

TIMES OF TROUBLE:  
LABOUR QUIESCENCE IN WINNIPEG  
1920 - 1929

BY  
DAVID EDWARD HALL

A Thesis  
Submitted to the Faculty of  
Graduate Studies  
of the  
University of Manitoba

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
for the degree of  
Master of Arts

Department of History  
University of Manitoba

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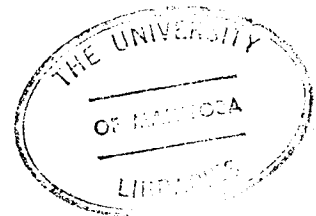
A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of  
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MASTER OF ARTS

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

|            |  |
|------------|--|
| A.F.L.     | American Federation of Labour              |
| A.C.C.L.   | All Canadian Congress of Labour            |
| B.R.A.C.   | Brotherhood of Rail and Steamship Clerks   |
| C.B.R.E.   | Canadian Brotherhood of Railway Employees  |
| C.L.C.     | Central Labour Council (Winnipeg O.B.U.)   |
| C.P.       | Communist Party                            |
| D.L.P.     | Dominion Labour Party                      |
| I.A.M.     | International Association of Machinists    |
| I.L.G.W.U. | International Ladies Garment Workers Union |
| I.L.P.     | Independent Labour Party                   |
| I.T.U.     | International Typographical Union          |
| I.U.N.T.W. | Industrial Union of Needle Trades Workers  |
| J.C.I.     | Joint Council of Industry                  |
| O.B.U.     | One Big Union                              |
| S.D.P.     | Social Democratic Party                    |
| S.P.C.     | Socialist Party of Canada                  |
| T.L.C.     | Trades and Labour Congress                 |
| U.G.W.U.   | United Garment Workers Union               |
| W.T.L.C.   | Winnipeg Trades and Labour Council         |
| W.U.L.     | Workers Unity League                       |
| W.W.L.L.   | Winnipeg Women's Labour League             |

## PREFACE

This thesis originated in my curiosity over the last decade or more, as to the fate of the "golden age" of labour radicalism in Winnipeg after the First World War. As a radical and trade unionist I wanted to understand why this radicalism declined so drastically over the half century to the levels it existed in the city's unions in 1969 when I first got involved in the labour movement. The logical place to start looking for answers was the decade following the general strike and preceding the depression of the thirties. In researching and writing this thesis I have found some answers, although they have seldom been simple, about the effects of the twenties on union radicalism. The task has been made more difficult and at the same time more stimulating by the almost total lack of work by labour historians on the twenties. To the extent that the period has been dealt with at all it was as a prelude to the great depression and the rise of the C.I.O. in Canada, or as a postscript to work on labour and radicalism before and during the post war upsurge and in Winnipeg, the general strike.

Surprisingly little has been added to D. C. Masters' comment written in 1949:

(By 1921) The tempo of Winnipeg labour had changed. The collapse of the strike and the difficulties of readjustment had told . . . There was no abandonment of the struggle for reform, but counsels of moderation now secured a better hearing and men were more disposed to accept gradual step by step progress.<sup>1</sup>

A. R. McCormack in a work on western radicalism to 1919 attributes this quiescence to the proven futility of radical unionism<sup>2</sup> and the ". . . bad beating workers had taken"<sup>3</sup> but concludes that:

More important the quiescence was a function of improved social conditions. In the most basic terms, workers enjoyed a higher standard of living; with the decline in immigration, real wages steadily increased during the decade.<sup>4</sup>

The only major exception to this postscript approach to the twenties in Winnipeg is D. J. Bercusson's history of the One Big Union (O.B.U.).<sup>5</sup> While the book addresses only one, shrinking faction of the labour movement, and concentrates on events outside of Winnipeg, it offers some valuable insights. Unlike Masters and McCormack, he notes the importance of a severe recession or depression which began in late 1920 and did not end until early 1926. In place of "step by step" progress" and "a higher standard of living" Bercusson describes how "High unemployment matched a fall in wages."<sup>6</sup>

In the context of these disagreements, the actual material conditions of the working class in Winnipeg requires investigation. It cannot be safely argued that increasing economic hardship leads directly to economic militancy and political radicalism, although there is

clearly a relationship between them. However it is often argued that increasing working class prosperity reduces both of these manifestations within the working class. It is this agreement which both Masters and McCormack appear to use as a major basis for their explanation of working class quiescence after 1919.

It was in investigating these economic questions<sup>7</sup> that I developed the periodication which is the basis of the chapter structure of the thesis. In the decade following the general strike Winnipeg's economy went through three distinct stages which vitally affected the working class. The first, from the strike until the end of 1920, was characterized by reasonably healthy levels of economic activity and was in essence a continuation of the war economy which began in 1915. While the stream of demobilized soldiers assured the city of persistent unemployment, it was not on a large scale and, for the overwhelming majority of workers, full time employment was the norm. Beginning in late 1920 Winnipeg entered the post war depression which was worldwide in scope. In Winnipeg this depression was to last until roughly the end of 1925. It was characterized by massive unemployment and widespread short hours with their accompanying shrunken pay checks. It was only in the years from 1926 to 1929--four years--that Winnipeg experienced much of the prosperity and economic growth usually associated with the twenties. Of course this period conveniently closes with the onset of

the "great depression" in the winter of 1929 - 1930.

In attempting to understand the effects of these economic cycles on the working class and the labour movement at least two criteria required examination. The first was real wages--money wages adjusted for changes in the cost of living. In making these calculations I was basically extending the work of H. Sutcliffe on real wages in selected occupations in Winnipeg from 1900 to 1919<sup>8</sup> by including the twenties. In addition I was able to collect data on some classes of unskilled workers and on workers claiming Workmen's Compensation benefits, although unfortunately this data only covers the twenties and does not allow comparisons with earlier periods. The data on real wages, both as it regards money wages and the cost of living, suffers limitations rooted in the primitive statistics gathering techniques of the period. Yet there is no reason to doubt them as indicative of overall trends, particularly when similar patterns emerge in various occupations.

The question of unemployment is even more difficult to quantify or analyze accurately. A wide variety of sources had to be looked at, none of them very satisfactory in themselves. Trade union reports on unemployment, city relief statistics, census data, employers' reports on employment, and general references to levels of employment and unemployment in government and labour publications, all provided some information. In addition some weight had

to be attached to the widespread use of shortened work weeks as an alternative to lay-offs. Again one must be cautious when generalizing from such sources, but they do tend to compliment each other and provide reasonably safe indications of general trends.

In addition to looking at the economic forces at work on the working class, the bulk of the thesis addresses developments in the trade union movement. It has been possible to trace with some accuracy the evolution of unionism in Winnipeg in terms of the growth or decline of union membership. Wherever possible I have attempted to provide membership figures for individual unions or sectors, as the forces at work and their effect on unions is often different in different industries and trades. The key criterion for labour militancy is of course strike/lockout activity, and the excellent records of the federal Department of Labour make possible a detailed evaluation of this form of class conflict. Within the unions the lack of source material, particularly for the International unions, has severely limited the possibility of analyzing membership views, power struggles or ideological conflicts. I have outlined some of the more important ones for which information is available and generalized on likely patterns.

A last aspect of working class life which I have addressed is labour and radical politics. Membership figures for the various class based parties is unfortunately almost non-existent. This has led to a reliance on



electoral activity and results as an indicator of working class political attitudes. The disadvantage of this approach is that it tells us relatively little about the attitudes of labour activists who may or may not be in step with the mass of the class. I have not attempted to analyze the internal conflicts in these parties to any extent and provide only an outline of their interrelationships.

Quite apart from any inadequacies of research or analysis which the thesis may suffer within the chosen framework, the framework itself is open to criticism and requires some rationale. By focusing on the major class based organizations of the working class the thesis runs the risk of limiting its analysis to the small number of workers who are actively involved, while ignoring the mass of the class including many union members and left wing voters who, particularly in a period of relative quiescence, play little or no direct role in shaping these organizations. I have attempted to avoid the worst aspects of this danger by looking at the economics of the working class, and by utilizing the concepts of vanguard and rank and file to avoid generalizing about one on the basis of an analysis of the other. But to some degree this danger is inherent in the study of working class history in that it is usually only the activists who leave any records which can be used to write the history of the class.

Apart from these qualifications, the focus on working class organizations reflects a perspective on what

aspects of working class history are important given the goals of the historian. My interest is very much directed towards the class "for itself" not "of itself." In other words the thesis attempts to focus on the main arenas in which the working class, as a class, is capable of interacting with society in an active rather than passive manner. This is not to deny that in most interactions between the working class and other classes and social institutions the working class is the recipient of ideas, organizations, and values. Likewise it does not question the existence of other forms of class activity in which workers develop cultural defenses of their own. The approach this thesis takes is premised only on the importance of the aspects of working class life which it addresses, and their possessing a relative autonomy sufficient to make them a legitimate focus of independent study.

Within the approach the thesis adopts there are still a number of factors which are important but which are dealt with inadequately. One is the attitudes and strategy of business and the state in the conflict with labour. Clearly these vitally affect the structures and policies of unions and working class parties, as well as the class and political consciousness of workers. A second factor which is inadequately addressed is the ideological developments within these organizations. Internationally the twenties saw great upheavals in this area, with the ruptures between the Second and Third

Internationals, the evaluation of Stalinism and the theorization by social democrats of the increasing integration of trade unions and social democratic parties into respectable society and to some degree the state. A third neglected factor is the changes in the work process and their effects on class consciousness and the forms of working class organizations and class conflict. Since the pioneering work of historians such as E. P. Thompson, David Montgomery and Harry Braverman,<sup>9</sup> the importance of this factor has been increasingly recognized.

A fourth area of neglect is the international labour movement. Developments in places as diverse as St. Petersburg, Glasgow, Seattle and Melbourne had an important impact on Winnipeg's labour movement and were often watched with great interest. More than this, familiarity with the class struggle on an international scale and comparative studies of their historical evolution are necessary if labour historians are to avoid parochialism and be able to sift out important local or national peculiarities from those of tertiary importance. All four of these factors are of necessity referred to in the thesis, but I fear in a rather crude and schematic manner. For this I can only offer the excuse of the limitations of time and space in a project of this nature and reiterate the perennial call for further study.

Within the framework of this study I make no claim to objectivity or disinterested indifference. Having spent

many hours as an active participant in the labour movement it would be hopeless to feign detachment in studying its history. Nor do I consider detachment desirable or objectivity possible. What is essential to good history is accuracy and honesty and these I have attempted to achieve to the best of my ability.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

|   | <u>Page</u> |
|---|-------------|
| LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS .....                       | ii          |
| PREFACE .....                                     | iii         |
| CHAPTER   |             |
| I    WINNIPEG LABOUR AND THE GENERAL STRIKE ..... | 1           |
| II   THE AFTERMATH JULY 1919 - DECEMBER 1920 ...  | 33          |
| III  DEPRESSION AND DEFEAT 1921 - 1925 .....      | 84          |
| IV   THE INTERREGNUM 1926 - 1929 .....            | 123         |
| CONCLUSION .....                                  | 149         |
| POSTSCRIPT .....                                  | 171         |
| FOOTNOTES .....                                   | 173         |
| APPENDICES .....                                  | 189         |
| BIBLIOGRAPHY .....                                | 213         |

## CHAPTER I

At eleven o'clock in the morning of May 15, 1919, workers throughout Winnipeg laid down their tools and walked out of their shops. The streets were flooded with men and women making their way to their homes or to their favourite gathering place. Most walked, as the street car men had joined with almost all of Winnipeg's blue collar work force in the work stoppage. Within hours a mass meeting of returned soldiers, called by the executives of the various veterans associations, met to discuss the strike. They rejected an executive motion of neutrality, and voted to support the striking workers.

Within twenty-four hours over 20,000 workers had joined the strike. By its conclusion upwards of 30,000 Winnipeg workers had answered the call of the Winnipeg Trades and Labour Council (W.T.L.C.) for a general strike to back the demands of the striking workers in Winnipeg's contract metal shops. Thousands of them were not union members, but caught up in the atmosphere of frustration and optimism they walked out in support of the unions which seemed to offer them hope for the future. Across the west, from Victoria to Port Arthur, thousands more walked out in sympathy with the Winnipeg strikers.

The Winnipeg general strike of 1919 was the greatest expression of working class solidarity in Canada's history. As such it was the culmination of over a decade of growing polarization and class conflict which, after a brief set-back at the start of World War I, rapidly escalated in its closing years. In Winnipeg this process was highlighted by such bitter strikes as the Street Rail strike of 1906, the Great West Saddlery strike of 1911 and the strike in the contract metal shops in 1918, but the trend ran deeper. The years from the turn of the century to 1919 saw a rapid growth of unionism and its spread into new areas. In the railways the running trades had been organized since before the turn of the century, but near the end of the first decade they were joined by the workers in the rail shopcrafts. In the years before the war locals of Brewers, Teamsters, Restaurant and Garment workers joined the established crafts in the union movement. With the war going on construction labourers, store clerks, packinghouse workers, mill hands and civic employees all began to flood into labour's ranks for the first time.

Not only were new groups of workers organizing. In these days before the dues check-off, unions had to persuade each worker to pay their dues each month. By the end of the war many unions, such as those in the rail shops, were experiencing unprecedented support, with almost 100% of the workers paying their dues.<sup>1</sup>

In politics labour also began to blossom. In 1913

R. A. Rigg, a bookbinder, became the first labour alderman, elected on a Social Democratic Party (S.D.P.) platform. In 1915 he was elected to the provincial legislature and replaced on city council by a printer, W. B. Simpson\* who ran for the Dominion Labour Party. In 1917, A. A. Heaps,\*\*

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\*First elected in 1915, Simpson served as an alderman for eighteen of the next nineteen years. Born in Hamilton, Ontario in 1877, and raised in the Snowflake area of Manitoba, he moved to Winnipeg in 1886, where he became a compositor and an active member of the International Typographical Union (I.T.U.) local 191. A delegate to the W.T.L.C. before 1900 he remained active until 1949 when he was made an honorary life member of that body. From 1920 to 1923 he also represented the W.T.L.C. on the controversial Joint Council of Industry. Working for the Free Press, he rose to foreman before being fired for his political activities. He worked as Press Manager for Columbia Press and then Gary Press, and for a period ran his own print shop. While a moderate labourite, Simpson was not afraid to differ with his fellow moderates. In 1920 he resigned as editor of the Western Labour News, a post he had attained after Ivens was fired for O.B.U. sympathies, largely over conflicts with the W.T.L.C. executive over editorial policy. While he edited the I.L.P. paper "Weekly News" for a time, he broke with the party eventually and in 1937 ran as an independent for city council, with the support of the W.T.L.C. and his own union, but was defeated.

\*\*Heaps was born in Leeds, England in 1889, son of a poor Polish Jew. Forced to go to work at thirteen to help support his family, he apprenticed as an upholsterer. Coming to Winnipeg in 1910, he worked at his trade in the C.P.R. shops and became active in his union--the Upholsterers International, local 49, and by 1912 was on the W.T.L.C. executive. A life-long socialist, Heaps was a founding member of the Social Democratic Party (S.D.P.) and from 1917 to 1925 was a city alderman, first for the S.D.P., then for the I.L.P. Charged with sedition in 1919, he successfully defended himself and after an unsuccessful attempt in 1923 he was elected to Parliament in 1925, joining J. S. Woodsworth. In the twenties and thirties, he supplemented his income by selling insurance and as an art dealer, for a time also writing a labour column for the Free Press. When the C.C.F. was formed he joined his close friend John Queen in opposing I.L.P. affiliation, arguing against labour joining with farmers in a multi-class party,



an upholsterer and member of the S.D.P. joined Simpson on council. From then on labour had a strong and growing presence in electoral politics.

In the first decade and a half of the century labour's growing strength was reflected by a marked, if uneven, upturn in real wages. In 1917 inflation, fueled by a wartime economy, sharply reversed this trend. Real wages began to fall and the response was immediate.<sup>2</sup>

It was an explosive situation. The draining of manpower into the army, the virtual halt in immigration and the war-induced economic boom led to the virtual elimination of unemployment. This combined with the rapid growth of unions and the importance of continued production to the war effort to place workers in a strong position. Strike statistics for 1917 - 1918<sup>3</sup> indicate that they made full use of their strength in the struggle to protect their living standards.

The increasing level of organization and the accompanying optimism in the working class combined with a high degree of combativity to form an ideal environment for the growth of working class radicalism. Since the

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but after the I.L.P. did affiliate he joined the C.C.F. caucus in Parliament. A rabid anti-communist Heaps was finally defeated in 1940, largely because the communist candidate took a large portion of the working class vote. After declining a seat in the Senate, he dropped from public activity, finally dying while on a visit to his native Leeds in 1956.

turn of the century, the W.T.L.C. had been dominated by labourism or reformism, and had participated in a series of attempts to form local labour parties. Early in the century working class politics were enlivened by the entry into Winnipeg of the Socialist Party of Canada (S.P.C.) and a later split from it, the Social Democratic Party (S.D.P.). Both parties claimed Marxism and revolutionary socialism as their heritage although the S.D.P. put much more reliance on electoral activities and the struggle for immediate reforms.<sup>4</sup>

The various labour political tendencies united in Winnipeg to form a lively political sub-culture. Market Square became the centre for colourful soap-box orators, where radicals competed with each other and with the Salvation Army for converts. Crowds sometimes numbered five hundred and participated with heckling, questions and boos. W.T.L.C. meetings became lively forums for debates on every conceivable issue of interest to the working class. There was often standing room only as labour activists crowded in to follow the debates or to join them. Organizations such as the Winnipeg Women's Labour League (W.W.L.L.) and the Winnipeg Ministerial Association were allowed to affiliate, though in the heady days of December 1918 the latter was expelled as contrary to the interests of Labour.<sup>5</sup> Winnipeg's weekly labour paper, The Voice, later the Western Labour News, reflected labour's diversity. Its editorial policy was moderate labourism, yet its pages included

regular columns by such various groups as the S.P.C., S.D.P. and the Single Tax League. It regularly covered events in the working class movement internationally and frequently printed extensive excerpts or serializations of British socialist writings.

This working class organizational and political life was dominated by British and Canadian-born workers, schooled in the rising tide of class politics and "new unionism" which marked this period in the old country and was increasingly influential in Canada. But the large eastern European community was producing its own radical current, with able leaders like J. Penner,\* M. Popovitch, W. N. Kolisnyk and H. Saltzman. Largely separated from the Anglo-Saxon debates, they overlapped with them in the foreign language branches of the S.P.C. and S.D.P., and in unions such as those in the garment industry where the membership was largely eastern European.

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\*Born in Russia in 1880, Penner immigrated to Winnipeg in 1904. A Marxist, he immediately involved himself in the Socialist Party of Canada (S.P.C.). He split along with the S.D.P. in 1911, becoming one of the leaders of its Jewish section. Having worked as a teacher, florist and accountant, in 1919 he was active in the general strike as a member of the Retail Clerks union. After the strike he joined the O.B.U. and was a delegate to its C.L.C. A founding member of the Workers (Communist) Party and a member of its first Central Committee, he left the O.B.U. in 1922. After running for office several times he was finally elected alderman in 1933, a post he held for nearly thirty years before he retired in 1962. His public life was only interrupted for the two years he spent interned in a concentration camp in 1941 - 1942, for his anti-war views and his membership in the Communist Party.

While this dynamic sub-culture was limited in numbers, the rapid growth of both unions and labour political parties, and the popularity of The Voice, all indicate that it was becoming increasingly influential in the working class. If political positions and influences varied widely, by the end of the war the debates reveal a strong common thread of aggressive class consciousness. The days of Capital seemed numbered, and in some unclear manner many workers believed that labour would soon come into its own.

The outbreak of war in the Fall of 1914 slowed down this process at first. While most labour activists opposed the war as an imperialist blood bath, the rank and file were swept up by the patriotic fervour to defeat "the Hun." But as the war dragged on attitudes began to change. The stench of the trenches began to reach Canada as the death toll mounted. Inflation began to erode living standards while war profiteering brought into question the justice of the war effort, if not the war. With the introduction of conscription new opposition to the conscription of men but not wealth began to surface. Radicals again began to gain influence and union positions away from moderates and conservatives.

In 1917 a new influence was felt as news of the Russian revolution began to reach Winnipeg. Socialists and eastern Europeans in particular eagerly watched events, as for the first time the working class seized power from a

previously invulnerable capitalism. When this was followed in 1918 by a wave of revolutionary upsurges throughout central and eastern Europe, many began to wonder if perhaps socialist "utopias" were possible after all--if not now, soon; if not here, elsewhere.

Out of this matrix of frustration, optimism, and above all consciousness of the potential power of the working class, came the growing popularity of the general strike. The year 1918 saw frequent debates in Trades and Labour Councils throughout the west on the effectiveness of the general strike as a tactic to win labour's demands. The specific issues varied widely. In the spring many Winnipeg unionists, including those in the vast rail shops, walked out in support of striking civic workers. In July a strike was threatened across the west in aid of the postal workers' demands. In August most Vancouver workers downed tools for a day to protest the slaying of Ginger Goodwin, a prominent unionist, by the Dominion Police, allegedly while he attempted to avoid arrest as a draft dodger. In October the Calgary Trades and Labour Council began preparations for a general strike in support of C.P.R. freight handlers. In December a general strike was debated in light of federal Orders in Council banning numerous radical and ethnic groups. In many of these instances, general strikes or their threat won significant gains for the workers involved. This was an important lesson.<sup>6</sup>

While industrial and political ferment was sweeping through western labour, central Canada lagged far behind. Eastern workers were not immune to the influences at work in the west and were, to a much smaller degree, evolving in the same direction.<sup>7</sup> Whatever the reasons for the large gap between the radicalism and militancy of western workers, and their relatively underdeveloped brothers and sisters in central Canada, the gap itself was a reality.

The differences between the west and the majority of the Trades and Labour Congress came to a head at the Congress's convention held in Quebec City in September, 1918, with vital consequences for Winnipeg Labour. The western delegates went with a series of resolutions which amounted to a program for transforming the Congress into a militant, class-conscious industrial union central dedicated to the overthrow of capitalism. One by one all of the western proposals were defeated, despite the support of some eastern delegates. In the ensuing election of officers, western nominees were defeated by more conservative leaders from central Canada. Bitter and frustrated the western delegates caucused and decided to call a conference of locals west of Fort William, Ontario to determine how to respond to this setback.

The result was the Western Labour Conference, held in Calgary in March, 1919. Its composition reflected the changing nature of western unionism. Trade union radicals, particularly members of the S.P.C. had been steadily

gaining influence in their local unions, district labour councils and provincial federations. This process reached its climax at Calgary, when a concerted effort by the "reds" helped them get elected in large numbers to the Conference. The result was a series of radical resolutions, adopted almost unanimously including one endorsing the "dictatorship of the proletariat." The Conference culminated in the call for the formation of a new all-encompassing union to be called the One Big Union (O.B.U.).

Arrangements were made for a referendum ballot for all Canadian unionists to decide whether or not to launch the O.B.U. However votes were to be counted separately for east and west. While understanding the need to win over eastern unionists, western labour was in no mood to wait for them. The delegates went home with high hopes for creating a union that at last reflected their aspirations.<sup>8</sup> But before the balloting had been completed the general strike broke out in Winnipeg and a watershed in labour history was reached.

\* \* \* \* \*

In order to understand the nature and importance of this watershed, it is necessary to look more closely at the dynamics of Winnipeg's labour movement in the years leading up to 1919. This in turn requires--if we hope to go beyond a purely organizational chronicle--some degree

of comprehension of the level of consciousness of the working class. This is a difficult task and one which shows the limitations of history as a science. Yet it is vital. The men and women who walked out in support of the metal trades in 1919 were by and large the same ones who made up the working class in the twenties. Yet the political and social dynamics of the working class and its relations with the rest of society appear to have changed quite dramatically over the decade, 1919 - 1929, which is the focus of this work.

In attempting to evaluate class consciousness a historian faces two obvious dangers rooted in the imprecise evidence. It is always tempting to romanticize the past-- to find in it what we wish to find and see a sophistication and nobility which is moving but unreal. On the other hand it is easy to overlook the very real differences, political, social and cultural, which set apart various periods in history. Instead of romanticizing labour history, this error can lead to writing into the entire past the insipid passivity so typical of North American labour since the fifties.

One way to help conceptualize working class consciousness while avoiding these twin dangers is to divide the working class between the masses, or rank and file, and the vanguard or activists. What differentiates the vanguard from the mass of workers is their development of a degree of class consciousness, and their participation in the life of working class or predominantly working class



organizations, such as unions and labour parties, not only during a strike or on election day but on a more or less ongoing basis. While admittedly there can be no hard line marking one group off from another, this concept does allow the recognition of the uneven development of consciousness and activity which is a fundamental characteristic of the working class.<sup>9</sup>

Such a sociological definition of vanguard lumps together workers with a wide variety of political beliefs, from labourism to Marxism. These were the people who led the organizing drives in their workplaces, packed W.T.L.C. meetings and attended the street-corner debates and political forums. They read the labour press and debated craft versus industrial unionism, reform versus revolution, social gospel versus atheism. They argued the need for class solidarity and were the first to lay down their tools against perceived injustice. While some became prominent in their unions or in labour politics, many more played their role as shop stewards or activists in the various working class political parties and progressive ethnic associations.

In a largely immigrant society the influences which shaped this group were as varied as their homelands. Russian populism and revolutionary Marxism, central European social democracy, British labourism, new unionism and religious dissent, American and Australian syndicalism,

all played a role in shaping their outlook. But if their solutions varied, they saw a common problem in the inequity and inhumanity of twentieth century capitalism.

By the second decade of the century this active minority was increasingly bound together by an aggressive class consciousness which combined a spirit of rationalism with a strong moralism. A tendency to disparage organized religion was tempered by a strong current of Christian socialism among union activists such as Fred Tipping\* and R. A. Rigg, both of whom had been preachers, in the Baptist and Methodist churches respectively. It was almost inevitable that this dynamic pole would attract such social gossellers as A. E. Smith, William Ivens,\*\* and J. S. Woodsworth to the labour movement, winning all three to socialism in the process.

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\*Tipping, like so many others, was English, born in 1886 and came to Canada in 1905. A carpenter by trade and a Christian socialist, he returned to school in Brandon and became a Baptist minister. In 1910 he got a job teaching carpentry at Lord Roberts School where he was to teach for forty years, rising to become school vice-principal. Active in the Carpenters union and a founding member of the S.D.P., Tipping earned the hostility of the W.T.L.C.'s radicals in 1919 when he signed a conciliation report criticizing the union side in the metal shops dispute. Impeached as president of the W.T.L.C., he remained active in it and was later to serve on its executive for many years until he retired in 1952. During the general strike he was the only teacher to walk out. Despite his membership in the W.T.L.C., he joined the O.B.U. supporters in splitting from the D.L.P. and forming the I.L.P. in 1921. Though never elected to public office Tipping was a frequent standard bearer for the I.L.P. and later the C.C.F. and remained an active socialist until his death in 1973.

\*\*Born in England in 1878, Ivens immigrated to Winnipeg in 1896 and took up his trade as a gardener.

Perhaps the most salient development in the vanguard in the decade before 1919 was its growth in size, particularly in the last half of the war. As unions were organized, grew and became more militant, an increasing number of workers became involved. In the last war years this involved groups with no previous trade union experience such as clerks and packinghouse workers.<sup>10</sup> Increased labour political activity likewise brought in new activists, while in the non-English speaking ethnic communities organizations such as the Ukrainian Labour Temple Association, formed in 1918, joined the foreign language political groups in involving immigrants in class-oriented activities.<sup>11</sup> The Labour Church ensured that even the religious had a class-based outlet for their activity.

Along with the growth of the vanguard came an increasing acceptance of radical ideas. Anti-capitalism, industrial unionism and the general strike became issues which by the end of the war united the bulk of the vanguard. In March, 1918 the most moderate labour political group,

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As an adult he returned to school and in 1909 was ordained a Methodist minister. A proponent of the social gospel and a strong trade union advocate, he came under increasing attack for his opposition to the first war and was finally expelled from the church. He became editor of the Western Labour News and the founder of the Labour Church. Convicted of Sedition in 1919 he was elected as a Labour M.L.A. while still in prison--a position he held until his defeat in 1936. Probably the most radical of the social gospel ministers and an aggressive and popular speaker, he later became a chiropractor and ceased to play a prominent role in politics.

the Dominion Labour Party (D.L.P.), adopted a platform which included a call for the replacement of capitalist property relationships with social ones.<sup>12</sup> But this was not a simple linear evolution. Men like J. L. McBride,\* while a member of the 1919 Strike Committee and of the D.L.P., were never radicals in any sense. Others, like W. H. C. Logan, the chairman of the 1919 Strike Committee, while socialists and in favour of industrial unions, were still moderates with an evolutionary view of social transformation. A last group were the revolutionary socialists like R. B. Russell of the S.P.C. and a machinist or Jacob Penner of the S.D.P. and active in organizing the Retail Clerks. This group's rejection of bourgeois society

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\*McBride was business agent of the Winnipeg Electricians for some thirty years, beginning in 1910, and also served several terms on the Executive Board of his International. Active in politics he served as Reeve of Assiniboia for part of the twenties. Never a socialist, he had briefly been a member of the D.L.P. after the war. Violently anti-O.B.U. and anti-communist, he soon abandoned labour politics and was a member of the Conservative Party by 1925 when he ran against the I.L.P. as an independent candidate for alderman. From the war until 1926 he was on the W.T.L.C. executive and on the Manitoba Executive of the Trades and Labour Council. In 1926 he went too far even for the moderate W.T.L.C. when he, along with W. Owens, W.T.L.C. president, supported the hated Mayor Webb for mayor. At least one large local union disaffiliated from the W.T.L.C. in protest. Under pressure both McBride and Owens resigned their positions and neither ever again held any union position outside of their own unions.

was near total, and it looked to a revolutionary transformation of society. It was this last group which was to provide the hard core of both the O.B.U. and the Communist Party (C.P.) in Winnipeg.

The process of radicalization took two forms. On the one hand virtually the whole vanguard appears to have moved to the left. The struggles up to 1919 against employer and state hostility, the horrors of the great war, and the example of revolutionary upsurges internationally all had their effect. On the other hand, the most radical among the vanguard increased their influence within the labour movement. This was particularly true of the unions, where radicals began to win an increasing number of positions as Business Agents, editors and on local executives in a variety of unions including key ones such as the Machinists, Boilermakers, Garment Workers and Carpenters. But while they gained in strength, they were still unable to win control of the W.T.L.C., where James Winning of the Bricklayers and a moderate defeated R. B. Russell eighty-one to fifty in the fight for the presidency in 1918.<sup>13</sup> Conversely, when Fred Tipping, a carpenter and member of the S.D.P. opposed the 1918 contract metal shops' strike the radicals were able to have him removed from the presidency of the W.T.L.C. and replaced by another modearte who was more willing to reflect the rank and file's militancy.<sup>14</sup> Similarly, when

Arthur Puttee,\* Winnipeg's most prominent advocate of labourism, and editor of the Voice, opposed the 1918 civic workers strike, the radicals were able to get the T.L.C. to publish its own weekly, the Western Labour News, forcing the Voice to fold.<sup>15</sup> Thus the left wing of the unions were unable to win the leadership of Winnipeg unionism, but were able to exercise an effective veto over the moderate leadership.

While the vanguard increased in size, became radicalized and developed an increasingly strong left, another equally important process was at work. This was the narrowing of the gap between the views and programs of the vanguard and those of the rank and file. Judging by the support for unionism and labour political candidates the vanguard had the support of a minority, albeit a

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\*Born in Folkstone, England in 1868, Puttee immigrated to Canada in 1880. Apprenticing as a compositor, he worked in Canada and the U.S. before settling in Winnipeg in 1888 and becoming active in the International Typographical Union and labour politics. Active in founding the W.T.L.C. and the Voice, Puttee was a moderate who preached independent working class political action. In 1899, now editor of the Voice he was nominated by the W.T.L.C. to run for Parliament. With Liberal support he won and in a second election in the Fall of 1900 he was again successful with Liberal support. Four years later the support was withdrawn and he was defeated. He continued to edit the Voice until 1918, when his active opposition to the successful civic workers strike led the W.T.L.C. to withdraw its support and start the Western Labour News. After he folded the Voice, Puttee ceased to play a leading role in Winnipeg's labour movement. By 1923 he was proprietor of the Printers Roller Company, a position he held until he retired in 1953. An active member of the Unitarian Church, he also became head of the Parks Commission. In the forties he favoured the expulsion of "reds" from the unions--unions, he felt, had become dangerous because they were too strong.

growing minority, of the working class. With the imposition of conscription, and even more with the ending of the war a major source of friction between the vanguard and many of the rank and file was removed. Support for the war had been almost as strong in the rank and file as hostility to it was in the vanguard. Falling living standards, political repression, war profiteering, and the general crisis of confidence in a system which led to the slaughter of 1914 - 1918 combined to make the class more willing to support militancy and radicalism than ever before. By the end of 1918 the vanguard seemed more reflective of the views of the rank and file than at any previous point in the century. The semi-general strike of May, 1918 indicated how rapidly this process was progressing. By the Spring of 1919 the vanguard could hold referenda on a general strike and the formation of the radical O.B.U. with every expectation of winning sweeping majorities among organized workers.

The Winnipeg general strike was the culmination of these processes. The growing strength, combativeness and confidence of the unions, the growth and radicalization of the vanguard, the crisis of confidence in capitalism brought on by war and economic dislocation, all came together in an unprecedented display of working class solidarity. The majority of Winnipeg workers, including the overwhelming majority of blue-collar workers, walked out, often without the benefit of a union, to support other workers and defend

unionism. While this was no revolution, it was clearly an aggressive attempt to win a greater share of the wealth and power in society. In this attempt the vanguard showed how closely it was in tune with the mass of the working class.

Before progressing further, it is necessary to look at some of the issues which divided the vanguard and the class as a whole, and in particular to evaluate what labour radicalism meant in 1919. The issues can be divided into two related components. The first area of dispute related to unionism. The second involved labour's political activity.

In union matters the key issue was undoubtedly craft versus industrial unionism. The dominant, and conservative, tradition was that unions could only be organized effectively on craft lines and that craft peculiarities were the most important factor to workers. The radicals argued that this view was obsolete as modern industry minimized craft differences and made possible and necessary the organization of all workers by industry.<sup>16</sup> The program of the radicals reflected an analysis which saw that the most important factor for workers was not their craft, but their place as workers in a class society. The general strike was a logical out-growth of the latter view, and ran counter to the conservative view that the craftsman's monopoly on skill was the key to union struggles.



Another point of demarcation centred around union democracy and the bureaucracy. The radicals favoured a maximum of union democracy, with membership votes required to choose a union, approve contracts, decide policy and strikes and elect officials. While conservative labour should not be seen as an autocratic monolith, it did tend to maximize the role of the union head office and paid staff. It tended to ignore the rank and file, and democracy, when it felt that the union and/or the bureaucracy were threatened.<sup>17</sup>

Closely related to democracy was the issue of the bureaucracy. With the growth in union membership and dues income, unions had increasingly turned to paid, full-time officials to handle union affairs. In the major unions these jobs were well-paid--always higher than any working member's wage--and at the highest echelons several times as much as any member earned. The problem was that these full-time officials tended to play an increasing role in decision-making. Often appointed by the union head office and paid by them, these officials owed their first loyalty, and their new found prosperity, to the continued approval of higher placed officials rather than the membership. The radicals argued that this detached the bureaucrats from the life style and feelings of the rank and file. The left distrusted the bureaucrats' power and divided loyalties. They sought to mitigate the dangers of bureaucratization by limiting officials' pay to that of a skilled worker and by

making more staff positions elective.

Conservative unionism, by contrast, found its strongest backers within the bureaucracy. Fearing any structural change would unseat them, they tended to resist industrial unionism. A highly paid staff and centralized power in the hands of the union hierarchy represented for the right wing a necessary part of union strength. Underlying this was distrust of the rank and file who might act "rashly" if they were not guided by their "leaders."<sup>18</sup>

On the union questions it is clear that the majority of the activists held views that can be described as radical. In addition to the Marxists of the S.P.C. and the S.D.P. many moderates like Winning and Veitch supported the radical program submitted by western locals to the 1918 Trades and Labour Congress convention. The strikes, union elections and referendum ballots of 1918 and 1919 indicate that on union issues the radicals reflected the views of a large majority of Winnipeg's organized workers. The vote on the 1919 general strike was passed 11,000 to 500, while the vote in favour of forming the O.B.U. was almost as lopsided at 8,841 to 705. Results like these in the face of press and government hostility leave little doubt as to rank and file sentiment.

In the arena of political action the basic question had for years been whether or not the working class should enter the political arena on its own as a class. While the vast majority of the vanguard by the end of the war agreed

it should, this was a fairly recent agreement. As late as the 1910 provincial election, the labour candidate ran with the backing of the Liberal Party.<sup>19</sup> This was in keeping with the British tradition of Liberal/Labour cooperation, which did not end until 1909, when the last Liberal/Labour M.P.'s affiliated to the Labour Party, itself only formally organized since 1906.<sup>20</sup> The absence of a viable labour party in the U.S. to this day reflects the hostility of most of the International union leadership. In this context even labour reformism seemed radical to many, as it assumed some sort of class analysis of society.

By 1918 the debate between radicals and conservatives in the unions had shifted in emphasis to the program of labour in politics. The key question was whether labour parties were designed solely to improve conditions under capitalism--as one interest group among many in a pluralist society--or whether their ultimate goal was the eradication of capitalism. By the end of the war all of the working class parties had adopted the second view, and it is safe to say that the vanguard had adopted a radical stance in politics, though by no means unanimously. The rank and file were far more deeply divided. Prior to 1918 a minority of them had voted for working class parties. But from the municipal elections of December 1918 on, the majority of Winnipeg's workers gave their support to one of the relatively radical working class parties, though a large minority continued to vote for bourgeois parties.<sup>21</sup>

By the criteria used here--which to a large degree transcend the immediate time and place--the vanguard was indeed radical in a basic sense on both union and political issues. This was how they saw themselves and how they were seen by the more conservative unionists of central Canada and the U.S. It was certainly how they were seen by the city's intellectual, political and economic elite.

For the rank and file no such generalization is possible. As a class they lacked the experience, sophistication and cohesion which allowed for the relatively consistent positions of the activists. While their views on union issues were quite radical, on political issues they were deeply divided. In most cases their views on both areas were more ambivalent, less thought out and more subject to change than those of the vanguard. An example of this ambivalence was the continued adherence to the bourgeois parties of thousands of workers who had joined the general strike. Yet, like the vanguard, the class as a whole had been moving towards more radical and militant policies in the years leading up to 1919. In the strike itself and in the civic and provincial elections which followed it, this process reached its peak.

The outstanding characteristic of the following decade was the reversal of this process of radicalization in the working class and its relative quiescence in the industrial arena. This was not a Winnipeg or even a North American phenomenon. In Europe this period of

radicalization in the last years of the war and the period immediately after it has been characterized the "red years"<sup>22</sup> and had led to the Russian revolution, Soviet government in Bavaria and Hungary, the wave of factory occupations in northern Italy, major electoral gains for the Labour Party and the radical shop stewards movement centred on the "Red Clyde" in Britain. But in Europe, as in Winnipeg, the twenties saw a series of defeats inflicted on the radical labour movement. The German revolution was bloodily suppressed, the Hungarian Soviet overthrown by the Rumanian army and Italy fell under the control of fascism. In Britain and France bourgeois parties were able to keep control of the government and after the defeat of the 1926 general strike in Britain, its union movement sunk into passivity. Even Russia, where the Soviet government was able to keep power, was faced with civil war and foreign invasion. The result was a retreat from workers democracy and war communism to the New Economic Policy, "socialism in one country" and bureaucratic Stalinism.<sup>23</sup> The factors which caused this defeat of working class radicalism are as numerous and complex as those which caused its growth. But in Winnipeg the defeat of the general strike overshadows all other factors, leaving its mark on the whole of the following decade.

In May, 1919 Winnipeg workers entered the strike united, aggressive and confident. Previous general strikes or their threat had forced concessions, and in the spring

of 1919 the labour movement was stronger in numbers and spirit than ever before. A repeat of earlier victories seemed imminent. But while the strength and determination of labour had grown, this growth was vastly inferior to that of the opposition. By 1919 two factors had shifted the balance of forces dramatically.

The first was the ending of the war. The need to maintain peace at home in order to win the war was replaced in the ranks of government and business by the need to re-establish a stable capitalist society. The means were placed in their hands, in part at least, by the end of full employment and the return of thousands of soldiers to the labour force.

The second key difference was the size of the stakes. A general strike is not necessarily revolutionary, so long as it is limited in its aims, duration and/or scope, no matter how distasteful it is to government and business. However by 1919 the use of the general strike was becoming a regular tactic of western labour. Moreover, with the call for the One Big Union, sent out in March of 1919, labour threatened to organized systematically, with revolutionary goals, and in such a manner as to make the general strike the normal course of last resort. This could indeed dramatically shift the balance of class forces. If unchecked, it would challenge both capital's profits and its social control.

As both sides agreed, a victory for the Winnipeg

strikers in this context would have greatly increased the chance of the O.B.U. being launched successfully, and might even have led to it being established in central Canada. All of this must also be placed in the context of revolutions in Europe and the social and economic dislocations involved in demobilizing and integrating thousands of veterans and shifting from a war to a peace economy. While playing their small role in Allied efforts to curtail revolution abroad, the government and bourgeoisie of Canada were determined to deal firmly with unrest at home.

It is not necessary to repeat the story of the general strike itself. D. J. Bercuson's Confrontation at Winnipeg does an admirable job, and nothing of importance could be added here. It is enough to point to the strike as symbolic of the strength, radicalism and elan of Winnipeg's labour movement at its peak. For it is not the strike but its defeat which marks a fitting beginning to the decade of retreat--what I. Bernstein, in his history of American labour in the twenties calls The Lean Years.<sup>24</sup>

To describe the strike's end on June 26, 1919 as a defeat would be to understate the case. On June 17, six prominent radical leaders, who had been the voice of the most militant workers were jailed and later released on bail conditional on their non-involvement in the strike. On June 21, "Bloody Saturday," police, special constables and the military drove the strikers and their supporters from the streets, leaving one dead and numerous injured.

On June 25 a demoralized strike committee ordered a return to work, without a vote by the strikers. No concessions were made to the workers except the perennial promise of a Royal Commission. No assurance was given that strikers would be rehired and many were not. The decisions of the strike committee left the rank and file cut off from events except as historical objects. The result was not an orderly retreat but a rout.

The nature of the return to work boded ill for the future. By the twenty-fifth some workers had already begun to drift back to work while others, notably government employees, were being replaced wholesale. Yet the strike was still largely effective, despite an estimated 3,000 veterans having taken strikers' jobs.<sup>25</sup> When rumours of a settlement began to spread and especially after the strike committee had called for a return to work at 11:00 a.m., June 26, chaos ensued. Frightened workers raced each other to return first and get whatever positions had not been filled.<sup>26</sup> Most waited until the deadline, then returned to work to find themselves in many cases fired or forced to reapply for their jobs on an equal footing with new applicants. Some groups, such as the Retail Clerks, refused to return until all the strikers were guaranteed their jobs. Few, if any, won this demand and they were replaced or drifted back to work.<sup>27</sup> An atmosphere of helplessness spread. For weeks after the end of the strike accusations of betrayal were hurled at the



strike committee by the more militant workers. In the rail shops the Carmen's Council, representing some fifteen hundred workers, demanded a formal investigation of the sell-out.<sup>28</sup> The absence of a vote combined with a total lack of concessions to breed bitterness and disillusionment.

If the terms and method of settlement left workers bitter and confused, the repression which followed much have left them demoralized and frightened. Precise data is non-existent, but at least 3,500 strikers lost their jobs, including policemen, firemen, telephone operators, express clerks, retail clerks, engineers, porters, rail shopmen and metal workers.<sup>29</sup> The importance of this in a city of less than 200,000 people is not difficult to imagine. In addition to those who lost their jobs, thousands were rehired without their seniority, losing the security, money and privileges which normally accompany long service.

In addition to these economic sanctions, many strikers faced legal charges arising from their strike activity. While the leaders' trials made the front page, scores of others were arrested. An extra Police Magistrate and two extra Crown Prosecutors had to be appointed to handle the load while Sir Hugh J. Macdonald, a regular magistrate, sat up at night studying to make sure none of the charged strikers got off on technicalities.<sup>30</sup> Charged for their activities on picket lines and demonstrations some were released after several days in jail, while others were convicted and received sentences varying from fines to

prison sentences as high as 2 years. In addition to the formal charges, police staged midnight raids on the homes of some fifty union activists on the night of June 30, in search of evidence of subversive activities.

But, however many were affected by legal repression, its impact was insignificant beside the economic sanctions. This was particularly true of the vanguard. While some employers replaced their whole staff, most forced the strikers to reapply individually for their jobs. People considered troublemakers before or during the strike were likely to find their applications rejected. The employers' definition of troublemaker and our definition of vanguard likely were very similar. Blacklists were circulated among employers to ensure that the most active militants failed to find work anywhere in the city.<sup>31</sup> The mood of defeat and despair was summed up in the July 2, 1919 edition of the Western Labour News:

It was inevitable that thousands of men and women would be refused their former positions if the strike failed . . . . The workers are whipped. The peace is a peace of violence. The result will be another France after the year 1870.<sup>32</sup>

Those who lost their jobs, and even more so those who were blacklisted, faced the prospect of destitution. Unemployment insurance was still only a slogan, and the city was unlikely to grant even the miserly welfare benefits to able-bodied strikers. Working class living standards of the period allowed for little saving and what reserves had been accumulated were exhausted by six weeks or more

on strike. But these punitive aspects of victimization of strikers were not the only effects.

For the vanguard must have suffered far out of proportion to its size. In numerous factories and shops this meant that the activists who would normally take the lead in organizing or re-organizing the unions were physically removed from their base. This must have seriously hampered any attempts to regroup after the strike's defeat in order to prepare for future struggles to improve conditions.

One result of this decapitation of the class was the elimination of unions from many industries. Another was that, on the shop floor level at least, union and political radicalism lost many of their ablest defenders. This of necessity enhanced the role and influence of more conservative workers, while leaving many rank and file radicals in something of a vacuum. Often lacking a constructive channel for their anger and frustration, disaffection and discouragement spread among many of the activists and the rank and file.

It is impossible to know what went on in the innumerable kitchens, cafes, porches and parks where the informal discussions so vital to working class consciousness took place. How many militants were warned by spouse, family, friends and neighbours to "watch their step" and think of their families and futures? And if this is true for native-born or British workers, how much more of a factor would it be for eastern European immigrants. In

addition to the economic dangers, they risked deportation to a region torn by war, revolution and famine. While it appears that politically motivated deportations were used sparingly, the threat was real.<sup>33</sup>

The rapid increase in electoral support for working class parties indicates that in the aftermath of the strike most workers were unrepentent. Several strike leaders were to be elected to the legislature while still imprisoned for subversion. It is clear that anger at the injustices of the capitalist system and at the repression of the strike was widespread. But for many electoral politics became the only way to express it. Electoral politics in turn are inherently a conservative form of struggle inasmuch as they allow the mass of the workers, including the vanguard, little or no room for effective activity between elections.

The effects of the defeat of the strike on the vanguard were deep. It soon lost in numbers as the faint hearted--or realistic--dropped from activity to concentrate on the struggle to earn a living. Others whose roots in Winnipeg were less deep moved on to other cities to escape the blacklist and the non-union shops. Those that remained had little reason to desert their radical perspectives. If anything, the actions of employers and government in the strike had borne out the analysis of the Marxists.<sup>34</sup> Yet workers doubtless became more cautious in their militancy. There was nothing in post-strike Winnipeg to endear capitalism or the government to them. But there was ample

evidence that to fight them was a risky, costly business, and perhaps a hopeless one.

It was in this cold climate that the O.B.U. was born in Winnipeg and the Internationals attempted to re-establish themselves. As the decade of the twenties unfolded there was little to offer encouragement. The working class was torn by divisions between the O.B.U. and the Internationals. Much of the decade was marred by a depression which increased unemployment and weakened workers' ability to defend their living standards. On a world scale reaction seemed to triumph everywhere except Soviet Russia, which began to show signs of a serious degeneration from its earlier ideals. All of these factors were to sap labour's radicalism and militancy. Yet the defeat of the strike had a deep impact on the class, both subjectively and organizationally. It marked, not just the symbolic, but the real beginning of "The Lean Years" in Winnipeg.

## CHAPTER II

The conflicts of the next eighteen months, through to the end of 1920, took place amidst a mixed economic environment. There was a continued increase in employment in Winnipeg, with the number of employees in manufacturing up by more than 20% from 1918 to 1920.<sup>1</sup> Construction picked up only modestly in 1919, partly because of the strike but in 1920 rose to about triple its wartime level measured by value of building permits.<sup>2</sup> While these figures show significant economic growth, they were insufficient to absorb the thousands of returned veterans, leading to a significant level of unemployment. As well, war time inflation continued unabated until late 1920, putting a strain on workers' living standards.

The effects of these economic developments on Winnipeg's working class were mixed. Some trades in short supply, particularly the building trades and printers, saw substantial increases in their real wages, after accounting for inflation. However, the steady layer of unemployed veterans, combined with the effects of the strike's defeat served to keep most wages down. In the context of rapid inflation this frequently meant substantial decreases in real wages. Particularly hard hit were the metal trades, whose wages had peaked in 1918 - 1919 as a result of strong

demand in the munitions industry and railshops, and who had suffered a major defeat in the contract shops' strike. These trades saw their average real wages fall by nearly 10% from 1919 to 1920. No accurate data on wage rates for the unskilled or semi-skilled is available, with the exception of construction labourers. In a period of relative boom they saw their real wages rise by only 3% from 1919 to 1920.<sup>3</sup> It seems unlikely that in other industries any significant gains were made among this class of worker, but this is of necessity speculative.

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It was in this environment that the conflict between the Internationals and the O.B.U. took its initial form. Based on the strong vote for the O.B.U. in the referendum, a meeting had been scheduled for June 4, in Calgary, which formally organized the O.B.U. as an industrial union with a socialist perspective.<sup>4</sup> None of the key supporters had been able to attend because of the strike, which also delayed the O.B.U.'s formation in Winnipeg. But as the last strikers returned to work or were replaced, the union conflict quickly took shape.

The July 15, 1919 W.T.L.C. meeting heard a report from the O.B.U.'s founding conference and were informed of the referendum results. Winnipeg's union members had voted overwhelmingly for the new union. R. A. Rigg,\*

speaking as the newly hired representative of the Trades and Labour Congress, presented the argument against leaving the International movement and was supported by the entire executive. The delegates, however, reflecting the referendum results and two decades of increasing militancy, voted overwhelmingly to affiliate to the O.B.U. and struck off a committee to report on how to do so.<sup>5</sup>

Two weeks later the W.T.L.C. voted to adopt a new constitution in line with that of the O.B.U. and to return its charter to the Trades and Labour Congress. The Winnipeg Central Labour Council (C.L.C.) of the O.B.U. was born. New officers were elected, with W. H. C. Logan\*\*

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\*Born in Lancashire, England in 1872, Rigg had gone to work in a cotton mill at age ten. He later took up theology and worked as a Methodist preacher for two years before coming to Winnipeg c. 1904. Working as a bookbinder, he served as president of his union for three years, and from 1910 to 1916 was on the W.T.L.C. executive, including a year as President and another as the Council's first paid organizer. A long-time socialist, he left the S.P.C. and was a founding member of the S.D.P. Elected alderman in 1913 and M.L.A. in 1915, he had resigned to enlist in the army in 1918 although he had opposed conscription. On his return from France in 1919, he became active in the strike, and drafted the pro-strike motion passed by the veteran's meeting of May, 1919. Articulate, respected and competent, he spearheaded the fight against the O.B.U. in Winnipeg until December, 1919. At that time, he was rewarded by a job as Western Superintendent of the Employment Service of Canada, rising in 1922 to the head of the Service.

\*\*Logan, a machinist, had worked for the C.N.R. since 1909. Active in his local and the W.T.L.C., he was a moderate socialist and member of the Dominion Labour Party (D.L.P.). A delegate to the Western Labour Conference in Calgary and chairman of the General Strike Committee, he was a natural choice to head the new C.L.C. He held the position for two years, later returning to the International Association of Machinists (I.A.M.) where he was on the executive of his own local for the last half of the twenties.



as chairman and R. B. Russell\* Secretary. With the central body formed, O.B.U. adherents took on the task of signing up members, structuring local units and transforming the O.B.U. from an ideal into a functioning union.

The loyalist executive of the W.T.L.C., spurred on by Riggs, acted equally quickly. Seizing control of the Council's property, they called a new meeting to which only those delegates loyal to the Internationals were admitted. At the meeting, the policy of excluding all but loyal men was ruthlessly enforced. Delegates such as H. G. Veitch\*\* whose union remained in the International, but whose personal sympathies were O.B.U., and W. Miller whose union

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\*Russell was born in Glasgow in 1889, where he was active in his union and the Independent Labour Party before coming to Winnipeg in 1911. Employed in the C.P.R. shops, he was active in the S.P.C. and by 1913 was business agent for I.A.M. District Lodge #2, a job he kept until 1919. Jailed for sedition in 1919 he remained Secretary of the O.B.U., and the C.L.C. until they merged into the Canadian Labour Congress in 1956, when he was made Secretary of the merged council. He ran for public office several times for the S.P.C. and later the I.L.P.

\*\*Veitch, described by the W.T.L.C.'s lawyer as "blundering, well-intentioned Henry," had come to Winnipeg from Scotland in 1910. In 1912 he had formed Wallingford Press in partnership with four other Printing Trades activists, and worked there as General Manager until he retired in 1954. Keeping his union membership in the Pressmen's union he served three terms as W.T.L.C. president during the war, and was active in the D.L.P. and later the Independent Labour Party (I.L.P.).

was paying dues to both the O.B.U. and the International were turned away. Thus, not only unions which had decided to join the O.B.U. were barred, but also any who waived or showed O.B.U. sympathies.<sup>6</sup> This was a gamble which risked driving the waivering elements into the O.B.U.'s arms. Yet it paid off in that it provided an undivided and secure base and continuity from which the Internationals could work at rebuilding their ranks.

The restructured W.T.L.C. was little more than a loyalist rump parliament. Initially claiming 8,000 affiliated members, by the end of 1919 it claimed only 5,000, down from 10,500 in 1918.<sup>7</sup> Given the massive initial support for the O.B.U., the substantial loss of members with the breaking of the strike, and the disaffiliation of the thousand-member Street Rail union, even the figure of 5,000 is undoubtedly exaggerated. In addition to the W.T.L.C.'s numbers the Internationals could claim the support of between fifteen hundred and two thousand Winnipeg members of the "big four" railway running trades unions--Locomotive Engineers, Locomotive Firemen, Trainmen and Conductors. While hostile to the O.B.U. and industrial unionism, they however maintained their traditional policy of remaining aloof from the rest of the labour movement and did not affiliate to the W.T.L.C.

If the loyalists were relatively weak in terms of rank and file support, they did not lack in other assets. They retained the intangible asset of the name and prestige

of the W.T.L.C. More significantly they retained the accumulated physical assets of Winnipeg unionism. In a series of court battles it was ruled that all buildings, equipment and funds of local unions and councils legally belonged to the chartering body (the Trades and Labour Congress and the various International unions), and were only held in trusteeship by the local bodies.<sup>8</sup> Accordingly all these assets were turned over to the remaining loyalists, no matter what the membership did or voted. The result was that the loyalists retained the physical infrastructure vital to the functioning of a union apparatus.

Behind these assets lay the relatively immense resources of the International unions. Almost every International with significant membership in Winnipeg dispatched organizers from elsewhere to aid in the fight in Winnipeg at some point in 1919 - 1920. The Trades and Labour Congress hired two special organizers to combat the O.B.U. in the west, utilizing funds from the Maintenance of Way International. One of these, Rigg, had Winnipeg as his primary responsibility and his talents and prestige proved invaluable to the loyalists. These organizers not only provided man-hours and organizational skills, but also helped to strengthen the will of local leaders, many of whom had little taste for the fratricidal war against their former comrades and friends.<sup>9</sup>

Outside of the labour movement, Winnipeg's loyalists had other allies. All levels of government, the capitalist

press, and the business community inevitably preferred the more conservative Internationals over the radical O.B.U. These allies however created some problems. Firstly, while all preferred the Internationals to the O.B.U., they were often just as convinced that no union was better than either. Secondly, while their support was crucial to the loyalist success, it raised the awkward question of why all of labour's traditional enemies preferred them. Nonetheless, the constant propaganda and frequent co-operation from these sources was an important asset.

Closely related to this was one final asset which was to prove the Internationals' most effective weapon against the O.B.U. This was the existence of collective agreements between the employers and the Internationals. It is difficult to overstate the importance of these agreements to the loyalists. It meant that only they were recognized by the employer or government as able to take up grievances over wages or working conditions. In some trades, such as the printers and garment workers, the contracts included a "closed shop" clause. This meant that only members of the International could be employed. In addition to collective agreements in existence when the O.B.U. was formed, the Internationals were often able to utilize employers' fear of the O.B.U. to continue to sign new agreements as the old ones expired. This often meant that, however few members they had, the Internationals would continue to monopolize formal worker-management

relations. The individual worker, to have any influence at all in jobs covered by these collective agreements, eventually had to join the International. The history of the inter-union conflicts in the different trades and industries makes clear the importance of this weapon.

If these combined assets were sufficient to guarantee the continued existence of International unionism in Winnipeg, they could not prevent a wholesale decline in their size and influence. One manifestation of this decline was the dissolution of unions in any form in some areas in the months following the strike. In the absence of any marked economic decline these must be primarily attributed to the defeat of the strike and the employers' aggressiveness after their victory. The two largest unions effected were the Retail Clerks and the Amalgamated Meatcutters, whose membership had peaked at over 460 and 520 respectively.<sup>10</sup> Both had been organized in Winnipeg during the war and grown rapidly, but neither had achieved any significant collective agreements. After joining the strike they had been left helpless by the settlement and both soon collapsed. The thriving meat-packing plants attempted to co-opt pro-union sentiment by setting up plant committees. With an equal number of representatives from the workers and management and a management chairman, they provided a channel for settling minor grievances while preventing collective bargaining. The ruthlessness of the retail stores and sophistication of the packing

houses were equally effective in union-busting for two decades. A Trades and Labour Congress local of packing-house workers appeared in 1937 and the Retail Clerks were re-established in 1938, but in the intervening years management power was unquestioned.

The list of casualties goes on. Some 230 brewery and flour mill workers, organized before the war into the United Brewery Workers, had their union broken. Locals of Letter Carriers in Winnipeg and Brandon were dissolved, not to be re-established until 1934. Telegraphers at Canadian Press, organized during the war into the Commercial Telegraphers Union, were left unorganized. Six directly chartered locals of the Trades and Labour Congress, representing police, firemen, caretakers, maids and municipal workers in Winnipeg's suburbs, were dissolved, in most cases after their members had been replaced by scabs. Even in the building trades, the Labourers, organized during the war, fell victim to the employers' assault. After reaching 225 members during the slow 1918 construction season, they folded in 1919 and were to remain unorganized until 1938, despite an ill-timed organizing drive in 1930. Other unions, such as the Hotel and Restaurant Employees, while they survived, saw their membership drop dramatically, in this case from some 300 to 37 in 1919.

In addition to the destruction of unions, several groups were forced into independent, unaffiliated unions, mainly among government employees. As many of their members



had been hired as strikebreakers, it is unlikely that these were much more than "company unions" at least at their inception. Among these "unions" were the Civic Employees Federation, the Gas Workers, Waterworks Operators and the Independent Brotherhood of Telephone Workers. These organizations, while weak and isolated did provide some of the benefits of unionism and collective bargaining, and some eventually affiliated to either the W.T.L.C. or the O.B.U. However, their removal from the mainstream of unionism in 1919 - 1920 weakened both the O.B.U. and the Internationals.

While the Internationals saw thousands of their members have their organizations broken or replaced by company unions, an even greater number were flocking into the O.B.U. Accurate data on O.B.U. membership in the first few months of its existence in Winnipeg is scarce. The problem of estimating membership is exacerbated by the absence of any system of dues check-off. Dues had to be collected each month by the shop steward or business agent. Even where a union had a collective agreement many workers might refuse to pay dues, or pay them irregularly. This allowed several methods of calculating membership. Convention delegates were allotted on the basis of paid-up members. For normal union activities a worker was considered a member until their dues were a period in arrears, normally three months. For propaganda purposes, all the workers in a shop covered by a collective agreement, or who had been members, might be counted.

Despite these difficulties, some fair estimates can be made of the size of the flight from the Internationals into the O.B.U. Nearly 9,000 Winnipeg unionists voted in favour of the O.B.U. in the 1919 referendum. This supports the O.B.U.'s assertion that in January, 1920 it had 8,000 members in the city, although only 3,500 were paid up. From March, 1920 to May, 1923 the financial records of the O.B.U.'s Winnipeg C.L.C. were available and allow fairly precise estimates.<sup>11</sup> Based on per capita paid by the units, these records indicate a peak membership in 1920 of 4,971, in keeping with the January paid-up membership, but well below the 1919 figure.

The O.B.U. had grown rapidly during the summer and fall of 1919. Units were organized among rail workers, the building trades, garment workers, bakers and numerous other groups. While never able to match the resources of the W.T.L.C., the union was able to elect and pay several full-time officials. Organized and structured, the units began to attempt to play their role in negotiating wages and working conditions with employers. In most cases they failed completely. To understand why it is necessary to look at some key sectors of the unionized work force in which the O.B.U. enjoyed broad support, and at developments outside of Winnipeg.

Outside of Winnipeg, and despite a large majority voting in favour of the O.B.U. in the 1919 referendum, the O.B.U. was quite weak from the outset. Partial general



strikes had taken place in most western cities in support of the Winnipeg strike and they had shared its fate. The results were swift in coming. In Vancouver, Edmonton and Calgary, demoralized O.B.U. supporters soon buckled in the face of hostility from employers, press and government, and the vigorous campaign of the Internationals to maintain their control. Workers soon drifted back into the Internationals, or simply ceased paying dues to any union. The more militant miners of Alberta and British Columbia fought to retain the O.B.U. in a series of strikes which were successfully crushed by a cynical alliance of mine owners and the Internationals, coordinated and encouraged by the federal government, which retained control over the mines under war-time legislation. With the secession of the Lumber Workers over financial and structural differences, at the September, 1920 convention, the O.B.U. virtually ceased to exist as a viable union outside of Winnipeg.<sup>12</sup>

In Winnipeg, the most important group, both in terms of numbers and influence, was the railway shopmen.<sup>13</sup> Numbering over 5,000 in Winnipeg's three major railway shops, by 1919 they were among the best organized in North America.<sup>14</sup> The shopcraft unions had also provided many of Winnipeg's leading radicals, including R. B. Russell and Dick Johns\* of the Machinists, W. Cooper\*\* of the Carmen

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\*Johns, born in Britain in 1888, started in the C.P.R. shops in 1911 at the same time as Russell. Active in I.A.M. where he held various executive positions during

and Jack Clancy\*\*\* of the Boilermakers. By the time of the strike, the railshops had established themselves as the centre of radical and industrial union sentiment in the city.

Many of the shopcrafts had been organized for less than a decade,<sup>15</sup> and it was not until 1918 that the railroads agreed to formally agree to recognize the unions.

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the war, he was also active in the S.P.C., running for them in the 1920 elections. On staff with the O.B.U. in 1919 and 1920, he then dropped out of union and political activity only to find himself blacklisted and unable to get work as a machinist. He eventually became a trades instructor for the Winnipeg School Board, going on to become a leader in the field of vocational education. Among his later activities were many years as principal of Tech-Voc High School, a term on the Winnipeg School Board, and participation in the planning of what was to become Red River Community College.

\*\*Cooper, a long-time socialist who had served 11 years on the Aberdeen city council before immigrating to Canada in 1907, was active in educational work within the O.B.U., frequently writing articles on politics, economics and philosophy for the Bulletin from a Marxist perspective.

\*\*\*Clancy had been active in his local since before the war, and in 1918 had been on staff with the Boilermakers, organizing the contract metal shops. In 1919 he was on the executive of the General Strike Committee and later of the C.L.C. Active in the D.L.P. in 1919 he nominated Ivens against Farmer, as the D.L.P.'s mayoralty candidate. Described as one of the most popular O.B.U. men in the Transcona shops, he was fired in 1924 for opposing the B and O Plan. He remained active in the O.B.U. serving for a time as organizer in Nova Scotia's coal mines, and was president of the Winnipeg C.L.C. for several years, as late as 1933.

Militant in their dealings with the railroads, the shopcrafts had initiated and led the successive organizing drives in the non-rail metal shops. In 1918 they were the first to walk out in support of the striking civic workers and in 1919 had been solidly behind the general strike. Many of the shopmen had vociferously opposed the surrender of June 26. In the aftermath of the strike the shopmen left the Internationals, from whom they had received little assistance over the years,<sup>16</sup> in droves and joined the O.B.U. At the C.N.R. shops, only the tiny Pattern-makers local had voted to remain in their international. In the C.P.R. shops the loyalists had greater strength, but it appears the O.B.U. had a large majority. The largest local in the C.P.R. shops, Carmen #371, dropped from almost 800 members to less than 50 after the strike.<sup>17</sup>

With the lines drawn attention turned to the negotiation of a contract for 1920. The existing agreement had been negotiated between the Canadian Railway War Board, representing all Canadian railways, and Division 4 of the American Federation of Labour's Railway Department, representing all the shopcrafts in Canada. In 1919, with growing evidence of the O.B.U.'s strength in the western rail shops, both the railways and Division 4 were anxious to exclude it from any role in collective bargaining. The result was an agreement reached in December, 1919, which established wages and conditions in the shops and extended union recognition to the shop floor. The latter

was important, as in previous years grievances had been handled by committees of the employees with no formal ties to the unions. Under the new agreement management undertook to deal only with committees of the Internationals, excluding the O.B.U. supporters from any potential role in grievances.<sup>18</sup>

The agreement covered approximately 35,000 shopcraft workers across Canada and was reached without any vote ever being taken to determine what union the workers wanted to have represent them. The reasons seem obvious. In the west, where most of the shopmen were concentrated in Winnipeg, the O.B.U. would have won such a vote handily, while even nationally the Internationals could not be sure of majority support. A long tradition of separate wage scales for east and west which had only ended during the war, made the O.B.U.'s demand for recognition at the bargaining table plausible, even if it only represented a majority in the west.

It is hard to overestimate the importance of the December, 1919 agreement between the railways and the Internationals. The rail shops were in the heart of the O.B.U.'s strength in Winnipeg. Out of 4,971 members in August, 1920, just before the Street Rail men affiliated, 3,846 were from the rail shops.<sup>19</sup> Even with the inclusion of the thousand street railmen, the shop workers constituted almost two-thirds of the C.L.C.'s membership. They provided a proportionate share of the activists. A C.L.C.

meeting in April, 1920 was not unusual in that twenty-seven of the forty delegates present were rail workers, and the executive was similarly dominated.<sup>20</sup>

Thus, with one blow, the O.B.U. was prevented from representing nearly two-thirds of their membership. Exclusion from collective bargaining prevented them from performing the central role of a trade union. The new monopoly on grievance procedures cut the O.B.U. off from the second most vital function of a union. Not only were the shop leaders of the O.B.U. unable to represent their members, but members who sought redress must appeal for help to the representatives of the International. They in turn were free to demand the rejoining of the International as a prerequisite for any assistance.<sup>21</sup> The loyalists' view of the situation was rather smugly summed up by the Winnipeg business agent of the Boilermakers, Bob McCutcheon:\*

. . . small numbers of rail workers have broken away, and hard as it was, they had to be disciplined in the interests of the whole body of workers.<sup>22</sup>

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\*Born in Nebraska in 1885, McCutcheon started work at age 11 when he was orphaned. A typical radical "boomer" of the period he had been a member of the I.W.W. or Wobblies for a period before joining the Boilermakers in 1905. Boasting of having worked on 28 different railroads in Canada and the U.S., he finally settled in Winnipeg in 1911, and for a time was a member of the S.P.C. before being "chased out" according to the O.B.U. Bulletin. Active in his union, he served as Canadian vice-president from 1917 to 1930, when his relation with the Boilermakers was severed. Much of this time he spent attacking the O.B.U. His popularity reached a low in 1920 when his own local instructed their delegate to vote against him at the 1920 International

The only alternative to being "disciplined" was for the O.B.U. men to strike for union recognition. Numerous factors could account for why they never took this risk. The period from its formation to the end of 1920 was crucial to O.B.U. efforts to establish itself outside of Winnipeg. Money and organizers were constantly being drained out of the city to try and pull together the crumbling national organization, while key leaders like Russell and Johns spent much of 1920 in prison. More importantly a series of drawn-out strikes by thousands of coal and hardrock miners for O.B.U. recognition continually exhausted the union's treasury, leaving nothing for any strike assistance for the thousands of rail workers if they went out. In addition the O.B.U. was wracked by the fight between the National Executive Board and the Lumber Workers, which led to a split in August, 1920.

While these problems contributed to the O.B.U. shopcrafts' passivity, they are not adequate to explain it. There was no shortage of militants capable of organizing a strike, and the absence of strike pay had not stopped earlier strikes. More important were the deep divisions within the rail workers' ranks and a reasonable

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convention. In the thirties he sold life insurance, while acting as an unpaid union organizer. Later he worked for the United Garment Workers and the Upholsterers before going on staff with the Retail Clerks in 1938--a position he held until his death in 1959.

caution after their recent defeats. The vanguard had divided over the question of Internationals versus O.B.U., and while the latter were a large majority, a significant number had remained in the loyalist camp to reorganize the International shopcraft locals, and the solidarity of the previous years had been broken. The experience of the general strike, when the shop workers were united and yet the running trades remained on the job made it clear that there would be no support from that quarter for a strike for O.B.U. recognition. There was also no assurance that the western shopworkers outside of Winnipeg would strike solidly, or that the eastern shopmen would strike at all. Instead there was every likelihood that the Internationals would provide scabs, as they did in a Port Arthur O.B.U. machinists strike in June of 1920.<sup>23</sup> The 1919 contract had also benefitted the skilled men more than the semi-skilled or unskilled, and meant the risk that a strike would be based mainly on the workers with the least power.<sup>24</sup> In addition the method of settling the general strike, without a vote, bred a distrust of the vanguard, many of whom were now active in the O.B.U.

Under the best of circumstances these divisions would have made the decision to strike a difficult and dangerous one. But it was not the best of circumstances. Thousands of Winnipeg workers had lost their jobs in the general strike, discrimination was the norm and blacklists circulated to keep the activists from finding work. While

rail workers had suffered relatively little, dozens had been fired and others had lost their seniority.<sup>25</sup> Outside Winnipeg the O.B.U. had as yet failed to solidify its support anywhere except in the strife-torn mining towns. Everywhere the remaining International loyalists appeared on top, controlling jobs, promotions, grievances and negotiations. Meager savings had been exhausted by the general strike and real wages were declining while overtime on war work had disappeared. It was not a situation to encourage audacity, and even workers whose loyalty to the O.B.U. and radical unionism was unshaken must have doubted the chances of a successful strike. Rightly or wrongly the O.B.U. shopmen did not strike for recognition in 1920, and by 1921 Winnipeg had slid into a world-wide depression and it was too late.

While the internationals could take some pleasure in the problems of the O.B.U. in the rail shops and their success in maintaining a monopoly over formal relations with management, their situation was not good. In the C.P.R. shops they had made some progress in regaining membership, with the Carmen's local up to 500 members by January, 1921, only 300 less than in 1919.<sup>26</sup> The Machinists claimed to be back up to their 1919 totals by the end of 1920, although this is doubtful.<sup>27</sup> But in the Transcona shops the Carmen retained only 90 members out of a 1919 total of 700. The Blacksmiths had only 53 members at the end of 1920, compared to 250 in 1919; Sheet Metal Workers



were down from 58 to 12; while the Plumbers claimed only 120, down from 250 in 1919.<sup>28</sup> It was not a very bright picture, with membership likely well under half of its 1919 level and many of these hostile.

If management and the Internationals had stymied the O.B.U. in the rail shops, they were even more successful in the second largest sector of unionized workers--the building trades. This group had traditionally made up ten to twenty per cent of the W.T.L.C.'s membership and in 1919 claimed thirteen locals with 2,500 members, organized in the Winnipeg Building Trades Council.<sup>29</sup> Long traditions of collective bargaining and organization, and an active role in the W.T.L.C. gave these unions an importance even greater than their numbers indicate.

The building trades came out of the general strike in a unique way. They had struck against the Builders Exchange, representing the employers, on May 1, over their own contract demands. While participating in the General Strike Committee, they did not face the problems of those engaged in a sympathy strike. They voted to return to work with the rest on June 26 and continue negotiations. Unlike most groups, they returned in good order and without discrimination. A month later they signed a collective agreement which, while it was certainly a defeat, retained most of their past gains and in the case of the Bricklayers and Plumbers marked a gain in real wages. But from the point of view of the Internationals the most important

part of the contract was a new clause granting preferential hiring to members of the Internationals.

Most construction workers had voted for the O.B.U. in 1919. The chairman of the O.B.U. Carpenters unit, and former president of local 2655 of the International, claimed that 97% of the carpenters had supported the O.B.U.<sup>30</sup> Other trades such as the Painters and Steam Shovel and Dredgemen were solidly behind the O.B.U.<sup>31</sup> All of these unions were among the larger building trades. But the trend was not unanimous and some trades, notably the Plumbers and Bricklayers, apparently had loyalist majorities.<sup>32</sup> The stronger sentiment for International craft unionism among the building trades, compared to the railshops was understandable. Traditions of craft pride were strong and had existed for a long time. More practically, construction workers were and remain a highly mobile group. A tradesman might work in several places throughout Canada and the U.S. in the course of his life. The Internationals' travelling cards were a valuable introduction to a new city and often meant a job through the union hall.

In addition a larger share of the vanguard, and particularly the most prominent leaders, remained loyal to the Internationals. While these include men like McBride and W. Owens who were extremely conservative in their views--both of them were active in the Conservative Party after the collapse of the D.L.P. in 1921--it also

included labourites such as Harding of the Carpenters who was close to Puttee in his politics, socialists like J. Winning\* and Marxists such as George Armstrong.\*\*

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\*Winning, a Scotsman who came to Winnipeg in 1906, became active in the Bricklayers union. He was the radicals' choice for a replacement for Fred Tipping when he was deposed from the presidency of the W.T.L.C. in 1918. A moderate socialist, he was active in the D.L.P. and suspected by Rigg of O.B.U. sympathies. Yet he remained in his International and from 1919 to 1922 was Secretary of the Building Trades Council. After running on a modest reform platform for M.L.A. as a W.T.L.C. candidate against the I.L.P. in 1922 he was soundly defeated and appears to have dropped out of any prominent role in labour politics or Winnipeg unionism after 1923.

\*\*Born in southern Ontario in 1874 and moving to Winnipeg in 1905, Armstrong is one of Winnipeg labour's most enigmatic figures. Described as one of the real founders of the S.P.C. in Winnipeg, he was a carpenter who rose to become business agent for his union during the war. Though he voted for the O.B.U. at the Western Labour Conference in 1919, after the strike he broke with most of his S.P.C. colleagues and remained in the International, serving on the W.T.L.C. for many years. In 1920, while imprisoned for sedition, he was the only S.P.C. candidate elected to the provincial legislature, out-polling Russell, and sat as an M.L.A. until 1922, when he declined to run again. In the legislature and the W.T.L.C. Armstrong maintained his independence and his principles. Despite the views of most loyalist leaders, he opposed the class collaborationist Joint Council of Industry, both on the W.T.L.C. and in the legislature, and eventually succeeded in defeating it. A socialist first and a loyalist second, he spoke at O.B.U. forums as late as 1929, while still on the W.T.L.C. His wife Helen Armstrong was an equally remarkable person. President of the Winnipeg Womens Labour League from 1918 to 1923, she was active in organizing women store clerks and was arrested several times during the general strike for her picket line activities. She attended the 1919 Trades and Labour Congress convention with her husband, but left early in disgust. A member of the D.L.P. after the war, she dropped out after the split with the I.L.P. and in 1922 ran as an independent for city council. Like her husband, she appears to have played no major role in Winnipeg's labour movement after the mid-twenties and in 1945 they both retired to Victoria.

Among O.B.U. supporters only H. Cotterell\* of the Painters and W. Hammond\*\* of the Carpenters had any comparable status.

Throughout the summer of 1919 and the following winter, affairs in the building trades union were chaotic. Both loyalists and the O.B.U. supporters sought to win the rank and file to their side. Both sought to win local unions as a block, but failing that established dual locals. The responses varied. The Painters, lowest paid of the trades went O.B.U. as a body, while others such as the Bricklayers--the highest paid among the trades--remained loyal to their International. Other unions, such as the Carpenters and Electricians, split down the middle, leaving functioning locals of both International

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\*Cotterell had been on the Painters union executive since before the war, and in 1919 was business agent for his local. He went, with most of the painters, into the O.B.U. in 1919 and was on staff with the Building Trades Unit and on the C.L.C. executive in 1920. Never very active in labour politics, he dropped out of any involvement in the labour movement after the crushing of the O.B.U. Building Trades Unit in 1921.

\*\*Hammond had been a comrade of Armstrong in both the Carpenters union and the S.P.C. He had preceded Armstrong as business agent of their local in 1914 and 1915. In 1919 he left the International for the O.B.U. and was on staff with the Building Trades Unit until 1921. Active in the C.L.C. in 1921 he replaced Logan as chairman. A delegate to the founding convention of the Workers, or Communist, Party in 1922, along with several others from the Winnipeg O.B.U., he ran for them in the 1922 provincial elections. When the C.P. adopted a policy of boring from within the Internationals he returned to the Carpenters union. By 1931 he was secretary of the Internationals Western Conference of Carpenters but little else is heard of him.

and O.B.U. men. To complete the confusion a few locals attempted to avoid a decision.<sup>33</sup> The best example of this is the Plasterers who withdrew from both the W.T.L.C. and the Building Trades Council but retained their International charter and refused to affiliate with the O.B.U., although some members, including their business agent, paid dues to the O.B.U. as well as the local.<sup>34</sup>

If the organizational struggle grew heated in 1919, on the job O.B.U., International and unaffiliated men worked side by side with no more than verbal animosity. The Building Trades Council purged locals sympathetic to the O.B.U. and made every effort to maintain functioning International locals in all the trades. With the start of the 1920 construction season, however, the conflict began to take new forms. In February the Painters union was thrown out of the W.T.L.C.-owned Labour Temple and the International locals approached the Builders Exchange for a new contract. At the same time the O.B.U. Building Trades requested negotiations, stating their only desire was a peaceful settlement and recognition as the representative of their members.<sup>35</sup> The O.B.U. presentations were ignored and a new contract quickly signed between the Builders Exchange and the various Internationals, despite the fact that in trades such as the Painters the O.B.U. represented the overwhelming majority of the men.

Once again the contract included a clause assuring preferential hiring for the loyalists. Unlike the 1919

contract, this one came into effect before the bulk of the hiring had been done, and after the lines had been fairly clearly drawn between O.B.U. and International men. The result was that throughout the city International men were the first called back to work, and for the first time O.B.U. members began to suffer for their views. This marks the turning point in the conflict as the Internationals went on the offensive after fighting a holding action for ten months.<sup>36</sup> Seeing a decisive victory within reach and encouraged by numerous representatives from International headquarters, the leaders of the loyalist faction stepped up their attacks. Not content with preferential hiring as an incentive for recruitment, union business agents began visiting major job sights demanding that employers fire any O.B.U. tradesmen. Led by the most conservative craft unionists like McBride, Owen and Harding, they threatened to pull out the tradesmen who were in the Internationals if the O.B.U. men were retained.<sup>37</sup> There is no evidence that these threats were ever carried out. In Winnipeg in 1920 it is doubtful that the business agents would have received much rank and file support for such strikes even among their loyalist members. But their bluff was never called. The employers were as eager as the Internationals to break the O.B.U. and across the city they readily acquiesced to the demands.<sup>38</sup>

This alliance with the employers gave the Internationals' leaders the power to control jobs and they used

it to systematically drive the tradesmen back into the Internationals. At times their thoroughness reached the ridiculous. On the Eaton's Mail Order building site McBride had two O.B.U. electricians fired in May of 1920. Unfortunately, the employer could not find any International or non-union men to replace them and ended up hiring two new O.B.U. electricians while presumably McBride looked the other way.<sup>39</sup> While non-union men were not popular, it was only O.B.U. men whose presence could not be tolerated.

Harding of the Carpenters, a union hard hit by O.B.U. defections, summed up the new position of the Internationals rather succinctly:

. . . (the O.B.U.) worker (must) realize that his only chance to secure a job is to belong to the organization that controls it.<sup>40</sup>

How did Winnipeg's International trade unionism degenerate to this level from the remarkable class solidarity of 1918 - 1919? At least part of the answer lies in the changed make-up of its active membership or vanguard, and their new relation to the rank and file. While individual radicals like Armstrong remained in their International, the vast majority of the more class-conscious workers defected from the Internationals in 1919. This combined with the influence of conservative bureaucrats from central Canada and the U.S. left the most conservative of the vanguard in control of the International locals. And with control over jobs, they also increased their control over the rank and file who risked expulsion and the loss

of their livelihood if they seemed sympathetic to the O.B.U.

The men who led the loyalist locals in 1920 had drawn different lessons from the experiences of 1919 than had the radical workers. The catastrophic defeat of the general strike confirmed their views that radical class struggle tactics endangered the survival of unionism. The disintegration of Winnipeg's powerful union movement in the face of employer attacks and O.B.U. secession seemed to show the utopian nature of industrial unionism. In light of these perceptions, and in order to maintain and justify their reliance on cooperation from employers and government, many of the loyalist leaders began to move steadily to the right on both union and political issues, emphasizing class cooperation and craft and business unionism.<sup>41</sup>

How the rank and file felt about this new policy is difficult to evaluate. The fact that there is no record of International men refusing to work with O.B.U. men indicates that enthusiasm for the policy of discrimination was largely limited to the bureaucracy. When the policy was first implemented in the spring of 1920 the loyalist leaders suffered a serious setback when the loyalist Building Trades Council voted in June to denounce these practices by the business agents. This embarrassment was only erased by having the Council executive withdraw the credentials from the Carpenter's Millworkers local and a local of the Hoisting Engineers, for their alleged sympathies. At the next meeting the remaining delegates



dutifully rescinded the motion.<sup>42</sup> Even if they represented the most conservative wing of Winnipeg unionism, the loyalists had still gone through the experiences of the previous years and many of them must have felt revulsion at the practises of their business agents. But the bureaucrats and employers had things firmly in hand, and membership support was unnecessary. There was little disgruntled loyalists could do, and the June experience indicated that opposition was more likely to mean expulsion than change.

Whatever was thought of the tactics employed by the Internationals, they were undoubtedly having an effect. Throughout 1920 workers continued to trickle out of the O.B.U. and back into the Internationals. Locals which had withdrawn from the Building Trades Council in an attempt to remain neutral began returning to the fold. By the end of 1920, while still having only 8 affiliates, down from 13 before the split, the Building Trades Council was able to claim 2,000 members. While such claims have to be viewed cautiously, in light of the busiest construction season since before the war it was probably only slightly exaggerated.

Again, as in the railshops, the O.B.U. was suffering from an effective alliance between employers and the Internationals. A strike for union recognition was an even less viable solution in the building trades than it had been in the railshops. The O.B.U.'s support was less overwhelming and the chances of many workers remaining on the job was high. Demoralization and a lack of material resources

played the same role as in rail in limiting the O.B.U.'s options. And in addition to these problems, the O.B.U.'s building trades were shaken by a deep internal division in the spring and summer of 1920.

The internal conflict arose over the issue of how to structure O.B.U. units. The O.B.U. was formed as an organization without any clear ideas on the part of the membership on how it would be structured beyond a general concern for industrial, or at least non-craft, unionism. In the building trades this led to a serious problem. The more craft-conscious workers wanted a separate unit for each craft, with a council to coordinate activities. The O.B.U. leadership, and the more industrially-minded workers argued for a single industrial unit of building trades workers, with crafts meeting separately only to discuss problems peculiar to their trade.<sup>43</sup> The leadership argued, reasonably, that what was being proposed was simply the old International Building Trades Council under a new name. In August, 1920 a vote of O.B.U. building trades workers decided in favour of the more centralized structure.<sup>44</sup>

There was nothing wrong in theory with the adopted structure, but it came in conflict with very strong craft traditions. Though supported by the majority, there was a strong, hostile minority. The O.B.U. Plasterers even withheld their dues for a brief period in protest.<sup>45</sup> Although probably inevitable, the conflict and the industrial structure that came out of it gave the Internationals new

ammunition in their attacks on the O.B.U. for ignoring craft perogatives. Combining with the effects of discrimination on the job sites, the dispute contributed to the tendency of those who were wavering to shift over to the Internationals.

Faced with declining membership and the effective discrimination campaign, and unable to fight back with job actions, the O.B.U. appealed to the Manitoba Joint Council of Industry (J.C.I.). The J.C.I. had been set up in March, 1919 with the passage of the provincial Industrial Conditions Act, but labour hostility had delayed its functioning until the spring of 1920. It was made up of two representatives from the employers, two from the loyalist W.T.L.C. and was chaired by Rev. C. W. Gordon--better known by his pen name of Ralph Connor. The J.C.I. had wide-ranging powers to investigate labour disputes and to make public recommendations, or at the request of both parties to a dispute, could act as a binding arbitrator.<sup>46</sup> The O.B.U. had attacked it from its inception as being at best useless, and suggesting it should be indicted as a "common nuisance."<sup>47</sup> While theoretically non-partisan, the J.C.I.'s labour representatives were two prominent International men, and the O.B.U. could expect little sympathy in its appeals.

The O.B.U. launched two appeals to the J.C.I. in 1920 with the dual purpose of publicizing its grievances and discrediting the Council. The first appeal was on behalf of the O.B.U. Painters. Arguing that as the O.B.U.

represented a large majority of the city's painters, the Builders Exchange, who had already signed a contract with the Painters International local, should negotiate with the O.B.U. It further proposed a wage scale higher than that agreed upon by the International. After several hearings the J.C.I. ruled that O.B.U. painters were bound by the new agreement and the wage rates set out in it.<sup>48</sup> The second O.B.U. appeal was against the discriminatory policy of the employers and the International in the building trades. The J.C.I. deliberated through the construction season and finally released its report in January, 1921. Predictably, it ruled that the Internationals' collective agreement was binding and that the firing of O.B.U. men to make room for loyalists was a proper interpretation of the preferential hiring clause. It recommended that the O.B.U. wait until the contract expired and attempt to change things then.<sup>49</sup> Given the refusal of the Builders Exchange to negotiate with the O.B.U., this was a less than helpful suggestion. Both of these rulings were unanimous and both were of dubious validity in terms of justice or even, in the second case, of law. But the O.B.U. could do little besides denounce the J.C.I., the Internationals and the Builders Exchange while they watched their membership bleed away.

While the construction trades and the shopcrafts represented the heart of Winnipeg's labour movement and dominated the labour scene, conflicts were raging in other unionized sectors. Among the garment trades where there was

no unifying employers' organization, tradition of industry-wide bargaining, or opportunity for government involvement, the results were quite different. Divided into a multitude of firms, often small, the industry was typified by low wages and a high percentage of women and eastern European workers. In 1919 there were three Internationals in the field in Winnipeg--the United Garment Workers of America (U.G.W.A.), the International Ladies Garment Workers Union (I.L.G.W.U.) and the Journeymen Tailors Union--representing perhaps 600 members. All had entered Winnipeg before the war, with the U.G.W.A. the oldest, dating back to 1899.

In the summer of 1919 the O.B.U. had the support of most garment workers, and the I.L.G.W.U. and Tailors' locals affiliated to the O.B.U., forcing their Internationals to lift their charters.<sup>50</sup> Only the U.G.W.A. was able to retain a functioning local. However, the I.L.G.W.U. had existing agreements which included a closed or union shop clause. When the members began paying their dues to the O.B.U., the International representatives used that clause to have them fired in many plants, including one with over 100 employees. At the urging of the C.L.C. executive the workers agreed to pay their dues to I.L.G.W.U. until the contract expired, and all got their jobs back.<sup>51</sup> As the contracts expired in 1920 the O.B.U. succeeded in negotiating new agreements for its members, with the threat of strike action. In the garment trades strong rank and file support, weak Internationals, divided employers and the absence of

government intervention enabled the O.B.U. to function as an effective union, costing the Internationals two affiliates and several hundred members.

In two other trades, the Bakers and Confectioners and the Barbers, similar conditions led to the same results. Both trades had been organized in Winnipeg for years, the Bakers being the more recent, having organized in 1913. While not large unions, they had about 275 and 125 members respectively in 1919. Both voted to join the O.B.U. as a body and had their charters lifted by their Internationals. In the absence of closed shop provisions, the new O.B.U. units were able to negotiate new agreements with most of the employers in 1920.<sup>52</sup> While a small local of Barbers in Brandon lasted four more years, neither International was to reappear in Winnipeg until the thirties--the Barbers in 1931 and the Bakers in 1936.

While the O.B.U. organized several other units, the only remaining major defection to them from the Internationals was the Street Rail Union. Organized since the turn of the century, the union had a history of militancy and political involvement dating back to the bitter 1906 strike against their employer, the Winnipeg Electric Company.<sup>53</sup> In the aftermath of the general strike the local voted to disaffiliate from the International, but remain

independent. That they did not join the O.B.U. was likely the result of the influence of A. Scoble\* and C. A. Tanner,\*\* two prominent moderates who led the local. The independent local, with over a thousand members in 1919 negotiated a collective agreement, and it became clear the Internationals had suffered a major defeat, although they quickly re-established an International Street Rail local with a handful of loyalists.

In Winnipeg's polarized labour movement it became increasingly difficult for the Street Rail men to remain aloof. In the summer of 1920, the locals pro-O.B.U. faction

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\*Scoble had been secretary, the business agent for the local since 1912, as well as being a paid Labour Gazette correspondent during the war. A delegate to the Western Labour Conference and a member of the General Strike Committee, he was a political moderate who remained in the D.L.P. even after the left wing had split to form the I.L.P. in 1921. In 1919 - 1920 he was business agent for the independent Street Rail union, but when the local joined the O.B.U. he returned briefly to the International. Later in 1920 he got a position with the City of Winnipeg as an "inspector" later rising to become "market superintendent" before retiring in 1947.

\*\*Born in England in 1887 and immigrating to Winnipeg in 1908, Tanner followed an eclectic career. Originally active in the Conservative Party, during the war he joined the D.L.P. A part-time farmer, he was secretary of the International Street Rail local in 1918 - 1919 and served as president of the independent union. Elected Reeve of West Kildonan in 1919 on the labour slate, in 1920 he was elected M.L.A. for Kildonan constituency. Splitting along with others to form the I.L.P. in 1921 he was re-elected M.L.A. in 1922 before retiring from politics. When his union affiliated to the O.B.U. in 1920 he went with it, serving as a delegate to the C.L.C. although not very active. After doing some organizing among restaurant workers for the O.B.U., he was hired in 1925 by the Manitoba Hotel Association, later becoming Managing Director of the Association.

won a vote to affiliate to the O.B.U. Aply led by W. Skinner and H. Jones\* the O.B.U. unit successfully negotiated new agreements and survived employer hostility and numerous attempts by the International to raid, to become the backbone of the O.B.U. in Winnipeg until the O.B.U.'s dissolution in 1956.

If the Internationals had suffered dramatic losses in membership, both to union-busting employers and to the newly formed O.B.U., they still represented a significant number of Winnipeg's workers. The largest group to remain in their Internationals, and the one with the longest history of organization was the railway running trades made up of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, the Order of Railway Conductors, the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and Enginemen and the Brotherhood of Railway Trainmen. In 1919 they had a combined provincial membership of 2,800 with between 1,500 and 2,000 of these in Winnipeg.

True aristocrats of labour, their pay ranged from slightly more than that of a machinist, for the Trainmen, to nearly double a machinist's wages for the Engineers.<sup>54</sup> None of these unions had joined the general strike, though many of their members, particularly the Trainmen, had

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\*Born in England in 1887 and immigrating to Winnipeg in 1908, Jones Played no prominent role in labour circles before 1919. In that year he was elected to his union executive. Following affiliation to the O.B.U. he was head of the unit for most of the twenties. Active in labour politics, he was elected alderman in 1921 on the I.L.P. slate after losing in 1919.



walked out. With the return to work, those who had walked out were disciplined with a number of them being fired.<sup>55</sup> By 1920, the O.B.U. had set up a Running Trades unit, but it never attracted much support and the bulk of the membership remained loyalist. Although they maintained their traditional policy of not affiliating to any central bodies such as the A.F.L. or T.L.C., they continued to provide a strong example of conservative craft unionism, which in other trades would lead workers into the W.T.L.C.

At the other extreme of the wage and status scale, the men who built and maintained the railways remained loyal to International Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees. First organized shortly after the turn of the century, they had joined a radical industrial union, the United Brotherhood of Railway Employees. Striking in 1902 in support of a strike of skilled workers, and in 1903 for union recognition, they were defeated both times when the skilled workers settled and returned to work leaving the trackmen helpless.<sup>56</sup> The Manitoba Executive of the Trades and Labour Congress described the actions of the running trades unions in 1902 as ". . . the blackest page in the history of trade unionism in Manitoba."<sup>57</sup>

Later organized into the International Brotherhood, they won union recognition during the war. Poorly paid, often speaking little or no English, scattered into seventeen locals across the province and with a conservative union, the men were in a bad position. The 1902 and 1903

strikes had proved that they had little power without the support of the skilled shopcrafts and running trades. While it is likely that there was much O.B.U. sympathy, the trackmen waited to see what the skilled men would do. With the running trades staying in their Internationals, and the O.B.U. shopmen unable to gain recognition, the trackmen took the better part of valour and remained loyalist. With a provincial membership fluctuating from 2,508 in 1919 to 1,883 in January, 1921, the Maintenance of Way union was an important victory for the loyalists.

A third group of rail employees is best described by the name of the major International in the field--the Brother of Railway and Steamship Clerks, Freight Handlers, Express and Station Employees (B.R.A.C.). In 1919 this union shared jurisdiction in the field with the Canadian Brotherhood of Railway Employees (C.B.R.E.), a Canadian union affiliated to the Trades and Labour Congress. After the defeat of a strike by the C.B.R.E. against the C.P.R. in 1912,<sup>58</sup> this group of C.P.R. workers had been organized during the war into Federal Labour Unions directly chartered by the Congress. In 1919 these were turned over to B.R.A.C. and the Congress attempted to force a merger between the two unions. During the war the C.B.R.E. had succeeded in organizing the relevant C.N.R. employees and had signed a contract with the railway.<sup>59</sup>

These unions had joined the general strike, and after its defeat many of their members lost their jobs, while

others deserted to the O.B.U.<sup>60</sup> Both B.R.A.C. and C.B.R.E. put several organizers into Winnipeg after the strike and managed to maintain many of their members. C.B.R.E. in particular could argue that it was a Canadian union organized on industrial lines and escape much of the hostility directed at the conservative American craft unions. It was far less hostile to the O.B.U. than the Internationals were,<sup>61</sup> and at least one of its organizers, A. F. Landry, was accused by Rigg of aiding the O.B.U. The result of the conflicts of 1919 and 1920 was that three hostile unions had significant memberships in this field, but, as in the shops, the O.B.U. lacked company recognition.

Outside of the railways and the construction industry, one of the most strongly unionized sectors was in the printing trades. The printing trades were divided into six unions, with I.T.U. being the largest, with over 500 members, while the Bookbinders' and Pressmen's unions combined numbered about the same. Organized since before the turn of the century, printers had played an active part in Winnipeg's labour movement since its inception. With a high degree of craft pride, a closed shop, and a long tradition of successful bargaining, the printing trades remained largely immune to the radical industrial union sentiment which swept Winnipeg during and after the war. Most of them refused to violate their contracts by joining the general strike and as a result were relatively untouched by its defeat. The O.B.U. made no headway among these

crafts, and they provided a bastion of International and craft unionism despite a decline in membership caused by a downturn in the industry in 1920.<sup>62</sup>

A last sector of loyalist unionized workers was in entertainment industry. Numbering between five and seven hundred, divided between the American Federation of Musicians and the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees, they played no important part in Winnipeg's labour movement. In these trades the advantage of an International travelling card was obvious, and only in the tiny local of motion picture projectionists did the O.B.U. enjoy any support. However, their size and long history of successful organization contributed to the prestige, if not the power of the W.T.L.C. and the International movement.

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In the political arena, the first reaction to the defeat of the general strike was for the various working-class parties to pull together. The D.L.P., S.D.P. and S.P.C. all tried to avoid taking sides in the inter-union fight. The S.D.P. and S.P.C. both favoured radical industrial unionism in principle and the bulk of their membership probably joined the O.B.U. However, the continued membership in their Internationals by such prominent radicals as Armstrong of the S.P.C. and Heaps and

John Queen\* of the S.D.P. prevented the political left wing from formally endorsing the O.B.U.

By far the largest of the working-class parties was the D.L.P., which in addition to its individual members had several trade union affiliates. As a non-Marxist, socialist party in the tradition of the British Labour Party, by 1919 it had attracted most of Winnipeg's non-union radicals, including Ivens, Farmer,\*\* and Dixon.\*\*\*

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\*Queen, a cooper by trade, was like so many of Winnipeg's radicals, a product of Scotland. Born in Lanarkshire in 1882, he was already a Marxist when he came to Winnipeg in 1906. He eventually joined the S.D.P. and from 1916 to 1921 represented them on city council. A delegate to the General Strike Committee in 1919, he was arrested and convicted of sedition, receiving a one-year prison sentence. While in prison, he was elected M.L.A. as the S.D.P. candidate in the 1920 election. He was to be re-elected continually until his defeat in 1941, running for the S.D.P., as an independent, for the I.L.P. and finally for the C.C.F. In addition he served as mayor of Winnipeg from 1934 - 1936 and 1938 - 1942. Even after joining the I.L.P. Queen remained a radical, arguing in 1923 that the party should drop all reformist demands from its program. A founding member of the C.C.F. he fought to make it a clear socialist party. Concerned about the I.L.P. being submerged in an alliance with farmers and intellectuals, he opposed its decision to merge into the C.C.F. clubs in 1936 and briefly left the party in protest. After his defeats of the forties, Queen ceased to play a prominent role in politics.

\*\*Born in Cardiff, Wales in 1878, Farmer came to Manitoba in 1900. For ten years he worked as a clerk for the C.P.R. in rural Manitoba, before quitting to open a bookstore in Brandon which failed. For a period he was a full-time organizer for the Direct Legislation League, before securing a position as an accountant with a Winnipeg grain company. Like his friend Dixon, he was an ardent follower of Henry George and the Single Tax League, and participated in a variety of reform groups and labour parties before 1918, but always as an opponent of socialism. Strongly moved by the war, which he opposed, and the working class radicalization, Farmer began to move to the left, joining

In the months following the strike it experienced a large influx of new members, with as many as forty or fifty applications at its bi-weekly meetings.<sup>63</sup> In part this represented the politicizing effects of the strike and its aftermath. However, it also reflected the efforts of the two union factions to sign up their supporters in order to prevent the party's prestige being used to aid their opponents.

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the D.L.P., and by 1919 he had been won to socialism. A founding member of the I.L.P., he was elected M.L.A. in 1922 and held his seat until he retired in 1949. In 1923 and 1924 he was elected mayor of Winnipeg and in 1928 - 1929 served as an alderman for Ward I. In 1925 he founded the Weekly News, a pro-labour paper which became the official organ of the I.L.P., and edited it throughout the twenties at least. Unchecked by Queen's Marxist scruples, Farmer was an early advocate of a farmer-labour political alliance, and when Queen resigned as leader of the Manitoba C.C.F. in 1936, Farmer replaced him, retaining the post until his retirement. From 1940 to 1942 he served as Minister of Labour in the Bracken coalition government, leading the C.C.F. to a disastrous defeat in the 1942 elections.

\*\*\*Dixon was born in Berkshire, England in 1881, where he worked as a gardiner until coming to Winnipeg in 1903. He worked as a "designer and engraver" before throwing himself full-time into politics. A founding member of the Winnipeg Single Tax League, he served as its secretary and most popular speaker until 1916 at least. Opposed to socialism but sympathetic to labour, he was narrowly defeated in the 1910 provincial elections, and in 1914 he won as an Independent Progressive with some labour backing. A pacifist, he opposed the war, and like Farmer, began to move to the left. Charged with sedition for his part in editing the Western Labour News during the general strike, he successfully defended himself and won acquittal. In 1920 he ran for election as a Labour candidate, topping the polls with more than double the first choice ballots of his nearest opponent. A founding member of the I.L.P., he served as caucus chairman for the Labour M.L.A.'s from 1920 to 1923. Following the death of his wife and two children, Dixon resigned from the legislature in 1923 to sell insurance.

Political unity was successfully maintained in the civic election campaign of December, 1919. In October, a convention was held to adopt a civic platform and nominate a mayoralty candidate. Open to all members of the D.L.P. and the newly formed Ex-Soldiers and Sailors Labour Party, as well as delegates from affiliated unions, the convention attracted over four hundred people. A radical reform platform was adopted, and Ivens narrowly defeated Farmer as Mayoralty candidate.<sup>64</sup> In the face of hostility from the W.T.L.C., who had recently fired him as editor of their paper because of his O.B.U. sympathies, Ivens withdrew as candidate, allowing Farmer to run. The degree of enthusiasm aroused by the campaign is indicated by a labour rally attended by some four thousand people. While Mayor Grey defeated Farmer 15,678 to 12,514, labour gained two new seats on council. In the suburban municipalities labour also won several positions, and the election was viewed as a qualified success. It is noteworthy that the unaffiliated Street Rail union provided three of the seven labour candidates for alderman, plus one school board candidate.

The provincial election of June, 1920 showed further labour solidarity. While attempts to achieve a joint slate of the D.L.P., S.D.P., and S.P.C. with a common program were unsuccessful, all three parties agreed to limit their

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He later served on the Workman's Compensation Board, which he had helped found. His personal misfortunes were crowned by his succumbing to cancer in 1930.

number of candidates to maximize labour's chances in the multi-seat Winnipeg riding. The S.D.P. and the Ex-Soldiers and Sailors Labour Party each nominated one candidate while the S.P.C. and D.L.P. each nominated four. While each party had its own platform, the D.L.P. joined the others in placing a call for ". . . the transformation of capitalist property into social property . . ." <sup>65</sup> at the head of their list of reforms. Of the ten labour candidates, only two--Dixon and Ivens--were not active unionists.

The results showed Dixon placing first in the riding, while Ivens of the D.L.P., Queen of the S.D.P. and Armstrong of the S.P.C. also won, with Russell of the S.P.C. being narrowly defeated. In addition to the four elected in Winnipeg, Labour won in several other ridings. In Springfield, which included Transcona, A. E. Moore\* won;

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\*Born in Dydenham, England in 1882, Moore came to Winnipeg in 1910, where he worked as a carman in the C.P.R. shops, and held several important positions in his union. Having spent ten years in the British Navy before immigration, Moore re-enlisted in W.W.I and served in France as a sergeant, where he was wounded. As President of the Manitoba Section of the Great War Veterans Association, he played an active role in support of the general strike. In 1920 he was fired for running for the legislature, but after a storm of protest was reinstated and continued to work in the shops until he retired. A political moderate and International union loyalist, he remained in the D.L.P. after the I.L.P. was formed and after one term as M.L.A. he ceased to play a prominent role in labour circles. Instead, he threw himself into veteran's activities, becoming the first Dominion President of the Royal Canadian Legion when it was formed in 1925. He held this post for twenty-two years until his retirement.



in Kildonan St. Andrews, just north of Winnipeg, C. A. Tanner of the Street Rail union won; and in Assiniboia, just west of Winnipeg, D. W. Bayley\* won, all as D.L.P. candidates. In Brandon, St. Clements and St. George labour candidates won as well, often with the support of progressive farmers. This marked the high point of working-class solidarity in the political field, with three of the imprisoned strike leaders vindicated at the polls.

The uneasy alliance of radicals and moderates, O.B.U. supporters and loyalists, which made up the D.L.P., soon broke down in the increasingly bitter conflict in the unions. A turning point was reached in August, 1920 when a debate was held between two O.B.U. men and two International supporters, on the relative merits of their forms of

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\*Bayley was born in Winnipeg in 1880 and worked as a school teacher. A prominent and eloquent advocate of the Temperance movement, he had lectured as far away as New Zealand. In 1921 he helped organize the I.L.P. and won re-election on their slate in 1922. The next year he left the party and sat as an independent, finally dropping out of politics altogether for personal reasons. An ordained United Church minister, Bayley lost his job as principal of King George V School because of his activities in the Labour Church in 1921. Later reinstated, he continued to teach school and in 1927 became Director of Temperance and of Correspondence Courses for the Manitoba Department of Education.

organization. Bill Hoop,\* a W.T.L.C. organizer told a crowd of 5,000 that the O.B.U. had caused the strike's defeat, and in essence had only one purpose--revolution. The speech outraged not only O.B.U. supporters but also those like Dixon and Ivens who were trying to maintain some semblance of labour unity. An attempt to expel Hoop from the D.L.P. foundered when the W.T.L.C. threatened to withdraw its support.<sup>66</sup> But when Hoop was nominated by a ward organization to run for alderman on the D.L.P. slate in November, 1920, matters came to a head. Repeated calls for him to step down were ignored, even though the leaders of the W.T.L.C. felt his running was a mistake.<sup>67</sup> The result was a mass exodus from the party as men like Dixon, Farmer, Ivens, and Tipping, plus the large O.B.U. base,

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\*Hoop was rapidly to become the most controversial man in Winnipeg's labour circles. Long an outspoken member of the S.P.C. he had been president of the Letter Carriers union and active in the W.T.L.C. Long a thorn in the side of moderate union leaders, after the strike he did an about-face on union and political issues. Losing his job with the Post Office for his political activities, he went on staff with the W.T.L.C. and then a series of International unions, always with the job of breaking the O.B.U.'s influence. At the same time he left the S.P.C. and became active in the D.L.P. where again he constantly lobbied against his former comrades who were now in the O.B.U. Hated by his opponents as only a renegade can be hated, he was a natural to cause the split in the D.L.P. After the demise of that organization, he later ran in 1927 as an independent against the I.L.P. in the civic elections, being soundly defeated. His long slide away from Marxism is indicated by the name of a "labour" paper he edited in the late twenties--"Winnipeg Sporting News."

refused to run on the same slate as Hoop or campaign for such a slate. The resulting confusion saw Farmer again defeated for mayor, and the loss of one city council seat. The breach was formalized in March, 1921, when those who had left the D.L.P., including most of its elected representatives and all of its O.B.U. members, officially formed the I.L.P.<sup>68</sup>

It was not only in the political arena that class solidarity was breaking down. In the immediate aftermath of the strike a Defense Committee had been set up with the support of both union factions and all political parties. Aided by prominent non-unionists like Ivens, it raised money for legal costs for the strike leaders' sedition trial and organized tours across the country to rally support for the defendants. It also took on the immense task of providing relief for those who had lost their jobs during the strike and were destitute. The scale of the repression is shown by the 3,500 ex-strikers the committee claimed to be aiding in August, 1919.<sup>69</sup> Functioning on donations from union locals and individuals, the committee had collected \$83,000 by May, 1920--a large sum for the times.<sup>70</sup>

But in April, 1920, the W.T.L.C., on Hoop's recommendation, pulled out of the Committee, claiming it had become an O.B.U. front.<sup>71</sup> With the W.T.L.C. gone the Committee called for a half-day general strike on the morning of Saturday, May 1 and a massive May Day parade in support of the defendants. Despite some 4,000 to 6,000

participants and thousands of sympathetic onlookers, the W.T.L.C. characterized the event as a failure. Citing the Labour Day parade in September, 1919, which had been marred by O.B.U. placards denouncing the Internationals, the W.T.L.C. had refused to endorse the May Day strike and march though many loyalist rank and file participated.<sup>72</sup> The loyalists soon proceeded to set up their own Defense sub-committee of the W.T.L.C. to take up the task of aiding the convicted strikers.

With two union centrals, two labour parties and two defense committees, Winnipeg could also boast two labour papers. After the firing of Ivens, the Western Labour News had become a propaganda organ for the W.T.L.C., and following the split of the I.L.P., it became the official organ of the D.L.P. In response, the O.B.U. Bulletin, originally a quite modest venture, was expanded into a full-fledged weekly labour paper for the other side.

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Thus, by the end of 1920, the divisions with the trade unions had spilled over into virtually all working class activities. The split in the D.L.P., as in the unions, was basically a split between the left and right wings of the vanguard. Although most of the founding members of the I.L.P. were reformist socialists, they shared an analysis of society based on class and class

conflict. Even middle-class reformers like Dixon and Farmer now supported the call for the socialization of capitalist property. The divisions of 1919 and 1920, in politics as in the unions, set the stage for the working class to make a choice--a choice which would be made in the next years.

In the union field the lines were drawn and the methods of conflict clear. The O.B.U., relying on its mass support, fought with votes, propoganda, meetings and demonstrations. The Internationals, lacking the mass support in most areas, used the assets they did have with great effectiveness. Foremost among these was the support of employers and the state, which united in the collective agreements with employers and endorsed by the state via the J.C.I. and the courts.

Concentrating on the traditionally organized skilled trades, the Internationals also had an advantage in that the objective basis of conservative craft unionism was still strong. In areas like the running trades and printing trades, high wages, a certain craft autonomy and skill monopoly had not made craft unions obsolete, but had reinforced a tradition of craft conservatism. In the building trades a similar pattern was highlighted when the highly skilled, highly paid Bricklayers remained loyalist, while the poor man of the building trades--the painter--went O.B.U. In these traditional bastions of craft unionism the Internationals offered real protection in the form of

travelling cards, insurance and pension benefits and often the closed shop. Only in the rail shops did these craft advantages have little impact. Yet it is also in the shopcrafts that these advantages were weakest. Lower wages and a tradition of collective bargaining only a decade old meant weaker unions and fewer benefits. Perhaps more importantly they worked in huge industrial complexes where the skill dilution associated with Taylorism and large-scale industrial organization were already being felt.

These differences among the skilled trades allowed the O.B.U. to gain substantial membership in some of them. But to survive the O.B.U. had to perform the basic functions of negotiating and enforcing agreements on wages and working conditions. Whether their membership was large as in the printing trades, or small as in the shop crafts, the Internationals with the help of employers and government, were able to freeze the O.B.U. out of collective bargaining for the skilled workers. By the end of 1920 the results were already beginning to show, with a slow trickle of workers out of the O.B.U. and back into the Internationals. Only in the industries where workers had failed to reap the benefits of conservative craft unionism, and where employers were weak or the state lacked an avenue for intervention did the O.B.U. win some important victories. Among the city's Bakers, Street Car men, Garment Workers and other smaller groups the O.B.U. was able to translate its rank and file support into viable units capable of protecting

their members, and there the O.B.U.'s support remained firm.

While civil war spread through the labour movement over how best to protect labour's interest against capital, the conflict between capital and labour went on. After their victory of June, 1919, the employers were on the offensive. In March, 1920 two hundred and forty-three firms employing 13,817 "hands" united to form the Employers Association of Manitoba.<sup>73</sup> Hostile to unions in general and the O.B.U. in particular, the Association agitated for the open shop and maintained a blacklist of "troublemakers." The intransigence of the employers combined with wholesale discrimination after the strike to make struggles for union organization and recognition difficult, if not impossible, in most industries. Conscious of their weakness, workers who two years earlier might have fought for their unions, were left frightened and divided. In shop after shop management set wages and working conditions on their own, ignoring or firing any worker who complained.

This was the reality behind the diminishing numbers of union locals and members in Winnipeg. Based on extrapolations from Department of Labour statistics we can estimate Winnipeg's total union membership at 19,593, organized into 91 locals at the end of 1918. Using the same method, the figures for the end of 1920, excluding the O.B.U., were 12,472 in 75 locals.<sup>74</sup> This leaves a drop in International union membership of over 7,000. Yet at the

end of 1920 the O.B.U. had only about 3,500 members in Winnipeg. While these figures are not precise, the high point for union membership was probably May, 1919, while it is probable that the 1920 figures are somewhat inflated as unions exaggerated their membership to bolster their prestige in the interunion fight. So the decline of 7,000 outside of the O.B.U. is a conservative figure. Thus, for every worker who remained in the O.B.U. another was left with no union. It would appear that the employers had taken full advantage of labour's defeat of 1919 and its subsequent divisions.



### CHAPTER III

In the winter of 1920 - 1921, the economic environment in which labour fought its battles changed dramatically. Winnipeg slid into a world-wide depression, from which it would not emerge until 1925. The effect of this depression on the working class and its organizations was devastating. Thousands were thrown out of work and on to relief, while thousands more scratched out a living on short time. In the mythology of the "Roaring Twenties" and the dismal record of the thirties, the depth of the depression of 1921 - 1925 has tended to be overlooked. Yet it was probably the second worst depression to hit Winnipeg in the last century, dwarfed only by the great depression of the thirties.

Data on employment levels in Winnipeg is scattered between several sources and is incomplete. The only overall indicator is the Employment Index published by the federal Department of Labour, and it was only published from 1922. By this guide employment dropped 10% from 1922 to 1923, and by 1924 was 15% below its 1922 level. After this it picked up, but it was 1926 before the already low 1922 figure was exceeded.<sup>1</sup> Statistics on employment in manufacturing shows a sharp drop from 1920 to 1922, followed by a slow increase which becomes significant in 1922 and probably exceeds the 1920 level

in 1926.

While no employment data is available for the construction industry, the value of building permits indicates a similar pattern. The yearly average dollar value of permits in Winnipeg from 1910 to 1914 was \$17,905,000. After declining to about \$2,000,000 annually during the war, it rose to \$8,370,000 in 1920. In 1921 it sank to \$5,580,400 and by 1924 it was just over three million dollars. In 1926, the value of permits finally exceeded the 1920 level, though no year in the decade was as high as the 1910 - 1914 average. Even allowing for deflation, construction activity was cut by at least a half from 1920 to 1924, and to less than a quarter of pre-war levels.<sup>3</sup> The effects of this decline are indicated by constant references in the labour press and the Department of Labour's Labour Gazette to exceptionally high unemployment in the building trades from 1921 to 1925. Data on unemployment among trade union members, while incomplete, reinforces this impression.<sup>4</sup>

The effects of the depression on Winnipeg's workers are sharply set out in the Annual Reports of the City Council's Emergency Unemployment Relief Committee,<sup>5</sup> which was set up in 1921 to handle the onslaught of applicants for welfare. It estimated that 7,000 were on relief in the winter of 1920 - 1921. The following winter the number rose to over twelve thousand again. While an improving job market caused a drastic drop in the next

two winters, the 1926 - 1927 season still saw more than 3,000 on relief. In the two worst winters, 1921 - 1922 and 1924 - 1925, claimants on relief for two months or more made up 44.6% and 51.7% respectively of the total number.<sup>6</sup>

Large as these numbers are, they do not reflect anything like the total numbers of unemployed. Of those applying for relief in the worst winter, 57% had been unemployed for more than two months when they applied. The relief figures only indicate those whom unemployment had rendered destitute. This destitution had to be proven in order to be eligible, and luxuries such as cars and telephones disposed of. Homeowners on relief had a lien placed on their homes and were supposed to repay their relief money once re-employed. A family of five was eligible only if their total income was below \$70 per month, and of course relief payments were less than this amount. It is noteworthy that this figure is less than half of what the federal Department of Labour estimated it would cost a family of four to live in modest comfort.

Data on unemployment and relief does not include workers who had jobs but worked less than a full week due to temporary shutdowns or short hours. The extent of this phenomenon is indicated by some data on the rail shops. In 1922 both the O.B.U. and the W.T.L.C. approached city council to appeal for relief payments for the shop workers. They reported that in the last six months of 1921, the

average work week in the shops was only 31 hours, down from a full work week of 44 to 50 hours. The average monthly wage for skilled tradesmen had dropped to between \$100 and \$111. Shop labourers--described as the bulk of the work force--saw their monthly average drop to \$44.70, down from \$74.90 when fully employed.<sup>7</sup> At the 1923 O.B.U. convention it was reported that the rail shops had averaged only three or four days a week for the previous four years, indicating that the situation was no brief aberration.<sup>8</sup>

No quantitative data has been published on short time in other industries. Monthly reports in the Labour Gazette on employment in Winnipeg indicate that seasonal unemployment and short time were common. Apart from obvious seasonal industries like logging, such industries as the meat packers and garment industry in particular seemed to face these problems. As well, there are reports of major fluctuations in employment and short time in the metal fabricating, steel, and printing industries throughout the depression years.<sup>9</sup> It was not until 1926 that these reports claim that employment had reached the levels of 1920.<sup>10</sup>

For those fortunate enough to be employed, real wages--that is, wages adjusted for changes in the cost of living--show some interesting developments in the depression period.<sup>11</sup> While money wages declined in all sectors, depression-induced deflation often offset this trend. In the building trades real wages from 1920 to 1925 rose in

every trade examined. In addition by 1925 they were higher than their average level in the two other periods studied--the pre-war period 1909 - 1914 and the war period of 1915 - 1919--with the exception of the electricians who were marginally below their war-time wage levels. The extent of the gains varied greatly, from 30% for the elite Bricklayers to 2% for the far more numerous Carpenters, but the trend is clear.

In the metal trades, while all gained between 1920 and 1925, only two of the smaller crafts surpassed both previous periods of comparison. The others, including the two largest of the metal trades, the Machinists and the Boilermakers, found their wages in 1925 significantly below their war-time levels and about the same as the 1910 rates. The printing trades won major improvements, with the Compositors up nearly 15% over their war-time rates and the Pressmen up 30% over war-time levels and 40% over their pre-war levels. The street rail men made major gains over their low 1920 rates, but were only about 3% above their war-time average and 5% above their pre-war levels.

Real wages for unskilled workers are of particular interest. We have data from 1909 for construction labourers and from 1920 for two other categories--agricultural labour and common factory labour. Construction labourers' rates fell by almost 12% from 1920 to 1925.

In the latter year they were only marginally higher than the pre-war period and about 7% below their war-time levels. Agricultural labour fared even worse, declining almost 25% from 1920 to 1925 as the war-time shortage of farm labour disappeared. Common factory labour fared better, but even its wages declined by about 2%, and in 1925 were at their lowest levels of the decade.

To sum up the data, most skilled workers who were fully employed saw a modest but significant increase in their real wages, while a minority saw large real wage gains. In contrast unskilled workers similarly employed saw a decline in real wages to varying degrees. Scattered reports on specific wage cuts implemented during the depression bear out this dual tendency, with the highest cuts consistently made on the least skilled and lowest paid workers.<sup>12</sup> Some ideas of how this averaged out for the work force as a whole is provided by the average wage rates of workers claiming Workmen's Compensation in Manitoba. After declining in 1920, the average rose by about 10% to 1922, then fell steadily to 1926, when the real wage was only marginally above the 1919 level.

Of course all of these figures are for a fully employed worker. In fact it is likely that most workers experienced at least some unemployment or short time during the depression. In particular the building trades must have seen their annual income decline substantially despite increased real wages. For the bulk of the work

force the period of the depression must have been one of lower living standards than most of the preceding years. And for a very large minority the depression meant real hardship and periodic destitution.

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Winnipeg's trade unions, already reeling from the defeat of the general strike and the effects of fratricidal strife, were now faced with a further blow. Projecting their membership from the figures from the locals reporting, the non-O.B.U. unions declined from 12,472 at the end of 1920 to a low of 8,742 in 1922 before rising slowly to 9,355 at the end of 1925. Thus the 1925 level was still less than half of the peak reported at the end of 1918 and lower than the projected number for any year since records were kept in 1911 to 1921. And unlike the declines of 1919 and 1920, none of these reflected secessions to the O.B.U. Instead that organization lost members even faster than other unions, declining from 4,971 in September, 1920 to 1,755 in August, 1923.<sup>13</sup> While there are no reliable figures for O.B.U. membership in 1924 or 1925, it is unlikely that it grew substantially. In consequence the total number of all union members at its lowest ebb in Winnipeg in 1923 was not much more than 10,000 or only marginally greater than half of the post-war peak.

The W.T.L.C., lacking the affiliation of the relatively stable running trades, was even harder hit. In addition to the running trades, many locals disaffiliated during the depression. As they struggled to survive amidst shrinking memberships, the cost of affiliation to the increasingly irrelevant and conservative W.T.L.C. became difficult to justify. The result was a continued decline in the Council's membership. From a peak of 10,500 members organized in 66 locals in 1918, and 36 locals with 5,000 members in 1920, the Council shrank to a low of 25 locals with 3,822 members in 1925.<sup>14</sup> The decision, under duress from the A.F.L., of the Trades and Labour Congress to expel the C.B.R.E. in 1921 as a union dual to the A.F.L.-recognized B.R.A.C. hurried the decline. With some 12,000 members nationally, C.B.R.E. had insisted on full Canadian autonomy in any merger with B.R.A.C., and failing that, was willing to go on its own outside the Congress.<sup>15</sup> In Winnipeg this meant that eight C.B.R.E. locals were lost to the W.T.L.C. The Internationals' central council was reduced to the heart of the craft union movement in the building and printing trades and the shopcrafts.

If the situation was bleak for the Internationals it was even worse for the O.B.U. Frustrated by their failure to achieve recognition from the railroads, bitter recriminations were hurled back and forth in the Winnipeg C.L.C. Matters came to a head in January, 1921 when W. Hammond, a member of the S.P.C. and business agent of



the building trades unit, defeated Logan in the election for Chairman of the C.L.C. Logan, a moderate who had chaired the C.L.C. since its inception, responded by characterizing the election as a takeover by the S.P.C., organized by Hammond and Russell. He demanded an end to radical rhetoric, the concentration of the union's remaining resources into Winnipeg, and a more traditional approach to unionism.<sup>16</sup>

The fight dragged on for months, and in the midst of continued setbacks was increasingly marred by slander and personal attacks. Logan, failing to swing the C.L.C. dropped out of any activity outside his own Fort Rouge Rail Unit, which briefly disaffiliated in the summer of 1921.<sup>17</sup> He soon followed the logic of his critique back into the I.A.M. and from 1925 to 1928 was Secretary of I.A.M. local 189. With his departure, along with the most bitter moderates, harmony was restored for a time, but only at the expense of more lost membership and credibility.

With the right wing of the O.B.U., in both the building trades and the shopcrafts gone, the next major split came a year later and from the left. The socialist movement in Winnipeg had been in ferment since the formation of the Communist International (Comintern) in 1919, and of its trade union arm, the Red International of Trade Unions (Profintern). The O.B.U. was in the midst of debating affiliation to the Profintern when the Workers

Party,<sup>18</sup> Canada's affiliate to the Comintern, held its founding convention in February, 1922. In accordance with Lenin's recently published pamphlet, "Left Wing" Communism, an Infantile Disorder,<sup>19</sup> the new party adopted a policy of working within the established Internationals in an attempt to win them over to a left-wing position. This policy of "boring from within" meant opposing secession, and the O.B.U.<sup>20</sup>

While the Winnipeg delegation to the convention had supported the O.B.U., aided by Russell who participated as a fraternal delegate, most accepted the decision, although the Party did lose some of its O.B.U. members.<sup>21</sup> A brief attempt by Winnipeg's communists to argue that in Winnipeg the O.B.U. was the major union and they supported it despite hostility to it everywhere else, was patently untenable and was soon dropped. In a series of three meetings called by the C.L.C. in May, 1922 and open to all O.B.U. members the C.P.'s position was debated. Well attended and raucous, all three went on until the early hours of the morning. The result was a motion condemning the C.P.'s position and reaffirming the value of the O.B.U.<sup>22</sup> Soon afterwards members of the C.P. were banned from holding office in the O.B.U. and the split was complete.<sup>23</sup> While the C.P.'s membership was small, it including Hammond, Max Dolgoy, leader of the Garment

Workers Unit, Matthew Popovitch\* of the Lumber Workers, Edith Hancox, former Business Agent of the Winnipeg Women's Labour League (W.W.L.L.), Secretary of the General Workers Unit and of the Unemployed Council, Jacob Penner, and H. Robertson, secretary of the Fort Rouge Rail Unit. Militants of this calibre were a serious loss and had an important following, particularly among east European immigrants.

While these defections from the O.B.U. on its right and left wings helped the Internationals somewhat, they were not sufficient to offset the losses brought on by the depression and the inability of most unions to provide much protection for their members. In the vast rail shops, the gains of 1920 and from the return of the Logan and C.P. factions did little more than slow the decline. While data is fragmentary there are some figures for the two largest unions--the Machinists and the Carmen. In

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\*Popovitch was born in the Ukraine, where he taught school before immigrating to Canada in 1910, already a committed socialist. Active in the S.P.D.'s Ukrainian local, he for a time edited "Robochy Narod" the leading Ukrainian left-wing paper, published in Winnipeg. National Secretary of the Ukrainian Labour Temple Association and on the O.B.U.'s C.L.C. executive from the Lumber Workers, he threw his considerable abilities and prestige into the newly formed communist movement. In 1922 he was elected to the first Central Committee of the Workers Party and in 1926 was Canada's delegate to the Comintern Executive in Moscow. A frequent candidate in civic and provincial elections on behalf of the C.P., he was arrested in 1931 and sentenced to five years in prison under Section 98 of the Criminal Code, which was used against several leading communists. He remained a loyal member of the C.P. throughout his life.

1918, with 7 out of 9 Manitoba locals reporting, I.A.M. claimed 1,422 members, while the Carmen with 4 out of 7 locals reporting had 1,594 members. In 1924, with all locals reporting, the Carmen claimed 933 members and in 1925 with all locals reporting, I.A.M. had only 480. Among the smaller shopcrafts, the Plumbers' rail local went from 191 in 1919 to 43 in 1924, while the Moulders went from 104 in 1918 to a low of 20 in 1922, before climbing to 47 at the end of 1925.<sup>24</sup> While these figures for the last years of the depression are an increase over the low point at the end of 1919, they still reflect half or less of the pre-O.B.U. membership. Annual union dues of up to \$25 kept many members out in the years of short time and small paycheques. But disgust with the policies and tactics of the Internationals was also likely a major factor.

Throughout the depression the rail shops were the focus of most of the O.B.U.'s attention in Winnipeg. Its strategic position in Winnipeg's industry and its tradition of shopcraft militancy made it crucial to any O.B.U. resurgence. Despite two years of unsuccessful attempts to win recognition, the O.B.U. probably still retained the sympathy, if not the dues, of a majority of the shopcraft workers in 1921. For example, the dissident Fort Rouge Rail Unit in June, 1921 reduced its bundle of O.B.U. Bulletins to 1,500, indicating a large audience.<sup>25</sup> It was this sympathy which allowed the O.B.U. to claim

4,100 members<sup>26</sup> in their rail units in May, 1921, without becoming a laughing stock. While the claim is absurd given the C.L.C.'s total membership of less than 4,000, it likely reflects a real base of support which would not pay dues to a union that could not protect them, but would buy its paper.

With the onset of the depression the rail shops were hit by a massive cutback in work. By April, 1921 they had been reduced to a three-day work week,<sup>27</sup> and until 1925 they would continue to be hit with short time and lay-offs on a large scale. The response of the Internationals to the introduction of short time was to call for lay-offs instead, to protect the incomes of the most senior men.<sup>28</sup> The O.B.U. organized a successful petition in favour of sharing the work and the company delayed lay-offs for a time at least,<sup>29</sup> although eventually they became necessary. But despite this tactical victory, 1921 ended with the O.B.U. still without recognition and weakened by the loss of Logan.

In 1922, they tried a different tack by setting up a front called the Western Shopmen's Committee and launching a campaign for "employee representation." This involved having a negotiating committee elected by a vote of all shop workers regardless of union affiliation.<sup>30</sup> In practice the O.B.U. counted on its mass support to allow them to replace the Internationals at the bargaining table. Both the railroads and the Internationals ignored

the new Committee and appeals to the federal government to intervene fell on deaf ears. The Committee then attempted to organize a ballot on the question of representation, but no results were ever released and it appears that it was met, like the appeals of the Internationals for support, by mass apathy.<sup>31</sup> Any chance of the Internationals launching a militant fight against the railroads was ended by the defeat of the national shopcraft strike in the U.S. in the summer of 1922. With the shopcraft unions virtually bankrupt<sup>32</sup> they accepted another wage cut rather than risk a strike in Canada. Under these circumstances the O.B.U. could do little besides fulminate against the wage cuts and promise to support a strike if the Internationals called one, while advising against such a course.<sup>33</sup>

In 1923 the O.B.U. was again ignored by the Internationals when it proposed a united front to strike for wage increases.<sup>34</sup> Increasingly they were also being ignored by the rail workers. Three years of short time, lay-offs, the defeat of the O.B.U. at every turn and the crushing defeat of the U.S. shopcraft strike of 1922 had completed the demoralization of the shopworkers. There was no enthusiasm for the Internationals, but instead a massive disillusionment and defeatism. The shops which had boasted nearly 100% organization in 1918 were reduced to the point where McCutcheon, vice-president of the Boilermakers, admitted that of the 6,000 remaining western shopmen, barely 2,000 were members of any union.<sup>35</sup> In

this environment the militant proposals of the O.B.U. received little support.

A new issue arose in 1924 which revealed much about the changes in Winnipeg's labour movement. The Internationals and the C.N.R. agreed to introduce the "B and O Plan" into the Transcona shops.<sup>36</sup> The plan was a manifestation of a swing towards management-labour co-operation which gained popularity after the defeat of the post-war upsurge in unions and radicalism. Modelled on a system introduced in the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad's shops in the U.S., its essence was a system of joint union-management committees whose task was to facilitate production and industrial harmony at the shop floor level. An enthusiastic union bureaucracy was able, with some difficulty to get a convention of Division 4, representing all the shopcrafts in Canada, to endorse the scheme but a motion to propagandize for it was defeated.<sup>37</sup>

To the O.B.U. and many of the shop workers educated in the militant industrial tradition of the previous two decades, this was class collaboration of the worst sort. The proposed joint committees were to have management chairmen and advisory power only.<sup>38</sup> Thus management could defeat any proposal it did not like, and was free to implement only those proposals which were to its benefit. Assuming conflicting interests between capital and labour, the radicals predicted speed-ups, piece work and a further

loss of the craft's skill monopoly--all in exchange for some hypothetical gains in job security and income. The O.B.U., as well as the C.P., launched a vigorous campaign against the plan, both inside and outside the shops.<sup>39</sup>

As the plan required at least the acceptance of the shop men if it was to work, this campaign posed a real threat to the plan and its sponsors who were busy preaching class co-operation as an alternative to class struggle.

In June, management responded by firing two popular O.B.U. leaders at the Transcona shops--Clancy and C. Foster. In this the company was supported by the Internationals, particularly McCutcheon, a former comrade of Clancy's in the Boilermakers before 1919, who singled out who should be fired.<sup>40</sup> The O.B.U., aided by the I.L.P. and the C.P., raised a furore. Prominent labour leaders such as Russell of the O.B.U., Ivens of the I.L.P. and Bartholemew\* of the C.P. addressed noon-hour audiences of over a thousand at the plant gates all week. At the third such meeting, on Wednesday, a motion was passed to stage a one-hour strike after lunch on Friday if the men were not reinstated.<sup>41</sup>

By this point the real issue was no longer just the two men, but also the ability of the O.B.U. to stage a

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\*Bartholomew, born in Ireland, had been an active unionist and socialist in Britain before coming to Canada in 1914. From 1918 to 1921 he was a prominent speaker for the Winnipeg S.P.C. and played an active role in the 1919 strike in Brandon. Joining the C.P. in 1921, he became its organizer for Manitoba and Saskatchewan. Later in the twenties, he was involved in a personal scandal and dropped from activity, finally committing suicide in 1931.



strike in the shop where it was strongest, and closely linked to this, the fate of the B and O plan. The W.T.L.C. quickly wired Ottawa a guarantee that no strike would take place. Management allowed representatives of the Internationals to canvass men during working hours, telling them that those that struck would be fired. The remnants of the S.P.C., most of it having joined in the founding of the C.P., joined the anti-strike agitation. At the eleventh hour the C.P. circulated a leaflet in the shops arguing that a strike would be a failure and would lead to the most militant workers being fired.<sup>42</sup>

Whether the leaflet was an accurate assessment or a self-fulfilling prophecy, the meeting on Friday was smaller than expected. With a thin face-saving formula about "new chances for redress" through the federal Minister of Labour, the strike was called off.<sup>43</sup> The Internationals pressed their advantage, threatening workers with the same fate as Clancy and Foster if they remained in the O.B.U. or led opposition to the B and O Plan. The inability of the O.B.U. to protect its most popular militants in its rail stronghold marked the end of their credibility in the shops and members began to drift back to the Internationals or into apathy at an accelerated rate.<sup>44</sup> In August, 1925 the B and O Plan was introduced into Transcona and soon afterwards into the Fort Rouge shops, with the passive acceptance of most of the workers.

The depression of 1921 - 1925 marked a major defeat

for the shopmen. In the words of R. B. Russell: ". . . (the railroads) pretty near half starved them into submission with short time."<sup>45</sup> His only error is of omission. For the economic defeat of the depression came on top of the political defeat of the general strike and the organizational defeat represented by the division of the labour movement into two hostile factions. While the O.B.U. was crushed during the depression, the Internationals could claim a victory of sorts, but it was a very limited one. A number of their locals in the shops, representing specialists and helpers, were dissolved or merged into other locals, as they retreated to their skilled base. In the C.P.R. shops--the Internationals' strongest base--we can see the pattern of their fortunes. The C.P.R. Federated Trades Council dropped from 2,000 members in 1918 to a low of 750 in 1920. While this increased to 1,500 in 1922, by 1925 it had shrunk to 830. It would appear that the Internationals failed to retain the loyalty or the dues of most of Winnipeg's shopmen during the depression years, even after vanquishing the O.B.U. But the real losers were the workers themselves, who saw their living standards eroded by short time and wage cuts and their skills undercut by dilution.<sup>46</sup>

If the shopcraft workers had suffered a major defeat, the building trades did little better. With the onset of the depression construction employment plummeted. By the spring of 1923 the City's Relief Committee estimated

that 50% of Winnipeg's bricklayers and plasterers, and between 20% and 50% of its carpenters, painters and plumbers had been forced to leave Winnipeg in search of work, while hundreds were forced onto relief.<sup>47</sup> Disastrous levels of unemployment more than offset any gains in real wages while working.

In the on-going fight between the Internationals and the O.B.U., the depression quickly decided the issue. In the relatively busy construction market of 1920, most O.B.U. tradesmen likely found work despite the Internationals' and the Builders Exchange's policy of discrimination, either on smaller jobs or on big sights when no International men were available. With the start of the depression this ceased to be true. Cases of discrimination multiplied<sup>48</sup> and the O.B.U.'s membership in the building trades rapidly bled away. It took a lot of commitment to pay dues on a union card which excluded the holder from work on most, if not all, union jobs, and at a time when it was hard for an International man to make a living. The result was that while the O.B.U. Building Trades Unit could still claim 900 members in the spring of 1921, they were reduced to 90 by August, 1923.<sup>49</sup> Attempts by the O.B.U. to get legislation outlawing such discrimination were not even supported by the I.L.P. and further appeals to the J.C.I. were likewise fruitless. As in the railshops, management and the Internationals with the support of the state, had utilized the depression

to break the back of the O.B.U. By the time construction began to pick up, in 1925, the O.B.U.'s base in the building trades was insignificant.

While the Internationals regained their dominance in the building trades, their numbers continued to contract. The Winnipeg Building Trades Council declined 2,500 in 1919 to a highly unlikely claimed membership of 1,800 from 1922 to 1926. Individual trades provide a more accurate impression. The Bricklayers and Plasterers shrank from 413 in June, 1922 to 190 in September, 1923. The painters were further reduced from 75 in September, 1921 to 24 in June of 1923, while the Winnipeg Carpenters' decline was in non-construction jobs.<sup>50</sup> Symptomatic of the weakness of the Internationals was the loss of the preferential hiring clause in the 1922 contract.<sup>51</sup> While discrimination against the O.B.U. continued, preference for International men ended as the employers ceased to need their assistance. With the O.B.U. defeated, the employees now began to challenge the Internationals.

The building trades were not totally passive through the depression. May of 1921 saw Iron Workers and Stonecutters stage small, brief strikes against wage cuts which were resolved by compromise. A strike by thirty Plasterers in June met firmer resistance and lasted seven weeks before a compromise was reached. In 1922 the Iron Workers were out again over wage cuts. Employed by Dominion Bridge on railroad bridge construction, they

were served with an injunction against picketing and a \$50,000 damage suit from the company, which then hired scabs to replace the strikers. With the building trades having abandoned joint negotiations after 1919, the Iron Workers were left on their own. It was 1924 before any of the building trades struck again, when a one-day strike of forty Bricklayers--in short supply due to out-migration--won a wage increase. The next year, a few tradesmen in St. Boniface struck, winning some wage increase. These scattered strikes show that the militancy of the building trades was not completely dead, and no doubt helped them maintain some of the real wage gains which deflation brought. Yet it is significant that the strikes were largely limited to a single trade, and averaged only 60 strikers and 11 days each, with most lasting less than a week.<sup>52</sup>

While the Internationals watched with concern as depression and the open shop chipped away at their numbers in the building trades, one of them--the Carpenters--came under attack on a different quarter. In May, 1922, when the millworkers organized in local 172 of the Carpenters union attempted to renew their agreement with the Millowners' Section of the Builders Exchange, they were told to get lost. The millowners had decided that wages were to be cut and rates to be set at the foreman's discretion, that hours were to be lengthened, and that they would refuse to negotiate with the union. On May 2,

one hundred and seventy-five millhands struck. Drawing on the vast pool of unemployed, the employers continued operations with scabs, and after three weeks the men returned on the companies' terms. A company-dominated "plant council" was set up to replace the union.<sup>53</sup> Again the Internationals were being reduced to their hard core of skilled tradesmen.

With the exception of the semi-industrial millworkers local, the Internationals had come out of the depression with their building trades unions, like the shopcrafts, basically intact. In another major sector--the printing trades--they were not as fortunate. These trades had had only one strike in the decade before 1921, lasting only four days. Almost alone they had largely remained aloof from the general strike. Their 1919 and 1920 contracts had included significant gains, including a 44-hour week in the non-newspaper, or job shops. In 1921 the employers, urged on by the United Typothetae of America, a U.S.-based employers' group dedicated to the open shop, attempted to take back some of these gains.<sup>54</sup> Matters were complicated by the recent convention decision of the I.T.U., the largest union in the printing trades, not to allow its members to work in any job shop working more than a 44-hour week.<sup>55</sup> In an industry where a union card was often a prerequisite for employment, this decision could be enforced.

The result was an intransigent employers' group

facing an equally intransigent workforce, both sides under pressure from their American counterparts to fight to the finish. The strike/lockout was continental in scope and Winnipeg seems a fair example of its progress. Several small employers quickly signed on union terms, while a few others settled during the course of the strike. But the bulk of the employers simply posted a notice of the new hours, and the employees walked out. Department of Labour statistics say that 157 workers were initially involved, but press reports indicate this included only the Pressmen, and that the two other unions involved, the Bookbinders and the I.T.U., probably totalled some 300 to 350 more.<sup>56</sup>

The strike dragged on from July 1st, 1921, until the I.T.U., the last union hold-out, formally ended it on August 30, 1924. The Bookbinders, the weakest union representing the least skilled workers were the first to collapse when they returned on the companies' terms on September 22, 1921. By the end of 1921 they retained only 33 members of a 1919 peak of 290, and in 1924 the Winnipeg local of the Bookbinders was formally dissolved. The Pressmen never formally ended the strike, but by the end of 1922 none were collecting strike pay or picketing. Some had returned to work on the employer's terms while others had found jobs in union shops, often in the U.S. Their ranks were reduced from 192, including the newspaper pressmen, in January, 1921 to only 72 in December, 1925, with most of these in the newspapers. The I.T.U., backed

by the resources of a strong International, maintained pickets for another year and a half before admitting defeat. Only strike pay of \$24 and \$17 per week for married and single strikers respectively enabled them to hold out for this long. Even the I.T.U.'s membership shrank from over 500 at the start of the strike to 340 when it was called off. And many of these were also employed by the newspapers and had been affected by the strike.

The strike was a major defeat for unionism in Winnipeg. An important group who had survived the defeat of 1919 and the recessionist movement largely intact, had been forced into a strike when the industry was in decline, and decisively defeated. As had occurred in other unions in 1919, many of the most militant workers lost their jobs and were forced to move to other cities. A lasting setback was also suffered by the unions when the employers set up a private school to teach the printing trades. This not only provided scabs, but also broke the unions' control over the number entering the trades which they had exercised via a union apprenticeship program, and flooded the labour market.<sup>57</sup> The effect on the Printing Trades Council of the defeat was disastrous. From a 1918 peak of 1,600 members, depression, then the strike, reduced it to 450 members in 1924. It would be more than two decades before the Council returned to its 1921 level of 1,100 members.



Among the few unions to hold up well through the depression, the largest were the running trades and the Maintenance-of-Way union. The running trades saw a small decline due to the sluggish economy, but the bulk of their membership kept their jobs and their union cards. Wages, which could reach \$500 a month with overtime included during the busy grain shipping season, kept them relatively content. The only disturbance was the formation of the Canadian Association of Railway Enginemen in 1921. Formed by men expelled from the Brotherhoods for refusing to limit their monthly mileage--a limitation imposed in order to benefit the less senior men--they also objected to the high dues of the Internationals.<sup>58</sup> While the Association lasted throughout the decade as an even more conservative alternative to the Internationals, it never gained a significant membership or won recognition from the railroads. The Maintenance-of-Way union saw little decline in membership as government encouraged rail construction as a source of employment during the depression. Potential jurisdictional problems with C.B.R.E. were settled by an agreement which gave C.B.R.E. the shop labourers and the Maintenance-of-Way International all non-shop trackmen.<sup>59</sup>

Among rail employees within the jurisdiction of B.R.A.C. and C.B.R.E. matters were worse. With the expulsion of the C.B.R.E. from the national Congress in 1921 the conflict between the two unions became even more bitter, although by 1922 the O.B.U. seems to have ceased

to be a factor. While the International accused the C.B.R.E. of dual unionism and being soft on communism, the C.B.R.E. boasted of its nationalism and semi-industrial structure and attacked B.R.A.C. as a foreign union. The combined effects of the depression and fratricidal strife was a dramatic loss in their combined membership. The two unions combined, with 8 out of 14 locals reporting, claimed 2,745 members in Manitoba in July, 1920. By June, 1925, with 15 out of 15 locals reporting, they were reduced to 1,340 members.<sup>60</sup> National figures on the two unions show the C.B.R.E. with a small increase in members during the depression, while B.R.A.C. lost more than two-thirds of its membership.<sup>61</sup> Presumably this meant that most of Manitoba's decline was from B.R.A.C.'s ranks. By the end of 1925 the two unions, while still raiding each other, had largely settled down with C.B.R.E. dominant on the C.N.R. and B.R.A.C. dominant on the C.P.R. But low membership and inter-union conflict enabled the railroads to keep wages down in these classifications. The C.B.R.E.'s successful survival after being exorcised by the Trades and Labour Congress was a setback for the Internationals and provided a positive example for others who were dissatisfied with their Internationals.

Probably the most confused area of inter-union conflict in this period was the garment trades. At the start of the depression the organized garment workers were divided between the United Garment Workers (U.G.W.) and two

O.B.U. units, one of garment workers and one of tailors. When the C.L.C. voted to bar communists from holding office in O.B.U. units, the Garment Workers Unit refused to obey and in March, 1923 voted to leave the O.B.U. and got a charter from the International Ladies Garment Workers (I.L.G.W.U.),<sup>62</sup> which at the time had a strong and influential communist minority. The predominantly eastern European membership remained loyal to its communist leadership, and the O.B.U.'s Garment Workers Unit disappeared although the Tailors remained loyal to the O.B.U., following a largely successful strike in 1921. Attempts by both the O.B.U. and the I.L.G.W.U. to organize the still largely unorganized garment workers met with little or no success except for the organization of a small local of the International Fur Workers under communist leadership in 1924.<sup>63</sup> The result of these conflicts and the depression was that by 1925 the O.B.U. claimed the industry was largely unorganized.<sup>64</sup> However, the U.G.W. seemed to have benefitted from the O.B.U.'s problems and claimed almost 500 members by the end of 1925.

Among the weaker unions affiliated to both union centrals, the effect of the depression was to further reduce their numbers. The Hotel and Restaurant Employees International, which had boasted 700 members in 1919 was reduced to a handful employed by the two railroad-owned hotels by 1924.<sup>65</sup> In 1925 the Winnipeg local was finally dissolved. The O.B.U. attempted to take advantage of this by launching a prolonged organizing drive in the winter of

1924 - 1925. The drive was broken when a strike at a large cafe was defeated with the use of scabs.<sup>66</sup> However, the persistent publicity given to the low wages and poor conditions in the industry, in the pages of the O.B.U. Bulletin no doubt caused a decline in the most flagrant, and often illegal abuses.<sup>67</sup>

The depression also allowed the Master Barbers to break the O.B.U. Barbers Unit which had 34 shops under contract in 1921. An organizing drive in the fall of 1923 signed up the barbers in 15 shops, but there is no indication that any of these signed collective agreements.<sup>68</sup> Among the city's bakers the O.B.U. had better results. In 1923 a separate unit was set up for the smaller north-end bakeries, and contracts were won from five of them. In a sixth a strike was defeated, but the displaced workers set up a co-operative bakery which seemed to have had some success as it was still going a year later.<sup>69</sup> A more important gain was the affiliation of the independent Gas Workers Union to the O.B.U. in 1925.

Many of the weaker International locals were forced to dissolve during this period. Locals of Upholsterers, Asbestos Workers, Jewellery Workers, Sheet Metal Workers, Steam Shovel and Dredgemen, and Operating Engineers all disappeared from the records, in addition to the previously discussed Bookbinders and Restaurant workers. One of the few bright spots was the reformation of a Brewery Workers local in 1925 and its winning of collective agreements.

Both centrals made sporadic attempts to organize unskilled or semi-skilled workers, but with little success. In 1923 a directly chartered local of A.F.L. was set up by the W.T.L.C. as an organizing tool with Leslie Morris, National Secretary of the communist Young Workers League as local secretary, but it met with little success and was dissolved in 1925.<sup>70</sup> The O.B.U. was much more aggressive, if not successful, in its organizing drives, especially among the contract metal shops, garment industry and the city's large abattoirs.<sup>71</sup>

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In the field of labour political action the period was one of confusion and produced mixed results. For a brief period in the fall of 1921 it appeared that the feuding D.L.P. and I.L.P. might make peace. An attempt was made to form a Manitoba section of the resurgent Canadian Labour Party (C.L.P.). With the D.L.P. recognized as the Manitoba Section, a founding convention was called for August with the I.L.P. invited to send delegates, and agreeing to do so. The I.L.P. soon pulled out, however, primarily because the constitution allowed for direct union affiliation through the D.L.P. Their fear was that this would renew the O.B.U.-loyalist fight in the labour party and allow the increasingly conservative leadership of the craft unions to dominate policy.<sup>72</sup> The I.L.P.

then nominated J. S. Woodsworth, at the time the secretary of the Labour Church, to run for the I.L.P. in the federal election of December, 1921. With the S.P.C. running R. B. Russell in Winnipeg North and the I.L.P. running Woodsworth in Winnipeg North Centre, the D.L.P.-C.L.P. were left with the choice of not running or appearing as spoilers. They chose the former.

Woodsworth swept to victory with at least half-hearted support from the whole labour movement. Russell was narrowly defeated, and relations among the city's radicals were not improved by the fact that Penner, running as a communist, received more votes than Russell's margin of defeat.<sup>73</sup> The balance between the D.L.P. and the I.L.P. was now further shifted with the latter group now having the support of a Labour M.P. The question of which party represented Winnipeg labour was finally resolved in the civic elections which were held a few days before the federal contest. Both the D.L.P. and the I.L.P. ran slates and the latter won handily, electing four councillors while the D.L.P. elected none. The Balloting also provided some hints as to the working class's views on the O.B.U.-International debate. Four of the D.L.P. candidates, including an incumbent, held office in an International union while three of the I.L.P. candidates held O.B.U. positions. The total first-choice votes for the International men was 1,176 while the three O.B.U. men received 4,312 first ballots.<sup>74</sup> The size of the spread indicates

that at the end of 1921, the O.B.U. still had the support, or at least sympathy of the majority of Winnipeg's workers. Among the three I.L.P.-O.B.U. aldermen elected, two-- Tom Flye\* and Jack Blumberg\*\*--were to serve a combined total of over fifty years on Council.

In the spring of 1922 the labour caucus helped defeat the Norris provincial government and a new election was called for July. The W.T.L.C. and the D.L.P. by now

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\*Flye was born in Wales in 1874 and before immigrating to Winnipeg in 1910 had played an active role in the Welsh labour movement. A blacksmith by trade, he worked at Dominion Bridge for a time but left after the defeat of the 1918 contract metal shops strike. He got work at the C.P.R. shops and was soon elected vice-president of the Federated Trades Council. A member of the Central Committee of the General Strike Committee, he was fired for his strike activities. He found a position at the Agricultural College teaching his trade, but quit in 1923 to become a full-time alderman. Active in the O.B.U. from its inception, he was a founding member of the I.L.P. in 1921. First elected alderman in that year, he continued to win re-election until he retired in 1943. In the thirties he refused to follow the I.L.P. into the C.C.F. and continued to run as an independent labour candidate.

\*\*Jack Blumberg was born in Hull, England in 1892, and came to Winnipeg in 1912, along with his brother Sam-- who was to play a prominent part in the S.P.C. He found a job as a street-car motorman and joined the International Street Rail Union, and the D.L.P. After serving overseas in the war he returned to his job and was elected to his local executive. In 1919 he was elected alderman on the D.L.P. slate. He followed his union into the O.B.U. in 1920, but later returned to the International. He eventually operated an insurance and real estate business which he passed on to his son. He served on Council as a representative first of the D.L.P., and from 1921 for the I.L.P., then C.C.F. until 1956 when he resigned to accept a position as chairman of the Transit Commission. Described as a "left winger" during the war, he later became an ardent anti-communist influence in the C.C.F.

had completed the break with the labour M.L.A.s and the Western Labour News claimed there were no representatives of the International movement in the legislature.<sup>75</sup> Following the logic of their position they nominated two "union labour" candidates, Winning and F. W. McGill of the Civic Employees Federation, while the newly organized C.P. likewise ran two candidates as did the S.P.C. The Union Labour candidates, running on a moderate reform platform<sup>76</sup> were thoroughly trounced, not only by the I.L.P., who got over ten thousand votes, but by the fledgling C.P. who got over one thousand votes, compared to the Union Labour's 644. The S.P.C. still polled a respectable 3,779 votes, but failed to elect anyone, while the I.L.P. elected Dixon, Farmer and Ivens. Queen, who had refused to follow the majority of his party into the C.P. ran as an independent, but soon joined the I.L.P. Outside of Winnipeg proper, Bayley and Tanner were re-elected for the I.L.P. but the other labour candidates were swamped by the United Farmers of Manitoba (U.F.M.) candidates, who were becoming increasingly anti-labour.<sup>77</sup>

In November, 1922 the I.L.P. achieved another victory at the municipal level when Farmer was elected Mayor on the I.L.P. slate. Unfortunately the I.L.P.'s votes for alderman were never as large as their vote for mayor and a majority of Council were still anti-Labour. But at the aldermanic level their share of the vote increased steadily from 30% in 1920 to 36% in 1924--the



year that Farmer was defeated for mayor.<sup>78</sup> The D.L.P., rejected by everyone except the leadership of the W.T.L.C., quietly passed out of existence. Its members either drifted into the I.L.P. or into political inactivity, with a handful returning to the Liberals or Conservatives. A renewed attempt to unite labour politically by forming a Manitoba Section of the C.L.P. in 1924 was a failure. Delegates from the W.T.L.C., S.P.C., I.L.P. and C.P. as well as several progressive ethnic organizations attended a convention in November,<sup>79</sup> but once again the crucial I.L.P. withdrew. In addition to restating their opposition to direct union affiliation, they also attacked the pre-dominance of the C.P. with its ethnic and union delegates.<sup>80</sup>

Following its withdrawal from the C.L.P., the I.L.P. nominated candidates for the federal election of 1925. The C.L.P., now virtually a front for the communists, nominated Bartholomew against Woodsworth, but later withdrew his nomination in the interests of labour unity.<sup>81</sup> The right wing of the W.T.L.C., led by McBride and Owens, turned to the Conservative Party, which they supported against the I.L.P. in the election. The collapse of the political unity of labour which had been largely achieved in 1918 - 1920, was complete, yet both Woodsworth and Heaps were elected to Parliament for the I.L.P.

While the establishment of the I.L.P. and defeat of the more moderate D.L.P. was the outstanding event in

in labour politics in the depression years, it was by no means the only important one. Both the S.P.C. and the S.D.P. had grown rapidly in popularity after the general strike and had a large following by 1921.<sup>82</sup> But with the formation of the C.P. (Workers Party at this point) they had both gone into crisis. Support for the Russian Revolution and the Bolshevik's form of Marxism was counter-balanced by a distrust of the Comintern's democratic centralism, the Ontario leadership of the new party, and long traditions on the part of the S.P.C. of sectarianism and on the part of the S.D.P. of reformism. The result was that both parties were split over the question of joining the new C.P. The majority of the Winnipeg S.D.P.'s members were in the eastern European language locals and as most of these went to the C.P.,<sup>83</sup> the moderate, British leadership represented by men like Queen and Heaps were left without a base and soon joined the I.L.P. The Winnipeg local of the S.P.C. voted in favour of joining the C.P. and when the national executive refused, they left in droves, including a significant number of the English speaking members.<sup>84</sup> But again the parties' leading figures, such as Armstrong, Russell and Johns, refused to join the C.P. For the S.D.P. the split meant its effective dissolution, but the S.P.C. continued on as an increasingly small sect. After the communists left, it again split over the International-O.B.U. conflict and by the end of the depression had broken with its O.B.U. supporters and

moved considerably to the right.<sup>85</sup>

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An overview of the five depression years, 1921 - 1925, indicates that Winnipeg's workers had little reason for optimism. Almost all of the city's unions, both O.B.U. and International, had suffered major losses in membership and several had been broken. With mass unemployment, workers were poorly equipped to fight back and half a decade had seen only 15 strikes, less than the total for each of the years 1912, 1917, 1918 and 1919. Of these 15 strikes, five were fought by the O.B.U. and three of these had been broken. Of the ten strikes by Internationals, four were broken, including the two largest, while only three were union victories and three were settled by compromise. Aggressive employers, union divisions, and a large body of destitute unemployed united to defeat labour's efforts to improve conditions or spread unionism. These set-backs hurt the central labour bodies as well as the locals. The W.T.L.C. was forced to lay off its full-time organizer in 1922, and in 1923 the Western Labour News went bankrupt.

But whatever its problems, the International movement in Winnipeg had used the depression years to successfully secure its major goal. The O.B.U. had been driven out of all the major bastions of labour except the

Street Rail Unit. If it still had widespread support, it had proven its inability to mobilize it in the key rail shops and building trades. No matter how depleted their ranks were, the Internationals were in control of all but one important unionized sector. Even the garment trades were primarily International, although the C.P.'s influence made this a danger point. The Internationals had truly been reduced to a hard core in the traditional labour strongholds, but there they were largely unchallenged as representatives of labour.

The O.B.U. had been far harder hit. The depression had seen the end of any hope of it establishing itself as a major industrial union. Its increasingly obvious inability to challenge the assaults of employers, government, and Internationals had led to wholesale desertions. With its break with the C.P. and later the S.P.C., it even lost its mantle as the only home of trade union radicalism. It is noteworthy that at the 1923 O.B.U. convention the reasons for its lack of success were listed as first unemployment and second the role of the Workers Party.<sup>86</sup> Like the W.T.L.C. the O.B.U. was desperate for money, constantly on the verge of bankruptcy, attempting to finance organizing drives outside of Winnipeg. The O.B.U. Bulletin was saved from the fate of the Western Labour News when in December, 1921 it began to sponsor a series of contests with large cash prizes. The contest's popularity guaranteed profitable circulation as a gambling

vehicle and they continued until 1928 despite numerous legal challenges, and solved at least part of the O.B.U.'s financial woes. It should be noted that the Western Labour News attempted to imitate these contests, but without success. This would seem to indicate that at least part of the O.B.U. Bulletin's success came from its greater popularity among the city's workers.<sup>87</sup>

Despite the widespread collapse of unionism and economic militancy during the depression, there is little indication that this reflected a significant decline in class consciousness. The causes of this collapse were instead the result of the inability of the workers or their organizations to fight back against the employers and the depression with any chance of success. The increasing electoral success of the I.L.P. and the significant support for the C.P. indicates that most workers had retained the basic class consciousness which had grown so rapidly during the war and its aftermath. Even these figures on votes cast for labour and radical parties understate the case as a significant number of Winnipeg's workers were disenfranchised by citizenship and residency requirements.

If class consciousness does not seem to have decreased, working class activism seems to have declined dramatically. The obvious examples of this demobilization is the decline in strike activity and union membership. But the pattern applies elsewhere as well. Efforts by

the working class parties to mobilize their supporters for non-electoral activities met with less and less response. May Day demonstrations slowly shrank from up to 7,000 in 1921 in what the O.B.U. called a "celebration of the revolutionary proletariat"<sup>88</sup> to a few hundred in 1925, almost solely from the C.P.<sup>89</sup> Another casualty was the Labour Church which drew steadily smaller crowds and was moribund by the second half of the decade.<sup>90</sup> The Winnipeg Women's Labour League seems to have folded during these years as well. Only among organizations of the unemployed does there seem to have been some progress,<sup>91</sup> and even here the numbers were small and their isolation from the workplace limited their influence on the rest of the class.

The cumulative effect of this demobilization was the continued shrinkage of the number of worker-activists or the vanguard. The lack of activity of any kind among the bulk of the class tended to increase the isolation of the remaining activists. In addition the vanguard was more fragmented and conflict-torn than it had been for at least a decade. In addition to the division between the activists of the two labour centrals, both were divided internally on ideological or political grounds between the left and right. In turn the left was divided between the C.P., S.P.C. on the left wing of the I.L.P., while the right was divided between the right wing of the I.L.P., the C.L.P. and the bourgeois parties. The apathy and inactivity of the working class, no matter how reasonable

it was, tended to reinforce conservative, elitist, and defeatist ideas among those who continued to dedicate themselves to class-based activities. This phenomenon applies not only to those like McBride who entered the Conservative party, but to a wide layer of activists of all political persuasions.

## CHAPTER IV

During the summer of 1925, Winnipeg's economy began to slowly recover. In manufacturing employment was up 20% over the preceding year and the building permits were up a third. The overall employment index increased about 5%. These improvements left the economy well below its 1920 level, but did constitute a marked improvement over the preceding years. Relief figures for the winter of 1925 - 1926 reflect this with 4,662 claiming relief, a decline of nearly 8,000 from the previous winter.

The next year was marked by a general economic upsurge, with all of the indicators showing growth and reports indicate that employment finally reached 1920 levels.<sup>1</sup> The period 1926 - 1929, encompassing four years, is one of steady increase in economic activity in Winnipeg and around the world.<sup>2</sup> The roar of the twenties, now half over, was finally being heard in Winnipeg's working class neighbourhoods. Winnipeg's employment index (1926 average = 100) which had bottomed at 86.2 in 1924 rose steadily until 1929 when it stood at 115.8.<sup>3</sup> The bulk of this increase was in manufacturing, where employment almost doubled from its 1922 low and was up by a third from 1925 levels to 19,150 employees.<sup>4</sup> The construction industry also revived somewhat, with the value of building permits



more than doubling in 1926 to 10.4 million dollars and rising to 11 million dollars by 1929.<sup>5</sup>

A look at the payroll covered by Workmen's Compensation in Manitoba gives some further indications of how Winnipeg's economy, where the bulk of the payroll was, developed during these years. The total payroll jumped from fifty-six million dollars in 1924 to eighty-one million in 1929. However in the same period the payroll of the railroads was static, declining from 37.4% of the total in 1924 to 25% in 1929. It was in the "General" category, including manufacturing and construction that the bulk of the increase took place.<sup>6</sup>

While Winnipeg's economy was on an upswing in the late twenties, it would be a mistake to characterize it as a boom. Construction never reached the annual average for the years 1905 - 1914, and when inflation is taken into account it remained well below that average.<sup>7</sup> The total employment index in 1929, while higher than ever before in the decade, showed a smaller increase over the decade than either the indexes for Canada or the prairie region. Predictably, Winnipeg's population grew more slowly than any other major city on the prairies. In Winnipeg the twenties roared late and softly.

Increased economic activity reduced unemployment from its disastrous depression levels, but failed to eliminate it entirely. For a large number of workers in seasonal industries such as construction or meat packing,

unemployment was still the norm for part of each year.<sup>8</sup>

In addition increased productivity seems to have created a steady layer of non-seasonal unemployment. While relatively small, it was significant enough to demand attention not only from labour papers, but from the Bracken government as well.<sup>9</sup> But for the vast majority of workers employment was fairly constant, subject only to traditional seasonal fluctuations.

Real wage rates in this short period of prosperity show some interesting trends.<sup>10</sup> Among the skilled building trades real wages rose quite sharply. By 1929 all of them had their highest real wages of the century. Compared to the 1910 benchmark their gains varied from 14.6% for the Stonecutters to 42.5% for Electricians. Compared to their average real wages from 1920 to 1925, the year 1929 saw increases of from 20% to 35%. A tight job market brought on by increased construction, the existence of strong unions and weak employers, the absence of any significant technological changes or skill dilution, all combined to put these workers in a position where their living standards were far above anything they had experienced before.

The metal trades reveal a very different pattern. The machinists, boilermakers and blacksmiths all see their real wages remain virtually static. Only the small group of moulders, who go up about 4%, and the largely construction employed sheet metal workers, who go up 10%, could

claim any significant increase from 1925 to 1929. The two largest groups, the machinists and the boilermakers, remained from five to ten percent below their wartime averages, while the smaller blacksmith and moulders group are up about 10%. Presumably weaker unions, skill dilution and strong employers are responsible for the inability of the metal trades to make any major gains during this period of prosperity.

Among the printing trades a small increase was registered by both the Compositors and the Pressmen, leaving both at record real wages during the last years of the decade. The conductors and motormen, employed on street cars saw small gains to 1928, but lost part of them in 1929. They appear to follow the pattern of the metal trades, and as semi-skilled workers may indicate patterns among workers of similar skill levels in other occupations.

It is among the unskilled that prosperity seemed to have the least impression on real wages. Construction labourers gained somewhat initially, but then saw their wages decline until 1929. By that year their wages were below their average for any of the periods studied, and the lowest for any year since 1913.<sup>11</sup> For common factory labour the data is less accurate, but indicates that wages were up somewhat from depression lows, but were only marginally above 1929 levels and at about the level of the decade average. Agricultural labour, while outside of Winnipeg, was partly drawn from the city's labour

market and no doubt was at least partially related to it in wage trends. Here real wages, which had fallen dramatically during the depression, remained basically static at its depression levels right up to the end of the decade.<sup>12</sup> While the limitations of the sources demands caution, the three categories studied indicate a remarkable absence of real wage gains among unskilled workers during a period of prosperity. If the trend for construction workers is at all related to other unskilled categories, it would appear that their wage rates were low relative to historical levels as well.

Keeping in mind the stagnation of wages in the largest of the metal trades, it would appear that prosperity brought little or no improvement in real wages for the majority of the city's workers. The real wage index for workers claiming Workmen's Compensation, which would cover both skilled and unskilled workers, tends to bear this out. It shows 1929 as the lowest year since 1920, and the average from 1926 - 1929 slightly below the decade average.<sup>13</sup> Thus for most workers the improvements in living standards in the years of prosperity took the form of more stable employment and not higher wages. Only for certain sectors of skilled workers were both gains combined, and for them improvements must have been substantial.

We are now in the last period of the decade which had supposedly brought increasing living standards to workers about to be hit by the undisputed hardships of the

"great depression." It is worthwhile now to look at absolute living standards. For while changes in living standards may well have a greater relevance to militancy and radicalism in the working class than do absolute living conditions, the actual standard of living must also have its effect. Real hardship in particular needs no standard of comparison to bring discontent. Also workers always have a standard of comparison other than their own past and that is the living standards of other classes, in particular businessmen and professionals with whom they usually share an urban environment. In order to gain some insight into the circumstances of workers in Winnipeg we have data on both the estimated cost of living and actual wages for the occupations studied.

The figures for weekly costs is based on Federal Department of Labour estimates for a working class family of five, living in modest comfort, neither prosperous nor at subsistence levels.<sup>14</sup> By these standards all of the building trades, except possibly the painters were at or above this level of modest comfort, even allowing for seasonal unemployment. Similarly the printing trades were well above it. The metal trades, assuming full employment were at or marginally below this level, while street rail conductors were slightly below it. The two groups of urban labourers however were below this level by as much as 40%. Of course a minority would have a family this large, and single workers or those whose

children had left home would have been much better off. In balance we could conclude that most skilled workers lived above this standard of modest comfort by the end of the decade, and a few lived well above it and were quite prosperous. The unskilled worker by contrast lived well below it and even in the best years, with full employment must have had to supplement their family incomes by having more than one member working or perhaps taking in boarders. Looking at the compensation claimants it would seem that this group far outnumbered the skilled journeyman.

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For Winnipeg's unions returning prosperity brought a badly needed uplift. Total membership projections, excluding the O.B.U., rose from 9,355 in 1925 to 12,227 in 1926 and continued to rise to 15,331 in 1929. In the same period the number of locals increased from 70 to 87. The gains were visible in virtually every sector. The Winnipeg Building Trades Council while declining from 13 affiliates in 1925 to 10 in 1929, still saw its membership rise by over a third. The Printing Trades Council saw similar growth until 1927, then fell off to about a quarter above 1925 levels. The Carpenters' Winnipeg and District Council and the C.P.R. Federated Trades Council experienced even greater growth, both more than doubling their membership in the four year period. Only the

moribund W.T.L.C. continued to decline in 1926 and 1927, reaching an historic low of 2,860 in the latter year. After that it experienced a resurgence as new locals and members poured in and by 1929 had nearly reached the levels of 1918, with 9,500 members in 56 affiliated locals.<sup>15</sup> The O.B.U. does not appear to have fared as well. No membership figures are available, but the absence of any indication of growth suggests that its membership probably remained around two thousand, mainly in the Street Rail Unit, Gas Workers Unit and Bakers Units.

One of the key reasons for the O.B.U.'s inability to match the growth of the rest of the union movement was its defeat in the rail shops during the depression. After the failure to get Clancy and Foster rehired, they continued to agitate against the B and O Plan in the C.N.R. shops, and even gain some support for their views.<sup>16</sup> But as work picked up and members began to flow into other rail unions the O.B.U. was largely ignored. The full extent of their decline was revealed in June, 1927, when some fifty shopworkers were permanently laid off without regard for seniority. Most were members of the O.B.U., while several were shop craftsmen who had joined C.B.R.E. and a few belonged to no union, but none were members of an International union.<sup>17</sup> Despite returning prosperity, the O.B.U. did not dare even propose a strike and instead appealed the firings to the courts. Nearly three years

and 17,000 dollars legal expenses later the Privy Council upheld a Manitoba Court of Appeals ruling against the O.B.U.<sup>18</sup> The court had ruled that because the men were not members of the unions signing the collective agreement, they were not protected by it. The lesson for the shop workers was clear and while the Internationals continued to regain members, the O.B.U. was no longer a factor in the shops.

The firings indicated not only the O.B.U.'s demise, but the renewal of the attacks by the Internationals on C.B.R.E. This round was begun by the entry of the International Brotherhood of Firemen and Oilers into Canada during the depression. By 1926 they were beginning to have an impact on C.B.R.E.'s membership which included shop labourers which in the U.S. belonged to their jurisdiction. Because of the active support the shopcrafts gave the new International, C.B.R.E. began, for the first time, to accept shopcraft workers into its ranks. The firings of June, 1927 which had been engineered by a group of International union representatives and the local management was a response to this move.<sup>19</sup> While the shopcrafts succeeded in turning back the C.B.R.E.'s attack on their membership, they had limited success in their attempts to break C.B.R.E. Its membership continued to grow in the last part of the decade and six new locals were formed in Winnipeg, four of which continued into the thirties. The Firemen and Oilers established four



locals in the province, one of them in Winnipeg, and won the support of a majority of shop labourers in the C.P.R. shops. A new organizing drive by B.R.A.C. led to their forming a new local in 1929.

During this period C.B.R.E. was shaken by renewed faction fighting, with the Winnipeg locals providing a base for the opposition to the autocratic leadership of A. R. Mosher, President of C.B.R.E. The fundamental issues seem to have been over the relative authority of the Executive and the locals, though they are not always clear. At each convention the Executive proposed constitutional changes such as lengthening the period between conventions, requiring Executive approval for contracts and reducing the number of delegates to conventions.<sup>20</sup> In 1929 a Winnipeg local managed to get its organizer rehired after he had been fired "by the company and the union" for being "impudent to the President" (Mosher). Over the decade most of Mosher's proposals were adopted and the disgruntlement was resolved when in the thirties a number of dissidents split and went into B.R.A.C.<sup>21</sup>

If among rail employees the Internationals had been forced to accept the existence of C.B.R.E., largely because of its continued ability to sign collective agreements even after its expulsion from the Trades and Labour Congress, in the building trades they faced no competition in the last years of the decade. In addition to growth of existing locals, the Asbestos Workers and the

Lathers were able to reestablish locals, and as well a new local of I.B.E.W. was formed. Spurred on by increased construction the building trades also began to show signs of returning militancy. In 1926 two groups who had been defeated during the depression attempted to reorganize. The first was the Structural Iron Workers employed by Dominion Bridge. The earlier experiences were repeated with scabs used to do the work. Despite this and their failure to win a contract, the company made some concessions and after two weeks the men returned to work.<sup>22</sup>

The second group was made up of 150 millworkers who were members of the Carpenter's union but had been without a contract since their strike was broken in 1922. In August, 1926 they walked out for union recognition, but when the companies refused to negotiate the strike soon fell apart and the workers returned defeated.<sup>23</sup>

A third group--the stonecutters--had better success. In annual strikes from 1926 to 1928, the fifty members of the Journeymen Stonecutters won substantial gains.<sup>24</sup> By 1929 their real wages had increased by over 20% compared to 1925. But by far the largest strike of the period, and the decade, was staged by construction Carpenters against the Builders Exchange in June, 1928. Nearly 500 union carpenters walked off the job over wages, and set up aggressive picket lines not only on unionized job sites but on previously non-union sites as well. The response was excellent and over 250 non-union

carpenters joined the strike. With construction busy and virtually no unemployed carpenters, the employers soon gave in, granting substantial increases.<sup>25</sup>

In the Garment trades continued low wages and poor conditions united with a radical, largely eastern European membership and a strong C.P. faction to produce continued turbulence. In September, 1926 the International Fur Workers local struck all of the shops it represented for union recognition and improved conditions, bringing out between one hundred and a hundred and fifty members. By October most of the companies had settled, -granting a 44-hour week but no union recognition. The remaining firms reopened with scabs and a series of pitched battles erupted between strikers and supporters and the scabs and police. Nearly twenty strikers were arrested, although many were later acquitted and although some picketing continued into the new year, the strikers were all replaced before the end of November.<sup>26</sup> The strike was a partial victory in that some firms had settled, but more importantly the unions tactics on the picket lines set a precedent for future conflicts in the industry.

The next two years saw relative industrial peace in the garment trades. Eighteen hatmakers, mostly women, walked out in 1928 for a shorter work week, but they were not unionized and with no strike pay they soon returned to work on the same terms they had left it. In the meantime, the C.P.'s trade union policy took a new turn.

Following the decision of the Comintern that a new period of revolutionary ferment was approaching and that communists must begin a more aggressive policy, including the building of revolutionary unions, the C.P. abandoned its strategy of boring from within and began to attempt to build new radical unions.<sup>27</sup> The result was that in the garment trades where the C.P. had its greatest influence in Winnipeg the communists, led by Max Dolgoy formed the first local of the Industrial Union of Needle Trades Workers (I.U.N.T.W.), affiliated to the Workers Unity League (W.U.L.), the Canadian affiliate of the Profintern. The I.L.G.W.U. local, formed because of the C.P.'s trade union policy, was now dissolved for the same reason, its members going to the new union.<sup>28</sup> A local of the Journeymen Tailors Union, formed in 1928 when the O.B.U. Tailors unit voted to go International, in 1939 seceded and joined the I.U.N.T.W., as did the C.P. led Fur Workers local. By 1935, when it was dissolved, the union had three locals in Winnipeg. That same year these were merged back into the I.L.G.W.U., when the Comintern again reversed course in favour of unified union movements.<sup>29</sup>

With the new union established, in the spring of 1929 the garment workers went on the offensive to prove the worth of the I.U.N.T.W. In two small, short strikes in March and April the union won its demands.<sup>30</sup> Then in May, 1929, some forty workers walked out at Western Glove over the introduction of piecework. While a second plant,

organized by the United Garment Workers Union (U.G.W.U.) continued to work, the company hired scabs and continued operations. Following the example of the 1926 Fur Workers strike the I.U.N.T.W. organized mass picketing supported by sympathizers mobilized by the C.P. Once again the police were used to herd scabs through the picket lines and nine strikers were arrested for assaulting scabs and police. A brief sympathetic strike by other members of the union was fruitless and by July the strike was broken, with only a few strikers accepted back by the company.<sup>31</sup> In June another strike was called at Freed and Freed Co., with thirty-six workers walking out over a new pay scale. The previous pattern was repeated with scabs, mass pickets, fights and arrests. It appears that this time the union's aggressive tactics paid off and after a month the employer signed an agreement.<sup>32</sup>

In other sectors the years 1926 - 1929 saw some expansion, but it remained a period of instability for the weaker unions. In 1927 locals of Bookbinders and Upholsterers were established, only to collapse with the onset of the Depression--the Bookbinders in 1930 and the Upholsterers in the following year. Attempts by the Hotel, Restaurant Union to set up locals in 1927 and 1930 both failed. Similarly several new O.B.U. units were formed and dissolved with no lasting results. The only strike coming out of these organizing attempts involved the teamsters at National Cartage in 1928. This strike

of seventy workers began when the men walked out in protest over the firing of two O.B.U. members for trying to organize the firm. The C.N.R.-owned company adamantly refused to negotiate or compromise and instead hired scabs. Several picketers were arrested for skirmishes with scabs and police and when the strike was finally called off after nearly six weeks only a few of the men were rehired.<sup>33</sup>

With fifteen strikes involving over 1,400 workers, the last years of the decade mark the beginnings of a more aggressive policy by Winnipeg unions. Membership was growing rapidly, although still largely limited to the traditional strongholds of unionism. Labour was still divided with three significant groups of unions in conflict with the Internationals. Two of these, the O.B.U. and C.B.R.E. had in 1927 participated in the founding of the All Canadian Congress of Labour (A.C.C.L.) as a rival national centre to the Trades and Labour Congress.<sup>34</sup> However, in 1929 the O.B.U. was suspended when, drained by court cases and organizing drives among resource sector workers in Ontario and the Maritimes, they failed to pay their per capita to the A.C.C.L. Despite their periodic conflicts with the Internationals, these two unions had both settled into limited jurisdictional areas and neither posed a direct threat to the Internationals. The third "dual" union was the communist Workers Unity League. The smallest of the three it was also the most aggressive and

while limited to the garment trades in Winnipeg in the twenties, during the depression it would play a larger role.

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In politics the last years of the decade saw ambiguous developments. In the federal election of 1926, Heaps and Woodsworth were both re-elected with increased majorities despite the Conservative Party's support among some right wing union leaders. In the civic elections at the end of that year the I.L.P.'s aldermanic vote picked up slightly from its low 1925 figure, but remained lower than the depression years.<sup>35</sup> Their mayoralty candidate was defeated by Col. Webb who was supported by union Conservatives like McBride and Cheadle.<sup>36</sup> At the same time the C.P. was able to elect an alderman for the first time.<sup>37</sup> At least part of the failure of the I.L.P. to make gains must be attributed to the continued hostility of the W.T.L.C. In 1926, despite the presence of several members of the International unions on the I.L.P. slate and the absence of any O.B.U. members, the W.T.L.C. again refused to endorse or support the I.L.P. slate.<sup>38</sup>

The provincial election of June, 1927 marked the lowest ebb of labour's electoral fortunes since 1920. The I.L.P. sank from five representatives to three in the provincial Legislature, reduced to its hard core of support

in Winnipeg. Bayley and Tanner were lost outside of Winnipeg in the rising tide of rural prosperity.<sup>39</sup> In Winnipeg, conservative union leaders actively campaigned against the I.L.P., further weakening its base.<sup>40</sup> But the 1927 municipal elections show a reversal of this trend. Despite Bill Hoop's candidacy as a "union labour" representative the I.L.P. increased its percentage of the vote to 40%--the highest level ever,<sup>41</sup> electing five of the nine candidates. This meant that the I.L.P. now had seven aldermen and the C.P. one, out of 18. In the 1928 election another labour alderman was added and the C.P. alderman re-elected. But in the 1929 civic election labour lost two of its seats with only 32% of the vote, reducing its representation to earlier levels. Thus while gains were made civically, labour never gained a majority on council, and was not to elect a mayoralty candidate until John Queen became mayor in 1934. Provincially, labour representation was at a level only matched once--in the 1941 debacle--in the period from 1920 to the present. But federally the gains of an earlier period had been consolidated.

For the C.P., the election of Kolisnyk, a former member of the S.D.P., a Ukrainian and a small businessman, marked an historical breakthrough. It marked their success at replacing the S.D.P. as the representative of radical eastern Europeans at the civic level at least.

Outside of electoral politics, the labour movement



was convulsed by conflicts within W.T.L.C. The leadership of this body had been moving steadily to the right since the general strike and the defeat of the D.L.P. Symbolic of the extent of the shift was the W.T.L.C.'s affiliation to the Board of Trade, an employer's group, in 1924.<sup>42</sup> The movement to the right was not limited to the W.T.L.C. as in the 1925 federal election the C.P.R. local of I.A.M. voted to endorse the Conservative candidate against Woodsworth, though later it endorsed the I.L.P. mayoralty candidate by a vote of five to four.<sup>43</sup> In the 1925 civic elections McBride, chairman of the Manitoba Executive of the Trades and Labour Congress and vice-president of the W.T.L.C., ran against the I.L.P. An analysis of his supporters' second choice ballots indicates they went to Citizens Committee candidates, indicating that his vote was not taken from the I.L.P.'s base. While he was nominated by half a dozen union business agents, his opponents included an International man from I.T.U. on the I.L.P. slate, and he received no formal endorsement from the W.T.L.C.<sup>44</sup>

The conflicts within the W.T.L.C. heated up in January, 1926 when the executive elections were challenged successfully and a new election held, with the conservatives winning.<sup>45</sup> At least part of this conflict was between those progressives such as Leslie of the Carpenters and Lowe of the I.T.U., who wanted to heal the breach with the I.L.P. and those, both Conservative and Communist,

who wanted to avoid having the W.T.L.C. support a party which they opposed. The battle continued with the progressives able to pass policies such as support for public ownership of the controversial Slave Falls hydro site, but the right able to win office and block support for the I.L.P.<sup>46</sup> In the meantime prominent unionists worked for the party of their choice<sup>47</sup> and the government and press were able to put forward conservatives, often with a capital "C" as representing labour. Resentment against this surfaced in 1926 when some locals opposed the government's appointment of McBride, a prominent tory as labour's representative on the Compensation Board. How close the balance of forces was on the W.T.L.C. was indicated by a vote of sixteen to fifteen in favour of a letter denouncing the role of the I.L.P. on city Council.<sup>48</sup>

The next major blow-up occurred in May and June, 1928, and is indicative of the problems posed by the W.T.L.C.'s political divisions. Ed Taylor, president of the W.T.L.C. and F. MacIntosh, secretary of the W.T.L.C. and chairman of the Manitoba Executive of the Trades and Labour Council, both made a trip to Ottawa to lobby for private ownership of the proposed Seven Sisters hydro development. While the former went as the representative of the Industrial Development Board and the latter as representative of the Electricians union,<sup>49</sup> it was clearly an attempt to portray widespread labour opposition to public ownership. Yet all the labour centrals in Winnipeg,

including the W.T.L.C. had passed motions favouring public ownership of the hydro developments. At least one local, I.A.M. #484, disaffiliated from the W.T.L.C. until the executive was replaced, and while the W.T.L.C. reaffirmed its position, prominent conservative union leaders continued to attack the position publically.<sup>50</sup> The degree of support among the rank and file for these conservatives was indicated in November when a referendum on public ownership of the hydro development passed by a margin of twenty-six to one.<sup>51</sup>

The conservatives suffered another setback in 1929, when the W.T.L.C. voted to withdraw from the Board of Trade and later officially opposed the government's conservative choices for labour representatives on the Workmen's Compensation Board.<sup>52</sup> This was too much for the right wing and they successfully organized a coup for the next meeting, when the W.T.L.C. reaffiliated to the Board of Trade, endorsed the government appointments and for good measure passed a new attack on the I.L.P. aldermen.<sup>53</sup> A month later a new fight broke out over amendments to the Workmen's Compensation Act proposed by John Queen of the I.L.P., which included an increase in benefits. The W.T.L.C. voted to oppose the amendments and in exchange four of the five union representatives on a committee appointed by the government were conservatives from the W.T.L.C.--the fifth being from the running trades.<sup>54</sup> The O.B.U. and A.C.C.L. who supported the amendments

received no representation. In the last months of the decade the union conservatives suffered an embarrassing setback at the hands of the I.L.P. aldermen. The Fair Wage Board, including its union representatives, had voted unanimously that the Winnipeg Fair Wage Schedule did not apply to the hydro sites outside of Winnipeg even though they were being built by the City, and the building trades unions agreed to work for a lower wage. Then in November, 1929, an I.L.P. motion passed city Council, applying the Winnipeg wage schedule to all city-owned hydro sites, thus giving the workers there a raise which their "representatives" had given away. For the workers involved the "Weekly News"\* editorial suggesting that ". . . union leaders represent the power trust, not the workers . . ." <sup>55</sup> must have seemed plausible indeed.

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The stock market crash of October, 1929 symbolizes the end of the decade, just as the defeat of the Winnipeg general strike symbolizes its beginnings. After the crash Winnipeg soon joined the rest of the world in the worst depression of the century, and Winnipeg's working class

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\*The "Weekly News" was founded in early 1925 by W. B. Simpson of I.T.U. and S. J. Farmer. It basically expressed the views of the I.L.P. although it was heavily shaped by the personal views of its editor, S. J. Farmer, as distinct from the more marxist views of men like John Queen.

and their unions, still not recovered from the defeats of 1919 and the post-war depression, had to function in new and harder conditions. In the few years of prosperity which preceded this new depression Winnipeg's workers had tried, with mixed success, to recover from their earlier setbacks. They had rejoined the International unions in large numbers and if the O.B.U. and W.U.L. members are counted it is likely that the 1929 union membership was exceeded only in 1918 and 1919. In addition to joining unions, workers were slowly beginning to reassert themselves in collective bargaining with an increased number of strikes and strikers, particularly in the building and garment trades.

Of the fifteen strikes in the four year period, four involving less than one hundred workers were clear victories. Of the rest, six were broken, involving almost three hundred workers. Five strikes, involving over one thousand workers, involved compromise settlements. These statistics indicate that while things were improving, labour was still faced with hostile and effective employers. While strikes were more frequent and larger than during the post war depression, they still fell well behind the war and pre-war periods, and in time lost were at lower levels than any of the preceding periods.

Apart from the rapid growth in union membership, several trends characterize this period, all of which originated in earlier periods, but which deepened in

the closing years of the decade. The first trend was signified by the virtual end of labour's civil war, with the O.B.U. isolated in a few sectors such as the Street Rail unit. The Internationals were able to translate their victories during the depression years into a monopoly over the organized skilled trades in the railroads, and the building and printing trades. Thus when prosperity brought a surge into the unions, it was the Internationals who were there to receive it.

A second outstanding tendency was the continued growth of the gap between skilled and unskilled workers. While this trend slowed drastically from that of the depression period and became much more uneven, it still appears to have continued despite a rapid growth in employment. While many skilled workers saw substantial increases in living standards, the only significant improvement for the unskilled took the form of increased employment. The Internationals made little effort to overcome this increasing division, apparently content to hold onto the skilled workers who formed the backbone of North American craft unionism. Only the small W.U.L. made any sustained effort to bridge the gap by organizing the less skilled and lower paid garment workers. The bitter strikes which followed their attempts indicate the task would not be easy, and in some ways presage the struggles of the thirties.

A third trend was the continued rightward drift

of the W.T.L.C., both on union and political questions. By the end of the decade this tendency had carried some influential union leaders into the Conservative Party, while numerous others seem to have opposed union involvement in political action. It was during these years that an active opposition within the Internationals began to emerge to challenge the increasingly reactionary leadership, although with limited success.

The role of the W.T.L.C. makes another tendency appear even more remarkable. This was the continued electoral success of the I.L.P. and the establishment of the C.P. as a factor in electoral politics. The I.L.P. continued to hold or increase its votes in federal and civic elections, and even at the provincial level where they received a trouncing in 1927, they held their core vote in the city of Winnipeg. Placed in the context of the continued hostility of the leadership of the W.T.L.C. this tendency seems to indicate that on political questions at least the I.L.P. represented a far larger number of workers than did the W.T.L.C. leadership.

The process of demobilization which was so evident in the preceding period seems to have halted, though there is little sign it reversed itself other than the slightly increased strike activity. What activity there was was organized by the left--the O.B.U., I.L.P and C.P., and always independent of each other. The last reference to the Labour Church is in 1927. May Day demonstrations or

meetings became the preserve of the C.P. who did mobilize small but increasing numbers after 1926.<sup>56</sup> The O.B.U. continued its paper and Athletic Club as well as founding a summer camp near Gimli.<sup>57</sup> It organized a demonstration of 3,000 unemployed in 1928,<sup>58</sup> but there is no sign of ongoing organizations of the unemployed after 1925. The I.L.P. met regularly and boasted a Dramatic Society, and during the British General Strike of 1926 was able to organize a successful mass meeting in support of it,<sup>59</sup> and of course had the "Weekly News" to publish its views. In addition to individual activities the weekly forums and debates in Market Square by 1928 were again becoming popular.<sup>60</sup>

It is difficult to analyze or generalize on changes in working class consciousness, radicalism and activity during this period. With increased trade union membership, and stable or growing electoral support for the I.L.P. and the C.P. it would appear that basic class consciousness among the mass of workers remained unshaken. In addition increased union activity combined with electoral activity probably was reflected in a growth in the number of activists, or the vanguard. There undoubtedly was a shift to less radical positions among the vanguard--not only in the extreme example of union Tories, but also in the pages of the two labour papers reflecting the views of the I.L.P. and the O.B.U. Yet even this tendency must be qualified by the increasing electoral base of the C.P.,



primarily among the north end's eastern European immigrants, and its continued trade union influence which was just beginning to express itself in the W.U.L. at the end of the decade. It would appear that for the class as a whole the apathy of the preceding period had not been shaken off and its views were expressed through voting for working class parties and joining unions, both in large numbers, but in little else. Among the activists there is little sign of the optimism and intellectual ferment of the pre-depression or even early depression years. Increasingly torn by political strife between Tories, Labourites and Communists the vast majority seem to have limited themselves to bread and butter union issues and election campaigns. The relative prosperity of the skilled workers who made up the bulk of the activists had finally begun to take effect. But these were a minority of the working class, and for most workers--the unorganized and unskilled--the end of the decade held little promise.

## CONCLUSION

If there is one word which characterizes the decade from 1919 to 1929 for Winnipeg labour it is defeat. The defeat was not absolute any more than a victory would have been absolute. It did not come all at once with the defeat of the general strike, but continued with setback following setback at least until the middle of the decade. It affected different sectors of the working class and the labour movement to different degrees and in different ways. Yet despite this pattern of defeat, some permanent gains were made and it is these that should be evaluated first in order to keep the analysis of defeat in perspective.

The major gain of the decade was the establishment of a deep-rooted class consciousness among the mass of the city's working class. Dazzled by the events of the post war period, it is easy to neglect the shift in mass consciousness which took place in that period and which, unlike the radicalism and militancy, lasted throughout the decade. To appreciate the importance of this shift it is useful to return to the vanguard--masses duality. Previous to the war the vast majority of activists had seen the need to build unions and labour political action, and likely most of them shared a socialist goal, broadly

defined. In contrast, before 1918 the mass of the workers had shown no great desire to organize into unions or to reject the major bourgeois parties in favour of labour or socialist parties.

While it is always difficult to perceive the attitudes of the average worker, the criteria which indicate a dearth of mass class consciousness in the pre-war years, when applied to the post war years show dramatically different results. First, union membership experienced an unprecedented upsurge to the end of the general strike, which indicates a major change in mass consciousness. While the growth in unionism ended with the strike it took years of battering before the number of unionists fell to earlier levels. The rapid growth in union membership after the end of the post war depression--a sixty percent growth in the last four years of the decade--can only mean that the earlier decline was not a product of any shift in class consciousness, but rather the result of more powerful forces exterior to class consciousness.

The second criterion, voting patterns, shows even more consistent evidence. If the shift in consciousness during the post war upsurge had taken root, this was was inevitable. Despite the limitations of elections as a means of expressing the popular will, the political liberties won in the nineteenth century allow much freer expression than is possible in the sphere of production, where the almost unlimited power of the employer is an

effective weapon against dissent. In post strike Winnipeg the ballot box was one of the few places where workers could express dissident views without penalty. The shift in the views they expressed compared to the pre-war years was decisive. In the provincial elections of 1920 they elected more labour and socialist representatives to the legislature than they had elected to all three levels of government combined in the fifty years before the general strike. Labour's representation would fluctuate through the decade, but in Winnipeg they would continue to win the support of most workers at all three levels.

The upheavals in the city's labour movement in both union and political circles allow a more detailed breakdown of this shift in consciousness. For class consciousness can include labour reformism as well as radical socialism, and craft conservatism as well as radical unionism. In various elections during the decade, candidates provided a choice between labour reformism, represented by the D.L.P. and various "trade union" candidates, socialism represented by the I.L.P., and communism represented by the C.P. Invariably labour reformism, typical of pre-war labour parties, was rejected overwhelmingly. The I.L.P. with its at least nominally socialist program was the decisive victor, but even the C.P. showed greater mass support than the candidate backed by the W.T.L.C.

In the division between the more conservative

International unions and the O.B.U. the evidence is more mixed. Yet even here the O.B.U. appears to have enjoyed majority support long after the strike's defeat had supposedly run the death knell for radical unionism. It was not until 1921 that the O.B.U. likely lost the support of the majority of the labour movement. As in the case of the decline of union membership as a whole, the shift of allegiance away from the O.B.U. was to a large degree a result of external coercion, as the Internationals, the employers and the government effectively combined to use discrimination to break the new union. And despite the forces arrayed against it, the O.B.U. was never completely broken. The combination of the evidence, electorally and in the inter-union conflicts, indicate that not only did class consciousness establish itself on a much broader scale in the twenties than previously, but also that relatively radical ideas gained a broader mass acceptance than they had achieved before the war.

That these ideas enjoyed majority support in the class during the decade is improbable. A large minority of the working class still rejected any class analysis, and combined with the conservative labour reformists they likely maintained a majority. But it was an ineffective majority inasmuch as most of it lay outside of the labour movement. In the traditional blue collar sectors of the working class it is clear that the I.L.P. and probably progressive unionism had majority support. It was this

mass class consciousness and broadly based anti-capitalism which were the major lasting acquisition of the 1917 - 1920 upsurge. The mass of workers had not been as radicalized as the vanguard during the upsurge, but their retreat in the wake of defeat and depression was also not as complete as the vanguard's.

If the class had made some gains, they were primarily subjective. Objectively they suffered a series of serious defeats. Starting with the capitulation of the general strike, they met almost unbroken defeat until the end of the post war depression. In the last years, major gains in living standards were made by a minority, but a small one. For the majority they represented only a respite from repression, depression and discrimination.

The depression which overshadowed half of the decade did not hit all of the working class directly. The minority of skilled workers who retained their jobs saw their living standards rise. Probably an equal number faced periodic destitution. For the bulk of the class the depression years meant an unending struggle for existence, fought in the ever present danger of slipping into destitution. Coming in the wake of the defeat of the general strike this had the effective of making them not more conservative, but more cautious. To become active in radical politics, or even just to join a union, for many workers might bring on discrimination and with it the risk of destitution. While this was largely a product of the changed balance

of forces between labour and capital, by driving workers out of the labour movement it contributed to labour's weakness.

With the economic upturn beginning in 1925 and lasting until 1929, conditions changed. The threat of discrimination receded somewhat and the number of employed workers grew with the result that, as we have seen, workers returned to their unions by the thousands. But with the power of the O.B.U. broken they largely returned to the conservative Internationals. For a significant minority of skilled workers, full employment combined with rising real wages to provide living standards as high or higher than ever before. An expanding economy also offered opportunities for advancement which these skilled workers were in the best position to take advantage of. The result was to provide an objective basis for giving credibility to capitalism's promise of prosperity as the reward for hard work and ability. For this sector of the working class, growing conservatism and mistrust of radical experiments was a logical outgrowth of these developments.

For the bulk of the work force--the unskilled, the semi-skilled, and those with weak unions or suffering from technological change--prosperity brought fewer rewards. Increased employment eased the struggle for survival and brought an increase in living standards over depression levels. What data we have for these categories indicate little or no increase in real wage levels, and

for some a decrease. Real wage trends for those claiming workmen's compensation, the closest we have to an overall average, indicate that any increase in real wages over the decade must have been limited to a minority. The resulting growth in the wage gap between unionized tradesmen and the less skilled had mixed effects. For some the example of the skilled workers would have held out hope for their future within capitalism, and encouraged a retreat from radicalism. For others the lack of improvements would have reinforced their critique of capitalism and deepened their radicalism.

These divisive trends in real wage patterns had a significant effect on the working class. Workers whose skill and traditions of organization gave them some strength in their relations with capital prospered in the last years of the decade. With the burden of the depression lifted from them they had little reason to turn to militancy and radicalism. Those whose stagnant wage levels provided continued motivation for militant or radical activity were also in the weakest position to battle successfully. The inability or unwillingness of the unions to help these sectors no doubt contributed to a growing cynicism and mistrust towards both the skilled workers and their unions. Class solidarity on the scale of 1919 was unlikely to last long in such an environment.

If the decade of 1919 - 1929 was characterized by defeat and division for the mass of the workers, for



the vanguard or activists it was even worse. The repression in the work place which followed the defeat of 1919 left a large proportion of the vanguard unemployed and divorced from their base of strength in the rank and file. Many were forced to leave the city to find work. Of those that remained large numbers found work only by leaving their trade or going into smaller, poorer paid shops where their chances of playing any effective role in the labour movement were minimal. A few started small businesses of their own. Others got jobs as trades instructors or in the civil service where their radicalism or militancy would be unlikely to find an audience among their fellow workers. Only the few who won political office or gained union staff positions could play an influential role in the labour movement without risk of discrimination.

Whatever the personal effects of the strike's defeat, for the vanguard as a whole the massive scope of the repression which followed had to have left its mark. After June, 1919 there could be little doubt that being a labour activist was a dangerous position to be in. The potential price of such activity went far beyond the normal sacrifices of time and money and now included the danger of being fired or laid off. While this was not necessarily a conservatizing force in the short term, it again encouraged caution and a greater attention to the risks involved in militancy and radicalism, particularly at the trade union level. It also inevitably shrank the numbers

in the vanguard, and in the long run, the absence of militant activity would serve to decrease militant and radical consciousness.

For the vanguard, unlike the mass of workers, the repression at the work place lasted well into the decade. The repression took two forms in the period following the strike. The first was the systematic breaking of unions, primarily among the newly organized sectors. This process was often accompanied by the firing of radicals and union activists and affected both the O.B.U. and the Internationals. The second-form was the policy of discrimination against members or activists of the O.B.U., carried out by business and government with the active collaboration of the International unions. In this form at least a part of the remaining vanguard was pitted against another portion. The result was a dramatic decline in the size of the vanguard at least to the end of 1922 when union membership reached its lowest point. While this decline was greatest in industries or firms where unions were completely broken, it was also apparent in such remaining strongholds as the rail shops, building trades and printing trades. With the upsurge in union membership starting in 1926, the number of people actively involved in the labour movement no doubt increased. However, membership never regained its 1918 - 1920 levels. This combined with the decline in confidence and enthusiasm and increased caution still must have left the vanguard at

the end of the decade a shadow of its former size and influence.

Changes in the vanguard over the decade were not limited to size, caution, or location. The ideas or consciousness of the working class activists had always covered a broad spectrum, and within that spectrum the decade saw some important shifts. Central to developments within the vanguard was the formation of the O.B.U. and the subsequent fratricidal warfare between it and the Internationals. In this Winnipeg was a rarity in North America, in that union radicalism took an organizational form in the O.B.U. Radical unions had a long tradition on this continent and were to continue the tradition spasmodically. But normally such unions were linked to a single industry, often in the resource sector or small single industry towns. In Winnipeg the victories won by earlier militancy led a broad and diversified section of the working class to the conclusion that a radical, industrial union was both desirable and possible. The result was the formation of the O.B.U. which, without question enjoyed mass support in its early months. The result was a split in the city's labour movement and in particular in the ranks of its activists.

The split, itself a product not of the general strike but of the wartime rise in radicalism, had important ramifications. The most obvious was the further weakening of Winnipeg's beleaguered union movement. It now had to

maintain two labour papers, two labour halls, two labour parties and two largely parallel union apparatus. Worse yet, untold hours were spent by union staff and activists attacking and trying to raid each other--time that would have been better spent looking after their members interests and attempting to rebuild some of the shattered weaker locals. As the dispute became more vicious, the criticisms became less a debate over the best working class strategy and more a mutual denunciation as traitors to the class. Many workers could be forgiven if all of this propaganda led them to decide that both were right and their dues dollars would be better spent at home.

The split, by giving an organizational form to the ever present ideological divisions within the vanguard, provided a unique opportunity to government and business. Normally any direct interference from these sources in the vanguard's internal debates is viewed with suspicion and hostility and often has counter-productive results from their point of view. But with these divisions structured it became possible for them to use their vast powers to exclude radicals and push forward the most conservative unionists, while still dealing with legitimate trade unions. While it is possible that some less ideological oriented employers favoured a weak O.B.U. unit over a strong International local, this external force was overwhelmingly directed to aiding the Internationals against the O.B.U.

As we have seen, this policy was extremely effective in defeating the O.B.U. in at least two vital sectors-- the shop crafts and the building trades. But in itself this is not an adequate explanation of the O.B.U.'s defeat. While it is easy to attribute this defeat to the inevitable futility of radical unionism, the fact that a variety of radical unions were able to establish themselves in other advanced countries, often under communist or syndicalist leadership makes this also an inadequate explanation. Even in Winnipeg the O.B.U. was able to function and adapt in those areas where the opposing alliance of government, business and conservative unions were weak or unable to utilize their power.

In a basic sense what was more important to the O.B.U.'s defeat than the formidable opposing alliance or its own structural and ideological immaturity, was its inability to establish itself in the rest of the country. This in turn was a result of different levels of class consciousness and experience in different parts of the country. In particular the relative conservatism and weakness of the vanguard and the class as a whole in central Canada was decisive. Without their support there was little chance of a viable national radical union central. In effect the O.B.U. was defeated by the same factors which had prevented the national Trades and Labour Congress from adopting a radical program in 1918. Whatever the underlying forces at work, the most important factor in the waging

of the fight in Winnipeg was the alliance of business, government and business unions. And the result of its outcome was that by the time unions began to regain members in 1926, the Internationals were overwhelmingly dominant and were the only important beneficiaries of the increased membership.

The International movement in Winnipeg had by then of necessity gone through an important transformation. The most militant and radical workers who still had jobs in the wake of the strike had left these unions in droves in 1919 - 1920, leaving them in the hands of the most conservative wing of the vanguard. This group in turn had its conservatism reinforced by pressures from union head offices, the Trades and Labour Congress, the A.F.L., and of course business and government, all of whom were eager to stamp out radicalism in the city's unions for their own reasons. Thus the local leadership represented not the mainstream of class consciousness, but its extreme right wing, and as a result often enjoyed little rank and file support, particularly in the early years of the decade. The absence of such support combined with their own ideological conservatism to make them fearful of any strategy or structure, be it strikes or union democracy, which made them dependent on mass support. Instead they were drawn to increased bureaucratic control, and to class collaborationist alternatives such as the Joint Council of Industry or the B and O Plan. Here their new found

respectability and their organizational competence could be drawn on to replace their lack of support. The rail shop crafts provide the best example of this approach, while the printing trades, where the Internationals retained rank and file support offer an interesting contrast.

In addition to the organizational triumph of the right wing, the vanguard as a whole was effected by other conservatising forces. With the destruction of unionism among most of the unskilled or semi-skilled workers, the skilled crafts made up a larger proportion of the vanguard than they had in the post war upsurge. Activists in these crafts were not immune to the effects of the rapidly rising living standards which they experienced in the last half of the decade. Also the long period of quiescence during the depression had its impact. Unemployment, not wages was the major concern and strikes and militancy provided no viable solution. The result was that the practice of the union activists tended to emphasize compromise not confrontation and dealings with management rather than efforts to mobilize the rank and file. This tended to strengthen the role and influence of the respectable "safe and sane" unionist as well as having a conservatising effect on all activists and training new activists in the practices of business unionism.

The divisions which wracked Winnipeg's labour movement in the twenties were not limited to the unions.

It was also a period of upheaval and realignment for the labour and socialist parties. Overshadowing this process was the international realignment brought on by the Second Internationals' betrayals of 1914, the Russian revolution, and the subsequent formation of the Third International or Comintern. In Winnipeg the divisions effected both the right and left wings of the labour movement. The right wing split between the D.L.P. and the I.L.P., largely over union issues. The D.L.P. soon disappeared from lack of support, but for the most conservative of the vanguard, who had been its backbone, the failure to establish a labour party in their own image was not too serious a blow. They quickly adopted the political stance of Gompers and the A.F.L., rewarding their friends and punishing their enemies within the bourgeois parties. The local Conservative party appears to have been the major beneficiary of this policy. The more progressive, or less bitter, craft unionists found a place in the moderate socialism of the I.L.P., where they balanced the marxism of former S.D.P. and S.P.C. members and the radical reformism of the former Georgites and social gospellers.

On the left the realignment was more complex and had more importance attached to it because of the weight attached to independent working class politics by the participants. With the formation of the C.P. with the support of the Comintern, the most radical among the



S.P.C. and S.D.P. soon gravitated towards it as the representative of revolutionary internationalism. The influence of the Russian revolution made this particularly true of the eastern European radicals in the city. Included in this regroupment were many militants of the O.B.U. With the adoption of a strategy of "boring from within" the Internationals by the new party, a crisis faced the left wing of the local vanguard. The result was a split within this group in the O.B.U., with a large minority of them returning to the Internationals on whatever terms possible. For those who chose to remain with the O.B.U., this defection led to a bitterness which made joint work among even the left wing of the vanguard difficult.

The failure of the O.B.U. to establish itself nationally made the C.P.'s trade union policy a logical one. If it had been adopted by the whole of the vanguard in Winnipeg it might have been able to halt, or at least slow the rightward slide of the W.T.L.C. But history is not controlled by logic alone. Instead of regrouping the left to retain such gains as possible, the C.P.'s decision led in Winnipeg to a further weakening of the labour left, with one section a helpless minority in the Internationals and the other a helpless majority in the O.B.U. While this split involved only a tiny portion of the working class, it included a substantial and influential segment of the vanguard, and it was this that led the

O.B.U. to describe it as a major cause of that union's defeat.

The only group which benefitted from all these divisions was the I.L.P. With the S.P.C. and S.D.P. gutted by the effects of the repression and the regroupment into the C.P. it was left as the only viable political outlet for non-communist socialists. As such it not only retained the centre and left wing of previous labour parties, but also garnered the support of many of the marxists who had previously supported the S.P.C. or S.D.P., but who for ideological or union reasons were unwilling to support the C.P.

As the largest torch carrier for the radicalism of 1919, and one untainted by the thorough gaining materialism and revolutionary discipline of the communists it also attracted most of the small group of intellectuals and social gospel exponents who had been drawn to the dynamism and idealism of the radical labour movement. These in turn provided some respectability and an increased articulateness to the I.L.P.'s overwhelmingly labour base. This was not an unmixed blessing as their ideas, while often as radical as those of the working class activists, lacked that group's aggressive class consciousness. This divergence influenced the I.L.P. in its drift to the right. The potential conflicts surfaced in the thirties, when a group of prominent working class leaders in the I.L.P. objected to being merged into the C.C.F. on

the basis that the latter was not a clearly working class party.

The C.P. did less well, but still managed to establish itself as the sole revolutionary party to survive the decade. As such it was a legitimate heir, along with the I.L.P., to the radical traditions in the city's working class. Born in a time of defeat, and suffering from inexperienced leadership and the Byzantine intrigues of the Comintern, this in itself was an accomplishment. In Winnipeg in the twenties its ranks were thinned by the break with the O.B.U., the struggle to "Bolshevize" the ethnic locals, and the expulsion of the Trotskyists. Yet it continued to have substantial support among the city's radicals, particularly the eastern European immigrants, whose ethnic traditions combined with their role as the most exploited sector of the work force to make them a receptive audience. As well with the victory of the International unions, their role as the left wing in these unions gave them added importance within the vanguard. The decision by the C.P. to split from the Internationals at the end of the decade, and form the Revolutionary Workers Unity League, was a test of their strength, but one which has yet to be evaluated by historians.

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It is apparent that the decline in labour radicalism in Winnipeg during the twenties was neither as rapid nor as complete as a cursory glance would indicate. Industrial militancy by contrast did indeed suffer a sharp decline immediately after the general strike, but this was clearly a response to the superior forces aligned against the workers rather than any dramatic rejection of union radicalism or militancy. It is also apparent that the decline in radicalism and militancy was not a result of any renewed pouring forth of the benefits of capitalism or faith in the political system. At least until 1925, the depression and the reactionary role of the state appeared to bear out the analysis of the marxists in the labour movement rather than that of the conservatives. Even in the four years of relative prosperity the bulk of the working class gained little, if anything, more than they had been accustomed to before the depression.

Yet no matter how it is qualified, the working class did experience a process of demobilization and de-radicalization during the decade. The answer to this apparent paradox involves the sources of radicalism and activism, which on any large scale require far more--and far less--than an intellectual critique of capitalism and a belief in the logical necessity of a socialist alternative. In the same way, union militancy requires more than a feeling of exploitation and a desire for improved wages and working conditions. In both cases the

crucial additional factor is the belief that victories can be won with the forces at hand. For the bulk of the class, and particularly for the vanguard, it also involves the confidence that the individual risks taken will not be disproportionate compared with the chances for victories. There are always a few in the vanguard who will struggle selflessly, no matter what the odds, but for most a more practical assessment prevails.

From this perspective the evolution of Winnipeg's labour movement takes on some coherence. From the defeat of the general strike through to at least the end of the depression, the risks involved in striking or even organizing into unions were too high. Only in circumstances where some unusual factor, such as a strong union and a shortage of skilled tradesmen, or extremely bad wages and conditions, came into play was militancy to be expected. For the bulk of the work force the intransigence of business and government, poverty, unemployment, and a weak and divided union movement, provided ample cause for quiescence. Only near the end of the decade, and then only for a minority of workers, was increasing prosperity an important factor in labour quiescence, and it was in this same period that the first small signs of returning militancy show up in the strike statistics.

It was not just union militancy which was affected by the shift in the balance of forces between the bourgeoisie and the labour movement. Working class radicals and

particularly those who translated their radicalism into activism, also responded to the changing power relations. While the conservative members of the vanguard regarded the defeat of 1919 as further proof of the weakness of militancy and the futility of radicalism, the bulk of the radicals saw it as a serious setback in the class struggle, but not as a decisive defeat. For the radicals the defeat was at least partially offset by the growing mass support for their ideas. At the same time more sophisticated and more optimistic, they continued to hope for a resurgence and growth in labour radicalism across the country and for further victories internationally which might tilt the balance of forces in their favour. Thus the turning point for the radicals was not until about 1921, many months after the defeat of the general strike.

Numerous factors caused the radicals to largely lose their hope for the short term at least. The failure of the O.B.U. to establish itself nationally and the onset of the depression which eliminated the chance of any immediate resurgence in militancy were important. Equally important were the cumulative effects of large scale industrial repression and discrimination which left much of the radical vanguard isolated and ineffective. Internationally the failure of the Russian revolution to spread or establish itself elsewhere in Europe robbed the left of its sense of being part of an irresistible tide of revolution. The combination of this series of defeats,

locally, nationally, and internationally combined to destroy much of the aggressive optimism which was an essential ingredient of post war radicalism.

As the decade wore on these influences only increased their effect on the radicals. Faced with a passive rank and file, a reduced and divided union movement, continued discrimination and an ebb tide in the class struggle internationally, it is little wonder that many of the vanguard as a whole and the radicals in particular lost heart. For those who remained active, electoral politics and the day to day activities of business unionism was almost all that was left. This was not a change of choice, but of necessity in the circumstances. This changing nature of the forms of class conflict in turn induced an increasingly conservative outlook for most, as quiescence and de-radicalization reinforced each other through six years of almost uninterrupted defeats, and four years of a cautiously returning life. But this was quiescence and de-radicalization bred not of conversion but of defeat.

## POSTSCRIPT

To the extent that the analysis presented in this thesis has validity, it raises some important questions. In particular the real wage trends raise the question of how widespread was the growing gap between skilled and unskilled workers. Only the study of more occupations, and in other locations would indicate the validity and importance of this trend. Within the skilled trades there are also interesting differences. Was the absence of rising real wage trends in the metal trades reflective of changes in technology or work organization? The striking gains made by the building trades, where the craftsman's monopoly on skill and high degree of work autonomy remained, indicate there might be a correlation.

At the level of the unskilled, if indeed they were excluded from the prosperity of the late twenties, they should have constituted a powder keg for industrial relations. Was this part of the explanation for the explosive growth of industrial unionism in the late thirties and forties? Did it provide the material for the successes of the communist Workers Unity League in the late twenties and early thirties? Did this group provide the base for the C.P.'s electoral victories in the twenties and thirties?



In Winnipeg, at least, it is clear that the support of employers and the state was vital to the ability of the union bureaucracy to gain control over a dissident rank and file. Does this pattern hold true elsewhere or is it a local phenomenon? What was the impact of such support on the union hierarchy and its relations with the rank and file. A related question is how the state's control over the process of labour relations, via labour legislation and court rulings, effected the relationship between the union apparatus and the rank and file.

Perhaps most important for understanding the evolution of the labour movement, the thesis poses the question of how typical events in Winnipeg were relative to other cities and countries. The post war upsurge in militancy and radicalism was an international phenomenon as was its defeat. Did the same alliance of forces which defeated it in Winnipeg also cause the defeats elsewhere? Were the effects on radicalism and militancy similar? Did the activists take the brunt of the defeat elsewhere as well? The list of questions often seems longer than the list of answers, but hopefully this thesis provides at least a small step towards finding answers and focusing the questions.

## FOOTNOTES

### PREFACE

<sup>1</sup>D. C. Masters, The Winnipeg General Strike (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1973), p. 135.

<sup>2</sup>A. R. McCormack, Reformers, Rebels and Revolutionaries: The Western Canadian Radical Movement, 1899 - 1919 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1977), p. 169.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 171.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 171.

<sup>5</sup>D. J. Bercuson, Fools and Wisemen: The Rise and Fall of the One Big Union (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1978).

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 216.

<sup>7</sup>For the basic economic background for Winnipeg in this period see: R. Bellan, Winnipeg First Century: An Economic History (Winnipeg: Queenston House, 1978).

<sup>8</sup>J. H. Sutcliffe, Economic Background of the Winnipeg General Strike: Wages and Working Conditions. M.A. Thesis: University of Manitoba, 1972.

<sup>9</sup>E. P. Thompson, The Making of the English Working Class (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1974). Harry Breaverman, Labor and Monopoly Capitalism (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1974). David Montgomery, "Worker's Control of Machine Production in the 19th Century," Labour History, Volume 17, Number 4, Fall, 1976, pp. 485 - 509.

### CHAPTER I

<sup>1</sup>Western Labour News, August 13, 1920.

<sup>2</sup>See Appendix. Table XVIII. For a more thorough discussion of real wage trends in Winnipeg see: J. H. Sutcliffe, "Economic Background of the Winnipeg General Strike," M.A. Thesis, University of Manitoba, 1972.

<sup>3</sup>See Appendix, Table VI.

<sup>4</sup>For a detailed discussion of socialism, with a strong pro S.D.P. bias see: E. Chisick, "The Development of Winnipeg's socialist movement 1900 to 1915," Masters Thesis, University of Manitoba (1972).

<sup>5</sup>Western Labour News, December 20, 1918.

<sup>6</sup>D. J. Bercuson, Confrontation at Winnipeg (Montreal, 1974), pp. 58 - 114. A. R. McCormack, Reformers, Rebels and Revolutionaries: The Western Canadian Radical Movement 1899 - 1919 (Toronto, 1977), pp. 137 - 171.

<sup>7</sup>Bercuson, op. cit., p. 191. C. Lipton, The Trade Union Movement in Canada 1827 - 1959 (Toronto, 1978), pp. 166 - 187. N. Penner, The Canadian Left (Scarborough, 1977), pp. 52 - 64.

<sup>8</sup>O.B.U. Bulletin January 27; February 3; February 10, 1927. Reprints transcript of the proceedings at the Western Labour Conference of 1919.

<sup>9</sup>For a theoretical analysis of the relationship of such a vanguard to the working class as a whole and to Lenin's theory of the vanguard party see: E. Mandel, The Leninist Theory of Organization (London, 1975).

<sup>10</sup>Canada, Department of Labour. Annual Report on Labour Organizations in Canada, 1911 - 1919.

<sup>11</sup>A. R. McCormack, op. cit., pp. 97; 143; 164. E. Chisick, op. cit., pp. 112 - 113; 125 - 126. P. Krawchuk, The Ukrainian Socialist Movement in Canada (1907 - 1918), (Toronto, 1979), pp. 66 - 99.

<sup>12</sup>R. B. Russell Papers, Dominion Labour Party, Winnipeg and District Branch, minutes, March 29, 1918. Box 2, File 6.

<sup>13</sup>Western Labour News, December, 1918.

<sup>14</sup>D. J. Bercuson, op. cit., p. 76.

<sup>15</sup>A. R. McCormack, op. cit., p. 146.

<sup>16</sup>Western Labour News, August 23, 1918.

<sup>17</sup>The conservatives view is summed up in two articles by R. Hewitt, Grande Lodge Deputy of the Carmen's union:

. . . the sacred right of defending Democracy and maintaining democratic control with our trade unions, has been cheapened and prostituted by senseless argument on 'rank and file control,' which in its last analysis means individual license to do as you please regardless of rules and general interests. (I.A.M. Bulletin, October 1923).

The needs of the Trade Union's are many, some of which are finances, publicity of our aims, loyalty, unselfishness, sacrifice, discipline, confidence in our representatives, and honesty, diplomacy and business ability on the part of our representatives . . . (I.A.M. Bulletin, January, 1924).

<sup>18</sup>Western Labour News, February 24, 1922. I.A.M. Bulletin, November, 1923.

<sup>19</sup>A. R. McCormack, op. cit., pp. 90 - 91.

<sup>20</sup>H. Pelling, A History of British Trade Unionism (Harmondsworth, 1977), pp. 118 and 128.

<sup>21</sup>This is based on election results published in Labour Organizations in Canada. J. E. Rea. "The Politics of Class: Winnipeg City Council, 1919 - 1945" in Berger and Cook, The West and the Nation (Toronto, 1976) deals with the status of the various Citizens' Leagues as bourgeois parties.

<sup>22</sup>A. S. Lindemann, The Red Years (Berkeley, 1974) for an overview of this period in Europe.

<sup>23</sup>Two books provide an overview of this period, the first from a revolutionary marxist perspective, the second from a social democratic perspective: W. Abendroth, A Short History of the European Working Class (New York, 1972), pp. 69 - 100. J. Braunthal, History of the International Volume II 1914 - 1943 (New York, 1967), pp. 95 - 356.

<sup>24</sup>I. Bernstein, The Lean Years (Boston, 1960).

<sup>25</sup>Borden Papers, OC564, Ketchen to Elmsley, June 26, 1919.

<sup>26</sup>Winnipeg Telegram, June 26, 1919.

<sup>27</sup>Western Labour News, June 30, 1919. The Winnipeg General Sympathetic Strike May - June, 1919. Prepared by the Defense Committee, Winnipeg, 1920 in N. Penner, Winnipeg 1919 (Toronto, 1973), p. 215.

<sup>28</sup>N. Penner, Ibid., Western Labour News, June 27, 1919. R. B. Russell Papers. Minutes of Central Labour Council (C.L.C.) of O.B.U., August 19, 1919.

<sup>29</sup>Western Labour News, June 30; July 2; July 8; July 10; July 11; August 1. Canadian Brotherhood of Railway Employees, Convention Proceedings, 1919.

<sup>30</sup>Meighan Papers, Letter from H. J. Macdonald, July, 1919.

<sup>31</sup>Western Labour News, July 8, 1919. O.B.U. Bulletin, September 4, 1920. Winnipeg Telegram, June 28, 1919.

<sup>32</sup>Western Labour News, July 2, 1919.

<sup>33</sup>D. Avery, Dangerous Foreigners (Toronto: 1979).

<sup>34</sup>N. Penner, op. cit., pp. 216.

## CHAPTER II

<sup>1</sup>Appendix, Table XVI.

<sup>2</sup>Appendix, Table XII.

<sup>3</sup>Appendix, Table XVIII.

<sup>4</sup>D. J. Bercuson, Fools and Wise Men (Toronto, 1978), pp. 126 - 127.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 146.

<sup>6</sup>R. A. Rigg Papers, Reports to P. Draper from Rigg, July and August 1919, P.A.C. Rigg/Rees Papers, Rigg to Winning, July, 1919, P.A.M.

<sup>7</sup>Appendix, Table IV.

<sup>8</sup>Russell Papers, Minutes of O.B.U. C.L.C. March, 1920. Box 4, File 15.

<sup>9</sup>Rigg Papers, Report to P. Draper, August 9, 1919. P.A.C.

<sup>10</sup>Western Labour News. Special Strike Edition No. 5 lists the votes of each local on general strike. Total vote cast could be far less than total membership, but is likely pretty close to the total. Other membership data for various unions is largely drawn from the monthly publication of the Federal Department of Labour, Labour Gazette.

<sup>11</sup>Russell Papers, Winnipeg C.L.C. Financial Records, 1921 - 1923, Box 9, File 47. P.A.M.

<sup>12</sup>Bercusson, Fools and Wise Men provides a detailed discussion of the O.B.U.'s decline outside of Winnipeg.

<sup>13</sup>Russell Papers, R. B. Russell's report to the 1923 O.B.U. Convention, Box 9, File 49, P.A.M., makes it clear that the O.B.U. leadership understood the importance of the rail shops. Western Labour News, August 13, 1920 gives similar evaluation by the Internationals.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid.

<sup>15</sup>Orlikow Interviews, R. B. Russell, Tape 5, p. 1.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid.

<sup>17</sup>Western Labour News, October 8, 1920.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., December 12, 1919. O.B.U. Bulletin, December 8, 1919. Wage Agreement #4 between Railway War Board and Division 4, clause 184. Railroad Files, P.A.C.

<sup>19</sup>Russell Papers, O.B.U. Convention proceedings, 1920. Box 9, File 49, P.A.M.

<sup>20</sup>Russell Papers, C.L.C. Minutes, April, 1920. Box 4, File 15, P.A.M.

<sup>21</sup>Minutes of Boilermakers local 126, December 19, 1920, MG10A11, P.A.C.

<sup>22</sup>Western Labour News, June 4, 1920.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., June 25, 1920.

<sup>24</sup>I.A.M. Bulletin, December, 1919.

<sup>25</sup>Canadian Brotherhood of Railroad Employees, Convention Proceedings, 1919 and 1921. Orlikow Interviews, R. B. Russell, Tape 6, page 1. Minutes of Boilermakers local 126, July 20, 1919, MG10A11, P.A.C.

- <sup>26</sup>Western Labour News, January 25, 1921.
- <sup>27</sup>Ibid., January 21, 1921.
- <sup>28</sup>Russell Papers, Brotherhood of Railway Carmen, Files and Papers, Report January 10, 1921, Box 12, File 67, P.A.M.
- <sup>29</sup>Appendix, Table IV.
- <sup>30</sup>Russell Papers, Report of T. Wooler to 1923 Convention, Box 9, File 49, P.A.M.
- <sup>31</sup>Western Labour News, May 14, 1920. O.B.U. Bulletin, January 10, 1920.
- <sup>32</sup>Bercusson, Fools and Wise Men, p. 153.
- <sup>33</sup>O.B.U. Bulletin, Jan. 10, 1920. Western Labour News, May 25 and July 23, 1920.
- <sup>34</sup>Russell Papers, C.L.C. Minutes, October, 1920, Box 4, File 15.
- <sup>35</sup>O.B.U. Bulletin, May 22, 1920.
- <sup>36</sup>Western Labour News, December 23, 1921. President's Report in W.T.L.C. Labour Annual.
- <sup>37</sup>O.B.U. Bulletin, February 12, 1921; May 22, 1920. Russell Papers, I.B.E.W. Local 435 Minutes, January, 1921, Box 3, File 9.
- <sup>38</sup>Russell Papers, C.L.C. Minutes, May, 1920, Box 4, File 15.
- <sup>39</sup>O.B.U. Bulletin, May 22, 1920.
- <sup>40</sup>Western Labour News, June 14, 1920.
- <sup>41</sup>Western Labour News, a new masthead of January 14, 1921. Ibid., May 21, 1920.
- <sup>42</sup>Ibid., June 18, 1920.
- <sup>43</sup>Russell Papers, C.L.C. Executive Minutes, July, 1920, Box 4, File 16.
- <sup>44</sup>Ibid., August, 1920.
- <sup>45</sup>Ibid., September, 1920.

<sup>46</sup>For a discussion of the J.C.I. see: H. Trachenberg, A Preliminary Investigation into Labour-Government-Management Relations in Manitoba: The Joint Council of Industry, unpublished paper prepared for Manitoba Department of Labour, 1970.

<sup>47</sup>O.B.U. Bulletin, June 5, 1920.

<sup>48</sup>Trachenberg, op. cit., pp. 16 - 17.

<sup>49</sup>Western Labour News, January 21, 1921. O.B.U. Bulletin, February 5, 1921.

<sup>50</sup>Labour Organizations in Canada, 1919, p. 35.

<sup>51</sup>Russell Papers, C.L.C. Minutes, December, 1919. Box 4, File 15, O.B.U. Bulletin, December 8, 1919.

<sup>52</sup>O.B.U. Bulletin, March 26, 1921.

<sup>53</sup>Bercusson, Confrontation at Winnipeg, pp. 11 - 14.

<sup>54</sup>Dominion Bureau of Statistics, Statistics of Steam Railways of Canada, annual reports.

<sup>55</sup>O.B.U. Bulletin, August, 1919.

<sup>56</sup>C. Lipton, The Trade Union Movement of Canada, 1827 - 1959 (Toronto, 1978), pp. 99 - 105.

<sup>57</sup>Quoted in Lipton, op. cit., p. 101.

<sup>58</sup>W. E. Greening and M. M. Maclean, It Was Never Easy (Ottawa, 1961), p. 26 - 30.

<sup>59</sup>Ibid., pp. 41 - 62.

<sup>60</sup>C.B.R.E. Convention Proceedings, 1921, reports by E. Robson and J. W. Watson.

<sup>61</sup>C.B.R.E. Convention Proceedings, 1919. President's Report.

<sup>62</sup>Appendix, Table IV. While the Winnipeg Printing Trades Council shows a decline in reported membership from 1,600 in 1918 to 950 in 1920 the early figures must be substantially exaggerated. A study of the printing trades locals reported membership in the Labour Gazette for the same period indicates a peak membership collectively of about 1,100.

<sup>63</sup>Russell Papers, D.L.P. Winnipeg and District Branch, Minutes, Box 2, File 6, 1919 - 1920.



<sup>64</sup>Western Labour News, October 10; October 24, 1919.

<sup>65</sup>Ibid., May 28, 1920.

<sup>66</sup>Western Labour News, September 10, 1920.

<sup>67</sup>O.B.U. Bulletin, November 27, 1920.

<sup>68</sup>Russell Papers, Winnipeg and District Branch of D.L.P. Minutes, November 18; November 20, Box 2, File 6. Ibid. Historical sketch of D.L.P. - I.L.P., Box 2, File 5. M. Robin, Radical Politics and Canadian Labour (Kingston: 1968), pp. 210 - 218, includes a good outline of the events involved in the split and the formation of the I.L.P.

<sup>69</sup>Western Labour News, August 1, 1919.

<sup>70</sup>Ibid., May 7, 1920.

<sup>71</sup>Ibid., April 9, 1920.

<sup>72</sup>Ibid., May 7, 1920.

<sup>73</sup>Labour Gazette, 1920, p. 498.

<sup>74</sup>Appendix, Table I.

<sup>75</sup>Appendix, Table V.

### CHAPTER III

<sup>1</sup>Appendix, Table XI.

<sup>2</sup>Appendix, Table XVI. While the data from 1920 and 1921 are not directly comparable, some guess as to the magnitude of the decline can be made. Employment drops at about the same rate--54%--as the number of establishments. Yet total capital declines by only 33%, reflecting the fact that it is primarily small firms who are excluded by the new criteria adopted for 1921. If employment is related to capital, not the number of firms then only about half of the decline in employment from 1920 to 1921 is due to the new definition of manufacturing and the other half is due to a decline in manufacturing.

<sup>3</sup>Appendix, Table XII.

<sup>4</sup>Appendix, Table IX.

<sup>5</sup>A copy of these Reports was included in the Annual Reports of the provincial Bureau of Labour.

<sup>6</sup>Appendix, Table X.

<sup>7</sup>Russell Papers, The Independent, January 20, 1922, Box 16, Western Labour News, December 30, 1921.

<sup>8</sup>Labour Gazette, 1925, p. 1193, ". . . much short time in rail 1920 - 1925."

<sup>9</sup>Labour Gazette, 1920, p. 1588; 1921, pp. 31, 302, 655; 1922, pp. 123, 1152; 1923, p. 585; 1924, p. 143; 1925, pp. 64 - 65 are some examples of these reports.

<sup>10</sup>Labour Gazette, 1926, p. 698.

<sup>11</sup>All the data on real wages are from Appendix, Tables XVIII, XIX, and XX.

<sup>12</sup>O.B.U. Bulletin. March 2, 1922: Wage cuts at Swifts Packers were 3¢ per hour for workers making 50¢ or over and 7¢ per hour for those at 44¢ and under. Ibid., December 7, 1922: Wage cuts for railroad mechanics of 7¢ per hour for workers earning over 77¢ and 9¢ per hour for those under 72¢.

<sup>13</sup>Appendix, Table V.

<sup>14</sup>Appendix, Table IV.

<sup>15</sup>C. Lipton, op. cit., p. 231. W. E. Greening and M. M. Maclean, op. cit., pp. 69 - 81.

<sup>16</sup>Russell Papers, C.L.C. Minutes, January, 1921 to May, 1921, Box 4, File 15.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., July, 1921.

<sup>18</sup>In fact the Workers Party was only the public, legal affiliate, while the more trusted members were organized into a secret Communist Party. As these divisions are peripheral to this thesis and confusing I will use the term Communist Party (C.P.) to describe both organizations.

<sup>19</sup>V. I. Lenin, "Left Wing" Communism, An Infantile Disorder (Moscow: 1970), first published in May, 1920.

<sup>20</sup>I. Avakumovic, The Communist Party in Canada (Toronto: 1975), pp. 28 - 30.

<sup>21</sup>Russell Papers, C.L.C. Minutes, March 12, 1922; November 14, 1922, Box 4, File 17.

<sup>22</sup>Russell Papers, ibid., March 3. O.B.U. Bulletin, May 4; May 11; May 18.

<sup>23</sup>Russell Papers, C.L.C. Minutes, November 28, 1922, Box 4, File 17.

<sup>24</sup>These figures are drawn from the Labour Gazette, reports on unemployment in trade unions.

<sup>25</sup>Russell Papers, C.L.C. Minutes, June, 1921.

<sup>26</sup>O.B.U. Bulletin, May 7, 1921.

<sup>27</sup>Labour Gazette, 1921, p. 655.

<sup>28</sup>I.A.M. Bulletin, July, 1921; December, 1921.

<sup>29</sup>O.B.U. Bulletin, June 11, 1921.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid., July 6, 1922.

<sup>31</sup>I.A.M. Bulletin, January, 1922; March, 1922; August, 1922. Western Labour News, August 11, 1922; December 23, 1922.

<sup>32</sup>Russell Papers, Brotherhood of Railway Carmen, local 550; Correspondence and papers, report dated March 27, 1923.

<sup>33</sup>O.B.U. Bulletin, July 6, 1922; August 3, 1922.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid., August 23, 1923.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid., March 15, 1923.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid., May 1, 1924; May 7, 1924.

<sup>37</sup>Railroad Files, P.A.C. Division 4 Convention Proceedings 1924. I.A.M. Bulletin, April, 1924.

<sup>38</sup>Railroad Files, P.A.C. "C.N.R. Joint Cooperative Plan" Constitution.

<sup>39</sup>O.B.U. Bulletin, May 8, 1924, passim.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid., June 19, 1924; June 26, 1924.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid., June 26, 1924.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid., July 3, 1924; September 18, 1924.

<sup>43</sup>Ibid., July 3, 1924; July 28, 1927.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid., March 12, 1925.

<sup>45</sup>Orlikow Interviews, R. B. Russell Tape 5, p. 4.

<sup>46</sup>I.A.M. Bulletin, June, 1922; December, 1923.  
O.B.U. Bulletin, July 6, 1922; July 26, 1923; June 5, 1924;  
November 19, 1925.

<sup>47</sup>Report of Emergency Unemployment Relief Committee  
for the winter of 1922 - 1923.

<sup>48</sup>O.B.U. Bulletin, October 29, 1921 and passim.

<sup>49</sup>Russell Papers C.L.C. Minutes, May 15, 1923,  
Box 4, File 17.

<sup>50</sup>Appendix, Table IV, Labour Gazette, reports  
on Unemployment in Trade Unions.

<sup>51</sup>Labour Gazette, 1922, p. 886. O.B.U. Bulletin,  
September 28, 1922; October 5, 1922.

<sup>52</sup>Canadian Department of Labour, strikes and Lockout  
Files, P.A.C. provides the material on strikes and lockouts  
used in this thesis unless otherwise footnoted.

<sup>53</sup>Ibid., and Western Labour News, May 5, 1922.

<sup>54</sup>Western Labour News, May 6, 1921; May 20, 1921;  
June 3, 1921.

<sup>55</sup>S. M. Lipset, M. A. Trow, J. S. Coleman, Union  
Democracy: The Internal Politics of the International  
Typographical Union (Glencoe: 1956), pp. 44 - 45 and  
286 - 289.

<sup>56</sup>Strike and Lockout Files, op. cit.

<sup>57</sup>Ibid.

<sup>58</sup>Labour Organization in Canada, 1921, p. 132.

<sup>59</sup>C.B.R.E. Convention Proceedings, 1925.

<sup>60</sup>From Labour Gazette, Reports on Unemployment in  
Trade Unions.

<sup>61</sup>H. A. Logan, Trade Unions in Canada (Toronto:  
1948), Chart VII, p. 146.

<sup>62</sup>Russell Papers, C.L.C. Minutes, January, 1923.  
O.B.U. Bulletin, January 4, 1923, Box 4, File 17.  
Western Labour News, March 2, 1923.

<sup>63</sup>O.B.U. Bulletin, August 14, 1924.

<sup>64</sup>Ibid., January 3, 1929.

- <sup>65</sup>Ibid., January 15, 1925.
- <sup>66</sup>Ibid., November 27, 1924; January 15, 1925.  
Russell Papers, C.L.C. Executive Minutes, February 10, 1925, Box 4, File 19.
- <sup>67</sup>O.B.U. Bulletin, November 27, 1924; December 4, 1924.
- <sup>68</sup>Ibid., March 26, 1921; September 20, 1923.
- <sup>69</sup>Ibid., July 12, September 6, September 12, 1923; December 4, 1924. Russell Papers, C.L.C. Minutes July, 1923, Box 4, File 17.
- <sup>70</sup>Western Labour News, March 2, 1923. Labour Organizations in Canada, 1923, 1925.
- <sup>71</sup>O.B.U. Bulletin, June 22, June 29, 1924; August 14, 1924, November 10, 1925. Russell Papers, C.L.C. Executive Minutes, August 14, 1924.
- <sup>72</sup>Western Labour News, September 23, October 7, October 14, 1921. Robin, op. cit., pp. 213 - 214. K. McNaught, A Prophet in Politics (Toronto, 1971), pp. 148 - 149.
- <sup>73</sup>Robin, op. cit., p. 214.
- <sup>74</sup>O.B.U. Bulletin, December 1, 1921.
- <sup>75</sup>Western Labour News, May 19, 1922.
- <sup>76</sup>Ibid., July 7, 1922.
- <sup>77</sup>This account is largely drawn from the detailed account in: Robin, op. cit., pp. 215 - 218.
- <sup>78</sup>Weekly News, December 2, 1927. Part of the reason for the smaller aldermanic vote was the success of the C.P.'s aldermanic candidates in winning working class votes which would go to the I.L.P. in the mayoralty race.
- <sup>79</sup>O.B.U. Bulletin, November 6, 1924.
- <sup>80</sup>Ibid., November 13, November 27, 1924.
- <sup>81</sup>Ibid., September 17, October 15, October 22, 1925.
- <sup>82</sup>Orlikow Interviews, R. B. Russell, Tape 4, p. 6; Tape 6, p. 5.
- <sup>83</sup>I. Avakumovic, The Communist Party of Canada (Toronto: 1975), p. 24.

<sup>84</sup>W. Rodney, Soldiers of the International (Toronto, 1968), pp. 48 - 49. Avakumovic, op. cit., p. 26.

<sup>85</sup>O.B.U. Bulletin, December 7, 1922 includes an attack on the O.B.U. by the S.P.C. and marks the first break between the two in Winnipeg. See also: Ibid., May 15, 1924; March 26, 1925.

<sup>86</sup>Russell Papers, Convention Proceedings, 1923, Box 9, File 49.

<sup>87</sup>In his testimony to the Court in the case of "W. Young vs the C.N.R." the "O.B.U. Bulletin's" printer, H. Veitch stated that the paper's circulation from 1924 to 1928 averaged well over 25,000 per issue. Record of Privy Council Proceedings: Case of Wm. Young vs C.N.R., P.A.C. RG. 30, Vol. 5559.

<sup>88</sup>O.B.U. Bulletin, May 7, 1921.

<sup>89</sup>Labour Organizations in Canada, 1925, p. 207.

<sup>90</sup>Orlikow Interviews, Mrs. James Aikens, Tape 12. Ibid., Fred Tipping, Tape. 18.

<sup>91</sup>Western Labour News, March 10, 1922; April 7, 1922. O.B.U. Bulletin, December 14, 1921; March 1, 1923; June 19, 1924.

#### CHAPTER IV

<sup>1</sup>Labour Gazette, 1926, p. 698.

<sup>2</sup>R. Bellan, Winnipeg First Century, (Winnipeg, 1978), pp. 163 - 185. Bellan places 1925 in the period of prosperity, while I have placed it as the last depression year. While 1925 did show a marked upturn in economic activity, the fact that employment levels of 1920 were not reached until 1926 seems to make the latter year a better dividing line, but the point is arguable.

<sup>3</sup>Appendix, Table XI.

<sup>4</sup>Appendix, Table XVI.

<sup>5</sup>Appendix, Table XII.

<sup>6</sup>Appendix, Table XIV.

<sup>7</sup>Appendix, Table XII.

<sup>8</sup>Labour Gazette, monthly reports on employment, 1926 - 1929.

<sup>9</sup>O.B.U. Bulletin, May 26, 1927; October 6, 1927; November 24, 1927; March 8, 1928; July 11, 1929; October 24, 1929. Weekly News, March 29, 1929. Flavelle Papers, P.A.C. Letter from John Bracken, January, 1928, RG. 27, 109, 617; 9.1 Volume 4.

<sup>10</sup>Appendix, Table XVIII.

<sup>11</sup>Appendix, Table XVIII.

<sup>12</sup>Appendix, Table XIX.

<sup>13</sup>Appendix, Table XX. It should not be assumed that compensation claimants are a random sample of the blue collar working class. Undoubtedly, then as now, the least skilled, lowest paid jobs were among the most dangerous. Also some industries such as the Printing Trades, which gained dramatically in real wages, are far less dangerous than others, such as the metal trades, which gained very little in real wages. But with this caution the pattern can still be indicative of overall trends.

<sup>14</sup>Appendix, Table XVII.

<sup>15</sup>Appendix, Table IV.

<sup>16</sup>O.B.U. Bulletin, August 27, 1925; February 25, 1925; April 1, 1925.

<sup>17</sup>C.B.R.E., Convention Proceedings, 1927. O.B.U. Bulletin, June 9, 1927. Record of Privy Council Proceedings: Case of Young vs. C.N.R.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid.

<sup>19</sup>O.B.U. Bulletin, June 13, 1929. C.B.R.E. Convention Proceedings, 1927.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., 1923; 1925; 1927; 1929.

<sup>21</sup>W. E. Greening and M. M. MacLean, op. cit., pp. 123 - 138; 163 - 178.

<sup>22</sup>Strike and Lockout Files, Department of Labour.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid.

- <sup>27</sup>I. Angus, Canadian Bolsheviks (Montreal: Vanguard Publications, 1981), pp. 273 - 281.
- <sup>28</sup>O.B.U. Bulletin, January 3, 1929. Labour Organizations in Canada, 1930, pp. 162 - 163.
- <sup>29</sup>B. Cochran, Labour and Communism (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977), pp. 71 - 77.
- <sup>30</sup>Strike and Lockout Files, Department of Labour.
- <sup>31</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>32</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>33</sup>Ibid., O.B.U. Bulletin, May 3, May 10, May 17, June 7, 1928.
- <sup>34</sup>Lipton, op. cit., p. 243 - 245. Greening and MacLean, op. cit., pp. 91 - 96.
- <sup>35</sup>Weekly News, December 2, 1927.
- <sup>36</sup>Ibid., November 19, 1926.
- <sup>37</sup>O.B.U. Bulletin, December 2, 1926.
- <sup>38</sup>Ibid., November 25, 1926.
- <sup>39</sup>W. L. Morton, Manitoba: A History (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1967), p. 400.
- <sup>40</sup>Weekly News, June 24, 1927.
- <sup>41</sup>Ibid., December 2, 1927.
- <sup>42</sup>O.B.U. Bulletin, December 11, 1924.
- <sup>43</sup>Ibid., December 3, 1925.
- <sup>44</sup>Weekly News, December 4, 1925.
- <sup>45</sup>Ibid., January 8, 1926.
- <sup>46</sup>Ibid., August 4, 1926. O.B.U. Bulletin, November 25, 1926.
- <sup>47</sup>Ibid., September 2, 1926. Weekly News, November 19, 1926.
- <sup>48</sup>Weekly News, October 21, 1927; October 7, 1927.
- <sup>49</sup>Weekly News, June 8, 1928. O.B.U. Bulletin, May 31, 1928.



- <sup>50</sup>Weekly News, June 22, 1928; July 20, 1928.
- <sup>51</sup>Ibid., November 30, 1928.
- <sup>52</sup>Ibid., May 23, July 5, 1929.
- <sup>53</sup>Ibid., July 19, 1929.
- <sup>54</sup>Ibid., August 23, 1929; December 5, 1929.  
O.B.U. Bulletin, June 27, 1929.
- <sup>55</sup>Weekly News, September 13, 1929; November 15, 1929. O.B.U. Bulletin, August 3, 1929.
- <sup>56</sup>Labour Organization in Canada, 1926 - 1929.
- <sup>57</sup>O.B.U. Bulletin, June 23, 1927.
- <sup>58</sup>Ibid., April 26, 1928.
- <sup>59</sup>Weekly News, May 6, 1927; May 14, 1926.
- <sup>60</sup>O.B.U. Bulletin, June 7, 1928.

STATISTICAL APPENDIX

TABLE I

## Winnipeg Trade Unions\*

|      | Number of<br>Locals in<br>Winnipeg | Number of<br>Locals<br>Reporting | % of Local<br>Reporting | Reported<br>Member-<br>ship | Projected<br>Member-<br>ship** |
|------|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1911 | 79                                 | 56                               | 70.9                    | 7,483                       | 10,554                         |
| 1912 | 82                                 | 50                               | 61.0                    | 7,518                       | 12,325                         |
| 1913 | 82                                 | 48                               | 58.5                    | 8,163                       | 13,954                         |
| 1914 | 80                                 | 40                               | 50.0                    | 6,693                       | 13,386                         |
| 1915 | 80                                 | 38                               | 47.5                    | 5,813                       | 12,238                         |
| 1916 | 75                                 | 47                               | 62.7                    | 7,121                       | 11,357                         |
| 1917 | 80                                 | 47                               | 58.8                    | 7,073                       | 12,029                         |
| 1918 | 91                                 | 56                               | 61.5                    | 12,050                      | 19,593                         |
| 1919 | 79                                 | 48                               | 60.8                    | 8,646                       | 14,220                         |
| 1920 | 75                                 | 53                               | 70.7                    | 8,818                       | 12,472                         |
| 1921 | 77                                 | 53                               | 68.8                    | 7,743                       | 11,254                         |
| 1922 | 71                                 | 50                               | 70.4                    | 6,155                       | 8,742                          |
| 1923 | 73                                 | 59                               | 80.8                    | 7,143                       | 8,840                          |
| 1924 | 72                                 | 61                               | 84.7                    | 7,790                       | 9,197                          |
| 1925 | 70                                 | 58                               | 82.9                    | 7,755                       | 9,355                          |
| 1926 | 77                                 | 59                               | 76.6                    | 9,366                       | 12,227                         |
| 1927 | 82                                 | 67                               | 81.7                    | 11,371                      | 13,918                         |
| 1928 | 85                                 | 70                               | 82.4                    | 11,468                      | 13,917                         |
| 1929 | 87                                 | 71                               | 81.6                    | 12,510                      | 15,331                         |
| 1930 | 88                                 | 81                               | 92.0                    | 14,214                      | 15,450                         |
| 1931 | 87                                 | 72                               | 82.8                    | 10,482                      | 12,659                         |
| 1932 | 88                                 | 74                               | 84.1                    | 9,284                       | 11,039                         |
| 1933 | 92                                 | 74                               | 80.4                    | 8,814                       | 10,963                         |
| 1934 | 86                                 | 73                               | 84.9                    | 7,824                       | 9,216                          |
| 1935 | 118                                | 84                               | 71.2                    | 9,800                       | 13,764                         |

\*All figures exclude the One Big Union.

\*\*Estimated membership for all locals other than O.B.U.

SOURCE: Labour Organizations in Canada.

TABLE II

## Trade Union Membership

| Year | MANITOBA |               |         | BRITISH COLUMBIA |               |         | ONTARIO |               |         | CANADA |               |         |
|------|----------|---------------|---------|------------------|---------------|---------|---------|---------------|---------|--------|---------------|---------|
|      | Locals   | Locals Report | Members | Locals           | Locals Report | Members | Locals  | Locals Report | Members | Locals | Locals Report | Members |
| 1911 | 119      | 78            | 8,960   | 231              | 162           | 22,599  | 702     | 419           | 34,530  | 1,741  | 1,057         | 102,684 |
| 1912 | 139      | 92            | 11,032  | 249              | 144           | 18,936  | 756     | 427           | 51,371  | 1,883  | 1,051         | 121,737 |
| 1913 | 141      | 83            | 10,117  | 259              | 157           | 21,362  | 807     | 470           | 45,261  | 2,017  | 1,164         | 128,652 |
| 1914 | 140      | 74            | 8,500   | 235              | 122           | 13,117  | 805     | 396           | 38,235  | 2,003  | 980           | 97,559  |
| 1915 | 135      | 75            | 7,879   | 216              | 120           | 10,757  | 757     | 427           | 34,856  | 1,883  | 998           | 90,993  |
| 1916 | 130      | 70            | 9,359   | 202              | 143           | 11,600  | 753     | 524           | 41,654  | 1,842  | 1,245         | 115,884 |
| 1917 | 136      | 91            | 9,537   | 221              | 166           | 21,201  | 803     | 550           | 52,478  | 1,974  | 1,313         | 142,007 |
| 1918 | 153      | 105           | 15,353  | 252              | 182           | 27,216  | 926     | 670           | 62,605  | 2,274  | 1,593         | 208,368 |
| 1919 | 143      | 97            | 11,878  | 234              | 156           | 21,006  | 1,201   | 821           | 87,105  | 2,663  | 1,806         | 239,359 |
| 1920 | 140      | 100           | 11,983  | 240              | 170           | 18,583  | 1,221   | 812           | 89,954  | 2,744  | 1,813         | 259,578 |
| 1921 | 141      | 95            | 10,316  | 236              | 159           | 16,899  | 1,099   | 735           | 66,771  | 2,514  | 1,612         | 193,914 |
| 1922 | 134      | 98            | 9,195   | 235              | 173           | 17,034  | 1,044   | 704           | 62,500  | 2,406  | 1,618         | 178,420 |
| 1923 | 133      | 109           | 10,285  | 236              | 180           | 23,803  | 1,032   | 727           | 61,410  | 2,381  | 1,703         | 193,630 |
| 1924 | 133      | 111           | 11,160  | 236              | 181           | 16,649  | 1,005   | 765           | 62,405  | 2,335  | 1,787         | 202,608 |
| 1925 | 130      | 109           | 11,115  | 246              | 203           | 28,175  | 1,006   | 760           | 63,251  | 2,395  | 1,816         | 196,645 |
| 1926 | 137      | 110           | 12,661  | 249              | 192           | 21,717  | 991     | 739           | 59,443  | 2,412  | 1,786         | 187,749 |
| 1927 | 143      | 120           | 14,948  | 254              | 221           | 25,187  | 1,014   | 792           | 64,082  | 2,604  | 2,000         | 212,540 |
| 1928 | 175      | 123           | 11,468  | 262              | 213           | 24,509  | 1,024   | 794           | 68,252  | 2,653  | 2,042         | 222,141 |
| 1929 | 185      | 127           | 17,631  | 271              | 220           | 25,069  | 1,055   | 838           | 71,889  | 2,778  | 2,117         | 232,970 |
| 1930 | 163      | 141           | 18,600  | 275              | 237           | 27,204  | 1,076   | 862           | 78,336  | 2,809  | 2,271         | 257,611 |
| 1931 | 162      | 133           | 14,237  | 276              | 225           | 24,222  | 1,046   | 811           | 66,317  | 2,772  | 2,225         | 229,677 |
| 1932 | 184      | 134           | 12,385  | 273              | 220           | 21,207  | 1,022   | 789           | 57,743  | 2,725  | 2,101         | 186,034 |
| 1933 | 186      | 136           | 12,084  | 274              | 215           | 20,943  | 1,012   | 772           | 52,906  | 2,707  | 2,080         | 181,401 |
| 1934 | 183      | 135           | 11,636  | 278              | 219           | 20,138  | 1,054   | 810           | 61,057  | 2,740  | 2,164         | 195,149 |
| 1935 | 186      | 146           | 12,718  | 264              | 231           | 22,559  | 1,026   | 853           | 64,989  | 2,728  | 2,289         | 206,036 |

SOURCE: Labour Organizations in Canada.

TABLE III

## Trade Union Membership

1911 = 100

| Year | MANITOBA |         | BRITISH COLUMBIA |         | ONTARIO |         | CANADA |         |
|------|----------|---------|------------------|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|
|      | Locals   | Members | Locals           | Members | Locals  | Members | Locals | Members |
| 1911 | 100      | 100     | 100              | 100     | 100     | 100     | 100    | 100     |
| 1912 | 117      | 123     | 108              | 84      | 108     | 120     | 108    | 119     |
| 1913 | 118      | 113     | 112              | 95      | 115     | 131     | 116    | 125     |
| 1914 | 118      | 95      | 102              | 58      | 115     | 111     | 115    | 95      |
| 1915 | 113      | 88      | 94               | 48      | 108     | 101     | 108    | 89      |
| 1916 | 109      | 105     | 87               | 51      | 107     | 121     | 106    | 113     |
| 1917 | 114      | 106     | 96               | 94      | 114     | 152     | 113    | 138     |
| 1918 | 129      | 171     | 109              | 120     | 132     | 181     | 131    | 203     |
| 1919 | 120      | 133     | 101              | 93      | 171     | 252     | 153    | 233     |
| 1920 | 118      | 134     | 104              | 82      | 174     | 260     | 158    | 253     |
| 1921 | 118      | 115     | 102              | 75      | 157     | 193     | 144    | 189     |
| 1922 | 113      | 103     | 102              | 75      | 149     | 181     | 138    | 174     |
| 1923 | 112      | 115     | 102              | 105     | 147     | 178     | 137    | 189     |
| 1924 | 112      | 125     | 102              | 74      | 143     | 181     | 134    | 197     |
| 1925 | 109      | 124     | 106              | 125     | 143     | 183     | 138    | 192     |
| 1926 | 115      | 141     | 108              | 96      | 141     | 172     | 139    | 183     |
| 1927 | 120      | 167     | 110              | 111     | 144     | 186     | 150    | 207     |
| 1928 | 147      | 128     | 113              | 108     | 146     | 197     | 152    | 216     |
| 1929 | 155      | 197     | 117              | 111     | 150     | 208     | 160    | 227     |
| 1930 | 137      | 208     | 119              | 120     | 153     | 227     | 161    | 251     |
| 1931 | 136      | 159     | 119              | 107     | 149     | 192     | 159    | 224     |
| 1932 | 155      | 138     | 118              | 94      | 146     | 167     | 157    | 181     |
| 1933 | 156      | 135     | 118              | 93      | 144     | 153     | 155    | 177     |
| 1934 | 154      | 130     | 120              | 89      | 150     | 177     | 157    | 190     |
| 1935 | 156      | 142     | 114              | 100     | 146     | 188     | 157    | 201     |

TABLE IV

## Union Councils in Winnipeg

| Year | Winnipeg Trades and Labour Council |         | Winnipeg Building Trades Council |         | Winnipeg Printing Trades Council |         | Winnipeg C.P.R. Federated Trades Council |         | Winnipeg Carpenters District Council |         |
|------|------------------------------------|---------|----------------------------------|---------|----------------------------------|---------|--|---------|--------------------------------------|---------|
|      | Locals                             | Members | Locals                           | Members | Locals                           | Members | Locals                                   | Members | Locals                               | Members |
| 1911 | 55                                 | --      | 10                               | --      | 6                                | --      | 10                                       | --      | 4                                    | --      |
| 1912 | 56                                 | 7,000   | 12                               | 1,500   | 5                                | 700     | 10                                       | --      | 5                                    | --      |
| 1913 | 62                                 | 8,009   | 14                               | 1,824   | 5                                | --      | 12                                       | 1,500   | 5                                    | --      |
| 1914 | 59                                 | 6,815   | 14                               | 1,500   | 6                                | 880     | 13                                       | 1,200   | --                                   | --      |
| 1915 | 51                                 | 4,900   | 12                               | 950     | 6                                | 700     | 12                                       | 1,500   | 4                                    | 450     |
| 1916 | 52                                 | 6,510   | 12                               | 950     | 6                                | 695     | 13                                       | 1,700   | 4                                    | 300     |
| 1917 | 56                                 | 8,250   | 18                               | 2,000   | 6                                | 1,000   | 13                                       | 2,000   | 3                                    | 450     |
| 1918 | 66                                 | 10,500  | 13                               | 1,250   | 9                                | 1,600   | 13                                       | 2,000   | 3                                    | 450     |
| 1919 | --                                 | 5,000   | 13                               | 2,500   | 6                                | 1,400   | 9  | 1,015   | 3                                    | --      |
| 1920 | 36                                 | 5,500   | 8                                | 2,000   | 6                                | 950     | 7  | 750     | 3                                    | 1,200   |
| 1921 | 35                                 | 4,769   | 7                                | 2,000   | 6                                | 1,100   | 8  | 1,125   | 3                                    | 1,200   |
| 1922 | 40                                 | 4,500   | 8                                | 1,800   | 6                                | 700     | 8  | 1,500   | 3                                    | 700     |
| 1923 | 33                                 | 10,000  | 13                               | 1,800   | 6                                | 500     | 8  | 1,000   | 3                                    | 800     |
| 1924 | 24                                 | 5,540   | --                               | --      | 5                                | 450     | 8  | 850     | 2                                    | --      |
| 1925 | 25                                 | 3,820   | 13                               | 1,800   | 5                                | 500     | 6  | 830     | 2                                    | 480     |
| 1926 | 34                                 | 5,820*  | 13                               | 1,800   | 5                                | 500     | 8  | 1,265   | 2                                    | --      |
| 1927 | 35                                 | 2,860   | 12                               | 1,710   | 6                                | 625     | 8  | 1,843   | 2                                    | --      |
| 1928 | 33                                 | 5,600   | 10                               | 1,200   | 6                                | 600     | 8  | 1,874   | 2                                    | 900     |
| 1929 | 56                                 | 9,500   | 10                               | 2,480   | 5                                | 560     | 7  | 1,900   | 2                                    | 1,000   |
| 1930 | 57                                 | 10,500  | 12                               | 1,740   | 5                                | 590     | 8  | 1,875   | 2                                    | 950     |
| 1931 | 35                                 | 10,500  | 11                               | 1,650   | 5                                | 595     | 7  | 1,418   | 2                                    | 800     |
| 1932 | 32                                 | --      | 12                               | 3,000   | 5                                | 600     | 9  | 1,307   | 2                                    | 400     |
| 1933 | 24                                 | 2,500   | 12                               | 3,000   | 5                                | 560     | 7  | 712     | (dissolved)                          |         |
| 1934 | 29                                 | --      | 13                               | 5,000   | 5                                | 500     | 6  | 1,243   |                                      |         |
| 1935 | 37                                 | 5,810   | 10                               | 2,290   | 5                                | 350     | 8  | 849     |                                      |         |

SOURCE: Labour Organizations in Canada.

\*L.D.I.C. 1927 gives 2,820 as the 1926 membership.

TABLE V  
O.B.U. - Winnipeg Central Labour Council  
Per Capita Income

| 1920    |          |          | 1922    |          |                                  |
|---------|----------|----------|---------|----------|----------------------------------|
| March   | \$501.21 | (3,341)* | Jan.    | \$218.40 | (1,456)                          |
| April   | 618.27   | (4,122)  | Feb.    | 126.06   | (840)                            |
| May     | 453.15   | (3,021)  | March   | 434.40   | (2,896)                          |
| June    | 606.60   | (4,044)  | April   | 247.15   | (1,648)                          |
| July    | 446.70   | (2,978)  | May     | 197.25   | (1,315)                          |
| Aug.    | 438.90   | (2,926)  | June    | 301.50   | (2,010)                          |
| Sept.   | 745.65   | (4,971)  | July    | 237.60   | (1,584)                          |
| Oct.    | 433.95   | (2,893)  | Aug.    | 321.75   | (2,145)                          |
| Nov.    | 665.70   | (4,438)  | Sept.   | 266.10   | (1,774)                          |
| Dec.    | 519.90   | (3,466)  | Oct.    | 275.25   | (1,835)                          |
|         |          |          | Nov.    | 170.10   | (1,134)                          |
|         |          |          | Dec.    | 274.50   | (1,830)                          |
| AVERAGE | 543.00   | (3,620)  | AVERAGE | 255.84   | (1,706)                          |
| 1921    |          |          | 1923    |          |                                  |
| Jan.    | 483.60   | (3,224)  | Jan.    | 199.20   | (1,328)                          |
| Feb.    | 606.10   | (4,041)  | Feb.    | 222.75   | (1,485)                          |
| March   | 618.40   | (4,123)  | March   | 175.65   | (1,171)                          |
| April   | 586.53   | (3,910)  | April   | 252.45   | (1,683)                          |
| May     | 416.10   | (2,774)  | May     | 181.65   | (1,211)                          |
| June    | 340.95   | (2,273)  |         |          |                                  |
| July    | 232.92   | (1,553)  |         |          |                                  |
| Aug.    | 247.65   | (1,651)  |         |          |                                  |
| Sept.   | 565.65   | (3,771)  |         |          |                                  |
| Oct.    | 395.70   | (2,638)  |         |          |                                  |
| Nov.    | 220.35   | (1,469)  |         |          |                                  |
| Dec.    | --       | --       |         |          |                                  |
| AVERAGE | 428.54   | (2,857)  | AVERAGE | (1,755)  | convention<br>- delegate<br>base |

\*Figures in brackets represent number of members covered by per capita payments.

SOURCE: Russell Papers MG10 A14-2 Box 9, File 47.

TABLE VI

## Strikes and Lockouts in Manitoba 1910 - 1929

| <u>Year</u>    | <u>Number of Employees</u> | <u>Average Duration</u> | <u>Time Lost</u>   | <u>Number of Strikes and Lockouts</u> |
|----------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1910           | 888                        | n/a                     | n/a                | 4                                     |
| 1911           | 305                        | n/a                     | n/a                | 7                                     |
| 1912           | 3,005                      | 8 days                  | 28,450 days        | 7                                     |
| 1913           | 1,138                      | 15                      | 23,501             | 5                                     |
| 1914           | 193                        | 16                      | 4,219              | 2                                     |
| 1915           | 107                        | 8                       | 830                | 4                                     |
| 1916           | 775                        | 10                      | 10,361             | 7                                     |
| 1917           | 2,261                      | 25                      | 47,206             | 12                                    |
| 1918           | 8,512                      | 10                      | 81,409             | 18                                    |
| 1919           | 25,599                     | 25                      | 1,045,660          | 8                                     |
| 1920           | 92                         | 7                       | 526                | 2                                     |
| 1921*          | 534                        | 43                      | 21,967             | 6                                     |
| 1922*          | 341                        | 91½                     | 63,021 (sic)       | 4                                     |
| 1923*          | 213                        | 202½                    | 34,780             | 2                                     |
| 1924*          | 103                        | 102½                    | 6,992              | 2                                     |
| 1925           | 122                        | 9                       | 532                | 4                                     |
| 1926           | 345                        | 26                      | 5,469              | 4                                     |
| 1927           | 100                        | 12                      | 825                | 3                                     |
| 1928           | 862                        | 15                      | 11,042             | 4                                     |
| 1929           | 110                        | 11                      | 1,155              | 4                                     |
| Yearly Average |                            |                         |                    |                                       |
| 1910-14        | 1,106                      | (1912-14 = 13)          | (1912-14 = 18,723) | 5                                     |
| 1915-18        | 2,914                      | 13                      | 34,952             | 10                                    |
| *1920-25       | 234                        | 76                      | 21,303             | 3                                     |
| 1926-29        | 354                        | 16                      | 4,622              | 4                                     |

\*Results from these years are distorted by a strike of composers called across North America in July, 1921 and settled in August, 1924 in an attempt to establish a 44-hour week in trade.

SOURCE: Labour Gazette, 1910 - 1930.



TABLE VII

## Trade Union Membership\* as Percentage of Canada

|      | Manitoba      |                | Western Canada |                |
|------|---------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
|      | <u>Locals</u> | <u>Members</u> | <u>Locals</u>  | <u>Members</u> |
| 1911 | 6.8%          | 8.7%           | 33.5%          | 41.5%          |
| 1912 | 7.4           | 9.0            | 34.7           | 36.8           |
| 1913 | 7.0           | 7.9            | 34.5           | 37.6           |
| 1914 | 7.0           | 8.7            | 33.1           | 36.9           |
| 1915 | 7.2           | 8.7            | 32.7           | 32.6           |
| 1916 | 7.1           | 8.1            | 32.3           | 29.2           |
| 1917 | 6.9           | 6.7            | 33.0           | 34.1           |
| 1918 | 6.7           | 7.4            | 32.7           | 30.2           |
| 1919 | 5.4           | 5.0            | 28.0           | 22.4           |
| 1920 | 5.1           | 4.6            | 27.8           | 20.0           |
| 1921 | 5.6           | 5.3            | 29.8           | 24.6           |
| 1922 | 5.6           | 5.2            | 30.8           | 26.0           |
| 1923 | 5.6           | 5.3            | 30.7           | 28.1           |
| 1924 | 5.7           | 5.5            | 32.1           | 25.6           |
| 1925 | 5.4           | 5.7            | 32.3           | 30.2           |
| 1926 | 5.7           | 6.7            | 32.8           | 30.1           |
| 1927 | 5.5           | 7.0            | 32.4           | 30.8           |
| 1928 | 6.6           | 5.2            | 33.8           | 29.0           |
| 1929 | 6.7           | 7.6            | 34.1           | 30.6           |
| 1930 | 5.8           | 7.2            | 33.4           | 30.0           |
| 1931 | 5.8           | 6.2            |                |                |
| 1932 | 6.8           | 6.7            |                |                |
| 1933 | 6.9           | 6.7            |                |                |
| 1934 | 6.7           | 6.0            |                |                |
| 1935 | 6.8           | 6.2            |                |                |

\*Excludes O.B.U.

SOURCE: Labour Organizations in Canada.

TABLE VIII  
Strike and Lockouts in Manitoba as Percentage  
of Canadian Total

| <u>Year</u>    | <u>Number of<br/>Employees<br/>(Percentage)</u> | <u>Number of<br/>Strikes<br/>(Percentage)</u> | <u>Time Lost<br/>(Percentage)</u> |
|----------------|---|---|-----------------------------------|
| 1910           | 4.11  | 3.96  |                                   |
| 1911           | 1.04  | 7.00  |                                   |
| 1912           | 7.01  | 4.42  | 2.50                              |
| 1913           | 2.81  | 3.29  | 2.27                              |
| 1914           | 1.98  | 3.45  | 0.86                              |
| 1915           | 0.94  | 6.35  | 0.87                              |
| 1916           | 2.92  | 5.83  | 4.38                              |
| 1917           | 4.50  | 7.50  | 4.20                              |
| 1918           | 10.67   | 7.83  | 12.56                             |
| 1919           | 16.79   | 2.38  | 30.74                             |
| 1920           | 0.15  | 0.62  | 0.07                              |
| 1921           | 1.89  | 3.50  | 2.09                              |
| 1922           | 0.78  | 3.85  | 4.12                              |
| 1923           | 0.62  | 2.33  | 5.17                              |
| 1924           | 0.30  | 2.86  | 0.54                              |
| 1925           | 0.42  | 4.60  | 0.04                              |
| 1926           | 1.45  | 5.19  | 2.05                              |
| 1927           | 0.45  | 4.05  | 0.54                              |
| 1928           | 4.90  | 4.08  | 4.92                              |
| 1929           | 0.85  | 4.44  | 0.76                              |
| Yearly Average |   |   |                                   |
| 1910-14        | 3.39  | 4.42  | (1912-14 = 1.88)                  |
| 1915-18        | 4.76  | 6.88  | 5.50                              |
| 1920-25        | 0.69  | 2.96  | 2.00                              |
| 1926-29        | 1.91  | 4.44  | 2.07                              |

Source: Labour Gazette 1910 - 1930.

TABLE IX

## Unemployment in Trade Unions in Manitoba

| <u>Year</u> |         | <u>Number of<br/>Locals<br/>Report</u> | <u>Number of<br/>Members</u> | <u>Number<br/>Unemployed</u> | <u>Percentage<br/>Unemployment</u> |       |       |
|-------------|---------|--|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------|-------|
| 1919        | Jan. 31 | Bldg.*                                 | 9                            | 1,500                        | 409                                | 27.23 |       |
|             |         | Total                                  | 104                          | 18,258                       | 680                                | 3.62  |       |
|             | April   | Bld.                                   | 6                            | 429                          | 77                                 | 17.95 |       |
|             |         | Total                                  | 74                           | 11,090                       | 183                                | 1.65  |       |
|             | July    | Bld.                                   | 3                            | 99                           | 4                                  | 4.04  |       |
|             | July    | Total                                  | 43                           | 5,213                        | 48                                 | 0.92  |       |
|             | Oct.    | Bld.                                   | 5                            | 295                          | 5                                  | 1.69  |       |
|             |         | Total                                  | 27                           | 8,812                        | 113                                | 1.28  |       |
|             | 1920    | Jan. 31                                | Bld.                         | 6                            | 650                                | 89    | 13.69 |
|             |         |  | Total                        | 72                           | 11,018                             | 496   | 4.50  |
| April       |         | Bld.                                   | 6                            | 493                          | 283                                | 57.40 |       |
|             |         | Total                                  | 77                           | 11,642                       | 318                                | 2.71  |       |
| July        |         | Bld.                                   | 8                            | 655                          | 55                                 | 8.40  |       |
|             |         | Total                                  | 72                           | 11,222                       | 149                                | 1.33  |       |
| Oct.        |         | Bld.                                   | 8                            | 767                          | 97                                 | 12.60 |       |
|             |         | Total                                  | 82                           | 14,357                       | 479                                | 3.34  |       |
| 1921        | Jan. 31 | Bld.                                   | 11                           | 1,312                        | 523                                | 39.86 |       |
|             |         | Total                                  | 83                           | 12,261                       | 1,080                              | 8.81  |       |
|             | April   | Bld.                                   | 12                           | 1,326                        | 338                                | 25.49 |       |
|             |         | Total                                  | 84                           | 10,845                       | 1,200                              | 10.07 |       |
|             | Sept.   | Bld.                                   | 12                           | 1,751                        | 251                                | 14.33 |       |
|             |         | Total                                  | 92                           | 10,317                       | 404                                | 3.92  |       |
|             | Dec.    | Bld.                                   | 13                           | 1,763                        | 1,039                              | 58.92 |       |
|             |         | Total                                  | 90                           | 9,722                        | 1,508                              | 15.51 |       |
| 1922        | March   | Bld.                                   | 7                            | 586                          | 458                                | 78.16 |       |
|             |         | Total                                  | 86                           | 8,251                        | 1,162                              | 14.08 |       |
|             | June    | Bld.                                   | 10                           | 1,223                        | 155                                | 12.67 |       |
|             |         | Total                                  | 87                           | 9,256                        | 619                                | 6.69  |       |
|             | Sept.   | Bld.                                   | 9                            | 845                          | 42                                 | 5.00  |       |
|             |         | Total                                  | 92                           | 9,187                        | 63                                 | 0.70  |       |
|             | Dec.    | Bld.                                   | 9                            | 778                          | 359                                | 46.10 |       |
|             |         | Total                                  | 91                           | 8,825                        | 686                                | 7.80  |       |
| 1923        | Mar. 31 | Bld.                                   | 8                            | 557                          | 226                                | 40.60 |       |
|             |         | Total                                  | 91                           | 8,630                        | 732                                | 8.50  |       |
|             | June    | Bld.                                   | 8                            | 587                          | 101                                | 17.20 |       |
|             |         | Total                                  | 90                           | 8,686                        | 484                                | 5.60  |       |
|             | Sept.   | Bld.                                   | 9                            | 662                          | 16                                 | 2.40  |       |
|             |         | Total                                  | 92                           | 8,906                        | 68                                 | 0.80  |       |
|             | Dec.    | Bld.                                   | 8                            | 496                          | 167                                | 33.70 |       |
|             |         | Total                                  | 98                           | 9,233                        | 599                                | 6.50  |       |

(Continued)

\*Building Trades

TABLE IX (Continued)

| <u>Year</u> |         | <u>Number of<br/>Locals<br/>Report</u> | <u>Number of<br/>Members</u> | <u>Number<br/>Unemployed</u> | <u>Percentage<br/>Unemployment</u> |       |
|-------------|---------|--|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------|
| 1924        | Mar. 31 | Bld.                                   | 7                            | 282                          | 52                                 | 18.40 |
|             |         | Total                                  | 87                           | 8,663                        | 641                                | 7.40  |
|             | June    | Bld.                                   | 5                            | 517                          | 144                                | 27.90 |
|             |         | Total                                  | 95                           | 9,917                        | 482                                | 4.90  |
|             | Dec.    | Bld.                                   | 4                            | 84                           | 65                                 | 77.4  |
|             |         | Total                                  | 93                           | 9,196                        | 819                                | 8.90  |
| 1925        | Mar. 31 | Bld.                                   | 3                            | 25                           | 13                                 | 52.00 |
|             |         | Total                                  | 97                           | 9,355                        | 770                                | 8.20  |
|             | June    | Bld.                                   | 4                            | 69                           | 0                                  | 0.00  |
|             |         | Total                                  | 99                           | 9,367                        | 401                                | 4.30  |
|             | Sept.   | Bld.                                   | 6                            | 299                          | 7                                  | 2.30  |
|             |         | Total                                  | 101                          | 10,130                       | 175                                | 1.70  |
|             | Dec.    | Bld.                                   | 5                            | 98                           | 62                                 | 62.30 |
|             |         | Total                                  | 96                           | 9,324                        | 355                                | 3.80  |
| 1926        | March   | Bld.                                   | 5                            | 98                           | 52                                 | 53.10 |
|             |         | Total                                  | 95                           | 9,019                        | 632                                | 7.00  |
|             | June    | Bld.                                   | 5                            | 137                          | 0                                  | 0.00  |
|             |         | Total                                  | 87                           | 8,790                        | 225                                | 2.60  |
|             | Sept.   | Bld.                                   | 4                            | 197                          | 1                                  | 0.50  |
|             |         | Total                                  | 92                           | 9,228                        | 49                                 | 0.50  |
|             | Dec.    | Bld.                                   | 5                            | 423                          | 218                                | 51.50 |
|             |         | Total                                  | 91                           | 9,903                        | 430                                | 4.30  |

SOURCE: Labour Gazette.

TABLE X

Cost to Manitoba Provincial Government of Unemployment Relief During Winter  
Season and Numbers on Relief

| Season    | Cost     | *Number On Relief in Winnipeg | Percentage of Applicants With Dependents | Percentage On Relief 2 Months Or More | Percentage Unemployed 2 Months or More | Percentage of Relief Claimants Who are Labour | Percentage of Relief Claimants Who are Tradesmen |
|-----------|----------|-------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|--|---|--|
| 1920-1921 | \$78,952 | 7,000**                       | --                                       | --                                    | --                                     | --  | --   |
| 1921-1922 | 161,718  | 12,680                        | 52.2%                                    | 44.6%                                 | 57.0%                                  | 67.4%   | 28.5%  |
| 1922-1923 | 63,542   | 8,032                         | 59.2                                     | 41.4                                  | 52.8                                   | 61.3  | 32.6   |
| 1923-1924 | 55,104   | 8,955                         | 60.5                                     | 37.7                                  | 39.9                                   | 66.1  | 27.9   |
| 1924-1925 | 58,609   | 12,395                        | 44.9                                     | 51.7                                  | 23.5                                   | 69.5  | 26.4   |
| 1925-1926 | 16,567   | 4,662                         | 97.9                                     | 21.9                                  | 42.9                                   | 73.4  | 22.2   |
| 1926-1927 | 9,640    | 3,167                         | 97.4                                     | 45.2                                  | 37.9                                   | 74.8  | 23.4   |
| 1927-1928 | 11,552   | 2,813                         | 98.8                                     | 30.4                                  | 30.4                                   | 69.4  | 27.6   |
| 1928-1929 | 10,962   | 2,280                         | 99.0                                     | 57.5                                  | 57.7                                   | 66.9  | 29.9   |
| 1929-1930 | 64,282   | --                            | --                                       | --                                    | --                                     | --  | --   |

\*Includes Dependents.

\*\*Minimum Estimate.

SOURCE: Annual Reports of Winnipeg City Emergency Unemployment Relief Committee.

TABLE XI  
 Employment Index as Reported by Employers  
 1926 Average = 100

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| <u>November 1st</u> | <u>Canada</u> | <u>Prairies</u> | <u>Winnipeg</u> |
|---------------------|---------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| 1921                | 91.3          | 101.9           |                 |
| 1922                | 97.0          | 104.3           | 101.8           |
| 1923                | 100.0         | 98.5            | 90.7            |
| 1924                | 94.1          | 93.4            | 86.2            |
| 1925                | 98.3          | 98.4            | 94.7            |
| 1926                | 104.0         | 106.9           | 106.1           |
| 1927                | 108.9         | 110.7           | 108.2           |
| 1928                | 118.9         | 128.6           | 115.4           |
| 1929                | 124.6         | 129.5           | 115.8           |
| 1930                | 112.9         | 125.8           | 108.8           |

SOURCE: Labour Gazette.

TABLE XII

## Value of Building Permits in Winnipeg

| Year      | Yearly Average | Value        |
|-----------|----------------|--------------|
| 1905-1914 |                | \$12,826,477 |
| 1915      |                | 1,826,300    |
| 1916      |                | 2,507,300    |
| 1917      |                | 2,212,450    |
| 1918      |                | 2,050,650    |
| 1919      |                | 2,948,000    |
| 1920      |                | 8,370,150    |
| 1921      |                | 5,580,400    |
| 1922      |                | 6,875,750    |
| 1923      |                | 4,484,100    |
| 1924      |                | 3,177,900    |
| 1925      |                | 4,156,690    |
| 1926      |                | 10,362,600   |
| 1927      |                | 7,569,300    |
| 1928      |                | 10,547,400   |
| 1929      |                | 11,050,250   |
| 1930      |                | 6,653,750    |

SOURCE: Canada Yearbook

TABLE XIII

## Population

| <u>Year</u> | <u>Winnipeg</u> | <u>St. Boniface</u> | <u>Manitoba</u> | <u>Urban</u> | <u>Rural</u> |
|-------------|-----------------|---------------------|-----------------|--------------|--------------|
| 1906        | 90,153          | 5,119               | 365,688         | 138,090      | 227,598      |
| 1911        | 136,035         | 7,483               | 461,394         | 200,365      | 261,029      |
| 1916        | 163,000         | 11,021              | 553,860         | 241,014      | 312,846      |
| 1921        | 179,000         | 12,821              | 610,118         | 261,616      | 348,502      |
| 1926        | 191,000         | 14,187              | 639,056         | 278,858      | 360,198      |
| 1931        | 218,785         | 16,305              | --              | --           | --           |

SOURCE: Canada Yearbook.

TABLE XIV

## Payroll Covered by Workmens Compensation Board of Manitoba

|      | Railroads |            | City of Winnipeg |            | Prov. Gov't |            | Wpg. Electric Co. |            | General  |            | Total    |
|------|-----------|------------|------------------|------------|-------------|------------|-------------------|------------|----------|------------|----------|
|      | (\$,000)  | % of Total | (\$,000)         | % of Total | (\$,000)    | % of Total | (\$,000)          | % of Total | (\$,000) | % of Total | (\$,000) |
| 1921 | 19,122    | 32.0       | 2,618            | 4.4        | 2,595       | 4.3        | 2,501             | 4.2        | 32,843   | 55.0       | 59,679   |
| 1922 | 18,934    | 34.5       | 2,410            | 4.4        | 2,145       | 3.9        | 2,504             | 4.6        | 28,876   | 52.6       | 54,870   |
| 1923 | 22,776    | 40.1       | 2,390            | 4.2        | 1,770       | 3.1        | 2,451             | 4.3        | 27,436   | 48.3       | 56,822   |
| 1924 | 20,996    | 37.4       | 2,743            | 4.9        | 1,600       | 2.9        | 2,360             | 4.2        | 28,373   | 50.6       | 56,072   |
| 1925 | --        | --         | --               | --         | --          | --         | --                | --         | --       | --         | --       |
| 1926 | 19,334    | 31.2       | 2,500            | 4.0        | 2,188       | 3.5        | 2,343             | 3.8        | 35,584   | 57.4       | 61,948   |
| 1927 | 20,908    | 32.2       | 2,737            | 4.2        | 2,233       | 3.4        | 2,525             | 3.9        | 36,722   | 56.3       | 65,197   |
| 1928 | 21,759    | 28.6       | 2,856            | 3.8        | 3,428       | 4.5        | 2,697             | 3.5        | 45,351   | 59.6       | 76,091   |
| 1929 | 20,333    | 25.0       | 3,051            | 3.8        | 4,187       | 5.2        | 2,670             | 3.3        | 50,931   | 62.7       | 81,172   |

SOURCE: Annual Report of Workmens Compensation Board of Manitoba.



TABLE XV  
Occupations of Employed in Winnipeg\*

|   | 1911   |            | 1921   |            | 1931   |            |
|---|--------|------------|--------|------------|--------|------------|
|   | Total  | % of Total | Total  | % of Total | Total  | % of Total |
| Total                                   | 62,265 |            | 74,067 |            | 96,845 |            |
| Labourers                               | 9,201  | 14.8       | 7,614  | 10.3       | 13,699 | 14.1       |
| Building Trades                         | 6,975  | 11.2       | 4,491  | 6.1        | 6,448  | 6.7        |
| Printing Trades                         | 1,115  | 1.8        | 1,092  | 1.5        | 1,330  | 1.4        |
| Running Trades                          | 899    | 1.4        | 1,241  | 1.7        | 1,303  | 1.3        |
| Conductors and Motormen                 | 535    | 0.9        | 732    | 1.0        | 471    | 0.5        |
| Bakers and Confectioners                | 272    | 0.4        | 496    | 0.7        | 476    | 0.5        |
| Metal Trades                            | 3,766  | 6.0        | 2,065  | 2.8        | 4,292  | 4.4        |
| Textile and Garment                     | 1,790  | 2.9        | 1,311  | 1.8        | 2,489  | 2.6        |
| Chauffeurs and Teamsters                | 1,359  | 2.2        | 1,082  | 1.5        | 2,855  | 2.9        |
| Owners, Managers, etc.                  | 5,559  | 8.9        | 7,152  | 9.7        | 7,557  | 7.8        |
| Professionals                           | 3,242  | 5.2        | 5,422  | 7.3        | 7,771  | 8.0        |
| Clerks, Office and Government Employees | 8,384  | 13.5       | 13,409 | 18.1       | 14,123 | 14.6       |
| Salesmen                                | 6,698  | 10.8       | 5,790  | 7.8        | 6,227  | 6.4        |
| Other                                   | 12,470 | 20.0       | 22,170 | 29.9       | 27,804 | 28.7       |

\*Excludes St. Boniface and Transcona.

SOURCE: Dominion Bureau of Statistics.

TABLE XVI

## Manufacturing in Winnipeg

| <u>Year</u> | <u>Eta-<br/>blishments</u> | <u>(\$,000)<br/>Capital</u> | <u>Employees</u> | <u>(\$,000)<br/>Salaries<br/>and Wages</u> | <u>(\$,000)<br/>Average<br/>Capital</u> | <u>Employees<br/>Per Est.</u> | <u>(\$)<br/>Salaries and<br/>Wages Per Employee</u> |
|-------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------|--|---|-------------------------------|---|
| 1917        | 816                        | 95,530                      | 20,055           | 17,382                                     | 117                                     | 25                            | 867   |
| 1918        | 779                        | 82,709                      | 19,181           | 18,774                                     | 106                                     | 25                            | 979   |
| 1919        | 876                        | 80,378                      | 23,175           | 24,123                                     | 92                                      | 26                            | 1,041   |
| 1920        | 911                        | 100,372                     | 23,729           | 33,574                                     | 110                                     | 26                            | 1,415   |
| 1928*       | 419                        | 67,355                      | 11,046           | 15,521                                     | 161                                     | 26                            | 1,405   |
| 1922        | 436                        | 46,251                      | 10,679           | 13,858                                     | 106                                     | 24                            | 1,298   |
| 1923        | 424                        | 70,789                      | 11,542           | 14,705                                     | 167                                     | 27                            | 1,274   |
| 1924        | 411                        | 87,490                      | 11,934           | 15,395                                     | 213                                     | 29                            | 1,290   |
| 1925        | 409                        | 89,688                      | 14,346           | 18,391                                     | 219                                     | 35                            | 1,282   |
| 1926        | 446                        | 96,802                      | 15,469           | 20,087                                     | 217                                     | 35                            | 1,299   |
| 1927        | 468                        | 108,636                     | 16,759           | 21,290                                     | 232                                     | 36                            | 1,270   |
| 1928        | 491                        | 115,678                     | 18,340           | 23,994                                     | 236                                     | 37                            | 1,308   |
| 1929        | 501                        | 125,321                     | 19,150           | 25,217                                     | 250                                     | 38                            | 1,317   |
| 1930        | 519                        | 123,782                     | 19,749           | 25,845                                     | 239                                     | 38                            | 1,309   |
| 1931        | --                         | --                          | --               | --   | --                                      | --                            | --  |
| 1932        | 559                        | 70,201                      | 16,119           | 17,426                                     | 126                                     | 29                            | 1,081   |
| 1933        | 600                        | 73,886                      | 15,336           | 15,156                                     | 123                                     | 26                            | 988   |
| 1934        | 612                        | 75,514                      | 15,745           | 15,985                                     | 123                                     | 26                            | 1,015   |
| 1935        | 616                        | 71,838                      | 16,649           | 17,569                                     | 117                                     | 27                            | 1,055   |
| 1936        | 594                        | 71,757                      | 16,673           | 18,060                                     | 121                                     | 30                            | 1,083   |

SOURCE: Canada Yearbook.

TABLE XVII

Weekly Cost of Basic Foods, Fuel and Lighting, and  
Rent for a Working Class Family of Five

| Year  | Budget in Dollars       |                       | Budget Index           |                          |
|-------|-------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
|       | Manitoba <sup>(1)</sup> | Canada <sup>(2)</sup> | Canada<br>(1910 = 100) | Manitoba<br>(1928 = 100) |
| 1910  |                         | \$12.79               | 100.0                  |                          |
| 1911  |                         | 13.00                 | 101.6                  |                          |
| 1912  |                         | 13.79                 | 107.8                  |                          |
| 1913  |                         | 14.02                 | 109.6                  |                          |
| 1914  |                         | 14.32                 | 112.0                  |                          |
| 1915  |                         | 13.79                 | 107.8                  |                          |
| 1916  |                         | 14.21                 | 111.1                  |                          |
| 1917  |                         | 17.34                 | 135.6                  |                          |
| 1918  |                         | 19.91                 | 155.7                  |                          |
| 1919  |                         | 21.34                 | 166.8                  |                          |
| 1920  | \$27.19 (40.79)         | 25.54                 | 199.7                  | 118.37                   |
| 1921  | 25.64 (38.46)           | 23.42                 | 183.1                  | 111.62                   |
| 1922  | 22.86 (34.29)           | 21.10                 | 165.0                  | 99.52                    |
| 1923  | 22.41 (33.65)           | 20.89                 | 163.0                  | 97.56                    |
| 1924  | 22.39 (33.59)           | 20.77                 | 162.4                  | 97.47                    |
| 1925  | 22.68 (34.02)           | 20.90                 | 163.4                  | 98.73                    |
| 1926  | 22.94 (34.41)           | 21.63                 | 169.1                  | 99.87                    |
| 1927  | 22.79 (34.19)           | 21.35                 | 166.9                  | 99.22                    |
| 1928* | 22.98 (34.47)           | 21.21                 | 165.8                  | 100.0                    |
| 1929  | 23.20 (34.80)           |                       |                        | 100.96                   |

\*12-month average for 1928.

(1) Based on average prices of January and July. The Department of Labour estimates that such a budget would be about 2/3 of total expenses, including clothing, medical expenses, etc. The figures in brackets are the appropriate actual costs.

(2) From 1914 - 1919, figures are for month of April; 1920 - 1929 are January and July average.

SOURCE: Labour Gazette.

TABLE XVIII

## Real Wage Index For Selected Occupations in Winnipeg

| <u>Year</u>    | <u>Brick-</u><br><u>layers</u> | <u>Car-</u><br><u>penters</u> | <u>Elec-</u><br><u>trical</u> | <u>Paint-</u><br><u>ers</u> | <u>Plumb-</u><br><u>ers</u> | <u>Stone-</u><br><u>cutters</u> | <u>Sheet</u><br><u>Metal</u> | <u>Black-</u><br><u>smiths</u> |
|----------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1900           | 95.8                           | 73.9                          | 76.0                          | 92.9                        | 86.3                        | 109.7                           | n/a                          | 97.3                           |
| 1905           | 102.2                          | 89.6                          | 88.6                          | 95.6                        | 94.8                        | 123.2                           | n/a                          | 103.0                          |
| 1909           | 100.5                          | 101.1                         | 100.5                         | 86.1                        | 100.5                       | 100.5                           | n/a                          | 100.5                          |
| 1910           | 100.0                          | 100.0                         | 100.0                         | 100.0                       | 100.0                       | 100.0                           | 100.0                        | 100.0                          |
| 1911           | 109.5                          | 97.4                          | 97.4                          | 111.3                       | 97.4                        | 89.2                            | 93.0                         | 96.1                           |
| 1912           | 100.6                          | 87.9                          | 102.7                         | 98.5                        | 86.9                        | 85.6                            | 90.5                         | 85.1                           |
| 1913           | 85.7                           | 82.7                          | 85.8                          | 98.5                        | 81.8                        | 80.6                            | 85.1                         | 80.1                           |
| 1914           | 90.2                           | 95.0                          | 90.4                          | 115.8                       | 94.0                        | 92.6                            | 97.8                         | 92.0                           |
| 1915           | 95.5                           | 100.5                         | 138.3                         | 116.2                       | 99.5                        | 101.7                           | 103.5                        | 97.4                           |
| 1916           | 87.8                           | 97.2                          | 127.1                         | 123.0                       | 91.4                        | 93.5                            | 95.1                         | 96.0                           |
| 1917           | 78.7                           | 89.5                          | 106.3                         | 102.2                       | 81.7                        | 84.0                            | 88.4                         | 94.2                           |
| 1918           | 76.6                           | 89.2                          | 104.6                         | 102.7                       | 82.5                        | 79.4                            | 94.5                         | 104.5                          |
| 1919           | 82.5                           | 84.5                          | 96.5                          | 88.4                        | 86.3                        | 72.9                            | 100.8                        | 106.8                          |
| 1920           | 88.6                           | 96.7                          | 99.4                          | 103.7                       | 93.9                        | 78.2                            | 87.5                         | 98.5                           |
| 1921           | 93.8                           | 92.3                          | 105.4                         | 101.8                       | 99.5                        | 83.0                            | 85.0                         | 102.4                          |
| 1922           | 102.9                          | 97.6                          | 106.7                         | 105.7                       | 100.5                       | 90.6                            | 86.7                         | 109.4                          |
| 1923           | 102.6                          | 99.7                          | 108.9                         | 107.8                       | 108.3                       | 92.2                            | 94.3                         | 111.6                          |
| 1924           | 109.8                          | 99.8                          | 114.0                         | 107.9                       | 114.0                       | 92.6                            | 94.4                         | 111.6                          |
| 1925           | 115.2                          | 98.5                          | 112.6                         | 106.6                       | 112.5                       | 93.8                            | 93.2                         | 110.3                          |
| 1926           | 123.1                          | 114.6                         | 130.9                         | 119.3                       | 125.2                       | 102.0                           | 103.7                        | 108.9                          |
| 1927           | 123.9                          | 115.3                         | 131.8                         | 120.1                       | 126.0                       | 102.6                           | 104.4                        | 109.7                          |
| 1928           | 127.5                          | 120.1                         | 130.8                         | 119.1                       | 125.0                       | 111.1                           | 103.6                        | 108.8                          |
| 1929           | 130.8                          | 124.6                         | 142.5                         | 124.9                       | 132.1                       | 114.6                           | 102.6                        | 107.8                          |
| Yearly<br>Avg. |                                |                               |                               |                             |                             |                                 |                              |                                |
| 1909-14        | 97.8                           | 94.0                          | 96.1                          | 101.7                       | 93.4                        | 91.4                            | 93.3                         | 92.3                           |
| 1915-19        | 84.2                           | 92.2                          | 114.6                         | 106.5                       | 88.3                        | 86.3                            | 96.5                         | 99.8                           |
| 1920-25        | 102.2                          | 97.4                          | 107.8                         | 105.6                       | 104.8                       | 88.4                            | 90.2                         | 107.3                          |
| 1926-29        | 126.3                          | 118.7                         | 130.4                         | 120.8                       | 127.1                       | 107.6                           | 103.6                        | 108.8                          |

(Continued)

TABLE XVIII (Continued)

| <u>Year</u>    | <u>Boiler-<br/>makers</u> | <u>Mould-<br/>ers</u> | <u>Machin-<br/>ists</u> | <u>Compos-<br/>itors</u> | <u>Press-<br/>men</u> | <u>Conduc-<br/>tors and<br/>Motormen</u> | <u>Construc-<br/>tion La-<br/>bourers</u> |
|----------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|--|---|
| 1900           | 92.8                      | 90.3                  | 80.2                    | 93.2                     | 102.1                 | 80.8                                     | 92.0                                      |
| 1905           | 91.6                      | 95.6                  | 93.4                    | 90.4                     | 99.1                  | 96.4                                     | 111.6                                     |
| 1909           | 100.5                     | 93.2                  | 100.5                   | 90.4                     | 100.5                 | 96.0                                     | 100.5                                     |
| 1910           | 100.0                     | 100.0                 | 100.0                   | 100.0                    | 100.0                 | 100.0                                    | 100.0                                     |
| 1911           | 111.4                     | 89.2                  | 97.6                    | 105.2                    | 97.4                  | 94.1                                     | 107.2                                     |
| 1912           | 98.6                      | 79.0                  | 86.4                    | 97.0                     | 88.6                  | 91.9                                     | 94.9                                      |
| 1913           | 92.7                      | 79.6                  | 86.7                    | 94.9                     | 94.6                  | 91.9                                     | 89.2                                      |
| 1914           | 106.6                     | 91.5                  | 104.0                   | 109.1                    | 108.7                 | 105.6                                    | 102.6                                     |
| 1915           | 112.8                     | 96.8                  | 118.7                   | 115.4                    | 117.8                 | 111.8                                    | 108.5                                     |
| 1916           | 103.7                     | 98.5                  | 109.1                   | 107.1                    | 110.8                 | 102.8                                    | 108.8                                     |
| 1917           | 97.5                      | 99.3                  | 111.6                   | 92.2                     | 105.3                 | 91.1                                     | 106.3                                     |
| 1918           | 111.7                     | 95.2                  | 115.2                   | 93.6                     | 100.1                 | 90.1                                     | 104.0                                     |
| 1919           | 100.1                     | 103.0                 | 104.1                   | 95.3                     | 116.0                 | 97.2                                     | 109.4                                     |
| 1920           | 93.3                      | 97.5                  | 86.9                    | 103.7                    | 125.2                 | 91.0                                     | 112.7                                     |
| 1921           | 96.9                      | 106.8                 | 91.0                    | 112.5                    | 137.2                 | 96.5                                     | 109.2                                     |
| 1922           | 99.2                      | 111.3                 | 102.0                   | 114.2                    | 146.4                 | 101.1                                    | 104.0                                     |
| 1923           | 93.9                      | 113.6                 | 104.1                   | 114.6                    | 145.8                 | 103.1                                    | 106.1                                     |
| 1924           | 99.8                      | 113.7                 | 100.3                   | 114.7                    | 146.0                 | 103.2                                    | 106.2                                     |
| 1925           | 100.4                     | 112.2                 | 99.1                    | 113.2                    | 144.1                 | 101.8                                    | 100.1                                     |
| 1926           | 99.2                      | 110.8                 | 100.2                   | 114.2                    | 145.6                 | 102.4                                    | 103.6                                     |
| 1927           | 99.9                      | 111.6                 | 100.8                   | 116.3                    | 146.4                 | 105.0                                    | 104.3                                     |
| 1928           | 100.6                     | 113.1                 | 100.8                   | 116.8                    | 147.5                 | 105.9                                    | 100.0                                     |
| 1929           | 99.6                      | 117.2                 | 99.8                    | 116.4                    | 146.1                 | 102.4                                    | 96.1                                      |
| Yearly<br>Avg. |                           |                       |                         |                          |                       |  |   |
| 1909-14        | 101.6                     | 88.7                  | 95.9                    | 99.4                     | 98.3                  | 96.7                                     | 99.1                                      |
| 1915-19        | 105.3                     | 98.6                  | 111.7                   | 100.7                    | 110.0                 | 98.6                                     | 107.4                                     |
| 1920-25        | 97.2                      | 109.2                 | 97.2                    | 112.2                    | 140.7                 | 99.5                                     | 106.4                                     |
| 1926-29        | 99.8                      | 113.2                 | 100.4                   | 115.9                    | 146.4                 | 103.9                                    | 101.0                                     |

SOURCE: 1900 - 1920--Real Wages and the Winnipeg General Strike, by Phillips and Sutcliffe--unpublished Paper, 1920 - 1929--Raw data from Labour Gazette.

TABLE XIX

## Weekly Wages, Hour and Real Wage Index - Selected Trades in Winnipeg

|                        | 1920    | 1921  | 1922  | 1923  | 1924  | 1925  | 1926  | 1927  | 1928  | 1929  |
|------------------------|---------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Boilermakers           | \$36.75 | 36.00 | 32.88 | 30.50 | 32.38 | 33.00 | 33.00 | 33.00 | 33.50 | 33.50 |
| Avg. Hrs/week          | 50      | 50    | 50    | 50    | 50    | 50    | 50    | 50    | 50    | 50    |
| Real Wage Index        | 92.7    | 96.3  | 98.6  | 93.3  | 99.2  | 99.8  | 98.6  | 99.3  | 100.0 | 99.1  |
| Machinists             | \$35.00 | 33.75 | 33.75 | 33.75 | 32.50 | 32.50 | 33.25 | 33.25 | 33.50 | 33.50 |
| Avg. Hrs/week          | 50      | 50    | 50    | 50    | 50    | 50    | 50    | 50    | 50    | 50    |
| Real Wage Index        | 88.3    | 90.3  | 101.2 | 103.3 | 99.5  | 98.3  | 99.4  | 100.0 | 100.0 | 99.1  |
| Moulders               | \$30.94 | 31.96 | 29.69 | 29.69 | 29.69 | 29.69 | 29.69 | 29.69 | 30.32 | 31.73 |
| Avg. Hrs/week          | 45      | 47    | 47½   | 47½   | 47½   | 47½   | 47½   | 47½   | 47    | 47    |
| Real Wage Index        | 86.2    | 94.4  | 98.4  | 100.4 | 100.5 | 99.2  | 98.1  | 98.7  | 100.0 | 103.7 |
| Compositors            | \$45.00 | 46.00 | 41.65 | 40.96 | 40.96 | 40.96 | 41.80 | 42.30 | 42.80 | 43.05 |
| Avg. Hrs/week          | 47      | 46    | 46    | 46    | 46    | 46    | 46    | 46    | 46    | 46    |
| Real Wage Index        | 88.8    | 96.3  | 97.8  | 98.1  | 98.2  | 96.9  | 97.8  | 99.6  | 100.0 | 99.6  |
| Pressmen               | \$42.50 | 44.00 | 41.80 | 40.80 | 40.80 | 40.80 | 41.68 | 41.68 | 42.30 | 42.30 |
| Avg. Hrs/week          | 48      | 46    | 46    | 46    | 46    | 46    | 46    | 46    | 46    | 46    |
| Real Wage Index        | 84.9    | 93.2  | 99.3  | 98.9  | 99.0  | 97.7  | 98.7  | 99.3  | 100.0 | 99.1  |
| Common Lab. in Factory | \$23.59 | 23.25 | 20.34 | 20.13 | --    | 19.32 | --    | 19.56 | 20.26 | 20.31 |
| Avg. Hrs/week          | 55      | 55    | 55    | 54    | --    | 54    | --    | 53    | 54    | 54    |
| Real Wage Index        | 98.4    | 102.8 | 100.0 | 101.8 | --    | 96.6  | --    | 96.7  | 100.0 | 99.3  |
| *Conductors & Motormen | \$30.00 | 30.00 | 28.00 | 28.00 | 28.00 | 28.00 | 28.50 | 29.00 | 29.50 | 28.80 |
| Avg. Hrs/week          | 50      | 50    | 50    | 50    | 50    | 50    | 50    | 50    | 50    | 50    |
| Real Wage Index        | 85.9    | 91.1  | 95.4  | 97.3  | 97.4  | 96.1  | 96.7  | 99.1  | 100.0 | 96.7  |
| **Agricultural Labour  | \$18.75 | 15.35 | 12.31 | 12.13 | 11.38 | 11.87 | 11.81 | 11.77 | 11.77 | 11.69 |
| Real Wage Index        | 134.6   | 116.8 | 105.1 | 105.6 | 99.2  | 102.1 | 101.7 | 100.8 | 100.0 | 98.4  |

\*Maximum rates with three years' experience.

\*\*Out of this wage the worker would pay for his board--from \$5.00 to \$7.00 per week.  
Wages are for year-round labourers--seasonal help made about 20% more.

TABLE XIX (Continued)

|                     | 1920    | 1921  | 1922  | 1923  | 1924  | 1925  | 1926  | 1927  | 1928  | 1929  |
|---------------------|---------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Construction Labour | \$31.90 | 29.15 | 24.75 | 24.75 | 24.75 | 23.65 | 24.75 | 24.75 | 23.92 | 23.40 |
| Avg. Hrs/week       | 55      | 55    | 55    | 55    | 55    | 55    | 55    | 52    | 52    | 52    |
| Real Wage Index     | 112.7   | 109.2 | 104.0 | 106.1 | 106.2 | 100.1 | 105.6 | 104.3 | 100.0 | 96.9  |
| Electricians        | \$39.60 | 39.60 | 35.75 | 35.75 | 37.40 | 37.40 | 44.00 | 44.00 | 44.00 | 48.40 |
| Avg. Hrs/week       | 44      | 44    | 44    | 44    | 44    | 44    | 44    | 44    | 44    | 44    |
| Real Wage Index     | 76.0    | 80.6  | 81.6  | 83.3  | 87.2  | 86.1  | 100.1 | 100.8 | 100.0 | 109.0 |
| Plumbers            | \$44.00 | 44.00 | 39.60 | 41.80 | 44.00 | 44.00 | 49.50 | 49.50 | 49.50 | 52.80 |
| Avg. Hrs/week       | 44      | 44    | 44    | 44    | 44    | 44    | 44    | 44    | 44    | 44    |
| Real Wage Index     | 75.1    | 79.6  | 80.4  | 86.6  | 91.2  | 89.9  | 102.0 | 100.8 | 100.0 | 105.7 |
| Bricklayers         | \$55.00 | 50.60 | 49.50 | 48.40 | 51.70 | 55.00 | 59.40 | 59.40 | 61.60 | 63.80 |
| Avg. Hrs/week       | 44      | 44    | 44    | 44    | 44    | 44    | 44    | 44    | 44    | 44    |
| Real Wage Index     | 69.5    | 73.6  | 80.7  | 80.6  | 86.1  | 90.4  | 96.6  | 97.2  | 100.0 | 102.6 |
| Painters            | \$38.50 | 35.64 | 33.00 | 33.00 | 33.00 | 33.00 | 37.40 | 37.40 | 37.40 | 39.60 |
| Avg. Hrs/week       | 44      | 44    | 44    | 44    | 44    | 44    | 44    | 44    | 44    | 44    |
| Real Wage Index     | 87.0    | 85.4  | 88.7  | 90.5  | 90.5  | 89.4  | 100.1 | 100.8 | 100.0 | 104.9 |
| Stonecutters        | \$44.00 | 44.00 | 42.90 | 42.90 | 42.90 | 44.00 | 48.40 | 48.40 | 52.80 | 55.00 |
| Avg. Hrs/week       | 44      | 44    | 44    | 44    | 44    | 44    | 44    | 44    | 44    | 44    |
| Real Wage Index     | 70.4    | 74.7  | 81.6  | 83.3  | 83.4  | 84.4  | 91.8  | 92.4  | 100.0 | 103.2 |
| Carpenters          | \$44.00 | 39.60 | 37.40 | 37.40 | 37.40 | 37.40 | 44.00 | 44.00 | 46.20 | 48.40 |
| Avg. Hrs/week       | 44      | 44    | 44    | 44    | 44    | 44    | 44    | 44    | 44    | 44    |
| Real Wage Index     | 80.5    | 76.8  | 81.3  | 83.0  | 83.1  | 82.0  | 95.4  | 96.0  | 100.0 | 103.8 |
| Sheet Metal         | \$39.60 | 36.30 | 33.00 | 35.20 | 35.20 | 35.20 | 39.60 | 39.60 | 39.60 | 39.60 |
| Avg. Hrs/week       | 44      | 44    | 44    | 44    | 44    | 44    | 44    | 44    | 44    | 44    |
| Real Wage Index     | 84.5    | 82.1  | 83.7  | 91.1  | 91.2  | 90.0  | 100.1 | 100.8 | 100.0 | 99.1  |
| Blacksmiths         | \$37.50 | 36.75 | 35.00 | 35.00 | 35.00 | 35.00 | 35.00 | 35.00 | 35.00 | 35.00 |
| Avg. Hrs/week       | 50      | 50    | 50    | 50    | 50    | 50    | 50    | 50    | 50    | 50    |
| Real Wage Index     | 90.5    | 94.1  | 100.5 | 102.5 | 102.6 | 101.3 | 100.1 | 100.8 | 100.0 | 99.0  |

SOURCE: Labour Gazette.

TABLE XX

Average Wages of Workers Claiming Workmen's Compensation  
in Manitoba (in \$ per week)

| Date | All Industry* |         | Storage and<br>Cartage |       | Building |       | Steam Railways |         | Real Wage Index*<br>All Industry |
|------|---------------|---------|------------------------|-------|----------|-------|----------------|---------|----------------------------------|
| 1919 | 24.31         | (1,805) | 22.00                  | (37)  | 30.63    | (103) | 25.55          | (689)   |                                  |
| 1920 | 28.28         | (2,509) | 26.40                  | (76)  | 34.68    | (183) | 28.22          | (914)   | 94.8                             |
| 1921 | 29.13         | (2,849) | 28.39                  | (198) | 35.65    | (195) | 29.76          | (828)   | 103.6                            |
| 1922 | 26.07         | (3,518) | 23.74                  | (240) | 30.82    | (214) | 27.77          | (990)   | 104.0                            |
| 1923 | 25.45         | (3,510) | 22.95                  | (234) | 33.85    | (142) | 27.82          | (1,075) | 103.5                            |
| 1924 | 24.82         | (3,444) | 22.20                  | (275) | 28.94    | (134) | 26.78          | (966)   | 101.1                            |
| 1925 |               |         |                        |       |          |       |                |         |                                  |
| 1926 | 24.98         | (4,733) | 21.55                  | (396) | 31.02    | (511) | 27.01          | (1,075) | 99.2                             |
| 1927 | 25.28         | (4,697) | 21.75                  | (329) | 30.58    | (350) | 28.05          | (1,068) | 101.1                            |
| 1928 | 25.20         | (5,434) | 21.32                  | (353) | 30.01    | (352) | 28.09          | (1,079) | 100.0                            |
| 1929 | 24.76         | (5,632) | 22.0                   | (372) | 28.16    | (389) | 26.31          | (960)   | 97.3                             |
| 1930 |               |         |                        |       |          |       |                |         |                                  |
| 1931 |               |         |                        |       |          |       |                |         |                                  |

\*1928 = 100

\*\*Figures in brackets are numbers of workers claiming compensation.

Data from 1921 to 1929 includes comparable groups.

Data for 1919 and 1920 excludes city, province and federal.



TABLE XXI

Total Number of Employees, Total Hours Worked, Total Compensation  
Received on Canadian Railways for Specified Years

| Year | Employees |                       | Total Hours |                       | Total Compensation |                       |
|------|-----------|-----------------------|-------------|-----------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|
|      | Number    | Index No.<br>1920=100 | Number      | Index No.<br>1920=100 | Amount             | Index No.<br>1920=100 |
| 1920 | 185,177   | 100.0                 | 465,466,482 | 100.0                 | 290,510,518        | 100.0                 |
| 1921 | 167,627   | 90.5                  | 394,778,197 | 84.8                  | 247,756,138        | 85.3                  |
| 1922 | 165,635   | 89.4                  | 401,995,411 | 86.4                  | 233,294,040        | 80.3                  |
| 1923 | 178,052   | 96.2                  | 442,051,515 | 95.0                  | 253,320,005        | 87.2                  |
| 1924 | 169,970   | 91.8                  | 415,773,205 | 89.3                  | 239,864,265        | 82.6                  |
| 1925 | 166,027   | 89.7                  | 411,209,522 | 88.3                  | 237,755,752        | 81.8                  |
| 1926 | 174,266   | 94.1                  | 437,927,249 | 94.1                  | 253,412,424        | 87.2                  |
| 1927 | 176,338   | 95.2                  | 449,887,049 | 96.7                  | 267,067,048        | 91.9                  |
| 1928 | 187,710   | 101.4                 | 482,685,474 | 103.7                 | 287,775,316        | 99.1                  |
| 1929 | 187,846   | 101.4                 | 478,743,301 | 102.9                 | 290,732,501        | 100.1                 |
| 1930 | 174,485   | 94.2                  | 431,629,401 | 92.7                  | 268,347,374        | 92.4                  |
| 1931 | 154,569   | 83.5                  | 364,211,642 | 78.2                  | 229,499,505        | 79.0                  |
| 1932 | 132,678   | 71.6                  | 303,443,246 | 65.2                  | 181,113,580        | 62.3                  |
| 1933 | 121,923   | 65.8                  | 276,312,787 | 59.4                  | 158,326,445        | 54.5                  |
| 1934 | 127,326   | 68.8                  | 293,563,102 | 63.1                  | 163,336,635        | 56.2                  |
| 1935 | 127,526   | 68.9                  | 296,744,680 | 63.8                  | 172,956,218        | 59.5                  |
| 1936 | 132,781   | 71.7                  | 313,291,604 | 67.3                  | 182,638,365        | 62.9                  |
| 1937 | 133,467   | 72.1                  | 319,191,097 | 68.6                  | 193,355,584        | 66.6                  |

SOURCE: Statistics of Steam Railways of Canada for 1920 - 1937, incl. ("Employees and Salaries and Wages"). Figures covering employees, total hours and total compensation represent Grand Totals.

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