

THE FOREIGN THREAT: NATIVISM IN SASKATCHEWAN,

1896-1930

by  
Lloyd L. Begley

A thesis in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
of the Universities of Winnipeg and Manitoba  
for the Degree of  
MASTER OF ARTS

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**THE FOREIGN THREAT:  
NATIVISM IN SASKATCHEWAN, 1896-1930**

**BY**

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**A Thesis/Practicum 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**

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#### DEDICATION

To my mother, Kathleen Begley, who tragically did not see its completion. To my father, George Begley, whose support throughout has been encouraging and appreciated. And to Lori, who has always been there.

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## ABSTRACT

Between 1896 and 1930 Nativism was displayed by Saskatchewan's Anglo-Celtic majority culture group. Determined to recreate a society based upon Ontario and British models, residents were dismayed by the arrival of large numbers of non-British immigrants. It was believed that non-British and non-Protestant immigrants would threaten Canadian citizenship and political standards.

During World War One, citizens with ancestral ties to enemy nations faced persecution and hostility from a large segment of Saskatchewan society. They were interned, had their rights of citizenship revoked, their newspapers, organizations and clubs suppressed, and had their language and religious rights circumscribed.

Throughout the latter half of the 1920s, as large scale immigration resumed, several organized nativist associations emerged on the Saskatchewan scene. The Ku Klux Klan, The National Association of Canada, as well as reactionary wings of the Conservative and Progressive parties, had little difficulty influencing the electorate and ending twenty-four years of Liberal dominance in Saskatchewan politics.

Saskatchewan's new Premier, J.T.M. Anderson, wasted little time in appointing a Royal Commission on Immigration and Settlement. Hoping to gain politically from its findings, Anderson named to the commission, individuals who

were hostile to Liberal ideologies. He wished to use its findings to precipitate the creation of a provincial department of immigration. Many who testified before the commission argued that the practice of flooding the province with undesirable non-British and non-Protestant immigrants threatened established institutions in Saskatchewan and Canada.

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## Introduction

Between 1896 and 1930 an anguished debate raged over the question of immigration in Saskatchewan. During the settlement period 1896-1914, as part of the National Policy, the Canadian Government initiated an aggressive immigration policy directed towards the settlement of the Prairie Provinces. The result was a phenomenal growth in population, including an increase in the number of immigrants from southern and eastern Europe. Throughout the Great War immigration all but ceased. The debate, however, concerning attitudes toward European immigration, reignited during the post-war period of reconstruction. In the early 1920s renewed interest in the resumption of immigration caused many to be less vocal in their opposition. Later in the decade, residents became increasingly belligerent in their opposition to immigrant groups.

A considerable body of Canadian historiography has focused on the problems associated with immigration during this period. One particular theme, the rise of nativism, addresses Anglo-Canadian responses to the large influx of southern and eastern-European immigration. Howard Palmer examined the concept of nativism in Alberta society in Patterns of Prejudice: A History of Nativism in Alberta, and Morris Mott applied the theme to the city of Winnipeg in his Master's thesis, "The Foreign Peril: Nativism in Winnipeg,



1916-1923".<sup>1</sup> The rise of nativist sentiment in Saskatchewan has yet to be addressed within an historical framework.

In their quest for an adequate definition of the concept of nativism, Palmer and Mott turned to the work of American historian, John Higham. Nativism was defined by Higham as "an intense opposition to an internal minority on the grounds of its foreign (un-American) connections."<sup>2</sup> Nativism is a distinctly American spirit developed in the late 1830s and early 1840s by critics opposed to foreign elements entering American society. What was fundamental to the attitudes of American nativists, was their sense of ultra-nationalism. Deep within each nativist lay a fear that some imported influence threatened the existence of the United States from within. By studying the attitudes and reactions of individuals and groups, Higham established three main currents of American Nativism; Anglo-Saxon, anti-Catholic, anti-radical. American nativists created stereotyped images of the non-Anglo-Saxon who posed a racial threat, of the Catholic who posed a religious threat, and of the immigrant revolutionary, who posed a political threat.

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<sup>1</sup> See Howard Palmer, Patterns of Prejudice: A History of Nativism in Alberta, (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1982) and Morris K. Mott, "The Foreign Peril: Nativism in Winnipeg, 1916-1923," (Unpublished Masters Thesis, University of Manitoba, 1970).

<sup>2</sup> John Higham. Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism, 1860-1925. (New York: Atheneum, 1978.) p.4.

Over time, each of these images developed from a generalized fear to a more sophisticated and intense xenophobia.<sup>3</sup>

The following study of Saskatchewan nativism between 1896 and 1930 will apply the three themes of American nativism as projected by Higham. It will examine the attitudes and behaviour of Saskatchewan's Anglo-Celtic majority, who controlled and dominated the province economically, politically, and socially from the period of early settlement until the beginning of the great depression, toward immigrants of diverse cultural backgrounds. The ideological, political, economic, and social factors which motivated the emergence of nativism in Saskatchewan will be considered.

Through the period under review, British and eastern Canadian settlers in Saskatchewan influenced public opinion and determined public policy regarding ethnic issues. They were determined to recreate as familiar an environment as possible by establishing social, political, economic, educational, and religious institutions based upon models they had left behind in Ontario or Great Britain. Part of this determination included the right to dictate which types of settlers would be awarded full social, economic and political equality.

In order to achieve a greater understanding of nativism during the period under review, it is necessary to present a

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 64-65.

discussion of the problems and ideas inherent in Western Canadian society during the period of expansion, 1896-1913. Most English Canadians felt that the nation and population should grow through immigration, but they assumed the majority of newcomers would be English speaking. The wave of British immigrants many in the west were hoping for failed to materialize. As a consequence, the federal government initiated a policy which opened Canada's immigration doors to non-British settlers. With the massive influx of foreign immigrants to Western Canada, reaction by the English-Canadian culture group was one of dismay. Poles, Russians, Germans, Ukrainians, and Doukhobours, to name a few, all came to Canada after the turn of the century in order to acquire the promised free land and start a new life. What was most disturbing to many Anglo-Canadians was the fact that these people did not share cultural, economic, or political experiences of the British and American settlers. Most Canadians accepted the arrival of non-British immigrants as necessary for the economic development of the nation yet they remained disturbed about the fact that large masses of alien and politically naive immigrants would threaten Canadian citizenship and political standards.

During the Great War, few could have predicted the extent to which coercive measures would be used to control nearly every aspect of Canadian private and public life. The pressures of war would impose a new sense of cultural

and social responsibility upon the Anglo-Canadian people. This phenomenon was particularly true with regard to the approximately 180,000 Saskatchewan residents of German or Austro-Hungarian extraction. Germans, Austrians, Ukrainians, and others with ancestral ties to the enemy nations faced persecution and hostility from the Saskatchewan press, patriotic organizations, and a large segment of the wider Anglo-Canadian population. They faced internment, had their rights of citizenship revoked, their newspapers organizations and clubs suppressed, and had their language and religious rights circumscribed. Events of the last two years of the war deepened the belief that the radicalism of foreign immigrants posed a threat to Western Canadian society. The conscription crisis, the Russian revolution, and the rise of labour militancy, combined to create an uneasy situation in Western Canada. Added to this was an uncertain economy characterized by high prices, low wages, and increased unemployment as Canada's soldiers returned home. In this uneasy atmosphere, nativist sentiment expanded in Saskatchewan, appearing as expressions of Anglo-Saxon, anti-Catholic, and anti-radical nativism.

Western Canadian society during the period, 1920-1930, has been described as forming a kaleidoscopic picture, intermingling with the vision and reality of passion and

prejudice.<sup>4</sup> As Saskatchewanians entered the decade of the 1920s, Anglo-Saxon and anti-radical nativism fomented during the Great War crystallized opinions regarding immigrant groups. During this period residents focused much attention on immigration and the sort of policy Canada should adopt. Businessmen, railway interests, and colonization associations pressed Dominion officials to embark on a vigorous scheme in an attempt to spark Canada's depressed economy. On the other hand, labour groups, farmers associations, and veterans organizations, opposed an open door immigration policy on economic and patriotic grounds. By the end of 1926, in the wake of such debate, various nativist organizations began to appear upon the Saskatchewan scene. One such group, the Ku Klux Klan, was able to take advantage of uneasiness towards political issues within the province. The rise of the Klan was an expression of intense passion and prejudice which characterized prairie society during the decade of the twenties.

As electors prepared to go to the polls in the late spring of 1929, Anglo-Saxon and anti-Catholic nativism had affected every section of Saskatchewan's population. Intense opposition directed toward increased levels of immigration caused many in the province to lose faith in the political leadership of the Liberal party and put their

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<sup>4</sup>S.M. Trofimenkoff. ed. The Twenties in Western Canada. (Ottawa: The National Museum of Man, National Museums of Canada, 1972), p.3.

future in the hands of a nativist Co-operative government under the leadership of J.T.M. Anderson. A dramatic example of Saskatchewan opinion regarding immigration during this period can be found in the records of the Saskatchewan Government's Royal Commission on Immigration and Settlement. The Commission's report and proceedings constituted an exhaustive official record of attitudes toward the foreign immigrant. An examination of the Commission's findings and the testimony of those who appeared before it will serve as a reliable barometer in measuring the extent of nativism within Saskatchewan, 1896-1930.

CHAPTER ONE  
THE SETTLEMENT BOOM AND  
THE RISE OF NATIVISM IN SASKATCHEWAN, 1896-1914

Nativist attitudes among the British in Saskatchewan derived from their reaction to foreign immigration during Canada's settlement boom between 1896 and 1914. Most felt that the nation's population should grow, but it was assumed the majority of newcomers would be English speaking. When the large influx of non Anglo-Saxon immigrants began to arrive in western Canada, the reaction of English-Canadians was one of dismay. Poles, Russians, Ukrainians, and Doukhobors, to name a few, all came to Canada after the turn of the century in order to acquire the free land promised them and start a new life. Most accepted the arrival of non-Anglo-Saxon immigrants as necessary for the economic development of the nation, but many believed that large numbers of alien and politically unsophisticated immigrants would threaten Canadian values, institutions, citizenship, and political standards.

In order to achieve a greater understanding of nativism in Saskatchewan, it is necessary to examine the problems and ideas inherent in Saskatchewan society during the period of expansion, 1896-1914. It can be expected that the events which transpired would have effected public opinion toward immigration in the decades to come.

Until the second half of the 1890's, the rate of settlement in the North-West Territories was disappointingly slow. Its population had increased by only a little more than 41,000 in the decade between 1881 and 1891.<sup>1</sup> Although there was a minor flow of migration from Ontario and Manitoba and some immigration from the British Isles during the 1880's and 1890's, it was hardly enough to replace those Canadians who left the region to pursue other opportunities in the United States.<sup>2</sup>

During the 1880's, especially following the completion of the Canadian Pacific Railway in 1885, settlers from Manitoba, central Canada and Great Britain comprised the majority of Saskatchewan's population. Of a total population of 41,522 in 1891, settlers of British origin numbered almost 24,000 or 68 per cent of Saskatchewan's population.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Census of Canada, 1901. Vol. I, Table I, "Population of 1871, 1881, 1891, and 1901, compared by Electoral Districts within their present limits (1901)," p.5.

<sup>2</sup> It has been estimated that approximately 1,615,000 citizens left Canada between 1881 and 1901. See, Donald Avery, Dangerous Foreigners: European Immigrant Workers and Labour Radicalism in Canada, 1896-1932 (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1983), p.193.

<sup>3</sup> Census of Canada, 1891. Vol. I, Table IV, "Places of Birth," p.362., Table VI, "Population of 1871, 1881, and 1891, compared by Electoral Districts, within their present limits (1891), and their relation to Census Districts," p.369. Census figures indicate that 37,747 residents in Saskatchewan were of British origin in 1891. Of this number 29,250 were Canadian born, while 8,497 were born in the British Isles or other British possessions. Of the 29,250 born in Canada, approximately 15,000 were of aboriginal ancestry, making up the second largest



It was during these years of early settlement that the foundations of Saskatchewan's society were laid. In a quest to provide an adequate examination of Saskatchewan's institutional and cultural roots, two scholarly studies have proven to be particularly valuable. Louis Hartz's examination of this theme in his book, The Founding of New Societies, and Professor J.E. Rea's application of Hartz's study to the Manitoba experience in his article, "The Roots of Prairie Society," have proven to be essential in a study of the institutional and cultural origins of Saskatchewan society.<sup>4</sup>

In his study Hartz suggests that new societies established in the western world, including Canada, are fragments of older European parent societies. In the process of creating a society on new soil, the fragment breaks off from its parent to become master of a new region. Members of the fragment group have been influenced by the older parent communities from which they originated, carrying with them its values, social ideas and cultural institutions to the new land. However, the influences of the parent culture cease at the moment of departure as the

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cultural group in the province with 36.5 per cent of the total.

<sup>4</sup> Louis Hartz, The Founding of New Societies: Studies in the History of the United States, Latin America, South Africa, Canada, and Australia (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and World, 1964), J. E. Rea, "The Roots of Prairie Society," in David P. Gagan, ed., Prairie Perspectives: Papers of the Western Canadian Studies Conference (Toronto: Holt, Rinehart and Winston of Canada, 1970), p.46-55.

new society is no longer exposed to the continual societal changes of its parent.<sup>5</sup> In the new region, the imported value system of the parent society becomes frozen, ceasing to evolve any further than it was at the point of fragmentation. No longer facing the challenges of its parent, the ideology of the fragment becomes a common assumption or universal which is reflected in the reproduction of institutions crucial to the functioning of the new society. Once established, the transplanted ideology becomes a new point of departure from which the infant society can mature, capable of inspiring new concepts, or creating a distinctive regionalism.<sup>6</sup>

In applying the Hartzian paradigm to Saskatchewan, it must be determined if the attitudes, institutions and social practices of the majority British-Ontario fragment are reproduced in Saskatchewan and become more or less permanent. It was the firm belief of a large number of Ontarians, including expansionists, promoters, government officials, railway agents, and Canadian imperialists captivated by the promises of unlimited economic potential for the development of the North-West, that the region should be opened up and claimed as a possession of English

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<sup>5</sup> Hartz, p. 3-6., also see, Rea, p.47.

<sup>6</sup> Rea, p.47., Hartz, p.5.

Loyalist Ontario.<sup>7</sup> They assumed that the social practices and institutions of Anglo-Protestant Ontario would be transplanted in the North-West and serve to light the way to a new and better civilization for all of Canada.<sup>8</sup> Examples of this view were expressed by several members of Western Canadian society. Men such as Patrick Gamie Laurie and Charles Mair expressed the desires of Canadian expansionists envisioning a West dominated by Anglo-Canadians, outnumbering French culture and tipping the national political scales in favour of Anglo-Canadian Ontario.<sup>9</sup> In the case of P.G. Laurie, who in 1878 at the age of 45, established the North-West's first newspaper at Battleford, these sentiments were given full expression in editorials published in his Saskatchewan Herald.<sup>10</sup> Laurie foresaw a strong western society established as an extension of British Ontario and believed the method of accomplishing this task was to encourage British immigration, Anglo-

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<sup>7</sup> Doug Owsram, The Promise of Eden: The Canadian Expansionist Movement and the Idea of the West, 1856-1900 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980), p.59. Also see, Jaroslav Petryshyn, Peasants in the Promised Land: Canada and the Ukrainians, 1891-1914 (Toronto: James Lorimer and Company, 1985), p.4.

<sup>8</sup> Petryshyn, p.5.

<sup>9</sup> Walter Hildebrandt, Views from Fort Battleford: Constructed Visions of an Anglo-Canadian West (Regina: Canadian Plains Research Centre, 1994), p.49.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p.49.

Ontario migration or the assimilation of non-English immigrants.<sup>11</sup>

As the pace of Anglo-Canadian migrants from Manitoba and Ontario and immigrants from Great Britain increased during the 1880's and 1890's, they gradually overtook aboriginal groups, French and the Metis to become, by the turn of the century, the majority culture group in the prairie west.<sup>12</sup> They became, as the Hartz model suggests, masters of the new region and moved quickly to stamp their imprint on the new society.

In addition to their household effects, settlers brought with them their ideas of social organization.<sup>13</sup> Overwhelmingly Protestant in religious affiliation, and familiar with the practices of local democracy and responsible government, they attempted to create a society based on the models they had left behind by founding churches, establishing schools, and setting up a judicature, as well as other municipal and social organizations.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid., p.51.

<sup>12</sup> 1901 Census returns indicate that the English culture group comprised 43.9 per cent of Saskatchewan's population, while aboriginals and Metis numbered 19.4 per cent and the French equalled 2.9 per cent. See John Archer, Saskatchewan: A History (Saskatoon: Western Producer Prairie Books, 1980), Appendix E, "Ethnic Composition of Saskatchewan's Population," p.358.

<sup>13</sup> Edmund H. Oliver, "The Settlement of Saskatchewan to 1914," Proceedings and Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada, Third Series, Vol. XX, Section II, 1926, p.64-65.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

This new Anglo-Celtic majority culture group rapidly transformed Saskatchewan's society, dominating local politics and fitting easily into positions of prominence in municipal, societal, farm, and labour organizations.<sup>15</sup> It was the goal of the new majority to transplant the political, economic, religious, cultural, and social institutions they were most familiar with in Ontario to the Western environment in a determined attempt to create, free of restrictions, a society based upon Anglo-Canadian Protestant Ontario.

Pre-occupied with the creation of a new society, Saskatchewan's early settlers were not interested in debating the desirability of the few among them who were not of Anglo-Saxon origin. Eager to see their businesses and settlements grow, they urged the Territorial and Dominion governments to promote western settlement. For a number of reasons however, the influx they had envisioned failed to materialize.

Unfavourable publicity circulated by British, Canadian, and American newspapers discouraged prospective settlers from making the Canadian prairies their home. Editorials criticized the railway monopoly, colonization companies,

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<sup>15</sup> James William Brennan, "A Political History of Saskatchewan, 1905-1929," (Unpublished Ph.D Thesis, University of Alberta, 1976), p.17.

climatic conditions, and the quality of the soil.<sup>16</sup> In addition, newspapers circulated reports of atrocities committed by those who had taken up arms against the government during the North-west Rebellions of 1885, arousing fears of additional uprisings.<sup>17</sup> Further, declining wheat prices, fear of frost and drought, the absence of railway branch lines, the lack of suitable farming techniques, and unfavourable markets and prices, all combined to check the pace of settlement before 1896.<sup>18</sup> Since good, cheap land was still available in the United States, the flood of immigrants would not come to the Canadian prairies until the American frontier was closed and the empty Canadian west offered a more attractive alternative.

Between 1896 and 1914, Saskatchewan experienced unprecedented population growth. In 1901 its population had not quite reached 100,000 residents. By the summer of 1914 however, Saskatchewan's population had broken half a million. The flood of land hungry settlers prairie residents had hoped for in the 1880s and 1890s became a reality after the turn of the century.

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<sup>16</sup> A.N. Lalonde, "Colonization Companies in the 1880's," in D.H. Bocking ed., Pages from the Past: Essays on Saskatchewan History, (Saskatoon: Western Producer Prairie Books, 1979), p.26.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p.27.

<sup>18</sup> Howard Palmer, "Responses to Foreign Immigration: Nativism in Alberta, 1880-1920," (Unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Alberta, 1972), p.9.

A new era emerged in the lives of westerners as the nineteenth century drew to a close. A severe depression that had lasted until the early 1890's was turning around and giving way to unprecedented prosperity.<sup>19</sup> Gold discoveries in the Klondike, rapid industrial expansion in western Europe and the United States, and an increased demand for foodstuffs in burgeoning urban centres created a rise in the price of western agriculture products.<sup>20</sup> In the prairie west, the end of the drought cycle and the development of more sophisticated farming methods increased the quality and quantity of prairie harvests.<sup>21</sup> Abroad there was a softening of international tensions and a relaxing of restrictions on emigration.<sup>22</sup> As good land in the American west increasingly became unavailable, settlers began to look for new opportunities in the "Last Best West".<sup>23</sup> With these global and domestic changes, along with Laurier's appointment of Clifford Sifton as his Minister of the Interior, Canada's ability to attract immigrants flourished.

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<sup>19</sup> R.C. Brown and Ramsay Cook, Canada 1896-1921: A Nation Transformed (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1974), p.49-50.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., p.50.

<sup>21</sup> Brennan, "A Political History of Saskatchewan," p.50.

<sup>22</sup> John Archer, Saskatchewan: A History, p.115.

<sup>23</sup> Brennan, "A Political History of Saskatchewan," p.50.

Sifton has been described as one of the most energetic new brooms in Wilfrid Laurier's cabinet.<sup>24</sup> As Minister of the Interior, Sifton was responsible for filling the empty North-west with productive and successful farmers. If agricultural settlers could be attracted to the west and kept on the land, Canada's problem of national development could be solved.<sup>25</sup>

Under Sifton's direction, Canada's immigration policy matured. He took what had previously been a floundering, unworkable program, and turned it into a successful, well administered plan, geared to satisfy the economic requirements of the North-west.<sup>26</sup> He made available huge blocks of land that had previously been held in reserve for land and railway companies by revising the land grant system, thereby applying pressure on the companies to choose their allotments.<sup>27</sup> He streamlined the Immigration Department by closing the Land Board at Winnipeg and established departmental control of matters that had

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<sup>24</sup> Mable F. Timlin, "Canada's Immigration Policy, 1896-1910," Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science, (hereafter cited as CJEPS), vol. 26, 1960, p.518.

<sup>25</sup> John Wesley Dafoe, Clifford Sifton In Relation to his Times (Toronto: Macmillan Company of Canada, 1931), p.131.

<sup>26</sup> Jaroslav Petryshyn, Peasants in the Promised Land, p.12.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., p.20.



previously required Orders-in-Council.<sup>28</sup> In addition, he made the procedure of obtaining a homestead less complicated and improved the physical state and administration of immigration sheds and halls.<sup>29</sup> With his reforms under way, Sifton then turned his department's attention to the task of attracting homesteaders.

Sifton understood that Anglo-Canadians on the prairies preferred to attract settlers who were most like themselves, people from central Canada, Great Britain, and north-western Europe.<sup>30</sup> The limited number of farmers available in Great Britain and Scandinavia, and restrictive emigration laws in Germany, forced Sifton to turn his attention to central and eastern Europe.<sup>31</sup> His objective was to fill the west with homesteaders as quickly as possible. Immigrants, regardless of national origin were encouraged to move to the west, the only requirement being that they be from a farming background. His immigration policy was outlined by Deputy Minister James Smart:

If a settler is one who has been engaged in agricultural pursuits in the old land, is possessed of

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<sup>28</sup> Jane W. McCracken, "Yorkton During the Territorial Period, 1882-1905," (Unpublished M.A.thesis, University of Saskatchewan, Regina, 1972), p.98.

<sup>29</sup> Archer, Saskatchewan: A History, p.116.

<sup>30</sup> Howard Palmer, Patterns of Prejudice: A History of Nativism in Alberta (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1982), p.22. Also see, John Wesley Dafoe, Clifford Sifton in Relation to his Times, p.138.

<sup>31</sup> Palmer, Patterns of Prejudice, p.22.

his full faculties, steady, honest, sober, and willing to work whether he be rich or poor, Galician, Austrian, Russian, Swede, Belgian or French, we believe it most desirable to encourage him to occupy our land and break up our soil and assist in developing the resources of the country, and in this way enrich himself in Canada.<sup>32</sup>

A variety of methods were used to attract settlers. American reporters received free tours of western Canada in the hope that they would write glowing accounts of the Canadian west. Steamship agents received bonuses if they brought settlers from western European countries that had restrictions on emigration.<sup>33</sup> An intensive advertising campaign was initiated which featured the publication of immigration literature in the form of pamphlets and advertisements, designed to present favourable accounts of life in the Canadian west.<sup>34</sup> Immigration agents were sent to Great Britain, Europe and the United States to distribute information and promote emigration.<sup>35</sup> In 1896, the

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<sup>32</sup> House of Commons Journals, 1900, p.308. as cited in R.C Brown and Ramsay Cook, Canada 1896-1921: A Nation Transformed, p.55-56.

<sup>33</sup> R. Douglas Francis, Images of the West: Changing Perceptions on the Prairies, 1690-1960 (Saskatoon: Western Producer Prairie Books, 1989), p.108.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> McCracken, "Yorkton During the Territorial Period," p.99., and Francis, Images of the West, p.108. Also see D.J. Hall, "Clifford Sifton: Immigration and Settlement Policy, 1896-1905," in R. Douglas Francis and Howard Palmer eds., The Prairie West Historical Readings, (Edmonton: Pica Pica Press, 1985), p.289.

Immigration Department sent out 65,000 pamphlets, by 1900 over one million had been distributed.<sup>36</sup>

In considering the kind of settlers they hoped would make their homes in the west, Saskatchewan residents believed those most desirable would be similar to themselves in nationality, culture and religion, and would have the same vision concerning the type of society they hoped would be created in the west. Their west was to be based on the British characteristics of the English language, the Protestant religions and the Common Law, transplanted and slightly modified to the needs of the North-west.<sup>37</sup> In keeping with this attitude, the British elite in Saskatchewan believed the northern half of the continent was theirs by right to develop. They were helping to build a glorious heritage; their west would play an integral part in the development of Canada and the Empire.<sup>38</sup>

Optimism in Saskatchewan society remained high, especially among members of the business community. Various Boards of Trade, individual residents, and representatives of the Territorial Grain Growers Association, eager to see their towns and villages grow, asked Premier Scott's

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<sup>36</sup> Francis, Images of the West, p.109., Hall, "Clifford Sifton," p.289.

<sup>37</sup> Oliver, "The Settlement of Saskatchewan to 1914," p.64. Also see, Petryshyn, Peasants in the Promised Land, p.5.

<sup>38</sup> Saskatchewan Times, "Glorious Heritage", May, 17, 1901, p.1.

government to promote immigration. These organizations urged the provincial government to undertake its own advertising campaign and station agents in Great Britain, the United States, and western Europe to lecture and inform prospective immigrants of the advantages of settling in Saskatchewan.<sup>39</sup> Members of Saskatchewan society envisioned their future in a prosperous west, a British-Canadian west, with strong Imperial ties.

Such feelings of Empire building provided the basic guidelines for Saskatchewan's new society. The Saskatchewan Times declared that a brilliant future lay ahead for the west and told its readers that a new era had dawned and a new nation had been born; "a Maiden Empire was growing a mother Empire's head".<sup>40</sup> That the west would evolve within the traditions of older Canada with ties to Great Britain was never in question.

Two characteristics that westerners believed set themselves and their region apart from the rest of the world were its resources and its climate. It was argued that western crop levels had proven the fertility of the soil and that one of the advantages for choosing a life on the

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<sup>39</sup> Saskatchewan Archives Board, (hereafter cited S.A.B.), Walter Scott Papers, "Immigration: Individual Inquiries, 1905-16," Walter Scott to B. W. Wallace, Secretary, Prince Albert Board of Trade, p.40841. Also see, S.A.B., J. A. Calder Papers, "Immigration, 1906-16," p.4036-37. Also see, Qu'Apelle Progress, "Settlers Wanted," June, 8, 1905, p.1.

<sup>40</sup> Saskatchewan Times, "A Home for Millions," April, 13, 1903, p.5.

Canadian prairies was its remarkably fine climate.<sup>41</sup> The dry cold air was invigorating rather than depressing and the summer was more genial than that of Europe; it forced people to survive and become hearty Canadian souls.<sup>42</sup> As historian Carl Berger points out, the Canadian prairies were perceived as a place where the ordinary man, once tempered by the climate, was transformed into a superior being. "The adjective "northern" came to symbolize energy, strength, self reliance, health, purity, and its opposite, "southern" was equated with decay and effeminacy, even libertinism and disease".<sup>43</sup>

Such imperialist feelings were best expressed by residents during the celebration of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in the summer of 1897. In Regina for example, citizens saw their town turned into a bastion of Empire, decorated with bunting as the Union Jack flew above public buildings, hotels, offices, and stores.<sup>44</sup> Ceremonies began with a parade led by the Mounted Police Band, accompanied by officials of the Territorial and Municipal governments, school children, and representatives of various

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<sup>41</sup> Ibid., "Our Western Climate", April, 20, 1903, p.4.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., April, 20, 1903, p.4.

<sup>43</sup> Carl Berger, The Sense of Power: Studies in the Ideas of Canadian Imperialism, 1867-1914 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1970), p.129.

<sup>44</sup> Regina Morning Leader, "God Save Our Beloved Queen," June, 24, 1897, p.1.

fraternal organizations, including The Sons of England, The Loyal Orange Lodge, Oddfellows, and the Canadian Foresters.<sup>45</sup> At Regina's Market Square citizens listened to speeches from local dignitaries and clergy, expressing Regina's loyalty to God, Queen, and Country. Loud cheers went up as the speakers praised their Monarch and the exploits of the Empire. School children led in the singing of patriotic songs, and the celebration came to a conclusion with the singing of "God Save The Queen."<sup>46</sup> In communities across Saskatchewan similar celebrations were held, with each claiming that no community entered more spontaneously, enthusiastically, more loyally into the celebration of the day.<sup>47</sup>

Feelings of imperial grandeur among Saskatchewan residents during these years cannot be underestimated. Like residents from the neighbouring prairie provinces, Saskatchewan citizens considered Canada the daughter of the Empire and themselves British. Historian Jaroslav Petryshyn has contended that "Canada's political and social institutions - its preference for law and order and its capacity for self government - were equated with the genius of British nationality".<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> See for example Saskatoon Daily Star, June, 22, 1897.

<sup>48</sup> Jaroslave Petryshyn, Peasants in the Promised Land, p.6.

Saskatchewan's British elite believed only those immigrants who possessed a similar cultural background as themselves to be the most desirable class of settlers for the North-west. It was agreed by citizens, clergy, educators, and politicians that British immigrants would easily be absorbed into territorial society. By 1901, citizens of British ancestry constituted the largest single group in Saskatchewan's population, comprising 44 per cent of its population, or 40,094 of 91,297 residents.<sup>49</sup> By 1911 Saskatchewan's population had leapt forward by over 400,000 with residents of British extraction comprising 51 per cent of its population, or 251,010 of 492,432 total residents.<sup>50</sup>

British settlers in Saskatchewan found their lives little different than the ones they had left behind. Since they were considered culturally similar to Canadians, immigrants from the British Isles fit in easily as members of Saskatchewan society.<sup>51</sup> Some took up land along the C.P.R. mainline, while others established themselves in the

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<sup>49</sup> Fifth Census of Canada, 1911, Vol. II, Table XIII, "Origins of the People by Provinces, 1911 and 1901," p.371.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

<sup>51</sup> Palmer, Patterns of Prejudice, p.24. Also see, Brennan, "A Political History of Saskatchewan," p.17.

Shelbrook-Prince Albert district, or at Lloydminster, the site of the Barr Colony.<sup>52</sup>

Although most members of Saskatchewan society supported any attempt to attract British settlers, one particular group of British immigrants frequently came under attack; those young men who came to be known as remittance men. As the sons of well-to-do British families, these "Tom Browns" had attended some of the finest public schools in Britain and on coming to Canada continued to receive an allowance from family or friends at home.<sup>53</sup> Remittance men arrived in the west with their highly polished boots and their polished Oxbridge accents, ignorant of the requirements needed to prosper at agriculture or ranching, and became among the most unpopular settlers in the minds of Canadians.<sup>54</sup> A large number of westerners who attributed their success on the prairies to hard work and perseverance had little use for remittance men. They were not interested in working the land, refused honest toil, lived on allowances from home, and looked down on Canadians they

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<sup>52</sup> Oliver, "Settlement of Saskatchewan to 1914," p.70-73. Also see, Brennan, "A Political History of Saskatchewan," p.20.

<sup>53</sup> Patrick A. Dunae, Gentlemen Immigrants: From the British Public Schools to the Canadian Frontier (Vancouver: Douglas and McIntyre, 1981), p.124.

<sup>54</sup> Patrick Dunae, "Tom Brown on the Prairies: Public School Boys and Remittance Men in the Canadian West, 1870-1914," Paper presented to the fifty-eighth annual meeting of the Canadian Historical Association, University of Saskatchewan, June, 1979, p.2.



considered beneath themselves.<sup>55</sup> They were labelled as prodigals, more interested in spending their time loafing, playing sports, and bragging about the old country while they waited for their allowances from home, than trying to understand the new country.<sup>56</sup> The Grenfell Sun declared:

We don't want your English fellow with a thousand pounds or so to chuck away...they are a curse in a country where a man must work if he is ever to get anything for himself. At first, of course the stores do good business with these thousand pound young Englishmen; then they get to the end of their money and bad debts begin to accumulate and they go home... they don't know how to work and never will learn. They only know how to gamble, and drink, and swear, and live on remittances. If they should happen by chance to do a bit of work one day, they want to loaf around all the rest of the week,... we do not want them. Keep your rubbish we say. We want workers. We want men who know what farming is and like it and mean business - practical farmers and farmers sons and small farm labourers.<sup>57</sup>

Although remittance men were considered the least desirable among British immigrants, criticism of their actions was minor compared to reaction toward immigrants from foreign countries. They may have been considered lazy by western standards, and unwilling to contribute to the necessities of nation building, but despite their failings, they were British. They shared with Canadians the glories of Empire and were familiar with the Anglo-Saxon traditions

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<sup>55</sup> Grenfell Sun, "Immigration System Wrong," April, 15, 1897, p.1., "A Brief for the Prodigal", November, 24, 1898, p.1.

<sup>56</sup> Saskatchewan Herald, "The Englishman in Canada," October, 9, 1909, p.6.

<sup>57</sup> Grenfell Sun, "A Voice from the West," June, 16, 1897, p.1.

of Protestantism, law and order and good government.<sup>58</sup>

Although there was vocal criticism of these prodigals, it lacked nativist feelings since these "Tom Browns" were not considered a threat to Canadian institutions; they were merely delaying the progress of development in the west by not contributing to the standards set by Anglo-Canadians.

Nearly every sector of Saskatchewan society, including journalists, businessmen, government officials, and farmers, approved of the large number of American settlers making their way to the Canadian prairies. In fact, many in the west regarded American immigrants almost as highly as the British.

Nearly 600,000 American settlers came to the Canadian prairies between 1898 and 1914.<sup>59</sup> In Saskatchewan, Americans settled in the Beaver Hills district near Yorkton, the Saltcoats area, the Alemeda district in Southern Assiniboia, and in the Rosthern area.<sup>60</sup> Others established themselves at Craik, Davidson, Hanley and Dundurn, on the railway between Regina and Saskatoon.<sup>61</sup> In the southern parts of the province, American settlers remained close to the Canadian-United States boundary,

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<sup>58</sup> Grenfell Sun, "A Railway Official's Reflections Upon English Immigration," April, 6, 1899, p.3.

<sup>59</sup> Karel Denis Bicha, The American Farmer and the Canadian West, 1896-1914 (Lawrence Kansas: Coronado Press, 1968), p.114.

<sup>60</sup> Oliver, "The Settlement of Saskatchewan to 1914," p.71.

<sup>61</sup> John Archer, Saskatchewan: A History, p.119.

establishing their homes along the Soo-Line, between Portal and Regina, with a large group moving into the Moose Jaw area in 1903, and in the Grenfell district in 1904.<sup>62</sup>

Saskatchewan residents welcomed these experienced farmers who had money, but most importantly many were of British extraction, and they all spoke English.<sup>63</sup>

Saskatchewan's provincial politicians considered American settlers among the finest type of immigrants. In 1906 Premier Walter Scott wrote J. Obed Smith, Canada's Commissioner of Immigration in Winnipeg. In his correspondence, Scott told Smith that Americans were the best class of settlers, and claimed there was little doubt they would prove to be great Canadians and loyal to the British Empire.<sup>64</sup> W.R. Motherwell, Saskatchewan's Minister of Agriculture, also praised immigrants from the United States and stated they were of the same high quality as immigrants from Great Britain.<sup>65</sup>

Rural and urban newspapers in Saskatchewan welcomed American immigrants. The Saskatchewan Times regarded them

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<sup>62</sup> Bicha, The American Farmer and the Canadian West, p.92-97.

<sup>63</sup> The Regina Leader, July, 18, 1901, p.4.

<sup>64</sup> S.A.B., Walter Scott Papers: "Immigration: Staff," Scott to J. Obed Smith, February, 8, 1906, p.41847. Also see, Scott Papers: "Immigration: 1906-1916," Scott to Norman Mclean, p.40865-66.

<sup>65</sup> S.A.B., W. R. Motherwell Papers: "Immigration: 1906-1917," p.9956.

as among the very best type of settler for the prairies, since they were experienced in western methods of agriculture and cattle raising, possessed a fair amount of capital, and wanted to establish their sons on farms of their own.<sup>66</sup> American settlers easily fit in as members of Saskatchewan society. To many, they did not seem like immigrants at all, since they so much resembled Canadians or British settlers and were English speaking.<sup>67</sup> They became members of local agricultural societies and rose to prominence as independent businessmen and as land speculators, equally concerned with the growth of Saskatchewan society.<sup>68</sup>

Joining British and American settlers as the most desirable class of immigrants were settlers from northern Europe. Immigrants from Germany, Denmark, Holland, Belgium, and the Scandinavian countries were considered desirable because of their cultural similarity to English Canadians, and their ability to aid in the economic development of the province.<sup>69</sup>

There had been early German settlements in the province at Edenwold, Langenburg, Hohenlohe, Balgone, Ebenezer, and

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<sup>66</sup> Saskatchewan Times, April, 13, 1903, p.4.

<sup>67</sup> The Regina Leader, July, 3, 1902, p.1.

<sup>68</sup> Don Kerr and Stan Hanson, Saskatoon: The First Half-Century (Edmonton: New West Press, 1982), p.56-7.

<sup>69</sup> Howard Palmer, "Responses to Foreign Immigration," p.69.

Strassbourg.<sup>70</sup> In later years, German settlements emerged in the areas of Rosthern, Holdfast, Dundurn, Purdue, Haultain, Odessa, Kipling, Melville, Lanigan, Middle Lake, St. Walburg, and St. Brieux.<sup>71</sup> German Lutherans settled in the Melville - Lemburge - Neudorf area, while German Catholic settlements were established at Meunster and in the Tramping Lakes region.<sup>72</sup>

Scandinavian immigrants settled along east-central Saskatchewan, in the Harrowby-Langenburge-Churchbridge area, between the Manitoba border and Yorkton. They also comprised a large portion of the population along the Canadian Northern Railway, in the areas of Wadena, Buchanan, Duck Mountain, and Fort Pelly.<sup>73</sup> Germans and Scandinavians came to comprise two of the largest non-Anglo-Saxon minorities in Saskatchewan. By the time of the 1911 census, Germans numbered 68,628 or 13.9 per cent and the Scandinavians, 33,991 or 6.9 per cent of Saskatchewan's 492,432 residents.<sup>74</sup>

Most Saskatchewan residents believed that German immigrants had proven themselves to be industrious and

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<sup>70</sup> Archer, Saskatchewan: A History, p.116.

<sup>71</sup> Oliver, "The Settlement of Saskatchewan to 1914," p.82.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

<sup>73</sup> Archer, Saskatchewan: A History, p.105.

<sup>74</sup> Census of Canada, 1911. Vol. II, Table VIII, "Origins of the People by Districts," p.340-41.

thrifty settlers, well suited to the challenges of western settlement.<sup>75</sup> In addition, they were readily accepted because they were members of the northern Teutonic race and were related to the blood line of the English royal family.<sup>76</sup>

The general consensus of the Saskatchewan press was that northern Europeans were among the more desirable class of settler who could meet the rigours of pioneer life. The Qu'Appelle Progress maintained that Germans and Scandinavians had proven themselves to be of top quality stock for foreigners and were quickly becoming assimilated to Canadian customs and manners.<sup>77</sup>

German and Scandinavian areas of settlement were regarded as among the most prosperous in the province. Many saw northern Europeans as progressive settlers, who were building up their households, their farms, and their new country.<sup>78</sup> They were given much credit for successfully settling in areas that had previously been considered unsuitable for settlement, and since many had come from the midwestern United States, where they had farmed and

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<sup>75</sup> Oliver, "The Settlement of Saskatchewan to 1914," p.82.

<sup>76</sup> K. M. McLaughlin, The Germans in Canada (Ottawa: Canadian Historical Association, 1985), p.10.

<sup>77</sup> Qu'Appelle Progress, January, 26, 1899, p.3. For similar sentiment see; Regina West, October 18, 1899, p.4.

<sup>78</sup> Regina West, June, 6, 1900, p.4.

prospered, they were familiar with the requirements needed to become successful on the northern plains.<sup>79</sup>

Those who were writing about immigration to Canada at the time also considered Germans and Scandinavians as the best type of settlers. J.S. Woodsworth, in Strangers Within Our Gates, maintained that "even those who detest foreigners make an exception of Germans, who they classify as white people like ourselves".<sup>80</sup> J.T.M. Anderson, inspector of schools in Yorkton, wrote, "Few will deny that the very best immigrants that have ever come to Canada from foreign countries are those from Iceland, Sweden, Norway, and Denmark."<sup>81</sup> W.G. Smith regarded Scandinavians as hardy people, accustomed to a rigorous climate, acquainted with agriculture, forestry, fishing, known for their honesty, hospitality, patriotism, and love of freedom.<sup>82</sup> He maintained that they assimilated easily, intermarried with Anglo-Saxons, learned English, and were interested and active in the politics of the country.<sup>83</sup> To Robert

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<sup>79</sup> Saskatoon Phoenix, "Americans Highly Prized in the Northwest," September, 22, 1905, p.2. Also see; Grenfell Sun, March 12, 1896, p.5., and The Regina Leader, January 12, 1899, p.2.

<sup>80</sup> J.S. Woodsworth, Strangers Within Our Gates or coming Canadians (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972), p.84.

<sup>81</sup> J.T.M. Anderson, The Education of the New Canadian (London: Dent, 1918), p.39.

<sup>82</sup> W.G. Smith, A Study in Canadian Immigration (Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1920), p.189.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

England, northern Europeans were closely related to the French and Anglo-Saxon stocks of Canada and were easily assimilable.<sup>84</sup>

During the late 1890's and early 1900's immigrants from central, southern and eastern Europe poured into the west by thousands. By 1916, they totalled nearly 103,000 in Saskatchewan, comprising 15.8 per cent of the population.<sup>85</sup> Ukrainian immigrants settled north of Yorkton, in the broad wooded areas along the park belt.<sup>86</sup> Other groups from Austria and Russia, including Polish immigrants, settled among Ukrainians near Yorkton, Fish Creek, Saskatoon, Regina, directly east of Swift Current along the Alberta border and in the Prince Albert district.<sup>87</sup>

While British, American, and northern Europeans were regarded as most desirable, central and south-eastern Europeans were referred to as the "scum of Europe," opposed to Canadian values and practices with little hope of

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<sup>84</sup> Robert England, The Central European Immigrant (Toronto: Macmillan Company of Canada, 1929), p.41.

<sup>85</sup> Archer, Saskatchewan: A History, "Appendix E," p.358.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid., p.117-18.

<sup>87</sup> Heinz Lehman, The German Canadians, 1750-1937: Immigration, Settlement, and Culture, trans. Gerhard P. Bassler (St. John's Newfoundland: Jespersen Press, 1986), Appendix, Map, no. 2, "Saskatchewan's Population of non-British Origin in 1911," p.364.



becoming Canadians in sentiment or custom.<sup>88</sup> It was argued that by settling in large colonies they would not contribute to the progressive development of the west; but rather, threaten existing and future Canadian institutions.<sup>89</sup>

Conservative newspapers across Saskatchewan<sup>90</sup> depicted immigrants from south-eastern and central Europe as filthy, disease ridden, poverty stricken, ignorant, racially inadequate, and immoral.<sup>91</sup> The Saskatchewan Times declared Galicians were the least desirable class of settlers, by claiming that a number of Norwegian families, considered among the very best immigrants, were packing up and leaving the region, because Clifford Sifton's Galicians had settled nearby.<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>88</sup> Saskatchewan Herald, "Foreign Colonies," June 10, 1898, p.1.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid.

<sup>90</sup> Newspapers were not official political party organs, but the Saskatchewan Herald, Regina Standard, Regina West, Saskatchewan Times, Grenfell Sun, and Saskatoon Star, consistently supported Conservative policies and candidates. The Regina Leader, Moose Jaw Times, which were owned by Saskatchewan's Liberal Premier, Walter Scott, along with the Saskatoon Phoenix were just as committed to the Liberal Platform and candidates.

<sup>91</sup> Grenfell Sun, March, 9, 1899., Saskatchewan Times, June, 27, 1899., November, 24, 1899.

<sup>92</sup> Saskatchewan Times, September, 29, 1898. For similar sentiment see; Saskatchewan Herald, "Foreign Colonies," June 19, 1898, p.1., and Grenfell Sun, March 9, 1899.

Such sentiment was expressed in town halls and at public meetings across the province. In Kinistino, for example, citizens from the area gathered to discuss the immigration question. Residents in attendance decided the threat of the despised foreigner was so great that they passed a motion which opposed placing any colony of foreigners in the district.<sup>93</sup> Many Protestants in Saskatchewan believed that the Liberal immigration policy was destined to sever all ties Canada had with the Mother Country, ultimately posing a threat to institutions at home.<sup>94</sup>

The Conservative press, fraternal, and women's organizations expressed basic nativist fears once immigrants from central and south-eastern Europe obtained the franchise. One issue which caused considerable animosity emerged when reports reached the west that the Dominion government intended to remove the right of franchise from members of the North West Mounted Police. In response, the Conservative press asked why foreigners, who had been in the country for only a short period of time and were ignorant of the ways of the country, should gain the franchise when the

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<sup>93</sup> Prince Albert Advocate, "A Rousing Meeting," August, 21, 1899, p.3.

<sup>94</sup> Saskatchewan Times, June, 27, 1899, p.4.

highly patriotic and intelligent members of the North West Mounted Police should lose their franchise rights.<sup>95</sup>

Members of the Orange Order, Masonic Lodge, and Society of St. George expressed similar sentiment. They argued immigrants knew little about Canada's political process and claimed central and south-eastern Europeans would not use the privilege for Canada's advantage and would ultimately threaten the existing institutions of the country. Also, members of various women's organizations, such as the Women's Christian Temperance Union, Homemaker's clubs, and Imperial Order of the Daughters of the Empire, believed that immigrants would abuse their right to the franchise by selling their vote to the highest bidder.<sup>96</sup>

A group of Russian peasants belonging to a non-conformist pacifist sect, known as the Doukhobors, also aroused anxieties among Saskatchewan's population. In their homeland, the Doukhobors had been violently persecuted by the Russian government for their refusal to break with their pacifist beliefs and serve in the Imperial Army of the Tsar. Sponsored by Leo Tolstoy and the English Quakers, about 7,500 Doukhobors arrived in Saskatchewan in 1899 and settled on three large blocks of land totalling 270,480 acres that

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<sup>95</sup> Saskatchewan Herald, May, 30, 1900, p.3.

<sup>96</sup> SAB, Walter Scott Papers, "Women's Franchise: Petitions and Correspondence, 1913." Mrs. S. Roberts of Dundurn to Walter Scott, January, 15, 1913.

had been reserved for them.<sup>97</sup> Two groups of Doukhobors settled in the Yorkton region, one seventy miles north at Thunder Hill, the other thirty miles north at Devil's Lake; a third colony of Doukhobors settled north of Saskatoon near Rosthern.<sup>98</sup> Initial reaction towards the Doukhobors was mixed. A number of people sympathized with these simple people who were escaping violent persecution at the hands of Russia's tyrannical government. In Yorkton, their arrival was met with cheers from local citizens and volunteers helped with the onerous task of feeding and sheltering them.<sup>99</sup>

Not everybody, however, was so benevolent. Those who opposed the arrival of the Doukhobors voiced many of the same arguments used in the campaign against Galician immigration. Their strange appearance, their poverty and their desire to live a communal existence led many Anglo-Canadians to object to their arrival on the grounds that they would never become worthy, industrious Canadians.<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> Archer, Saskatchewan: A History, p.116. Also see, Joseph Elkington, The Doukhobors: Their History in Russia, Their Migration to Canada (Philadelphia: Ferris and Leach, Publishers, 1903.), p.212.

<sup>98</sup> McCracken, "Yorkton During the Territorial Period," p.115. Also see, Archer, Saskatchewan: A History, p.116, and Aylmer Maude, A Peculiar People: The Doukhobors (London: Archibald Constable, 1905), p.203.

<sup>99</sup> Pierre Berton, The Promised Land: Settling the West, 1896-1914 (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1984), p.85.

<sup>100</sup> See for example, Grenfell Sun, March 9, 1899.

The Saskatchewan Herald reported that the Doukhobors had no concept of morality, claiming they were rotten with consumption and so immoral that men hitched up women to ploughs to break the virgin prairie.<sup>101</sup> Continuing its attack, the Herald asked residents if it was their desire to have their sons and daughters married to such dirty, uncivilized, poverty stricken peasants from Russia.<sup>102</sup> Mixed marriages of this type, it warned, would cause Canada to lose her tie to the Mother Country and form a conglomerate population made up of all the undesirable races of the world; the result being the extinction of Anglo-Saxondom.<sup>103</sup> Opposition to the Doukhobors came from many sections of Saskatchewan society. Ranchers were opposed to them because of the vastness of their land reserves.<sup>104</sup> Labour leaders claimed that lower wages paid to them by railway companies was a direct threat to the existing wage structure of the west.<sup>105</sup> Yorkton businessmen, who were initially pleased with the honesty of the colonists and delighted in the prospects for the future of their businesses, soon voiced their opposition when they

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<sup>101</sup> Saskatchewan Herald, August, 4, 1899, p.3.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid. For similar sentiment see; Saskatchewan Times, November 4, 1899.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid.

<sup>104</sup> George Woodcock and Ivan Avakumovic, The Doukhobors (London: Faber and Faber, 1968), p.164-65.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid.

realized that the communal lifestyle of the Doukhobors would lead to them buying their products from larger, wholesale suppliers in the cities.<sup>106</sup>

After they became settled, and began to make considerable progress on their reserves, hostility towards them temporarily subsided. However, opposition mounted when the Doukhobors refused to register their lands and vital statistics.<sup>107</sup> If they complied with the homestead regulations by registering their lands and taking the oath of allegiance, the Doukhobors felt they would no longer be exempt from military service.<sup>108</sup> In addition, they were opposed to the registration of births, deaths, and marriages and believed the Canadian government as tyrannical as that which they had fled in Russia for forcing them to do so.<sup>109</sup>

When the Doukhobors staged a series of protest marches between 1902 and 1905, residents of the province soon began clamouring for greater restrictions on immigration and the expulsion of the Doukhobors. Intent on finding their "promised land" - a warmer country free from government

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<sup>106</sup> Ibid.

<sup>107</sup> Saskatchewan Herald, "Doukhobor Movements," December, 3, 1902, p.1.

<sup>108</sup> Regina Standard, "A Bloodless Victory," November, 13, 1902, p.1.

<sup>109</sup> Saskatchewan Herald, "The Crazy Doukhobors," November, 5, 1902, p. 1.

restriction, where they could eat fruit from the trees, preach the scriptures and meet Christ - close to fifteen hundred Doukhobors left their reserves late in October, 1902 and set out in the direction of Yorkton.<sup>110</sup> Putting their trust in God, they carried with them no food or protective clothing.<sup>111</sup>

Ignoring pleas from immigration officials to return to their villages, the Doukhobors left Yorkton on October 29 and headed east, discarding their clothing along the way.<sup>112</sup> They reached Minnedosa on November 1 exhausted, hungry, and half frozen. They lasted for three more days before being loaded on a special train by police and local citizens and returned to Yorkton.<sup>113</sup>

Six months later the Doukhobors set out again, protesting the federal government's regulations on land registration. In May, 1903 some fifty men, women and children left their villages and headed in the direction of Yorkton. When they were a half- mile from town they removed

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<sup>110</sup> Maude, A Peculiar People, p.216., Saskatchewan Herald, "The Crazy Doukhobors," November, 5, 1902, p.1., "A Queer Pilgrimage," November, 12, 1902, p.4., Regina Standard, November, 6, 1902, p.1.

<sup>111</sup> McCracken, "Yorkton During the Territorial Period," p.116., Saskatchewan Herald, "A Queer Pilgrimage," November, 12, 1902, p.4.

<sup>112</sup> Woodcock and Avakumovic, The Doukhobors, p.186., Saskatchewan Herald, "A Queer Pilgrimage," November, 12, 1902, p.4.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid., p.180. Also see; Saskatchewan Herald, "Back to Yorkton," November, 19, 1902, p.4.

their clothing and "marched on the town in a nude state".<sup>114</sup> This time the police were ready for them. They nailed open the doors of the immigration hall, hung lanterns and stood guard during the night. The mosquitoes had quite a feast, and by morning the Doukhobors were dressed and willing to return to their villages.<sup>115</sup>

Twenty-eight men who had taken part in the 1903 march were sentenced to three months in prison in Regina and would eventually found the Sons of Freedom Movement, which held a series of additional marches between 1903 and 1905.<sup>116</sup> When given the option of registering their homesteads and taking the oath of allegiance within two months, or having their homesteads confiscated, nude marches and hunger strikes among the Sons of Freedom became commonplace. Although many of the independent Doukhobors complied with Ottawa's demands, the Community Doukhobors continuously refused. Finally in June, 1907, the Doukhobor reserves were thrown open to homestead entry.<sup>117</sup>

Public reaction toward the marches was not surprising. The actions of the Sons of Freedom led many in the west to regard all Doukhobors as fanatical lunatics, who should

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<sup>114</sup> Yorkton Enterprise, May, 28, 1903.

<sup>115</sup> McCracken, "Yorkton During the Territorial Period," p.121.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid., p.122-23.



never have been allowed to enter the country in the first place. Conservative newspapers gladly used the Doukhobors as the prime example of undesirable immigrants in their attacks on Liberal immigration policy. The Saskatchewan Herald argued that the Doukhobors were Saskatchewan's version of the dreaded Mormons who were causing similar problems in Alberta.<sup>118</sup> It attacked Sifton's immigration policy claiming the federal government could have avoided the "Doukhobor problem" if they had spent more energy bringing to the west additional settlers like the Americans, who among other things, had the experience and money necessary to establish successful farms on the plains, and whose methods of working were far superior to the Galicians or Doukhobors.<sup>119</sup>

During the immigration boom, western Canadian society was influenced by three closely related reform movements, each determined to correct Canada's social problems in an attempt to create a new and better Christian Canada.<sup>120</sup> Each of these reform movements, the social gospel, prohibition and women's suffrage, identified non-English

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<sup>118</sup> Saskatchewan Herald, "Our Mormons," April, 13, 1903, p.4.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid.

<sup>120</sup> Palmer, Patterns of Prejudice, p.37.

immigrants as a threat to the attainment of the kind of society they desired for western Canada.<sup>121</sup>

Many of the mainstream Protestant denominations during this period were greatly effected by the ideology of the social gospel. As western Canada's towns and cities multiplied, Protestant churches became concerned about the growing problems of alcoholism and prostitution and sought methods of combating the social evils that were plaguing the very society they were striving to protect. As the number of non-English immigrants increased, many Protestant denominations accepted the responsibility of meeting and saving the immigrants. Their actions were an expression of extreme nationalism, combined with nativist feelings, responding towards individuals believed to pose a threat to Canadian values and institutions.<sup>122</sup>

At the forefront of mission work among immigrants in the west were the Methodist and Presbyterian churches. As the number of non-English immigrants grew, leading Presbyterians and Methodists declared foreigners had to be assimilated to ensure Canada's future as a Protestant nation within the Empire. In discussing the immigration problem in

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<sup>121</sup> Marilyn Barber, "Nativism, Nationalism, and the Social Gospel: The Protestant Church Response to Foreign Immigrants in Western Canada, 1897-1914," in Richard Allen, ed. The Social Gospel in Canada: Papers of the Interdisciplinary Conference on the Social Gospel in Canada (Ottawa: National Museums of Canada, 1975), p.188.

<sup>122</sup> Ibid., p.186.

his book, Our Task in Canada, the Reverend R.G. Macbeth addressed the issue as perceived by the Presbyterian church:

Some of the newcomers are of that highly desirable class, but they are tremendously in the minority. For the most part, those who have been coming in recent years are of inferior races and lower civilizations. And our task is to make them Christian citizens of Canada.<sup>123</sup>

In keeping with this belief, the Reverend Dr. Robertson, Superintendent of Canadian Home Missions of the Presbyterian church, told members of the Synod that Western Canada's population contained an increasing foreign element, and if an effort was not made to assimilate foreigners immediately the stability of the Dominion was in danger.<sup>124</sup> Likewise, Methodist leaders were equally concerned about the increasing non-British presence in the west and the possibility of the creation of a polyglot society.<sup>125</sup>

Although Methodists spent most of their time and energy performing mission work in Alberta and Manitoba, they were equally concerned about the "foreign problem" in Saskatchewan. In December, 1910, representatives of the Methodist and Presbyterian churches from each of the prairie

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<sup>123</sup> R.G. Macbeth, Our Task in Canada (Toronto: The Westminster Company, 1912), p.21.

<sup>124</sup> Saskatchewan Herald, "Foreign Colonies," June, 10, 1898, p.1.

<sup>125</sup> George Neil Emery, "Methodism on the Canadian Prairies, 1896-1914," (Unpublished Ph.D thesis, University of British Columbia, 1970), p.5.

provinces met in Saskatoon to discuss Canada's future and their strategy concerning foreign immigrants. During the convention delegates passed a resolution which proclaimed that in the future both denominations would work closely together and co-ordinate their efforts to reach the foreigners and help make them worthy, industrious, Christian Canadians.<sup>126</sup>

Members of the Protestant churches considered immigrants from northern and western Europe, such as Icelanders, Scandinavians and Germans, to be industrious, intelligent, enterprising, and easily assimilable: a class of people, who understood Canadian institutions and customs and took a keen interest in the nation's political and social problems. In contrast, immigrants from southern and eastern Europe, including Austrians, Galicians, Bukovinians, Russians and Poles were considered ignorant, immoral, unsanitary, disrespectful of women, drunken and unassimilable and threatened to create a polyglot population.<sup>127</sup> It was therefore essential to Canada's survival as a British and Christian nation that the least

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<sup>126</sup> SAB, United Church of Canada: Methodist Church, Saskatchewan, Minutes of meeting between representatives of the Methodist and Presbyterian churches, December, 3, 1910, p.12.

<sup>127</sup> The Missionary Outlook, June, 1904, Vol. 23, #6, p.129., SAB, Records of the Women's Missionary Society of the Presbyterian Church in Saskatchewan, Manitou, "The Saskatchewan Contribution to the Work of the Women's Missionary Society of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, to the Time of Church Union, June, 1926," report written for the Regina Women's Canadian Club, May, 1927, p.2 and p.12.

desirable immigrants should come under the "quickenning, uplifting, renewing influences of a pure Christianity".<sup>128</sup>

In their efforts to combat the foreign problem head-on, Methodists and Presbyterians established home missions across Saskatchewan in areas where foreign immigrants were highly concentrated. The Presbyterian church, with the moral and financial assistance of the Women's Missionary Society, established mission hospitals and schools in eastern European communities north of the C.P.R. line at Canora, Wakaw, Verigin, Kamsack, Otthorn, Hafford, Prince Albert, and Glenside; Methodists established home missions in Regina, Insinger, and Calder.<sup>129</sup>

Members of the prohibition and women's suffrage movements considered central and south-eastern European immigrants detrimental to their goal of attaining an alcohol free society, dominated by morality, Christianity, temperance, and universal female suffrage. Prohibitionists believed foreign immigrants were among the greatest abusers of alcohol and as such, not only became criminals, prone to

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<sup>128</sup> W.D. Reid, "The Non-Anglo-Saxons in Canada: Their Christianization and Nationalization," in G.D. Mathews, ed., Alliance of the Reformed Churches Holding the Presbyterian System (Toronto: Hart and Ridell, 1892), p.124., cited in J. Agnew Johnson, "The Presbyterian Church and Immigration: The Thrust of the Presbyterian Church in Canada Among Ukrainian and Chinese Immigrants Prior to 1925," (B.A. Thesis, Lakehead University, 1975), p.15.

<sup>129</sup> SAB, United Church of Canada Records: Methodist Church, Saskatchewan. Minutes of meeting between representatives of the Methodist and Presbyterian churches, December, 3, 1910, p.1.

fits of violence and every other kind of social evil, but were easy prey for unscrupulous politicians and corrupt liquor dealers.<sup>130</sup>

The suffrage movement in Saskatchewan concerned itself with extending the franchise to women in order to help rid the province of social problems they attributed, to a large extent, to the presence of vast numbers of foreign immigrants.<sup>131</sup> It was argued immigrants were ignorant of Canada's needs as well as its social and political problems.<sup>132</sup> Women's groups maintained they would use the franchise to benefit the country, whereas "foreign immigrants are susceptible to election bribery."<sup>133</sup> At the seventh annual convention of the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) of Alberta and Saskatchewan the President told delegates:

At the end of three years any foreigner may become naturalised and have full right of franchise, even though he be in every way unfit for the responsibility. These people are always the tools of unscrupulous politicians, and at the time of a campaign, where moral issues are at stake are rapidly managed by the liquor

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<sup>130</sup> Palmer, Patterns of Prejudice, p.39.

<sup>131</sup> SAB, Walter Scott Papers, "Women's Franchise: Petitions and Correspondence, 1913," Mrs. Rosa Currie, Secretary of the Ladies Aid Society of the Turtle River Valley District, Mervin, Saskatchewan, to Walter Scott, April, 8, 1913.

<sup>132</sup> Ibid., Mrs. George Aldoris of Lorne to Scott, January, 13, 1913. Mary P. Mitchell of Rhen to Scott, January, 15, 1913. Mrs. S.S. Smith on behalf of the Women's Club of Colonsay, to Scott, July, 14, 1914.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid., Mrs. S. Roberts of Dundurn to Premier Scott, January, 15, 1913.

forces and rapidly become a real menace to the community in which they are.<sup>134</sup>

In Saskatchewan, the suffrage banner was carried by various women's organizations including, The Women's Christian Temperance Union, Women's Canadian Clubs, local Councils of Women, and Homemaker's Clubs. Like the prohibitionists, suffragists were upset, not only because of the large number of immigrants entering the west, but because they allegedly brought with them their European drinking habits, and their low ideals of morals and citizenship.<sup>135</sup> Suffragists believed, that in order to combat the alien threat, the franchise immigrant men enjoyed should be restricted and extended to women and that programs geared to accelerate the assimilation of immigrants should be developed.<sup>136</sup> Mrs. W.P. Reekie, in charge of WCTU work among foreigners, told delegates at their first annual convention in Saskatoon that the foreign problem is one that must be thoroughly worked out if they were to save the honesty, truth, and uprightness of Canada.<sup>137</sup>

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<sup>134</sup> Ibid., Women's Christian Temperance Union of Alberta and Saskatchewan, Report of the Seventh Annual Convention, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, October, 14-17, 1910, p.29.

<sup>135</sup> Ibid., p.28.

<sup>136</sup> Howard Palmer, Patterns of Prejudice, p.39

<sup>137</sup> SAB, Women's Christian Temperance Union of Saskatchewan, Report of the First Annual Convention, Regina, Saskatchewan, October, 2-7, 1913, p.61.

Nativist reaction toward immigration and ethnic groups in Saskatchewan surfaced during the province's era of early settlement. Residents of the province clung to a vision of society they hoped would emerge, as well as a strong ethnic pecking order regarding the type of settlers they preferred to help them develop their new society in the North-west. Settlers from eastern Canada and Great Britain were most preferred, followed closely by Americans and northern Europeans. But as large numbers of central, southern, and eastern Europeans began to enter the west, a portion of the population questioned their desirability. Nativist attitudes became more pronounced as non-English immigration increased, touching off a debate concerning the type of society that was to emerge in the province.

When Canada went to war in the summer of 1914, nativism was firmly in place in Saskatchewan. Although a large portion of the population had accepted the arrival of non-English immigrants as beneficial for a growing nation, nativist reaction towards enemy aliens during the Great War was widespread. Many, who at one time had argued that large scale immigration was a necessity, now joined those who had always maintained that non-English immigrants were a threat to the political, social, and cultural institutions of Canada.



## CHAPTER TWO

### THE GREAT WAR, ENEMY ALIENS, AND RADICAL LABOUR

When Canada entered the Great War in August 1914, approximately 150,000 residents of Saskatchewan were of German extraction or had ancestral ties to the Austro-Hungarian Empire, including Austrians, Poles, Hungarians, Slovaks, Czechs, Croats, and Ukrainians.<sup>1</sup> These "enemy aliens," as all immigrants from "enemy" countries were called, became the objects of persecution and hostility by the English language press, patriotic organizations, and a large segment of the general Anglo-Canadian population.<sup>2</sup> Throughout the course of the war they faced internment, had their rights of citizenship first threatened and then revoked, experienced the suppression of their newspapers, organizations and clubs, and had their language and their religious rights circumscribed. As well they became the

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<sup>1</sup> Census of Canada. 1911, p.340-41., also see; Census of the Prairie Provinces: Population and Agriculture, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta, 1916, p.144. Next to persons of British origin, Germans comprised the second largest ethnic group in Saskatchewan when war was declared in the summer of 1914. There were 353,098 British and 77,109 Germans in Saskatchewan out of a total population of 647,835.

<sup>2</sup> It was the tendency of the press and the general Anglo-Saxon community to refer to Austrians, Hungarians, Ukrainians, and other citizens from the Austro-Hungarian Empire as Austrians or Hungarians, but most often they were all referred to as enemy aliens. There was little if any effort to distinguish one group from the other.

objects of threats, violence, loss of employment, and property damage at the hands of the general public.

War-time nativism directed at enemy aliens gained momentum as the war continued. By the time of the Armistice in November 1918, almost every German, and Austro-Hungarian living in Saskatchewan had in one way or another experienced some form of discriminatory action. In the immediate post-war atmosphere in Saskatchewan, Anglo-Saxon nativism was joined with anti-radical nativism, as alien labourers became associated with the growing militancy of organized labor in Saskatchewan and elsewhere in Canada. This new and unfamiliar labor militancy gave rise to the development of a "red scare" atmosphere in Saskatchewan, renewing calls for the suppression of alien organizations and the deportation of foreign labor radicals.

During the years leading up to the Great War, English Canadians in Saskatchewan had developed a strong dislike for non-English immigrants. Germans, however did not fit into the category of the non-preferred; in fact, many believed German settlers to be among the nation's most loyal and popular citizens. It was recognized that they were anxious to assimilate and familiarize themselves with Canadian customs; and because they came from a strong northern race, were considered freedom loving and able to adapt easily and

willingly to the Parliamentary system.<sup>3</sup> Through the course of World War One however, feelings of nationalism intensified, leading many in the province to take part in what has been described as "the most spectacular reversal of judgement in the history of American nativism."<sup>4</sup>

As the war dragged on and reports reached the home front of German atrocities in Belgium, gas attacks on Canadian troops in France; as the lists of Canadian boys killed or wounded in action grew in length, anti-German and anti-Austrian sentiment intensified. Even naturalized German Canadian citizens, who had been in the country for a considerable period, and had proven themselves to be industrious, prosperous and loyal Canadians, did not escape the wartime nativism aimed in their direction.

It has been claimed by John Herd Thompson, in his examination of the war years in western Canada, that westerners were surprised by, and unprepared for, the declaration of war in August, 1914.<sup>5</sup> However, evidence suggests the contrary. The assassination of Austrian Archduke Francis Ferdinand in the summer of 1914 received front page headline status and sparked a considerable amount

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<sup>3</sup> Carl Berger, "The True North Strong and Free," in Peter Russel, ed. Nationalism in Canada (Toronto: McGraw - Hill Company of Canada, 1966), p. 12-17.

<sup>4</sup> John Herd Thompson, The Harvests of War: The Prairie West, 1914-1918 (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1978), p.74.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p.18.

of editorial comment in provincial dailies and rural weeklies.<sup>6</sup> To suggest that Saskatchewan residents were prepared to enter the European fray would be misleading. However, to suggest that many were caught by surprise, would be equally misleading. Saskatchewan residents, particularly those residing in areas where they had access to the daily press, were, in fact, kept well informed about the storm brewing in the Balkans. They followed the events which transpired and certainly understood that the diplomatic struggle could evolve into a world war as Germany and Austria began to mobilize their armies in the latter part of July. When it was learned that attempts by Great Britain to resolve the diplomatic crisis had ended in failure, and the mobilization of German and Austro-Hungarian troops intensified, Saskatchewanians anticipated that any sort of resolution seemed improbable and that war seemed inevitable.<sup>7</sup> In Regina, for example, the Morning Leader announced that a war among France, Russia, Germany, and Austria-Hungary was beyond doubt; and if or when Great Britain became involved, "We are with the Motherland, united... to put forth every effort and make every sacrifice

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<sup>6</sup> Saskatoon Daily Star, "Military Law Proclaimed in Sarajevo," June 29, 1914, p.1. and p.6. Also see; Ibid., "The Assassination of Archduke Francis Ferdinand," June 30, 1914, p.4.

<sup>7</sup> Saskatoon Phoenix, "Austria and Serbia," July 27, 1914, p.6.

necessary to ensure the integrity and maintain the honour of the Empire."<sup>8</sup>

Evidence suggests, in fact, that preparations and even the hysteria associated with the beginning of the Great War began during the week prior to its formal declaration. In Regina, Saskatoon, Moose Jaw, and Prince Albert, members of local militia units were ordered to report to their Commanding officers and begin their preparation to go the front if necessary. Nearly 1,700 men in Regina alone responded by August 1.<sup>9</sup>

When war was declared, English Canadians in Saskatchewan received the news with jubilation. In every corner of the province overzealous mobs paraded throughout their home towns. They sang patriotic songs and cheered local politicians, dignitaries, and clergy as they extolled the virtues of the British cause and asked all men to enlist unselfishly in their defence of the principles of Empire.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Regina Morning Leader, "Europe Ablaze," August 3, 1914, p.4. Also see; Ibid., "Hanging in the Balance," August 1, 1914, p.4. For similar sentiment see; Saskatoon Daily Star, "The Driving Force," August 3, 1914, p.4. For evidence of such sentiment in the rural areas see; Lloydminster Times, "Red Dogs of War Again Let Loose," July 30, 1914, p.1., and Saskatchewan Herald, July 30, 1914, p.1.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., "Regina Militia Units Which May be Called in Event of International War Muster 1,700," August 1, 1914, p.2.

<sup>10</sup> Saskatoon Daily Star, August 5, 1914, p.10. Also see; Regina Morning Leader, "Patriotic Demonstrations of Unparalleled Fervour Called Forth by Germany's Challenge," August 5, 1914, p.4.

In Saskatoon a scene took place which was typical throughout the province. Thousands had blocked off the street in front of the Daily Star offices on the evening of August 4 to receive the latest news concerning the developments in Europe. When news of war was announced, the crowd erupted in a frenzied state of excitement.<sup>11</sup> The celebration went on for the better part of a week as cheering crowds paraded nightly along the city's downtown core, singing patriotic songs such as Rule Britannia, The Maple Leaf, and The British Grenadiers, and marching to the cadence of the Caledonian Pipers and the Saskatoon City Band.<sup>12</sup> Similar demonstrations took place in Moose Jaw, Prince Albert, Swift Current, and Regina as news of war sparked scenes of remarkable enthusiasm, bringing relief from the pent up anticipation and suspense citizens had been experiencing over the previous few days.<sup>13</sup>

The call for men to enlist went out immediately. On the evening of war's declaration, militia units in Saskatoon, Regina, Prince Albert and Moose Jaw, mustered their strength at the local armouries and drill halls, to

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid., "News of War Declaration Stirred Up Whole City to State of Excitement," August 5, 1914, p.1.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., "Crowd in Mood of Celebration," August 6, 1914, p.3.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., "Canada receives News of Declaration of War With Unbounded Enthusiasm and loyalty," August 5, 1914, p.10. Also see; Regina Morning Leader, "Canadians are all Enthused," August 5, 1914, p.2.

prepare themselves for mobilization and to accept recruits to bring their numbers up to a war strength of 1,000 officers and men.<sup>14</sup>

Most of those rushing to enlist were similar to young Harold Baldwin. Baldwin, a British immigrant who homesteaded near Rosetown, travelled eighty miles to Saskatoon on horseback and by rail to enlist.<sup>15</sup> Losing his left leg as a result of charging an enemy trench in 1916, Baldwin was invalided home and wrote of his experiences at the front in his memoirs of the war, Holding the Line. Most men in the first contingent were Britishers like himself with no relatives in Canada. Their motivation for rushing to enlist in the First Canadian Division was an ardent patriotism for the old flag and all it stood for, and a strong sense of adventure.<sup>16</sup>

Most expected the war to last only a few months. It would be a short campaign, comprised of quick offensives and counter attacks which would end when the allied forces had inflicted such damage upon the enemy that the Kaiser would be forced to capitulate. In fact most believed that the war would be over by Christmas. And if one was a gambler,

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<sup>14</sup> Regina Morning Leader, "Every Local Militia Unit Will be Recruited to Full War Strength Immediately," August 5, 1914, p.3.

<sup>15</sup> Harold Baldwin, Holding the Line (Chicago: A.C. McClurg and Co., 1918), p.3.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., p.4.

Lloyd's of London gave even odds that the war would be over by December, 31.<sup>17</sup>

It is perhaps for this reason that the initial response was so immense. Volunteers rushed to the recruiting stations eager to take their place on the firing line before the allies had sealed the victory. Many left their jobs outright, while others were granted leaves of absence, such as Professors R.J. Bateman and Louis Brehaut of the University of Saskatchewan, who in addition to leave, were granted half salary while on active service.<sup>18</sup> Students as well were induced to leave their studies and enlist in the Canadian Expeditionary Force. The University of Saskatchewan announced that all undergraduate students who enlisted would receive their full years standing, and the Law Society gave a similar inducement to law students.<sup>19</sup>

The patriotic hysteria displayed by Saskatchewanians to the declaration of war was nothing less than phenomenal. This can best be illustrated by the scenes created in many communities as enthused citizens turned out to see their volunteers off to war. In Saskatoon, Moose Jaw, Regina, Swift Current, Prince Albert, and every rural district in the province, local dignitaries, politicians, and clergy

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid., "Odds Even at Lloyd's War Over by Dec. 31," August 19, 1914, p.3.

<sup>18</sup> Saskatoon Phoenix, "Enlist as privates in 105th," October 22, 1914, p.3.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.



showed up to give their support to departing troops. In an abundance of flag waving and anthem singing, thousands lined the streets, some marching along with recruits, to bid farewell.<sup>20</sup> In his war memoirs, Harold Baldwin described the scene at the Saskatoon railway station. He recalled that thousands of cheering Saskatonians ventured out on a cold and damp afternoon to bid farewell to the departing troops. After speeches from the mayor, several city councillors, and other government officials, Baldwin remembered that the roar of the crowd was so loud that songs being sung were "Fairly drowned in the waves of departing cheers."<sup>21</sup>

Among the most boisterous supporters of the war effort were members of the mainstream Protestant denominations, the Anglican, Methodist, Baptist, and Presbyterian churches.<sup>22</sup> For the Protestant clergy the war became a universal struggle against despotism and injustice.<sup>23</sup> In Sunday

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<sup>20</sup> Saskatoon Daily Star, "Moose Jaw Troops Bidden Goodbye and Godspeed by Civic Organizations," August 19, 1914, p.7. Also see; Saskatoon Phoenix, "P.A. Gives Fine Send-Off to Members of 52nd Regiment," August 25, 1914, p.4., and Ibid., "Saskatchewan Sends First Contingent of Militia Forces to Front," August 24, 1914, p.3., Ibid., "Citizens Unite in Extending a Hearty farewell to Troops," August 24, 1914, p.3., Lloydminster Times, "Volunteers Recipients of Good Send-Off," August 20, 1914, p.1.

<sup>21</sup> Baldwin, Holding the Line, p.4.

<sup>22</sup> Thompson, Harvests of War, p.37.

<sup>23</sup> Castell Hopkins, Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs, 1914, (Toronto: The Annual Review Publishing Company, 1915), p.287. Hereafter cited as C.A.R.

sermons five days after war was declared Protestant ministers gave their approval by lauding the virtues of the British Empire and praising the motherland for coming to the aid of innocent Belgium.

Ministers told their audiences that although war was directly contrary to the teachings of the Christian church, Britain was justified in its course and forced into war through the haughtiness of the Kaiser. World peace was possible only through the total destruction of the German military, and with this goal in mind, it was the duty of every true son of the empire to go to the defence of its principles.<sup>24</sup>

At Regina's First Baptist Church, Reverend S.J. Farmer denounced the actions of the Kaiser and declared that by "unsheathing the sword" in the defence of an innocent ally, Britain's actions were justified.<sup>25</sup> Farmer proclaimed the only method now available to bring peace was the complete destruction of the military machines of Germany and its allies.<sup>26</sup> At Regina's St. Paul's Anglican, Reverend Walter Western declared that the spirit of Christianity was opposed to war. He told parishioners however, that the present conflict was inevitable. Germany had been building

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<sup>24</sup> Regina Morning Leader, "Prayers for the Safety of Empire Offered in Regina Churches," August 10, 1914, p.4.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

its military arsenal for years and wanted war at any cost. Christians, he claimed, wanted peace, but peace with honour. He praised those who had volunteered to fight for their country's glory, men who understood the risks involved, but were ready to make sacrifices undreamed of in the defence of the principles of empire.<sup>27</sup>

In almost every community of Saskatchewan, Protestant ministers gave their approval of Canada's involvement in the war. During its first few weeks services were held for volunteers, who were blessed and praised as good Christians and good Canadians for enlisting and willing to sacrifice themselves for God and the empire.<sup>28</sup> A service held in Saskatoon was typical of such events. At Knox Presbyterian Church a farewell drum service was held for that city's first contingent of volunteers. During the evening, ministers from each of the major Protestant denominations addressed the audience with a clear message; although war was not desirable, it was necessary to crush the tyrants of Europe and preserve peace in the world. The actions of Great Britain and the allies were just; Belgium's freedom had been violated and it was the duty of every civilized

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> For examples of these events see, Saskatoon Phoenix, "Attend Divine Service Before the Departure," August 24, 1914, p.3. Also see; Saskatchewan Herald, August 14, 1914, p.1., and Ibid., August 21, 1914, p.1. See also; Melfort Journal, August 14, 1914, p.1., and, Lloydminster Times, August 20, 1914, p.1.

nation to go to her aid and crush the military despots of Europe.<sup>29</sup>

During the early stages of the war, a large portion of Saskatchewan's population continued to hold German residents in high regard. Calls for restraint and understanding toward Saskatchewan's German population were heard from various corners of the province. On the day that Canada entered hostilities Premier Walter Scott, while addressing a crowd at the opening of the Regina Exhibition, appealed to citizens to show restraint in their actions toward citizens of the various countries involved.<sup>30</sup> In the legislature, both Premier Scott and W.B. Willoughby, leader of the Conservative opposition, stated that the province's German residents were desirable, hard-working citizens of the province who, they were sure, would continue to remain loyal to the country of their adoption, and asked residents to display a level of understanding toward their German fellow citizens.<sup>31</sup> The Saskatchewan Herald told its readers

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<sup>29</sup> Saskatoon Daily Star, "Citizens at Two Affairs Show Appreciation of City - Soldier's Great Sacrifice," August 24, 1914, p.14. For additional examples of such events see, Melfort Journal, "Enthusiastic Rally," August 14, 1914, p.1., and Lloydminster Times, "Volunteers Recipients of Good Send-off," August 20, 1914, p.1.

<sup>30</sup> C.A.R., 1914, p.631.

<sup>31</sup> Kurt Tischler, "The German Canadians in Saskatchewan with Particular Reference to the Language Problem, 1900-1930," (Unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Saskatchewan, 1978), p.72. Also see; S.A.B., Walter Scott Papers, "World War One: German Canadians, 1914-1915." Walter Scott to Theodore Schmitz, President of the German Canadian Alliance of Saskatchewan,

that, although there were a large number of residents of Saskatchewan who were of German ancestry, they were merely peaceful observers of hostilities, and must not be considered to pose a threat to the nation.<sup>32</sup> The Herald reminded citizens that Germans were among the most valued and respected citizens of the province and the present war was not waged in bitterness toward the German people, it was a war against the German military system.<sup>33</sup>

Similar sentiments were expressed by Protestant ministers who urged restraint by informing citizens that their quarrel was not with Germans or Austrians living in Saskatchewan, many of whom had fled their homes to seek refuge in Canada from the very tyrants with whom the Dominion now found itself at war. They reminded residents that Saskatchewan's 70,000 Germans had proven over the years to be among the province's best citizens. Rev. F.W. Klein for example stated:

There are Germans sitting in our Legislative Assemblies, and as citizens the Germans are among the best in the country, and they have always shown a keen and practical interest in public affairs, local, provincial, and Dominion. With these patient, honest, and industrious members of our cosmopolitan population there is nothing but sympathy and friendliness...

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October 3, 1914, p.59, 538-39.

<sup>32</sup> Saskatchewan Herald, "Germans abroad a Great People," August 14, 1914, p.1.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., see also; Ibid., "Germany a land of Knowledge and Progress," August 21, 1914, p.1. For examples of similar sentiment, see; Saskatoon Phoenix, "Attitude of Germans in Canada," October 7, 1914, p.1.

Therefore we say this is not a war against the German people, but against a military caste, the survival of a regime, that the rest of civilization has left behind. And because we do not regard it as a war against the German people, we can live at peace with those Germans, who seeking better conditions of life, have come to Canada, and are loyal to their adopted country.<sup>34</sup>

Despite such pleas, wartime nativism among a portion of Saskatchewan's population was immediate. In several centres, violent nativist reaction was carried out by overzealous citizens toward German and Austro-Hungarian residents. In Regina, three days after Canada had entered hostilities, an attempt was made to burn down the residence of Anton Ritter, a German printer who was the compositor of Der Courier, a German-language newspaper published in Regina.<sup>35</sup> In Saskatoon, there were incidents of violent attacks on German and Austrian citizens.<sup>36</sup> Others were victims of attacks, often in towns where many had lived for years and by fellow citizens with whom they were well acquainted. At times, the fact that one fit the prevailing stereotype of a German, or had a German sounding name, was enough to stir people into violence. For example, a fair haired Englishman was standing in front of the office of the Regina Leader during the evening of August 6. He was reading, along with a large group of others, the latest news

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<sup>34</sup> Saskatoon Phoenix, "The Germans in Canada," October 5, 1914, p.4.

<sup>35</sup> Regina Leader, "Attempt to Set Fire to House of German Printer," August 8, 1914, p.8.

<sup>36</sup> Saskatoon Daily Star, August 5, 1914.

bulletins of the war, which The Leader had posted on the outside of their office building.<sup>37</sup> Members of the crowd accused him of being a German, based solely upon his appearance and attacked him; when he screamed at a nearby police officer for help, the officer refused.<sup>38</sup> The gentleman eventually broke free and was chased by the crowd to a police station, where he sought refuge.<sup>39</sup>

Such sentiment was not uncommon, but for the most part, the first few weeks of the war saw Saskatchewan residents preparing themselves for war. They read and followed intensely any news from France and Belgium and displayed little nativist sentiment toward those among them whose ancestral home was at war with the allied nations. There were pockets of nativist sentiment calling for greater restrictions and the immediate internment of residents who were of German or Austro-Hungarian ancestry, but most of such sentiment came from a very small segment of Saskatchewan's population.

As the war entered its eighth week however, and reports of German atrocities in Belgium reached Saskatchewan, citizens began to question who Canada's enemies really were. Was the country merely fighting German militarist

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<sup>37</sup> Regina Leader, "Found it Necessary to appeal to Police: Rather Discreditable Attack Upon Citizen Last Evening," August 7, 1914, p.4.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

aggressors, or were they at war with everything German, including its people?

The atrocity reports received an immediate response from Saskatchewan's press. The Saskatchewan Herald declared that as a result of fiendish cruelties performed on innocent people in Belgium, the civilization of all of Europe was now at stake.<sup>40</sup> To the Saskatchewan press corps, the war which at one time had been against the generals and military men had now turned into a war against every German citizen.

Over a period of only a few weeks the image of the German had changed. At the time of the declaration of hostilities, Germans in Saskatchewan were considered among the finest citizens of the Dominion. By its second month however, the image of Germans had become that of the barbarous "Hun", associated with every evil known to mankind. It was now argued that every German was fighting simply for the delight of destruction; to burn, slay, and subjugate the less warlike civilizations for the glory of Teutonic ambition.<sup>41</sup>

A number of other incidents related to the war served to significantly change public opinion towards those among them of German or Austrian background. Gas attacks on

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<sup>40</sup> Saskatchewan Herald, "Fiendish Cruelties Perpetrated by the Atrocious Germans: harrowing Tales of Inhumane Torture," October 29, 1914, p.3.

<sup>41</sup> Lloydminster Times, "Evidence of Systematic and Organized Outrage," May 20, 1915, p.1.



Canadians at the front, the sinking of the cruise ship Lusitania, and the growing number of Canadians among the war dead, combined to influence an increased sense of nativism toward Germans and Austro-Hungarians.

In response to the sinking of the Lusitania, newspapers declared that such an act was, without question, the wilful wholesale murder of innocent men, women, and infants, equalled only by Germany's atrocities in Belgium, and their fighting asphyxiated men.<sup>42</sup> The Swift Current Sun described the incident as an ultimate act of cowardice and declared that at one time Germans were considered among Saskatchewan's finest citizens. Now "the German race has gone blood mad" and become an uncivilized barbarous breed.<sup>43</sup>

In the days following the disaster, local press, politicians, and individual citizens called for stricter measures concerning the registration and internment of enemy aliens. Saskatoon citizens argued that the federal government had been too lenient on individuals of enemy alien origin by allowing them to run around free of restrictions. The Star declared that in light of the Lusitania disaster and other atrocities, the time had come to implement stricter measures on enemy aliens, irrespective

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<sup>42</sup> Esterhazy Observer and Pheasant Hills Advisor, German Kulture," May 10, 1915, p.9., Ibid., "Lusitania sunk by Pirates," May 13, 1915, p.1.

<sup>43</sup> Swift Current Sun, "War News on Sea," May 13, 1915, p.2.

of their behavior, and regardless of whether they had been naturalized or not: "they should be forced to register or be interned." <sup>44</sup>

Ministerial response to these events was no less vehement. At Saskatoon's Third Avenue Methodist Church, Reverend C.W. Whitley denounced German citizens by declaring that they had committed their horrific actions merely as an to expedient to serve the desires of their evil Kaiser and his war-lords.<sup>45</sup> At First Baptist Church, the Reverend A. Eustace Haydon declared that Germany had thrown the gauntlet in the face of humanity, to transform what had been a see-saw struggle of national ideals, into holy-war. Haydon told parishioners that Germany could never be forgiven for her destruction of those values more precious than life;

Germany has shown that she is warring on those things which we thought had become fixed principles in the thought of humanity. What is there for us to do? Only this, that we pledge ourselves to God in this Holy-War for the maintenance of the principles of Jesus. It is better for us to perish, maintaining our faith in that ideal, sacrificing ourselves for the glorious dream, than living to accept their doctrine.<sup>46</sup>

Likewise, at Westminster Church the Reverend Dr. Dix declared that the use of gas on allied troops, the brutalities in Belgium, and this "act of scientific savagery against defenceless non-combatants" is the spirit of "hate

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<sup>44</sup> Ibid., May 12, 1915, p.4.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> Saskatoon Phoenix, May 10, 1915, p.3.

incarnate challenging all that is best in civilization."<sup>47</sup>

As a result of these events the war became, for many ministers, a crusade, a Holy-War, waged by the children of God against the German anti-Christ. At their Tenth Annual Synod, Saskatchewan Presbyterians passed a resolution which declared that the war had become much more than a struggle between nations, it had become a war which demanded Christian chivalry, Christian patriotism, collective necessity, and human efficiency to save the world for Christ.<sup>48</sup>

Similarly, Methodist ministers, in their reaction to events during the spring of 1915, associated the allied cause with that of Christ. "The great task must be accomplished," cried Reverend Charles Endicott, in his Presidential address to delegates at a Ministerial session of the Methodist Church. Their great task was the task of Christ, a holy crusade to make the world safe for democracy, humanity, and Christianity.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> S.A.B., United Church of Canada: Saskatchewan Conference, Presbyterian Church of Canada, Synod of Saskatchewan, Synod Records, Minutes: Published, 1906-1915. Acts and Proceedings of the Tenth Synod of Saskatchewan, of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, p.11. The Tenth Synod of the Presbyterian Church in Saskatchewan was held at Westminster and Knox churches in Saskatoon, November, 2-4, 1915.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., United Church of Canada, Saskatchewan Conference: Methodist Church, Saskatchewan Conference, Conference Records, 1884-1925, Minutes 1904-1925. Minutes of Ministerial session,

The message of the mainstream Protestant churches by the spring of 1915 was clear. Germany's actions on the seas, their treatment of innocent civilians, and their use of poisonous gas, were not the action of a civilized nation. Germans, once regarded as among the most noble citizens of the world, were now a threat to every Christian nation. It was the task of Christians everywhere to support the efforts of the allies and sacrifice themselves, if need be, for the cause of humanity, Christianity, and righteousness.

Nativist reaction from across Saskatchewan affected Germans, Austrians, Ukrainians, and other eastern Europeans in every facet of their lives. Their newspapers, associations, churches and schools were all subjects of or targets for intense nativist feelings. During the early weeks of the war, newspapers published in "enemy languages" received little attention from Saskatchewan nativists. By the end of August 1914 however, residents began to refer to the foreign language press as the enemy language press, as calls went forward in favour of restrictions. The War Measures Act, passed during a special session of Parliament shortly after the outbreak of hostilities, gave the Governor-in-Council power to censor, control and suppress publications, writings, maps, plans, photographs, and means

of communications.<sup>50</sup> In effect the order authorized the Chief Press Censor to enter any printing house and examine, approve or reject any writing, copy, or printed matter.<sup>51</sup> Any newspaper which printed articles, news or correspondence that might in anyway influence a segment of public opinion against British interests faced suppression.<sup>52</sup>

Not long after the outbreak of hostilities, the enemy language press in Saskatchewan became the subject of intense opposition. They were suspected of printing anti-British literature and distributing it among Saskatchewan's enemy alien population, in an attempt to arouse animosity toward the allied cause. A number of Saskatchewan newspapers declared that the enemy alien press was publishing and distributing what was described as "treasonable literature" and demanded the federal government impose a ban on all enemy language newspapers from entering Canada, along with the arrest and imprisonment of the offenders.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> W. Entz, "The Suppression of the German Language Press in September, 1918 (with special reference to the secular German Language papers in Western Canada)," Canadian Ethnic Studies, vol.8, no. 2, 1976, p.57.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid. Also see; Saskatchewan Herald, October 29, 1914., and Saskatoon Daily Star, November 3, 1914.

<sup>52</sup> Tischler, p.74.

<sup>53</sup> Saskatchewan Herald, October 29, 1914, p.4. Also see Saskatoon Daily Star, "Anti-British Literature Pouring into Country," November 3, 1914, p.3., and Melfort Journal, "Stop Pro-German Propaganda," January 1, 1915, p.5.

Premier Scott's reaction to pressure from citizens, organizations, and the Conservative press, concerning the enemy language press, is illustrated in his response to a complaint from one Saskatchewan resident. E.A.W.R. McKenzie of the Pelly district, in his correspondence with the Premier, told Scott that the situation was getting more dangerous daily and could eventually lead to a situation which would directly threaten the safety of Canadians at home if Germans, their Galician friends, and other pro-Germans were continually allowed to read "anti-British" newspapers.<sup>54</sup> McKenzie indicated that if the anti-British press were not strictly controlled or discontinued, serious trouble would result, suggesting that Canadians were not beyond taking the law into their own hands.<sup>55</sup> In his reply to McKenzie, the Premier agreed that there had been quite a number of news items and articles published in the German press, which he believed had dangerously gone close to the line of minimum loyalty to British interests.<sup>56</sup> Scott declared that he had personally in the past taken steps towards having influence brought upon the editor of Der Courier and the persons controlling it:

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<sup>54</sup> S.A.B., Scott Papers, "World War One: German Canadians, 1914-1915," E.A.W.R. McKenzie to Walter Scott, May 17, 1915, p.59611-12.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., Scott to Mckenzie, May 19, 1915, p.59,614.

...and while I think these steps have had some little result, still there appears to be a tendency from time to time on the part of the paper to lose sight of the dictates of propriety and common sense to say nothing of loyalty.<sup>57</sup>

During the last years of the war, hostility toward the enemy alien press increased substantially. In the spring of 1917, a series of demonstrations took place in Regina to protest the anti-British stance of Der Courier and the federal government's unwillingness to act on the situation by imposing restrictive measures. In May, returned and active soldiers descended upon Der Courier's publishing house in Regina, smashing windows and causing other damages as an indication of their opposition to the publication of the paper in the German language.<sup>58</sup> In addition, the Saskatchewan Command of the Great War Veterans' Association (G.W.V.A.) passed a resolution demanding the suppression of enemy alien newspapers on the basis that they were being utilized for the purpose of spreading disloyal and dangerous propaganda.<sup>59</sup>

In September 1918, the Chief Press Censor for Canada, Lt. Col. E. J. Chambers, after meeting with Premier Martin and the editor of Der Courier, attempted to convince Minister of Justice Charles J. Doherty that the enemy

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<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> W. Entz, "The Suppression of the German Language Press in September, 1918 (with special reference to the secular German Language papers in Western Canada)," p.61-62.

<sup>59</sup> Tischler, p.75.

language press should be suppressed.<sup>60</sup> He maintained that, while meeting with Premier Martin and the editor of Der Courier, it was evident that an overwhelming number of Saskatchewan residents demanded suppression.<sup>61</sup> Furthermore, Chambers explained that resentment towards Der Courier among returned soldiers was at such a level, that the possibility of additional violence was likely, if the enemy alien press were allowed to continue unrestricted publication.<sup>62</sup>

On September 20, J. A. Calder, a former Saskatchewan cabinet minister and new federal Minister of Immigration and Colonization, informed Prime Minister Borden that he was convinced suppression of German-language newspapers should take place as a method of avoiding serious trouble in the west.<sup>63</sup> Shortly after Calder's correspondence with Borden, an Order-in-Council came into effect which prohibited the publication of books, newspapers, magazines, or any printed matter in the language of any country

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<sup>60</sup> W. Entz., p.62. W.M. Martin replaced Walter Scott as Premier of Saskatchewan in 1916 when Scott was forced to retire from politics due to ill health.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> Tischler, p.75.



presently at war with Great Britain, without license from the Secretary of State.<sup>64</sup>

Reaction in Saskatchewan to the order was marked with overwhelming approval by the Conservative press corps. The Melfort Journal applauded the action and welcomed the end of the anti-British influence in Saskatchewan. In addition, The Journal issued a warning to its readers to continue to scrutinize enemy books, pamphlets, and newspapers of religious or scientific character, not covered by the order, and therefore allowed to continue to enter the province.<sup>65</sup> In fact, although pleased with the restrictions, The Journal felt that the Order-in-Council did not go far enough. The paper felt, as did a good number across the province, that the times called for the complete suppression of any publication in the enemy language, religious, scientific, or otherwise.<sup>66</sup>

As the war approached the end of its third year, with little progress being made toward an allied victory, the province witnessed a surge in nativist sentiment which played a significant role in the provincial election campaign in June, 1917. The election would prove to be largely a negative contest, which saw Conservatives assemble

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<sup>64</sup> C.A.R., 1918, p.580-581. The Order-in-Council was approved on September 25 and came into effect on October 1, 1918.

<sup>65</sup> Melfort Journal, "Rooting Them Out," October 11, 1918, p.5.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

a campaign designed to appeal to voters on racial and religious grounds and gain politically from negative attitudes toward enemy aliens.

The Conservatives, under the leadership of W.B. Willoughby, devised a campaign platform at their annual convention in April, which on paper, must have seemed to many to be quite appealing. Included in their platform were pledges to negotiate the transfer of provincial lands to the province from the federal government, to provide long term loans to farmers, to institute complete prohibition, transfer the funding of road construction and maintenance to municipalities, and enact regulations designed to govern maximum hours, minimum wages, and conditions of work for women.<sup>67</sup> In addition, there were pledges to provide pensions for mothers, assist returned soldiers in resuming their civil occupations, and rid the civil service of patronage and other abuses.<sup>68</sup> On the more volatile topic of education, the Conservative platform seemed quite moderate. They pledged to make changes to the school laws and regulations concerning text books and the qualifications of teachers, so as to "provide in every school in Saskatchewan, whether public or separate, private or parochial, adequate and efficient instruction in reading,

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<sup>67</sup> Saskatoon Star, "Conservative Party Announces Platform for Coming Election," April 27, 1917, p.2 and p.10.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

writing and speaking the English language...."<sup>69</sup> Although their platform must have appealed to a large segment of the electorate, Conservative candidates and speakers chose to ignore much of their platform and concentrate their campaign on the racially volatile topics of education and the Soldier's Representation Act.

Unlike the Conservatives, who hoped to gain politically from a growing level of war-time nativism, the provincial Liberals, under their new leader, William Melville Martin, clung to the proven path of campaigning which they had utilized in past elections. W.M. Martin, who had replaced Walter Scott as Liberal leader in 1916, conducted a campaign designed to appeal to the electorate on the government's past record of effective, efficient, and progressive government.

The achievements of nearly twelve years of Liberal rule formed the cornerstone of the government's campaign. Liberal candidates pointed to the creation of the provincial telephone system, the establishment of the University of Saskatchewan, the success of the Co-operative Elevator Company, the hail insurance and farm credit schemes, the abolition of the bar, and the extension of the franchise to women.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>69</sup> Ibid.

<sup>70</sup> Brennan, "A Political History of Saskatchewan," p.363-364.

The controversy over soldier's votes began in February, 1917 when provincial Liberals introduced legislation designed to provide exclusive representation for Saskatchewan soldiers in the next legislature.<sup>71</sup> The Soldier's Representation Act was designed to provide three special members for soldiers serving in France, England, and Belgium, whose purpose was to deal exclusively with issues of their concern. Rather than vote in their home constituencies, soldiers were to elect representatives from within their own ranks.<sup>72</sup> From the moment of its inception, the Soldier's Representation Act faced howling protests from a large segment of Saskatchewan's population.

Veteran's and other organizations, accused the Liberals of depriving soldiers of their rights of citizenship and giving special privileges to enemy aliens, pacifists and enemy sympathizers. At a special meeting of the Saskatchewan chapter of The Army and Navy Veterans of Canada, a resolution was passed denouncing the act as an undemocratic piece of legislation which had not been sought

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<sup>71</sup> J.A. Boudreau, "Western Canada's Enemy Aliens in World War One," Alberta Historical Review, Vol. 12, No. 1. (Winter, 1964), P.7. Also see; Brennan, "A Political History of Saskatchewan," p.347.

<sup>72</sup> S.A.B., W. M. Martin Papers, "Armed Forces: Franchise, 1917-1918," Martin to Sergeant Lorne B. Sweet, "C" Company, 232 Overseas Battalion, March 2, 1917, p.9,528., Martin to W. Moore, secretary of the Saskatoon Veteran's Society, March 8, 1917, p. 9,602., and Martin to J. W. Dafoe, May 18, 1917, p.9,642.

nor desired by members of the Canadian Expeditionary Force.<sup>73</sup> The Soldier's Wives and Mothers League of Saskatoon, described the legislation as an "injustice being forced on our men who are so nobly defending all that life holds dear."<sup>74</sup> The Saskatoon Veteran's Society and the Returned Soldier's Association of Moose Jaw argued the new act constituted nothing more than unjust and unfair discrimination against soldiers and was an infringement upon their rights as citizens.<sup>75</sup>

Most who were outraged over the new act argued that it disfranchised Saskatchewan's soldiers and strengthened the position on the home front of slackers and enemy aliens. Petitions were drawn up and circulated among members of Saskatchewan regiments by various veteran's groups. One such circular argued the new legislation meant that:

votes of 27,000 soldiers will be withdrawn from the various constituencies of the province, thereby leaving the selection of members of the legislature to those who have not volunteered for active service and to men of ALIEN ENEMY BIRTH AND SYMPATHIES. For, by withholding from the soldiers the right to vote in their home constituencies, the government hands over

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<sup>73</sup> S.A.B., W. M. Martin Papers, "Armed Forces: Franchise, 1917-1918," Army and Navy Veterans of Canada to Martin, 27 February, 1917, p.9,532.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid., Soldier's Wives and Mothers League of Saskatoon to Martin, February 27, 1917, p.9,530.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid., Saskatoon Veteran's Society to Martin, March 5, 1917, p.9,601. Also see: The Returned Soldier's Association of Moose Jaw to Martin, March 6, 1917, p.9,609.

the absolute control of the destinies of this province to these men of alien enemy birth and sympathies.<sup>76</sup>

In addition, a petition was sent to the Premier from representatives of Saskatchewan members in the Canadian Expeditionary Force. The petition, signed by 1,928 soldiers, declared that the members of the force protest the proposal of the Saskatchewan government to take away

our rights as citizens... and protest against naturalized Germans and Austrians being allowed to vote in our home towns and districts while we are deprived of the right to vote there.<sup>77</sup>

Likewise, Protestant ministers protested against the actions of the provincial government. Reverend Murdock Mackinnon for example, pastor of Regina's Knox Presbyterian Church issued a scathing attack upon the Premier and the new act. In his assault, Mackinnon appealed to Canadians to help preserve Saskatchewan from the alien enemy. He declared that by removing the franchise from Saskatchewan soldiers, the provincial Liberals were not only strengthening the position of enemy aliens in the province, but seriously jeopardizing its British character. Mackinnon warned that

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<sup>76</sup> Ibid., W.M. Martin Papers, Veterans of the Great War to Martin, February 23, 1917, p.9,527. This petition was distributed among Saskatchewan soldiers and a copy was sent to Mr. Martin by Sergeant Lorne B. Sweet, "C" Company, 232 Overseas Battalion, a native of Battleford Saskatchewan.; also see, Ibid., "Soldiers Your Rights as Citizens Are Being Curtailed," This article was distributed among Saskatchewan soldiers, a copy of which was sent to Premier Martin by Captain E.W. Byers, March 2, 1917, p.9,597-98.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., Members of the Canadian Expeditionary Force to Martin, February 28, 1917, p.9,535-9,595.

unless enemy aliens were disfranchised, British institutions in the province and the Dominion, were in danger of elimination.<sup>78</sup>

Similarly, the controversy surrounding the language of instruction in Saskatchewan schools stirred the fires of staunch Anglo-Saxon nativists in opposition to Martin's Liberal government. Although the public school question had been a particularly explosive topic in Saskatchewan for many years, the 1917 wartime election provided the precise forum that W. B. Willoughby and the Conservative opposition were looking for, to bring the question to the forefront of debate.<sup>79</sup>

Their pledge in their election platform to make changes to the school laws to provide adequate and efficient instruction in reading, writing, and speaking the English language in Saskatchewan schools did not satisfy all members of the Conservative party. Many wished the party had taken a harder line on the language issue. At the Conservative convention in Saskatoon, Donald Maclean, Saskatoon's Conservative nominee, declared that he was prepared to go further than the official Conservative platform in regard to

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<sup>78</sup> Ibid., W. L. Martin Papers, Orange Sentinel, "Is Saskatchewan to be Governed by Alien Enemies?" April 1917, p.9,620.

<sup>79</sup> Raymond Huel, "The Public School as a Guardian of Anglo-Saxon Traditions: The Saskatchewan Experience, 1913-1918," in Martin L. Kovacs ed. Ethnic Canadians: Culture and Education, (Regina: Canadian Plains Research Centre, University of Regina, 1978), p.299.

the language question.<sup>80</sup> In his address, Maclean declared the only solution to the language problem, was to make English the sole language of instruction in the public schools of the province.<sup>81</sup> Likewise, A. E. Bence, President of the Saskatoon Conservative Association, declared he was disappointed his party had not gone further than it did in asking that the English language be the only medium of instruction in Saskatchewan schools.<sup>82</sup> Bence accused the provincial Liberals of pandering to the foreign vote by not going far enough to guarantee that English and only English be the language of instruction in Saskatchewan's primary grades.<sup>83</sup> In addition, Lt. L. M. G. Armstrong, a candidate for the Conservative nomination running against Donald Maclean, attacked the government by appealing to the audience's patriotic sentiments. In his address, Lt. Armstrong declared that loyal Canadians were bearing the brunt of war, while thousands of foreigners neither fought nor paid for the freedom and security which they were enjoying. He declared that:

I enter a solemn protest against our government for its action in disfranchising the soldiers by means of a bill which segregates 33,000 men, and confines their representation to three men. Turn out a government

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<sup>80</sup> Saskatoon Daily Star, "Maclean Choice of the Conservatives for the Saskatoon Seat," May 4, 1917, p.11.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.



which if elected means turning over to this country for the next five years to alien enemies. (loud and prolonged applause)

I pledge my support to the candidate who comes out flatfooted and who says English only now and for all time. That is the man we will support and elect, and it remains to us to show the men who are fighting that we at home are doing our part.<sup>84</sup>

In their offensive, Conservatives were joined by a number of other groups including, the Grand Orange Lodge of Saskatchewan, Imperial Order of the Daughters of the Empire, Sons of England, the National British Citizenship League, and The Convention of Municipalities.<sup>85</sup> In their attack, Orangemen submitted a questionnaire to candidates asking if they supported a law establishing one system of public and non-sectarian schools, if they opposed special privileges being granted to any segment of the population on account of race or religion, if they favoured banning all bilingual teaching in Saskatchewan schools and putting the French language on the same footing as all other foreign languages, and finally, if they favoured a law providing that all school trustees must be able to read and write the English

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<sup>84</sup> Ibid., Similar sentiment was expressed by Conservative candidates throughout the province. See for example; Lloydminster Times, "Big Conservative Meeting," June 7, 1917, p.1. Also see; S.A.B., Martin Papers, Elections: Saskatchewan, 1917, "Transcript of Speech Delivered by J.E. Bradshaw," Conservative candidate in Prince Albert, sent to Martin by D. Lockerbie of Kinistino, June 8, 1917, p.24306-309.

<sup>85</sup> Lloydminster Times, "German Schools," June 17, 1917, p.7., also see; J.W. Brennan, p.361.

language.<sup>86</sup> If candidates answered all questions in the affirmative, Orangemen would consider them suitable.<sup>87</sup> For its part, the National British Citizenship League which first appeared in Saskatchewan in the spring of 1917, declared its members stood for "one flag, one school, one tongue," and its purpose was to instill loyalty to the British Empire and institutions and protect British rights against invasion by aggressive aliens.<sup>88</sup>

Results of the 1917 Saskatchewan election were a disastrous blow to provincial Conservatives. Not only did they fail to win the election, they barely managed to maintain their numerical strength in the legislature.<sup>89</sup> Disappointed in the outcome, Saskatchewan nativists offered several reasons for the Conservatives defeat. The Liberal victory was credited to the disenfranchisement of the soldiers and the dominance of the enemy alien vote, the Liberals half-hearted way of handling the school question in the foreign settlements, and the aliens fear of conscription.<sup>90</sup>

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<sup>86</sup> Ibid., "The School and Language Question in the Province," June 17, 1917, p.1.

<sup>87</sup> Brennan, p.361.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid., p.370.

<sup>90</sup> Saskatchewan Herald, "Perhaps Pickel is Elected and Perhaps He Isn't, After All," June 28, 1917, p.1. Also see; S.A.B., Martin Papers, Elections: Saskatchewan, 1917, M.N. Campbell of Pelly to Martin, June 28, 1917. In his

The defeat of Willoughby's Conservatives strengthened pleas in the province for the disfranchisement of enemy aliens. The Melfort Journal displayed such sentiment in one of its editorials by demanding that enemy aliens be disenfranchised for the following reasons:

Saskatchewan and Alberta are crowded with aliens from the countries of which we are at war. They roam around the country holding up farmers and mine owners for exorbitant wages, if they do not get them they go on strike.

When conscription comes we presume they will be exempt, and be left with a clear field in the labor market to ask any figure they have a mind to, while our men are at the front getting killed to save the country-for them!....

... It was the votes of these aliens with whom Saskatchewan and Alberta are "crowded", which sent back to power the governments now ruling in those two provinces. Furthermore, unless the federal government summarily disfranchise these aliens (which it has a perfect right to do in wartime) it will be these very votes that will sway results in the western provinces in the event of Laurier being able to bring about a general election. Thus the fortunate alien does not merely dictate the rate of pay for his work, but can also control the vote in the province in which he dwells!<sup>91</sup>

Nativism displayed during the 1917 provincial election was no less evident throughout the federal election campaign in December. As in the provincial campaign, targets of

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correspondence Campbell warned the Premier that the Liberals had a great deal of "smoothing over" to do in the district as there was a great deal of bitterness in his area among the "Canadian population" regarding the enemy alien question. He told Martin that Pelly district residents believed the Liberal victory was won by the enemy alien vote and their opposition to conscription, a victory which many believed would not have happened had the soldiers been allowed to vote in their home ridings.

<sup>91</sup> Melfort Journal, "The Right Method," July 20, 1917, p.2.

Saskatchewan nativists were enemy aliens, but for the first time Saskatchewan nativists also directed their animosity at French Canadians and Quebec. The federal election over conscription and coalition found many in Saskatchewan holding the same animosity toward French Canadians as they had directed at enemy aliens. Nativists argued, due to the opposition of Quebec to conscription, French Canadians, like enemy aliens, were by no means loyal in thought or in practice to the Empire.

Unlike the provincial election, the main issues of the federal campaign for many in Saskatchewan were not as difficult to grasp. Campaign issues in Saskatchewan, as they were elsewhere in the Dominion, were straight forward: vote for Borden, Union government, conscription, and winning the war; or vote for Laurier, abandoning the needs of the soldiers at the front, disloyalty, losing the war, and being governed by a Laurier - Quebec - enemy alien coalition.<sup>92</sup>

The Unionist press in Saskatchewan openly identified Wilfrid Laurier's position on conscription with support for the Central Powers. It seemed to many that conscription and union government would bring victory and restrict those among them who they believed to be sympathizing with the enemy.<sup>93</sup> The Saskatchewan Herald argued that without Union government and mutual confidence behind Canada's war

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<sup>92</sup> Saskatchewan Herald, December, 13, 1917, p.5.

<sup>93</sup> Melfort Journal, August 3, 1917, p.4.

effort, "it becomes useless to defeat the Hun and protect Liberty and Democracy."<sup>94</sup>

Saskatchewan residents whole-heartedly supported conscription not only because they believed it was necessary for winning the war, but because they expected it would force Quebecers to make many of the same sacrifices so many Saskatchewan families had already made.<sup>95</sup> In one of its editorials, the Saskatoon Daily Star argued what many in the province had felt since the war began; that a disproportionately small number of French Canadians had enlisted from Quebec and that the burden of the war had fallen upon English Canada.<sup>96</sup>

Borden's Government passed the War-time Elections Act on September 17, 1917. It disenfranchised all citizens of enemy alien birth who had been naturalized after March 31, 1902, or who habitually spoke an enemy language. It also disenfranchised members of pacifist religious groups and

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<sup>94</sup> Saskatchewan Herald, December 13, 1917, p.1.

<sup>95</sup> Saskatoon Daily Star, "Cause For Rejoicing," May 19, 1917, p.4. Also see; Ibid., "Recruiting in Quebec," June 15, 1917, p.4. According to the Daily Star, only 679 of Canada's 400,000 troops were French Canadians from Quebec. Also see; Regina Morning Leader, "We Rejoice that it has Come at Last," May 18, 1917, p.4., and Esterhazy Observer and Pheasant Hills Advisor, "Conscription in Quebec," December 6, 1917, p.2.

<sup>96</sup> Saskatoon Daily Star, "Recruiting in Quebec," June 15, 1917, p.4. According to the Daily Star, only 679 of Canada's 400,000 troops were French Canadians from Quebec. Also see; Esterhazy Observer and Pheasant Hills Advisor, "Conscription in Quebec," December 6, 1917, p.2.

other conscientious objectors. Exceptions were made for those who had sons, grandsons, or brothers serving overseas in the Canadian forces. In addition to removing the franchise from these former voters, the War-time Elections Act gave the franchise to a group of new voters; wives, widows, mothers, sisters, and daughters of members of the Canadian forces, who had served or were serving overseas.<sup>97</sup>

The War-Time Elections Act received little opposition within Saskatchewan society. As elsewhere in the west, there had always been a level of concern surrounding the influence of the immigrant in politics. During the war-time election these concerns intensified, as it continued to be argued that the immigrant's lack of political knowledge had made him the tool of the electoral machine and the pawn of Liberal politicians. Conditions brought about by the war intensified these feelings and brought proposals advocating the disenfranchisement of enemy aliens from editorialists, veteran's groups, and even from the Provincial Equal Franchise Board of Saskatchewan.<sup>98</sup> The Melfort Journal, for example, demanded the disenfranchisement of enemy aliens and asked local residents if they were prepared to allow the House of Commons, after the upcoming election, to be dominated by thirty-five or forty members who owe their

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<sup>97</sup> John Herd Thompson, The Harvests of War, p.126.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid., p.126-27.

election to the votes of Hungarian and German reservists "who are now given British citizenship, and who will out vote Canadian soldiers at the front."<sup>99</sup>

Throughout the election campaign, Unionist speeches, advertisements and editorials, appealed to the prejudices of Western Canadians by keeping an anti-Quebec and anti-enemy alien theme at the forefront of debate.<sup>100</sup> They asked residents if they were willing to put control of their future in the hands of Quebec and the enemy aliens, one who will neither pay nor fight and the other who is a slacker and a pro-German. One such message that ran in the Saskatchewan Herald, declared a Laurier victory would mean two things; quitting the war and deserting Saskatchewan boys in the trenches, and putting the control of the Canadian government in the hands of enemy aliens and French Canadians, who have shirked their duty since the war began.<sup>101</sup>

Saskatchewan residents, in their growing war-time anxiety about the loyalty of new immigrant groups, did not limit their nativist attacks upon immigrants from the enemy nations. Nativism in Saskatchewan was also directed toward

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<sup>99</sup> Melfort Journal, August 3, 1917, p.4. For similar sentiment see; Esterhazy Observer and Pheasant Hills Advisor, "War Times Election Act," November 8, 1917, p.4.

<sup>100</sup> Esterhazy Observer and Pheasant Hills Advisor, "Political Notes," December 13, 1917, p.2.

<sup>101</sup> Saskatchewan Herald, December 13, 1917, p.5.

members of religious pacifist sects, most notably the Mennonites. Resentment of pacifist groups had built up in Saskatchewan during the war because of their separatism, pacifism, resistance to compulsory schooling, and their use of the German language.<sup>102</sup> In particular Saskatchewan nativists were disturbed by their exemption from military service, granted them by the War Measures Act. It was believed that due to their exemption pacifists were allowed to prosper during the war, while others shed their blood that they might keep their liberty. Under the Act, citizens were granted the right to apply for an exemption from military service. Those considered engaged in employment judged as essential to the war effort could be granted an exemption by local tribunals in their communities. Although nativists were wholeheartedly in favour of conscription, many believed that exemptions should be granted to loyal citizens doing their part to win the war at home in essential services, such as farmers and tradespeople involved in the food production, munitions and other crucial industries.<sup>103</sup> It was the slacker that nativists were concerned about, those otherwise healthy men of military

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<sup>102</sup> Howard Palmer, Patterns of Prejudice, p.50.

<sup>103</sup> S.A.B., Martin Papers, Armed Forces: Exemptions, 1917-1918, D.L.Campbell of Caron to Martin, december 29, 1917, p.9,418-19. Also see; Ibid., Dunning Papers, Greater Productivity Campaign: Exemptions of Farmers from Military Service, 1917-1918, John L. Rooke of Togo to Dunning, November 19, 1917, p.42,549-50



age, not engaged in essential services, but yet unwilling to make the enlistment sacrifice.<sup>104</sup> They were confident the Military Service Act, even with its system of exemptions, would provide enough men to fulfil Canada's obligation at the front.<sup>105</sup> It was for this reason as well that large scale nativist attacks were not directed at pacifist religious groups in Saskatchewan until the federal government's wholesale cancellation of exemptions from conscription in April, 1918.

As the war became more bitter, particularly after the repeal of exemptions and an increased number of Canadian troops were demobilized because of wounds, tolerance of pacifist sects became more grudging. Many in the province renewed calls for internment, disfranchisement, and the conscription of pacifists for desperately needed agricultural help to support the war effort.<sup>106</sup>

Such animosity was almost unanimously evident among Saskatchewan's press corps, veteran's organizations, patriotic groups, and civilian population. The Lloydminster Times, in one editorial, displayed what had become the predominant attitude. The Times argued that pacifists, by

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<sup>104</sup> S.A.B., Martin Papers, Armed Forces: Exemptions, 1917-1918, A. MacArthur of Uren to Martin, January 21, 1918, p.2,426-27.

<sup>105</sup> S.A.B., Saskatchewan Grain Growers' Association: Minutes and Reports, 1915-1917, p.52.

<sup>106</sup> John Herd Thompson, Harvests of War, p.81.

refusing to fight for the nation of their adoption, a nation that gave them refuge from all those who oppressed them, were indirectly defending "Hun" brutalities and therefore pro-German.<sup>107</sup> Such attitudes increased dramatically during the last year of the war. "There is a coldly savage indifference in the self styled pacifist," declared the Saskatchewan Herald:

who attempts to halt the war to make peace and liberty possible in the world, for he would rather see whole populations suffering in German slavery than see them defend themselves with arms. It is this strange callousness to suffering, which sooner or later, and often unconsciously betrays the pacifist into pro-Germanism; there is an affinity between his cruel willingness to see people suffer without striking back at the brutality of the German who wishes to strike the helpless. The so-called "pacifist" usually defends the German indirectly...these "pacifists" usually do not recognize there own chill for what it really is: they pretend a superior morality.<sup>108</sup>

As the war entered its fourth year and Saskatchewan residents found it more difficult to see its end, anti-pacifist rhetoric found its way more frequently into the editorial pages. In addition, with the return of a growing list of wounded, unemployed and bitter veterans, Canadians in the west led the nation in their demands for the confiscation of the pacifist's property and their

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<sup>107</sup> Lloyminster Times, "The Callous Pacifist Usually Defends Hun Brutalities Indirectly," April 18, 1918, p.6.

<sup>108</sup> Saskatchewan Herald, April 18, 1918, p.2.

disenfranchisement.<sup>109</sup> In fact, as the war dragged on, it seemed to many that Mennonites and Doukhobors were actually profiting financially from the war through the cultivation of food stuffs, while Canadians had made the ultimate sacrifice. As a result of these feelings, Saskatchewan veterans' groups joined church and patriotic organizations in demanding the removal of rights of citizenship from pacifist groups and conscientious objectors.<sup>110</sup>

Nativist agitation in Saskatchewan directed toward pacifist groups reached drastic proportions after the United States entered hostilities. Large numbers of Mennonites and Hutterites made their way to Canada to escape a war crazed, oppressive atmosphere in the U.S. and a real threat of compulsory military service.<sup>111</sup>

The total number of Hutterites and Mennonites who entered the Dominion in 1918 to escape repercussions south of the border is difficult to ascertain, since many later returned after being granted amnesty by President

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<sup>109</sup> Lloydminster Times, "Claims Against Enemy Aliens," April 26, 1917, p.3., also see; Melfort Journal, "Discuss Conscription and Alien Labour," November 23, 1917, p.1.

<sup>110</sup> Melfort Journal, "The Man Without a Country," September 28, 1917, p.8.

<sup>111</sup> Thomas P. Socknat, Witness Against War: Pacifism in Canada 1900-1945, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987), p.77.

Wilson.<sup>112</sup> In Saskatchewan, newspapers anxious to ban their entry put the figures as high as 30,000 to 60,000, but the Hon. J.A. Calder, Minister of Immigration and Colonization, estimated that not more than 500-600 Mennonites and not more than 1,000 Hutterites had entered Canada during 1918.<sup>113</sup> Regardless of the exact numbers, those reported by the Saskatchewan press, combined with emotional strains of four years of costly war, and the growing bitterness of returned soldiers, only served to heighten hostility in the province toward pacifist religious sects. Their mode of life, their German language, their opposition to war, and their resistance to assimilation, could no longer be tolerated in the climate of hate which the war had generated.<sup>114</sup> Nativists let their animosity be known during the autumn of 1918, when mounting public hostility erupted in demonstrations against the new Mennonites at Swift Current, Moose Jaw, and Regina.<sup>115</sup>

By 1918, members of pacifist religious groups were considered to be undesirable and unassimilable. Agitation against them by patriotic and veterans' groups across the province, with help from similar organizations in the west,

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<sup>112</sup> Canadian Mennonite Bible College Heritage Centre Archives, Hereafter cited as C.M.B.C.H.C.A. George H. Reimer, "Canadian Mennonites and World War I," p.43.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid., p.43-44.

<sup>115</sup> Thomas Socknat, Witness Against War, p.77-78.

succeeded in putting pressure on the federal government to pass a series of Orders-in-Council aimed specifically in their direction. On October, 25, 1918, the federal cabinet passed an Order-in-Council which cancelled privileges granted Mennonites in 1873, making them subject to military service and eliminating their special education and language rights.<sup>116</sup> Also, public pressure resulted in the passage in June, 1919 of an additional Order-in-Council which specifically barred the entry of Mennonites, Doukhobors, and Hutterites into the Dominion on the grounds that they were:

Undesirable, owing to their peculiar customs, habits, modes of living, and methods of holding property, and because of their probable inability to become readily assimilated or to assume the duties and responsibilities of Canadian citizenship within a reasonable time after entry.<sup>117</sup>

A war weary Saskatchewan public welcomed the Armistice of November, 1918 with relief and rejoicing. Saskatchewan society greeted returning troops with cheers, civic receptions and optimism. It was widely assumed that soldier reabsorption into civilian life would be a simple matter; and that once this had been accomplished, Saskatchewan would witness a rebirth of the growth that had been anticipated before the outbreak of hostilities. In the legislature, Premier Martin displayed such optimism when he commented

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<sup>116</sup> C.M.B.C.H.C.A. George, H. Reimer, "Canadian Mennonites and World War One," p.48-49.

<sup>117</sup> Howard Palmer, Patterns of Prejudice, p.53., Also see; George H. Reimer, p.48-49.

that post-war reconstruction simply meant the beginning of Saskatchewan's development again, at the point where it left off when war was declared. He announced that the province wanted increased railway development, better roads, immigrants of a more desirable quality, and better schools.<sup>118</sup> Such sentiment was shared by a majority of Saskatchewan's population; but the fact was, where it left off was not there any more, and returned soldiers and welcoming civilians faced a new and unfamiliar future.<sup>119</sup>

The return to peace, however, did not heal the ethnic and class divisions that had developed in the province during the war.<sup>120</sup> Instead, Anglo-Canadians who, during the war, had learned to despise Germans, Austro-Hungarians, and members of pacifist religious sects, had little difficulty transferring their aroused passions to members of Saskatchewan's growing militant labour ranks.<sup>121</sup>

Following the Armistice, enemy aliens in Saskatchewan and across western Canada continued to be considered a threat to Canadian society. But rather than being perceived as pro-German sympathizers, conspiring to win the war for

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<sup>118</sup> John Archer, Saskatchewan: A History, p.186.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid.

<sup>120</sup> J.W. Brennan, "A Political History of Saskatchewan," p.378.

<sup>121</sup> Donald Avery, Dangerous Foreigners: European Immigrant Workers and Labour Radicalism in Canada, 1896-1932, (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1983), p.76.

the Kaiser, they were now associated with causing civil unrest in Canada's labor unions, an attitude that gradually grew throughout the post-war period and climaxed during the Winnipeg General Strike in June, 1919. Enemy aliens were linked to a world wide conspiracy by Russian Soviet and German Spartican agents to influence Canada's workforce and engineer a Bolshevik revolution to overthrow the nation's democratic institutions.<sup>122</sup>

The task of locating occupations for returned soldiers would prove difficult. The federal government's efforts, through the Soldier Settlement Board, to assist veterans in taking up homesteads and start them farming with stock and equipment had been a disappointment. The vast majority of former farmers were not interested in agriculture and chose instead to seek jobs in urban centres. Employment was scarce, however, as apart from the construction industry, there were few opportunities in the larger communities.<sup>123</sup> Some businesses in the province displayed a willingness to alleviate the problem by replacing foreign workers with

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<sup>122</sup> For examples of this new image see: Qu'Appelle Progress, "To Sow Seeds of Revolution," June 19, 1919, p.2. In its editorial The Progress, reported that there were over 173,000 "Bolsheviki" secret agents working in Canada and the United States to bring about revolution in North America by influencing the vulnerable working classes. Also see, Saskatchewan Herald, "The Winnipeg Strike," June 14, 1919, p.2. Similar views were expressed in The Herald when it argued that Canada's Labour Force had unfortunately been led into the "Red Conspiracy" and were being used by Bolshevik conspirators to bring about revolutionary movements.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid., p.413-414.

returned soldiers, and the provincial government, in an attempt to do its part, gave preference to returned soldiers when filling vacancies in the civil service.<sup>124</sup>

Throughout the war, Saskatchewan experienced a vast increase in the cost of living, making it difficult for a large segment of the population to acquire many necessities of life by the spring of 1919.<sup>125</sup> These deteriorated economic conditions, combined with growing unemployment and a mounting impatience with the timid cautiousness of the eastern dominated Trades and Labour Congress, gave rise to a new and radical wing of the western labour movement.<sup>126</sup>

This new militancy of western labour found expression in the formation of the One Big Union (O.B.U.) and in a series of strikes across the country during the spring and summer of 1919.<sup>127</sup> Established at the Western Labour Conference in Calgary in March 1919, to which Saskatchewan

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<sup>124</sup> Ibid. Among those businesses in Saskatchewan which declared a willingness to replace enemy alien employees with returned veterans, were the Quaker Oats Company and the C.P.R.

<sup>125</sup> Saskatoon Daily Star, "Conflicting Views of capital and Labour," May 6, 1919, p.4. According to Department of Labour Statistics, since 1913 the cost of grain and fodder in Canada increased 131 per cent, animals and meats 86 per cent, dairy products 67 per cent, other food stuffs 110 per cent, woolens 209 per cent, cottons 119 per cent, hides and tallow 76 per cent, boots and shoes 39 per cent, farm implements 114 per cent, fuel and lighting 87 per cent, building materials 100 per cent, and home furnishings increased 150 per cent.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid.

<sup>127</sup> Brennan, p.415.



labour had sent seventeen delegates, the provincial O.B.U. at once set to work to convince their fellow Saskatchewan trade unionists of the wisdom of the decision taken at Calgary to form a single industrial organization of all workers, that would be independent of the international craft unions which dominated the T.L.C."<sup>128</sup>

In Saskatchewan, as elsewhere in the west, the growing militancy of organized labour was demonstrated by the fact that workers were willing to use the strike weapon more often. While there had been only two disputes in the province during each of 1914 and 1915, this number increased to six in 1916 and fell briefly to five in 1917, before jumping to nine in the final year of the war.<sup>129</sup>

When the federal government created the Royal Commission on Industrial Relations in an attempt to discover reasons for the growing industrial unrest across the nation, revolutionary rhetoric presented to the commission served to heighten public suspicion of the emergence of radical Bolsheviks in the ranks of Canadian labour. While visiting Saskatchewan in May 1919, the Commission heard testimony from members of the business community and representatives of organized labour. It was the testimony of Joseph Sambrook, secretary of the Regina Trades and Labour Council,

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<sup>128</sup> Ibid., p.416.

<sup>129</sup> Walter J.C. Cherwinski, "Organized Labour in Saskatchewan: The T.L.C. Years, 1905-1945," (Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Alberta, 1972), p.55

which raised public concern over the seemingly revolutionary growth of western unionism in Saskatchewan. In his testimony before the Commission, Sambrook advocated the adoption of the Russian Soviet form of government. He charged that the present system, the choosing of candidates, their method of election, the organization of Parliament and the cabinet, were framed in such a way "as to avoid the influence of the public will and to allow an invisible government to direct national affairs almost wholly in the interest of the junkers and profiteers."<sup>130</sup> Sambrook's testimony gained a considerable amount of publicity in the local press and served to strengthen suspicions within Saskatchewan society that the O.B.U. was connected in some way with events in Russia and Europe.<sup>131</sup>

Thus on May 15, when workers answered the call of the Winnipeg Trades and Labour Council and entered a general strike in support of workers in the building and metal trades for higher wages and the right of collective bargaining, anti-radical nativism reached its peak. To a large portion of Saskatchewan's population, the Winnipeg General Strike seemed to be the beginning of a "Bolshevik"

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<sup>130</sup> S.A.B. Canada. Royal Commission on Industrial Relations, testimony before the Commission on May 8, 1919, Regina, Saskatchewan, p.1,119-1,211.

<sup>131</sup> Brennan, p.417.

conspiracy to overthrow constituted authority in Canada.<sup>132</sup> It was argued that alien Bolsheviks were brought into Canada to lead the nation's labour force into revolution. The Winnipeg General Strike was believed to be the result of a Bolshevik mission to spread socialist ideals among labor, in an attempt to foster general strikes and bring the release of enemy alien prisoners, actively working for the German government in Canada.<sup>133</sup>

In reaction to sympathetic strikes in Regina, Saskatoon, and Moose Jaw, several segments of Saskatchewan society accused enemy alien Bolshevik agitators of influencing the Saskatchewan public with revolutionary ideals. When labor men walked off the job in Regina for example, the Regina Leader issued the following warning to the strikers:

No usurpation of the rights and powers of civic government will be tolerated in Regina. There will be no recognition of permits from any strike committee to do business in this city. There will be nothing resembling a Soviet created here. Law and order will be maintained and, the strikers to the contrary notwithstanding, the business of this country will go on.

If organized labour decides to quit work, in order to express in a mistaken way their sympathy with organized labour in Winnipeg, they cannot be prevented from doing

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<sup>132</sup> Saskatoon Daily Star, May, 17, 1919, p.1., and Turner's Weekly, "Some Aspects of the Strike," June 7, 1919, p.6-8. The workers involved in the original dispute were employed by The Vulcan Iron Works, Manitoba Bridge and Iron Works, and The Dominion Bridge Company.

<sup>133</sup> Saskatoon Daily Star, June 11, 1919, p.12.

so, but other men will organize to carry on the essential services of the community.<sup>134</sup>

Four members of Saskatoon's city council, including its Mayor, F.R. Macmillan, local representatives of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, and The International Association of Fire Fighters, travelled to Winnipeg to observe the developments and devise a strategy to bring Saskatoon's sympathetic strike to a satisfactory conclusion. From Winnipeg, Saskatoon's delegation reported that the strike leaders' ultimate goal was to gain the release of political prisoners, actively working for the German government in Canada, and to establish the Russian form of Soviet government and the German Spartican movement in Canada.<sup>135</sup> The delegates claimed that no part of the country would be safe in the future, if the Winnipeg strike and sympathetic strikes in Saskatchewan and elsewhere were successful.<sup>136</sup> Mayor Macmillan and his delegation issued the following statement concerning their position on labour unrest in the nation and the threat of a Bolshevik revolution:

We are convinced after having viewed the Winnipeg strike situation from every angle and from the viewpoint of employee and employer, that there is a

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<sup>134</sup> Regina Leader, May 27-28, 1919, cited in Brennan, p.418.

<sup>135</sup> Saskatoon Daily Star, "Delegation Says 'Peg Strike Not Deserving of Saskatoon Support," June 2, 1919, p.1 and p.3.

<sup>136</sup> Ibid.

sinister motive among some of the labour leaders underlying the negotiations leading up to and during the strike, to establish the principle of the O.B.U. and to overthrow constitutional authority.

We are strongly of the opinion that no sympathetic strike should be called in Saskatoon in support of the sympathetic strike in Winnipeg and we further strongly urge, that all workers at present on strike in Saskatoon, return to work immediately.<sup>137</sup>

This "red scare" attitude was shared by the majority of the province's press corps. The Qu'Appelle Progress displayed many of the same views when it argued that the situation in Winnipeg was not in fact an industrial strike, as had previously been known in Canada:

but an attempt at revolution - not merely an industrial revolution, but a genuine political revolution ... the complete overthrow of existing forms of responsible constitutional government.<sup>138</sup>

Anti-radical nativists across the province demanded the federal government deal with this new form of enemy agitation. Calls were made by the Saskatchewan press for the immediate suppression of Bolshevik activity in the country and the deportation or imprisonment of those responsible for fostering socialist militant ideals in the minds of the Canadian worker.

An editorial in the Qu'Appelle Progress summed up these sentiments:

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<sup>137</sup> Ibid.

<sup>138</sup> Qu'Appelle Progress, June 19, 1919, p.6. Also see; Saskatoon Daily Star, "The Winnipeg Strike," May 23, 1919, p.4.

The time has arrived when the Federal government must bestir itself to control these red agitators and revolutionists, and if they cannot be controlled they should be deported....<sup>139</sup>

The return to peace in 1918 did not serve to lessen ethnic hatred brought about by almost five years of brutal and costly war. Anglo-Saxon nativism directed toward Germans, Austro-Hungarians and members of religious pacifist groups found a new target during the post-war period, in the radical labourer. The red scare atmosphere created within Saskatchewan served to heighten already bitter feelings Saskatchewan's Anglo-Saxon population held for the enemy aliens. Calls for increased restrictions came from all quarters of Saskatchewan, demanding the eradication of radical labour men from the Dominion in the form of arrests and the eventual deportation of those responsible for the movement.

The period from 1914 to 1920 served to intensify anti-immigrant sentiment in Saskatchewan. Prior to the outbreak of the Great War, many residents had already acquired negative assumptions toward those among them of non-Anglo-Saxon origin. German residents of the province, however, did not experience such sentiment. Instead, before the

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<sup>139</sup> Qu'Appelle Progress, "The Winnipeg Strike," June 12, 1919, p.7. For further evidence of the Saskatchewan press calling for the deportation of alien Bolshevik agitators see Saskatoon Daily Star, "Conflicting Views of Labor and Capital," May 6, 1919, p.4., and June 7, 1919, p.1., Turner's Weekly, "Bolshevism," May 24, 1919, p.5., and Saskatchewan Herald, "The Winnipeg Strike," June 14, 1919, p.2.

outbreak of hostilities, Germans were considered to be among Canada's most cherished and respected citizens. The experience of the Great War however, served to transform these attitudes, as the German image became that of the despised enemy of all mankind, the "Barbarous Hun." Other immigrant groups from enemy nations, however, namely Ukrainians from the Austro-Hungarian provinces of Galicia and Bukovina, had never been as well respected as those of German ancestry. Austro-Hungarians before the war were considered by Saskatchewan nativists to be among Canada's least desired immigrants. Central and eastern Europeans were considered to be unintelligent, dirty, backward, and susceptible to vices and other weaknesses of low morals and upbringing. These attitudes intensified during the course of the Great War, as notions of Anglo-Saxon superiority and about the threat posed by immigrants to Anglo-Saxon institutions were transformed into public policy. Nativists in Saskatchewan, because of the strains of war, demanded and, along with others in western Canada, were responsible for the enactment of restrictive measures and legislation designed to control those among them considered to be a threat to Anglo-Saxon institutions. It was felt in almost every section of the province, that immigrants from enemy nations should be interned, have their franchise restricted, and their institutions controlled or suppressed. Anglo-Saxon nativists in Saskatchewan were joined in the final

years of the war, with anti-radical nativists in their animosity directed at enemy aliens. This time animosity was directed at a new kind of villain in western Canadian society, the alien bolshevik revolutionary.

As Saskatchewan prepared to enter a new era in its development, the experience of war-time nativism never completely disappeared from the public's mind. With the war behind them and the threat of the red scare atmosphere abated somewhat, Saskatchewan citizens, like others in the west, were anxious to rejuvenate much of the same development they had experienced before the outbreak of hostilities. But the summer of 1914 simply was not there any more. The struggle for further development would prove a difficult undertaking, as nativist attitudes intensified by almost five years of bitter and costly war, could not be easily forgotten.



### Chapter Three

#### Nativism in Saskatchewan During the 1920s

As Saskatchewanians entered the 1920s, anti-foreign and anti-radical nativist sentiment, made manifest during the Great War, had crystallized opinions concerning the desirability of immigrant groups. During the decade of the 1920s, these nativist modes of thought would continue to be expressed in reaction to immigration policy and those considered to be a threat to Saskatchewan's social, political, and cultural institutions.

In the years immediately following the war, residents and business organizations hoped to continue the level of prosperity they had enjoyed before the conflict. After a period of adjustment following the war, Saskatchewan, like the rest of the Canadian west, experienced a decline in labour unrest and a decrease in anti-German sentiment, thus allowing a re-emergence of pre-war concerns about immigration.<sup>1</sup>

Immigration however, was not the only issue on the minds of Saskatchewan residents during the early 1920s. The period was dominated by economic problems generated by a post-war recession that struck both rural and urban centres.<sup>2</sup> In the cities unemployment was of primary concern

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<sup>1</sup> John Archer, Saskatchewan: A History, p.201.

<sup>2</sup> Palmer, Patterns of Prejudice, p.61-62.

as returned soldiers continued to flood Saskatchewan urban centres in a futile search for jobs.<sup>3</sup> In rural areas, the plight of farmers was no less disheartening. With the return to peace, farmers' hopes for a bumper crop in 1919 were dashed by a combination of drought, hail, and grasshopper infestation.<sup>4</sup> Crop failures, a drop in the price and demand for agricultural products, and the federal government's refusal to address concerns about high tariffs caused many prairie farmers to abandon the "old line" political parties. Instead many put their faith in the farmers' movement which had been gaining popularity during the post war period.<sup>5</sup>

A growing threat of unemployment and the disappointments experienced by farmers, led Saskatchewan businessmen, politicians, and the province's social and business elite to renew their support for a boost in immigration to help cure economic ills. It was assumed that by opening Canada's doors to agricultural settlers the problems facing prairie economies would be met head on. Immigrant farmers would provide traffic and freight for the railway companies, buy vacant land, open up new regions for development, and provide a steady market for Canadian

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<sup>3</sup> Archer, p.187.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p.188.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

industry.<sup>6</sup>

Several groups within the province actively set out to promote a resumption of a vigorous immigration policy, including The Western Canada Colonization Association (W.C.C.A.) and the Saskatchewan Land Settlement Association (S.L.S.A.). Created in the spring of 1920, the W.C.C.A. consisted of a number of western landowners, including nine Saskatchewan members, dedicated to the promotion of prairie immigration and the sale and settlement of their vacant lands.<sup>7</sup> The W.C.C.A. argued that western Canada was in dire need of a greater population to develop the nation's agricultural industry and offset the national debt.<sup>8</sup> It desired an increased level of immigration through a selective policy, targeting the promotion of immigration from Great Britain, the United States, and northern Europe.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Palmer, p.64.

<sup>7</sup> S.A.B., Dunning Papers, Federal matters: Colonization Schemes, 1922-1926. Dunning to D. Algar Baily, September 19, 1922, p.29,757. Also see; S.A.B., Pamphlet Collection, Western Canada Colonization Association, "Solution of the Unoccupied Land Problem," (n.d.). Saskatchewan members of the W.C.C.A. included, Major F.J. James, President of the Regina Board of Trade, J.D. Miller, President of the Saskatoon Board of Trade, L.T. Macdonald, Commissioner of the Regina Board of Trade, J.B. Musselman, Secretary of the Saskatchewan Grain Growers Association, Alderman J.K. McInnis of Regina, F.F. Cairns of Saskatoon, and J.H. Kern and John Crawford of Moose Jaw.

<sup>8</sup> S.A.B., Pamphlet Collection, Western Canada Colonization Association, "Solution of the Unoccupied Land Problem," (n.d.).

<sup>9</sup> Preferred nations included countries from northern and central Europe. See, S.A.B., Pamphlet Collection, J.W. Dafoe, "A Square Deal for the Settler," (n.d.). Also see; Saskatoon Daily Star, "Immigration Meeting is Held at Calgary," April 3, 1920, p.3.

To provide support for prospective settlers, the W.C.C.A. hoped to raise one and a half million dollars over a three year period from individuals and corporations including the Hudson's Bay Company, railways, industry moguls, banks, retailers, and mortgage companies who shared their enthusiasm in filling vacant lands.<sup>10</sup>

Joining the W.C.C.A. in their quest was the Saskatchewan Land Settlement Association (S.L.S.A.). Created in April 1919, the S.L.S.A. comprised local land owners and agents interested in the sale of vacant land. Addressing a gathering of businessmen, members of various Boards of Trade, and interested investors in June 1920, S.L.S.A. President, J.H. Haslam of Regina, declared that Canada's most pressing need was an increased population and urged delegates to advocate the resumption of European immigration.<sup>11</sup> Members of the S.L.S.A. argued that European immigration was necessary because settlers Canada desperately needed were not likely to come from Great Britain or the United States. "We must if we want immigration," declared Haslam, "seek it where it is to be procured and that is among the people who made up a large

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and p.9.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Saskatoon Daily Star "Prominent Men Here to Consider Policy of Land Settlement," June 8, 1920, p.3.

part of our foreign immigration before the war."<sup>12</sup>

Maintaining that the future prosperity of Canada depended upon the development of its natural resources and particularly upon the settlement and cultivation of the prairie west, the S.L.S.A. urged the federal government to adopt an aggressive immigration policy.<sup>13</sup>

Enthusiasm surrounding the formation of such "booster" organizations and the support they got from the press, Boards of Trade, and municipal officials across the province is indicative of the widespread belief among many in Saskatchewan that immigration was needed to solve Canada's economic problems.<sup>14</sup> Such sentiment was expressed by various municipal and local business organizations including the Kindersley Board of Trade, Saskatoon Board of Trade, and the Saskatoon Kiwanis Club. It was argued that a vigorous immigration policy would mean added population, new homes, greater development of natural resources, and promotion of new business leading to broad national

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., "Ask Government for Aggressive Action," June 11, 1920, p.3.

<sup>14</sup> For examples of such sentiment see; Saskatoon Daily Star, "Time for Action," June 9, 1920, p.4. and Ibid., "Immigration Resolution, June 11, 1920, p.4. Also see; S.A.B., Dunning Papers, Federal Matters: Colonization Schemes, 1922-1926, A.J. Hansen of Prince Albert to Dunning, April 1, 1925, p.29, 906-912, and S.A.B., Pamphlet Collection, J.W. Dafoe, "A Square Deal for the Settler," (n.d.).

prosperity.<sup>15</sup>

With the hope of a return of prosperous economic conditions, and pressure from western business interests and other immigration boosters, Mackenzie King's Liberal government gradually removed barriers against large scale European immigration.<sup>16</sup> In March 1923, the acting Minister of Immigration and Colonization, Charles Stewart announced that the federal government had initiated a policy to encourage large scale immigration from Great Britain, Scandinavia, Holland, Belgium, France, and Finland.<sup>17</sup> In addition, it was announced that 700,000 dollars had been set aside for a "General Passage Agreement" to provide assistance, by way of loans, to British agricultural families, single farm workers, domestic servants, and juveniles coming under approved sponsorship.<sup>18</sup> Also, by the summer of 1923, it was realized that the Canadian west was in dire need of agricultural workers. To meet this demand, the federal government entered into an agreement with the

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<sup>15</sup> S.A.B., Saskatchewan Grain Growers Association - United Farmers of Canada (Saskatchewan Section), Hereafter cited as S.G.G.A.-U.F.C.(SS), Immigration File, B2-25. Also see; S.A.B., Dunning Papers, Gerald Graham, Commissioner of the Saskatoon Board of Trade to Dunning, April 11, 1923., and M.F. Smeltzer, "Saskatchewan Opinion on Immigration From 1920-1939," (Unpublished Master's Thesis, University of Saskatchewan, 1950) p.24.

<sup>16</sup> Donald Avery, Dangerous Foreigners, p.99.

<sup>17</sup> House of Commons Debates, 1923, p.1084-85.

<sup>18</sup> S.A.B., Report, Saskatchewan Royal Commission on Immigration and Settlement, 1930, p.48.

Canadian National and Canadian Pacific railways to provide 12,000 British harvesters to take off the 1923 crop.<sup>19</sup>

Regarding immigration from European countries, the federal government removed the ban upon citizens of former enemy nations, including, Germany, Austria, Bulgaria, and Turkey. Thus citizens of those countries were permitted to enter Canada as immigrants on the same conditions as other nationalities.<sup>20</sup> In addition, modifications were made to an existing Order-in-Council to allow additional Europeans to secure entry into Canada and in 1924, a number of agreements with railway interests were devised to encourage European immigration.<sup>21</sup>

The new government policy respecting immigration differed from the open door policy which existed in the pre-war period. The new policy was formally selective in nature. Immigrants were welcome to come freely as in 1913; however, it was made clear that settlers from the British Isles would be given preference and could choose from several assisted passage and settlement schemes, designed to promote their successful establishment on the land. Americans, Scandinavians, northern, and western Europeans were also considered members of the preferred classes, since

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<sup>19</sup> Canadian Annual Review, 1923, p.267.

<sup>20</sup> Avery, p.99.

<sup>21</sup> Robert England, The Central European Immigrant in Canada, (Toronto: The Macmillan Company of Canada, 1929), p.20., and Avery, p.99.

these groups were believed to be culturally similar and politically aware of the necessities of life in the Canadian west.<sup>22</sup> On the contrary, central and eastern Europeans continued to be considered members of the non-preferred class of settlers, who could only gain admittance on a selection basis.<sup>23</sup> Only agricultural families planning to establish themselves in farming, or farm labourers and domestic servants sponsored by friends and relatives already in Canada, were generally admitted from these countries.<sup>24</sup>

Despite the optimism displayed by Saskatchewan business representatives and organizations concerning the enactment of a vigorous immigration policy, several groups across the province would not let such policies and projects go unchallenged. Veterans organizations, farm groups and organized labour held the opinion that the Dominion government should attend to matters at home, before beginning large scale immigration campaigns.<sup>25</sup> In the face of economic problems during the early 1920s, combined with disappointing crop yields and little progress in the reduction of tariffs, farmers feared that more newcomers

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<sup>22</sup> Palmer, p.67.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Myron G. G. Gulka-Tiechko, "Inter-War Ukrainian Immigration to Canada, 1919-1939," (Unpublished Master's Thesis, University of Manitoba, 1983), p.75.

<sup>25</sup> See for example; Saskatoon Daily Star, "Act Against Undesirable Enemy Aliens," March 26, 1920, p.1.



would provide undesired economic competition at a time when farmers were trying to cope with a drastic decline in grain prices.<sup>26</sup> At their twenty-second annual convention in January 1923, the S.G.G.A. announced that no additional time and money should be devoted to any increase in immigration or any grandiose colonization schemes, until economic conditions in the province improved.<sup>27</sup>

In addition, the S.G.G.A. expressed concern about groups from some European countries, whom they considered undesirable and unassimilable. A.J. McPhail, Secretary of the S.G.G.A., in a letter to Charles Stewart explained that members of the S.G.G.A. were concerned about the continued practice of large scale immigration schemes involving groups such as Mennonites, who had in the past proven to be resistant to assimilation, ungrateful for the concessions provided them and whose practices and pacifist beliefs were not acceptable to the rest of Saskatchewan society.<sup>28</sup>

Veterans organizations, such as the Great War Veterans Association, the British Empire Service League, as well as some Protestant churches, emphasized a patriotic approach in selecting suitable immigrants, while labour representatives

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<sup>26</sup> Brennan, p.681.

<sup>27</sup> C.A.R. 1923, p.723.

<sup>28</sup> S.A.B., S.G.G.A.-U.F.C.(SS), Immigration File, B2-25., A.J. McPhail to Charles Stewart, December 28, 1922. A.J. McPhail was chosen as Secretary of the S.G.G.A. at its 1923 annual convention. He replaced J.B. Musselman, who resigned as Secretary to accept a position with The Co-operative Elevator Company in 1922.

remained opposed to immigration in general due to the fact that a greater number of immigrants in the labour force would translate into a reduction of wages, and in many cases would result in Canadian workers being replaced by the less expensive European immigrant, who was willing to work longer hours for a lesser wage.<sup>29</sup> Saskatchewan labour representatives attended a Trades and Labour Congress annual meeting with the federal government in January, 1923. At the meeting, labour representatives were adamant about keeping out any possible labour competition. Tom Moore, President of the T.L.C., called the present immigration policy an aid to those groups and individuals who desired to get rich quick, through the method of labour exploitation.<sup>30</sup> He condemned the government's policy and stated labour was opposed to any immigration policy that would admit cheap labour for farms and industries, or would allow the wages and standards of living in Canada to be fixed in Europe.<sup>31</sup>

The Saskatchewan government's opinion regarding immigration during the early 1920s was expressed by the Hon. C.A. Dunning in November 1923, while attending a federal-provincial conference on immigration in Ottawa. Dunning told the conference that he was strongly in favour of

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<sup>29</sup> J.F.C. Wright, Saskatchewan: The History of a Province, (Toronto: Maclelland and Stewart, 1955), p.212.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., p.175.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

selected immigration with a preference for immigrants from Britain, northern Europe, and the United States who had the capital to buy and operate farms, while large numbers of impoverished foreign farm labourers were definitely to be discouraged.<sup>32</sup> He stated that non-preferred immigrants, such as Poles and Ruthenians, were impossible to assimilate and expressed the belief that Canadians were not in favour of allowing the entry of immigrants who are "just one remove from anarchists."<sup>33</sup> He told the federal-provincial conference:

The provinces have a very vital interest in this whole question. We have to maintain schools: we want a class of people who will send their children to school. We have to maintain hospitals: we don't want immigrants who will fill them up or contaminate our own people with epidemics. We have to keep up insane hospitals: We don't want more of the mentally sick. We have to maintain jails; we don't want them filled with foreigners to the exclusion of our own people (laughter.) This wide open door business sounds well but I want it to be understood, in my view, that there must be selection ... we want no cesspools in this country.<sup>34</sup>

The Premier's response is indicative of the feelings expressed by a large segment of Saskatchewan's population. Many preferred a selective policy designed to keep out undesirables who were considered to be unassimilable and

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<sup>32</sup> David E. Smith, Prairie Liberalism, p.134.

<sup>33</sup> Ramsay Cook, ed., The Dafoe - Sifton Correspondence, 1919-1927, Vol. 2, Manitoba Record Society Publications, General Editor W.D. Smith, (Altona: D.W. Friesen and Sons, 1966), p.137., John W. Dafoe to Sir Clifford Sifton, January, 13, 1923.

<sup>34</sup> Cited in Smith, p.134.

supported Bolshevik ideas.

On February 5 the federal government announced that under an agreement with Great Britain, financial assistance would be extended to three types of immigrants. Under the new agreement, children under seventeen would receive a grant covering the cost of their transportation; nominated persons would be provided with an interest free loan to cover transportation costs, and household workers would be given the same loan, but with an added inducement that six pounds would be refunded, provided they remained employed for one year.<sup>35</sup> J.A. Robb, the Minister of Immigration and Settlement, also announced that a Land Settlement Branch of his department had been organized to ensure that new settlers would be directed to locations where they would have the best opportunity of success and be safeguarded from exploitation.<sup>36</sup>

In the summer of 1924, the federal government completed a second agreement with Britain, designed to provide assistance to 3,000 selected families, over a period of three years.<sup>37</sup> The plan, which was scheduled to take effect in the spring of 1925, would be a co-operative agreement between the two governments. Under the agreement, the

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<sup>35</sup> C.A.R., 1924-1925, p.186.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> S.A.B., Report, Saskatchewan Royal Commission on Immigration and Settlement, p.49.

British Government would loan each family up to 300 pounds sterling for livestock and equipment, while the Canadian Government agreed to provide suitable farms and houses, the cost of which would run from 500 to 700 pounds sterling.<sup>38</sup> In return, these loans were to be repaid by the settlers over a twenty-five year period at five percent interest.<sup>39</sup> These new schemes were designed to demonstrate the possibilities of assisted British settlement.

These agreements, however, failed to satisfy the railway companies, business organizations, various boards of trade, newspapers, and ethnic groups who were pressing the federal authorities to open the immigration gates still wider. They argued that only a limited number of British, American, and northern Europeans could be expected, and that in all likelihood only central and eastern Europeans would do the rugged work of clearing unsettled farm land.<sup>40</sup> As a result of added pressure from the railway companies and other business interests, federal Liberals entered into an agreement with the C.P.R. and C.N.R. in September 1925. Under the terms of the "railways agreement" the C.P.R. and C.N.R. were authorized to recruit immigrants from non-preferred central and eastern European countries and settle them in Canada, find employment for farm labourers, and

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<sup>38</sup> C.A.R., 1924-1925, p.187.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Brennan, p.678.

place women and girls in domestic service.<sup>41</sup> The agreement was designed to last for a period of two years and was renewed in October 1927 for an additional three years.<sup>42</sup> The countries included under the agreement were Finland, Switzerland, the Baltic countries, Poland, Romania, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Austria and Hungary.<sup>43</sup>

The influx of central and eastern Europeans who entered the Dominion by way of the railways agreement aroused mixed emotions in Saskatchewan. Business interests, provincial Liberals, and Saskatchewan Members of Parliament welcomed these newcomers. They maintained that Canada desperately needed agricultural settlers to go on the land, provide traffic for railways and expand the domestic market for Canadian manufacturers. Provincial M.P.'s took the stand that Canada on the whole was yet undeveloped, and that there was plenty of room within the country to hold millions of people. C.R. MacIntosh, for example, member for North Battleford, told the House of Commons:

There is a huge growth in our national debt, and our population is practically only nine million. What we need is a greater population, with more real producers on the farms, in the forests, in the mines, and in all the basic industries of Canada, to develop more wealth. That will make it

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<sup>41</sup> John Herd Thompson and Allen Seager, Canada 1922-1939: Decades of Discord, (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1986), p.130. Also see; S.A.B., Report, Saskatchewan Royal Commission Immigration and Settlement, p. 174.

<sup>42</sup> Brennan, p.678.

<sup>43</sup> Gulka-Tiechko, p.136.

easier for us as a people to solve our problems, unite our provinces and make Canada go forward.<sup>44</sup>

Premier Gardiner, while addressing a meeting of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce in Vancouver in 1927, expressed similar sentiment when he told members that Canada desired hardy new settlers, regardless of nationality, to develop the vast wealth stored in the northern hinterland:

We want men, no matter from what nation they come, who are willing to devote their lives to hard labour if they know they will wring a proper reward from their toil. So far as we are concerned, in the most cosmopolitan province in the Dominion, we recognize men of worth, no matter where they come from.<sup>45</sup>

Various Boards of Trade and business organizations unanimously approved of the railways agreement and the increased immigration it would provide. J.A.Curror, Secretary of the Prince Albert Board of Trade, wrote to James Gardiner in May, 1926.<sup>46</sup> In his correspondence, Mr. Curror indicated that his organization was in favour of the efforts of the federal government and looked forward to the improved conditions an increased population would provide

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<sup>44</sup> House of Commons Debates, 1926, p.472-73.

<sup>45</sup> Regina Morning Leader, "New Trade Routes, New Settlers, Required in Canada, Says Gardiner," September 15, 1927, p.1. For similar expressions of opinion also see; Ibid., "Uhrich Defines Class of Migrant Most Wanted in Saskatchewan, Lays British Submergence Ghost," February 3, 1928, p.3.

<sup>46</sup> James G. Gardiner was Minister of Highways in the Dunning government. He became the leader of Saskatchewan's Liberal Party after Dunning accepted the position of Minister of Railways and Canals in Prime Minister Mackenzie King's cabinet in February 1926. See; Norman Ward and David Smith, Jimmy Gardiner: Relentless Liberal (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), p.57-60.

for the province.<sup>47</sup> C.G. Page, a local businessman, in a letter to Charles Hamilton, Minister of Agriculture, maintained that a majority of westerners believed there was a need for increased immigration and that it was in the best interests of Canada to return to her 1913 immigration policy.<sup>48</sup> In addition, Page outlined what he and his colleagues believed would be the benefits of such a policy: a greater population would help combat a growing national debt; it would help develop natural resources, boost manufacturing, and increase the production of all agricultural products. These results would stimulate trade and bring new wealth, which in turn, would provide employment in both the primary and secondary industries.<sup>49</sup> Although government representatives and business organizations favoured a vigorous immigration policy, a number of groups across the province spoke out vehemently against filling the west with non-preferred settlers.

In February 1927, the federal government announced it had extended the railways agreement for an additional three years, maintaining an open door immigration policy. This announcement caused many in the province to step up their opposition to what they considered uncontrolled immigration

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<sup>47</sup> S.A.B., Hamilton Papers, Land Settlement and Immigration File, 1926-1929, Letter from J.A. Currer to James Gardiner, May 6, 1926.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., C.G. Page to C.M. Hamilton, May 14, 1926.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.



practices. Opponents were concerned about the increase in numbers of central and southeastern Europeans, in relation to a perceived steadily decreasing majority of British or Canadian residents in the west.

At the beginning of the Great War residents of central and southeastern European extraction numbered approximately 180,000, comprising 22.5 per-cent of Saskatchewan's population. The province's British and Canadian population maintained its dominance as the majority culture group with 353,098 or roughly 54.5 percent. By the time of the 1921 census, although there was an increase of over 47,000 British residents in Saskatchewan, the majority culture group saw its numbers drop to 52.9 per-cent of the total, and the numbers of residents of the province from the undesirable European nations increase to 207,620 or 27.4 per-cent. In 1926, although the number of British residents in Saskatchewan increased to 416,721, they witnessed a drop once more to comprise 50.8 per-cent of the total as compared to an increase in unpreferred residents who now numbered 241,862 or 29.5 per-cent of the province's total. By the end of the 1920s, Saskatchewan's British population had fallen a full seven per-cent to comprise 47.5 per-cent of the total, compared to an increase in the number of non-preferred continentals, which had reached 32.6 per-cent.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> Archer, Appendix E: "Ethnic Composition of Saskatchewan's Population," p.358.

As residents during the 1920s witnessed a decrease in the size of the majority British culture group and a rise in the numbers of unpreferred foreign immigrants, many began to question the idea that more immigrants were needed to add to the future prosperity of the province. Opponents argued that if immigration was needed at all, it should be more restrictive in nature, targeting settlers from the preferred nations of Britain and the United States. Others maintained that the west had been flooded with central and southeastern Europeans, who, because of poor agricultural conditions and a downturn in the economy, had been released as farm labourers, and were now drifting across Saskatchewan looking for employment. In addition to economic concerns, many were convinced that Ottawa was undermining efforts to assimilate foreign immigrants, by admitting more central and southeastern Europeans, and by continuing to settle them in colonies.<sup>51</sup> They argued that there was a definite decrease in the number of British immigrants entering Canada compared to an increased number of settlers from the non-preferred countries, thereby posing a threat to existing Anglo-Saxon institutions within the province.

The United Farmers of Canada (Saskatchewan Section), at their 1927 convention, maintained that provincial economic problems had not been cured by a vigorous immigration policy. They argued that as long as the government

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<sup>51</sup> Smith, Prairie Liberalism, p.137.

continued to bring unemployed workers from European nations economic problems would be exacerbated across the province.<sup>52</sup>

In 1928, the U.F.C.(S.S.) held a special conference with a number of individuals and groups from across the province to discuss the immigration problem. Those groups present at the conference represented a large cross section of Saskatchewan opinion. Attending were representatives of farm organizations, labour groups, women's associations, veterans' groups, various colonization boards, church organizations and political parties.<sup>53</sup> At the conference, these groups continued to express concern regarding the failure to assimilate immigrants and the consequences. The following resolution was unanimously accepted:

The present policy of bringing in excessive numbers of immigrants is not to the benefit of the Dominion as a whole, in as much as large numbers of recent arrivals are not being

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<sup>52</sup> S.A.B., S.G.G.A-U.F.C.(SS), Immigration Files, 1928-1929, 1947, File B2-26.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid, Report of Immigration Conference, August 14, 1928. The following groups were represented at the Conference:

- U.F.C.(SS)
- U.F.C. Women's Section
- Canadian Legion (Saskatchewan Command)
- Saskatoon Trades and Labour Council
- Saskatchewan Rural Municipalities Association
- Women's British Immigration League
- Netherlands Colonization Bureau
- The Ministerial Association
- The Right Reverend George Exton Lloyd, Anglican Bishop of the Diocese of Northern Saskatchewan
- J.T.M. Anderson, Leader of the Conservative Party of Saskatchewan

assimilated, except at the expense of those who have been resident in Canada for a number of years, accentuating the economic problem and its effect upon the standard of living ... Therefore be it resolved that we urge the federal government to appoint a national commission of Inquiry that shall study the problem of immigration and assimilation from every possible angle.<sup>54</sup>

Veterans were particularly vocal in their opposition to increased levels of foreign immigration. At their 1927 convention in North Battleford, the Saskatchewan Command of the Canadian Legion urged the federal government to take immediate steps to restrict immigration to residents of British and French countries who were assimilable and amenable to Canadian traditions, customs and laws.<sup>55</sup> At the Canadian Legion's national convention, Saskatchewan representatives argued that every Legion local across the province believed a National Committee of Inquiry should be created to conduct a survey of agricultural and mineral resources, report upon the probable extent to which immigrant manpower could be absorbed, and devise a scheme of land settlement for British and Canadian applicants.<sup>56</sup>

Nativists blamed federal immigration policies for increased unemployment, depressed wages, and a rise in Canadian emigration to the United States. In assessing the

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<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> Saskatoon Daily Star, June 11, 1927, p.3.

<sup>56</sup> S.A.B., S.G.G.A.-U.F.C(SS), Immigration Files-General, 1926-1930, 1939, File B2-146.

validity of this argument, it must be determined if Saskatchewan's economy suffered due to increased levels of immigration. During the period, 1926-1930, Saskatchewan's economy grew. A number of good crop years, increased activity by banks and loan companies, and a resurgence of construction activity all pointed to the fact that the province's outlook for the future was bright and optimistic.

It was wheat that made Saskatchewan prosperous and yields continued to be good after 1925.<sup>57</sup> There had been a steady increase in total acreage under crop during the 1926-1930 period. In 1926 there was just under 20 million acres under cultivation. This number increased steadily during the final years of the decade to reach nearly 23 million during the 1929 season.<sup>58</sup> As well, there was an increase in grain production. In 1926 Saskatchewan farmers harvested close to 220 million bushels of wheat. This number jumped to 252 million in 1927 and reached a record 321,215,000 in 1928.<sup>59</sup>

In addition to an increase in production and yields, better crops and higher prices lured old settlers and new ones into the previously abandoned south-west portion of the

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<sup>57</sup> Brennan, "A Political History of Saskatchewan," p.663-64.

<sup>58</sup> Twenty-Fifth Annual Report of the Department of Agriculture of the Province of Saskatchewan For the Twelve Months Ended April 30, 1930. (Hereafter cited, Department of Agriculture Report, 1930.) p.18.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid, p.19.

province and opened new areas for settlement in the northern and woodland districts of the province.<sup>60</sup> As well, an abundant supply of cheap land, combined with better crops and higher prices, stimulated the purchase of farm machinery. The investment by farmers in the purchase of farm implements, it has been argued by Brennan, is a reliable barometer for measuring the state of Saskatchewan's economy.<sup>61</sup> In theory, the degree of investment in farm machinery indicates the level of farmers' purchasing power, and therefore standard of living. Throughout the decade of the 1920s, Saskatchewan farmers' investments in farm implements and machinery were greater than in either Alberta or Manitoba.<sup>62</sup> The number of tractors in operation on Saskatchewan farms increased from 26,674 in 1926 to 43,308 in 1931.<sup>63</sup> In 1926 there were only 148 combine-harvesters in operation on Saskatchewan farms, but by 1928 this number had jumped to 2,356 and to 6,019 in 1931.<sup>64</sup>

Economic growth in Saskatchewan agriculture, arguably, spawned growth in secondary industries across the province.

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<sup>60</sup> S.A.B., Province of Saskatchewan, A Submission by the Government of Saskatchewan to The Royal Commission On Dominion-Provincial Relations, 1937, (Hereafter cited, Saskatchewan Submission), p.138.

<sup>61</sup> See Brennan, p.640.

<sup>62</sup> Saskatchewan Submission, p.139.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid, p.141.

<sup>64</sup> Archer, Saskatchewan: A History, p.204. And Saskatchewan Submission, p.141.

After a period of stagnation and decline this renewed prosperity breathed new life in Saskatchewan's construction industry.

In 1926 alone, the construction of homes, businesses, and capital projects such as hospitals and bridges nearly tripled.<sup>65</sup> Packing houses, cold storage plants, canneries, and creameries were constructed during this period to meet the needs of an expanding agricultural economy.<sup>66</sup> In addition there were 582 grain elevators constructed and nearly 1,000 miles in railway lines laid between 1925 and 1930 to meet requirements fostered by increased levels of wheat production and settlement.<sup>67</sup> It seems, therefore, contrary to the nativist argument that increased immigration was detrimental to Saskatchewan's economic stability, the reverse is evident. Immigration during the latter half of the 1920s did not curtail, but rather fostered economic growth. New areas were opened for settlement, generating an increase in agricultural production. In turn this increase helped boost secondary industries to meet the demands of a larger population and increased production.

In such an atmosphere, two new radical nativist

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<sup>65</sup> Sixth Annual Report of the Bureau of Labour and Industries of the Province of Saskatchewan For the Twelve Months Ended April 30, 1927. (Hereafter cited, Bureau of Labour and Industries Annual Report, 1927.) p.11.

<sup>66</sup> Archer, p.205.

<sup>67</sup> Department of Agriculture Report, 1930. p.37. And, Saskatchewan Submission, p.132.

organizations emerged during the latter half of the 1920s. The Ku Klux Klan and the National Association of Canada appeared on the Saskatchewan scene to lead the nativist campaign in combatting the invasion of Canada by undesirable European and Catholic immigrants. They refuted the arguments of government and business organizations that non-Anglo-Saxon and non-Protestant immigrants were necessary for Canada's economic growth and argued instead that non-Anglo-Saxon, Catholic immigrants threatened to undermine Anglo-Saxon institutions and destroy Canada's racial purity.<sup>68</sup>

One of the most outspoken critics of Canada's open door immigration policy was the Right Rev. George Exton Lloyd, Bishop of the Anglican Diocese of Saskatchewan.<sup>69</sup> Throughout his career in western Canada, Bishop Lloyd had always been an ardent proponent of restrictive immigration and the preservation of the "Britishness" of the west. He emerged during the 1920s as a tenacious opponent of an immigration policy he believed was eroding British

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<sup>68</sup> Palmer, Patterns of Prejudice, p.98.

<sup>69</sup> Bishop Lloyd was born in England in 1861 and educated at St. John's College in London, Wycliffe College, Toronto, and the University of Toronto. He served with The University Company of the Queen's Own Rifles in the Northwest Rebellion in 1885 and was severely wounded. He was the founder of Rothesay College for Boys in New Brunswick, served as chaplain and later became the leader of the Barr colonists at Lloydminster, founded and served as Principal of Emmanuel College in Saskatoon, and was elected Bishop of Saskatchewan in 1922. Pioneers and Prominent People of Saskatchewan (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1924), p.42. Also see; John Hawks, The Story of Saskatchewan and its People, (Regina: S.J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1924), p.765-67.



traditions and institutions in western Canada.<sup>70</sup> In his campaign to protect Canadian society from the evils of everything non-British and non-Protestant, Bishop Lloyd combined Anglo-Saxon and anti-Catholic nativism in his self-appointed crusade of protecting the Canadian west for the Empire. Throughout the decade of the 1920s Bishop Lloyd argued Canada was in danger of losing its British heritage if non-preferred, non-Anglo-Saxon, and non-Protestant immigrants were allowed to continue to pour into the Canadian west.<sup>71</sup> He argued that the west had become a great patchwork quilt of diversified nationalities, who were resistant to assimilation into Canadian life and nationality. "The only condition that these people should ever be allowed to enter Canada," declared the Bishop, "is that they become Canadian citizens and agree to assimilate our ideals and speak our language."<sup>72</sup>

Lloyd demanded, as the only salvation for the retention of Canadianism, a ten year ban on foreign immigration, foreign ideals, and foreign speech. He argued that Canada required a half million British settlers yearly from the British Isles; careful selection of desirable immigrants from Denmark, Sweden, and the United States, and the promise

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<sup>70</sup> Brennan, p.690.

<sup>71</sup> Saskatoon Daily Star, "Bishop Lloyd Pleads for Better Policy on Immigration to Canada," May 6, 1922, p.11.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

from these immigrants that they will conform with Canadian ideals and standards. Lloyd also called for the rigid exclusion of Asians, coloured races, and all other European immigrants; and ten years of arduous work, paid for by the federal government, in assimilating and remoulding the present foreign population of Canada.<sup>73</sup>

Following the renewal of the railways agreement in 1927, Bishop Lloyd stepped up his nativist campaign. In an attempt to rally support for his crusade against non-British and Catholic immigration, Lloyd organized the National Association of Canada (N.A.C.) in 1928.<sup>74</sup> With support from patriotic organizations concerned with preserving British institutions in Canada - the Sons of England, the Grand Orange Lodge, and Royal Canadian Legion - the N.A.C. criticized the federal government's preference for non-British immigrants and demanded to know why the west was being flooded with every kind of "continental", while "Britishers" were few and far between.<sup>75</sup>

Through a series of articles and letters to editors distributed across the country, Bishop Lloyd argued that the railways agreement, by opening the doors of the nation to non-Anglo-Saxon and non-Protestant aliens, would

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<sup>73</sup> Ibid. Also see; Ibid., "Bishop Lloyd Would Ban Alien Immigrants During Next Ten Years," October 18, 1922, p.11.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid., p.691.

<sup>75</sup> Palmer, p.100. Also see; Saskatoon Star, April 21, 1928, p.26.

denationalize and mongrelize Canada, destroying its character as a British nation. He advised readers that the federal Liberals and the railways, who advocated the admission of non-preferred immigrants, believe that in some "magical way" they would become good Canadians in blood, ideals, and institutions. The Bishop declared that nothing could be farther from the truth and informed readers that under the railways agreement Canada could never build a great nation out of twenty or forty different racial groups with different traditions, instincts and ideals.<sup>76</sup> The threat of foreigners, according to Lloyd and his nativist allies, did not merely come from their unacceptable appearance, ignorance of British ways, preference for crime and vice, and their weakness for garlic; the threat included the fact that most immigrants from the backward and non-preferred countries were predominantly Catholic.<sup>77</sup>

In the atmosphere created during the late 1920s with its significant expression of anti-Catholic and Anglo-Saxon nativism, the Ku Klux Klan entered the Saskatchewan fray as

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<sup>76</sup> Saskatoon Daily Star, "Bishop Lloyd on Nation Building," August 29, 1928, p.4., and Ibid., "Bishop Lloyd on Nation Building," September 5, 1928, p.4. Also see; Ibid., "The Immigration Question," April 21, 1918, p.26., and "British Australia, Mongrel Canada," April 27, 1928, p.15.

<sup>77</sup> Martin Robin, Shades of Right: Nativist and Fascist Politics in Canada, 1920-1940, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), p.53. Also see; Toronto Globe, "Flood of Continentals Grave Peril to Canada Asserts Western Bishop," September 17, 1928, p.1 and p.2., and Manitoba free Press, "Charges British are barred From Canada," September 27, 1928, p.10.

one of the most vocal - if not the most vocal - critics of the federal and provincial governments' position on immigration. Klan strategy regarding central and southeastern European immigration was to present these immigrants as posing a threat to the British nationality and Protestantism of Saskatchewan society. At a time when a large number of Saskatchewanians believed that non-British immigrants posed a threat to their Anglo-Saxon values, Klan rhetoric and propaganda gained in popularity and allowed it to thrive within the province.

Entering the Saskatchewan scene near the end of 1926, the Klan experienced a meteoric rise, and enjoyed a brief period of prominence, before suffering a short decline to oblivion.<sup>78</sup> The first organizers of the Klan in Saskatchewan were Lewis A. Scott, his son Harold, and Hugh Finley (Pat) Emmons. They arrived in Saskatchewan in the latter half of November, 1926 and wasted little time distributing Klan propaganda and beginning their membership drive.<sup>79</sup> They took out newspaper ads announcing public lectures and distributed a pamphlet outlining the Klan's objectives and principles entitled "Why I intend to become a

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<sup>78</sup> Patrick Kyba, "The Saskatchewan General election of 1929," (Unpublished Master's thesis, University of Saskatchewan, 1964), p.17.

<sup>79</sup> S.A.B., Papers of Hon. J.G. Gardiner, (Hereafter cited as Gardiner Papers) Micro. R-7.4, Reel 7, "Transcript of Statement made by Hugh F. Emmons in the Presence of C.E. More, as an Attorney Representing the Canadian Government at Indianapolis Indiana, February 23, 1928," p.12,531-535.

Klan Member" by slipping it under doors and depositing it in mail boxes.<sup>80</sup>

In the United States the Klan had built its organization around three themes: antipathy to Negroes, Jews, Catholics, and immigrants; the promotion of the public school as a patriotic and Protestant institution; and opposition to crime and vice, particularly bootlegging.<sup>81</sup> In modifying these themes to suit Saskatchewan conditions, Klan organizers devoted little attention to Negroes and Jews; instead they directed their hostility at non-Anglo-Saxon immigrants and the Roman Catholic Church, by demanding stricter immigration laws to exclude non-preferred immigrants and the retention of English as the only official language of the province.<sup>82</sup> In their drive to gain members, the Emmons-Scott gang organized large gala events, advertised as revival meetings of the Ku Klux Klan. Here, prospective Klansmen witnessed burning crosses, heard solemn versions of the national anthem and hymns such as "Onward Christian Soldiers" sung by Klansmen dressed in full Klan regalia. The pinnacle of these events was always a powerful

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<sup>80</sup> William Calderwood, "Pulpit, Press and Political Reaction to the Ku Klux Klan in Saskatchewan," in S. M. Trofimenkoff, The Twenties in Western Canada: Papers of the Western Canadian Studies Conference, March 1972, (Ottawa: National Museum Of Man, National Museums of Canada, 1972), p.191.

<sup>81</sup> Brennan, p.693-94.

<sup>82</sup> See for example; S.A.B., Gardiner Papers, Saskatoon Star, "Offers Vigorous Defence of Klan", March 9, 1929.

speech from Emmons outlining Klan values and its purpose in Saskatchewan.<sup>83</sup>

The Klan's appeal was immediate. By the end of 1927 the Regina chapter, where they had established their provincial headquarters, had enrolled one-thousand members.<sup>84</sup> In the rural areas, the Klan was successful in establishing chapters south of Regina, east along the C.P.R line to the Manitoba boarder, and into the southwest region of the province to the Alberta boundary. Local Konklaves sprang up in Ceylon, Radville, Indian Head, Grenfell, Whitewood, Moosomin, Kipling, South Qu'Appelle, Fort Qu'Appelle, Mossbank, Limerick, Lafleche, Kincaid, Hazenmore, Swift Current, Shaunavon, Assiniboia, and other centres, including the tiny community of Woodrow, which boasted 153 Klansmen, 31 of whom were women, of a total population of 218.<sup>85</sup>

The Klan's greatest success took place 40 miles west of Regina in Moose Jaw. Located at the end of the Soo-Line from Chicago, Moose Jaw during the post-war period, quickly acquired a reputation of being a haven for criminals and hoodlums, who saw the end of the Soo-Line as a good place to hide out. It became a city where bootlegging, prostitution,

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<sup>83</sup> Robin, p.30.

<sup>84</sup> Julian Sher, White Hoods: Canada's Ku Klux Klan, (Vancouver: New Star Books, 1983), p.49.

<sup>85</sup> Robin, Shades of Right, p.30-31.

gambling, dope peddling, blackmail, and extortion flourished along River Street, virtually ignored by the corrupt police department of Chief W. P. Johnson.<sup>86</sup> In fact during one particularly hostile crime wave in 1924, the day shift of the city police force locked up the night shift officers for plundering stores and warehouses.<sup>87</sup> In this uneasy atmosphere of crime and vice, Klan organizers rode into Moose Jaw early in 1927, set themselves up at the Royal George Hotel, and adopting the slogan, "clean up River Street" as their battle cry, quickly focused their attacks upon the criminal elements of the community.<sup>88</sup>

The Klan's appeal in Moose Jaw was immediate. In October, 1927, J.J. Maloney boasted to a gathering of klansmen in Regina that the Moose Jaw Klavern had the largest membership in the province. He declared the Moose Jaw chapter had a membership of 2,300 businessmen, Christian gentlemen, and leading citizens who had "banded together for the common purpose of the preservation of the integrity of the British Empire and the removal of vice as far as they

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<sup>86</sup> James H. Gray, Red Lights on the Prairies (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1973), p.96-100. Also see; S.A.B., Gardiner Papers, Arthur Davies of Moose Jaw to Gardiner, February 2, 1928, p.12,066-67. Also see; George, H. Robertson, "Moose Jaw: Playboy of the Prairies," Maclean's, May 1, 1951, p.14-15, p.54-55, and p. 57.

<sup>87</sup> George H. Robertson, "Moose Jaw," p.57.

<sup>88</sup> S.A.B., Gardiner Papers, "Testimony of Hugh F. Emmons," p.12,560. Also see; Robertson, 'Moose Jaw,' p.57., and John Archer, Saskatchewan: A History, p.207.

can."<sup>89</sup> It was here, in the centre with its largest popularity, that the Klan held its first giant rally in Saskatchewan in June 1927. Organizers sent invitations and circulars to promote the event and arranged for transportation and accommodations for Klansmen attending from out of town.<sup>90</sup> The Moose Jaw Times reported that a crowd of between 7,000 and 8,000 had gathered for the gala event, just beyond the western limits of the city on Caribou Street. Klansmen had come from every corner of the province, including a group of 435 from the Regina Klavern who arrived on a special train arranged for by Hawkins and Lewis Scott, and chauffeured to the konclave by a cavalcade of Klan cars. They were joined by large contingents from neighbouring klaverns in Alberta, Manitoba, and from some centres in the United States.<sup>91</sup>

During the event, the crowd was treated to what seemed more like a Christian revival meeting than a promotional meeting of the Ku Klux Klan. They were diverted by prayers, hymns, and a towering 150 foot fiery cross. Ministers gave

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<sup>89</sup> Regina Morning Leader, "Ku Klux Klan Not Dead Yet Meeting Told," October 5, 1927, p.8.

<sup>90</sup> See for example, Regina Morning Leader, "Ku Klux Klan Grand Open Air Spectacle: Moose Jaw, Tuesday Next, June 7," June 4, 1927, p.20. Arrangements were made for those attending from out of town for transportation on special trains. For example, at the cost of \$1.50, a Klan train was scheduled to leave Regina at 7 p.m. and return by 11:30 p.m. on the evening of the event.

<sup>91</sup> Moose Jaw Evening Times, "Thousands attend First Great Open Air Meeting Klan," June 8, 1927, p.7.



sermons on topics such as the importance of patriotism as the foundation of all Christian nations, and the dangers of mixed marriages, while Klansmen in full regalia sought out memberships and donations from prospective candidates.<sup>92</sup>

When Emmons stepped up to speak he announced that shortly after his arrival in Moose Jaw he received threats from the criminal elements of town that "his back was against the wall" if he persisted in his attempts to clean up River Street. One spectator at the event, recalled that Emmons had a clear message for the River Street gang:

The River Street gang have threatened to murder me. Let them do it. Then I ask you, brothers and sisters to skin my body and make it into a drum. Then beat the drum in River Street to the Glory of God and the Ku Klux Klan.<sup>93</sup>

The growth of the Ku Klux Klan in Saskatchewan was phenomenal. Then as quickly as they arrived on the Saskatchewan scene, Hugh Emmons and the Scotts disappeared in September 1927.<sup>94</sup> Not only were they gone, but they vanished with over \$100,000 in membership fees and quarterly dues collected from Saskatchewan klansmen.<sup>95</sup> It would not

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<sup>92</sup> Ibid. Also see; Regina Morning Leader, "Huge Cross Burned as Klan Hold Big Meet at Moose Jaw," June 8, 1927, p.1.

<sup>93</sup> C.H. Higginbotham, Off the Record: The C.C.F. in Saskatchewan, (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1968), p.29.

<sup>94</sup> Regina Morning Leader, 'Ku Klux Klan Not Dead Yet Meeting Told," October 5, 1927, p.8.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid., "No Warrant Yet Out for Arrest of Klan Man," October 17, 1927, p.10., The Leader, estimated that Emmons disappeared from Saskatchewan with approximately \$1,313., while no estimate of funds taken by Lewis A. Scott and Harold Scott were given. Premier

have been surprising, if after being abandoned by its leaders, the Saskatchewan Klan had disintegrated. Rather, the reverse took place as it expanded over the next few months and grew under new leadership. Shortly after the disappearance of Emmons and the Scotts, J. H. Hawkins arrived early in October from Toronto, to take control of the Klan's Saskatchewan operation.<sup>96</sup>

A former school teacher, self-proclaimed lawyer, and optometrist, Hawkins, who had spent time in Toronto as the Canadian Klan's Imperial Klailiff, entered the Saskatchewan scene, where people were willing to forget the deeds of Emmons and the Scott boys and rally behind Hawkins.<sup>97</sup> A skilled orator and entertainer, Hawkins toured the province in search of converts with the Klan's message of hatred toward everything that was not Anglo-Saxon, Protestant, gentile, racially pure, and purely patriotic.<sup>98</sup> At a Klan

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Gardiner however, estimated the amount missing to be \$169,000 in total. He calculated this number by taking what he believed to be the total number of klansmen in the province (13,000) and multiplied it by the \$13.00 initiation fee and quarterly dues charged to each person before they were admitted to the Klan., See; S.A.B., Gardiner Papers, Gardiner to Bruce F. Mackay of Balcares, February 4, 1928, p.12054-57. Also see; S.A.B., Gardiner Papers, Rabbi Ferdinand M. Isserman, "The Klan in Saskatchewan," Canadian Jewish Review, June 15, 1928, p.13792.

<sup>96</sup> Brennan, p.696.

<sup>97</sup> Saskatoon Star, June 5, 1928, p.13. Also see; Regina Morning Leader, "More than 1,000 Here Klan debate at Lemberg," July 3, 1928, p.10.

<sup>98</sup> James H. Gray, Booze: The Impact of Whisky on the Prairie West, (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1972), p.169., and S.A.B., Gardiner Papers, Moose Jaw Times, "Speakers Assert Klan Principles

rally in Melville for example, Hawkins declared his undying loyalty to Canada and the British crown:

... I am loyal to Canada and the British Crown - a Canada composed of those strong virile men of the North, the Nordic or Anglo-Saxon race ... men whose forefathers fought for this country by expenditure of British blood and treasure, whose sons died in Flanders's field that it might continue ... men who eat meat once a day and who require a bath once a week, but I am not loyal to a Canada composed of men who jabber all the tongues that destroyed the effort to build the tower of Babel, men who tighten their belly-band for breakfast, eat spaghetti and hot dog and rye bread for lunch and suck in his limburger cheese for supper - men who crowd our own people out as the example at Yorkton by offering to work for ten cents an hour, men who come to Canada with tags on them telling you their destination, God deliver Canada from men of this Character ... let us see that the slag and scum that refuse to assimilate and become one hundred percent Canadian is skimmed off and thrown away.<sup>99</sup>

Joining Hawkins in Saskatchewan's Klan revival was a fervent ultra-Protestant, anti-Catholic from Ontario named J. J. Maloney. Born of Irish Catholic parentage on Friday the thirteenth in Hamilton's north end, "the district of wild Irish living down by the Bay, where men were men and policemen went in pairs," Maloney entered the Saskatchewan scene from Ontario during a 1926 federal by-election, to work for an independent Conservative candidate in his

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at Mass Meeting," October 28, 1927.

<sup>99</sup> Saskatoon Star, "K.K.K. Organizer at Melville Replies to Speeches of Premier," June 5, 1928, p.13.

attempt to battle Mackenzie King in Prince Albert.<sup>100</sup>

Maloney claimed to be a former candidate for the priesthood "who had been inspired by divine intervention to forsake the church altogether and launch a one-man campaign to warn others of the evils of Roman Catholicism."<sup>101</sup>

Speakers at Klan rallies, many of whom were local clergymen, directed their attacks at everything non-British, non-Protestant, and what they perceived to be non-Canadian. The creed for the Saskatchewan Klan read:

The Klan believes in Protestantism, white supremacy, Gentile economic freedom, just laws and liberty, separation of Church and state, pure patriotism, restrictive and selective immigration, freedom of speech and press, law and order, higher moral standards, our public schools, and freedom from mob violence.<sup>102</sup>

In their quest to protect the Canadian way of life from the threat of central and southeastern European immigrants, Klan literature and propaganda argued that the eventual dismantling of Canadian institutions could not be averted by ceasing the admission of undesirable immigrants. Stopping the immigration of non-British and non-Protestants was

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<sup>100</sup> J. J. Maloney, Rome in Canada (Vancouver: Columbia Protestant Publications, n.d.), p.130. and S.A.B., Gardiner Papers, Gardiner to Rev. H.D. Ranns of Biggar, February 15, 1928, p.12091-93.

<sup>101</sup> J. J. Maloney, Rome in Canada, p.130, and Brennan, "A Political History of Saskatchewan," p.697.

<sup>102</sup> S.A.B., Gardiner Papers, Gardiner to rev. Dr. John Nicole of Rosetown, February 11, 1928, p.12,081. Also see; Ibid., "Knights of the Ku Klux Klan of Kanada: Principles of the Order," p.12,594.

simply not enough:

...Merely stopping the alien flood does not restore Canadianism or even secure us against final utter defeat. Canada must defend herself against the enemy within or we shall be corrupted and conquered by those to whom we have already given shelter.... The first danger is that we shall be overwhelmed by the alien's mere force of breeding.... Why not spend some money to keep at home our native boys instead of bringing in these, which is the largest contributor to crime lists and by far the largest proportion of the inmates in our insane asylums.<sup>103</sup>

The Klan carried out similar attacks upon the Roman Catholic Church. In their literature and at their rallies the Klan declared that Saskatchewan schools must be set free from the sectarian influences of the Roman Catholic Church and that there should be one system of public schools throughout the Dominion.<sup>104</sup> They claimed British Canadians were leaving the Dominion in large numbers for the United States, only to be replaced by non-preferred, Catholic immigrants who would never become assimilated and who posed a danger to Canada. At their rallies and in their literature, klansmen claimed that the Roman Catholic Church was much more than just a religious body, it was a huge political machine working to dominate "our national Life," and make Rome the ruling power in "our country."<sup>105</sup> While addressing a crowd of nearly 2,000 at Regina's city hall,

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<sup>103</sup> S.A.B., Gardiner Papers, The Freedman, p.11,552-53.

<sup>104</sup> Kyba, "Ballots and Burning Crosses," p.21.

<sup>105</sup> S.A.B., Gardiner Papers, Excerpt from Klan Pamphlet, p.11,553-554.

J.H. Hawkins gave a distinct message to Saskatchewan's Roman Catholic population:

Until you are willing to abide by the teachings of Jesus Christ, render unto God the things that are His, the separation of church and state, until you are willing to place this flag (indicating the Union Jack) above the yellow flag of Rome, until you are willing to swear your allegiance to the British Crown and to drink your first toast to the British King and not to the Pope, until you are willing to conduct yourself in Canada as the Protestant Church does, step down and step out of the public life of Canada. And when the Klan says "step down" it means "step down." And the Klan will see that you do.<sup>106</sup>

Under Hawkins and Maloney the Klan reorganized itself on a purely provincial basis. It renounced its ties to all other Canadian and American Klans, declaring itself a completely independent body, a move that appealed to Saskatchewan nativists and resulted in massive Klan growth and popularity throughout the province.<sup>107</sup> Offering honorary memberships to clergymen and other important and influential dignitaries, Hawkins and Maloney were successful in doubling the number of Klan locals in the province. When Emmons and the Scotts abandoned the Saskatchewan scene in September 1927, there were approximately 61 Klan locals scattered throughout the province.<sup>108</sup> After Maloney and Hawkins stepped up their campaign of hate to reach the

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<sup>106</sup> S.A.B., Gardiner Papers, Comprehensive Report of Meeting of The Ku Klux Klan Held at City Hall, Regina, February, 16, 1928," p.12,517-530.

<sup>107</sup> Calderwood, p.194.

<sup>108</sup> Brennan, p.698.

pinnacle of Klan popularity in 1929, they had extended the Klan across the entire province, from Prince Albert in the North to the United States border in the south, numbering approximately 125 local chapters.<sup>109</sup>

An accurate number of Saskatchewan residents who joined the Klan during the turbulent years of the 1920s has proved difficult to establish. Officials of the organization claimed, as early as June 1927, that their society numbered in excess of 40,000 strong.<sup>110</sup> Others have argued that the number of klansmen in the province was considerably lower and have suggested that 25,000 members is more accurate.<sup>111</sup> Premier Gardiner, in response to such grandiose claims wrote to an acquaintance, "that if they have one-tenth of that number I would be somewhat surprised."<sup>112</sup> Regardless of discrepancies concerning the size of the Ku Klux Klan in Saskatchewan, its size, and the rapidity of its growth in the province was remarkable when it is remembered that the size of the S.G.G.A. during its peak had been no more than

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<sup>109</sup> Calderwood, p.194.

<sup>110</sup> S.A.B., Gardiner Papers, Moose Jaw Evening Times, "Thousands Attend First Great Open Air Meeting Klan," June 8, 1927, p.7. At their great revival celebration of the River Street campaign, Klan leaders declared to the crowd that in four months in Saskatchewan they had amassed a membership exceeding 40,000 members. Also see; Ibid., "Testimony of Hugh Finley Emmons," p.12,588. In his testimony Emmons put the number of Klansmen at approximately 12,000 for the province by the time he left in September 1927.

<sup>111</sup> Brennan, p.698.

<sup>112</sup> S.A.B., Gardiner Papers, Gardiner to Rev. H.D. Ranns of Biggar, August 29, 1927, p.12036-37.

35,000 and the membership of the U.F.C.(S.S.) was barely 30,000 during the late 1920s.<sup>113</sup>

The Klan's remarkable success was due to its ability to feed off a nativistic atmosphere, already in existence, toward the Catholic church and immigrant groups considered to be undesirable and unassimilable. As Pat Emmons said, during an interview in 1928, the atmosphere in Saskatchewan was ripe for the Klan to establish themselves during this period. He told his interviewer that Klansmen considered Saskatchewan fertile ground for growth because of the province's large Roman Catholic population and because they could feed "the fear bogeys of the masses." "We fed people antis," he said, "whatever we found that they could be taught to hate we fed them. We were out to get the dollars and we got them."<sup>114</sup> They campaigned against everything from crime and corruption in Moose Jaw to juvenile delinquency in Regina in order to widen Klan appeal, but repeatedly their main objective was to target the Catholic church and non-preferred immigrants for all of Saskatchewan's problems.<sup>115</sup>

This was by no means new for Saskatchewan residents by the late 1920s. Anti-Catholic nativism had emerged on other

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<sup>113</sup> Brennan, p.698.

<sup>114</sup> S.A.B., Gardiner Papers, Rabbi Ferdinand Isserman, "The Klan in Saskatchewan," Canadian Jewish Review, June 15, 1928, p.13791-92.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid.



occasions in the province. Twice before, during the provincial election campaign in 1905 and during the Great War, Saskatchewan residents had displayed anti-Catholic and Anglo-Saxon nativism toward denominational schools and non-English immigration. The seeds of nativism were planted before the arrival of the Klan in Saskatchewan, but the organization quickly capitalized on emotions and used the opportunity to gain supporters. As residents prepared to go to the polls in June 1929, anti-Catholic and Anglo-Saxon nativism were firmly entrenched in Saskatchewan society. The influence of the Ku Klux Klan, the National Association of Canada, and other nativist groups would prove to effect voting behavior on election day, ultimately aiding in the defeat of the Gardiner Liberals, bringing an end to almost twenty-five years of Liberal dominance in Saskatchewan's Legislature.

## Chapter Four

### The Apex of Nativism in Saskatchewan:

#### The 1929 Provincial Election and the Royal Commission

During Saskatchewan's 1929 provincial election, nativism played a dominant role in influencing the electorate. Conservatives, Progressives, and their friends, Bishop George Exton Lloyd, the Grand Orange Lodge, and the Ku Klux Klan, attacked the government. They argued that Catholic and non-English immigrants had been allowed to enter Saskatchewan society directly threatening established institutions. Their aggressiveness would throw provincial Liberals on the defensive, appealing to the electorate on their record of twenty-four years of solid government.<sup>1</sup>

These nativist organizations, along with reactionary wings of the Conservative and Progressive parties, had little difficulty in convincing the electorate that the provincial and federal Liberals were responsible for all the problems within Saskatchewan society. That Klan messages appealed to members of the opposition parties in Saskatchewan is beyond question. In fact, there is ample evidence to suggest that a sizable number of Progressives and Conservatives were actively involved with the Ku Klux Klan.

By the time the Klan entered Saskatchewan in November

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<sup>1</sup> David Smith, Prairie Liberalism, p.173.

1926, provincial Conservatives and Progressives were struggling to maintain their effectiveness as government opponents in the Legislature. Results of the 1925 provincial election indicate the desperate shape of the province's opposition parties, as both had barely managed to retain their numerical strength in the legislature.<sup>2</sup> If the Conservatives had any hope of capturing the provincial legislature in the next election, they needed to gain votes of a significant number of Liberal supporters. Therefore, they concentrated on winning the support of a sizable number of English Protestants who had voted Liberal in the past.

There can be little doubt that Klan rhetoric appealed to many provincial Conservatives. As the Klan grew in popularity and the Tories grew hungrier for power, the co-operation between them became increasingly extensive and open. At the Conservative's biennial convention held in Saskatoon in March, 1928, a large number of delegates were Klansmen, including its Grand Wizard for Saskatchewan, J.W. Rossborough, his secretary Charles Ellis, and provincial organizer J.H. Hawkins.<sup>3</sup> Klansmen attended meetings, distributed literature, and consulted on planks to be

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<sup>2</sup> S.A.B., Saskatchewan Executive and Legislative Directory, 1905-1970, (Regina: Saskatchewan Archives Board, 1971), p.45-47. In the 1925 Saskatchewan provincial election the Progressives won six seats, while the Conservatives won only three.

<sup>3</sup> Saskatoon Daily Star, "Klan is Rapped By Premier; Speaks at Dysart Meeting," June 2, 1928, p.6.

included in the Tory platform.<sup>4</sup> The level of involvement of Klansmen was prominent, as J.F. Bryant reported to R.B.

Bennett:

The K.K.K. were very active indeed at the convention as were also the Orangemen. The head officers of both organizations were present and the organizers of the Klan being very evident throughout the hall. We had some difficulty in keeping them in the background but succeeded in doing so without any incident whatever....The resolution which was passed in connection with the school question met with the entire approval of the Protestant organizations.<sup>5</sup>

Tories chose as leader, Dr. J.T.M. Anderson, whom it was hoped could rejuvenate the party and carry them forward into the next provincial election. James Thomas Milton Anderson was born in Fairbanks, Ontario in 1878. He attended high school in Toronto before graduating with B.A., M.A., and L.L.B. degrees from the University of Manitoba. He later attended the University of Toronto receiving his doctoral degree in pedagogy in 1918, the same year he published a study on immigration and assimilation entitled, The Education of New Canadians.<sup>6</sup> Anderson taught school in Ontario and Manitoba before arriving in Saskatchewan in

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid. Also see; Western Producer, "Conservative Convention Attracts Delegates From All Parts of the Province," March 22, 1928, p.1., and Martin Robin, Shades of Right, p.71.

<sup>5</sup> Public Archives of Canada, (P.A.C.), R.B. Bennett Papers, J.F. Bryant to Bennett, March 16, 1928, p.24951, cited in Calderwood, "Pulpit, Press and Political Reaction to the Ku Klux Klan in Saskatchewan," p.211.

<sup>6</sup> See J.T.M. Anderson, The Education of New Canadians, (Toronto: J.W. Dent, 1918).

1908, where he taught in Melville and Grenfell. He became a public school inspector in 1911 and was appointed Director of Education Among New Canadians in 1918, a position he held until it was abolished in 1923. That year he accepted the position of organizer for the provincial Conservatives and was named their leader in 1924. Citing health problems, Anderson stepped down as Conservative leader in 1927, but remained on as Conservative house leader in the legislature. Dr. Anderson was an active Orangeman, Mason, and served as District Governor of the Kiwanis Clubs of Western Canada, and as District Commissioner of the Boy Scouts in Saskatchewan.<sup>7</sup>

Delegates to the Conservative convention devised a platform intended to carry them to victory in the next provincial election. It included planks intended to deal effectively with economic and agricultural problems, improve the standard of living, encourage industrial development, improve the province's welfare system, establish a public health commission, develop a publicly owned and operated power system, reduce licensing fees on automobiles, re-organize the farm loan board, establish a commission to investigate abuses in the civil service, and the immediate return of Saskatchewan's natural resources to provincial

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<sup>7</sup> Saskatoon Daily Star, "New Leader Of Party Has Long Record of Service," March 15, 1928, p.3. Also see; Martin Robin, Shades of Right, p.299, note 107.

control.<sup>8</sup> In an attempt to take advantage of religious and racial antagonism stirred up by the Klan and other nativist organizations, Conservatives included proposals to deal with the heated issues of immigration and education.

Conservatives demanded an aggressive but selective immigration policy to increase the number of British immigrants and to restrict undesirable central and south-eastern Europeans from entering the Dominion.<sup>9</sup> They maintained future immigrants must be British, similar to Canadians in education, language, religion, and political knowledge.<sup>10</sup> Canada's current immigration policy was considered unacceptable, since it filled the west with central and south-eastern Europeans, who had proven to be unassimilable.<sup>11</sup>

A resolution was passed concerning the issue of religious influences in the public school system. Conservatives demanded the elimination of all textbooks containing denominational biases and unpatriotic sentiments; the prohibition of religious emblems in the public schools, and the holding of public school in buildings used for

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<sup>8</sup> Western Producer, "Large number of Resolutions Passed by the Conservatives," March 22, 1928, p.7.

<sup>9</sup> Saskatoon Daily Star, "Conservatives in Bid for Support of Farmers, Others Pledge Themselves to Support Diversified Agriculture; Education, Immigration, Government Economy Dealt With in Resolutions," March 15, 1928, p.3.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

religious purposes.<sup>12</sup>

A number of prominent Saskatchewan Tories were openly sympathetic to the Klan. One such high profile Conservative was Dr. Walter D. Cowan, a former Conservative-Unionist M.P. who sat for Regina from 1917 to 1921 and would represent Long Lake from 1930 to 1935.<sup>13</sup> Dr. Cowan served as Klan treasurer and had little trouble announcing his sympathy for their agenda.<sup>14</sup> In a letter to federal Conservative leader, R.B. Bennett, in 1928, Cowan proudly declared that the Klan was the most complete political organization ever assembled in the Canadian west and that every Klan organizer was a Tory.<sup>15</sup>

In addition to Cowan, a number of other high profile Tories also recognized the potential political windfall to be gained from Klan rhetoric. Included in this number was J.F. Bryant, a Regina lawyer and Orangeman who had represented Klan leaders in at least three separate

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<sup>12</sup> Western Producer, "Large Numbers of Resolutions Passed by the Conservatives," March 22, 1928, p.7.

<sup>13</sup> William Calderwood, "Pulpit Press and Political Reaction to the Ku Klux Klan in Saskatchewan," p.209.

<sup>14</sup> J. W. Brennan, "A Political History of Saskatchewan," p.712.

<sup>15</sup> Julian Sher, White Hoods, p.55, In his letter to Bennett, Dr. Cowan stated that The Klan was "... the most complete political organization ever known in the West. Every organizer in it is a Tory. It costs over a thousand dollars a week to pay them. I know it for I pay them. And I never pay a Grit." cited in Brennan, p.712.

trials.<sup>16</sup> As President of the Regina Conservative Association, Vice President of the provincial association, and future Minister of Public Works and Minister of Telephones and Telegraphs, Bryant was an important spokesman for Conservatives and Klansmen across the province.<sup>17</sup>

There is evidence that a good number of Conservative leaders in Saskatchewan were involved with the Klan.<sup>18</sup> At his trial, Pat Emmons, charged with stealing Klan funds and fleeing to the United States, told the court he had left Canada with a broken heart because leading Conservatives, including J.T.M. Anderson and Dr. Cowan, wished to use the Klan for their own political objectives.<sup>19</sup> Later, at a public meeting called by Emmons to expose the Klan, he presented sworn affidavits from himself and Charles Puckering, a Klan secretary who was responsible for Klan

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<sup>16</sup> See for example, Saskatoon Daily Star, Hugh Emmon's Held Innocent of Charges of Theft of Funds," May 8, 1928, p.1.

<sup>17</sup> S.A.B., Saskatchewan Executive and Legislative Directory, 1905-1970, p.26.

<sup>18</sup> Among prominent Conservatives whose names appear on Klan membership lists were Nathaniel Given of Delisle, J.A. Merkley of Moose Jaw, W.W. Millar of Biggar, and William Smith of Swift Current, all of whom were elected to the Legislature in 1929. Also included was James Pascoe, an independent-Conservative M.L.A., 1921-1925, and Mayor of Moose Jaw in 1929. See; Calderwood, "Pulpit, Press, and Political Reaction to the Ku Klux Klan in Saskatchewan," p.227, and Brennan, "A Political History of Saskatchewan," p.712.

<sup>19</sup> Saskatoon Daily Star, "Tells Why She Entered Klan," May 10, 1928, p.11.



propaganda and educational work.<sup>20</sup> In their affidavits Emmons and Puckering claimed that Anderson had approached Emmons in 1927 and asked for Klan assistance in gaining the election in Moose Jaw of Dr. Smith, the Conservative candidate in a by-election there. They charged that Anderson also asked Emmons to travel to Saskatoon and organize a Klan chapter. To this end, Anderson allegedly provided Emmons with a list of names of individuals willing to assist him in establishing a klavern there.<sup>21</sup>

In terms of membership, Conservative supporters were among the majority in Klan ranks. However, Progressive supporters probably ran a close second.<sup>22</sup> Klan appeal among Progressives rested in a number of factors related to the condition of the party in the late 1920s. After enjoying success in the federal arena in 1921, Progressives suffered crushing political setbacks during the 1925 federal and 1926 provincial elections. By the time the Klan arrived in Saskatchewan in November, 1926, there were three distinct elements within the Progressive party; a Liberal partisan

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<sup>20</sup> Saskatoon Star Phoenix, "Pat Emmons Howled Down in Regina," May 31, 1928, p.1., and p.5.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., p.5. Also see; S.A.B., Gardiner Papers, Newspaper Clippings: Mounted Clippings, 1927-1928, Regina Morning Leader, "A Protector of the People," October 23, 1928, p.13899., and Ibid., Newspaper Clippings File, Special File of Clippings, Ku Klux Klan, 1928, Regina Morning Leader, "Affidavits Introduced by Emmons," May 31, 1928, p.14039-14040.

<sup>22</sup> William Calderwood, "The Decline of the Progressive Party in Saskatchewan, 1925-1930," Saskatchewan History, Vol.21, no.3, Autumn, 1968, p.92 and p.96.

group which had become disenchanted with federal Liberal policies, former Provincial Rights supporters and alienated Conservatives, and an Anglo-Saxon Protestant non-partisan contingent, whose ideologies prohibited them from supporting either of the old line parties in the province.<sup>23</sup> As a result, by the mid 1920s, there was little effective leadership and the party became an incoherent body without any central control.<sup>24</sup> In this atmosphere of conflicting opinions and lack of sustained or effective leadership, a large number of Progressives found closer association with Anderson's Conservatives and the messages of the Ku Klux Klan particularly attractive.<sup>25</sup>

One Klan theme, which was especially appealing to Progressives, was its claim to be a non-political and non-partisan organization. Klansmen argued they were not involved in politics for the advancement of any particular political party, but were "banded together with a firm resolve to carry out its principles with a view of making Canada for Canadians and Canadians for Canada."<sup>26</sup> That such

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<sup>23</sup> Brennan, "A Political History of Saskatchewan," p.723.

<sup>24</sup> P.A.C., R.B. Bennett Papers, J.J. Leddy to Bennett, April 17, 1928, p.25030, cited in Brennan, p.723.

<sup>25</sup> Calderwood, "The Decline of the Progressive Party in Saskatchewan," p.93.

<sup>26</sup> S.A.B., Gardiner Papers, Regina Daily Post, "Post Letter Box," Letter to the Editor., February 1, 1929. Copy of a letter sent by A.J. Balfour, Regina Secretary, Invisible Empire of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan to J.M Parker, Liberal M.L.A. for the constituency of Touchwood. Parker in a previous article in the

policies were attractive to Progressives is evident in their platform laid out in June of 1928. Delegates declared that they stood for responsible, representative, and co-operative government, advocating equal rights for all and special privileges for none.<sup>27</sup> It was a theme which found expression in the press, as citizens responded to the Premier's accusations that a link existed between the Klan, the Conservatives, and Progressives. In the opinion of one correspondent to the Western Producer, the reason for the Klan's success was reminiscent of conditions in Saskatchewan which opened the way for the organization's acceptance among Progressives. She informed the Premier that rather than launch investigations as to the origins and activities of the Klan, he should be more concerned about investigating existing conditions in the province which had opened the way for the Klan to find a home:

The question the government should ask and seek to answer, is why should the K.K.K. thrive or even put forth roots in the province of Saskatchewan. The K.K.K. is similar I believe to other organizations which have sprung up when people have lost confidence in constituted authority. When they feel that justice too often miscarries - that politics and patronage figure too largely in our courts; that the welfare of the state is made subservient to the interests of the party, permitting privileges to influential minorities - privileges detrimental to the best interests of

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Daily Post had declared a connection existed between the Klan and the provincial Conservative party, p.13942.

<sup>27</sup> Saskatoon Daily Phoenix, June 20, 1928, p.3.

the society as a whole....<sup>28</sup>

Names of a number of prominent Progressives appear on Klan membership lists. These include Thomas Tear of Moose Jaw, E. Jones, Secretary Treasurer of the Rosetown Progressive Party Organization and member of the Harris Klavern; J.W Vandergrift, member of the executive for the Progressives in Maple Creek and member of the Pontie Klavern, and J. Balfour, a delegate at the Progressive convention in January, 1926 and member of the Balcarres Klavern.<sup>29</sup> Klan membership lists included Rev. A.J. Lewis, a former Progressive M.P. defeated in the 1925 federal election and lecturer for the Strasbourg Klan, John MacLoy, a former Progressive candidate and member of the Board of Directors of the United Farmers of Canada (Saskatchewan Section), and John Evans, M.P. for Rosetown, who at least on one occasion, spoke at a Klan rally in the Oddfellow's Hall in Saskatoon.<sup>30</sup>

The most vehement opponent of the Klan in Saskatchewan was Premier Gardiner. Aware of the political danger

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<sup>28</sup> Western Producer, "Gardiner and the Klan," February 23, 1928, p.17.

<sup>29</sup> S.A.B., Gardiner Papers, "Membership Lists of the K.K.K. in Saskatchewan," p.12411-12512.; also see Calderwood, "Pulpit, Press, and Political Reaction to the Ku Klux Klan in Saskatchewan," p.169, and p.177, note 109.

<sup>30</sup> Calderwood, "Pulpit Press, and Political Reaction to the Ku Klux Klan in Saskatchewan," p.169, and S.A.B., Gardiner Papers, The Reporter, (Saskatoon), A Klansman, "The K.K.K. and Politics," February 23, 1929, p.12935.

surrounding the Klan's appeal on racial and religious grounds, Gardiner began to collect information on the organization shortly after its arrival in 1927. In January 1928 Gardiner launched a campaign designed to expose and destroy the Klan in Saskatchewan. In his reply to the throne speech on January 30, the Premier denounced the Klan as a lawless organization, that had entered the Province for the sole purpose of getting rich by soliciting funds from Saskatchewan citizens, taken in by its racial and religious hatred.<sup>31</sup>

More significant was his endeavour to link the opposition parties to the Klan. He accused them of attempting to capitalize on racial and religious animosity stirred up by the Klan for their own political successes. He told the legislature:

If we cannot get government in this province without the co-operation of that kind let us not have co-operation or let us have no government at all. We in Canada have never found it necessary to get proper enforcement of law and order by having an organization parading about the country wearing hoods over their heads so that people do not know who they are. Any man who has not backbone and courage to stand out in the open has no place in British institutions and government.<sup>32</sup>

To test the political waters, Premier Gardiner called a

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<sup>31</sup> Saskatoon Daily Star, "Provincial Premier denounces K.K.K. in Speech Before House," January 31, 1928, p.6.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

by-election in the riding of Arm River for October, 1928.<sup>33</sup>

Arm River was a large rural seat near Davidson, which had consistently gone to the Liberals since its inception in 1908.<sup>34</sup> Gardiner chose to call the by-election for a number of reasons. He wished to use the opportunity to demonstrate Liberal strength, to prove the Conservative's association with the Ku Klux Klan, and to expose the Klan as the lowest form of political advocate, one that would stoop so low as to make boisterous appeals to the electorate with lies of racial and religious bigotry.<sup>35</sup>

For the Tories, Arm River would provide a forum where they could flaunt a rejuvenated Conservative party's growing popularity. It would also indicate to Tories the degree of support they could muster among constituents who had traditionally voted Liberal.<sup>36</sup> Even better, a victory would serve to indicate that the electorate were fed up with 24 years of Liberal "machine" government in Saskatchewan - a government tainted by their connection with a Catholic

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<sup>33</sup> John Archer, Saskatchewan: A History, p. 209.

<sup>34</sup> Norman Ward and David Smith, Jimmy Gardiner: Relentless Liberal, p.89. Also see; S.A.B., Saskatchewan Executive and Legislative Directory, 1905-1970, p.91. And, S.A.B., Gardiner Papers, Gardiner to Mrs Charles E. Ferris of the Edmonton Women's Liberal Club, October 30, 1928, p.8720-21.

<sup>35</sup> Nathaniel A. Benson, None of It Came Easy: The Story of James Garfield Gardiner, (Toronto: Burns and MacEachern, 1955), p.160.

<sup>36</sup> Saskatoon Star Phoenix, "Adrain Chosen as Candidate," June 2, 1928, p.3.

conspiracy to dominate Saskatchewan, their willingness to favour undesirable, unassimilable immigrants, a government with a past of political patronage and corruption.<sup>37</sup>

To this end, the campaign in Arm River did not disappoint. There was little doubt in either party that the result in Arm River would influence the next general election. For this reason both parties threw the full might of their political machines into the contest. During the by-election, every major issue that was to be raised during the 1929 campaign was debated, including the issues of sectarianism in the public schools and the problem of immigration.

Regarding the sectarian issue, the roots of nativist concern among Conservatives were straight forward. Under existing conditions in Saskatchewan, public schools were controlled by trustees who were largely Protestant. However, in a number of districts where Catholics were in the majority, trustees were Roman Catholic. In these Catholic districts, nuns were hired on occasion as teachers and crucifixes and other religious emblems were allowed to be placed in the schools. Protestants, who were in the minority in these districts had the right to establish separate schools, as Catholics did in Protestant dominated areas. However, in some cases there were not enough

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<sup>37</sup> Regina Daily Post, "Government Victory in Arm River," October 26, 1928, p.4. Also see; Regina Daily Star, "Conservatives Fire First Gun in By-Election," October 15, 1928, p.1.

Protestant families to support a school of their own and Protestant children were forced to attend Catholic run public schools.<sup>38</sup>

On this issue, Conservatives criticised the government for allowing Protestant children to be unjustly exposed to Catholic influences. Campaigning near Davidson, J.F. Bryant charged that by allowing Protestant children to be exposed to Catholic influences in the public school, Liberals had put the provincial school system and the future of the province in danger of falling under the control of the Roman Catholic church and undesirable foreigners.<sup>39</sup>

On the topic of immigration, Tories and their nativist friends argued that the Gardiner government was conspiring with French Catholic federal ministers and members of the Catholic hierarchy, to inhibit British immigration and flood Saskatchewan with unassimilable Catholic immigrants.<sup>40</sup> "We in Arm River face this issue from no desire of our own," declared Bryant to an audience in Penzance, "the battleground is Arm River. Here the first battle in Saskatchewan must be fought. It is part of a great struggle

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<sup>38</sup> Ibid., "Latta Explains Saskatchewan School System," October 19, 1928, p.26.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., "Bryant says Government Knows of Movement to Make Province Catholic," October 16, 1928, p.12.

<sup>40</sup> Regina Daily Star, "Gardiner Government in Conspiracy Against Immigration of British to Saskatchewan," October 24, 1928, p.16.



for supremacy; the days of armageddon have come."<sup>41</sup>

"Luckily," claimed Bryant, there was a growing movement which was gaining popularity among Saskatchewan residents, dedicated to eradicating the Catholic and foreign menace from Saskatchewan. The Ku Klux Klan, declared Bryant, was growing in popularity and was an extension of the fact that thousands of Protestants in Saskatchewan who had a clear idea of the situation were eagerly enrolling themselves under the banner of the order in the hope that they might yet save Canada from the foreigner and the Catholic church.<sup>42</sup>

Nativists claimed a continued influx of central and eastern Europeans would eventually chip away at the Anglo-Saxon values of Canada. The openly nativist Regina Daily Star stated:

The Biological fact that the intermixing of the nationalities will eventually degrade the character of the people is being overlooked, and the utmost indifference is being shown to the ousting of native born and British settlers from employment .... In the long run Canada will suffer for it.... It will be too late, then, to remedy the evil. What is to be done should be done now, for it will be no use to damn the river when the floods are let loose.<sup>43</sup>

Premier Gardiner's strategy at Arm River was to allow the Conservatives to set the issues and make their charges;

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<sup>41</sup> Ibid., "Bryant Says government Policy is Dangerous," October 16, 1928, p.1.

<sup>42</sup> Regina Daily Post, "Bryant Says Government Knows of a Movement to Make Province Catholic," October 16, 1928, p.12.

<sup>43</sup> Regina Daily Star, October 19, 1928., cited in Brennan, p.739.

his answer would emphasise the government's past record of stable, representative and responsible government.<sup>44</sup> Regarding education, Gardiner defended Liberal policies by stating that the Tories had based their arguments upon perceived racial and religious problems, which were simply not true. He argued that Roman Catholics in the province comprised twenty per-cent of the total population.<sup>45</sup> Of this number, the Premier claimed only twelve per cent of employees of the Department of Education were Roman Catholic, none of whom were in positions of authority; that among Saskatchewan's fifty-one school inspectors, six were Roman Catholic, and in the province's normal schools, out of 36 employees only three were Roman Catholic.<sup>46</sup>

Gardiner stated that the Liberals had adhered to guidelines laid out in the B.N.A. Act and Saskatchewan Act, regarding religious instruction. He explained that under the terms of the Saskatchewan Act of 1905, religious minorities, Protestants as well as Catholics, had the right to build a separate school provided that they are not satisfied with the religious instruction provided by the board of trustees. The only privilege given to languages

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<sup>44</sup> S.A.B., Gardiner Papers, "Moose Jaw Convention Address, March 18, 1929," p.11631-11681. Also see; Regina Daily Post, "Gardiner Makes Power Issue in By-Election," October 4, 1928, p.9.

<sup>45</sup> Brennan, "A Political History of Saskatchewan," p.728.

<sup>46</sup> Regina Daily Post, "Not a Word of Truth in Suspicions of Anderson Premier Tells Audience," October, 12, 1928, p.2.

other than English was that given to French, which could be used as a language of instruction only in a child's first year, and afterward only as a subject of study for one hour per day. He claimed that this was only being done in 31 of 4,822 school districts across Saskatchewan, eight of which were Protestant separate schools and 23 of which were Roman Catholic. The Premier declared that more than 97 per cent of the province's children attended the public school and two per cent attended separate schools, where the only privilege is that of religious instruction during the last half hour of the school day.<sup>47</sup>

Liberals defended the current immigration policy. Under the terms of the British North America Act, immigration was the joint responsibility of the federal and provincial governments. However, Premier Gardiner argued that as long as the province's natural resources were controlled by the federal government, immigration to Saskatchewan would be administered by federal authorities. He maintained that under such circumstances the provincial government was not in a position to dictate who would be admitted into the country, nor could they prohibit immigrants from settling in Saskatchewan.<sup>48</sup>

The Premier assured voters that Anglo-Saxon

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<sup>47</sup> Ibid., "Premier Announces Session of Legislature," October 4, 1928, p.11.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

institutions were not threatened by an influx of foreign immigrants. Gardiner maintained that of Saskatchewan's 820,000 residents, 624,000 were born in the British Empire. Of the 196,000 remaining, 76,000 had come from the United States, 27,000 from Russia, most of whom were of German decent, 33,500 from Germany and Austria-Hungary, 20,000 from the Scandinavian countries, and 10,000 from Ukraine, leaving 30,000 from other countries of the world, posing no threat to established institutions in Saskatchewan.<sup>49</sup>

The by-election, nevertheless, was dominated by issues of race and religion. In the end the Liberals were victorious, but only by fifty-nine votes.<sup>50</sup> Just three years earlier, in the 1925 provincial election, the Liberal's margin of victory at Arm River had been three hundred and eight.<sup>51</sup> This time, the narrow margin of victory would serve as an indication to Liberals that trouble lay ahead for the upcoming province-wide election.

The result of the Arm River by-election led both parties to declare a moral victory. Premier Gardiner

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<sup>49</sup> Regina Daily Star, "Dr. Anderson Told Untruth Says Premier," October 8, 1928, p.16.

<sup>50</sup> Western Producer, "Dr. Waugh Declared Elected," November 1, 1928, p.1.

<sup>51</sup> S.A.B., Saskatchewan Executive and Legislative Directory, 1905-1970, p.91. In 1925, with 6,184 residents eligible to vote, the Liberals defeated the Conservatives 1,799-1,491. In 1928, with of 6,225 eligible voters, the Liberals defeated the Conservatives 2,764-2,705. See; Province of Saskatchewan, Provincial Elections in Saskatchewan 1905-1986, (Regina: Chief Electoral Office, Province of Saskatchewan, 1987) p.44 and 49.

described the contest as one of the most bitterly fought campaigns he had ever witnessed in Saskatchewan, and the Liberal victory as one of the most important, in view of the fact that they were opposed by the Conservatives, the K.K.K., private power interests, and disgruntled Liberals.<sup>52</sup> He argued publicly that the results indicated Liberals could face everything the Conservatives and their Klan friends could hurl their way and that they could stand their ground on their record and emerge victorious.<sup>53</sup> He told delegates at a Liberal convention in Moose Jaw that, "we met them on their own turf, among their own friends and beat them although they loaded the dice, stacked the cards, fouled their own nest and maligned every Saskatchewan citizen."<sup>54</sup> Of course this is the sort of public comment Gardiner would be expected to make; privately the Premier was concerned about the future. He acknowledged that the narrow victory in Arm River was too close for comfort. He admitted that although the Liberals got one thousand more votes than in 1925, it was the best showing they had ever thought

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<sup>52</sup> Ibid., Gardiner Papers, Gardiner to Charles Avery Dunning, Minister of Railways and Canals, October 29, 1928, p.8837. For similar sentiment see; Ibid., Gardiner to Herman Danielson, November 17, 1928, p.8686, and also; Gardiner to Sarah J. Stewart, Convenor of the Program Committee of the Women's Liberal Club of Saskatoon, October 29, 1928, p.8715-16.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., Gardiner to E.J. Campbell of Estevan, October 29, 1928, p.8834.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., "Moose Jaw Convention, March 18, 1929," p. 11631-11681.

themselves able to accomplish.<sup>55</sup> In a letter to Harry Sifton, the Premier confessed:

We did not anticipate that the opposition would be able ... to put as efficient an organization into the constituency as they did .... A four fold organization to get out votes, composed of the Klan, the Conservatives of the three cities, the private power interests and the disgruntled Bell group, was most efficient in the constituency of Arm River, ... these four parties got out the largest opposition vote possible and in spite of the fact that we increased our vote by more than fifty per cent, they were almost able to overcome it....<sup>56</sup>

Conservatives in their response to the election result, credited the Liberal victory with their support among non-English settlers in Arm River. J.T.M. Anderson argued that Liberals won the by-election due to the overwhelming support they got from one poll at Lakeside, dominated by a majority of Roman Catholic foreigners, who were working "hand in glove" with the government. He suggested that some sort of election fraud had occurred, but stopped short of issuing a formal charge. He did say, however, perhaps ironically, that Conservatives believed

in a square deal for all but they don't believe in getting down on their knees to solicit the support of any individual or organization whose aims and objects do not emphasize the Union Jack and one hundred per cent Canadian citizenship.<sup>57</sup>

Tory supporters, despite their dissatisfaction, looked

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<sup>55</sup> Ibid., Gardiner to Harry Sifton, November 16, 1928, p.8691-8693.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> Regina Daily Star, "Is Elated Over Arm River Win Says Gardiner," October 26, 1928, p.15.

upon their narrow loss as a favourable omen. They argued that party support and organization at Arm River indicated that their dry spell was over and their fight against the Gardiner machine had only just begun. "One swallow does not make a summer," wrote the anti-Liberal Regina Daily Star, "and one by-election does not make or sustain a government."<sup>58</sup> The Star, continued:

The fighting spirit of those who desire to see Saskatchewan honestly governed has been stimulated, and from now on it will find fresh fuel to put on the political fire that will eventually destroy Premier Gardiner, his government and his machine. If the opposition ever needed an incentive to greater effort, it has it now in the failure to capture Arm River.<sup>59</sup>

The 1929 provincial election campaign was the climax of the nativistic attack, initiated during the provincial Conservative convention in the spring of 1928. It was an emotional contest, which saw anti-Catholic and Anglo-Saxon nativist sentiment dominate debate, in charges and counter charges about religious influences in the province's public school system and the threat of non-English and non-Protestant immigrants.

Education had been a particularly volatile issue in Saskatchewan politics since provincehood in 1905. In the first provincial election, Provincial Rights candidates and their leader, F.W. Haultain, campaigned against the establishment of separate schools. As well, during the 1917

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<sup>58</sup> Ibid., "The Machine Wins Again," October 26, 1928, p.4.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

war-time election, nativists argued that special privileges regarding language instruction must be eliminated from public schools. Nativists demanded an English only policy, denouncing the use of French as posing a threat to Saskatchewan's Anglo-Saxon values and institutions. In 1929 the sectarian issue would prove an important factor in the demise of Saskatchewan's Liberal government.<sup>60</sup> Nativists argued that unless religious emblems were removed from public schools, the children of Saskatchewan's Protestant majority would be contaminated by the sectarian influences of Rome, resulting in the complete domination of Saskatchewan and eventually the Dominion by the Papacy.<sup>61</sup>

Anderson believed the public school to be the underlying institution of democracy. Influenced by his years spent as a school inspector and Director of Education for new Canadians, he referred to the public school as the training ground for citizenship, a place where children met, studied, and played together, regardless of their racial

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<sup>60</sup> S.A.B., "Oral History Project," Interview of Tom Johnston by Chris Higganbotham, Tape R-145, July 22, 1963. Hereafter cited as Johnston Interview. Mr Johnston was active during the period of the late 1920s in the United Farmers of Canada (Saskatchewan Section), and had been a Liberal campaign worker for his neighbour Samuel Latta. In 1930 he was appointed to the Saskatchewan Royal Commission on Immigration and Settlement as a Commissioner, representing the interests of the Organized farmers in Saskatchewan.

<sup>61</sup> Saskatoon Star Phoenix, "The Need For Educational Reform," May, 13, 1929, p.5. Also see; Regina Morning Leader, May 14, 1929, p.3.



origin or religious faith.<sup>62</sup>

Anderson charged that as a result of government unwillingness to ban the use of sectarian influences in public schools, the vital role of the school as a Canadianizing agent was threatened. He claimed that the Liberals refused to enforce school regulations to gain electoral support from ethnic and religious minorities. He pledged a Conservative government would ban sectarian influences from the public school by eliminating the use of textbooks containing denominational biases or unpatriotic sentiments and replacing them with texts which inculcated patriotism and love for Canada and Saskatchewan.<sup>63</sup> He promised a Tory government would amend the school act to prohibit the use of religious emblems, ban teachers from wearing religious garb during school hours, and prohibit the holding of public school, except temporarily, in buildings designed for religious purposes.<sup>64</sup>

In the face of such a volatile issue, Liberals had little political option but to argue that the charges of their opponents were unfounded. They concentrated on providing statistics, in an attempt to refute Conservative

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<sup>62</sup> Regina Daily Star, "Views of the Parties," June 1, 1929, p.5.

<sup>63</sup> Saskatoon Star Phoenix, "Non-Sectarian Public Schools," May 13, 1929, p.5. Also see; Ibid., "More Than 4,000 at Joint Meeting of Political Opponents," May 29, 1929, p.13.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., "The Need For Educational Reform," May 13, 1929, p.5.

charges that an anti-Protestant conspiracy existed between Liberals and the Roman Catholic church. It was argued that of seven government ministers only one was Roman Catholic, of 1,615 Saskatchewan citizens employed in government departments 1,407 were Protestant, and of the 8,500 teachers in Saskatchewan's school system, only 153 were Roman Catholic nuns, 64 of whom were teaching in public schools.<sup>65</sup> In fact, Gardiner claimed Saskatchewan's school system had a lower proportion of teaching clerics than any other province in the Dominion.<sup>66</sup>

In an address on Regina's C.K.C.K. radio, Samuel J. Latta, Provincial Secretary and Minister of Municipal Affairs, argued that under Saskatchewan's provincial school system minorities - Protestant as well as Catholics - were guaranteed the constitutional right to have and to maintain their own schools.<sup>67</sup> Latta explained both were subject to the same regulations outlined by the School Act. Each could teach French or religion, each received a government grant, each school system must teach in the English language, employ a certified teacher, and were inspected by the same

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<sup>65</sup> Ibid., "Not Yet Repudiated, May 31, 1929, p.4. Also see; Ibid., "Big Audience Hears Premier of Province Defend School Policy," May 16, 1929, p.7, and Regina Morning Leader, May 18, 1929, p.20.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid., "Premier Issues Statement to Voters," May 30, 1929, p.1.

<sup>67</sup> Regina Morning Leader, May 18, 1929, p.1., and p.31. For similar sentiment see; Saskatoon Star Phoenix, "Separate Schools a Constitutional Right," May 22, 1929, p.5.

inspector.<sup>68</sup> Liberal strategy was to inform the public that no special concessions were given to Catholic residents of the province, and that no threat existed to Protestant institutions.

On the immigration question, government opponents charged the provincial and federal Liberals with conspiring with the Catholic church and the railway companies to fill the west with undesirable non-English immigrants, while at the same time discriminating against British immigrants interested in settling on vacant western lands. Most vocal among these critics were Bishop George Exton Lloyd, the Orange Lodge, and the Ku Klux Klan.

Bishop Lloyd told audiences that Canadians were not satisfied by the fact that only 55 per cent of Canada's population was made up of British citizens and 45 per cent of the population was composed of residents of foreign and non-Protestant birth.<sup>69</sup> He maintained that federal Liberals, with the blessing of the Saskatchewan Liberal machine, were conspiring with the railway companies to restrict the admission of British citizens and fill the west with non-preferred European immigrants; a process that would eventually result in the elimination of Canada's national character.<sup>70</sup> Advocating their deportation, Lloyd declared

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<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

<sup>69</sup> Lloydminster Times, October 11, 1928, p.1.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

that foreign immigrants were not going into farming as was promised under the railways agreement but, rather, crowding into Saskatchewan's cities, cutting labour prices, and lowering the standard of living.<sup>71</sup>

On the eve of the election, Lloyd urged voters to oust the Liberal government:

I shall vote against the Gardiner government [because] the Gardiner policy on immigration is non-British if not anti-British. Mr. Gardiner ... has deliberately thrown dust into the eyes of the public on this question.

I shall vote against Mr. Gardiner's government because he has been most unfair in the administration of the school laws of the province ...

I shall vote against Mr. Gardiner's government ... because of their action in the last session of the legislature when the resolution was introduced to prohibit the wearing of a religious garb or exhibiting religious emblems in the public schools of the province.<sup>72</sup>

J.T.M. Anderson argued Saskatchewan cities were filled with hundreds of unemployed foreigners who had been dumped in the province by the federal Liberals with the support of Gardiner's government, with little or no concern for their employment or their assimilation. He refuted the government's stand that immigration was the sole responsibility of the federal government, stating that the province had definite powers to deal with immigration under the British North America Act. He charged that provincial

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<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

<sup>72</sup> Regina Daily Star, June 5, 1929., cited in Brennan, p.760.

Liberals were shirking their responsibility because they did not want to "Balk the Liberal government at Ottawa."<sup>73</sup> Anderson promised, if elected, to appoint a commission representing varied interests to discuss the problem and form a sensible policy to let Ottawa know that Saskatchewan insisted on a preponderance of British immigration.<sup>74</sup> He promised a Conservative government would work in conjunction with federal authorities to select immigrants suited to Saskatchewan's economic and racial situation, and would guarantee they had jobs before allowed entry into the province.<sup>75</sup>

A more reactionary wing of the Conservative party was less diplomatic in their attacks regarding the immigration question. Influenced by their association with the Ku Klux Klan and the Orange Order, these extremist Tories were committed to the eradication of the alien threat and the protection of British institutions. They sought the abolition of the present immigration policy and no further admittance of non-preferred European and Catholic immigrants. It was argued by radicals such as Klan Lawyer J.F. Bryant that the continued influx of immigrants would

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<sup>73</sup> Saskatoon Star Phoenix, "Conservative Policies Outlined by Speakers at Two Meetings Here," May 17, 1929, p.7.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> Kyba, "Ballots and Burning Crosses," p.55-56.

demolish rather than stimulate Saskatchewan's economy.<sup>76</sup> Bryant and other Conservatives argued that the full scale importation of continental immigrants only served to take jobs away from Canadians, and would eventually result in the elimination of the Britishness of the country and the domination of it by despised foreign elements and the Catholic church.<sup>77</sup>

J.T.M. Anderson's position on immigration seems more moderate than that of his extremist colleagues. Though his views mirrored those of his nativist associates, his public position was more guarded. He was less emotionally charged in his speeches to be sure, but his position on immigration was in accord with other nativists, a restrictive immigration policy, discriminating against members of non-Protestant and non-English backgrounds.<sup>78</sup>

In dealing with the immigration charges of their opponents, Liberals followed closely Gardiner's defensive strategy, informing voters that the charges made by government opponents were unfounded. Liberal speakers stuck close to the line that the federal government controlled Canada's immigration policy. They argued that Saskatchewan was unable to control the inflow of immigrants because the

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<sup>76</sup> Regina Morning Leader, May 19, 1929, p.4.

<sup>77</sup> Brennan, "A Political History of Saskatchewan," p. 739-40.

<sup>78</sup> See for example; Saskatoon Star Phoenix, "Anderson and Immigration," May 25, 1929, p.5.

province was powerless to exclude any race of people from its borders.<sup>79</sup> Premier Gardiner criticised Conservatives for introducing issues of race into politics, defended the record of the Liberal government and asked electors not to allow issues of race and religion, issues without foundation, to cloud their decision at the polls.<sup>80</sup>

Liberal strategy was impressive, and "if logical arguments and facts won elections, Gardiner should have been home free."<sup>81</sup> However, the 1929 election proved to be neither logical nor factual, and an aroused electorate were not buying the statistical defense Liberals were providing, regardless of its accuracy.

Results of the 1929 provincial general election indicate that Premier Gardiner's appeals fell on deaf ears. The Liberals won a plurality of seats, but were unable to continue as the governing party as the combined strength of their opponents left them without a clear majority in the legislature. Liberals won twenty-eight seats while the Conservatives won twenty-four.<sup>82</sup> In addition, five Progressives and six Independents were elected who gave

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<sup>79</sup> Ibid., "More than 4,000 at Joint Meeting of Political Opponents," May 29, 1929, p.13. Also see; Regina Morning Leader, May 15, 1929, p.1. and p.8.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid., May 16, 1929, p.1.

<sup>81</sup> Ward and Smith, Jimmy Gardiner, p.100.

<sup>82</sup> S.A.B., Saskatchewan Executive and Legislative Directory, 1905-1970, p.49-50.

their support to the Conservatives to form a coalition government.<sup>83</sup> The Progressive and Independent candidates agreed to support J.T.M. Anderson in the creation of a co-operative government. The conditions by which they agreed to support Anderson were that he pursue a campaign to reform the civil service, that each group would retain their identity, and each be given complete freedom in federal politics.<sup>84</sup>

The effect of nativism on the 1929 provincial election can not be underestimated. Although there is little doubt that other issues such as civil service reform, highways, a provincially controlled power system, as well as a desire to defeat Gardiners' Liberal machine, influenced the electorate's decision, nativist feelings regarding sectarianism and immigration dominated Saskatchewan's political atmosphere and were primary factors in the demise of the Liberal government.<sup>85</sup>

The desirability of non-English immigrants was an important issue in the minds of many Saskatchewan residents during the latter half of the 1920s. After the renewal of

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<sup>83</sup> Evelyn Eager, Saskatchewan Government, p.53.

<sup>84</sup> Brennan, "A Political History of Saskatchewan," p.770.

<sup>85</sup> S.A.B., Johnston Interview, Johnston recalled that the primary issues contributing to Anderson's victory were those of sectarianism and immigration. He attributed Anderson's success to a high level of anti-Catholic sentiment generated in no small degree by Conservatives such as J.F. Bryant and to the activities of the Ku Klux Klan and J.J. Maloney.



the Railways Agreement in 1927, immigration opponents became increasingly vocal. Critics believed that the Liberals seemed bent on destroying assimilation efforts by continuing to allow the west to be filled with non-English immigrants and to continue to settle them in colonies.<sup>86</sup> This process, combined with a steady decline of the level of British immigration aroused angry criticism, since many believed that the whole purpose of assimilation in the first place, was to strengthen Anglo-Saxon values, rather than destroy them.<sup>87</sup> If the present immigration policy was allowed to continue, critics argued, the domination of Saskatchewan by the British majority culture group was sure to become extinct.<sup>88</sup>

This perceived threat caused many to protest more vocally and more often. Outside the extreme nativist organizations other mainstream groups expressed concern over foreign immigration. Organizations such as the United Farmers of Canada (Saskatchewan Section), the Saskatoon Trades and Labor Council and the Royal Canadian Legion led the way in criticising increased levels of non-English immigration.

At a conference on immigration in 1928 these groups, joined by the Saskatchewan Rural Municipalities Association,

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<sup>86</sup> David E. Smith, Prairie Liberalism, p.137.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid.

the Women's British Immigration League, and a number of other concerned organizations and individuals, met to discuss problems associated with the current immigration policy and to devise a strategy whereby their efforts might be co-ordinated to curb non-English immigration.<sup>89</sup> A resolution was adopted and sent to Ottawa, urging the federal government to appoint an independent national board of inquiry, to study the problems of immigration and assimilation.<sup>90</sup> The federal government's failure to act on this request prompted these groups to meet again a year later in Saskatoon. Joining them at their immigration conference were Saskatchewan's new Premier, J.T.M. Anderson, Provincial Treasurer Howard McConnell, Progressive M.P. for Rosetown John Evans, and Liberal M.P. for Saskatoon Dr. MacGillvary Young.<sup>91</sup> Delegates passed a resolution urging the provincial government to appoint a commission of inquiry to study the problems of immigration and assimilation as they affected Saskatchewan.<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> S.A.B., S.G.G.A.-U.F.C.(SS) Papers, B2 IX, 148: Immigration Commission, (Saskatchewan), 1930; "Memorandum to the Royal Commission on Immigration at its sitting in Saskatoon, January 30, 1930," p.3.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid.

<sup>91</sup> S.A.B., Johnston Interview. Also see: S.A.B., S.G.G.A.-U.F.C.(SS) Papers, Immigration: General, 1926-1939., "Minutes of Immigration Conference held in the Secretary's Office of the United Farmers of Canada, November 4, 1929." p.1.

<sup>92</sup> S.A.B., S.G.G.A.-U.F.C.(SS) Papers, B2 IX, 146, U.F.C.(SS): Immigration General, 1926-1939, "Minutes of the Immigration Conference Held in the Secretary's office of the United farmers of

Such a commission appealed to J.T.M. Anderson. It was Anderson's intention to use its findings to substantiate his government's stand regarding immigration. During the 1929 provincial election campaign Anderson stated that the province had a right to be consulted regarding the quantity, quality, and types of immigrants allowed to settle in Saskatchewan, and promised to appoint an inquiry on immigration if elected.<sup>93</sup> His actions during the first few months of his mandate support this conclusion. In November, he refused a request from the federal Minister of Immigration, Robert Forke, to take in one thousand persecuted and destitute Russian Mennonite refugees.<sup>94</sup> In his reply to Forke, Anderson argued that, in view of assistance being given to immigrants presently residing in Saskatchewan, the provincial government could not allow the admittance of additional destitute foreigners without some assurance that they would not become public charges.<sup>95</sup> In his throne speech, one week after the Royal Commission held its first session, the Premier pledged to investigate all

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Canada, November 4, 1929." p.3.

<sup>93</sup> Saskatoon Star Phoenix, "Conservative Policies Outlined by Speakers at Two Meetings Here," May 17, 1929, p.7.

<sup>94</sup> S.A.B., S.G.G.A.-U.F.C.(SS) Papers, B2 IX.146., Immigration: General, 1926-1939, Ray Nacht, Secretary, Soviet Union Immigration Bureau, Washington D.C. to George F. Stirling, Director, Publicity and Research Department, U.F.C.(SS), November 18, 1929, Manitoba Free Press, "Qualify Refusal Gist of Anderson's Reply on Admission of Mennonites."

<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

phases of immigration and settlement and establish a suitable provincial immigration policy.<sup>96</sup>

Anderson's intention was to challenge the federal government on the point that immigration was solely a federal matter. He argued that immigration should be a shared responsibility, which warranted the consultation of Saskatchewan on matters affecting the province. Anderson was confident that the conclusions of the Royal Commission would support his desire to establish a provincial immigration policy.<sup>97</sup> In addition, such an inquiry would be politically advantageous to provincial and federal Tories. Locally, it would hold Anderson in good stead with a number of groups, including the United Farmers of Canada, the Trades and Labor Council, and the Royal Canadian Legion. He wished to establish the sort of relationship with the organized farmers that the Liberals had previously enjoyed for so long.<sup>98</sup> As well, a royal commission would be equally useful to federal Tories, who might use the commission's findings to condemn Mackenzie King's Liberal government.<sup>99</sup>

The appointment of a provincial Royal Commission on

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<sup>96</sup> S.A.B., X3.G. Newspaper Clippings: Legislative Assembly, Seventh Legislature, Second Session, February 6, 1930-April 9, 1930., Regina Daily Star, "Speech From the Throne," February 7, 1930, p.7423.

<sup>97</sup> Western Producer, "Speech From the Throne," February 13, 1930, p.3.

<sup>98</sup> S.A.B., Johnston Interview.

<sup>99</sup> Smith, Prairie Liberalism, p.141.

Immigration and Settlement was announced on December 5, 1929.<sup>100</sup> Included in its mandate was the question of past immigration policies and their effects upon the social and economic well being of the people of Saskatchewan. It was to study the effects of the province's natural resources upon growth and development, to examine previous population movements and their relationship to the economic, social, and cultural standards of community life, to explore the causes and effects of population loss in Saskatchewan, the possibility of devising and adopting an assisted settlement plan for Saskatchewan natives and other Canadians, and the expediency of adopting settlement schemes designed to promote desirable British immigration.<sup>101</sup>

Anderson appointed to the commission individuals who were hostile to liberal ideologies, including its chairman Dr. W.W. Swanson, professor of economics at the University of Saskatchewan, its Vice Chairman, Percy Shelton, a court reporter from Saskatoon, and Commissioners Thomas Johnston, a long-time farmer of the Govan district, G.C. Neff, a well-known Saskatchewan lawyer, and A.R. Reusch, an insurance broker from Yorkton with considerable experience dealing

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<sup>100</sup> Saskatoon Star Phoenix, "Dr. Anderson Names Commission to Study Immigration Question," December 6, 1929, p.7. Also see; Western Producer, "Commission on Immigration is Approved," December 12, 1929, p.3., and Regina Daily Post, "Province Names Commission on Immigration," December 6, 1929, p.22.

<sup>101</sup> S.A.B., S.G.G.A.-U.F.C. (SS) Papers, B2 IX.148., Immigration Commission (Saskatchewan), 1930. "Saskatchewan Royal Commission on Immigration and Settlement," (nd).

with the question of immigration.<sup>102</sup>

As a member of the executive of the Soldier Settlement Board, Swanson had been active on the immigration question for a number of years. He had written and presented several papers on the issue in which he espoused the virtues of Empire and expressed concern over the problems of foreign immigration, the failure of assimilation, and the deterioration of the British Character of the west. To members of the Canadian Club in 1923, he had advocated a selective immigration policy based on the slogan, "select with discernment, plant with discretion, and tend with care."<sup>103</sup> He claimed that through this process 15,000 farmers a year could be added to Canada's agricultural population. According to his plan, one half of this number would be carefully selected from a pool of Canadian farm boys; the remainder selected from a pool of the highest quality British immigrants, allowed to settle in colonies to ensure the preservation of the Britishness of the west.<sup>104</sup>

An imperialist to the core, Swanson argued that Great Britain had played a dominant role in the political,

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<sup>102</sup> S.A.B., Government of Saskatchewan, Minutes and Proceedings of the Royal Commission on Immigration and Settlement, 1930, Vol. 1, Opening remarks of Chairman W.W. Swanson, January 30, 1930, p.9-10. Also see Western Producer, "Commission on Immigration is Appointed," December 12, 1930, p.3.

<sup>103</sup> S.A.B., W.W. Swanson Papers, Miscellaneous Articles, "Migration Address Given to the Canadian Club at a Luncheon at the Cecil Hotel on Friday April 20, 1923," p.2.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid.

economic, and social development of the new world. He maintained that the deterioration of the British domination of western Canada, necessitated a steady addition of British settlers to guarantee the preservation of British institutions and traditions.<sup>105</sup>

The appointment of Thomas Johnston and Percy Shelton would serve a two-fold purpose for Anderson. Not only did they share suitable opinions regarding immigration, they were also members of important organizations that Anderson was desperate to cultivate as political allies. Tom Johnston was a former Liberal supporter, who had left the party in disgust over the workings of "machine" government. He joined the Progressives in the early 1920s and as a member of the executive of the United Farmers, attended numerous meetings dealing with immigration. He had been partly responsible in devising U.F.C. resolutions demanding immigration restrictions and the appointment of a royal commission. As well, he was chairman of the joint meeting of the U.F.C.(SS), the T.L.C., and Legion which Premier Anderson attended in November 1929.<sup>106</sup> Percy Shelton's appointment would serve a similar purpose. A prominent member of the Royal Canadian Legion and chairman of its Immigration Committee, Shelton was instrumental in drafting

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<sup>105</sup> Ibid, W.W. Swanson, "Colonization and the Economic Progress of Saskatchewan," n.d., p.1-3.

<sup>106</sup> S.A.B., Johnston Interview.

the Legion's resolution regarding immigration in 1929. It demanded restrictions on foreign immigration and advocated the settlement of repatriated Canadians, returned veterans, and British immigrants.<sup>107</sup> Shelton had also been present at the November 1929 meeting among farm, labor, and veterans organizations which Premier Anderson had attended, and approved of the meeting's resolution demanding the appointment of a royal commission on immigration and settlement. The appointments of commissioners Neff and Reusch were also politically motivated. According to Johnston both were loyal Conservative supporters and were completely in line with Anderson's opinions regarding immigration.<sup>108</sup>

The Saskatchewan Royal Commission on Immigration and Settlement constitutes an exhaustive official record of citizens' attitudes regarding foreign immigration. From January 30 until June 3, 1930 the Commission held forty sittings across the province. It questioned 476 witnesses, collected 52 volumes of evidence from representatives of farm, labor, church, and patriotic organizations, as well as individual opinions.<sup>109</sup> These volumes catalogue a long list

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<sup>107</sup> S.A.B., S.G.G.A.-U.F.C.(SS) Papers, Immigration General, 1926-1939, "Memorandum Re; Immigration, Canadian Legion, Saskatchewan Provincial Command, October 1929."

<sup>108</sup> S.A.B., Johnston Interview.

<sup>109</sup> Government of Saskatchewan, Department of Natural Resources, Report: Saskatchewan Royal Commission on Immigration and Settlement, (Regina: Roland S. Garrett, 1930), p.11.



of grievances against past immigration policies for their lack of selectivity and for the creation and perpetuation of the colony settlement system.

A number of interviews of the more influential organizations across the province demonstrate clearly their expressions of Anglo-Saxon nativism and anti-Catholic hostility toward immigrant groups. Frank Eliason, representing the United Farmers of Canada (Saskatchewan Section), testified that transportation companies and the federal government encouraged immigration from European countries, causing a heavy influx of settlers without regard to concerns about their assimilation into Saskatchewan society.<sup>110</sup> It was the opinion of the farmers, declared Eliason, that past and present immigration policies had been designed to force native Canadian farmers from their land, create unemployment among members of the Canadian working classes, and fill the country with unassimilable, non-preferred foreign immigrants.<sup>111</sup>

Colonel A.E. Potts, representing the Saskatchewan Command of the Royal Canadian Legion, presented a settlement scheme proposed by veterans which called for increased assistance and sponsorship for the settlement of veterans

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<sup>110</sup> S.A.B., Saskatchewan Royal Commission on Immigration and Settlement, Minutes of Proceedings, vol.1, Testimony of Frank Eliason, January 30, 1930, p.16.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid., p.18.

and their families.<sup>112</sup> Potts, like Eliason, also expressed concerns regarding the detrimental effect of unrestricted immigration upon employment and the standard of living. The Colonel testified that due to widespread unemployment that accompanied immigration, Legion members demanded protective measures which, by restricting the flow of alien labour, would tend to raise wages in the unskilled and semi-skilled work force.<sup>113</sup> In addition, veterans believed that owing to the existence of foreign colonies, high seasonal unemployment, severe competition, and poor agricultural returns, it was in Canada's best interest to maintain a preponderance of British-born, by implementing a restrictive immigration policy.<sup>114</sup>

Labour leaders also spoke in favour of the implementation of immigration restrictions. George Dealtry, an organizer for the American Federation of Labour and a delegate from the Saskatoon Trades and Labour Council, testified that labour did not want to halt immigration altogether. They understood that Canada needed a greater population, but believed that immigrants should only be allowed into the country if there was a good chance of them being assimilated without bringing down the standard of

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<sup>112</sup> Ibid., Vol. 2, Testimony of Col. A.E. Potts, January 31, 1930, p.4.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid., p.5.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid., p.11.

living of Canadian workers.<sup>115</sup> Dealtry maintained that a large number of unassimilable central and south-eastern Europeans had flooded western Canada who had no knowledge of Canadian values, language, and institutions. They were brought into Saskatchewan and thrown onto the labour market to the detriment of the province's working classes.<sup>116</sup>

Dr. W.A. Waddell, representing the Native Sons of Canada, argued his organization was opposed to assisted immigration whether sponsored by the Canadian government, the governments of the immigrant's origin, or by organized or group interests.<sup>117</sup> Waddell declared that as a result of the federal government's immigration agreements, Canada was overpopulated with undesirable non-English immigrants who would ruin the future development of the country.<sup>118</sup> The Native Sons of Canada advocated that undesirable foreign immigrants must be barred entry into Canada altogether, and that the nation should be reserved for Canadians.<sup>119</sup>

Bishop George Exton Lloyd reiterated his past statements concerning immigration. He maintained that the continued influx of unassimilable and undesirable alien

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<sup>115</sup> Ibid., Vol. 3, Testimony of Charles Dealtry, February 1, 1930, p.41-42.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid., p.42.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid., Vol. 22, Testimony of Dr. W.A. Waddell, March 27, 1930, p.59-61.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid., p.62.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid.

immigrants would endanger Canada's tie to the British Empire. He claimed that since 1921, Canada's proportion of British-born residents had steadily decreased from approximately sixty per cent to near fifty per cent in 1930, a situation which he professed would directly threaten the institutions of the Dominion.<sup>120</sup> He maintained the most pressing issue to be dealt with was to replenish the proportion of Canadians in Saskatchewan and decrease the number of central and southeastern Europeans to guarantee the future preservation of the Dominion as a British nation.<sup>121</sup> He argued that in order to preserve the Britishness of Saskatchewan, undesirable and unassimilable non-English speaking immigrants, who continue to drag down the progress of the province, should be deported. In the future, Canada must allow a limit of 100,000 immigrants per year, 75,000 of whom should be British, the remainder coming from the preferred nations of northern Europe and Scandinavia.<sup>122</sup> In justifying his proposals, the Bishop argued that non-preferred immigrants took jobs away from Canadians, committed the majority of crimes, and were resistant to assimilationist efforts.<sup>123</sup>

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<sup>120</sup> Ibid., Vol. 36, Testimony of Bishop George Exton Lloyd, April 26, 1930, p.26-28.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid., p.28.

<sup>122</sup> Ibid., p.29-32.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid., p.32.

Charles Ellis, secretary of the Ku Klux Klan of Saskatchewan, argued that immigration from non-preferred countries be stopped entirely for a period of at least five years and then continued only under a rigid quota law based on the census of 1901, when the population was predominantly British.<sup>124</sup> The Klan's stance would only allow non-preferred Europeans to enter at the rate of two per cent of the 1901 census, with no quota being applied to immigrants of British, French, or Scandinavian origin.<sup>125</sup> They advocated the entry of trained British and Scandinavian families, who would be allowed to settle in Saskatchewan, but only after proper selection and under strict supervision.<sup>126</sup> They argued that the responsibility of handling immigrants be removed from the hands of religious bodies and placed entirely under government control and declared that group settlement of any kind must be abolished altogether.<sup>127</sup>

According to individuals and groups who testified before the Royal Commission on Immigration and Settlement, answers to Saskatchewan's immigration problem lay in stricter controls through the implementation of a quota

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<sup>124</sup> Ibid., Vol. 24, Testimony of Charles H. Ellis, March 29, 1930, p.29-30.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid., p.30.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid.

<sup>127</sup> Ibid.

system, or some other selection method that favoured increased British settlement and the assimilation of those foreign immigrants already within the province. Witnesses argued that many of the problems experienced by Saskatchewan residents were caused by the greed of the transportation companies and the federal government's inability to recognize the problems that existed in the west. Many believed that due to the influx of central and southeastern European immigrants, Canadians were forced to leave their homes for opportunities elsewhere, therefore reducing the standard of living in the province. Others argued that flooding the province with undesirable and foreign immigrants served to reduce the number of native-born Canadians and increased the number of unassimilable non-English immigrants, thereby threatening established institutions in Saskatchewan and the Dominion.

In its final report, the Royal Commission mirrored the opinions of J.T.M. Anderson. It criticized the federal government for causing an influx of settlers who were not only unable to bear their share of public and social services, but who became charges upon the public funds.<sup>128</sup> To remedy this situation, they recommended immigration continue, but argued safeguards were necessary to ensure that only immigrants committed to go on the land were allowed to enter the province and that they be placed so

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<sup>128</sup> Ibid., p.18.

that they would be able to live in accordance with the dominant British social ideals and not be detrimental to the provincial standard of living.<sup>129</sup>

Convinced that these measures must be established for the province to stimulate and sustain economic growth, the commissioners argued that to place immigration and settlement entirely in the hands of the federal government would be a mistake. They argued that the "after care" of immigrants in past years was lacking at best. To rectify this problem, the commission recommended taking the responsibility of the "after care" of immigrants out of the hands of the federal government and making it the joint responsibility of Saskatchewan's Minister of Agriculture, for agricultural settlers, and the Minister of Labour, for non-agricultural immigrants.<sup>130</sup>

Regarding the class of immigrants allowed to enter the province, the commission argued that placing Saskatchewan residents on the land would be preferred to immigration. The first effort should be made to relocate settlers who had been placed on land unsuited for agriculture, and re-establishing those who had left the farm, but now wished to return to agricultural life. As well, they stated a special effort must be made to induce those who had left for the United States to return to Saskatchewan. No obstacle should

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<sup>129</sup> Ibid., p.19.

<sup>130</sup> Ibid., p.20.

be placed in the way of attracting immigrants from Great Britain, but care must be provided so that they attain permanent success.<sup>131</sup>

Regarding non-British immigration, the commission argued that a rapid increase in the number of non-English immigrants would place too great a stress upon the province's education system and other services by which immigrants were assimilated. Therefore they recommended the immigration of non-English settlers be curtailed.<sup>132</sup> In addition, the commission recommended that a head tax be placed upon non-English immigrants to cover the cost to the province of those that become charges of the government.<sup>133</sup>

The commissioners argued that no person be permitted to enter Saskatchewan without the permission of the Provincial Council of Immigration and Settlement. They recommended that homesteading be discontinued and that the remaining crown lands be sold preferably to Saskatchewan residents, other Canadians, and British immigrants, before being offered to non-English European settlers.<sup>134</sup>

In an attempt to curtail the emigration of the province's young people to the United States, Commissioners stated controls were necessary to check the admittance of

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<sup>131</sup> Ibid., p.23.

<sup>132</sup> Ibid., p.24.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid., p.25.

<sup>134</sup> Ibid., p.26.



immigrants who provided a surplus of cheap labour.<sup>135</sup> They stated that to control this movement, and to oversee the process of immigration, that a Saskatchewan representative sit on a federal board of immigration, whose function it would be to advise the federal government of all decisions of the Provincial Council of Immigration and Settlement, with respect to numbers and types of immigrants required by Saskatchewan.<sup>136</sup> Regarding the failure of assimilation, the commission declared large number of non-English immigrants put excessive pressure upon the province's education system and other services by which newcomers are assimilated.<sup>137</sup> Therefore the commissioners again recommended it was necessary to restrict the flow of non-English immigrants.<sup>138</sup>

J.T.M. Anderson's reaction to the commission's report was conspicuously absent. However there can be little doubt that the Premier was pleased with the commission's recommendations since they clearly reflected his opinion concerning immigration. Nor was there any immediate political reaction to the Royal Commission on Immigration and Settlement. Due to the fact that the commission's report was made public when the legislature was not in session there was little by way of comment from politicians

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<sup>135</sup> Ibid., p.18-19.

<sup>136</sup> Ibid., p.18-19.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid., p.24.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid.

on either side of the house. More importantly however, the Co-operative government of J.T.M. Anderson had little opportunity to turn the recommendations of the Royal Commission into policy, since Anderson's government found itself thrown into the process of coping with the economic problems of the great depression. Nevertheless, the report of the Saskatchewan Royal Commission on Immigration and Settlement helped to silence the most extreme nativists in the province, by dismissing the general economic arguments against immigration voiced by nativists, and recommending continued population growth through the admission of additional immigrant settlers. Regarding the types of immigrants allowed to enter Saskatchewan, it is clear that the commission believed that stricter controls must be implemented. They argued that the most preferred type of settlers to go upon Saskatchewan's vacant lands were residents of the province, repatriated Saskatchewanians, other Canadians, and British immigrants. The commissioners argued that non-English immigration should not be discontinued altogether. However, they believed that the numbers of foreign immigrants allowed to enter Saskatchewan must be reduced.

## Conclusion

The three major expressions of nativism identified by John Higham, and previously studied in the Manitoba and Alberta context, were present in the Saskatchewan environment. Nativists in Saskatchewan have displayed Anglo-Saxon, anti-Catholic, and anti-radical nativism.

Anglo-Saxon and anti-Catholic nativism emerged in Saskatchewan during the period of large scale European immigration, 1896-1914. During these years of Saskatchewan's political and social development, the English majority culture group believed that the type of society to emerge in the province would be an extension of English Loyalist Ontario. The institutions and social practices of Anglo-Protestant Ontario were to be transplanted to light the way to a new and better civilization for all of Canada.

In this atmosphere immigration was encouraged as a means of promoting population and economic growth. It was assumed by the majority British culture group, that newcomers would be similar to themselves in education, language, religion, and political sophistication. For this reason, English-Canadians in Saskatchewan were optimistic about filling the region with British and eastern-Canadian settlers. Immigrants from northern Europe and the United States were considered suitable since they were Protestant, had money, and spoke English.

This vision of creating an extension of Loyalist Ontario and Great Britain failed to materialize. When large numbers of eastern and central European immigrants poured into Saskatchewan, English-Canadians were dismayed. What was most disturbing to Saskatchewan's Anglo-Canadian population was that non-English immigrants did not share the cultural, economic or political experiences of British, American, or northern-European settlers. Most accepted the arrival of non-Anglo-Saxon immigrants as necessary for the economic development of the nation, but many believed that the large numbers of alien immigrants would threaten Canadian values, institutions, and political standards.

During this early period, Anglo-Saxon nativism was expressed by newspapers, ultra-Protestant fraternal organizations, and women's groups opposed to federal immigration policies. They argued that by filling the west with central and southeastern Europeans whom they considered to be filthy, disease ridden, poverty stricken, ignorant, racially inadequate, and immoral, all ties Canada had with the Mother country would be threatened. Fraternal organizations such as the Orange Order and Masonic Lodge, and women's groups, including the Women's Christian Temperance Union and the Imperial Order of the Daughters of the Empire, claimed that non-English immigrants would not use their right to vote for the benefit of the nation. They argued that non-British immigrants were ignorant of the

political process and their votes would therefore become the pawns of unscrupulous politicians; they would sell their votes to the highest bidder, thereby threatening Canada's institutions.

Anglo-Saxon nativism was also manifest in Saskatchewan's three closely related reform movements. Social gospellers, prohibitionists, and women suffragists identified non-English immigrants as a threat to the attainment of a new and better Christian society in the west. They expressed extreme nationalism, combined with nativist feelings in their response toward individuals believed to pose a threat to Canadian values and institutions. To counter this perceived threat, reformers concentrated their efforts on assimilating foreign immigrants by establishing home missions in immigrant communities to proselytize and educate foreigners. Non-English immigrants were perceived by prohibitionists to be among the greatest abusers of alcohol and other moral vices. Therefore they were believed to be detrimental to the procurement of an alcohol free society, dominated by morality, Christianity, and temperance. Suffragists, in their quest to acquire universal female suffrage, were opposed to and threatened by non-English immigrants. They questioned the franchisement of foreign immigrant males and argued that the nation would benefit to a greater extent if women were given the right to vote. They maintained that

non-English immigrant males were politically unsophisticated, susceptible to election bribery, and therefore a threat to Canada's institutions.

By the time Canada went to war in the summer of 1914, nativist attitudes were firmly in place in Saskatchewan. Although a large portion of the population had accepted the arrival of non-English immigrants as beneficial for a growing nation, nativist reaction towards enemy aliens during the Great War was widespread. Many who at one time had argued that large scale immigration was necessary joined those who had always maintained that non-English immigrants were a threat to the political, social, and cultural institutions of Canada.

Throughout the Great War, Saskatchewan residents with ancestral ties to the enemy nations were the targets of Anglo-Saxon nativists and faced both official and unofficial restrictive measures. Germans, Austrians, Ukrainians, Hungarians, and other eastern Europeans faced internment, had their rights of citizenship first threatened and then revoked, experienced the suppression of their newspapers, organizations and clubs, and had their language and religious rights circumscribed. As well many were victims of violent attacks, lost their jobs, and had their property damaged.

This surge in nativist sentiment had a profound effect on both the provincial and federal elections of 1917.

During the provincial contest, Saskatchewan Conservatives waged a campaign designed to appeal to voters on ethnic and religious grounds, with the aim to achieve power from negative attitudes toward enemy aliens. Similarly, nativism displayed in Saskatchewan was no less evident in the federal contest in December 1917. As in the provincial election, the targets of Saskatchewan nativists in the federal campaign were enemy aliens, but for the first time Saskatchewan nativists directed their animosity at French Canadians and Quebec. French Canadians were targets for nativists as citizens combined Anglo-Saxon nativism with ultra-nationalism in their condemnation of French Canadians for their refusal in coming to the defence of the Empire in its war effort. In their growing war-time anxiety over the loyalty of new immigrant groups, nativists did not limit their attacks to immigrants from enemy nations. Nativism in Saskatchewan was also directed towards members of pacifist religious sects, most notably the Mennonites. Due to their separatism, pacifism, resistance to compulsory schooling, and their use of the German language Mennonites became easy targets. Most particularly nativists in Saskatchewan were disturbed over the perception that Mennonites, due to their exemption from military service, were allowed to prosper during the war, while others shed their blood that they might keep their liberty.

During the immediate post-war period, the return to

peace did not heal the ethnic and class divisions that had developed in the previous four years. Instead, Anglo-Canadians, who during the war had learned to despise enemy aliens and members of pacifist religious sects, had little difficulty transplanting their aroused passions to members of Saskatchewan's increasingly militant labour ranks.

Following the Armistice, enemy aliens in Saskatchewan continued to be perceived as a threat to Canadian society. But rather than being distinguished as pro-German sympathizers, conspiring to win the war for the Kaiser, they were associated with causing civil unrest in Canada's labour unions. Foreigners were believed to be involved in a conspiracy to influence Canada's workforce and engineer a Bolshevik revolution to overthrow the nation's democratic institutions. A red scare atmosphere erupted within Saskatchewan which served to heighten already bitter feelings toward foreign immigrants. Calls for increased restrictions came from all quarters of the province, demanding the eradication of radical labour men from the Dominion and the eventual deportation of those responsible for the movement.

As Saskatchewan entered the 1920s, Anglo-Saxon and anti-Radical nativism made manifest during the Great War had crystallized opinions concerning the desirability of immigrant groups. Throughout the 1920s these nativist modes of thought would continue to be expressed in reaction to



Canada's immigration policy. Non-English immigrants continued to be regarded as posing a threat to Saskatchewan's social, political, and cultural institutions.

During the early years of the decade residents hoped to continue the level of prosperity they had enjoyed before the war began, thus re-kindling concerns about immigration. A growing threat of unemployment as well as disappointments experienced by farmers led Saskatchewan businessmen and politicians to renew their support for increased levels of immigration. It was assumed that by opening Canada's doors to agricultural settlers the problems facing prairie economies would be solved. Immigrant farmers would provide traffic and freight for the railway companies, buy vacant land, open up new regions for expansion and development, and provide a steady market for Canadian industry.

With these concerns in mind as well as pressure by western business interests and other immigration boosters, the federal government removed barriers against large scale European immigration and implemented several schemes designed to boost immigration. The most famous of these immigration schemes was the 1925 Railways Agreement. Under its terms the C.P.R. and C.N.R. were authorized to recruit immigrants from non-preferred central and eastern European countries and settle them in Canada, find employment for farm labourers, and place women and girls in domestic service.

The railways agreement aroused mixed emotions in Saskatchewan. Business interests, provincial Liberals, and Saskatchewan members of Parliament welcomed foreign immigrants. They claimed that an increased population through immigration would stimulate trade and bring new wealth, which in turn would provide employment in both primary and secondary industries. A number of individuals and groups, however, spoke out against increased levels of non-English immigration. Farm, labour, and veteran's organizations argued that increased levels of non-preferred immigration would serve to undermine the Britishness of the west and bring about conditions of increased unemployment, depressed wages, and a rise in Canadian emigration to the United States.

Joining these groups in their condemnation of non-English immigration were two new nativist organizations which arrived on the Saskatchewan scene in the latter half of the decade. The National Association of Canada and the Ku Klux Klan emerged to lead the nativist campaign in combating the invasion of Canada by undesirable and Catholic immigrants. Bishop George Exton Lloyd, who had always been a defender of the Britishness of the west and opponent of non-English immigration, stepped up his nativist campaign during the second half of the 1920s. He founded the National Association of Canada in 1928 in an attempt to rally support for his crusade against non-British and

Catholic immigration. The Bishop argued that the railways agreement, by opening the doors of the nation to non-Anglo-Saxon and non-Protestant aliens, would denationalize and mongrelize Canada, destroying its nature as a British nation. In the atmosphere created in the 1920s with its significant expressions of anti-Catholic and Anglo-Saxon nativism, the Ku Klux Klan entered the Saskatchewan fray as one of the most vocal critics of the federal governments' position on immigration. Klan strategy regarding central and southeastern immigration was to present these immigrants as posing a threat to the Britishness and Protestantism of Saskatchewan society. At a time when a large number of Saskatchewanians believed that non-British immigrants posed a threat to their Anglo-Saxon values, Klan rhetoric and propaganda gained in popularity and allowed it to thrive within the province.

Although the seeds of nativism were firmly planted before the arrival of the Ku Klux Klan in Saskatchewan, the organization quickly capitalized on emotions and used the opportunity to gain supporters. As residents prepared to go to the polls in June 1929, Anglo-Saxon and anti-Catholic nativism was firmly entrenched in Saskatchewan society. The influence of the Ku Klux Klan, the National Association of Canada, and other nativist groups affected voting behavior in Saskatchewan's 1929 provincial election. The aggression of these nativist organizations along with reactionary wings

of the Conservative and Progressive parties had little difficulty in influencing the electorate and bringing an end to twenty-four years of Liberal tenure in Saskatchewan.

The 1929 provincial election was an emotional contest which saw anti-Catholic and Anglo-Saxon nativist sentiment dominate debate in charges and counter charges about religious influences in Saskatchewan's public schools and about the threat of non-English and non-Protestant immigrants. The provincial Conservatives, under the rejuvenated leadership of J.T.M. Anderson, charged that the Liberal's unwillingness to ban the use of sectarian influences in the province's public schools threatened the role of the provincial education system as a Canadianizing agent. Anderson pledged that a Conservative government would banish sectarian influences from the public school and revise curricula to emphasize patriotism and a love for Canada and Saskatchewan. His proposed overhaul of the education system included the elimination of textbooks containing what were believed to be denominational biases and unpatriotic sentiments. As well, he promised to banish the use of religious emblems and prohibit teachers from wearing religious clothing.

Government opponents, in their animosity to non-English immigration, were no less vocal. Members of nativist organizations including the Ku Klux Klan, Bishop George Exton Lloyd, as well as several reactionary members of the

Conservative and Progressive parties charged the provincial and federal Liberals with conspiring with the Catholic Church and the railway companies to fill the west with undesirable non-English and non-Protestant immigrants, while at the same time discriminating against British immigrants interested in settling on vacant western lands.

These attacks left the government relying upon a defensive strategy. Concerning the issue of sectarianism in the public schools, Premier Gardiner argued that members of religious minorities (Protestant as well as Catholic) had the constitutional right to establish and maintain their own schools. Regarding immigration, the provincial Liberals argued that the question of immigration was not the responsibility of the province but fell under the jurisdiction of the federal government. Premier Gardiner criticised his opponents for introducing issues of race into politics, defended the record of the Liberal government and asked electors not to allow issues of race and religion to cloud their decision at the polls. However, nativism during the 1929 Saskatchewan election significantly influenced voting behaviour. It was a major contributor in bringing about the defeat of Premier Gardiner's Liberals.

Closely following the election of a co-operative government in Saskatchewan, the new Premier, J.T.M. Anderson, wasted little time in putting his campaign promises into operation. Regarding the question of

immigration, Anderson had promised during the election to appoint a commission of inquiry to investigate the question of immigration and settlement in Saskatchewan. He followed up on this promise in December 1929 by appointing the Saskatchewan Royal Commission on Immigration and Settlement. Hoping to gain politically from the commission, and to guarantee its findings would be similar to his own opinions regarding immigration, Anderson appointed to the commission individuals who were hostile to liberal ideologies. He intended to take advantage of a favourable report from the Royal Commission to enable creation of a provincial department of immigration.

Regardless of Anderson's motives behind its creation, the Saskatchewan Royal Commission on Immigration and Settlement constitutes an exhaustive official record of citizens' attitudes regarding foreign immigration. It questioned 476 witnesses representing farm, labour, church, and patriotic organizations, as well as individuals. Testimonials before the Commission comprise a long list of grievances toward past immigration policies for their lack of selectivity and for the creation and perpetuation of the colony settlement system.

Many who testified before the Saskatchewan Royal Commission on Immigration and Settlement argued for stricter controls regarding the admission of non-English immigrants. Others argued that the admission of non-English immigrants

must be curtailed to improve the standard of living in Saskatchewan. However, the consensus among many who testified was that the practice of flooding the province with undesirable non-English immigrants threatened established institutions in Saskatchewan and Canada.

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