

TRADE UNIONS AND THE WORKINGMAN IN CANADA

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YEARS
of
HARD
LABOUR

by MORDEN LAZARUS
an OFL publication

YEARS OF HARD LABOUR

*An account of
the Canadian workingman
his organizations and tribulations
over a period of
more than
a hundred years*

by

Morden Lazarus

an OFL publication

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P R E F A C E

I appreciate the dilemma of historians. They are supposed to write factually about times they have not lived through, events in which they have not been involved and people they have never seen.

Historians must also be selective. Those who have written about Canada, whatever the epoch, have, with few exceptions, chosen to exclude working people and their organizations.

This void is noticeable in the courses and textbooks of our school system. The 131-page study by the Ontario Human Rights Commission in 1971, which devotes a page and a half to the trade union movement, indicated that students learn little about organized labour and what they do learn is flavoured with an anti-union bias.

In recent years a few historians have made valuable, if still small, contributions toward filling the gap. One example is *Canada Investigates Industrialism*, an abridged version of the Royal Commission on the Relations of Labour and Capital 1889. In his introduction the editor comments, "Canadian historians have as yet told us little about the process of industrialization. The material of the Royal Commission is important therefore if Canadian history is to advance beyond the limited perspectives of much of recent literature, particularly what passes for labour or working class history. . ."

In what follows my purpose is a modest one — to sketch the broad outlines of the development of Canada's trade union movement. Necessarily in such a brief account, many events have been omitted, but I have tried to include the basic ingredients of the story.

I freely acknowledge my personal bias. From the time I helped found the first CCF paper in Canada, the New Commonwealth, in 1934 until the end of my term with the Ontario Federation of Labour in 1972, I have taken an active part or a close interest in at least some of the events about which I have written, met most of the men pictured and known some of them very well.

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I appreciate the opportunity given me by the Ontario Federation of Labour to produce this narrative and regret that I have not had time or space to include many trade unionists whose contributions should certainly be recorded in a longer, more detailed work.

For this account I have used, in addition to my own records, material available from the Industrial Relations Library, University of Toronto, the Public Archives in Ottawa, particularly the Labour Archives, Manuscript Division and Historical Pictures Division, and the Canada Department of Labour, releases of the Co-operative Press Associates of which I have been managing editor since 1945, and the OFL Labour Review which I edited from 1958 to 1972. Other sources are listed in the references and bibliography.

The advice and assistance of my wife Margaret whose active service in the trade union movement spanned its most exciting years were most helpful to say the least. Errors or omissions which may trouble readers are mine.

Morden Lazarus

May 1974

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The Workers' Lot

When Gilbert and Sullivan wrote, "*The policeman's lot is not a happy one*," a similar song, though in serious vein, could well have been written about the unhappy lot of the workingman in Canada.

And Thomas Hood's poem about a wayward waif,

*"One more unfortunate,
Weary of breath,
Rashly importunate,
Gone to her death!"*

could have lamented the pitiful, ill-paid drudgery of hosts of working women.

For many, working conditions were nothing less than slavery. A too-long-neglected report issued in 1889 exposed evils such as the beating and imprisonment of children which shocked the country.

*"In one place in Ontario children, certainly less than 11 years of age, were employed around dangerous machinery. Some of them worked from six o'clock in the morning until six o'clock in the evening, with less than an hour for dinner; others worked from seven in the evening until six in the morning."*¹

Pioneer life was no picnic for any who helped settle Canada, but for most of the working classes it must have been sheer misery. Keeping body and soul together was hard enough, but protesting gross exploitation and injustice was almost impossible. Most immigrants were poverty-stricken, unskilled, uneducated and virtually helpless before the rigours of their new surroundings and

their oppression by the political, judicial and rising industrial authorities.

If, as Sir Wilfrid Laurier predicted, the 20th century belonged to Canada, Canada in the 19th century belonged to the land barons, the railway magnates and the factory owners to whom history has given credit in full measure and the public has contributed banks full of cash.

One historian at least saw the colonization of this country for what it was.

"Owning such huge areas of land in Canada, it was now to the interest of the titled and other absentee proprietors in England and Scotland to stimulate emigration. Every new settler meant an increase in the increment certain to flow from their land holdings. At the same time, the parishes of England found Canada as a convenient dumping ground for their overflow of paupers. . . ."

*"Reduced to pauperism by the results of centuries of plundering, extortion and exploitation of the ruling class at home, these emigrants were herded in foul ships and packed off to Canada under the most inhuman and horrible conditions."*²

This account was well documented by resident physicians in Canada who complained about the spread of "fevers of a contagious character" aboard the ships, the dirt and lack of ventilation, the lack of proper food and the numerous deaths in passage.

Those who survived arrived destitute. "The extortion of ship captains on the

passage had robbed them of their last shilling."

The immigrants knew nothing of farming and were helpless in the "bush". They took to "the large towns in the Provinces with their starving families to eke out by day-labour and begging together a wretched existence". Those who could, "tempted by a more genial climate and higher wages, went to the United States".³

Land clearing, lumbering, the building of roads, canals and railroads made fortunes for contractors and owners while the excess of cheap labour enabled them to have their pick at the lowest possible wages.

The laws of the time were as cruel as the circumstances of workers' lives. The prosecuting attorneys, magistrates and judges were all of the upper class. These officials visited the severest punishments upon poor offenders.

Kingston penitentiary was an inhuman institution where "abominable tortures and other cruelties" such as merciless flogging with rawhide and the "water cure" were inflicted.

"Frequently the keepers amused themselves firing arrows at the convicts while these unfortunates were at meals. The bread-and-water dungeon punishment was extremely common."

At midcentury "highly moral sentiment" arose against solitary confinement. The solitary system was replaced with the contract system by which convicts were hired out to manufacturers who, "profiting greatly, were strong in their praise of the humanitarian spirit which had done away with solitary confinement".⁴

In Ontario the laws were cruel enough. But in the province of Quebec they were vicious. Hanging for minor offences of minors and adults alike was not uncommon.

The Tragic Victims

"The canalmen and lumbermen endured in a 'womanless, homeless and voteless world', and protest against the conditions of existence were largely individual and ineffectual.

"Equally primitive were the protests of Irish labourers who formed the largest single source of unskilled labour in the vast canal, railway and public works projects of the 1840's and 1850's . . . the Irish unskilled labourers were incapable of forming enduring combinations or taking political action.

"Like the handloom weavers and the framework knitters in the early decades of the 19th century in Britain, the Irish unskilled labourers were no cohorts of revolution but rather the tragic victims of the distress of early industrialization."

—Martin Robin, RADICAL POLITICS AND CANADIAN LABOUR, p. 13

The National Policy

Indiscriminate immigration, waves of newcomers adding their plight to that of inhabitants who were themselves insecure, gave rise to a growing attitude among working people that immigration should be curtailed.

But this was the gestation period of Sir John A. Macdonald's National Policy — the opening up of the west by the rapid development of a railroad system, the encouragement of immigration to settle the prairie provinces, and the raising of tariff walls, all redounding to the benefit of the financial, commercial and industrial interests of the east.

The National Policy did succeed in spurring the industrialization of Canada, but industrialization brought with it the new evils which accompanied the factory system. "The one and only fixed and dominant idea," commented the

Royal Commission of 1889, "was to obtain the largest possible percentage of work with the smallest possible outlay of wages."

To achieve profit at any cost in human suffering, employers filled their mills and factories with women and children to the practical exclusion of adult males, the Commission found.

These comments were all the more credible in that members of the Commission were very carefully chosen by partisans of the Conservative government bent on refurbishing its image in labour circles. The few trade union members were known Conservative supporters but their party allegiance did not deter them from adding their own pertinent views to the majority Commission report.

Even in times when hardship was part of normal life, the conditions which the Commission encountered in their survey appalled them. A Montreal cigar manufacturer imprisoned his factory apprentices in a "black hole" for hours at a time, often past working hours, and maintained a special constable to overawe and strike terror into the hearts of juveniles.

For all this there was no remedy . . . "incredible as it may appear, law, in the person of the Recorder of Montreal, expressly authorized the punishment inflicted."⁵

The Commission received disturbing evidence of sweated labour, women and children working excessively long hours, and objectionable sanitary arrangements in Canadian factories.

Legislation covering Ontario and Quebec prohibited employment of children under 12 in places with 20 or more employees, but it was not enforced.

In workingclass homes the Commission found exorbitantly high rents and dangerously low standards of hygiene and sanitation.

The illuminating testimony heard by the Commission covered 5,000 pages. The recommendations in its report, especially in the minority report, were aimed at the elimination of the worst abuses and the amelioration of the worst working conditions. They were by no means revolutionary, though they may have seemed so to the power élite of the time. Certainly the good word the Commissioners had for labour unions could have given offence:

"Workingmen's organizations have spread very rapidly of late years and with much apparent good to their members and trade. . . Your Commissioners recommend that, in view of the good already accomplished, the increase of such societies be encouraged by all legitimate means and that one day in the year, to be known as Labour Day, be set aside as a holiday by the Government."

Of all the recommendations, only the one on Labour Day was implemented. The rest were ignored for many years, yet eventually — that is, within the next five or six decades — most of them found their way to the statute books.

The Penniless Immigrants

The sorry immigration conditions of the earlier half of the century had hardly improved in the second half. Daniel O'Donoghue, the first trade unionist elected to the Ontario Legislature (in 1874), used his position in an effort to "stem the tide of indiscriminate immigration".⁶

The government of Ontario spent considerable sums to assist immigrants. Immigration officials benefitted "in proportion to their numbers".

Misleading promises were made to immigrants who were kept ignorant of the depressed wages of Canadian workmen. O'Donoghue objected to the "supposed philanthropy" of those who were gathering up London waifs for

shipment to this country. "We have in Canada already, our cities abound with them, a class of poor children who seem utterly uncared for. . ."

In Toronto "the House of Industry" was a busy place where the charity of "tender-hearted ladies" kept some poorly-paid workers "a hair's-breadth away from the workhouse".

Even those who had the lowliest jobs "saw with dismay the boatloads of penniless newcomers from Europe".

In Ottawa soup kitchens were set up and hand-outs to growing numbers of "clients" persuaded the city council to set up a Retrenchment Committee.

Assisted immigration ceased in 1888 but the importation of labour under contract continued. The Royal Commission recommended that the bringing in of contract labour be forbidden.

*"Parliament in its wisdom has protected the interests of the manufacturer by the safeguard of the tariff, and the citizen whose only capital is his labour should not be less the object of paternal care," its report stated.*⁷

In this the Commission echoed the view of spokesmen for the struggling labour groups of a century ago. The *Trades Journal*, organ of the Provincial Workmen's Association in Nova Scotia, supported Sir John A. Macdonald's National Policy in the early 1880s until growing bitterness and disillusionment over unplanned immigration gave it second thoughts.

*"We do not object to labour of all kinds coming to this country on its own expenses," the paper declared in 1882, "but when the government, or the capitalists, whose manufactures are protected, assist in, or import foreign labour, then they adopt a course not likely to make a protective policy very popular with the working classes".*⁸

By December of that year the *Trades Journal's* views were expressed more sharply.

*"As for assisting the immigration of mechanics, labourers and farm servants, that would be a piece of folly. Though trade is brisk, brisker than in years, yet we know that it is with difficulty that employment can be had at times."*⁸

However, the Canadian government in 1883 urged that agents in London act more vigorously to supply the need for "mechanics and labourers".

By 1889 the *Trades Journal* was completely disillusioned with the Tories and the National Policy, as its editor revealed in this statement on May 15:

"On Tuesday when the train conveying the National Policy Italians to Cape Breton to work on the Government railway reached Piedmont station, it crossed the westbound train with a load of Cape Breton Scotchmen and Frenchmen on their way to the United States. How thankful the Cape Bretoners should be.

*The next importation will likely be a carload of Chinese."*⁹

The *Trades Journal* was not far off the mark. The Chinese were the workhorses in the building of the railroads in the west. Canada was a way-station for hundreds of thousands of European immigrants who, eager for the opportunity to earn a livelihood, sought their fortunes in the United States.

Disappointment with the National Policy was voiced in Ontario too.

Probably the most effective and influential sector of organized labour in the 1880s was the Knights of Labour.

In Hamilton, a city of considerable development and a centre of labour activity, the Knights of Labour in 1883 established the *Labour Union*, "A Weekly Journal Devoted to the Interests of

All Classes of Labour", edited by E. H. Rowe. This soon became the *Palladium of Labour* "and as such continued to publish for several years with an intellectual vigour and idealism that often distinguished the Knights of Labour elsewhere".¹⁰

The Knights of Labor originated in the United States but had marked success in Canada, especially in Ontario and Quebec. Their aim, as expressed in their publication, was to encourage a more class-conscious and aggressive attitude among urban workers. They were suspicious of Sir John's National Policy as "the specious plea to patriotism (which) is often put forward as a reason why labour should accept low wages and long hours uncomplainingly".¹¹

Sir John nevertheless continued to appeal to the patriotism of the working man. In a speech to the Workingmen's Liberal Conservative Association of Ottawa in 1886 he implored his audience "as you value the future of Canada, to work earnestly and unitedly, to allow no jealousies, section or racial, to arise".

For the workers, however, the National Policy had not fulfilled its promise. Labour unrest grew. A new weekly newspaper, the *Labour Advocate*, appeared in Toronto on December 5, 1890, carrying the banner, "We Demand all the Reform that Justice can ask for, and all the Justice that Reform can give". The paper and its position were supported by both the Knights of Labor and the Toronto Trades and Labour Council.

In the 1891 federal election the *Labour Advocate* declared that it did not "care two straws as to the result, regarding both parties as utterly corrupt and bent only on the retention or acquirement of power".

The Conservatives retained power with a reduced majority, but Sir John A. Macdonald died three months later.

The Long Trail Ahead

Improvements in the standard of living and in working conditions of working people improved over the years only by slow degrees.

An investigation, by a special Royal Commission, of CPR railway construction in British Columbia in the late 1890s found "violations of agreements, threatenings and illegal arrests by contractors, lack of medical attention, non-providing of accommodation, unsanitary houses, tents without stoves, overcharges for supplies, bad methods of wage payments and other abuses".¹²

In October 1900, 200 labourers working at the Montreal Cotton Company on excavation work went on strike for a 25 cents a day increase over their wages of \$1 a day.

In 1908, 6,000 workers struck at Dominion Textile, Montreal Cotton and other plants in Quebec cities in protest against a 10 per cent wage cut imposed because of depressed conditions in the industry. A Royal Commission reported evidence of exploitation and evasion of labour laws by the employers.

The report also observed that the lot of many of the workers in the cotton mills was particularly hard, due both to the shortage of work and to a considerable reduction in wages paid.

A serious strike of railwaymen in Fort William, Ont., in 1909 arose over workers' demands for wage increases above the prevailing rates of 17½ cents an hour for day work and 20 cents for night work.

Coal mining, "a sinkhole for unskilled labour", was an industry with "long hours, low earnings, dangerous and unsanitary working conditions and labour exploitation generally . . . whenever workers have been unable to organize effectively and strike for their demands".¹³

In contrast to the plight which workers and their families endured, privileged people were amassing fortunes with government help.

The prevailing government policy of the time was to make

“large grants of land, timber, mineral and other resources, as well as generous subsidies for particular objectives, to major business interests in order to stimulate economic growth. This was a policy that tended to promote corruption, the amassing of fortunes and indulgence in conspicuous expenditure by the more fortunate minority of the nouveaux riches.

“It generated intense resentment among the less privileged in an era of generally low income, widespread poverty and insecurity.”¹⁴

One of the most notable beneficiaries of government aid in Canadian history is, of course, the Canadian Pacific Railway.

“The Canadian Pacific, a fourth generation welfare case, has enjoyed the benefits of the public dole longer than anyone else in Canada. It got on the dole in the first place by corrupting a Father of Confederation. . . ‘I must have another ten thousand. Will be the last time of calling. Do not fail me. Answer today.’”¹⁵

This telegram from Sir John A. Macdonald sent from Kingston to a representative of the CPR on August 26, 1872, sought a further contribution to add to the \$287,000 which the founders of the CPR had already given to the Conservative Party. It was a good investment: the CPR eventually received from the government a cash subsidy of \$25 million and 25 million acres of land

in western Canada, or about one per cent of all the land in Canada. Parts of the railway already built, on which the government had spent \$14 million, were handed over for nothing, and sections under construction were completed at government expense.

Later the government gave the CPR another subsidy to build a line through southern B.C., then it guaranteed the interest on another \$15 million loan. . . Eventually, through the acquisition of subsidiaries, the CPR ended up with 36 million acres of the best land in Canada, or some 1½ per cent of all the land in the country.¹⁶

A continuing sore spot with workers struggling to make a living was the immigration policy which provided a surplus of labour to “keep workers in their place”.

The most exploited and the most resented of the labourers were the Chinese. For the building of the railways in the west, Chinese coolies were hired for a dollar a day, with the condition that they buy their provisions at company stores where prices were high. They were paid only 80 cents a day if they bought their needs elsewhere.

The coolies were very adept at taking care of themselves in the wilderness and in moving from camp to camp. Two thousand men could move 25 miles in a 24-hour period, a feat which took white workers a week or more.

Gross exploitation coupled with competition from more and more immigrants on the one hand and corruption and extravagance on the other did not provide an atmosphere which lent itself to material wellbeing or peace of mind.

There was a long, long trail ahead.

2

Beginnings of the Labour Movement

A semblance of trade union organization can be traced back at least 150 years. In 1827 printers organized in Quebec City, took part in the regulation of wages, cared for their sick and held musical and dramatic entertainments. In Ontario printers had an organization at the time of the incorporation of Toronto as a city in 1834. Other workers followed soon after, among them shoemakers, coopers and stonemasons.

Printers conducted a successful strike in Toronto in 1854. Theirs was one of the first organizations to affiliate with an international union. The National Typographical Union was established in the United States in 1852. In 1869 it changed its name to the International Typographical Union and admitted locals from Quebec City, Saint John and Toronto.

But trade unionism could only emerge in strength with the establishment of the factory system, the concentration of workers in industrial centres and the building of railways as lines of communication. This happened in the early seventies.

Workers didn't form unions with aggressive intent but as defensive organizations. They reacted to economic exploitation and their organizations were designed to protect and advance their interests vis-à-vis their employers.

The labour movement in Canada was indigenous but the British influence was as important in its beginnings as it was in the nation itself. British immigrant workers knew from experience

the need for togetherness in an unfriendly environment.

The laws relating to labour in Canada were British laws. The first anti-union legislation in Britain was the Combination Act of 1799 which made it illegal for any workman to combine with others to try to increase wages or decrease hours of work or, indeed, for any trade union purpose whatsoever. An act passed in 1824 gave unions a modicum of legal status but it was not until 1871 that legislation was enacted which declared that no trade union was illegal merely because it was "in restraint of trade".

This statutory recognition of trade unions was not granted in Canada. "Even by the liberal statesmen and the press of the day, labour unions were considered as perversions, 'mere ebullitions of unfounded discontent', whose aims were 'mischievous where not Utopian'."¹

The Toronto Trades Assembly

Yet at this very period trade unionism was sinking down roots. In Toronto on April 12, 1871, a group of unions — the Coopers, three lodges of the Knights of St. Crispin (shoemakers), the Bakers, Cigar Makers, Iron Moulders and the Typographical Union — met in the Iron Moulders' hall and established the Toronto Trades Assembly. J. S. Williams of the Typographical Union was elected president.

The Trades Assembly began a campaign for shorter hours, taking its cue

from the British Nine Hour League, also founded in 1871, and a similar movement in the United States. It was soon in the thick of a battle for this objective.

In July 1872 the Typographical Union went on strike against a Toronto newspaper, the *Globe*, whose publisher was George Brown, leader of the Liberal Party in Ontario. The strike issue was the nine-hour day without loss in pay.

The strike lasted 17 weeks but it had hardly begun when 24 members of the union were arrested and charged with seditious conspiracy. Since the British law of 1871 had not been enacted in Canada, it was still a criminal offence to take collective action.

The men were released from jail and the strike was won through the political intervention of Sir John A. Macdonald.

*"Sir John A. Macdonald, delighted at the opportunity to 'dish the Liberals' with two pieces of unimpeachably Gladstonian legislation, lost no time in passing through the Dominion of Parliament a Trade Unions Act and a Criminal Law Amendment Act (1872) modelled on the British Acts of the previous year. This was the first big piece of successful political action by Canadian unions. The prosecution was dropped and the strike was won."*²

Canadian Labour Union

The Toronto Trades Assembly, whose aggressive support of the printers had contributed to this legislative victory, now set up another milestone in Canadian labour history. It started a move toward a national assembly with the co-operation of the labour councils in Hamilton and Ottawa. (These councils had been formed in 1863 and 1872 respectively.)

As a result, the Canadian Labour Union was established in September 1873. The founding meeting was attended by 31 local unions, including 14

from Toronto, five from Ottawa and four from Hamilton. Others wrote to declare their endorsement.

The CLU, Canada's first national labour centre, adopted a declaration of principles not significantly different from those of today. The objectives were:

"... to agitate such questions as may be for the benefit of the working classes in order that we may obtain enactment of such measures by the dominion and local legislatures as will be beneficial to us and the repeal of all oppressive laws which now exist. The use of means consistent with honour and integrity to so correct the abuses under which the working classes are labouring as to ensure to them their just rights and privileges. To use our utmost endeavours to impress upon the labouring classes of this country the necessity of close and thorough organization."

The formation of the Toronto Trades Assembly led to the publication of the *Ontario Workman*, a weekly newspaper which first appeared in Toronto on April 18, 1872. The newspaper supported the nine-hour day drive and countered criticism by emphasizing the influence of the British labour movement which had originated the campaign.

The Canadian Labour Union, the Toronto Trades Assembly and the *Ontario Workman* together gave new impetus to the development of a labour movement in Canada, but an economic recession proved a temporary brake. After three conventions the CLU was unable to carry on and the idea of a central labour body lay dormant until trade revived in the late 70s and 80s.

The Father of Canadian Labour

Few people who left their mark on Canadian labour history have had their names enshrined in the chronicles of the times.

Daniel O'Donoghue's name is there.

In 1852 Daniel John O'Donoghue, age eight, came to Canada with his parents. The poor Irish immigrant family settled in Ottawa, as many Irish did.

*"By 1832 they (the Irish) had built the Rideau Canal from Kingston to Bytown, and had moved on, some into the lumber camps of the Ottawa Valley, some to the next construction project in Kingston, Toronto or Hamilton, and presently to the building of the railroads in western Ontario."*³

Daniel's father died five years after the family arrived in Canada. Daniel, forced to leave school where he had been a bright pupil, was apprenticed to a printer.

To become a printer in those days was a fortunate step, for printers were not only top drawer workmen but they were in the vanguard of union organization.

O'Donoghue completed his apprenticeship and three years as journeyman by the age of 20, then spent some time working in the United States. He came back to Ottawa in 1866 and got a job with the *Ottawa Times*. There he helped organize the Ottawa Typographical Union which soon affiliated with the International.

In 1869 he led a strike at the *Times* and won.

In 1873 he led a delegation from the Ottawa Labour Council to meet with the Prime Minister, establishing a tradition which continues in various forms to this day.

That same year he became secretary of the labour council and influenced the passage of the Mechanics' Lien Act by the Mowat government in Ontario.⁴

"But 1873 was also a time when a bishop in Montreal was applauded because he refused Christian burial to

Daniel J. O'Donoghue

1844 — 1907



Daniel O'Donoghue was a remarkable "Irishman with the heart of a warrior and the nose of a shrewd politician" — one of the few trade union leaders to be honoured with a worthwhile biographical account. It appears in "Faith, Sweat and Politics", a history of the early trade union years in Canada, by Doris French.

a printer named Chabot because he had joined a union.

"Workmen were called into court and fined for leaving their employment; more than this, the workman's master could prosecute any employer who subsequently hired the man.

*"It was common practice for lumbermen to be 'secured' by the hotel-keeper, who kept them briefly but amply supplied with whisky while they stopped in Ottawa, and arranged with the lumber boss to be repaid from the men's wages when they returned to the bush. From one brief, wild carousel to the next, months hence, the lumberman lived not much better than a serf in bondage."*⁵

This was the Ottawa of O'Donoghue's day, an Ottawa which gave flagrant evidence of the need for vast changes in attitudes toward the situation of working people.

Daniel O'Donoghue attended the founding meeting of the Canadian La-

bour Union in Toronto and chaired its constitution committee.

In 1874, O'Donoghue became the first trade unionist elected to the Ontario Legislature, simultaneously with the election of the first Labour member in the British House of Commons.

He was described at that time as "a poor man who has nothing to depend upon for support but his wages", and as "a sociable and agreeable gentleman, very intelligent and very well-informed who, though a 'workingman', has done the city . . . no discredit as its parliamentary representative".

Shortly after his election to the Ontario House, he voted in favour of the Extension of the Franchise Act which lowered voters' income qualification to an annual income of at least \$400 (O'Donoghue had urged a \$300 minimum) and removed the property qualification. He supported other progressive legislation.

Delegates to the final convention of the Canadian Labour Union lauded O'Donoghue as an example of what workingmen could do in parliament.

But the 1870s were lean and hungry years. The Toronto Trades Assembly could do little to help either its affiliates or their members and suspended its activities in 1878.

The Ottawa *Free Press* commented editorially in January 1879:

"A large number of the labouring classes are in absolute want. They have had no employment for months, and they and their families are wholly dependent for fuel, food, clothing and shelter on the city and on the charity of citizens."

The Ottawa Trades Council had collapsed in 1876 and the only union left in the city was the Typographical.

Daniel O'Donoghue lost his seat in

the Legislature in the 1879 election. The Tories won a decisive victory.

The Grit paper, the *Free Press*, reported that raw liquor flowed like water, and the day after the election inebriated men were still to be seen in the streets arguing that they had not yet received their promised pay for voting Tory.

As the economy recovered from the doldrums, so did the labour movement. The industrial upturn was sparked by the adoption of the National Policy (1879) and the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway (1881-85). In 1881 the International Typographical Union held its annual convention in Toronto; this encouraged the revival of a central labour body in the city, now called the Trades and Labour Council. Other labour councils were revived or established in Halifax (1882), Hamilton and London (1883), Guelph (1885), Oshawa, Brantford and St. Thomas (1886), Winnipeg (1887), Montreal, Ottawa, St. Catharines, Peterborough, Vancouver and Victoria (1889).

In 1881 the Knights of Labor came to Canada. Also in 1881 the "Federation of Organized Trades and Labour Unions of the United States and Canada" was set up in Pittsburgh. This was the forerunner of the American Federation of Labour (1886). Its name suggests that it intended encompassing unions north of the 49th parallel.

The convention call of the FOOTLU in 1882 noted that Chinese coolies were being imported into Canada without restriction and concluded that ". . . the interests of our trade union brethren north of the border demand that legislative work should be attended to in Ottawa as well as in Washington." The Americans were concerned that many of the coolies might be slipping across the border and competing for their jobs.

"Perhaps for this reason the Toronto Trades and Labour Council was invited to send delegates to the

*FOOTLU convention in Cleveland in 1882. A year later the legislative committee of the Toronto workers approved the American labor group's objectives and urged that a delegation be sent."*⁶

Daniel O'Donoghue moved the motion but it was not acted on because the Council's treasury was empty.

First Canadian Labour Congress

The most lasting accomplishment in this period was the founding, in 1883, of a new national central body, the Canadian Labour Congress. Like the CLU before it, this congress was established on the initiative of the labour council in Toronto.

The first convention of the CLC was attended by delegates from 29 unions,

of which eight were Knights of Labor Assemblies. At the 1886 convention, attended by 109 delegates, its name was changed to the Trades and Labour Congress of Canada. The TLC convention of 1888 drew only 41 delegates but attendance recovered to 86 by 1890.

The years following 1890 were full of difficulties as another economic depression gripped the country. Attendance at the Congress reached its lowest point in 1895 — only 39 delegates representing 29 organizations.

With the new century times changed for the better. The TLC's 1912 convention was attended by 252 delegates, the largest number to that time. By then the Congress had an executive member for every province in the Dominion.

The Knights of Labor, the AFL and the TLC

The Holy and Noble Order of the Knights of Labor was established in Philadelphia in 1869 with the declared intent

"To make industrial and moral worth, not wealth, the true standard of individual and national greatness. To secure for the workers the full enjoyment of the wealth they create; sufficient leisure in which to develop their intellectual, moral and social faculties; all the benefits, recreation and pleasure of association; in a word, to enable them to share the gains and honours of advancing civilization."

The Knights were the forerunners of industrial unionism.

Their first Canadian Assembly was formed in Hamilton in 1881 and soon there were 25 Assemblies in that city. They organized 306 branches in Canada between 1881 and 1890. Of these, 222 were in Ontario and 58 in Quebec.

Their policies included prevention of land speculation, health measures in in-

dustry, prohibition of child labour under age 15, a graduated income tax, a new monetary system, abolition of interest, public ownership of telegraph, telephones and railroads, equal pay for equal work for male and female employees, establishment of co-operatives. They believed in persuading employers to arbitrate differences with their employees "in order that the bonds of sympathy between them may be strengthened, and that strikes may be rendered unnecessary".

The Knights of Labor controlled the Trades and Labour Congress in its early years. Their Assemblies had an absolute majority of delegates at most of the conventions between 1886 and 1894 and they held the presidency from 1888 to 1892.

Most of the prominent labour spokesmen of the time were members of the Order, including Alfred Jury, originally very active in the Toronto Trades Assembly, and Daniel O'Donoghue who became chairman of its Legislative Committee. O'Donoghue wrote:

"The tendency of the principles and methods of the Knights of Labor is in the direction of intellectual development, peaceful and lawful agitation, and an intelligent and united use of the ballot as a remedy for many of the grievances of which wage earners complain."

The pursuit of these desirable objectives foundered on the rocks of harsh reality. The policy of avoiding strikes proved its undoing, as inflexible opposition by employers to such workers' demands as the eight-hour day in the United States provoked vigorous protest from organized labour.

In Canada the Knights' record showed more strikes lost than won. In 1887 in Toronto a group of builders went on strike for higher pay. Although they exercised every restraint and offered to arbitrate in a reasonable way, their demands were rejected and their strike broken.

Various Canadian leaders of the Knights appeared before the Royal Commission on the Relations of Labour and Capital in 1889 to testify about their principles and policies. Their fundamental belief was in the essential brotherhood of man and their motto, "That is the most perfect government in which the wrong done to one is the concern of all."

Dual Conflict

The American Federation of Labor at first proclaimed that it had no quarrel with the Knights of Labor. It expressed the hope that each organization, while maintaining its own structural identity, would work in harmony with the other. In practice, however, basic differences soon became evident.

The AFL was committed to development through a craft union structure. The Knights accepted everyone as members except lawyers, bankers, stockbrokers and professional gamblers!

So inevitable conflict arose about "dual organization" where both groups

operated in the same jurisdiction. This was anathema to the AFL which, in 1889, issued an ultimatum: "No meeting or conference with the Knights of Labor shall be held until they declare against dual organization in any one trade." In other words, the Knights were to be excluded from any trade in which the AFL was active.

While the Knights ran into adversity, the influence of the AFL increased in Canada with the growth in strength of the craft unions. The Trades and Labour Congress tried to act as peacemaker between the two contending organizations and for several years maintained a strict neutrality. But attitudes soon shifted and by 1894 the TLC had accepted the AFL pattern. Two years later it was trying to persuade the AFL to turn over to it the per capita tax levied on the Canadian locals of international unions.

And in 1903 the TLC convention in Berlin, Ontario, passed an amendment to its constitution which excluded the Knights of Labor and all other unions unconnected with the international movement.

This at one blow accomplished a number of objectives. It resolved the problem of dual organization; it aimed a blow at "socialism" in the west; and it moved the AFL to grant the TLC \$500 for the furtherance of its legislative program — a symbol of the new and closer relations between the two bodies.

But as the Knights and other groups were split off from the TLC, a new central organization had its beginnings. The rejected organizations immediately formed an independent body. The National Trades and Labour Congress, as it was named, struck as its keynote the building of a purely Canadian trade union system.

In 1908 this new congress became the Canadian Federation of Labour which, after a long period of zigzags and vicissitudes, evolved in 1940 into the Canadian Congress of Labour.

3

“Bread-and-Butter” and Militant Unionism

1900 to 1918

“The aims and aspirations of our labour movement are not useless verbiage and declarations, but the real ideal and highest conception of what human life should be. Labour’s philosophy is the philosophy of democracy,” declared D. A. Carey, president of the Trades and Labour Congress of Canada, to its 12th annual convention in 1898.

The Congress had about 70 years to give meaning to these words between the time it was founded and its merger with the Canadian Congress of Labour to form the Canadian Labour Congress in 1956.

What degree of success did it achieve?

“The early unions,” Andy Andras, CLC Legislative Director, told a stewards’ training course in 1967, “were principally craft unions which were not interested in rocking the boat in any terms of social change. They adjusted themselves to the status quo. They were what are called today ‘bread and butter unions’.”

Originally unions were voluntary protective organizations formed to protest against grievances and injustices found in the work place. The hostility of public, press, employers and legislators made almost impossible the declared intention of the union pioneers to achieve their objectives by peaceful means. But that was what they tried to do. The position of TLC leaders reflected this attitude.

Bursts of militant unionism did erupt, especially in the west. Governments showed little reluctance to meet labour unrest or aggressive designs with force. For a workingman to stick a bludgeon or a shillelagh under the nose of an army rifleman could prove a deadly way of attaining even the most honourable objective.

The record of the Trades and Labour Congress may not be scintillating, but the Congress could not have existed for over three and a half generations if its ways had been entirely out of consonance with the wishes of its affiliates. In fact, it was the affiliates which influenced its direction and pace.

As mentioned earlier, skilled British workers with some trade union experience played a leading role in the pioneer days of trade unionism in Canada but the Canadian unions were soon drawn within the orbit of events in the United States.

There were obvious reasons. The natural lines of transportation and communication run north and south. Most Canadians live in urban-industrial centres within 100 miles of the U.S. border. The majority of the populations of the two countries speak the same language and have many similar social, economic and political customs and institutions.

It is not surprising, then, that Canada and the United States have similar industrial relations systems — particu-

larly since Canadians have so often borrowed from U.S. initiatives and so many Canadian employers have been subsidiaries of U.S. companies. The early unions in Canada were often dependent on U.S. organizers and funds for their operation.

"Union organizational structures, government systems, ideologies and policies in Canada, therefore, tend to reflect those of United States parent bodies in their respective industries and trade jurisdictions. . .

"... it is safe to say that a large fraction, and probably a majority, of organized wage earners in Canada is employed in the more than 4,000 enterprises that are branch plants or subsidiaries of United States corporations. . .

"And finally, almost two-thirds of Canada's total exports, and more than two-thirds of her imports, are to and from the United States."¹

But there were differences as well as similarities. At no time were all Canadian trade unionists concerned with "bread-and-butter" or "business" unionism to the exclusion of an active interest in progressive social policies which would benefit the community as a whole or of support for a political party which would give priority to such policies.

In fact, the position of Canadian unionists was in striking contrast to that of the American Federation of Labour.

The AFL did not champion remedial legislation to improve workingmen's lives.

"In 1914 the annual convention declared against the eight-hour day by legislative action, except for women and children and government workers. Gompers himself also opposed compulsory health insurance and unemployment insurance, and although schemes for both purposes

were in operation in various European countries, the AF of L took no action to bring them before the American public. Gompers explained his attitude by saying national insurance was 'at variance with our concept of voluntary institutions and of freedom for individuals', and presumably he felt it would weaken the authority of the unions over their members, for in many cases they provided sickness and unemployment benefits."²

Small as they were in the early days, Canadian unions were in the forefront of the battle for social benefits such as old age pensions and unemployment insurance. The most vocal advocates of legislative action were trade union activists and labour members in parliament. The beneficiaries were all the people of Canada.

As for the AFL, the preaching of "pure and simple" unionism — better wages, hours and working conditions — did not spare the workers of the United States from long, bitter struggles against the intractable might of corporate wealth.

To this day, when trade unionists sing, they sing of Joe Hill, song writer of the Industrial Workers of the World — the Wobblies — who was executed in 1915 for allegedly killing a Salt Lake City grocer. In the eyes of his fellow workers, Joe Hill died a martyr.

*"I dreamt I saw Joe Hill last night
As live as you and me. . ."*

Canadians sing that song too.

Canada's proximity to the United States acted as a safety valve for workers' frustration. Emigration relieved some of the pressure of industrial unrest and may account to some extent for the lower incidence of violent strikes and lockouts in this country.

In another area Canada did get in ahead of the United States. A Department of Labour was set up here in 1900, in the United States in 1913.



James Simpson

1873 — 1938

One of the most colourful characters in the Canadian labour movement during the first half of this century was James Simpson. He was born in Lancashire in 1873, son of a stonemason and staunch trade unionist who, angered by a cut in wages, brought his family to Toronto in 1887.

The 14-year-old Jimmy got his first job in a Cabbagetown factory where he worked 12 hours a day dipping bicycle parts in red paint. The turning-point in his career came when his Sunday school teacher had him apprenticed as a printer on the Toronto News. Six weeks later a strike took place and Jimmy was on the picket line. The strikers started their own paper which burgeoned into the Toronto Star.

Simpson worked for the Star for about 25 years, ten of them as City Hall reporter. He spent his evenings working for the labour movement and his Sundays preaching in the People's Church.

His municipal career began with his membership on the Toronto Board of Education from 1905 to 1910. In his final year he was Board chairman and prepared a report for a commission on technical schools. He made an unsuccessful try for Board of Control in 1911 but in 1914 was elected with labour backing on a platform including municipal hospital services, municipal coal and gas distribution and more parks. He was controller again in 1933 and in 1935 became Toronto's first labour mayor.

His first labour office was secretary of the Municipal Committee of the Toronto Labour Council. By 1902 he was vice-president of the Council. He also became vice-president of the Toronto Typographical Union Local 91, organized the Labour Temple and was its first secretary. He had three stretches as vice-

president of the Trades and Labour Congress of Canada — 1904 to 1909, 1916-1917 and 1924 to 1936.

Jimmy Simpson was a committed socialist of the British Labour Party stripe and a life-long protagonist of labour political action. He was a founder of the Canadian Labour Party, a leader in the Ontario ILP and an eloquent spokesman for the CCF.

Jimmy Simpson was a man of great courage who never avoided an issue. He was always strong in his language, always ready to defend his principles, always concerned for the welfare of his fellow men.

He died in an auto accident in Toronto on September 24, 1938.

The *Labour Gazette* was started at the same time as the department, with Mackenzie King as editor. Daniel O'Donoghue became Canada's first Fair Wage Officer, a post he held until his death in 1907.

Wealth at the Top

The Canadian economy displayed relatively rapid growth at the turn of the century. But the distribution of rising incomes took the shape of an inverted pyramid, with the weight of wealth at the top.

Mass immigration in the first decade, fast economic growth combined with maldistribution of wealth were bound to generate strains and conflict.

The organization of labour expanded with the economy but not without pro-

blems. Employers were hostile to unionization and attacked unions for "American domination" and control by "foreign agitators" regardless of their affiliations.

The strikes and lockouts, especially in coal mining and railway construction, were mostly over the issue of union recognition.

Governments took the side of the employers. Legislation like the Trade Union Act of 1873 gave unions legal status and allowed strikes for "legitimate" objectives, but with little result.

As time went on, union rights were circumscribed — the right to strike, picket and boycott — with no comparable obligation on employers to recognize unions or bargain with them. Unions had little or no protection against offensive or retaliatory actions by employers, such as firing or black-listing union members and hiring strikebreakers.

Between 1901 and 1913 workers were involved in 14 large strikes across Canada in which "violence" in some form occurred. In 11 of these strikes the militia or regular military forces were used.

Bias of Government

The Deputy Minister of Labour, Mackenzie King (promoted from editor of the *Labour Gazette*), was in large part responsible for the bias of government before World War I.

Growth of the economy required expansion of the railways. The railways were dependent on construction and coal. Coal in western Alberta and British Columbia was considered an industry of vital national importance.

"In view of these priorities, the federal government, as personified in Mackenzie King, its main mediator and architect of labour policy, was inclined to follow a pragmatic or opportunistic strategy of accepting any means for achieving immediate

*settlement of disputes and strikes in the railways and coal mines, even if it involved a considerable measure of compulsion that worked primarily to the disadvantage of organized labour as the weaker power group in most cases, and generated more widespread unrest and conflict in the long run."*³

Similarly, provincial and local governments sided with employers. The law placed a higher priority on property rights and the right of an employer to carry on operations without interference than it did on the rights of workers to organize for collective bargaining and to protect their jobs.

In addition to strikebreakers, employers were allowed to hire special armed guards, supplementing regular police, to protect their property. Often local and provincial authorities read the Riot Act or proclaimed Martial Law, banned public meetings and brought in militia or regular units of the army.

The building of the railways was accompanied by many violent disputes provoked by intolerable working conditions and low wages. The prevailing rate for construction workers on the railways was \$1.50 a day with board supplied at the rate of \$4 a week.

Railway construction often took place in remote areas. The fact that workmen were dependent on contractors for their keep left them wide open to gross exploitation.

A Royal Commission report of conditions resulted in the passing of the Public Works Health Act in 1900. This provided for the public regulation of housing and health facilities for workers on railways and public works.

As with other legislation affecting workers, the Health Act was ineffective in eliminating abuses, but the very lack of enforcement encouraged the organization of construction workers into unions.

Militancy in the West

The federal government of Sir Wilfrid Laurier's time was most troubled by the militancy of the coal miners and railroad workers in western Canada. It set up the Royal Commission on Industrial Disputes in British Columbia in April 1903. This turned into an inquiry into the operations of the Dunsmuir-owned mines which had cut miners' wages by 10 per cent in 1902. A wage cut was a sure way to inflame discontent, especially when the company obtained a 67 per cent rebate on coal exports to San Francisco, announced early in 1903 by the United States government.

The inquiry heard many miners tell of their grievances which ranged from low pay to discrimination and dismissals for union activity. But the official report of the inquiry stated that the United Brotherhood of Railway Employees and the Western Federation of Miners were undesirable organizations — "revolutionary socialist" and not "legitimate" trade unions. Their officers were "not trade unionists, but foreign socialistic agitators of the most bigoted and ignorant type".

While it did concede that Dunsmuir and other large employers provoked working men into organizing unions to protect themselves from what amounted to tyrannous treatment, the report ignored most of the grievances presented by the miners.

Instead, the commissioners recommended new laws to control trade unionism and collective bargaining. They proposed new conciliation and arbitration machinery to compel labour and capital to settle their differences before long strikes occurred, the prohibition of strikes or lockouts until either side had given 30 days' notice to the Registrar of the Supreme Court of Canada. Compulsory arbitration was to be reserved for public utilities, transportation and communications and coal

mining if and when strikes threatened the public interest.

The report was considered a reflection of the bias of Sir William Mulock, federal Minister of Labour, who was under strong pressure from business interests to act against "international" unions. Many employers blamed these unions for the growing militancy of Canadian labour, especially in British Columbia.

The 1903 convention of the Trades and Labour Congress protested against the commission's report and recommendations. The upshot of these events was the Industrial Disputes Investigation Act, though its enactment was delayed until 1907. The IDIA provided for the compulsory intervention of the federal government in a labour dispute on the application of either party and for the appointment of a tripartite board to hold hearings and recommend terms of settlement. Until this board reported, strikes and lockouts, picketing and boycotting were prohibited.

This Act placed effective restraints on unions but none on employers, who could still impose yellow-dog contracts,⁴ resort to blacklisting and discriminatory discharge of unionists and employ non-union workers and strikebreakers. Nevertheless, it remained on the statute books until well into World War II.

Railway Strikes

One of the first and largest railway strikes of those days involved about 5,000 CPR track maintenance men across Canada from June 17 to August 31, 1901. The issue was union recognition. This strike led to the Railway Labour Disputes Act of 1903, an early experiment in compulsory investigation and conciliation of industrial conflicts.

Railway strikes were numerous and extensive. About 500 members of the International Association of Machinists, supported by the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, struck against the Grand Trunk Railway from April

to the end of the year 1905. The company finally broke the strike with strikebreakers.

Five years later unions including the Order of Railway Conductors and the Brotherhood of Railway Trainmen struck the entire Grand Trunk system from July 18th to August 2nd. Local militia were called out in a serious disturbance at Brockville, followed by a regiment of troops from Toronto. This strike occurred after the unions turned down recommendations from a board appointed under the Industrial Disputes Investigation Act (IDIA) of 1907.

At Fort William on August 9, 1909, 700 freight handlers who worked at the CPR sheds went on strike for wage rates above the 17½ cents an hour for day work and 20 cents an hour for night work they were getting. They also wanted elimination of the so-called bonus system whereby the company withheld an additional one cent an hour until the end of a season's work.

The strike violated the IDIA, as the company and the government were not given prior notice. The workers were mostly recent European immigrants whose spokesmen disclaimed any knowledge of the Act.

An inquiry into the strike found that it was almost settled by August 14th when "an unfortunate incident occurred": the CPR brought in 30 armed constables from Winnipeg. This aggravated the situation. The board of inquiry thought that "a less prominent display of force" might have averted the calamity which followed.

Strikers gathered around the company's boardinghouse where the police were barracked. When they emerged to meet the strikers, "eleven constables were wounded and taken to hospital and several of the strikers were also believed to have been wounded", but none of the latter was taken to hospital.

The Mayor arrived at the scene, read

the Riot Act and called out the militia, 150 men arriving from Port Arthur followed by 75 riflemen from Winnipeg. The CPR also brought in 100 strikebreakers from the east and work was resumed.

The inquiry led to a settlement by August 24th — a three cents an hour wage increase and abolition of the bonus system.

Strikes of street railway employees occurred in Toronto in 1902, in Hamilton and Winnipeg in 1906. Militia or troops were called out in all three disputes. The Riot Act was read in Winnipeg.

The construction unions were involved in 468 strikes between 1901 and 1913, but most of them were small and didn't last long. The building trades unions were among the first to be well-organized in Canada as well as in the United States and, as much as any, suffered from the booms and busts of uneven economic expansion.

War Measures

The IDIA did not serve its prime purpose, the prevention of industrial conflict.

What did lessen conflict for a while was the depression of 1913-14 and the beginning of the first world war. But before long unrest among working people was again aroused by the inflation during the war and in the immediate postwar years. In 1916 the cost of living index went up 8 per cent; in 1917 it jumped by 18 per cent and in 1918 by 13½ per cent.

This unrest, exacerbated by wartime profiteering, led the government to extend the IDIA to cover all war industries. A special order-in-council was issued outlawing hoarding and "artificial" price increases, but it proved meaningless. It was not enforced.

In the west, workers and their organizations protested the sharp price

rises and conscription of manpower without conscription of wealth. They called a number of strikes for wage increases to meet higher living costs.

In 1917 the government adopted another special order-in-council, P.C. 1743, which recognized workers' rights to organize and bargain collectively and abolished strikes and lockouts for the duration of the war. But this again proved ineffective against the adamant opposition of employers to union recognition.

The government also issued an order-in-council suppressing 14 radical organizations. It outlawed any effort to bring about change by force, prohibited meetings conducted in Russian, Ukrainian or Finnish, and shut down labour and socialist publications.

The Trades and Labour Congress was opposed to the militant views and actions of its western affiliates and representatives. At its 1918 convention in Quebec City it endorsed conscription, tabled a resolution opposing Allied intervention to help crush the Russian revolution and defeated all moves to approve industrial unionism.

Western TLC delegates then called a Western Labour Conference to strengthen their organizational efforts. It was held in Calgary in March 1919.

This conference endorsed socialism, industrial unionism, the six-hour day, an end to political suppression and to lobbying by labour leaders. The delegates approved the calling of a general strike if all other means of achieving their objectives failed. They voted for the establishment of the One Big Union, a proposal previously mooted, as a formal organization.

Before the OBU could be effectively formed, the Winnipeg General Strike intervened.

Labour and Politics

The Trades and Labour Congress of Canada was not an organization which

Sam Lawrence

1879 — 1959



When Sam Lawrence died at the age of 80 the Hamilton Spectator headline called him "Hamilton's Mr. Labor". Born in Somerset, England, in 1879, he had joined his father's union, the stonemasons', at the age of 18; he arrived in Canada on April 9, 1912, attended his first Stone Cutters' Union meeting on April 11 and remained a member until his death. He held all the offices in his local, was delegate to the Hamilton Trades and Labour Council from 1913 to 1937 and president for two terms and attended many conventions of the Trades and Labour Congress of Canada.

Sam Lawrence had a taste of political activity before he left England, having run for a council seat. In Hamilton he never lost a municipal election. Beginning in 1922 he was alderman, controller, mayor for the six years 1943-50, then controller again, for a total of 30 years in office. His one defeat was in the provincial field. He was elected as the CCF's first and only MPP in the Ontario Legislature in 1934 but failed in his bid for re-election in 1937.

Even when he attained the city's highest office he remained a labour man, interested in the troubles of all who came to him for help and advice. He was mayor during the turbulent steel strike of 1946 and refused to call in outside police, thus averting what could have become a serious confrontation. Given a cheque at a testimonial banquet, he immediately sent a donation to striking copper miners in Murdochville.

Sam Lawrence gained and retained the confidence of his fellow citizens because of a character which blended sincerity, modesty, honesty and moderation.

perfectly illustrated the slogan, "United we stand, divided we fall". It stood the test of time in spite of many internal differences.

These differences persisted to the end in regard to its general policies, its actions and its attitude toward politics.

Especially politics.

*"In 1872 most trade unionists supported the party of Sir John A. Macdonald; by 1878 labour, ignoring the odd appeals from Liberal leaders, was grimly determined to have its own representatives in the legislative halls of the country. Party attitudes as well as economic conditions had strengthened the movement's determination to elect independent candidates — to have in Ottawa spokesmen of the working class itself."*⁵

In 1883 the newly-formed Canadian Labour Congress adopted a resolution which stated that "the working class of this Dominion will never be properly represented in Parliament or receive justice in the legislation of the country until they are represented by men of their own class and opinions".

It took almost 40 years before labour was thus represented in any effective way — after the Winnipeg General Strike.

The CLC became the Trades and Labour Congress in 1886. At the TLC's 1889 convention, a committee was set up to consider the formation of an independent political party. It recommended that its affiliates nominate candidates where practicable, and elsewhere to support the party which would help labour most.

The TLC convention of 1892 resolved to "take into consideration the advisability of forming a Labour Party". In 1896 the convention voted to endorse the Socialist Labour Party but rescinded this motion the next year.

The TLC convention in Winnipeg in 1898 drew up a platform of objectives which included:

1. *Free compulsory education;*
2. *A legal working day of eight hours and a six-day week;*
3. *Government inspection of all industry;*
4. *A minimum living wage based on local conditions;*
5. *Public ownership of railways, telegraph, waterworks, lighting, etc.;*
6. *Tax reform by lessening taxes on industry and levying them on land values;*
7. *Abolition of the Dominion Senate;*
8. *The union label on all manufactured goods and on all government supplies;*
9. *Abolition of child labour of children under 14 and of female labour in all branches of industrial life such as mines and factories;*
10. *Abolition of property qualifications for public office;*
11. *Voluntary arbitration of labour disputes.*

The 1903-4-5 conventions reaffirmed support for independent labour candidates wherever possible.

In 1906 TLC president Alphonse Verville was elected to the House of Commons from a Montreal constituency and expressed the hope that at least a dozen labour men would join him in the next parliament. But just as O'Donoghue in his later years came under the influence of Mackenzie King (and King was briefly influenced by him), so Verville fell for the blandishments of Prime Minister Sir Wilfrid Laurier. By 1907 he was "in Laurier's pocket".

However, Verville's election, the success of the British Labour Party and the American Federation of Labour's declaration in favour of "independent political action" in 1906, spurred the move toward a working class party.

In September 1906 the TLC convention in Victoria, B.C., approved the formation of a Canadian Labour Party on a provincial basis. It rejected a resolution moved by R. P. Pettipiece, delegate from the Vancouver Trades and Labour Council, and seconded by James Simpson, Toronto Typographical Union Local 91 and Frank Sherman, United Mine Workers District 18, to have the principles and program of the Socialist Party of Canada endorsed by the Congress.

Simpson, "the eloquent typographer and journalist from Toronto who tempered his socialist views with a consistent loyalty to AFL international unionism",⁶ was influential in both the trade union and political movements for many years. He was the first trade unionist to be elected Mayor of the city of Toronto — in 1934.

The TLC resolution of 1906 led to the formation of provincial sections of the Canadian Labour Party in Nova Scotia, Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba and British Columbia. The Ontario section was founded on Good Friday 1907, at a convention attended by 600 delegates from many cities and towns. Its candidates contested the provincial election of 1908.

"The socialists in the TLC were in a minority, but they were never the pariah minority which they became in the AFL."⁷

The TLC convention in September 1908 witnessed a bitter debate for and against socialism. R. P. Pettipiece took a doctrinaire stand. Allen Studholme, recently elected MLA in Hamilton East, accused him of representing a "We party" that contradicted belief in the brotherhood of man.

British Labour Party leader Keir Hardie, a convention observer, pleaded with the delegates for labour unity. He said that in England socialism hadn't the restricted meaning it had in Canada

where progress could be injured by "the present attitude of the believers in socialism and the champions of organized labour pure and simple".⁸

The TLC president from 1911 to 1918 was James Watters, also a socialist, who was active in the formation of the Canadian Labour Party.

However, ideological differences continued.

"The dominant characteristic of the Canadian labour and independent political movement in the years preceding the war was its sectionalism. The TLC had expanded its membership from approximately 8,000 in 1900 to 100,000 in 1914, but remained the central organization of a movement which had not yet discovered, in the words of Harold Laski, an essential unity. British labour leaders who visited Canada during the pre-war years — Ramsay MacDonald, Keir Hardie and Philip Snowden — brought home the same impression: Canadian labour was weak, divided and distant from the day of effective independent political participation."⁹

For most of the first world war organized labour was at odds with the government. On May 21, 1917, three officers of the TLC — President Watters, Vice-President Simpson and Secretary-Treasurer Draper — met Prime Minister Robert Borden to hear him justify conscription of 50 to 100 thousand men for the armed forces. The labour men opposed conscription and asked for labour representation in the cabinet. Simpson told Borden that "no other country has treated organized labour with such scant courtesy" as his government. Borden replied that a start had been made by the appointment of a labour man to the Senate!

Dissatisfied, the TLC thereupon summoned 80 international unions to a meeting June 1st to 4th. The representatives demanded the reorganiza-

tion of the imperial munitions board to give equal representation to labour and management.

Unions including the machinists, carpenters, plumbers and steamfitters, sheet metal workers and others charged that wages and working conditions under the existing board were scandalous. With little dissent the conference endorsed a statement demanding conscription of wealth along with manpower. TLC president Watters favoured a general strike if necessary to force "the government to conscript material wealth through every worker in the Dominion refusing to work for gain of the private profiteer".

*"Let labour demonstrate their loyalty and patriotism on the day manpower is conscripted by seeing that the work of their brain and every ounce of their physical energy is utilized for the support of the men at the front, and in defence of the nation, to provide ample remuneration and adequate pensions to the men in khaki and a full measure of protection to the dependants of such men, and to relieve the nation from the burden of debt which the productive work of labour can meet — even if a general strike is necessary to bring it about."*¹⁰

At the TLC convention in September 1917, the Committee on Officers' Reports stated that it was neither "right, patriotic or in the interests of the Dominion or of the labour classes" to oppose conscription. The statement was bitterly attacked by delegates, particularly by those from the west and Quebec. James Simpson reiterated his view that the government had ignored labour in the conduct of the war and that organized labour shouldn't be satisfied by the appointment of a labour man to the Senate.

An amendment to the Committee's report was defeated by ten votes. The report itself was finally passed by a vote of 134 to 101.

Watters and Simpson now agreed that political action rather than direct action was the course to pursue. The situation was that the westerners, particularly in British Columbia, favoured both direct and political action. The Ontario unions opposed resort to the general strike and supported independent political action along British Labour Party lines. The Congress executive supported the Ontario position. It decided to endorse and initiate a National Labour Party.

The decision, made just three months before another federal election, was a little late.

Labour candidates contested the 1917 election. Four candidates ran under the banner of the Greater Toronto Labour Party on a "Win-the-War" platform of conscription of wealth as well as manpower, a square deal for returned soldiers and their dependants, and an end to the "policy of procrastination, graft and profiteering that has reigned unchecked while the Border administration has been in power". Other candidates ran in a dozen Ontario seats.

All fared poorly except in a few constituencies like Hamilton and Temiskaming where Labour won from 30% to 40% of the vote. At this period organized labour comprised only about 2% of the population.

The Independent Labour Party founded in Hamilton on July 2, 1917, was active in the election and its president, Walter Rollo, contested Hamilton East. The ILP was soon to play a larger part in Ontario politics.

In March 1918, the Ontario Section of the new Canadian Labour Party was founded. Attending the convention were 400 delegates, with the ILP having the largest bloc. The convention decided that the CLP should consist of "all its affiliated organizations including Trade Unions, Local Labour Parties, Co-operative Societies, Trades Councils,

Local Labour Parties and Farmers' Organizations".

The TLC executive took part in the formation of the Ontario CLP, with its vice-president, James Simpson, as its leading organizer. From the platform TLC secretary P.M. Draper assured the founding convention that the Congress would finance the new party until it was on its feet.



Tom
Moore

1878 — 1946

Tom Moore was highly regarded as one of the most progressive labour leaders of his time. Born in Yorkshire, he came to Canada at the age of 27 and settled in Niagara Falls. Having learned the carpenter's trade in his father's shop, he joined the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America and over the years held every office in his local union. He was

AFL president Samuel Gompers, at a labour convention in Ottawa, denounced the formation of the labour party. His anti-politics address was in turn strongly attacked as interference by TLC president Watters and other delegates.

Canadian labour was not in a mood to compromise after its wartime setbacks and in face of hardening times.

General Organizer for the Brotherhood in Eastern Canada from 1911 to 1918. In 1918 he was elected president of the Trades and Labour Congress of Canada, an office he held until 1935 and again from 1938 to 1943.

In 1919 he was a member of the Royal Commission on labour conditions that recommended old age pensions and unemployment insurance. Again in the 1930s he served on government commissions studying employment and social insurance.

Moore took an active interest in international labour affairs. He attended the first general conference of the ILO in 1919 and was elected to its governing board in 1922. Later he represented Canadian organized labour at conferences in Kyoto, London and Amsterdam.

4

Winnipeg General Strike and Aftermath

The first world war ended with victory overseas but also in a recurrence of serious disturbances at home.

These reflected the deep revulsion of working people at high prices and profiteering on the one hand and starvation wages on the other.

The Russian revolution aggravated the divisions between capital and labour everywhere. In Canada as elsewhere, the revolution appeared to some labour people to be the release of the working class from oppression and exploitation. But it heightened the hostility of employers to workers' organizations. Employers in Canada had seldom been even mildly considerate of working class needs and views.

"When their position was seriously challenged, they were quick to call upon governments to provide police or military protection. There seems good grounds for suspecting, therefore, that much of the apparently hysterical behaviour of various employer groups in the immediate postwar era represented a calculated assault upon unionism as such, rather than any real fear of radicalism or revolution."¹

The clash of these two opposing sides reached a climax in the Winnipeg General Strike of 1919.

The basic issues were union recognition and the right to collective bargaining as the means of improving wages and working conditions. Wages were low. Prices were high; so was unemployment. Men were coming home

from the war to find that living conditions were very difficult for most Canadians but that some Canadians had profited very, very handsomely.

The refusal of employers to recognize the Metal Trades Council as bargaining agent for all metal shop employees provoked a strike which began May 2. The day before, members of the Building Trades Council had walked out following a bargaining impasse on wage demands.

The two Councils appealed to the Winnipeg Trades and Labour Council. This Council held a vote on the question of a general strike in support of its affiliates. The vote strongly supported strike action and on May 15, 1919, over 30,000 workers left their jobs. Of this number, about 12,000 were not union members.

The conflict was now between workers, union and non-union, on one side and the Establishment, including employers, elected officials, the professions and the church, on the other.

The affiliates of the Labour Council elected a General Strike Committee. The Establishment was represented by a Citizens Committee of 1000, made up of prominent businessmen and professional leaders, complete with an armed "home guard" to maintain law and order.

The General Strike Committee set up a Central Strike Committee to provide essential goods and services to the community. Its policy was that the strike was to be conducted in a peaceful

manner. Strikers were advised to stay at home to avoid the risk of a clash with anti-union elements or the military. Policemen were urged to stay on duty.

Nevertheless, the Committee of 1000 labelled the strike a revolutionary conspiracy instigated by a few red subversives and "alien scum". In this they had the full support of both daily newspapers which also approved their invitation of military intervention to suppress the strike.

But the attempts of the Committee of 1000 to win the support of returned soldiers failed. In fact, a meeting of war veterans called by officers of their organizations to condemn the strike actually voted strongly in favour of it.

The strike was also endorsed by workers across the country. There were small sympathetic strikes in some cities, but a fullscale sympathy strike in Vancouver over a period of four weeks, involving as many as 12,000 people.

This speeded up federal intervention. Two cabinet ministers, Labour Minister Senator Gideon Robertson, a former union man, and acting Minister of Justice Arthur Meighen came to Winnipeg and consulted with members of the Committee of 1000 and leaders of the provincial and municipal governments. Their failure to meet representatives of the workers invoked charges of partisanship.

Senator Robertson ordered the postal workers to return to work on pain of losing their jobs and pensions. The majority refused. Other public employees were similarly threatened with little result.

All levels of government now resorted to repression. On June 6th Parliament amended the Immigration Act to extend to British subjects the provisions which permitted deportation by executive order without trial.

The same day the Mayor of Winnipeg banned all parades and the congregation of people in crowds. On June 9th the police commission fired the entire police force with a few exceptions and hired special constables to replace them.

On June 17th the Royal North West Mounted Police raided the homes of unionists and the Labour Temple, arrested 10 strike leaders, seized their books and records. These actions served to increase tensions in an already tense community.

On June 21st returned soldiers arranged an illegal parade to the Royal Alexandra Hotel where Senator Robertson was staying. They wanted to know his reasons for conspiring with the Committee of 1000 in the arrest of the strike leaders. They were concerned about possible further action.

"The city was alive with Mounted Police, and all were aware that General Ketchen had alerted the militia units, and that a large number of machine guns had been shipped into Winnipeg. . .

*"On the morning of the parade Mayor Gray issued a proclamation warning that anyone taking part in it would do so at his own risk. As the parade itself was forming the Mayor read the Riot Act. After that the machinery by which the parade was stopped was put into action."*²

The RNWMP charged the paraders. Of 30 casualties, 16 were among the public, including one death.

The strike was broken. Eight strike leaders were brought to trial. R. B. Russell, who had originally opposed a general strike, was sent to the penitentiary for two years; five received one year sentences, one a six month sentence and one was freed.

"The convictions were all based on the dubious assumption that the strike was the result of a conspiracy

to overthrow the government, rather than a concerted struggle by organized labour in Winnipeg to secure basic rights of recognition and collective bargaining.”³

The Trades and Labour Congress executive did not support the general strike. While they didn't condone its suppression, they refrained from demanding the unconditional release of the arrested leaders. Instead they urged release on bail and a fair trial.

President Tom Moore, however, warned the government that the labour movement would not stand for strong-arm methods of suppressing legitimate demonstrations and, if the government didn't have sufficient proof that the arrested men were a danger to the state, it would be held strictly accountable.

On the economic front, organized labour had suffered a setback. But on the political front the results were more encouraging and of long-term significance.

In the Manitoba elections of 1920, eleven ILP candidates were elected. Five of them were strike leaders serving jail terms. Labour-supported candidates continued to be returned in election after election. But it took 50 years to elect a labour-supported government in Manitoba, the NDP.

The general strike also changed the political picture federally. In the 1921 election J. S. Woodsworth, a church minister turned longshoreman who had been arrested while editing a strike paper but was never tried, was elected to the House of Commons from Winnipeg Centre. In the 1925 election he was joined by A. A. Heaps, a strike leader who had been arrested but acquitted.

Between them they made history through their winning battle for old age pensions in 1926,⁴ through their unceasing fight for unemployment insurance and for civil liberties.⁵

John W. Buckley

1882 — 1958



“Mr. Buckley was in the tradition of those old country working lads during the last century, with little formal schooling but a fine education from voracious reading of the world's great literature . . .

“His millwright father died while he was only seven in his native Manchester, and he had only six years in school. In 1907 he came to Canada, a carpenter, and from then until World War II worked in Toronto's CPR and CNR shops. Throughout an active career in politics and the labour movement he never stopped reading, and was proud possessor of a library of more than 1,000 books. Into his lunch pail daily went the meaty fare of Aristotle, Balzac, Adam Smith, Karl Marx, Dickens and DeMaupassant, which he devoured to and from work and at noon.

“Like most men he had prejudices, but they were mainly against sweat shops and children being raised in slums and such evils . . . Nor was he always temperate in language. Possibly this age of tranquillizer pills and the soft sell needs a little of his honest intolerance of wrong injected into public debate. Yet he never said personal or spiteful things of his opponents. Issues, not men, were what he fought. Those who recall his white thatch will remember there was almost always a kindly, humorous twinkle behind those spectacles.” — (from an editorial in the Toronto Star, October 21, 1958)

J. W. Buckley's name is inextricably linked with the history of the Toronto and District Trades and Labour Council of which he was secretary from 1929 to 1947. He held office in the Trades and Labour Congress, as vice-president from 1943 to 1946 and as secretary-treasurer from 1947 to 1949, when he retired. He was also active in the labour political movement, especially the Ontario ILP, and later in the CCF.

He died on October 20, 1958, “one of the last of an era of great individualists”.

Forerunner to a New Political Party

When farmers meet in a labour hall and form an organization that before long elects a government, that is news. This is how it happened.

On March 14th, 1914, 200 delegates from farm organizations met in the Labour Temple in Toronto. At this meeting the United Farmers of Ontario was formed. But no delegate dreamed that in five years' time the UFO would form the government of Ontario — with a helping hand from labour.

Four years later a UFO delegation of two thousand went to Ottawa to protest the conscription of farmers who were at the same time being asked to produce more food for the war effort. All they got was a cold shoulder from the government and a bad press.

The farmers' views on the conscription issue were expressed in their 1917 convention resolution which said in part:

"It is a manifest and glaring injustice that Canadian mothers should be compelled to surrender boys around whom their dearest hopes in life are centred while plutocrats, fattening on special privileges and war business, are left in undisturbed possession of their riches."

This today may sound like an emotionally-charged leftist declaration but it stated no more than the facts. The first world war produced a record crop of millionaires. Trade unions also reacted against profiteering on the one hand and low wages on the other.

Farmers were incensed at the treatment they were receiving from both federal and provincial governments. The 1918 UFO convention, attended by 4,000 delegates, responded by endorsing political action independent of the old parties. They were not thinking in terms of a new political party but were determined to elect members who would stand up for principles democratically adopted.

In the fall and winter of 1918-19, the UFO contested and won two by-elections, in Manitoulin and North Ontario ridings. This gave them tremendous encouragement and wide public support. But the Conservative govern-

ment of Ontario ignored the storm signals and called an election for October 20, 1919.

Meanwhile the Independent Labour Party of Ontario, which had made no headway until 1917, was undergoing a reorganization. As one of its leaders, Harry Halford, put it:

"Conditions as they exist today make it absolutely necessary that the people get together if they expect to see democratic principles upheld. . . ."

"Combines, trusts, profiteering, money-grabbing, everything getting into the hands of the few, high prices prevailing everywhere, no legislation to prevent coralling of everything by the few. What with the fixing of franchises, voters lists, the working of patronage systems, combinations for the perpetuation of office-holding and making jobs for your friends, there are very sound reasons why a Labour Party is needed."

The ILP had made some impact on municipal affairs in Hamilton and some other industrial areas. It had a good executive headed by Walter Rollo, and an effective publication, the *Industrial Banner*, edited first by Joe Marks and later by Jimmy Simpson who left the *Toronto Star* to take on this responsibility.

In February 1919 it contested a by-election in St. Catharines with a union machinist and returned soldier as candidate. The seat had been Conservative for 30 years, yet the ILP reduced the government majority from 1,529 to 172.

The provincial election of 1919 was fought by labour under the ILP label. John Buckley, one of the most remarkable of the trade union pioneers, who was to be secretary of the Toronto Labour Council from 1929 to 1947, was the ILP president. Buckley ran in North-east Toronto. Many years afterwards he wrote:

"I was naturally interested in measures many of which today have been translated into law: an improved Workmen's Compensation Act, votes for women, technical education, universal suffrage, better housing, a minimum wage satisfactory to the wage earners, an eight-hour day. . . ."

Buckley himself was not elected but he gloried in the result.

"Without newspaper support, with only voluntary and spare time workers, no corporation slush funds, and no promises to any particular group, we — the Farmer-Labour group — found ourselves in a position unprecedented in Ontario history."

The party standings after the October 1919 election were:

United Farmers of Ontario	44
Liberals	29
Conservatives	25
ILP of Ontario	11
Independent	1
Soldier	1

A fairly good relationship existed between the farm and labour organizations. The 11 labour members joined with the 44 farm workers to form a coalition government. As leader of the UFO, E. C. Drury became premier. Two labour members entered the cabinet — Walter Rollo (Hamilton) as minister of labour, and Harry Mills (Fort William) as minister of mines.

John Buckley wrote in his "Scrapbook":

"At the first session of our Legislature, in 1920, we passed the Mothers' Allowance Act . . . a Minimum Wage Act for women and girls . . . an Adolescent School Act which eliminated child labour . . . We abolished private employment exchanges which were a racket and created government employment agencies. We gave the platoon system to the Firefighters, and enforced the Factory Acts by appointing additional factory inspectors. As well as increasing the benefits under the Workmen's Compensation Act from 55% to 66 2/3%, we also increased the allowance to widows and orphans, and the funeral benefits, and appointed a trade unionist to the Compensation Board."

The *Toronto Star* said in an editorial, May 9, 1923: "No legislature since Confederation

ever conferred as many benefits on the province. . ."

Why, then, did the Farmer-Labour alliance lose the 1923 election?

There was disagreement about future organization. Premier Drury, for one, wanted a "broadening out" into a new "People's Party" and so, too, did some ILPers. Most farmers, however, preferred to stick with the UFO label, and the ILP with independent political action by labour. More damaging still, there was dissension within both groups.

In the ILP it centred around M. M. McBride of Brantford who was irked at not being included in the Drury cabinet. McBride's expulsion from the party in 1921 occasioned some comic verse in the *Industrial Banner* by Simpson:

*"McBride, no doubt, when his time ebbs out,
Will ride in a flaming chariot,
He will sit in state on a red hot plate
Between Satan and Judas Iscariot.
Ananias that day to Satan will say,
My right to priority died,
So take me up higher, away from the fire,
And make room for this liar, McBride'."*

So the explanation is not as simple as John Buckley made out when he wrote,

" . . . the policy of the Conservative Party in 1923 was not beer by the glass but beer by the barrel. The Tories were returned to office."

The labour members got along relatively well with the farmers and co-operation between UFO and ILP continued right to the end. But neither group was in good shape to fight a hard political battle. And in 1923 the press was hostile, the Conservatives well-organized and financed. The election results were disastrous: Conservatives 77, UFO 17, Liberals 14, ILP 3.

Neither UFO nor ILP ever recovered from the defeat. A decade later radical elements from both found a political home in a new "people's party", the CCF.

From Boom to Bust

The decade of the 1920s was a difficult period for the trade union movement. It began with a recession and ended with a boom and a bust.

The surge in union organization at the end of the war receded quickly. Inflation and unemployment pauperized many workingmen's homes. The cost of a family budget averaged \$21.07 a week in 1923. This included 29 staple foods, fuel, lighting and rent, but no allowance was made for such essentials as transportation, education, personal needs and clothing. But the average weekly earnings in manufacturing in 1922 were only \$18.00.

The instability of the work force made unionization difficult. Immigrants flooded in from Europe but almost as many exited to the United States. Canada was just a funnel.

There was a rapid growth in U.S. ownership of Canadian industries and resources. With it came American business's techniques for dealing with labour — the open shop and the company union.

The Trades and Labour Congress was challenged by splits and secessions. The One Big Union had a rocket-like rise just after the Winnipeg General Strike but it was an idea whose time had not come and it began a long descent almost immediately after take-off. Most units that had deserted the TLC for the OBU returned to the fold. Similarly, the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) made some brief headway in British Columbia, temporarily siphoning off lumber workers and coal miners.

Though both these movements petered out, they pointed up the inadequacy of the TLC structure to meet the needs of the growing numbers of unskilled and semi-skilled workers in the new mass production industries. The OBU and the IWW were all-inclusive (industrial) organizations while the TLC

unions were in the main restricted to the skilled crafts, the "aristocracy of labour".

The combination of all these circumstances resulted in a decline in size and a general lack of militancy in the trade union movement during most of the 20s. Only the coal miners put up much of a fight against wage cuts and for union rights. With less than two per cent of the labour force, they accounted for 49 per cent of all workers going on strike. And they acted with the disapproval, and sometimes against the orders, of their international union headquarters.

The chief machinery for dealing with strikes and lockouts in Canada was the Industrial Disputes Investigation Act of 1907. On January 20, 1925, the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in London declared the Act *ultra vires*. It had survived for 18 years before its "illegality" was exposed!

Following the ruling, Parliament amended the Act, making it apply only to disputes within federal jurisdiction but providing that it would apply in any province which passed enabling legislation.

The IDIA continued in effect in its truncated state until 1943 when it was superseded by new legislation.

1926 to 1929 were boom years. Employment was at a high level and no surplus labour was available to help with the western harvest. Accordingly, 8,500 unemployed miners were brought over from Britain in August 1928 and distributed through the prairie provinces. Many remained in Canada.

In August, 1929, the Trades and Labour Congress held its 45th convention. Tom Moore was re-elected president for his 12th term and P. M. Draper secretary-treasurer for his 30th.

For 1929 the Department of Labour reported 2,778 branches (locals) of unions in Canada with a combined

membership of 319,746. Of these, international craft unions had 1,953 branches with total membership of 213,514. The Canadian Brotherhood of Railway Employees reported 18,694 members, the One Big Union 22,890 and the Confederation of Catholic Workers an estimated 25,000.

From this high point union membership went steadily downhill. For in early fall of 1929 the stock market crashed and Canada sank with the United States into a major depression which lasted until the second world war.

Women's Rights

An interesting development of the decade was a forecast of Women's Liberation.

Women gained the right to vote and the Women's National Council of Canada, a federation of women's societies, issued a statement of principles and policies in 1920.

Under "political standards", they urged the abolition of patronage, publication of political donations and political equality for men and women.

Under "social standards", they urged uniform marriage laws, equality of cause for divorce and no financial barrier, and the raising of the age of consent to 18.

Under "industrial standards", they listed equal pay for equal work, physical and mental fitness and not sex as the basis of employment, co-operation as the principle of employer-employee relations, and collective bargaining.

Four women contested seats in the 1921 federal election. Agnes Macphail won the Southeast Grey riding in Ontario to become the first woman member of the House of Commons. She didn't take long to find her place with the small group headed by J. S. Woodsworth.

P. M. Draper

1868 — 1943



Patrick Martin ("Paddy") Draper was one of the most popular and influential of trade unionists throughout a long career. Born in Aylmer, Quebec, he was a compositor by trade, one of the original employees of the Government Printing Bureau in Ottawa and director of printing from 1921 to his retirement in 1933.

In 1888 he joined Local 102, International Typographical Union, became secretary-treasurer in 1891 and president from 1893 to 1920 and from 1928 to 1943. But his main role was as secretary-treasurer of the Trades and Labour Congress of Canada which he filled for 35 years, from 1900 to 1935. He was president of the TLC for the period 1935-39 but then stepped down because of ill health.

Draper was the trusted adviser of Sir Robert Borden on labour matters and attended the Versailles Peace Conference in 1919 as a member of the Canadian delegation. He was workers' delegate to the first ILO conference, which elected him to its governing body.

Schisms Within The House of Labour

The All-Canadian Congress of Labour

The National Trades and Labour Congress was formed in 1902 after the expulsion from the Trades and Labour Congress of Canada of the Knights of Labour and others for dual unionism.

The name was soon changed to the Canadian Federation of Labour. Affiliation was open to national trade unions, local unions and district assemblies of the Knights of Labour, but not to international unions.

The CFL maintained its existence until 1927 but with limited success.

*"The grievance-against-the-internationals basis of unionism, a quite different thing from patriotism . . . was too negative a concept upon which to build a movement, though it held scattered groups smarting from unfortunate personal experiences. . . In short, the time was ripe for a new lead and an expression of fresh purposes."*¹

The All-Canadian Congress of Labour established in 1921 had a shorter life than the CFL but a happier ending. Its base was the Canadian Brotherhood of Railway Employees (CBRE) which was founded in Moncton, N.B., in 1908. Its first officers, A. R. Mosher, president, and M. M. Maclean, general secretary, were its guiding spirits. It was a fully Canadian union which represented those railway workers not in the running trades or shopcraft unions. By the 1920s it was considered the strongest labour organization with

headquarters in Canada, a position credited to the abilities of its leaders.

In 1917 the CBRE affiliated to the Trades and Labour Congress. But in that year the Brotherhood of Railway and Steamship Clerks, Freight Handlers, Express and Station Employees, founded in the United States in 1898, came to Canada. It chartered branches in the Canadian Pacific Railway Co. which earlier had beaten the CBRE in a hard-fought strike.

The BRSC then made an attempt to monopolize the field by taking over the CBRE. Mosher was prepared to discuss a merger which would maintain his union's identity and give its officers equal rank with those of the BRSC.

The BRSC rejected any such arrangement. When the TLC tried to mediate the differences, the BRSC used its status as an international union to demand the CBRE's expulsion. The TLC executive complied by suspending one of its biggest affiliates.

President Mosher went to court to stop revocation of the CBRE charter and won damages and costs. This proved to be no more than a token victory. The TLC convention of 1921 voted 394 to 161 for the expulsion of the CBRE as a dual union, making the executive's decision permanent.

This convention also added Section 7 to its constitution, authorizing the Executive Council to compel a merger of an affiliate or chartered body with an international union. The kind of law-

suit won by the CBRE was henceforth unlikely to succeed.

For the next six years the CBRE was on its own. It owned its own building in Ottawa, its own printing press and published its own paper, the *Canadian Railway Employees' Monthly*.

In June 1926 an editorial in the *Monthly* declared that the Trades and Labour Congress policy of refusing affiliation to Canadian labour organizations which were in competition with branches of American unions was spoiling any chance of developing a unified, powerful unionism in Canada. The time had come to form a congress of purely Canadian bodies.

As a result of this initiative, in 1927 delegates from the CBRE, the declining CFL, the remnants of the OBU and various unaffiliated unions, most of which had seceded from AFL unions, met in convention and formed the All-Canadian Congress of Labour (ACCL).

President Mosher of the CBRE (which had by far the largest delegation) was elected president of the new Congress, an office he held during its entire life. He declared that its objective was "to achieve the complete independence of the Canadian labour movement by removing every vestige of foreign control and by organizing the workers of Canada in industrial unions covering every Canadian industry".²

The ACCL was not very successful in its efforts. The deep depression of the 30s lay ahead, bringing with it a series of stirring events out of which a new labour alignment was born. Logan comments:

*"It can be said without fear of contradiction that the policy of the International Movement toward dual unions was accountable for the existence of both sections of labour which joined in 1940 to form a rival Congress."*³

The "Commie Liners"

In the 20s a Communist party calling itself, until 1942, the Workers' Party of Canada, presented itself as a divisive force in the ranks of organized labour. This Canadian section of the Third (Communist) International established its headquarters in Toronto in 1922. A major objective in its platform was

"To consolidate the existing labour organizations and develop them into organizations of militant struggle against capitalism, to permeate the labour unions and strive to replace the present reactionary leadership by revolutionary leadership."

Initially attractive to many workers who applauded the overthrow of Tsarist tyranny in Russia, the CP gradually forfeited support as its "rule or ruin" tactics and dogmatic adherence to the "party line" alienated the unions and their political counterparts.

The Trades and Labour Congress executive was hostile from the beginning. When the United Mine Workers' District 26 moved at the 38th TLC convention in 1922 that the Canadian government be asked to lend \$15 million to the Soviet government, the motion was lost 147 to 56. TLC president Tom Moore, speaking to the motion, asked if a trade union convention could be held in Russia.

"Do you think you could have free speech there? If you tried it, you would be stood up against the wall in front of some of the Red Guard and shot down. When Russia establishes a government that is representative; when it grants the liberty it preaches about to the Russian people; when it removes its soldiers from the throats of the workers, then we will come to the aid of the people of Russia."

The Communist Party leaders decided to form a united front with the remnants of the Ontario section of the

Canadian Labour Party, and the Workers' Party was admitted to the CLP as an affiliate in March 1923. The Communists "arranged themselves in numerous local branches", which gave them the voting power to control CLP conventions and elect their nominees to the top posts.

By 1926 most of the union affiliates of the Ontario CLP had had enough. (The Quebec section of the CLP had expelled the Communists the previous year.) As the Brotherhood of Railway Carmen put it in a resolution to the convention of that year, "... the major part of the time has been taken up with useless discussions and controversy between the communist and non-communist delegates on matters not of vital interest to the vast majority of the affiliated membership".

By 1927 organized labour had rejected the Canadian Labour Party because of its domination by the communists. Moderates and social democrats also withdrew their support. James Simpson, founder of the CLP and keystone of the unity of radicals and moderates, didn't even appear at its convention.

At the Toronto Labour Council meeting of October 6, 1927, Simpson charged the Communists with disrupting District 26, UMW, by pushing for affiliation with the Red Trade Union International and with breaking up "one of the most militant and best organized groups of international trade unions in Canada" in Alberta.

In the next two to three years the TLC unions took steps to eliminate Communist influence from their ranks, expelling a number of party leaders. The charge leading to many of these expulsions was dual unionism. And in fact the Communists had for a number

of years been fostering the secession of groups of their adherents from established unions over which they were unable to gain control.

The battle between the Communists and the moderate and social democratic forces inside and outside the labour movement was joined.

In 1930 the Canadian Communists, following a pattern set in the United States, set up the Workers' Unity League to serve as a central body for the secessionist groups and to organize the unorganized and the unemployed under its banner.

The WUL carried on when the Communist Party was declared illegal in 1931 and six of its leaders were given prison terms under the infamous Section 98 of the Criminal Code.

But in 1935 the Comintern made a dramatic change of line. Communist organizations around the world were to give up the "smash from without" tactic against their labour opposition and return to the "bore from within" strategy aimed at achieving maximum influence and control over workers' organizations and, eventually, governments. A "united front" was the slogan of the day.

The obedient WUL immediately disbanded its central bodies and sent its members back to the regular unions.⁴

The new line had no more success than previous lines. Politically, the CCF now stood in the way by offering democratic solutions to economic and social ills. Economically, industrial unionism established itself within the expanding mass production industries, and the great majority of the new industrial unions were aggressively anti-Communist.



A. R. Mosher

1881 — 1959

Aaron Roland Mosher was born on a farm near Halifax, Nova Scotia, on May 10, 1881, a fifth generation Canadian of Dutch pioneer stock.

At the age of 15 he left school, worked briefly in a coal mine and then got a job in Halifax as storekeeper and clerk for a coal merchant. In 1903, angered by the unfair treatment of another employee by the merchant, he quit the job and went to work for the Intercolonial Railway as a freight-handler in the Halifax sheds.

In 1907 he led a group of the freight shed employees out on strike. The strike lasted only a week but resulted in improved wages and working conditions. Later that year an organizer from Boston formed a local of the International Brotherhood of Railway Employees composed of employees of the Halifax freight sheds and offices. Mosher was elected financial secretary-treasurer. He then did much of the work of organizing locals in Moncton, Saint John and other points on the Intercolonial Railway.

Since the Canadian locals were the larger part of the international union, they decided to withdraw from the international and set up a wholly Canadian organization. This was the genesis of the Canadian Brotherhood of Railway Employees which was founded at a meeting in Moncton in 1908. Mosher was unanimously elected Grand President and held that post until his retirement in 1952. Under his leadership the Brotherhood became the largest union of transport workers in Canada.

In 1917 Mosher led the CBRE into affiliation with the Trades and Labour Congress of Canada only to see it expelled two years later at the instance of a competing international. This experience soured him on international unionism and he became Canada's foremost

exponent of labour nationalism. In 1927 he took the leading part in the establishment of the All-Canadian Congress of Labour and was elected its president. When in 1940 the ACCL united with the Canadian branches of CIO unions in the Canadian Congress of Labour, he became the CCL's first and only president.

Mosher's forceful personality was never more in evidence than in his chairmanship of CCL conventions during its most contention-filled years. "Mosher's rules of order" brought under control the most unruly delegates. Yet his nature was convivial, once the day's business had been attended to.

For his wartime service on numerous government boards he was made a Commander of the Order of the British Empire. In 1953 St. Francis Xavier University awarded him the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws.

The founding convention of the Canadian Labour Congress in 1956 named him an Honorary President and in 1972 he was one of the first two members named to the CLC's Labour Hall of Fame.

The Dirty Thirties

A. A Time of Despair

People who lived through the 1930s had something to remember the rest of their lives.

Rich who became poor never could forget the stock market crash.

Middle class people counted their blessings if they merely survived without going on relief.

Poor in great numbers were reduced almost to beggary, living off the "pogey".

There was fear of revolution and repression borne of that fear.

The depression went on for most of ten years. Then, what the nation could not find the means to do in peacetime, it did in wartime. Factories started humming again and people went back to work; thousands left these shores for overseas duty; there was a tremendous outpouring of energy and money and resources.

In the years before the war some people wondered how close to totalitarianism this nation could come without wanting it or knowing it.

A terrible depression — but still in retrospect a very eventful time.

The ranks of the unemployed grew to record levels.

Governments of sane men couldn't cope in any imaginative or constructive way to head off near disaster.

The Mackenzie King government in 1929 was too blind to heed the warn-

ings of bad times. It could see nothing but prosperity all around.

The few labour members in the House of Commons lost no opportunity to urge the government to prepare for a bust after the boom years. Woodsworth and Heaps made repeated appeals for an unemployment insurance program.

A. A. Heaps, member for North Winnipeg, told the House of Commons on February 20, 1928,

"What is prosperity? The fact that a bank manager, a railway president, or an industrialist states at an annual meeting that his business has had a prosperous year is no indication as to conditions throughout the country. Prosperity reflects itself in the general conditions of the masses and when they are prosperous, only then can we say we are in a state of prosperity."

He pointed out that union men were being refused entrance to company towns springing up in northern Ontario with American capital. "I am not one of those who look with kindly feeling toward American imperialism, especially as I see it working in Nicaragua and Mexico," he said.

Heaps was a staunch member of an international union. But the veteran of the Winnipeg General Strike was worried about U.S. policy with regard to its foreign investments:

"For my part, I would sooner have waited a little longer, if possible, for the development of our national

resources than to see the people of Canada become, in the language of the Bible, 'hewers of wood and drawers of water' for American capitalists."

When R. B. Bennett, lawyer and millionaire, was elected leader of the Conservative Party, Heaps referred to him as a director of one of the country's leading banks "where clerks received a salary of \$40 monthly, yet the bank's profits soared to record heights".

Continuing the labour members' battle for social welfare, he moved on February 16, 1928,

"That in the opinion of this House, the Committee on Industrial and International Relations be authorized to investigate and report on insurance against unemployment, sickness and invalidity."

The King government was not prepared to consider such measures, holding that they were provincial responsibilities.

On March 6, 1929, Heaps again moved that the Committee be empowered to investigate a system of health insurance and unemployment insurance. Again the government balked. He then moved an amendment to permit the provinces to transfer to the federal government the legislative powers they possessed in this field (as had been done in connection with the IDIA). The House voted it down 97 to 18.

Heaps asked the government why "cheap German immigrant labour" was being imported by General Motors in Oshawa while Canadians were being discharged.

He spoke of the long hours and low wages of miners working for the Dominion Iron and Steel Corporation in Nova Scotia, their families living in primitive conditions and in poverty.

A. A. Heaps

1889 — 1954



Abraham Albert Heaps was the eldest of seven children born to a Polish immigrant couple in Leeds, England, in 1889. A bright schoolboy, he was awarded a scholarship which he couldn't accept because of the need to add to the family income. He was apprenticed to an upholsterer and became expert in the trade. Many years later and a member of Parliament, he re-upholstered for Prime Minister Mackenzie King the old office chair of Sir Wilfrid Laurier.

In 1911 Heaps emigrated to Winnipeg where he went to work in the CPR coach shop. He at once became a union member and student of labour conditions and was elected to office in the Winnipeg Trades and Labour Council in 1913. In 1917 he was elected to the Winnipeg City Council where he sat continuously until his election to the House of Commons in 1925. He was arrested during the Winnipeg General Strike of 1919 on a charge of seditious conspiracy, but was acquitted, having eloquently conducted his own defence.

As Labour and CCF Member of Parliament from 1925 to 1940, Heaps was a forceful, informed and tireless advocate of labour and social reform. Twice he was offered the portfolio of Minister of Labour by Mackenzie King — in 1925 and after his defeat in the wartime election of 1940. In between he had been offered a seat in the Senate by Prime Minister R. B. Bennett.

Heaps held a couple of civil servant appointments in the 1940s before going into retirement. Early in 1954, his health failing, he returned to England and died there in April. He was buried where he was born, in Leeds.

When Finance Minister Dunning pontificated, "What Canada needs is the practice of thrift," Heaps asked how girls in Quebec working for Dominion Textile could be thrifty on \$8 a week.

When the labour members appealed for action to improve abominable working conditions in the Nova Scotia steel mills, the government replied it was impractical and unconstitutional — the mills were under provincial jurisdiction.

Then, asked Heaps, why continue to appoint committees to investigate social and labour conditions if the government never wished to do anything about them?

There was no answer from the government benches.

The Crash

By this time the onslaught of the depression had been signalled by the stock market crash of 1929. The government was totally unprepared. Instead of taking action it continued to insist that the nation was prosperous.

People thought differently. King lost the summer election of 1930 and Conservative leader Bennett became Prime Minister.

J. S. Woodsworth handily retained his seat in Winnipeg North Centre, and despite vicious opposition, Heaps was also re-elected. The Liberals attacked him for being a "radical". The Communists called him "a servile lackey of the capitalists". He defeated the former by two thousand votes, the latter by four thousand. The people of North Winnipeg knew their man.

Back in Parliament Heaps opposed tariff concessions to Dosco in Nova Scotia until it improved working conditions. The steel worker, he told the House in September 1930, worked long hours at low wages — as long as 102

hours a week without overtime pay. He was sneered at as a "soap-boxer", to which he replied,

"Since I came into this House a little over a week ago, I heard the cry, 'Give Canada a chance'. Those of us who sit here in this corner are just as anxious as anybody to give Canada a chance. But who is Canada?"

"Is Canada the financier or the industrialist who lives in New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, London, Paris or Berlin, as many do who happen to own the key industries of this country? They are not Canada."

"Canada consists of the men who till the soil of this country. Canada consists of the men who go down into the mines to risk their lives to bring up coal and other mineral deposits which make it possible for us to live in this Dominion."

"Canada consists of the men who work in our factories and workshops and who make transportation within our borders possible. I am raising my voice tonight for that real Canada, the men and women who work in this Dominion . . . who make life possible here. . ."

"I am raising my voice for the men and women in the textile industry . . . the boot and shoe industry, who make a wage on which it is impossible for a Canadian to live in anything approaching decency and comfort."

"I raise my voice for those Canadians who work in the steel factories for seven 13-hour shifts a week. These are the people I represent here."

Woodsworth and Heaps both reiterated their old plea — that the government consider the immediate establishment of a federal system of insurance against unemployment, sickness and invalidity. Prime Minister Bennett accepted their motion, slightly amended and with the addition of the word "contributory". The Liberals, too, endorsed

it. But that's as far as it got. Action had to wait.

Meantime the numbers of the unemployed were swelling. The cities were unable to cope with the armies of jobless. In November 1932 the House of Commons was informed that 850,000 people were on relief. By February 1933, the number had risen to almost one and a quarter million.

The single, homeless unemployed were the worst off.

"In their aimless wanderings about the country, hard-pressed provincial and municipal relief agencies were reluctant to meet their needs, and they suffered serious deterioration in physical condition and morale.

*"And, from the official viewpoint in Ottawa, they constituted a danger to established authority. As stated by a government spokesman in Parliament: 'Their morale is low, they are very susceptible to the contagion of Communist ideas and to the influence of subversive organizations.'"*¹

The vitality of the Trades and Labour Congress, too, was at a low ebb and little or nothing was done officially to help the unemployed. This left the field open to the Communist Workers' Unity League and it seized the opportunity.

In 1932 work relief camps were established for single unemployed males under the administration of the Department of National Defence. The project was to cost no more than \$1 a day per man, 20 cents of which was paid in cash for each day on which a man actually worked.

The limited relief, the isolation and harsh conditions of the camps and the military administration, including the denial of free speech, aroused resentment and sometimes violent protest.

"Out of these conditions was formed the Relief Camp Workers' Union

*of the WUL. The Union played a dual role, as agitator and propagandist for the Communist Party, and the more limited role of a camp-workers' organization demanding, and on occasion striking for, better conditions, recognition of the camp committee, and abolition of the so-called 'slave camp' system."*²

Major disturbances took place at Long Branch, Ontario, in 1933, in Valcartier, Quebec, Rockcliffe, near Ottawa, and Dundurn, Saskatchewan, in 1935, and in a large number of camps in British Columbia in 1933-4-5.

The most serious confrontation, the "Regina Riot" of Dominion Day 1935, occurred when the authorities stopped in that city an "On-to-Ottawa" trek of jobless who proposed to make their protest in person to the federal government.

The clash resulted in the arrest of 103 persons, 24 of whom were brought to trial on charges of rioting, wounding and assault. Nine were convicted but appealed. Thereafter the charges were either dismissed or dropped.

The forces of authority had broken the demonstration, but did nothing to remedy the grievances which caused it.

Thus, the election of a new old party government under Bennett made no difference, nor did the election again of the old old party government under Mackenzie King in 1935.

Some people of like mind who had long seen the need for change found the time ripe for founding a new political party, the CCF. But its building would take time. In the meanwhile, an investigation into the workings of the floundering economic system unearthed a few grim skeletons which an unhappy Bennett government tried to bury again and quickly . . . *the Stevens Report on Price Spreads and Mass Buying.* The gross exploitation of la-

bour and the consumer were starkly exposed.

More important, a torpid trade union movement was stirred to a new awakening in the rise of the CIO.

A farmer was elected Liberal premier of Ontario after years of Conservative rule and proved to be more Tory than the Tories. In his battle to sink the up-coming union forces he eventually sank himself.



T. C. Douglas and M. J. Coldwell

The Depression and the Regina Riots

The following account is an extract from "Some Reminiscences" by M. J. Coldwell, former CCF National Leader.

There was bitterness everywhere. People were losing farms; they were losing their homes.

There were young men roaming all over the Dominion — riding the rods. We lived in Regina and quite frequently young fellows would come to our door and ask for food.

I well remember the Regina riots of 1935. I remember the first we heard about the coming trek at a City Hall meeting when we were told of the condition of the young men in the camps in British Columbia. Some of us decided that if these young men came to Regina we would have to do something for them.

When they arrived a few days later — some 1700 came on freight cars — we obtained permission from the Exhibition Board to put them in the Stadium at the Exhibition Grounds

where they were housed during their stay in Regina.

I went among them the first evening they were there and addressed them. I told them that if they behaved themselves I was quite sure the people of Regina would not only sympathize with them but do what they could to help them. That, of course, proved to be the case for we had the largest tag day ever held up to that time in the city of Regina.

Unfortunately they were in Regina for some time. The federal Conservative government of the day and the provincial Liberal government were playing politics and finally it came to the point where it was evidently decided in Ottawa that the trek had to be dissolved.

At a public meeting held on the Market Square on July 1st, the Mounted Police and the City Police broke up the meeting which ended in a riot. One of the police detectives in plain clothes was killed, a great deal of damage was done in the city and several people were hurt.

I should say, however, that most of the young men were not on the Market Square. They

were attending a baseball game to which they had been invited.

The trek was stopped at Regina. The trekkers were, of course, on their way to Ottawa to place their circumstances before the Government of Canada. It was shocking the manner in which these young people were herded together in relief camps at twenty cents a day with no other prospects. And of course similar conditions applied in the cities where unemployed were kept on a relief level below subsistence.

I shall never forget either, going among some of the people and seeing the children. I remember addressing a meeting in a log hall and seeing children in the late fall or early winter with no shoes or stockings but with their feet bound with strips of gunny sacking.

You would find children going to school dressed in clothes made of flour bags. All across Saskatchewan there were farm children who had never seen an apple. If they were shown one they would ask what it was and if it was good to eat. Eggs were three cents a dozen. You could buy turkeys for seventy-five cents. A chicken was worth twenty-five cents. Wheat sold at thirty-eight cents a bushel at Fort William, twenty-one cents a bushel at some of the local elevators in Saskatchewan.

I am quite sure that most of the younger people today can't realize the conditions that then existed. When the people turned Mr. Bennett out in 1935 and put Mr. Mackenzie King in, the conditions were no better. They gave tear gas bombs to the boys at the time of the Regina riots under Mr. Bennett, and tear gas bombs were thrown among the boys in Vancouver when they had a sit-down strike in protest later on under Mackenzie King. There was no difference between the two.

The only people who were fighting for them in the House of Commons in the early thirties were Mr. Woodsworth and the Labor and Farmer group, and subsequently, Mr. Woodsworth and those CCF members who were elected to the House of Commons in 1935.

There was a young Baptist minister in the city of Weyburn who had written to Mr. Woodsworth regarding the condition of the unemployed, and who sought his advice as to what he might do to help or how he might organize them to make an effective protest against the conditions under which they were living.

Mr. Woodsworth, I believe, advised this young man, T. C. Douglas, to get in touch with me. One Saturday afternoon I took my car and my son and went down to Weyburn.

That was my first meeting with Tommy Douglas. . . .

Tommy decided that he would assist in organizing a branch of the Independent Labour Party among the unemployed in Weyburn. We had locals in Regina, Saskatoon, Melville, Moose Jaw, Swift Current, North Battleford and Weyburn. There may have been others but these are the ones I recall at the moment.

In 1935 Tommy and I were both elected to the House of Commons and shared an office there for five years.

B. The Magic of CIO

In 1933-34 the American Federation of Labor authorized special organizing campaigns in mass production industries. These produced few results.

The failure aggravated a bitter rift at the 1934 AFL convention between the craft unions, which opposed organization of the mass production industries on an industrial basis, and the minority led by John L. Lewis, president of the United Mine Workers, which favoured it.

The split led to the formation of the Committee for Industrial Organization (CIO). In 1936 the AFL Executive Council charged the CIO with dual unionism and subsequently suspended it. In 1938 the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) was formally established as a parallel central labour body.

The CIO campaigns to organize the main primary and mass production industries were amazingly successful and were conducted with the fervour and emotional involvement characteristic of an evangelical revival.

The dramatic rise of militant industrial unionism in the United States "made waves" which pounded on the shores of Canada.

After years of economic decline and the obstinate resistance of Canadian employers, especially in steel, auto, machinery and meatpacking, backed by government intervention, Canadian workers were ready for more aggressive leadership than the Trades and Labour Congress was willing or able to provide.

GM Strike in Oshawa

The turning point was the strike at the General Motors plant in Oshawa, Ontario. It took place between April 8 and 26, 1937.

It followed an almost classic pattern. Management refused to recognize the union of the workers' choice and government took the side of management.

The strike involved 4,200 members of Local 222 of the United Automobile Workers of America which had just been organized with Charles H. Millard as president.

Ontario's Premier Mitchell Hepburn, determined to protect his friends the mining magnates, vowed to keep the CIO out of Ontario. The Oshawa strike was to be the showdown. Hepburn requested and obtained an RCMP force from Ottawa to maintain "law and order". The Ottawa government offered to mediate the dispute but the premier rejected the offer as "unwarranted interference".

Ottawa refused a second request for reinforcements and the premier there-

upon mobilized his own police force which became known as "Hepburn's Hussars".

Opposed to this unnecessary show of force, Mayor Alex Hall of Oshawa invited the premier to visit Oshawa to see at first hand the exemplary behaviour of the men.

The mayor threatened to use his own police force if the province's "sons of Mitches", as they were dubbed, so much as crossed the city line.

Two Liberal cabinet ministers, David Croll and Arthur Roebuck, resigned, declaring, "We would rather walk with the pickets than ride with General Motors."

The strike was peaceful and orderly: there was not a single arrest during its entire course. It ended with a partial victory for the union — a contract without formal union recognition — but a landmark victory nevertheless.

The brazen attempt by the Hepburn government to deny workers the right to join a union of their choice and to bargain collectively in good faith with management was evidence that Canadian legislators were not yet ready to concede what the Americans had already granted.

Nevertheless, the Oshawa strike was a portent of things to come. Hepburn's crude essay at dictatorship was a passing phenomenon. Within a decade banners were flying above the headquarters of unions in the auto, steel, electrical, rubber, chemical, textile, mining and other mass production industries.



Angus MacInnis

1884 — 1964

Angus MacInnis was one of the most forceful and conscientious spokesmen for the working man who ever sat in the House of Commons.

He was first elected to Parliament as a Labour member in 1930 and was re-elected as CCF member on five occasions — in 1935, 1940, 1945, 1949 and 1953.

Angus MacInnis was the son of a Gaelic-speaking farmer in Prince Edward Island, born September 2, 1884, in the little town of Glen William.

He worked in a ship's chandlery in Boston and as a harvest hand in Manitoba before going to Vancouver where he spent the rest of his life.

He was a milkman and a street railwayman in Vancouver and became business agent of Street Railwaymen's Union Local 101. He was also Vancouver organizer of the Federated Labour Party which later became the Independent Labour Party.

He was a school trustee for two years and an alderman for five. He failed twice to get elected to the B.C. Legislature before winning the Vancouver East seat in the House of Commons. He was an M.P. for 27 years.

He had only public school education but was an avid reader and studied economics after long hours of work as a streetcar motorman. The treatment meted out to the miners in the Nanaimo strike of 1911 greatly influenced his political thinking.

He was active in the formation of the CCF and for eight years was vice-president of its National Council. In 1947 he was parliamentary adviser to the Canadian delegation to the General Assembly of the United Nations. In 1950 he was adviser to the government delegation to the International Labour Organization conference in Geneva.

He had an abiding faith in the ability of the ordinary man and woman to become, through diligent study and co-operative action, the

arbiters of their own destiny. His concern was always for the exploited, the poor, the weak, the elderly.

During World War II when Canadians of Japanese origin were deprived of their belongings and herded into lonely camps and cities far from their West Coast home, this concern flamed into indignation and political courage of a high order as he fought for their rights.

Later the University of British Columbia conferred on him an honorary degree, citing his efforts to beat back this attack on civil liberties.

Angus MacInnis was a man of rockbound integrity, deep compassion and wise counsel. He died on March 3, 1964 after a long illness.

First union affiliation

as told by Angus MacInnis

When the CCF was formed it was decided that it would be a federation of farmer, labour and socialist organizations. It was thought that the trade unions would affiliate in the same way as the trade unions in Britain had affiliated with the Labour Party there. . .

At the U.M.W. Convention in Truro, Nova Scotia, in 1938 the delegates had before them eleven resolutions urging political action. One resolution favoured political action through the CCF. This resolution carried unananimously. Shortly afterwards an invitation was sent to the CCF to send representatives to Glace Bay to discuss with the officers of District 26 the matter of affiliation.

David Lewis, then National Secretary, and I were sent to Nova Scotia. We visited every mining centre and spoke, I think, at all the locals of District 26. The affiliation was consummated before we left Cape Breton.

The first fruit of the affiliation was the election of Clarie Gillis to the House of Commons at the federal election in 1940. Clarie ably represented Cape Breton South from that time until the 1957 election.

The Canadian Congress of Labour

The American Federation of Labour expelled the Committee for Industrial Organization (CIO) in 1937.

The Trades and Labour Congress expelled the CIO unions in Canada in September 1939. Its executive first suspended the CIO branches in January while its secretary-treasurer, P. M. Draper, was in hospital. Draper and others like John Buckley, an outspoken executive member of the Toronto Trades and Labour Council, opposed the suspension.

AFL President William Green accused Buckley of being antagonistic to the AFL and sailing under false colours. Buckley's reply was typical of the man:

*"I for one do not recognize in you any such immeasurable superiority to myself as to entitle you to pronounce, dictatorially, upon my moral tendencies, my principles or my mentality. Above all I do not discern in you that calmness of judgment, or of temperament, or that impartiality in collecting and weighing evidence, that power of representing to yourself the feelings of others or that accurate knowledge of the minds and motives of men, that are so necessary in carrying out so high a judicial office faithfully. . . So far as I am concerned, this concludes this regrettable exchange of letters that should have had no part in the American labour movement."*¹

In June 1939 a Co-ordinating Committee of the CIO Unions in Canada was established by Silby Barrett, Mari-

time Provinces' international board member of the United Mine Workers of America.

A month later a report prepared for the Committee pointed out that, of over a million and a quarter Canadian workers directly within its jurisdiction, the CIO had organized less than five per cent.

The average wage of industrial workers was less than \$20 a week, while 84 per cent of wage earners received less than \$10 a week. Yet the government set the minimum subsistence standard at \$21.50 a week. The report also said that Ontario and Quebec had the worst labour and social legislation in Canada. The CIO could make its greatest contribution to trade union unity by increasing its membership. To this end a central organizing body with adequate financing should be set up.

The report also recommended that steps be taken to promote the pro-unity element at the coming TCL convention.

But AFL President Green ordered all unions affiliated with the AFL to vote for CIO expulsion.

The CIO unions were barred from the Trades and Labour Congress convention held in Niagara Falls in September. The vote for expulsion was 231 to 98.

Autonomous in Canada

The stage was set for a new central labour body.

At a meeting in Toronto on October 4, 1939, representatives of the CIO

unions initiated a Canadian Committee for Industrial Organization. Silby Barrett was chairman and C. H. Millard secretary. Its first meeting, in Ottawa on October 25, was attended by 105 delegates from 29 locals. They represented 55,000 workers in nine international unions — Auto, Steel, Rubber, Electrical, Mine Mill, Newspaper Guild, Boot and Shoe, Fur, and Mining.

The Committee's report, read by secretary Millard, was entitled "CIO Autonomous in Canada". The spark for industrial organization may have come from the U.S. but the product in Canada was to be Canadian-made.

On November 30, 1939, the officers of the Canadian Committee met with their counterparts in the All-Canadian Congress of Labour, A. R. Mosher and M. M. Maclean. They drew up a seven-point memorandum of understanding. A constitution was drafted and on September 9, 1940, the convention of the ACCL transformed itself into the First Annual Convention of the Canadian Congress of Labour. A. R. Mosher was elected president, an office he was to hold during the entire life of the CCL.

A great deal of the organizing activity of the new Congress radiated from the small, dimly-lit offices in downtown Toronto rented by the Steelworkers.

The first group of organizers in the steel industry had been Communists. They had been granted a number of charters but an investigation by the international headquarters showed that many of them covered memberships of small minorities of employees in the plants and little or nothing was being paid in dues. The anti-war position and tactics of the Communists at this time also aroused antagonism. The international officers therefore discharged the original Canadian staff and appointed Charlie Millard as Executive Director in mid-1940 to re-build the organization.

Millard took on his enlarged responsibilities with great relish. He had been beaten for re-election as UAW Canadian Director by George Burt in 1939 and had since been acting as CIO representative in Canada. Now, as Steel's head, he was in a position to lend a helping hand to other nascent unions. In his offices, while he directed an ever-expanding Steel organization, Fred Dowling of Packinghouse engineered the take-over of the company unions at Canada Packers and Swift's, Joe MacKenzie led Rubber Workers' battles against Goodyear and Firestone, a Congress and a Boot and Shoe organizer frequently used the equipment, Eileen Tallman planned evening missionary work among the bank clerks. A mimeograph machine revolved incessantly, grinding out handbills to be distributed at some plant gate the following morning.

Millard was an ardent CCFer, sharing the socialist views based on religious commitment of J. S. Woodsworth. Where staff was required he looked for those who shared his vision of what the labour movement should become, and frequently found them among the young CCF members who were flocking into the new unions.

*"The result of the CIO's invasion of Canada was the creation of a new, young, aggressive industrial union movement in which enthusiastic CCFers held important leadership positions."*²

The most influential change in the leadership of the Congress occurred at the 1941 convention with the election of Pat Conroy as secretary-treasurer. Conroy was also given the responsibility for organization.

"A devout Catholic of Irish parentage and a strict though tolerant teetotaller, the Scottish-born Conroy had had a thorough training in trade unionism. . . From 1932 Conroy was a leader of the



Silby Barrett

1884 — 1959

Silby Barrett is memorable for two things — the salty flavour of his diction and his unswerving devotion to his union. In furthering workers' interests he allowed neither the rules of grammar nor of constituted authority to stand in his way.

He was born in Newfoundland on September 27, 1884. At eight years old he went fishing with his father and fished for seven summers. In 1902 he crossed to Nova Scotia to be a coal miner and joined the miners' union.

The United Mine Workers of America came to Nova Scotia in 1909 and Barrett helped organize for them. A nine-month strike in which soldiers were used, families were evicted from company-owned homes and literally starved into submission broke the union but hardened Barrett's commitment and in 1916 the miners were re-organized in the UMW and a contract with the company was obtained. Barrett became the first president of District 26, UMWA, and in 1919 he was elected International Board member for the District.

Following a disastrous strike in 1923 the Nova Scotia steelworkers had only an employee representation system when in 1936 CIO President John L. Lewis appointed Silby Barrett to bring them into the Steel Workers Organizing Committee. He successfully organized locals at Sydney and Trenton and in 1937 was named SWOC Director for all of Canada. He gave up this responsibility in 1942 when SWOC became a constitutional union, the United Steelworkers of America. Backed by strong organization in steel and coal, Barrett led a campaign for a "Wagner Act" for Nova Scotia. The result was the Nova Scotia Trade Union Act of 1937, the first of its kind in Canada, which guaranteed workers the right to organize in unions, obliged employers to bargain with them and provided for checkoff of union dues if an employer made deductions from em-

ployees' pay for any other purpose.

Barrett participated in the establishment of the Canadian Congress of Labour. At its first convention in 1940 he was elected an executive committee member and in 1951 he was elected a vice-president.

In 1945 he was appointed by President John L. Lewis as director in Canada for District 50, UMWA. This position he retained until his retirement.

mine workers of western Canada and it was in this capacity that he helped found the Congress. . . Most important, he was trusted by the CIO and ACCL forces."³

Demands for unionization surged in every part of the country. The effectiveness of the organizational machinery of the CCL and its affiliates may be judged from the membership figures of affiliated and chartered locals:⁴

Year	Locals	Membership
1940	448	100,000 (est.)
1941	489	125,000 (reported)
1942	564	200,089
1943	710	245,812
1944	894	272,146
1945	955	244,750
1946	1,087	314,025

In 1946 the CCL itself had 23 full-time and 15 part-time organizers. Its staff probably outnumbered that of the TLC during the war years.

The CCL proved to be stronger as a central labour body than the TLC for a number of reasons. First, it was autonomous and suffered little interference from the CIO in the United States. Second, most of its affiliated international unions were interested in achieving self-sufficiency in Canada. Third, the CCL took a more flexible position than the TLC in accepting membership: "Any bona fide organiza-

tion of Canadian workers, whether local, national or international in character, shall be eligible for membership in the Congress and further, any body of ten or more workers, not part of any national or international union, may be chartered directly by the Congress as a local union."⁵ Fourth, it emphasized organizing the unorganized.

Conroy was an effective and aggressive officer of the CCL until his sudden resignation at its 1951 Vancouver convention following a row with Millard over a nominee to the Congress executive.

His successor was another member of the United Mine Workers, this time from Cape Breton, Donald MacDonald. MacDonald had been a Congress organizer for more than a decade and at one time leader of the CCF in the Nova Scotia Legislature.

By 1951 trade union membership in Canada had gone over the million mark.

Union Membership in Canada: A Comparison

Year	Number (in thousands)	As % of Non-Agricultural Paid Workers
1921	313	16.0
1931	311	15.3
1941	462	18.0
1951	1,029	28.4

New Initiative for Political Action

The CCL didn't have the same inhibitions about political action from which the TLC suffered since Gompers' time (although the TLC did support the Liberals in the 1945 federal election). Before the CIO-CCL unions came into being, support of organized labour for the CCF was negligible.

On July 25, 1942, the Trade Union Committee of the Ontario CCF held a

conference attended by members of 69 locals of 43 TLC and CCL unions. The conference advocated union affiliation with the CCF and endorsement of the CCF as the official political arm of the trade union movement in Canada.

In September 1942 the CCF-TUC appointed Clarie Gillis, M.P. from Glace Bay, N.S. and a miner, to campaign for affiliations. His own organization, District 26 of the United Mine Workers, had already affiliated in 1938 on its own initiative. In four months Gillis succeeded in obtaining 27 affiliations, 14 from CCL unions, 12 from TLC unions and 1 CCCL union. The affiliated membership was 12,000.

In the Ontario election of 1943 the CCF captured 32.4% of the vote. The Liberals, with 30.9%, were propelled from office to third party position. The Conservatives formed the government with 38 seats and only 36.7% of the vote. Of the 34 CCF MPPs elected, 19 were trade unionists, including Steelworkers' director Millard, and Robert Carlin, Canadian director of the Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers.

In that year the CCL convention endorsed the CCF as the political arm of labour and recommended that its affiliates join the party.

Enthusiasm for the party waned when it was reduced to eight seats in the Ontario Legislature in the 1945 election following a national campaign of virulent anti-CCF propaganda. It recovered to 23 seats in 1948 with strong trade union support.

Nationally the CCL continued to endorse the CCF until the merger with the TLC in 1956.

Battling the "Commie-Liners" — Stage 2

The 1940s were enlivened by a running battle between the leaders of Communist-dominated unions and the heads of the Congress and its non-Communist affiliates.

The main strongholds of the Communists were the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers, the Mine, Mill and Smelters Workers and the Fur and Leather Workers. These unions were also Communist-dominated in the United States. The B.C. labour movement was, until 1948, "almost a personal fiefdom of the Communist Party"⁶ which controlled the largest unions, the International Woodworkers of America, Mine, Mill and the Shipyard Workers.

The first major differences surfaced with the war. The Communists, firmly tied to Soviet foreign policy, defended the Nazi-Soviet pact, opposed Canada's participation in an "imperialist" war, then, after Hitler's invasion of Russia, became superpatriots, gave no-strike pledges and urged an all-out production effort. In the federal and Ontario elections of June 1945 they campaigned for the Liberal party, notwithstanding the Liberal government's consistent anti-labour record.

In the immediate postwar period they opposed the Marshall Plan, which the CCL welcomed and which was the final issue on which the World Federation of Trade Unions broke up.

On the home front the Communist unionists reverted to militancy, both outside and inside the Congress. Almost every CCL policy and program — political, economic, social — was condemned as erroneous or inadequate. In line with the party's original objective, "*to replace the present reactionary leadership by revolutionary leadership*", they attacked and vilified officers of the Congress and its affiliates.

Their opponents, of course, fought back. There were charges, suspensions

and threats of suspension. Finally the non-Communist majority had had enough. The acrimonious debates in councils and conventions may have been good sport for some, but they were distracting, time-consuming and their outcome seldom in doubt. The Congress officers began to look for means of getting rid of the pesky, divisive opposition.

B.C. was the scene of the first clean-up. Under the supervision of Steelworker William Mahoney, sent from Ontario as the CCL's western director of organization, the non-Communist unionists were organized to take over control of the Vancouver Labour Council, the B.C. Federation of Labour and, finally, the IWA. In this fight the Communist leaders of IWA were also up against their own International union and therefore moved to secede from the International, setting up the Woodworkers' Industrial Union of Canada. After only a few years this organization disappeared, almost all its membership returning to the now non-Communist IWA.

Next came the turn of the Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers. In 1947 its International sent a group of organizers, who were also Communists, into northern Ontario. Several Mine, Mill locals rebelled and asked the Congress for charters. After a period of vituperative argument over jurisdiction the Congress decided to issue charters to the dissident locals and ordered Mine, Mill to withdraw. Mine, Mill refused and was expelled at the 1949 CCL convention.

The UE was the most unswerving of the Communist-dominated unions in its following of the party line. From 1940 on, it led the opposition to CCL policy, supporting all Communist party positions and initiating the vilification of Congress leaders. After a particularly virulent onslaught at the Ontario Federation of Labour convention in 1949, the UE was suspended from



Pat Conroy

Patrick Conroy was born in 1900 of Irish parents in the mining town of Baillieston, near Glasgow, Scotland. His father, a miner and trade unionist, died when he was eight, leaving a family of seven children dependent on the earnings of the eldest sons, aged 15 and 17.

At the age of 13 Conroy went to work in the mines and became a member of the British Mineworkers' Federation. He had done well in school and had won a scholarship in the top grade, but his family was so poor that he could not take advantage of it.

Work in the mines meant rising before six o'clock, walking several miles to the pit and shovelling coal from the mines working at the coal face. He started at the apprentice's pay of 50 cents a day. After four years he was a full-fledged miner earning \$1.75 a day.

His eldest brothers had emigrated to Canada before World War I and in 1919 Conroy followed them, going to Drumheller, Alberta. He went to work in the coal mines there and joined the United Mine Workers of America. A short time later he set out to see the United States and for two years drifted from one job to another. He worked at falling and bucking trees in the woods of Washington, Oregon and California. He worked as a labourer and a time-keeper for construction gangs in Oklahoma and Kansas. He worked in the mines in Kentucky, Colorado and New Mexico.

In 1922 he was back in Drumheller and soon after was elected to the committee of his union. Then he became its secretary and from that went up through a succession of union positions to vice-president of District 18 (Western Canada) of the United Mine Workers. In that capacity he attended the convention which established the Canadian Congress of Labour in 1940. He was elected a CCL vice-president and the following year he became secretary-

treasurer, a full-time position as chief administrative officer.

During World War II Conroy acted on a number of government committees dealing with production and finance and later with reconstruction. His services were recognized by the award of Member of the British Empire.

Conroy had been active in the World Federation of Trade Unions and, when it became evident that the organization was being used by the Communist faction, he joined union leaders of other democratic countries who withdrew and established the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions in 1949. He became an executive member of the ICFTU at its formation.

In 1948 he was awarded an honorary degree of Doctor of Laws by St. Francis Xavier University, Antigonish, N.S.

At the CCL convention in 1951 he suddenly resigned as secretary-treasurer because of differences with some members of the executive and, although urged from all sides to reconsider, refused to withdraw his resignation.

Early in 1952 he was appointed labour attache to the Canadian Embassy in Washington, a post he held until his retirement in 1972.

representation on the CCL executive council, a suspension upheld by the 1949 convention. Its expulsion, however, was on the technical grounds of non-payment of dues, the result of an oversight in its International office in the fall of that year.

The junior member of the Communist triumvirate, the Fur and Leather Workers, was charged with slandering leaders of the CCL and TLC and expelled from the CCL in 1951.

In 1968 Mine-Mill was absorbed by the United Steelworkers. UE was readmitted to the Canadian Labour Congress in 1973. The Fur and Leather Workers were shorn of Communist leadership and joined the Meat Cutters

and Butcher Workmen after the 1956 TLC-CCL merger.

Notwithstanding its antipathy to communism, the Canadian Congress of Labour never adopted restrictive constitutional provisions against Communists or Communist-dominated organizations. Communists could and did appear in the delegations to all Congress bodies, even of anti-Communist unions, and could hold any office to which they could get elected. And, al-

though many CIO unions barred Communists from membership by constitution, these clauses were almost entirely ignored by their Canadian sections.

The Trades and Labour Congress, in contrast, adopted a constitutional amendment in 1950 which denied representation to any organization "officered or controlled" by Communists and made individual Communists ineligible as delegates.

8

New Goals for Labour

In the mid-1930s the labour legislation in Canada was still the Industrial Disputes Investigation Act.

The constitutionality of the Act was challenged by the Toronto Hydro-Electric Commission in 1924. In 1925 the Privy Council ruled that the Act was ultra vires of the Dominion Parliament: under the BNA Act the provincial legislatures had jurisdiction.

The Act was amended to make it possible for any province to make a dispute within its jurisdiction subject to the provisions of the IDIA. A number of provinces — British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Nova Scotia — passed enabling legislation, while Alberta enacted its own version of IDIA. Ontario and Quebec did neither, despite urgings from the trade union movement, for several years.

Initiative for change came from the United States. In 1935 Congress adopted the National Labor Relations Act (Wagner Act) which for the first time provided legal guarantees of labour's right to organize, prohibited employers from using various anti-union tactics and required them to bargain in good faith with the representatives chosen by their employees.

It was some years before similar legislation was enacted in Canada, but it became a goal which Canadian labour strove to reach.

Provincial governments enacted various forms of labour legislation in the late 1930s. Most of them embodied the

principles of IDIA with a leavening of some Wagner Act provisions such as freedom of association and collective bargaining. But gaps and ambiguities remained. Enforcement machinery was lacking — for example, employers could still form company unions — and this rendered the legislation ineffective.

In addition to IDIA, the federal government relied solely on the Criminal Code which prohibited employers from discharging workers 'solely' for union activity — a prohibition which was easily evaded in practice.

While union membership in the United States doubled in the years 1935 to 1940, in Canada it went up more moderately, from 280,000 to 362,000.

A study of Labour Legislation prepared for the Royal Commission on Dominion-Provincial Relations in 1939 by A. E. Grauer reported:

"The hostile attitude of many employers to collective bargaining had defeated the chief purpose of unions in organizing to bring about greater equality in bargaining power. . . . Analysis of strikes and lockouts in Canada in six years . . . shows that a considerable number of strikes and a substantial loss of working time has been occasioned by disputes over recognition of unions or dismissals for union activity; and that disputes resulting from these causes have increased rather than diminished in recent years."

Canada's involvement in 1939 in the second world war brought full em-

ployment and even labour shortages.

When the United States entered the war, its federal government put pressure on management and labour to avoid conflict and elicited a "no-strike agreement" from the trade unions in exchange for "maintenance of membership" concessions from the employers.

But Canada still lagged behind and industrial conflict continued during the war years. Employer hostility to unionization was not modified by the requirements of war.

Instead of taking steps to improve labour-management relations, the federal government enacted wage control measures which allowed for appeal to either the National War Labour Board or the Regional War Labour Boards.

Crisis in Steel.

In March 1942 members of the United Steelworkers of America at Algoma Steel Corporation, Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, and Dominion Steel and Coal Corporation, Sydney, Nova Scotia, applied to their provincial Regional War Labour Boards for an increase in their base rate to 55 cents an hour.¹

The Boards rejected the application and in August Local 2251 at Sault Ste. Marie took a strike vote. The result was 3,126 in favour, 17 against.

In September the federal government set up a Royal Commission headed by Hon. Mr. Justice Barlow of Toronto, with nominees of management and union.

In its detailed brief to the Commission the United Steelworkers argued that the increased production needed for the war effort required removal of "the present shackles of substandard wage rates". Base rates varied from 45½ cents an hour plus a \$2.53 cost-of-living bonus for a 56-hour week at Algoma, to 43½ cents an hour plus \$4.96 bonus for a 56-hour week at Sydney, to 46½ cents an hour plus a minimum

bonus of \$4.25 a week at the (non-union) Steel Company of Canada plant in Hamilton.

In 1941, the union pointed out, the Department of Labour had stated that a pre-war wage of \$25 a week would leave a family "practically no margin for expenditures on anything but the basic necessities of life". The equivalent wage in 1943 would be \$29.25 but at Algoma even 56 hours' work with bonus brought in only \$28.01.

The union's arguments fell on deaf ears. The Barlow Commission, with the union's nominee, King Gordon, dissenting, "felt themselves bound by the Order-in-Council to hold that the 45½¢ base rate at Algoma and the 43½¢ rate at Sydney must be continued".

Reaction to the report was immediate. About 12,000 workers at Sault Ste. Marie, Sydney and at another Dosco plant in Trenton, N.S., walked out "as one man" on January 12, 1943.

Representatives of the union held a series of meetings with members of the government in Ottawa. Finally a settlement was worked out which, though the wording was ambiguous, was understood to incorporate the union's wage demand for a 55 cent minimum rate. Mr. Arthur MacNamara, Deputy Minister of Labour and Vice-Chairman of the National War Labour Board, confirmed the base rate in the presence of five witnesses. The National War Labour Board was given authority to implement the settlement.

What followed can only be described as a double-cross. The union accepted the assurances given it and prevailed on its members to return to work. But the government then reorganized the War Labour Board, reducing its membership from 12 to 3. The new board, chaired by Mr. C. P. McTague, repudiated the strike settlement, fixed the base rate at 50 cents an hour for Algoma and Dosco, Sydney, and left the



C. H. Millard

One of the dominant figures in two decades of labour history, Charles Hibbert Millard is a native of St. Thomas, Ontario, grew up in Gravenhurst and learned the trade of carpenter. After four years' overseas service in World War I he settled in Oshawa where he started a small woodworking business. The business went under in the depression and Millard went to work in the General Motors plant.

The briefest summary of his career in the Canadian labour movement would read: First president of Local 222, UAW, in Oshawa and leader in the 1937 strike; 1938-39, Canadian Director, UAW; 1939, Canadian Director, CIO; 1940, Executive Director, Steel Workers Organizing Committee; 1942-1956, National Director, United Steelworkers of America.

He was a member of the committees which formed the Canadian Congress of Labour in 1940 and the Canadian Labour Congress in 1956 and was elected a vice-president of both central bodies.

Millard's contribution to the labour movement extends well beyond the building of the largest union in the country or the organizational help given to other unions. He created research, education and legislative departments in his headquarters, believing that union members must be well-informed and trained not only for their own economic battles but for effective social activity in their communities. Most of the leaders of other industrial unions shared this concept and so the Congresses they formed reflected in structure and policies a broad view of labour's role and responsibilities in the nation's business.

For Millard economic and political action were two sides of the same coin. An early convert to the social democracy of the CCF, he combined party with union activity. He was elected to the Ontario Legislature in 1943 and 1948 and has been an unsuccessful candidate in federal elections of the 60s. Accordingly, he

strongly promoted the CCL endorsement of the CCF which began in 1943 and the formation of the labour-backed New Democratic Party in 1961.

Millard's vision reached beyond national boundaries to the world at large. He was an enthusiastic delegate of the CCL to the all-embracing World Federation of Trade Unions set up at the end of World War II and to the non-communist International Confederation of Free Trade Unions established in 1949. So, when the formation of trade unions as bastions of democracy in the newly-independent nations appeared to him as essential, he resigned his directorship of the Steelworkers in 1956 and accept appointment as Director of Organization for the ICFTU. From its base in Brussels he spent much of the next five years travelling in Africa, Asia and Latin America, assisting nascent organizations.

Following his return to Canada in 1961 he acted as trustee in the rehabilitation of the Seafarers' International Union and participated in union educational projects as well as in church and social service work in his own community. In 1970 he received the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws from Waterloo Lutheran University in recognition of his contribution to the country and the world.

Trenton workers out in the cold. The government declined to intervene.

The union reaction was bitter: "What can be expected on the industrial front in Canada if promises solemnly made are so lightly broken? Is an agreement by the Government of Canada no better than a scrap of paper?"

Kirkland Lake Strike

That was not the only occasion during the war when organized workers were let down by the authorities, who sided with management.

In the winter of 1941-2, 3,000 gold miners and mill men went on strike in the Kirkland Lake, Ontario, area. They were members of the Mine, Mill and

Smelter Workers (CIO-CCL) and the issue was union recognition. The strike lasted three months.

Industry was putting pressure on the Mackenzie King government against legislating compulsory union recognition and collective bargaining. The gold mine operators were particularly obdurate. They refused to meet with the union.

Premier Hepburn sent hundreds of provincial police into Kirkland Lake. His attitude had not changed since the Oshawa strike. Where the mineowners were concerned, he was their man.

Goldmining had not been removed from the "essential industry" list as it had in the United States.

"The union advanced the demand on the federal government that, if gold was not essential to the war effort, then the men and their families, at government expense, should be moved from the town and put into essential industry.

"If it was essential, the federal government should order the companies to negotiate."²

Union spokesmen went to Ottawa to present their case to the Prime Minister, but to no avail.

That winter the miners and their families were literally frozen out, despite financial contributions from unions across the country.

The strike was called off. Some miners lost their jobs. Some, especially strike leaders, left the goldfields.

But the strike was not a total failure. It was one of those critical fights which weld trade union solidarity. Many of the men who had gone through that struggle became leaders in union ranks, both in mining and in other industries. Labour never forgot Kirkland Lake.

More but Slow Progress

The union struggles were not entirely ignored. The National War Labour

Board held an extensive inquiry into the causes of mounting labour unrest. In 1943 a new Order-in-Council, P.C. 1003, was passed. It finally brought Canada's labour legislation more in line with the standards of the Wagner Act of 1935.

P.C. 1003 guaranteed labour's right to organize; laid down terms for defining appropriate bargaining units and for certification; made collective bargaining compulsory and empowered labour relations boards to investigate and correct unfair labour practices.

It retained the provisions of the IDIA in amended form for preventing and settling disputes; for compulsory conciliation and delay of strikes and lockouts pending investigation; for intervention of a conciliation officer and, failing settlement at that stage, establishment of a tripartite conciliation board.

It also made mandatory the binding arbitration of disputes arising during the life of a collective bargaining contract.

"The provisions of P.C. 1003 became the basis for most postwar industrial relations in Canada. Parliament in 1948, after official termination of the wartime emergency, passed a new statute, the Industrial Relations and Disputes Investigation Act, that retained most of the principles and procedures of P.C. 1003."³

The provinces, with jurisdiction over all of the working force except the minority in federal jurisdiction, now moved to adopt legislation along the lines of P.C. 1003. Unlike the United States, where federal labour legislation applies nationwide, Canada has eleven separate authorities. The new legislation did not mean the struggle was over. But the battlefield for union rights was now more clearly defined.

Ford Strike

Before the end of 1945 the United Automobile Workers in Windsor struck the Ford Co. for 99 days to win union security (generally understood to mean the union shop and checkoff). They won — not only for themselves but for every union.

UAW Local 200 built up its membership in 1941. Certification votes were still non-existent in law, but the company agreed to a secret ballot. Local 200 won by roughly 6,000 to 4,000.

The war was no sooner over than Ford "took the gloves off". When the union called the strike, it ordered the employees back to work on pain of losing their jobs. Some 250 to 300 provincial and mounted police were bar-racked in the city.

Public reaction favoured the strikers. Windsorites co-operated with the union to form a car blockade around the Ford factory.

The blockade was so effective that Ford agreed to binding arbitration. A member of the Supreme Court of Canada, Mr. Justice Ivan C. Rand, was appointed arbitrator.

His report was a "hodgepodge" but did contain a pattern-making formula. Known as the "Rand formula", it provided that every employee in the bargaining unit, whether union member or not, must have the equivalent of the union's dues checked off his wages and remitted to the union by management.

This formula, sometimes with modifications, has since been incorporated in many union contracts. It practically eliminates resentment at "freeloaders" which disturbs the internal harmony of partly-unionized plants, and also strengthens the union's financial base.

It has been said that the Ford strike for union security "did more to put

industrial unionism on its feet than any other single event".

As for UAW Local 200, by 1955 it had a full union shop at Ford.

Workers Ignore Government Take-Over

When the United Steelworkers were on strike against Algoma Steel and Dosco in 1943, they had not yet obtained recognition at the Steel Co. of Canada in Hamilton.

The union was certified in 1944 after victory in a vote ordered by the Labour Court which was Ontario's agency for handling certification procedures at this period. It was now the bargaining agent in the three basic steel plants.

But certification didn't mean acceptance. Stelco was determined to maintain an open shop and total management rights.

In 1946 the three local unions coordinated their bargaining aims and prepared to strike for them if necessary. Just before the strike deadline, July 15, the federal government passed an Order-in-Council taking over the three plants and putting controllers in charge. The Order set out fines and prison terms for union officers and rank-and-file members if they went on strike.

Still the workers struck. At Sault Ste. Marie and Sydney the plants were shut down tight. At Stelco, while 3,000 walked out, about 1,000 stayed in the plant with supervisory staff.

The stockpile of supplies which the company had built up before the strike was supplemented by plane and powerboat. The union dropped leaflets to the stay-ins from its own plane and had its own launch picketing Hamilton bay. Both federal and provincial police were ordered into Hamilton. But this form of intimidation proved counter-productive.

With the economy suffering from lack

of steel, the federal government early in September came to terms with the Steelworkers. The increase of 18½¢ which had been the union's wage objective was won.

The open shop at Stelco was a thing of the past. And in a very short time the men who struck and the men who stayed in the plant were working together without bitterness as union members.

Asbestos Strike

The asbestos workers' strike of 1949 in Quebec is another landmark in Canadian labour history.

The Canadian and Catholic Confederation of Labour (now the Confederation of National Trade Unions) was established in 1921. At its beginning it was under the domination of the Church fathers who squelched any show of militancy demonstrated in the union's dealings with employers and the provincial government. But other unions were active in Quebec and obtained a strong foothold. This forced the CCCL to open its ranks to other than just French-speaking, Catholic workers.

The turning point in this Quebec organization's development was the long and bitter strike which brought forth the unusual spectacle of a few prelates in the Catholic Church openly supporting the union against the employers and the provincial government after the Minister of Labour had declared the strike illegal.

The strike against the Johns Manville Company was the first in which the Asbestos Workers' Union was involved even though the company was extremely rigid in its attitude and policies. The union was asking for substantial wage increases and other benefits to make up for its lagging behind when the company was making very large profits.

Johns Manville offered five per cent on wages and nothing more. In face of

hostility from both the Duplessis government and company, the employees voted to strike without recourse to conciliation as required by law. The company declared the strike illegal, refused to negotiate and obtained a court injunction banning picketing.

Some weeks later the Minister of Labour officially declared that the strike was illegal and that the union would lose certification unless the workers returned to their jobs.

A hundred police were moved to the strike scene, but the municipal council of the town of Asbestos condemned the police on the grounds that they were under the influence of alcohol, were guilty of "indecent acts" and had created disorder in public places.

The council also charged that unprovoked acts of violence had been committed against Johns Manville employees.

The company, encouraged by the attitude of the Duplessis government, undertook to break the strike by an extensive advertising campaign and by hiring strikebreakers.

As the number of strikebreakers increased, so did the acts of violence. But public opinion was turning to the side of the strikers. The labour movement across Canada was united in their support and Mgr. Joseph Charbonneau, Archbishop of Montreal, preached a sermon urging financial contributions for them.

In this time of growing tensions, the company announced wage increases for the strikebreakers who, it said, would be given priority of employment when the strike was over. Strikers were threatened with eviction from company-owned houses. Police violence against strikers grew; mass picket lines were broken up with tear gas.

The strikers were now determined to stop the strikebreakers. To counter

them, the police force was augmented and armed with orders to shoot if necessary. After dispersing picketers in Asbestos, the police moved on to the adjoining town of Thetford, where some strikers were taking refuge in a church basement. Fifteen were arrested and some badly beaten.

A Justice of the Peace read the Riot Act and the police continued their arrests. About 120 persons were taken into custody and many were beaten up. The strike leaders were arrested and charged with "conspiracy".

Finally, the Archbishop of Quebec, Mgr. M. Roy, helped bring an end to the strike, five months after it had begun.

The workers obtained a wage increase of 10 cents an hour and were guaranteed employment without discrimination.

Considering the intensity of the struggle, the immediate gains were modest. But this long and highly-publicized conflict brought the Catholic Confederation new prestige and, for a few years, rapid organizational advance. By 1953 it had reached a membership peak of more than 100,000.

Others on the Picket Lines

Almost 14,000 members of the United Packinghouse Workers of America were on strike from August 22 to October 24, 1947. It was the first nationwide stoppage in a major industry other than railroads. The industry did not come under P.C. 1003 which governed wartime labour relations in federal jurisdiction, but the federal Minister of Labour used emergency powers to prevent strikes in 1944, 1945 and 1946. In 1945 the Minister had appointed controllers to take charge of 18 large packing plants across the country while an IDI Commissioner held hearings. The wartime controls had lapsed in 1947 before the

strike began and efforts to get the provincial authorities to agree on one jurisdiction failed.

Eventually master agreements were signed with the three major chains — Swift's, Canada Packers and Burns. Unsettled issues went to arbitration.

A series of strikes against the Southam Publishing Company's chain of newspapers involved about 300 members of the International Typographical Union over a period of four years from the end of December 1946 to November 1949.

Conflict on the Lakes

The most protracted and brutal battles in Canadian labour history were waged by the seamen on the Great Lakes. The Canadian Seamen's Union was organized in 1937 after a series of strikes led by Pat Sullivan who was then a Communist. It faced a group of the country's most anti-union employers.

In 1946, with 29 shipping companies refusing to negotiate with the CSU which had gone on strike, the federal government appointed a controller who imposed the conditions for which the union was striking. The CSU was also given sole bargaining rights.

Less than a year later, Sullivan broke with the Communist Party, resigned from the CSU and started a rival organization, the Canadian Lake Seamen's Union. The companies, violating the law, signed contracts with the new body and a violent internecine conflict broke out as the CSU tried to protect its jurisdiction.

In 1948, the CSLU was absorbed by the AFL's Seafarers' International Union. With the connivance of the government, the SIU sent the notorious Hal Banks, who had a criminal record in the United States, as its representative to Canada. Shortly after he arrived, the Shipping Federation of Canada,



George Burt

Burt was involved throughout his career in labour politics and was a member of the founding committee of the New Democratic Party.

His community interests centred around Windsor, Ontario, the location of his headquarters.

George Burt led the Canadian region of the United Automobile, Aerospace and Agricultural Implement Workers of America for twenty-seven years from its militant infancy in the late 1930s through its development into one of the largest and most socially-minded unions in the country.

He was born in Toronto in 1903. After high school he became a journeyman plumber and worked at the trade until the depression years when he moved to Oshawa and got a job as a torch solderer in the body shop of General Motors. The body shop became the hub of the organizing efforts which led to the chartering of Local 222, UAW, and the historic strike of 1937. Burt was the first treasurer of Local 222.

At the International Union convention in 1939 he was elected Canadian Director of the UAW and held this office continuously until his retirement in May 1968.

The UAW was an affiliate of the Canadian Congress of Labour and Burt was a vice-president of the Congress during most of its existence. He also served as president of the Ontario Federation of Labour (CCL) for two terms, 1951 to 1953. After the formation of the Canadian Labour Congress he was elected a general vice-president.

Burt developed a particular interest in the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions' western hemisphere organization, ORIT, and represented the CLC at a number of its conventions.

UAW members benefited greatly from his skill at the bargaining table. He was regarded as one of the ablest negotiators in the union. Under his guidance, the UAW in Canada grew to become the second largest in Canada by 1968.

comprising almost all the major companies in the industry, signed an agreement with him.

On the east coast, 27 deepsea shipping companies also signed with the SIU after the CSU had rejected the unanimous report of a conciliation board. The CSU called a strike which was extended to many ports throughout the world. The eventual failure of this strike wrote finis to its career. In December 1950 the Canada Labour Relations Board revoked its certification for "being Communist-controlled and directed" and therefore "no longer a trade union within the meaning of the Industrial Relations and Disputes Investigation Act".

Railway Strike

The railway strike of August 1950 was the first of any size since before World War I. It was nationwide and involved 125,000 non-operating employees from August 22 to 30 on both major railways, the CN and the CPR. The strike had been preceded by a year of fruitless negotiations.

The reaction of public and press to the strike bordered on the hysterical but none of the dire results predicted occurred.

The strikers were legislated back to work by the Maintenance of Railway Operations Act enacted by a special session of Parliament called by Prime Minister St. Laurent on August 29. The parties were to resume negotia-

tions, and unsettled issues were to be referred to a government-appointed arbitrator.

The House was assured that the Act was *not* intended to establish a precedent — but it did.

The intensity of strikes in the immediate postwar period resulted from organized labour's determination to break the shackles of wartime restraints and to establish new and higher wage

standards, lower working hours and improved working conditions.

Major strikes in the lumber industry of British Columbia, in rubber, automobile and electrical appliance plants in Ontario, by steelworkers in Ontario and Nova Scotia, coal miners in the Maritimes and packinghouse workers across Canada, created new patterns of wages and hours. In so doing they affected the working conditions and living standards of other workers, organized and unorganized, in other areas and industries, large and small.

Milestone Events — Merger

The first part of the 1950s was a period of relative prosperity.

*"In many cases employers faced with profitable contracts and rapidly increasing demands for their output, in effect bought labour peace by voluntarily and unilaterally increasing wages by enough, or more than enough, to compensate for higher costs."*¹

American money was rapidly buying up the Canadian economy.

"Massive investments, particularly in resource development projects, created new industries such as oil and gas refineries and pipelines, iron ore, iron mining and smelting and

*various lines of secondary manufacturing. In the aggregate these substantially transformed the Canadian industrial structure."*²

Production, income, population and employment rose, but price levels rose only moderately.

Technological change and automation were factors to reckon with in the new industrial speed-up, so that the rate of unemployment also rose.

Still, union growth was on the upswing. In 1951, union membership at just over a million comprised 28.4% of the non-agricultural working force; by 1955 it had risen to 1,352,000 and 33.7%, a record high.

Union Membership and Local Branches in Canada as at Jan. 1, 1955-57

Organization	Jan. 1, 1955		Jan. 1, 1956	
	Branches	Membership	Branches	Membership
	No.	No.	No.	No.
Trades and Labor Congress of Canada ¹	3,598	600,791	3,765	640,271
American Federation of Labor only	54	9,290	24	1,050
Canadian Congress of Labour ¹	1,532	361,271	1,440	377,926
Congress of Industrial Organizations only	9	2,500	—	—
Canadian and Catholic Confederation of Labour	445	99,801	432	101,169
International Railway Brotherhoods (Independent)	365	40,307	366	43,877
Unaffiliated international, national, regional and local unions	670	154,247	735	187,359
Totals	6,673	1,268,207	6,762	1,351,652
	May 1, 1965 ²		Jan. 1, 1957	
	Branches	Members	Branches	Members
	No.	No.	No.	No.
Canadian Labour Congress	5,238	1,030,000	5,404	1,070,129
Canadian and Catholic Confederation of Labour	432	101,000	411	99,372
American Federation of Labor — Congress of Industrial Organizations	24	1,000	17	1,184
International Railway Brotherhoods (Independent) ³	366	44,000	257	33,594
Unaffiliated international, national, regional and local unions	702	175,000	669	181,906
Totals	6,762	1,351,000	6,758	1,386,185

¹ Amalgamated as at May 1, 1956.

² Estimated membership at the founding of the Canadian Labour Congress.

³ The Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and Enginemen affiliated with Canadian Labour Congress on Oct. 1, 1956. —Canada Year Book

This substantial gain was reflected in improvements in wages, fringe benefits and working conditions, achieved without resort to strikes or other manifestations of conflict.

The focus in negotiations started to turn toward job and income security. Pension plans, medical insurance and similar benefits showed up in more and more agreements.

The 1955 agreement between the Ford Motor Company and the UAW broke new ground with the institution of company-financed "Supplementary Unemployment Benefits".

There was an increasing emphasis on seniority provisions as protection in hiring and firing, transfers and promotions.

The lessening of industrial strife was counterbalanced by a heightened concern among employers about the growing size and power of unions. Their spokesmen made a concerted effort to blame organized labour for the mild degree of inflation which occurred. It was with difficulty that the labour movement could convince the public, even with the undisputed facts, that factors other than labour costs were responsible. The point was eventually acknowledged in retrospect when economists assessed the reasons for rising costs at the end of the next decade.

The economy sagged after a boom year in 1957. Unemployment increased to a range of five to seven per cent in both Canada and the United States after 1958.

By then the Conservatives led by John Diefenbaker were in power at Ottawa. They initiated a tight money policy to control inflation when what was called for was expansion of the economy to stimulate employment.

The government shut down the Avro aircraft plant at Malton, Ontario, without providing any alternative employ-

ment for the highly-skilled workers. Many of them left for the States. It was a high-level boo-boo which neither the International Union of Machinists nor the electorate forgave.

In general strikes were not widespread or large, but there were a few notable exceptions.

The Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and Enginemen were on strike against the CPR from January 2 to 11, 1957, shutting down the railway's operations. The CPR proposed to dispense with firemen on diesel engines. It intended to retain those already on the job but not to replace them when they retired.

The government appointed a three-man commission which upheld the company's proposals after a year's investigation.

Two strikes which were punctuated by violence occurred in the eastern provinces and were very costly to the trade union movement.

Murdochville

At Murdochville, Quebec, the Steelworkers fought a long and bitter battle against Gaspé Copper Mines, a Noranda subsidiary. In 1952, when the company was beginning its operations, the union signed up some 80 per cent of the workers. However, the Quebec Labour Board accepted the company's argument that, because the mine was not yet in full production, certification should be denied.

A year later the International Union of Mine Employees, newly-chartered by the TLC, arrived on the scene, apparently with the support of the company and the government, since it rapidly obtained certification and a two-year collective agreement.

By the time this contract was up for renewal, the TLC-CCL merger was approaching and the two Congresses gave the Gaspé workers a choice of bargain-

ing agent. In June the Steelworkers submitted authorization cards from at least 80 per cent of the employees to the Quebec Labour Board with an application for transfer of certification.

Gaspé Copper first persuaded the Board to delay processing the application and then, on August 1, 1957, stalled it indefinitely by obtaining a "writ of prohibition" from the Superior Court of Quebec on the grounds that the Board had not followed proper legal procedures.

Blocked from negotiating a new agreement, the Steelworkers called a meeting in September which voted almost 98 per cent to authorize a strike.

The strike was not immediately called. The union waited month after month, with grievances piling up, hoping for a favourable decision from the Labour Board. In March, 1958, the last straw was added to the pile: the union president was fired, and other layoffs and dismissals were threatened. Hardly waiting to inform the union representatives, the 900-odd workers walked off the job.

The fat was in the fire. The company obtained an *ex parte* injunction against picketing on the grounds that the strike was illegal, the union not having been certified — a position also taken by the Quebec government and Superior Court. Provincial police were sent to Murdochville. In addition the company employed 40 armed private detectives and imported strikebreakers, while strikers were warned that they must return to work or lose their jobs.

There were frequent skirmishes between strikers, non-strikers and police. Two dynamite explosions were set off, one of which killed a striker. Trade unionists from Ontario and Quebec, led by CLC president Claude Jodoin and CCCL president Gérard Picard, held a demonstration of support and solidarity in Murdochville — and while it was

going on, the Steelworkers' offices were broken into and pillaged. The president of the Quebec Federation of Labour, Roger Provost, charged the company and the government with deliberately provoking violence.

Steelworkers' requests for government intervention were rejected and by fall the union's resources and the determination of the strikers to hold out were running short. On October 5, 1957, the strikers voted to return to work. The company took back only 200, retaining 800 strikebreakers.

To add insult to injury, Gaspé Copper then sued the United Steelworkers for damages and loss of production. The costly litigation wound up in the Supreme Court of Canada some years later and the company was awarded over two million dollars.

The Steelworkers had lost a grim battle — but they won the war. A few years later, they again applied for certification for the Gaspé workers, and this time it was granted and is in effect to this day.

IWA in Newfoundland

A second notable and costly strike took place in Newfoundland. The International Woodworkers of America was organizing loggers and lumber workers. The strike was directed against the two main companies, Anglo-Newfoundland Development Corporation with 1,360 employees and Bowater Corporation with 1,500. It occurred during the first three months of 1959.

The union's objectives were a raise in the prevailing wage rate of \$1.05 an hour, a reduction of the 60-hour work week, improvement of the squalid conditions in the logging camps, and union recognition.

A union has seldom had better grounds for organizing workers and has seldom met more implacable opposition from both employers and govern-

ment. Premier Smallwood was determined that the IWA should not gain a foothold in the province and so be in a position to reach for wages and working conditions on a par with those on the mainland.

The president of the IWA's central and eastern Canada region, H. Landon Ladd, together with a few new union members, travelled across the country giving a firsthand account of the inhuman conditions in which the loggers worked and lived. The trade unions raised about \$900,000 to back the strikers.

Unfortunately, as in many situations where people's livelihoods are at stake and the opposition is powerful and inflexible, there were outbreaks of violence. They reached a climax at Badger, Nfld., a rallying point for strikers, when 60 RCMP officers ordered 75 pickets off the road. "In the ensuing clash, which the strikers claimed was provoked by the police, one RCMP officer was killed when struck over the head by a club-wielding picket, and several men were seriously injured."³

That was the beginning of the end for the IWA in Newfoundland. The provincial government passed legislation which drove the union from the island.

The Murdochville and Newfoundland strikes, like the Asbestos strike before them, were neither the first nor the last where government intervention on the side of the company was decisive.

Mine Workers

An organizing drive which had a happier ending was the campaign to organize the gold and base metal miners in northern Ontario and Quebec.

In 1950 the Canadian Labour Congress gave the jurisdiction in metal mining to the United Steelworkers of America. The Mine, Mill and Smelter

Workers had made at least two unsuccessful attempts to unionize these mining camps; the Steelworkers were to pick up the pieces.

Mine operators, led by the Noranda interests, were among the toughest of employers and were determined to keep unions out.

Most of the mines were located in remote areas. Lines of communication with outside centres were poor in those days, especially in winter. Mine labour was paid as little as \$1 an hour — sometimes even less — for a 48-hour week. Working and living conditions were rugged. The turnover of workers was high as Canadians left for better-paid jobs and new immigrants were brought in.

Steelworker local unions were set up from Timmins to Kirkland Lake in Ontario and in the Rouyn-Noranda area of Quebec. Certifications were obtained and contract negotiations conducted. But no satisfactory settlements could be wrung from the employers. The miners had to use their last weapon, the strike.

An eight-month struggle during the bitter winter of 1953-54 found more than 7,000 miners patrolling the pit-heads day and night, often in sub-zero temperatures. No welfare benefits were paid, no outside jobs were available. Wives kept family life going on meagre strike assistance from the union by pooling resources in community kitchens and cutting their own wood for heating.

The struggle didn't bring complete victory, but for the first time in the history of the northern mining camps, a strike was settled with the union organization intact and the miners returning to work with agreements which included more money in their pay packets.

Eaton Drive

The campaign to organize the T. Eaton Co. Ltd. in Toronto, is a case history of a costly, planned organizational effort nullified by the passage of time. It illustrates the vagaries of labour legislation which permit smart lawyers, backed by unlimited financial resources, to delay a vote on certification for what seems to the union involved an interminable period.

It is a condition of successful organizing that the time between A, the signing up of members in the union, and Z, the negotiation of a collective agreement, be the shortest possible. It is therefore part of the strategy of a company bent on negating the union's efforts to prolong the passage from A to Z.

In a massive organization like Eaton's the time-lag would be considerable in normal circumstances. But the circumstances encountered at Eaton's were not normal.

The campaign was organized under the jurisdiction of the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union, Local 1000, with the help of money and organizers from other unions and the Canadian Congress of Labour. Canvassing for memberships began in the fall of 1947. By September 1949 Local 1000 had enrolled about 5,000 employees, but then the Ontario Labour Relations Act was amended to make mandatory the collection of a \$1 initiation fee from all signed-up members on whose behalf an application for certification was made. This made it necessary for Local 1000 to repeat its contact job and collect the dollar from each member — a time-consuming process.

However, on October 18, 1950, the union was able to apply for certification for some specified groups of employees.

Meanwhile, Eaton's had acted early to counter the threat of unionization. In March 1949 it instituted the first of

a series of wage increases and payment of time and a half for overtime. This was followed in October by a pension plan which up to that time it had refused. In September 1951 it gave all employees the first general increase in its history — \$2 a week for fulltime and \$1 a week for part-time employees.

In response to the certification application the company's tactics took another turn — direct intervention to induce employees to sign printed cards rejecting the union and the use of lawyers to delay a certification vote. Eventually the Labour Board ruled that the company's intervention was improper, but its consideration consumed valuable time and this favoured the company.

The company also benefited from the long time the Board took in deciding on the appropriate bargaining unit. When the decision was announced on May 28, 1951, the union, though not entirely happy with it, accepted it. The company rejected it; not until July 11 did it accede to the Board's request for payroll lists against which to check the union's membership cards. It then took 11 weeks to file the cards. More delay.

On September 26, 1951, the frustrated union laid its case before the Ontario Legislature. It asked for immediate action to conclude the certification procedure, and for amendment of the Labour Relations Act "to make impossible such infringement of employees' rights in the future".

The representation vote was held on December 4 and 5, 1951, one year and two months after the union had applied for certification. At the time the union had 5,479 accredited members. There were 9,914 eligible voters, of whom 9,300 voted. The result was:

<i>For the union</i>	4,020
<i>Against the union</i>	4,880
<i>Spoiled ballots</i>	259
<i>Segregated ballots</i>	141

Why did the union finally lose the vote?

The report to the Canadian Congress of Labour gave four points which it considered most decisive: 1) the anti-union campaign waged by the company during the final weeks before the vote; 2) the company's sudden generosity: "In the 14 months before the vote, there were four \$2 general wage increases at three-month intervals, as well as a pension plan and an improved welfare scheme." 3) the unexpected length of the drive — four years from its initiation to the final vote; 4) the high staff turnover at Eaton's which drained away signed-up members.

Birthpangs of Unity

The formation of the Canadian Congress of Labour in 1940 as a result of an agreement between the "freshman" CIO unions in Canada and the All-Canadian Congress of Labour meant the addition of a third central labour body to the two existing ones — the Trades and Labour Congress of Canada (TLC) and the Canadian and Catholic Confederation of Labour in Quebec. The railway running trades unions remained separate from any central body.

The CCL didn't wither away as TLC officialdom expected. It gained in strength by acting.

Toward the end of 1941 it took the initiative toward a form of labour unity by proposing an international joint council of the AFL, CIO, TLC and CCL to promote the war effort and to frame a joint legislative program. TLC president Tom Moore was invited to address the next CCL convention but took sick before the TLC executive board reached a decision on acceptance.

Nevertheless, the 1942 CCL convention by resolution instructed its executive to approach the TLC and CCCL with a view to joint action. The 1942 TLC convention in turn instructed its

incoming executive to "do all in its power to bring about unity".⁴

Every CCL convention for the next seven years passed a resolution favouring joint action followed by organic unity. A TLC resolution of 1944 resolved "to give serious study to the possibility of achieving one trade union centre in Canada with proper safeguards for all unions with respect to jurisdictional rights".

No action followed the words. A similar exchange of resolutions took place in 1946. That year District 50 of the United Mine Workers of America, which was then affiliated with the AFL in the United States and with the CCL in Canada, asked the executives of both Congresses to work out a plan for unity. TLC President Percy Bengough rejected the bid.

The whole performance was repeated in 1947. With the blessing of AFL President William Green, District 50 suggested merger. But the AFL and the TLC were at loggerheads over the refusal of the latter to expel the Machinists, Bengough's own union. The Machinists were at the time "temporarily out of the AFL".

Relations between the two Canadian Congresses thawed briefly in 1950 when their presidents issued joint statements in support of the UN stand on the Korean war and of the national strike of the non-operating railway unions.

But in 1951 the TLC withdrew from a consultative committee of four labour organizations which had been established in February after the presentation of a joint brief on price control to the federal government.

The TLC executive council said that little or no improvement in relations between the two Congresses had taken place; the TLC had gained nothing from their association nor from the presentation of joint briefs with an

organization which was an affiliate of a political party.

Whatever the validity of these excuses, the CCL was not a CCF affiliate. It did endorse the CCF as the "political arm of labour". But its affiliates could make their own choice of what political action, if any, they took.

In the meantime the AFL executive council in the United States decided on November 25, 1952, to reactivate a committee which had been appointed to meet a similar CIO committee to discuss organic unity. The two committees met in April 1953 and by June 17 had worked out a no-raiding agreement.

On December 7, 1953, the TLC wrote the CCL that it had appointed a committee consisting of its president, two vice-presidents and secretary-treasurer to implement a 1953 convention resolution. This resolution urged its affiliates to refrain from raiding, concentrate on organizing the unorganized as a first step toward closer relations and eventual organic unity with the CCL.

On December 9 the CCL appointed a parallel committee. These two became the Unity Committee which finally drew up the terms of merger of the two Congresses.

In 1954 the Unity Committee proposed, among other things, a no-raiding agreement similar to the one adopted in the United States. This was approved at both TLC and CCL conventions that year.

On February 9, 1955, the AFL-CIO Unity Committee reached a merger agreement followed by an implementation agreement.

The TLC and CCL reached agreement on merger on March 9 and on implementation on May 9, 1955.

The AFL and CIO merged in December 1955 under the unwieldy name of American Federation of Labour and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO).

The TLC and CCL merged in April 1956 as the Canadian Labour Congress, a name which went back in history to the 1880s.

The newly-formed Canadian Labour Congress was (and is) completely autonomous, which point was clearly stated in the first of the 15 principles of the merger. AFL-chartered locals became CLC locals.

At its founding convention, Claude Jodoin, president of the TLC, was elected president. Donald MacDonald of the CCL was elected secretary-treasurer.

The CLC started with a membership of over one million.

The founding convention of the Canadian Labour Congress and the convention of the Canadian and Catholic Confederation of Labour the same year set up committees to discuss merger. Numerous meetings were held but negotiations were eventually broken off. The main obstacle to merger was the CCCL's wish to affiliate as a unit in order to maintain its distinctive character. The CLC's structure and jurisdictional arrangements required affiliation by unions.

Since this failure, there has been a kind of love-hate relationship between the Confederation (which changed its name in 1960 to Confederation of National Trade Unions) and the CLC's Quebec Federation of Labour. Periods of jurisdictional strife have alternated with periods of co-operation. There have been joint submissions to the Quebec government and joint action to protest anti-labour legislation and demonstrate against it.

Merger in Ontario

Until 1944 there was no provincial federation of labour functioning in Ontario. The major central labour body in Canada until 1940, the Trades and Labour Congress, did not charter provincial federations; its annual conventions elected provincial executive groups which represented the TLC at the provincial level. Their responsibilities were nominal.

The affiliates of the Canadian Congress of Labour, formed in 1940, moved to set up a provincial body in 1944. The founding convention of the Ontario Federation of Labour was held in Toronto on April 15 and 16 of that year.

The first president of the OFL was Elroy Robson of the CBRT & GW, and the first secretary-treasurer was William Sefton of the Steelworkers.

The OPFL

The TLC-affiliated unions didn't establish a central organization in Ontario until January 1947, when the Ontario Provincial Federation of Labour was founded in Toronto. J. A. Dunlop of the Firefighters' Union was elected president and John Buckley secretary-treasurer.

In contrast to the OFL, the OPFL had no fulltime paid officers or staff.

At its 1955 convention Douglas Hamilton ran against the incumbent, A. F. MacArthur, for the presidency. He had no differences with MacArthur on economic policies, he told the convention, but "I am of the firm opinion, rightly or wrongly, that until this movement as a movement begins to put the same sort of energy into the political field that they are now putting into the economic, then they are doomed to failure."⁵

Hamilton was defeated by 266 votes to 162, but at this convention the issue of political action was fought on the

floor. A resolution submitted by Aeronautical Lodge 717 of the International Association of Machinists, Malton, proposed immediate affiliation with the CCF and submission of a resolution to this effect to the next TLC convention.

The resolutions committee brought in a substitute resolution which would put the OPFL on record as endorsing "only those candidates who would act freely in the interests of labour".

"When this resolution hit the floor, all hell broke loose. Bill Benson and Roy Bagley of the Machinists attacked the substitute resolution in pretty strong language."⁶

Hamilton asked, "How long are we going to have this nonsense crammed down our throats? This resolution isn't worth any more than the paper it's written on."

The substitute resolution was defeated. The original resolution with the word "affiliate" changed to "endorse" was then brought to the floor with a committee recommendation of non-concurrence. The vote was a tie — 134 to 134.

The convention was in an uproar when a motion to adjourn was accepted by the chair and carried 127 to 124. The chair was relieved of the responsibility of casting the deciding vote.

The significance of this debate on political action was that it indicated a shift of attitude within the OPFL. The CCF had been supported by a small but important minority of TLC unionists in the 1943, 1945 and 1948 provincial elections, but at no previous time could they have come so close to winning a vote on direct endorsement of the party.

The gap between the political policies of OPFL and OFL was being bridged.

Plans for merger of the two provincial federations went ahead soon after the Canadian Labour Congress came



First officers of the Ontario Federation of Labour after merger in 1957 of original OFL and Ontario Provincial Federation of Labour were, left to right, David B. Archer, Executive Secretary, Cleve Kidd, President, and Douglas Hamilton, Secretary-Treasurer. Mr. Archer was elected OFL president in 1958 at which time the Federation had almost 400,000 affiliated members. Mr. Hamilton resigned from the OFL in 1970 to become member of the Ontario Workmen's Compensation Board.

into being in 1956. On January 16, 1957, a meeting of the Unity Committee composed of OFL officers Sam Hughes, president, and Cleve Kidd, secretary-treasurer and OPFL officers A. F. MacArthur, president, and William Boothroyd, secretary-treasurer, agreed upon merger terms.

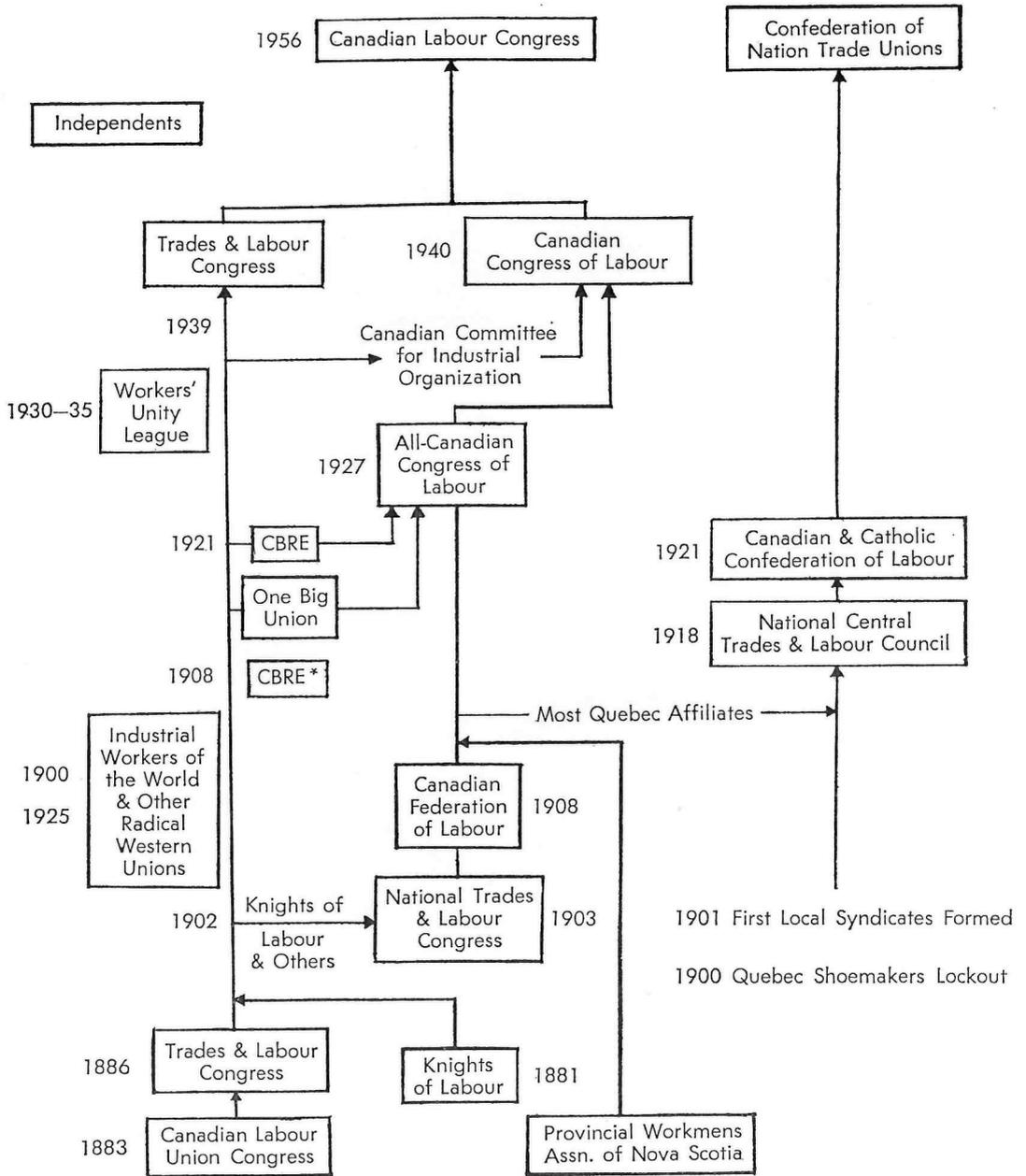
A one-day convention of each federation preceded the merger convention which was held in Toronto March 27 to 29. Cleve Kidd was elected president and Douglas Hamilton from the OPFL secretary-treasurer. David Archer remained in the post of executive secretary which he had held in the OFL.

* * *

The mergers of provincial federations across Canada and of labour councils at the local level proceeded quickly and with remarkably few hitches. Unification was a positive factor in extending the horizons of organized labour. The union movement had been pressing hard for years to establish and maintain a solid base in a fast-paced industrial society. With the merger it reached stability and maturity.

The Canadian Labour Congress expanded its staff and its activities well beyond the limits of both former congresses combined. It rapidly became the recognized voice of organized labour in English-speaking Canada. It developed a structure designed to cope with the challenges of a changing work force in a highly technological age.

THE HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE CANADIAN LABOUR MOVEMENT



1873-1877 Canadian Labour Union

1871 Local Trade Assemblies Begin to Emerge

1867 Knights of St. Crispin

1825-1860 Numerous Weak & Isolated Locals

1800-1825 Scattered Friendly Societies & Labour Circles

*Canadian Brotherhood of Railway Employees

Decade of Growth and Conflict

The 1960s began with a two-year recession. But for the union movement they began with two events, one notable — the takeover of the Mine-Mill local at Inco, Sudbury, by the United Steelworkers — and the other memorable — the founding of the New Democratic Party.

The USWA-Mine-Mill Fight

When the United Steelworkers took over the metal mining jurisdiction, it was ready to challenge the Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers with the authority of the Canadian Labour Congress behind it.

The two unions had been in conflict ever since Mine-Mill was expelled from the Canadian Congress of Labour in 1949.

The jewel in the crown of the small Mine-Mill empire was Local 598. This local had about 17,000 members in one of the continent's most important mining companies, International Nickel. It was the one big union in Sudbury and had organized some industries and businesses in the area not related to mining. It also included the workers at the Falconbridge Nickel mine, not nearly as big as Inco but still substantial. It was an important factor in the community.

The Sudbury and District Labour Council was, of course, a CLC affiliate, but its work and influence were restricted by the fact that the CLC unions in the district were few and their memberships small. The only way that

the Labour Council could expand its membership and prestige was through affiliation of the Mine-Mill local. But this was out of the question as long as that union was on the outs with the Congress.

The Labour Council was responsible, among other things, for carrying out the political action policies of the Congress — policies which were also endorsed and actively promoted by the Ontario Federation of Labour. With Communist domination of the Local 598 executive, the development of legislative and political action was hampered in a key area of northern Ontario.

In 1958 Local 598 elected a new executive. This executive, whose preference was affiliation with the CLC to bring them back into the mainstream of the labour movement, was re-elected in 1959, 1960 and 1961.

In 1960 it bid for direct CLC affiliation but this was turned down on the grounds that the local could get back into the Congress through the Steelworkers which held the jurisdiction.

In 1961 the Steelworkers began an intensive organizing drive at Inco operations in Sudbury and Port Colborne, Ontario, and in Thompson, Manitoba. They were certified for the Port Colborne and Thompson operations the same year.

The battle at Sudbury was more prolonged. In a representation vote conducted at Inco by the Ontario Labour Relations Board in February 1962, the Steelworkers came out on top by the

narrow margin of 15 votes. This was, however, enough for certification and an agreement was concluded with Inco which included the check-off. Mine-Mill fought back and obtained another vote in 1965. This time the Steelworkers won by a decisive margin, 8199 to 6099. The Falconbridge unit remained with Mine-Mill.

The Sudbury, Port Colborne and Thompson victories made a big difference to more than the Steelworkers. It increased the affiliated membership of the Congress and the respective provincial federations. It was a tremendous asset to the Sudbury Labour Council and to other unions which could now organize in Sudbury without encountering a huge and hostile competitor.

And it had a significant impact on political action at the local, provincial and federal levels.

The Founding of a New Party

As this narrative has described, trade unions had made a series of efforts, direct and indirect, to engage in politics ever since the original Canadian Labour Union Congress of 1883 declared,

“... the working class of this Dominion will never be properly represented in Parliament or receive justice in the legislation of the country until they are represented by men of their own class and opinions.”

Over the years many trade unionists in successive generations never lost sight of this goal. But many others were no more than lukewarm to labour political action and even more were indifferent or opposed, especially if the policies were labeled “socialist”.

The political education efforts of the labour movement were, at least until the merger of 1956, very modest indeed. Organizing the unorganized was top priority and rightly so. Labour could not be influential in any other field of

endeavour unless it were first successful in this.

The merger wiped away most of the old internal conflicts. It opened up new vistas. But the merger convention made no decision on the question of political action to which the CCL had been committed because the TLC was not.

But the CLC leadership had no intention of leaving a vacuum in this area of national policy. They were determined to put the issue on the floor at the very next convention. They were encouraged by the fact that within the old TLC a strong element in favour of political action had developed.

In the 1950s it was evident that the CCF had passed the peak of its postwar successes marked by the near-win in Ontario in 1943, the election to government in Saskatchewan in 1944 and the 28 federal seats won in 1945 with 15.6% of the vote.

By 1958 CCF representation federally was reduced to eight seats on 9.4% of the vote, and in 1959 only three CCF members were returned to the Ontario Legislature.

In view of this decline, the 1959 convention of the Canadian Labour Congress in Winnipeg adopted a resolution which instructed the executive to examine the possibility of forming a new political party encompassing three groups — the CCF, the trade unions, and others, including farmers, academics and professionals.

The 1960 CLC convention passed a resolution to support the already established National Committee for the New Party on which the CLC, as well as the CCF and others, was represented.

Early in 1961 the CLC launched a financial campaign to raise funds for the founding convention of the new party.¹

The Ontario Federation of Labour was particularly active in the work of

starting the new party. After the 1958 Congress convention, its Political Action Committee (it was the only provincial labour federation in Canada with a full-time political action director) directed its efforts toward building support for the party among the membership of its affiliates. It initiated a series of 20 or more political education conferences and staff conferences. It conducted a Statement of Support (SOS) campaign and obtained endorsement of the Statement from 370 locals with approximately 177,000 members. This constituted more than one-quarter of the locals and more than half the membership affiliated with the OFL.

When the New Democratic Party was launched, these locals were already committed to affiliation so that the party in Ontario had a ready-made trade union base.

In addition, an Ontario Committee for the New Party was formed to prepare for a founding convention of the party in Ontario.

The CLC financial drive raised about \$190,000 before the founding convention held in July 1961 in Ottawa — enough to cover a substantial portion of the costs.

Of 1659 voting delegates at the convention, 631 were trade unionists, 411 of them from Ontario.

Turbulent Years

After starting slowly the Canadian economy surged in the middle 60s to new records of growth, production and per capita income. Price rises accelerated to the point where government measures to curb inflation resulted in high levels of unemployment in the latter years of the decade.

A continuous explosion of labour disputes made the 60s among the most turbulent in labour history. Wage increases to catch up with living costs

were the main issue, but job security in an era of automation was a rising demand.

There were walkouts of employees who had previously been docile — teachers, workers in hospitals, hotel and department stores — particularly in Quebec where public servants had just been given the right to strike.

There was a rash of “wildcat” strikes, symbolic of rank-and-file unrest and perhaps also a wish to prove that they were not simply manipulated by “union bosses”.

Workers resented what they thought was an attempt to make them the scapegoat for inflation and resisted the plea for voluntary wage restraints made by an Incomes and Prices Commission. The unions asked in vain for a full-scale public investigation into the relation between wages, prices and profits.

Here are some of the more significant strikes which occurred during the decade.

Residential Construction

In 1960-61 strikes in residential construction in Ontario led to the appointment of Carl Goldenberg, Q.C., of Montreal as a one-man Royal Commission to inquire into labour-management relations in the construction industry.

Thousands of immigrants who had settled in the province during the 1950s, especially in the Toronto area, were engaged in residential building. Many of the contractors and sub-contractors also were fairly recent arrivals. Attempts to organize the workers were frustrated by language and other problems and were not facilitated by inter-union conflict.

The Royal Commission found that the 10-hour day and the six or seven-day week was common among the unskilled and semi-skilled workers, that they



Fred Dowling

Fred Dowling was born and raised in Toronto where, as a young man, he excelled in semi-pro baseball. After a stint with the Canadian National Railways in 1935, he went to Chicago where, in a job with the giant Armour Co., he made his first contact with the meat packing industry.

*Back in Toronto, his social conscience aroused by his experiences in those depression years, he became active in the CCF Youth Movement and labour editor of the CCF newspaper, *The New Commonwealth*. His organizing abilities became evident when, with the coming of the CIO to Canada, he helped in the organization of the GM plant in Oshawa and in the early campaigns of the Rubber Workers. In 1939 CIO Canadian Director Millard hired him as a staff representative and in 1941 he was assigned to the Packinghouse Workers Organizing Committee.*

In 1943 he attended the founding convention of the United Packinghouse Workers of America in Chicago where he was elected to the International Executive Board and as Canadian Director, a position to which he was unanimously re-elected until his retirement. At the convention of 1946, he became vice-president.

Under Dowling's leadership the UPWA became the dominant union in the entire Canadian food industry, including flour and cereal branches and the related shoe and leather industry. The Canadian district had almost complete autonomy within the international union.

Dowling has never been a "business unionist" but strongly believes that the role of the labour movement encompasses social and economic causes, concern for peace and world understanding.

A member of the Canadian Congress of

Labour's executive board from 1948, he was a CCL delegate to the founding convention of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions in 1949 and at the establishment of ICFTU's American regional body, ORIT, in Mexico City. For fifteen years he was a member of ORIT's executive. He was the first North American to sit on the management committee of the International Union of Federations of Workers in the Food and Drink Trades, a secretariat with headquarters in Geneva.

His personal political commitment to democratic socialism has never wavered and he has been a strong advocate of labour political action. When the New Democratic Party was founded in 1961 he was elected its first labour vice-president, a position he filled until he declined re-nomination in 1967.

*The UPWA merged with the Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen in 1968 and Dowling remained Director of the Canadian section which adopted the name, *Canadian Food and Allied Workers*. He retired in 1972.*

were greatly exploited and shortchanged in respect of legal benefits and that laws were evaded by employer-employee collusion. The industry itself was disorganized and chaotic, beset by violence and other illegal acts.

A strike of about 6,000 workers associated with what became known as the "Brandon Hall Union Group" was punctuated by frequent clashes between union and non-union workers. It ended with agreement to accept the recommendations of an arbitration board.

The Hotel and Restaurant Employees and Bartenders Union called a strike at the CPR's Royal York Hotel in Toronto in May 1961. The 1,350 employees, many of them low-paid immigrant women, endured almost a year of strike which ended with a mediated settlement.

Brandon Packers Strike

A strike at Brandon Packers Ltd. in Manitoba lasted from February 29 to

August 30, 1960. It involved only 103 members of the United Packinghouse Workers but the strife resulted in the appointment of a special Royal Commission chaired by Mr. Justice G. E. Trischler.

The Brandon firm was originally a family-run operation with which the union had amicable relations. But it was sold and the new management started out by making changes in wage policy. These involved gearing wages to the local labour market instead of to the packing industry centred in Winnipeg.

After nine months of fruitless bargaining the union went on strike. Mass picketing resulted in a number of untoward incidents provoked, in part at least, by management's declaration that no striker would be re-employed and all strikebreakers would be given permanent jobs.

A settlement was reached by direct negotiations between the company and UPWA Canadian director Fred Dowling. It provided larger wage increases than the company had originally offered and reinstatement of the strikers with full seniority.

The company manager was fired for refusal to implement the terms of the agreement. At the inquiry he produced copies of company documents which disclosed a number of fraudulent acts by the owners. They included submission of "false and misleading information" to the union in negotiations about the company's financial affairs.

*"Despite the exposé of such misdemeanours by the company, which clearly helped provoke the long and bitter conflict, the Report of the Inquiry Commission branded the strike as a 'conspiracy' on the union's part."*²

Loggers' Strike

The lamentable ending to a loggers' strike in northern Ontario is com-

memorated by a cairn at Reesor Siding near Kapuskasing. Local 2995 of the Lumber and Sawmill Workers Union went on strike early in 1963 at the Spruce Falls Power and Paper Company. The union was determined that the Company would pay the same rates at its Long Lac operations as at Kapuskasing. The strikers were confronted by independent loggers — a settlers' 'co-operative' — who defied them and continued cutting wood. In February Professor Bora Laskin, University of Toronto, was named by the Ontario government to mediate the dispute. However, on February 11, a clash at Reesor Siding between strikers and armed settlers resulted in the deaths of three union members and the wounding of 12 others. Twenty settlers were charged with non-capital murder and 400 strikers with rioting.

On February 14, agreement was reached to settle the dispute by arbitration. The union won most of its demands. But at the end of April, when 242 strikers were tried for rioting and unlawful assembly, 138 were found guilty on the latter charge and fined \$200 each. Early in October the settlers were found not guilty of murder; three of them were fined \$100 each for possession of an offensive weapon.

There is a happier sequel to this affair. Most of the settlers became employees of the Spruce Falls Company and members of the Lumber and Sawmill Workers Union.

Post Office Employees' Strike

A strike of over 12,000 mail carriers and postal workers from July 22 to August 9, 1965, opened up the issue of collective bargaining in the federal civil service.

The Canadian Postal Employees' Union and the Federated Association of Letter Carriers had asked for wage increases of \$660 a year, improved working conditions and collective bar-

gaining rights. Their members were in low-wage brackets. Postal clerks were paid from \$2,190 to a maximum of \$4,680 a year.

The government offered increases ranging from \$300 to \$360. The national executives of both organizations expressed dissatisfaction with the offer.

Strikes began in three major centres, Montreal, Vancouver and Toronto, followed in others. Revenue Minister Edgar Benson labelled them illegal but said no action would be taken against the strikers if they returned to work by July 23.

The strikes continued. Then the government appointed Mr. Justice J. C. Anderson as a special commission of inquiry. By this time almost 10,000 postal workers in about 70 centres were on strike without official union sanction.

The commissioner met with union officers and promised a speedy report. On July 27 the officers urged a return to work. The workers complied in all centres but Montreal. On July 29, Judge Anderson recommended a wage boost of \$360 a year for 9,500 postal workers and promised a further and substantial increase for all 22,000 postal employees in a final report.

The final report of August 4 recommended increases ranging from \$510 to \$550 with \$360 retroactive to October 1, 1964 and the balance effective August 1, 1965.

The employees approved the decision in a referendum vote in which the Montreal group refused to participate. But they accepted the settlement.

Injunctions in Two Strikes

The use of injunctions in industrial disputes was up front and centre in two small but significant strikes in Oshawa and Peterborough — within 50 miles of each other.

On January 27, 1966, the Toronto Newspaper Guild struck the *Oshawa Times*. The printing trades employees refused to cross Guild picket lines, which were enlarged by the Oshawa and District Labour Council, UAW Local 222 and unionists from surrounding areas.

Unable to publish, the *Times* obtained an *ex parte* injunction from Ontario Supreme Court Justice Donnelly on January 31. The injunction limited the number of pickets to ten members of the Guild. But mass picketing continued. On February 4, the *Times* asked for another injunction, enforcement of the previous one and the reading of the Riot Act if the law was ignored.

The Guild in its turn filed 40 charges of unfair labour practices against the newspaper. Premier John Robarts and Labour Minister Rowntree now intervened. On February 10, a settlement was reached which gave the union a \$15 a week wage increase in a three-year contract, some job security in the event of technological change and a modified union shop.

As this strike ended, a strike by the Textile Workers Union of America at the Tilco Plastic plant in Peterborough was in its third month.³

On December 14, 1965, 36 members of the union went on strike for higher wages. They were getting 90 cents to \$1.17 an hour. The strike was decided on only after the company had reneged on the retroactive pay clause in an agreement already reached.

On December 17 the company obtained an *ex parte* injunction banning picketing. Three days later the union was faced with another injunction ordering a complete ban or, as an alternative, a limitation to 12 pickets. Reluctantly the union accepted the limitation.

During the few days when picketing was banned, the company hired strike-

breakers. Also, employer Harold Pammett was charged with provocative acts against the strikers and was bound over to keep the peace for one year. However, he refused to re-open negotiations.

On February 23, the injunction was challenged when 200 trade unionists, including Labour Council officers, demonstrated in front of the plant. The demonstration was peaceful, but on February 25, Attorney General Wishart charged 27 demonstrators with contempt of court.

Two of the 27 were TWUA staff members, Charles Clark and Victor Skurjat. The defendants were found guilty after an eight-day trial before Chief Justice Gale. Five were sentenced to two months in jail and the rest to 15 days. Appeals failed.

The Ontario Federation of Labour underwrote the costs of the trial and of the defendants. When the provincial government later named Mr. Justice Ivan Rand a one-man tribunal to investigate issues in industrial disputes including court injunctions, the OFL published this statement:

“What started the Rand Inquiry?”

“On June 27th, 1966, trade union members were sentenced to jail by Chief Justice Gale for taking part in a sympathetic picket in support of TILCO strikers in Peterborough.

“The judge condemned them for violating a court injunction limiting picketing at the plant, even though it was admittedly a peaceful demonstration by over 200 citizens.

“The OFL and its affiliated unions representing half a million members strongly protested this injustice and urged the government of Ontario to amend the legislation to allow peaceful demonstrations and to eliminate the misuse of injunctions in labour disputes.

“So what happened?”

“The Ontario government appointed Justice Ivan C. Rand as a one-man Royal Commission, not just to investigate the misuse of injunctions, but to roam over a wide range of issues. . .

“He wrote as though union members spend their time on strike — instead of attending to their jobs, doing their share to keep the wheels of the economy running smoothly — AND TO HAVE INCOME DISTRIBUTED FAIRLY.

“THE FACT IS — STRIKES ARE THE EXCEPTION, NOT THE RULE.”

The Rand Report, when it was made public in August 1968, was labelled by OFL President David B. Archer “an authoritarian document. It is completely unworkable. Free men and women would quit rather than submit to unreasonable restraints on their rights.”

The main recommendation of the report, according to the OFL, was “the establishment of an all-powerful high-priced Tribunal of legal beagles who would have total control of union actions beyond the conciliation stage of negotiations. One thing we don’t need in labour relations is another expensive court. That’s what the Tribunal would be.”

The report met with favour from neither management nor labour. It did propose the prohibition of *ex parte* injunctions but balanced this with a recommendation that unions be made legal entities which could sue or be sued.

The Ontario Federation of Labour, supported financially by its affiliates, embarked on a \$100,000 campaign which for the first time put labour’s case before the public through the use of television, radio and newspapers as well as public meetings and printed matter.

Few of the 56 recommendations of

the Rand Report were implemented. In 1970, five years after the Tilco strike, use of the *ex parte* injunction was restricted.

The jail terms inflicted on 27 men, all of whom were solid citizens active in the Peterborough community, left a permanent scar on the memories of all who were involved in the strike. Most of the strikers were women. Their conduct on the picket line was exemplary. They deserved and received the support of the Labour Council (three of whose leaders went to jail) and of organized labour generally.

Two "Wildcats"

Wildcat strikes are of two kinds. One, which occurs during the life of an agreement, is usually spontaneous but always illegal. It may be provoked by feelings of frustration, when, for example, there is an accumulation of unsettled grievances or when suspicions are aroused about company motives in prolonging the bargaining process. The other, a legal wildcat, occurs against the advice of union officials during a legal strike period. This type was described by Mr. Justice Freedman in his report on railway run-throughs as "fundamentally an act of protest . . . against the company partly and against the union. . . It derived in large measure from a sense of insecurity in the face of a changing technological world. . ."

Two large wildcat strikes occurred within two months in 1966 and involved locals of the same union, the United Steelworkers.

The first took place at the International Nickel Company in Sudbury between July 14 and August 8. It was a reflection of the bitter feelings which remained among INCO workers after an unsuccessful 119-day strike in 1958.

Over 15,000 workers walked out without authorization from the Steel-

workers' Union which was in process of negotiations with the company. The talks had not been very productive. The company was not prepared to pay a wage increase considered adequate by the union nor to agree to a job evaluation system, the Co-operative Wage Study, widely used both in the United States and Canada.

Four days after the walkout started, 300 provincial police were stationed in Sudbury. Inco applied to the Ontario Labour Relations Board for permission to prosecute a group of strikers for striking illegally. The Board adjourned a hearing on the application indefinitely.

On August 6, the employees voted to return to work and negotiations resumed. Company offers of first 47 cents an hour, then 63½ cents, plus fringe benefits, were rejected by the union committee. On September 15, the members of Local 6500 voted over 91 per cent in favour of strike action in support of their demands.

Now a legal strike was called at Inco operations in both Sudbury and Port Colborne. Three days later the membership voted by over 57 per cent to accept a package totalling 86 cents in wage increases and fringe benefits in a three-year contract.

With these gains the Inco employees were said to be the highest paid in the Steelworkers' Union.

The second "wildcat" started at the basic plant of the Steel Company of Canada in Hamilton just a few days before the Sudbury wildcat ended. About 12,500 employees were involved between August 4 and August 31.

Here, too, the Steelworkers' Union was engaged in lengthy negotiations for substantial wage increases and improvements in fringe benefits. The main issue was parity earnings with workers in comparable operations in the United States. The union produced impressive

data to show that productivity in Canadian steel companies was higher than in similar plants in the United States but wage rates were considerably lower.

The union wanted an increase of \$1.20 an hour. Stelco offered 60 cents over three years.

Union officials attempted to end the work stoppage which, according to newspaper accounts, was showing definite signs of turbulence. The walk-out ended after four days. The company fired 33 men and suspended 16 others for their part in the stoppage.

On August 18, the union's negotiating team put before the membership a proposal which, it was said, would make them the highest-paid steelworkers in the world. The company had also agreed to refrain from civil action against the union for the wildcat and to reconsider the disciplinary action against the men who had been fired or suspended.

The membership rejected this offer. But on August 30, an offer three cents higher than the one rejected was ratified. The gain was estimated as 70 cents an hour.

More Disputes in '66

An illegal strike of longshoremen on the Montreal waterfront went on for 39 days during May and June. It defied the efforts of a conciliator and a mediator because of the obduracy of the Shipping Federation as well as the union.

The strike was finally settled by the unprecedented intervention of the Prime Minister and five members of the cabinet. The longshoremen went back to work with wage increases of almost a dollar an hour in a two-year agreement.

In June St. Lawrence Seaway workers organized by the Canadian Brother-

hood of Railway, Transport and General Workers voted to strike for wage increases commensurate with those won by the longshoremen. A federal conciliation board recommended 30 per cent over two years plus substantial fringe benefits. This proposal was accepted.

The second nationwide railway strike in Canada's history took place in late August and early September.

First, the CBRT & GW, representing 22,000 employees on the CNR, voted to strike for wage demands. A month later, in July, four railway union groups were discussing strike action after intensive conciliation and mediation efforts had failed.

Unauthorized walkouts started in Montreal and Toronto in protest against the delay in reaching contract settlements. Leaders of the 17 non-op rail unions (the non-running trades) urged the strikers to return to work pending the setting of an official strike deadline.

The nationwide strike began August 26. The government was prepared with legislation to end it, as it did in 1950. But this time it took four days for the bill to pass through Parliament. The bill, introduced three days after the strike started, ordered an immediate return to work and provided a two-stage wage increase of 8 per cent with further increases to be negotiated or, if necessary, arbitrated.

The rail union officials denounced the terms and informed the government that it would take at least 18 per cent to achieve a settlement.

On September 1, the government revised the bill to guarantee a minimum wage increase of 18 per cent in four stages during 1966 and 1967.

Even on these terms the rail workers returned to work reluctantly. It was not until September 7 that rail service was completely restored.

The SIU and the Norris Report

The campaign of the Seafarers' International Union led by Hal Banks to extend its control over all Canadian seamen, a campaign employing violence and intimidation, led to its expulsion in 1960 from the Canadian Labour Congress for raiding other maritime union affiliates. The next year the CLC set up the Canadian Maritime Union to replace the SIU.

When in 1962 Upper Lakes Shipping Company recognized the CMU, a brutal struggle began. The AFL-CIO Maritime Trades Department co-operated with the SIU in a boycott of the CMU in U.S. ports which was enforced with gunfire and beatings. Appeals for government action to restore order met no response until the CBRT members on the canals refused to handle ships manned by the SIU and so tied up inland shipping. The government then appointed Mr. Justice T. G. Norris to investigate the situation and make recommendations.

The Norris Report was tabled in the House of Commons in July 1963. The commissioner attacked Banks as "a bully, cruel, dishonest, greedy, power-hungry, contemptuous of law". He recommended the removal of Banks and his colleagues from office to eliminate the corruption and dictatorial administration of the SIU.

He proposed a trusteeship to take control of the union until remedial measures were carried out and, in October, Parliament enacted a trusteeship bill. The trustees were given extensive powers and penalties were imposed for interference with their work. Named to the first Board of Trustees were Mr. Justice V. L. Dryer, chairman, Judge R. Lippé and Charles H. Millard. The AFL-CIO Maritime Trades Department opposed the trusteeship and continued its boycott.

In the early months of 1964 the

public, press and other unions were criticizing the trustees for their failure to remove the SIU leadership from office. But in their first report, in March, the trustees made it clear that they intended to allow the SIU membership to decide who should run their union. They did, however, remove Hal Banks from the presidency and named C. H. Millard and Charles Turner, an employee of the board, to fill the administrative vacancy.

Even the suggestion that one of the former SIU officers might prove a suitable alternative to Banks was met with renewed outcry for a complete clean-up. But Millard was convinced that Leonard McLaughlin, the secretary-treasurer, was "a changed man" who had "proved himself as a reliable and able servant of the union".

The trustees arranged for an election of officers which took place in November. The McLaughlin slate was declared elected for a four-year term, subject to continued supervision by the trustees.

The trustees then initiated collective bargaining on an industry-wide basis between the union and the shipping companies. By the end of August 1965 agreement was reached on three-year contracts.

Following the criticism they had endured, the trustees appeared before a House of Commons committee empowered to hear their report. The closed-door session closed the door on one of the most notorious episodes in Canadian labour history, though with one piece of unfinished business affecting its leading actor.

In May Hal Banks had been found guilty in court of perjury and conspiracy to commit assault. He was sentenced to a five-year term in penitentiary. Freed on bail pending an appeal, Banks fled the country, returning to the United States.

On February 16, 1968, the executive council of the Canadian Labour Con-

gress voted to re-admit the Seafarers' International Union.

UAW Parity

For 1968 the United Automobile Workers set as an objective wage parity — the payment by the auto industry of the same wages in Canada as in the United States.

The union struck the Chrysler Co. for one week at the end of January. On February 1, a settlement was reached which closed the wage gap in four stages during a two-year contract. The union then struck General Motors on February 9, and on March 27 reached agreement on terms similar to those won at Chrysler.

The drive to achieve the pattern settlement at Ford of Canada was pushed by a "wildcat" strike in April after a strike deadline had been extended. An official strike which started April 16 ended six days later with the signing of the pattern settlement. The UAW reached agreement with American Motors in June.

The UAW also struck Massey Ferguson in April to obtain wage parity. The company argued that parity would destroy its competitive position in the U.S. market and force it to close its Canadian operations. The settlement reached June 29 was short of parity but the company agreed not to move its operations out of Canada during the life of the agreement.

Record Work Stoppages

The last year of a stormy decade broke the record for industrial conflict up until that time. In 1969 almost eight million man-days were lost in work stoppages. The main issue in most of them was money as workers tried to make up for diminished purchasing power and to cover anticipated price rises.

Two of the strikes were in the public sector. The 9,700 members of the Ontario Hydro Employees Union (Local 1000, CUPE) staged a five-week "rotating" strike in February-March which won them most of their demands. Members of the International Association of Machinists grounded Air Canada's planes on April 20 and returned to work only after federal mediation on May 19 with a 16 per cent wage increase.

Most militant of all were the United Steelworkers who had some 40 of their locals "on the bricks" during the year. The basic steel companies of Algoma and Stelco, together with their fabricating plants, were shut for 80 days and International Nickel's operations at Sudbury and Port Colborne for 128 days. The iron ore mines and Gaspé Copper in Quebec were shut down and a number of smaller firms were closed for periods of from one to four months.

Why were there so many strikes, large and small, legal and illegal, during the 1960s? Various studies have been made but this brief extract from a longer analysis indicates the basic reasons:

"Rising money earnings tend to be cancelled out by price increases during periods of economic expansion and inflation, so that workers and union members have a strong incentive to seek, and if necessary to strike for, unusually large wage gains to keep ahead of the rising cost of living. Highly publicized profits of leading corporations; spectacular 'killings' on the real estate and stock markets; conspicuous expenditures by the nouveaux riches; the general awareness of rising earnings and living standards of neighbours and colleagues in various occupations — all of these generate escalating demands among wage earners and union members, and by them on their union leaders and bargaining representatives, for new wage

increases or equivalent dollar benefits. . .

“Conflict emanating from such developments tends to be sharpened when government officials at or near the peak of a boom begin to be concerned about the dangers of runaway inflation, and take steps to counteract them by such measures as credit restrictions and ‘tight money’, tax increases and cutbacks in government expenditures. A ‘now or never’ psychology tends to develop, particularly in union ranks, while caution and willingness to resist further union demands are stiffened among employers.”⁵

It should also be noted that working people are more knowledgeable about what is going on in the world around them than they used to be. They are better educated, better organized and better able to see where their interest lies. Their means of communication are better and faster. Their working conditions have improved in some ways but worsened in others. The speed-up on an already fast-moving production line is a great educator and breeder of “working class solidarity”.

More Noteworthy Happenings

The labour movement was not exclusively concerned with strikes during the 60s.

In 1963 the Labour College of Canada, which had been in the planning stage for several years, opened in Montreal. It was jointly sponsored by the CLC, the CNTU, the University of Montreal and McGill University. A tough seven-week (later eight-week) course in economics, political science, history, sociology and labour studies was offered to trade unionists in both French and English. Later a 12-week correspondence course was added.

Ontario’s first comprehensive community-controlled health clinic began to

function in Sault Ste. Marie in the same year. The project was initiated and largely funded by Local 2251 of the United Steelworkers. Its new building won an architectural award.

Another major event of 1963 was the merger of two public service unions — the National Union of Public Service Employees and the National Union of Public Employees — as the Canadian Union of Public Employees. The new union started off with 86,000 members.

The Canadian Labour Congress convention in Winnipeg, April 1966, approved a proposal for a seven-man commission to study all aspects of its role and administration. Secretary-treasurer Donald MacDonald was named chairman.

The Commission reported to the CLC convention of 1968. The report said that international unionism was “unique, but it is effective. Canadians are able to meet the demands of international union solidarity and Canadian autonomy without becoming schizophrenic”. It recommended an increase in the number of vice-presidents from 13 to 20, 10 elected at large at the biennial conventions and 10 representing the provincial federations of labour. It urged more emphasis on public relations, research and education. It outlined a code of ethical practices to govern the internal procedures of affiliated unions. It proposed that the Congress be given more authority to settle jurisdictional disputes. It recognized the desirability of fewer and larger unions but did not spell out how this could be brought about.

The Woods Report

The labour movement was being examined at the same time from another angle. It was increasingly drawing public and media attention and criticism because of the high incidence of strikes. In September 1966 the federal government appointed a Task



Claude Jodoin

Claude Jodoin, first president of the Canadian Labour Congress, was born in Westmount, Quebec, in 1913. The depression of the 30s ended his schooling and forced him to go to work. In 1937 he became an organizer for the International Ladies' Garment Workers and in 1947 he became manager of its Montreal Joint Board.

During World War II he was a captain in the Mount Royal Fusiliers Reserve.

Throughout the 40s he was an officer of the Montreal Trades and Labour Council and president from 1947 to 1954. In this period he was also a Montreal City Councillor and represented Montreal-St. James in the Quebec Legislature from 1942 to 1944.

In the 50s Jodoin became a national labour leader. After serving as vice-president of the Trades and Labour Congress for five years he was elected president in 1954. In this position he had a major role in the merger negotiations which led to the formation of the Canadian Labour Congress and at the CLC's founding convention in 1956 he was unanimously elected president.

He was re-elected at the next five conventions. But his career was tragically cut short when, in May 1967, he suffered a stroke which completely incapacitated him.

One of Claude Jodoin's special interests was the international labour scene. He was a member of the Executive Board of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions for many years and, from 1951 to 1960, of the Governing Body of the International Labour Organization.

In 1967 he received the award of the Order of Canada and also a Centennial Medal. Just a few days before he became ill, he was given the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws by

the University of New Brunswick. The citation read, in part:

"His boyhood ambition was to be a surgeon. But the crash of '29 and the depression forced him to trade the scalpel for the pick and shovel. . . . In the sweat shops of Montreal he saw the need for surgery of a social kind, when cutters were driven to sleeping on their tables and a pair of workers might share a weekly wage of \$7.50. In 1937 he joined Montreal Local 262 of the ILGWU, organized a triumphant strike, and negotiated their first contract."

When in November, 1972, the CLC inaugurated a Labour Hall of Fame, Claude Jodoin was one of the first two members to be named to it.

Force headed by Dean H. W. Woods of McGill University to investigate the handling of labour disputes and the adequacy of labour legislation.

The Woods Report was tabled in the House of Commons in March 1969. The CLC described its recommendations as "a mixed bag". Labour was pleased that the right to strike was upheld as an essential part of the collective bargaining process but had reservations about the proposal for a three-man commission which would intervene if a stoppage seemed likely to damage that vague concept, "the public interest". It criticized, too, the recommendation of a new Canada Labour Relations Board composed entirely of lay members to replace the current board which was representative of labour and management.

The government took no immediate action on the report but it had some influence on the legislation introduced in 1971 and 1972.

The Freedman Report

Another inquiry dealt with an issue which was becoming a major concern

of the labour movement — the impact of technological change. In November 1964 Mr. Justice Samuel Freedman of the Manitoba Court of Appeal was appointed a commissioner to investigate a dispute between the Canadian National Railways and the running trades unions. The CN had announced that it would run trains through two towns where crews had formerly been changed. Sensing a threat to their jobs and their communities, some 2,800 railway trainmen, conductors, firemen and engineers booked off sick, seriously affecting railway operations.

In his report Mr. Justice Freedman declared that a unilateral change in working conditions by management during the term of a contract was a manifest inequity. He recommended that the company give the railroad Brotherhoods 30 days' notice of a proposed run-through and negotiate with them on it. Either party should then have the right to refer the proposal to

a single arbitrator. If the arbitrator found that the run-through would cause a material change in working conditions, it would be postponed until the next regular contract negotiations. Otherwise it could be put into effect without delay.

The Freedman Report also recommended financial compensation for employees required to move their homes, severance pay for those who lost their jobs and government assistance to disrupted communities.

The railway Brotherhoods and labour generally were well pleased with the report. Over the next five or six years they continued to press the government to incorporate in legislation the principle that management and unions should become equal partners in the examination and introduction of technological changes. The pressure bore fruit in amendments to the Canada Labour Code in 1972.

Union Organization and Structure

During the early years of the 1960s, the organization of employees into unions lost some of its momentum. At the beginning of 1960, labour organizations active in Canada had a membership of 1,459,000 or 32% of non-agricultural paid workers. By 1964 membership had slipped to 29.4%, the lowest in the decade.

But by 1968 a sharp recovery increased membership over the two million mark for the first time and 32.5% of non-agricultural paid workers were in unions. By early 1972, membership reached 2,370,000 or 34.4%, the highest percentage in many years.

Noteworthy events not previously mentioned in this account included the following:

1961-2

The United Packinghouse Workers of America changed its name to the United Packinghouse, Food and Allied Workers to indicate the extension of its jurisdiction outside the meat packing industry.

Twenty directly chartered locals of the Canadian Labour Congress with a total of 3,500 members were transferred to the Packinghouse Workers, the Steelworkers and other CLC affiliates, bringing the total transfers to 175 since the merger convention in 1956.

The membership of the Confederation of National Trade Unions went over the 100,000 mark for the first time.

1963

The ten largest unions, with a membership of almost half a million,

accounted for more than one out of three workers in union ranks. There were 161 international and national unions listed by the Canada Department of Labour. Union membership was about 30% of the non-agricultural work force.

1964

At the beginning of 1964, union membership amounted to 29.4% of the non-agricultural paid work force. About 75% of all members were in unions affiliated with the Canadian Labour Congress, 8% with the CNTU and 18% in unions not affiliated with either.

The Steelworkers had the largest increase in membership, 12,000, while Mine-Mill had the biggest drop, from 25,000 to 20,000.

Three new entries were listed by Labour Canada: District 50, United Mine Workers of America, the Pulp and Paper Workers (Ind.) and the Canadian Union of Public Employees, the result of a merger of the National Union of Public Employees and the National Union of Public Service Employees. CUPE's combined membership of 86,000 made it the second largest union in Canada.

The Lithographers and Photo Engravers International Union resulted from a merger of the Amalgamated Lithographers of America and the International Photo Engravers Union of North America.

1965

At the beginning of 1965, union membership totalled 1,589,000, the

largest on record to that time but only 29.7% of the 5,432,000 non-agricultural workers.

The biggest gain was shown by the UAW with 14,000 new members, followed by the Steelworkers with 8,000 and the Carpenters with 6,900.

Affiliates of international unions in Canada had a membership of 1,124,700 or 71% of total union membership.

The ten largest unions held 36% of Canada's union membership — the Steelworkers, CUPE, UAW, Carpenters, IWA (Woodworkers), Teamsters, IAM (Machinists), IBEW (Electrical Workers), IBPS & PMW (Pulp, Sulphite and Paper Mill Workers), and CBRT & GW (Canadian Brotherhood of Railway, Transport and General Workers).

1966

Union membership at the beginning of the year reached 1,736,000 or 30.7% of all non-agricultural paid workers.

In Quebec the CNTU gained two new affiliates, the Quebec Government Employees Union and the Federation of Quebec Engineers.

In Ontario 4,000 employees of the Loblaw's grocery chain affiliated with the CLC under the name of the Union of Canadian Retail Employees.

In Manitoba the Canadian Association of Industrial, Mechanical and Allied Workers (Ind.) reported three locals with 800 members.

A new Canadian Marine Officers Union affiliated with the AFL-CIO reported three locals with 850 members.

Six federal civil service staff organizations affiliated with the CLC.

The Association of Canadian Television and Radio Artists (ACTRA), with ten branches and 3,200 members, affiliated with the CLC.

The UAW reported an increase of 19,300 members, the Steelworkers 10,000 and the Teamsters 9,800.

1967

Union membership in Canada totalled 1,921,000 or 32.3% of non-agricultural paid workers.

The CLC gained a major affiliate when the Public Service Alliance of Canada with 93,000 members joined its ranks on January 1st. PSAC resulted from a merger of the Civil Service Association of Canada and the Civil Service Federation of Canada.

The International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers merged with the United Steelworkers of America. A referendum of Mine-Mill members on August 3rd showed a better than two to one majority in favour of the merger. However, the Mine-Mill unit at Falconbridge Nickel Mines, Sudbury, Ont., refused to join the Steelworkers and became an independent union.

The Canadian Union of Public Employees showed a gain of 16,300 members, the Steelworkers 10,000 (apart from the Mine-Mill members). There were increases in the building trades unions — IBEW 6,900, Plumbers 6,000, Carpenters 5,600 and Operating Engineers 4,200.

In the five years to January 1967, Canadian union membership rose by half a million.

1968

At the beginning of 1968 union membership was over two million for the first time. The 2,010,000 members represented 33.1% of the non-agricultural paid workers, the highest percentage since 1959.

Membership in the CNTU went over the 200,000 mark for the first time. Its 201,300 members in 12 affiliates constituted 9.6% of Canadian union membership.

The UAW regained second place in

numerical strength with 127,000 members. The Steelworkers were first with 145,000, CUPE third with 116,000 and PSAC fourth with 97,800.

In July the United Packinghouse, Food and Allied Workers merged with the Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen of North America. The combined membership in Canada was 40,000. The Canadian section is known as the Canadian Food and Allied Workers.

The Seafarers' International Union of Canada re-affiliated with the CLC, taking with it its affiliate, the Canadian Marine Officers' Union.

The Canadian Airline Employees' Association also affiliated with the CLC.

For the purpose of negotiating a first agreement under the Public Service Staff Relations Act, two postal unions formed the Council of Postal Unions. They are the Canadian Union of Postal Workers and the Letter Carriers' Union of Canada.

The UAW disaffiliated from the AFL-CIO but retained its affiliation with the CLC in Canada.

1969

By early 1969 union membership in Canada reached 2,075,000 or 32.5% of non-agricultural paid workers.

In January, four operating railway unions united under the name of the United Transportation Union. The four were the Brotherhood of Railway Trainmen, the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and Enginemen, the Switchmen's Union (all three AFL-CIO-CLC) and the Order of Railway Conductors and Brakemen (Ind.)

The Building Service Employees' International Union changed its name to the Service Employees' International Union.

CUPE recovered second place among the ten largest unions in Canada.

1970

Union membership continued to grow. At the beginning of 1970 the total was 2,173,000 or 33.6% of the non-agricultural work force.

Nineteen unions with 30,000 or more members accounted for 53% of all Canadian membership.

New organizations included in the Labour Canada directory included the Civil Service Association of Ontario, the Civil Service Association of Alberta, the Manitoba Government Employees' Association, the Nova Scotia Civil Service Association, the Northwest Territories Government Employees' Association, the Canadian Postmasters' Association and the Quebec Teachers' Federation (Fédération nationale des enseignants québécois).

The Canadian Maritime Union joined the Canadian Brotherhood of Railway, Transport and General Workers.

District 50 of the United Mine Workers signalled its separation from the UMW by changing its name to the International Union of District 50, Allied and Technical Workers of the United States and Canada (Ind.).

The Brotherhood of Painters, Decorators and Paperhangers of America (AFL-CIO-CLC) changed its name to International Brotherhood of Painters and Allied Trades.

The British Columbia Government Employees' Association changed the last word in its title to "Union".

The two Canadian districts of the United Mine Workers of America (Ind.) in western Canada and the Maritimes affiliated with the CLC. The Mine Workers had been an affiliate of the Canadian Congress of Labour.

1971

Union membership at the beginning of the year was 2,210,554 or 33.3% of non-agricultural paid workers.

About 75% of the membership was in unions with CLC affiliation, 9.6% with CNTU affiliation and 15.6% in various unaffiliated international and national unions and independent local organizations.

Twenty unions reported membership of 30,000 or more; of these, nine had 50,000 or more and constituted 37% of total union membership.

The Association of Radio and Television Employees of Canada (CLC), known as ARTEC, merged its 2,000 members with the Canadian Union of Public Employees.

The Stonecutters, an old AFL-CIO-CLC union with only 300 members in Canada, joined the Steelworkers.

The American Newspaper Guild (AFL-CIO-CLC) deleted the word "American" from its name to reflect its international composition.

1972-3

The total union membership in Canada at the beginning of 1972 was 2,370,641.

In 1921, union membership was just 313,000 or 3.6 per cent of the Canadian population. In 1972, membership of unions comprised about 10 per cent of the population.

In 1921, 16 per cent of the non-agricultural work force was organized in unions. At the beginning of 1972, the percentage had risen to 34.4.

Membership was organized in 99 international unions, 84 of which were affiliated with both the AFL-CIO and the CLC; 68 national unions, of which 19 were affiliated with the CLC, 12 with the CNTU in Quebec, four with the Canadian Council of Unions, and 33 were unaffiliated; 129 directly chartered local unions, 128 of them chartered by the CLC; and 141 independent local unions.

International unions with head-

quarters in the United States accounted for about 60 per cent of the total Canadian membership. Membership in international unions as a percentage of the total has shown a gradual decline from 77 per cent in the early 20s.

One of the main factors in this percentage decline is the extension of organization among public servants who belong to national unions.

The Canadian Labour Congress was Canada's dominant central labour body with an affiliated membership of 1,725,000 in 7,600 local unions, or 72.8 per cent of total union membership.

The Confederation of National Trade Unions, based in Quebec, had 218,621 members or 9.2 per cent of total union membership.

Only about 0.5 per cent of the total belonged to the CCU.

Organizations outside these central bodies had 17.5 per cent of the total.

In 1972 the Lithographers and Photo Engravers International Union changed its name to the Graphic Arts International Union.

District 50, Allied and Technical Workers, merged with the United Steelworkers.

In August 1972 the International Brotherhood of Pulp, Sulphite and Paper Mill Workers and the United Papermakers and Paperworkers (both AFL-CIO-CLC) approved merger in a new union named the United Paperworkers International Union. The UPIU has more than 50,000 members in Canada.

In 1973 the International Printing Pressmen's and Assistants' Union (AFL-CIO-CLC) changed its name to International Printing and Graphic Communications Union.

The Association of Commercial and Technical Employees (ACTE) was set up by the Canadian Labour Congress



Donald MacDonald

International Confederation of Free Trade Unions. At the ICFTU World Congress in London in 1972 he was elected president, the first non-European to be so honoured.

In 1959 he received an honorary Doctor of Laws degree from St. Francis Xavier University and serves on the Board of Governors of that university. In 1972 he became an Officer of the Order of Canada.

Donald MacDonald is a Maritimer by birth and by conviction. He grew up in Sydney, Cape Breton, Nova Scotia, and supplemented his schooling with extension courses at St. Francis Xavier University.

He became an active trade unionist at 17 and at 21 was president of Local 4560, United Mine Workers of America. He played a prominent role in the UMW until he was black-listed in 1940.

Maritimes District 26 of the Mine Workers was affiliated to the CCF and MacDonald became a leader in the party. In 1941 he was elected to the Nova Scotia Legislature and was party leader there until 1945. He also served on the provincial and national CCF councils.

The co-operative movement has been another of MacDonald's lifelong interests. He himself helped to organize housing and consumer co-ops and credit unions and was for a time manager of a consumer co-operative. He has been instrumental in bringing about closer relations between the Canadian Labour Congress and the co-operative movement.

MacDonald joined the staff of the Canadian Congress of Labour as an organizer in 1942 and three years later was made Regional Director of Organization for the Maritime Provinces. At the CCL convention of November 1951 he was elected secretary-treasurer.

He became secretary-treasurer of the Canadian Labour Congress at its founding convention in 1956 and held that office until 1967 when, following the sudden illness of President Jodoin, he was appointed acting president. At the 1968 convention he was elected president by acclamation and was re-elected in 1970 and 1972. He retired at the 1974 convention.

For the past twenty years MacDonald has been a member of the Executive Board of the

to organize white collar workers in banks and trust, insurance, real estate and similar companies.

The CLC Executive Council approved the affiliation of the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers which had been expelled from the Canadian Congress of Labour 23 years before. The Council also admitted the United Fishermen and Allied Workers as a regional union in British Columbia.

The Canadian Labour Congress

The majority of all international and national unions in Canada are affiliated with the Canadian Labour Congress.

The CLC is an autonomous body which is the effective voice of the working people of Canada. It is by far the largest non-governmental organization in the country.

It is financed by a per capita fee from its affiliated union organizations and holds biennial conventions at which full financial statements of its operations are made public.

The CLC has four full-time officers who are subject to re-election at every convention. These executive officers and six general vice-presidents, who are usually heads of major unions, comprise the Executive Board.

The Executive Council is made up of members of the Board, ten vice-presidents elected at large by the convention and the presidents of the ten provincial federation. This is the governing body of the CLC between conventions.*

The Congress is the paramount policy-making body of the trade union movement in national, international and inter-union affairs.

Its key functional departments are research, legislation, organization, education, public relations, social action, political education and international affairs.

The Congress makes an annual submission to the federal government in which it advocates policies approved at its delegate conventions and by its Executive Council between conventions. It also offers criticism of government policies which it considers detrimental

to the interests not only of the labour movement but of the community at large. The Congress also presents special briefs on urgent issues as they arise.

The CLC has two regular publications: a bi-monthly magazine, *Canadian Labour*, and a semi-monthly newsletter, *Canadian Labour Comment*.

The Congress is represented on a number of bodies which are influential in public and community affairs, including the Economic Council of Canada, the Canadian Council on Social Development, the Consumers' Association of Canada, the Canadian Broadcasting League, the Community Health Foundation, the Standards Council of Canada, The Unemployment Insurance Advisory Committee, the Canadian Red Cross Society, the Canadian Cancer Society, the Canada Safety Council, the Vanier Institute of the Family, and others.

In addition, it provides financial support for about 30 organizations including the National Committee on Human Rights, the Canadian Association of Adult Education, the United Way, the Canadian Institute of International Affairs, the Group Health Association, the Indian-Eskimo Association and the United Nations Association.

Ontario Federation of Labour

The Ontario Federation of Labour is one of ten provincial federations. Its affiliated membership of about 700,000 is larger than the combined memberships of all the other federations.

It is chartered by the Canadian Labour Congress and is the central labour body for all Congress affiliates in Ontario. Fees are 10 cents per member per month.

The OFL holds annual conventions

* The structure of the Executive and Council could be altered by constitutional amendment at the CLC Convention, May 1974, in Vancouver.

but its two executive officers, president and secretary-treasurer, are elected biennially for two-year terms.

The OFL Executive Board is made up of the two officers and 12 vice-presidents also elected for two-year terms.

The Executive Council is composed of the Executive Board plus one delegate from each of the more than 50 labour councils in the province.

This is the governing body which carries out convention decisions on provincial matters, particularly labour legislation, workmen's compensation and other welfare measures, education, human rights, employment standards, safety regulations, health and housing. It is the policy-making body between conventions.

The OFL departments include research, social services, public relations, education, political education and services to labour councils.

The OFL has a bi-monthly publication, *Labour Review* which has been published since the federation came into being in 1957.

The Ontario Federation of Labour is active in or represented on a number of organizations including the Ontario Labour Relations Board, Ontario Economic Council, York University, Ryerson Polytechnical Institute, Toronto Symphony, United Appeal, Ontario Histadrut Trade Union Council, Toronto Arts Foundation, St. Johns Ambulance, Labour Safety Council of Ontario, Canadian Civil Liberties Association, John Howard Society, Ontario Welfare Council, Council of the College of Nurses of Ontario, Ontario Arts Council, Board of Governors — Universities of Toronto, Waterloo and Trent, Community Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology, Canada Safety Council, Central Hospital, Canadian Institute of Public Affairs, Conservation Council of Ontario, Royal Ontario

Museum, Ontario Committee on Employment Standards, Ontario Educational Communications Authority (South Central Region), Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (Labour Advisory Team).

The Labour Councils

Just as the Canadian Labour Congress relates to the federal level of government and the federations to the provincial level, so labour councils deal with matters of local government.

But their responsibilities go beyond that. They are usually the effective agencies at the local level for carrying through the policies of the trade union movement initiated at the two upper levels.

Most labour councils in Ontario — and this is true across Canada — have limited funds and no full-time staff. Their work is carried out by unpaid elected officers and committee chairmen together with volunteers from among their delegates and other union members.

Labour council workers sometimes receive payment for time taken off from their regular jobs and for expenses. These payments are strictly accounted for at council meetings. Most labour councils have rules which limit spending by the elected officers to a nominal sum, say ten dollars. Expenditures above this are subject to authorization by the delegates from the affiliated locals at the regular monthly meeting.

The effectiveness of labour councils varies from area to area. The Labour Council of Metro Toronto has an affiliated membership larger than that of most provincial federations. It celebrated its 100th anniversary in 1971 and has built up an outstanding record of achievement.

The Metro Toronto Council could do this only with good leadership. Con-

sidering that for most of its first century it functioned without paid staff, the contribution of its elected officers is noteworthy. It now has full-time staff members, an executive secretary, a projects director and clerical assistants. and its work and influence has expanded considerably.

Other labour councils have equally

commendable records. But in the smaller industrial centres pioneer work is still being done: local unions there are still few and small.

In a few areas one large local union helps to carry on the work of the labour council in the community with the support of just a few smaller ones.

Labour's Voice in the Community

The central organizations give organized labour in Canada a voice in the affairs and an influence in the direction of the nation.

The primary responsibility of trade union organizations is, of course, to gain the best possible wage and working conditions for the members they represent.

But in the process of making these gains the rest of the work force and the public at large are also beneficiaries.

For the interests of the effective unions in Canada are not limited to collective bargaining with management. They extend to all other spheres which determine the wellbeing of the nation.

The issue of old age pensions is just one example. The record of organized labour on this issue has been spelled out, year after year, in convention resolutions and submissions to government and now in a feature publication of the Ontario Federation of Labour.²

The call for a free, universal education system was first heard from trade union conventions almost a century ago; for workmen's compensation in the early part of this century — with the result that Ontario was probably the first government on this continent to institute a rational workmen's compensation system, in 1915.

The influence of labour spokesmen in obtaining unemployment insurance for Canadians has already been spelled out in chapter 8.

Since the formation of the Canadian Labour Congress the voice of labour has been raised more strongly on many subjects. From 1963 on, the CLC, supported by its federations and labour councils, has campaigned on a specific issue each year: *in 1963* for better labour-management-government relations; *in 1964* for a Canada Pension Plan (which came into effect in 1966); *in 1965* for a Health Charter for Canadians (following the introduction of medical care insurance in Saskatchewan); *in 1966* for Auto Compensation Boards (public, no-fault automobile insurance is now in effect in three western provinces); *in 1967 and 1968* on the issue of better housing for low income families at costs they can afford; *in 1969* for tax reform on the basis of the Carter Report (which the Congress endorsed in principle); *in 1970* for a Social Policy for Canada, to improve and rationalize the social security measures now in effect (and in support of a guaranteed annual income program); *in 1971* for anti-pollution measures and vastly improved conservation and environmental policies; *in 1972* for full employment policies; *in 1973*

for support for senior citizens; and *in 1974* for an adequate pension at age 60.

In 1974, too, the CLC Executive Council voted to launch an educational campaign among union members in support of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The Ontario Federation of Labour itself has initiated a score of projects for educating trade unionists, for communicating with the public and for influencing legislators.

The OFL has conducted an annual educational summer conference every year since 1959. For a number of years farmers and teachers participated in these conferences and exchanged views on subjects of mutual interest. In 1969, for example, the conference subject was "*Solution to Pollution: a Matter of Life and Death*". This June conference was followed in October 1970 by a series of 20 seminars on the subject in cooperation with community colleges and then by a conference in January 1971 on the theme, "*Pollution and Jobs*".

The federation made a major issue of poverty in 1966 and continues its fight for a better distribution of income and of educational and work opportunities.

Both the Congress and the provincial federations conduct summer and winter schools and weekend institutes to which members are sent by their local unions.

Campaigns and conferences on current issues supplement the submissions to government and other projects undertaken by federations and labour councils.

Labour's objectives, which usually involve policies at all three levels of government, are also pressed by labour's elected representatives in Parliament and legislatures, on government bodies and, most importantly, by the political party of which organized labour is an integral part.

These objectives reflect the majority

opinion of rank-and-file trade unionists whose voice is heard through their delegates to meetings, conferences and conventions of their central labour bodies.

Most important are the rank-and-file opinions expressed at local union meetings and at conferences and conventions of the individual unions.

The Affiliates

The leverage for action by the central bodies comes from the affiliated unions. They provide the membership, the funds and the sinews which give the labour movement its strength.

Trade union development has been a moving panorama — from the early craft unions to the industrial unions and now, coming to the top and centre of the picture, the public service unions — altogether an impressive picture of the growth and change in the working force over a century and a half. Only one major element is missing — the salaried white collar employees in the private sector.

In the first decades of union organization the craft unions were dominant — printing trades, railway workers, building trades. The response in Canada to the rise of the CIO brought the steel, auto, rubber, chemical, glass, plastic, food, textile and mining unions to the fore.

Today the sharp demarcation which differentiated craft from industrial unions is no longer so clearly defined. The International Union of Machinists, for example, was one of the early craft unions with a history going back to the 1890s. Today its membership includes both craft and industrial workers, on the railways, in the aircraft and machine industries, and even in garages.

In recent years the dominant position of the industrial unions is being challenged by public service unions, in particular the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) and the Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC).

PSAC came into being when the federal government finally granted bargaining rights to federal employees within the confines of public service legislation.

By 1970 these two unions were al-

ready the second and third largest in Canada. The following table shows the changes in the top ten union organizations in the latest 10-year period for which figures were available by April 1974:

**TEN LARGEST UNIONS — 10-YEAR COMPARISON
1963 - 1972**

1963	Membership	1972	Membership
1. United Steelworkers of America (AFL-CIO-CLC)	90,000	1. United Steelworkers of America (AFL-CIO-CLC)	165,055
2. United Automobile, Aerospace and Agricultural Implement Workers (AFL-CIO-CLC)	61,000	2. Canadian Union of Public Employees (CLC)	157,919
3. United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners (AFL-CIO-CLC)	60,200	3. Public Service Alliance of Canada (CLC)	129,652
4. National Union of Public Employees (CLC)	52,900	4. United Automobile, Aerospace and Agricultural Implement Workers (CLC)	102,933
5. International Association of Machinists (AFL-CIO-CLC)	40,400	5. United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners (AFL-CIO-CLC)	74,362
6. International Woodworkers of America (AFL-CIO-CLC)	37,900	6. Quebec Teachers' Corporation (Ind.)	70,000
7. International Bro. of Teamsters (Ind.)	37,300	7. International Bro. of Teamsters (Ind.)	60,560
8. International Bro. of Pulp, Sulphite and Paper Mill Workers (AFL-CIO-CLC)	36,600	8. Service Employees' National Federation (CNTU)	56,603
9. International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (AFL-CIO-CLC)	35,500	9. International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (AFL-CIO-CLC) ..	56,026
10. Canadian Brotherhood of Railway, Transport and General Workers (CLC)	32,200	10. International Woodworkers of America (AFL-CIO-CLC)	53,158

The United Steelworkers of America retained first place in every year, as they had during the previous decade. The major changes were the rise of the public service unions into second and third positions and of two Quebec-based unions, the Quebec Teachers' Corporation and the Service Employees' National Federation (CNTU) into 6th and 8th place.

In 1963 the top ten unions had 35,000 or more members; in 1972 it

took membership of over 50,000 to be included in the top ten.

When official 1973 figures are available from Labour Canada, it is not unlikely that a public service union will have accomplished two notable things: one, become the largest employee organization in Canada, and two, become the first union to take over first place from the Steelworkers in thirty years. In July 1973, CUPE reported a membership of 181,000.

Labour Legislation

Legislation in Canada governing relations between employers and employees originally stemmed from British statutes. The intervention of Sir John A. Macdonald in the printers' dispute of 1872 simply meant the updating of Canadian law to conform with British law. However, it marked the first time that a government concerned itself with workers' rights.

The Wagner Act passed in the United States in 1935 proved a decisive influence on labour legislation in Canada. Today Canadian legislation is similar to — but not the same as — U.S. legislation. For Canadian attitudes toward labour-management relations are indigenous.

“As compared with the United States, it (legislation) has shown from the beginning a marked pre-occupation with attempting to settle disputes, prevent strikes and avoid ‘public disorder’, rather than with protecting the rights, liberties and prerogatives of one or other of the contending parties. And again in contrast with the United States, Canadian legislation for more than sixty years has placed its major emphasis on intervention in industrial disputes and restriction of unions’ and employers’ freedom to engage in strikes and lockouts.

“In earlier decades, as noted, when the law stressed private property and unions were widely viewed as a threat to the established order, the industrial relations policies of government in Canada tended to

favour employers at the expense of organized labour. Legislation incorporating the main principles of the U.S. Wagner Act of 1935 was not passed until well into World War II.”¹

A deluge of reports of royal commissions, task force studies and investigations has poured into almost every nook and cranny of industrial relations in recent decades. But, when viewed from a trade union vantage point, the trend of legislation has not substantially altered.

Federal Labour Legislation

The British North America Act places labour legislation within the jurisdiction of the provinces.

Ontario passed an act in 1873 which provided for local boards of conciliation to be set up on agreement between employer and employees. But there was no compulsion on employers to agree. Early convention resolutions of trade unions urged compulsory arbitration, by which they meant that employers should be compelled to bargain with their workers. In the absence of this provision the legislation was virtually meaningless.

The only effective legislation in Canada through World War II was federal. Only tardily have the provinces exercised their prerogative to enact labour codes.

Provincial labour legislation now covers over 90 per cent of Canada's work force. The rest are subject to federal legislation.

The first Industrial Disputes Investigation Act came into force in 1907. This Act was inspired by a serious strike in the coal-mining industry in western Canada. It applied to disputes involving ten or more employees in mining, transport, communications and public utilities, but in other industries only by consent of both parties.

Like the Railway Labour Disputes Act of 1903, the IDIA established a tripartite board of conciliation and investigation which had the legal power to compel testimony.

The main role of the board was to achieve settlements through conciliation, but it could also pass judgment on the parties and the issues involved if conciliation failed.

The Act also introduced a new principle — compulsory delay of work stoppages, a so-called “cooling off period”, while investigations were under way.

In World War I the Act was extended to industries making military supplies. Late in the war another compulsory provision was added when strikes and lockouts were prohibited in major war industries.

In 1925 the courts ruled that the federal legislation had overstepped the bounds of federal jurisdiction. Parliament accordingly amended the IDIA so that it applied only to disputes within the federal domain. A provincial government, however, might pass enabling legislation so that the federal Act would apply in that province.

Between 1925 and 1932 all provinces but Prince Edward Island did so.

The Wagner Act passed in the United States in 1935 guaranteed the right of workers to organize into unions of their own choice, free from employer interference or attack. It established labour relations boards to investigate complaints of unfair labour practices, to

prosecute offenders and to conduct votes to determine which union, if any, a unit of employees wished to have represent them. If a union won a majority of votes, it was “certified” as the bargaining agent for the unit of employees and the employer was required to negotiate with it for a collective bargaining agreement covering the terms and conditions of employment.

Governments in Canada were slow to adopt the progressive measures contained in the U.S. legislation. Some provincial statutes of the 1930s paid lip service to the right of free association and collective bargaining, having provided no machinery to enforce them.

In the emergency of World War II the federal government extended the coverage of the IDIA to all industries considered essential to the war effort. Other additions to labour legislation were made to fill obvious gaps. These included recognition of the right of workers to join unions, encouragement of collective bargaining and compulsory conciliation of disputes. However, there was no provision for the certification of unions or requirement that employers must bargain with certified unions. Hostile employers ignored the legislative exhortations with impunity.

Naturally, discontent swelled among the newly-organized workers in the mines and factories, and strikes for union recognition and collective bargaining grew in number. In 1943 the National War Labour Board undertook an extensive inquiry which resulted in Order-in-Council P.C. 1003.

This measure introduced the main features of the Wagner Act — certification machinery and compulsory bargaining — but retained compulsory conciliation of disputes, and the delay of strikes and lockouts pending investigation.

With the end of the war jurisdiction over labour matters in general reverted

to the provinces. In 1948 parliament passed the Industrial Relations and Disputes Investigation Act which included the main provisions of P.C. 1003, but it now applied only to the federal jurisdiction.

The industries under federal jurisdiction include navigation, shipping, interprovincial railways, canals, telephone and telegraph, steamship lines and ferries, air transportation and airports, radio and television broadcasting.

Federal labour legislation today is embodied in a Canada Labour Code in five parts: Part I — Fair Employment Practices; Part II — Female Employees Equal Pay; Part III — Labour Standards; Part IV — Safety of Employees; Part V — Industrial Relations.

Progressive Amendments

In 1971 and 1972 Parliament amended the Standards and Industrial Relations sections of the Canada Labour Code in the first major revision of federal labour legislation since 1948.

Added to the Standards section were provisions for advance notice to employees of layoffs or dismissal, for a higher minimum wage and for elimination of discrimination in wages between male and female employees.

The period of notice varies with the number of employees laid off: eight weeks' notice for 50 to 100 employees; 12 weeks' notice for between 100 and 300 employees; and 16 weeks' notice for more than 300. Fines for violation range up to \$100,000. Individuals whose employment is terminated except for just cause must receive either two weeks' notice or two weeks' wages in lieu of notice. All employees with at least five years' service must receive severance pay, and an employee may not be dismissed because his wages are subject to garnishee procedures.

The minimum wage was raised from \$1.65 to \$1.75 (it had gone from \$1.25

to \$1.65 in 1970), and could be raised thereafter by order-in-council rather than requiring an act of Parliament. On April 1, 1973, it became \$1.90 and on April 1, 1974, \$2.20.

The third change in standards was a reflection of the recommendations of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women. The legislation now provides:

"No employer shall establish or maintain differences of wages between male and female employees, employed in the same industrial establishment, who are performing under the same or similar working conditions the same or similar work on jobs requiring the same or similar skill, effort or responsibility."

Another amendment followed Ontario law which entitled a female employee with more than one year's service to maternity leave of up to 11 weeks before delivery and 6 weeks after. It is illegal to dismiss an employee because of pregnancy.

Part V

The amendments to the Industrial Relations section of the Canada Labour Code were at first given a rough reception in the House of Commons: the bill was withdrawn, re-introduced with revisions and passed on June 30, 1972. It became effective March 1, 1973.

The controversial provision, which had met hostility from employers' organizations, was designed to protect employees against technological change. It was in line with the recommendations of Mr. Justice Freedman who, in his 1965 report on the CN railway dispute had written:

"The old concept of labour as a commodity simply will not suffice; it is at once wrong and dangerous. Hence, there is a responsibility upon the entrepreneur who introduces technological change to see that it is not effected at the expense of his working force."

The new provision requires an employer to give the bargaining agent 90 days' notice of impending changes which would adversely affect a significant number of employees. This requirement does not apply (a) where a collective agreement contains provisions to cushion the impact of change; (b) where the agreement provides for the negotiation and settlement of problems arising from change; (c) where written notice of change has been given in the period open for the negotiation of an agreement.

A union may apply to the Labour Board to have its contract re-opened for negotiation during the term of an agreement if an employer introduces extensive technological changes without giving adequate notice. In certain cases this involves the ultimate right to strike over the issue.

Following the Woods Report, the legislation reconstituted the federal Labour Relations Board as a full-time body with a chairman, vice-chairman and four members. The first chairman is Marc Lapointe, a Montreal lawyer. In addition to its previous jurisdiction in certification, collective bargaining and conciliation procedures, the Board was given authority over unfair practices (formerly adjudicated in the courts), problems of successor rights (when new owners take over a company which is a party to a collective agreement), strike declarations, and orders granting access to company property for union activities such as organizing.

Decisions of arbitrators are protected from excessive judicial review and their awards are enforceable as orders of the Federal Court.

The rules for obtaining certification are made somewhat easier. A union applying for certification as bargaining agent for a unit of unorganized workers is entitled to a representation vote if it can prove support of at least 35 per

cent of the unit. The result is based on the majority of votes actually cast.

Bargaining rights are extended to professionals, fishermen and owners and operators of trucks where they are in positions of economic dependency. Employees in a supervisory capacity are eligible for collective bargaining but managers continue to be excluded.

The Minister of Labour is given several options in dealing with disputes: he may appoint a conciliation officer, a conciliation commissioner or a conciliation board, or take no action at all.

The legislation applies to about 550,000 federal employees only but, as with other actions of the federal government, its influence has an important bearing on the trend of labour legislation in the ten provinces. It is true, too, that federal legislation is often out-paced and influenced by provincial legislation.

Public Service Staff Relations Act

The proclamation of this Act on March 13, 1967, opened a new era in employer-employee relations in the federal public service.

The PSSR Act is conventional labour relations legislation with important modifications. It obliges a bargaining agent to choose one of two procedures in cases where agreement with the employer, usually represented by the Treasury Board, is not reached: 1) binding arbitration or 2) conciliation, with the right to strike. However, employees considered essential to "safety and security" are prohibited from striking.

The Act is administered by a Public Service Staff Relations Board consisting of a Chairman, a Vice-Chairman, 3 Deputy Chairmen and 4 to 8 other members equally representative of the employees and the employer.

The majority of the 49 bargaining units within the public service initially opted for the arbitration method of resolving an impasse in contract nego-

tiations. Recently, however, some of them have been re-considering their choice in light of their experience with salary awards.

Provincial Labour Legislation

Provincial legislation varies only in detail from province to province. However, parity cannot be equated solely to the similarity in the wording of statutes. It is axiomatic in trade union circles that good legislation with bad administration is no better than poor legislation with good administration. One can be as objectionable as the other.

Industrial relations acts in each province provide for the certification of unions and collective bargaining "in good faith" and for conciliation procedures in case of disputes.

Every province sets minimum wage rates which, by April 1974, were the following:

MINIMUM HOURLY WAGES IN CANADA

(as of April, 1974)

	Present Minimum and date in effect	Rising to . . . and date
Federal	\$2.20 April 1	
Alberta	\$2.00 April 1	
British Columbia	\$2.25 December 3, 1973	\$2.50 June 3, 1974
Manitoba	\$1.90 October 1, 1973	
New Brunswick	\$1.75 January 1	\$1.90 July 1, 1974 \$2.15 January 1, 1975 \$2.30 July 1, 1975
Newfoundland	\$1.80 January 1	\$2.10 May 1, 1974 \$2.20 January 1, 1975
North West Territories	\$2.00 September 1, 1973	
Nova Scotia	\$1.65 July 1, 1973	\$1.80 July 1, 1974
Ontario	\$2.00 January 1	
Prince Edward Island	\$1.65 January 1	\$1.75 July 1, 1974
Quebec	\$1.85 November 1, 1973	\$2.00 May 1, 1974 \$2.15 November 1, 1974
Saskatchewan	\$2.00 December 31, 1973	\$2.25 July 2, 1974
Yukon	\$2.30 April 1	

Wage gains and fast-rising living costs have put considerable pressure on governments to raise these minimums. In March 1974, the Canadian Labour Congress urged the federal government to increase the

federal hourly minimum to \$2.50. The Ontario Federation of Labour's annual convention in November 1973 had already adopted a resolution urging a provincial minimum of \$2.75.

Every province provides for annual paid vacations and most provinces for paid public holidays.

All provinces have adopted fair employment practices laws forbidding discrimination in hiring and conditions of employment and in trade union membership on grounds of race, colour, religion and national origin. British Columbia, Ontario and Newfoundland prohibit discrimination in employment

and trade union membership on grounds of age. Nine provinces have equal pay acts or provisions in human rights or labour standards legislation which forbid discrimination in rates of pay solely on the grounds of sex. Quebec forbids discrimination in employment on grounds of sex.

Most provinces have Factory or Industrial Safety Acts which regulate such matters as sanitation, noise levels,

lighting, ventilation and the guarding of dangerous machinery.

Extensive amendments have been made in laws regulating the design, construction, installation and operation of machinery and mechanical equipment such as pressure vessels, boilers, elevators and electrical installations in line with technological changes. Legal standards have been set in new fields involving hazards to workers and the public — for example, gas and oil-burning equipment and radiation-producing equipment.

Each province has its own workmen's compensation legislation. Ontario's is considered to be the best on the continent. An investigation by a Legislature Committee in 1972-3 turned up deep-seated if not extensive flaws in administration which the Ontario government took prompt steps to correct.

Key Contract Clauses

Two other aspects of collective agreements are noteworthy. One is the provision of a procedure for settlement of grievances during the life of an agreement. This usually entails two or three steps up from the shop floor (or office) to the top management/union level. If the grievance is not resolved in these step-by-step discussions between the two parties, a form of binding arbitration imposes a settlement. If a grievance procedure ending in arbitration is not included in a contract, most Labour Relations Acts provide a model clause which becomes operative.

The other is the issue of management rights. It is essential that a union make a serious effort to have included in its collective agreement with management all those items necessary to protect the wages, working conditions and security of its membership. Management, usually supported by the law, assumes that all matters not clearly covered by the agreement fall within its prerogatives; frequently it insists

on the inclusion of a "management rights" clause in the agreement.

After years of bargaining, unions are gradually limiting management's prerogatives in two important areas: one, safety measures on the job; two, decisions on technological change. On safety, unions are winning the right to joint labour-management safety committees. (These are now required by law in Saskatchewan, with equal representation from each side and unresolved issues settled by the Labour Board.)

On technological change, the federal and some provincial governments have legislated some protection for employees against the rapid introduction of changes, while unions have attempted, some successfully, to have clauses on technological change written into collective agreements. Some agreements go so far as to protect all or most employees against loss of their jobs on account of technological change. The work force may be reduced only by retirement, voluntary quit or discharge for just cause.

Shortcomings and gaps in legislation affecting working people and the unions which represent them remain in all jurisdictions. In the provinces where governments are labour-oriented, the legislation is different in scope and balance from that in other provinces. As the advanced labour act first adopted by the CCF government of Saskatchewan proved, the good has a way (contrary to the axiom about money) of driving out the bad.

In Ontario, the dominant industrial province, a flood of reports on labour matters has not quenched the fires of discontent. The Ontario Federation of Labour has, with notable consistency, countered each report with criticism and each change of legislation with protest.

The current Labour Relations Act in Ontario was revised in 1970. When im-

portant amendments were announced on June 22 of that year, OFL president David B. Archer commented:

"I very much regret that after so many years of cogitating, the government has again turned a deaf ear to the pleas of this Federation to permit full collective bargaining to civil servants, agricultural workers, professional workers and others now denied it. It is nonsense to state in the preamble that the act is to encourage collective bargaining and then to deny the right to such a large number of employees."

Typical of its persistence in urging changes in the legislation were statements of the OFL at its annual convention in November 1972, in its annual submission to the provincial government in June 1973, and in its submission to the provincial Minister of Labour in February 1974.

New Governments — New Legislation

The position of organized labour under Ontario legislation was in contrast to its position in certain other provinces.

The labour legislation enacted by the CCF government in Saskatchewan in 1946 was a model for its time. When the New Democratic Party government headed by Premier Allan Blakeney was elected to office in 1971, it set about to restore labour rights which had been eroded by seven years of Liberal government since 1964.

The NDP government passed a trade union act which

- (a) requires maintenance of union membership by all employees who are employed after a union has won certification;
- (b) makes compulsory employer deduction of union dues (check-off); all employees from date of certification must pay dues whether union members or not;

- (c) allows a union which shows 25% support of employees in a bargaining unit to apply for certification;
- (d) outlaws *ex parte* injunctions;
- (e) provides protection against technological changes by requiring an employer to give 90 days' notice of any change which will affect the lives and working conditions of a significant number of employees;
- (f) makes a technological change of which notice has been given a bargainable issue whether or not any other part of the collective agreement is open for negotiation.

The government also introduced a new Act, the first of its kind in North America, which provides that, in addition to the usual inspections, all shops with 10 or more employees must have employer-employee occupational health committees with equal representation from both sides. Minutes of committee meetings must be forwarded to the Department of Labour which has authority to break a committee deadlock on matters of safety.

Another bill strengthened the equal pay for equal work legislation and guaranteed to any woman with 12 months' service maternity leave without loss of job or seniority.

The government also improved the vacations with pay entitlement: two weeks for everyone, three weeks after five years' service and four weeks after 15 years' service. By 1978 four weeks vacation will be compulsory after 10 years of service.

* * *

The NDP government in Manitoba was first elected in June 1969 and re-elected in June 1973.

The Minister of Labour is a veteran trade unionist, Russell Paulley, who believes that better labour legislation alone is not enough to meet the demands

of modern society. Other areas of provincial jurisdiction are equally important in assuring decent living standards for working people — for example, economic development, housing, health services and environmental concerns.

In labour legislation the scales are balanced much more evenly between management and labour than by previous administrations. This has been done by a) extending the right to strike to almost all employees; b) giving full collective bargaining rights to employees of Crown corporation; c) setting 35% employee support as the requirement for a certification vote; d) requiring deduction of union dues for all employees covered by an agreement; e) setting heavy fines for employers who interfere with union organization; f) setting stiff penalties for illegal strikes and illegal lockouts; g) providing for 90 days' notice of technological change to be followed by negotiation with the right to strike on the issue.

The Labour Minister believes that the legislation reduces government intervention in the collective bargaining process. His position is that the responsibility for solving industrial disputes must be placed on the shoulders of employers and employees.

What is most important is the stimulus which the government has given to economic and social development. Manitoba has one of the lowest unemployment rates in Canada and has embarked on a three-year experiment with a guaranteed minimum income program (MINCOME) in co-operation with the federal government. The aim of MINCOME is to eliminate poverty and encourage employment at the same time.

* * *

British Columbia's is the latest of three NDP governments elected with labour support.

The Labour Code which the Barrett government introduced in the Legislature in October 1973 is intended to create a completely new structure for labour-management relations in a province where industrial strife has been endemic. Management, especially in resource industries, has been extremely exploitative and trade union organizations have reacted with a militancy which is now proverbial.

A higher percentage of the working force is organized than in any other province. Most affiliates of the B.C. Federation of Labour were adamantly opposed to the labour legislation enacted by the Social Credit government which, in their view, interfered unduly with labour's rights and with the collective bargaining process.

The NDP government repealed the old Trade Union Act, the Labour Relations Act and the Mediation Act and started anew.

The new Labour Code establishes a 10-person Labour Relations Board composed of a chairman, three vice-chairmen and three representatives each from labour and management. This Board has wide powers covering all phases of industrial relations.

Features of the legislation are the following: a) negotiations for renewal of agreements must start at least 60 days before expiration of the old ones; b) a union may apply for certification with 35% membership in a bargaining unit (but must, of course, win a majority in a representation vote); c) all contracts must include provision for negotiations on technological change; d) the Labour Board may impose a one-year first contract if the parties fail to reach agreement in negotiations; e) the Board may freeze wages and working conditions prior to a certification vote (to prevent an employer from fighting an organizing drive with a sudden pay rise); f) informational picketing is permissible at any time but other forms

of picketing may be restricted; picketing of competitors of a struck employer who gain advantage from the strike is permissible; g) employers are forbidden to use, authorize or permit the use of professional strikebreakers; h) injunctions in strike situations must be obtained from the Labour Board, not from the courts; i) any contract which discriminates against any person contrary to the Human Rights Act is null and void; j) exemption from union membership on religious grounds is allowed but union dues must be paid.

The government repealed the legislation which prohibited unions from contributing to political parties or candidates.

Some of the industrial relations problems in British Columbia were different in scale and kind from those in other provinces and required different solutions. Labour had been pressing hard for change, not only in legislation but in government. When both were achieved, the result was not greeted with hosannahs but with critical appraisal extending to forthright opposition.

Management was also critical but that was a normal reaction of business interests to a socially-oriented administration.

Time can be a great healer. The B.C. Labour Code may prove to be a bold yet reasonable attempt to give organized labour what it has always felt entitled to — legislation which is as pro-labour as farm legislation is pro-farmer. It is certainly a serious effort to break new ground in the industrial relations field within the confines of a capitalist-welfare state.

Challenge to Ontario

With a congeries of new, improved and progressive measures being enacted at federal level and in a number of provinces, the government of Ontario is under pressure to step up its labour legislation to conform with current situations.

Terry Meagher



A native Nova Scotian who came to Toronto in 1950, Mr. Meagher was Executive Secretary of the Labour Council of Metropolitan Toronto before he assumed his present post as Secretary-Treasurer of the Ontario Federation of Labour in 1970.

He is treasurer of the Canadian Civil Liberties Association, a member of the Ontario Labour Committee on Human Rights, an Executive member of the John Howard Society and on the Ontario Welfare Council, the Ontario Arts Council and the Council of the College of Nurses of Ontario.

It is not just that Ontario's legislation is moving forward with the speed of a caterpillar in molasses. Equally irritating is the low efficiency of its administration. Long-delayed decisions on certification may be unavoidable but, unless evidence to the contrary is produced, unions conclude that decisions delayed mean hard organizing work aborted, with malice aforethought.

In February 1974 the Ontario Federation of Labour gave Ontario Minister of Labour Fern Guindon a 17-point bill of particulars outlining the deficiencies in the legislation and the administration, and the loopholes which, from labour's point of view, prevent or retard the organization of the unorganized.

Hardly one of the particulars had not been presented to the government at least once a year for the last decade. The trade union movement meeting in solemn convention always lives in hope that some day things will improve.

WORK STOPPAGES IN CANADA: SELECTED YEARS 1946-73

	Number of Stoppages	Workers Involved	Duration in Man Days	Percentage of Total Working Time
1946	226	138,914	4,515,030	.54
1951	258	102,793	901,620	.09
1956	229	88,680	1,246,000	.11
1961	281	97,959	1,335,080	.11
1966	617	411,459	5,178,170	.34
1967	522	252,018	3,974,760	.25
1968	582	223,562	5,082,732	.32
1969	595	306,799	7,751,880	.46
1970	542	261,706	6,539,560	.39
1971	569	239,631	2,866,590	.16
1972	598	706,474	7,753,530	.43
1973*	712	349,866	5,705,090	.30**

*preliminary figures

**time lost equivalent to 30 man-days for every 10,000 man-days of working time

In Summary

More than sixty years ago Clarence Darrow, famous defence lawyer for the underdog and for radical causes, wrote:

"With all their faults, trade unions have done more for humanity than any other organization of men that ever existed. They have done more for decency, for honesty, for education, for the betterment of the race, for the development of character in man, than any other association of men."

Most Canadians would be startled by that statement. To many the very word "unions" conjures up images of big, powerful, selfish and demanding aggregations which fight for inflationary wage gains, which are strike-prone if not strike-happy, which wilfully resort to violence, and which hold the public at their mercy when they disrupt public services.

Even so, few Canadians would propose that unions be done away with. Most would agree that democracies with unions are far better than totalitarian states without unions.

Trade unions began as, and still are, defensive organizations — to protect the interests of working people against the power of constituted authority and fast-growing industrialization.

But while it is true that unions have a priority commitment to their own membership, they long ago expanded their activities in support of policies which benefit the entire community.

When they found their efforts frustrated by government or business or

both, they turned to political action. The old saying in the trade union movement, that what you win at the bargaining table you can lose at the ballot box, is especially valid in these days of high unemployment and inflation.

If political progress has been slow, the reason is not hard to find. Before unions could be effective in politics, they had to be effective in their primary function of organizing the unorganized. The increasing success in their organizing and educational work is not unrelated to their recently more productive use of their voting power.

On the collective bargaining side, unions work within the system. Politically they are committed to changing it. This seeming ambivalence reflects two major influences — the influx of British immigrants, refugees from the industrial revolution and its concomitant of intolerable poverty, and developments in the United States. The struggles against the "robber barons" and the inhuman conditions of the factory system below the border had their counterparts, though on a smaller scale, in this country.

The British influence continues in our form of political action through direct support of a political party, which the AFL-CIO rejects, at least in theory. The U.S. experience influenced Canadian labour's acceptance of a collective bargaining process under strict government regulation.

In general trade unions move within the framework of the body politic and

their members are induced to turn in one direction or another like most other citizens. But they differ from other citizens' organizations in having explicit economic, social and political objectives; in having the right, within legal limits, to strike for the purpose of obtaining their demands; and in having the ability to mobilize mass support for their goals.

Two aspects of unionism are of particular concern to the public — use of the strike weapon and international affiliation.

It is common to decry strikes that affect the public — strikes by railwaymen that impede the movement of people and of goods for export, strikes by hydro workers that threaten power supply, strikes by garbagemen that threaten health, and now, of all things, strikes by teachers.

Usually the effect of strikes on the public interest is overstated: anger is easily worked up by the media in what the media's owners, a power in themselves, consider to be fulfilment of their public duty. But even when the public's convenience is being disturbed, that is a far cry from a threat to national survival.

As official statistics show and unions keep pointing out, far more time is lost through unemployment, sickness and accidents.

Today strikes are often censured as harmful to the national economy. But the gross national product and the value of exports, both indices of prosperity, have been rising every year.

Strikes which result in wage increases are often condemned as major contributors to inflation. But profits have been rising far more sharply. By the end of 1973 the corporate share of the GNP was almost two per cent above average, while labour income's share had fallen to a record low.

Unions have seldom been popular in Canada. It is interesting to speculate what would have happened had public and employer reaction to unionization been positive in the early days, if associations of workingmen had been welcomed rather than resisted.

Early organizations like the Knight of Labor dreamed of a world where strikes would be unnecessary. Some wrote into their statements of principles the settlement of differences with employers by peaceful means — by what today would be called conciliation or voluntary arbitration. The response from employers was negative or hostile.

So strikes became the cogwheels which slowly propelled the trade union movement forward. They did not result in loss of public goodwill, because there was little or none to begin with. It was effective union organization and growth which commanded public attention and respect. So did the determination of forward-looking elements in the unions to participate in politics in opposition to, not as tools of, old party politicians representing the status quo.

Opposition has always been a great stimulus to union education and action.

The other issue of current public concern is the operation of international unions. The domination of large sectors of the economy by foreign-owned corporations is a major factor in the rising nationalism evident throughout Canada. This gives rise to the argument that, if companies should be repatriated, so should unions.

But the operations and influence of foreign-owned companies and of Canadian unions with international (meaning U.S.) affiliations, are not really comparable. Any one of a dozen multinational corporations in Canada controls more wealth than all the hundred or more union organizations combined. All together, corporations have a tremendous impact on the direction of

the economy, inside and outside of government, an impact which is becoming more fully appreciated.

Any one of a dozen or more of these corporations has more economists and public relations personnel on staff than the entire trade union movement from coast to coast. Every one of them pays bigger salaries for more senior executives and makes use of more computer technology than all the unions put together.

But they are not subject to the checks and balances which are inherent in the democratic procedures of most trade union organizations. Corporations are run by boards of directors which are self-perpetuating and by senior managers who make only a token gesture of consulting the views of shareholders at annual meetings.

In contrast, the successful functioning of a large union or a congress is heavily dependent on the efficiency of its chain of command and communications from the rank-and-file membership level through local unions and labour councils, through regional bodies and labour federations, to the administration at the top.

Local unions and labour councils meet semi-monthly or monthly to conduct business and plan projects. Delegates to congress and federation conventions and to regional and central bodies of their own unions are elected at membership meetings. At every level officers are subject to an election process regulated by constitution. These democratic procedures are not conducive to job security for union executives but do keep them responsive to the needs and desires of their members.

If union members have ideas or gripes, they have outlets for expressing them. Many take advantage of them — the activists who often work their way from positions on local union and labour council executives to staff posts and

higher. The big majority of union staff and executives come from the ranks.

Under these circumstances the policies of Canadian unions, whether national or international, are naturally determined by local conditions, requirements and aspirations. On top of this, many Canadian sections of international unions have a high degree of autonomy in the conduct of their affairs and their number is growing.

The Trades and Labour Congress of Canada had had organizational ties with the American Federation of Labour. But back in 1940 the Canadian Congress of Labour was formed with the specific agreement of the CIO unions that it would be entirely independent and self-governing. This principle was not only insisted on by the Congress's ACCL components; it was upheld by the CIO unions in Canada, some of which, like the Steelworkers, gained early recognition of a Canadian identity for themselves.

By 1956 there was no question but that the Canadian Labour Congress would be autonomous and the AFL-CIO terminated all its activities in this country.

The CLC's 1970 convention adopted policy guidelines to encourage greater autonomy in laggard unions in response to "a growing tendency toward a Canadian identity in the social and economic sectors of society". These guidelines for "minimum standards of self-government of the Canadian sections of international unions" included three main points: 1) Canadian officers to be elected by Canadians; 2) policies dealing with national affairs to be determined by the elected Canadian officers and/or the Canadian members; 3) elected Canadian representatives to have authority to speak for the union in Canada.

These standards are being adopted but major unions like Steel, UAW,

IAM, CFAW, RWDSU, URCLWA and IWA, to mention just a few, already have control of their own operations in Canada well beyond the guidelines. The "growing tendency toward a Canadian identity" is still apparent and will continue to act as a stimulant on those unions which have yet to measure up.

In other words, the democratic process is actively working toward a stronger Canadian role, not only in structure and policy-making but also through improved services in unions, whether they retain their international connections or sever them. It is an inaccurate and uninformed view that most Canadian unions which have been "international" from their beginnings are just puppets manipulated from Washington.

At the same time, onlookers do not understand the bonds of tradition, pride and solidarity which keep a member loyal to his union. Under its banners battles have been fought, victories won, defeats endured. Institutions survive as much on sentiment as on cold calculation. And unionists who have looked on their fellow-members as "brothers and sisters" will not easily see them as "foreigners".

Should any part of Canadian union dues go to a U.S. headquarters? In any one year some unions send more funds across the line than are returned in cash and services, while others receive more than they remit, especially in strike situations. But few unions pay dues to international offices without expecting and getting fair return for their money. Most unions maintain a bank account in Canada into which dues receipts are paid and from which Canadian costs are paid and investments made.

Furthermore, Canadian delegates have the right and responsibility to stand up for their rights at international conventions. When they don't, the fault could well lie here. Union con-

stitutions are not, like the Bible, written once and for all time. They are subject to change. And they have been changed in recent years in response to Canadian requests, for example, for national policy-making structures and for complete freedom of political action.

Canadian unionists have not always agreed with the AFL-CIO or with their own internationals, and have said so. When the AFL-CIO withdrew from the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, the CLC stood fast by its affiliation and its president, Donald MacDonald, was elected president — an honour for Canada as well as Canadian labour. In its social and economic policies the CLC is oriented toward social democracy, the AFL-CIO toward modified capitalism.

Conclusion

The predominance of the corporate power elite in every aspect of this nation's life is in part counterbalanced by the numerical strength and democratic structure of union organization. Union membership, even though it is no more than 10 per cent of the population, still outnumbers boards of directors, managers and shareholders by a wide margin. It is a question of people power against money power.

Commissions, task forces, labour-management committees and conferences have spent countless hours discussing ways and means of cooling the economic struggle manifested in strikes and lockouts and picket lines and layoffs and plant shutdowns and inflation and unemployment.

These are all issues pertinent to the governance of the nation. But the overriding issue to which the best collective brains must be put is human survival.

It is natural for people to be concerned about industrial strife, but the history of Canada has proven that this country has survived very well the con-

frontations which have occurred. The huge accretions of wealth in the banking system, in multi-national corporations, in insurance and real estate giants, attest to that. But is this measure of survival not just a little smug and self-serving?

The U.S. president in the troubled depression and wartime years, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, made this sage statement: *"The test of progress is not whether we add more to the abundance of those who have too much; it is whether we provide enough for those who have too little."*

The unresolved concerns which have in them the seeds of human destruction are the huge expenditures on wars and armaments compared with the relatively small amounts contributed to help alleviate mass starvation; the tragic waste of energy and resources on this continent, to which escalating inflation is not unrelated; and the continuing maldistribution of wealth within and between nations.

Trade unionists are aware of these human and worldwide dilemmas. They are concerning themselves with environmental issues. They are interested in the quality of life as the *sine qua non* of a rising standard of living. They want improving living standards, not only for themselves but for everyone in need.

Within Canada economic gains have been impressive. It is a far cry from

the time when a steelworker in Sault Ste. Marie worked for "a labour rate of 27 cents an hour. There were two shifts a day, one 11 hours and the other 13 hours, and you worked seven days a week at straight time. When you changed shifts, you worked 24 hours through, at straight time of course."*

Times have changed and the workman's field of vision has broadened. Today more trade unionists than ever are thinking of their fellow men and the state of the world around them. They are asking themselves the question put to them by Dr. John Rich when he spoke to an OFL education conference in February 1964:

"Our world is changing and the worker's role is changing in it. What we have to ask ourselves is whether the obligation of the unions is simply to accept political and economic structures as they exist, fighting defensive skirmishes in many different sectors, or whether to accept and claim the right to have some say in the economy as a whole. . .

"I put it to you that the important question for the unions to ask is not 'What is the best we can achieve for our members in our present society?' but 'What is the best sort of society we can achieve?' and then to throw our full weight behind the necessary political and legislative changes."

* Algoma Unionist, 30th anniversary issue, 1965.

GLOSSARY OF LABOUR TERMS

AGREEMENT, COLLECTIVE — A contract (agreement and contract are used interchangeably) between one or more unions acting as bargaining agent, and one or more employers, covering wages, hours, working conditions, fringe benefits, rights of workers and union, and procedures to be followed in settling disputes and grievances.

ARBITRATION — A method of settling disputes through the intervention of a third party whose decision is final and binding. Such a third party can be either a single arbitrator, or a board consisting of a chairman and one or more representatives. Arbitration is often used to settle major grievances and for settling contract interpretation disputes. **Voluntary arbitration** is that agreed to by the parties without statutory compulsion. **Compulsory arbitration** is that imposed by law.

BARGAINING AGENT — Union designated by a labour relations board or similar government agency as the exclusive representative of all employees in a bargaining unit for the purpose of collective bargaining.

BARGAINING UNIT — Group of workers in a craft, department, plant, firm, industry or occupation, determined by a labour relations board or similar body as appropriate for representation by a union for purposes of collective bargaining.

CERTIFICATION — Official designation by a labour relations board or similar government agency of a union as sole and exclusive bargaining agent, following proof of majority support among employees in a bargaining unit.

CHECKOFF — A clause in a collective agreement authorizing an employer to deduct union dues and, sometimes, other assessments, and transmit these funds to the union.

CLOSED SHOP — A provision in a collective agreement whereby all employees in a bargaining unit must be union members in good standing before being hired, and new employees must be hired through the union.

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING — Method of determining wages, hours and other conditions of employment through direct negotiations between the union and the employer. Normally the result of collective bargaining is a written contract which covers all employees in the bargaining unit, both union members and non-members.

COMPANY UNION — A one-company group of employees, frequently organized or inspired by management and usually dominated by the employer.

CONCILIATION and **MEDIATION** — A process which attempts to resolve labour disputes by

compromise or voluntary agreement. By contrast with arbitration, the mediator, conciliator or conciliation board does not bring in a binding award and the parties are free to accept or to reject the recommendations.

COST-OF-LIVING ALLOWANCE — Periodic pay increase based on changes in the Consumer Price Index, sometimes with a stated top limit.

CRAFT UNION — A trade union which organizes on the principle of limiting membership to some specific craft or skill, i.e., electricians, plumbers, etc. In practice many traditional craft unions now also enroll members outside the craft field.

FEDERATION OF LABOUR — A federation chartered by a national congress grouping local unions and labour councils in a given province.

FRINGE BENEFITS — Non-wage benefits, such as paid vacations, pensions, health and welfare provisions, life insurance, etc., the cost of which is borne in whole or in part by the employer.

GRIEVANCE — Complaint against management by one or more employees, or a union, concerning an alleged breach of the collective agreement or an alleged injustice. Procedure for the handling of grievances is usually defined in the agreement. The last step of the procedure is usually arbitration.

INDUSTRIAL UNION — A trade union which organizes on the principle of including all workers from an industry, regardless of their craft or whether they are skilled or unskilled.

INJUNCTION — A court order restraining an employer or union from committing or engaging in certain acts. An **ex parte** injunction is one in which the application for an injunction is made in the absence of the party affected.

JOB EVALUATION — A system designed to create a hierarchy of jobs based on factors such as skill, responsibility, experience, time and effort. It is often used for the purpose of arriving at a rational system of wage differentials between jobs or classes of jobs.

JOB SECURITY — A provision in a collective agreement protecting a worker's job, as in the introduction of new methods or machines.

JURISDICTIONAL DISPUTE — A dispute between two or more unions as to which one shall represent a group of employees in collective bargaining or as to whose members shall perform a certain kind of work.

LABOUR COUNCIL — Organization composed of local unions in a given community or district.

LABOUR RELATIONS BOARD — A board established under provincial or federal legislation to administer labour law, including certification of trade unions, investigation of unfair labour practices and other functions prescribed in the legislation.

LOCAL (UNION) — (Also known as **lodge**, or **branch**) — The basic unit of union organization. Trade unions are usually divided into a number of locals for the purposes of local administration. These locals have their own constitutions and elect their own officers; they are usually responsible for the negotiation and day-to-day administration of the collective agreements covering their members.

LOCKOUT — A phase of a labour dispute in which management refuses work to employees or closes its establishment in order to force a settlement on its terms.

MAINTENANCE OF MEMBERSHIP — A provision in a collective agreement stating that no worker need join the union as a condition of employment, but all workers who voluntarily join must maintain their membership for the duration of the agreement as a condition of employment.

MODIFIED UNION SHOP — A place of work in which non-union workers already employed need not join the union, but all new employees must join, and those already members must remain in the union.

PER CAPITA TAX — Regular payments by a local to its national or international union, labour council or federation, or by a union to its central labour body. It is based on the number of members.

PICKETING — Patrolling near employer's place of business by union members — pickets — to publicize the existence of a labour dispute, persuade workers to join a strike or join the union, discourage customers from buying or using employer's goods or services, etc.

PREMIUM PAY — A wage rate higher than straight time, payable for overtime work, work on holidays or scheduled days off, etc., or for work under extraordinary conditions such as dangerous, dirty or unpleasant work.

RAIDING — An attempt by one union to induce members of another union to defect and join its ranks.

RAND FORMULA — A union security clause in a collective agreement stating that the employer agrees to deduct an amount equal to the union dues from all members of the bargaining unit, whether or not they are members of the union, for the duration of the collective agreement.

SENIORITY — Term used to designate an employee's status relative to other employees for determining order of layoff, promotion, recall, transfer, vacations, etc. Depending on the provisions of the agreement, seniority can be based on length of service alone, or on additional factors such as ability or union duties.

TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE — Technical progress in industrial methods such as the introduction of labour-saving machinery or new production techniques. These often result in manpower reductions.

TRADE UNION — Workers organized into a voluntary association or union to further their mutual interests with respect to wages, hours, working conditions and other matters of interest to the workers.

UNION SECURITY — Provisions in collective agreements designed to protect the institutional life of the union. See Checkoff, Closed Shop, Maintenance of Membership, Rand Formula, Union Shop, Modified Union Shop.

UNION SHOP — A place of work where every worker covered by the collective agreement must become and remain a member of the union. New workers need not be union members to be hired, but must join after a certain number of days.

Source: **Canadian Labour Congress**

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- 2 Kenneth McNaught, **A Prophet in Politics** (University of Toronto Press, 1963), p. 124. This book contains an excellent account of the strike.
- 3 Jamieson, **op. cit.**, p. 182.
- 4 See **The Rest of Your Life**, Ontario Federation of Labour publication, 1973, pp. 30-4.
- 5 Leo Heaps, **The Rebel in the House** (London, Niccolo, 1970), contains excerpts from **Hansard** on these and other issues.

Chapter 5 — Schisms within the House of Labour

- 1 H. A. Logan, **Trade Unions in Canada** (Toronto, Macmillan Co. of Canada, 1948), p. 379.
- 2 Stuart Jamieson, **Industrial Relations in Canada**, 2nd ed. (Macmillan Co. of Canada, 1973), p. 22.
- 3 Logan, **op. cit.**, p. 369.
- 4 The Communists have from time to time posed as proponents of Canadian nationalism, yet there has never been an organization on the Canadian scene more "international" in terms of direction and policy. From its beginnings the Communist Party scrupulously followed the Soviet-oriented, Soviet-dictated "party line". The tactics it employed and the resolutions its adherents presented at meetings and conventions were always uniform across the country, laid down on instructions from abroad by its central headquarters.

Chapter 6 — The Dirty Thirties

- 1 Stuart Jamieson, **Task Force on Labour Relations, Study No. 22**, p. 255.
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- 1 Quoted in I. M. Abella, **Nationalism, Communism and Canadian Labour** (University of Toronto Press, 1973), p. 36.
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- 4 Logan, **Trade Unions in Canada**, p. 391. (The 1940 estimate is probably exaggerated; 77,000 is more likely.)
- 5 First CCL Constitution.
- 6 Abella, *op. cit.*, p. 111.

Chapter 8 — New Goals for Labour

- 1 The following account of the steel dispute is condensed from a pamphlet, **Crisis in Steel**, published by the National Office of the United Steelworkers of America, Toronto, May 1943.
- 2 **Labour Review**, September-October 1969, p. 4.
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Chapter 9 — Milestone Events — Merger

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Chapter 10 — Decade of Growth and Conflict

- 1 The drive was organized by a committee chaired by Wm. Mahoney, National Director of the United Steelworkers, with Morden Lazarus of the OFL as director. See Gad Horowitz, **Canadian Labour in Politics**, for a good account of trade union participation in the CCF and the founding of the new party.
- 2 Jamieson, **Task Force on Labour Relations, Study No. 22**, p. 407.
- 3 A detailed account of this strike appeared in **Canadian Labour**, October-December 1973 issue, written by Edward Seymour, Canadian Education and Publicity Director of TWUA.
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- 1 **The Rest of Your Life**, published in 1973.

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