

A UNION ON THE HILL:
THE INTERNATIONAL UNION OF MINE, MILL AND
SMELTER WORKERS AND THE ORGANIZATION OF
TRAIL SMELTER AND CHEMICAL WORKERS
1938-1945

by

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ABSTRACT

Using union records, newspapers and relevant secondary sources this thesis examines the complex process of union organization at a local level, an area of union activity that has received little attention from Canadian labour historians. In 1938, the International Union of Mine Mill and Smelter Workers began a drive to organize workers at the Consolidated Mining and Smelting Company's industrial complex in Trail, British Columbia. Although the campaign took place in an era of explosive trade union growth, the attempt to establish a local in Trail was long and difficult, succeeding only in 1945.

The following study analyzes the various factors which limited or aided Local 480's growth during this seven year period. The historical development of both company and union is examined along with organizational strategies, management reaction, worker response and the effect of labour legislation. This thesis argues that, while all the above factors were important, labour legislation had the greatest impact on the organization process and was instrumental in the successful completion of Local 480's campaign.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Approval	ii
Abstract	iii
Introduction	1
Chapter One: Beginnings	12
Chapter Two: Building A Foundation	28
Chapter Three: Stalled	45
Chapter Four: A Union On The Hill	60
Epilogue	78
Notes	80
Bibliography	94

Introduction

1937 was a hallmark year for Canadian labour. The Department of Labour's statistics on labour organization indicated a new all time high for union membership. Labour Organizations In Canada listed 384,619 members for 1937, surpassing the previous watermark of 378,047 members reported during Canada's "Labour Revolt" in 1919.¹ The following two years saw a slight reduction in membership, down 0.5 percent in 1938 and 5.9 percent in 1939. Modest union growth of .9 percent in 1940 still left approximately 18,000 fewer members than in 1937. Between 1941 and 1945 the figures climbed dramatically as membership increased by almost 100,000 members per year. Canadian union membership grew from 362,223 in 1940 to 711,117 in 1945.¹ A 96 percent increase in five years! This massive increase reflected structural as well as numerical change as increasing numbers of mass production workers entered labour organizations.

This remarkable upsurge in membership was tied to developments in the United States that fostered the growth of industrial unionism under the auspices of the Committee for Industrial Organization, and to the presence of a large number of experienced and committed Canadian unionists. In 1935, spurred by "New Deal" legislation such as the Wagner Act, which protected American workers' right to organize and join unions, trade unionists sympathetic to the organization of mass production workers formed the Committee for Industrial Organization (CIO). Led by United Mine Workers president John L. Lewis the CIO sought to organize large numbers of workers in various industries from steel to textiles. The American Federation of Labor, distinctly uncomfortable with the unskilled nature of this new constituency and the militancy of their leadership,

suspended and finally expelled the CIO from the AFL in 1936. The CIO, hampered by Supreme Court challenges to the Wagner Act, did not achieve much success until the Act was upheld in 1937. Now clearly protected by law, the CIO successfully organized numerous industries throughout the United States.² This surge of independent industrial unionism in the United States galvanized many Canadian workers and activists long-committed to the cause of industrial unionism.

Industrial unionism became an increasing tendency in Canada during the 1920s and early 1930s under the auspices of the All Canadian Congress of Labour (ACCL) and the Workers' Unity League (WUL). The ACCL was formed in 1927 by unions ousted from the Canadian Trades and Labour Congress (TLC) for their advocacy of industrial unionism and their virulent condemnation of the craft-based TLC and its international affiliate the AFL. The ACCL forged a coalition with a number of independent and left-wing unions to garner a membership of some 40,000 workers by 1930.³

The Worker's Unity League was formed in 1930 as a result of a Communist International directive to dissolve alliances between communists and "reformist" organizations such as the ACCL. Thus, in 1930 the WUL formed as a revolutionary trade union central comprised of communist-led unions in mining, logging and garment manufacturing. The WUL's record was mixed but it did increase membership through aggressive organizing of both industrial workers and the unemployed, gaining a reputation as "the 'one fighting organization' on the industrial relations scene."⁴ In 1934 the WUL and its affiliates were responsible for "50 per cent of all strikes and strikers", holding a 'hard core' membership of 24,086.⁵ In 1935, however, the WUL received instructions from the Communist International to disband the revolutionary unions and rejoin the TLC to forge a "broad

united front movement against fascism and against another imperialist war."⁶ The WUL complied and the Canadian TLC now had a sizeable percentage of its membership that was committed to industrial organization at the very moment that the North American labour movement launched a large scale drive for industrial unionism.⁷

As the statistics noted earlier indicate, industrial unionism did indeed expand in the ensuing years. However, the historians of Canadian labour's experience in the late 1930s and 1940s have not, as a rule, focused on the process of organization, that is, the activity of organizing workers into unions prior to union recognition. Rather, studies have been centered around strikes, the political history of unions and trade union centrals - what one might consider post-organizational phenomena. While most offer some insight into the impetus for organization, such as the rise of industrial unionism in the United States, the catalyst of depression and war, or abysmal working conditions, a close examination of organizational efforts is not offered.

For example, Harold A. Logan's invaluable Trade Unions In Canada (1948) renders the institutional record of Canadian labour from the nineteenth century to labour's legitimation in the late 1940s, but it is unconcerned with organizational efforts; workers are simply organized or not according to the statistical evidence at hand. Similarly, Irving Abella, in his study of the inter-union and intra-union politics of the Canadian CIO and its affiliates, Nationalism, Communism and Canadian Labour (1973), spends some time exploring organization but offers little in-depth analysis.

Abella notes that Sarnia's foundry workers were "ripe for organization as a result of low wages, long hours, no security, and unsafe

working conditions ...". However, racial intolerance and employer intransigence resulted in a disastrous sit-down strike that ended in a bloody confrontation between strikers and anti-union forces, tacitly supported by the Holmes Foundry owners and the Sarnia police force. Abella does not consider that the sit-down may well have been an organizing tactic designed to convince reluctant workers of the union's ability to successfully battle the employer; a confrontation directly connected to the organization process.⁸ Similarly Abella fails to explore the incredibly successful United Auto Workers (UAW) drive to sign up auto workers at General Motors' Oshawa, Ontario plants. The organizational initiative flowed out of a confrontation over production line speed-up in February 1937, and by March organizer Hugh Thompson had signed up some 4000 members to the UAW. Yet Abella does not offer any insight into the process by which so many workers chose to join the union. Surely an organizational drive that succeeded in enrolling the Mayor of Oshawa and most of his council as honorary members demands some detailed examination. This appears particularly pertinent in light of the fact that in its immediate post-organizational phase UAW Local 222 successfully led a strike against General Motors that, Abella argues, "... inspired workers across the country ... and gave the CIO the impetus it so badly needed to begin the organization in the mass production industries of the country."⁹ Also, in light of Abella's own concerns about American domination of Canadian Labour and the history of communist and anti-communist battles in Canada's labour unions, a clearer explication of the organization process might well help us to understand the particular basis of this internecine warfare.

Laurel Sefton MacDowell's study of the Northern Ontario gold-miners' strike of 1941-42, 'Remember Kirkland Lake', contains valuable information regarding North American labour legislation throughout the 1930s and 1940s as well as offering insight into the nature of labour confrontations in resource industries and company towns. Her discussion of organizing is, however, somewhat limited. In a chapter titled "The local context" Sefton MacDowell discusses the principal reasons miners had for forming a union; the history of trade unions in mining, life and work in the enclosed community of the company town, as well as poor wages and dangerous working conditions. She also notes possible obstacles to organization such as race relations, political faction, and employer opposition.¹⁰ Yet Sefton MacDowell does not explore the slow process of organization that took place in International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers Local 240. It took from 1936 to 1941 for Mine-Mill to sign up a majority of mine workers in the area.¹¹ How was worker reluctance finally overcome? How did this five year period of organization affect the internal operation of local 240? Did it have any bearing on the local executive's decision to call a strike against the Kirkland Lake mine owners? Sefton MacDowell notes that "the strike vote November 8, 1941 was the climax of the union's organizing drive ...", but does not explore this telling comment at any length.¹² One is left with a nagging question: Was the strike itself part of the drive? Perhaps Kirkland Lake was a battle, not only for union recognition by employers and the state, but also a means of completing the organizing process.¹³ A closer examination of that process may well have resulted in a better historical understanding of this important incident and the institutional development that surrounded it.

Historians Jerry Lembcke and William Tattam's political history of the International Woodworkers of America (IWA), One Union In Wood, suffers from similar limitations. Lembcke and Tattam argue in the conclusion of One Union In Wood, that persistent support of communist leadership in the IWA stemmed from the rank and file's recognition of the "superiority of the communist's leadership" and their ongoing presence as union organizers in the worker community. These are interesting and perhaps accurate perceptions, but to fully understand the loyalty of rank and filers it seems appropriate to closely consider the process by which Pacific-Northwest woodworkers were organized, or organized themselves, into IWA locals.¹⁴

Some American labour historians have, in the past twenty years, breached the wall of silence that has surrounded organization efforts during the early years of the CIO. One of the first to do so was Sidney Fine, whose 1969 monograph Sit Down exhaustively examines one of the most dramatic episodes in CIO history. The 1936 General Motors sit-down strike in Flint, Michigan is viewed by Fine as the "'most critical labor conflict' of the 1930s and perhaps in all of American history ..."¹⁵

Fine's seminal work details the role of a small activist cadre that used the sit-down as an organizing tool designed to convince reluctant workers of the efficacy of the UAW.¹⁶ The sit-down strike was a tactic that allowed a small group of workers to tie up a large plant by occupying key departments in the productive process. If the factories chosen were part of an essential production chain, for example a plant specializing in glass, then the entire industry could be disrupted through the actions of a limited number of activists.¹⁷ Thus the strength of the union could be demonstrated to intransigent employers and reluctant work-

ers alike. This was the tactic chosen by activist workers and unionists at Flint's General Motors plants. Indeed the plants were often held by very few members. At one point in the strike the number of sit-downers at GM's no. 1 plant fell to ninety, at the no. 2 it fell to seventeen. In addition, a number of the sit-downers were sympathetic auto workers still employed at other plants who spent off-shift hours occupying General Motors.¹⁸ Fine clearly shows that organization was a complex process, reluctant workers needed to be convinced of what was possible before they would fully commit themselves to the UAW. "It has been said," wrote Fine, "that it required 'a brilliant meteor flaming across a dark sky' to capture the attention of auto workers, who, in the main, had hitherto resisted the appeals of union organizers. If so, the sit-down strikes became that meteor."¹⁹

Peter Friedlander's 1975 publication, The Emergence of UAW Local 1936-1939 builds on the subject of organization broached in Fine's seminal study. Friedlander, less concerned with dramatic episode than Fine and building on a foundation of class analysis, explores the organizing process from the initial phases to the post-organizational operation of UAW Local 229.²⁰ Drawing on archival sources and extensive interviews with former Local 229 president, Edmund Kord, Friedlander indicates how cultural, social and shop floor fragmentation made organization a very difficult task in this unnamed Michigan auto-parts plant. For example, first generation immigrant workers' fear of the boss overcame the anger and resentment the conditions of work engendered. While second generation workers were less deferential their life-cycle - recently married with young families - limited their enthusiasm for union agitation. American Appalachian workers as well as suburban

Anglo-Americans also hung back, reluctant to take chances and unconvinced of the efficacy of union organization. In addition, the communicative isolation engendered by work processes placed limits on organization activity. Conversely, members of youth gangs, their behavior patterns set to an external code of conduct that rejected authority, were often enthusiastic union members once they made the group decision to join the union.

In this complex situation unionism was no spontaneous outburst of collective activity. Organization demanded a dedicated, intelligent and manipulative core of workers. Union organizers overcame barriers by organizing key departments in the factory, by "converting" certain high profile ethnic workers and gang members, and by asserting the union's power over the bosses' power on the shop floor.

Friedlander, through Kord, makes it very clear that the organization process in Local 229 was all about power: how the bosses held it and how the union got it. The union got power first by tapping the hierarchical elements in the ethnic enclave; second, by appearing strong to both bosses and potential members; and third, by asserting union strength through the enforcement of union rules among workers. Friedlander concludes that the need for a strong leadership cadre, in the context of organization, represents the genesis of bureaucratization in the union's structure. The Emergence of a UAW Local shows both the complexity of the initial organization efforts of trade unions and the subsequent influence such an experience has upon the further operation of the union.²¹ Thus, in the United States, some historians have begun to consider the complexities of the organization process in the 1930s and 1940s and how that process affected both incident and institution.²²

That these and similar studies have had some effect on the views of American historians of labour is indicated in the first chapter of Nelson Lichtenstein's 1982 study of wartime militancy in the CIO unions, Labor's War At Home. Lichtenstein argues that one of the central issues of intra-union tension in the immediate pre-war period were unauthorized strikes led by local activists that "flowed organically out of the struggles of the immediate pre-union era, when organizers had used such tactics to flex the union's muscles and demonstrate the power of collective action to those still uncommitted to the UAW."²³

Canadian historians, however, have yet to grapple with the organization process to the extent of their counterparts in the United States. While some popular memoirs have been published that offer some insight into the complex process of organizing, no sustained analysis has appeared.²⁴ Of two Canadian history texts on the Canadian working class and trade unionism the first devotes a few pages to union organizing in the 1930s and 1940s and the other focuses primarily on institutional developments in the period.²⁵ The dearth of information in these two publications is largely indicative of the limited study that has been done in this area. Suggestive of new directions is Robert Storey's 1983 article "Unionization versus Corporate Welfare: 'The Dofasco Way'".²⁶ Storey chronicles how the Dominion Foundries and Steel Company (Dofasco) employed corporate paternalism and coercion to organize their employees the "Dofasco Way", successfully outmaneuvering union organizers to maintain a union-free operation. Storey's study demonstrates the important role organizers played in convincing workers to join unions. Their defeat is testimony to sophisticated and concentrated opposition faced by organizers and the workers they sought to organize. It is therefore

important that the organizational process be studied so that our understanding of this period of institutional growth is enhanced. Even during the heady days of the CIO in the late 1930s and early 1940s union growth was never a given; issues of power, politics, organizational strength, tactics and employer response all played a role in the success or failure of union representation bids. The study that follows this introduction looks at the organizational process of a Trail, British Columbia local of the International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers in the years 1938 to 1945.

The decision to study Mine Mill Local 480 was a relatively easy one. Local 480 met a number of requirements that were necessary to carry out the study I had in mind. First, there were plenty of records available for research purposes. The University of British Columbia has available extant holdings of Mine Mill Canada papers which include numerous records from Local 480. Executive and General Membership minutes, various copies of Mine Mill newspapers including Local 480's organizing paper the Commentator, and collections of correspondence provided me with the opportunity to study the "official" records of the organizing drive. Second, Local 480 provided a constituency that fit well with a study of industrial unionism. The members and potential members of the local were employed at one of British Columbia's largest industrial complexes, the Consolidated Mining and Smelting Company of Canada (CM&S) metallurgical and chemical plants at Trail. CM&S employed some 4000 workers at its Trail complex in the late 1930s and somewhat more than that during World War II. Thus Trail smelter and chemical workers, employed in large numbers for a highly organized and established industrial concern were clearly the type of workers that CIO organizers were recruiting in the

first years of massive industrial union growth in Canada. Finally, organizational efforts by Local 480 ran from summer 1938 to summer 1944 before union recognition was achieved. The first contract between the local and CM&S was not signed until January 1945. This long organizational period lent itself to my interest in studying the complex interactions of capital, the state, unions and workers during the organizational period of union life.

In order to analyze the lengthy organizational drive in Trail a number of factors will be examined in the chapters to follow. Chapter One will discuss the historical background of both the company and union up to the beginning of the organizational period in 1938. Chapter Two will consider the drive from 1938 to 1939 and will examine labour legislation, union tactics and corporate response. Chapter Three will continue an analysis of the issues above but will focus primarily on the effect of World War II up to early 1944. Chapter Four focuses on winning recognition and a contract in 1944 and 1945 and offers some concluding remarks. This thesis argues that, while a number of factors were important, labour legislation had the greatest impact on the organization process and was instrumental in the successful completion of Local 480's campaign. What follows is a study based largely on the official records of large institutions; union, company and government, but its main purpose is to gain a better understanding of the complex, conflict-ridden and often contradictory human endeavour that constitutes union organization.

Chapter One

Beginnings

The two organizations that would spend much time, money and energy vying for the loyalty of Trail smelter and chemical workers in the years 1938 to 1945 had a common goal: to effectively organize workers. Their motives were, however, diametrically opposed. CM&S, under the guidance of General Manager and Vice-President Selwyn G. Blaylock, saw the organization of employees as a means of controlling workers and assuring profits for himself and his employers, the board of directors and stockholders of the Consolidated Mining and Smelting Company of Canada. The union activists of Mine Mill, on the other hand, viewed organization as a way to limit employer power by creating strong unions that could provide increased wages, job security and safety, and limit the often arbitrary and unfair labour practices that flowed out of capital's primary focus on profits. As the following analysis will indicate, up to 1938 S.G. Blaylock and the management of CM&S had met and maintained their organizational goals much more successfully than Mine Mill.

The Company

By 1938 CM&S had established itself as a successful enterprise that managed its mines, plants, profits and people effectively and efficiently. Located at Trail, in the South-East corner of British Columbia some 400 miles from Vancouver, CM&S had been in operation since the early 1900s. The original smelter at Trail was purchased in 1898 from American mining engineer and entrepreneur Augustus Heinze as part of a package deal that included Heinze's railway franchise, a potential threat to the CPR's new route through Southern British Columbia. The

smelter was initially considered a \$200,000 albatross, an additional and unwanted holding purchased only because Heinze would not surrender the franchise unless the "moderately profitable" copper smelter, which he built in 1896 to tap local mines, was included. Aided by easy access to Kootenay ores and cheap coal and coke transported from the Crow's Nest Pass, the company began to produce lead bullion in 1901. In 1902, encouraged by a five dollar per ton bounty on lead paid by the federal government, the Canadian Smelter Works, as it was now known, became the first Canadian producer of refined lead and the first smelter in the world to refine lead bullion using the newly developed Betts Electrolytic Process.¹

In 1906 the CPR reorganized its Kootenay holdings into the Consolidated Mining and Smelting Company of Canada Limited (CM&S). CM&S was a consolidation of various CPR interests in the region that included three mines producing silver, lead, copper and gold, the Rossland Power and Light Company which supplied hydroelectricity to local mines, and the Trail smelter.²

In 1911 CM&S purchased the Sullivan Mine in Kimberley, rich in both lead and zinc ore. In 1916, at the request of the Imperial Munitions Board, CM&S began producing zinc, a key element in armament production. This small electrolytic zinc plant, its financing guaranteed by the IMB, went on to produce over 20,000 tons of zinc in the next three years.³ Wartime profits led to another round of expansion in the 1920s which saw the successful completion of an immense research and development project that enabled CM&S to refine the rich but difficult ores from the Sullivan Mine. The new metallurgical process, selective flotation, was originally discovered in Australia and tailored to Sullivan ores by CM&S engineers.⁴

Selective flotation took the Sullivan ore, high grade but with a very high zinc component that made other elements difficult to refine, and economically separated it to produce rich lead and zinc concentrates as well as usable iron tailings. By 1923 selective flotation was incorporated into the production stream. This process combined with the extensive Sullivan Mine deposits to assure increased production and profits for CM&S.⁵

The 1920s were marked by a rapid expansion in annual metallurgical production. Lead output increased over 11 times from 13,000 to 150,000 tons and zinc production increased nearly seven-fold from 18,000 to 120,000 tons per year.⁶ By 1930 the small copper smelter reluctantly purchased in 1898 was one of the world's largest lead and zinc producers.⁷ By 1931 CM&S had also expanded into chemical fertilizer production. This move was, by and large a defensive measure brought about by a Washington State farmers' law suit that claimed crop damage as a result of nearly 10,000 tons of sulphur dioxide gas per month the smelter smokestacks discharged into the atmosphere above Trail. CM&S lost the suit and paid over \$350,000 in damages, but by that time they had built a chemical fertilizer plant to capture and utilize the now costly sulphur dioxide gas.⁸ Thus by 1931 CM&S controlled virtually every phase of production in its increasingly large empire. From the rock face where the ore lay to the by-product of the smelting and refining process, the company was able to manage each step in the production chain in order to assure profit.

Profit it did; paying back over \$10 million in funded debt by 1926, CM&S was able to finance its large expansion in the 1920s primarily from retained earnings.⁹ While the 1930s presented a challenge to CM&S

profits on the whole the company fared very well indeed. In fact, from 1929 to 1939 CM&S incurred losses in only two years: \$713,000 in 1931 and \$2.9 million in 1932. Even in these two years the company continued to pay dividends, approximately \$2.75 million in 1931 and 1.5 million in 1932. Other than these two relatively dismal years CM&S managed to show a profit of over one million dollars annually over the depression period.¹⁰

This successful weathering of the depression was not achieved at a cost to the physical plant or mining operations at CM&S. General Manager and company Vice-President Selwyn G. Blaylock and his managers continued to express confidence in a brighter future, seeing the depression as just another obstacle to be hurdled. In his contribution to the 1932 Annual Report, a year where losses were nearly three million dollars, General Manager Blaylock made his view on the issue of neglect very clear. Despite adverse conditions, stated Blaylock, "no attempt has been made to reduce cost by high-grading the ore bodies, by letting plants run down or in any way discounting the future ...".¹¹ This attitude is also reflected in management's decision to complete construction of the fertilizer plants despite reduced earnings. The decision not to "discount the future" paid huge dividends; the 1937 Annual Report showed a record-breaking profit of \$14.66 million. While earnings "corrected" somewhat the following year profits still remained solid at \$6.21 million.¹² Of course someone had to pay for the maintenance of profits in a soft market, and CM&S management turned to the one productive sector where cuts could be made without "discounting the future": its workers. Workers lived with both wage reductions and short time during the depression period. 1930 saw layoffs and a reduction in pay. In 1931 the vari-

ous metal price and efficiency bonuses were reduced and the number of shifts per month were cut. By 1932, CM&S' worst year during the depression, wages were reduced another five percent and single men were cut from three-quarter time to half-time. When profits rebounded in 1933 Blaylock restored one of the five percent reductions and began calculating the efficiency bonus once again. Shift reductions remained common practice throughout the depression, despite some very profitable years. It would appear that the company used workers as a buffer between the vagaries of a depression economy and the maintenance of profits, a practice not uncommon among many of North America's "best" corporations in this period.¹³

The CM&S program of reduced shifts rather than large layoffs tempered this practice somewhat. Furthermore, unlike many other large companies, CM&S did not renege on its corporate welfare policies. During the depression, CM&S continued to operate recreational facilities such as the curling and hockey rink, to support various charities, self-help societies and pension plans. In addition, the company provided free seed and fertilizer for employees who wished to plant gardens on company owned garden plots just outside the City.¹⁴ This continuation of corporate paternalism seems in line with Blaylock's decision not to "discount the future": Trail was a long way from other industrial centers and a mass layoff would probably have resulted in a mass exodus. This would have led to a long and costly recruitment and training programs for new workers when the economy returned to normal, as Blaylock was confident it would. Thus, the kind of management practices that CM&S applied to its inanimate, productive capacities it also applied to the human element in the productive chain.

The workers of CM&S were managed under the auspices of the Workman's Cooperative Committee (WCC), an organization that had ensconced management prerogative under the rubric of cooperation since World War I. The WCC was formed by CM&S management in the wake of a strike by smelter workers in 1917. While the strike was crushed, CM&S, hoping to avoid such disruptive and unprofitable confrontations in the future, decided to "organize" its workers. CM&S was clearly part of an increasing trend toward corporate welfarism within the Canadian business community in this respect. Between 1918 and 1920 the company put in place an industrial relations package that included numerous employee benefits as well as a company sponsored Workmens' Cooperative Committee designed to circumvent labour unrest.¹⁵

The committee was composed of representatives from every department, elected by the employees. Its duties were "to help to interpret management's ideas to the employees and those of employees to management."¹⁶ The committee would of course operate under the guiding hand of CM&S management and be financed from company coffers. To assure that a cooperative tone was maintained, upper management both called and attended nearly every meeting. As one former smelter man noted: "The workers had the opportunity of electing their representatives but Mr. Blaylock [General Manager from 1918] attended all the meetings ... and most of the men that were elected were company men and afraid to speak out on behalf of the workers. They were always prepared to say yes to Mr. Blaylock".¹⁷ This meant that management decisions were clearly articulated and rubber stamped by the committee; the WCC was never intended to be a voice for the workers. CM&S was free to carry out management prerogatives with a

minimum of worker interference, its main concern was that employee presence and acquiescence be maintained.

CM&S combined the practice of cooperation with corporate paternalism, providing employee pensions, medical plans, company funds in support of municipal projects and local education, corporate sponsorship of local events and organizations as well as annual employee picnics and summer excursions. This web of paternalism also included a company mortgage plan that allowed workers to purchase or build their own homes. Benefits such as company medical services also served to limit union inroads. As historian Alan Derickson has noted, union-operated hospitals fostered solidarity among workers, and in the larger community. They also focused attention on industrial health and safety issues.¹⁸ Under a company-sponsored program employers buttressed their superior position among workers and in the community through the provision of medical services. This serviced to limit independent worker activity in the area of medical care, and expanded the web of paternalism.¹⁹

These programs were not in any way philanthropic, like the corporate welfare plans of other companies. The WCC and its attendant benefits was a business practice designed to retain workers and maintain labour peace at a minimum cost. For example, medical and pension plans were fifty percent employee financed but fully administered by CM&S. The company mortgage plan operated on retained earnings without a loss since its inception in 1921.²⁰ There is little doubt that the corporate welfare policies were designed to protect company interests. Blaylock would have likely agreed with the vice-president of one of Canada's largest steel companies when he stated in 1919, that the purpose of such programs was "to give them [employees] a direct interest in the business and promote

continuity of employment ... [because] continuous and contented service is an asset to any company."²¹

Thus the company provided numerous services to workers at minimal cost while buttressing an unequal power relationship. By administering this non-obligatory system CM&S made the "carrot" of paternalism also the "stick" of coercion. After all, what was freely given could be as freely withdrawn. Corporate welfare was a powerful management tool, for, as historian Craig Heron has noted: "In an age before social security legislation, the corporation's welfare might be, in the words of a retired Algoma steelworker, 'the only type of security you could have'".²²

The ultimate power of CM&S remained virtually unchallenged throughout the 1920s and 1930s. The WCC performed its function, promoting cooperation and providing the appearance of worker input into workplace issues, enhancing worker acquiescence and management hegemony.

Despite CM&S' encouragement of employee owned housing and the existence of numerous small businesses Trail remained for all intents and purposes a company town. CM&S was the largest single employer, in fact the only employer of consequence in the city. The economic livelihood of everyone was therefore intimately tied to the fortunes and activities of the "Company". In addition, CM&S funds provided for the construction and operation of recreational facilities such as the hockey and curling rinks as well as funding the city's hockey team.²³ Trail's architecture was also a testimony to CM&S hegemony. Not only was Trail physically dominated by the presence of CM&S plants towering high above the city, but public buildings such as City Hall, Memorial Hall and the company department store were designed by CM&S engineer C.A. Broderick.²⁴

Municipal offices were, more often than not, held by CM&S middle management. CM&S Master Mechanic Herbert Clark was the Mayor of Trail throughout the 1920s and again during World War II. According to local historian Elsie Turnbull, General Manager Blaylock

had a close relationship with key men in the community. Knowing Herb Clark for his work as Master Mechanic he relied on him to run the affairs of the town for what Blaylock considered their best interests. In return the Company helped generously in all projects, matching dollar for dollar and contributing machinery and the time of workmen for projects ranging from a new waterworks system to a new school.²⁵

This largesse was provided by a company that paid no municipal taxes to the City of Trail. In 1922, despite the considerable opposition of Trail taxpayers, CM&S formed the Municipality of Tadanac just a few miles from the smelter city. This move protected CM&S holdings from municipal taxes and provided a company municipality in the area where company executives had built homes to escape the acrid, acid-laden smoke from the smelter stacks.²⁶

During the 1920s any threats to company control were handled swiftly and directly. Mine Mill activist Cedric Cox alleged that in the 1920s "if an organizer of a union came into town he was usually marched out of town with a rifle at his back by the Pinkerton men, ... [but] ... in the 1930s [Trail] was a fairly open town."²⁷ The increased openness in the 1930s was probably a result of CM&S confidence that Trail's inhabitants, like the citizens of General Motors dominated Flint, Michigan, had internalized company power to the point where they believed that what was good for the "Company" was good for them. The bus driver in Catherine Brody's novel of depression era Flint, Nobody Starves, could have been speaking of Trail and CM&S when he declared that the "company owns this town".²⁸

Like Trail, Flint was a city fully dependent on a single company. General Motors, like CM&S, used that knowledge to build a solid edifice of control that was perhaps more effective because it was forged in a largely non-coercive manner over a long period of time.²⁹ In this atmosphere community standards were, in many ways, company standards.³⁰

A measure of company success in manufacturing consent can be gauged by considering an area where workers were able to exercise free will, by leaving the employ of CM&S. This was rarely carried out. Prior to World War II the average annual employee turnover rate was around ten percent.³¹

By the 1930s, no doubt aided by the depression economy, CM&S seemed increasingly assured in its control of its workers. In the 1931 Annual Report Blaylock heartily applauded the cooperative attitude of CM&S employees noting that "cordial relations were maintained between employees and management" in a particularly difficult year, the second in a row that workers received wage cuts and shift reductions. In 1935, with profits restored, Blaylock stated that "again costs and recoveries indicate the continued good will and cooperation of the entire force." In 1937 over \$14 million in profits gave the General Manager cause to celebrate the success of the WCC. "The cooperative committee system", he wrote, "has undoubtably gained strength year by year. Their cooperation has been most efficient and whole hearted."³² So pleased was Blaylock that in a Financial Post article in the spring of 1937 he boasted that through cooperation he had achieved peace in the industry.³³ By the end of the following year the CM&S dominated peace would be shattered by the first concerted union activity in Trail Since World War I.

The Union

While CM&S history is marked by near continuous development the organization that sought to challenge the company, the International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers, was essentially a brand new organization in the 1930s, despite its existence in one form or another since the 1890s. Mine Mill's forerunner, the Western Federation of Miners (WFM), was a militant miners' union formed in 1892 to represent hard rock miners of western North America. The union led numerous strikes and organizing campaigns throughout the west, battling mine owners from Coeur d'Alene, Idaho to Rossland, British Columbia. The WFM was also instrumental in the formation of the celebrated and much-studied Industrial Workers of the World. In 1901 the WFM had as many as 18 locals in British Columbia and during the next decade extended to Northern Ontario.

The WFM, however, suffered virulent employer opposition and was rent by vociferous factionalism. Large gains in membership were often marked by just as dramatic losses brought about by both failed strikes and political divisions. In 1914 the WFM claimed 65,000 members, 4,000 in Canada. By 1916 its United States' membership had shrunk by half and Canadian membership was rapidly declining. In that year the WFM changed its name to the International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers. In part the name change reflected the union's broader jurisdiction but, as others have suggested, it was also a bid to revitalize sagging membership and to move beyond the bitter losses and factionalism of earlier years.³⁴

The new incarnation of the WFM was also less militant. It reaffiliated with the American Federation of Labor and repudiated the IWW's

syndicalist tactics, declaring that workers' only hope was to "secure industrial justice ... through the bona fide labour movement."³⁵ This change in philosophy did not improve Mine Mills' fortunes. Eschewing broad political activity and direct action put Mine Mill on the outside of the remarkable, if short-lived, One Big Union. In fact Mine Mill's new gospel, "bona fide unionism", contributed to the defeat of the only union representation Trail smelter workers enjoyed prior to 1944.

Mine Mill signed a contract with CM&S in 1916 but by 1917, their weekly pay-packet eroded by excessive wartime inflation, smelter workers, led by local militants, struck for higher wages despite the existence of a signed contract. Both the local and international union executive clung to the sanctity of contract and repudiated the strike. Union repudiation combined with employer intransigence and poor metal prices to defeat the striking smelter workers. The strike was lost, strike leaders blacklisted and the union dissolved.³⁶

By 1920, after severe losses in Cobalt and Kirkland Lake Ontario, loss of locals to the OBU, and other defeats, only eight Canadian locals remained in operation.³⁷ Decline was similar in the United States. After 1929 the depression took its toll as well; by 1932 only six locals existed, several only as "paper locals" with no active members.³⁸

In 1933 the United States' Districts were revitalized by Roosevelt's National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA). NIRA Codes protecting workers' right to organize trade unions, "gave a spark of encouragement which stirred hopes that a union could be revived or developed."³⁹ Mine Mill organized 3500 miners in Butte, Montana in a one week period in June 1933. By the end of the year Mine Mill boasted at least twenty-eight locals.⁴⁰ The Wagner Act, passed in 1935, was a further impetus to

growth and despite the limitations posed by the Codes and Supreme Court challenges to the NIRA and the Wagner Act Mine Mill grew rapidly; by 1938 the union had enrolled 50,000 members, 4000 of them in Canada.⁴¹

Like many other Canadian unions, new and old, whose fortunes turned during the 1930s, Mine Mill owed a fair amount to the rise of the CIO in the United States. However, it was the aura of success of the CIO rather than the active participation of American CIO operatives or CIO money that aided industrial unionism in Canada. Canadian organization took place under the rubric of the CIO but was generally carried out by activists who had been involved in organizational activities in ACCL or WUL unions.

Irving Abella has argued that while the CIO enjoyed massive growth in the United States in the mid-1930s, it had no interest in organizing Canadian workers until they had completed their work at home. Therefore on their own,

without informing the CIO, scores of ex-WUL organizers began organizing unions in Canada. ... Within a few months these men, and a handful of others, had organized hundreds of workers and scores of new CIO locals. Yet not one CIO organizer or one cent of CIO money had crossed the border ... [prior to 1936] ...⁴²

In fact the CIO's first major Canadian breakthrough, the organization of nearly 3000 steelworkers at DOSCO in Sydney, Nova Scotia, has recently been attributed to communist organizers who "turned over" the workers to Silby Barrett and the Steel Workers' Organizing Committee.⁴³

In 1936, Mine Mill began organizing in Canada, directing efforts from Sudbury, Ontario. The drive was supported by a core of activists made up of "a few old OBU members ... workers from the defunct MWUC [Mine Workers Union of Canada, a WUL Union] ... and people from the remnants of

the WUL".⁴⁴ As union activist and miner Bob Carlin has noted, communists were one of the few groups of people "that would dare to go out and take a chance in this organizing."⁴⁵ And organize they did. In 1936 three northern Ontario unions were granted charters. The union also claimed a local in Flin Flon, Manitoba and six locals in British Columbia.⁴⁶ However by 1937 the initial promise of Mine Mill remained unfulfilled. In northern Ontario the Kirkland Lake and Timmins' locals were stalled, victims of factional disputes and employer opposition. In Sudbury a Mine Mill organizer was beaten and the union office ransacked by anti-union thugs.⁴⁷ Despite such setbacks organization work continued and in late spring 1938 the union launched a highly publicized drive in Canada's far western province.

The target for Mine Mill in British Columbia was the hard rock miners and smelter workers in the province's major metallurgical mining centre, the Kootenays. Mine Mill Local 289, a Vancouver chemical workers' union, launched the drive with a conference in June 1938. Delegates outlined the need for organization discussing "wages and hours, [the] ravages of silicosis and leading, occupational diseases common to the industry, workings of the company towns and company unions, high cost of living and inner union activity."⁴⁸ George Barnet, Secretary Treasurer of Ymir Local 300 and conference chair, spoke on an issue deemed of particular importance after nearly a decade of depression, job security:

Being a married man, I believe the fundamental principles of unions should be to establish job security. The difference in the non-union camp ... is a contrast. This convention is a move toward province-wide organization ... that will make job security, safe working conditions and improved wages an accomplished fact.⁴⁹

The man chosen to lead the campaign was Arthur H. (Slim) Evans. Evans was a high profile figure on the Canadian left. Born in Toronto in 1890, Evans had been involved in a series of radical movements and unions since he was a young man. Evans had been a member of the IWW and was jailed for his participation in free speech fights in Kansas in 1912. He later joined the OBU while working in the coal mines of Drumheller, Alberta. In 1923, working as secretary of the Drumheller United Mine Workers local, Evans authorized funds for a wildcat strike, was prosecuted for embezzlement by the UMW international executive, and sentenced to three years in jail. He joined the Communist Party in 1926 and became a key organizer of the unemployed during the 1930s. In 1935 Evans was closely involved in the WUL inspired "On To Ottawa Trek".⁵⁰ It would seem that, given the immediate publication of an organizational newspaper, the Union Bulletin, and the appointment of a high profile organizer, Mine Mill's organizational drive was not to be a clandestine affair. Why, when organization drives were still marked by "underground" activity and direct company violence, was the British Columbia campaign to be both public and publicity oriented?

The answer lies in a combination of factors including, of course, the rise of the CIO and the existence of a core group of trade unionists willing to undertake the hard work and risks involved in organizing workers. But the immediate impetus for this particular drive was British Columbia's new labour legislation, the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act (ICA Act). The legislation, passed in ~~April~~ 1937, guaranteed British Columbia workers' right to organize and offered some sanctions against employer intimidation. Section 4 of the Act stated that: "It shall be lawful for employees to form themselves into a trade union, and

to join the same when formed." Section 7(1) provided for a \$500 fine for employers guilty of intimidation of employees. Other sections provided for fines against employers who refused "to bargain collectively with members of a trade union representing the majority choice of the employees ...".⁵¹ Although the fines were small the legislation did seem to indicate that unions had achieved some state supported rights regarding organization and bargaining. Thus, the ICA Act allowed Mine Mill, buoyed by the rising tide of industrial unionism, to launch a broad-based, public, organizational drive in British Columbia.

The main target of the drive were the CM&S plants at Trail. The opportunity to organize the smelting and chemical complex must have been an exciting prospect to Mine Mill activists. Clearly the organization of Trail would be a major breakthrough for the union. If the benefits to smelter and chemical workers were obvious to organizers so too were the benefits to Mine Mill. Organizing such a large group of workers would assure Mine Mill a sizeable core of members and a sizeable income to pursue other organizational goals. As well, the successful unionization of such a large anti-union corporation as CM&S was of inestimable value in providing the "aura of success" so important in the initial stages of union building.⁵² On the other hand, CM&S was sure to be a formidable opponent; the company had successfully sustained its own special form of "worker organization" for over twenty years, and it was unlikely to give up that power without a fight. Neither party anticipated how long and hard that fight would be.

Chapter Two

Building a Foundation

While Mine Mill's organizational drive at Trail in 1938 and 1939 was marked by a number of dramatic episodes it was not marked by similarly dramatic gains in membership. Instead the thirteen months prior to Canada's entry into World War II was a period of classic organization and counter-organization strategies on the part of Mine Mill organizers and CM&S management. While some gains were made in terms of increasing the union's presence at CM&S plants and in the community, no breakthroughs occurred. This period underscores CM&S's virulent anti-union stance, the weaknesses of the ICA Act as an organizational aid and the social and structural constraints that limited membership gains.

The task facing Arthur Evans when he arrived in the Trail district in August 1938 was phenomenal. Evans was the only full time organizer in the area. His immediate task was to organize Trail as well as any other miners interested in forming a union. To aid him in his work were a small group of communists in Rossland, some sympathetic CCF members and some activist trade unionists from area locals in Ymir and Nelson - all volunteers with other responsibilities and jobs.¹

While organizational activities did go on in other work places the main focus of Evans' drive was the nearly 4000 workers at CM&S's Trail complex. Evans' first goal was to overcome the social and structural constraints to worker organization in Trail; he needed to battle company hegemony and the physical division of workers at the CM&S plants.

As has been noted earlier, after twenty years of uninterrupted company control CM&S's well being and the well being of Trail were

synonymous among much of the city's citizenry. For others, less enamored with the CM&S plan, the possibility of limiting company power must have been an exciting, if daunting, prospect; twenty years of effective "carrot and stick" rule probably made resistance seem very risky indeed. Evans' job then was to try to break through the effective hegemony the company had forged.

Evans' other goal was to overcome the structural barriers to organization posed by the physical placement of workers. The CM&S plants were spread out over many acres; workers toiled in over fifty departments at a variety of tasks from maintenance and warehousing to direct production jobs in various metallurgical and chemical plants throughout the complex. The work was often loud and the heat fierce in the metal processing areas. The fumes from the chemical and electrolytic processes made work uncomfortable and conversation difficult. Workers would sometimes slip out a back door for a breath of "fresher" air and a chat, but personal contact between large groups of workers was limited.² These divisions between workers on the job were a significant barrier to organization, especially in a plant with nearly 4000 workers. It was obviously impossible for Evans to forge a union on the job; the initial stages of organization would have to be carried on in the community.³ Mine Mill and Evans approached the problem of social and structural constraints by seeking to raise the union profile and by battering against the perception of CM&S as a positive, paternal force that was caring and democratic in its dealings with its employees; it sought to chip away at the myth of the "happy CM&S family".

After a number of small secret meetings in the hills in and around Trail and Rossland, Mine Mill launched a public campaign in the early

fall. On September 4, Labour Day Monday, Evans and a number of union activists from Nelson and Ymir distributed copies of Mine Mill Local 289's paper the Union Bulletin to workers' homes in Trail. The paper had only a short article outlining the Trail campaign but did serve to announce the arrival of Mine Mill to Trail and to provide smelter workers with news from the B.C. labour front. A similar distribution took place on September 19. Again, little of the Union Bulletin copy was related to Trail but it reasserted the union's presence in the company town; continuity and an air of confidence were important qualities to emphasize if Mine Mill was to break through the barriers to organization in Trail.⁴ One local merchant, the editor of the Trail Daily Ad-News was quick to indicate that not all of Trail's citizens applauded the "Company". The Ad-News celebrated the Union Bulletin's arrival with a direct attack on the cooperative committee system. The September 5 editorial noted: "The Union Bulletin ... was distributed throughout the city last night. Its general tone was reminiscent of the days when men made their wage contracts unhampered by 'happy family' ideas and big dividends."⁵ Apparently there already existed some cracks in the CM&S wall. But Evans would soon find out that they were few and far between and CM&S and its happy family were only too happy to carry out repairs.

Company repairs began quickly with the distribution, on September 6 of an anti-CIO paper, the Labour Truth. The Labour Truth was published by the company unions of the British Columbia Shipping Federation after it smashed a longshoremen's strike in 1935. In typical company union fashion the paper applauded "independent" trade unions and vilified the CIO unions as foreign organizations dominated by communists. An example of its approach is a cartoon from December, 1937 that depicts CIO leader

John L. Lewis as a Charlie McCarthy for a baboon with a hammer and sickle; the caption read "CIO puppet for Communist Party".⁶ CM&S's use of Labour Truth to prop up the company union is indicative of the central weakness of the ICA Act. The Act continued to protect the existence of the workmen's committees and "independent" unions of British Columbia's employers. No part of the statute specifically forbade company support of worker organizations. Such a clause would have undermined the legal and moral justifications of employers who argued that their anti-union activities were acts of defense against outside interference in local "independent" worker organizations. The central theme of Labour Truth's articles propped up that particular myth.

With the distribution of Labour Truth, city merchants were well aware, if they were not before, that Trail was going to be a company-union battleground. Unlike the Ad-News most chose CM&S. On September 21 Trail radio station CJAT refused to broadcast a CIO speech "prepared to answer questions asked by smelter employees ... which were raised as a result of the open distribution of the Union Bulletin on Labour Day ...". The station manager explained, according to Evans, that "he 'had not considered the whole matter before' and 'owing to the present situation in Trail ... in the interest of the listening public' it was deemed ill advisable."⁷

Evans published the speech and distributed it on September 23, the same day that CM&S raised smeltermen's wages by twenty-five cents a day. He used the incidents of the previous few weeks as an organizing tool, claiming that they reflected union progress. In an article entitled "Operators Alarmed" Evans argued that the "mine and smeltermen's union is striking home, and that there are great prospects ahead". Evans then

attacked the distribution of Labour Truth as an attempt by the company to undermine the union - by "a well known red herring route ... seeking to scare hard rock workers with the much abused and rather moth-eaten 'communist' bogeyman". Evans further charged that Blaylock and CM&S were behind CJAT's refusal to broadcast his CIO talk, calling it "a clumsy attempt to deny free-speech a la Hitler." Finally Evans charged that CM&S's twenty-five cent raise was nothing more than a transparent attempt by the company to undermine the drive and "proving that owners recognize just what a union would do for the workers ...".⁸ Whether these actions reflected the "positive prospects ahead" is questionable. But that CM&S was not about to "roll over" in the face of union opposition was not in question at all. In fact Evans' comments were published the day after CM&S or its supporters distributed an anti-union broadside that may have been responsible for the only incident of property destruction and direct intimidation recorded during the organizing campaign.

On October 2 copies of the September 24 issue of Liberty Magazine was distributed "free of charge" to CM&S employees. Over 1500 CM&S employees were mailed copies of Liberty with a typed, mimeographed sheet that instructed the reader to "turn to page 13". There an article by the former Mayor of Akron, Ohio, entitled "Why Akron is a Ghost Town", claimed that the poor condition of the rubber industry was a direct result of CIO unions. The article contained information on the organization of a vigilante group that had "marched upon the offices of the outside organizers, dismantled them, rounded up the CIO organizers and ran them out of town."⁹ The article's message was crystal clear to at least a few people in Trail and district; in the next few days both Evans and his landlady received telephone threats and Evans' car was destroyed.

The question of who carried out these actions was never resolved but the facts surrounding the theft of Evans' car have never been disputed. On the evening of October 5, Evans' car, decorated for a "CIO Parade" the following day, was stolen from the front of his boarding house, towed up smelter hill, through the municipality of Tadanac, set on fire and pushed over the bank at Stony Creek. The union made much of the incident, claiming that it was direct intimidation and calling for a probe by the Attorney General's office; no arrests resulted or direct links made to CM&S. As local historian Elsie Turnbull put it, "rumors flying around Trail consisted of different stories to fit every ideology."¹⁰ Nonetheless, it would be surprising if Mine Mill organizers, chronically short on funds, would have destroyed their only vehicle for propaganda purposes.

As a result of the Liberty distribution Mine Mill brought CM&S up on charges of intimidation under the ICA Act. A local magistrate dismissed the charges when the head of CM&S's Employment Department, C.W. Guillaume, testified that the chair of the WCC, Tim Buscombe, approached him with a copy of Liberty Magazine suggesting that the article on page thirteen would be a "good one to distribute to CM&S employees." The magistrate therefore ruled that the WCC was not acting under the direction of CM&S and intimidation charges were stayed.¹¹ The ICA Act's failure to address the issue of company-dominated unions thus allowed CM&S to avoid responsibility for, at the very least, its tacit approval of such anti-union activity.

The Liberty incident did not mark the end of the publication war, but by the time of the court case Mine Mill had successfully established itself as a dissenting voice within the CM&S's "happy family". In fact

by November 1 Mine Mill had established a local organizing paper, the Commentator, which was printed for the union by the Trail Ad-news. The Commentator pounded at CM&S hegemony, attacking company management and policies. The paper criticized company hospital and pension plans, arguing that the costs were too high and that workers paid for the programs while CM&S untruthfully claimed they were supported by the company. The bonus system was also attacked as arbitrary and unfair. The paper also charged that company houses, whether rented or purchased, were of inferior quality. These charges, usually accompanied by facts and figures, were often supported by letters to the editor. Such assaults were invariably followed by remonstrations to workers to join an organization that would put a stop to such unfair practices - Mine Mill. The Commentator also carried numerous reprints of articles from other union papers noting that CIO union members received higher pay, more holidays and better job security than non-union workers.¹²

Meanwhile, organizers launched an attack on the mainstay of company power, the Workmen's Cooperative Committee. The WCC was the obvious next target for Mine Mill. Because the cooperative committee represented company control, its defeat by union forces would serve to indicate union strength to reluctant workers as well as allow the union to confront the company head on, rather than through the paper. As union member Cedric Cox recalled, the strategy was "to make inroads into the company union so that we could get a voice in there and let the workers know what we were doing."¹³

The actions of pro-company committee members provided the union with the opportunity to "make inroads" during the autumn of 1938. Tim Buscombe, the committee man found responsible for the magazine's distri-

bution, was ousted from the chair of the WCC in late October. Buscombe's defeat, as a result of committee vote, could be interpreted as an attempt at crisis management by CM&S and the committee. However by late November it became clear that members of the committee were willing to censure anti-union intimidation. In December the new chairman of the WCC, Knowles was thrown out of office when members learned that he had intimidated a local printer into rejecting union work. Apparently Knowles and a colleague had "canvassed" local merchants suggesting that they not support the Ad-News because it handled union orders. Members called for Knowles' resignation and threatened to resign themselves. At this point Blaylock entered the meeting; when questioned, he denied any CM&S involvement and once again the committee chair suffered ignominious defeat.¹⁴

While the WCC battlefront was relatively quiet during January, in February things began to heat up. This time WCC members intervened on behalf of a fellow worker. The WCC called for the reinstatement of an unemployed worker who was late for his bi-monthly registration with the company (all unemployed CM&S workers had to report to the employment office every two weeks in order to remain on the recall list). While C.W. Guillaume, supported by Blaylock, refused to consider the WCC request the action itself indicates opposition to company control was growing in the WCC.¹⁵ On February 10 the WCC again flexed its muscles when it rejected Blaylock's request that the committee approve a motion making the WCC the official bargaining representative of the workers. Obviously Blaylock and CM&S were attempting to regain control by buttressing the legitimacy of the WCC.

CM&S also attempted to salvage WCC relations through a bit of old fashioned, and patently transparent, bribery. CM&S sponsored its "first ever" joint committee meeting between the Trail and Kimberley cooperative committees. Trail members attended a three-day meeting in Kimberley where the Commentator reported:

the CM&S spent quite a sum of money in wages, transportation, hotel expenses and entertainment both liquid and otherwise, twenty cases of beer being supplied for one meeting alone ... The committee men all enjoyed themselves ... particularly getting a kick out of the sad plight of Guillaume and Blaylock.

The union men used the opportunity to greet their Kimberley brothers who "were supplied with and eagerly accepted quantities of CIO literature."¹⁶

These developments seemed to portend a great future for Mine Mill in Trail. In the February 20 issue of the Commentator, CM&S was the butt of an editorial cartoon that reflected union confidence. In the cartoon Blaylock is depicted as a pig jumping into a wallow (the Columbia River), pursued by flies. The caption read: "Heading for the Columbia: It's great what a good organization behind you can do."¹⁷

Brimming with confidence, Evans set in motion a plan to certify the union as bargaining agent for CM&S employees. Evans proposed to do this by launching a petition requesting that the "International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers be the sole bargaining agency in all future negotiations between the Consolidated Mining and Smelting Company of Canada Limited, and the employees of Tadanac and Warfield plants." According to the ICA Act, if a majority of employees signed the petition the company would be required to recognize and bargain with the union. The plan also had an additional bonus: supporters were not required to pay an initiation fee or union dues. This was an important consideration

for many workers reluctant to turn money over to organizers when victory was by no means assured.¹⁹

Despite recent set-backs the management of CM&S was not ready to admit defeat. The company began an all out effort to discredit the union and drum up support for the WCC and "independent" unionism. CM&S, under the auspices of the WCC, but without its formal consent, launched the Cooperator. The broadsheet extolled the virtues of the CM&S-employee cooperation and attacked the CIO and Mine Mill describing both organizations as communist and "foreign labor parasites." The Cooperator viewed CM&S somewhat differently. "Mr. Blaylock and his company", stated one editorial, "have treated us as human beings and provided us with the opportunity to exchange our brawn and what brains we may have for fair wages and a reasonable assurance of security in our jobs."¹⁹ The union was also attacked in editorials broadcast on radio CJAT.²⁰

The most vociferous attack on Mine Mill and Evans came from the Communicator, published in late February, 1939. The Communicator, claiming that it was "Issued By a Group of Bona Fide Tadanac Workers" to "answer Commentator abuses", typically heaped abuse on the CIO and the "dues racket." Further, it "exposed" Evans as a communist and recalled his prison term for the embezzlement of union funds in the 1920s. The paper also charged that Evans could be a company spy! After all, the Communicator claimed, Evans was incarcerated only several months of his three year jail term for embezzlement, and while he was arrested for his part "in the riot of unemployed men marching on Ottawa" he was not prosecuted. There are people, the Communicator stated:

... [who] even venture the opinion that he was sent there [to Regina] to create a riot of such proportions as to justify the authorities breaking up the mob ... before they made good their threat ... They cannot

help wondering who is furnishing all the money that is going for booze and gambling now. They suspect an ulterior purpose in asking us to sign a petition that must later be scrutinized by the company. ... We are not passing judgement on the merits of these suspicions. If Mr. Evans is not on that side of the fence where he would have us believe he is, he is playing his game fairly well. Arising out of the investigations of the La Follette commission on the spy racket within labor unions some enlightening articles have been written. Read them and draw your own conclusion. It is an ominous fact that the company shows little concern in the activities of Mr. Evans. We wonder why?²¹

If the slightly twisted logic of the Communicator's smear campaign may have struck home in some instances, it was mainly because it touted itself as an independent paper published by concerned workers. Just below its masthead the editor had blocked out a section entitled "Who Issues Communicator", the answer was:

This paper is compiled, paid for and circulated by a group of bona fide workers at the Tadanac Smelter, each with the responsibility of a family to raise. It is issued without the knowledge or consent of any official of the company, and there are no officials, foremen or straw bosses in the group.²²

Even the union, ever vigilant for signs of company interference described it as an "anonymous sheet" supposedly published by a group of reactionaries and not one of the "mushroom publications of the CM&S Cooperative Committee."²³ In fact the Communicator's self-description was an outright lie. The paper was published under the direct control and financing of CM&S. In a letter to RCMP headquarters Ottawa, dated October 5, 1939, C.W. Guillaume admitted CM&S involvement in the Communicator:

To be candid regarding the matter of putting our ideas, experience, etc. in writing for Colonel J.A. Macdonald, I do not like it. There is no doubt our propaganda did good work. As a matter of fact, I do not think "propaganda" is the right word for it. It was more in the nature of education, or of selling the conditions that are now and have been in existence for twenty years.

It is true that we, through our paper, exposed the agitator in his true colours and I am thankful to say I believe it is at least dead, if not buried. I am enclosing a copy of the paper that exposed the agitator, but in this connection I must say that I do not like the stuff. [The Communicator is attached to the letter] I shall leave it to your good judgement as to whether you send it to Colonel Macdonald or not.²⁴

While Guillaume may have overstated the effectiveness of the Communicator smear campaign, it probably had some limiting effect on the petition drive. More importantly, the above evidence clearly indicates the company's willingness to circumvent legislation preventing company interference and intimidation of employees seeking to organize. Guillaume's letter also serves to question the authenticity of CM&S's denial of other anti-union activities ascribed to individuals and committees.

Despite CM&S's smear campaign the petition was launched in early March. Mine Mill's British Columbia officials and the International office threw additional support behind the drive as well, voting extra funding and focusing all of British Columbia's organizational activity in Trail. Progress was slow, but by the third week of the drive the union had 746 of the 2244 signatures needed.²⁵

Another facet of Mine Mill's "push" in Trail was a campaign to capture the WCC in April's committee elections. The combination of union control of the WCC and a petition requesting affiliation with Mine Mill would assure union certification by late spring. The Commentator began focusing on the election, calling for a WCC coup by progressives: stating that "if taken advantage of [the WCC] can be a medium through which support can be rallied ..."²⁶ The effectiveness of a committee coup was driven home in late April when miners in the Bridge River Valley repudi-

ated the Pioneer cooperative committee and voted to affiliate with Mine Mill.²⁷

The April elections went well and, according to Evans, "final committee election returns ... showed CM&S workers had defeated all anti-union candidates, with but one seat still in doubt." When the election results came in Evans wrote Blaylock requesting a meeting "in the interest of laying the basis for future peaceful negotiations ...". Blaylock's reply on May 5 made it very clear that the time for "peaceful negotiations" was not at hand. "Dear sir" wrote Blaylock, "I have for attention your letter of April 25 requesting an interview. I have read most issues of your 'Commentator' and 'Union Bulletin' and through them I am forced to the conclusion that no useful purpose could be served by interviews or correspondence with you."²⁸ It would seem that Blaylock and his management team still felt that the workers were not fully in the hands of Mine Mill. This opinion was also reflected in a letter from "Tank Puller", published in the Commentator:

... You certainly made no mistake about the defeat of the reactionaries, but there are still some on the committee who are definitely opportunists, and would do most anything to get in the good graces of Mr. Blaylock. You see in some departments ... the elections went in favor of some bad ones in order to defeat worse ones, so you can easily see what mess things still are.²⁹

That the committee did not follow the lead of their Pioneer brothers and resign en masse suggests that the assessments of both Blaylock and "Tank Puller" were quite correct.

Despite the mixed results of the WCC elections, the organizational push continued. The height of the 1938-1939 campaign was reached at an open air union rally on Sunday May 14. The rally, attended by "1500 smeltermen and their wives", officially opened "to strains of God Save

the King", and participants heard pro-CIO speeches, critical assessments of CM&S policy, and calls to organize from Evans and CM&S employees John McPeake and G.S. Belanger. Evans attacked the WCC plan, pointing out how workers were "cheated out of their 'real' wages by the various schemes of deductions, for shares, bonuses, pension fund etc. ..." and called on them to "exercise their democratic rights" to join a union.³⁰ As spectacular as this "first union rally in twenty years" was made to appear in the labour press, it reflects a building of momentum not a breakthrough; despite small victories the WCC was as yet unrepuated by the majority of workers, and the signature drive was just over the 1000 mark, well short of the 2200 names needed. To bring home the point that he still held the best cards, if not all of them anymore, on May 17 Blaylock "recognized" the WCC as the sole bargaining agent under the ICA Act. Despite his failure to attain WCC approval for such an action no repudiation came from the committee.³¹

Over the next few weeks two major blows set back the union drive considerably; the arrest of Arthur Evans followed by company layoffs and wage cuts. Evans was arrested in Rossland on June 3 for public drunkenness. In 1977 longtime Mine Mill activist Garfield Belanger recalled the incident:

It wasn't until he was in jail that I heard about it - I got a phone call, as did a few others, asking us to come up to the jail because Art was raising hell up there ... he was rattling the bars and so forth and the firemen upstairs couldn't get any sleep and the policeman on duty ... couldn't do anything with Art.

A couple of us ... tried to get him to quieten down but there was no way he would stop. Even the judge went down to see him ... but Art insisted on raising hell. He was really indignant and some of us were pretty mad too, that he wouldn't calm down.

I think he lost some of his following over this incident but it was provoked by the police ...³²

Evans was released on bail, appeared in court on June 17, and received a seven day sentence. As Belanger indicates, Evans' actions were not applauded by union supporters or colleagues. In a situation that demanded that Evans "keep his nose clean", he had made a serious error in judgement. Evans' poor judgement was censured by both the union and the Communist Party and, on July 10, he officially resigned as organizer "due to ill health."³³

While Evans languished in a Rossland jail cell CM&S initiated a twenty-five cent wage cut and escalated layoffs that had begun the previous fall. While the wage cuts and layoffs appear to have been caused by a cash flow problem at CM&S, the result of a decision to pay out \$8 million in dividends on profits of \$6.5 million, the anti-union forces were quick to argue that CM&S's actions were a direct result of CIO activities. Thus the June 19 Commentator reads more like the Financial Post, its front page taken up with turgid descriptions of CM&S's short-term debt, dividend payments, acquisitions and profit ratios, as the union attempted to dampen worker fears of anti-union firings. Worker fears were raised further by the end of CM&S's depression layoff policy; CM&S no longer sought to maintain the work force through reduced time overall, nor did it give job priority to married men; layoffs were now made according to the company's needs.³⁴ There is no evidence of an anti-labour practice regarding layoffs - this would have been a blatant violation of the ICA Act. Rather the company's policy was a clear statement that if employees chose Mine Mill over the WCC, the paternal glove would no longer cover the iron fist of company prerogative.

In the face of company retrenchment Mine Mill needed to fill the gap left by Evans' departure. The union chose local smelter worker John McPeake to take over the organizer's role. The union claimed that the July 24 appointment of McPeake, a smelter worker in Trail for three years, "spikes for all time the lie that ... the CIO is an imported alien product foisted upon this community ... McPeake ... understands what the smeltermen have put up with, their grievances and their problems; he also understands by what means the smeltermen are prepared to have them solved."³⁵

Despite the celebratory tone of the Commentator editorial McPeake had inherited an organizational drive in trouble. The petition campaign ended with Evans and no attempt was made to resuscitate it. Instead McPeake and the organizing committee decided to form a union local; potential members would have to commit both money and time if Mine Mill was to succeed in Trail. McPeake applied for and was granted a charter for Local 480 in August 1939. McPeake then penned a letter to the WCC requesting a secret ballot to allow workers to decide who they wished to represent them, the WCC or Local 480. At this point, argued McPeake, the committee had yet to be officially recognized as the bargaining agent of Smelter workers, was fully supported by CM&S funds and had never signed a collective agreement. When McPeake's secret ballot proposal took the shape of a motion during a WCC meeting it was defeated - sixteen against, eight in favour and twelve abstentions.³⁶ The vote breakdown shows CM&S still in control but the number of abstentions also indicates that thirty-three percent of WCC representatives were either intimidated by the company or were unsure of where they stood. Clearly the union still had a distance to go before it would gain the support of a majority of

smelter workers. Yet the vote also indicates that during the past year, despite a vociferous anti-union response by CM&S and the obvious limitations of the provisions of the ICA Act the union had built a foundation of support; the wall of CM&S hegemony had been breached to some extent.

The fact that CM&S still retained control of the WCC after a year of direct attack is indicative of the company's successful manipulation of employees during the previous twenty years. But one must also remember that the committee system could continue to wield such power because its existence was deemed acceptable by statute. Unlike labour legislation in the United States where, since 1935, company supported unions were illegal, Canadian legislators accepted the presence of the company union. Companies such as CM&S were free to exercise authority through "bona fide" workers' organizations. Thus, a mixture of coercive and paternalist policies that served to undermine labour organization were implemented while the facade of a democratic and cooperative system remained in place. The statutory legitimacy of the WCC, coupled with a twenty-year history of corporate welfare policies made CM&S a formidable edifice indeed.

Even as Mine Mill fought yet another skirmish with CM&S and the WCC Canadians from Trail to Tignish watched in horror as the world drew ever closer to the brink of war. On September 1, 1939 Nazi Panzers rolled into Poland. On September 3, as the Union Bulletin went to press Britain declared war on Germany. On September 6, Canada followed suit. Meanwhile in September John McPeake and the activists of Local 480 were blissfully unaware of the effect these decisions would have on their home local over the next five years.

Chapter Three

Stalled

Although Local 480 managed to survive the first years of the war it was a period of stagnation for Mine Mill in Trail. While CM&S prospered, garnering profits of between nine and twelve million dollars a year supplying chemicals and metals to the war effort, Local 480's membership remained disturbingly low as the union grappled with wartime conditions.¹

Although membership did show an increase in this period, growth was far from spectacular. Local 480's monthly financial reports to the International's office in Denver, Colorado give a portrait of a local that was going nowhere.² Despite the previous twelve months of organizational activity, the decision to form a Trail local did not galvanize local smelter workers. In August 1939, the month of its birth, Local 480 had only nine members in good standing; in September, thirty-one. It took until March 1940 to break up to one-hundred, but membership declined to a low of forty-five by June 1941. Up to December 1942, the peak number of Local 480's "members in good standing" was 179, reached in September 1942. The greatest number of initiations in any one month of the forty month period from the local's birth was fifty-six; for three of those forty months no initiates were brought into the union. In only twelve of the forty months did initiations exceed the number of members in arrears.³ This barely discernible growth can be attributed to several major factors, all of which were related to wartime conditions in one way or another. These factors included CM&S management's responses to the war, a huge labour turnover at the Trail complex, and the negative impact of wartime legislation.

CM&S management had come out of the summer of 1939 still in control of its fiefdom. Evans was gone, the petition dead, and the WCC remained loyal to the principle of "cooperation". CM&S and its "common front" of anti-union forces kept on the pressure with various publications and public pronouncements regarding the evil of communist inspired CIO interlopers. Blaylock was quick to make wartime conditions an ally in his battle against Mine Mill. In mid-September, less than a week after Canada declared war on Germany, Blaylock rejected calls for a wage increase, reminding workers of the special sacrifice war entailed. Thus the union issue became tied up in the high emotion of wartime patriotism and sacrifice. While many workers probably rejected Blaylock's appeal others may well have agreed that it was necessary to put aside the "disruptions" of the union campaign in favour of war production, especially when the war began in earnest in spring 1940.

Others, aware of the Mine Mill's connection to communist labour activists, may have distanced themselves from the union because of the Communist Party's repudiation of its original support for the war in September 1939. But, overall, the party's refusal to support the "Imperialist War", born of Stalin's non-aggression pact with the Nazis, had little impact on the day-to-day activities of Local 480. The Commentator's editorial policy indicates both strong support for the war effort and an attempt to tie the patriotic wartime spirit to the union drive. For example, a letter to the editor in August 1940 from a C. Lillydale reminded readers of their obligations: "I have been a member of Local 480 since November 1939", he wrote, "and know it to be a genuine anti-fascist organization ... While I am in the army fighting against this mad movement ... I expect smeltermen remaining in Trail [will do]

everything they can to build Local 480 ...". An editorial in the same issue clearly binds organization and the war effort. The editorial, titled "Appeasement", states in part: "In Europe appeasement has had one result - an evil one - namely the growth and strength of fascism leading to war and endless misery ... In Trail the men for appeasement are [those] carrying out the principles of the Workmen's Cooperative Committee."⁴ Thus it appears that, at the local level at least, Mine Mill was not sticking to the party line, either because Communist Party control was limited in the Trail local or because activists considered organization their first priority.⁵ The Communist Party's anti-war policy stood until June 1941 and probably had some negative effect on union fortunes, although evidence would seem to indicate that it was not a major cause of the malaise that settled over the union. Other war-related issues and actions appear linked much more closely to Local 480's performance during the war years.

One of these was CM&S's increased vigilance in matters of security. As a result of security concerns CM&S plants became armed camps. Blaylock's description of security measures in the 1940 Annual Report was enough to make the blood run cold in trade unionists who held in their collective memory the scenes of armed battle in places like Detroit, Estevan, Sarnia and a host of other industrial plants, cities and towns in the past ten years. "Your company has been put to very heavy expense to guard your plants from sabotage", wrote Blaylock:

It is difficult to decide how far ... [we] ... should go in this connection, and perhaps we have overdone it. No part of the boundaries of your plants is out of the vision of at least one guard, day or night. The guards are all sworn in as special constables and have special uniforms, and must have a loaded rifle at all times ... The Company has an armoured tank carry-

ing four machine guns and six rifles ready for action at any moment.⁶

While CM&S precautions might easily be put down to over-zealous wartime preparations these actions may also have served, perhaps inadvertently, as a means of limiting militant union activities such as sit-down strikes - the one weapon that trade unions with limited membership could use. The presence of armed guards may also have served as a potent form of intimidation for potential union members. One should not forget that sabotage could be very broadly defined, as sit-down strikers in the Aluminum Company of Canada's Arvida Quebec plant found out in July of 1941 when C.D. Howe, Minister of Munitions and Supply, claiming that the strike was an act of sabotage, convinced federal and provincial authorities to send in the troops to evict sit-downers.⁷ Thus the presence of armed "specials" and a tank would certainly have led workers and unionists to consider their actions cautiously.

Another patriotic security measure of CM&S management likely served as a very effective act of anti-union intimidation among the smelter and chemical plant's Italian employees. Italian workers had been a presence at the CM&S complex since around the turn of the century, settling in Trail after the completion of the CPR line through the region. Trail Italians maintained a cultural enclave in the small smelter city, retaining their language and culture within a separate Italian community that included their own parish and fraternal organizations. Mine Mill sought to reach potential members through Italian language meetings and advertisements in the Commentator. For a short period in 1938 an Italian speaking organizer was hired. The response was not dissimilar to that of other workers, that is, quite limited. Nonetheless Italians such as Remo Morandini, whose father had been a member of Mine Mill in 1916, joined in

the early stages of the union drive. Others, assuredly, did not join. One must remember that membership rolls show hardly any members at all. For example, May 1940 reveals the grand total of 96 members in good standing!⁸ It would be difficult indeed to argue that Italian workers' decision whether or not to support the union rested on ethnicity. Nevertheless General Manager Blaylock used the wartime atmosphere as an insurance policy against Italian organization.

When Mussolini declared war on Britain and France in June 1940 several hundred of the Italians employed at the CM&S plants were officially considered enemy aliens. According to local historian, Elsie Turnbull, Blaylock sought to meet this "potential threat" to CM&S's war effort head on. The General Manager called a meeting at the Cristoforo Colombo Hall declaring "that he trusted them since they had chosen the Canadian way of life [and] he would protect them from molestation if they maintained full production as part of the war effort [emphasis added] and if they surrendered their firearms for the duration." Apparently the Italians in question complied, going to Blaylock's office the next day "to personally bespoken his loyalty and turn in his gun."⁹ Like the use of armed guards, Blaylock's actions could be attributed to wartime security or patriotic considerations, but it is nevertheless true that such actions would serve to insure acquiescence to corporation as well as loyalty to the Crown.¹⁰ Thus the activities of war that fed CM&S security provisions also served to buttress industrial authority, clearly to the detriment of Local 480's new member roster.

The war also took its toll on existing membership, wreaking further havoc on union fortunes. A sizeable number of Trail smelter workers joined the swelling ranks of Canada's armed forces soon after hostilities

began. The decision to do their patriotic duty was made easier by Blaylock's calls for special wartime sacrifices that meant little or no wage or bonus increases for CM&S workers. The Commentator noted in November 1939 that, as a result of CM&S's refusal to increase wages, many workers "have been comparing notes to see how well off they would be if they quit, and got another suit of clothes (free) to wear."¹¹ The editor's musings were certainly on the mark; by July 1940, a few months after the end of the "phoney war", organizer John McPeake reported to the executive that one-third of the membership had been lost to enlistment and "that a re-orientation would be required."¹² Given the small membership of Local 480 this may not have been a great loss in terms of numbers, but in terms of energy and commitment it was likely devastating. These early members would have been committed unionists, willing to join the union at its early stages despite the risks involved. The loss of such members was very costly indeed. Enlistment continued apace and nearly every meeting of the local was marked by farewells and best wishes to new recruits.

High enlistment and job dissatisfaction led to a very high labour turnover at the CM&S plants, a development that turned out to be of no aid to the union. In the 1939 Annual Report Blaylock noted that labour turnover was much lower than the "normal" ten percent rate enjoyed by the company. By 1940 this situation changed dramatically. While no statistics are available for 1940, the rates for the years 1941 through 1944 indicate a sizeable labour turnover. In 1941, 30 percent of the workers at the Trail plants opted for either a "free suit of clothes" or a new place of employment, in 1942 and 1943, 55 percent made the same choices.¹⁴

The large number of new workers in the city could have worked in the union's favour. After all many of these workers had not lived under the paternalist hand of CM&S, nor had they been exposed to the company's anti-union campaign. The local, however, was in no position to reach these new workers due to a lack of effective organizing activities, largely as a result of a shortage of resources, both human and financial. The union, simply put, had too few members to successfully recruit new ones. While the rhetoric of industrial unionism burst forth on the pages of the Commentator and the Union Bulletin, the union's small membership, not greater than 225 before March 1943 - never had a strong presence in the plants.

The problem of a low union profile was further exacerbated by the local's failure to get an effective shop steward system off the ground. While such a system was officially in place in the fall of 1939, there is no discussion of shop steward activities in either executive or general meeting minutes in 1940. In 1941 a motion was passed by the Local 480 executive "that the shop steward system be reorganized and a proper method of dues collection through the shop stewards be arranged." However, no action appears to have been taken or, if it was, it proved ineffective, for in October 1942 the executive passed a motion recommending the establishment of a shop steward system. Similar motions passed in late October and early November but nothing was done. In early December the executive delayed action on shop stewards until the new year.¹⁵

The failure to install an effective shop steward system may well have been a result of limited membership; few members meant even fewer people willing to take on the additional work. Nonetheless without a

well-operated steward system potential members were left outside union influence, and there was no union presence on the job to reinforce union support.¹⁶ This translated into lapses in membership and chronic arrears in dues payments. As one member of the executive noted, some union members were letting their membership lapse as they "consider not enough is being done."¹⁷ Local 480 was in no position to take advantage of the potential new workers offered; in fact the local even had a problem retaining its old members.

The fortunes of Local 480 were also tied to the fortunes of Mine Mill throughout the Dominion. Professional organizers and funding so necessary to the organizing effort were dependent on healthy, well organized locals, preferably with a contract, that could supply the International and hence the newly organizing locals with much needed funds. Between 1939 and 1942 Canada's Mine Mill locals were anything but healthy. By 1939, many members of Mine Mill's international executive board were of the opinion that the Canadian campaign should be terminated. Gains were considered minimal and they feared that a Canadian organizing campaign would over-tax union coffers. In March 1941, the Canadian Congress of Labour invited the United Mine Workers of America to organize Northern Ontario because Mine Mill was considered financially incapable of mounting an effective organizing campaign in the mining district. John L. Lewis declined and Mine Mill continued its organization work in and around Kirkland Lake, Timmins and Sudbury.¹⁸

In the winter of 1941-42 Mine Mill led a strike by Kirkland Lake gold-miners that, according to some scholars and activists, began the march toward government protection of trade unions in Canada. At the time, however, it was an unmitigated disaster for Mine Mill. Maneuvered

by mine owners into a strike nearly impossible to win, Mine Mill members struck the Kirkland Lake mines from November 1941 to February 1942. The mine owners, supported by Ontario Provincial Police brought in to "protect the mines", crushed the strike by mid-February despite a great deal of public sympathy and several hundred thousand dollars in strike aid from Mine Mill, CCL affiliates and sympathizers. The strike loss in Kirkland Lake led, in turn, to the failure of Mine Mill organization in Timmins. Plans for a huge organizing campaign in Sudbury were also abandoned when Mine Mill organizers were assaulted and union offices trashed by "goons" who "candidly admitted they were hired by an official of the International Nickel Company."¹⁹ By March 1942 Mine Mill's Canadian membership was dismally low and the union's debt had risen to \$35,000.

All of this translated into minimal support for Local 480. The local at this point showed little promise and Mine Mill's financial situation precluded any serious injection of funds or organizers. In May 1940, as a result of a failed referendum on a per capita increase, the International office cut off the British Columbia "campaign grant" until new funding could be approved at the fall convention. This meant that the local would be allowed to retain its dues for operational costs but a shortfall of at least \$75 a month existed.²⁰ One could understand the International's reluctance to fund the drive; by 1940 Mine Mill's effort was stalled. In addition to Trail's limited gains, the Zebellos local, organized in 1938, was nowhere near successful. In a two month period in 1940 the local went through four secretaries and membership had dipped precipitously. Pioneer Local 308, formed in a flurry of activity in early 1939, led a recognition strike in October, but Pioneer's owner, Dr. Howard James, refused to budge. Strikers were fired and strike leaders

jailed. By April 1940 the Pioneer local was "washed up", the forty strikers left were expected "to be frozen out" soon.²¹ In a quest for more promising centers John McPeake's organizing efforts took him away from Trail on a regular basis and, despite promises from the International, neither funding or a full-time organizer came to Trail.²²

The absence of McPeake and of funds affected not only the local's ability to organize new members, but also served to undermine the existing membership. A number of executive meetings were given over to discussions of membership apathy during 1941 and 1942. One of the major causes cited was that the "local was without adequate leadership when John McPeake [was] absent." Others felt that the lack of funding from the International was also a major problem.²³ The executive could not solve the problem of funding, but it did attempt to address leadership concerns by engineering John McPeake's election as president of the local in the spring of 1941.²⁴ McPeake, however, continued his organizing activities and rarely took the president's chair. This ill-conceived attempt to answer smelter worker criticisms and concerns regarding organization met with little success; there was no appreciable rise in initiations or payment of dues in the ensuing months. The one bright spot in this bleak portrait was that miners at the Sullivan Mine in Kimberley began requesting membership cards and information from the local.²⁵ On the other hand this "success" further underscores failures at the CM&S Trail plants.

Worker apathy toward unionization was probably fostered by wartime legislation and orders-in-council. The War Measures Act of October 1939 gave the federal government wide powers to regulate labour supply and demand, the level of prices and wages and labour-capital relations. The

overall effect, at least until 1943 and 1944, was to circumscribe worker activity rather than to address worker concerns. For example, order-in-council PC 3495 (1939) extended the Industrial Disputes Investigations Act (1907) to all war-related industry, approximately 85 percent of all industrial activity in the nation; it contained no mechanism for union recognition and had a pre-condition of compulsory conciliation before strikes were allowed. PC 2685 (1940) called for 'fair and reasonable' wages and health and safety standards as well as recognizing workers' right to organize. It did not, however, offer any enforcement mechanisms, relying instead on the voluntary compliance of employers.²⁶ PC 7307 (1941) prohibited strikes until a strike vote was taken and supported by a majority of all employees were affected by the dispute. If, after these hurdles were cleared and a strike took place, there was little to be won. Going hand in hand with Federal price controls PC 7440 (1940) froze basic wage rates in war-related industries at 1922 to 1929 levels; subsequent raises came in the form of whatever cost of living bonus authorized by Federal bureaucrats. Exceptions were made only in cases where proof of unduly depressed or enhanced wages could be shown. Some workers initially accepted PC 7440 as it complemented price controls but inconsistent application of its policies soon eroded support. Conciliation boards often withdrew from disputes when they were settled even if they violated the order, and some employers increased wages substantially while others adhered strictly to the law. It has been argued that the legislation primarily provided employers with a rationale for doing whatever they intended to do in the first place.²⁸

In Trail these restrictive orders-in-council served only to increase smelter workers' pessimism and sense of vulnerability. Local 480 members

as well as unorganized but sympathetic workers felt that little could be done until after the war. 1940 was marked by an "after the war" mindset. A "Brother McVie" indicated to the executive in February 1941 that the major cause of union apathy was the feeling that "nothing can be done under the war regulations."²⁹ Wartime labour regulations were therefore yet another factor limiting Local 480 gains in the period 1941 to 1942.

The union's poor showing and lack of new support translated into a series of defeats at the hands of CM&S management. The first came in early 1940 when a "rump" in the WCC tried to push through a wage brief demanding a \$1 a day increase. The brief, put together by four pro-union WCC members, was presented to the committee on February 27; it was rejected with little or no discussion. The frustrated unionists published the brief in the Commentator and were subsequently thrown off the WCC for their efforts. Although the four dissidents were re-elected to the committee later in the spring, the \$1 a day demand was not broached upon their return. The incident indicates the limits placed on both actors in the play; the expulsion shows CM&S and anti-union forces still firmly in control of WCC policy while the re-election of the dissidents suggests that pockets of unionism did exist on the shop floor. Nonetheless, as long as the WCC could reject the pro-union proposals without a strong reaction from a significant number of smelter workers, CM&S had little to fear from Local 480. By July 1940 even the pockets of union strength appeared to be disintegrating as the union went into retreat. At a July 21 executive meeting John McPeake recommended that the local's office be given up for at least one month "as a result of intimidation, members joining the army [,] fear among the Italians [and] general poverty ..."³⁰ The report was accepted but the office appears to

have remained open. Nonetheless it is clear that wartime conditions were taking their toll on the union.

In August the local had only 166 members in good standing. After McPeake resigned as organizer in that same month, the WCC entered into negotiations with CM&S. This time pro-union members managed to push through a motion to present management with the \$1 a day brief from February. The Commentator reported that "Mr. Blaylock scratched a big cross" through it and counter-offered with a cost of living increase based on government statistics. In a series of special meetings during September the executive discussed its options. The executive saw three alternatives, to vote strike, accept the offer, or recommend "no vote". The executive decided that union support was too weak to recommend a strike vote or push through a vote of non-confidence against the WCC, so it recommended that workers boycott any vote on the offer. This, the executive reasoned, would allow the union to continue the fight at a later date because they had not "capitulated" to CM&S. The executive later reversed this stand and recommended a "no" vote. It failed. On October 23, 1940 the WCC and CM&S agreed to a 12 cent raise, the contract "terminable by either party if taxes go up before or after August 31, 1941." As Blaylock concluded in the 1940 Annual Report, "The Cooperative Committees have had a trying but apparently successful year."³¹

1941 was no better for the union. Members in good standing never exceeded 73, while June saw no initiations and only 45 members in good standing. The status of the union is probably best measured by Blaylock's response to a delegation of "union committeemen" who asked him to place various bonuses in the holiday pay. One of the men present reported to the executive that Blaylock refused

and delivered himself of the following information; the employees were to stop coming to him for concessions and were instead to get behind the war effort with some sacrifices ... Blaylock referred to CIO strikes in the U.S.; said the CIO was founded by communists and paid with 'Moscow Gold' and was the 'No. 1 saboteur'. He was watching their activities around here and wasn't going to stand any monkey-shines from them. Then he went on to talk about the committee ... saying that there were about nine committee members [of approximately 40] who were always against anything the good cooperators wanted to carry out ... Henceforward this would have to stop and there would be no concessions on wages, holidays with pay ... or time off.³²

Here is a portrait of Selwyn Blaylock, in all his paternalist glory, berating the prodigal sons. It is also a portrait of a man confidently in control of his domain. To CM&S the war meant more than increased profits; it meant a re-consolidation of managerial power.

In 1942 the situation remained unchanged. Union membership continued to stagnate, general meetings were plagued by poor attendance, dues were chronically late and union dances were cancelled due to poor attendance.³³ On October 16, 1942 Blaylock felt quite free to reject a request regarding bonus increases with a haughty letter that stated: "No increases in the bonus can be made except such as you are able to earn in the efficiency bonus. I believe the men could easily cut the present cost very materially which would have the effect of increasing the efficiency bonus."³⁴

The negative impact of wartime conditions set up a vicious cycle that devastated union growth in Trail. As membership activity bottomed out and recruitment stagnated, CM&S reasserted itself, blocking any and all union initiatives on the WCC. This reflected poorly on the union's ability to challenge CM&S power and further undercut union gains which in turn gave CM&S the appearance of even more power. Between 1939 and the

end of 1942 the war was no aid to the trade union movement in Trail. The perceived weakness of the union and the pessimism of potential members is clearly articulated in the response of the men who worked in the melting room at the smelter. "The men in the melting room" stated a report to the executive, "were fed up with the present setup and were on the verge of joining the union but did not want to do so and pay dues for long periods before the town was organized."³⁵ It appears that many potential members made a similar decision in the years 1939 to 1942.

Chapter Four

A Union On The Hill

The arrival of 1943 seemed to offer little promise to Local 480. The conditions that limited membership remained virtually unchanged as the union struggled to overcome the limitations posed by company resistance, labour turnover and wartime legislation. These limitations had instilled a pessimism in the ranks of Mine Mill members and potential members throughout the CM&S plants; it seemed that little could be done unless organizing conditions changed radically. This occurred in March, 1943 when the provincial government passed a new Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act.

The 1943 ICA act was part of a complex state response to the rising fortunes of the social democratic left in provincial and federal politics, the disruptions to wartime production caused by an ever-increasing number of strikes - many of which centered around union recognition - and intense lobbying on the part of labour. In addition, the Coalition government of John Hart faced CCF opposition that had a somewhat tenuous but potentially dangerous link with the province's trade unions that could spell defeat for the Hart government in the future. British Columbia's strike activity had increased dramatically, from eight "time lost" disputes in 1941 to 50 in 1942. The time lost in these job actions rose almost five times, from 7594 days in 1941 to 35,025 the following year.¹ In January 1943 seven trade union centrals submitted a brief to the provincial cabinet calling for changes to the 1937 ICA Act. The relative importance of these factors in the changes to the ICA Act are certainly debatable but, to the unions of British Columbia, the fact that such revisions did occur was very important indeed.²

The 1943 amendments to the ICA Act, Bill 30, passed by the provincial legislature in February 1943, provided for automatic recognition of bargaining agent status for trade unions where a majority of those employees affected by a dispute were members. A "Trade Union" was clearly defined as "a national or international organization, or a local chartered branch of such an organization." Automatic recognition on the basis of membership applied only to trade unions, all other organizations required a majority vote to achieve certification.³ The legitimation of bona fide trade unions received an additional boost in Section 6 which outlawed company unions by declaring that: "It shall be unlawful for any employer to dominate or interfere with the formation or administration of any organization of employees or contribute financial or other support to it ..."⁴ In addition, collective bargaining was clearly defined as negotiation for the purposes of arriving at a settlement. As historian Stephen Gray notes: "This provision would make it difficult for employers to argue [that] they had fulfilled their legal obligations simply by sitting down at a table with union officials."⁵

While IWA official Nigel Morgan referred to Bill 30 as labour's "Bill of Rights", the act was not without limitations. For example, a trade union member was defined as a person with three months' continuous membership in the local union, a clause that would serve as a barrier to certification in any industries with high labour turnover. While refusal to enter into collective bargaining was an offence under the Act, the maximum fine was only \$500. In addition, any employer or employee could request an investigation of membership rolls to ascertain if the union still held a majority only six months after the union was recognized. Despite these limitations, the 1943 ICA Act clearly made organization and

bargaining easier tasks for unions. The IWA saw it as a "'green light' for an all out drive to organize the unorganized."⁶

The amendments were vigorously criticized by British Columbia industrialists, especially by CM&S management who accurately viewed Section 6 as the death knell of twenty-plus years of successful "cooperation". In February Blaylock and other industrialists openly censured the new amendments. Around the same time, Blaylock placed phone calls to Premier Hart in an attempt to get "the government to give us proper leeway in paying the expenses of the Cooperative Committee". Blaylock reported to concerned members of the WCC that Hart "and Mr. Pearson [Minister of Labour] had promised me to take care of our committee situation ..." Any hope Blaylock and other British Columbia employers had of putting long term pressure on the government was quashed when the Bill was rushed through its second reading. Failed by its employer, the WCC attempted to lobby the government on their own, but to no avail.⁷

While CM&S and the WCC were scrambling to limit the damage wrought by the new ICA Act, Mine Mill moved to take advantage of the amendments. In early spring the union appointed one of the Canadian Communist Party's leading members, Harvey Murphy, to handle Mine Mill in British Columbia.⁸ Murphy, who was wont to describe himself as "the reddest rose in the garden", was a seasoned party organizer. Since the 1920s he had been involved in various party projects including Workers' Unity League organizing drives in the 1930s.⁹ Murphy's appointment indicates the importance with which the ICA Act amendments were viewed by the union. The new act served as a catalyst, pushing union activism to the forefront in the company town. The local, the international office and pro-union workers all recognized the opportunity that the demise of the WCC repre-

sented. On March 18 Local 480's executive was instructed to call a board meeting to coincide with Murphy's arrival, hire a theatre for a mass meeting on March 21 and arrange advertising to promote it.¹⁰

Over the next month union activity increased substantially. Murphy chaired numerous mass meetings and rallies, bringing in guest speakers such as Harold Pritchett of the IWA and Bert Herridge, CCF MLA and Mine Mill supporter. Special meetings were organized for Italian workers, and women union members were requested to make an extra effort to bring in their sister workers.¹¹ For its part Local 480's executive finally regenerated the shop steward system, making it an effective organizational tool for the union.

After years of stillborn motions the steward system actually took shape in April 1943. Chief Stewards were appointed who in turn named or nominated stewards for separate departments. The executive passed a motion that the Chief Stewards "become temporarily known as the Organizing Committee ... and that they be allowed to spend the money necessary for such organization work ..." A full time staff person was appointed as well as a press committee editor.¹²

This confident and competent union activity combined with the new ICA amendments to undermine much of the pessimism of smelter workers and membership increased dramatically. There were 340 initiations in March, 507 in April and 393 in May. By May Local 480 boasted nearly 1400 members.¹³ Local 480 and Local 651, representing Sullivan Mine workers at Kimberley, claimed to represent a majority of CM&S employees by early May 1943. A general meeting on May 11 passed a motion that "negotiations be conducted with the Company jointly by the Kimberley and Trail locals."¹⁴ A second resolution to "apply to the Company for recognition as a bargaining agent

of the employees of Kimberley and Trail ..." was unanimously supported. The union sent a letter to this effect to CM&S management shortly after the meeting. The letter was published in the May 19 edition of the Commentator along with the banner headline "Local 480 Attains A Majority". Included were photographs of a victory parade through downtown Trail.¹⁵ In the meantime the union awaited Blaylock's reply to its request for bargaining agency status, but CM&S had no intention of rolling over just yet.

Blaylock and CM&S management clearly recognized the danger posed by the ICA amendments. After attempts to block the legislation failed, the company and the WCC sought to assure the survival of cooperation through the formation of an "independent" union. On March 23, shortly after the amendments were passed, the WCC published a bulletin calling for the formation of an independent association because, under the new legislation "it will become illegal to accept financial assistance from the company ...". This and subsequent bulletins on the matter were printed on Industrial Relations Department stationary. Initial meetings on the proposal were held on company time and at company premises. On April 8 all Trail employees were informed on WCC bulletins posted throughout the plant - a courtesy never offered Local 480 - that a vote on the WCC proposal for an independent association would take place on April 13 and that "All Day Employees Are Expected to Vote". Most employees complied with the request and on April 13 the proposal passed 1932 to 1754.¹⁶

The majority vote was less representative than it would first appear. Aside from the unfair advantage of open access to workers enjoyed by the WCC, as well as an element of quiet coercion implicit in company support of the proposal, the fact that foremen were allowed to vote on the ques-

tion further indicates that the WCC and the company had "stacked the deck" in their favour. Nonetheless, on May 20, 1943, just one day after Local 480 published the "Victory" edition of the Commentator, 300 smelter workers met to form the Independent Smelter Worker's Union (ISWU); the WCC no longer existed and the ISWU represented the cooperators at CM&S. In its first official act the ISWU confirmed its cooperative stance by appointing all the former officers of the WCC to its executive. Mine Mill maintained that the ISWU was simply a company union by another name, but failed to convince the Minister of Labour.¹⁷

The ISWU remained relatively weak throughout the summer of 1943. A Mine Mill report on an ISWU meeting in July notes that there were 25 members present.¹⁸ Nonetheless the ISWU served company purposes well; CM&S could continue its battle against Mine Mill under the auspices of a "legitimate" union. Claiming that its employees fully supported the new organization, CM&S "transferred" bargaining agency status to the ISWU despite the fact that the union had never been recognized by the Department of Labour.¹⁹ In addition to the countermeasure the "recognition" of the ISWU offered CM&S, the company refused to accept any claims to a union majority that included both Local 480 and Local 651. Mine Mill therefore applied to the Minister of Labour for certification on May 25. The investigation took the better part of the summer and in early August the Department of Labour ruled against Local 480 and 651, claiming that each would be dealt with separately "in the matter of being certified and negotiating a contract."²⁰ Despite the changes to the ICA Act and the new found energy and enthusiasm of organizers and workers, CM&S had once again prevailed.

Mine Mill moved very cautiously in the autumn of 1943 as it prepared for the certification vote that the Ministry had ruled necessary. There was never a question of a strike to enforce the majority in Trail and Kimberley despite the precedent set by thousands of workers in the summer of 1943. For while strikes erupted across the country - year end would see over 400 strikes involving thousands of workers, many of whom, like Local 480, were fighting for union recognition - Mine Mill had pledged "no strikes for the duration." Unlike the IWA in British Columbia which eschewed CIO and Communist Party pleas for a no strike pact, Mine Mill in Canada approved its International's stance on no strikes in 1943.²¹

As other historians have noted Mine Mill's no strike pledge is a measure of Communist influence within the union.²² In many ways it was a continuation of policy since the Communist Party's second reversal on war policy in June 1941. While it is true that Mine Mill, at least on a local level, never pushed the "Imperialist War" stance of the party in the years 1939 to 1941, after Hitler's assault on the Soviet Union union leaders in Canada and the United States became increasingly willing to limit opposition to the boss in order to further the war effort of the 'United Nations'. While never losing sight of the need for organization, from 1942 on Local 480 sought increased support and company recognition by publicly calling for "cooperation in the war effort through shop production committees where victory production could be achieved (no matter what the cost to pre-war ideas of management and workers alike) that is essential to achieve victory." Beginning in 1943 Local 480 supported the CM&S program of "B4P" ("Boost for Production").²³ In addition, Local 480 was actively involved in the "Unity Movement", a drive for support of Mackenzie King's conscription plebiscite. Local 480 called on smelter

workers to "Organize For War and Organize For Peace."²⁴ As union membership and company response indicates, the union's unequivocal support of the war effort did little to change its fortunes in Trail. Indeed, the no strike pledge may have had some negative impact on union success. Successful job action might have served to enforce a union shop and convinced reluctant members to join. CM&S workers were clearly in a better position in this regard than were Mine Mill strikers in Kirkland Lake's strategically unimportant gold mines.

Therefore, rather than job action Mine Mill chose to utilize existing legislation to attain its goal, spending the fall firing up the rank and file for a November certification vote. Local 651, Kimberley, made a similar decision, but decided on a September vote. International representatives convinced Local 480 members to wait until later as they felt that student summer employees could undermine the union bid.²⁵

Harvey Murphy launched Local 480's new certification drive with a Labour Day speech that emphasized both labour's contribution to the war effort and the importance of effective labour legislation. It was a speech that spoke to "responsible labour" that can and will attain rights through state mechanisms. It spoke to moderate labour sensibilities rather than a militant rank and file. Murphy's address reflects the realities of the no strike policy, state power and a reluctant membership:

Our union in common with labor in the United Nations has and is placing Victory in the War first ... and is today striving with all its might to build the front of production of vital war materials. We are pledged to and have lived up to our pledge of "no strike for the duration" for we realize that this is our war [and] the contribution being made ... by the hard rock miners and smelter men and women is second to none. Thousands of our workers are in the armed forces and the rest are seeing to it that not one allied soldier

is lost or one minute added to the time necessary to defeat the fascist axis ... the growth of the labor movement while it certainly increases labor's contribution to victory ... does not lessen the opposition to the boss's to labor organization ... labor must act together to see to it that ... leaks in the ICA Act are plugged ... [and] that there is established definite federal labor legislation ...²⁶

The autumn organizing drive was carried out using tactics similar to the spring campaign: numerous open meetings, effective use of shop stewards and anti-ISWU and CM&S publicity. The ISWU also helped Mine Mill's work when its executive failed to consult women workers before they appointed a "women's representative" for the lead refinery. As a result seven women in the lead room "threw their Maple Leaf buttons away and quit the ISWU."²⁷ The drive was also aided by the Kimberley local's successful certification bid in early September, making Local 651 the first Mine Mill local to achieve recognition under the new act.²⁸

Buoyed by union successes, old members became increasingly willing to pay dues in arrears and over 200 new members signed union cards. Members in good standing went from 844 in September to 1120 by the end of October. The local announced a certification vote for November and the membership in good standing rose to 1485, over 100 more than during the May certification bid. The certification vote took place on November 2 but, despite the confidence of the executive and the expanding membership roster, Local 480 once again missed the brass ring.²⁹

Local 480's second loss of the year was largely a result of the ICA Act's stipulation that three months of continuous membership was necessary before a union member's vote was valid. Given the 55 per cent labour turnover at the Trail plants in 1943, there were too many new or reinstated members and Local 480 could not attain majority support.

The union was informed of the lost certification bid just before the end of the year and, by the first week of January, Murphy was on the hustings expressing great hopes for the New Year. "The Company knows" Murphy told the January 5, 1944 General Meeting, "the number of employees who came into our union, so no wonder they didn't blow their horn about our recent defeat for certification". At a second meeting on January 13 he called for "three hundred new members by February 1st ... so that in no way can we be denied certification when we apply approximately three months from now." Murphy closed by reminding Trail workers of their organizational tardiness noting that, "at the present time we are the only major industry that is not working under a union contract or union conditions."³⁰ Murphy's confidence that Local 480 would win the next certification bid despite ICA Act regulations was never to be tested. Instead the federal government took action that virtually assured Local 480 victory.

The King government, apparently concerned with increasing industrial unrest (402 strikes and lock-outs in 1943 representing one million worker days lost), intense lobbying by labour centrals for a "Canadian Wagner Act", and the rising fortunes of the CCF to which such labour and progressive elements were becoming increasingly aligned, substantially altered its labour policy in Privy Council Order 1003 (February 1944).³¹ PC 1003 superceded provincial labour legislation in the Dominion and placed the provinces' labour relations under the Wartime Labour Relations Regulations. The new legislation instituted compulsory collective bargaining and a mandatory grievance procedure. Section 18(1) stated: "Every collective agreement ... shall contain a provision for final settlement without stoppage of work, on the application of either party [to

a contract] of differences concerning its interpretation or violation."³² For unions like Mine Mill which had already renounced strikes "for the duration" PC 1003 served to protect them from a possible "strike by capital" - a lockout. These provisions also meant that unions would no longer have to exercise raw power to administer contracts. Rather than risky and costly strikes there existed a set of legislated rights to which unions could appeal. This was especially important to locals such as Mine Mill 480 whose limitations in resources and militancy negated the possibility of "taking it."³³

PC 1003 continued to provide sanctions against company harassment of union members and, like the ICA Act, it outlawed company unions. More important, PC 1003 did not include the problematic three-month membership stipulation that had effectively undermined Local 480's November certification bid.³⁴ On March 15, 1944 the British Columbia government agreed to administer PC 1003 on behalf of the Federal Minister of Labour. On March 21 Local 480's executive passed a motion "that we apply for certification under the new Federal labour code."³⁵

The ISWU and CM&S tried to undermine union support in the wake of PC 1003 but to no avail. Even concessions granted to their opponents were cause for the local to celebrate CM&S's weaknesses. In February the ISWU, with the blessing of CM&S, applied to and received from the National War Labour Board a small raise and improved vacations. To which the Commentator replied: "Can anyone still believe that the Company did not actively engineer this, or that the Company did not give these and other concessions only to keep workers from joining a real union?" On February 29 the Commentator crowed, "the ISWU claims 1600 members but cannot fill the Oddfellows Hall (seating 150) ... They are now holding their meetings

in their own office while claiming continual gains in membership." Meanwhile Local 480 held a mass meeting on February 15 that overflowed the Colombo Hall.³⁶ The ISWU launched a full scale membership drive in March that prompted a Local 480 circular entitled "A Clear Admission That They Are In a Desperate Situation." The circular attacked the ISWU as an "Illegal Bargaining Agent" and reassured smelter and chemical workers that "under the Federal Act we have a large majority and we will be certified."³⁷

Such confidence was not merely rhetoric; motions were placed on the floor at the April 4 executive meeting regarding arrangements for a victory celebration, the purchase of a sound truck, and the acquisition of a union hall.³⁸ While perhaps overly sanguine the motions were rooted in the excitement of the spring of 1944, when for the first time in its five year history, Local 480 was clearly on top. The union had moved into the community and it must have seemed that everyone recognized its "inevitable" victory, with the obvious exception of the ISWU and CM&S. Radio station CJAT finally allowed Mine Mill access to the air waves, and Trail and district workers were treated to a series of "CIO Talks" by Harvey Murphy. In March the Trail Board of Trade offered a membership to the union. Later in the spring a Local 480 representative was invited to attend a meeting of the "Main Committee of the Victory Loan Drive". In May Local 480, just twelve months after being unable to get enough support to put on a dance, fielded a softball team to play in the Trail men's softball league.³⁹

On May 6 the union hosted a huge May Day celebration that was both a victory party and an organizing tool. Over 1300 people attended an evening parade, marching to "snappy march music ... and workers' songs

carrying banners proclaiming 'Put Victory First', 'Smash Fascism' and 'CIO Means Unity and Strength'." The crowd was addressed by CCF MLA H.W. (Bert) Herridge, various Mine Mill officials and the Vice-President of the CIO Ladies Auxiliary. The guest speaker of the evening was IWA "red bloc" leader, Harold Pritchett, who told those assembled that time was "running out" for the "Blaylock system". The meeting was "topped by a dance."⁴⁰

On June 2, 1944, after an investigation of union records by the British Columbia Department of Labour, Mine Mill Local 480 was recognized as the official bargaining representative of CM&S non-salaried workers at Trail, nearly six years after the union declared its intention to organize CM&S employees "on the hill."⁴¹ On June 17 CM&S and Local 480 announced a "working agreement" in which the company accepted the compulsory provisions of PC 1003. CM&S agreed to recognize Local 480 and cancel all previous agreements thus terminating the ISWU's bargaining agency status. The union was also recognized as the workers' voice regarding shop floor issues, representation on safety committees, and leave for union officials. A grievance procedure was also put in place that included paid time for stewards on grievance work. In addition, CM&S accepted an eight hour day, overtime pay and "call out" time.⁴² Wage negotiations were put on the back burner as both parties agreed to wait for the National War Labour Board's (NWLB) decision regarding Kimberley Local 651's request for a wage increase. This nod to state prerogative, while understandable given wartime regulations, also symbolizes the role of the state in the relationship between Local 480 and CM&S.

Indeed, for Local 480, the state was a major player throughout the entire six year organizational drive in Trail. The explicit inclusion of government regulation in Mine Mill's initial agreement with CM&S is clearly a continuation of the state's central role in the drive to organize Trail smelter and chemical workers. While it is true that no amount of legislative protection would have resulted in a union without the initiative of Local 480's dedicated trade unionists, it is also evident that the genesis of Mine Mill's organizational challenges, its major set-backs, and its eventual victory centered around state intervention into labour-capital relations.

Mine Mill's organizational drive began primarily in the context of changes to the British Columbia Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act in 1938. While Mine Mill's initiative was, of course, inextricably tied to industrial unionism's rising fortunes in North America in this period, Art Evans' arrival in Trail is directly connected to legislation that, limited as it was, protected workers and union organizers from the more overt forms of anti-union coercion and violence.

During the initial phase of organization both Mine Mill and CM&S played out a drama of organizational and counter-organizational moves in which no clear victor had emerged at the time of Evans' departure in the summer of 1939. While the charges against Evans and his subsequent resignation were assuredly a blow to unionization efforts in Trail, the arrival of World War II changed the organizational climate radically.

The war affected the Trail union drive both negatively and positively. It drew away a sizable percentage of active unionists into the armed forces and refocused concerns towards a common war effort rather than the unionization struggle. The wartime climate also gave

CM&S the opportunity to reassert its power over Trail workers through security measures such as armed plant guards and "loyalty" oaths from Italian workers. CM&S also tried to make peace in production a measure of civil duty in wartime Canada. In its desire to keep productivity high the wartime state instituted a series of statutes that did little or nothing to aid labour organization. In addition wage controls, restrictions on worker movement, and the virtual control of labour-capital relations by the National War Labour Board led to a pessimistic and compliant attitude among Trail workers that resulted in stagnation and decline in Local 480's membership and activism. Members and potential members were increasingly of the opinion that little more could be done in the smelter city until the state lifted wartime restrictions on labour.

But the attitude of Trail workers did not reflect the views of all Canadian workers for labour-capital conflict increased rapidly in the early 1940s. This increase in labour organization and conflict combined with the vagaries of provincial and federal politics to produce a series of provincial and federal acts that undermined employer power, provided unions with protection under the law and, most importantly for the productive capacities of the wartime state, attenuated labour unrest.

In 1943 revisions to British Columbia's labour legislation breathed new life into Local 480. The 1943 ICA Act provided the impetus to "reorganize" Local 480's organization effort. Mine Mill provided Trail with a professional organizer, more money was found to support the effort, and the membership was revitalized by the demise of the WCC. One must remember that up to that point no other part of the formula had changed. Wartime controls were still in effect, the WCC was at least as strong as it was at the beginning of the war, and CM&S's "security"

measures were still firmly in place. Thus, as in 1938, state initiatives had a large role to play in the union's fortunes. However, the 1943 ICA Act still contained barriers that the local could not immediately surmount; the stipulation that three months of continuous membership was a prerequisite for voting rights in union certification spelled defeat for Local 480 in November 1943. While this barrier would likely have been surmounted in subsequent bids, the implementation of PC 1003 negated the ICA Act and removed the three month clause. The promise of gains under the "new Federal legislation" pushed the union front and center, giving it an aura of success that, in an oddly circular way, assured its victory.

Thus Local 480, in exchange for some security of tenure, accepted the wartime state's regulations regarding wage negotiations. There would be no "taking it" as a result of Mine Mill victory in Trail. As historian Craig Heron has noted, the industrial relations system symbolized by PC 1003, while protecting the workers' right to organize, also served to limit severely older forms of resistance - direct action. Strikes in response to immediate crises or sympathy strikes for brother and sister workers were now illegal. But, as Heron also claims, "compared to the uncertainty and unfairness of [prior] employment practices ... these were major gains for workers."⁴³

This was the case for Trail smelter and chemical workers. In a situation where worker power was severely limited by employer power, no matter what its guise, Trail workers clearly recognized the need for state intervention in order to protect organizational initiatives. In this they were little different than their American counterparts whose upsurge in organization corresponded with various pieces of enabling leg-

isolation throughout the 1930s. They appear to have had much in common with other Canadian workers, many of whose unions "used the provisions of PC 1003 to nail down their first contracts with employers."⁴⁴ One should take care not to see this need for state intervention as timidity on the part of workers. Nor should it be considered as a weak attachment to the principles of a democratic work place. It is much more likely that many workers felt it was not possible to take or keep power without some legal protection. After all, if the case of Trail workers is any indication, they had a clear sense of their employer's power, and they had certainly experienced the effects - both positive and negative - of state power. To attempt to "take it" without some protection could mean losing everything so CM&S workers bided their time until the odds were with them. Trail workers then responded quickly to the obvious protections that PC 1003 offered and on June 2, 1944, Local 480 received recognition under the auspices of the new act.

The union clearly recognized the role played by the state in its victory, as well as the necessity for "responsible unionism" implied by the rules and regulations of PC 1003. In an address to Local 480 members on June 19, 1944 Mine Mill District One president Harvey Murphy reminded the Local 480 membership that union victory under state initiative carried with it certain responsibilities as well as rights. Murphy's remarks, transcribed by Local 480's recording secretary, can be viewed as a coda underscoring the character of the movement that was the organization of Trail smelter and chemical workers:

After the agreement was discussed Bro. Murphy then said in conclusion that our whole character as a union changes completely, that we have to impress on our fellow workers the dignity of Organized Labor ... we are a responsible union ... Also that we should check up on all grievances, and make sure they are really

grievances before we go any farther with them, also that we should establish good relations between ourselves and the bosses.⁴⁵

After six long years, trade unionism had arrived on "the hill"; the shape of that unionism reflected not only the history of Local 480's struggle to organize and the hopes and dreams of workers who wanted a better life for themselves and their families, it also indicated the limits of possibility in a world where production for profit still reigned.

Conclusion

Thus this study of union organization at a local level returns analysis to a broader national perspective. For while the local context was integral to Local 480's development, labour legislation played a crucial part in the successful unionization of Trail smelter and chemical workers. Thus the local context contributes to an understanding of national developments in this period of fundamental change for Canadian labour. While the massive growth of unionism in this period was remarkable, it was also a complex process involving local, regional and national experiences. A great deal more study is required in all of these areas before we can achieve an understanding of this historic era.

Notes

Introduction

1. Labour Organization In Canada (Ottawa: Department of Labour, 1938); Labour Organization In Canada, 1945, p. 10.
2. George Brown Tindall, America: A Narrative History, Volume Two, Second Edition (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1988), pp. 1138-1139; Bryan D. Palmer, Working-Class Experience: The Rise and Reconstitution of Canadian Labour, 1800-1980 (Vancouver: Butterworth & Co., 1983), pp. 219-220.
3. Irving Abella, Nationalism, Communism and Canadian Labour (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1973), p. 3; John Herd Thompson with Allen Seager, Canada 1922 - 1939: Decades of Discord (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1986), pp. 144-146.
4. Thompson and Seager, p. 224.
5. Ibid., p. 287.
6. Canada and the VII World Congress of the Communist International in Abella, p. 3.
7. As Abella notes, the United States' CIO was much more important as a figurehead than as an active participant in the drives of the 1930s. Many of the early breakthroughs occurred without CIO funds and occasionally without CIO (U.S.) approval. Abella, p. 5.
8. Abella, pp. 6-7.
9. Abella, p. 22.
10. Laurel Sefton MacDowell, 'Remember Kirkland Lake': The Gold Miners' Strike of 1941-42 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1983), pp. 50-64.
11. MacDowell, p. 79.
12. MacDowell, p. 120. Faced with intransigent employers, provincially supported "special" constables and state mechanisms that propped up the employer's position, the Kirkland Lake strike collapsed in February 1942 leaving both Mine Mill and the Canadian Congress of Labour near bankruptcy.
13. Sidney Fine suggests that calling a strike was often the culmination of organizational efforts. See Sidney Fine, Sit Down: The General Motors Strike of 1936-1937 (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1969), p. 120.
14. Jerry Lembcke and William Tattam, One Union In Wood (Madiera Park: Harbour Publishing, 1984).

15. Fine, p. 338.
16. For the limited growth of Flint's UAW membership prior to the strike see Fine, pp. 110-111.
17. Fine, p. 122.
18. Fine, pp. 168-169.
19. Fine, p. 133. The Flint sit-downers forced General Motors to sign its first collective agreement with a union on February 11, 1937. All strikers returned to their jobs and the UAW won the right to organize workers in seventeen additional plants. For a critical assessment of the contracts signed in this period see Nelson Lichtenstein, Labor's War At Home (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1982).
20. Peter Friedlander, The Emergence of a UAW Local (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1975).
21. Friedlander's analysis is not without its limits. David Brody has noted that while his approach "can yield remarkable results", Friedlander's heavy reliance on Kord's testimony "obscures lines of analysis external to the experience of his informants." See David Brody "Working-Class History in the Great Depression" in Workers In Industrial America (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980) pp. 158-166.
22. See also Ronald Schatz, "Union Pioneers: The Founders of Local Unions at General Electric and Westinghouse, 1933-37", Journal of American History, Vol. 66, No. 3 (December 1979), pp. 586-602; Robert Zieger, "The Limits of Militancy: Organizing Paper Workers, 1933-35", Journal of American History, Vol. 63, No. 3, (Dec 1976), pp. 638-657.
23. Nelson Lichtenstein, pp. 14-15.
24. See Wayne Roberts ed., Organizing Westinghouse: Alf Ready's Story (Hamilton, McMaster University, 1979) and Baptism of A Union (Hamilton, McMaster University, 1981); Fighting For Labour: Four Decades of Work in British Columbia (Victoria, Ministry of Provincial Secretary and Government Services, 1978); Ben Swankey and Jean Evans Sheils, Work and Wages (Vancouver, Trade Union Research Bureau, 1977); Mike Solski and John Smaller, Mine-Mill, (Ottawa, Steel Rail Publishing, 1984); John Stanton Never Say Die (Ottawa, Steel Rail Publishing 1987); Howard White, A Hard Man to Beat: The Story of Bill White (Vancouver, Harbour Publishing, 1983).
25. Bryan Palmer, Working Class Experience; Craig Heron, The Canadian Labour Movement: A Short History (Toronto: James Lorimer & Company, Publishers, 1989).
26. Robert Storey, "Unionization Versus Corporate Welfare: The 'Dofasco Way'" Labour/Le Travail 12 (1983), pp. 7-29.

Notes

Chapter One

1. G.W. Taylor, Mining: The History of Mining in British Columbia (Sannichton: Harcock House, 1978) pp. 145-150.
2. Ibid. p. 149.
3. "The Story of the Consolidated Mining and Smelting Company of Canada Limited", Canadian Mining Journal Volume 75, Number 5. (Montreal: National Business Publications, May, 1954), pp. 132-133.
4. On the Australian discovery of selective flotation see Jeremy Mouat "Creating A New Staple: Capital, Technology and Monopoly in Resource Production, 1901-1925". Unpublished paper presented to the 69th Annual Meeting of the Canadian Historical Association 27 May, 1990.
5. Mouat argues that CM&S success in this area was not due to bold entrepreneurship but to "its size and the financial resources provided by its relationship with the CPR. See "Creating A New Staple", p. 21.
6. "The Story of the Consolidated Mining and Smelting Company ...", p. 133.
7. The Cominco Story PABC NW 669 C755 p. 5.
8. In 1928 emissions were measured at 9600 tons per month. CM&S attempted to settle out of court as early 1926 but this approach failed to placate all concerned and an International Joint Commission was struck to investigate the charges. The Commission found in favour of the complainants and assessed damages as of February 28, 1931, at \$350,000. See Trail Smelter Question (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1938) pp. 8-10; "The Story of the Consolidated Mining and Smelting Company ..." pp. 133, 308.
9. "The Story of the Consolidated Mining and Smelting Company ...", p. 137.
10. Consolidated Mining and Smelting Company of Canada Limited (CM&S) Annual Reports 1929 through 1938.
11. CM&S Annual Report 1932, p. 12.
12. Ibid. 1937, 1938.
13. David Brody, "The Rise and Decline of Welfare Capitalism", pp. 48-79.
14. Elsie Turnbull, Trail Between Two Wars (Victoria: Elsie G. Turnbull, 1980) pp. 67-68.

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16. "The Story of the Consolidated Mining and Smelting Company ...", p. 367.
17. Ben Swankey and Jean Evans Sheils, Work and Wages (Vancouver: Trade Union Research Bureau, October 1977), p. 278.
18. Alan Derickson, Workers' Health Workers' Democracy: The Western Miners Struggle, 1891-1925 (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988), pp. 95-97.
19. Ibid., pp. 203-204.
20. See Turnbull pp. 47-48, p. 68. See also "The Story of the Consolidated Mining and Smelting Company ...", pp. 370-375.
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31. CM&S Annual Report, 1946.
32. "General Managers Report", CM&S Annual Reports 1931, 1935 and 1937.
33. "Candles In The Gloom" typed mss. by "Ted", p. 2. Mine Mill Collection, University of British Columbia Special Collections, Box 35, File 35-19.

34. Vernon Jensen, Nonferrous Metals Industry Unionism, 1932-1954 (New York: The New York State School of Industrial and Labor Relations, Cornell University, 1954) pp. 2-4; Harold Logan, Trade Unions In Canada: Their Development and Functioning (Toronto: The MacMillan Company, 1948) pp. 158-161; L.S. MacDowell 'Remember Kirkland Lake', pp. 57-58.
35. Mine Mill President Moyer quoted in Logan, pp. 161-162, footnote 7.
36. See Stanley Scott, "A Profusion of Issues: Immigrant Labour, The World War and the Cominco Strike of 1917" Labour/Le Travailleur 2 (1977), pp. 54-78.
37. Logan, p. 161.
38. Jensen, pp. 4-5.
39. Ibid., p. 5.
40. Ibid., pp. 6-7.
41. The NIRA Codes tended to promote company unions as they protected employee organizations but made no stipulation that such organizations could not be employer supported. The Wagner Act, which essentially outlawed the company unions, protected union workers from employer coercion and established collective bargaining rights under law, remained in question until the United States Supreme Court upheld the act in 1937. See MacDowell, pp. 14-15.
42. Abella, p. 5.
43. George MacEachern, George MacEachern: An Autobiography; The Story of a Cape Breton Radical, David Frank and Donald MacGillivray eds., (Sydney; 1987).
44. MacDowell, p. 62. As MacDowell has noted: "The union's [Mine Mill] organizing drive benefited from an influx of experienced communist organizers after the WUL disbanded." (MacDowell, p. 62.) Much ink has been spilled on the "communist question" regarding Mine Mill and other CIO unions in Canada and the United States, most of which has been concerned with factional battles and the purges of the cold war period. This study will not concern itself with inter or intra-union battles. Instead, it accepts that communists were definitely part of the union, as rank and filers and organizers and in executive positions. The "fact" of communists will be dealt with only when Communist Party policy might have affected organization. While the genesis of many factional disputes and outright battles may well lie in the organizational period such analysis will be left to another time and place and perhaps other researchers.
45. MacDowell, p. 64.
46. Logan, p. 162.

47. Macdowell, p. 62.
48. Union Bulletin 4 July 1938. Lead poisoning is a chronic disease resulting from the absorption of lead salts into the body either by breathing lead dust and fumes, ingestion or absorption through the skin. According to a 1935 U.S. Department of Labor circular the signs and symptoms of this deadly industrial disease were headaches, dizziness, colic, constipation, loss of weight, convulsions, blood changes, anemia, palsy, neuritis, weakness, blue line on gums, joint pains and paralysis. Lead Poisoning: Its Cause and Prevention, Industrial Health and Safety Series No. 7, U.S. Dept. of Labor, 1935. The company did recognize lead poisoning by 1931. The 1931 Annual Report contains a safety report where Blaylock notes a reduction of 40.5 percent in shifts lost due to lead poisoning. However the general response to leading was a short term transfer and some workers report that a daily quota of milk was supplied to lead room workers to combat the ill effects of lead poisonings; there is no record of disability payment for lead poisoning in the Annual Reports. In the late 1930s the U.S. Department of Labor estimated that "some 500,000 workers in the United States [are] ... exposed to the serious silicosis hazard, many in foundries and mines and wherever silica bearing material is worked or handled in a manner to produce dust." U.S. Department of Labor Press Release No. 5878, August 9, 1939. Mine Mill Collection UBC.
49. Union Bulletin, 4 July 1938.
50. Alvin Finkel, "Evans, Arthur" Canadian Encyclopedia No. 2 (Edmonton: Hurtig Publishers, 1988), p. 730.
51. Stephen Gray, "Woodworkers and Legitimacy: The IWA In Canada, 1937-1957" (Ph.D. thesis, Simon Fraser University, 1989), pp. 33-34.
52. Various scholars have noted the need for an "aura of success" in organization drives. See Fine, Sit-Down; Friedlander, The Emergence of a UAW Local; and Lichtenstein, Labor's War at Home.

Chapter Two

1. Swankey and Sheils, Work and Wages, pp. 278-280.
2. See Commentator, 29 February 1944 for departments; for the fresh air comment see A Communist Life: Jack Scott and the Canadian Workers' Movement 1927-1985, Bryan D. Palmer ed., (St. John's: Committee on Canadian Labour History, 1988) p. 83.
3. The absence of any identifiable and active pro-union group at the CM&S plant - although certainly a good number of pro-union individuals were employed there - indicates the degree to which coercion and consent buttressed the company's power in the city and at the smelter. In direct contrast to the situation at Trail was Evans' experience at the Vancouver Island mining town of Zebellos. On the week of July 15 Evans flew into Zebellos, met with a group of miners

eager to join the union and willing to assist him; by the end of the week a Zebellas local was formed. Swankey and Sheils, p. 268.

4. Union Bulletin, 5 September 1938, 19 September 1938.
5. Ibid., 19 September 1938.
6. Labour Truth, December, 1937.
7. Union Bulletin, 3 October 1938.
8. Ibid., 3 October 1938.
9. Apparently the September 24 Liberty was a popular issue in numerous industrial plants throughout North America. Union Bulletin, 17 October 1938; Commentator, 15 November 1938 from a reprint of an article in the United Rubber Worker.
10. Union Bulletin, 17 October 1938, 10 July 1939; Turnbull, Trail Between Two Wars, p. 73.
11. Commentator, 2 November 1938.
12. These examples are drawn from various issues of the Commentator from November, 1938 to March, 1939. In November the union also distributed 4000 copies of a CIO pamphlet attacking company unions.
13. Swankey and Sheils, p. 278.
14. Union Bulletin, 5 December 1938.
15. Ibid., 6 February 1939.
16. Commentator, 6 March 1939.
17. Ibid., 20 February 1939.
18. Payment of dues and initiation fees was often a problem in many unions during and after organization. This continued until Justice Ivan Rond's decision regarding the checkoff of dues in 1945. See Craig Heron, The Canadian Labour Movement, p. 85.
19. Cooperator, 19 March 1939. In Swankey and Sheils, p. 272.
20. This claim is made in the Commentator. While no hard proof of this assertion exists it would not seem unlikely. The President of CJAT was B.A. Stimmel, the Superintendent of the zinc plant. See Union Bulletin, 17 October 1938.
21. Communicator, 25 February 1939.
22. Ibid., 25 February 1939.
23. Commentator, 27 March 1939.

24. Ontario Archives, C.S. Hamilton Papers MV7152 F163. I would like to thank Larry Hannant, who kindly shared this information with me.
25. Union Bulletin, 27 March 1939.
26. Commentator, 10 April 1939.
27. Patricia Roy, "1939" unpublished paper, 1990.
28. Commentator, 1 May 1939, 22 May 1939.
29. Ibid., 22 May 1939.
30. Commentator, 22 May 1939; Turnbull, p. 73; The Nelson Daily News estimated 1500 - 2000 persons present. Article reprinted in Union Bulletin 22 May 1939.
31. Commentator, 22 May 1939, 10 August 1939.
32. Swankey and Sheils, pp. 279-280.
33. Turnbull, p. 74; Swankey and Sheils, p. 276; Union Bulletin, 10 July 1939.
34. Commentator, 19 June 1939.
35. Ibid., 24 July 1939.
36. Union Bulletin 21 August 1939, 14 September 1939.

Chapter Three

1. For CM&S profits see CM&S Annual Reports 1939 to 1943.
2. The monthly financial reports, while they provide a general sense of membership, are not entirely trustworthy. The reports have many gaps, sometimes months are missing and numbers are occasionally incorrectly entered or do not balance with totals. Nonetheless the reports do provide data that indicate the ebb and flow of worker response to the union drive and, as such, serve my purposes here.
3. "Monthly Financial Reports" - IUMMSW Local 480, August 1939 to December 1939. Mine Mill Collection, University of British Columbia Special Collections.
4. Commentator, 20 August 1940.
5. The answer could, of course, be either or both. Many communists did not agree with the party's war policy. The Communist Party was also declared illegal under the War Measures Act so one can easily understand a low key approach even for those in agreement with the 1939-41 policy. The fact is that Local 480's constituency and,

according to Jack Scott, its executive, were not communists or "sympathizers" in this period. (Scott argues that party dominance in the Local did not take place until the steel raids in the 1950s.) A Communist Life, p. 87. It is clear an unequivocal denunciation of the war would have cost the local much of its already limited support. Stephen Gray's assessment of the IWA's approach to bargaining and contract administration might well apply to Mine Mill's response to Party policy from 1939-41: "... the discrete parameters of the trade union agenda, rather than Party policy would determine industrial tactics." Gray, p. 137.

6. CM&S Annual Report, 1940, p. 5.
7. MacDowell, 'Remember Kirkland Lake', pp. 34-35.
8. Monthly Financial Reports - IUMMSW Local 480, May 1940.
9. Turnbull, Trail Between Two Wars, pp. 84-85.
10. One should not consider this incident a major barrier to union support in Trail. Even if this action served to deter all Italian participation in the union - an assumption that is both simplistic and inaccurate - Italian workers in Trail were not a large enough group to cause the stagnation that occurred in this period. The 1941 Census of Canada enumerated 507 Italians in non-ferrous metal smelting and refining in British Columbia and a total of 3779 such workers in the province. If we assume that all these workers were employed at Trail, Italian workers would have represented approximately thirteen per cent of Trail smelter workers. This is not an insignificant portion but not of a size that would make or break Local 480. This is especially the case given that not all Italians rejected the union. Thus the reluctance of some Italians was but one factor among many that affected union growth. Figures drawn from Census of Canada, 1941 Volume VII, Table 26, "Occupations and Industries".
11. Commentator, 13 November 1939.
12. Local 480 Executive Minutes 7 July 1940. Mine Mill Collection, University of British Columbia, Special Collections, Box 70.
13. Peter Friedlander notes that younger, second generation industrial workers were often the earliest and most committed union supporters.
14. CM&S Annual Report, 1946.
15. Local 480 Executive Minutes, 7 October 1941; 22 October 1941; 27 October 1941.
16. While it is understood that until recognition occurs union stewards do not have an "official" channel to management, their presence provides a clear counter to employer power on the shop floor and can be a powerful organizing tool. See Steve Jeffereys, Management and

Managed: Fifty Years of Crisis at Chrysler (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1986), pp. 63-71.

17. Local 480 Executive Minutes, 10 April 1941.
18. Abella, Nationalism, Communism and Canadian Labour, pp. 87-88.
19. Abella, pp. 89-90; MacDowell, passim.
20. Local 480 Executive Minutes, 20 May 1940.
21. Patricia Roy, "1939", pp. 4-13.
22. Local 480 Executive Minutes, 11 January 1941, 9 February 1941.
23. Ibid., 9 February 1941, [?] February 1941, February 23, 1941.
24. McPeake is listed as President by 27 March 1941.
25. Local 480 Executive Minutes, 19 December 1941.
26. MacDowell, pp. 17, 23.
27. Ibid., p. 29.
28. Ibid., p. 28, footnote 92.
29. Commentator, 25 January 1941; Local 480 Executive Minutes, 23 February 1941.
30. Monthly Financial Reports IUMMSW Local 480, August 1940; Local 480 Executive Minutes, 20 August 1940.
31. Local 480 Executive Minutes, [?] September 1940; CM&S Annual Report 1940.
32. Local 480 Executive Minutes, 27 May 1940.
33. See Monthly Financial Reports IUMMSW Local 480; Local 480 Executive Minutes, 20 August 1940, 7 October 1942.
34. Blaylock to Chairman Bonus Sub-committee 16 October 1941. Mine Mill Collection University of British Columbia Special Collections, Box 73, File 73-9.
35. Local 480 Executive Minutes, 16 May 1941.

Chapter Four

1. Gray, "Woodworkers and Legitimacy", pp. 112-117 and Table I, p. 114.
2. Explanations of the reasoning behind government support of protective legislation for trade unions range from teleological,

corporate-liberal visions of capitalist-state conspiracies to whiggish perceptions of inevitable progress. See Ronald Rodash, "The Corporate Ideology of American Labor Leaders From Gompers to Hillman", Studies On The Left, 6, (1966), for an example of the former and Harold Logan, Trade Unions In Canada (1948) for the latter. Craig Heron, The Canadian Labour Movement (1989) provides a reasonable explanation of such enabling legislation (in this case PC 1003) as a response to the pressures of an intense labour lobby, increased strike activity, CCF gains and a strong desire for political survival on the part of the King government. See Heron, pp. 79-81. My discussion on British Columbia in 1943 draws on Heron's analysis as well as Gray's.

3. Gray, p. 115.
4. An Act to Amend the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act, Section 6(2), Mine Mill Collection, University of British Columbia Special Collections, Box 36, File 36-8.
5. Gray, p. 115.
6. Ibid., p. 116.
7. Blaylock to WCC, 13 March 1943. Mine Mill Collection, University of British Columbia, Box 73, File 73-9.
8. Abella, Nationalism, Communism and Canadian Labour, p. 91.
9. Turnbull, Trail Between Two Wars, p. 74; A Communist Life, passim.
10. Local 480 Executive Minutes, 18 March 1943.
11. Women began working in production in 1943, part of a wave of NSS recruits throughout the nation. Their numbers at the CM&S plants were, however, relatively small. British Columbia Department of Labour statistics show, from a total of five smelting or concentrating firms reporting, fifty-two women employees in 1942, 191 in 1943 and 207 in 1944. Nonetheless women were specifically targeted for union appeals. In mid-March 1943 in a Commentator article, "Smelter Women and the Union", Local 480 pledged equal pay and equal rights for union sisters when Mine Mill represented 'workers on the hill'. (Women were receiving 80 per cent of full pay and were saddled with excessively long training periods or were designated "helpers" rather than operators.) While this assurance of equal rights may have stemmed from a strong egalitarian impulse among Local 480's membership it also reflected a fear that women might undermine the union. "If women are employed at the smelter", argued the Commentator in May 1942, "it is partly the responsibility of the men to see that these women are paid at the going rate, and not used as a means of job competition ... It is very likely that many workers will be displaced from their present jobs for women who will ... be given preferred jobs hoping to win them over as allies in any situation that may arise between employers and the men." But the smelter women did not respond to the union as a bloc; some women

joined Local 480, some did not. Those that did were requested to recruit their fellow women workers. Active union women also found some union positions open to them, as trustees or shop stewards. Irene Vetere was both a trustee and shop steward during the war. Betty Mar and Peggy Ball were Trustees in 1943. The interaction between women smelter workers and Mine Mill presents itself as an interesting research project but not one that will be pursued here. Turnbull, p. 81; British Columbia Department of Labour Annual Report (1944); Special Meeting of Delegates for the Canadian Metal Industry Conference, 15 June 1944; Shop Steward and Executive Minutes Local 480, February 1943, March 1943, August 1943, September 1943. Shop Steward's Minutes in the Mine Mill Collection, University of British Columbia Special Collections, Box 72.

12. Local 480 Executive Minutes, 8 April 1943; Shop Steward Minutes, 22 April 1943.
13. Membership Book 1939-1943, pp. 107-120, Mine Mill Collection, University of British Columbia Special Collections, Box 69; Monthly Financial Reports IUMMSW Local 480.
14. Local 480 General Membership Meeting Minutes, 11 May 1943. Mine Mill Collection, University of British Columbia Special Collections, Box 70.
15. Commentator, 19 May 1943.
16. John Stanton to George Pearson, 3 June 1943, Mine Mill Collection, University of British Columbia Special Collections, Box 56; WCC Bulletin, Mine Mill Collection Box 73, File 73-9.
17. Stanton to Pearson.
18. Report on ISWU meeting 13 July 1943. The report seems to indicate that Mine Mill had a "fifth column" at work in the ISWU. Mine Mill Collection, University of British Columbia Special Collections, Box 73, File 73-9.
19. Blaylock to Mine Mill Local 480. Addendum to Stanton - Pearson letter.
20. Local 480 General Meeting Minutes, 25 May 1943; Shop Steward's Minutes, 5 August 1943.
21. Gray, p. 69; Abella, p. 91.
22. Abella, p. 91.
23. Turnbull, p. 83.
24. Commentator, 25 January 1943.
25. Local 480 General Membership Meeting Minutes, 25 August 1943.

26. Harvey Murphy, Labour Day Speech 1943 (MSS). Mine Mill Collection, University of British Columbia Special Collections, Box 54, File 54-10.
27. Local 480 Shop Steward's Minutes, 16 September 1943.
28. Union Bulletin, 16 September 1943.
29. Monthly Financial Reports IUMMSW Local 480, September to November 1943.
30. General Membership Meeting Minutes, 5 January 1944, 13 January 1944.
31. Historical Statistics of Canada, M.C. Urquhart and K.A.H. Buckley eds. (Toronto: MacMillan Company, 1965), Series D426-43, p. 107; Craig Heron "The Steel Industry, 1900-1950" in On The Job: Confronting the Labour Process in Canada. Craig Heron and Robert Storey eds. (Kingston and Montreal, McGill - Queens University Press, 1986). This, of course, does no justice to the complexity of the process that led to the enactment of PC 1003. Nor does it offer any in-depth analysis as to why the King government responded in this manner. Heron offers a general analysis of the complex interaction of political climate and work place relations that appear to have fostered such "progressive" legislation. See Heron, "The Steel Industry In Canada", pp. 231-233.
32. PC 1003 - Extract of Canadian War Orders and Regulations, 17 February 1944. Mine Mill Collection, University of British Columbia Special Collections, Box 55.
33. This is not to say that acceptance of PC 1003 did not mean a trade-off. Unions were now locked into a legal system that could work against broad worker coalitions. Direct action was severely limited by the legal sanctity of contract. This tendency was further enhanced by an increasing prevalence of bureaucratic union management structures. On the limits posed by trade union legitimation see Heron, The Canadian Labour Movement, pp. 88-90.
34. PC 1003, Extract of Canadian War Orders and Regulations.
35. Addendum to a copy of the 1943 ICA Act, Mine Mill Collection University of British Columbia Special Collections, Box 55.
36. Commentator, 15 February 1944, 29 February 1944.
37. "A Clear Admission That They Are In A Desperate Situation" Local 480 circular, Mine Mill Collection, University of British Columbia Special Collections, Box 35, File 35-19.
38. Local 480 Executive Minutes, 4 April 1944.
39. Commentator, 13 January 1944; Local 480 Executive Minutes, 4 April 1944.

40. Ralph J. Berry, Press Release (MSS) CLC U28F IUMMSW 480.
41. B.C. District Union News, 30 August 1944.
42. Trail Daily Times, 17 June 1944.
43. Heron, The Canadian Labour Movement, pp. 86-89.
44. Ibid., p. 81.
45. Local 480 General Membership Meeting, 19 June 1944.

Epilogue

1. See George Barnett's comments in Chapter One, p. 26; see also John Bodnar, Workers' World: Kinship, Community and Protest in an Industrial Society, 1900-1940 (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982) p. 184: "Interwoven throughout our interviews was discussion of the desire for job security as the primary motive behind efforts to unionize in Pennsylvania".
2. B.C. District Union News, 30 August 1944; Trail Daily Times, 17 June 1944; Commentator, 27 November 1944.
3. Commentator, 27 November 1944.
4. B.C. District Union News, 25 January 1945.

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