forty-

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[64] See the reference in Chapter V, p.182 to David Truman, The Governmental Process (New York, Alfred Knopf, 1951). Truman suggests that during times of social crisis groups do form to stabilize societal relations.

three unions, three labour parties, seven socialist groups and one single-tax association. A report in the Citizen and Country says there were twenty-four socialists all told at the convention (several of the union delegates were socialists), but they could not act in unison because most of them were bound by instructions from their own union.[65] The report seems to be without substance. The convention was quite unstructured, and it is doubtful that a union could bind a delegate's vote beforehand on many of the issues discussed. A more likely explanation for the socialists' lack of success at the convention was that their number was smaller than reported. In checking the list of delegates, only fourteen can be positively identified as having belonged to any of the socialist groups in existence at that time.[66] Of the fourteen seven represented unions, which meant that the message had to be taken to the convention floor by the other seven. In actual fact, the burden was shouldered by

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[65] Independent, May 10, 1901. Reprinted from the Citizen and Country.

[66] The list of delegates from the Official Minutes of Proceedings reprinted in Loosmore, Appendix, p. XXV, was checked against all known references to socialists and only fourteen could be thus identified with certainty. It is, of course, possible that the original figure of twenty-four is correct, but if so, the twenty-four were not aggressive and articulate enough to put forward their views forcefully and persuasively at the convention.

Burns and Kingsley, who were constantly on their feet attacking each suggested plank as either irrelevant to the class struggle or trivial. It was to no avail--the delegates were not interested in economic solutions (they did accept the single tax notion) to long-term problems. They wanted immediate solutions to short-term problems. While the socialists called for abolition of the wages system, the other delegates were interested primarily in government intervention in the economy, which, they said would eventually lead to socialism.

The new party formed at the convention was called the Provincial Progressive Party (PPP). There was very little that could be called new in either the preamble or the platform for the new party which the convention endorsed. The preamble called for a declaration making the non-payment of wages a criminal act, and endorsed the principle of recall. The platform was as follows:[67]

> Gradual shifting of all taxes from the producers to the land.
>
> Government ownership of railways and means of communication.
>
> Government establishment and operation of smelters and refineries.
>
> Woman [sic] franchise and abolition of all property qualifications for public office.

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[67] Canadian Annual Review, 1902, p. 87.

> No taxation of farms, improvements, implements, stock, and the assessment of wild lands at prices asked by speculators.
>
> Lands to be held by actual settlers, and ten per cent of all public lands to be set aside for educational purposes.
>
> Education to be free, secular, and compulsory up to 16 years, and text books, meals and clothing to be supplied out of public funds when necessary.
>
> Compulsory arbitration of labour disputes and absolute restriction of Oriental immigration.
>
> Pulp-land leases to contain a re-foresting condition and the reservation from sale or leasing of a certain part of all known coal areas for the future establishment of state-owned coal mines.
>
> Municipal control of the liquor traffic; the right to referendum in all cases of valuable subsidies or franchises; and compulsory free transportation on all railways, etc., for Judges and members of the Legislature.
>
> Election day to be a public holiday with four hours free from service for each employee.

Some of the planks deserve comment. The third one, calling for government ownership and operation of smelters, reflects the predominance of miners over other occupations represented at the convention. At that time the ore was shipped to the U. S. for smelting and the miners believed that more jobs would be created and more money would be available for wages if a smelter was located in the area.

The women's franchise plank was opposed by Kingsley on the basis that it had nothing to do with class politics.[68]

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[68] Independent, April 19, 1902. Kingsley's argument

The clause calling for compulsory arbitration of labour disputes would be anathema to present-day labourites, but it is understandable in the context of 1902 when unions were still struggling to be recognized as a legitimate element in society.[69]

The socialists fought every step of the way, forcing full debate on each plank proposed. That there was no meeting of minds is hardly surprising, since the socialists were convinced that bringing truth and enlightenment to the public was the crucial immediate step necessary to gain victory at the polls. It followed that patching up the system was not only a waste of time but might even delay the imminent attainment of socialism. On the other hand, as a reporter at the convention said in referring to the opposition to the socialist views, "the speakers...contented themselves with opposing all radical planks on the ground that they wanted to build a platform which would arouse no particular opposition and allow them to get a number of men

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is interesting in view of the contrary argument of the Left today that the position of women in society is linked to the class nature of the society.

[69]For the complete minutes of the convention see the Independent, April 19, 1902.

elected to the legislature."[70]

The Kamloops Convention was a significant attempt to unite all the forces of the Left into one combined political effort. To the socialists, however, labour's intent to reform the political system had already been tried and found wanting; to the labour people, the policies of the socialists called for too radical a change. Not until the late 1920's would such diverse groups finally come together to work out a common attack on the problems of society as they saw them.

On the surface, the Kamloops Convention appeared to have every possibility of creating a political force with the potential to become a great and influential power in B. C. politics. All participants were clearly opposed to the notion of fusion with any outside political group. Moreover, by combining under the name of the PPP all the individual Independent Labour parties in the province had now united in one organization, and by itself the large number of delegates at the convention would have suggested a growing interest in reform politics.[71] But a new political force was not the

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[70] Independent, May 10, 1902, reprinted from C. & C., May, 1902.

[71] It should be noted, however, that the conference was dominated by the miners' unions from the Kootenay area, from where the majority of the delegates came. There were eleven delegates from the Lower Mainland and Vancouver

result-the PPP was never heard from in any meaningful way again, and within a year it had ceased to exist. There were a number of reasons for the demise of such a promising organization.

Through the pages of the Citizen and Country the Executive Committee of the BCSP reminded all locals that, in accordance with Section 14 of the constitution, which read: "Under no circumstances shall the Socialist Party of B. C. fuse or act with any political party, unless they have substantially the same principles as our party," it would be unconstitutional to become part of the new PPP. They continued, "The PPP deliberately rejected all that was vital in our platform; therefore, that party is no more entitled to special consideration at our hands than either the Liberals or the Conservatives."[72] In the face of this,

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Island: George Bartley, Vancouver Labour Party; H. Buckle, Nanaimo Trades and Labour Council; Ernest Burns, B. C. Socialist Party; T. H. Cross, V. T. & L. C.; Sydney Harris, Vancouver Fishermen's Union; D. Jameson, New Westminster Typographical Union; E. T. Kingsley, Revolutionary Socialist Party of Canada; Robert McPherson, V. T. & L. C.; R. Todd, Vancouver Typographical Union; J. H. Watson, Vancouver Boilermakers Union.

[72] Citizen and Country, May 30, 1902. By referendum vote later in the year, the constitution was amended to drop the last clause from Section 14, i.e., unless they have substantially the same principles as our party.

members of the BCSP were forced to choose between that party or the PPP.

An important factor in influencing the men's decision was a speaking tour of the province undertaken by Eugene Debs, leader of the SPA, in late June and early July of 1902. Debs was a popular figure in B. C. working class circles. He had been in Vancouver in the 1890's on behalf of the American Railroad Union, and was well known in the mining areas due to the large number of Americans in the mines. Between June 25 and July 2, he spoke in Vancouver, Revelstoke, Slocan, Sandon, Kaslo, Nelson, Phoenix, Greenwood and Rossland. According to reports, all the meetings were crowded and people were turned away at the door in many places. In a note to the Canadian Socialist, summarizing the content of his message, Debs said his purpose was to advise workingmen to "stay clear of half-way movements." He dismissed the PPP as a "middle-class movement" with a platform that "may properly be described as a mixed bag of pickles", and with no mission "except to retard the bona fide socialist movement" which it would do, he said,

> For but a very short time and in twelve months or less, it will have ceased to exist. What is wanted in Canada, as elsewhere is a straight-out class conscious socialist party...to whom men are bound to turn, when they realize there can be no compromise with the enemy and that the party that seeks to harmonize the conflicting

> interests of the classes involved in the class struggle, is surely the party of the capitalist class and should be shunned by every man who favours emancipation of the workers from the centuries of slavery and inhumanity.[73]

Further opposition to the PPP came from the joint convention of the WFM and the Western Labour Union in Denver, Colorado, in early June, 1902. The convention adopted the platform of the SPA.[74] The nearly four hundred delegates present represented about 150,000 miners.[75] As the Sandon Paystreak reported, "the Western Federation of Miners has declared for socialism straight and absolute divorce from the old line parties." In characteristic style the editor went on to say, "Both parties in both countries are in the hands of men who are as corrupt as hell," and this is the "first gun shot in a new war of emancipation."[76] In British Columbia the WFM did not immediately declare itself in favour of socialism (this would not occur until 1904) but the American decision did influence

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[73] Canadian Socialist, July, 12, 1902.

[74] The vote in the WFM was 230 to 73 and in the WLU 56 to 13.

[75] Canadian Socialist, June 20, 1902.

[76] Sandon Paystreak, June 14, 1902.

the support which the miners gave to the PPP.[77]

Probably one of the most important factors militating against the PPP was the behaviour of the labour political activists. In spite of George Barkley's editorial comment on returning from the Kamloops convention--"One thing noticeable at the convention was the spirit of antagonism to anything that savoured of fusion with either of the old parties"[78]--the coast members of the PPP could not extricate themselves from the coat-tail of the Liberal Party. When the Reverend George R. Maxwell's untimely death necessitated a by-election in the federal constituency of Burrard, the ex-Lieutenant Governor, T. R. McInnes,[79] came to Vancouver and was made an Honorary President of the PPP.[80] Shortly after, McInnes announced that he would be an Independent Liberal candidate in the by-election. "The good-intentioned interior supporters have already been morally sold out by

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[77]The leadership of the WFM in B. C. was not pro-socialism and it took the socialists in the union two years to gain enough positions of influence to carry the union in support of the Socialist Party of B. C.

[78]Independent, April 19, 1902.

[79]He was the father of W.W.B. McInnes, a member of Prior's cabinet.

[80]Western Socialist, Nov. 29, 1902. Eleven members took part in the vote.

the same old coast 'labour' politicians," wrote Pettipiece.[81]

This attitude was undoubtedly shared by others besides the socialists, for it was clearly absurd to have a labour party with a platform of evolutionary socialism and an honorary president running as a capitalist. A further anomaly in the episode was the fact that McInnes, the honorary president of the PPP, ended up opposing Chris Foley, the president of the PPP, who ran on the ticket of the Independent Labour Party rather than that of the PPP. It would appear that the PPP was both illegitimate and premature. Its parents neither acknowledged its existence nor provided it with the necessary sustenance.

The Kamloops Convention did not "mark the beginning of a new era in the politics of B. C."[82] That era had really begun two years earlier, when the CSL began to organize in the province. The labour reformism which had dominated B. C. left-wing politics until the turn of the century still had a large number of sympathizers, as evidenced by the Kamloops Convention, and in the following years there were a number of attempts to organize a provincial labour party. Such attempts

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[81] Western Socialist, Nov. 29, 1902.

[82] Independent, May 10, 1902, reprinted from the Citizen and Country.

were always unsuccessful, however, and only occasionally would an Independent Labour candidate run for government office. Thus the Left of B. C. politics was open for domination by the socialists. After the Kamloops Convention, labourism was replaced by socialism, though its precise nature was as yet unclear. For most of the next twenty years labour and reform politics in British Columbia would have few adherents and the revolutionary politics of the socialists would dominate the politics of the Left.

CHAPTER V

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

The Kamloops Convention was the last attempt for some years to unite the various reform groups in British Columbia. Although the socialism of Kingsley and Burns had been rejected at the Convention, the socialists were undaunted and returned to the familiar tasks of organizing and education. The Third Annual Convention in 1902 was the scene of prolonged debate between possiblists and impossiblists. The latter won out, and it was they who dictated the platform of the Socialist Party of British Columbia (SPBC), which was formed at this time. In the following two years strikes by the United Brotherhood of Railway Employees (UBRE) and the Vancouver Island coal miners helped to radicalize the workers involved and enabled the socialists to further consolidate their position in the province. In the 1903 provincial election the socialists for the first time fielded a large number of candidates. Much encouraged by the election results and the growing interest in socialism in the province, the SPBC responded to calls from their comrades east of the Rockies and in 1904 became the Socialist Party of Canada.

The main items of business at the Third Annual Con-

vention in 1902 were the wording of the platform and constitution, and the question of whether or not the B. C. Socialist Party (BCSP) and the Revolutionary Socialist Party of Canada (RSPC) would unite. The issue of contention concerned what means should be advocated for ending the wages system--the goal agreed upon by both groups. One group argued that, while working towards the revolution, it was necessary to try for some immediate relief from capitalism. They therefore called for a platform listing some of the party's immediate demands. The other group took the view that ameliorating measures would simply postpone the collapse of capitalism and the advent of the revolution, since the workers would not then see the system's flaws as soon as they otherwise might. This discussion would involve the socialist movement for many years, with no decisive answer reached until long after the advent of the CCF in 1933.

Essentially, the revolutionary socialists put themselves in an impossible position. In Marxian terms, an end to the wages system meant a revolution that would occur when the proletariat became self conscious as a class and seized the ownership of the means of production. At the same time, however, the revolutionary socialists chose to operate as a political party within a democratic system which ordinarily

entails competition between groups to determine the distribution of social goods. By choosing not to enter the competition through agitation for incremental changes in the system, the "impossiblists" in effect cut themselves out of the day-to-day political struggle. If politics is seen as a struggle over the allocation of goods and authority, then the revolutionary socialists, opting for an absolute end--i.e. the demise of the capitalist system--were cut off from the political conflict. This in turn separated them from many people who wanted immediate changes in the system to make living tolerable. With many groups competing in society, politics necessitates compromise, and this the impossiblists refused to accept. In Daniel Bell's words, they were living "in but not of the world."[1]

The impossiblists realized that, by eschewing evolutionary socialism, they were asking workers to sacrifice present comforts for the sake of the future revolution. Secure in the "inevitability of history," they offered the

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[1]Daniel Bell, Marxian Socialism in the United States (Princeton, New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 1967), p. 5 and passim. This is Bell's explanatory variable for lack of socialism in the U. S. He does not accept the many explanations put forward by such people as Selig Perlman, Sidney Hook, Louis Hartz or S. M. Lipset, who have stressed the distinctive character of American life, which amounts to conditions, not causes, says Bell.

workers only enlightenment for the present. The function of the party, as they saw it, was to propagandize the workers by pointing out how the capitalist system enslaved them and how everyone who worked for wages belonged to the same exploited class. Thus political candidates were run for educational purposes (thanks to broad newspaper coverage and the distribution of election platforms)[2] rather than as serious aspirants for political office.[3] The impossiblists could act as *just* men, by describing the inequities of capitalist society, but they could not act as *political* men by relating to specific problems requiring immediate attention. The immediate task was not to win elections, but to make socialists.[4] Although basically a political party is an alliance for the purpose of attaining political power,[5] the revolu-

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[2]Interview with Wallace and Stuart Lefeaux, May 25, 1966.

[3]The problems faced by those candidates who did get elected are discussed in Chapter VIII.

[4]This view would be carried into the CCF by former members of the SPC. Ernest Winch, for example, in a letter to J. G. King in 1935, wrote, "First, I disagree that 'the primary task at this time is the electing of candidates to the House of Commons'; that is never our primary task which is the 'making of socialists'--something very, very different." Quoted in Walter Young, *The Anatomy of a Party: The National CCF 1932-1961*, p. 179.

[5]Joseph A. Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism and*

tionary socialists did not judge success or failure on the basis of how close they came to winning elections. They were convinced that, when enough socialists existed, political power would belong to the proletariat.

But even the immediate demands ('palliatives', as SLP members disparagingly called them) of the possiblists did not relate directly to the everyday political and economic problems faced by the workers of the province. The demands that the possiblists proposed for the party's platform were intended to be steps toward socialism which would at the same time provide the workers with some relief from their economic hardships, but they did not give room to party workers to speak out on such immediate issues as the Boer War, Asiatic immigration, tariffs, and the like. Though the party executive and various members did in fact take stands on some of these issues, such stands were not based on the party platform; they were similar to radical thinking elsewhere and did not always derive from an economic interpretation of society.

The debate among the B. C. socialists had begun in

Democracy, 3rd edition (N. Y. Harper and Row [1942] 1962). "A party is a group whose members propose to act in concert in the competitive struggle for political power." p. 283.

earnest early in 1902 when the proposed platform and constitution of the BCSP had been published by the party's executive. It continued during the spring and summer--public meetings, in the pages of the Western Socialist and even in the Seattle Socialist, whose readers were among the impossiblist faction in the Socialist Party of America. The editor of the Seattle Socialist had attacked the proposed platform and constitution of the BCSP declaring that it did not have the mark of socialism on it. In reply, Ernest Burns enunciated a position which would eventually cause him to leave the SPC:

> My socialism is of a more elastic quality than that of some ultra-orthodox comrades, who have reduced Socialism from a philosophy to a creed, and regard the slightest questions of their tenets and dogmas as heresy of the most outrageous type. We have now entered upon an era when the principles of socialism will have to be applied to our daily life. This work is right before us and will not commence--as so many of the comrades imagine--after some industrial catastrophe has occurred in which the economic fabric of capitalism will fall to pieces, leaving the ground free and clear for Socialism; on the contrary, we have to grow into Socialism from present conditions just as feudalism grew into commercialism, clearing away the rubbish of obsolete capitalism on the one hand and laying the foundation for the temple of industrial democracy wherever we can find chance to work. This concurrent process of development and decay takes place in all organic life, not excepting the institutions of society itself.[6]

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[6]The Socialist, Jan. 12, 1902. Also reprinted in the Independent, Feb. 1, 1902.

At the convention, held in Vancouver on October 3, 1902, delegates from the RSPC and the BCSP put together a platform and constitution which were to be voted on by referendum of the membership of both groups. They agreed that, if the referendum favoured amalgamation, the new party's name would be The Socialist Party of British Columbia (SPBC).

The platform's preamble confirmed the nature of the class struggle in economic terms, stating that, "The irrepressible conflict of interests between the capitalist and the worker is rapidly culminating in a struggle for possession of the powers of government, the capitalist to hold; the worker to secure it by political action. This is the class struggle." The five points of the platform established beyond doubt that the socialism of the SPBC was not the socialism of the groups previously organized under the banner of the Canadian Socialist League, nor that of the Provincial Progressive Party; it was the socialism of the RSPC.[7] The party opted for public ownership of the means of wealth production, democratic

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[7]The entire platform and preamble are in the Western Socialist, Oct. 18, 1902 and reproduced in appendix 4. The similarity between this platform and that of the RSPC in appendix 11 is obvious.

management of industry by the employees and production for use rather than production for profit. It also vowed that elected socialists would support legislation designed to advance the cause of the working class and aid the class struggle, and oppose that which did not.

The platform left no doubt concerning the immediate future course of socialism in B. C. Noticeably absent was any reference to immediate demands which had formed a large part of the suggested platform submitted by the executive committee of the BCSP in the early spring. The result of the referendum vote was overwhelmingly in favour of the direction the convention had taken: in the SPBC fifty-three voted for and eleven against the platform, fifty for and fourteen against the constitution. In the RSPC eight-two voted for and two against the platform, eight-two for and two against the constitution. Clearly the impossiblists had won the day. What accounts for the apparent hegemony of this group?

One answer is provided by Loosmore, who says,

> The main beneficiaries of the Kamloops Convention seem to have been the radical Marxian socialists. The initial growth of the Socialist Party had brought in a number of members who were little more than "sentimental" socialists, more interested in immediate reforms than in social revolution. These people were drawn toward the PPP in 1902,

and lost interest in the Socialist Party.[8]

Loosmore then goes on to surmise that, with the ranks of the Socialist Party thus depleted, it was easy for people like Kingsley to commit the amalgamated organization to the objective of attaining socialism through education and agitation.

Loosmore's explanation is tempting, since it is axiomatic that the appearance of a new group on the scene is accompanied by some initial depletion of the ranks of existing organizations. In this case, however, the evidence does not support such an explanation. It is true that, as was seen in Chapter II, the socialists in B. C. had many different orientations and had drawn their panaceas for society's ills from many sources, but it is not correct to say that the predominant feeling was in favour of immediate reforms rather than revolutionary change.[9] Furthermore, the PPP never became an organization to which people could give their allegiance and support.[10] It is also true that

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[8]Loosmore, p. 164.

[9]See Chapter II, passim.

[10]Chris Foley did try to establish a local in Vancouver, but it did not last more than two meetings, and in one or two locations in the Interior feeble attempts to establish locals were also made.

Kingsley was very influential. A most persuasive speaker, he had become the foremost advocate of the RSPC cause after his arrival on Vancouver Island in the spring of 1902, and he was for a number of years the fountainhead from which emanated many of the positions of the SPBC and the SPC. He would certainly have been able to influence the delegates at the convention, but the vote was taken by referendum and thus many of the party members, especially those in the Kootenay mining areas, would never have heard him. Kingsley was indeed influential, but in view of the great debate which had been going on for some time, it is too simple to say that he was the prime factor. There had to be other elements which would encourage the members to take this sharp turn to the left.

Sentimental socialists can change too. J. M. Cameron, surely one of the leading lights among the "sentimental" socialists, said on the eve of the convention, "The aim of the socialists is to emancipate the great army of workers from wage slavery by getting control of the means of production, distribution and exchange, and making them collective property." He went on to explain why he favoured the one-plank platform--i.e. the collective ownership of the means of production, distribution and exchange--and concluded that "Any who cannot agree on this plank are

not socialists."[11] G. Weston Wrigley, another whose background was steeped in Christian and "sentimental" socialism, became a partner with Pettipiece in the Western Socialist, wrote in it, and was also business manager. Reading the newspaper from this period leaves no doubt as to its favouring the one-plank platform.

The early reform and socialist groups in B. C. did get many of their ideas from Edward Bellamy, Robert Blatchford, Henry George and Thorstein Veblen, all of whom suggested change through corrective legislation, but it must be remembered that they also included some class analysis in their thinking. It was this latter element which was reinforced in the mining areas of B. C., while the former was seen as only a partial corrective to an unjust system.

Loosmore may be correct in saying that some members left the socialist orbit with the advent of the PPP, but there were also converts from the PPP to the socialist movement. H. Buckle, for example, editor of the Nanaimo Clarion and executive officer of the PPP, joined the RSP in October, 1902.

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[11] Western Socialist, Sept. 27, 1902.

In trying to understand why the members of the Revolutionary Socialist Party voted so overwhelmingly in favour of the one-plank platform, it must be borne in mind that the party was centered in the Nanaimo and Ladysmith coal mining areas, where a large number of miners were British and thus already imbued with the Marxian tenet of class antagonism. Moreover, they worked in a situation which lent itself to a Marxian analysis.

After the results of the referendum were announced, the socialists devoted the remainder of 1902 consolidating their position and preparing for a province-wide organization campaign the following year. Before the year was out, further events served to boost their confidence. James H. Hawthornthwaite quit the Nanaimo Labour Party and joined the SPBC, which gave the party a sitting member in the B. C. Legislature, as Hawthornthwaite had been elected by acclamation in February, 1901, to the Nanaimo seat left vacant when Ralph Smith resigned to run for a federal seat in the election of November 7, 1900. Hawthornthwaite had been Smith's "left hand" man during his election campaigns of 1900 and had been instrumental in delivering the radical miners' vote for Smith.[12]

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[12]Considering Hawthornthwaite's background, this was

Another event which bolstered the socialists was the significant showing made by Parker Williams against W.W.B. McInnes in the North Nanaimo by-election on December 15, 1902. The by-election was necessitated when James Dunsmuir resigned his seat and the premiership and turned over the reins of government to Edward Gawlor Prior, who became Premier on November 21, 1902. Prior had invited McInnes to join the cabinet and, under the rules at that time, it was necessary for McInnes to resign his seat and run for re-election. In a surprising two-way race, Williams polled 155 votes--nearly forty per cent--and McInnes polled 263 votes. There is some truth in the statement that Parker Williams' good showing,

> allied with the fact that J. H. Hawthornthwaite had already espoused the socialist cause, thus in a large measure removing the popular idea of

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a surprising role for him to play. He was born in Ireland and came to Canada in 1885. He went to work as a secretary for the United States Consulate in Victoria, later being promoted to the position of U. S. Consular Agent in Nanaimo. He left this position to go into the real estate business and subsequently moved to San Francisco in an unsuccessful attempt to promote some ideas he had for new mining machinery. Returning to Nanaimo he took a job as night watchman for the Vancouver Coal Company and then became a clerk in the Company's land department--the job from which he was released at about the same time he was having his disagreement with the Nanaimo Labour Party and Ralph Smith. It was suggested at the time that it was Smith's influence with the Vancouver Coal Company that cost Hawthornthwaite his job. For the story of Ralph Smith and the Nanaimo Liberal-Labour Party, see Loosmore, passim.

> its abstract nature, and making it a matter of practical politics, served as a warning to the corporations to henceforth refrain from trusting the political lives of their most useful lieutenants to the mining sections of Vancouver Island.[13]

These areas would be represented for many years by socialists. Williams was elected to the B. C. Legislature for Newcastle in 1903 and was re-elected in 1907, 1912 and 1916.[14] The year 1903 provided the radicals with many

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[13] *Clarion*, January 12, 1907, p. 1. There is no doubt the other parties were becoming concerned with the growing strength of the socialists among the miners. The *Victoria Colonist*, April 27, 1903, carried a report of a "secret" meeting in Nanaimo between the Conservatives, Liberals and Labourites, the purpose of which was to obtain agreement between the three groups to back a common candidate in the forthcoming election and thus prevent a victory by the socialists. The Conservatives would not agree to the proposal, thus ensuring a three-way fight.

[14] Parker Williams was born in Wales in 1873 and worked in the coal mines there prior to emigrating to Canada. Before coming to work in the mines on Vancouver Island, he worked in the lumber camps of Ontario, the railway camps of Ontario and Alberta, and also in the coal mining camps of Alberta and Washington State. Williams' background was typical of the many men who came to B. C. to work in the mines and lumber camps and ended up devoting all their free hours to the fight for decent working conditions and a fair share of the "good life" promised by the immigration people and successive provincial governments. While Laurier boasted that the Twentieth Century would belong to Canada, these men were trying to ensure that a fair share of the worker's daily production in this century would accrue to them.

opportunities for education, agitation and growth. There was a widening rift between organized labour in B. C. and the Trades and Labour Congress of Canada (TLCC). Driving the wedge into this division were the constant pressure of the radicals for Congress support of independent political action[15] and, in the mining areas particularly, a growing sympathy for the industrial unionism of the ALU. The TLCC in its support of craft unionism was regarded as conservative and under the control of the AFL. In the interior mining country, the WFM was affiliated with the ALU, which it had been instrumental in starting, while on the coast the Vancouver Trades and Labour Council (VTLC) disaffiliated from the TLCC in February, 1903, by not paying its per capita dues. At this time the VTLC even went so far as to support the organizing of new unions on an industrial basis. In December, 1902, the Miner's and Mine Labourer's Protective Association in Nanaimo had broken with the Congress and affiliated with the WFM as Local 177.[16]

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[15]Many workers believed the Congress was beholden to the old line parties, and therefore would not represent their interests. Parker Williams called the TLCC a "part of the Liberal Machine." Loosmore, p. 171.

[16]For details of this break and the involvement of Ralph Smith, see Phillips, p. 38, and Loosmore, p. 172.

In the Vancouver Island coal fields of the Dunsmuir empire, relations between management and labour reached crisis proportions in 1903. In South Wellington, because of their attempts to unite the local unions, the miners were locked out in December, 1902, for more than six months; and in Ladysmith, after four of the leaders were fired, the miners were locked out when they organized as Local 181 of the WFM.[17]

Trouble had also been brewing in the railway trades. The United Brotherhood of Railway Employees (UBRE), an American union organized along industrial lines and affiliated with the ALU, had been organizing machinists, clerks, freight handlers and others. When the union applied for recognition, the CPR responded by terminating the leaders' employment as soon as they were discovered,[18] until

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[17] See Phillips, Chapter III, for a detailed account of the activities leading up to this turbulent period.

[18] This was not the only response from the CPR. As was the practice, they brought in hundreds of scabs and laced the UBRE with their own secret agents. The espionage ring within the union was so extensive that it included not only some officials of the locals, but also Harold V. Poore, the Organiser General for Canada and President George Este's trusted lieutenant. Report of the Royal Commission on Industrial Disputes in the Province of British Columbia, (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1904), pp. 9-11.

eventually a strike was called for February 27, 1903. Politically this developed into the most significant strike of the year: the sympathy strikes which were called demonstrated the development of a class consciousness within at least part of the work force in B. C. Eventually the strike involved teamsters, coal miners and seamen, and evoked sympathetic support from the building trades unions as well.

Much of the support for the strike emanated from the outrage produced by the killing of Frank Rogers, one of the leaders of the 1901 Fishermen's Strike[19] and a member of the SPBC. On April 13, 1903, Rogers became the first socialist martyr in B. C. when he was shot while picketing on the tracks of the CPR. According to the Clarion, a volley of nine or ten shots was fired "by a gang of thugs employed by the Canadian Pacific Railway Company."[20] Though eventually a man was tried for the murder, he was acquitted, and to this day in left-wing circles the trial is cited as a travesty of justice. The incident appeared to lend substance to socialist claims

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[19] See Chapter IV, p. 112.

[20] Clarion, May 12, 1903.

that a class war raged under capitalist oppression. Revulsion swept through the unions and served to unite member unions of the Vancouver Trades and Labour Council, and to radicalize other previously uncommitted workers.

Though the unions striking for recognition in 1903 lost their battle, the potentially explosive situation served as a catalyst for socialist organization. The strikes and labour disputes of 1903, following so closely on the fishermen's strike, created a situation in which it was possible to apply a Marxian analysis to the B. C. case, using the conflicts as examples of the class struggle inherent in the capitalist order. These events strengthened the hand of the socialists and, within the party, the hand of the impossiblists.

When the SPBC held its third annual convention in September, 1903, the secretary was able to report new locals in Cumberland, Grand Forks, New Westminster, Boundary Falls, Eholt, Denoro, Fernie, Michel, Mother Lode and Camborne.[21] During the year, the executive committee had attempted to keep full-time organizers in the field, but lack of funds had prevented it. It was reported at the convention, however, that during the previous four months it had been

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[21] Clarion, September 11, 1903.

possible to have organizers in the following locations: Courtenay and Cumberland in May, Kingsley; Boundary District in June, Wilson; Greenwood in July, Embree; Revelstoke and Camborne the same month, Ogle; Fernie the same month Hawthornthwaite; Kootenay and Fernie in August, Kingsley; Haney the same month, Pettipiece and Burns (short visits); Vanada the same month, a visit from Hawthornthwaite.

In accordance with their goal of making converts through education and agitation, the convention appointed Kingsley as the full-time organizer. In their determination to keep the propaganda meetings going by cutting costs to the provincial body, the Provincial Executive Committee (PEC) later passed a resolution stating that a speaker, or organizer, would not be provided unless the sponsoring group contracted to pay for the cost of the hall and advertising and to take up a collection, the proceeds of which were to be turned over to the PEC and used to pay the salary and travelling expenses of the organizer.[22]

The convention also discussed the advisability of going on to organize a national party, but decided that the

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[22] Clarion, Oct. 22, 1903. Apparently coffee parties for candidates are not a modern phenomenon. This same article reported that the Pettipieces were experimenting with coffee parties as a means of promulgating socialism, inviting "30-40 neighbours to spend the evening at their residence for discussion, singing, coffee and cake."

time was not yet propitious and that this should be left in abeyance until they could send Kingsley on a tour of the eastern provinces to "educate" the inhabitants to real socialism. Reaffirmed was the intention "to stand firmly on the issue of the abolition of the present system of wage slavery as the basis for all political propaganda." Further resolutions elaborated the party's position in other areas. There were to be no alterations in the party platform: they were opposed to manifestos by party candidates, but each was to be left free to use his own judgement in addressing the electorate. No member of the party was to nominate a party candidate or stand for nomination himself unless he was either a member in good standing for six months or a charter member of the local. Proxy votes were prohibited in party meetings. In an attempt to widen the base of participation, the convention agreed that no one should hold provincial office while holding a similar office in any branch of the party.[23]

Although the possiblists continued the debate after the convention, the impossiblists merely became more

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[23]In the following chapter there will be a complete discussion of how the party was organized.

doctrinaire.[24] It was during this period that the latter first advocated exclusivity in party membership, requiring examinations in Marxism as a prerequisite to membership. This practice actually held during the life of the party and was often justified on the basis of the party's special circumstances in British Columbia. Parmeter Pettipiece, writing about the importance of doctrinal purity said, "fate has decreed this position in the world's history to us, and we should prove to the workers of the world that we can rise to the occasion; let us stand firm; keep our organization iron-clad, aye, 'narrow' and see that we shy clear of the rocks of danger which have wrecked so may well-meaning movements."[25] Such purity was scoffed at by members like Ernest Burns, who said, "Every Socialist Party in the world with the exception of the Socialist Labour Party of the U. S. and our own has some statement in the program or platform in regard to measures for immediate improvement of social or industrial conditions."[26]

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[24]For the continuing dialogue, see Western Socialist, Jan. 24, 1903, Jan. 31, 1903, Feb. 7, 1903, and the Western Clarion, May 28, 1903, June 4, 1903, July 3, 1903.

[25]Clarion, October 15, 1903.

[26]Clarion, June 25, 1905.

Not surprisingly, the impossiblists' position alienated many potential supporters outside the movement. Chris Foley[27] described the impossiblist view as "a modern manifestation of the same spirit that in bygone days throttled freedom of speech and set the fires of persecution in every civilized country of Europe."[28] The sine qua non of the evolutionist position was friendship with the unions, since they realistically believed that the majority of their support would come from the working classes. Alternatively the labour unions were excoriated mercilessly by the revolutionary wing. The Revelstoke Local No. 7 of the SPBC had passed a resolution condemning the Clarion and Kingsley for their attitude to the unions and threatened to discontinue support of the Clarion unless the attitude changed, Kingsley, in reply, said:

> The stock in trade of the present working class movement is 'Capital and Labour are brothers,' 'Capital has rights as well as Labour,' 'All we demand is justice,' 'The Right to Organize,' 'Collective Bargaining,' 'Demand the Union Label,' etc. The stage paraphernalia consists of the strike accompanied with the privilege of getting licked, the boycott under which the commodity labour power can strut the stage and bawl out other offending commodities....

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[27]Foley was popular with the Kootenay miners until 1902, when his advocacy for gradual change and the Liberal Party lost him much support.

[28]The Independent, Oct. 10, 1903.

> The Socialist Party cannot depend on the support of members of trade unions unless they are to go back on union principle. The principles of unionism and socialism are antagonistic. To support one is to deny the other, no man can serve two masters....
>
> If the Socialist Party of the United States or any other country commits folly through ignorance, that is no reason why the party in British Columbia should do likewise....[29]

Kingsley was rapidly becoming the target of the dissidents' attacks. In part this was due to his visibility as organizer and as the author of many articles in the Clarion. More important, however, was his antagonism to the craft unions. He was a doctrinaire Marxist, who learned his early lessons well from DeLeon of the Socialist Labour Party. Kingsley's persuasive and logical arguments played a major role in the continuing advocacy of revolutionary socialism by the SPBC and later the SPC. At this point in the development of socialism in B. C., he was to some extent the intellectual fountain-head and had the majority of the membership with him. At a later stage, when he was editor and publisher of the Western Clarion, he was able to maintain his position through the use of the paper, which was the sole contact with the membership across the country. Opposing points of view were printed, but the dialogue was

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[29] Clarion, Dec. 26, 1903.

controlled through the paper and a sympathetic Dominion Executive Committee who, as will be seen, were always members of the B. C. branch of the party. Actually, Kingsley's analysis itself was opposed by very few within the party, but it was felt that his approach to union members would serve only to alienate them from the socialists. An organizer who had more sympathy with the benefits of unionism should make the initial forays, they argued, while "Kingsley was the man to teach the advanced class."[30]

Kingsley's view won out, however, and the vitriol of the socialists continued to pour onto the unions affiliated with the TLCC and the international unions of the AFL.[31] Strong support for the SPBC came from affiliated members of the ALU such as the WFM and the UBRE, as well as from the Fishermen's Union of B. C., all of whom were led by socialists. These were the unions involved in the strikes of 1901, 1902, and 1903. In explaining their own support for these particular industrial unions, the

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[30] Clarion, July 10, 1903. April 26 letter from the Victoria Executive Committee.

[31] The struggle within the TLCC between the socialists (the majority of whom were from B. C.) and the less radical labour leaders has been documented in: Paul Phillips, No Power Greater; Martin Robin, Radical Politics and Canadian Labour; and Gad Horowitz, Canadian Labour in Politics, passim.

Socialist Party said

> The UBRE....not only possess all the good features of the old trades union, but it stands for industrial freedom as its ultimate aim, is now affiliating with the American Labour Union, an organization which has declared for the overthrow of the capitalist system, the abolishment of wage slavery, and demands for every worker the full product of his toil--in a word, socialism.[32]

For the first few months of 1903 the Socialist Party continued to publish the Western Socialist as the party's official organ. Since a party organ was always of paramount importance to the socialists, its genesis is of some interest: G. W. Wrigley and his father had begun publishing the Citizen and Country in Ontario in Ontario in 1898. The purpose of the paper was to spread information about the various reform movements and ideas that were abounding at the time.[33] When, under the leadership of the younger Wrigley, the Canadian Socialist Leagues were formed, Citizen and Country readership spread across Canada along with the Leagues.

Meanwhile, in B. C., Parmeter Pettipiece's Lardeau Eagle, which he had been publishing in Ferguson since

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[32]Western Socialist, Dec. 20, 1902, p. 1.

[33]See Chapter II, p. 72.

February, 1900, became the official organ of the BCSP. Although Pettipiece had only been introduced to socialism early in 1900, he quickly became a convert (living in the mining area was doubtless an influence.) In March, 1902, he sold the Eagle and moved to Vancouver, commencing negotiations with Wrigley to buy a share in the Citizen and Country. He was successful and the Citizen and Country, along with Wrigley, moved to Vancouver in June. The paper's name was changed to Canadian Socialist and the first edition appeared on July 5, 1902, taking the place of the Lardeau Eagle as the official organ of the BCSP. In September, suffering from financial difficulties, Wrigley sold his share of the Social Progress Company (the paper's publisher, which included a printing plant) to Pettipiece and moved to Victoria to become an organizer for the American Labour Union. Pettipiece changed the name of the paper to the Western Socialist. In the spring of 1903 the Nanaimo Clarion, a labour paper which had been taken over by the RSPC, was now (during the strike of the railway workers) merged with the UBRE strike Bulletin and the Western Socialist. The first issue of the new paper, named the Western Clarion, appeared on May 7, 1903. Initially the paper was a tri-weekly with a circulation of six thousand,[34] but as the UBRE and coal

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[34] Clarion, May 7, 1903. p. 1.

strikes petered out, so did the paper's circulation. In July the Clarion became a weekly, and by October circulation was down to twenty-five hundred.[35] There were other set-backs during this early period,[36] but the paper recovered and remained, with some fluctuation, as the most potent power in the movement until it ceased publication in 1925.

It was through the pages of the Clarion that party battles were fought; news of dominion, provincial and local executive decisions was carried; members were advised about party happenings; articles on socialism of a local, national and international nature were printed. Obviously the party depended to a large extent on the Clarion and therefore its continued publication was always a matter of utmost concern. The amount of time, effort and money which some party members devoted to the paper may seem inordinate, but it must be judged in light of the paper's overall contribution to the party.

During this early period attempts were made to bring

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[35] Clarion, Oct. 15, 1903.

[36] There were two periods when the paper did not appear: November, 1903, and January to May, 1905.

the paper under party ownership and control; there was fear that the paper might pass into the hands of a less sympathetic owner and there was also concern about the financial strain which continued publication was placing on Pettipiece. In January, 1903, Pettipiece formed the Western Socialist Publishing Company (which controlled both the paper and the printing plant) and issued stock to the SPBC in payment for the Nanaimo Clarion. Pettipiece wanted to see complete party ownership of the paper but although he offered additional stock in the Western Socialist Publishing Company to the SPBC membership, controlling interest was never attained. The few individuals who did purchase stock turned it over to the SPBC to be controlled by the provincial executive. At very few times in its history was the Clarion ever self-supporting. For a number of years it was subsidized by the current owner of the printing business[37] (the Western Socialist Publishing Company) until its final years when it was financed from a small legacy.

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[37] In 1905 Kingsley bought the business from Pettipiece. In 1908 the Clarion came under the ownership and direction of the SPC, but until 1911 (when it ceased publication for a few months) Kingsley still provided a subsidy which averaged $100 a month. After 1912 the SPC carried the financial burden.

During the first six months of 1903, the activities of the socialist unions in B. C. attracted much more public attention than did the activities of the SPBC. The industrial confusion and business uncertainty caused by the Vancouver Island Coal Miners' Strike and the UBRE Strike led the federal government to appoint a Royal Commission to investigate the causes of labour unrest in B. C. The commissioners were the Hon. Gordon Hunter, Chief Justice of British Columbia, and the Rev. Elliot S. Rowe, a Methodist minister and sometime socialist.[38] William Lyon McKenzie King, Deputy Minister of Labour, was the Commission's secretary. Ottawa believed that B. C. society was being divided into two warring camps as a result of the activities of agitators from outside the country. The Royal Commission report reinforced this view, though the commissioners labelled the culprits not as mere outside agitators but "revolutionary socialists"[39] who were using the unions as political instruments in order to attain their confessed goal of seizing the "political power of the state for the

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[38]Rowe, it will be recalled, was one of the original directors of the Canadian Socialist League and had established the local in Victoria which was then a part of the SPBC.

[39]Report of the Royal Commission on Industrial Disputes in the Province of British Columbia (Ottawa, King's Printer, 1904).

purpose of confiscating all franchises and national resources without compensation...."[40] The strikes had begun for legitimate economic reasons and the accusation that the socialists "used" the unions is not true. Although the leadership of the WFM and UBRE admitted to their desire to overthrow the capitalist system, the strikes were not called with this goal in mind. They were, however, exploited as educational vehicles for Marxism.

To the investigators, the fact that the WFM and the UBRE did not aspire to the goals of the "legitimate" trade unions--i.e. continuation of the capitalist system with a better share for the workers--was sufficient to justify legislation to outlaw them, or at least to curb their activities. The commissioners' recommendations ensued from their belief that there was equality of opportunity which enabled the working man to make his own decisions about where he would work, etc. At the same time, the commissioners were not prepared to risk the possibility that the workers might make the wrong decision, as can be seen from the general tenor of the recommendations, some of which even purported to protect the workers from "subversive"

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[40] Report, p. 67.

ideas from outside the dominion.

The commissioners found that the socialists in the ALU, WFM and UBRE had conspired to bring out on strike the coal miners in order to cut off coal supplies to the CPR, thus aiding the UBRE in its struggles. In order to curb these "illegitimate" unions, the commissioners recommended, among other things: that unions be incorporated with a model constitution, that the employer be given thirty days' notice of strike, that two-thirds of those in attendance at a strike meeting must favour strike action to permit a strike, that there should be no interference during a strike by anyone outside the dominion, that it be made an offense to use or publish the epithets "scab" or "unfair", and finally that there be fines or imprisonment for any person, not a British subject or a resident of Canada for twelve months, who incited any employee to quit his employment. The penalties of this latter recommendation would also apply to anyone who somehow transmitted a recommendation to quit work from someone living outside of Canada.[41] The recommendations were intended to render impotent the "revolutionary" unions, but they went too far and succeeded in alienating the TLCC and many of its member unions too. No action

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[41] Report, pp. 70-77.

was ever taken on the Report. Besides the strong opposition voiced by labour unions, the Report tended to be nullified by the fact that the strikes were over by the time the Report was published. Moreover, the economy took an upturn and it became evident that such stringent legislation was not necessary to maintain labour peace. The final paragraph of the Report had rendered the pessimistic verdict that "while much good can be accomplished by wise legislation, the labour problem, so called, is incapable of final solution, and that it will be with us as long as human nature remains what it is, and present civilization endures."[42] The statement is a striking illustration of the view held by one of the warring camps. On the opposite side, the socialists contended that it was not human nature but human institutions which made man greedy, grasping, and uncooperative, and that changes in the environment--i.e. in the structures of society--would change man as well.

In the middle of the Royal Commission hearings British Columbians once again found that they had a new premier in the person of Richard McBride, who had been

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[42]Report, p. 77.

called to form a government on June 1. The Lieutenant-Governor, Sir Henri Joly de Lotbiniere, had asked Prior to resign when it was discovered that a government contract had been improperly awarded to Prior's own firm. After a short sitting of the House, McBride called an election for October 3. This was the first B. C. election which was fought on party lines, and there were candidates from the Conservative, Liberal, Socialist and Labour parties. There is evidence here to corroborate Truman's hypothesis that "severe disturbances inevitably produce associations to stabilize group relations."[43] As shown in Chapter III, a number of new groups had been competing for power in British Columbia during the preceding few years, and it could be argued that this factor, along with the severe labour disturbances of the past three years, impelled parties to form on more permanent lines than had previously been the case. In a forty-two seat House, the Conservatives won twenty-two seats, the Liberals, seventeen, the Socialists, two and Labour, one.

McBride had promised during the election campaign "that an important part of our policy will be road and trail construction" (to open new areas of the province.)[44]

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[43] David Truman, The Governmental Process, p. 61.

[44] Ormsby, p. 336.

Opting for McBride, the voters, "weary of the long rule by a capitalist and land-holding clique"[45] and of the stalemate caused by the many strikes, indicated that they were ready to embark on a period of industrial development. Nonetheless, the demands of the socialists and the platform of the PPP enunciated in Kamloops in April, 1902, were not to go entirely unnoticed. The Conservatives adopted the PPP plank of government ownership of railways and public utilities and stated further "that a portion of every coal area hereafter to be disposed of should be reserved from sale or lease, so that State-owned mines may be easily accessible, if their operation becomes necessary or advisable."[46] It is evident from the election results that, for the time being at least, socialism had ousted reform labourism as the repository of the radical vote. Although there were more labour candidates than socialist, the latter obtained a larger share of the popular vote (about eight per cent) and elected two M.L.A.s compared to labour's one--William Davidson of Slocan, who had not been opposed by a Socialist Party candidate. The Socialist Party ran nine

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[45] Canadian Annual Review, 1903, p. 218.

[46] C.A.R., 1903, p. 219.

candidates and obtained 4,629 votes from a total of 59,688 votes cast.[47] The impossiblists gained strength from the election results, which they viewed as proof that their stance had been vindicated. For many years afterward, whenever setbacks occurred, these early successes would be cited to justify the party's uncompromising position on the grounds that it had worked once before and therefore should work again. G. Western Wrigley wrote that the gains in the 1903 election came because the SPBC's platform was the "shortest and most uncompromising statement of the principles of revolutionary socialism that has ever been drafted in any country."[48]

It is difficult to evaluate the effect of the bad publicity received during the Royal Commission, on the socialists' overall share of the vote. Certainly in the mining areas Socialist Party candidates did well enough, but might they have done even better if so much of the

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[47] All the results quoted here and below are from the Canadian Parliamentary Guide, 1905, pp. 441-443. Vancouver and Victoria were multiple member ridings and therefore the total vote cast does not relate to the total number of registered voters, which was 39,296. Letter of February 23, 1971, from Deputy Chief Electoral Officer, Province of British Columbia.

[48] G. Weston Wrigley, "Another Red Spot on the Socialist Map," International Socialist Review, IV (December 1903) p. 400.

responsibility for labour unrest had not been placed at their door? In the Vancouver City electoral district J. C. Mortimer and A. R. Stebbings of the Socialist Party came close to the bottom of the poll with 1,338 and 950 votes respectively. In the Victoria electoral district, J. C. Watters came last with 699 votes. But in the mining country, outside the large urban areas, where the isolation of the small settlement and the omnipresent corporation weighed heavily on the residents, The Socialist Party results were much more encouraging, as can be seen from the table on page 186.

Although the party had anticipated about seven thousand votes and the election of six or seven members, they were nonetheless very pleased with what they got. Before all the results were in, the Clarion ran the following banner headlines:[49]

> TOTAL SOCIALIST VOTE IN B. C. IN JUNE, 1900 684
> TOTAL SOCIALIST VOTE IN B. C. IN OCTOBER, 1903 3,770
> APPROXIMATE INCREASE IN THREE YEARS ...550 PER CENT
> APPROXIMATE PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL VOTE.....8 PER CENT

When the counting was complete, the Socialist Party had received 4,629 votes, elected two members, and come within

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[49] Clarion, October 8, 1903.

RESULTS OF OCT. 3, 1903, PROVINCIAL ELECTION

IN RIDINGS CONTESTED BY SOCIALIST CANDIDATES

(Excluding Vancouver and Victoria)

Fernie	Votes	%	Newcastle	Votes	%
W.R. Ross (Con.)	316	37.4	Parker Williams (Soc.)	288	40.0
E. C. Smith (Lib.)	309	36.5	A. Boyden (Con.)	217	30.2
J. McPherson (Soc.)	221	26.1	D. W. Murray (Lib.)	214	29.8
Grand Forks			**Nanaimo**		
G. A. Fraser (Con.)	346	46.1	J. H. Hawthornthwaite (Soc.)	486	44.0
J. Riordan (Soc.)	232	30.9	E. Quennel (Con.)	325	29.4
W.H.P. Clements (Lib.)	173	23.0	H. Sheppard (Lib.)	294	26.6
Greenwood			**Revelstoke**		
J. R. Brown (Lib)	238	36.7	Thomas Taylor (Con.)	342	40.5
E. Mills (Soc.)	229	35.3	J. M. Kellie (Lib.)	316	37.5
J. E. Spankie (Con.)	181	28.0	J. W. Bennett (Soc.)	186	22.0

(Source: C.P.G., 1905, pp. 441-443.)

ten votes of electing Ernest Mills in Greenwood.[50]

The legislative accomplishments of the Socialist Party members are examined in Chapter VII. Here it will only be pointed out that, with the support of William Davidson,[51] they were able to wield a great amount of influence with Premier McBride because they virtually held a balance-of-power position. The extent of this power was at times exaggerated by members of the party, one of whom was quoted as saying, "The Socialists are the power in this province today and although we permit the Conservatives to hold office, we are thoroughly aware that they do so at our pleasure. Conscious of the fact that we hold a balance of power, we intend to take a hand in the management of affairs in this province."[52]

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[50]The following explanation for Mill's defeat was mentioned in an interview with W. W. Lefeaux on May 26, 1966, and in a letter from John McInnis to Gretchen Steeves, Sept. 30, 1958. Angus McInnis Collection, U.B.C. The Liberals and Conservatives, aware of the strength of Socialism in Greenwood, took advantage of the fact that, at that time, the rural polls closed two hours ahead of the urban polls. Twenty Liberals and Conservatives in Greenwood agreed to withhold their votes until the results of the rural balloting were known, and then vote for the Liberal or Conservative who had the most votes.

[51]During the time he sat in the Legislature, Davidson consistently met in caucus with Hawthornthwaite and Williams and finally joined the Socialist Party.

[52]Vancouver Province, October 24, 1904.

There is no doubt that the election results and the growth of the party during 1903 had given the Socialists a new self-concept. The interest in socialism and the growth of the party had, in relative terms been exceptional. In January, 1903, the regular Sunday night meetings for the study of Marxian economics began attracting such large crowds they had to be moved from the rooms above Burns' Second-Hand Store to a larger hall and then eventually to a theatre.[53] The membership in the Vancouver local doubled during the period of the UBRE strike, and in July the Clarion was predicting that "The Cooperative Commonwealth will dawn upon the old world in 1908."[54] The British Columbia situation was gaining attention in other circles as well. An article in the International Socialist Review referred to the growth of socialism in the province as "remarkable,"[55] and the Victoria Daily Colonist wrote in March, 1903, that "the growth of socialism in British Columbia during the past year has been phenomenal."[56]

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[53] Western Socialist, Jan. 17, 1903.

[54] Clarion, July 3, 1903.

[55] A. M. Simons, "British Columbia," International Socialist Review, IV (October, 1903), p. 249.

[56] Victoria Daily Colonist, March 2, 1903.

Even with these successes, however, it was difficult to maintain enthusiasm and consistent organizational structures outside the central core of leadership in Vancouver and on Vancouver Island, where there were two elected M.L.A.s. Part of the difficulty arose from the mobility of the miners, who were predominantly single and constantly on the move from one location to another in the search for better conditions. The fact that, as ore bodies were worked out, new locations had to be found, also made for discontinuity. Party organizers would establish a new local and membership would often climb to over a hundred in a very short time, only to wither away again within the year because the active members had moved on to other locations. Added to the problem of transience was the fact that most of the mines and smelters worked shifts, making it difficult to find a suitable meeting time for the men. When the leaders were on night shift, no meetings could be called except on weekends--an arrangement which in those times was neither popular nor considered proper. That most of the organizational drive and enthusiasm came from Vancouver was clear from the Kootenay members' lack of response to the numerous pleas during 1903 and 1904 to buy

stock in the Western Socialist Publishing Company.[57]

When the Fourth Annual Convention of the SPBC was held in Vancouver on December 21, 1904, there were delegates from Ladysmith, Fernie, Vancouver, Nanaimo and Victoria, with Hawthornthwaite and Williams as ex-officio delegates without voting rights. The secretary reported that there were fifteen active locals with 240 members. Though the membership had decreased during the year, the party's confidence had not. The most important item of business concerned the possibility of expanding the party across the dominion. The executive committee had received correspondence from the Socialist Party of Manitoba, the Ontario Socialist Party, and the Socialist League in Fredericton, New Brunswick, all announcing that they had adopted the platform of the SPBC and advising the B. C. group that they would affiliate if the SPBC would expand across Canada.[58] Consequently the convention changed the

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[57]With circulation of the Clarion holding steady at about 2,500, the paper was in constant financial difficulty. The Provincial Executive Committee proposed a monthly levy on members' dues to meet this problem, pointing out that a levy would have the additional benefit of enabling the members to purchase the publishing company from Pettipiece, thus bringing the paper under Party control. The response from the Kootenay area, however, was almost nil.

[58]While the metamorphosis of socialism in British Columbia--from the sentimental utopianism of the early

party's name to the Socialist Party of Canada, appointed Kingsley, Hawthornthwaite and Williams to draft amendments to the constitution to make it suitable for a national party, and decided that, until a dominion-wide convention could be held, the executive committee of the B. C. group would act as the Dominion Executive Committee (DEC).[59] The convention approved the amended constitution, which was subsequently passed by referendum vote of the B. C. locals.

Why Marxist socialism should take root in B. C. more readily than in the other Canadian provinces has been alluded to in Chapter I and will be further discussed in Chapter IX. A combination of weak leadership, lack of a local party press, economic circumstances, an entrenched two-party system, and other factors referred to in previous chapters prevented these groups from realizing the same strength as did their counterpart in British Columbia. The leadership and dynamic character of the British Columbia movement had been acknowledged implicitly by Wrigley when

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groups to the aggressive Marxism of the SPBC--was taking place, the loosely-organized groups of the Canadian Socialist Leagues in the other areas of the dominion had also been forming provincial governing bodies. In Ontario and Manitoba provincial socialist parties were formed in October, 1901, and November, 1902, respectively, while the Fredericton Socialist League became the central body for New Brunswick in July, 1902.

[59] Clarion, Jan. 28, 1905.

he moved the Citizen and Country from Toronto to Vancouver in 1902. This was followed the next year by a request from the Ontario Socialist Party to the SPBC for the latter to expand across the dominion. The request was renewed in 1904, accompanied by the announcement that the Thanksgiving convention of the Ontario Socialist Party had adopted the platform and program of the SPBC. Similar steps were taken by the Manitoba Socialist Party and the Fredericton Socialist League the same year.

A principal explanation for the failure of other provinces to develop indigenous Marxist parties of significance is that potential leadership there was often siphoned off to B. C. Although there is no empirical evidence to support the common assertion[60] that B. C. received more than its share of discontented and frustrated settlers, the assumption is not an unreasonable one. Dissatisfied with conditions in other provinces, young Canadians and newly-arrived immigrants tended to drift westward looking for better circumstances.[61] When they arrived at the "end of the line" in Canada and found conditions in B. C. equally

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[60]For example, see Martin Robin, Radical Politics and Canadian Labour, Chapters 3 and 4.

[61]Biographical information collected by the author shows that a number of socialists active during the first

unsatisfactory, they had a number of choices: they could retrace their steps or seek greener pastures still further afield--in Australia or New Zealand, for example--or they could remain in B. C., reconciling themselves to a less than Utopian existence or attempting to remold B. C. society into the society of their dreams. For economic reasons, if for no other, many opted to stay put. Pettipiece, who came from Ontario, explained why he established the Eagle in Ferguson: "This province is full of discontented people who, like myself, came here to get away from existing circumstances, but it is of no use; we must all go back to the cause."[62]

The leaders of the Canadian Socialist League--Cameron, Charlton, Wrigley--were from Eastern Canada. The USLP was led by such men as MacClain and Burns from Britain. The

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decades of the century (e.g. Parker Williams, J. M. Cameron, Parmeter Pettipiece, O. Lee Charlton, W. B. Caird, Fred Faulkner, George Morgan) gradually worked their way across Canada, going from job to job.

[62] Citizen and Country, June 13, 1900. There were other reasons why immigrants stayed on the coast, having once arrived. "The country looked more like home than anything I had seen in Canada. And when I reached Vancouver and saw ships loading timber in the harbour, I felt as if I had escaped from bondage." George Hardy, Those Stormy Years (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1956), p. 27. The mild B. C. climate tended to attract those who became unemployed elsewhere in Canada; thus B. C. often served as a safety valve for labour troubles in other parts of the country.

RSPC's membership was predominantly British, though Kingsley was American and A. Kirby, the first secretary, was from New Zealand. With such a mixture of people and ideas, one might expect the end socialist product to have been a compromise brand, especially since the province had a history of attempts at reform politics. But it was the very failure of these attempts to achieve any meaningful reform, coupled with the uncompromising stance of big industrialists like Dunsmuir and the Kootenay mine owners, which enabled the Marxist leadership in B. C. to find followers--the essential ingredient which Marxist leaders in other provinces (which did not have B. C.'s "industrial frontier") lacked. Having failed to obtain significant changes through gradual reform, the next step for the embittered B. C. worker looking for a political solution was to move to the left. That meant lending support to the revolutionary socialism of the SPBC, the only socialist group in the province.

And now the SPBC had become the spearhead of Marxism for the entire nation. Buoyed up by the successes of the years 1902-1904, the ascendant impossiblists viewed their debut on the national scene as a certain sign of impending nation-wide triumph. Their confidence hardened the party's steadfast commitment to revolutionary doctrine, leaving no room for compromise. As a consequence the transformation

of Marxian socialism into the social democracy of the CCF and the NDP was to be a long and painful process. Meanwhile, the two decades which followed the formation of the SPC were years of success, hope and frustration.

CHAPTER VI

YEARS OF SUCCESS AND FRUSTRATION

It soon became apparent that the Socialist Party of Canada was doomed to remain the Socialist Party of B. C. in all but name. The vision of a national socialist movement proved to be a pipedream, and the economic buoyance and business growth which characterized the early years of McBride's premiership forced the SPC leadership to concentrate their talents in their home province. These were busy years indeed: at times the members were certain the revolution was inevitable, they conceded that it might take a little longer than originally anticipated. But always they were convinced that their most important function as a party was to educate the masses in Marxian economics and the realities of the class struggle inherent in the capitalist system. For the first few years following formation of the SPC, encouraging election results and the steadily increasing percentage of popular vote obtained were sources of optimism, leading the party into attempts to become a political machine in order to win more votes. The move, however, was not successful: many of the members, secure in their belief that the revolution was the inevitable outcome of the capitalist

system refused to extend their efforts beyond the prime task of education. Nevertheless, a handful of socialists continued to be elected to the legislature, and these men left their mark on the statutes of the province for years to come. Various labour-management confrontations, the First World War and its aftermath, the conscription crisis and the Russian Revolution all had important repercussions for the development of socialism within the province during this period.[1]

Accepting the challenge to become a national party, the B. C. group adopted a constitution intended to be the basis for a democratically-governed organization. Since it is of considerable importance to the later understanding of some of the difficulties arising within the socialist movement, this document will be examined in some detail.

Article I of the Constitution laid down the organizational structure of the party: Dominion Executive Committee (DEC), Provincial Executive Committee (PEC), Riding Locals and Riding Branches, and the timing and organization of conventions. It also stipulated that party law would become effective only when approved by a majority

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[1]These developments are referred to in this chapter and discussed further in subsequent chapters.

of the general membership.

Article II concerned the organization and operation of locals, which were to take the name of the provincial riding in which they were situated, while the various centers in the riding were to be organized as branches of the main riding local. In practice, the first group in a riding applying for a charter became the main local regardless of location in the riding. Five or more persons could form a local upon submitting application on the prescribed form to the Provincial Executive Committee along with the first month's dues and a five dollar fee to cover membership cards, prescribed ledgers for the secretary and treasurer, and other supplies. Officers were to be elected annually with the exception of the chairman, who was to be elected each meeting. Other items covered in this article were instructions for handling of party funds, procedures for the expulsion and suspension of members, and the minimum monthly dues to be collected. The article ended with the stipulation that "No Local shall enter into any compromise with any other political party, nor furnish financial aid to any other organization." This exclusive relationship was reinforced in the membership application form.

Article III concerned the setting up of branches,

and placed them under the jurisdiction of the local.

Article IV outlined the duties and the makeup of the PEC. In order to encourage regular meetings, the annual provincial convention was given the power to determine the riding which was to be the seat of the PEC. This riding would then elect seven of its members to act as PEC for twelve months beginning January 1 of each year. The PEC was to elect officers from its membership for a twelve-month term, but a new chairman was to be elected each meeting. Any local outside the seat of the PEC could augment the committee's membership at any time by sending one delegate. A member of the PEC was prohibited from holding any other office in the party. Article IV also provided that the PEC could draft legislation to be introduced by party representatives in the houses of legislation. There was no suggestion of a penalty should the legislator refuse to present the bill. (At various times it had been suggested that elected members file an undated letter of resignation with their local, but the suggestion was rejected as "a stray reform plank from the old ship of populism.")[2]

The duties of the PEC were:- (a) to receive and

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[2]Clarion, June 18, 1904.

submit to a general vote propositions relating to provincial affairs sent from any local if endorsed by at least two other locals; (b) to supervise the agitation throughout the province; (c) to make all of the preparations for the provincial convention and to make a full report to such convention on all party matters; (d) to issue to the locals semi-annually, and in a sufficient number of copies, a report of party finances; (e) to be represented in the provincial convention by one of its members, who would have an advisory vote only in the proceedings, and bear no other credentials; (f) to employ organizers to further the interests of the party, the Committee to be held strictly responsible for the qualifications and efficiency of such persons.

Section 4 of Article V provided that "Until a Dominion Convention is held and other arrangements made, the Provincial Executive Committee of British Columbia shall act as the Dominion Executive Committee." The party never did raise enough money for a national convention, nor were there ever enough strongly-organized provincial groups to force one. Under the constitution it was a comparatively simple matter for the other provincial bodies to ask for a dominion convention. Article V provided for

the DEC to "receive and submit to a general vote propositions sent from any Provincial Executive Committee of the Party if endorsed by at least one other such Committee." Certainly this article would have enabled dissident groups to have insisted on a dominion convention, but this did not happen. During the entire history of the party, the PEC of B. C. also performed the duties of the DEC and the annual provincial conventions in B. C. always chose the Vancouver local as the seat of the provincial executive of British Columbia. Consequently the Vancouver local always occupied a disproportionately influential position in the party which, coupled with control of the Clarion, contributed to the insular attitude often taken by the party.

The duties of the DEC outlined in Article V were similar to those for the PEC except that they pertained to the national level. In addition, the DEC was charged with the responsibility of maintaining adequate communication with the socialist parties of other countries. Article V also outlined the financial structure of the party, which was based on monthly "dues stamps" which the DEC would sell to the PEC's for five cents each. The latter, in turn, would sell these stamps to the locals for ten cents each, and the locals sold them to the members for twenty-five cents.

Although the constitution did not decree annual dominion conventions, Article VI did provide for annual provincial conventions. These were to be held between August 15 and October 15, the place to be decided by party vote but the actual date to be left to the discretion of the PEC. Each local was entitled to one delegate plus another delegate for each additional twenty members or major portion therof. Proxy voting was allowed only for delegates of a member's own riding. All acts of conventions, whether provincial or dominion, were to be submitted to the membership for ratification.

Article VII was a catch-all of miscellaneous items: party members were empowered to remove all officers, boards and committees; no person could be nominated as a candidate for public office unless he had been a member for six months, nor could such nominee accept nomination or endorsement by any other political party; a local's charter could be revoked by either executive committee for any violation of the provisions of the constitution; the accounts of executive committees were to be audited every six months; transportation to conventions was to be paid for by party funds; all propaganda literature was to be issued only on the authority of the DEC. Of interest in this article is the attempt by the party to control

patronage that might come under the control of elected members. According to Section 10, "When a vacancy occurs in any public office within the patronage of a party representative he shall submit the same to the local of his riding for nomination by referendum vote."[3]

The various constitutional checks on control of the party machinery by an individual or an oligarchy would have been sufficient to ensure a democratic organization in a party wherein the various extremities were healthy. But throughout its history the SPC never enjoyed a completely healthy body, its provincial organs being constantly in varying degrees of atrophy. No two provincial groups were ever concurrently energetic enough to question the hegemony of the Vancouver group. Outside of B. C., in fact, no strong provincial group ever existed. There were healthy locals at various times in Alberta, in Winnipeg, and in

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[3]When Hawthornthwaite had difficulties with his riding local in 1911, one of the criticisms levelled at him was that he had not followed the local's suggestions for filling a minor post which had fallen vacant in his riding. Although Hawthornthwaite did not have the authority to make that appointment, the local believed that the government would seek his advice. Hawthornthwaite exculpated himself by claiming that he had in fact submitted the names but that the government had ignored his advice. The Minister involved stated that he had not received any communication from Hawthornthwaite involving the appointment. This is the only recorded incidence of Section 10 ever having been invoked. See Chapter VII, pp. 285-287 and Footnote 17.

various parts of Ontario, but never strong provincial bodies. In 1910, for example, the Toronto locals scathingly denounced the management of the party and called for a dominion convention "to rectify the undoubted errors that exist within our party," but though the call was substantiated with some very convincing evidence,[4] nothing ever came of it, since a dominion convention could only be called by the DEC or by two PEC's acting jointly. In effect, due to the weakness of the socialist cause outside the borders of British Columbia, democracy within the Socialist Party was weakened when the SPBC became the SPC. This is not to say that during the course of its history the party was plagued by constant internecine wars and attempts to throw off the yoke of the B. C. group. As will be seen later, there were splits in the party, just as there were splits in other socialist parties all over the world, but there were factors in the SPC limiting this phenomenon. Unlike the Socialist Party of America, of which Daniel Bell wrote, "The inclusion in the platform ...of meliorative appeals tended to encourage almost any variety of dissident to join, and extended the basis of

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[4] Clarion, Dec. 17, 1910.

factionalism,"[5] the SPC called solely for the abolition of the system of wage slavery and by eschewing palliatives at all times it had consequently a smaller membership, but one that was more in basic agreement with the goals of the party. Moreover, without conventions there was no way, other than through the pages of the Clarion, for party dissidents to communicate with one another and challenge the ends of the party and the means of obtaining these ends. Even with these impediments, of course, it would have been possible, through constitutional means, for a sufficiently large group of dissidents to unseat Vancouver. That this did not occur was due largely to the "purity" of the membership.

How was it that in British Columbia, where the party's greatest electoral successes occurred in the mining districts of Vancouver Island and the Kootenay, that Vancouver, where candidates were always at or near the bottom of the polls, was able to sustain its dominant position? If socialism in other parts of Canada was not sufficiently strong to challenge the Vancouver oligarchy, it would seem that at least within British Columbia control

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[5]Daniel Bell, Marxian Socialism in America, p. 53.

by the Vancouver group could have been challenged.[6] The constitution provided that the annual convention would decide which local would act as PEC during the ensuing twelve months, the location of the convention to be decided by referendum vote of the provincial membership. But except for 1906, when the location was Fernie, and 1908 when it was Nelson,[7] all B. C. conventions were held in Vancouver. One reason for this was that Vancouver was the geographical center of party strength between the other two strongholds of Vancouver Island and the Kootenay. Since Vancouver Island locals could not afford to send delegates to the Kootenay and vice-versa, these members usually compromised by choosing Vancouver. Furthermore, although per capita

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[6]See Robert Michels, Political Parties (Glencoe, Illinois; The Free Press, 1949, [1915]), for an original discussion of the trend toward oligarchy in mass parties. Moses Baritz reviewed this book in the Clarion, April, 1917. He agreed with Michels' contention that the socialist parties which Michels studied had veneration of leadership and were run by oligarchies. Baritz argued that this was due to the failure of these parties to educate members concerning the nature of socialism. Consequently the membership allowed the leaders to dominate. Baritz argued that this did not occur in a truly revolutionary party (as the SPC) since the latter always attempted to educate the membership and the masses, and thus the party remained democratic.

[7]This was the closest the party ever came to a dominion convention. The Alberta group was strong in 1908 and the B. C. convention was held in Nelson to enable Alberta delegates to attend.

Vancouver had fewer socialists than the other two areas, it had the most in absolute numbers, since it was the largest population center in the province. (Membership in Vancouver Local Number 1 often ran to well over a hundred, and there were at various times at least three locals in Vancouver.) With Vancouver as the consistent choice for the convention locale, it naturally followed that the greatest number of delegates came from the Vancouver area and therefore Vancouver could control other important decisions such as which riding would be the seat of the PEC. Although it is true that convention decisions had to be submitted to referendum vote, there is no record of a decision ever having been upset in this way. The powerful position occupied by the Vancouver group, including its control of the Western Clarion, meant that all important party policy was enunciated and interpreted by them.[8]

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[8]Although the platform of the party was designed to prevent interpretation and to keep the membership on the straight and narrow path leading to abolishment of the wages system, the practicalities of earning a living in a capitalist society made this extremely difficult. The resultant conflict between the party's role as a movement and its role as a party was the identical conflict recognized by Walter Young in the CCF. (See Anatomy of a Party, pp. 3-11 for an analysis of the conflict.) Immediately the SPC contested elections, it had to compromise itself. Although the party itself renounced reform measures,

From Vancouver to the Atlantic provinces was a long reach for a party financed by the "nickles and dimes" of the membership and from silver collections at open meetings. Not surprisingly, the reach was a feeble one. At the peak of its strength in the Maritime provinces, the SPC had, at the end of 1909, fifteen locals, eleven of which had formed that year when the party put W. G. Gribble, a carpenter from Toronto, into the area for six months as an organizer. Two of the remaining locals had been organized the previous year by Henry Harvey Stuart.[9] The other two had been the only bastions of Marxian socialism for any length of time in the area: Fredericton, N. B., was organized July 28, 1902, and Glace Bay, Cape Breton Island, was organized November 22, 1904. Although Newfoundland was not a part of Canada at the time, a ten-member local of the SPC was formed in St. John's in late 1906 by Robert E. Scott from Montreal.[10]

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individuals such as Parker Williams, J. H. Hawthornthwaite, John McInnes, and William Davidson, once elected, supported reform measures in the Legislature along with their capitalist colleagues. The exigencies of realpolitik meant that failure to introduce and vote for legislation that would improve the miners' lot meant losing one's seat in the next election. See Chapter IX for further discussion of this point.

[9] Clarion, Jan. 8, 1910.

[10] Clarion, Dec. 1, 1906.

What was true for Canada in general was true also for the Atlantic provinces: the only places where there was any continuing interest in the socialism of the SPC was in the rail yards and the mining communities. For a number of years after 1905 there were locals in almost continuous existence in such places as McAdam Junction, N. B. (the center for the CPR system east of Montreal) and in Cape Breton County, N. S. (the coal mining center of the area).[11] Apart from these bright lights, socialism in the Maritimes amounted to a few small isolated groups kept going by devoted ideologues like H. H. Stuart in Fredericton and Jules Levenne in Springhill. The Maritime members of the SPC were little affected by events in the rest of the party, and they in turn had no effect on the party other than to increase the circulation of the Western Clarion and to permit the claim that the SPC was indeed a national party. There was apparently some interest in the area for change--when Kier Hardy of the British Labour Party came through, he drew four hundred people to a meeting on September 30, 1908,[12] and the Halifax Herald and

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[11]Until the 1970 provincial election, when two members of the NDP were elected, Cape Breton was the only area of Nova Scotia ever to have elected a socialist.

[12]Clarion, Dec. 19, 1908, "Maritime Provinces Notes," by H. H. Stuart.

Moncton Times during 1908 gave good coverage to the newly-formed Independent Labour Party--but the SPC was never able to capitalize on this interest.

In the Province of Quebec SPC activity was limited to Montreal and within Montreal it was further limited almost entirely to German speaking immigrants, the local having been formed by the German Workingmen's Club in 1905.[13] A smaller Jewish local sometimes held joint meetings with the German local. Though English and French were the languages used, speakers were invited to alternate meetings to speak in Italian, Hebrew or Yiddish.[14] As in the Maritimes, the socialist band was a tiny one and it was only through the tireless efforts of the long-term secretary, Otto Jahn, that a local was maintained.

In the Yukon Territory, ever since the days of the Cooperative Commonwealth Community at Harmona,[15] there had been some interest in socialism. In 1903 a Socialist

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[13] As noted earlier, there had been locals of the Socialist Labour Party and the Canadian Socialist League in Montreal, but these were ephemeral. See Chapter II.

[14] Clarion, April 13, 1907.

[15] See Chapter II.

Education Club was established in Dawson City to hold political discussion meetings[16] and in January, 1904, this group formed the Socialist Party of the Yukon territory and affiliated with the SPC in April with twenty-one charter members.[17] A year later they had ninety members.[18] The group did not run candidates in elections; their function was primarily an educational one. There were periodic reports from them in the socialist press up to the first World War, but it appears that they were never involved in the disagreements between the possiblists and the impossiblists of the SPC nor with labour politicians. Like their comrades in the Atlantic provinces and Quebec, their effect on the development of socialism in British Columbia was nil, except to encourage the Vancouver group by providing apparent evidence of a nation-wide following.

Saskatchewan at various times also had a local of the SPC (in Regina) but the party never became strong enough to form a PEC. The SPC brand of socialism never appealed to the farmers.[19]

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[16] Clarion, May 30, 1903.

[17] Ibid., April 15, 1905.

[18] Ibid., January 27, 1906.

[19] The SPC's relationship with farmers is discussed later in this chapter.

It was only in the provinces of Alberta, Manitoba and Ontario that the affiliates of the SPC were ever strong enough to affect the British Columbia section of the party. From the time it became a national party until the period just before the first World War, the B. C. contingent spent a good deal of time, effort and money organizing new groups in these areas and maintaining the purity of the party membership. Charges of dictatorship and bigotry were often hurled at the Vancouver leadership by these groups, and energies that might better have been devoted to B. C. affairs were spent in defending the leaders' actions.[20]

The attempt by the B. C. socialists to extend the SPC umbrella over the rest of Canada was almost certain to fail. The two-party system was well established in both the Maritimes and Ontario, and this made it more difficult for the socialists to recruit followers.[21] In Ontario the craft unions were much better established than in B. C., and the appeal of labour politicians much more enticing to

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[20]See Appendix II for a short history of the development of the SPC in the province of Ontario, and its influence on the SPC in B. C.

[21]See Chapter IX for a discussion of the significance of the party system on the growth of socialism.

those relatively few people dissatisfied with the system, for Ontario, of all the provinces, was an upwardly mobile society. At the height of its strength the SPC had no more than two thousand members outside the province of British Columbia, and the DEC devoted precious time, money and energy to keep the fledgling groups outside of B. C. alive and growing when all of this might better have been spent on the home front.

In the bid to establish a national party, the SPC leadership did not bargain for the kind of effort needed to make the dream a reality. So certain were they of the inevitable triumph of their cause that initially they believed they had merely to put forth the party name and people would flock to it when they became socialists. Though ultimately the DEC expended considerable amounts of its resources in the attempt to build a national party, it was never enough to satisfy the eastern comrades. A typical comment came from Fred Hyatt, organizer for Saint John, N.B.:

> Very seldom do we ever hear of the Dominion Executive worrying themselves about Eastern affairs. Our members pay their per capita, so I suppose after all they must belong to the S.P. of C. but it is in name only and one of our members even suggested that instead of paying the tax we ought to use it right here in Saint John, seeing that we

get very little benefit.[22]

But the DEC could not achieve the impossible, and their energies were needed at home if the party in B. C. was not to lose ground in the face of the economic dynamism and business growth that characterized the first few years of McBride's premiership.

For a party which depended for its support on alienated labour, the beginning of 1905 was not a propitious time to launch a national organization. A number of technological advances and a booming world market were combining to make the fish canning industry "unbelievably profitable".[23] At the same time, Canada's greatest period of immigration had begun, and the rapidly-settled prairie provinces provided a seemingly insatiable market for B. C. lumber. During this period too the Okanagan Valley was recognized as a fruit-growing area, and by 1908 over a million fruit trees had been planted or were in production. Technological advances were also made in the mining industry, and the great Consolidated Mining and Smelting Corporation was created through amalgamation of the Canadian Pacific smelt-

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[22] Clarion, April 16, 1911.

[23] Ormsby, British Columbia: a History, p. 339.

ing operation at Trail with the Centre Star and War Eagle mines at Rossland and the St. Eugene lead mine at Moyie.[24] At the same time the government was encouraging railroad construction through subsidization. All sectors welcomed the economic surge, and even the growth of big businesses through mergers, price fixing and government subsidy met with few protests. Although during the booming years of the early McBride administration a large part of the national resources, industry and wealth production of this rich province were largely controlled by a handful of men who were usually impervious to the needs of the community, protest against this situation came almost entirely from the socialists.

McBride was a shrewd politician and appeared to identify himself with the wants of labour by allowing the passage of legislation for safety regulations and shorter working hours in the mines, and by recognizing, in his campaigns and speeches, the working class as an increasingly

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[24] Ibid., p. 341. In describing the growth of the B. C. economy in a Montreal speech, McBride cited the total output of manufacturers, forests, mines, agriculture, furs and fisheries as: 1881-$8,116,355; 1891-$22,213,575; 1901-$45,000,000; 1908-$60,000,000 (est.) Canadian Annual Review, 1908, p. 515. Quoted from Montreal Herald, Aug. 18, 1908.

significant part of the polity. This made it more difficult for the socialists to rally support by demonstrating that the state was the executive committee of the exploiting class. During these booming times workers were much more inclined to join unions than the SPC because it was the unions which were committed to the goal of securing a larger share of the increasing provincial income for the workers. Even under these difficult circumstances, however, the SPC continued to hold legislative seats in the mining areas and this at least provided them with a base from which to continue their educational work.

From the earliest years of the party, the years filled with hope and success, the leadership believed, as had Marx and Engels before them, in the primacy of material elements (the foremost being economic relationships) over political action. They also believed with Lenin that "The working class, exclusively by its own effort, is able to develop only trade union consciousness, i.e., it may itself realize the necessity for combining in unions, to fight against the employers and to strive to compel the governments to pass the necessary labour legislation, etc."[25]

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[25]V. I. Lenin, "What is to be Done?" in Essential Works of Lenin, Ed., Henry M. Christman (New York, Bantam Books, 1966), p. 74.

As a result, the SPC's activities as a political party were not primarily directed toward winning elections but toward educating the working class in a variety of ways. Although the party followed the Marxist view that it was the relations of production in society that were the causes of inexorable social change, they also held with Lenin that their task was to combat "spontaneity,"--i.e., the tendency for workers, in their striving to obtain a fairer share of the fruits of their production, to come under the wing of the bourgeoisie, especially where unions were involved. As Lenin wrote, this "subservience to the spontaneity of the labour movement, the belittling of the role of the 'conscious element' of the role of Social Democracy, means, whether one likes it or not, growth of influence of bourgeois ideology among the workers.[26] Hence the SPC took up the political education of the working class and the development of the latter's political consciousness. This was indeed a formidable task in a society which was in fact an upwardly mobile one for many people and thus gave the lie to the message of the class struggle.[27]

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[26]Ibid., p. 74.

[27]See Chapter IX.

Since the organizing activities of the party centered about the prime function of education and not on the setting up of an electoral machine, locals were organized as a means of bringing members together in order to make good socialists of them. The function of the local was to hold regular classes in Economics and History, to act as the fulcrum in the area for the organization of meetings featuring speakers from both the SPC and the United States, to provide speakers for street-corner meetings (a very popular method at the time for publicizing views), to distribute free literature published by the Dominion Executive Committee, sell pamphlets,[28] and--lastly--to work during elections. They were also to nominate candidates for elections, but this in fact was a limited responsibility since the leadership in Vancouver often ran in ridings outside the Vancouver area.

It is difficult to assess the success of the party's educational efforts.[29] Certainly among the faithful, whose numbers during the pre World War I period never fell below

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[28]According to a speech by Jack Kavanaugh in the Royal Theatre, reported in the B. C. Federationist on Oct. 11, 1918, in less than ten years the SPC had sold in the West over $10,000 worth of literature in the form of pamphlets and small tracts. At a probable average cost of 10¢ each this would amount to 100,000 pieces of literature.

[29]See Chapter IX.

a thousand in B. C.[30] and were often much larger, there is no doubt that membership in the SPC served to maintain a belief in Marxian and world socialism. In the Vancouver area particularly there were ample opportunities to meet others with similar beliefs. The SPC headquarters was "open every day and most nights and there were always large gatherings discussing every phase of industrial and political life."[31] In addition to the Western Clarion with its frequently mundane and occasionally brilliant Marxian analyses,[32] the public speaking, and the classes in History, Economics and Philosophy, a number of less cerebral activities were carried on regularly. May 1, the Labour Day of International Unionism, was always celebrated in the Lower Mainland with a large picnic or evening party, with the inevitable speeches. As the Province wrote in reporting one such picnic of over two hundred in North Vancouver, "Every socialist prides himself on the international features of his organization. So it was not surprising

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[30]Interview with W. W. Lefeaux, May 25, 1966.

[31]Letter from J. A. MacDonald, Sept. 1966, in possession of author.

[32]Certainly D. J. McKenzie's work would fall into this category.

that there were speeches and songs in half the languages of Europe."[33] This was an important occasion and in the event of rain, or May 1 not falling on a Saturday, Sunday or Monday,[34] the celebration was held in the evening with "songs, speeches, food and dancing."[35] Another occasion celebrated for a number of years was "Bloody Sunday," commemorating the massacre of the peasants in St. Petersburg on January 20, 1905. Money raised at these events was sent to support the peasants in Russia.[36] One of the important annual events, limited to Vancouver, was the commemoration of the Paris Commune. This was an occasion for a banquet and a charge of one dollar was levied. Even

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[33] Vancouver Daily Province, May 1, 1905.

[34] May 1 was not a gazetted holiday and, with the six-day work week, Sunday was the only day on which a picnic could be held. It was considered correct to celebrate the day before or the day after May 1, but any further away would not seem like a true remembrance and hence the alternative of evening parties.

[35] Victoria Colonist, May 2, 1908.

[36] Vancouver Daily Province, Jan. 22, 1906. The paper carried a detailed report of the speeches of Burns and Kingsley (N. L. Joanson, a recent lieutenant in the Russian Army just released from a Japanese prisoner-of-war camp, was the advertised speaker but he was unable to attend) and the news that $32 had been collected to send to the Russian peasants. The Clarion, Jan. 20, 1906, reported that $40 had been raised to send to the Russian Revolutionaries.

so, attendance never fell below a hundred.[37]

Both the size of the SPC in B. C. and public interest in socialism fluctuated between 1905 and 1925, with the periods 1910-1916 and 1920-1925 representing the low points. One indication of this fluctuating interest was the size of the public meetings held by the party in Vancouver. During the early years of socialist activity in the city, public meetings outgrew the rooms above Ernest Burns' Second Hand Store on Cordova Street, moved to the Sullivan Hall, then to a small Cordova Street theatre, and eventually to the City Hall, with a seating capacity of some four to five hundred.[38] From 1905 to 1910 the SPC held meetings almost every Sunday night during the winter months. The larger Empress Theatre on East Hastings Street was used for these meetings and, according to W. W. Lefeaux, it was not unusual to have "hundreds of people turned away" from the door.[39] It is

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[37]In a letter from J. A. McDonald, Sept. 1966, in possession of author.

[38]Vancouver Daily Province, Oct. 11, 1906, reports an SPC-sponsored meeting at City Hall with standing room only and, for some unknown reason, mentions that there were "over 200 ladies" in attendance.

[39]Interview with W. W. Lefeaux, May 25, 1966. Mr. Lefeaux said meetings at the Empress Theatre averaged 1500 to 1700 people.

interesting to note the comments of a British observer at one of these meetings:

> I was present at a socialist meeting in Vancouver, which was held on a Sunday evening in a large music hall, and was well attended. It is difficult to judge status by dress in the Dominion, as there is a uniform air of well-to-do-ness about all classes. It was quite evident from a glance at the audience that it was not comprised of those who espouse Socialism as a possible solution of problems of which they are the immediate victims. Many of them were in evening dress, and the occupants of boxes at the sides of the building, which included ladies, looked as if economic laws had not dealt unkindly with them, Socialism or no Socialism.[40]

After 1910 there were sporadic attempts to hold large meetings, but in most instances it appeared that the SPC had lost its drawing power. Some meetings held during the 1912-1914 Coal Strike[41] were successful, but

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[40] Joseph Adams, Ten Thousand Miles Through Canada (London: Methuen, 1913) pp. 191-192. Since the date and location of the meeting are not given, it is impossible to identify the meeting in question. While the SPC membership itself was certainly working class, the party did sponsor speakers and debates which would have been of interest to a wide audience. For example, Bowser spoke on Workmen's Compensation at an SPC-sponsored meeting, and President Klinck of the University of British Columbia chaired at least one debate with SPC sponsorship. Such meetings would probably have drawn a crowd not unlike that described by Adams.

[41] The Vancouver Island Coal Strike lasted two years and although many of the strikers involved were SPC members the SPC did not do much to support the strike. They did join the Miner's Liberation League in a concerted action with other such groups as the B. C. Federation of

in the main these were sponsored jointly with other groups and thus did not necessarily indicate any renewed interest in the SPC.

During World War I interest in the socialist cause temporarily revived: In 1915 a crowd of sixteen hundred attended the Avenue Theatre to hear a discussion of the proposed new Workmen's Compensation Act by the Honourable W. J. Bowser, Attorney General and Acting Premier of British Columbia, and Jack Harrington, one of the leading lights of the SPC.[42] During 1917, 1918 and 1919, the Anti-Conscription campaign, the intervention in Russia by Allied troops, and the Winnipeg General Strike sparked further

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Labour, the I.W.W. and the Social Democratic Party, to work to release the miners who had been jailed, but soon left in a dispute with the I.W.W. over tactics. See Chapter VII, pp.313 -319 for a more extensive discussion of this strike.

[42] B. C. Federationist, June 4, 1915. The paper also reported that hundreds were turned away. Even though it was a B. C. Socialist Party M.L.A. (Jack Hawthornthwaite) who had been instrumental in having the first Workmen's Compensation Act in B. C. passed, the SPC took the Marxist view that "this measure...was merely in response to the desire of the executive of the employment class to lessen the burden of the employers by giving them a cheaper form of protection than could be obtained from private companies."

interest in the party.[43] The Royal Theatre was constantly filled for party meetings and during a good part of 1919 it was necessary to use two theatres, the Royal and the Columbia, to handle the audiences.[44]

These large meetings were an important aspect of the SPC's attempt to spread the Gospel according to Marx. In the smaller communities, however, the party concentrated its efforts in the development of locals. Although always

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[43]These issues are discussed further in Chapter VIII. The SPC's view of conscription was that the war was between capitalists over markets; since it did not concern the workingman, all members of the proletariat should refuse to fight. The party had been acutely disappointed when the various socialist parties in Europe had fallen into line with their nationalist governments, but they were able to make common cause of the anti-conscription campaign with some elements of the Western Labour movement who argued that there should not be manpower conscription without wealth conscription. Some of the leading participants in the Winnipeg General Strike were members of the SPC (eg., R. J. Johns, R. B. Russell and W. A. Pritchard) and in Vancouver much of the protest and the sympathetic strike were initiated either by the SPC itself or members of the SPC who held leading positions in the labour movement. During the trial of the Winnipeg General Strike leaders the prosecution called attention to the influence of SPC publications on the minds of strike participants.

[44]This was a particularly tense period in Western Canada, and other groups besides the SPC were also drawing large crowds to theatre meetings. During late 1918 and early 1919 there were often four theatres filled to capacity on a Sunday evening: the SPC in the Royal and Columbia and the Federated Labour Party in the Rex and the Broadway. (The Dec. 6, 1918 issue of the B. C. Federationist reported a series of F.L.P. lectures featuring such speakers as J. S. Woodsworth, R. P. Pettipiece, Jack Kavanaugh, Ernest Burns and E. T. Kingsley.)

short of funds, it managed throughout 1905-1918 to keep at least one organizer in the field, and often two or three. In return for a pledge of SPC support in running for public office, a candidate was required to promise that, if elected, he would work for the party when not involved in Legislative business. As a result, much of the time the party had Hawthornthwaite, Williams, McInnis and (in Alberta) O'Brien[45] working as organizers, in addition to the few salaried men they were able to keep on the road.

Many of the locals were ephemeral, some needing reorganization for every election or every visit of the organizer; others endured for many years. They clustered around the coal mining area of Vancouver Island, the Lower Mainland area, the Okanagan Lake area plus the mining towns of Hedley and Princeton, and particularly around the southeastern part of the province in the Kootenay-Boundary mining district.

The locals in the Okanagan were never large: none ever numbered more than twenty-five members, and more often they had around ten. Though the SPC made concerted efforts to organize the Okanagan farmers, the party had little

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[45]Charles O'Brien was elected on the SPC ticket to the Alberta legislature in 1909, the only member of the Party to be so elected outside of B. C.

appeal to these small property owners who were themselves employers of wage labour at various times. During the first quarter of 1908, C. M. O'Brien was sent on a speaking and organizing tour throughout the whole area without much success, although it was reported from Mara that "Comrade O'Brien completely drove away that stupid idea that a lot of the small farmers have, viz.; that the Socialists are after their farms and homes."[46] In the same report, however, the writer went on to say that the farmers "persisted in believing it [that the Socialists are after their farms and homes] in spite of all the telling to the contrary, and all the literature sent to them on the subject of socialism by this local."[47] The essence of the argument used with the farmers was contained in a Clarion article by O'Brien entitled "The 'Independence' of the Small Farmer" in which he says,

> The small farmers, it would appear, do not work for wages. They own, (or think they own-usually the latter) a small piece of private property. But their product, beef, wheat, etc., must have access to private property-elevators, railways, steamships, mills, packing houses, tramways, etc., so they too must pay a tribute. That tribute is everything they produce.

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[46]Clarion, Feb. 15, 1908.

[47]Ibid., Feb. 8, 1911.

> The small farmers have no regular payday, but they and their wives and children receive in exchange for their product, which is the result of the expenditure of their labour power, just what the wage-earners receive-on the average just enough to enable them to get food, clothing and shelter to produce again next year. Usually the farmer's crop is mortaged in advance.
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> Wage-earners only work for small farmers as a last resort, in preference to starvation, because with small farmers they have to work harder and for longer hours and for smaller pay than is customary among wage-earners....
>
> So, if possible, the condition of the small farmer under the rule of capital is worse than that of the very poorest paid wage-earner.
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> The so-called ownership by the small farmers of a little private property in the means of wealth production is simply a whip that lashes them to work harder and longer hours and live more stintedly than the capitalist can get wage-earners to submit to. They struggle harder to retain what they believe to be their ownership over property than they would do were they propertyless.[48]

From December, 1910, to March, 1911, Gerald Desmond worked the Okanagan area as a full-time organizer. During his trip four locals were set up, sixteen meetings held, about the same number of Economic classes, a hundred dollars' worth of literature was sold, and about forty subscriptions to the Clarion.[49] This may not seem

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[48] Ibid., June 13, 1908.

[49] Ibid., March 25, 1911.

like a bad bit of work in a little over three months, but in fact it was the townspeople whom Desmond reached and not the farmers. He reported,

> This is in some ways a peculiar district. Quite a percentage of the "ranchers" are petty bourgeois English that have been frozen out of industrial life and are in agriculture as a "last hope." These people are under the delusion that they are going to make anything from ten thousand per cent up out of agriculture "when the trees come up bearing" and don't want Socialism. I don't bother with them....the farmers find it harder to grasp social production than any other section of the workers.
>
> Moreover the farmer suffers from another delusion that the pure and simple wage worker does not have and that is that he is a capitalist. Fully half of them have this idea and uphold it.[50]

Even the special editions of the Clarion which were directed especially to the farmers failed to induce them to see the light of the socialist day. The Okanagan never became a fertile socialist field.

A further attempt to reach the farmers--this time in Alberta--was made by R. P. Pettipiece when, as organizer for the Alberta Trades and Labour Congress, he was a guest speaker at the annual convention of The Society of Equity[51]

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[50]Ibid., Feb. 8, 1911.

[51]The Society of Equity was a group of Alberta farmers who organized as a pressure group to try to get price stabilization, lower freight rates, import tax

on November 14, 1907. "This bunch of what I call cut-throats sees how things are going," said Pettipiece, "so they are filling the voters' places by non-voting Asiatic labour. The capitalists are skinning the labour men in B. C. every day, and the only difference with the farmers is, they are skinned wholesale once a year."[52] Although the Society of Equity was considered less conservative than farmers in general, Pettipiece did not manage to persuade them to the socialist cause. When the Alberta TLC held a convention the following month and invited delegates from the Society of Equity, Pettipiece chaired the Resolutions Committee, which he loaded with socialists. The committee recommended the adoption of the SPC platform, but this was strongly opposed by the farmer representatives "who work for profit" since the platform "does not favour working for profit."[53] Though the recommendations of the Resolutions Committee were passed, thanks to the socialists in the TLC

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relief, etc., for the farmers. They worked closely with the Alberta Trades and Labour Congress executive on a number of issues. It was Equity members who later became the backbone of the United Farmers of Alberta.

[52] Canadian Annual Review, 1907, p. 287.

[53] The Voice, Dec. 27, 1907.

the farmers in Alberta no longer sought a working relationship with either labour or the socialists.[54] Agrarian agitation for change did surface in B. C. and some other provinces during the war, but the answers sought were not provided by the socialists, and the farmers went their own way through their own political parties such as the United Farmers of Alberta, the United Farmers of Ontario, and the Progressives. In B. C. they continued to support the "old-line" parties, with the minor exception of the Courtenay area, where there was strong farmer support for the SPC.[55]

On Vancouver Island the SPC locals were active and sympathy for the socialists' cause was strong as evidenced by the continued election to the provincial legislature of Williams and Hawthornthwaite and, later, Jack Place. The nature of the membership, however, changed over the years. Earlier the coal miners had been predominantly of British origin and it was they who gave the initial impetus to the socialist cause in this area. Gradually men from other national groups came to work in the mines and eventually outnumbered Anglo-Saxons in the growing lumbering and

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[54]This convention and a similar one in B. C. are discussed more fully later in this chapter.

[55]Harrington said one area here was known by the locals as "Socialist Valley."

logging industry in the area. In 1910 a member of the South Wellington local complained about the lack of interest in the SPC among the Britishers, saying that "if it were not for our 'foreign' comrades...our meetings would certainly be empty."[56] On an organizing trip through the Island a year earlier, Jack Harrington had commented on the same phenomenon:

> On to Campbell River and into the logging camps--found that the English were not interested in Socialism and that only the foreigners were willing to listen. These "ignorant" (?) foreigners were studying socialist books; but our English friends not for them. They were satisfied.
>
> In Lund I got another cold reception from more "salt of the earth," this time Americans, not a word would they reply to my questions, looking up from their game of cards as if I were a bad smell. I again sought salve for my wounded feelings amid the ignorant foreigners.[57]

This shifting support had implications for the SPC, as would be seen the following year when certain elements would break away to form the Social Democratic Party of Canada.[58]

One of the difficulties faced by the SPC in main-

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[56] Clarion, March 19, 1910.

[57] Ibid., Aug. 28, 1909.

[58] See Chapter VII.

taining locals was the system of blacklisting used by employers to force troublemakers out of their area. Through a cooperative list, the coal operators were able in this way to rid themselves of some of the socialists who had been active in union activities. Some of the outcasts changed occupations, but others moved to the Kootenay-Boundary mining area only to find that they were faced with the same problem there.[59]

In the southeastern corner of the province, the socialists were always able to rally support among the miners, but the miners were also strong union supporters, first of the Western Federation of Miners and then of the Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers. Employer opposition was a constant hazard. Coupled with the use of the blacklist

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[59] An example is given in a report from organizer O'Brien in Ladysmith: "This is Dunsmuir's personal bailiwick. The spy or Pinkerton detective business is in force here to a much greater extent that any place I have ever seen. From what I can learn even the post office here is more than expected [sic] of being an excellent bureau of information for the mine bosses....At any rate our boys who have been active in the past and who are now active find it extremely difficult to dispose of their labor power in this camp. The thousand and one influences known to every wage-slave are brought to bear upon them to compel them to quit their employment and in many cases they are fired outright upon the slightest of pretexts. Once they have quit or been laid off, it is almost impossible for them to get on again....The propaganda meetings were discontinued because they afforded the bosses an opportunity to victimize...", Western Clarion, Nov. 9, 1907.

were open attempts by employers to influence the workers to vote for certain candidates in municipal and provincial elections as well as in union elections. An example is cited in a report from A. E. Hardy, writing about the "Class War" in Grand Forks:

> Mr. Hodges,[60] the manager of the Granby Mining Company, and autocrat of the boundary District, is very busy getting bunches of the men into his office lately, and telling them they must not elect the men that have been discriminated against[61] at the forthcoming election of union officers. The officers of this union are, and have been, class-conscious Socialists who would not allow the Granby to handle them....We had never had any trouble here until this would-be tyrant and despot, Mr. Hodges, started the ball rolling. But the game isn't over yet. This is the man that threatened a union committee that the outrages committed by the mine owners in Cripple Creek and the Coeur d'Alenes[62] would be committed here in the event of a strike, and who said to the same committee, "What do we care for your laws, we can buy law."...
>
> It was a nice picture here at the recent city elections to see this foreign corporation whose representatives here are foreigners without a vote in the country, dictating to Canadian citizens how they could vote. This should be an eye-opener to some of those patriotic citizens who imagine they are free men in a free country with a vote to

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[60]Hodges had previously held management posts in the Colorado mines where there were fierce battles between employer and employee.

[61]This refers to the blacklisted men who, though not employed by the Company, were still members of the union.

[62]Cripple Creek was a gold mining town in Colorado

do as they please with.[63]

Apparently this was not an isolated event. In 1910 Matthew Halliday described the Granby Mining Company activities in Phoenix, B. C.:

> A short time ago Phoenix Miner's Union held election of officers and Yours Truly (Matt. Halliday) was the Socialist candidate for Financial Secretary. The Granby Company down to their petty bosses did all in their power to have me defeated, which I was by a small majority and the results scattered all over the local press....The reason for the deep interest taken by the Granby Co. is the "Workmen's Compensation Act" which works a hardship on them when he [sic] don't have a "Reasonable" man to deal with as Secretary. Tickled by their success the Granby Co. started "rubbing it in" by firing Comrades Powchuk, Bohanas and Lackie, the leading spirits of the Ukrainian Local.
>
> In summing up the situation in Phoenix, I find that fear of the Granby Co. keeps men from voicing their sentiments in public, but fear of the Granby Mine keeps the more intelligent away.[64]

Reporting some impressions of the 1908 convention in Nelson, Wallace Lefeaux wrote that "Ninety per cent of these men

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and the scene of violent labour strife during the 1890's and early 1900's. Coeur d'Alene was a mining town in Idaho and the scene of the bloodiest battles between the Western Federation of Miners and the mine owners.

[63] Clarion, Feb. 22, 1908.

[64] Ibid., July 23, 1910.

were blacklisted as far as getting work was concerned, for a socialist is a dangerous man for the ruling-class; when working with other men he taints them with ideas that are a menace to the prsent [sic] glorious system."[65]

It is known that blacklisting was a common practice before the days of strong unions protected by adequate legislation, but just how widespread the practice was is hard to determine; one side naturally tends to overstate and the other to understate the extent of it. At any rate, it was sufficiently widespread to require that the SPC endeavour to keep an organizer in the field as constantly as finances would allow, since blacklisted men were always on the move and therefore the locals were continually needing to be reorganized. In the triangle formed by Revelstoke, Rossland-Trail and Fernie, the SPC had twenty-two locals, but no organizer was ever able to keep all of them active simultaneously. The ostracism, the itinerant nature of some of the mines and the mobility of many of the miners militated against SPC efforts to develop a mass party, although at times they were able to deliver enough votes to elect an SPC candidate and to work effectively with the WFM and the Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers Union.

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[65] Clarion, June 6, 1908.

It is in Vancouver, however, long known to revolutionary socialists as the cradle of socialism[66] in Canada, and seat of both the Dominion and Provincial Executive Committees, where one would expect to find flourishing locals working diligently toward the millennium. This, however, was not the case. Admittedly there was always at least one local in Vancouver and sometimes as many as three (plus some "foreign" locals discussed below) but nonetheless there was a constant struggle to inspire the membership to action and to increase the size of the membership body. At times Local 1 boasted over a hundred members, but at other times the number would drop to twenty-five, with a handful of members carrying on the active work. The Clarion carried innumerable pleas for Vancouver members to come out to membership meetings, and Frederic Perry, secretary of the Vancouver local, wrote that the inactivity of the local (about which complaints were voiced) was bound to continue "as long as the Local meetings consist of the usual nine or ten...."[67] In the early years of the SPC, activity in Vancouver centered around the efforts of the PEC and the

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[66]Nanaimo is considered to be the birthplace of revolutionary Marxian Socialism in Canada since it was here that the Revolutionary Socialist Party of B. C. started. Later the party joined with the British Columbia Socialist Party to become the Socialist Party of B. C. (See Chapter V.)

[67]Clarion, Nov. 9, 1907.

DEC to extend the party throughout the province and the dominion and to produce the Western Clarion. These tasks absorbed the talents of the more energetic within the city, leaving the job of expanding the Vancouver membership to lesser lights. It was not until after 1910 when the party, through disaffection of the evolutionary socialists and the foreign locals, had lost a great proportion of both its national and provincial membership, that attention was turned to organizing within Vancouver.

There are other reasons why Vancouver was not the hot-bed of socialism one might expect, considering that it was the administrative and intellectual center of the movement. By the first decade of the century Vancouver had wrested financial control of the province from Victoria and was growing rapidly, fed by the resource development in mining, lumbering and fishing. In sociological terms Vancouver was an upwardly mobile society. Although there were indeed poor and working class people, the class analysis of the SPC was difficult to justify when people were able to move up the economic ladder as more immigrants came in to replace them at the bottom. Reform labour politics might have had an appeal, but labour and the socialists were divided and for the present it was the socialists who had the leadership ability needed to launch

a party which might have been more appealing to Vancouver's working class.[68]

In February, 1912, Wilfred Gribble was appointed organizer for Vancouver, the first time an organizer had been hired to bring together all the socialists in the city.[69] He had some success and at least was able to stir into activity those who were already members. By January the next year, Local No. 69 of Vancouver was putting out a monthly paper, The New Review. For a few months the local was able to publish ten thousand copies of each issue and to distribute them free, but this spurt of activity was short-lived and it wasn't until the mass meetings during the closing years of World War I, mentioned earlier in the chapter, that Vancouver acquired a large active membership. When the election activities of the SPC are examined, it can be seen that, on the basis of results in Vancouver, the revolutionary socialist movement would have had a difficult time justifying its existence. Though Vancouver was the center of the SPC, the socialists in Vancouver never did hear the call, "Rally to the cause and let us make

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[68] See Chapter IX.

[69] Clarion, Feb. 3, 1912.

Vancouver a hot-bed of Socialism. We have laid dormant for too long; let's be up and doing. Let's make the politicians of Vancouver shiver in their shoes."[70]

From its inception the SPC was viewed by its members as an educational vehicle rather than a political machine. Although, like other political parties, their ultimate goal was to form the government, this was a long-range goal which would be attained only after a sufficient number of people had been educated to understand the class struggle and Marxian economics. Meanwhile elections were viewed primarily as opportunities for publicizing socialist ideas.

In 1910, however, an attempt was made to change tactics. D. G. MacKenzie, the new secretary, outlined the PEC's reasons for the new policy:

> Up to the present our work has been mostly that of agitation. Before a more thorough and effective organization could be built up it was essential that the material should be provided by imbuing a sufficient element in the population with our ideas. That this has been done to an extent sufficient for the purpose the last election has demonstrated....[71]

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[70] B. C. Federationist, Jan. 27, 1913.

[71] In the provincial election of Feb. 2, 1907, the SPC ran candidates in seventeen ridings and obtained about eight per cent of the vote cast. In the election of Nov. 25, 1909, they contested sixteen ridings and received just under twenty per cent of the vote cast.

> On the other hand there is every evidence that along past lines we have gone about as far as we can. But few more Locals could be formed effectively in this Province and the Locals already in existence will suffer now for lack of sufficient funds and a sufficient field for their activities. So, that unless, new methods are devised the projected stagnation must inevitably ensue to a great or lesser extent.
>
> It is proposed to build up in British Columbia a Socialist political "machine" that will combat the old parties on their own ground. In the past our organizers have functioned necessarily more as speakers than as organizers; in the future it is proposed that they shall be more organizers than speakers.[72]

The attempt to change tactics came none too soon to suit some of the membership. From Fernie, where the November, 1909, election had been won by a Conservative who polled over two hundred votes more than the socialist candidate,and this without having held a meeting, came the following comment:

> The party has to regard itself as a political party and its members must submit themselves to a discipline which we have all previously endeavoured to avoid. We don't like to work for the movement. We like to talk about the cut of the pants and put off everything until capitalism bursts itself. What is the good of propaganda if we are too lazy to forge weapons out of the material we have already made.[73]

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[72] Clarion, Jan. 1, 1910.

[73] Ibid., Oct. 29, 1910.

The Fernie sentiment was echoed by some members elsewhere who, grown impatient waiting for history to take its course and aiding it only through educational efforts, welcomed the shift in emphasis heralded by McKenzie. As the difficult task of building a political machine began, the locals were asked to change from only propagandizing and educating to organizing members to knock on doors, distribute literature, ensure that newcomers to the area were on the voter's list and hold political meetings. The uncompromising stance against ameliorating reform measures did not change, nor were educational activities to be dropped, but the political aspect--the gaining of political power--was to be upgraded. But it is not correct to say that, like the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation at a later date, the SPC had finally learned that "the election of one good socialist achieved more than ten pamphlets."[74]

As the laws of physics tell us, it takes a great deal of energy to change the direction of any large mass. Although the SPC put more organizers into the field and hired full-time organizers to keep the locals and branches in two or three ridings active, the party was unable to increase its membership significantly or to convince the

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[74]Walter Young, Anatomy of a Party, p. 60.

majority of the existing membership that political activism would promote the cause faster than would self-education alone. The old-time party members lacked the energy, and the party lacked the money, to send more organizers into the field. Most of the members could see no reason to spend themselves organizing for political victory when Marxism taught that victory for the proletariat was historically determined.

By 1913 the SPC had still not succeeded in changing direction. J. H. Burroughs, writing on behalf of the newly-elected DEC, repeated the call made three years earlier by MacKenzie:

> The reputation the party has gained through the ability and uncompromising attitude maintained by its propagandists and literature is an asset of great value. But knowledge, if not translated into organized activity, is largely innocuous to the enemy....something more is needed than a paid up dues card and a full head of economics.
>
> It is time we settled down in earnest to the task of creating an actual political machine for the combatting of the capitalist forces in Canada.[75]

Like the earlier call by MacKenzie, however, Burroughs' appeal went unheeded. Talk of the SPC becoming a political machine died out, and inexorably the party

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[75] B. C. Federationist, Jan. 17, 1913.

reverted to its traditional educational function. Rectitude of position and discipline within the party were re-emphasized. The pages of the Western Clarion blossomed again with calls for discipline and self-righteous statements from the leadership regarding the strength and correctness of the party position. Typical of the attitude which characterized the SPC until it ceased to function in 1925, was an editorial by W. A. Pritchard.[76] After outlining various recent statements on party position, he continued:

> One thing alone appears to be lacking. The quality of the propaganda generally cannot be questioned; the tone of the "Western Clarion" may not be "loud" but it is "correct," if rather "deep." But one thing remains; the application of principles to tactics....
>
> The Socialist Party of Canada is composed of individuals. If any individual member deviates in his public political capacity the party as a WHOLE assumes the responsibility of such error. Those who violate party principles and still remain immune from discipline, do so because the party is at fault. If we condone acts contrary

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[76] W. A. Pritchard was an eloquent speaker and writer who served in many capacities for the SPC and the labour movement. He was part of the first executive of the One Big Union, was a leading figure in the Winnipeg General Strike, contested many elections for the SPC and later the Independent Labour Party, was elected Reeve of Burnaby, and edited the Commonwealth, a paper set up by the CCF. He was finally lost to the socialist movement when he supported Robert Connell, first legislative leader of the CCF, when the latter resigned under attack from the left wing of the CCF to form his ill-fated Social Constructives Party.

> to Socialist principles merely because Comrade X has been a good war-horse in the past, the party becomes a mere farce.[77]

It is obvious that in its political decline the party harkened back more and more to its heyday, which it mistakenly regarded as the product of its pure position.[78] Meanwhile the SPC's electoral influence steadily diminished. The votes of those on the Left, from the War period onward, went to other groups such as the Federated Labour Party and the Independent Labour Party, both of which had many former SPC members as their leading lights.[79] Though electoral activities were no longer a serious party function, educational activities, including large propaganda meetings, continued throughout most of this declining period. For example, in Vancouver during the summer of 1913.

> At least two open air meetings are being held every night in the week with an extra open air meeting and a theatre meeting on Sundays. From $10 to $40 worth of literature is being disposed

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[77] Clarion, July, 1916.

[78] In fact electoral support had come to the SPC during this earlier period for quite different reasons such as dynamic leadership and the lack of another alternative to the Liberals and Conservatives. See Chapter IX.

[79] For a discussion of the reasons for diminishing SPC electoral influence, see Chapters VIII and IX.

> of every week and Clarions are finding their way into the hands of at least eighty uneducated slaves every night.... there is distribution of some 3,000 leaflets every month by the membership of the Vancouver Ward Socialists.[80]

Another ongoing party concern was publication of the Western Clarion as the party organ. The paper had come under party ownership in 1908;[81] editors were appointed by the party and the paper reflected the views of the executive committee of the day. Apart from the organizers who travelled periodically through the ridings, the Clarion was the one means of communication between leadership and membership and between the various membership groups in these days before the widespread use of telephones, automobiles or radio. Though the Constitution called for annual provincial conventions and for dominion conventions at the behest of the DEC or two PEC's, there were never sufficient funds available for a dominion convention, and provincial conventions were held only sporadically.[82] The conventions were intended to ensure

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[80] Clarion, Aug. 2, 1913.

[81] For a number of years the relationship between the Clarion (and its predecessors) and the SPC was paradoxical. While the party called for public ownership of the means of production, prior to 1908 the newspaper was run as a private enterprise, as were earlier socialist organs. See discussion in Chapter V.

[82] In B. C. conventions were held annually from

personal contact among the scattered membership, but attendance at the few conventions held was sparse. In such a situation it is easy to understand why the Clarion was so important in the opinion of the leadership. The concern for a party organ was reinforced each time lack of funds curtailed publication for a few issues, as in 1904 and 1912 and again in 1918, when the federal government, under the auspices of the War Measures Act, refused the publishers permission to use the mails. Whenever the Clarion failed to appear, it seemed to members and leadership alike that the SPC itself had ceased to exist. Without the party organ there was anaemia at the center and atrophy at the extremities. Reappearance of the Clarion did not always dispell the atrophy, but it quickly remedied the anaemia since the executive committee could once again communicate party news to the membership, exhort the members to renewed efforts and continue to outline for members' edification the application of Marxian principles

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1901 to 1904, but the first year the SPC was formed no annual convention was held because "there was nothing to discuss." Conventions were also held in 1906, 1908, and 1911. The 1906 one was held in Fernie and the 1908 one in Nelson, attended by members from both B. C. and Alberta. This inter-provincial meeting was the closest the SPC ever came to having a dominion convention. Lack of funds was not the only reason for not holding meetings. Since the constitution required all convention decisions to be submitted to referendum vote, the leadership reasoned that they might just as easily have a referendum in the first place.

to capitalist society. When, in 1912, publication ceased for a few months, alternative space during the interim was donated to the SPC by the B. C. Federationist, organ of the B. C. Federation of Labour, which was edited by Pettipiece. Under this arrangement the views of the SPC went out regularly to the fifty-five hundred Federationist readers as well as to the twenty-five hundred Clarion subscribers.

The Clarion was again forced out of publication for a short time by the federal government during the "Red scare" of 1918 and 1919 because it supported the new government in Russia, criticized the role of the Allied forces in Russia, and prophesized the fall of capitalism in the West in the same way as in Russia.[83] When publication resumed in January, 1920, circulation went quickly to six thousand in February and eight thousand by May. This coincided with the heightened interest in events in Russia at the time and

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[83]Not only was use of mail service to distribute the Clarion refused the SPC, but on May 28, 1918, their headquarters in Vancouver were searched by the R. C. M. P. and military police. During the closing years of the war a large amount of seditious literature was circulated in Canada and the authorities were determined to find the source. No seditious reading matter was found in the Vancouver office at this time, nor would it have been found at any other time since the SPC always insisted that change should come through constitutional means. For further discussion see Chapter VIII.

in the widespread desire for societal change which followed the War. From this point on, however, the Clarion followed the SPC downward. It had enjoyed a remarkably long life--longer than any other socialist paper in Canadian history--and had contributed greatly to the maintenance of a vision of socialist society within British Columbia.[84]

The socialist movement in B. C. was originally composed of Canadians, Americans and Britons, but this gradually changed as a result of the federal immigration policy, beginning in 1900. While Anglo-Saxons were still the largest single group coming into the country, they were less likely SPC recruits since, without the barriers of language and alien culture, they did not have the same difficulty obtaining employment as did other European immigrants. The middle-Europeans, the Finns, Germans, Italians and others had often to start at the lowest-paying and most isolated jobs available. Many of them went to the mining, logging and fishing camps where SPC groups were

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[84] Clarion circulation was not limited to B. C. It went to members right across Canada and was sold by members on the streets of cities from Halifax to Victoria. One member recalled that he first became interested in socialism from reading the Clarion in the reading room of the Toronto Public Library, where he went to combat the loneliness he experienced as a new immigrant. Interview with W. B. Caird, Aug. 25, 1966.

already active. Having in their homelands experienced socialism akin to that espoused by the SPC, they were more drawn to the party than were the Britishers, who had left behind the gradual socialism of Kier Hardy and the Labour Party.[85]

Thus the SPC soon found that a large part of its membership was made up of foreign-speaking members. In an attempt to accommodate them, the existing locals formed foreign-language branches, and the Dominion Executive had the Constitution printed in Finnish as well as in English.[86] In the larger centers there were usually at least three, and sometimes four, foreign branches of the English-speaking local; in the smaller locations there was usually one foreign-language branch which included the dominant language groups settling in the area. For example, Toronto had an English-speaking local with Finnish, Italian and Jewish branches; Winnipeg had German, Jewish and Ukrainian branches of the English-speaking locals; Nanaimo had an English-speaking local plus a Finnish branch. In each area the various groups held their own business, educational and

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[85]The Labour Party was formed in Britain in 1906.

[86]In the U. S. socialism was also beginning to "speak with a foreign accent."

propaganda meetings, and periodically all the groups in the area would get together for a joint meeting, complete with translators.

Thus the growth of SPC membership in the years before 1910 was in large part due to the great many foreign-speaking immigrants who chose the party as the one most closely resembling the large Marxist-oriented parties of their homelands.[87] There was also an aspect of protest in their joining the SPC, for many immigrants found that Canada was not the land of milk and honey portrayed by the Canadian representatives who recruited immigrants. Their disillusionment was often expressed in foreign language papers started by immigrant associations in Canada:

> We came to Canada because the agents fooled us saying "here prevails the happiness." We did not find any happiness here. And we know now there is no happiness neither in Canada, nor in Argentina, nor in Brazil. Our happiness is in our hands. And it whispers in our ears. Become a member of the Socialist Party of Canada.[88]

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[87] As will be seen in Chapter VII, the immigrants were mistaken. The SPC eschewed reform attitudes whereas the socialist parties of Europe, though Marxist, had been influenced by Eduard Bernstein and were evolutionary socialists or "possiblists." See Eduard Bernstein, Evolutionary Socialism, (New York: Schoken Books, 1961.)

[88] Cheronyj Prapor, reprinted in the Clarion, Dec. 28, 1907. The Cheronyj Prapor was a newspaper printed in Winnipeg by a recent immigrant from Russia.

While the relationship of immigrant groups to the SPC and their eventual alienation from the party are discussed more fully in the next chapter, they are mentioned here because they did contribute during this period to the delusion, on the part of the party faithful, that the SPC was a growing party and therefore it was only a matter of time before the inevitable collapse of the capitalist system.

Meanwhile, in accordance with their dialectical interpretation of history, SPC candidates continued to enter elections for propaganda purposes with little expectation of getting elected.[89] Candidates carrying the Socialist label ran in every federal campaign from 1900 to 1921 (six elections) in every B. C. provincial election[90] from 1900 to 1924 (eight elections), and in

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[89]On the provincial scene there were some exceptions to this, but all the SPC candidates ever entered in federal elections ended up at the bottom of the poll. This does not necessarily mean that the party following deserted it in federal elections. In provincial elections, ridings covered a small enough area to take advantage of the localized support which the SPC had in the mining areas, but federal ridings were much larger and thus support was diluted.

[90]Since nearly all the provincial successes occurred in B. C., discussion here is confined to that province. Outside of B. C., only Alberta ever managed to elect an SPC member to the provincial legislature. This was Charles O'Brien, who was elected for the Rocky Mountain riding in 1909. He was defeated when he ran for re-election in 1913.

some municipal elections.

When SPC candidates went into an election campaign they made no promises other than the one to work to remove labour from the category of a commodity by advocating at all times public ownership of the means of production. They always told their audiences that, in regard to any measure proposed by the governing bodies to which they might be elected, they would ask these questions (which appeared in their platform): Is this proposal in the interest of the working class? Will it aid that class in its struggle against capitalist domination? If so, they would support it; otherwise they would not. Before the possiblists left the SPC[91] this seemed a logical way to explain the role one would play if elected. As the SPC became more "purified", however, it became less clear how an elected SPC candidate would react in opposition; hence the above questions were removed from the platform. Instead, everything was now discussed in terms of total change. This of course severely handicapped SPC candidates, since most people were satisfied with at least some aspects of their lives. While other parties discussed the railways issue, for example, in terms of costs, jobs

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[91] See Chapter VII.

created, social benefits, and so on, the socialists sidestepped such mundane considerations and discussed the issue only in terms of the rapacious nature of capitalism. It is remarkable, in fact, that the party had any electoral success at all, considering their narrow platform.

The most encouraging results federally were those of the October 26, 1908, federal election. Four years earlier the party had run candidates in the Kootenay, Nanaimo, Vancouver, Victoria and Yale-Caribou ridings, obtaining about eight per cent of the vote cast there. In 1908 they contested all eight of the B. C. ridings and received 8,257 votes or about fifteen per cent of the total vote cast. This was not an insignificant showing even though in every case the candidate did end up at the bottom of the poll. As usual, the best support came from the mining areas of the province as the results in some of the towns and polling stations in these areas show.[92]

PARTY	CONSERVATIVE	LIBERAL	SPC
Fernie	126	129	155
McGuigan	3	2	12
Whitewater	14	13	17
Coal Creek	22	27	105
Silver Cup Mine	5	13	80
Ymir	15	12	18

[92] Clarion, Nov. 28, 1908.

PARTY	Conservative	Liberal	SPC
Salmo	17	12	17
Michel	23	22	90
West Fernie	2	7	18
Moyie	60	63	80
Phoenix	81	101	88
Cobble Hill	17	7	19
Ladysmith	116	129	186
Nanaimo	262	370	715
Northfield	9	15	78

Hawthornthwaite, who had taken the Nanaimo riding in three consecutive provincial elections, could do no better than third in the federal contest, trailing Ralph Smith (Liberal) and the Conservative, Shepherd. While he won the miners' vote in Cobble Hill, Ladysmith, Nanaimo and Northfield, this was not enough to take the entire district. (The final tally was: Smith-1,542; Shepherd-1,386; Hawthornthwaite-1,302.)[93]

In all subsequent federal elections the SPC vote went down. In 1911 they railed against reciprocity, charging that it was the result of large capital seeking expansion and that American capital was after Canadian resources. But in the final analysis, they said, it did not really matter as long as the "capitalist class owns the earth."[94] During the conscription crisis and the

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[93] Canadian Parliamentary Guide, 1909, p. 504.

[94] Clarion, Sept., 1911.

election of 1917 the SPC was able to fill three large Vancouver theatres on a Sunday evening, and hopes rose that this great interest in conscription would be translated into votes for SPC candidates. But they, like the Liberals, were swallowed up in the chauvinism that engulfed the West.[95]

There is little to be said about the 1921 federal election. The SPC was already on its downhill slide and its leadership position had been taken over by other parties of the Left. Over the years the party had managed to educate a large number of workers about their class position, but now these workers were taking their vote elsewhere.

In B. C. it was only in Vancouver that SPC candidates ever entered municipal politics. In general the party believed that municipal issues involved mainly property owners and therefore provided little opportunity for Marxist educational activity. Others, however, including Kingsley and Pettipiece, held the view that "actual experience in administration was a prime necessity for the workers and the sooner they set about acquiring domination in social administration, the sooner would

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[95]See supra footnote 21 and Chapter VIII, pp. 326-348 for a more extensive discussion of the SPC view of conscription and the war.

their ultimate object be attained."[96] Over the years many candidates ran for Council and School Board, but until they ran under a different banner[97] in the twenties, they were never elected. From a socialist's point of view the School Board was the most desirable municipal plum, since it offered the greatest opportunity for influencing society through its young. Here a socialist trustee could direct his efforts toward "the elevation and education of the working class; towards the cultivation in our upgrowing youth of a spirit of true dignity and democracy that will make them strong to assert themselves against the oppression and injustice that confronts them today."[98] In addition to asking for free school supplies, extension of the Health Department duties to the schools, better salaries for teachers, equal salaries for male and female teachers, and no discrimination against married women as teachers, the socialists called for books on Ethics, History and Political Economy written from the working-class viewpoint.[99] SPC

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[96] B. C. Federationist, Oct. 12, 1912.

[97] Parmeter Pettipiece was twice elected as School Trustee (in 1922 and 1924) as a candidate for the Federated Labour Party.

[98] Clarion, Jan. 6, 1906. From the Manifesto of Socialist Candidates in Vancouver School Elections.

[99] See Appendix 7 for the complete platform for the 1906 election. Subsequent platforms were similar.

candidates consistently obtained between ten and fifteen per cent of the votes cast in School Board elections. On the municipal level, as on the federal level, the SPC lacked credibility. On the provincial level, however, the story was somewhat different:-

As has been seen, the SPBC had run a limited number of candidates in the 1903 provincial election, obtained about eight per cent of the vote, and elected Parker Williams for Newcastle and J. H. Hawthornthwaite for Nanaimo. In the February 2, 1907, election the SPC contested eighteen ridings, including Victoria and Vancouver, and elected, (in addition to Williams and Hawthornthwaite) John McInnis in the Grand Forks riding.[100] In Vancouver the five candidates were at the bottom of the poll, as was the Victoria candidate. In the sixteen ridings outside the two large metropolitan areas the SPC collected almost twenty-one per cent of the votes cast. This was a substantial improvement over 1903, and the socialists were much encouraged by the results, especially when they considered the fact that the economy (at least until the end of the year) was booming,

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[100]These results and those for other elections reported in this chapter are taken from the Canadian Parliamentary Guide for the relevant years. The percentages are calculated from the C.P.G. figures.

and that this was McBride's first attempt to have his government re-elected.[101] Happy to see the Liberals routed, the socialists were even happier to see the complete defeat of the labour candidates, which indicated to them the utter uselessness of cultivating the union vote (since apparently union members did not even vote for their own labour candidates.) The election taught the socialists that more pre-election work was needed to register their supporters, who were transient miners, and reinforced for them the importance of educating the workers, who misguidedly supported capitalist parties because of ignorance concerning what the system of wealth production meant to them.[102] Of interest is the strength which the party assumed came from its one-plank platform:

> It is a fact that reforms come most plentiful when the threat of revolution is the strongest. Never before have the capitalist parties been

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[101] This was McBride's great "railway election," and he and William J. Bowser travelled throughout the interior of the province with a large map of B. C. for a backdrop. On the map was a large red spot indicating Revelstoke, and emanating from the red spot were a number of lines depicting the railroads McBride promised to build to create jobs and to take the resources out of the province. Interview with W. W. Lefeaux, May 25, 1966. (Lefeaux was an Independent candidate in Revelstoke in the election, but was supported by the SPC.)

[102] Clarion, Feb. 9, 1907.

> so solicitous about the workers. They had a program of immediate demands much similar to that adopted by socialist parties in their infancy until they get to know better. The strength of our platform was clearly demonstrated in this respect. They could not steal a plank from it and they dare not discuss our impeachment of the wage system.[103]

After governing for two and a half years McBride called another election for November 25, 1909. This time the SPC entered candidates in fourteen ridings outside Vancouver and Victoria. In the latter two the candidates again came last, though they more than doubled the proportion of the vote obtained in 1907. Hawthornthwaite and Williams were re-elected with increased majorities, but McInnis was beaten out by a Conservative in Grand Forks. The popular vote in ridings outside the two metropolitan centers of Vancouver and Victoria rose to nearly twenty-five per cent of the votes cast. Nine of the twenty SPC candidates saved their deposit by getting at least fifty per cent of the votes obtained by the winner.

The socialists were happy in that they had increased their popular vote and there were some indications that their situation was improving in Vancouver.

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[103]Ibid., Feb. 9, 1907.

McBride was happy because his railway policy[104] was again accepted by the voters and his opposition had been reduced to two socialists and two liberals.

In terms of the popular vote, the election of March 28, 1912, was the high point for the socialist candidates in B. C. The SPC had candidates in twelve ridings outside of Vancouver and Victoria and collected slightly more than twenty-five per cent of the popular vote in these ridings. They re-elected Parker Williams in Newcastle, and in Nanaimo Jack Place replaced Hawthornthwaite, who did not run in this election. As will be seen in Chapter VIII, Hawthornthwaite had resigned from the SPC and most of his local had gone over to the SDP. The SDP later nominated Jack Place to run for the Nanaimo seat and he was given the support of the SPC. Technically the SPC did not have a candidate in the Nanaimo riding and therefore had only Parker Williams in the Legislature. However, Place and Williams cooperated and did in fact constitute a socialist opposition, though they were not representatives of the same party.

In each of the other ridings the socialist candidate came last, which had not been the case in the

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[104]The issue in this campaign was McBride's plan to help fund the building of the Canadian Northern Railway.

previous election. In Vancouver, Skeena and Victoria, only the Independent candidates received fewer votes than the socialists. Thirteen of the eighteen socialist candidates lost their deposits. Although the Liberal candidates ran second in most of the ridings, they did not win a seat and were not in the House until they won a Vancouver by-election in March, 1916, and sent two members to Victoria. In the interim the Conservatives had forty seats and the socialists two.

This meant that the only opposition consisted of the two socialists, Williams and Place, and a rare opportunity was presented to the SPC and the SDP, for McBride's Conservative government[105] was finally beginning to come apart under accusations of graft, general mismanagement and over-investment in railways. But the two parties failed to get together to provide the two legislators with the kind of support they needed, for it was of course an impossible task for two people unaided to follow up and investigate every misdeed of a government department or rumour of government ineptitude and graft. As has been said previously, elections were entered primarily for

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[105]McBride resigned on December 15, 1915, and Bowser became Premier.

educational purposes and as a means of obtaining, through the vote, some idea of the effectiveness of party propagandizing. This was true for the SDP as for the SPC. Once a member was elected to the legislature he was left pretty much on his own. As Jack Harrington was to say at a later date:

> Our position on parliaments is that we have never been so much concerned with what our members have done in parliaments as with what they have done out of it. [sic] That is to say-they are government paid Socialist educators, with travelling facilities provided, enabling them to move from one end of the province to the other. Our judgement of their conduct as Socialist members has been prompted largely by the efforts they have made to work as propagandists under these favourable conditions.[106]

During the 1912-1916 period this may have been a costly mistake for both the SPC and the SDP for, as the only opposition during much of this period, they could have taken advantage of the situation, perhaps thereby increasing their representation in the Legislature. But the leadership in both groups were more interested in the feud existing between them and with criticizing the war and agitating against conscription. The mundane (in their opinion) issues of a large provincial debt, graft in government departments (which was to be expected from any

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[106] Clarion, Jan. 21, 1921.

capitalist anyway, they said) and ill-conceived, poorly-financed railways did nothing to educate the workingman about the operating of the economic system. Instead they concentrated on opposing the War, and did nothing to suggest cures for unemployment or any of the other current problems, which might have given them some credibility with the voters. There were, of course, other reasons for the socialists' inability to capitalize on the increasing unpopularity of the Conservatives: For the first two years of the War, the mining industry was depressed and consequently many of the SPC supporters were dispersed into other areas of the province, diluting the traditional SPC strongholds. Also, public opinion was strongly in favour of the War which the socialists opposed; moreover, the war triggered a great fear of alien nationals which made the SPC suspect because many of its members were of German descent. For these reasons and also because they were completely issues-oriented, the Liberals, even without representatives in the Legislature, provided a more able opposition to the Conservative government on a day-to-day basis than the two lone socialists were able to do.[107]

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[107]For an account of the circumstances surrounding the downfall of the Conservatives and the work of the reform groups of this period see, Ormsby, British Columbia: a History, Chapters 13 and 14. Also Martin Robin, The Rush

On September 14, 1916, the Liberals won a handy majority and Harlan G. Brewster became Premier.

In the 1916 election the SPC ignored Victoria, ran one candidate in Vancouver, plus four others scattered throughout the province. These four collected slightly over nineteen per cent of the vote cast, while Jack Harrington in Vancouver got about fifteen per cent of the vote collected by the winning candidate.[108] Parker Williams again won Newcastle but he was now running on an SDP ticket having been expelled earlier from the SPC.[109] This was the first time since 1901 that there was no representative of the SPC or its forerunners in the B. C. Legislature. Other forces were now at work on the Left in B. C. politics. Socialism and labour were beginning to see ways of cooperating in their political endeavours, but not under the banner of the SPC.[110]

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for Spoils: The Company Province 1871-1933, (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1972), Chapter V.

[108] Because Vancouver City was a multiple member riding, from C.P.G. figures it is only possible to determine the total vote cast and not the number of electors who went to the polls. The highest vote--9,119--was for a Liberal candidate, while Harrington was third from the bottom of the poll with 1,380 votes.

[109] See Chapter VII, p. 287.

[110] See Chapters VII and VIII.

Predictably, no socialists were elected in the December 1, 1920, election. The election did, however, forecast the rising influences of labour in the politics of B. C., for three men[111] running as labour candidates were elected. Parker Williams, who had held the Newcastle seat since first being elected in 1903, had resigned in 1917 when the new Liberal government appointed him to the Workmen's Compensation Board. Hawthornthwaite took the seat in a by-election the following year, but in 1920 he was unseated by Samuel Guthrie, the labour candidate. The SPC ran seven candidates, one in Prince Rupert and six in Vancouver, all of whom finished at the bottom of the poll.[112]

In 1924 the SPC ran only two provincial candidates: W. A. Pritchard in Nanaimo, who came second with thirty-one per cent of the votes cast, and Jack Harrington in Vancouver, who came twenty-fifth out of twenty-seven

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[111] Samuel Guthrie in Newcastle, R. H. Neelands in Vancouver South and Thomas Uphill in Fernie. Guthrie ran on a labour ticket (defeating Hawthornthwaite, who ran as an Independent), while Neelands and Uphill ran for the newly-formed Federated Labour Party which is discussed in Chapter VII.

[112] J. S. Woodsworth also ran in Vancouver for the Federated Labour Party as did Angus MacInnis.

candidates. It is interesting to note that in the multiple riding of Vancouver, the party ran only one candidate, leaving the other five spaces for Canadian Labour Party candidates. This was the last election in which SPC candidates ever participated.

For over two decades socialist candidates had been put forward by the SPC or its predecessors. To what avail in terms of legislation? As a revolutionary party the SPC was officially not concerned with legislative outputs, which were deemed to be mere palliatives. However, though the party gave no aid to its legislative representatives, the Western Clarion continually reported their legislative activities. The editors, and by inference the PEC, apparently approved of their M.L.A.s' activities. It was not until after Hawthornthwaite and Williams had left the SPC[113] that the party reviewed the legislative careers of their men and decided that they were not consonant with the SPC's revolutionary dogma. Perhaps the real inconsistency lay, not in the performance of the SPC legislators, but in the final two paragraphs of the SPC platform.

The Socialist Party, when in office, shall

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[113] See Chapter VII, pp. 285-289.

> always and everywhere until the present system is abolished, make the answer to this question its guiding rule of conduct: Will this legislation advance the interests of the working class and aid the workers in their class struggle against capitalism? If it will the Socialist Party is for it; if it will not the Socialist Party is absolutely opposed to it.
>
> In accordance with this principle the Socialist Party pledges itself to conduct all public affairs placed in its hands in such a manner as to promote the interests of the working class alone.[114]

These paragraphs actually contradicted the remainder of the party program, and certainly ran counter to the constant pronouncements of party spokesmen against palliatives of all kinds, including legislative ones. But had the legislative members reacted to proposed government legislation according to the dictum "no compromise," it would have meant voting against all legislation except that which would never be presented to them--to abolish private ownership of the means of production. In later years M.L.A.'s came under attack for not doing just that, and eventually, in 1915, the party removed the controversial paragraphs from its platform. By this time the SPC did not have any members in any legislative body and so it was never determined how effective a member might be in this constrained position--unable to propose legislation and having to vote

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[114]For the complete platform, see appendix 4.

against all that proposed by others. Prior to the removal of the above clauses from the platform, the elected representatives of the SPC had used them to justify the positions they took in the Legislature. Since the SPC platform contained no specific guidelines, the M.L.A.s were on their own in deciding whether a particular piece of legislation would "advance the interests of the working class and aid the workers in their class struggle against capitalism." In the end they behaved like any other reform politician, a fact that dismayed some of their purer brethren. Here is the Toronto local:

> How far are they different from the Capitalist M.P.'s? Only in this direction. The Capitalist political hacks advocate reforms to be returned, and vote for them along with our "revolutionaries" and our Socialist M.P.'s repudiated these reforms, saying that Socialism was the only hope and that reforms did not reform, and then in parliament voted for the very measures which they and the Party press had renounced. Here is the blight of the revisionist: Hawthornthwaite, Williams and O'Brien are worse than the capitalists because they vote for measures which they know cannot assist the working class in their fight for the emancipation from economic bondage.[115]

Before this became the dominant attitude within the party, the socialist M.L.A.s had taken the initiative in many areas, in spite of the warning by William Davidson that

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[115] Clarion, Dec. 17, 1910.

> a man who goes to the legislative halls on any other basis than that of the Socialist, which questions the right of the capitalist to own the industrial plant, thereby threatening their continued possession, goes on a fools [sic] errand and has but two alternatives, to become a Socialist or the cat's-paw of one of the great capitalist parties.[116]

Since all the socialist members represented mining constituencies, the main thrust of their legislative proposals concerned regulation of the mining industry and the improvement of working conditions for the miners.[117] It must be remembered that voting along "party lines" was not always the rule in the B. C. Legislature at that time, and this made it much easier for an opposition member to get support for bills or amendments to existing legislation than a member in a similar position would dare to expect now. From the number of bills which the socialist members were able to get through the Legislature, it can be seen that the private member was much more involved in the legislative process than he is at the present time.

Thus, though few in number, the socialists were able to make some significant improvements in the working

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[116]Ibid., Dec. 28, 1907.

[117]The Material used in the discussion was taken from the B. C. Journals, the Victoria Colonist, the Victoria Times, the World, the Western Clarion, the Vancouver Daily Province, and C.A.R.

conditions of miners. In the 1901 session, Hawthornthwaite's first, he was able to get passed an amendment to the Mining Act requiring certificates of competency for miners and foremen working at the face, and excluding Chinese workers who could not speak English (and who were often used as strike-breakers by the mine owners.) The amendment was supported by other members representing mining constituencies. In 1902, 1903 and 1904, the socialist members were able to get further amendments to the Act, limiting the hours of work to eight hours per day for certain classes of underground workers as well as requiring mine plans to be posted to assist escape in the event of accidents. A proposed amendment requiring mine inspectors to be elected by the miners was defeated.[118] In 1905 and 1906 a bill to extend the eight-hour working day to certain classes of workers in smelters was defeated, but was passed in the 1907 session. A further amendment to the Mining Act in 1906 required foremen to be proficient in First Aid. In subsequent sessions--1907, 1908, 1909 and 1910--proposals to extend the eight-hour working day to other classes of

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[118]The miners thought inspection routines were inadequate and suspected that the inspectors were being paid off by the owners. This amendment was attempted a number of times in subsequent years but was always defeated.

mine and smelter workers were defeated as was an amendment calling for inquests into mining accident deaths, but in 1909 the socialists were able to get through another amendment to the Act, this time requiring safety clutches on mine elevators.

The socialists were interested in other areas of legislation too. When the land grants had been given to the Dunsmuir interests for construction of the Esquimalt-Nanaimo Railway there were already a number of settlers on the property expecting through homesteading to obtain certain rights to the land. This did not happen and a number of them were forced off the land by the Railway Company. The first attempt by the socialists to have settlers' rights recognized by law was defeated in 1902 but passed in the 1904 session. The socialists also fought for the settlers in regard to the school tax being levied on them, and were able to get an amendment to the School Act protecting the farmers from a tax increase until such time as the educational opportunities for their children were equal to those in other areas of the province.[119]

From the point of view of the unions, the amendment

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[119]These efforts on behalf of the farmers probably account for the fact that Vancouver Island was the only area in the province where the SPC was able to get farmer support.

to the Trades Union Act proposed by socialist legislators and carried in 1902 was probably one of the most important. The amendment excepted the union and its officials from prosecution for damages during a strike, lock-out or other type of labour dispute. This has been important to the labour movement ever since and it is not one which will be easily given up.[120]

Another area in which the socialists were extremely interested was the Election Act, believing as they did that the Act militated against the workers in many ways. For one thing, the election deposit was too high for a working man; few could afford to take a chance on running for office and losing the two hundred-dollar deposit. The Act also made it too easy for the Chief Electoral Officer to erase men's names from the voter's list and too difficult to get them on very quickly. Since the miners of necessity moved about a good deal, many of them (representing socialist support) were never able to get their names on the lists. In 1902 socialist M.L.A.s were able to get an amendment to the Election Act passed which

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[120]In the early 1960's the Social Credit government of W.A.C. Bennett attempted to reintroduce an element of responsibility on the part of unions for damages as the result of strikes, but the bill had to be withdrawn because of public pressure.

provided that every elector on election day was to be given four clear hours free between polls opening and closing. In 1904 and 1905 an amendment to have the election deposit reduced to fifty dollars was defeated but in 1907 another amendment to have the deposit reduced to a hundred dollars was carried. In subsequent sessions the socialists succeeded in getting through amendments which reduced the number of days' residence required in a riding before one's name could be put on the list and of lengthening the amount of time a voter could be out of his riding before having his name scratched from the list. During this period the socialists also tried a number of times to get female suffrage, but these efforts were always soundly defeated.[121]

Not all of the efforts of the socialist legislators were as honourable as the foregoing. A great many workers were highly antagonistic to the Chinese, Japanese and East

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[121]Though women received their earliest support from the socialists, it appears that socialism is still a predominantly male preserve, according to Meisel's survey of the 1968 election. Meisel refers to the NDP as "decidedly a men's party." His survey shows that in Canada as a whole 40% of the NDP vote was from women, compared to a 50-50 distribution for the Liberals and a 49% male-51% female for the P. C.'s. John Meisel, Working Papers on Canadian Politics (Montreal: McGill-Queen's Press, 1972) p. 12 and Table 1.

Indians,[122] and the socialists catered to their prejudices in spite of the rhetoric concerning the solidarity of workers the world over. A number of times, for example, when legislation to subsidize one of McBride's railways was being discussed, the socialists attempted to attach amendments calling for all-white labour. A particularly iniquitous act on their part was an attempted amendment to the Public Schools Act in 1910 which read:

> That the Board of Trustees shall have the power to exclude any child or children from the school or schools on the ground that owing to racial or other differences it is deemed to be inadvisable to the best interest of the majority of children to admit them.[123]

From these few examples of SPC legislative activity it can be seen that the socialists deemed it necessary to work for legislation on behalf of the working class even though they realized that the more successful they were, the longer it would take for capitalism to capitulate. Knowing that their supporters were suffering under present conditions, they realized that if they did not try to

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[122] In the newspapers of the day, and even in the B. C. Statutes, East Indians were referred to as Hindoos, sometimes as Hindus, although the great majority of the first East Indian settlers were Sikhs.

[123] Clarion, Mar. 26, 1910.

alleviate these conditions, the voters would turn to other parties who might serve them better. The double-bind in which the socialists found themselves demonstrates the impossibility of being a minority legislator and a revolutionary Marxist at the same time; the only "out" seen by these early socialists was a kind of schizophrenic behaviour: performing in the Legislature as evolutionary Marxists struggling for reforms, and outside the Legislature as revolutionary Marxists restricted to enlightening the masses. The only way the SPC could have avoided this split personality and maintained its ideological purity would have been not to run candidates at all (or at least make sure they didn't get elected.) Periodically the socialist members of the Legislature would proclaim the futility of government action, as in Hawthornthwaite's amendment to the Throne Speech on January 12, 1911:- Declaring that government enactments were of little benefit to the masses, he said,

> Further development of the means of wealth-production and distribution by the present ruling class results, in the last analysis, in the further misery and poverty for the great majority of people....we have no confidence in the present government....the collective ownership and democratic management of the means of wealth production and distribution and the abolition of the wage-system can alone remedy the existing evils

> and poverty that afflict the people of the Province.[124]

Such a resolution was as far as the SPC representatives could legitimately go in forwarding their cause in the Legislature.

Many members of the SPC saw the impossibility of the party's position and left to go elsewhere. In this and previous chapters reference has been made to groups which broke away from the SPC and to other socialist groups in B. C. The next chapter examines the splits from the SPC and looks at the groups which were thus formed.

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[124] B. C. Journals, 1911.

CHAPTER VII

FISSION AND DECLINE OF REVOLUTIONARY SOCIALISM

A number of radical threads ran through the political fabric of the working class in B. C. in the early years of the century. Representing revolutionary Marxism was the Socialist Party of Canada-the impossiblists. The Social Democratic Party of Canada-the possiblists-represented evolutionary Marxism. Labour parties, which had enjoyed only minimal success prior to the turn of the century and were not very influential during the early part of the century, came into their own in the twenties in the form of the Federated Labour Party, the Canadian Labour Party and the Independent Labour Party. The Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), nicknamed the Wobblies, brought to B. C. the notion of direct economic action and a distrust of political action.[1] Although the IWW was never a strong force in the province, it found support in the logging camps and among the railroad gangs, and some of

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[1]Direct action included strikes of individual industries, general strikes and sabotage. It was based on the assumption that political power would automatically follow the gaining of industrial control.

the IWW ideas were carried into the One Big Union (OBU)[2] and influenced labour organization and political attitudes after W. W. I and through the early twenties.

Thus, while the SPC had begun the century as the dominant influence on the Left, its powerewas gradually eroded under pressure from these groups and the changing social and political culture in B. C. The party had been able to maintain its dominant position for a number of years largely because of the energy and ability of a few of its leaders and influence of the Western Clarion. Helpful too was the concentration of support in the Kootenays and Vancouver Island, as opposed to the diffuse support of the other groups which made it impossible for them to elect members to the legislature. Finally, the constancy of the SPC platform from year to year afforded another advantage over other groups in which there was constant shifting of emphasis from election to election. It was this latter "strength", however, which ultimately was the cause of the party's undoing.

The Left in B. C. faced problems similar to those

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[2]The One Big Union is discussed in Chapter VIII. Its goal was to have all unions affiliated with it so that labour could act in concert to gain control of the country's economy.

outlined by Engels in a letter to Friedrich Sorge in 1893. Referring to the difficulties in starting a socialist movement in the United States, Engels wrote:

> It is not to be denied that American conditions involve very great and peculiar difficulties for steady development of a worker's party.
>
> First, the Constitution is based, as in England, upon party government which causes every vote for a candidate not put up by one of the two governing parties to appear to be lost. And the American, like the Englishman, wants to influence his state; he does not throw his vote away.
>
> Then, and more especially, there is immigration which divides the workers into two groups: the native born and the foreigners, and the latter in turn into (1) the Irish, (2) the Germans, (3) the many small groups, each of which understands only itself: Czechs, Poles, Italians, Scandinavians, etc. And then the negroes. To form a single party out of these requires unusually powerful incentives. Often there is a sudden violent elan, but the bourgeois need only wait passively and the dissimilar elements of the working class fall apart.
>
> Third, through the protective tariff system and the steadily growing domestic market the workers must have been exposed to a prosperity no trace of which has been seen here in Europe for years now (except in Russia, where, however the bourgeois profit by it and not the workers.)[3]

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[3]Friedrich Engels, Letter to Friedrich Sorge, Dec. 2, 1893. Marx and Engels: Basic Writings on Politics and Philosophy, Lewis Feuer, ed., (New York: Anchor Books, 1959) p. 458. The following table gives the birthplace in percentages of the population of British Columbia,

Ever since the founding convention of the SPBC[4] in October, 1902, there had been an uneasy alliance of the two factions within the party: the dominant, revolutionary faction represented by Kingsley (and later McKenzie, Pritchard, McDonald,) and the evolutionary faction represented by Ernest Burns. Burns and others of like mind remained within the SPBC but continued to press their position. When the split between the two factions finally came, it also involved the Washington State section of the SPA. The latter, like the SPC, contained various factions. In Washington the dominant group had control of the Seattle Socialist and espoused the same revolutionary position as did the dominant faction of the SPC. Walter Mills, a member of the Washington group had been invited to Victoria and Vancouver on a series of speaking engagements, the first of which was in Victoria on December 28, 1906. As a result of the content of his speech, the SPC in Vancouver

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1881-1921.

	Total Population	Percent of Population			
		Native Born	British	U.S.A.	Other
1881	49,459	72.20	12.14	4.64	11.02
1891	98,173	58.02	21.54	6.69	13.75
1901	178,657	55.76	18.43	9.61.	16.20
1911	392,480	43.14	30.08	9.57	17.21
1921	524,582	50.34	30.64	6.66	12.36

From Canada Yearbook 1925, p. 239.

[4]See Chapter V.

cancelled sponsorship of his Vancouver engagements. Ernest Burns objected and made arrangements himself for Mills to speak in Vancouver during April.[5] Burns' Vancouver local objected to this and an attempt was made to expel him from the party. The necessary two-thirds majority could not be obtained but an amendment was passed to suspend him until he could conscientiously support the platform and program of the SPC.[6]

And what was the awful heresy which Mills had committed in Victoria? He had advocated that workers support both socialist and labour candidates, and suggested fusion of the two groups in Victoria. To the SPC, of course, this was treason. In addition to cancelling Mills' Vancouver appearances, they lodged a complaint with the Washington SPA, charging Mills with advocating fusion and compromise. Mills continued his activities and eventually lost his membership in the SPA Seattle local.[7] Although Ernest Burns himself was not in favour of fusion with labour groups, he did not regard the evidence against Mills as

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[5] Vancouver Daily Province, March 8, 1907.

[6] Ibid., March 8, 1907. Clarion, March 9, 1907.

[7] Seattle Socialist, April 17, 1907. Mills was also involved in an abortive attempt to take control of the Seattle local from the impossiblist faction.

sufficient to prevent him from speaking in Vancouver. Upon his suspension from the SPC Burns resigned, and on April 1, 1907, held a meeting to form the Social Democratic Party of B. C. (SDP).[8] Though the platform of the new party was essentially the same as that of the SPC, its strategy differed. While the SDP were Marxists, they were also possiblists, believing that until political power could be attained, they must try to alleviate hardships for the workers.[9]

Locals of the SDP were immediately formed by dissident SPC members in Vancouver, Victoria, Ladysmith and Nanaimo. Over the years other locals were formed in various parts of the province, but the SDP never became a force to be reckoned with at election time. Periodically the party ran its own candidates, but more often it simply advised its followers to support SPC candidates.

A national body--The Social Democratic Party of Canada (SDPC)--was officially formed on December 30, 1911, in Port Arthur, Ontario. The SPC breakaway locals which had met in Berlin, Ontario, on May 24, 1910, had vowed to

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[8] Victoria Daily Times, April 5, 1907. Vancouver Daily Province, April 2, 1907.

[9] See Appendix VI for the constitution, by-laws and platform of the SDPC.

remain together if their choice of Berlin local as the Provincial Executive Committee of Ontario was not accepted by the Dominion Executive Committee.[10] The Ontario groups formed the Canadian Socialist Federation with which a number of dissatisfied SPC groups from the Maritimes and B. C. also affiliated. There were now four large groups of former SPC members organized in the country: the B. C. SDP, the Canadian Socialist Federation, the Manitoba SDP, and the Ukrainian Social Democratic Party.[11] Finally a unity convention was called for December 30 and 31, 1911, in Port Arthur, Ontario,[12] and it was at this convention that the Social Democratic Party of Canada was formed and the party platform developed. While the new national socialist organization did develop some locals of its own, it consisted primarily of dissident members of the SPC and, as will be seen later in the chapter, it attracted a large

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[10]See appendix 12.

[11]These groups are discussed later in the chapter.

[12]The first call for a dominion convention of dissatisfied locals was put by the Finnish local in Port Arthur, Ontario. They suggested dates in late 1910 or early 1911, but it wasn't possible to hold the meeting until almost a year later. Clarion, Oct. 29, 1910.

portion of the foreign language membership of the SPC.[13]

One of the early strengths of the SDPC came from the support of Cotton's Weekly, a radical paper recently converted to socialism. It was published in the unlikely (for a socialist paper) town of Cowansville, Quebec, by W. V. Cotton, a barrister and son of a local businessman. Originally a reform paper, it moved gradually to the socialist position and, after the publisher lost out in a bid for a seat in the House of Commons in 1908, he joined the Montreal local of the SPC. At the same time he promoted the sale of his journal across Canada, with some success. In many ways it was a more readable paper than the Clarion, less pedantic and covering a wider variety of topics. When it first appeared, the Clarion was kind to it, even though it was not entirely revolutionary in content, reminding its readers that "full-fledged revolutionaries do not drop from heaven: they grow."[14] This tolerance did not last long, however, and when Cotton's cited strikes as evidence of the class

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[13] Cotton's Weekly, Dec. 14, 1911, estimates that at this time, just prior to the formation of the SDPC, the membership of the SPC had dropped to about 1,300 while the groups forming the new party totalled about 2,000 members.

[14] Clarion, March 20, 1909.

struggle the Clarion soon took it to task, pointing out that the class struggle was not between buyers and sellers but between masters and slaves.[15] Cotton's continued to advocate its own brand of socialism, however, and when the SDP was formed the newspaper was designated the official organ of the party although there were no editorial or financial connections. In 1914 Cotton sold the paper and it was moved to Toronto under the new name of Canadian Forward. The paper collapsed when the SDP did in 1918.[16]

In B. C. the SDP received boosts from two events involving Hawthornthwaite and Williams. In Nanaimo Hawthornthwaite, finding it increasingly difficult to get along with the members of his local, finally submitted his resignation to the PEC in April, 1911. What little evidence there is concerning this trouble seems to indicate that it was as much a problem of personalities (on both sides) as of doctrine.[17] The local accused Hawthornthwaite of not

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[15]Ibid., Aug. 20, 1910.

[16]See Chapter VIII.

[17]The story of the difficulty between Hawthornthwaite and the Nanaimo local is reproduced in the Clarion, May 20, 1911, in the form of copies of letters from Hawthornthwaite, reprints from the Nanaimo Herald (where the Nanaimo local first published its charges against Hawthornthwaite) and Hawthornthwaite's statement to the DEC of the SPC. The

performing his party duties and of being more interested in preparing the Victoria riding to elect him in the next federal election. Annoyed with Nanaimo local's handling of the situation, the PEC expelled the entire local from the SPC. A number of locals objected to this and called for a referendum. Of the thirty-three locals active at the time, six were opposed to the PEC action, three supported it, seven called for a convention to discuss the entire affair as well as overall party organization, and the others did not answer the referendum call. Because a majority did not oppose them, the PEC assumed that their action was vindicated.[18] As in many other cases, non-voting locals were counted as supporters on the assumption that if they disagreed they would surely have voted.

Nanaimo local was trying to initiate some control over Hawthornthwaite's activities. They complained about his inadequate organizing activities and accused him of not submitting to the Provincial Secretary a list of names which the local had provided for Commissioners to take affidavits under the Election Act (non-paying appointments.) There were also charges of land speculation. This hit the newspapers in 1912. The B. C. Federationist, Feb. 20, 1912, reported that Hawthornthwaite had made thousands of dollars through the sale of coal rights on some land he owned. The Vancouver Daily Province, April 3, 1912, was more specific; they reported Hawthornthwaite had received $125,000 for some land he had purchased for $60,000.

[18] Clarion, July 1, 1911.

At the annual SPC convention in the fall of 1911, the Hawthornthwaite affair was the main item of business. After initially overruling the PEC's expulsion of the Nanaimo local, the convention eventually supported the PEC[19] but not before fully thirty per cent of the delegates had walked out.[20] The Nanaimo local joined the SDP. In the next provincial election Hawthornthwaite did not run and the Nanaimo SDP local nominated Jack Place to contest Hawthornthwaite's old seat. Place won the election, thus giving the SDP a sitting member in the provincial legislature.

The SDP gained another local in 1911 when the Ladysmith group, at a meeting which Parker Williams was unable to attend, decided to leave the SPC and join the SDP. Unaware of this action, Williams went to a nomination meeting for the provincial election of March 28, 1912, and found that he too was expected to join the SDP. He insisted

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[19] Ibid., Dec. 16, 1911.

[20] Most of the groups represented by these delegates joined the SDPC which was formed later in the year. This was one of the most vitriolic of SPC conventions. It was after this convention that McKenzie resigned as party secretary and editor of the Clarion. He said he resigned for personal reasons and not because of the convention, but he described the convention as "an exercise in futility." Clarion, Dec. 16, 1911. McKenzie remained active in the SPC until his death in 1917, but Kingsley played no further leading roles after 1911 and eventually joined the FLP in 1918.

on remaining with the SPC but did agree to join the SDP local as well in order to maintain long-standing contacts with the members. He ran for re-election as an SPC candidate and was successful. Later that year Nanaimo became the seat of the provincial executive of the SDP and the new executive attempted to place Williams under their control. He refused, saying he was already subject to control by the Provincial Executive Committee of the SPC. He then wrote the latter giving them all the information. They ruled that, since Williams had joined another party, he was (according to the constitution) no longer a member of the SPC.[21] Williams maintained his SDP membership, which meant that the SDP now had two sitting members in the B. C. legislature. It looked as though the SDP was about to replace the SPC as the dominant socialist group in B. C. But such was not to be the case.

In the by-election held in Vancouver on February 26, 1916, Parker Williams spoke on a public platform in favour of a Liberal Party candidate. In May the SDP read him out of the party because his action was a violation of the constitution.[22] He again won re-election in the

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[21] Clarion, Sept. 14, 1912.

[22] Victoria Colonist, May 16, 1916. The SPC's

provincial election of September 14, 1916, running as an Independent Socialist. Clearly by this time Williams was winning the Newcastle riding on his own reputation and not as a member of either of the socialist parties. In the same election Jack Place was defeated in Nanaimo by a labour candidate. The following year Williams resigned his legislative seat to accept appointment by the new Liberal government to the Workmen's Compensation Board.

In another direction the SDP had earlier gained support at SPC expense--this time from the foreign language locals. In B. C. Ernest Burns said that at one time the SDP "was mainly Finnish."[23] In the rest of Canada the SDP consisted mainly of Ukrainians, Jews and Finns. Interestingly it was the Finnish group in Port Arthur, Ontario, who were instrumental in calling the 1911 convention to establish

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reaction was that Williams had never really understood the "historical significance of class struggles in human society." Certainly Williams' action is difficult to explain, particularly in view of the sentiments he expressed in a letter he wrote three years earlier: "Toryism fights in the open, with a spiked club. Liberalism steals up in the guise of a friend, and by purchase, by bribery, by fraud, and by duplicity, endeavours to defeat us.... Whether corporation, thug, or agency, spy, scab or harlot, that lends himself to divide the workers on election day, by masquerading in the garb of a Lib/Lab candidate, all are the shameless tools used by the house of plunder." Clarion, April, 1916.

[23]Interview with Ernest Burns, April, 1958, by

the SDPC.

It will be recalled from the previous chapter that the SPC constitution allowed for the establishment of foreign language locals. For a number of reasons, however, this did not work out to the satisfaction of either the party or its foreign language branches. Many of the branch members believed that the kind of socialism they had known in their homelands should also be practised in Canada. The principal socialist parties on the European continent were Marxist, but they also advocated intermediate reforms. For this reason most of the European immigrants who were interested in socialism were more in tune with the SDP than with the SPC. As one Finnish member of the SPC explained,

> The social conditions are altogether different in Finland to those of this country. Until a few years ago the country has been under a complete despotism...people who never before in their lives had a voice in the management of affairs, place more than a due confidence in the parliaments as a means of bettering conditions even under the capitalist system of production. They are not conscious of the inability of parliaments.[24]

Prejudice apparently also played a part in the falling out between the SPC and its foreign language groups.

Dorothy Steeves. Angus MacInnis Collection, Box 53, U.B.C.

[24] Clarion, Sept. 24, 1909.

Though this does not seem to have been the case in Vancouver, there was certainly an element of it in the breakup of the Toronto local and of the Winnipeg local as well. It seemed to be especially important in those locations where the foreign language locals became powerful enough to elect some of their members to executive positions. A number of reports in the Clarion accused the English language group of devious tactics in trying to hold onto power. One such tactic was the withholding of membership dues stamps from the foreign locals so that at election time their members would be ineligible to vote because their memberships had run out. "Jealousy, vengeance and race prejudice have then developed among the defeated...."[25] said Samuel Schneider, a member of the Jewish branch in Winnipeg.

The foreign language groups had formed originally because most of the new immigrant members could not understand or take part in the meetings. To meet this problem a group of Ukrainian members in Winnipeg had proposed in 1907 to establish a Ukrainian Socialist League (USL) as part of the SPC. The League would propagandize among the Ukrainians, publish its own Ukrainian newspaper and have

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[25] Clarion, Oct. 30, 1909.

a say in SPC affairs. It was estimated there were 100,000 Ukrainians in Western Canada who would be reached much more easily by Ukrainian-speaking organizers and a Ukrainian newspaper than by English-speaking organizers and the Clarion. Under the proposal all USL members would also be members of the SPC, united through their locals and branches with their English-speaking comrades. The USL was to influence the operation of the SPC through actions of individual members in the SPC locals and at party conventions where the executive of the USL would have separate votes. No action was taken on this proposal when it was first made.[26] Presumably the DEC at this time did not consider the matter to be important enough to pursue. Meanwhile, the Ukrainian socialists did proceed to publish their own socialist newspaper, the Robotchy j. Narod.

In the ensuing years, although disputes continually broke out between the foreign-language groups and the English-speaking groups, the party executive did little to alleviate the problem. In 1907 they had published a thousand copies of the SPC constitution in Finnish, but nothing was done for the Ukrainians.[27] One local (Gibson's Landing)

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[26]Ibid., Nov. 16, 1907.

[27]Ibid., Jan. 12, 1907. The Finns coming to B. C.

hoped the problem might be solved by abolishing foreign language branches altogether. Gibsons' had always kept the nationalities together, and believed their own successful experiment might provide a model for the whole party. They proposed that all branch locals be abolished, that there be only one chartered local in any area and that all organizers be under the direct control of either the PEC or DEC. The DEC published the suggestion and called for comments,[28] but if any were received they were not published. The DEC continued to ignore the problem.

Meanwhile the Ukrainian members were becoming increasingly dissatisfied with the way in which the party was being run, with the position of immigrant groups within the SPC, and with the ambiguous aspect of the party platform regarding support by elected members of legislation to improve conditions for the workingman. In a letter to the DEC, Myr Stechinshin, editor of the Robotchy j Narod, said,

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were an interesting group. Some of them attempted to set up a collective utopia at Sointula. See John Ilmari, Kolehmainen, "Harmony Island-A Finnish Utopian Venture in British Columbia," B. C. Historical Quarterly, V. 4, No. 2 (April, 1941) pp. 11-123 for the story of the Finns on Vancouver Island and later Malcom Island. Finding the coal mines on Vancouver Island oppressive, they moved to Malcom Island to set up a utopian farming community. The area was unsuitable for farming, however, so they took to fishing.

[28]Ibid., Oct. 30, 1909.

> Nearly every socialist party of Europe was once in the same stage of development, in which the S.P. of C. is now, and there is no reason why should not the S.P. of C. profit by the experience of her sisters.... The European reformers are more revolutionary than the Canadian revolutionists.

He went on to attack the ambiguity of the platform:

> Now the question arises, Who is to decide the question, whether some particular legislation is in the interests of the working class or not? It seems that the Party should do it. It does not. The three Socialist members of the B. C. Parliament have occupied their seats for a number of years and the Party never expressed itself as to what they should do in there. According to the platform they were fully entitled to keep quiet or even to vote in the interests of the C.P.R. or to vote for shooting the strikers....it is absolutely impossible for the Socialist members of Parliament to rely on the advice of Provincial Executives. Why, it would be necessary to hold a continuous meeting for a period of a few months just to give pointers to the Socialist members....The Party should express itself what kind of legislation is in its opinion in the interest of the working class, and the Socialist members of Parliament should not ask for any other questions....
>
> That is the whole "immediate demands" question. That is it and that is how it is put in all Socialist Parties of Europe....
>
> I challenge anybody to point out to me if there was one instance when the Socialist members of Parliament of B. C. were opposing any reforms such as 8-hour day and other palliative measures of European Socialism. No, they were always advocating them!
>
> The Parliament is an opportunistic and compromising institution and any political party, whether it shrieks revolution or reform, if it takes part in parliamentary activity and is not in majority, becomes of necessity a reform body

regardless of its revolutionary aim.[29]

At a meeting of the Ukrainian Socialist Publishing Association in Winnipeg on November 12, 1909, at which all Ukrainian locals and branches of the SPC were represented, the feeling was expressed that Ukrainian locals were only nominally in the SPC; they did not know what was going on in the party, as the party did not know what was going on in the foreign language locals.[30] It was proposed therefore that a Ukrainian Socialist Federation be formed, with Myr Stechinshin as secretary. While remaining in the SPC, the Federation would supervise all propaganda and publications in the Ukrainian language. At the same time the Finnish locals in B. C. were also suggesting language federations. Their proposal was that language locals be allowed to elect executive committees which would have the same standing as PEC's and would deal directly with the DEC.[31] The DEC responded by saying they would favour the Finnish proposal but not the Ukrainian proposal, since the latter appeared to give "the impression of a language federation in whose affairs the Socialist Party of Canada shall have no say,

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[29]Ibid., Sept. 25, 1909.

[30]Ibid., April 9, 1910.

[31]Ibid., April 16, 1910.

but which shall have a say in the Socialist Party of Canada."[32]

The rejection impelled Myr Stechinshin to move to form the Ukrainian Social Democratic Party of Canada (USDPC). A convention of Ukrainian socialists was held in Edmonton August 22 to 25, 1910, to decide whether they would remain with the SPC or go to Stechinshin's new USDPC. Charles O'Brien, the SPC organizer in Alberta, was invited to speak to the conference, but one speech could hardly undo all the neglect of the past. The delegates voted twenty-four to two to go with the USDPC.[33]

The USDPC was one of the groups which came together in Port Arthur in December, 1911, to form the Social Democratic Party of Canada (SDPC). Some of the B. C. and Alberta Ukrainian locals broke away from the USDPC, formed the Ukrainian Socialist Federation and applied to the SPC to be affiliated as a foreign language group with their own executive committees and their own paper, the Nova Hromada. This time the DEC was more receptive to its Ukrainian members--it agreed to give them a charter if no protests were heard

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[32]Ibid., May 21, 1910.

[33]Ibid., Sept. 3, 1910.

within thirty days.[34] But the change in tactic had come too late; by far the largest number of members had gone to the USDPC. Earlier the German, Jewish and Lettish locals of the SPC in Winnipeg had voted to withdraw from the SPC. In withdrawing they said, "We are of the opinion that the best interests of the movement today demand: 1) The adoption of a constructive policy, and 2) The democratic management of the affairs of the party, both of which features are lacking in the S. P. of C."[35] They formed the Social Democratic Party of Manitoba and then became affiliated with the SDPC when it was organized in December, 1911. During 1910, 1911, and 1912, most of the Finnish locals of the SPC in B. C. also joined the SDPC. One effect of these defections was that the SPC had now become predominantly English speaking while the SDPC consisted primarily of immigrant groups, although there were significant numbers of both English and foreign-language members in both groups.

By 1912 socialism in B. C. as an organized force was in disarray. The constant internecine battling of the past few years marred its appeal for new recruits; the desired

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[34]Ibid., June 17, 1911.

[35]Ibid., Aug. 20, 1910.

image of a unified movement with an ideology that could save the world was supplanted by an image of a group which was both faction riddled and difficult to get along with. The internal struggles had also led to splits in the socialist ranks. At this time the SPC had dwindled to its B. C. and Alberta groups, with a few scattered remnants in the other provinces. The SDP in B. C. did not become a powerful force either politically or as an educational vehicle.[36] Not having its own provincial party organ,[37] it depended on Cotton's Weekly[38] which reflected in the main the interests

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[36]It is difficult to determine just how many members the SDP had in B. C. Cotton's Weekly, September 17, 1914, carried a report by Provincial Secretary Ernest Winch stating there were fifteen locals with 689 members. In the same issue there is a short history of the SDP and the author claims "82 locals in Ontario, 46 in B. C., 45 in Alberta, 20 in Saskatchewan, 28 in Manitoba and 8 in the Province of Quebec." In Cotton's Weekly, June 4, 1914, there is a list of delegates to the B. C. convention of the SDP representing thirteen locals. The Finnish locals are grouped as one but they do have twenty-one votes compared to one or two for most other areas and forty-nine for Nanaimo. It would appear that Winch's figures are somewhat more accurate than the historian's.

[37]For a few months in the spring of 1914 the Vancouver local of the SDP published the Social Democrat but it succumbed to financial difficulties.

[38]Some indication of interest in the SDP brand of socialism in the various regions is given in the following table showing the circulation of Cotton's Weekly for the years 1909 and 1912. G.R.F. Troop, Socialism in Canada (M.A. Thesis, McGill University, 1922), p. 57. This is not

of the Eastern groups. Consequently the various groups in B. C. were isolated from each other since they did not have an ongoing means of communicating party activities and concerns to each other. Moreover, because a majority of the membership were of European immigrant stock, the SDP was not able to appeal to a large segment of the working force, particularly the craft unions, who were predominantly of Anglo-Saxon heritage. In a bid to overcome this difficulty and to inject new life into the party, a number of SDP locals attempted to involve union people in the SDP by inviting their representatives to all-candidate nominating

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an indication of membership since many subscribers would not necessarily be SDP members. (Many SPC members subscribed to both the Clarion and Cotton's.)

	1909	1912
Nova Scotia	404	1,361
Prince Edward Island	3	18
New Brunswick	152	417
Quebec	788	1,261
Ontario	1,029	9,093
Manitoba	177	1,398
Saskatchewan	212	2,651
Alberta	167	2,988
British Columbia	479	4,779
	3,411	23,956

By comparison the Clarion circulation during the years up to 1910 varied widely from a low of about 2,500 to a high of 10,000. In late 1911 when the B. C. Federationist took over the subscription list of the Clarion there were just over 5,000 subscribers. There are no regional figures available for the Clarion.

conventions, stipulating only that all candidates be socialists of the SDP variety, though not necessarily party members.[39] The union people, however, did not respond; the attempts to woo labour fell flat.

The SDP also made repeated attempts to convince the SPC that it would be to its advantage to unite with the SDP. Such approaches were always rejected by the SPC, however, with a haughty reply that anyone who could abide by the platform and tactics of the SPC--the one true socialist party--was welcome to join.[40] Cotton's Weekly also suggested amalgamation of the two parties[41] on a national scale but this proposal too the SPC rebuffed, pointing out that the larger party produced by amalgama-

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[39] B. C. Federationist, Nov. 19, 1912.

[40] Clarion, April 5, 1913, and Aug. 1, 1914. Not that there was animosity between the two groups at all times, although this was the case in Vancouver where personalities had become involved. In Winnipeg the two groups realized the important thing was to make socialists. They formed the Winnipeg Socialist Club, the purpose of which was strictly social and would have nothing to do with controversial matters. The hope was to graduate people from the social club into one or the other of the socialist parties. Clarion, Oct. 14, 1913.

[41] Cotton's Weekly, April 4, 1913, and again on April 30, 1914, when the platforms of both parties were printed.

tion would also be a weaker party because of inevitable internal strife. True to its word and its principles to the last, the SPC did not cooperate or combine with any other group except for one brief fling during the 1924 B. C. election.

The SDP's contribution to the politics of the Left in B. C. lay in showing the unions that not all socialists disavowed the need for immediate reforms. In 1918 the B. C. Federation of Labour was instrumental in forming the Federated Labour Party (FLP), the appearance of which marked the demise of the SDP in B. C. as the latter's few remaining members went to the FLP. The formation of the FLP also marked the beginning of a new relationship between labour and socialism in B. C.[42]

There had always been enough SPC members in labour organizations in B. C. to prevent formation (often under pressure from the Eastern labour leadership) of a separate labour party. They were also able to muster enough support in provincial labour bodies so that the latter would

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[42]The concern here is with the socialists' involvement in labour's political and industrial forays in B. C. Others have written about labour organization, labour strife and labour political action in B. C. See: Stuart Jamieson, Times of Trouble: Labour Unrest and Industrial Conflict in Canada, 1900-66; Paul Phillips, No Power Greater; Martin Robin, Radical Politics and Canadian Labour.

publicly support either the SPC itself or socialism as a general goal. In B. C. there were always socialists in the executives of local and provincial bodies and in individual unions. Many of these socialists, believing that unions were an essential response to capitalism, were in the forefront of every great union battle from the Fishermen's Strike in 1900 to the One Big Union. Other socialists became involved in unionism through their jobs and were able to influence union decisions concerning political action. Interestingly, those socialists who were influential in labour circles were members of the SPC, not, as one might expect, the SDP. The leaders of the WFM were SPC members, as were other active labour leaders such as John McInnis, Parmeter Pettipiece, Jack Leheny, Victor Midgley, Jack Kavanaugh, Joe Naylor, James Watters, J. H. McVety, J. T. Mortimer, W. A. Pritchard and, later, Ernest Winch. These men were not interested only in the economic action of labour unions, but in political labour involvement as well, though not via separate labour parties. They endeavoured instead to channel labour's political support through the SPC, on the grounds that it was foolish to split the support of the working class when the SPC was already actively representing the workers' interests. Parmeter Pettipiece, for example, was a leading light of the SPC for years and also worked during that time in the labour movement, not because

he believed in their economic goals, nor in the usefulness of unions themselves, but because he believed these were groups that could be directed toward political action. His comment was typical of the SPC view:

> The trade union movement has outlived its usefulness, if it ever had any, from an all-workers standpoint. It has not won a "victory" in the last five years. It will win less in the next five. It does not guarantee a man a job through affording a certain degree of protection to those fortunate enough to have one. It comprises only about one-tenth of the working class. It does not recognize that every man, woman and child has a Nature-given right to live; that the human needs of one are as great as the human needs of another, and therefore, all should receive the same recompense as far as material needs are concerned.
>
> It is not an emancipating movement but a traders' movement, pedlars of labour power... What other solution is there but the collective ownership of the things we collectively use: production for use, in lieu of profit--Socialism?[43]

Undoubtedly the SPC's attitude concerning the futility of economic reforms made it very difficult for the party to get union members' support. Arguing that the capitalists always held the upper hand in economic matters and therefore efforts should instead be directed toward attaining political power, the SPC deplored trade unions which "diverted working men away from the true causes of revolution."[44]

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[43] Clarion, Aug. 5, 1905.

[44] The Voice, Sept. 28, 1906.

At the Twenty-Second Annual Convention of the Trades and Labour Congress of Canada, held in Victoria in September, 1906, the delegates called for each provincial congress to facilitate the organization of a Canadian Labour Party (CLP) in their provinces, but not before prolonged debate initiated by the socialists in attendance. The view of the socialists toward a Labour Party in B. C. was best expressed by Pettipiece, who attended as a delegate from the Vancouver Trades and Labour Council: "The formation of an Independent Labour Party, especially for B. C. when socialist organization is almost complete in a majority of the constituencies,...is a miscarriage of energy and effort."[45] He went on to predict the speedy death of the "untimely infant." A meeting to organize a CLP in B. C. was held October 29 and 30. Delegates were invited from all B. C. unions. Just prior to this meeting (October 6-8) the SPC had held its annual convention in Nelson at which a motion was passed condemning

> the setting up of any and all such "labor parties" as calculated to deceive, confuse and mislead the workers into a line of action that not only cannot relieve them from the stress of capitalist exploitation, but must inevitably tend to a prolongation of their present miseries, and their further degradation, and be it further resolved, that we warn all workingmen to be extremely

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[45] Clarion, Oct. 6, 1906.

> cautious in giving support to such schemes lest they unwittingly be induced to follow a line of action that because of its false premises and obscure conclusions can but lead to disappointment and final disaster.[46]

The October 29-30 labour convention was constituted on the basis of one delegate from each union rather than on the basis of proportional representation. The first item for discussion was a motion by delegate McKenzie of the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners, asking that delegates be given votes in accordance with the numerical strength of the unions they represented.[47] The motion was carried twenty-six to twenty-three. It soon became apparent that the meeting was divided between those who favoured the formation of a CLP in B. C. and those who preferred to give labour support to the SPC. The latter came mainly from the mining unions in the Kootenay and Vancouver Island while the CLP supporters came mainly from the craft unions in Vancouver and Victoria. The mining unions were

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[46] Ibid., Oct. 20, 1906.

[47] Vancouver Daily Province, Oct. 30, 1906. The account which follows is taken from the Victoria Daily Times, Oct. 31 and Nov. 1, 1906; The Victoria Colonist, Oct. 30, 31, and Nov. 1, 1906; The Vancouver Daily Province, Oct. 30 and 31, 1906, and the Clarion, Nov. 3, 1906. The United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners had instructed their delegate to call for proportional representation. There is no evidence that this move had been engineered by the SPC.

by far the largest in the province and with proportional representation this meant there was now a sizable majority in support of the SPC.

Before the convention could proceed with other business, William Davidson, M.L.A. and representative of the Slocan Miners Union, moved that the convention go on record as being unable to support a labour party which did not stand for the abolition of capitalist exploitation and the end of wage slavery. Since there already existed in B. C. a party that did oppose these things, said Davidson, the convention should urge all labour union members to support the SPC and study the principles of socialism. The opposition argued that this motion was out of order since the delegates had been sent by their unions to form a labour party and it was beyond their authority to do anything else.

Davidson retorted that his experience in the legislature had taught him that the only people who consistently fostered and supported legislation for the working class were the socialist members and it therefore behooved labour to get behind this party. However, the CLP supporters did not wait to debate the issue. Twenty-four of them bolted the convention and went to another room with the intention of carrying on with the avowed purpose of the convention.

After they left Davidson's motion was put to a vote and passed ninety to twelve with forty-two abstentions.[48] Having no further business to conduct, the meeting ended and delegates returned home.

The group who had left the meeting reconvened their own meeting and proceeded to form the B. C. section of the CLP. Their platform called for such reforms as free compulsory education, a 44-hour work week, public ownership of all coal mines, railways and telegraphs, abolition of the Senate, exclusion of all Asiatics and other objectionable aliens, adult suffrage, establishment of a national bank and government-operated fire and life insurance companies.[49] Not representing most of B. C.'s organized labour, the CLP thus set up was never heard from again. Though labour candidates did afterward run in elections, they were sponsored locally and not by any organized provincial labour party.

"Socialists Planned to Stop New Party" declared a Vancouver Daily Province headline[50] following the meeting.

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[48]The abstentions were the weighted votes of the men who had left the convention.

[49]All the daily newspapers gave this conference wide coverage, each of them devoting two or three full columns to the debates and discussions of both groups.

[50]Vancouver Daily Province, Oct. 31, 1906.

Although there is no evidence that the socialists plotted in advance to stop the proposed labour party, there is no doubt that, once arrived at the convention, they did take concerted action and certainly they were pleased with the result. The SPC had continually propagandized the miners of the province and also served them well in the legislature. At this meeting the miners showed their appreciation. Although they had not prevented the formation of a B. C. section of the CLP, they had ensured that it would not command province-wide support. For only a part of organized labour to successfully carry forward the new party was impossible, since that required considerable enthusiasm. which was not forthcoming. Obviously there was not yet a sufficiently large segment of labour ready to express itself politically or willing to jettison the SPC.

The following year the Alberta labour groups met in convention to form a provincial section of a CLP. Once again the socialists foiled the attempt. Parmeter Pettipiece was then working as an organizer for the Alberta Trades and Labour Council and part of his job was to organize the convention. Through control of the resolutions committee he was able to determine what resolutions got to the floor of the convention. The convention rejected the proposal for a separate labour party and voted support for

the SPC.

The effect of socialist subversion of attempts to set up labour parties is discussed in Chapter IX. Ironically, it is doubtful that endorsement by labour groups aided the SPC at the polls. The party continued for some time to get good support in the mining areas and mixed or little support elsewhere in the province. The experience of the SPA was much the same. Victor Berger, the only SPA member ever elected to the American Congress, in writing of an unsuccessful attempt to get a pro-socialist resolution through the 1902 AFL convention, declared:

> A resolution like this, even when (if) passed with a large majority, would mean little or nothing to the cause of Socialism in America. In fact experience in the past...has proven that resolutions of trades union congresses, even when going so far as to advise the members to vote the ticket of the Socialist party, amount to nothing in practise.[51]

But SPC subversion of labour parties was based more on concern for principle and ideology than on a desire for labour votes. To the SPC the essential difference in policy between the labourite and socialist was that

> the Laborite distrusts the capitalists as men, tracing his trouble to unjust administration of things and an unequal division of profits; the Socialist claiming not moral superiority for the workers as a class, challenges and

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[51] David A. Shannon, The Socialist Party of America (Chicago, Quadrangle Paperback, 1967 [1955]), p. 22.

> denounces the capitalist "system" of production as founded upon the robbery of the workers, founded not as a deliberate and conscious conspiracy against any class in society but involved through the changed and expanding form of industry....
>
> Reduced to its lowest common denominator, the essential difference between Independent Labour and Socialism is that the former would try to regulate robbery, the latter guarantees to abolish it.[52]

After the 1906 attempts to form a labour party it was some years before labour as an organized group would make another try. However, in B. C. a large number of the labour leaders were socialists who were constantly dissatisfied with the conservative nature of the TLCC. The latter was dominated by the central Canadian unions who were not enamoured of socialist principles to the same extent as were union men in the West. In an attempt to improve their effectiveness on both the economic and political fronts, a number of B. C. unions joined in 1910 to form the B. C. Federation of Labour. Phillips says this move reflected "the whole spirit of a social class movement that had emerged with the strong socialism of the majority of union leaders."[53] The first president was J. C. Watters[54]

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[52] Clarion, Sept. 22, 1906.

[53] Paul Phillips, No Power Greater, p. 49.

[54] In 1915 Watters served as president of the TLCC.

and the first secretary was Parmeter Pettipiece. Both were active members of the SPC. The influence of the socialists on the labour movement was reflected in the statement of principles adopted at the 1910 convention:

> We...pledge ourselves to unceasingly demand a universal workday of eight hours or less so long as labour-power is sold as a commodity. We believe there is more efficacy in electing working class representatives to write the laws than by supplicatory methods and our efforts will move in that direction in the future. We are firmly convinced that the future belongs to the only useful people in human society--the working class.[55]

The convention also voted to endorse socialism as a political goal, but did not specify whether it was the SPC or SDP brand of socialism.

The B. C. Federation of Labour was started by the more radical unions and initially was rather small. By the time of its second annual convention in 1912, however, membership had grown to almost five thousand and a year later it was almost nine thousand. At the second convention delegates again discussed the possibility of endorsing socialism and a resolution asking all affiliated unions to hold special meetings to vote on the question was passed

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[55]From the Declaration of Principles of the B. C. Federation of Labour, quoted in William Bennett, Builders of British Columbia, p. 44.

seventy-eight to three with five abstentions. The results of the poll indicated that union members as well as their leaders were in favour of socialism: in the thirty-seven unions which forwarded results of their vote to the Third Annual Convention, a total of 1,718 members were in favour. 431 opposed. In only six unions was there a majority opposed.[56] The Vancouver Trades and Labour Council also polled its members (representing about one-third of B. C.'s unionized labour force of about 20,000), who voted fifty-three to eight in favour. It was one thing to vote in favour of socialism, however, and quite another to translate such a vote into action. As was seen in the previous chapter, the SPC had by this time passed its political nadir and was retiring more and more into an educational shell. By 1917 Victor Midgley was able to say in his president's report to the B. C. Federation's Annual Convention that the SPC was "no longer a factor in the political life of the province."[57] The SDP of course had never been a political factor and even now, though its membership was larger than that of the SPC, the SDP had very few influ-

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[56] B. C. Federationist, Jan. 24, 1913. Minutes of the Third Annual Convention of the B. C. Federation of Labour.

[57] Ibid., March 9, 1917. Letter to the Editor from Victor Midgley.

ential labour members. Moreover, its large European membership made it unappealing to a large part of the union membership. Thus, though the vote in B. C. Federation of Labour had indicated substantial support for socialism, there was no party to which the leaders of the Federation could channel political action.

One might wonder why at this particular point in time so many labour people had apparently moved to the left in their political stance. Part of the answer, of course, lies in the fact that a large number of labour leaders were connected with the SPC. For them to wield influence among the rank and file, however, suggests that the general membership had also moved to the left. In part this was due to the constant educational work performed by the SPC over the years. But there were in addition particular issues which demonstrated to unionists that the class war about which the SPC preached was not entirely myth. One of the most significant issues, uniting labour and socialism, was the Nanaimo Miners' Strike.

There are a number of different accounts regarding what triggered the strike, although most are generally agreed that it started as a general "holiday" when a miner

by the name of Samuel Mottishaw was fired.[58] Why Mottishaw lost his job is not clear (no accounts from the mine owners are available). One story is that Mottishaw was blacklisted because he was on the gas inspection committee[59] and the Company thought he was doing too thorough a job. Another account is that he was too active a member of the SPC and the Company wanted him to leave the Island.[60] At any rate,

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[58]There are two views as to why the strike spread. The daily press of the time again blamed foreign agitators among the miners, this time in the form of the United Mine Workers of America, with district headquarters in Seattle. For example, the Vancouver Daily Province, May 17, 1913, said that the 600 miners in Nanaimo in favour of the strike were all submitting to orders by Robert Foster, president of District 28 with offices in Seattle. An alternative explanation is offered by Paul Phillips in No Power Greater and Stuart Jamieson in his report to the Task Force on Industrial Relations, Times of Trouble: Labour Unrest and Industrial Conflict in Canada, 1900-66. The latter suggest that the miners had almost to beg the UMWA to come to organize. Phillips also suggests that the owners wanted the work stoppage to cover up the existence of watered stock. McKenzie and Mann had purchased Dunsmuir's Vancouver Island coal interests and floated a $25 million dollar stock issue, and at the time were trying to obtain financing for the Canadian Northern. The strike, says Phillips, would be reason for them not paying a dividend on the watered stock. Phillips, No Power Greater, p. 56.

[59]Phillips, No Power Greater, p. 56.

[60]Clarion, Dec. 13, 1912. In the same issue the correspondent, Bob Walker from Cumberland, claims that it is the Socialists whom the Company is trying to get out of the mines and off the Island. He quotes the Mayor of Cumberland as saying, "Whatever chance the miners had of winning before, since they started to fly the red flag, there is no hope for them at all. The company and the

the men were locked out and the strike soon spread from Cumberland to Ladysmith, Extension and Nanaimo. Eventually about eight thousand men were involved.[61] The strike/lockout began on September 12, 1912, and things were not entirely back to normal until August, 1914, although work did start at Ladysmith and Nanaimo on September 11, 1913, and at the other locations reached about two-thirds capacity through the use of scabs. During this lengthy strike period, groups on the Left came together as they had never done before in B. C. For the first time a majority of the unionized workers were affiliated with a central organization, enabling them to channel their demands into a coordinated effort. By January, 1914, there were 120 unions, representing some 14,000 workers, affiliated with the B. C. Federation of Labour.[62] Again there was talk of forming a political arm of labour, but this time a committee was struck to approach both the SPC and the SDP with plans for amalgamation of the two and structuring of a party which

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government can stand anything but that." Mottishaw was a British miner who had come to the SPC through membership in the Nanaimo Socialist Club and the Revolutionary Socialist Party of Canada.

[61] C.A.R., 1913, p. 681.

[62] Phillips, No Power Greater, p. 60.

would have the support of organized labour in the province.[63] But concerted political action was not the only concern. There was also some talk in labour circles about using the general strike as a weapon,[64] and this was the first time, outside of IWW circles, that such action had been seriously considered in B. C.

On August 12 and 13, 1913, violence broke out in Ladysmith, South Wellington, Nanaimo and Extension. At Extension things got so bad that Bowser, the Attorney General, sent in the Militia. Two hundred and fifty-six men were arrested, including Jack Place, SDP MLA, and Sam Guthrie, at that time president of the Nanaimo local of the UMWA and later a labour MLA. With the intervention of the militia the SPC now put the battle on the political field, describing it as a class struggle. The headline of the August 30 Clarion declared: NOW! YOU 20,000 B. C. UNIONISTS - ACT! and an editorial noted that the strike could have been settled long ago if the miners had allowed the owners to get rid of all the socialists in the mines,

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[63] B. C. Federationist, Nov. 14, 1913. A Labour Representation Committee of five was appointed by the B. C. Federation to approach the SPC and the SDP. In the Clarion Dec. 6, 1913, the meeting between the SPC and the committee is reported, as well as the unanimous rejection by the SPC.

[64] Phillips, No Power Greater, p. 57.

which would have meant the end of representation of the district by socialists in the legislature. Thus, said the Clarion, the "miners will be stripped and helpless, and at the mercy of the most conscienceless gang of labor-skinners that ever cursed this continent." The editorial then went on to advocate strike action in the manner that would have pleased the IWW:

> The 20,000 unionists of the B. C. Federation of Labour have declared for socialism and political action. They now have the opportunity to exercise a brand of political action that the capitalist interests of this province have not reckoned with.'
>
> If a single miner is shot by the forces of murder--STRIKE!
>
> If those forces are used to cow the miners while the mines are flooded with Oriental labor--in contravention of the statute law of the province--STRIKE!
>
> If the arrested men are railroaded to jail in the attempt to destroy the political and economic organizations of the workers--STRIKE!
> ....
>
> The armory of political action is not exhausted by putting a ballot paper in a box once in four years. A strike for these objects will be as truly political as is the action of the government in levelling rifles and machine-guns at the striking miners...[65]

On October 23, 1913, five of the arrested men were

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[65] Clarion, Aug. 30, 1913.

sentenced to two years' imprisonment, twenty-two to one year plus a $100 fine, and eleven to three months and a $50 fine.[66] Some of the others had previously been released and some were held for a number of months without trial.[67] On October 27 representatives of the B. C. Federation of Labour, UMWA, VTLC, IWW, SPC, SDP and the Victoria Trades and Labour Council met in the IWW headquarters in Vancouver to form the Miners' Liberation League,[68] the purpose of which was to work for the release of the miners who, they felt, had been railroaded to jail. The League did have some success: in March, 1914, twenty-two of the convicted miners were pardoned and none of the others served their full sentence.[69] The argument of the League, and especially of the B. C. Federation of Labour, was that the government was in many ways to blame for what happened and had

> assisted the coal operators to help defeat the miners in various ways, such as non-enforcement of the Coal Mines Regulation Act, the Deception

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[66] Ibid., Nov. 8, 1913, lists all the names. C.A.R., 1913, p. 682.

[67] Jamieson, Times of Trouble, p. 125.

[68] Clarion, Nov. 8, 1913.

[69] Phillips, No Power Greater, p. 60.

> of Workmen Act and the Order-in-Council regarding immigration into British Columbia, and by sending special police and militia to act as "scab-herders."[70]

The SPC did not stay long in the League. They voted to leave[71] when the League would not repudiate the statements made at a public meeting by a representative of the IWW who declared that, if results were not obtained by year end, then attempts would be made to shoot or poison McBride and members of his cabinet and a million dollars' worth of property would be destroyed each week. Though the SPC maintained sympathy for the goals of the League, they believed that success would come only by constitutional means. Thus was the brief period of cooperation between the socialists and organized labour ended.

The unifying effect of the Vancouver Island Coal Miners' Strike on the labour movement was also short-lived. By the time things had returned to normal in the mines, the country was at war and the depression which had started in 1913 was exacerbated by the loss of European markets and the cessation of building and railway construction. In 1915 more people were on the unemployed lists than in the

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[70] Labour Gazette, Vol. XV, 1914-1915, p. 273.

[71] Clarion, Jan. 3, 1914.

organized labour movement. The B. C. Federation of Labour represented about twenty-one thousand workers in 1913 and this fell to less than eleven thousand by the end of 1915.[72] By 1916, however, the war economy had taken hold, and this, coupled with the large number of young men who had joined the forces, brought full employment to the province. When wages did not rise to keep pace with the steep price increases, however, union activity intensified again. Coupled with these economic factors were political concerns which brought labour once again to the point of considering the formation of its own party. At the TLCC convention in 1917 a move toward political action was again made when a motion was passed urging each provincial group to develop its own labour party.

In B. C. the issue that finally brought the union people and many of the socialists together in common political cause was manpower registration and conscription.[73]

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[72]Phillips, No Power Greater, p. 62.

[73]See Chapter VI, Footnote 21 and Chapter VIII, pp. 326-341 for a more extensive discussion of the SPC review of conscription and the war.

From the beginning both the SPC and the SDP had been against the war. The labour movement itself had been split over the efficacy of the war, but one thing that had united it was the belief that there should not be conscription of manpower without the accompanying conscription of wealth. At the B. C. Federation of Labour Convention in January, 1918, "the most outstanding decision ...arrived at was that a political convention be formed."[74] An interesting aspect is that the decision to help form a labour party was taken as a result of a report by Parmeter Pettipiece[75] concerning the forming of a political organization. Strong opposition to such an organization came from other SPC members at the convention, including Ernest Winch, who was a delegate of the Longshoremen, Arthur Goodwin from the miners in Trail, and Joseph Naylor who at the time was president of the BCFL. In his president's report Naylor based his objection on the age-old argument, which had worked so well on previous occasions, that the SPC was already in the field representing the working class. When the final vote was taken on the question, "Are you in

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[74] B. C. Federationist, Feb. 1, 1918.

[75] E. T. Kingsley and Parmeter Pettipiece apparently dropped out of active SPC leadership roles about 1911.

favour of a working class political organization?" there were eighty-two in favour, eleven against and fifteen abstentions. Naylor and the other SPC members had won the point that the new party should not be an official body of the BCFL. The convention called for a Provincial Labour Conference to be held on February 2, 1918, for the purpose of forming the new political party.[76]

The executive of the new organization, named the Federated Labour Party (FLP) was amply represented with ex-members of the SPC. Kingsley from Vancouver and John McInnis of Fort George were Vice Presidents and Gordon Kelly was president. Other former SPC stalwarts who actively participated in the conference and took out memberships in the new party were Hawthornthwaite, McVety, Dr. W. J. Curry,(who had been expelled from the SPC in 1910 and then joined the SDPC) A. S. Wells, Jack Kavanaugh and Pettipiece.[77] Though the platform was a far cry from previous labour statements, it was still not one that an SPC member could support. The influence of the socialists was evident in statements such as one that the FLP "is organized for

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[76] B. C. Federationist, Feb. 1, 1918.

[77] Ibid., Feb. 8, 1918.

the purpose of securing industrial legislation, and the collective ownership and democratic operation of the means of wealth production."[78] But there were a number of other planks which in times past men like Kingsley would have shunned as palliatives. Truly the FLP was a mixture of socialist and labour thought. It was actually very similar to the SDP, except that it enjoyed the support of a large body of unions in the province, including both the craft unions and the industrials.[79]

The SDP in B. C. was absorbed into the FLP. While the SPC continued with its own separate existence, its influence was minimal and its membership steadily declined. It was now the FLP's turn to be the dominant influence in the politics of the Left in B. C. The long struggle between the three shades of political hue on the Left in B. C. had come almost full circle--from labour dominance at the turn of the century to the ascendancy of revolutionary Marxism and finally, at the close of the second decade, to a combination of labourism and possiblism.

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[78]Phillips, No Power Greater.

[79]For further discussion of the formation of the FLP, see Chapter VIII, pp. 359F.

CHAPTER VIII

NEW ALIGNMENTS ON THE B. C. LEFT

The revolutionary socialism of Marx as preached by the SPC in B. C. had fallen on hard times during the period following 1910. Having once been the dominant group on the Left in B. C., with provincial organizations and locals across the dominion, the party had gradually lost many of its national groups and in B. C. had now to contend with competition from the SDP. But further realignments were yet to come. The 1914-1918 War and the 1917 events in Russia and their aftermath changed political alignments throughout the world and B. C. was no exception. The ideal of "international socialism" which had appealed to so many socialists, was seriously undermined by the war.

According to Adam Ulam,

> The age in which Marx wrote saw the stirring of politically subject nationalities. This was seen as just a reflection of the economic and political questions. With this oppression gone, nationalism itself was to find its expression in internationalism, dictated by the ever spreading network of industrialization. The logic of industrialization, which makes the workers into socialists, forbids them to become chauvinists.[1]

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[1]Adam Ulam, The Unfinished Revolution, p. 56.

But Marx was wrong. With the outbreak of war, the mantle of international socialism quickly came apart at the seams. Nationalism proved to be the stronger of the two ideologies, and socialists in the various countries fell into line behind their national governments. The workers of the world did not unite and the much heralded international brotherhood exploded with the first shot fired. The German Social Democratic Party was the strongest socialist party in Europe and since 1891 had been considered the repository of the legacy of Marx and Engels. At the outbreak of the war, however, all but one of the party's representatives in the Reichstag voted to support Germany's entry into the war. The ideal of socialist internationalism, thus weakened, never recovered its pre-war strength, and since that time has been further weakened by Russia's sacrifice of national communist parties to the needs of Russian nationalism.

The action of the German Social Democratic Party, the British Labour Party and other European socialist groups came as no surprise to the SPC. The latter had consistently refused to join the International Socialist Bureau (the Second International) on the grounds that a large number of the members were nothing but pseudo-socialists advocating an evolutionary transformation to socialism and therefore the International Socialist Bureau was not an expression of

working class interest. This attitude had caused some strife in the party, which had come to a head in 1909 just prior to the defection of a large part of the membership to the SDP: The Dominion Executive Committee had taken a stand against affiliation on the grounds that the International Socialist Bureau had admitted non-socialist bodies, and that such bodies were not only ignorant of socialist principles but also practised compromise with capitalist parties, thus betraying the working class. Some SPC locals opposed this decision and called for a referendum to resolve the question,[2] but before the argument could be carried further the dissident groups left the SPC to go to the SDP. The question of affiliation with the Bureau never arose again within the SPC, all the remaining members agreeing that compromise was out of the question in a true revolutionary socialist party as the SPC was.

Since 1909 the SPC had been predicting war between Britain and Germany as a result of the business interests' endeavours to revive trade. As the SPC said, "Only by destruction of property on a vast scale can the interests of property be served."[3] Consequently the party was not

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[2] Clarion, Aug. 7, 1909, and Sept. 4, 1909.

[3] Ibid., March 6, 1909.

surprised by either the outbreak of hostilities or the action of the many "pseudo-socialist" parties around the world. Though the SPC opposed the war, they viewed it in the context of the inevitable historical process which would lead ultimately to the destruction of capitalism and rule by the proletariat. As an editorial in the Clarion explained,

> Though the war may be costly in both life and treasure, nothing but ultimate good can come of it. The war madness must run its course. The capitalist system must destroy itself. Whether it does so by the folly of its own tools and official acts, or through a proletariat that has been driven into revolution because of its oppression and tyrannies matters little. There are signs upon the European horizon that presage the beginning of the end.[4]

Although the SPC opposed the war throughout its duration, it did not advocate any other means, except for constitutional ones, to attain the party's ends. It was this historical determinist position which saved the SPC from government harassment during the war and prosecution under the 1918 Order-in-Council banning the meetings of organizations opposed to the war.

When the war began the SPC published the following manifesto;

> In view of the European situation and the

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[4] Clarion, Aug. 15, 1914.

efforts of the capitalist press and politicians to stir up a war fever in Canada to the end that the Canadian workingmen will be induced to take up arms in defense of the interests of their master, the Socialist Party of Canada instead of passing futile resolutions of protest, would call your attention to the following facts:

1) Inasmuch as all modern wars have their origin in the disputes of the international capitalist class for markets in which to dispose of the stolen products of labour, or to protect themselves in possession of the markets they already have, the motive of the anticipated struggle in Europe is of no real interest to the international working class.

2) Further, the struggle, if materialized, will claim as its victims countless thousands of the members of our class in a quarrel that is not theirs, it behooves the workers not to be carried away by the frenzied clamorings of the interested advocates of war, the vaporings of capitalist "statesmen" or the blare of martial music. In no conceivable manner, shape or form could the interests of the workers of any of the nationalities involved be furthered or protected by their participation in the conflict.

3) ...the only struggle that can be of vital interest to the working classes of all nations is that which has for its object the wresting of this power from the hands of the master class and using it to remove all forms of exploitation and servitude. To this struggle the Socialist Party of Canada calls you. The only barrier standing in our way is ignorance in the ranks of our own class.

As an International Working Class, we have but one enemy--the International Capitalist Class.[5]

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[5]Ibid., Aug. 15, 1914.

Throughout the war the efforts of the SPC were directed toward convincing workers of the truth of the above. (The SDP's attitude in B. C. was similar, though not as uncompromising.) But the party had little influence on labour in this regard. When the TLCC held its congress in Vancouver in September, 1915, the anti-war sentiments of the socialists in influential positions in the B. C. and Alberta labour organizations were scarcely acknowledged. The Congress passed the following declaration with only twenty-nine negative votes, all of which came from the socialists and the representatives of Vancouver Island miners:

> Under existing conditions it becomes the duty of the Labor world to lend every assistance possible to the Allies of Great Britain, and for us in Canada more especially to the Empire of which we form a part, in a mighty endeavor to secure early and final victory for the cause of freedom and democracy.[6]

It was at this congress that labour's first official stand on conscription was taken:

> It is in the best interests of labor that the Allies and Great Britain in particular should finally triumph in the war; this we reiterate in a most positive manner. It is also the duty of labor to lend every possible assistance in the strife. But that help must

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[6]Ibid., Oct., 1915.

> be free, not coerced; it must be dictated by duty and not by coercion; it must be the outcome of loyal affection for the Mother Country, for this Dominion and for those whose fates hang in the balance, and not the product of the lash, hunger or the legalized enforcement of a people.[7]

--to which the SPC replied, "These hacks of capitalism, masquerading as labor leaders (!) must be fought to a finish."[8] The rhetoric fell on deaf ears. While many of B. C.'s labour leaders were or had been members of the SPC and thousands of B. C. workers had been influenced by the economic and political teachings of the party, these people were not willing to stand on the periphery of society as was the SPC leadership. Their association with the SPC would indeed influence their thinking for years to come, but they were no longer as uncompromising as they once had been. They did not regard the war as solely a struggle between capitalists.

In the conscription issue, however, the party was somewhat more influential.[9] The B. C. Federation of Labour

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[7] B. C. Federationist, Sept. 25, 1915.

[8] Clarion, Oct. 1915.

[9] The struggle within the TLCC over conscription is discussed in Paul Phillips, No Power Greater, Chapter V.

(BCFL) convention at Revelstoke in 1917 elected an executive who were largely members of the SPC; Joe Naylor, president; Victor Midgley, Albert Goodwin, and J. H. McVety, vice-president; A. S. Wells, secretary. These men helped to harden labour's attitude toward conscription. In cooperation with the SPC, the Federation held a number of public meetings objecting to conscription. Although the activities of the western Canadian labour movement, particularly the B. C. section, created an uproar within labour ranks, the Unionist forces of Borden took all of the B. C. seats in the 1917 federal election. The failure of the B. C. labour radicals and the SPC to influence the outcome of the election over conscription[10] was a principal reason for the coming together of the BCFL and a number of SPC members to form the Federated Labour Party (FLP) in early 1918. Seeing that public meetings and agitation in the unions had not been able to influence political decisions, they concluded that the alternative must be attainment of direct political power.

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[10]There were other reasons why socialist candidates failed to obtain a larger percentage of the vote: For the 1917 election the government passed a special amendment to the Elections Act giving the vote to female relatives of enlisted men and taking the vote away from any Canadian citizen of enemy extraction who had obtained his citizenship after 1902. This hit the socialists hard, since it was from the latter that they received the greatest share of their support.

The SPC and the SDP were the only political groups in English-speaking Canada who consistently fought against Canada's participation in the war. When two SPC members, Wilfred Gribble and John Reid, were convicted of sedition and sent to jail, the party argued that, even in the matter of freedom to oppose the war, the proletariats were discriminated against. In French-speaking Canada Henri Bourassa and his followers had conducted vigorous anti-recruiting and anti-war campaigns but since "these be not common clay or working people"[11] no such fate as prison had befallen them.

Neither the SPC nor the SDP were really of much concern to governmental authorities during the early part of the war, though the foreign language locals of the SDP did become the target of suspicion after the Russian

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[11] Clarion, March, 1916. In the same issue it was reported that Gribble got a two-month sentence for saying in a speech about the war that "Kings are puppets." John Reid went to jail for fifteen months for saying in an Alberta speech that "this war is being waged for commercial supremacy," In the Feb., 1916, Clarion, A. Taylor from the New Brunswick SPC said, in referring to Gribble's trial, that "the judge inferred in his charges to the jury that the evidence of the witnesses for the defense could not be creditable as four were socialists, one was in sympathy with socialism and one was the son of a socialist. So it is easy to see that the socialist movement is on trial and not Comrade Gribble."

revolution. The support of the Canadian people for the boys overseas made it generally impossible for the SPC during most of the war to find an audience. It was not until after the passage of the Military Service Act in June, 1917, that the SPC was again able to attract large crowds. The war economy with its spiralling inflation[12] impelled a large number of people to begin thinking about capitalism as an economic system; manpower conscription without attendant wealth conscription aroused opposition in some sections of the working force; the Bolshevist takeover in Russia brought Marxian socialism to the forefront as an alternative economic system. Combined, these issues enabled the SPC to once again attract large audiences[13] and to evoke a sympathetic response in many labour groups. The overthrow of the Kerensky government in Russia also brought new vigour to SPC members, for Bolshevism now meant Socialism and here was evidence of

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[12]In terms of "real wages" income at the time was at the lowest point it had been for almost twenty years. "Real wages dropped sharply from 1900 to 1915, and labourer's wages did not return to 1900 levels until 1925." Leo A. Johnson, "The Development of Class in Canada in the Twentieth Century," in Gary Teeple, ed., Capitalism and the National Question in Canada (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972), p. 169.

[13]This was the era when the SPC filled two and some times three theatres for Sunday night meetings. See Chapter VI.

what Marx had predicted.

It was after the Bolshevist takeover in Russia that the federal government became concerned with the activities of the SPC and more so with those of the foreign language groups of the SDP. Coupled with concern about the effect of the Russian revolution on Canadian radicals, the Canadian government was probably influenced by the U. S. Government action on May 6, 1917, banning "any organization which proposed by physical force to bring about change unlawfully" and specifically the IWW.[14] In September, 1917, 166 members of the IWW were indicted in the United States District Court of Chicago; ninety-five of them were subsequently fined and given jail terms.

Under powers provided by the War Measures Act, the Chief Press Censor banned the importation into Canada of all publications advocating anything of a socialist nature.[15] This hit the SPC very hard since they had been obtaining the majority of their books and pamphlets from the Charles Kerr

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[14] Report on Labour Organization in Canada, 1918, p. 35.

[15] Through interpretation of the regulations by an over-zealous clerk, Plato's Republic was included in the interdict.

Publishing Company in Chicago.[16] Depriving the SPC of Das Kapital was akin to depriving the Christian Church of the Holy Bible. Needing the writings of Karl Marx for their economics and politics classes, members of the SPC who comprised the Political Economy Club undertook to publish the first nine chapters and the thirty-second chapter of Das Kapital.[17] They were even able to make a profit on the endeavour (apparently book-banning guaranteed popularity then as now.) But the publishing venture was short-lived: On May 28, 1918, the SPC headquarters in Vancouver was searched by the military police and the R.C.M.P.,[18] who were trying to identify the source of seditious reading matter which had been circulating in increasing amounts during the past few months. On August 6 the Censor's office warned the B. C. Federationist[19] that publication would be suspended if the censorship regulations continued to be ignored.[20] On October 4 the Western Clarion

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[16]Charles Kerr was the largest publisher of socialist literature in the United States.

[17]B. C. Federationist, Dec. 6, 1918.

[18]Clarion, June, 1918.

[19]C.A.R., 1918, p. 311.

[20]The B. C. Federationist was the official paper

was banned and the SPC advised that the mails were closed to them. They promptly changed the name of the paper to the Red Flag and when it too was banned the name was again changed--this time to the Indicator. Though the party was able to ship some copies by express, circulation of the Red Flag and the Indicator fell from six thousand to two thousand per issue without the use of the mails.

On February 25, 1918, the federal government issued another Order-in-Council which banned the following organizations for the duration of the war and declared it unlawful to attend any of their meetings:

(A) The Industrial Workers of the World
The Social Democratic Party
The Russian Social Democratic Party
The Russian Revolutionary Group
The Russian Social Revolutionists
The Russian Worker's Union
The Ukrainian Revolutionary Group
The Ukrainian 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
and any subsidiary association, branch or committee of either of the said unlawful associations by whatever name called or described; or

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of the B. C. Federation of Labour and the Federated Labour Party and had become increasingly concerned with revolution under the influence of the many SPC members who were active in the BCFL and ex-SPC members who were now active in the Federated Labour Party.

> (B) Any association, organization or corporation which, while Canada is engaged in the war, should have for one of its purposes the bringing about of any governmental, political, social, industrial, or economic change within Canada by the use of force, violence or physical injury to person or property, or threatened such injury in order to accomplish such change.[21]

On November 13 the Order-in-Council was amended, dropping the SDP and the Ukrainian Revolutionary Group and adding the Finnish Social Democratic Party and the Revolutionary Socialist Party of North America.[22] At the same time meetings, other than of a religious nature, in any enemy language, Russian, Finnish or Ukrainian, were banned. Moreover, newspapers could be published only in French or English.[23]

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[21] C.A.R., 1918, p. 308 and Clarion, Oct. 15, 1918.

[22] In dropping the SDP from the list, the government was merely being more specific. In B. C. the SDP had ceased to exist, so far as the English language groups were concerned, when the FLP was founded in February. In the rest of Canada the SDP consisted primarily of foreign language groups. Thus by banning the Russian Social Democratic Party, the Ukrainian Social Democratic Party and the Finnish Social Democratic Party, all affiliates of the SDP, the Order effectively outlawed those groups advocating force to accomplish change. The effect of the government's action was to destroy the SDP. In later years a number of members from these foreign language locals would join the Canadian Communist Party.

[23] Clarion, Oct. 15, 1918.

The SPC managed to escape the wrath of the government, partly because the party was now of importance only in B. C., partly because the more action-oriented members had gone to the FLP, and partly because the SPC continued to advocate revolution solely through legitimate means. While the Clarion regretted the government's action, it continued to counsel the comrades to keep their heads:

> Carry on the socialist propaganda within the law. Organized society, even such as it is, is the product of historical development. You can not place yourself outside it, outside its forms, its pains and penalties, its rules and procedures and kick it into your desired position as you would a football.[24]

In its fight against sedition and revolutionary socialism the Canadian Government took one more step. On October 7, 1918, the government created a Public Safety Division of the Justice Department, appointing C. H. Cahan, K. C., as the director to supervise the enforcement

> of the laws, orders and regulations respecting aliens, unlawful publications, assemblies or meetings, and the laws, orders and regulations intended or designed to suppress or extirpate enemy, revolutionary or seditious propaganda.[25]

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[24]Ibid., Oct. 15, 1918.

[25]Order-in-Council (No. 2476), Oct. 7, 1918. Quoted in G.R.F. Troop, Socialism in Canada (M.A. Thesis, McGill University, 1922), p. 79.

Cahan found that a large amount of highly seditious and revolutionary material was being circulated in various foreign languages, particularly among Finnish, Ukrainian, Russian and Ruthenian immigrant groups. In a long address delivered to the St. James Literary Society in Montreal on December 12, 1918[26] he outlined the content of some of this material and indicated that the number of people involved was quite large[27] and the situation quite serious. His investigators had also found that the chief disseminator of revolutionary socialist literature was the SDP and of seditious literature, the IWW.[28] Most of the SDP literature

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[26]Charles Hazlitt Cahan, Socialist Propaganda in Canada: its Purposes, Results and Remedies (an address delivered to the St. James Literary Society, Montreal, Dec. 12, 1918. In University of Toronto Library.) Cahan reproduces a number of the pamphlets distributed and they are very violent in content. His address gives some idea of the depth of concern in government circles about the unrest among the foreign language groups.

[27]According to Cahan there were over sixty Finnish branches of the SDP and even more Ukrainian branches. He did not list the number of Russian SDP locals, but did say there were 63,784 Russians in Canada who were age 16 and over, which was fewer than the number of Ukrainians. His numbers for Finnish and Ukrainian locals seem exaggerated, judging from other information now available.

[28]The IWW ought to have been of no real concern in Canada since there were no more than six to ten locals spread across the country. However, because they were very prominent in the United States at the time, it was assumed that they must also be connected to any kind of sedition or sabotage occurring in Canada. The newspapers were especially

was printed in a language other than French or English and its general tenor was to extol the revolution in Russia and to encourage Canadians to establish the same kind of rule in Canada.

The SPC had no trouble with Cahan; nor did its few remaining language groups such as the Ukrainian Socialist Federation. The Government's Orders-in-Council were aimed at those advocating the forcible overthrow of the government and this the SPC did not do. The regulations hit hardest at socialism in Eastern Canada, primarily in Ontario, for socialists in the East, under the influence of the foreign language groups of the SDP, had been advocating the use of physical force to take control of government. To some extent this served to make socialism in the West more respectable than in the East. In the East the labour movement was not influenced by SDP socialism, due partly to the latter's revolutionary stance[29] and

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guilty of promulgating this view. The Canadian Annual Review, which to some extent represented newspaper opinion across the country during 1918 and 1919 reported extensively on the activities of the socialists in Canada, constantly connecting them to the IWW. Hawthornthwaite, Kingsley and even Woodsworth were tagged with the IWW label. C.A.R., 1918, pp. 310-312.

[29]The SDP was "revolutionary" in the sense of advocating forceful overthrow of the government, but not in the sense of doctrinal purity--the party platform included immediate demands which the SPC eschewed.

partly to the fact that the SDP was dominated by Finns, Russian, Ukrainians and Russians, while the labour movement was dominated by the Anglo-Saxon members of the craft unions. At any rate, the Government's ban on meetings and publications of the Ukrainian, Finnish, Austrian, Russian and other groups effectively broke up the SDP and thwarted any influence it might have had on labour. The Government also arrested a number of SDP leaders. On October 19, 1918, seventy men were arrested in Ontario on charges of belonging to an unlawful association and of having seditious material in their possession.[30] Many of these men never came up for trial. In Toronto, for example, twenty-four were arrested but only six were finally brought to court. Prejudice against the foreign language socialists was apparent in the courts as well as in the labour movement: the three foreign-speaking men brought to court received sentences ranging from three to six months, while the three English-speaking men, with the same charge, all received suspended sentences.[31]

By contrast, the 1918-1919 period was good for the SPC in B. C. The labour movement was pretty well under the control of present or former SPC members; the Clarion's

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[30] Western Labour News, Nov. 8, 1918.

[31] G.R.F. Troop, Socialism in Canada, (M.A. Thesis, McGill University, 1922), p. 81.

circulation when the ban was lifted rose to about ten thousand; Economics classes were packed, as were the weekly theatre meetings. To maintain its position, however, the party found that it had to change its definition of political action. Previously political action had meant anything that would work toward making the "wage-slave" realize his class position. Strikes by labour unions had never fitted this category. But the failure of the SPC and the labour movement to effect changes through electoral activity had caused many labourites and socialists to explore alternative methods of influencing the political system. One such alternative was the formation of the Federated Labour Party to which reference has already been made. The other was the gradual move toward direct economic action via the general strike.

A number of issues had served to promote a feeling of dissatisfaction in many quarters: the Russian revolution, the Canadian Expeditionary Force sent into Russia to oppose the revolution,[32] inflation, profiteering,[33] and the

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[32]The Socialists were infuriated by this Canadian intervention in the internal afairs of Russia. The unions were urged not to handle any cargo which they suspected might be going to support the force in Russia.

[33]C.A.R., 1918, p. 325. A report here of the extraordinarily large profits a number of corporations were making.

federal government's Order-in-Council forbidding strikes or lockouts for the duration of the war.[34] To bring the discontented together, however, a dramatic and immediate issue was needed. That issue was provided by the shooting of Albert (Ginger) Goodwin.[35]

After the Military Service Act was passed in 1917 and conscription became law, a number of men went into hiding in the coastal forests of B. C., among them Ginger Goodwin. He was shot by a constable patrolling the shoreline, looking for both invaders and draft dodgers.[36] Goodwin came from Cumberland but had been blacklisted in the Vancouver Island mines after the strike[37] and had gone to Trail to work. Here he again got involved in union

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[34]This was passed July 11, 1917.

[35]Accounts of the shooting of Goodwin appear elsewhere: Paul Phillips, No Power Greater, pp. 72-73: Dorothy Steeves, The Compassionate Rebel, pp. 38-39. Here the events are merely sketched in, in order to see the role of the SPC.

[36]According to Wallace Lefeaux SPC members organized secret caches of food for these hideaways. Interview, May 25, 1966. In Aug., 1918, two SPC members, Joe Naylor and D. Aitken, were arrested in Nanaimo for assisting draft evaders but both were later acquitted.

[37]See Chapter VI.

activities. According to Stan Lefeaux[38] Goodwin had failed three previous medical examinations because he had tuberculosis, but because he was in the midst of organizing the Italian mine workers and was active in the SPC local there, "the local bigwigs called in the conscription board to see if any of the agitators were eligible for the army." Goodwin was reclassified and ordered to report for induction but instead of doing so he went into hiding in the forest around Comox. The final result was that Goodwin was shot under questionable circumstances and, while the constable was exonerated, labour and socialists felt that Goodwin had been murdered for his radical activities.

The reaction of the socialists, of labour, and of the people of Cumberland to the shooting was almost instantaneous. The SPC organized a special burial ceremony for August 2 in Cumberland. The funeral procession was over a mile long. Wallace Lefeaux and W. A. Pritchard of the SPC spoke at the service. The miners of Cumberland declared a special 24-hour work stoppage and no one moved to prevent them from taking the time off. The Vancouver Trades and Labour Council (VTLC) endorsed the proposal of the Metal Trades Council for a similar 24-hour work stoppage to start

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[38]Stanley Lefeaux, Interview, May 25, 1966.

at 11 o'clock on August 2. Thousands of workers stayed off the job.[39] In the afternoon a group of over three hundred returned soldiers,[40] who had been encouraged to act by the Board of Trade,[41] stormed the Labour Temple. Since the unions had been forewarned, there were only a few officials in the building when the mob struck. There was some property damage and Victor Midgley, secretary of the VTLC, was forced to kiss the Union Jack. According to the SPC, Mayor Gale offered at a public meeting to lead gangs to deport the leaders of the VTLC.[42] The soldiers had missed Ernest Winch, newly elected president of the VTLC and SPC member, in their Labour Temple raid and so went the next day to the Longshoremen's Hall to get him. Winch, however, managed to arrange for a negotiation

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[39]Phillips, No Power Greater, p. 73 reports that of all the unions in Vancouver, only the Telephone Employees, Printers and Teamsters remained on the job.

[40]Wallace Lefeaux says the soldiers were all returned officers and not enlisted men. Interview, May 25, 1966.

[41]Clarion, Aug., 1918. Phillips, No Power Greater places some of the blame for the near-riot on the business community leaders and the inflammatory editorials in the World and the Vancouver Daily Province, both of which denounced labour as pro-German and Bolshevik.

[42]Clarion, Aug., 1918.

session between representatives of the soldiers and the VTLC. On the assumption that it was only the leaders who were the troublemakers, the soldiers demanded that the VTLC leaders leave the province for the duration of the war. After the negotiations the VTLC met and decided to resign their VTLC positions and hold new elections to prove that they had the backing of all the union members. Of the 118 VTLC members, all but three were returned to their positions on the Council. In light of such overwhelming support, nothing further was heard from Mayor Gale, the business groups or the returned soldiers.

The SPC were jubilant at this demonstration of working class solidarity in B. C., for which they took a great deal of credit. They pointed out that the troubles which were occurring in Toronto were along racial lines, but in B. C.:

> Labour forces, irrespective of race, are united and on the defensive against the historically reactionary forces. Note the line-up: Board of Trade, Manufacturer's Association, Credit Men's Association, Daughters of the Empire, press and pulpit, etc., on one side; on the other, Organized Labour. And despite wire pulling and intimidation the Labour forces present a solid phalanx and refuse to be stampeded by the reactionary alignments....
>
> Let them go to it. We can watch them,

> supremely confident that all the historical forces are with us of the working class.[43]

The radicalism that was developing in the rank and file of labour impelled the SPC to compare the effectiveness of its political action policy with the effectiveness of labour's economic action policy. The party's percentage of the vote had decreased considerably in the 1916 provincial election and their work during the conscription election of 1917 had given negligible results. On the other hand, thanks to their work with unions, the latter were now much closer to the SPC philosophy than at any previous time in the party's history and had just moved in concert to successfully conduct a one-day work stoppage. This was economic action narrowly bordering on a general strike. Now the party moved to redefine political action. A manifesto issued during the latter part of 1918 delineated the new attitude:

> The politics of the working class are comprised within the confines of the class struggle, and conversely, the class struggle is necessarily waged within the political field. By this statement we do not imply that the political action of the working class must be limited within the bounds of constitutional convention or of parliamentary procedure, nor that the means employed in waging the class struggle must everywhere be the same.

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[43] Clarion, Aug., 1918.

> Political action we define as any action taken by the slave classes against the master class to obtain control of the powers of the state, or by the master class to obtain control, using those powers to secure them in the means of life. For one country it may be the ballot, in another the mass strike, in a third insurrection.
>
> These matters will be determined and dictated by the exigencies of time and place.

A further indication of the change in attitude appeared in the Western Labour News in a comment on the new manifesto:

> At one time we thought that the constitution of Canada allowed us to come under the first category (i.e. those countries where the ballot alone was necessary) but nowadays we are in doubt. Our masters make it illegal for us to own Socialist literature, to take part in Socialist meetings, or to talk socialism. It has practically made it unconstitutional to be a Socialist, hence other methods will have to be evolved; and while we would like the old ballot way, if we cannot have it we will again turn to our grand old guide, the Communist Manifesto.[44]

During 1917 and 1918 there were more work stoppages in B. C. than during the three previous years of the war. These culminated in the mass one-day work stoppage protesting the death of Ginger Goodwin. During these years

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[44] Western Labour News, Jan. 24, 1919. The Winnipeg Trades and Labour Council took over the Voice in July, 1918, and renamed it the Western Labour News. Under its new editor, Rev. William Ivens, it was transformed from a labour paper to a radical paper supporting the SPC, mass strikes and the OBU.

there was much talk in the VTLC, the B. C. Federation of Labour, and in various other labour bodies throughout the West about the effectiveness of mass action, i.e., the general strike. By 1918 the majority of Western labour leaders were convinced that political action had failed and therefore the only hope now was mass economic action in the form of a general strike. The wave of labour's move to mass action was yet to crest and the SPC rode it until it came smashing down along with the Winnipeg General Strike. In days gone by the SPC would have opposed the direction labour was taking, but feelings were running so high among labour people that to do so now would have been suicidal. To change the direction of labour's efforts, as the SPC had been able to do in previous times, was now impossible. Too, there were many signs of radicalism and a portent for change to which the SPC wanted to be connected. The events leading up to the formation of the One Big Union (OBU) and its quick demise have been documented elsewhere[45] as has the Winnipeg General Strike (WGS).[46] The SPC had no

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[45]Paul Phillips, No Power Greater, Chapter 5; Martin Robin, Radical Politics and Canadian Labour, Chapters 11 and 12; Dorothy Steeves, The Compassionate Rebel, Chapter 4; G.R.F. Troop, Canadian Socialism, pp. 85-93.

[46]D. C. Masters, The Winnipeg General Strike

official role to play in either of these events although prominent SPC members played important parts in both the OBU and the WGS.[47] The importance of these events here is that they illustrate how the SPC, which for years had suffered under the criticism of being too "scientific" and "pure", was carried along with the enthusiasm of the times and became a willing partner of direct action as opposed to political action. What formation of the OBU represented

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(Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1950); Norman Penner, ed., Winnipeg 1919 (Toronto, James Lewis and Samuel, 1973); Martin Robin, Radical Politics and Canadian Labour, Chapter 12.

[47] In some ways it can be said that the OBU was a progeny of the SPC. At the 1918 convention of the B. C. Federation of Labour (held in Calgary so that more delegates could attend the Western Labour Conference which was to follow immediately after) Jack Kavanaugh and W. A. Pritchard, both SPC members, were the leading participants in the debate which resulted in the convention's support for the One Big Union. At the Western Labour Conference, held a few days later in the same city, the central executive committee chosen to conduct the propaganda of the OBU were all SPC members: R.J. Johns, J. R. Knight, Victor Midgley, Joseph Naylor and W. A. Pritchard. Other prominent former SPC members such as Kingsley and Pettipiece opposed formation of the OBU while proposing no alternative political action.

The goal of the OBU, which was strictly a Western labour phenomenon, was to have all existing unions affiliated with it (as well as setting up their own OBU locals) so that all unions could coordinate their activities and act as one. One suggestion, for example, was that in future all OBU affiliates would negotiate their contracts from January 1 so that if strikes were necessary they could all be called simultaneously to increase the likelihood of success.

was not much different from what had been recommended by the IWW in previous years and so vehemently attacked by the SPC. To take direct action through mass strikes was to force the economic and political situation--that is, to force history--something which the SPC had always felt could not be done.

Although the SPC was not officially involved with the Winnipeg General Strike or with the sympathy strikes held in B. C., three of the seven men arrested and tried after the strike were SPC members: W. A. Pritchard, R. B. Russell and R. J. Johns. During the trial, moreover, the prosecution cited publications of the SPC and articles from the Clarion and the Red Flag as evidence of the accused's attempt to forcefully overthrow elected authority. In Vancouver, when unions comprising over ten thousand workers decided to go out in sympathy with the Winnipeg strikers from June 2 to July 4, the SPC gave moral support and continually published articles reminding the strikers that this was their strike in support of their class, that workers the world over were watching them, that they should be scrupulous in regard for the law and should "have good heart since the great working class giant was rising to its feet and the dawn was breaking."[48]

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[48] Red Flag, June 14, 1919.

But the dawn did not break. The WGS was broken, the sympathy strikes in B. C. petered out, and the OBU came to nothing in the industrial centres, although it did exist for a few years in B. C. with the loggers' union as its main source of strength. Perhaps it was time for a respite. The long years of the war overlapping and followed by two years of hectic political activity took its toll on the psychic and physical energies of the workers. Radical political activity could not be maintained and a long period of quiescence set in. The failure of political activity followed by the failure of direct action disillusioned many of those on the Left. Some went back to the Federated Labour Party; others carried on with the SPC; most simply focussed on earning a living for their families and making out as best they could in society as it was presently structured. The SPC, however, "knew" where its best course lay--back to educating the working class. With hindsight the party decided that the actions of the past months had been premature. They returned to their old position: revolution would come spontaneously when enough members of the working class understood their class position.

Events of the past few years had created great ferment within the SPC and among socialists and radicals outside of the party as well. To the SPC it seemed during this exciting

period that the years of effort to develop a class consciousness among the workers of B. C. were finally bearing fruit. During this time street corner meetings were always large, it was easy to fill a theatre with fifteen hundred people to hear an SPC speaker, classes in Marxian economics were always oversubscribed (many had over a hundred students) and the Western Clarion averaged six thousand copies per issue with some issues going as high as ten thousand. A fact that should have indicated to the leadership that their popularity represented a protest against the current situation rather than recruitment of converts to their ideology was that membership increased only slightly. Perhaps they may be excused for not seeing this sign, however, since they had decided during the low years of 1913-1916 to reverse their attempts to become a political machine and concentrate on their educational role. Since it was not possible to maintain organizers in the field to keep all the locals, the party had become essentially a Vancouver-based group with a few locals in the mining areas of the province and some scattered throughout the rest of Canada. As long as the party organ could be kept solvent and public meetings were well attended, it was felt they were making progress and therefore the lack of membership was not a serious problem. When the hoped-for revolution in Canada

failed to materialize during 1918-1919, however, the disappointed socialists realized that their optimism had been ill-founded.

But the Russian revolution was to have more repercussions within the SPC than simple disappointment. Initially the party delayed in making a reaction to the events in Russia. The first editorial mention was in the Clarion of March, 1918, and even then the attitude was one of waiting to see if the Bolsheviki actions would be consistent with the teachings of Marx. The SPC did not assume that Bolshevism was synonymous with socialism, and criticized the North American socialist press for assuming that Marxism had triumphed. In April, presumably with more information at hand, the SPC sent an open letter of congratulations to the Central Committee Council of Workmen's and Soldiers' Delegates, Petrograd, noting that the SPC was particularly pleased that the Committee had committed itself to adhere to the teachings of Marx and Lenin.[49] For some time after this the SPC stood by the side of the Bolsheviks, not because the latter were as yet practising

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[49] Clarion, April, 1918. One wonders what was the reaction of Lenin when he read in the same letter, "We have yet to notice an error of tactics or a violation of revolutionary working class principles."

socialism but because they were working toward that goal, dealing with conditions "such as they found close at hand" and unable in Russia's undeveloped state to immediately inaugurate a new system.

Having firmly established itself in power, the Communist Party in Russia moved to establish the Third International or, as it was also known, the Communist International. The First Congress of the Communist International, held in Moscow in March, 1919, established eighteen points or conditions by which every party desiring affiliation would have to abide.[50] There is no doubt that these points played a decisive role in splitting the socialist movement the world over, and no less so in B. C.

In essence the conditions for affiliation called for highly centralized national organizations subject to control by the Congress of the Communist International or its Executive Committee. All the resolutions of the congresses of the Communist International were to be binding on all parties affiliated with the International, and the Communist International was also to be highly centralized. Thus, not

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[50]The eighteen points are listed in Appendix 8. At the Second Congress held July and August, 1920, the eighteen points were changed to twenty-one, but the change did not significantly alter the original conditions and only the eighteen points were ever published in the Clarion.

only were the parties belonging to the International to be organized along the lines of democratic centralism, but the International itself was to be similarly organized. Lenin's principle of democratic centralism meant that, while members of the organization were to have an input to problem solving, the central body would make the final decision, which would be binding on all members. Lenin reasoned that, since the party was the vanguard of the proletariat, it must act in a leadership role during civil war or revolution. Where quick and effective action was necessary, said Lenin, the party center must be an "organ of authority with full power."

When the list of conditions for affiliation appeared, a split rapidly developed within the SPC. Inevitably the matter was debated extensively in the Clarion.[51] In general the arguments of those wishing to affiliate were based on a belief that the international proletarian revolution was close at hand, that the events in Russia signified the beginning and therefore to strengthen the likelihood of international success it was necessary to join the International. Those who opposed affiliation objected to many of the eighteen points. They feared dictatorship from Moscow;

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[51] Clarion, Jan. 16, 1921.

they argued that some of the suggested actions (such as infiltrating the labour unions) would alienate groups outside the party and nullify their educational work; they did not like the idea of democratic centralism (particularly the aspect which called for dictatorship of the SPC by the International); they argued that not all of the conditions for applying the eighteen points existed in Canada. But more important than objections to specific conditions was the growing conviction that the Bolsheviks were not true Marxists. That the party as the repository of Marxist truth must act as a vanguard in educating the proletariat was understandable, but to suggest that the party should dictate in all other matters as well was a far cry from the dictatorship of the proletariat as conceived by many SPC members. These members argued, therefore, that the SPC's mission among the Canadian working class could be accomplished as a socialist party outside the Communist International.

In December, 1921, the SPC held a referendum on affiliation and the results showed that the membership was split almost fifty-fifty. Even the old stalwart Vancouver Local No. 1 split 37 against and 24 for affiliation. Almost to a man those favouring affiliation left the SPC to join the Worker's Party of Canada, which later became

the Communist Party of Canada.[52]

The SPC never recovered from this split. For twenty years the party had been a strong enough force to ensure that, whenever socialism or radical political action was discussed, a representative of the SPC would be involved. But from this point on the party consisted of a few scattered remnants whose few members were no longer able to influence the course of events in B. C. left-wing politics. The SPC continued with some educational work and managed to publish the Clarion, through funding of a small bequest, until August, 1925. But at this point the party ceased to function. Its significant contribution of a Marxist viewpoint to B. C. political thought had ended with the split over affiliation with the Communist International, and the party's official demise came with the death of the Clarion. Socialism itself, however, was far from dead, for another road had been opened in early 1918, with the development of the Federated Labour Party:-

From the turn of the century left-wing politics in B. C. had suffered from a lack of unity. Among the social-

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[52]The Worker's Party of Canada was formed Dec. 11, 1921, in Toronto. The Vancouver branch was started in January, 1922, by ex-members of the SPC: William Bennett, Jack Kavanaugh and A. S. Wells.

ists were the two groups who had the same goals but different methods--the SPC and the SDP. In addition there were the various labour politicians and labour groups around the province, all of whom wanted change but regarded the socialists as too extreme. As a consequence the vote on the Left was always split and there is no doubt that many a worker's vote went to either the Liberals or Conservatives because he was confused by the dissension among left-wing factions. The labour parties could never manage to stay in existence between elections and their appearance only during election times added further to the confusion and doubt of the voter. Some suspected that the fragmentation of the Left was engineered. There were often accusations that the labour groups were funded by either the Liberals or the Conservatives and that labour politicians were simply Liberals or Conservatives in disguise. This suspicion endured for a long time and was referred to by Angus McInnis as late as 1925 in an article concerning a dispute between the VTLC and the FLP.[53]

Considering the traditional fragmentation of the Left in B. C., the organization of the FLP in 1918 was

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[53]Federationist, April 3, 1925.

surely a bench mark. For the first time labour and socialists were able to cooperate sufficiently to form a common party. Among its leadership and membership the FLP had some of the leading impossiblist spokesmen, including Kingsley, Pettipiece, A. S. Wells, Jack Kavanaugh and William Bennett, plus James Boult from the SLP, Ernest Burns and Dr. W. J. Curry from the SDP, Gordon Keely, Bert Showler, W. R. Trotter, Helena Gutteridge, R. H. Neelands from the unions, and others such as J. S. Woodsworth, James McVety, Angus McInnis, Victor Midgley, and Thomas Tomashevsky.[54] The combination of circumstances toward the end of the war--conscription, inflation, the Russian Revolution, and so on--had produced a more radical outlook among many people and thus it was possible for this once disparate group to join in common political cause. Though the SPC never officially cooperated with the FLP, neither did it launch vituperative attacks upon it as had been its habit with previous organizations that threatened to usurp the party's power on the Left or to betray the working class with palliative measures. One reason for this new

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[54]Tomashevsky was the man who had been instrumental in persuading the Ukrainian Socialist Federation in Alberta and B. C. to stay with the SPC when Myr Stechinson had led the majority of the Ukrainian foreign language locals of the SPC into the SDP.

tolerant attitude was the SPC's loss of interest in politically representing the working class; the party was now concentrating more on educational activities which involved large public meetings, economics classes and propagandizing through publications. These activities were all considered as "political" as was running candidates: the aim was to make people sufficiently aware that they should elect members of their own class to public office; it was no longer deemed important that candidates be SPC members.

The platform adopted by the FLP showed the marked influence of the socialists, calling as it did for "the collective ownership and democratic operation of the means of wealth production."[55] At the same time the platform also contained proposals more closely associated with the traditional demands of labour, such as proportional representation, minimum wage legislation, the 44-hour week and mothers' pensions. The Federationist devoted a large portion of its space to the activities of the new party and the editorial pages reflected more and more the interest of the unions in socialism and in the activities of

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[55] Federationist, Feb. 8, 1918.

the Bolsheviks in Russia. In less than three months the FLP had established thirteen locals around the province and the Vancouver locals had close to two thousand members.[56] Then, just when it seemed that the magic combination for the cooperation of all left-wing elements had finally been found, growth suddenly slowed.[57] For a while the FLP was forced to take a back seat to the flurry of syndicalist activity which engulfed the West and culminated in a large number of strikes and the formation of the OBU.

Just as the earlier failure of political action had swung a large number of people toward direct economic action, however, failure of direct action swung the pendulum once again toward political action. In the December 1, 1920, provincial election the FLP ran fourteen candidates (there were a number of Independent Labour candidates as well.) Harry Neelands was elected in South Vancouver and Tom Uphill in Fernie. Sam Guthrie ran as a Labour candidate in Newcastle and was also successful. The SPC ran

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[56]Ibid., April 19, 1918.

[57]A number of influential men who had joined the FLP initially left to organize the OBU.

six candidates, all in Vancouver, and they collected an average of about six per cent of the vote cast. The Liberal Party again formed the government but with a reduced majority.[58]

The years following the 1920 election brought little in the way of political advancement to the Left in B. C., but they did see a shift in alignment on the Left. When the Worker's Party started, it took a number of former socialists who now believed that communism was the way of Marx. At the same time a large number of union men lost their radicalism when the tumult of 1918-19 was over, and returned to one of the old-line parties. This left the FLP in the middle, acting as a unifying force for those who were neither communists nor free-enterprisers. The party platform remained unchanged but instead of justifying it only in terms of Marx and the class conflict, it was promoted on the basis of equity and as a plan to make the economy work without unemployment.

On the national scene the Trades and Labour Congress of Canada again encouraged the formation of labour parties in the provinces, but this time (at its convention in Winnipeg in 1921) it proposed the establishment of a Canadian

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[58] Canadian Parliamentary Guide, 1922, p. 466, and Clarion, Jan., 1921.

Labour Party to coordinate the political activities of all labour political groups across the Dominion.[59] The proposal was ignored in B. C. until 1924, when the B. C. executive of the TLCC called a meeting to establish a branch of the CLP. Present were delegates from the FLP, the Worker's Party, the VTLC and a number of unions. As the constitution[60] of the CLP provided that it should be an affiliate body only and should not organize locals on its own, the FLP suggested at the meeting that it should become the B. C. branch of the CLP. The meeting turned down this request on the grounds that the FLP did not represent all groups in the province.[61] Instead the FLP,

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[59]Canada, Dept. of Labour, Labour Organization in Canada, 1921.

[60]The Constitution of the CLP is reproduced in Appendix 9.

[61]Federationist, April 3, 1925, article by Angus McInnis on the dispute between the B. C. Federationist, official organ of the FLP, and the Labour Statesman, official organ of the VTLC. There were probably other reasons why the FLP request to be the sole organizing body in B. C. was turned down. As Phillips says (No Power Greater, pp. 93-94) there were some schisms in the B. C. labour movement at this time. During the devastating Longshoreman's Strike in the fall of 1923, the VTLC had withdrawn its support from the Federationist and given it to the Longshoreman's Strike Bulletin. In Jan., 1924, the name was changed to the B. C. Labour Bulletin

the Worker's Party and a large number of unions affiliated with the CLP.

Affiliation with the CLP in B. C. did not work wonders for the Left. In Vancouver a few labour men were elected to the School Board and to City Council, but in the 1924 provincial election only Tom Uphill in Fernie retained his seat for the FLP. A few labour groups grew up in the Vancouver district and affiliated with the CLP, but overall growth was negligible. On January 30, 1926, after some months of negotiations, the several branches of the FLP, in Vancouver, South Vancouver and Burnaby agreed to amalgamate with the New Westminster Labour Party and the South Vancouver Labour Party. They formed the Independent Labour Party (ILP).[62] Regardless of its name, however, the ILP was basically a socialist party, formed "for the

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and then on April 25 to the Labour Statesman which became the official organ of the VTLC. Since the Federationist supported the FLP the dispute between the editors of the Federationist and the VTLC reflected on the FLP and so the VTLC opposed the FLP becoming the CLP branch in B. C.

[62] Canadian Labour Advocate, Feb. 12, 1906. The paper's life was brief. On June 12, 1925, the Federationist became the Canadian Farmer-Labour Advocate and then on July 24 it became the Canadian Labour Advocate, the last issue of which was published April 29, 1926. The platform and manifesto of the ILP are reproduced in Appendix 10.

purpose of creating a Working Class Consciousness with a view of securing the collective ownership and the democratic control of the means of wealth production."[63] Its manifesto stated that the party's aim was to educate the working class concerning its economic position and that part of this education would involve contesting every elective office. While acknowledging that it would accept reforms to improve the position of the working class, the party's ultimate objective was a socialist state. In the next few months the various branches of the FLP around the province also became branches of the ILP. (A condition of being an ILP branch was affiliation with the CLP.) Now the political forces on the Left in B. C. consisted of only two groups, the Communist Party[64] and the ILP, both of whom were CLP affiliates.

What was to be the first of many clashes between the Communist Party on one hand, and labour and socialist forces on the other, took place within the CLP. As the hard-working communists across the country gradually took control of the

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[63]From the preamble to the ILP platform.

[64]The Worker's Party had become the Communist Party of Canada in 1924.

CLP (except in Alberta), many of the CLP affiliates in the various provinces began to drop out. The situation came to a head in B. C. at the ILP convention on June 17, 1928, when a motion to withdraw affiliation from the CLP was passed. The motion read:

> That owing to the disorganization of the Canadian Labour Party due to the withdrawal of so many of the affiliated Trade Unions we feel that it would be in the best interests of the political labour movement that the Independent Labour Party withdraw its affiliation from the Canadian Labour Party.[65]

With the demise of the CLP[66] as a national coordinating body, the groups on the Left in Western Canada began to explore other means of coordinating their activities. A Conference of Western Political Parties was organized and met annually from 1929 until 1932, when the proposal for the CCF was formulated. The B. C. ILP was a regular participant in these conferences.

The ILP had many former SPC stalwarts--Kingsley, Wallace Lefeaux, Pettipiece, W. A. Pritchard, Ernest Winch, etc.--and these men ensured that the party retained its socialist platform although they did not insist that it be

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[65] ILP Executive Minutes and Convention Reports, June 6, 1928, Angus McInnis Collection, Box 45, U.B.C.

[66] For a good history of the CLP see Martin Robin, Radical Politics and Canadian Labour, Chapter 16.

the impossiblist variety. On December 6, 1931, the ILP changed its name to the Independent Labour Party (Socialist), and six months later--June 13, 1932--changed its name again. this time to the Socialist Party of Canada.

Thus it was that when the party federated with the CCF in 1933, it did so under the banner of its old forbear, the Socialist Party of Canada. This was only fitting, for it carried into the CCF a healthy respect for many of the socialist principles that had been the lifeblood of the old SPC throughout its history.

CHAPTER IX

CONCLUSION

For a generation Marxian socialism was the dominant ideology of the Left in B. C. Though its successes as a political party were minimal, it did make significant contributions to the political culture of the Left in the province.

Many scholars[1] have proffered explanations, ranging from the specific and local to the universal, for the failure of Marxism to "take hold" in North America. None

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[1]The following are some examples, but the list is not exhaustive: Yehoshua Arieli, Individualism and Nationalism in American Ideology (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1965); Daniel Bell, Marxian Socialism in the United States (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967 [1952]); W. S. Chambers and W. D. Burnham, eds., The American Party System (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1967); Leon D. Epstein, Political Parties in Western Democracies (New York: Fred A. Praeger, 1967); Louis Hartz, The Founding of New Societies (New York, Harcourt, Brace and world, Inc., 1964); Gad Horowitz, "Conservatism, Liberalism, and Socialism in Canada-an Interpretation", CJEPS, (May, 1966); Seymour M. Lipset and Stein Rokkan, "Cleavage Structures, Party Systems and Voter Alignments;" S. M. Lipset and Stein Rokkan, eds., Party Systems and Voter Alignments (New York, Free Press, 1967); Seymour Martin Lipset, The First New Nation (New York, Basic Books, Inc., 1963); Gunnar Myrdal, An American Dilemma (New York: Harper and Bros., 1944); F. J. Turner, The Significance of Sections in American History (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1932.)

of these single-factor explanations, however, meets the acid test: were this cause absent, would socialism have taken hold?[2] When these various explanations are applied to the B. C. case, a substantial amount of evidence can be marshalled in support of a number of them, yet together they provide only a partial explanation since Marxian socialism did take hold in some parts of the province[3] and its influence was carried into the CCF when it formed in 1932. Even the Horowitz explanation, which was developed solely for Canada, does not hold for British Columbia. Horowitz says that the pan-North American approach that is invoked to explain the lack of a strong socialism in North America compared with Europe emphasizes similarities between the United States and Canada and therefore does not help us to understand Canada's uniqueness. But neither does Horowitz's pan-English Canada explanation explain the uniqueness of British Columbia. The toryism brought to Central Canada by the Loyalists did not penetrate as far westward as British Columbia and socialism in B. C. was not related to the presence of "corporate-organic-collectivist"

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[2]See "Why No Third Party in America?" mimeo by the author, 1969.

[3]See Chapters I and III and Chapter IV, pp. 120-121.

toryism. The dominant toryism in British Columbia was business conservatism, more related to the liberal individualism of the United States than to corporate-organic-collectivist toryism. In the mining camps of B. C. there was no sense of community among the workers and the employers; instead, the overriding feeling was one of isolation and antagonism between the two groups. Moreover, the provincial government did not hold itself responsible to provide for all levels of society, but saw its role primarily in terms of encouraging industrial development.

As Professor John Wilson points out,[4] there are a number of political cultures in Canada, each generating a different set of political values and actions. In certain areas of British Columbia the political culture nurtured the Marxian socialist cause for a period of time, and support in these areas gave the party sufficient strength and encouragement to carry on its political and educational activities in other parts of the province.

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[4]John Wilson, "The Canadian Political Cultures: Reflections on the Problem of National Integration." A paper presented at the forty-fifth annual meeting of the Canadian Political Science Association, Montreal, August, 1973.

There were Marxists in other centers of Canada too, but they had an inconsequential following, they were not influential in the labour movement, their propaganda and educational activities reached very few people, and they were most of the time regarded as representatives of society's mis-fits.[5] One of the important differences between the socialist movement in B. C. and in other parts of Canada was that in B. C. the movement was dominated by Anglo-Saxons whereas in other areas it was dominated by non-English speaking immigrants. This meant that in B. C. the socialists had a certain "respectability" which they did not enjoy in other areas. As socialism in B. C. moved from impossiblism through possiblism to the social democracy of the CCF, some of the Marxist ideology was carried along. In other parts of Canada, however, because Marxist groups were tarred with the "foreigner" label, Marxism had been largely rejected by those groups which eventually federated with the CCF.

It is not the intention here, however, to suggest that British Columbia was ever a hive of socialist activity

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[5]There are exceptions. For example, James Simpson, originally an SPC member, then an SDP member, was a number of times elected to the Toronto City Council and was Controller for one term. He was also a vice-president of the TLCC. However, the SPC always considered him more of a labour man than a socialist.

(although compared to other provinces it might appear so), nor that there was ever a time when behind every union card was an SPC membership card. In the parts of the province where Marxian socialism had appeal, it did so because it was perceived as relevant to the situation then existing. In these areas, then, the socialists attained some political influence through their elected socialist representatives.

Although the activities of SPC legislators could not be reconciled with the party platform because the latter called for complete change while the former worked for reform, it was the fact of having representatives in Victoria which earned the party legitimacy and awarded it a more significant and enduring role in B. C. politics than might otherwise have been the case.[6] It is one thing to be a political group advocating change from outside the legislative halls, but quite another thing to be a group advocating change from within the legislative halls. In the first instance, since the group is seen as irrelevant and outside the parameters of legitimate political striving,[7] it can be

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[6]See for example the discussion in Chapter VI, pp. 266-276, concerning the SPC's legislative effectiveness.

[7]The question of special-interest groups arises. But even an interest group does not gain political, press or public attention and influence unless it appears to

ignored by the press, political opponents and the people. In the second instance the group is a recognized political force representing legitimate wants and therefore it cannot be completely ignored. This was the case with the SPC.

There is an aspect of the democratic system which favours the long-term existence of any group who can initially attain some electoral success: once on the government payroll, such persons can become full-time politicians. The SPC members of the Legislature--Hawthornthwaite, Williams, McInnes, Davidson--were in effect on government salary to spread the word of Marxian socialism. And this the SPC required them to do at all times when they were not attending to legislative business. Since legis-

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represent a legitimate, substantial body of people. At the turn of the century there was extensive concern by the various political factions over the possibility of labour political action, but labour did not succeed in organizing either a political party or an effective pressure group.

A review of newspaper coverage for the period 1900 to 1930 shows that the press usually gave fair coverage to the legislative activities of socialist MLA's, but as the latter's percentage of the vote grew over the years, newspaper editorials became more critical. In covering socialist meetings, for example, newspapers consistently concentrated on the negative aspects such as dissension within the membership and the socialists' self-righteous attitude, and emphasized such words as "revolution," "international," "proletariat," "Marx," and "workers' paradise."

lative salaries were adequate to support a family,[8] it was possible for these men to be almost full-time organizers. When travel expenses became part of an M.L.A.'s indemnity, the SPC sent Hawthornthwaite and the others on many trips throughout the province, thus sparing the party the travel expense of paid organizers.

The electoral support of the mining areas acted as an elixir for the SPC, enabling the party to devote energies to other concerns, principally education. Although it classified itself as a political party, the SPC did not have as its primary goal the immediate attainment of political power. This, in line with Marx's teaching, would inevitably occur when the time was right. Meanwhile the party's proper function was to educate the working man concerning his class position, to teach him how the capitalist system "really" worked and to inculcate Marxian economics and politics. The obsession with education which typified most of the old-time SPC, SDP, FLP and ILP-SPC members was immediately apparent in the interviews held in connection with this study and in letters received in reply to requests for information. Many

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[8]The sessional indemnity in 1903 was $800 and in 1912, $1200. C.P.G., 1903 and 1912. During the same period the average annual wage in B. C. was approximately $450. Canada Year Book, years 1903 to 1912.

of the respondents could remember the value of literature sales for various periods much better than they could recall who ran in which election or how they fared at the polls.[9] The SPC viewed politics and the way in which society was ordered under the capitalist system as a zero sum game: every gain for one side was a loss for the other. Thus every convert made through the party's educational work was a loss forever to all other parties.

There is no doubt that a first-class educational job was done by the SPC. The energetic, committed Vancouver leadership produced hundreds of different pamphlets and published them by the thousands. They also wrote small booklets analyzing local events in detail,[10] and kept their Hastings Street office open seven days and seven nights a week for political discussion groups. In addition they taught Economics to thousands of people, and regularly filled theatres on Sunday evenings with audiences for

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[9]Ernest Hall, long-term NDP M.L.A. and presently Provincial Secretary in the cabinet of the B. C. government, reports that the same concern with education prevailed among old-time CCF members in Saskatchewan, many of whom could remember to a penny how much money was made on literature sales in the committee rooms, but were unable to remember whether their candidates won. Letter, June, 1968.

[10]For example, Jack Kavanaugh, The Vancouver Island Strike (B. C. Miner's Liberation League, Vancouver, n.d.); E. T. Kingsley, The Genesis and Evaluation of Slavery (Vancouver, n.d.)

speeches or debates between SPC members and labour, or between SPC members and business or government representatives. Outside Vancouver they maintained as many organizers in the field as the party could afford: For a number of years the party was able to have one or two full-time men on the speech-making and organizing route, and these were augmented by the M.L.A.s. By word of mouth and print the socialist message reached into every nook and cranny of the province where a working man might be found. Several correspondents and interviewees[11] reported to the author that during the first ten years of the SPC's existence it was impossible to go into the bunkhouse of a logging, mining or railroad operation without finding at least some of the men pouring over literature put out by the SPC, or socialist books published by the Charles Kerr Company and sold by the SPC through the Clarion.

The educational work of the SPC, however, was not translated immediately into votes for socialist candidates. Where revolutionary socialism was most relevant and had the greatest appeal was in the isolated mining, logging and construction camps around the province. These occupations have traditionally been filled with transient workers who,

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[11]For example, J. A. McDonald, Fred Faulkner, and W. W. Lefeaux.

in moving about the province in search of work, would often fail to get on the voter's list. Thus, even when won over to the SPC cause, these workers often did not represent votes. The SPC also claimed that the mines in the Kootenay area were closed down on some pretext or other during the period preceding an election so that the workers would have to move on in search for other employment.[12] Thus they would neither be able to exercise their vote in the constituency in which they were registered nor to vote in their new constituency, where they would not yet be registered. It was these same transient workers who would flock to the SPC meetings in Vancouver during the winter months of logging and construction camp shut-downs. Although the SPC was also very active with educational work in the Vancouver area, it was not to the Vancouver workers that they appealed. Until the period of World War I the Vancouver labour force did not perceive the capitalist industrial system as noxious as did workers in the isolated communities of the province. Vancouver's was a rapidly

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[12] I have not been able to verify this accusation by correlating mine shut-downs with elections, but it would seem to be an expensive way for a mining company to assure itself of sympathetic legislators in Victoria.

expanding society with constant upward mobility[13] which appeared to refute the Marxian teachings of class antagonisms.

Although the SPC did not reap the full fruit of its educational labours, its teachings were not lost to the socialist cause in B. C. In later years many of the converted and their offspring in all probability gave their votes to the FLP, ILP-SPC and finally to the CCF. Studies in other countries have shown the value of socialization in developing strong attachments to specific parties and ideologies through generations.[14] Lipset and Rokkan in their study of European party systems did not take their studies past the 1920's since they found, once the suffrage extensions was completed, that due to socialization "the

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[13]Data to verify this statement is not available, but a glance at the figures for growth of population, educational opportunities and small industry leaves little doubt as to its accuracy.

[14]See David Butler and Donald Stokes, Political Change in Britain: Forces Shaping Electoral Choice (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1969) pp. 62-64; 247-249, 263-265; Phillip Converse, "Of Time and Partisan Stability," Comparative Political Studies, Vol. 2, No. 2 (July, 1969) pp. 141 ff., 165-167; Kenneth Prewitt and Norman Nie, "Review Article: Election Studies of the Survey Research Center," British Journal of Political Science 1:4 (Oct., 1971), pp. 497-501.

party systems of the 1960's reflect, with few but significant changes, the cleavage structure of the 1920's."[15] Since these tendencies have been noted in such a wide variety of studies, it is reasonable to assume that similar attachments formed in B. C. There is no empirical proof, of course, that the supporters of the FLP, ILP-SPC and the CCF did so as a result of the educational work done in previous times by the SPC, but interviews with early CCF members verify that a large number of party members and supporters received their original socialist training through the efforts of the SPC[16] and they credit the "leftness" of B. C. politics largely to the work of the SPC. Many of the leading members of the FLP, ILP-SPC and CCF were former SPC members and their influence on party policy was great. These later parties also maintained the

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[15]S. M. Lipset and Stein Rokkan, "Cleavage Structures, Party Systems and Voter Alignments," S. M. Lipset and Stein Rokkan, eds., Party Systems and Voter Alignments (New York: Free Press, 1967), p. 50. Italics in the original. In B. C. the cleavage structure did not harden until the early 1930's, but since that time the CCF/NDP have consistently received about one third of the popular vote in provincial elections. Lipset's and Rokkan's findings seem to hold even in a population fed with a high percentage of immigration, such as B. C.'s.

[16]Dorothy Steeves, The Compassionate Rebel, also noted this. See particularly Chapter VI and VII.

SPC penchant for education in Marxist economics. For example, Wallace Lefeaux, a former SPC member, held classes in Marxian economics for hundreds of newcomers to the CCF when it was being launched in 1932 and 1933. There is no doubt that the SPC's greatest contribution to the Left in B. C. came through its unceasing educational activities, the effects of which were seen for years after the party itself had vanished as a meaningful entity.

In its relationship with labour the SPC was both a failure and a success. While it failed to get the majority of the working class, unionized or not, to support its policies, success came indirectly through the efforts of party members who worked themselves into leadership positions within the organized labour movement. Through their efforts, plus opportune circumstances, labour moved far enough to the left to enable socialist and labourites to work together, first through the FLP and later through the ILP-SPC and the CCF. The SPC castigated craft unions mercilessly as elitist and concerned only with their own well-being rather than that of the working class in general. The party did manage, however, to accept the industrial unions, although basically it believed that all unions, which confined themselves to

economic matters and did not go for the political jugular, were anathema to the class struggle. Nonetheless, SPC members occupied leadership positions in both craft and industrial unions. The machinists and typographers, the longshoremen and miners--all had SPC members on their executives for many years. The B. C. Federation of Labour was formed largely as a result of the inspiration and leadership of SPC members, and for the first ten years of the Federation's existence the labour movement was led by radicals educated to class consciousness via SPC-sponsored meetings, classes and reading materials. Though there are additional reasons why the labour movement in the West was more radical than that in the East,[17] the work of the SPC was probably the most important factor. Ormsby, Phillips, Robin[18] and other observers of the B. C. scene have all noted that B. C. labour has given more support to radical politics than has been the case with labour in other parts of Canada, but none of these writers has emphasized the importance of the Marxian socialists in this phenomenon. Students of American socialism have all stated

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[17]See Chapter I and II. Also Paul Phillips, No Power Greater, passim; Martin Robin, Radical Politics and Canadian Labour, passim.

[18]Margaret Ormsby, British Columbia, a History; Martin Robin, Radical Politics and Canadian Labour; Martin Robin, The Rush for Spoils; Paul Phillips, No Power Greater.

that the greatest failure of the Socialist Party of America was its inability to infiltrate the American labour movement, but as the present study has shown, the SPC was different. It did have a large influence with B. C. labour and although the party did not survive, its influence in the labour movement was felt for some years.

Although the SPC never pandered to labour unions, the party always lived in hope that union members would come to see the hopelessness of their position and throw their support behind the socialist cause. To ensure that the working man was not confused with what to do with his vote when he finally withdrew it from the Liberals or Conservatives, the SPC opposed the formation of other parties on the Left, especially labour parties, since these were viewed as pseudo-reform groups which would not help the working class over the long run. Thus SPC union members consistently fought to prevent labour from establishing its own party. Although they did not succeed in this goal, they were able to split union support for any party that was started. Prior to W. W. I there were two serious attempts by organized labour to set up a province-wide labour party: at Kamloops in 1902 and in Vancouver in 1906. In the former case, when the Provincial Progressive Party was formed, the intention was that it should be an

amalgam of all the radical groups in the province plus labour, but the socialists would have nothing to do with it since the platform was reform and not revolutionary. But it was not only socialist criticism of the PPP which caused it to fail. Labour itself was not ready to strike out on its own. The craft unions, particularly those with international affiliations, were not convinced that more could be gained by individual political action than by supporting candidates of any party which pledged itself to support labour's cause. They were swayed by Gomper's dictum, "Reward your friends." Though the industrial unions did favour political action, the members of the largest industrial union, the WFM (later replaced by the UMWA) supported the SPC. With such mixed support the PPP was doomed to failure. The socialists can be given greater credit for frustrating the 1906 attempt to set up a labour party than the attempt four years earlier. By weaning a large section of organized labour away from the TLCC's brainchild, they ensured that the party was born on paper only and was never active either politically or educationally. Thus the SPC was able to reserve the left of the political spectrum for itself. Though there is no evidence that the party gained any electoral advantage from this happy circumstance, one outcome was that left-wing politics were not watered down in B. C. Here the politics of the

Left were the politics of the SPC--i.e. revolutionary Marxist. By keeping a labour party out of the political arena, the SPC ensured that left-wing politics in B. C. would be radical politics, thus guaranteeing that there would be no compromise with the capitalist parties.

To the liberal observer the "no compromise" attitude appears wholly irrational for a political party, since the understood goal of a party is to gain support from as many sources as possible in order to form the government, or at least to influence government decision making. In these terms the policy of the SPC was certainly a failure. The party's main source of increased power would have come from the labour unions, but because the SPC would not accept the immediate economic goals of organized labour, labour in turn would not support the long-term political goals of the SPC. Thus immediate political power--which the party would have accepted but did not expect--was withheld from the SPC, but the long-term goal of ultimate power, which was supposed to come sooner through no compromise, also escaped them. "No compromise--no political trading" was obviously a complete failure as a policy. Or was it?

It can be argued that, had the SPC reached out to the unions in the early days of its existence, the Left in B. C. might have been represented in legislative halls much sooner than it was. But what is the evidence that the

votes of the working man would have gone to the SPC. Labour itself was unclear about how to obtain from government those measures which would help the working man. In the attempts to set up labour parties it was clear that some labourites believed that an independent political party dedicated to the cause of labour was the answer, but when these parties were set up they lacked both enthusiastic leadership and the workers' support for candidates who were run on a labour ticket. On the other hand were those in labour ranks who were committed to support any political candidate who pledged himself to labour's causes. The evidence seems to indicate that, had the SPC reached out for labour support, the result would not have been increased electoral success but only the watering down of socialist ideals. In the long run this would have meant a different kind of socialism in B. C. since, as has been argued, the work of the SPC was felt in the politics of the province long after the party ceased to exist. Compromise would probably have changed the SPC's early circumstances very little and rendered ultimately less effective the socialist input to the political culture of the province.

But the SPC could not escape compromise completely. The mere fact of getting elected meant that SPC legislators had to participate in the give and take of parliamentary

politics. The party ran candidates, not with the expectation of getting them elected, but for educational purposes. Then, when some of the candidates obtained seats, the SPC behaved in an irrational way. In the Clarion they gave prominence to the legislative accomplishments of their representatives, though these were in complete contradiction to the party platform of no immediate demands. Piecemeal repair of the present system would only delay the day of the ultimate revolution, said the SPC. But SPC M.L.A.'s could not go into the legislature and vote against every item of business which was put before them since they also had to look forward to re-election prospects.[19] Were they to follow the SPC platform explicitly, the only piece of legislation for which they could vote would be one putting control of all the means of production into the hands of the people, and this type of legislation, of course, would never appear. The SPC platform itself was contradictory: While calling for nothing but the ownership and democratic operation of the means of production by the people of the province, and railing against immediate reforms, it also pledged that

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[19]The only situation in which they could safely have voted against all legislation was one in which they knew that the electorate supported the SPC's long-term goals. This was not the situation in B. C. during the period of the SPC's existence.

SPC candidates, if elected, would support only legislation which was beneficial to the workingman. In later years this pledge was removed from the platform. Technically thereafter, the very first time an SPC legislator voted to support a piece of legislation, he should have been put out of the party for contravening the constitution and platform. But the entire thrust of the SPC as a political party was illogical. Actually the party should never have run candidates; elected representatives had no alternative but to compromise the party's stated position of no palliatives.

But the SPC faced other conundrums too. Although early in its existence the party had made valiant bids to "go national," throughout most of its history its efforts were limited to an attempt at "socialism in one province." It has often been argued[20] that the road to socialism in a federal system like Canada's is through the provinces, where it is not necessary to devise a program which will appeal to the divergent interests of all the various regions in the country. The argument continues that, once socialists

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[20]For example, Pierre E. Trudeau, "Practise and Theory of Federalism," Michael Oliver, ed., Social Purpose for Canada (Toronto, Toronto University Press, 1961), pp. 371-393.

gain control in a number of provinces, it will be easier for them to appeal on a national basis. There is much to be said for this line of reasoning if the kind of socialism in question is the social democracy of the NDP, but for a Marxist socialist party bent on revolutionary change during the early part of the century this tactic could not succeed. Had the SPC actually gained power in B. C. and proceeded to "take control of the means of production for the people," the federal government could immediately have put a stop to it through its power of disallowance. It is probable that, through lack of use, Ottawa no longer has the power to disallow provincial legislation, but during the first decade of this century Ottawa annually disallowed B. C.'s legislative attempts to limit Chinese immigration. It may be argued that in recent times constitutional practice has evolved to such an extent that the provinces can negotiate with Ottawa as autonomous political communities,[21] but during the period when the SPC was active a recalcitrant federal government with unlimited taxation powers could have made it almost impossible for a provincial Marxist

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[21]Richard Simeon, Federal-Provincial Diplomacy: The Making of Recent Policy in Canada (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972), takes this view.

government to find sufficient economic resources to carry out its platform. Had the SPC taken power and stood by its declared intention to remain within constitutional limits, it would not have been able to initiate its platform. It would have had either to become "revisionist" or to give up the notion of "socialism in one province" and work instead for Canada-wide socialism. During the 1905-1910 period particularly, when the SPC was predicting electoral success,[22] it might be expected that this problem would have been recognized and perhaps a new interpretation of Marx proposed to fit the particular situation in which B. C. Marxists found themselves. But one of the prime weaknesses of the SPC leadership was their failure to develop any interpretations of Marxism which would apply to the unique situations of British Columbia and of Canada as a whole.

The party did address itself to current affairs, but always in the manner of a polemical and not in such a way as to lead to the development of native Marxist elaborations. For example, British Columbia's "Asiatic problem"

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[22]It could be that the leadership never really believed in the immediate victory that they predicted, and their statements were only designed to encourage the membership.

was blamed on the capitalists because

> So long as there is competition there will be cheap labour in demand by the employers, and even if we did exclude them [the Chinese] the manufacturers will simply move their machines and factories to China, in many cases, and then ship the "over production" back to us....Socialism will abolish private profit making and thus solve this apparently vexing problem of cheap Oriental labour being dumped at our doors.[23]

After the anti-Oriental riots in Vancouver in 1907 the SPC claimed that the "political tools" of the capitalists were responsible for inflaming working class minds "with the idea that the Japanese, Hindu or Chinese workingman coming to Canada, comes as an enemy to the white worker," and thus the working man was being kept from the realization that it was the capitalists who brought in cheap labour to hold down wages.[24] This may or may not be true, but the fact is that the SPC did not consider adapting Marx's analysis to a province where a large percentage of the population growth was coming from immigration. In general the immigrant is enthusiastic about starting a new life, and though he may experience many anxieties about his new venture, discontent arising from a feeling of class consciousness due to his relationship to the means of

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[23] Western Socialist, Nov. 15, 1902.

[24] Clarion, Sept. 14, 1907.

production is generally not one of his initial concerns.

The party demonstrated a similar lack of imagination with regard to World War I and conscription.[25] Offering no analysis of the effect of the war on postwar society, the SPC limited its observations to saying that the war was further evidence of the "death throes" of capitalism. It had been started by capitalists in a struggle for markets, and since it was of no concern to the working man, he should resist conscription. (Like Lenin, the SPC argued that imperialism was an integral part of capitalism and wars would continue so long as the capitalist system was dominant.)

The failure of the SPC to develop Marxist theory suitable to B. C. circumstances or to recognize the correct timing for the revolution caused the party to lose credibility. During every period of unrest such as the anti-Oriental riots, the Nanaimo Coal Strike, conscription, the Bolshevik Revolution and the Winnipeg General Strike, the party would issue bold declarations that the revolution was on the verge of taking place. After a number of such predictions had failed to materialize, the SPC and Marxism

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[25]See Chapter VIII.

itself fell into disrepute.

It is possible to speculate on the probable fate of the SPC as an organization had it abandoned its "no compromise" position. Earlier in this chapter it was argued that this position was good from a Marxist point of view, since it kept Marxism as an ideal alive in B. C. But the stance was "hemlock" for the SPC itself. The party was unusual among social organizations in that it stood by its principles to the detriment of its own survival. Among most organized groups the preservation of the organization takes precedence over its formal goal, the survival instinct dictating that "it is better to live to fight again."[26] When the Liberal Party was rejected in the provincial election of 1912, a vacuum was created into which the SPC could have moved had survival taken precedence over the party's ultimate goal. In other crises too-conscription and World War I, for example--the SPC might have taken compromise action directed at prolong-

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[26]Roberto Michels, Political Parties, (Glencoe, Illinois, Free Press, 1949 [1915]) was one of the first to observe this phenomenon among left-wing parties, but it has also been noted among groups of the Right as well. In Alberta and B. C. the Social Credit parties quickly abandoned their Douglas monetary theories when they found it politically expedient to do so.

ing its life. If the preservation of the organization had become an end in itself, however, the goal of a Marxist revolution would have been impeded. But the road of "no compromise" did not allow for attainment of this goal either. This is the fate of those carriers of ideas who are out of tune with their time, whether ahead of their time or past it. Either they must modify their stance or suffer public scorn or indifference. History has shown that ideas take hold only when the social and political milieu is "ripe" for them. Since this was not the case in British Columbia, the SPC was a political failure. As an educational force, however, the influence of the Marxists extended well beyond the period of their activity. Consequently, an unbroken red thread runs through the history of the B. C. Left, from the Revolutionary Socialist Party of Canada, beyond the SPC through the FLP and ILP-SPC, and into the CCF.

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APPENDIX

Appendix 1

Platform and Constitution Of The Socialist Labor Party Of The Dominion of Canada

Amended Sept. 2, 1901

(Source: Angus McInnis Collection, U.B.C.)

PLATFORM

The Socialist Labor Party of Canada re-asserts the inalienable right of all men to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

We hold that the purpose of Government is to secure every citizen in the enjoyment of this right; but in the light of our social conditions we hold, furthermore, that no such right can be exercised under a system of economic inequality, essentially destructive of life, of liberty, and of happiness.

We hold that the true theory of politics is that the machinery of Government must be owned and controlled by the whole people; but in the light of our industrial development we hold, furthermore, that the true theory of economics is that the machinery of production must likewise belong to the people in common.

To the obvious fact that a despotic system of economics is the direct opposite of our democratic system of politics can plainly be traced the existence of a privileged class, the corruption of Government by that class, the alienation of public property, public franchises and public functions to that class, and the abject dependence of even the mightiest nations upon that class.

Again, through the perversion of democracy to the ends of plutocracy, labor is robbed of the wealth which it alone produces, is denied the means of self-employment, and, by frequent compulsory idleness in a system of wage slavery, is even deprived of the necessaries of life.

Human power and natural forces are thus waisted,

that the plutocracy may rule.

Ignorance and misery, with all their concomitant evils, are perpetuated that the people may be kept in bondage.

Science and invention are diverted from their humane purpose to the enslavement of women and children.

A professedly democratic franchise in Canada is made a mockery and a farce by a license system of cash deposits, property qualifications and other impediments to the free exercise of the ballot, and to the free nomination and election to public office in the Dominion of wage-working citizens.

Against such a system the Socialist Labor Party enters its protest, and reiterates its fundamental declaration that private property in the natural sources of production and in the instruments of labor is the obvious cause of all economic servitude and political dependence.

The time is fast coming when, in the natural course of social evolution, this system, through the destructive action its failures and crisis on the one hand, and the constructive tendencies of its trusts and other capitalistic combinations on the other hand, shall have worked out its own downfall.

We, therefore, call upon the wage workers of Canada, and upon all other honest citizens, to organize under the banner of the Socialist Labor Party into a classconscious body, aware of its rights and determined to conquer them by taking possession of the public powers; so that, held together by an indomitable spirit of solidarity under the most trying conditions of the present class struggle, we may put a summary end to that barbarous struggle by the abolition of classes, the restoration of the land and to all the means of production, transportation and distribution to the people as a collective body, and the substitution of the Co-operative Commonwealth for the present state of planless production, industrial war and social disorder; a commonwealth in which every worker shall have the free exercise and full benefit of his faculties, multiplied by all the modern factors of civilization.

RESOLUTIONS

While the above is the platform of the S.L.P.

of C. for parliamentary elections (Provincial and Dominion), it is in order for sections of the party to append to the platform for the purpose of Municipal and Local campaigns resolutions to embody demands for immediate relief from present conditions, it being distinctly understood that nothing can be appended to the platform that in any way conflicts with its revolutionary principles.

CONSTITUTION

I.---MANAGEMENT

The affairs of the Party are conducted by the National Executive Committee, the National Board of Appeals, the Local Sections, the National Conventions and by the general vote. At all elections a plurality vote is sufficient to elect; but an absolute majority is required to elect the seat of the National Executive Committee.

II.---SECTIONS

1. Seven persons may form a Section, provided they acknowledge the Platform and Constitution of the Socialist Labor Party, and do not hold office in a pure and simple trade union.*

(a) Membership of Sections must be made up of not less than two-thirds wage-workers.

(b) They shall report their organization as a Section, giving a list of members and remitting $1.00 for charter, with the dues for the current month, to the National Executive Committee.

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*The history of the defective organization of the working class under the constitution of pure and simple Unionism proves that the officers of such unions naturally tend to become corrupt tools of Capitalist politicians, abusing their official position in the union to divide the rank and file on election day, and leading them into one or other of the political shambles of Capitalism, hence the above clause to protect the S.L.P., the only class conscious political organization of the working class in Canada.

For attitude on Craft Organization, see resolutions at end of this Constitution, page 14.

(c) No applicant shall be admitted to membership without the presiding officer shall explain the significance of the class struggle to him and his pledging himself in writing to its recognition and support. A copy of the constitution and platform shall be handed to every new member.

(d) In subscribing to the platform and constitution, the members take upon themselves the obligation to assist each other to the extent of their ability in case of need.

(e) A member in good standing of one Section shall have the right to attend and speak at any meeting of another Section, but shall not be allowed to vote.

(f) Each Section shall send every six months a report of its numerical and financial condition, its progress and prospects, with the names and addresses of members in good standing and otherwise to the National Executive Committee.

2. The Section shall be the unit of organization.

3. It shall be the duty of Sections to provide rules governing their action, providing such do not conflict with the rules of the National organization.

4. At every meeting a chairman shall be elected, who shall observe the usual parliamentary rules.

5. Every Section shall elect from its members an Organizer, Financial Secretary, Corresponding Secretary, Treasurer and Literature Agent, and such additional officers as it deems proper. The Organizer shall conduct the correspondence with the National Executive Committee, and shall send an official report once every six months to said Committee; he shall send 5 cents of the monthly dues of each member to the National Executive Committee; he shall conduct the local organization and agitation.

6. Should a protest be entered against the admission to a Section of any applicant for membership, a two-thirds vote of all present at a regular business meeting shall be necessary to admit him.

7. Sections shall have jurisdiction over their

own members.

8. Every Local and Provincial Executive shall elect a Grievance Committee of three members, which shall investigate immediately all charges and difficulties in the Section, and report its findings.

9. All charges must be made in writing, whereupon the committee shall investigate the case and hear the witnesses of both parties. The same shall not be debated until the Grievance Committee has thoroughly investigated the case and reported to the Section. A detailed report of the investigation and findings shall be drawn and laid before the next business meeting of the Section. The Section shall then decide the matter, and its decision be entered on the minutes. The minutes and all papers concerning the investigation shall be delivered to the Secretary of the Section for safe keeping. The Secretary shall inform the accused in writing of such decision.

All members against whom charges are made shall retain their full constitutional rights pending investigation and decision of the Section.

All decisions of the Section may be appealed from to the National Board of Appeals.

10. After action taken in accord with Clauses 8 and 9, a majority of two-thirds of the members present at any business meeting shall be sufficient to expel any member; a simple majority shall be sufficient to suspend. Names of expelled members to be published in the official organ of the party.

11. No expelled or suspended member shall be accorded the privileges of a member of the Party by any Section or National Committee unless the bar of expulsion or suspension has been removed by the Section expelling or suspending such member, or by the National Board of Appeals.

12. Each Section shall hold a regular business meeting at least once a month.

13. In any Section which is divided into two or more branches, all dealings with the Party's National Executive shall be carried on by the Section Organizer.

14. Members who have withheld payment of their dues for more than three months shall be suspended from all rights until they have fulfilled their obligations.

15. A sick or unemployed member will be excused from payment of dues and his card marked by the Financial Secretary and reported to the National Executive Committee.

16. The result of every election within the Section must be communicated at once to the National Executive Committee.

17. In case of dissolution of any Section all property of the same must be delivered to the National Executive Committee.

18. No Section shall enter into any compromise with any other political party.

IV.---NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

1. The National Executive Committee shall be composed of seven members, to be elected by a general vote of the Section of the place selected as the seat of the same. The Committee shall elect from its members a Recording Secretary and a Treasurer.

The said Section shall elect the National Secretary, who shall also act as Secretary for International Affairs. He shall be a member of the Executive Committee, but with an advisory voice only. The names of the members of the National Executive Committee, together with the name of the National Secretary, shall be submitted to general party vote for confirmation.

It is the right and duty of the said Section to suspend any member of the National Executive Committee, including the National Secretary, who may be guilty of any neglect of duty; to elect a temporary successor in place of such suspended member, and to submit immediately such action with the reasons, therefore, to a general vote of the Party.

The said Section shall also elect an Auditing Committee, which shall have power at any time to inspect and audit the books and the funds on hand.

2. The members of the National Executive Committee shall be elected for the term of one year, but may be re-elected at the expiration thereof.

3. The National Executive Committee has for its duty:

(a) To carry out the resolutions of the National Convention and those adopted by general vote.

(b) To supervise the agitation throughout the country.

(c) To establish proper relations and communications with the Socialist parties of other countries.

(d) To make all necessary preparations for the National Convention, and make a full report to such convention on all party matters.

(e) To issue to the Sections semi-annually and in a sufficient number of copies a report of the Party's finances.

4. It is also the duty of the National Executive Committee:

(a) To receive and submit to a general vote propositions sent by any Section if endorsed by at least one other Section. If in the opinion of the National Executive Committee a proposition is not in the interest of the Party, it shall not be submitted to general vote, unless 20 per cent of all the Sections in good standing shall be subsequently re-endorse it; then the proposition shall be submitted to a general vote.

(b) To be represented in the National Convention by the National Secretary, who shall have no vote, but merely an advisory voice in the proceedings, and shall bear no other credentials.

(c) The National Executive Committee may make its own order of business.

(d) That the National Convention or general vote shall fix the compensation (if any) to be paid at any time to the executive officers of the Party.

5. Annually and in due time the National Executive Committee shall call upon the Sections to make nominations for not more than three delegates to represent the Party in the annual convention of the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance. The nominees shall be chosen by a general or referendum vote, and the ones receiving the highest vote shall be declared elected.

6. The National Executive Committee shall issue application cards to the Sections bearing a plain exposition of the principles of the Socialist Labor Party, and also of the duties required from the applicant for membership.

V.---NATIONAL BOARD OF APPEALS

1. The National Board of Appeals shall be composed of seven members, to be elected by a general vote of the membership of the city selected by the National Convention as the seat of such Board. No member of the Board shall be eligible to any office in the party during his or her term of office; nor shall the seat of the Board be the same as that of the National Executive Committee.

2. The duties of the Board shall be:

(a) To settle, upon appeal, all difficulties in the Party within four weeks after receiving the necessary evidence, the decisions to be at once communicated to the National Executive Committee; and to decide appeals in cases of expulsion and of suspension.

(b) From all decisions of the Board appeal may be taken to the general vote, or to the National Convention, provided a convention is to be held within six months. The Sections must report the result of their votes to the National Executive Committee within six weeks; within two additional weeks the National Executive Committee must publish the result in the official organ of the Party.

(c) The Secretary of the Board of Appeals shall render to the National Convention a full report of the transactions of the Board during its term of office.

(d) The Board shall declare vacant the seat of any of its members who shall have been absent from three consecutive meetings without sufficient excuse, and order the membership of its locality to fill the vacancy.

3. The Secretary of the Board may, or upon the demand of a majority of the members thereof, shall, call a session.

4. The members making a decision shall sign the same before transmittal to the National Executive Committee.

5. Duplicates of decisions and dissenting opinions shall be filed with the Secretary of the Board before transmittal to the National Executive Committee.

6. No person connected with a case shall be qualified to sit on it. If the issue is one in which the whole Section is interested, and such Section happens to be the one that chooses the Board, then the National Executive Committee shall appoint another Section to choose a Board of Appeals for that case.

VI.---CONVENTIONS

1. A National Convention of the Party shall be held every third year; but if three Sections in two different Provinces so demand, a general vote shall be taken as to holding a special convention. A general vote shall decide as to the place, but the date of a convention shall be fixed by the National Executive Committee.

2. A Section of seven members shall be entitled to one delegate, and to an additional delegate for every twenty-five additional members or major portion thereof.

Each delegate shall have only one vote.

3. The expenses of delegates shall be borne by the Sections sending them. The expenses of the National Convention shall be paid by the Party.

4. The National Convention shall frame the National Platform, decide the form of organization, select the seats of the National Executive Committee and Board of Appeals.

5. All acts of the Convention shall be submitted to the Sections for general vote.

VII.---DUES

1. The Sections shall levy upon each applicant for membership an initiation fee of 25 cents, to be applied to a six months' subscription to the official organ of the Party; also upon each of their members a monthly tax of five cents, to be paid monthly to the National Executive Committee.

2. The dues, shall be receipted for by stamps to be furnished by the National Executive Committee.

VIII.---THE PARTY PRESS

Pending such time as the Canadian Party shall be in a position to establish a National organ of its own, official organ of the S.L.P. of the U.S.A. shall be recognized and accepted as the official journal of the S.L.P. of Canada.

MISCELLANEOUS REGULATIONS

This Constitution may be amended by the National Convention or by a general vote. Within five weeks after the issuance of a call for a general vote relative to changing the constitution, amendments may be proposed by any Section to any proposition so laid before the Party, and such amendments shall then also be submitted to be voted on, together with the original proposition. The result of the vote must be reported to the National Executive Committee within ten weeks after the first call was issued.

The National Executive Committee shall forthwith transmit to the Sections a tabulated statement of the vote cast by each Section.

No Section or sub-division shall be distinguished by race or nationality.

All officers, boards or committees of the Party shall be subject to removal by their constituents. (See Art. IV., Sec. I, as to the National Executive Committee.)

CANDIDATES FOR PUBLIC OFFICE

No person shall be nominated as a candidate for any public office unless he has been a member of the Party for at least three months, and has identified himself with the Party by active participation in its work.

No candidate of this Party for any public office shall be permitted to accept any nomination or endorsement from any other political party.

Any member of the Socialist Labor Party accepting a nomination of the Party shall at once place in the hands of the Secretary of the Section of which he is a member, his resignation, dated blank, of the office for which he is so nominated, and authorize the Section to have it filed with the proper authorities in case of his election and failure to stand squarely on the Party's platform and

to advocate its principles.

All former provisions conflicting with this constitution are rescinded.

RE CRAFT ORGANIZATION

Whereas, the absurdity and inefficiency of the old style, pure and simple form of trade unionism has been demonstrated by its divisions at the ballot-box, and by the corrupt associations of its officials with capitalist political jobbery, we recommend to all workers to join the organization of their craft in the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance, a trade union movement which teaches the political solidarity of all wage workers at the ballot box.

(Source: Angus McInnis Collection, U.B.C.)

Appendix 2

UNITED SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

(Printed in the Independent, May 26, 1900)

Workers, vote for the principles and resolutions of the United Socialist Labor Party at the Provincial Election. Candidate Will McClain, president of the International Association of Machinists in this city. He is a man of the people, by the people and for the people. MANIFESTO.

In submitting this platform and demands to you... we point to the fact that every nominee has signed his own resignation, blank date. This enables the United Socialist Labor Party to withdraw any of its candidates if elected as soon as they do not live and act according to the tactics and principles of the USLP.

The continuous war between the capital and labor is fiercer every year. We call upon you to side with the representatives of the class-conscious proletariat of the world and this city and elect them to office, for they will work in your interests...and against the interest of your oppressors, the capitalist class...it is better to vote for the thing you want and not get it than to vote for something you do not want and get it. Vote for principles upheld by the right men.

"The ethics of socialism are identical with the ethics of Christianity"--Encyclopedia Britannica.

"Socialism - a theory of society that advocates a more precise, orderly and harmonious arrangement of the social relations of mankind than that which has hitherto prevailed."--Webster.

"Socialism is simply applied Christianity, the Golden Rule applied to everyday life."--Professor Ely.

"Socialism - The answer of socialism to the capitalist is that society can do without him just as society now does without the slave owner and the feudal lord, both which were formerly regarded as necessary to the well-being and even the very existence of society."--Professor W. Clark.

"Socialism being the product of social evolution, the only danger lies in obstructing it."--Reverend F.M. Sprague.

WHAT SOCIALISTS WANT

Every human being to be well housed, clothed, fed and educated; the adoption of a social and industrial system that will put an end to profit, interest, rent and all forms of usury; land, water machinery--all the means of production and distribution and all the available forces of nature to be owned by and operated for the benefit of the whole people; the gradual elimination and finally the abolition of all usele-s and unproductive toil; the work days to be as short as the needs of the people will permit--about four hours per day will possibly do it.

WORKINGMEN

You would like steady work, but you vote yourselves out of a job. You would like short hours but you vote for long hours to toil. You would like to buy coal at $1.50 per ton but you vote to pay $6.50.... The United States census show that the average wealth produced by each worker in our manufacturing establishments is $2,504 per year. You vote to get only a small part of it! Vote to have it all.

PLATFORM

The United Socialist Labor Party of B.C. reasserts the inalienable right of all men to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

We hold that the purpose of the Government is to secure every citizen in the enjoyment of that right; but in the light of our social conditions, we hold, furthermore, that no such right can be exercised under a system of economic inequality essentially destructive of life, of liberty and of happiness.

We hold that the true theory of politics is that the machinery of Government must be owned and controlled by the whole people, but in true theory of economics is that the machinery of production must likewise belong to the people in common.

To the obvious fact that a despotic system of economics is the direct opposite of our democratic system of politics, can plainly be traced the existence of a privileged class, the corruption of Government by that class, the alienation of public property, public franchises and public functions to that class, and the abject

dependence of even the mightiest nations to that class.

Again through the perversion of democracy to the ends of plutocracy, labor is robbed of the wealth which it alone produces, is denied the means of self-employment, and by frequent compulsory idleness in a system of wage slavery, is even deprived of the necessities of life.

Human power and natural forces are thus wasted, that the plutocracy may rule.

Ignorance and misery, with all their concomitant evils are perpetuated that the people might be kept in bondage. Science and invention are diverted from their humane purpose to the enslavement of women and children

Against such a system, the United Socialist Labor Party enters its protest, and reiterates its fundamental declaration that private property in the natural sources of production and in the instruments of labor is the obvious cause of an economic servitude and political dependence.

The time is fast coming when, in the natural course of social evolution, this system, through the destructive action of its failures and crises on the one hand, and the constructive tendencies of its trusts and other capitalistic combinations on the other hand shall have worked out its own downfall.

We, therefore, call upon the wage honest citizens, to organize under the banner of the United Socialist Labor Party into a class-conscious body aware of its rights and determined to conquer them by taking possession of the public powers, so that, held together by an indomitable spirit of solidarity under the most trying conditions of the present class struggle we may put a summary end to that barbarous struggle by the abolition of classes, the restoration of the land and of all the means of production, transportation and distribution to the people as a collective body, and the substitution of the Co-operative Commonwealth for the present state of planless production, industrial war and social disorder; a commonwealth in which every worker shall have the free exercise and full benefit of his faculties, multiplied by all the modern factors of civilization.

RESOLUTIONS

With a view to immediate improvement in the conditions of labor we present the following demands:

1. Reduction of the hours of labor in proportion to the progress of production.

2. The Dominion to obtain possession of the mines, railroads, canals, telegraphs, telephones and all other means of public transportation and communication; the employees to operate the same co-operatively under the control of the Federal government and to elect their own superintendent and foremen, and that no employee shall be discharged for political reasons.

3. The Provinces and municipalities to obtain possession of local railroads, ferries, water works, gas works, electric plants and all industries requiring Provincial and municipal franchise, the employees to operate the same co-operatively under control of the Provincial and Municipal administrations and to elect their own superintendents and foremen, and that no employee shall be discharged for political reasons.

4. The public lands to be declared inalienable. Revocation of all land grants to co-operations or individuals where the conditions of the grants have not been compiled with.

5. The Dominion to have the exclusive right to issue money.

6. Federal legislation providing for the scientific management of forests and waterways, and prohibiting the waste of the natural resources of the country.

7. Inventions to be free to all; the inventors to be renumerated by the nation.

8. Progressive income tax and tax on inheritances; the smaller incomes to be exempt.

9. School education of all children under fourteen years of age to be compulsory, free and accessible to all by public assistance in meals, clothing, books, etc., where necessary.

10. Repeal of all pauper, tramp, conspiracy and sumptuary laws. Unabridged right of combination.

11. Prohibition of the employment of children under fourteen years of age, prohibition of the employment of women and young persons in occupations detrimental to health or morality. Abolition of the convict labor contract system.

12. Employment of the unemployed by the public authorities (country, city, provincial and national).

13. All wages to be paid in lawful money of the Dominion of Canada. Equalization of women's wages with those of men where equal services are performed.

14. Laws for the protection of life and limb in all occupations and an efficient employers' liability law.

15. The people to have the right to propose laws and to vote upon all measures of importance, according to the initiative and referendum principle.

16. Abolition of the veto power of the Executive (national, provincial and municipal) wherever it exists.

17. Abolition of the Senate and all upper legislative chambers.

18. Municipal self-government, the abolition of the system of money deposits and property qualifications for candidates for parliamentary and municipal legislatures.

19. Direct vote and secret ballots in all elections. Universal and equal right of suffrage. Election days to be legal holidays. The principal of proportional representation to be introduced.

20. All public officers to be subject to recall by their respective constituencies.

21. Uniform civil and criminal law throughout the Dominion. Administration of justice to be free of charge. Abolition of corporal and capital punishment.

THE SOCIALIST LABOR CANDIDATE

The nomination paper of Mr. Will McClain, engineer and machinist, together with the deposit of $200 was placed in the hands of the Returning Officer, Mr. Beattie, Wednesday afternoon at 5 o'clock.

The committee rooms of the United Socialist Labor Party were opened on Tuesday night last, at 32 Powell Street, a large attendance of members and friends being present.... The Committee on Organization was elected, and the membership have started to work in good shape to try and secure the return of their candidate, who is President of the International Machinists' Union of this City, and

Statistician to the Trades and Labor Council.

(Additional plank added to USLP platform printed in Independent June 2, 1900).

22. The United Socialist Labor Party of B.C. would always stand for truth and justice and liberty. A true democracy of happy workers, freed from the abuse of greedy corporations, inhuman hirelings and task masters of unscrupulous corporations, who are bringing thousands of Japs and Chinese to the Province of British Columbia to take the places of the white British workers of this fair province, and in so doing are simply taking the bread and butter out of the mouths of the wives and children of the workers of this city and province. Therefore, we appeal to the workers of this city to help us in our noble fight against all unscrupulous hirelings of the capitalist class and in doing this you are helping to protect your wives and families, homes and firesides. Better wages, shorter hours of labor and a minimum wage of $2.50 a day for all unskilled labor.

Appendix 3

B.C. SOCIALIST PARTY

Statement of principles adopted at Vancouver, October 3rd, 1901.

(Printed in the Lardeau Eagle, Feb. 20, 1902)

The Socialist Party of B.C., in convention assembled, reaffirms its adherence to the principles of International Socialism, and declares its aim to be the organization of the working class, and those in sympathy with it, into a political party, with the object of conquering the powers of government and using them for the purpose of transforming the present system of private ownership of the means of production and distribution into collective ownership by the entire people.

Formerly the tools of production were simple and owned by the individual worker. Today the machine, which is an improved and more developed tool of production, is owned by the capitalists and not by the workers. This ownership enables the capitalists to control the product and keep the workers dependent upon them.

Private ownership of the means of production and distribution is responsible for the ever increasing uncertainty of livelihood and poverty and misery of the working class, and it divides society in two hostile classes--the capitalists and wage-workers. The once powerful middle class is rapidly disappearing in the mill of competition. The struggle is now between the capitalist class and the working class. The possession of the means of livelihood gives to the capitalists the control of the government, the press, the pulpit and schools, and enables them to reduce the working men to a state of intellectual, physical and social inferiority, political subservience and virtual slavery.

The economic interests of the capitalist class dominate our entire social system; the lives of the working class are recklessly sacrificed for profit, wars are fomented between nations, indiscriminate slaughter is encouraged and the destruction of whole races is sanctioned in order that the capitalists may extend their commercial dominion abroad and enhance their supremacy at home.

But the same economic causes which developed capitalism are leading to socialism, which will abolish both the capitalist class and the class of wageworkers. And the active force in bringing about this new and higher

order of society is the working class. All other classes, despite their apparent or actual conflicts, are alike interested in the upholding of the system of private ownership of the instruments of wealth production. The Liberal, Conservative, the bourgeois Public Ownership parties, and all other parties which do not stand for the complete overthrow of the capitalist system of production, are alike political representatives of the capitalist class.

The workers can most effectively act as a class in their struggle against the collective powers of capitalism, by constituting themselves into a political party, distinct from and opposed to all parties formed by the propertied classes.

While we declare that the development of economic conditions tends to the overthrow of the capitalist system, we recognize that the time and manner of the transition of Socialism also depend upon the stage of development reached by the proletariat. We, therefore, consider it of the utmost importance for the Socialist party to support all active efforts of the working class to better its condition and to elect Socialists to political offices, in order to facilitate to attainment of the end.

PLATFORM

General Demands

1. The public ownership of all industries controlled by monopolies, trusts, and combines, and ultimately of all the means of production, distribution, and exchange. No part of the revenue of such industries to be applied to the reduction of taxes on property, but to be applied wholly to the increase of wages and shortening of the hours of labor of the employees, to the improvement of the service, and to diminishing rates to the consumers.

2. The progressive reduction of the hours of labor and the increase of wages in order to decrease the share of the capitalist and increase the share of the worker in the product of labor.

3. The establishment of a national currency and government banking system; all fire and life insurance to be also operated by the government in the interests of the whole people.

4. The inauguration of a system of public industries; public credit to be used for that purpose in order that the workers be secured the full product of their labor.

5. Abolition of the senate, establishment of the initiative and referendum, proportional representation, and right of recall of representatives by their constituents.

Provincial Demands

1. Abolition of financial and property qualifications for candidates and electors at provincial and municipal elections.

2. The education of all children up to the age of sixteen years to be free, secular and compulsory. Text books, meals, and clothing to be supplied out of the public funds when necessary.

3. Municipalization and public control of the liquor traffic.

4. A nine-hour work law fixing wages at not less than $2 per day, thereby counteracting evil effects of Oriental emigration into this province.

5. Reduction of hours of labor to 44 per week.

6. Scientific and practical management of fisheries, forests, and waterways in best interest of the producers.

7. Government operation of coal mines and immediate construction and operation of smelters, refineries, and saw mills for benefit of the workers.

8. Abolition of poll and personal property tax, the deficit to be met by an increased tax on land values.

9. No more bonuses of either land or money to individuals or private corporations.

10. Graduated land tax similar to law in operation in New Zealand.

11. Government hospitals throughout the province, and free medical attendance to all needing such.

But in advocating these measures as steps in the overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of the

Co-operative Commonwealth, we caution the workers against such public ownership movements as are an attempt of the capitalist class to secure government control of public utilities for the purpose of obtaining greater security in the exploitation of other industries and not for the amelioration of the condition of the working class. It must be remembered that there is a vast difference between "government" and "public" ownership. While the corporations own the senate and parliament we will have the "government ownership", and not until the people own and control the legislatures can we have true "public" ownership.

Constitution

Sec. I. This organization shall be known as the "Socialist Party of B.C."

Sec. II. The party shall be organized as follows: First, local branches of not less than five members; second, an executive board of seven members, these to be elected at annual convention of delegates from all Locals. At least four of the Executive shall be chosen from plact of headquarters, and known as resident members. The non-resident members of the Executive shall not be required to be present at all meetings, but shall be consulted and kept advised of all the proceedings of the board.

Sec. III. The executive board shall have supervision of the party organization. It shall have power to hire and appoint organizers, grant to and revoke charters of Locals, and adopt such measures as may be required to carry out objects of organization. The executive board shall be required to make a report of its meetings through its official organ, "The Lardeau Eagle".

Sec. IV. Any member of the executive board may be recalled by an imperative mandate of the membership of the Party; his successor to be elected by the initiative and referendum. A majority of those members voting being necessary to elect.

Sec. V. The officers of the Executive shall be: Chairman, Treasurer, Literary Agent, Organizer, and Secretary. They shall be elected at annual conventions.

Sec. VI. The duties of the secretary shall be to act as corresponding and recording secretary, and to receive the provincial dues from secretaries of local branches. The treasurer shall take charge of the funds of

the Party, and furnish a bond to amount required by the executive board. The literary agent shall take charge of the literary propaganda of the Party. The organizer shall organize new branches, and build up existing branches, and shall be subject to direction of the executive board.

Sec. VII. A Party convention may be called any time, at the request of five branches.

Sec. VIII. Any reputable person who subscribes to the principles of the Socialist Party of B.C., and severs all connection with the old political parties, shall be eligible for membership.

Sec. IX. The dues of the members shall be fixed by each Local, but shall be sufficient to pay ten cents per month, for each member, to the executive board.

Sec. X. A local branch shall consist of at least five members, and shall hold at least one meeting per month. It shall make its own rules and by-laws so long as they do not conflict with the provincial constitution.

Sec. XI. Any person subscribing to our principles and platform in a locality where there is no local branch may become a member at large by sending his application to the provincial secretary and complying with the constitution.

Sec. XII. All questions not provided for in this constitution shall be dealt with by the executive board, subject to a referendum vote.

Sec. XIII. The Executive shall submit all questions to a referendum vote upon the request of three Locals.

Sec. XIV. Under no circumstances shall the Socialist Party of B.C. fuse or act with any political party, unless they have substantially the same principles as our party.

Sec. XV. This constitution may be amended by a referendum vote of the membership, or at the annual provincial convention of the Party.

Sec. XVI. The annual convention shall be called by the executive some time before November of each year. Every Local in good standing shall be entitled to send one delegate, and one additional delegate for each 20 members, or major fraction of the same paying dues to executive.

Appendix 4

PLATFORM OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

(Printed in Western Clarion, June 2, 1903, adopted in convention Oct. 3, 1902. Also in Western Socialist, Oct. 18, 1902.)

We, the Socialist Party of British Columbia, in convention assembled affirm our allegiance to and support the principles and program of the international revolutionary working class.

Labor produces all wealth and to labor it should justly belong. To the owner of the means of wealth production belongs the product of labor. The capitalist system is based upon private or capitalist ownership of the means of wealth production, therefore, all the products of labor belongs to the capitalist. The capitalist is master; the workingman is slave.

So long as the capitalist remains in possession of the reins of government all the powers of the state will be used to protect and defend their property rights in the means of wealth production and their control of the products of labor.

The capitalist system gives to the capitalist an ever swelling stream of profits; and to the worker an ever increasing measure of misery and degradation.

The interests of the working class lies [sic] in the direction of setting itself free from capitalistic exploitation by the abolition of the wage system. To accomplish this necessitates the transformation of capitalist property in the means of wealth production into collective or working class property.

The irrepressible conflict of interests between the capitalist and the worker is rapidly culminating in a struggle for possession of the powers of government, the capitalist to hold; the worker to secure it out by political action. This is the class struggle.

Therefore, we call upon all wage-earners to organize under the banner of the Socialist Party of B.C. with the object of conquering the public powers for the purpose of setting up and enforcing the economic program of the working class, as follows:

1) The transformation as rapidly as possible of capitalist property in the means of wealth production (natural resources, factories, mills, railways, etc.,) into the collective property of the working class.

2) Thorough and democratic organization and management of industry by the workers.

3) The establishment as speedily as possible of production for use in lieu of production for profit.

4) The Socialist Party, when in office, shall always and everywhere, until the present system is utterly abolished, make the answer to this question its guiding rule of conduct: Will this legislation advance the interests of the working class and aid the worker in their class struggle against capitalism? If it does, the Socialist Party is for it. If it does not, the Socialist Party is absolutely opposed to it.

5) In accordance with this principle the Socialist Party pledges itself to conduct all the public affairs placed in its hands in such a manner as to promote the interests of the working class alone.

This same Platform was adopted by the Socialist Party of Canada when organized in December 1904.

Appendix 5

CONSTITUTION OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA - 1903

(Printed in Western Clarion, Nov. 5, 1903)

Management:

The affairs of the Party are conducted by the Provincial Executive Committee, local organizations, party conventions and general vote.

Party law shall become effective only when approved by a majority of the general vote.

Locals:

The local organization of the Party shall conform to the provincial electoral ridings, each Local taking the name of its respective riding, the different points in such riding to be organized as branches of such Local. But one charter shall be issued to a riding, and the various branches in such riding shall work together through an executive committee.

Five or more persons may form a Local in any riding where no Local exists, provided they acknowledge the platform and constitution of the party, and subscribe to its pledge of membership. They shall report their organization to the provincial executive committee and with the approval of such committee a charter shall be issued. The Local shall comply with the requirements of the provincial executive committee as to financial and other reports.

Application for charter must be made upon form provided by the provincial executive committee. In addition to dues for current month, each application for charter must be accompanied by a fee of $5 to cover expense of all necessary supplies, including charter, minute book, financial books, warrants, vouchers, membership cards, etc.

The Local shall be the unit of organization. It shall at every meeting elect a new chairman, who shall observe the usual rules of parliamentary procedure.

The Local shall elect from its membership an organizer, secretary, recording secretary, treasurer, and such other officers as it deems necessary.

The organizer shall conduct the work of agitation and organization.

....

The officers of the Local shall be elected for the term of one year, but may be re-elected at expiration thereof. The election of officers shall take place during the month of December, term of office to be on first of January following.

Every applicant for membership shall fill out and sign an application as follows:

I, the undersigned, hereby apply for membership in ....Local....S.P. of B.C.

I recognize the class struggle between the capitalist class and the working class to be a struggle for political supremacy, i.e., possession of the reins of government and which necessitates the organization of the workers into a political party distinct from and opposed to all parties of the capitalist class.

If admitted to membership I hereby agree to maintain or enter into no relations with any other political party, and pledge myself to support my voice, vote and all other legitimate means the ticket and programme of the S.P. of B.C. only.

_____ Applicant

_____ Occupation

_____ Age

_____ Address

_____ Citizen

Admitted to Local ..... 19.... Chairman, Recording Secretary

No person under the age of eighteen years shall be admitted to membership.

Should a protest be entered against the admission to a Local of any applicant for membership, a two-thirds vote of all present at a regular business meeting shall be necessary to admit him.

Locals shall have jurisdiction over their own members.

Any violation of the pledge for membership, or

financial obligation to the Party shall be considered warrant for expulsion. A two-thirds majority of the members present at any business meeting of the Local shall be sufficient to expel. A simple majority shall be sufficient to suspend.

All expulsions and suspensions shall be at once reported to the provincial executive committee.

No expelled or suspended member shall be accorded the privileges of a member of the Party, by any branch, Local or committee, unless the bar of expulsion or suspension has been removed by the Local expelling or suspending such member.

The Local shall collect from its members a monthly tax of at least ten cents which shall be receipted for by stamps purchased from the provincial executive committee at ten cents each, and in no other manner. The secretary shall affix stamp to member's card and cancel same by writing amount paid across face of stamp in ink over his initials.

Members who have withheld payments of dues for more than two months shall be suspended from all rights until they have fulfilled their obligations. To reinstate themselves by payment of such back dues they must first obtain permission for a regular business meeting of the Local.

Sick or unemployed members may be excused from payment of dues upon application to a regular business meeting of the Local.

The Local shall hold at least one business meeting each month.

Special meetings shall be called only at the request of five or more members. Such requests shall be made in writing to the secretary who shall notify all members of such special meetings.

The result of every election of officers within the Local must be communicated at once to the provincial executive committee.

In case of dissolution of any Local all property of the same must be delivered to the provincial executive committee.

No Local shall enter into any compromise with any other political party, nor furnish financial aid to

any other organization.

Branches:

Five or more persons in any riding where a Local already exists may with the consent of Local be organized as a branch thereof, by first complying with Section 10, Article 2 (application for membership above) of the provincial constitution.

The branch shall elect a recording secretary, secretary and treasurer and such other officers as it deems necessary, whose duties shall be as above.

The branch shall comply with all requirements of the Local as to reports, etc. and adhere as closely as possible to the general methods of procedure as laid down in the provincial constitution.

Provincial Executive Committee:

The provincial executive committee shall be composed of seven members to be elected by a general vote of the membership of the riding wherein is located the seat of the committee. The committee shall elect from its membership a recording secretary, secretary, treasurer, and such other officers as it deems necessary. The duties of the recording secretary and secretary and treasurer shall be same as above. It shall be the duty of the Local electing the committee to suspend any member thereof who may be guilty of neglect of duty, to elect a temporary successor in place of such suspended member, and to submit such action, with reasons thereof, to a general vote of the Party.

Any Local outside of seat of committee may add to membership of committee by sending one delegate whenever it desires to do so.

The member of the provincial executive committee shall be elected for the term of one year but may be re-elected at the expiration thereof. The election shall take place between November 1st and December 15th of each year and term of office to begin with January 1st following. The first such election under these articles shall take place in 1904.

The provincial executive committee has for its duty:

(a) to carry out the wishes of the Party as expressed in its platform constitution and

by general vote.

(b) to supervise the agitation throughout the province.

(c) to establish and maintain proper relations and communications with the Socialist parties of other countries.

(d) to receive and submit to a general vote propositions sent from any Local if endorsed by at least two other locals.

(e) to make all necessary preparations for the provincial convention and make a full report to such convention on all party matters.

(f) to issue to the Locals semi-annual reports of the Party finances.

(g) to be represented in the provincial convention by one of its members who shall have no vote but merely an advisory voice in the proceedings and shall bear no other credentials.

(h) to formulate and adopt a uniform system of financial and other records, including secretary's books, vouchers, reports, application blanks, etc. and to furnish all such supplies to Locals at actual cost of same.

(i) to employ organizers to further the interest of the Party, the committee to be held strictly responsible for the qualification and efficiency of such.

The provincial executive committee may compensate its officers according to the labor performed by them, from the treasury of the Party.

No member of the provincial executive committee shall hold any other office or position on committee in the Party.

Conventions:

A provincial convention shall be held between August 15th and October 15th of each year. A general vote shall decide as to the place, but the provincial executive committee shall decide as to the date of the convention.

Each Local shall be entitled to send one delegate for each 20 members or major portion thereof in

good standing. Delegates must be members of the Local they are elected to represent. Each delegate shall have but one vote.

The provincial convention shall frame the party platform, decide the form of organization, select the seat of the provincial executive committee and investigate and decide all difficulties within the Party.

All acts of the convention shall be submitted to the Locals for general vote.

Miscellaneous:

All officers, boards and committees of the Party shall be subject to removal by their constituents.

A copy of the constitution and platform shall be handed to every new member.

A member in good standing of one Local shall have the right to attend and speak at any meeting of another Local, but shall not be allowed to vote.

No person shall be nominated as candidate for any public office unless he has been a member of the Party for at least six months and has identified himself with the Party by active participation in its work.

No candidate of the Party for any public office shall be permitted to accept any nomination or endorsement from any other political party.

Any violation of the provisions of the constitution by a Local shall be deemed sufficient warrant to empower the executive committee to revoke its charter.

....

The accounts of the provincial executive committee shall be audited at the end of each half year. The Local electing provincial executive committee shall provide auditors. The finds of such audit shall be embodied in the semi-annual report of the provincial executive committee.

Each Local shall provide for the auditing of its accounts semi-annually. All accounts and records of the Party shall be open to inspection by any member in good standing upon due notice to the officer in charge.

This constitution to go into effect on January 1st, 1904.

Constitution amended to form basis of Socialist Party of Canada (Western Clarion, January 28, 1905).

Appendix 6

CONSTITUTION

Social-Democratic Party of Canada

(Source: Angus McInnis Collection, U.B.C.)

Adopted in Unity Convention at Port Arthur, Ontario, December 30 and 31, 1911. Endorsed by Party Referendum, March 31, 1912. Amended by Party Referendum, May 31, 1912. (Dominion Executive Committee, Social-Democratic Party of Canada, Berlin, Ontario).

ARTICLE I.--MANAGEMENT

The management of the Social-Democratic Party of Canada shall be conducted by a Dominion Executive Committee, a Provincial Executive Committee, Local Organizations. Conventions and Referendum Vote.

ARTICLE II.--LOCALS

Section 1.--Five or more persons may form a local provided they acknowledge the platform and constitution and subscribe to its pledge of membership. Subject to the approval of the provincial executive (where one exists, and in the absence of such committee, to the Dominion Executive Committee) a charter shall be issued when accompanied with the current month's dues and a fee of $3.00.

Section 2.--No more than one charter shall be issued in any language in any city or town without the approval of those locals already existing.

Section 3.--Each local shall receive a name and a number. Subject to the constitution, complete local autonomy shall prevail.

Section 4.--Every applicant for membership shall fill out and sign an application form as follows:

I, the undersigned, hereby apply for membership in Local _____, Province of _____, Social-Democratic Party of Canada. I subscribe to the platform of principles as laid down by the Social-Democratic Party of Canada, and if admitted to membership, agree to be governed by the constitution of the Party.

Name of Applicant _____

Address _____

Occupation _____

Age _____

Are you a voter at present _____

Admitted to Local _____

_____ Chairman.

_____ Rec. Sec.

Section 5.--Each member shall pay such monthly tax as the Local may decide which shall be receipted for by stamps purchased from the Provincial Executive Committee where one exists, and in the absence of such committee, at 10¢ each, and initialed by the Secretary of the Local. The balance shall go into the local treasury.

Section 6.--Any member sixty (60) days in arrears of dues or assessments shall be considered in bad standing.

Section 7.--Any violation of the pledge of membership or constitution shall be considered warrant for suspension or expulsion. It shall require a majority vote of all the members in good standing at a special meeting called for consideration of any charge preferred against any member. Any member shall have the right to appeal against a decision of the local to the provincial executive committee, thence to a referendum vote of the province. All suspensions and expulsions shall be reported to the provincial executive committee, and no local of the party shall admit to its membership such suspended or expelled members until the ban of suspension or expulsion has been removed.

Section 8.--Secretaries of Locals shall make quarterly reports within fifteen (15) days (viz: on January 15, April 15, July 15 and October 15) to the provincial executive committee (where one exists, and in the absence of such committee, to the Dominion Executive Committee).

Section 9.--In case of dissolution of any local, all property must be delivered to the Provincial Executive Committee.

Section 10.--All locals in one city or constituency shall take joint action in all manners of mutual interest. When approved of by a majority of locals of such city or constituency, the city or district convention shall be held for the nomination of a candidate. Any local may initiate a district referendum.

Section 11.--Any city or constituency may elect a central committee to deal with matters of interest to such city or constituency. The expense so incurred to be borne by the locals concerned.

ARTICLE III.--PROVINCIAL ORGANIZATIONS

Section 1.--Not less than five locals in one province may form a provincial organization for the purpose of supervising and directing the organization in that province.

Section 2.--Any local in unorganized provinces may initiate, through the Dominion Executive Committee, a referendum to be submitted to the locals in that province as to the desirability of forming a provincial organization. The executive committee upon receiving a favorable reply from the majority of the locals shall arrange for the first provincial convention and otherwise help in the formation of the provincial organization. The convention shall apply for a provincial charter, determine the form of organization, and elect provincial officers.

Section 3.--The provincial organization shall have complete autonomy in all matters of a strictly provincial character, and shall speak and act in harmony with the constitution and platform of the Social Democratic Party of Canada.

Section 4.--The provincial organizations shall secure charters, and supplies for the affiliated locals from the Dominion Executive Committee. Stamps shall be issued to the provincial organizations at the cost of 5¢ each, and stamps shall be issued by the Provincial organizations to locals at 10¢ each.

ARTICLE IV.--DOMINION EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

(That the representation on and seat of the Dominion Executive Committee be left until the first general convention. In the meantime the work of the Dominion Executive Committee be left to the General Executive Committee of the Canadian Socialist Federation, Berlin, Ont.)

Section 1.--The duties of the Dominion Executive Committee shall be to conduct the current affairs of the party, such as the issuing of charters, furnishing stamps, and general supplies to Provincial Executive Committees, and Locals in unorganized territories; to supervise agitation throughout the Dominion, to accept all propositions for referendum, and when such propositions are endorsed by three or more locals, and are in harmony with the constitutional provision to submit same to general vote of Party. To submit report to Dominion Convention and to formulate the rules and order of business of the Dominion Convention of Party, not otherwise provided for by the constitution, subject to adoption or amendments by the convention. To issue to the locals semi-annually, and in sufficient number, copies of the Party's finances.

Section 2.--The Dominion Executive Committee shall furnish due stamps to the Provincial Executive Committees at five cents each, and to locals in unorganized territory at ten cents, and to furnish all necessary supplies at actual cost.

Section 3.--The Dominion Executive Committee may compensate its officers according to the labor performed by them from the treasury of the party.

Section 4.--The Dominion Executive Committee shall be empowered to levy assessments, subject to referendum.

ARTICLE V.--CONVENTIONS

Section 1.--A general vote of the membership of the party shall be taken each year, between March 1st and June 1st, to decide upon the necessity and the proximate date of holding a convention and where it shall be held.

Section 2.--Each local shall be entitled to one vote for each twenty-five members or portion thereof, and an additional vote for twenty-five members or major portion thereof in good standing. No delegate shall cast more than seven votes.

Section 3.--All proceedings of the convention shall be submitted to the locals for general and individual vote. A list of the names of those voting shall accompany the ballots to headquarters.

Section 4.--The transportation expense of one delegate from each local shall be paid out of the funds of the Party. Locals sending more than one delegate shall bear the expense of such.

ARTICLE VI.--PROPAGANDA

Section 1.--Locals other than English-speaking shall have full control of propaganda and organization in their respective languages, provided they apply to the Dominion executive committee for a charter for language organization. Such propaganda must be consistent with the constitution and platform of the party.

Section 2.--Foreign-speaking locals shall be exempt from any special assessment for English propaganda levied by the Dominion Executive Committee.

Section 3.--The locals of the respective foreign-speaking organizations shall submit in Dominion matters to the decision of the Dominion conventions and Dominion executive committee, in Provincial matters to the provincial conventions and provincial executive committees, and in local matters they shall act in conjunction with other locals affected as provided by the constitution

Section 4.--The Executive Committee of language organizations shall report quarterly to the Dominion Executive Committee and all provincial executive committees concerned as to the progress being made, and all other matters of importance.

Section 5.--Language organizations shall get the charters and supplies for their affiliated locals from the Dominion Executive Committee. Stamps to the language organizations shall be issued at 2½¢ each. Whenever a provincial organization is in existence, the executive committee of the language organization shall return to such provincial organization 2½¢ for each stamp issued to locals of the language organizations in their respective provinces.

Section 6.--Language locals shall have the right of the usual representation at all conventions and all executive bodies.

Section 7.--The language locals shall report to the executive committee for their language organizations.

. . . .

BY-LAWS

Section 1.--The Dominion Executive Committee shall assume the duties of provincial executive committees where no provincial organization exists.

Section 2.--The vote on every referendum shall close 60 days from the date of its publication.

Section 3.--All propositions or other matters submitted for the referendum of the party shall be presented without preamble or comment.

Section 4.--Any violation of the provisions of the constitution and by-laws of the Social-Democratic Party of Canada by a local shall be deemed sufficient warrant to empower the Dominion Executive Committee to suspend such local upon the recommendation of the provincial executive committee and immediately submit its action for the approval of the general membership.

Section 5.--The officers of the Local shall be elected for a term of one year, but may be re-elected at the expiration thereof. The election of officers shall take place during the month of December; term of office to begin on the first of January following. The result of every election of officers within the local must be communicated at once to the provincial executive committee, or where no such committee exists, to the Dominion Executive Committee.

Section 6.--Locals shall hold at least one business meeting each month.

Section 7.--All officers, boards or committees shall be subject to removal by their constituents if a charge of neglect of duty and violation of constitution and platform by them is proven.

Subject 8.--Any member in good standing of one local shall have the right to attend and speak at any meeting of another local, but shall not be allowed to vote.

Section 9.--No section of the Social-Democratic Party of Canada shall act in conjunction with any body of men not recognizing the class struggle and the necessity of abolishing capitalism.

Section 10.--No person shall be nominated as candidate for any office in the Provincial or Dominion Executive Committees or any public office unless he has been a member of the party for at least six months and has identified himself with the party by active participation in its work.

Section 11.--All candidates for any legislative or administrative body shall sign first a resignation

paper with a blank space for date, before the official nomination takes place, and deposit same with his local.

Section 12.--The resignation signed by any member of the Party elected to the Provincial or Dominion Parliament shall be held for joint action by the local he represents and the Provincial Executive Committee subject to referendum.

Section 13.--Any member of the Social-Democratic Party of Canada, elected to a Provincial or the Dominion House of Parliament shall devote four months of each year to organization work in their respective province, or furnish a substitute.

Section 14.--Any person may join as a member at large, provided they acknowledge the platform, constitution and pledge of membership, by applying to the Dominion Executive Committee or the Provincial Executive Committee of the Province in which they reside. Such member shall pay the monthly fee of twenty-five cents.

Section 15.--No person shall become a member of any outside Local, providing one exists in the locality in which they reside.

. . . . .

ORDER OF BUSINESS

The order of business at all business meetings of the party shall be as follows:--

1--Election of
2--Reading of minutes.
3--Applications for membership.
4--Correspondence and bills.
5--Report of committees.
6--Report of organizer.
7--Unfinished business.
8--New business.
9--Good of movement.
10--Financial reports.
11--Motion for adjournment.

. . . .

PLATFORM

We, the Social-Democratic Party of Canada in convention assembled, affirm our allegiance to and support of, the International Socialist Movement.

By virtue of the ownership of the means of production and distribution (natural resources, factories,

mills, railroads, etc.) all wealth the workers produce, accrues into the hands of the capitalist class. This property the capitalist defends by means of the state (the army, the navy, the judiciary).

The object of the Social-Democratic Party is to educate the workers of Canada to a consciousness of their class position in society, their economic servitude to the owners of capital, and to organize them into a political party to seize the reins of government and transform all capitalist property of the working class. This social transformation means the liberation not only of the proletariat, but of the whole human race. Only the working class, however, can bring it about. All other classes maintain their existence by supporting the present social order.

The struggle of the working class against capitalist exploitation produced a constant state of warfare between these two forces for the control of political and economic power.

As a means of preparing the minds of the working class for the inauguration of the Co-operative Commonwealth, the Social-Democratic Party of Canada will support any measure that will tend to better conditions under capitalism, such as:

(1) Reduction of hours of labor.
(2) The elimination of child labor.
(3) Universal adult suffrage without distinction of sex or regard to property qualifications; and
(4) The Initiative, Referendum and Right of Recall.

Appendix 7

MANIFESTO OF SOCIALIST CANDIDATES IN VANCOUVER SCHOOL ELECTIONS

(Western Clarion, January 6, 1906)

As Socialist candidates in the municipal campaign of 1906 we stand primarily as advocates of the principles of Revolutionary Socialism. We affirm that poverty in its entirety, and the major portion of crime vice and wretchedness that prevails in our present social order is the result of the ownership by a privileged minority of the essential tools of production.

Nothing short of the collective ownership by the workers themselves of all the means of wealth production can give to the people that happiness and security which is essential to life and liberty.

Our mission as Socialists is to remove labor from the category of commodities, to abolish wage slavery and establish an industrial democracy in which for the first time in human history, mankind may be free.

To this end we must ask always and everywhere in regard to measures brought forth by governing bodies to which we may be elected; is this proposal in the interest of the working class? Will it aid that class in its struggle against capitalist domination?

If that question can be honestly answered in the affirmative, our vote and influence will be used to further the proposed measure; if it cannot be so answered, we remain unalterably in opposition.

As candidates for school trustee we advocate the following classes in our educational system as being distinctly in the interest of the working class:

1) The free supply of textbooks and all utensils required by the pupils of our public schools; the establishment of a complete system of free kindergartens for the young; a general extension of manual training and the domestic sciences, such as sewing, cooking, etc., now taught only to a limited extent.

2) The extension of the Health Department's duties to the schools, a regular inspection of all pupils by competent medical men, the eyes, teeth, and general health being carefully supervised at the city's expense.

3) The substitution of textbooks on history, ethics and political economy written from the working-class standpoint for those now in use that uphold and honor the capitalist system. Especially will we oppose the cultivation of the jingo and military spirit in the young and the glorification of murder and robbery under the guise of war and conquest and instead to seek inaugurate courses of exercises having as their object the physical and mental improvement of the children.

4) We would recommend less stinginess in the payment of teachers in order that the best talent may be attracted to this most important service; equal salaries to male and female teachers and no discrimination against the married woman as a teacher.

In conclusion, our endeavours will be directed toward the elevation and education of the working class; towards the cultivation in our upgrowing youth of a spirit of true dignity and democracy that will make them strong to assert themselves against the oppression and injustice that confronts them today.

A.J. Wilkinson
F.X. Godin
Ernest Burns
F.M. Parr

Appendix 8

CONDITIONS FOR JOINING THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

Adapted from the Western Clarion, January 1, 1921

1) Daily propaganda must bear a truly Communist character; all organs of the press which are in the hands of the Party must be edited by reliable Communists who have proven their loyalty to the cause of the proletarian revolution.

2) Each organization wishing to join the Communist International shall be bound to remove systematically and regularly from all responsible posts in the Labour movement all reformists and partisans of the "centre" and to replace them by Communists without troubling about the facts that in the beginning it might be necessary to replace "experience" men by rank-and-file workmen.

3) In all countries where in consequence of martial law of exceptional laws the Communists are unable to carry on their work lawfully, a combination of lawful and illegal work is absolutely necessary.

4) An insistent, systematic propaganda and agitations in the army is necessary and the formation of Communist nuclei in each military organization.

5) A systematic and regular propaganda in the rural districts is necessary....

6) Every party desirous of joining the Third International is bound to denounce not only open social patriotism but also the falsehood and hypocrisy of social-pacifism; it must systematically demonstrate to the workmen that without a revolutionary overthrow of capitalism no international arbitration, no talk of disarmament, no democratic reorganization of the League of Nations will be able to save mankind from new imperialist wars.

7) Parties desirous of joining the Communist International shall be bound to recognize the necessity of a complete and absolute rupture with reformism and the policy of the centrists and to propagate this rupture among the widest circles of members of the Party.

8) ... shall be bound to denounce without any mercy all the tricks of "its own" imperialists in the colonies, supporting not in words only but in deeds all

liberation movements in the colonies. It must demand the expulsion of its own imperialists from such colonies....

9) ... bound to carry out a systematic and persistent Communist work in the labor unions, co-operatives and other labor organizations of the masses. It is necessary to form Communist nuclei within these organizations.

10) Any party belonging to the Communist International is bound to carry on a stubborn struggle against the Amsterdam "International" of the Yellow Labor Unions. ... must propagate the necessity of a rupture with the yellow Amsterdam International.

11) ... shall be bound to reinspect the personnel of their parliamentary factions not verbally only, but in reality to the Central Committee of the Party and demand from each proletarian Communist to submit his whole work to the interests of real revolutionary propaganda.

12) In the same way should all the periodical and other press and all publications be fully subordinated to the Central Committee, whether the Party as a whole at the given moment is lawful or illegal; it is quite inadmissible that any publishers abusing their autonomy might carry on a policy different from that of the Party.

13) The parties belonging to the Communist International shall be organized on the principles of democratic centralism. At the present moment of acute civil war the Communist Party will be able to fulfill its duty only if it is organized in the most centralized form, if it is ruled by an iron discipline, almost a military one, and if its Party centre is an organ of authority with full power....

14) Where Communists carry on their work lawfully, party must periodically conduct a re-registration to weed from the party all bourgeois elements that may have crept in.

15) ... bound to render all possible aid to the Soviet Republics in their struggle against counter-revolutionary forces. ... refuse to transport objects of military equipment addressed to the enemies of the Soviet Republics. ... carry out propaganda against the troops sent against the Soviet Republics.

16) Parties which up to the present time have stood upon the old Social and Democratic programmes must revise them in conformity with the special conditions of

their country and in accordance with the resolutions of the Communist International. ... the programme of each Party must be confirmed by the next Congress of the Communist International or its Executive Committee.

17) All the resolutions of the congresses of the Communist International are binding for all parties joining the International. The Communist International, operating under the conditions of most acute civil warfare, must be organized in a more centralized form than the Second International.

18) All desiring to join the Communist International must alter their names to the Communist Party of such-and-such a country. It is necessary that each rank-and-file worker should be able to distinguish clearly the difference between the Communist parties and the old official "Social Democratic" or "Socialist" parties which have betrayed the cause of the working class.

Appendix 9

CONSTITUTION OF THE CANADIAN LABOR PARTY 1923

(Source: Angus McInnis Collection, U.B.C.)

I. NAME

The Canadian Labor Party.

II. MEMBERSHIP

The Canadian Labor Party shall consist of Provincial Sections of the Canadian Labor Party, and these Provincial Sections shall be constituted on a plan to be decided by a Provincial Convention.

III. PARTY OBJECTS

(a) To organize and maintain in the Federal Parliament and in the country a political Labor Party, and to ensure the establishment of a Provincial Section of the Party in each Province of the Dominion.

(b) To co-operate with the Executive Council of the Trades and Labor Congress of Canada, or other kindered organizations, in joint political or other action in harmony with the party constitution and Standing Orders.

(c) To give effect, as far as may be practicable, to the principles from time to time approved by the Party Conventions.

(d) To unify the political powers of the workers, whether hand or brain, for the purpose of securing for themselves the full fruits of their industry; and generally to promote the political, social and economic emancipation of the people.

(e) To co-operate with the Labor and Socialist organizations in other countries and to assist in organizing a Federation of Nations for the maintenance of the Freedom and Peace, for the establishment of suitable machinery for the adjustment and settlement of International Disputes by Conciliation or Judical Arbitration, and for such International legislation as may be practicable.

IV. PARTY PROGRAMME

Preamble: We have in view a complete change in our present economic and social system. In this we recognize our solidarity with the workers world over. As a means to this end and in order to meet the present pressing needs, we recommend the following platform:-

(1) Unemployment - State Insurance against unemployment, chargeable to industry.

(2) Public ownership and democratic control of public utilities.

(3) Electoral Reform. Proportional Representation. Names instead of Election Deposit. Extension of voting facilities.

(4) Old age pensions, health and disability insurance.

(5) Abolition of Non-Elective Legislative Bodies.

(6) International Disarmament.

(7) Direct Legislation - Initiative referendum, Recall.

(8) Enactment of recommendations of Washington Labor Conference, especially the Eight-Hour Day.

(9) Repeal of amendment to Immigration Act providing for deportation of British Subjects.

(10) Removal of taxation on the necessities of life, taxation of land values, and abolition of fiscal legislation which leads to class privileges.

(11) Nationalization of the Banking system.

(12) Capital levy for reduction of War debt.

(a) It shall be the duty of the Party Convention to decide, from time to time, what special proposals of legislation, financial, or administrative reform shall receive the general support of the Party, and be promoted, as occasion may present itself, by the National Executive and the Parliamentary Labor Party; providing that no such proposal shall be made definitely part of the General Programme of the Party unless it has been adopted by the Conference by a majority of not less than two-thirds of

the votes recorded.

(b) It shall be the duty of the National Executive and the Parliamentary Labor Party, prior to every general election, to define the principal issues for the election which in their judgment should be made the special Party programme for that particular election campaign, which shall be issued as a manifesto by the executive to all constituencies where a labor candidate is standing.

(c) It shall be the duty of every Parliamentary representative of the Party to be guided by the decisions of the meetings of such Parliamentary representatives, with a view to giving effect to the decisions of the Party conference as to the general programme of the Party.

V. THE PARTY CONVENTION

(1) The work of the Party shall be under the direction and control of the Party Convention, which shall itself be subject to the Constitution and Standing Orders of the Party. The Party Conference shall meet regularly once in each year, and also at such other times as it may be convened by the National Executive.

(2) The Party Convention shall be constituted as follows:- Provincial Sections affiliated to the Canadian Labor Party shall send one delegate for the charter and one for each 500 members or majority fraction thereof on which fees are paid.

VI. THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE

(a) There shall be a National Executive of the Party consisting of the President, Vice-President and Secretary-Treasurer, elected at the annual convention, and one representative from each Provincial Section to be elected at the annual conventions of the various Provincial Sections, and this National Executive shall, subject to the control and directions of the Party Conference, be the administrative authority of the Party.

(b) The National Executive shall be responsible for the conduct of the general work of the Party, and shall take steps to ensure that the Party is represented by a properly constituted organization in each Province. It shall give effect to the decisions of the Party conference; and it shall interpret the Constitution and Standing Orders and Rules of the Party in all cases of dispute, subject to an appeal to the next regular annual convention by the organization or person concerned.

(c) The National Executive shall confer with the Parliamentary Labor Party at the opening of each Parliamentary session; and also at any other time when the National Executive or the Parliamentary Party may desire such conference on any matters relating to the work and progress of the Party, or to the efforts necessary to give effect to the General Programme of the Party.

VII. PARLIAMENTARY CANDIDATURES

(a) The National Executive shall co-operate with the Provincial Sections of the C.L.P. in any constituency with a view to nominating a Labor Candidate in any Parliamentary Candidate can be regarded as finally adopted for a constituency as a candidate of the Labor Party his candidature must be sanctioned by the National Executive.

(b) Candidates approved by the National Executive shall appear before their constituents under the designation of "Labor Candidates" only. In any General Election they shall include in their election addresses and give prominence in their campaigns to the issues for the election as defined by the National Executive from the General Party Programme. If they are elected they shall act in harmony with the Constitution and Standing Orders of the Party in seeking to discharge the responsibilities established by Parliamentary practice.

VIII. AFFILIATION FEES

Provincial Sections comprising the Canadian Labor Party shall pay into the Party Treasury a per capita tax of one cent per year on all their paid-up members.

STANDING ORDERS

I. ANNUAL CONVENTIONS

(1) The National Executive shall convene the annual Party Convention at the time and place appointed for the annual convention of the Trades and Labor Congress of Canada and shall convene other Sessions of the Party convention from time to time as may be required.

(2) In the event of it being necessary to convene the Party Conference upon short notice, in order to deal with some sudden emergency, the Secretaries of affiliated Sections shall, on receiving the summons, instantly take such action as may be necessary to enable the Section to be represented, in accordance with the rules.

(3) Any session of the Party Convention summoned with less than ten days' notice shall confine its business strictly to that relating to the emergency which cannot without detriment to the Party be postponed.

(4) Persons eligible as delegates must be paying bona fide members.

II. AGENDA

(1) Notice of resolutions for the annual convention shall be sent to the Secretary at the office of the Party not later than July 1st, for inclusion in the first Agenda which shall forthwith be issued to the affiliated Sections.

(2) Notice of amendments to the resolutions in the first agenda shall be forwarded to the Secretary not later than ten days prior to opening of Convention, for inclusion in the final agenda of the Annual Convention.

(3) No business which does not arise out of the Agenda shall be considered by the Party convention without two-thirds vote of the Convention.

III. VOTING

Convention decisions shall be reached by the casting of votes on the basis of one delegate one vote, and a majority of the votes cast shall determine the result, except if otherwise provided by the Constitution.

IV. NATIONAL EXECUTIVE

(1) The National Executive shall be elected by the annual convention, the candidates being confined to delegates elected to attend the annual convention.

(2) The National Executive shall present to the annual convention a report covering the work and progress of the party during its year of office, together with a financial statement and accounts duly audited.

(3) The consent of candidates must be secured before their nomination for office.

(4) This Constitution can only be amended at the Annual Convention of the Party.

Appendix 10

PLATFORM AND MANIFESTO OF INDEPENDENT LABOR PARTY

(Source: Angus McInnis Collection, U.B.C.)

The Independent Labor Party is formed for the purpose of creating a Working Class Consciousness with a view of securing the Collective Ownership and the Democratic Control of the means of wealth production.

Private Ownership of the means of wealth production (lands, forests, mines, fisheries, mills and factories), is the basis of the present system of society. The ownership of these natural resources and the machinery of production is vested in a small minority of the people, who, because of this ownership, constitute the real rulers of the country--the ruling class.

This class ownership of the means of life, with the restrictions and appropriation of the fruits of labor necessarily following from it, is the root cause of the present insecurity and privation suffered by the working class.

The large majority of the people--the working class--being propertyless, must obtain the necessities of life through the only way open to them, i.e., by selling their labor power. But the only condition upon which they can do so is that a profit must accrue to the owning class from the process. Profits for the few and not the needs of the many is the motive underlying production.

The farmer, despite the semblance of ownership which appears from the occupancy of the land and the machinery with which he works it, is in approximately the same position as the propertyless wage-worker. The wage-worker sells his labor power direct to the capitalist class for a price (wages), and that which he produces belongs to the party employing him or her. The farmer converts his labor power into other commodities (wheat, oats, etc.), which he must dispose of in the open market, having little or no control over the price of his product.

The result of his toil passes into the hands of the capitalist class in rent, interest, and profit, just as surely and completely as does the product of the labor of the wage-worker, which he (the wage-worker) leaves in the mill or factory when the whistle blows at the end of the day.

The production and distribution of the things essential to our needs has reached a stage of development in which it requires the active co-operation of practically all the productive forces in society; social production has superseded individual production. Our ultimate objective is, therefore, the collective ownership of things collectively produced and collectively used. The need and well-being of society must be the regulator of production.

Present governments are controlled by the same people who own and control the financial and industrial institutions of the country, and is therefore used in their interest. Under these conditions the welfare of the masses is a subordinate consideration.

Realizing this, it logically follows that the working class can not improve their condition in any permanent way until they assume the powers and functions of the state. This can be accomplished in this country by taking advantage of our political privileges and electing working class representatives to all legislative and administrative bodies. The working class itself must be its own emancipator.

Taking into consideration the International aspect of the development of capitalism and the inter-dependence of each country upon all other countries for even the partial functioning of the productive forces that obtain today, we realize the impossibility of the working class of any one country--even if the entire government was within its control--formulating and carrying out, unaided, a complete programme of socialization. We therefore pledge our support and co-operation to all groups, of whatever nationality, having similar aims.

The present productive forces of society are quite sufficient to supply our every need and comfort; but the present system of production and appropriation denies to the great mass of the people the bare necessities of life. While the few revel in wealth and luxury millions are done to death by slow starvation. Knowledge of the cause of this phenomenon is absolutely essential to intelligent action.

Class ownership of the means of production; class appropriation of the social product of labor, is the cause of this denial to the workers of an opportunity to participate in the fruits of their labor.

Collective ownership of the means of production; social appropriation of that which is socially produced, is the only means to end exploitation.

In the foregoing we have given an outline as brief and concise as possible, of present-day society, and the fundamental change necessary to establish a system by which the community will own, organize and control its resources for the benefit of all.

The Independent Labor Party, as a socialist party, holds that the difficulties which the working class is laboring under can only be removed by a change in our economic system. For this reason we do not put forward any lengthy list of immediate aims.

The function of the party is to organize and to educate the workers along political lines as the surest and safest way to get control of the powers of government. Once having secured that power it will be used to liberate where it is now used to oppress.

By working class we mean all the people who must labor by hand or brain and have no other means of support.

While we realize that economic conditions, to a large extent, determine the political, social and economic aspirations of a people, yet we do not consider economic conditions as the sole factors that govern lives and actions. Fears and prejudices, customs and traditions are also determining factors in our lives.

Before the workers can advance to power they must gain confidence in their own ability as organizers, legislators and administrators, and the best way to create that confidence is by contesting the election to every elective office.

On the platform, we shall endeavor to instill into the minds of the people a knowledge of their social and economic position in society, and also of their power; and create a desire for freedom in the shaping of their own destiny. At the council table we shall use our influence in keeping and extending the control of the people over public utilities. In parliament we shall support all legislative measures having for their purpose the betterment of working class conditions, but we maintain

that so long as the workers are content to sell their life's energy in the market, they must accept the conditions which the fluctuations of that market entails. We shall accept reforms to strengthen our position, but our ultimate objective is the Socialist State.

Appendix 11

PLATFORM OF THE REVOLUTIONARY SOCIALIST PARTY OF CANADA

(Source: The Independent, May 24, 1902)

The Revolutionary Socialist Party of Canada in convention assembled affirms allegiance to and support of the principles and program of the international revolutionary proletariat.

The irrepressible conflict of interest between the capitalists and the wage earners is rapidly culminating in a struggle for the reins of government. The capitalists now hold possession of and are thus able to maintain their economic domination over the workers. The workers are about to take possession for the purpose of enforcing their economic program by becoming masters of the wealth they produce. To continue the capitalist class in the possession of the legislative and executive powers of government, means but to prolong the wage slave system with its terrible consequences to the workers. The capitalist system with its profits for masters and wages for slaves, can give to the latter only an ever increasing measure of misery and degradation. The capitalist system is based on the one fundamental proposition of Capitalist ownership of the means of wealth production for profit.

Stripped of all sham and hypocrisy, it is the political and economic program of all parties except of the revolutionary working class. The interest of the workers lies in the direction of setting themselves free from capitalist exploitation, by the abolition of the wage system. To accomplish this necessitates the transformation of capitalist property in the means of wealth production, into collective or working class property. We, therefore, call on all wage earners and other decent citizens to organize under the banner of The Revolutionary Socialist Party of Canada, with the object of conquering the public powers, for the purpose of setting up and enforcing the economic program of the working class as follows:

1) The transformation as rapidly as possible of capitalist property in the means of wealth production (natural resources, factories, mills, railways, etc.) into the collective property of the working class.

2) Thorough and democratic organization and management of industry by the workers.

3) The establishment, as speedily as possible, of production for use in lieu of production for profit.

4) Candidates for public office upon the ticket of the Revolutionary Socialist Party shall, by the acceptance of such nomination, stand pledged to the unqualified support of the principles and program herein set forth. They shall, in case of election, use every legitimate means within their power, to further such principles and program, and content and prevent if possible, the adoption of any measure in contravention thereto.

The Revolutionary Socialist Party of Canada proclaims itself the political exponent of working class interest. It will deviate neither to the right nor the left of the fine line laid down in its platform. It will neither endorse or accept endorsement. It has no compromise to make.

The pathway leading to our emancipation from the chains of wage slavery is uncompromising political warfare against the capitalist class, with no quarter and no surrender.

Appendix 12

A BRIEF OUTLINE OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF CANADA IN ONTARIO

When the Socialist Party of Ontario requested the SPBC to "go national", they undoubtedly raised false hopes in B.C. In reality the Ontario group was hardly large enough to call itself a party, consisting as it did of some two dozen stalwarts in Toronto. Wilfred Gribble recalled the night they decided to affiliate with the SPBC: "going down ... to the Temperance Hall on Bathurst St. to find a little bunch there fanning the (then) feebly burning flame of Revolution".[1] When the Toronto group formally became part of the SPC on January 31, 1905, they decided to pay dues directly to the Vancouver group. It was two years before Ontario finally elected its own P.E.C.

From the beginning the Toronto socialists organized along ethnic lines. During 1905 a Jewish branch of the Toronto local was formed, and in 1906 Finnish and Italian branches were also formed. In the spring of 1906, C.M. O'Brien was sent out from Vancouver on an organizing tour. He gave talks and lectures in twenty-two Ontario towns and cities, but organized only one local in Berlin. He found that the people in Ontario had not been educated to the fact that there is "only one source of robbery, i.e., when workers surrender their labour power for wages".[2] His policy was not to organize locals until the comrades understood and were ready to fully accept the platform of the SPC. By mid-1906 there were four locals in Ontario: Hamilton, Berlin, Port Arthur and Toronto. The size of the first three is unknown, but Toronto had some three hundred members.[3] The following year Gribble was put into the field as a full-time organizer, and the gospel spread. By the fall of 1907, when a former editor of the Chicago Socialist, A.W. Mance, held five meetings in Berlin, each drew between eight hundred and a thousand people.[4] Pettipiece came to Ottawa for the meetings of the Canadian Trades and Labour Congress and addressed large meetings in Galt, Guelph and Berlin. The Ontario group held a provincial convention on the Labour Day weekend of 1907 and the Toronto local was instructed to

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[1] Clarion, August 29, 1908.

[2] Ibid, June 30, 1906.

[3] Ibid, June 2, 1906.

[4] Ibid, Oct. 12, 1907.

form a PEC., which was controlled by the English-speaking branch. Weston Wrigley reported that "Sunday, October 20, was to be a big day in the history of the Toronto local; English branch to hold mass meeting in the Labour Temple; Italian branch starts series of meetings in new headquarters and club rooms; Finnish branch opens new $7,000 headquarters, dance hall and gymnasium with a concern Saturday night, a Socialist meeting Sunday night and a dance Monday night."[5] By the time of the Ontario Provincial Convention, held in the Finnish Hall in Toronto on September 6 and 7, 1908, the Ontario socialists boasted of between five and six hundred members organized into fifteen locals. But the SPC in Ontario had reached its zenith; from this point on the numbers would diminish and the party would be split by internecine arguments. Incompatible personalities, bigotry, involvement in municipal politics and the Ontario economic success story all played a part in the failure of the SPC in Ontario.

From the beginning the socialists in Ontario were not prepared to submit to the B.C. group. They ignored the decision taken at an earlier SPC convention not to ask for a signed resignation from nominated candidates. They also ignored the party decision to let elected members act on their own and required James Simpson,[6] who was twice elected to the Toronto Board of Education for two-year terms, to consult with the local's education committee before each meeting of the Board. As the Dominion Executive Committee (DEC) said, "There seems to be too many constitution meddlers in Toronto, and too much attention paid to what Socialists shall do 'when elected', rather than what we, as workingmen, must do to elect them." In the same editorial the party's policy towards elected representatives was reiterated:

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[5]Ibid, October 26, 1907.

[6]Simpson was a well-known leader in the trade union movement and a hard worker in church and temperance circles. He was Vice-President of Canadian Socialist League No. 2 in Toronto in 1900 and in the same year ran in the provincial election for the People's Party in Toronto. He ran for the mayoralty of Toronto in 1908 but lost much of the earlier support he had received when running for Board of Education. Supported by Labour and the Social Democratic Party, he was elected City Controller in 1914. Elected by nation-wide referendum of locals of the Social Democratic Party of Canada to represent Canadian socialists at the International Socialist Congress to be held in Vienna in August, 1914, he held a clear majority over all other candidates together, including Parker Williams.

> Let party members rally to the support of men deserving their confidence, and treat with members-in-office as men--not kindergarten students. If members of the Socialist Party who allow themselves to become standard-bearers refuse to equip themselves with the necessary weapons of knowledge, fight it out in your business meetings and on nomination day.[7]

The Toronto local's participation in municipal politics was to bring new strife to the harmony of the Toronto branches. Annually from 1904 onward, the party had run candidates in the municipal elections, with some successes. In 1905 and 1907 James Simpson was elected to the Board of Education as an SPC candidate, but supported by Labour. In 1907, Lindalla, a member of the Finnish branch, ran for Mayor as an SPC candidate and polled 8,2777 votes, more than any other SPC candidate had ever polled. In 1908, James Simpson resigned from the Board of Education to run as the SPC mayoralty candidate, polling only 3,691 votes even though he was again supported by Labour.[8] It was the Labour support that got him into trouble. Wrigley accused him of opportunism and during the campaign insisted that either his Labour friends support the whole of the SPC ticket or that Simpson publicly renounce the support of Labour. Simpson refused to do either and brought charges before the English-speaking branch of the Toronto local against Wrigley, claiming that the latter acted in a manner unbecoming to a socialist. Simpson was upheld, the newer members supporting him and the older members such as Gribble, Peel and Parrot supporting Wrigley. At this point the Clarion entered the fray, saying that it was little wonder the opportunist itch broke out because "Municipal struggles can be fought only upon opportunist lines, for the reason that no economic program can there be enforced that does not conform to the economic program laid down by the federal power".[9] The columns of the paper were then closed to the discussion of local issues which it was felt were of no interest to the party membership generally.

The Ontario section of the SPC eventually split along the lines of possiblist and impossiblist. The

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[7]Clarion, October 27, 1906.

[8]Ibid, February 8, 1908.

[9]Ibid, April 25, 1908.

division of the locals along language lines was a contributing factor to the split. By and large the English language group held to the impossiblist line, which meant advocating under all circumstances the one policy of obtaining the reins of political power. Following from this was their antagonism to unions, their refusal to cooperate with any other political group for public meetings, their desire to control every action of individual party members, and their belief that participation in municipal politics was a futile gesture because the issues involved at the municipal level of government did not even lend themselves as suitable vehicles for party educational efforts. The immigrant groups, on the other hand, brought with them to Canada not only their Marxist socialism, but also their experiences with European socialist parties. At the 1908 SPC convention, for example, the Finnish branch of the Toronto local introduced a resolution calling for specific reforms to be advocated during municipal elections. The proposed reforms had been advocated very successfully by the Finnish Socialist Party.[10] The Finnish and Jewish delegates supported the resolution, which was defeated.

Another aspect of the split was that the Party in Ontario had been founded by men who supported the B.C. platform and they were not about to see the SPC in Ontario change. Strengthened in this attitude by the DEC, they became possessive, dictatorial, and more interested in doctrinal purity than in fulfilling the party's role of "making socialists". With the growth of the foreign language locals and the increase in locals outside the Toronto area during 1907 and 1908, the "charter" group felt their leadership more and more threatened and eventually sought protection for their position by giving up as PEC for Ontario and turning the job over to the DEC "until such time as the Locals of Ontario shall have demonstrated by useful effort, united action, and sound progress to the satisfaction of the Socialist Party of Canada as a whole their fitness for organizing provincially".[11]

According to the SPC Constitution, the first group organized in a provincial electoral riding was to be

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[10]Ibid, September 26, 1908. Some of the reforms suggested were universal franchise, setting aside land for the use of the city and away from private land speculators, and city-built housing for the working class.

[11]Ibid, April 9, 1910.

the local, and groups subsequently formed were to be considered branches of that local. In Toronto, however, the separate language branches were collectively referred to as Toronto Local No. 1. Immediately prior to the English-speaking branch surrendering the reins of the PEC to the DEC, they had applied for a charter which would establish them as a separate local in the Toronto area. They received a charter as Local 24, but some of the younger members changed their minds and decided to remain as the English Branch of Local No. 1. At the same time, they seized the books and property of the branch. The DEC immediately revoked their charter and Local 24 carried on as the PEC for a short time and then resigned. In taking over the duties of the Ontario PEC, the DEC did follow constitutional guidelines by publishing their decision in the Clarion and asking for a referendum on their action.

The other groups in Ontario, under the leadership of Local Berlin, contended that asking the membership to vote on something about which they had insufficient information was unfair. Angered at losing their autonomy as a provincial group, they called a convention of all Ontario locals for May 24, 1910, in the Finnish Hall in Toronto. There were twenty-nine delegates at the convention, representing a membership of 727. All of the Ontario locals were represented except Toronto No. 24 and two smaller ones. The delegates decreed Berlin as the seat of the PEC and passed a motion declaring that if the convention proceedings were not accepted by the SPC as a whole, the Ontario locals would nevertheless remain a provincial party.[12]

The DEC refused to recognize the convention proceedings on the grounds that:

> some of the moving spirits...were "delegates" from Locals without a charter, Locals without membership and Locals without either. And further,...it could be shown and we challenge disproof, that they [the delegates] represented an alleged membership of which the majority, possibly two-thirds, is absolutely opposed to the Platform and principles of this party.... Moreover when a convention prefaces a request for a referendum with the threat that, if the referendum does not result in their favour, they will disregard the referendum and will secede from the

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[12]Ibid, June 18, 1910.

> Party, this Committee would not be justified in taking any other course than to decline to recognize the convention.[13]

The matter of whether or not to have a referendum on the DEC's decision was then left to the locals who were to advise the DEC by the end of July. Few locals were willing to pursue the issue, and no referendum was held. Most of the locals of the Ontario group left the SPC and formed a new party, the Canadian Socialist Federation, which later joined the Socialist Democratic Party of Canada (SDPC).[14] The English-language branch of the Toronto local left the SPC in 1911 and formed the Socialist Party of North America. The SPC was left with its Toronto Local 24 and a couple of other English-language groups outside of Toronto. The large drop in membership of the Ontario section of the SPC corresponded to a similar decrease in membership and influence of the SPC in British Columbia. While in B.C. a recovery was made for a period of time, in Ontario Marxian socialism of the impossiblist variety was finished.

The new SDPC was Marxist in orientation, but also committed to reforms until such time as enough socialists had been converted to enable a takeover of political and economic control. The Socialist Party of North America remained as a small Toronto group with essentially the same platform as the SPC. The group was shattered in 1918 under pressure of federal government anti-revolutionary and anti-sedition Orders-in-Council.[15]

The attempt by the B.C. socialists to extend the SPC umbrella over Ontario was almost certain to fail. In Ontario the craft unions were much better established than in B.C., and the appeal of labour politicians much more enticing to those relatively few people dissatisfied with the system, for Ontario, of all the provinces, was an upwardly mobile society. At the height of its strength the SPC in Ontario had no more than a thousand members.

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[13]Ibid, June 18, 1910.

[14]See Chapter VII for further discussion.

[15]See Chapter VIII for further discussion.

SAMPLES OF SPC MEMBERS HOLDING UNION OFFICES AND MEMBERSHIPS IN OTHER PARTIES

Burns, Ernest	BCSP, United Fishermen's Union, VTLC, SDP, FLP, ILP, CCF.
Caird, W. B.	SDP, ILP, CCF.
Charlton, O. Lee	Ruskin Cooperative, CSL, SDP, FLP, CCF.
Curry, D. W. J.	SDP, FLP, ILP (Soc.), CCF.
Kavanaugh, Jack	B. C. Federation of Labour, Workers' Party.
Kingsley, E. T.	SLP, RSPC, FLP, ILP (Soc.)
Lefeaux, Wallace	ILP (Soc.), CCF.
McInnis, John	Phoenix Miners' Union, CCF.
McVety, J. H.	VTLC, B. C. Federation of Labour, FLP, ILP.
Midgeley, V. R.	Lathers' Union, B. C. Federation of Labour, OBU, ILP.
Naylor, Joe	Nanaimo Miners' Union, B. C. Federation of Labour.
Pettipiece, Parmeter	Ferguson Miners' Union, VTLC, ITU, B. C. Federation of Labour, FLP, ILP (Soc.)
Pritchard, W. A.	VTLC, OBU, CCF.
Sidaway, J.	ILP (Soc.), CCF.
Skinner, Robert	Retail Clerks' Union, ILP (Soc.), CCF.
Stirling, George F.	FLP, CCF.
Tree, Ambrose	OBU, CCF.

Watters, J. C.	Boilermakers' Union, B. C. Federation of Labour, TLCC, FLP.
Wells, A. S.	FLP, B. C. Federation of Labour, OBU, Workers' Party.
Winch, Ernest	SDP, OBU, ILP (Soc.), CCF.