

CITIZEN AND SOCIALIST:
THE ETHOS OF POLITICAL WINNIPEG,
1919 - 1935

A Thesis
Presented to
The Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
The University of Manitoba

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

by
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1970



ABSTRACT

This thesis is an analysis of the basic underlying assumptions held by the major political factions in the city of Winnipeg between the years 1919 and 1935. It first considers the influence of two basic waves of immigration which had ushered the city into the twentieth century, and attempts to show how two periods of particularly severe stress upon the community — the 1919 Winnipeg General Strike and the great depression of the nineteen thirties — revealed a factionalized community, with different political and ideological groups vying for political power. It does so by concentrating upon four individuals, prominent in civic politics during the period, who seem representative of the major political factions, with their differing social attitudes and priorities. Its scope is limited further by the fact that these individuals are studied in terms of two hypothetical socio-psychological constructs: the "ethic of conscience" and the "ethic of responsibility". The thesis concludes by analyzing a delicate shift of decision-making power between 1934 and 1935 on the Winnipeg City Council, when it moved from one dominated by the city's traditional leaders, the "Citizens'" faction, to one dominated by a slight plurality of socialists and communists.

The walking-plough, tipped with its point set to slip into the sod, its mouldboard gleaming a lambent silver polished by miles of turning soil, jerks as the horses lean into their collars, and the furrow rolls.

Such is one of the clearest images of my boyhood memory. ...I look back on it with fondness for something gone forever except in fading memory, and am proud that I was once good at the plough. ...In a sense, ...I was fortunate because I was among the last of millennial generations of men who followed the plough, as I knew even then. So I belonged, to a human labour force, peasant, serf, slave, whose work fed household, village and city, and carried the fabric of civilization on their sweating shoulders. A strange boast, if you like, but it is a strong, rich memory.

...I did not then care, and have not much since cared for urban literature, if, that is, the literature depends on urban background. ...There may be a reason; a cityscape, after all, is man made and to that extent humanized. But how to humanize what was not human to begin with? It is this question, perhaps a shallow one, that makes me clash with city-bred historians of today who condemn my respect for environment in history. They have what I call the pavement mentality. ... They know neither the revolution of the seasons nor the relevance of time and place, but live contained and self-impelled lives.

W. L. Morton

...You want to know what it was like for me, sensitive, artistic child of Jewish immigrant parents, to grow up here in the thirties and forties? So I'm telling you.

Everybody knows midwesterners are a friendly, hospitable lot. They're notorious for it. You will find, for instance, that about the only people Manitobans could not stand in those days were those who got there before them: Indians and Metis (they drink to excess, publicly, and are so tubercular!) and the people who got there after them (twenty-seven other ethnics).

The sign said:

WELCOME TO MANITOBA

The fine print read something like this:

Taking care not to offend by appearing too noisy or too pushy or too comfortable, by all discreetly unobtrusive and legally inoffensive means, make yourselves almost at home.

And so, figuratively speaking, hand in hand, and literally speaking hardly at all, we set out along The Manitoba Way together. Everybody was a minority and everybody else was inferior, though some were powerful and made the rules and seemed confident that they alone belonged. At this point in time I can understand, however, that they were afraid that they too would be overrun, and their footprints obliterated. And we were hard on them, let's face it. We forced them to withdraw to restricted living zones, restricted beaches, restricted clubs, restricted Medical School; it is humiliating and belittling to be restricted, even voluntarily, on your own territory. Can you imagine how the bison must feel, huddled down there in their potholes, listening to our noises up above, and remembering all those glorious years of thundering over their own free prairie?

Adele Wiseman

The secret of the success of the British people ... always has been that their word is good. British people came here and built this city. Their thrift was a virtue, and now for some reason thrift is not to be a policy of the people. We are all to be leaners and joiners. Who shall we lean on? And who shall we join? The British people have always been people who stood by themselves.

Mayor Ralph Webb (1934)

While it is true that I have given up my time and energy, with whatever talents I may possess to the service of the city during the best years of my life,... still there is a deep feeling of disappointment going with it all, for I am convinced that the majority of those who vote are not interested in faithful service nor in the welfare of Winnipeg.... We all know that Winnipeg is not making any headway. As a matter of fact, we know that Winnipeg has been going back ever since 1919.

John A. McKerchar (1935)

Mr. Queen wants a new order of society and Mr. Bracken offers him law amendments.

Winnipeg Free Press (1934)

FOR MY PARENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

There are many people and organizations without whose aid, advice, and encouragement the following project would have been impossible. I would like, therefore, to express my appreciation to them in writing.

First, I would like to thank the Department of History of the University of Manitoba, the Faculty of Graduate Studies, and the J.S. Ewart Memorial Fund for their generous financial support not only during the period when this thesis was being researched and prepared, but also during various regular academic sessions.

I would also like to thank several of the many people who made the task of research much easier than it might have been. Miss Ruth Bugey, of the Winnipeg Free Press library, John Bovey, Provincial Archivist of Manitoba, Elizabeth Blight and Barry Hyman of Mr. Bovey's staff, as well as the staff of the Provincial Library in general, were always very helpful.

Similar gratitude is owed to those individuals who graciously shared their personal knowledge of some of the major characters and events of Winnipeg during the nineteen thirties by consenting to be interviewed, often at length. They were also very generous with their time. I thank them too.

Last, may I express my thanks to four individuals who have always shown great patience and warm understanding. My name is now added to the growing list of graduate students at the University of Manitoba who owe more than we can ever repay to Professor J.E. Rea, whose scholarly advice is ever incisive and whose office door is always open. I also owe more than I can hope to repay to my wife, Donna, who offered not only her typing skills but her keen editorial wit to help produce the finished draft. The final product owes not a little to her talents. Finally, I would like to thank my parents for the encouragement and interest they have always shown. This thesis is dedicated to them.

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INTRODUCTION

"MAY '29 BE YOUR BEST YEAR YET!"

To most citizens of Winnipeg, silently suffering the consequences of another New Year's frolic, the January 1, 1929, edition of the Manitoba Free Press would have contained little cause for alarm. Its review of 1928 had featured the introduction of an old age pension system, the inauguration of a mail service linking Winnipeg, Regina, Calgary, and Edmonton (indeed, the feminists among its readers must have smiled smugly when reviewing Amelia Earhart's daring flight clear across the Atlantic the previous June 18); Yankee fans would have gloated over their idols' second consecutive four game sweep of the National League representatives, this time at the expense of the St. Louis Cardinals; and the American people had elected a new President with the largest mandate¹ in the history of the Republic. The summer vacation for school children in Winnipeg had been extended for an extra month in 1928 because of an epidemic of infantile paralysis, to the delight of those fortunate enough to have remained healthy; and a delight of a more visceral nature had been satisfied after March 14, when from twenty to forty Winnipeg hotels opened beer parlors.² And for those whose pleasure depended upon whether they were a 'bear' or a 'bull' at the right time, satisfaction could be gleaned as easily from the financial

¹ Popular vote: Hoover 21,392,190; Smith 15,016,443; electoral vote: 444 to 84.

² Manitoba Free Press, January 1, 1929, p. 10.

pages, in proud, bold headlines: "Toronto 'Change Ends Best Year in History"; "Wall Street Ushers Out Old Year in Strong Upswing".³

The year had ended with an upswing even at the movies, at least for those who were 'western' fans; for at the "Province" Charlie Chaplin, in "The Immigrant", was finally getting second billing — to Ken Maynard. "You've seen him fight the bad men of the West," ran the ads, "now see him chase a phantom killer through the secret chambers of a spooky mine."⁴ Earle Hill's "Capitolians" theatre attempted to compete against Maynard's sure-shooting appeal by a thriller ("The Terror", starring Mary McAvoy and Edward Horton) with a new-fangled gimmick: it was billed as "Winnipeg's First 100% ALL-TALKING feature picture".⁵

In the afterglow of the festive season, it was easy for many to forget that on April 20, 1500 jobless men had marched on City Hall and the Legislative Buildings, demanding aid;⁶ or that the "Male Help Wanted" section had slowly shrunk to half a column.⁷ If the Free Press that day had had a reader with prophetic vision, he might well have smiled at the naive optimism of Free Press editorialists: "Canada's forests are being

³ Ibid., p. 12.

⁴ Ibid., p. 14.

⁵ The Free Press offered a particularly prophetic editorial, "The Talking Pictures", a few days later in which it predicted the death of 'silents' within ten years and a transition from pictures with "spectacular scenery and acrobatic acting" to "the technique of the stage drama". The net result of this, it claimed, would be a tremendous demand for "reasonably intelligent players". (Jan. 4, 1929, p. 11).

⁶ Ibid., (Jan. 1), p. 10.

⁷ Ibid., p. 15.

turned into wealth in the production of pulp and paper. A depression in the paper industry can be but temporary, being caused by over-expansion." The answer, of course, was simple. "This matter, if common sense is used, will right itself." It was, they insisted, the heyday of capitalism. "In the great scope of Canadian industry and development there have been no setbacks during 1928. Immigrants are coming in about as fast as the country seems able to absorb them; production within the Dominion is mounting steadily; our foreign and domestic trade are both increasing." The more astute of the readers would have observed that the writer, like Queen Gertrude, perhaps protested too much -- and knew it:

Canadians, going forward into the new year, do not need to whistle to keep up their spirits. All that is required are courage and vision to match their opportunities in order that this nation may fulfill its destiny as the home of a great people, living together in unity and tolerance and seeing to it that all who have the will to labour may have a fair opportunity to share in what Providence has placed at our hand. (8)

And lastly, having finished the cartoon section, the reader would have closed the newspaper with a final tragi-comic irony fresh in his mind. Otto Wellington's comic strip, "Pa's Son in Law", had offered the following New Year's greeting:

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

May the weeps be few and the
Laughs be loud,
May the silver lining obscure
the cloud;

⁸ Ibid., p. 11.

May the best you've had, be
 The worst you'll get --
 May '29 be your best year
 Yet!

* *

The official crest of the City of Winnipeg has on it two symbols: a cluster of three sheaves of wheat and a steam locomotive. Even three decades into the twentieth century these accurately reflected the basic economic make-up of the city. It was, first and foremost, a farmer's market: that the City Hall was constructed adjacent to the market square was a direct reflection of this. Secondly, it was a depot in which manufactured goods would be produced and distributed to the vast western hinterland. When the great depression came, the brutality and extent of its impact upon this urban community can best be seen as it manifested itself in these areas. The 1928 wheat crop had been a bumper 566,000,000 bushels; by 1937 it would be only 156,000,000.⁹ The collapse of the world wheat market after 1929 was sudden and total. By the fall of 1930 wheat was being sold on the Liverpool market at the lowest price since the reign of Charles II.¹⁰ Tractor purchases in the prairie provinces declined from 14,557 in 1929 to 762 in 1933, and the number of registered vehicles dropped from 307,162 in 1930 to 239,575 in 1933.¹¹

⁹ R. Bellan, "Relief in Winnipeg, the Economic Background", unpublished (revised) M.A. Thesis (University of Toronto, 1942), p. 124. Henceforth cited as 'Bellan'.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 123.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 124.

The period after the war had been one of general expansion in Winnipeg's manufacturing industries, especially those of farm products -- flour milling, slaughtering, meat packing -- as well as textile industries such as the needle trades. In 1922 the total (gross) value of manufactured products in Winnipeg was \$66.9 million; by 1929 it had reached \$109.3 million.¹² Three years later it had fallen to 56 million.¹³ The wholesale trade of Manitoba, 75% of which was centred in Winnipeg, declined from \$98,960,000 in 1930 to \$64,461,000 in 1933. Eaton's mail order slumped from \$22,027,000 in 1930 to \$17,139,000 by 1932. The value of the tourist trade fell off from \$2,380,000 in 1928 to \$828,000 by 1933.¹⁴

Such contraction by manufacturing, wholesale, retail and farm industries meant one thing above all else to each wage-earner: reduction of wages or, worse, loss of job. Between 1931 and 1936 there was a decline of 26.34% in earnings of Winnipeg workers. Federal income tax assessments declined by 35% in the five-year period 1929-34.¹⁵ The index of employment fell from a high of 112.3 in 1929 to 80.2 in 1933, rallying to 87 by 1935.¹⁶

The problem of employment, or more accurately of unemployment,

¹² Royal Commission on the Municipal Finances and Administration of the City of Winnipeg (1939), Carl H. Goldenberg, chairman, p. 7. Henceforth cited as 'Goldenberg'.

¹³ Ibid., p. 8.

¹⁴ Bellan, op. cit., p. 131.

¹⁵ Goldenberg, op. cit., p. 10.

¹⁶ Bellan, op. cit., p. 138.

was the most crucial and all-engulfing one of the depression decade. It created at the simplest level an army of individuals whose personal plight caused most of them to defend or challenge -- most for the first time -- the economic and ideological system which had thus far regulated their lives. It is difficult to overestimate the psychological effects of the depression upon the young man or woman brought up in the optimism of the nineteen twenties and who suddenly found himself without work and hope just when he had reached eighteen and was ready to conquer the world.

We came with pulses clear and strong
And gay winds rippling fleet,

wrote one poet at the time,

With dancing hope and running song --
We came on eager feet.

But the grey mist of depression brought with it cynicism and despair, a certain general hardening, and a gradual dissipation of the fanciful twinkle in the eyes of the young:

Still as the land, without a sign,
Dark images, uncouth,
We stand against a light-May sky --
The living-dead of youth! (17)

Problems which were in fact difficult and complex were simplified, and their possible solutions polarized -- all by the 'reason' born of hunger. As one young man sitting in one of Winnipeg's hobo jungles was to set the situation in 1932:

The depression, the railway companies and Bennett were our chief topics. We wisely listened to each other's views on depression. Its [sic] due to tariffs, to immigration, the price of wheat, the U.S.A., Russia, war, ... religion,

¹⁷ Alan B. Creighton, "Unemployed", Canadian Forum, XIV, 158 (November, 1933), p. 71.

the "Bohunks". Nothing but war will bring back prosperity; no cancellation of war debts; no socialism; no God; - let's have the good old days; scrap machinery, to hell with motor cars, deport the Reds, deport the "bohunks", oust Bennett....

Quite evidently there is no use for a penniless person in this land of opportunity; a person without work and money is considered an outcast, no town or city wants him but he can usually get two meals per day and exist because even Canadians do not usually let dogs starve. When a person has lost all his money and cannot get work he can either take to the road and become a bum or stop in his hometown and get a free bed and two meals a day from the city relief for which he has to do as many hours per week. I estimate that this scheme breaks the spirit of the average man within a year; hence I chose the road. My spirit is by no means broken I [sic] just feel angry and the harder Canada kicks me the more I'll retaliate. I do not consider myself an ordinary "bum". If there is any work to be done I'll do it providing I receive what I consider a decent living wage. I will certainly not work for my board and I will not work for the pittance many are receiving today.

Until such time as I get a decent job I intend to live well, dress respectably, eat all that's [sic] good for me, keep myself clean and have clean clothes. Canada will generally pay for this. (18)

Such was the plight of perhaps a not untypical single, unemployed man.

But the depression had as deep an effect upon the family -- both urban and rural. There, too, ideals and great humanitarian visions seemed often to have little meaning when faced with the gradual erosion of years of home-building. Early in 1932 J. S. Woodsworth gave a speech in Windsor, Ontario, wherein he challenged the youth of Canada to 'think for themselves' politically. He received this answer from a twenty-three year old Ontario farm girl who had been in the audience:

"Do you dare think for yourself". I WOULD DARE if I had not the responsibilities of trying to keep, with my \$80.00 per month, a family who cannot shift for itself because of

18 "Experiences of a Depression Hobo", anonymous letter written in approximately June, 1932. Reproduced in Saskatchewan History, Vol. XXII, no. 2 (Spring, 1969), pp. 61-63.

conditions prevalent thru out the country - also because of a dad who thought of humanity.... I possess a daddy who's smarter than lots of men holding responsible positions today - he's well read and knows his subjects thoroughly and more than I'll ever know -- his ideals are higher and deeper than the usual run of beliefs. He was and is one who believes in the emancipation of humanity. Where has it gotten him? Instead of spending his years learning something that would place HIM on a pedestal, and he has had opportunities by the dozen, he has thought of humanity -- of cheering others on to greater goals -- inspiring them with finer ideals -- even his immediate family came as second choice -- if indeed that.

Today -- at 45 or 50 -- still a young man -- he's broke -- house taken by taxes -- no future -- a cluttered past -- out of work several months -- discouraged -- and if he starved today -- the precious humanity wouldn't give a whoop....

O yes -- I'm cynical. And where the working-man is concerned I harbor no illusions. Civilization has not reached the stage where there is any such thing as "equality" in its mind. No sir. Its [sic] money and position FIRST in the lowliest of classes. (19)

For many, as it was for this young lady, the economic and social dislocation of themselves and their families did not mean discarding their beliefs in democracy and capitalism in favour of a Left- or a Right Wing extremism. It meant, instead, a last-ditch defence of certain basic values -- especially the belief in the primacy of individual initiative and effort -- against attack from all quarters. These people, deeply committed to the liberal-democratic, capitalist way of life in its idealized form, would wait -- discontented and impatient and perplexed -- but they would wait for the economic recovery which they knew would some day come. Led with the rest of their generation by the circumstances of

¹⁹ Valya Ponosevitch to J. S. Woodsworth, March 9, 1932, J. S. Woodsworth Papers, M.G. 27, III C7, Vol. II, P.A.C. Note the similarity in position (priority of values, economic) between Valya's father and that of Sandor Hunyadi, in John Marlyn's, Under the Ribs of Death. See below, pp. 35 - 37.

the time, they would keep a careful watch on extremist groups, and would vow that when prosperity returned they would do all in their power to make certain things stayed that way.

Yet while the vast majority of people in North America remained committed to its chosen way of life the manifestations of unemployment on a vast scale were stark, constant and unnerving reminders of the wide discrepancy between ideal and reality. The collective existence of Creighton's "living dead of youth" raised a host of questions which could no longer be left unanswered. Even if one could cast aside all questions of ideology and social philosophy arising from the large numbers of unemployed, the basic fact remained that they were human beings, and regardless of the merits and faults of the economic system in which the unemployed were found, they had to be fed and sheltered if that system was to keep from being justly called 'inhumane' by dissident minority groups. Thus, one major problem created by the unemployed was relatively clear-cut, even if almost insoluble: the sustenance of human life at a level sufficient to keep respect for one's self and his society, thereby preventing the possibility of social and/or political revolution.

But the question was, 'how?'; for between the problem and its solution were many intervening variables. For one thing, differences of ideology and social philosophies could not be cast aside: the depression exposed many half-submerged conflicts -- both cultural and ideological; it gave new life to political groups which in 'good times' had little appeal. The facts seemed to indicate for a significant minority that capitalism was in its death throes; that the market system was collapsing. For the Marxist-Leninist, inevitably so; for the more moderate

socialist or social democrat, justly so. Never before had capitalism been so vulnerable to attack from the extreme Left (or Right), and its response naturally tended to be negative and defensive.

Even amongst the majority who maintained their faith in the essential viability of capitalism and who held that the depression was a more severe form of similar phenomena which had cursed the world before and would curse it again, the problem of feeding the unemployed necessitated in each case an introspective evaluation of one's attitude toward social welfare. And this, in turn, depended upon the hierarchy and priority of values from which each was working.

To many in North America thrift, sobriety and good honest work²⁰ deserved and, it was felt, usually brought success. A man who showed the manifestations of these values merited, in the public's eye, his lollipop. If he 'put in his eight hours' he deserved to have a certain modicum of security, a roof over his head, and more than bread on his table. But what happens when there is no 'work'?²¹ When there is insufficient 'plenty' to give 'thrift' any meaning? When the bottle seems the only palliative for the shame of the breadlines or voucher wicket? What then 'sobriety'? When indigence reaches the point where it is no longer an 'abnormal' condition within a society — shared by a large

²⁰ Work is seen here as a 'process' rather than a 'job to be done'.

²¹ Here work is seen as a 'job to be done'. The distinction becomes important when considering the philosophy behind working for relief. Is, for example, the digging and filling in of a ~~ten foot~~ hole immediately after digging it in order to collect relief worth the dehumanization involved?

number of people who have no other alternative — can one justify a political commitment to limited relief rations because of a personal conviction that 'a man has got to work for a living'? Or should all unemployed individuals receive assistance regardless of whether they 'volunteer' to leave their families for a Federal Government unemployment relief camp miles from the nearest city? These and other questions arose whenever any governmental body was faced with some aspect of the unemployment problem.

The city of Winnipeg was not without any of the above problems; and its response to the problems created and questions raised by the depression was part of a world response to a world phenomenon. But the particular ways in which the city attempted to cope with its problems, that often-comic bickering between "Left" and "Right" factions on City Council, the shift to a Socialist-dominated council in 1935, the geographic positionings of "established" and "radical/indigent" groups from South to North on the city map, and the particular stances assumed and rhetoric employed by its civic leaders and then some, contain not a little which is peculiarly of Winnipeg.

The time to study the 'soul' of a city is when it is under considerable stress: political, economic, or ideological. This thesis focuses on two periods of particular stress upon the community: the period immediately surrounding the 1919 strike and that of the early years of the depression — times when the community was undergoing the pressures of such areas of strain. Both chronological areas are important ones in understanding Winnipeg civic life expressed in its

most simple terms. But the roots of the community lie deep in the last third of the nineteenth century, in a much less complex Province of Manitoba.

CHAPTER I

"TELL ME SOMETHING, MR CANADA. . . . WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE?"

In the midst of winter, 1896, several hundred concerned men set out from the frozen hinterland of the Canadian Northwest and converged upon the city of Winnipeg. The occasion was a convention organized by a number of individuals who were anxious about the slowly declining rate of immigration to the territories.¹ The convention, billed at the time as "Western Canada's Invitation to the World", had as its immediate objective the establishment of "a permanent immigration association which ... might perform a really valuable service to the country."² So spoke the Mayor of Winnipeg, Richard Willis Jameson, who then urged that the delegates adopt as their motto "the immortal words which Lytton had put into the mouth of Cardinal Richelieu, 'In the golden lexicon of youth there's no such word as fail'".

A reading of The Colonist's extensive account of the convention proceedings serves to illustrate that both themes expressed by the Mayor were the dominant ones of the convention. On one hand, pervading the speeches is a buoyant optimism — a sense that the Canadian West was the place to be; and on the other, one finds in the speeches of some of the delegates an indication of what Mayor Jameson meant when he spoke of

¹ The Colonist, Vol. X, No. 10 (March, 1896), p. 452.

² Ibid., p. 448.

the "really valuable service" which a permanent immigration association might perform. He was not referring only to numbers; indeed, it is clear that throughout the convention's proceedings the delegates were preoccupied with something more important to them. "As to the decrease in immigration for some time past", one guest speaker was to state, "I will say as my honest belief that it is not the quantity of people but quality you must look to and in that respect our government is to be congratulated."³ Other speakers left no doubt as to what type of settler was of this desired quality. Perhaps ex-Mayor of Winnipeg Tom Gilroy, the convention's chairman, phrased it best: "We can do well for the settler, and we want the men who can and will do well for themselves, and the state. Let the right class come, let us be careful to get only the right kind.... We want and will welcome good men no matter whence they may come."⁴ But this last, gratuitous phrase was quickly qualified as he proceeded in his speech:

...As we know ... the greatest colonizer the world has ever seen is the Anglo-Saxon. From ancient times it has been in his blood to be a leader. As Englishmen, we are proud to belong to the noble race. There are in the world today at least 120,000,000 sturdy Anglo-Saxons; they are a vast family to choose from. There are 60,000,000 under the British flag. Surely from among these numbers, millions of them not so well situated as we Canadians, good men can be found to take possession of our rich and productive prairie lands, and the country beyond them. There is room here for the race to follow out the early command of God to 'Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth.'

The delegates must have nodded silently with approval, for it seems by

³ C. C. Myer, Danish Consul-General, "Immigration from Northern Europe", *ibid.*, p. 452.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 449-450.

the tenor of the convention that Mr. Gilroy was, like any good politician, expressing the commonly-held sentiments of his audience.

From the convention's opening the most frequent theme was that of acquiring the 'right kind' of colonist. In his Welcome, Lieutenant-Governor J. C. Patterson had first expressed his belief in the importance of the Northwest to Canada, and then warned his audience: "We did not seek to fill up the country with workingmen from the cities of Southern Europe, whose Socialistic ideas were subversive of law and progress, and whose presence in large numbers are a menace to peace, as they have proven to be in the United States."⁵ Then he added:

We want, and we must secure the thrifty, energetic and industrious agriculturists of Great Britain and Scandinavia, descendants of the race who conquered the world and established civilization. To such immigrants we can offer homes in a country unrivalled for its fertile soil, its great resources and a congenial climate — the climate that fosters the development of a hardy, independent and industrious people.

He was greeted with thunderous applause, for this was the larger, unstated objective of the convention. The coming of the Anglo-Saxon to Western Canada in sufficiently large numbers would establish 'Civilization' in the great Canadian Northwest.

In his Manitoba: a History W. L. Morton provides the following quotation from the Manitoba Weekly Free Press (May 22, 1875): "A short time ago a meeting was held in Southampton, Ontario, to consider the proposal to form an organization for planting a colony in Manitoba."⁶

⁵ Ibid., p. 448.

⁶ Manitoba: a History (Toronto, 1967), p. 157.

There are cultural as well as migratory overtones to the statement, for during this period the young province was being staked in the name of the Anglo-Saxon and "reborn in the image of Ontario".⁷ "Everyone in Ontario had heard of the new frontier"⁸ by the early 1870's and many were dragging their belongings and their children over the Dawson route to claim its stone- and stump-free farmland. Immigration from Ontario and the British Isles increased steadily from 1876, and continued into the early 1880's: from 11,500 immigrants in 1879, to 18,000 in 1880, to 28,600 in 1881. They were "almost wholly from Ontario, ... and almost wholly Protestant...".⁹

From the establishment of Manitoba as a province the ethic of its majority culture was first of all Anglo-Saxon, secondly British, and finally Protestant. The fact that the above quotation from The Manitoba Weekly Free Press concerned the good citizens of an Ontario town named Southampton illustrates this British character; that the first thing a number of Ontario immigrants did in 1871 was to take over a Métis claim near a Manitoba river and rename that river 'The Boyne' is no less significant in this respect. A glance at the backgrounds of the most important provincial political figures in the early twentieth century illustrates further the British-Ontario nature of the province.

R. P. Roblin, T. G. Mathers, D. C. Cameron, T. C. Norris, and

⁷ J. E. Rea, "The Roots of Prairie Society", Department of History Publications, University of Manitoba (1969), p. 2.

⁸ Morton, op. cit., p. 156 and passim.

⁹ Ibid., pp. 177, 179.

J. H. Ashdown, to mention only a few, were all born in Ontario¹⁰ and had moved to Manitoba before or during the period which marked "The Triumph of Ontario Democracy"¹¹ in Manitoba. The process had begun in 1871, with the purchase of one million four hundred thousand acres of Manitoba pasture land from the unmarried children of half-breed families, at the price of promising "reserves, annual presents and money payments".¹² And it had seemingly ended in 1896, with the 'settlement' of the problem of Manitoba's schools.

The very success for which the delegates of Winnipeg's first large-scale convention had hoped proved, however, to be an immediate source of trouble. The monumental success of Sir Clifford Sifton's immigration policies indeed filled the prairies with settlers. But the Anglo-Ontarian sub-structure upon which the character of the province was being formed found itself confronted with a basic conflict of interests regarding these new immigrants. From an economic standpoint many new settlers were needed to occupy the marginal and sub-marginal lands which were rapidly becoming the only areas left in the southern portion of the province; but for the most part it was only the non-Anglo-Saxon who would submit himself to the intense and unceasing

¹⁰ Alexander I. Inglis, "Some Political Factors in the Demise of the Roblin Government: 1915", unpublished M.A. Thesis, University of Manitoba (1968), pp. 2n, 11n.

¹¹ This is the title of W. L. Morton's ninth chapter in Manitoba, pp. 199-233. The result of this triumph is indicated in the title of his tenth chapter: "A British and Canadian Province...".

¹² Ibid., pp. 154-155. The bestowal of this land had been done under the terms of the Manitoba Act (1870).

hardship which life on such land invariably meant. It was often only the hard-working, broad-backed Galician and "Ukarainian" who would undergo the frustration of breaking-in a rock-filled meadow with a hand-plow. From a cultural standpoint the coming of the "foreigner" from Eastern Europe meant to many an Anglo-Ontarian farmer in Manitoba a threat to the very level of civilization which he hoped such large-scale immigration would ultimately create.

Frederick Philip Grove's novel, Fruits of the Earth, seems to afford particular insight into the attitudes which many Anglo-Ontarian farmers held regarding "foreign" immigrants. Abe Spalding, its leading character, had emigrated from Ontario as a young man (in 1900) and had been the first settler in a particular section of southwestern Manitoba. Slowly, other settlers began to establish farms around him. One of them, he learned, was a Ukrainian. Shilloe "proved to be", as Spalding was later to admit to himself, "a pleasant, round-faced, clean-shaven man of thirty-odd, good-looking in his way...". Yet all the while the fellow still remained "unmistakably Slavic".¹³

The coming of the "Galician", despite his strength of back, slowly began to upset the British-Ontario settlers' vision of a

¹³ Frederick P. Grove, Fruits of the Earth (Toronto, 1965), pp. 43-44. Grove's novel, published in 1933, should not be discarded as "just a novel". It was written by a man who was intensely familiar with southwestern Manitoba and its psychological patternings, and set to paper only after a forty year gestation period. In addition, it was intended as a (somewhat symbolic) history of the district. It "was never intended to figure as a novel", Grove later told a correspondent. "I meant it to be taken as a piece of pioneer history." Its original title had been Chronicles of Spalding District, and had been changed to its present title only by an annoyed Grove and an insistent publisher. Ibid., M. G. Parks, "Introduction", p. viii.

Kiplingesque colony in the Canadian Northwest. "They shipped in two carloads of foreigners, Ukarainians, dodgast them", one of Abe's neighbours lamented. "I was thinking of asking fer a job my own self. But the white man don't stand a chancet [sic] in this country any longer."¹⁴ To Abe, even the Ukrainian's home life seemed mysterious, and somehow less civilized. No one, it seemed, ever saw Shilloe's wife; and there seemed always "a flock of children scampering for house or stable to hide"¹⁵ whenever Abe rode past their farmhouse. Nevertheless, such men as Shilloe (with their families) proved valuable in the long-run, for their efforts improved the value of Abe's land, and their large families meant that the district population quota would be filled more quickly; the district would therefore be eligible for a provincial educational grant.¹⁶

The ethnocentrism of the majority culture in Manitoba was deep-rooted and in many ways justified. Its prime assumption — that the Anglo-Saxon race was superior to other races — seemed to its members only a matter of common sense. Working from an overwhelmingly materialistic conception of value they needed only a reading of The Manitoba Free Press on almost any day to see positive proof of this. Was the British Navy not the strongest and largest the world had ever known? Was the British Empire, millions strong and united under one beloved monarch, not also the largest history had ever experienced? Had the British Constitution and parliamentary institutions not

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 33.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 44.

¹⁶ Ibid., pp. 57-58.

lasted — and worked — longer than those of any other country? And its culture! 'What other civilization could ever have produced a Scott, a Tennyson, a Dickens and a Kipling?', they must have thought — 'and all within the span of a hundred years!'

If race and nationality were the two leading influences upon the ethic of the majority culture in late nineteenth and early twentieth century Manitoba, its religion was the third major factor in its cultural heritage. The fact that the province was predominantly Anglo-Saxon — a fragment of a civilization which at the time was awing the world with its accomplishments — gave it an ethnocentrism which at times bordered upon an incipient racism. This knowledge that not only were they Anglo-Saxon, but also British, made the colony conservative regarding their attachment to British political institutions. They were sentimental and traditionalist wherever matters of the imperial connection or interests (indeed, an extremely large contingent left Winnipeg's Union Station for the Transvaal in 1899), the monarchy, or representative institutions were concerned. But it was that part of their ethic influenced by Protestantism which most affected their daily lives.

An elaboration of the influence of the "Protestant ethic" hardly needs statement here, since it has become a socio-cultural truism. It is sufficient for the present purpose to state that the Protestant character of the province — and especially its leaders — imbued in it a deep-seated faith in the value of 'work', 'thrift', 'sobriety', and 'patience'.

The environmental factors operating upon the province during this period — that it was a frontier and rural society — helped to

reinforce several of these values. Life was nearly impossible without hard work of some kind, whether in the field or the emporium. Thrift was essential in an environment where abundance, though always in the mind's eye, was seldom in the cupboard or granary. Sobriety, too, was highly valued — but its observance, it seems, was made as often as not in the breach. Regardless of this discrepancy, however, the fight against the corrupting influences of alcohol continued well into the twentieth century and was often a major factor in provincial politics.¹⁷

But it was in the area of attitudes toward politics that the environment had perhaps its most significant effect upon the majority culture in Manitoba. The Manitoba frontier of the 1880's, like all frontiers, demanded that approaches to anything — be it mending the grain reaper or starting out in business — would be of a pragmatic nature. This orientation of mind transferred easily to the level of politics. Pragmatic and empirical, the Manitoba farmer was distrustful of vague political theories and abstractions. And while he seldom was confronted with theoretical political arguments, the ideas of "Politics" and "Party" seemed to embody such abstractions. The fact that political parties were controlled from Eastern Canada made him doubly uneasy; that he was rural and so many of the decisions seemed to be dictated from cities, from Toronto and Montreal, further increased his suspicion. The city, like "Politics", was not to be trusted, for it lacked the directness and purity of the relationship of the farmer to his land. Both were complex, filled with avenues and byways

¹⁷ John Herd Thompson, "The Prohibition Question in Manitoba, 1892-1928", unpublished M.A. Thesis, University of Manitoba (1969).

unknown to the casual traveller; and where the city had its back-alleys and bordellos, "Politics" was not without its innuendos, back-room conferences, and corruption.

The tremendous boom which occurred in Manitoba after 1896, as elsewhere, had as its most significant result a tremendous increase in immigrant population. Between 1901 and 1911 the population of the province rose from 250,000 to 450,000; and over 100,000 of this increase was in the rising City of Winnipeg alone.¹⁸ Of the 110,477 person increase which took place from 1901 to 1906, 42,823 of these were rural and 67,654 were urban. This marked the first time in the history of the province that the growth in urban population had exceeded that of the rural.¹⁹ The physical expansion of the city during the period was enormous. In 1900 the value of land assessments stood at approximately ten million dollars; by 1908 the city was assessed at nearly sixty millions. The value in building permits was even more remarkable. Whereas in 1900 permits for buildings totalling fifteen million dollars had been issued, by 1908 the figure had reached a total in excess of one hundred twenty millions and would climb past two hundred millions by 1913.²⁰

Those who were responsible for controlling and directing civic life during the course of the tremendous change in the face and character of the city were little different from those who lived on the farms now so numerous in the Brandon-Souris area, or who operated the general store at Gladstone or the feed mill at MacGregor. Just as

¹⁸ Morton, op. cit., p. 300.

¹⁹ Goldenberg, p. 6.

²⁰ Goldenberg, p. 5.

"in manners, speech, and outlook it was this [the Anglo-Ontario] group which was the formative force in provincial society, [whose] ... direct manners, clipped, flat speech, and concern with moral values, gave Manitoban life its tone", it was these "rural, simple, and unpretentious" people who made up "that central core of Winnipeg, the Winnipeggers who were such by settlement and descent, were only a suaver version of the rural people, with whom their ties by blood and business were intimate."²¹

Men who entered the civic political arena brought with them the values of their race, their nationality, their religion, and the rural milieu in which they grew up. A well-run city, like a well-run farm, needed no political philosophy; it needed no hard and fast policy by which its administrators must abide. It needed only efficient management, honest and frugal financing, and plain, hard work. Above all, there must be kept out the idea of "Party", by which external factors and foreign ideologies might attempt to control and direct the course of the city which they had toiled so long and hard to build out of a crumbling fort and a colony of half-breeds.

For the European immigrant emerging from the C.P.R. station on Higgins Avenue after the long journey aboard the immigrant special from Canada's eastern ports, Winnipeg in the first decade of the new century was both a wonder and a terror. The vast expanse of Main Street — to which he would immediately have walked — and the disregard of the local constabulary for his identification were certainly a far cry from the winding alleys of Glasgow and the special patrolmen

²¹ Morton, op. cit., p. 408.

of Bukovina. But these more heightened senses of distance and privacy had other dimensions. For many they meant, instead, isolation and loneliness. For those new Canadians emerging from the shadows of the wooden frame stationhouse on June 13, 1904, the leading local newspaper offered them a peculiar welcome: "WELCOME STRANGERS — But if you get sick call on us BromoSeltzer, 10¢ per bottle".²²

As he stood on the edge of Main Street, often still in his teens, he might have removed his sheepskin coat for the heat. If he were lucky, he might then have spoken to someone who knew that there were half a dozen immigration sheds in the district, equipped with dormitories, to be used until he could find accommodations elsewhere.²³ Or he might have had relatives or old-countrymen with whom he could board. But chances were that he would be alone and without such information; and he would find himself like sixteen-year-old Mike Hrushka, whose "life adventures in the new world" began when he and his friend put down their valises on the sidewalk outside the main entrance to the station. Later, the pressures of the nature of community life of Winnipeg having forced him to change his name to Harris, he recalled that:

... After standing there and looking around for a short

²² Manitoba Free Press, Monday, June 13, 1904.

²³ One such hall (No. 5), opened in 1904, had 14 dormitories, capable of holding 25 "ordinary size" families. The basic attitude of much of the community seems to have been summarized in the comment of the Manitoba Free Press upon the opening of this facility: "...Its inmates appear to be comfortable and contented... and they are well behaved. And so they ought to be, for they are well cared for and kindly treated." (Wednesday, June 8, 1904).

while, I sat down on the curb, hoping for some one with the familiar sound of my own tongue to come by. Strangely enough, no one paid any attention to us.... Who cares who we were, where we were going? Nobody, we must have been looked upon as part of the dirt on the street.

What a country! In the midst of thousands of people in the big city nobody cared. I thought this would never happen in the old village. Our people were human. In our village somebody would certainly stop to talk to strangers by the roadside. To be sure a gendarme would stop to question the strangers as a routine. Not here. (24)

And then they would take from their sacks their last piece of "budz", made in the old country, to give them the courage required by their new world.

It was the fortune of these people to be part of the second major wave of immigrants to settle at the junction of the Red and Assiniboine rivers. The first had, of course, been the people who built the city; who were now the "solid citizens" of the community; the people who five years before had flocked thousands strong to the mass rally held on Main Street in front of the City Hall in order to give a rousing send-off for the fifty Winnipeg members of the Canadian contingent off to do battle with the Boers. It was these citizens of Winnipeg whose sentiments had been echoed in the words of the editor of Town Topics, when that gentleman had enjoined at the time: "I know nothing that would bind the empire so strongly together as associations in an enterprise of this kind. It will show the world that ... when we speak of the 'Soldiers of the Queen', we mean all who carry arms whenever the Union Jack waves from India to Australia —

²⁴ Michael Harris (Hrushka), "My Story", unpublished manuscript [in possession of its author], pp. 34-35.

from Windsor Castle to Osborne Street Barracks."²⁵ And it was one of these citizens who publicly declared his "Link of Loyalty" at that time of patriotic zeal. The excerpt quoted here barely ranks as doggerel, but it nevertheless indicates the extent to which the British influence permeated the community, even while the city was being invaded by those whom, in racial terms, it ranked at the level of the Boers:

Oh, glorious little island surrounded by the sea.
Our hearts are hot within us, and beating strong in thee.
The clarion song of battle is ringing in our ears,
And all our blood is tingling, our throats are hoarse with
cheers.

The poetry gets worse as, later, the poet's thoughts become more personal:

We are sons of the grandsons of wives who left the old
country long since,
But time has not damped the devotion your colonies thirst
to evince.
From the Arctic shores of the Yukon to the depth of the
Torrid Zone,
Wherever we are, however far, we are British in fibre
and bone. (26)

Winnipeg, led by "that central core" of Anglo-Saxons who by the turn of the century had had a full generation to establish themselves as the community's leaders, would remain a "British and Canadian"²⁷ city for the next fifty years. "I never before saw so much enthusiasm and patriotic loyalty to king and country", a visiting American woman editor marvelled twenty years later. "...It is really pleasant to see

²⁵ Town Topics, July 17, 1899.

²⁶ E.L.K. "Link of Loyalty" (8 stanzas), Winnipeg Daily Telegram, November 4, 1899.

²⁷ Morton's phrase, as is the one quoted immediately before.

some respect for person and tradition and custom."²⁸ But the immigrant of 1904 was not of that mold.

The immigrants of the 1860's, '70's and '80's had come largely from Ontario and Great Britain. With the gradual closing of the Manitoba frontier (at least that portion of the southern part of the province to which Anglo-Saxon farmers would be attracted) in the early part of the twentieth century, the great stream of Ontario settlers slowed to a trickle; and it was replaced by immigration from eastern Europe. But even setting aside the vast difference in outlook between the immigrant from Herzegovina and any one of a hundred men from Glengarry, there were differences in social outlook wrought by time and history which made even the British settler of 1874 or '84 different from his counterpart of 1904 or '14. The former would have left the England of Gladstone and Disraeli, of the poetry of Browning and the technological achievements of the Great Exhibition of 1851. He would have left before Labour had fully organized, before the advent of the T.U.C., and before the national government had come to believe that active intervention by the state to ensure a minimal humane level of human existence was desirable, much less an ethical obligation; when the children of the poor were still largely spoken of as 'paupers' and their wretchedness an unfortunate but normal condition of human life. The writings of Herbert Spencer said so; and salvation — if the paupers had the courage to strive for it — was guaranteed by Samuel Smiles.

But the mid-eighties marked the beginning of what one prominent

²⁸ Winnipeg Daily Telegram, December 20, 1919.

English historian has phrased "the movement of the 'social conscience'"²⁹. In part a response to socialism, the movement had perhaps been given its first major impetus with the publication in 1879 of Henry George's Progress and Poverty. The next twenty years saw the publication of Capital and the Fabian Essays, the growth of the Independent Labour Party and its child, the Labour Representation Committee. While in the space of a decade or so the philosophy of government toward human welfare had not changed in any substantive proportions, during the period several measures marking a decided shift in direction came before the British Parliament, including Joseph Chamberlain's proposal for an Old Age Pension (1892), and the Workmen's Compensation Act of 1897. More important, the growing awareness of a 'collective conscience', coupled with the rise of socialism and the social gospel, made the coming of a cooperative human commonwealth in the 'here-and-now' seem possible for men and women of differing persuasions. The England of the immigrant of 1904 was that of Mrs. Pankhurst and the Webbs, of Keir Hardie and General Booth. And regardless of his political convictions, if he were a workingman chances were he had at one time or another attended a socialist rally or been a member of a trades union or cooperative society.

The eastern European had often been in contact with influences which were antithetical to those of most native Manitobans of the period. Perhaps he had only been a child, like Mike Hrushka, but who years later could still remember clearly the day that the underground

²⁹ Henry Pelling, Modern Britain, 1885-1955 (Bungay, Suffolk, 1969), pp. 41-42.

revolutionary movement had come to his village in the Ukraine. Disguised as a gymnastic organization, "Seetch" — as it called itself — was in fact a branch of the Social Democratic Party which rallied the peasantry (and especially its youth) in large numbers by organizing them into drill teams. Each day they would perform in the village parks, all the while singing the "new-thought marching songs"³⁰ which told of the lives they could lead if only they took the correct steps. Perhaps he had been a young man, like Jacob Penner, who had been active in the Social Democratic Party south of Riga until his parents, fearing for his life, emigrated with their family to America and insisted that he come along. Together, the many Hrushkas and Penners would come to Winnipeg with "foreign" ideas, "foreign" clothes and "foreign" names, and for the most part they would melt into the many clap-board shacks and dirt-floored boardinghouses where they had the distinction of being some of the many "strangers within our gates".³¹ Their clothes could be thrown away, their names changed; but their ideas and memories would remain with them.

The city of Winnipeg had been built around a railway and a river, and the coming of this second, 'different' set of immigrants dictated that henceforth there would be a 'wrong' side of the tracks' and a 'right' side of the river. It would have been so had the only difference between those who were established in the community and those who had just come been one of 'haves' and 'have-nots'. But, as already

³⁰ Harris manuscript, op. cit., p. 8.

³¹ From J. S. Woodsworth's, Strangers Within Our Gates (Toronto, 1909).

stated, there were more subtle differences — differences in background and upbringing, which affected the conceptualization and priorities of the first (1870-1895) and second (1896-1914) waves. This was especially the case regarding their approaches to politics at the civic level.

* *

In the study which follows, four figures have been plucked from the historical landscape: John A. McKerchar, Ralph Humphreys Webb, Jacob Penner, and John Queen. Each of these men played major roles on City Council during 1934 and 1935, the primary period under consideration. It is a balanced group: two of the men, Webb and Queen, were Mayors of Winnipeg and members of the Provincial Legislative Assembly during these years. Both were subsequently judged successful in the eyes of the electorate, and both men therefore served several terms. McKerchar and Penner were aldermen during the period. McKerchar was just ending a long and distinguished political career (which had never extended beyond the level of school trustee or alderman); Penner was just then embarking upon a similar career which would continue until his retirement in 1962. Both had been unsuccessful candidates for the mayoralty between 1930 and 1934.

But within the political spectrum these four men divide neatly into two groups. Ralph Webb was an entrepreneur dedicated to the advancement of capitalism; John Queen was a social democrat. John McKerchar was a successful businessman interested politically in little beyond the preservation of the status quo; Jacob Penner was a Communist.

In order to understand their positions more fully it seems wise to attempt the construction of a simple framework which sets out their basic assumptions. This can be done by creating a pair of "pure types" which presumably would be the opposite ends of a continuum. The importance of postulating such "pure types" has been recently set forth by Giovanni Sartori as follows:

Granted that pure types seldom, if ever, are approximated in the real world.... It does not necessarily follow that it is logically erroneous, and even less that it is logically superfluous, to define concepts ex adverso. I would argue, on the contrary, that the logical error is to hold that if ... [they] are conceived as blends of the same continuum they should not be defined as opposites. A continuum of what? Unless the ends of a continuum are defined, the continuum itself remains undefined. Hence, even if one abides by the "continuum language", polar definitions remain the sine qua non condition for having a continuum at all. (32)

As his title states, Sartori's study deals with "Politics, Ideology, and Belief Systems"; but in his article he is more concerned with mapping out the cognitive and affective factors which are involved therein. As such, he largely avoids the relationship of an individual's belief-disbelief system (more precisely, his "political-religious-philosophic-scientific-etcetera system"³³) and specific ethical systems to which he might adhere. The substance of this exclusion had been formulated years ago by Lord Acton in the form of a question: "Are politics an attempt to realize ideals, or an endeavour

³² Giovanni Sartori, "Politics, Ideology, and Belief Systems", American Political Science Review, Vol. LXIII, June, 1969, p. 405.

³³ This is the phrase used by Milton Rokeach in The Open and Closed Mind (New York, 1960) to describe an individual's belief-disbelief system.

to get advantages, within the limits of ethics?" Or phrased in another way: "Are ethics a purpose or a limit?"³⁴ Acton had resolved his problem by declaring ethics to be a limit; it was from this perspective that one should therefore approach politics: "History does not work in bottled essences, but with active combinations", he had claimed; "compromise is the soul, if not the whole of politics".³⁵

Max Weber, a man equally conscience-ridden, came to similar conclusions while addressing himself to the same problem as applied to a different historical circumstance: "The matter does not appear to me so desperate if one does not ask exclusively: 'Who is morally right and who is morally wrong?' But if one rather asks: 'Given the existing conflict, how can I resolve it with the least internal and external damage for all concerned?'"³⁶ Weber's reflections led him to create two "pure types" which illustrate the two sides of the politico-ethical dilemma: the "ethic of responsibility" and the "ethic of pure ends" (or "ethic of conscience")³⁷. These shall be the two "pure types" to which reference shall be made for clarification at various points in this essay.

³⁴ Quoted by Gertrude Himmelfarb, "The American Revolution in the Theory of Lord Acton", Journal of Modern History, XXI (December, 1949), pp. 311-312.

³⁵ Ibid., p. 312.

³⁶ Quoted in Daniel Bell, "The Failure of American Socialism", in The End of Ideology; On the Exhaustion of Political Ideas in the Fifties (New York, 1960), p. 280.

³⁷ Hans Gerth and C. Wright Mills (eds.), From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology (New York, 1958), p. 120. The essay is Weber's "Politics as a Vocation".

According to Weber, those politicians who make politics their vocation may be either an 'occasional' politician or a professional;³⁸ he may live 'off' politics or 'for' it.³⁹ As a rule one does both, for the two are not mutually exclusive. But since "pure types" are being discussed here, one might push the distinction further.

He who lives 'off' politics sees it from an external vantage point — as a vehicle for achieving certain specific advantages. He usually approaches it as a representative of certain factional interests and participates in it guided by the "ethic of responsibility". His belief system is value-oriented, and he would answer Acton's dilemma by accepting Acton's choice. For him, 'politics' is an endeavour to gain whatever advantages may be had within the limits of ethical behaviour. And this ethical behaviour is determined in a practical, utilitarian fashion. His is therefore the "pragmatic view which seeks reconciliation as its goal."⁴⁰ The essence of his ethic is this reconciliation. He "takes account of precisely the average deficiencies of people.... He does not feel in a position to burden others with the results of his own actions so far as he was able to foresee them; he will say: these results are ascribed to my action."⁴¹

On the other hand, he who lives 'for' politics "makes politics

³⁸ Ibid., p. 83.

³⁹ Ibid., p. 84.

⁴⁰ Bell, op. cit., p. 279.

⁴¹ Gerth and Mills (eds.), op. cit., p. 121.

his life, in an internal sense".⁴² Either he cherishes the feeling of power it gives him or "nourishes his inner balance and self-feeling by the consciousness that his life has meaning in the service of a 'cause'".⁴³ His belief-system is norm- rather than value-oriented and he would assume a stance which opposes those taken by Acton and Weber. For him, politics is an attempt and an opportunity to realize ideals. Ethics is thus the impetus which gives 'politics' its purpose. The course of his politics is therefore determined by the orientation of his vision. His is an ethic as absolute as that of the Sermon on the Mount.⁴⁴ He is guided by his conscience, and feels 'responsible' "only for seeing to it that the flame of pure intentions is not quenched: for example, the flame of protesting against the injustice of the social order. To rekindle the flame ever anew is the purpose of his ... deeds...."⁴⁵

The question of how these two "pure types" and these four individuals relate to the description of the Manitoban character as it manifested itself in Winnipeg by the turn of the century should not be difficult to see. Being of a practical, pragmatic bent and surrounded by an environment in which materialism was paramount, the established Winnipegger inclined rather easily to the state of mind as crystallized in the "ethic of responsibility". But the different heritage of the

⁴² Ibid., p. 84.

⁴³ Loc. cit.

⁴⁴ Ibid., pp. 119-120.

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 121.

immigrant of the second wave, especially the lack of having experienced the pragmatizing effect of the North American frontier, gave him a different approach to life and to politics.

It was this basic conflict between the pragmatic materialism of the dominant 'English' majority and the philosophic idealism of the unassimilated continental European of Winnipeg's North End that John Marlyn caught in his novel, Under the Ribs of Death. Sandor Hunyadi, the son of a Hungarian watchmaker, finds himself culturally suspended between the world he wishes to be a part of — the Main Street business world symbolized by Imperial Crown Investment and the Nagy real-estate agency — and that which he wishes to forget — his un-English surname and the world and views of the Schiller Barber Shop off Salter Street. The after-hours sessions in the shop are seldom found in the world for which he has changed his name (to Alex Hunter), and its conversations reveal in its starkest form the gulf between them. "Do you know what they're talking about?", he asked his brother Rudolph one evening, after listening to a discussion between Mr. Schiller and Sandor's father about whether the shop table 'exists':

"It's a book by Bertrand Russell on philosophy," Rudolph answered, tearing his eyes away from his father. He flushed and added, proudly, "I brought it home from the library."

"Philosophy," Alex echoed. "About men sitting around tables? What's the use of talking about that?" he asked, somewhat louder than he had intended.

"The Use!" Mr Schiller repeated. "The question of the nature of reality is under discussion, and he asks, what's the use?"

Alex groaned. Mr Schiller had few pleasures in life, but one of these was baiting the eldest son of Joseph Hunter.

"I'll tell you," Mr Schiller continued. "Instead of examining this table, let's examine you. All around you are observers. From every angle they sit and observe. But this doctrine says no two will see the same thing. You

comprehend? All of them see something different. Ho, says one, I see a Hungarian. Ha, says another, an Englishman. No, no, says a third ..."

Alex leaped to his feet. "The only thing wrong with your theory is that I'm not English," he shouted, and growing aware of it, lowered his voice. "And I'm not Hungarian," he said. "I'm Canadian."

"So you are a Canadian," Mr Schiller said. "Tell me something, Mr Canada.... What do you believe?" ...

"What do you mean," he asked, "what do I believe?" Mr Schiller had returned to his chair. "Every man," he said, "believes in something. Tell me, what do you believe?"

"I just believe in things the way they are," he said and moved toward the stairs. "The way things are is all right with me." (46)

The goings-on in the Schiller barber shop provide a glimpse of the ethic of conscience / ethic of responsibility relationship in microcosm. The relative positions of the civic politicians mentioned above on the organizational continuum might well be determined in the reader's mind according to how he sees them acting and reacting during the heat of barber shop debate. One can easily imagine Mr. Ponosevitch as one of Marlyn's characters, enjoying the give-and-take of rational, philosophic debate in the Schiller barber shop.⁴⁷ In an opposite fashion, it is difficult to imagine Ralph Webb, or especially John A. McKerchar, much at ease in such an atmosphere.

Indeed, few people seem to typify the attitude of Sandor's Main Street, with its basic gravitation towards an "ethic of responsibility", more than Mr. McKerchar, an Ontario immigrant of the first wave. He would have found the failure to 'get down to earth' and the

⁴⁶ John Marlyn, Under the Ribs of Death (Toronto, 1964), pp. 127-128.

⁴⁷ Or, like Sandor's father, refusing to take rent from a boarder who is his countryman, even while his own family is barely solvent. See pp. 7-8 above.

inclination to talk in abstract terms to be negations of any value that the barber shop discussions might have had. At the opposite extreme lies Jacob Penner, whose passionate yet rationalistic approach to problems and whose concern for ultimate ends might well have made him a welcome guest in the Schiller barber shop.

Somewhere between these two 'opposites' must be placed Ralph Webb and John Queen. Queen's commitment to social democracy and his constant insistence that human welfare meant more to him than the city's fiscal reputation shows him to be well-inclined toward an "ethic of conscience". Webb's relative position is equally evident. His shrewd attempts to reconcile various political factions and interest groups on and off City Council during the nineteen thirties, even while openly aligning himself with the "Citizens' Committee" members of Council, makes him definitely nearer the "ethic of responsibility". The positions of the four men, relative to each other, may thus be set forth as follows:

ETHIC OF	:	Penner	—	Queen	—	Webb	—	McKerchar	—	:	ETHIC OF
CONSCIENCE:											RESPONSIBILITY

These four individuals, with their differing political and ideological inclinations, seem representative of the basic factions found within Winnipeg civic politics prior to the Second World War. Each represents a significant segment of the political community and each is representative of certain specific political temperaments found therein. To study these individuals as their careers relate to civic politics in Winnipeg is therefore to study certain basic elements found within civic — and indeed provincial — political life.

CHAPTER II

"THE GULF BETWEEN"

If the character of civic life in Winnipeg had largely been molded and set in the years from 1880 to the end of the First World War, the great strike in Winnipeg the following year was responsible for determining the particular ways in which it would be manifested. It was the Strike, more than any other single factor, which revealed the cleavage that had been developing within the community during the boom period of the early twentieth century. But the Strike was a precipitate, not a precipitant: it was the result of a combination of differing interests — economic, societal, ideological — not their cause. The significance of the Strike in subsequent Winnipeg history was that it crystallized and fused them into one event.

The people of Winnipeg have always taken pride in the "cosmopolitanism" of their city. In the present day, mention is frequently made of the "cultural mosaic" which Winnipeg seems to be. Although they did not use the exact term, citizens of Winnipeg early in the twentieth century adopted a similar stance. The "cosmopolitan" flavour of Winnipeg was their pride, too; but for them it was also a source of concern. While it cannot be denied that Winnipeg was culturally heterogeneous, such terms as were used to indicate this were only used to publicize the growing community and to rationalize the existence of a large number of

foreigners — people who did not care (they thought) for Anglo-Saxon ideals and values — in one end of a city which had been built by men with visions of a specifically British community in the Canadian West.

When, as at the time of the Strike, residents of the city were forced to reveal their true convictions regarding the nature of the community, the myth of a 'cosmopolitan' community faded quickly enough into a simple distinction between 'we' and 'they': between Anglo-Saxons and non-Anglo-Saxons. Hence the division of the world of Sandor Hunyadi between the various distinctive ethnic groups found within North-End Winnipeg and the city's 'other' element: "the English". The English, he had lamented, were "the only ones nobody ever calls foreigners. Nobody ever makes fun of their names or calls them balogny-eaters, or laughs at the way they dress or talk. Nobody, cause when you're English, its [sic] the same as bein' Canadian."¹

W. L. Morton has claimed that in being a "society of allegiance" Canada "admits of a diversity the society of a compact does not".² This view appears to have certain limitations, at least as it applies to Manitoba and to Winnipeg. It seems inaccurate to state that it has, more or less by conscious choice, tried to maintain a plural culture, as opposed to a "melting pot" conception of immigrant-'Citizen' relationship as developed by her

¹ Marlyn, op. cit., p. 24.

² W. L. Morton, The Canadian Identity (Madison, Wisconsin, 1961), p. 111.

neighbour to the south. In his Manitoba: a History, Morton illustrates both the way in which his belief in Manitoba's pluralism is manifested, and the limits of its perspective. He states that "the population of Red River had from the first been very mixed and immigrants of other nationalities were coming to Manitoba"³. As an example of this, he gives the fact that as early as 1871 a German society "had been organized in Winnipeg by local Germans."⁴ His conclusion is therefore that "uniformity of language and culture could at best be only an ideal, while duality had become even more unlikely, and plurality the working rule for an indefinite time.... The new province was committed to an experiment in the making of a community which its founders had scarcely foreseen."⁵ While these statements may be literally quite true the question of the ethnic relationships within a community, and especially those between majority and minority

³ Page 163.

⁴ Ibid., p. 163.

⁵ Ibid., p. 163. Dr. Morton was certainly not unaware of the assimilationist tendencies of the community, but his commitment to the belief that Manitobans more or less consciously rejected the "melting pot" as a method of coping with the immigrant seems to have introduced some ambiguity in his writing regarding precisely what was happening as the immigrant took his place in Manitoban society. Hence a rather murky generalization: "... even while Manitobans were preparing to reject the 'melting pot' theory of assimilation, ... in favour of the mosaic concept, that concept itself was becoming untenable. Only some intricate synthesis; some assimilation to an evolving, but not predetermined, type promised to produce an intricate cohesion among the people of Manitoba." Manitoba, p. 409.

cultures, hinges not on form but on attitude. Winnipeg may have had a "varied and polyglot" population, with "seventeen languages spoken on its streets"⁶; but since, as Morton states, "the British-Ontario element [nevertheless] made up the great majority"⁷ the question to be asked, it seems, is whether their claims of having an ethnically-diverse, "cosmopolitan" city⁸ was a positive acceptance of the benefits which might be accrued from a pluralist society or the defense-mechanism of a frightened and apprehensive majority group. The attitude taken seems rather to have been the latter: the rationalization used as a result of the failure of the community's attempts to cope with the non-Anglo-Saxons.

This is certainly the tenor of both J. S. Woodsworth's book, Strangers Within Our Gates⁹, which discusses his attempts as minister of Grace Methodist Church (in the heart of Winnipeg's slums) to "Canadianize" the immigrant, and of a shorter work written about thirty years later by a leading high-school educator, W. J. Sisler. Sisler chose as his title, Peaceful Invasion¹⁰. Both books reflect a humane paternalism which would help a

⁶ Ibid., p. 163.

⁷ Ibid., p. 171.

⁸ This, as mentioned earlier, is a constant claim made by Winnipeggers throughout the history of their city. To draw an example from the period under major attention here, note "A Cosmopolitan City", an editorial in the Winnipeg Evening Telegram during the 1933 civic election campaign (Nov. 29, 1933, p. 9).

⁹ J. S. Woodsworth, Strangers Within Our Gates (Toronto, 1909).

¹⁰ W. J. Sisler, Peaceful Invasion (Winnipeg, 1944).

foreigner until he could learn the English language, take rudimentary courses in Civics, and join the mainstream of the British community to which he had come. Both underline the distinction which was constantly made between 'we' and 'they' — and their titles are further examples of this dichotomy. There seems also to be no indication that either Woodsworth or Sisler (and, one might add, J. W. Dafoe) had intended that there be a "cultural mosaic" other than perhaps in terms of pageantry or costume at the time of the appropriate ethnic holidays. The sight of colourful dancers in Slavonic costume was undoubtedly a source of enjoyment to them — and in this sense was part of Winnipeg's "cultural mosaic" — but to see them in their work-clothes listening to agitators at the Market Square preaching all kinds of 'foreign' doctrines was a facet of the mosaic which the 'English' Winnipegger found difficult to accept without anger and a feeling of indignation.

When the Winnipeg General Strike broke out in mid-May of 1919 the reaction to it on the part of those who felt they represented the "best interests" of the city was both immediate and violent. Although the strike was in its initial stages peaceful and non-militant, there seemed to be considerable justification for such a reaction. Was there not a direct correlation between those who had been instrumental in organizing and participating in the Calgary Conference of the One Big Union (O.B.U.) — the Reverends William Ivens and Salem G. Bland, as well as R. B. Russell and R. J. Johns — and the leadership of the strike itself? And to many, if not all of the citizens who claimed to

have the "true interests" of the city at heart, the revolutionary rhetoric of the Conference was synonymous with the aims of the strike leaders.

One can hardly blame these concerned citizens for reacting in the way that they did: that is, for 'typing' the more radical of the leaders as the "'Red' element", and seeing the normal calm of the city during the early stages of the strike as being transcended by such occurrences as "a feast of Socialistic oratory"¹¹ one evening in Victoria Park as the strike reached its middle stages. Raised in an environment which fostered a pragmatic character, and in the British spirit of political gradualism, of compromise, of the de-radicalization of factions through political appeasement, they reacted not to "Bolshevism" per se as much as to the nature of the movement the word seemed to represent: as much as anything, they were reacting to radicalism in any form. This was what shocked the community so violently: that the strike was one which, if carried to its logical and implied conclusions, meant the total and irrevocable overthrow of the existing political and constitutional framework of government. One of the ironies of the strike is that in their fear the non-Labour element of the community seemed to sense the true nature of a general strike, and took this reaction to an extreme, while those actually involved in organizing the strike seemed only to have thought of it

¹¹ This and the phrase quoted immediately above, in "Introduces F. J. Dixon as Next Premier", Winnipeg Evening Telegram, June 11, 1919.

as a normal strike which was simply bigger and better than those which they had organized on a craft basis in previous years.

Undoubtedly, much of the hysterical reaction to the strike was a product of the times — which had also seen the bloodshed of another general strike in Seattle earlier, and would see the Palmer raids in the United States that autumn and in the spring of 1920. But to those involved, the struggle which was then occurring arose from problems of a more local nature. "Listeners to the debate on the strike issues at Monday evening's meeting of the City Council", wrote Dafoe on June 11, "could not but be impressed by the profundity of the gulf which yawns between the two sections of the community."¹² The gulf, he then stated, was between "the extreme wing of the workers with which most of the leaders were connected and the representatives of the community in general."¹³ The cause of this split, he felt, was obvious. It was "directly traceable to two fundamentally opposed conceptions of what ought to be the future framework of society."¹⁴ The Labour members of Council had adopted a position which could only be justified (in Dafoe's eyes) by taking "the extreme ground that the interests of the workers are the sole, determinant factor in public affairs."¹⁵

¹² "The Gulf Between", Manitoba Free Press, June 11, 1919.

¹³ Ibid. The editorial itself was unsigned. But the fact that it was a lead editorial combined with similar pronouncements on the strike by Dafoe makes it very likely that he was the author.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

He therefore saw Organized Labour as demanding the following: "the workers have the right, unless their demands be met to plunge the whole community into confusion, to disrupt it, to bring it face to face with starvation, disease and industrial impotence, and any who dare lift a finger to help themselves or their fellow citizens in the crisis are 'strike-breakers'."¹⁶ The leaders simply cannot get it into their heads, he added, that "the fundamental basis of the commonwealth is co-operation....", and until they do, the situation, he concluded, must remain as it was at that moment: "one of war, plain open internecine war." It is clear from Dafoe's statement that the division was not simply one of Labour versus non-Labour. And this is true of others who speak of the divisions within the community during the period. The vital area of difference was simply, 'which faction represents the "true interests" of the city?'. "Sane Labor"¹⁷ would always have a respected position on the editorial pages of either major Winnipeg daily, for it did not attempt to upset the status quo ante. The "Reds" running the 1919 strike seemed to be doing precisely that.

By June 12, the situation in Winnipeg had become serious enough for Sir Robert Borden to announce that an investigation was to be held into the cause of the strike. But to the Winnipeg

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Dafoe makes frequent reference to "sane Labor" or the "sane leaders of Labor". See for example, "The Second Round of the Strike" (editorial), Manitoba Free Press, November 26, 1919.

Evening Telegram --- owned by W. Sanford Evans, former mayor of Winnipeg (1908-10), a member of its Board of Control (1906-09), and a future leader of the Conservative opposition to John Bracken in the provincial House --- such an action would be a waste of the taxpayers' money: "Everyone knows", wrote its editor, "that the real cause of the general strike was the revolutionary plot of a gang of anarchists...."¹⁸ Whereas Dafoe was at the time willing to concede the right to collective bargaining in return for a guarantee by Labour that municipal utilities remain unobstructed¹⁹, not so the editor of the Telegram:

We simply cannot tolerate a peace that is based on the sacrifice of our rights; ... a peace in which the bestial foreigner is permitted openly to boast that he will not permit this or not permit that in a British city, flying a British flag, boasting of British law and cherishing British institutions.

Principles cannot be compromised. It would be better far that half the population should be wiped off the map, rather than submit to the dictates of Bolsheviks, anarchists and thugs. (20)

Two days later, it was to add weight to this conviction with a similar editorial emphasizing the principle involved: that regardless of the number of people supporting Labour and the Strike, Canada must ever hold "true, steadfast and resolute" in her support of British principles as opposed to the principles of

¹⁸ "Wanted -- Action, Not Politics" (editorial), Winnipeg Evening Telegram, June 12, 1919.

¹⁹ "The Gulf Between", op. cit.

²⁰ "Wanted -- Action,...", op. cit.

Bolshevism.²¹ And every day the dailies' editorialists gleaned from their own front pages the substance for the next day's editorial diatribe — whether it be the agitation (more evident than real) of "assaulters of Constables, undesirables and men in labor's ranks of Bolsheviki tendency"²², "the receipt of 'Bolsheviki money'"²³ by strike leaders, or "the activities of two of our Austrian residents — no doubt registered alien enemies"²⁴.

By June 21, the day of the Higgins Avenue riot, even the regular news reports no longer made any pretense at balance. One of the reporters for the Manitoba Free Press observed "[l]ittle groups of green-faced men struggling steadily southward along Main Street", while in the opposite direction he saw "[t]he British element [coming] swiftly, for the most part, deliberately facing some sort of ordeal.... The foreign element seemed less sullen, but at the same time more threatening."²⁵ It was by this kind of reportage that the vast majority of the population not directly involved in the running of the strike learned of its

²¹ "Principles Not Numbers, Count", Winnipeg Evening Telegram, June 14, 1919.

²² "Many Arrests Being Made in Connection With Late Riots", Winnipeg Evening Telegram, June 14, 1919.

²³ "Documents Seized in Raid — Deep and Serious Conspiracy, Says Robertson", Manitoba Free Press, June 18, 1919.

²⁴ "Fine Business This!", Manitoba Free Press (editorial) June 11, 1919.

²⁵ Manitoba Free Press, June 23, 1919; quoted by Morris Mott, "Nativism in Winnipeg in the 1920s, and Manifestations of Nativism in the Prohibition Movement and in Sabbatarianism", graduate seminar research project, University of Manitoba, 1970. Copy in P.A.M.

progress; and it was this, too, that led one citizen to become convinced that Bolshevik leaders had decided to use Winnipeg as a base for taking over North America, since the city "contained a considerable Slav population among which the seeds of Bolshevism might be expected to germinate".²⁶

As the Strike came to an end and everyday activities of the community resumed, attention turned more and more from the crisis in the province's main city to the condition of the crops in its fields. By early August the government employment office was pleading for field workers; already it had sent more than 2,500 men from Winnipeg to help with the harvests, yet the demand had still not been met.²⁷ And as the ironies of life in Manitoba would have it, the very "green-faced" bogey-men intent on capturing North America from their base in Winnipeg constituted the vast majority of those who helped harvest the crops which provided the bread for the tables of those such as Mr. MacLean [see footnote 26]. The irony would be manifested in other ways as well. While members of the Manitoba Command of the Great War Veterans' Association visited the Eli district and made pronouncements that Hutterites appeared to be desirable settlers,²⁸ members of the same

²⁶ John MacLean to the editor, Manitoba Free Press, June 7, 1919, quoted in ibid.

²⁷ "Employment Office Sends Many Laborers to Farms", Winnipeg Evening Telegram, Aug. 11, 1919.

²⁸ "Hutterites Appear Desirable Settlers — Visit Is Paid To Eli District by Representative of G.W.V.A. and Others — Find Farms and Homes Highly Creditable —", Manitoba Free Press, Aug. 21, 1919. The representatives of the veterans' association were W. C. Angus, Secretary of the Manitoba Command, and W. F. Eadie, of the vocational office staff.

association back in Winnipeg, commenting on the closing of the local alien board, quickly registered their "resent[ment at the loss of] this means of keeping track of foreigners...."²⁹

Harry J. Mansfield, speaking on behalf of this Alien Investigation Board, frankly and sadly admitted that "the veterans of Winnipeg [had] failed in their efforts of [sic] driving out the alien. The association did what they could ..., but it was not enough."³⁰

Meanwhile, local educators and politicians were continuing to rationalize the acceptance of the role which these non-"English" newcomers could play in building the community. It was satisfying, thought Premier T. C. Norris out loud later in the year, that "the Ukrainians young and old are eagerly learning the English language and are assuming the duties of citizenship", for in doing so they were "setting an example to other elements in this country...."³¹

²⁹ "Alien Board to Close This Week", Winnipeg Evening Telegram, Aug. 28, 1919. As an example of those who "have passed the investigation committee" standards, the article gave: Poles 692; Norwegians 2; Levanons [sic] 2; Italians 10; Hungarians 31; Austrians 54; Bohemians 21; Bulgarians 4; Danish 1; Finlanders 4; Germans 48; Hollanders 5; Russians 333; Roumanians 19; Swiss 1; Swedes 2; Syrians 9; and Turkish 1.

³⁰ "Says Alien Board Has Failed", Winnipeg Evening Telegram, August 18, 1919. The article was outlined, perhaps symbolically, with a heavy, black, funereal border.

³¹ "Ukrainians Show Example to Others Declares Premier", Winnipeg Evening Telegram, November 26, 1919. The last statement made by the premier was referring specifically to the seeming willingness of the Ukrainian community to take advantage of educational opportunities. See also, "Foreign-Born Citizens Under Consideration at Congress -- Hon. Dr. Thornton Tell What Public Schools Are Doing to Canadianize New Residents--", Free Press, Dec. 13, 1919. This speech by Thornton was made at the annual meeting of the Social Welfare Congress. For further information on the Congress proceedings of 1919 see "Social Welfare Congress" (editorial), Manitoba Free Press, Dec. 15, 1919.

But like the man biting the dog, it was largely these "other elements" among the foreign population who drew the attention of newspapers and politicians. As early as June of 1919, the possibility of a Labour resurgence in civic and provincial politics had been presaged by Labour leaders and accentuated by press reaction. On June 11, the Telegram had noted that "the 'Red' element among the strikers" had announced F. G. Dixon "as the next premier of the province of Manitoba".³² Then it added an innuendo typical of local journalism at the time: "How he will attain this position of honor and dignity was not stated; that seemed to be a matter that was understood". After the Strike had 'failed' and its leaders had been arrested, it became evident that Dixon would not become premier, as the editorial implied, by physical revolution. There remained, however, the other possibility: that the insidious "Bolshie" would change his tactics; that having failed in revolution, he might attempt to 'bore from within' the existing constitutional framework. The first test of this belief would come in November, with the annual election of a Mayor and the retiring half of the city's aldermen.

At the time of the Strike at least one of the newspapers in the city had concluded that the whole source of the strike's violence arose from problems created by the civic administration. "Everyone knows", the Telegram had blasted, "that the rioting, assaults, etc., were the natural consequence of a

³² "Introduces F. J. Dixon ...", op. cit.

policy of indecision and weakness followed by the municipal administration ..., which vacillated, temporized and threatened when it ought to have acted with a firm hand and compressed lips for the preservation of law and order."³³ As the time approached for the election, the community began what one might call the Rite of the Strike -- the annual symbolic re-enactment of the Higgins Avenue riot and all that it implied for members of City Council as they chose to see it manifested in civic politics.³⁴

The 1919 civic election campaign began with a vehemence and polarization which was to make it one of the most fiercely-contested municipal elections in the history of twentieth century Canada, if not North America. "'The Second Round of the Strike'"³⁵

³³"Wanted -- Action,...", (editorial), op. cit.

³⁴ Battles were waged in total earnestness between pro- and anti-Strikers on Council until well after the Second World War. With fewer and fewer men living who "remember" the Strike (at least among those on Council), battles are beginning to subside as Winnipeg enters the nineteen-seventies. Yet even as late as 1969, one still finds the basic Strike cleavage. Upon the 50th Anniversary of the 1919 Strike the United Steelworkers of America (Canadian members) presented a bronze plaque to the City of Winnipeg in commemoration of the concession of collective bargaining as a principle of industrial negotiations. There quickly arose a considerable row in City Council as to whether a plaque immortalizing such an event deserved a place upon the external walls of the new City Hall. The Strike was "not something the city should feel proud about", felt Alderman Robert Taft (former Police Chief). "For years after the strike ... Winnipeg had the reputation as a 'centre of Bolshevism'." "The city should recognize the historical significance of the 1919 strike", retorted (Communist) Alderman Joseph Zuken. "I cannot accept the argument that we're raking up old coals or opening old wounds by displaying this plaque". And the battle continued. "First Peg Up For '19 Strike, Winnipeg Free Press, July 8, 1969, p. 26.

³⁵ The title of a Manitoba Free Press editorial, Nov. 26, 1919.

began with the Mayor of Winnipeg, Charles Francis Gray — running for re-election — declaring that "... there [is] only one issue in this election, whether the city is to be governed by the British traditions of law, order and equity, or by one class who [are] fanatics."³⁶ Opening its own campaign against the "Radical-Labour" insurgence into the civic political arena, the Free Press warned its readers that "for the first time in the history of this city, an open attempt is being made to place the control of the civic administration in the hands of the representatives, not of the workers as a whole, but of an extreme section among them."³⁷ Who constituted this "extreme section"? The Free Press made this abundantly clear in another editorial in the same issue: "Bolshie Pulls the Strings".³⁸ Other editorial titles contained similar messages: "There Is Just One Issue — Red or White."³⁹; "Extreme Types are Winnipeg's Chief Woes".⁴⁰ Concerned citizens throughout the community warned of the dire effects of a possible Labour-Radical victory. Alderman George Fisher, Citizen's candidate, forecast that should Labour emerge victorious, "civic government in this city will cease on January 1, 1920. There will not be a

³⁶ Manitoba Free Press, Nov. 6, 1919.

³⁷ "The Labor-Radicals and Political Action" (editorial), ibid., Nov. 19, 1919.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid., Nov. 20, 1919.

bank that would be prepared to advance money to the City of Winnipeg if it goes into the control of this class."⁴¹ Ex-Mayor F. H. Davidson, himself an aldermanic candidate, and Mrs. R. F. McWilliams, wife of a prominent Winnipeg lawyer (who would later be a Lieutenant-Governor of the province) both expressed their complete agreement with Alderman Fisher. All Citizens' candidates at that particular meeting, held in Laura Secord School, emphasized that "there was only one issue before the voters: the election of a representative municipal government; or class legislation for one element of the community."⁴²

The campaign in general had seen the Anti-Labour forces consolidate themselves to a point where they had largely eliminated internal competition. For example, in Ward Four, the alderman then sitting had stepped aside to allow former-Mayor Davidson (considered a stronger candidate) to run in his place. He had done so because he felt "... the safety of the ward — and the safety of the city was at stake.... [T]o a large extent," he warned, "the people of Winnipeg will decide on November 28th what is going to be done in the Dominion of Canada."⁴³ Similarly, in Ward One, Isaac Cockburn had retired to allow J. G. Sullivan to

⁴¹ "Civic Defeat Spells Crash, Says Fisher — If Radical Platform Carries the City's Credit Will Come to an End — Ward 3 Alderman Tells Blunt Truths—", Manitoba Free Press, Nov. 20, 1919.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Ibid., Nov. 12, 1919.

run. "Sane labor I respect most highly", claimed the former, "but I will not be a party to the domination of Reds. We must not split this vote."⁴⁴

Again, it was not specifically "Labour" which anti-Labour forces were attacking. It was that element within the Labour movement which presumed at that point to represent the interests of the community as a whole. A full page Citizens' League advertisement appearing in the local newspapers from November 16 until the election (November 28) illustrated this: "NO ONE CLASS SHALL THREATEN, DICTATE, OR DEMAND.... THE CITIZENS OF WINNIPEG HAVE NO FIGHT AGAINST LABOR, BUT THEY CERTAINLY HAVE AGAINST THE REDS IN ITS RANKS!"⁴⁵ What in fact the advertisement implied was not that there should be "no class representation", but that there should be representation only by the class which had seen the community grow from a vision into reality. There was nothing sinister nor conspiratorial about this; it marked a simple fact of life in Winnipeg.

Labour attempted to counter the Citizens' campaign by claiming that it wished to "secure the supremacy of human rights over property rights".⁴⁶ The one-sided aspect of the Citizens' arguments regarding "class representation" was clearly revealed

⁴⁴ Ibid., Nov. 12, 1919.

⁴⁵ Winnipeg Evening Telegram, Nov. 26, 1919.

⁴⁶ Speech by S. J. Farmer, Manitoba Free Press, Nov. 6 1919.

by Fred G. Tipping, a Ward Two Labour candidate: "All representation up to date has been class representation.... [It has simply] not [been] working class representation."⁴⁷ Then he re-echoed Farmer's claim: "Labor would put human rights over property rights."

* *

On the morning of November 21, 1919 — one week before the electors of Winnipeg were to go to the polls — a crew of workmen, perched upon the great dome of the provincial Legislative buildings, were in the process of putting the final anchors upon the bronze figure of Eternal Youth. The "golden boy" thus began his long watch over the welfare and future of the prairie capital just as J. W. Dafoe, seated in his large, black leather swivel-chair in the Free Press editorial offices a few blocks north on Carleton Street, was about to set onto paper the fruits of his own vigilance. Like the right arm of the boy on the Dome, Dafoe's was not without its flame: for when the "Chief" spoke, Winnipeg, its 'Citizens' (and indeed Western Canada) heeded, and heeded well.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ Labor's Little Daily, Nov. 24, 1919. Copy in R. A. C. Manning Papers, P.A.M.

⁴⁸ The author has recently had his conviction about the immense influence of Dafoe in and out of Winnipeg confirmed by the comments made on the "Chief" by Frank H. Underhill and Arthur R. M. Lower — while both were reminiscing about Western Canada and Canadians at the 1970 meetings of the Canadian Historical Association in Winnipeg.

That particular day, perhaps because the embellishment of the parliament buildings by a gift of the French government seemed to indicate a new cosmopolitan height for the city, Dafoe was in a particularly good mood. His lead editorial of the day was, he must have felt, particularly kind to Labour — considering the circumstances. Indeed, he befriended the Single-Taxers (such as Fred Dixon) and simply warned them that by allying themselves with the Socialists as they were doing, they were in fact being duped. Dafoe could have furnished ample reasons for being much less kind to the Single-Taxers that day, for they had just proposed to exempt all homes from taxation which were assessed at \$3,000 or less — with the difference being made up by an increase in taxes on those homes assessed at more than \$3,000. But this was for the moment not his major concern. He dwelt upon the tax question considerably as he developed the day's copy, but it was not a financial matter that he found himself considering when he came to draw his conclusions. The "one real consideration in this election", he wrote, was nothing less than the control of the city and its institutions. He needed to look no further than his copy of the November 11 issue of the One Big Union Bulletin. "What does it say...?", he continued. "It says" — and he printed in capital letters — :

THE NEW INSTITUTIONS WHICH ARE TO SERVE SOCIETY ARE TO BE BUILT UP BY LABOR AND BY LABOR ALONE.... UNTIL THEY ARE READY TO TAKE CHARGE, NOT ONLY OF THE MANAGEMENT OF PROTECTION, BUT ALSO OF ALL OF THE ORGANIZATION OF SOCIETY, IN ALL ITS DETAILS, THEY CANNOT STOP THE WHEELS OF INDUSTRY.... IN THIS ELECTION AN OPPORTUNITY ARISES, AS ANOTHER AROSE LAST MAY, TO OB-

TAIN DISCIPLINE IN ACTING TOGETHER AS ONE MAN.
 IF THE WORKERS GET POSSESSION OF THE INSTITUTIONAL
 FURNITURE OF THE CITY ANOTHER OPPORTUNITY OPENS
 UP TO OBTAIN EXPERIENCES IN CONDUCTING SOCIAL
 AFFAIRS. (49)

The "ultimate object" of the Radical-Socialists was therefore simply and openly "to set up a class autocracy"⁵⁰. Would Henry George, he asked, ever "have supported any such doctrine, or would have lent even passive countenance to any such anti-democratic programme?" He thought not. The Single-Taxers should therefore in future watch the company they keep.

As the final week moved on, however, Dafoe's editorials became more and more impassioned and impatient. By the twenty-fourth the Radical candidates had become categorically "of a type entirely lacking in the qualifications which the electors are looking for", since they displayed "a rabid class-consciousness" and wished to substitute "eventual class domination for public control of the public property and services."⁵¹ In addition, Dafoe found them wanting "to bring the public schools under their own control to be used as propagators of their pernicious doctrines.....". If the public — and he included the workers — "value their schools, [and] respect those who have

⁴⁹ "Strange Bedfellows", Manitoba Free Press, Nov. 21, 1919.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ "The Calibre of the Radical Candidates" (editorial), Manitoba Free Press, Nov. 24, 1919.

built up a thoroughly democratic school system,"⁵² they should therefore return the sitting members on the School Board to office.⁵³

It was no use, Dafoe felt, for Labour to deny that this election had no connection with the Strike. "They try to repudiate their declaration that this election is 'the second round of the strike'", went his copy on the 26th. "This change ... is a mere temporary deference to public opinion in the hope that the electors may thereby be cajoled into voting for them. Once safely in office, with Winnipeg prostrate at their feet, they will put into operation, without compunction, the programme of vengeance and spoliation to which they are committed."⁵⁴ By the day before the election, Dafoe found himself writing — once again in capital letters — about the "one safe decision" which the citizens of Winnipeg must make:

THE GOVERNING POWER MUST PROCEED AND REFORM MUST
FLOW FROM THE WILL OF THE WHOLE PEOPLE, NOT FROM
"LABOR ALONE," AS THE ONE BIG UNION DEMANDS.
WHETHER IN THE CITY COUNCIL, IN THE SCHOOLS OR

⁵² In the City of Winnipeg Municipal Manual for 1919 one finds the following statistics for Wards One (South End) and Six (North End): Ward One: School population, 4,355; Building value, \$14,202,400.00 Ward Six: School population, 5,258; Building value, \$7,024,850.00 (basis of building assessment 2/3 value). In Municipal Manual — City of Winnipeg, 1919, p. 184. "Democratic"? Similar statistical ratios may be found for virtually any year in which a city manual for Winnipeg was published.

⁵³ "The Calibre ...", op. cit.

⁵⁴ "The Second Round of the Strike", Manitoba Free Press, November 26, 1919.

IN THE CONDUCT OF PUBLIC UTILITIES, ONE INTEREST MUST BE PARAMOUNT — THE INTERESTS OF THE WHOLE PEOPLE, WITHOUT DISTINCTION OF CLASS, OF RELIGION, OR RANK OR OCCUPATION. THE IDEAL OF THIS CITY, OF THIS COUNTRY, OF THIS EMPIRE IS GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE BY THE PEOPLE FOR THE PEOPLE. A VOTE FOR THE RADICAL CANDIDATE TOMORROW WILL BE A DENIAL OF THAT PRINCIPLE; IT WILL BE A VOTE IN FAVOR OF AN EVENTUAL RADICAL-SOCIALIST AUTOCRACY.

(55)

Had he not been so intensely involved with the "best interests" of the community, Dafoe might perhaps have realized that there was a discrepancy between the 'ideal' of his community as he had outlined it, and the course of action which he had prescribed to ensure its preservation. And it was not one peculiar to Dafoe or to Winnipeg. One finds it in the "general will" of Jean-Jacques Rousseau and finds it manifested in another form in the "dictatorship of the proletariat" of the Marxist. It is simply: Precisely who shall determine what is and what is not the "general will" of the people of any community? And is the will which seems to be manifested really the true will?

In his haste to condemn the distinct minority which constituted Radical-Labour candidates Dafoe perhaps forgot that his confreres in the Manitoba Club, their economic power notwithstanding, constituted an identical minority within a constitutional democracy, the representatives of whose interests are selected by the majority principle. Both elements were a distinct minority,

⁵⁵ "The Citizen and the Issue", ibid., November 27, 1919.

and both presumed to speak for the "general will" of the community. The difference between them was largely a simple geographic one: it amounted to the presence of the river which divided South from North, "We" from "They". Dafoe and his colleagues lived without exception on the South side of the Assiniboine; and Radical-Labour representatives could all be found on the North side. The further into the "North End" (and hence out of the physical sight of the city's 'best' citizens) the more radical became the reputation of the community, and more un-"Canadian" the individuals within it.

The outcome of the 1919 election was extremely close, with C. F. Gray — the Citizens' candidate for mayor — defeating Labour's S. J. Farmer. The vote was 15,630 to 12,514. At the time, the city was divided into seven electoral districts running from Ward One, in its extreme southerly section, to Ward Six at its most northerly extremity. (Ward Seven constituted the district which is today known as Elmwood, east of the Red River and north of the junction of the Red and the Assiniboine). Citizens' candidates won — with decreasing majorities — wards One through Four respectively (the last-mentioned by only 602 votes). Labour won the three remaining wards. The 1919 City Council had been constituted with four Labour and ten non-Labour members. The balance now stood at seven Labour, seven non-Labour members.⁵⁶ The mayor

⁵⁶ The foregoing election statistics were gleaned by Miss Kathleen O'Gorman from the results of the election as published in the Free Press and Evening Tribune. See her honors essay, "The Winnipeg Elections of 1919 and 1920 — A Comparison", University of Manitoba, 1970. Copy in P.A.M.

therefore held the balance of power.

The possibility of having a Labour-dominated Council should the election go the 'wrong' way served to frighten the Citizens' forces within the community into organizing on an official basis for the purpose of maintaining political supremacy. A Citizens' committee had been formed briefly in 1918 when a labour dispute threatened to develop into a general strike. The "Citizens' Committee of One Hundred" which had been formed at the time to help break the strike was quickly revived and enlarged in 1919 when the general strike broke out -- this became the "Citizens' Committee of One Thousand". By the time the strike had ended, it had become apparent that Labour was henceforth to be a powerful element in civic and provincial politics; the Committee therefore set about organizing itself as a permanent body. On August 20, 1919, the inaugural meeting of the new "Citizens' League" was held in a hall within the Board of Trades Building on Main Street. Three thousand citizens were in attendance. Chaired by Mr. A. K. Godfrey, President of Monarch Lumber Company, Ltd., the meeting claimed to represent all classes, and not simply those middle-class and white-collar workers who constituted the vast majority of those in attendance. "We feel for the labor man", Godfrey exclaimed at one point, and "will co-operate with the sane labor organizations in every possible manner."⁵⁷

At the meeting a large provisional executive was chosen, with Isaac Pitblado -- soon to be a prosecuting attorney in

⁵⁷ Winnipeg Evening Telegram, August 21, 1919.

the Strike trials — elected as President, Godfrey became one of the vice-presidents, and it was decided to maintain permanent offices (with a managing secretary) in the Board of Trade Building. Of the fifty-six members of the permanent body in attendance on September 22, 1929, at a meeting held to prepare the League for its first election campaign, the occupational breakdown was as follows:

TABLE ONE: CITIZENS' COMMITTEE BY OCCUPATION, 1919

<u>Occupations:</u>	<u>Number:</u>
Doctors, dentists, lawyers	10
Insurance, real estate, grain, finance	16
Retail merchants and wholesalers	10
Manufacturers and contractors	6
Other professional *	5
Publishers and printers	2
Miscellaneous **	2
Unaccounted for	5
<hr/>	
Total	n = 56

* Includes two engineers, an architect, a civil servant, and a hotel manager.

** Includes a salesman and a railway foreman.

The breakdown of this same membership list by place of residence clearly illustrates the North-South cleavage of the city:

TABLE TWO: CITIZENS' COMMITTEE BY RESIDENCE, 1919

<u>Place of Residence:</u>	<u>Number:</u>
South of Portage Avenue *	42
North of Portage Avenue	9
Unaccounted for	5
<hr/>	
Total	n = 56

* Portage Avenue runs from East to West along the north side of the Assiniboine River. (58)

⁵⁸ Tables One and Two are adapted from Paul Barber, "Class Conflict in Winnipeg Civic Politics — The Role of the Citizens' and Civic Election Organizations", honors essay, University of Manitoba, 1970. Copy in P.A.M.

Similarly, a list of possible financial contributors to the Committee illustrates to what sources the League looked for its support. Each of the companies and associations involved were ones which had vested interests in the community and would derive no benefit from any disturbance of the status quo. Among these sources were the following:

Wholesale Grocers Ass'n.	Provincial Exhibitors Ass'n.
Canadian Manufacturers Ass'n.	Western Canada Fire Under-
Bankers Ass'n.	writers' Ass'n.
Winnipeg Motor Trades Ass'n.	Winnipeg Life Underwriters'
Manitoba Mortgage Loan Ass'n.	Winnipeg Dental Society
Retail Merchants Ass'n.	Manitoba Law Society
Winnipeg Grain Exchange	Film Exchange Managers Ass'n.
Western Retail Lumbermen's Ass'n.	Man. Ass'n. of Architects
Builders Exchange	Real Estate Exchange
Royal Alexandra Hotel	Institute of Chartered
Fort Garry Hotel	Accountants of Manitoba
Imperial Oil Co. Ltd.	Manitoba Medical Society
	(59)

But while the interests represented by the Citizens' League constituted a major portion of the business community of Winnipeg, it would be a serious error to over-emphasize the real political strength of these anti-Labour forces at the civic level. While their economic and financial backing gave them a tremendous potential advantage in civic politics, the full force of this potential has never been used to the extent that it might. Their campaigns have in most years seen a Citizens' majority on Council and Citizens' aldermen occupying the most important Standing Committee chairmanships, but Council has at the same time always

⁵⁹ List given by D. C. Masters, The Winnipeg General Strike (Toronto, 1950), p. 64.

seen a significant Labour representation among its membership.

The reasons for this 'failure' of the Citizens' groups (they have had various names)⁶⁰ to realize their full political potential through the years are rooted in the nature of the groups themselves. They were, after all, simply a loose coalition of Liberal and Conservative businessmen who united once a year to try to maintain the status quo or (in the few years when there was a Labour majority on Council) to affect a return to the status quo ante. Except in dire circumstances they were to hold in the ensuing years no regular caucuses, issue no single platform, but would find themselves voting and acting solidly as a block because of their belief that "politics" should play no part in the civic administration. "The Citizens' Committee was gotten up", claimed Edward Parnell (soon to be Mayor of Winnipeg, 1921-22) just after the Strike, "for no other purpose but keeping law and order in the city and endeavouring to help run the public

⁶⁰ From 1919 to 1921 the group was known as "The Citizens' League of Winnipeg"; during 1922 as the "Citizens' Campaign Committee; 1923 and 1924 saw it called "The Winnipeg Better Civic Government Association (or "Winnipeg Civics Association"). From 1925 though -28, years of relative civic tranquility caused by tremendous municipal expansion and general prosperity, there was no (need for) open organization. With the coming of the depression, however, also came the "Civic Progress Association" (C.P.A.), from 1929-32. Since such a name was an embarrassment in such times, the group once more went nameless from July of 1932 to 1935 — except for terms such as "Citizens' Group", etc. With the election of a socialist Mayor and Labour-dominated Council in 1934, however, the group once again reorganized itself overtly. From 1936 to 1959 it was known as the "Civic Election Committee" (C.E.C.); since 1959 as the "Metro Election Committee" and "Civic Election Committee", and (since 1966) as the "Greater Winnipeg Election Committee". Adapted from Barber, op. cit. Henceforth the initials "C.E.C." shall be used to represent Citizens' election groups.

utilities and keep the city's affairs moving."⁶¹ And this essentially negative character of the group was to continue to be its major characteristic. "The impression that the Civic Election Committee made on me," a daughter of John Queen has declared (of her political experiences during the nineteen thirties), "was that it had no policies at all, other than not to spend money in the city of Winnipeg."⁶²

The individuals making up this loose coalition had little reason to rock the boat. It was they and their fathers who had uprooted themselves from Ontario soil to stake their claims in Manitoba. It was they who had shown the initiative and patient labour to make private firms such as J. H. Ashdown's and joint-stock companies such as the Great-West Life Assurance Company an indication of what could be accomplished in the Canadian West by a man or men of initiative and courage. It was these people — the Ashdowns, the Oslers, the Nantons, the Rileys, and the Richardsons — who had built the community from nothing and (to repeat Morton's phrase) in doing so "gave Manitoban life its tone".⁶³

* * *

For the most part, even as the city passed into its sixth decade these people remained 'rural' in their basic values,

⁶¹ Preliminary hearing, The King v. Ivens et al., testimony of Edward Parnell. Quoted in ibid., p. 65.

⁶² Paul Barber (interviewer), "Interview with Gloria Queen-Hughes", oral history session, Jan. 1970. Copy in P.A.M.

⁶³ See above, p. 23.

They may have lived in Winnipeg all of their lives, but connections with the grain trade, with outfitting settlers, with transporting grains and farm machinery by rail to settlements dependent upon the city for supplies — each of these tied the interests of these citizens of a city to the values of the rural hinterland with which they had such close connection.

The basic fact of Manitoban urban history — that the metropolitan capital of the province was a city which had largely been built by agricultural entrepreneurs who had found it necessary to have some central area in which their interests could be consolidated — has important implications for the study of metropolitanism as it is to be found in Manitoba. Whereas the metropolis of Toronto seems to have conceived of its hinterland as an area which could be used to bolster and strengthen the city itself, it seems that a significant portion of prominent Winnipeg citizens conceived of the Manitoba metropolis-hinterland relationship in reverse terms: Winnipeg was considered first and foremost as a centre to service and strengthen the rural outlying areas which provided the true strength of the region. One finds this in a striking passage from a speech made by Premier R. P. Roblin in Winnipeg, before the 1906 Manitoba Grain Growers' Convention:

We have in this city magnificent blocks, we have great piles, as they are sometimes described, in the form of warehouses, banking institutions, and various buildings of that kind, in which hundreds if not thousands are employed, and in which large sums of money are turned over from day to day, and yet I challenge any man to prove, or even assert with any

degree of authority or knowledge, that any banking institution, any wholesale house, or any department store, no matter how large, ever added one new dollar to the wealth of the realm; but the farmer who tills the soil and sells one bushel of wheat or grows a bullock for the market adds to the wealth of the nation. Therefore, it is to the sturdy husbandman of this country that we look for that development and that progress that we aspire to in making Manitoba one of the most important, if not the most important, Province in Canada as far as agriculture is concerned. (64)

Almost thirty years later, similar views — no less strong — were found in letters received by Mr. Bracken. "My dear old Cincinnati," [sic (the name seems singularly appropriate)], one long-time correspondent wrote, "... I continually tell friends of mine who insist that John Bracken never does anything that what they mean he does is TOO MUCH for those who after all do count — the Farmers. And that the Winnipeggers are squealing because he does demand that the Farmer be not milked to a standstill."⁶⁵ Attached

⁶⁴ Canadian Annual Review, 1906, p. 420. Quoted in W. L. Morton, The Progressive Party in Canada (Toronto, 1967), p. 13. To be sure, the rural bias exhibited by Premier Roblin and others prominent in Manitoba politics and social life was far from being a peculiarly Manitoban phenomenon. It was perhaps a natural expression of fears of a kind of life (urban) which was only then developing on a large scale, and was presenting problems for which there were at the time no full solutions. As late as 1929 one hears no less than Little Orphan Annie making the following statement: "Um-M-M—. This tastes just like cream. Yuh sure don't get milk like this in the city-.... Yessir — they could throw away all their cities, 'cept for a movie now an' then, maybe, and I'd still be happy — Plenty o' room, plenty to eat — work long days maybe, but sleep nights — yessir — for a kid yuh can't beat th' farm —". "Down on the Farm", in Manitoba Free Press, January 5, 1929, p. 38.

⁶⁵ R. Maxwell Moore to John Bracken, May 3, 1934. Bracken Papers, 1934, P.A.M. Correspondence is filed alphabetically by surname of the writer.

to that particular letter was a typed quotation from an essay, "The Physical Foundations of Civilization", by a Professor Frederick Soddy (taken from the April 25, 1934, edition of New Britain). It reads as follows:

The great age in which we live started with a conception of energy, with the discovery that its forms were convertible one into the other, and that it was conserved. Sunshine is the one source of energy which is of practical importance, and it is distressing that this vital fact has not been properly understood. The plant alone can transform sunshine into the form needed by animal life; the animals, including man, are wholly dependent on the plant, hence the basic position of agriculture. We are dependent on the farmer for the processes by which we obtain for our bodies the vital supply of energy.

Any system of economics today is false which does not take that factor into account; for it is a form of energy which man cannot yet supply without the plant. (66)

The writer had enclosed with the quotation a note: "Dear John..., Evans ... [W. Sanford Evans, the Deputy Minister of Agriculture] will likely use this as a speech soon -- But it is good enough to stand repeating by you."

Imbued with such values and interests, many Manitobans must have heartily approved of the selection of John Bracken as

⁶⁶ Ibid. One might add examples of the rural nature of the provincial political community almost indefinitely. Note for example the following excerpt from a Dafoe editorial: " ... The present Government of this province has, upon occasion, been termed an agrarian Government. The definition is not inexact; it has given first consideration to country problems - quite rightly. We live so close to the soil in the west that everybody recognizes that the development and encouragement of our agricultural resources ought to be a first charge upon the attention of our administrators and legislators. The Premier has been a farmer all his life; all his colleagues with the exception of the attorney-general, represent country constituencies and have intimate relations with rural life...." "The Farmers and the Province", Manitoba Free Press, January 12, 1920.

Premier of Manitoba in 1922. He was a man who shared with many of them a common political inclination. The very circumstances surrounding Mr. Bracken's rapid rise to the first political position in Manitoba are themselves an indication of the state and inclinations of the political mind in the province. In the last days of July, 1922, the Progressive Party of Manitoba found itself with the largest single group in the newly-elected Legislature.⁶⁷ But it had no leader. T. A. Crerar and R. A. Hoey were both approached; both refused. At the time, Bracken was President of the Manitoba Agricultural College. W. R. Clubb, one of the few members of the Legislature whom Bracken had ever met, suggested him as a possibility; and a delegation of Progressives subsequently set out to approach the agricultural expert. Bracken, like Crerar and Hoey, refused. But the more he refused, the more the delegation appealed to him on the ground that his service was a public duty. On this basis Mr. Bracken accepted. "I know nothing about politics", he warned them, "and what I do know I don't like. If you men will support me, stand by me when I make mistakes, and if you think I can serve you and the province, I will join you and see what we can do."⁶⁸

On August the eighth, John Bracken was sworn in as

⁶⁷ The returns: United Farmers of Manitoba: 27; Liberals: 7; Conservatives: 6; Labour: 6; Independent: 8. From Morton [Manitoba], op. cit., p. 379.

⁶⁸ L. F. Earl, "The Reign of John Bracken", Winnipeg Tribune, August 8, 1942.

Premier of the Province of Manitoba. His entry into the provincial political arena was a very inconspicuous one: he had come into the city "alone in a borrowed Model T Ford over a dirt road from the Agricultural College to the Oddfellows' hall on Kennedy Street."⁶⁹ His claims to the position were consonant with his entry. He had always somewhat prided himself on the fact that he had never felt inclined to vote in any election; and now he was leader of an entire political party. It was a party without funds and with little organization, and he had only met two or three of the men whom he was about to have in his cabinet. He had never witnessed the opening or closing ceremony in the Legislature, had never made an election speech, had never been elected to a political office and therefore did not yet have a seat in the provincial House.⁷⁰ He was nevertheless the Premier of Manitoba.

Many of the people of Manitoba and Winnipeg must have nodded with satisfaction at John Bracken's first political speech at the opening of the new Legislature: "We are not here to play politics or to represent a single class", he warned, "but to get down to the serious business of giving this province an efficient government."⁷¹ If, as Dr. Morton claims, the provincial election of 1922 was "a political divide" in Manitoba because it "marked the culmination of the effort to get rid of 'politics'"⁷², such

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Morton, op. cit., p. 384.

⁷² Ibid., p. 379.

an ambition had been present at the civic level from the days following the Strike and was vainly pursued for the next fifty years and more. If the phenomenon had occurred at the provincial level because it marked "an attempt by a province still predominantly agricultural to find relief from the stresses of rapid change, an exhausting war, and a deep depression by returning to its origins, the rural values of thrift, sobriety and patient labour"⁷³, such an escape was sought at the civic level even earlier because an essentially rural-valued City Council was unable to cope with problems created by rapid urbanization and industrialization.

This basic set of attitudes toward political life in general was largely carried over to the civic level. As in the provincial House, the pleas for "no 'politics'" were consistently heard in and out of the Council chambers; and, as at the provincial level, in reality, the idea was largely a myth. 'Politics' did exist, and existed openly. Sometimes this was to have comic effects (at least to the present-day reader of old news clippings of Council activities). Proceedings on Council at times seem to have been conducted more in the spirit of a soccer final than a democratically-elected political assembly, with British rules of "fair play" the criteria for procedure, rather than Roberts' Rules of Order. In May, 1934, Acting-Mayor Cecil Rice-Jones became flustered when Labour, temporarily in the majority, managed to

⁷³ Loc. cit.

force Council to take a certain measure:

'What's the use of worrying, Cece', Alderman Barry remarked, 'you know, it's just playing politics.'

'What are you fellows howling about?' Alderman Flye asked. "We Labor men have taken it many times when you were in the majority, and said nothing about it. But the first time the vote is against you, you whimper and whine.'

'But we don't play politics as you do,' Alderman Rice-Jones retorted.

'Politics!!!' Alderman Flye exclaimed. 'I don't know of a better politician on the city council than you are, Alderman Rice-Jones.' (74)

For a Labour alderman to tell a Citizens' alderman that he was an incompetent civic administrator was a serious enough charge; but it was acknowledged as part of the give-and-take of political life. But a charge that his colleague was a "politician" was judged as an affront to that alderman's integrity, and tantamount to a charge of open corruption of office. In another era and with different mores, such an accusation might well have provoked a duel; but in Winnipeg during the third and fourth decades of the twentieth century it meant instead an intensification of the battle which the Citizens' alderman felt he must wage to keep civic politics 'clean'.

⁷⁴ "Bitter Meeting of Civic Finance Committee Ends Hope of Wage Increase", unidentified clipping [uc], in Winnipeg Free Press, "City Council Scrapbook" [CCS], 1934, p. 76. All City Council Scrapbooks compiled by the staff of the Winnipeg Free Press are at present found in their library.

Despite their lack of a positive political philosophy and their failure to remove unsavoury Labour elements from City Council during the nineteen-twenties and thirties, the Citizens' groups were successful in their basic aims: they did manage throughout these years to dominate civic positions. There had been only one Labour mayor, S. J. Farmer (elected in 1924), during the period from 1919 to 1934; and he had had to operate with a Citizens' majority on the Council. In addition, the Citizens' group had kept a tight control over the important standing committees: Finance, for example, was not to be chaired by a Labour representative until 1935, when Thomas Flye was elected to the position.⁷⁵ Flye was deemed a "sane Labour" member on Council, and had the habit -- annoying to his Labour colleagues -- of voting the "wrong" way at times. Flye's peculiar tendency was to result in his removal from membership in the Independent Labour Party in the mid-nineteen-thirties. During many of the years between the Strike and 1935 the Finance Committee was under the stern oversight of John A. McKerchar, nicknamed "the Guardian of the Treasury".

Of the many careers that were "made" by the 1919 Strike

⁷⁵ It was at the inaugural meeting each January, at which these committee chairmanships and general memberships were chosen (and still are), that one finds the Rite of the Strike most evident. Factional rivalries are at their widest, tempers often at their hottest, and not infrequently the Strike and its role in civic history -- for good or for bad -- are used as fuel to intensify the feud.

and its aftermath in Winnipeg, none benefitted more than that of Ralph Humphreys Webb. But where those of John Queen, Fred Dixon (and indeed James Shaver Woodsworth) gained mainly publicity and the sympathy of the labouring masses, the legacy of the Strike to Webb was a set of needs on the part of Winnipeg's concerned citizenry. They needed a man who would represent the "true interests" of the city; they needed an ambitious and efficient administrator; they needed a man who would place Winnipeg in the forefront of Canadian cities, who would be diplomatic and who had the manners of an English gentleman, yet who would be stern enough to keep radical Labour and the foreign elements in the city in their places. Ralph Webb seemed to be exactly what they needed.

Webb had seemed to come to them almost as a gift from a providential deity for a hard-working, industrious community that deserved better than the disruptive influences of a general strike. Born on the high seas — in the most dramatic Fairbanks tradition — aboard a British frigate on its way to India, Webb had developed from an early age a strong sense of self-reliance, of Empire, of obedience to the Union Jack and duty to its causes, and of the contributions which British civilization had made to the world. Having enlisted in the British army in 1914 he served his country valiantly (and had lost a leg in doing so). He emerged from the war a Colonel and (for some reason) subsequently chose Winnipeg as the place where he should find his fortunes as a civilian.

Colonel Webb brought to his newly-adopted city the

best virtues of his race: he was brave (his peg-leg testified to that), he had initiative (within a few years of coming to Winnipeg he had become manager of the Malborough Hotel, was a prominent member of the Board of Trade, a major investor in real estate and securities, an executive of the Rotary Club, an organizer of the local tourist bureau, and — since he was the ideal "returned soldier" — was a man in great demand at Legion dinners and club luncheons). He was outspoken, prominent, respected, and successful. His choice of investments made him rich, and his choice of service-club engagements made him Mayor.⁷⁶

It was natural, then, that Ralph Webb should have been asked by the Winnipeg Better Civic Government Association to run for mayor in 1924, for Webb epitomized the "Concerned Citizen".⁷⁷ And citizens felt that they had reasons for concern at the time. S. J. Farmer — a Labour man — was Mayor of Winnipeg, and he was about to run for re-election. For if Labour should gain a majority among the aldermen —!!? They needed a strong candidate and Webb was their choice. He agreed and ran. He won by almost a

⁷⁶ The above information has been synthesized from a number of miscellaneous articles (many undated and unidentified) in the Necrology section of the Winnipeg Free Press library files.

⁷⁷ It may be tempting to construe the author's use of quotation marks around such phrases as "Concerned Citizen" as an indication of derision or mockery. This is emphatically not the case. People of Winnipeg themselves used such terms: either one was a Concerned Citizen or one was not. He was not if he did not hold certain values and follow certain accepted courses of action. One need only look at any Citizens' election campaign advertisement for the civic elections during the period to see this 'We-They' dichotomy manifested in its most open form. See Appendix A.

two-to-one majority.

By 1933, he seemed to be Winnipeg's perpetual mayor. He had run again in 1925 and 1926, both times winning by a substantial majority. Then, after a two year "retirement" to consolidate his business interests, he returned to the mayoralty race — winning in 1929, 1930, and 1931 — each time further increasing his political hold on the community to the point where of the 53,572 votes cast in 1931, 36,087 of them were for him. He won again in the troubled year of 1932. By the fall of 1933 he was therefore about to enter his eighth mayoralty race without a loss. His record stood as follows:

1924: Webb..... 22,014	1925: Webb..... 23,627
Opposition... 12,703	Opposition.. 12,703
1926: Webb..... 19,778	1929: Webb..... 22,804
Opposition... 12,673	Opposition.. 21,842
1930: Webb..... 26,626	1931: Webb..... 36,087
Opposition... 16,145	Opposition.. 17,485
1932: Webb..... 25,079	
Opposition... 24,308 (78)	

The results of Webb's political organizational abilities were impressive. He had been undefeated in public office for a decade; it was largely upon this record that Webb would base his last campaigns. His appeal was a widespread one, and while he drew his most solid support from south of the Assiniboine River, he also received a large and widely-spread vote from the city's

⁷⁸ "10-Year Record Shows Gain in Mayoralty Vote", Winnipeg Tribune, November 25, 1933.

other districts, including the North End.⁷⁹ In the election of 1932, for example, at the polling district surrounding Aberdeen School — situated north of the C.P.R. main lines and south of the North End's commercial area, Selkirk Avenue — Webb polled 274 votes, as opposed to 251 by John Queen and 112 by Communist Jacob Penner. Other polls in the area show similar ratios. To be sure, Communist and Radical-Labour strength was greatest in the North End, just as the voting strength of the I.L.P. lay in the north-central ward of the city (Ward Two under the post-1919 ward system). But Webb nevertheless had a consistent strength in these areas which Labour — whatever its hue — did not enjoy in the south ward (Ward One).

The secret of this strength rested largely in Webb's particular mystique. He was energetic and bold, "the best man you could find owing to his optimism...", a colleague of the nineteen-thirties would later state. "He had great foresight or vision ... he had something before him all the time."⁸⁰ Because of this, he drew votes not only from those who were financially secure and wanted to stay that way, but also from many who lived in less affluence; who lived perhaps on a twenty-five foot lot on Burrows Avenue; who by the nineteen-thirties were on or near relief, yet who clung to essentially conservative values in the hope

⁷⁹ See Appendix B.

⁸⁰ B. McKillop (interviewer), "Interview with C. E. Simonite", oral history session, June, 1970. Transcript in possession of interviewer.

that one day after the depression had ended they too would have something to conserve. Mayor Webb promised the fulfillment of aspirations and ambitions, and he received the eager support of those such as Alex Hunter. For these people, the promises of socialists like John Queen or Communists like Jacob Penner meant the possible end of their hopes and not the acquisition of a utopian vision.

More than this, however, Ralph Webb found successful and consistent support from many of the citizens of Winnipeg because the same psychological balance which tempered their approach to ideology and to politics was operant within him. He was a Conservative, but was not doctrinaire: loyal to his party but capable of bending with the political winds. He would have agreed with Acton's claim that, "compromise is the soul, if not the whole of politics", and throughout his political career he succeeded by finding various means of conciliating various factional interests. He also lived "off" politics — in the sense that he did not conceive of an intertwining of politics with ethical life and society in general.

There is, it seems, a separation of "politics" and "ethics" made by those like Webb, whose political thought is filtered through an ethic of responsibility. For such a person, "politics" largely has a kind of hazy, independent existence, not unlike that of the God of the Eighteenth Century Deist: they both exist, yet are divorced somehow from the 'real world', are far off in a corner. Whereas the God of a Voltaire was needed

mainly to solve the largely intellectual problem of a First Cause, 'political life' was needed by Webb simply to gain advantages for the community of interests (the 'real world') which he represented and which provided the ethical base, the ethos, of the community which had been set up largely to serve them.

As such, the 'ethic' involved was one which was somehow totally divorced from 'politics', just as 'Nature' to the Man of the Eighteenth Century was separated from the God which had created the Natural world. Where the eighteenth century philosophe had denatured his God and in so doing deified Nature⁸¹, the political community of "Citizens" in Winnipeg had attempted to separate ethics and politics, and thereby politicized ethics. The political struggles which were to be waged in Winnipeg as the city moved in the nineteen-thirties, and a state of crisis, would largely be ones revolving around the role in politics of some ethical, 'higher' law. In such times, the paramount political question became whether such a "law" should be used to transcend the everyday solutions to the problems of a world experiencing the state of depression as it never had before.

⁸¹ Carl L. Becker, The Heavenly City of the 18th Century Philosophers, (New Haven, 1961), pp. 102-103. Of course there is no attempt made here to equate 'Politics' with an eighteenth century 'God', or 'ethics' with 'Nature'. But there is a certain similarity in the process involved. Both are trying to supplant one aspect of society (a God who seems no longer really to be needed or "Politics", which has for these Manitobans a direct connection with dishonesty and political sleight-of-hand) with some 'purer' form. Both in fact achieve something paradoxical in effect, in the sense that they replace their respective 'problems' with others of a similar nature; ones derived from the success of the very changes which they had made.

CHAPTER III

"THEY USED TO TELL ME I WAS BUILDING A DREAM . . ."

Mayor Webb was addressing a meeting at Isaac Brock School. It was November of 1932, and once again he was running for the mayoralty of the City of Winnipeg. Two months earlier he had indicated his political intentions in the local tradition of the Citizens' Candidate: "If the people want me to run again, in view of present conditions, I will do so."¹ John Bracken was not the only Manitoban Cincinnatus. "If elected I will simply do the best I can to carry on to the best of my ability in view of the extraordinary conditions prevailing", he was to state elsewhere. "... I hope these conditions will be bettered as time goes on."²

But while he had high hopes, he promised no changes for the better, for he knew he was powerless to affect any substantive improvement. The depression was a world-wide one, and was beyond the control of any individual. The only solution, he felt, was to "get behind public men. Public men were always glad to get every assistance possible, but the citizens should consider it their primary duty not to lean too much on govern-

¹ "Mayor Willing to Run Again If Voters Ask Him", Winnipeg Tribune, October 10, 1932.

² "Penner Joined By Webb and John Queen", Winnipeg Free Press, November 2, 1932.

ments."³ The solution, then, was not one of governmental initiative or economic regulation, but one simply of faith: faith in the Citizens who had been elected as best representatives of the true interests of the community. In Winnipeg, of course, these individuals were those sponsored by its most prominent citizens. Support the Citizens' Candidates; have faith, with them, in the economic and political system in which they had vital interests, and the depression would eventually be beaten. "The remedy for the current problem", he urged, was not a governmental one; it was one of individual initiative. It was up to each man "to see what he can do to get himself out of the mire. 'We have been blaming all governments for not doing enough,... instead of realizing what we ourselves can do to help ourselves and others.'"⁴ Mayor Webb's solution was that of Samuel Smiles and the Nineteenth Century Liberal.

There were others involved directly in the 1932 election campaign who were much less content to 'wait out' the depression. Two days before Webb's appearance at Isaac Brock School the candidate of the Workers' Unity League for the mayoralty, Jacob Penner, had opened his campaign with a vitriolic speech at Lord Selkirk School in Elmwood. This was Penner's second campaign for the position of chief magistrate of the

³ Ibid.

⁴ "Says Solution of World Problems Individual's Task", Winnipeg Free Press, November 17, 1932.

city. He had run against Webb the previous year in a five-man race, and had polled not quite four thousand votes (coming fourth).⁵ Although he was giving his speech in Ward Three, where Labour was strongest, Penner's audience was not one which welcomed him with open arms. He was speaking in an Independent Labour stronghold.⁶ "Social Revolution" and nothing less, "is the only remedy for the prevailing economic crisis", he began. "Capitalism has reached a stage of development where, like a man afflicted with a deadly disease, it cannot recuperate or bring back prosperity." The end was nearing. "The capitalist class has been trying to save the decaying system by means of various economic conferences, inflation, deflation, low tariffs, high tariffs, and moratoriums, using the best brains," he added. Only war, he went on, could "liquidate the crisis at present", but even that would only "defer the inevitable social revolution."⁷

It must have been difficult for those at the meeting

⁵ The breakdown of the 1931 mayoralty vote is as follows: Webb: 36,007; T. A. Hunt, K.C.: 7,631; T. R. Deacon: 5,142; J. Penner: 3,954; C. MacPhail: 758, Winnipeg Tribune, November 25, 1932.

⁶ The results from the Lord Selkirk poll for 1932 would soon give Queen 594, Webb 286, and Penner only 38. Winnipeg Free Press, November 26, 1932. See Appendix B.

⁷ This and the preceding unacknowledged quotations from "Penner Opens His Campaign for the Mayoralty Office — Says Social Revolution is Only Remedy for Present Economic Crisis" (uc), November 15, 1932, Winnipeg Free Press Library: "Civic Election" file, 1932. Henceforth such clippings shall be cited as follows: CEF: [year].

skeptical of Penner's philosophy to have taken his speech seriously. He had run in the provincial election of 1927 and for mayor in 1931, so they had heard him speak before, and had read his speeches in the local dailies. He had been soundly defeated both times and his speeches were always the same: "the inevitability of the Revolution"; "the abuses of the capitalist system"; "the oppression of the workers". Always the rhetoric was the same.

But for Penner such phrases were more than the rhetorical tools of his political trade: they were absolutely true, and the truths were manifestly evident. Indeed, every aspect of his life, he felt, clearly showed that the course of history, as Marx had claimed, was pointing to the liberation of the workers and the overthrow of the capitalist system.

Penner could still remember his boyhood days in the countryside of Latvia surrounding the port of Riga, on the Baltic. Born in 1880, he had grown to young manhood within the repressive régime of post-Alexandrian Russia, and had been inspired at a very early age by the revolutionary activities of young intellectual émigrés who had returned to the Ukraine to fight against Czarist forces during the early eighteen nineties. The son of orthodox Mennonites of German ancestry, Jacob had been raised in an atmosphere which emphasized the following of one's conscience in the pursuit of personal truth, and conscience was to be his lodestar throughout his life.

By the age of eighteen, he had graduated from a Russian teachers' college, found he did not enjoy the life of a teacher, and spent two years learning the techniques of surveying land. His early initiative and independence had also seen him break with the religious faith of his parents and involve himself in the activities of the Russian Social Democratic Party in the Riga area. It is possible that during this period he became acquainted with the writings and ideas not only of Karl Marx but also M. Plekhanov.

Up until the time of Plekhanov's writing, revolutionaries in Russia had refused to consider merely political reforms unless they could be accompanied simultaneously with the necessary economic reorganization.⁸ Plekhanov, however, claimed that such a belief was against the true interests of the working class. Indeed, parliamentary institutions ought instead to be welcomed by working class revolutionaries, not only because "propaganda and agitation could more easily be carried on under a constitutional regime", but also because "constitutionalism is certainly the most convenient, and perhaps the only, road by which the socialist ideal can ultimately be attained."⁹ There was much of Plekhanov's thought with which Penner might have disagreed (indeed, it is not certain that Penner even knew directly of

⁸ Donald Mackenzie Wallace, Russia — On the Eve of the Revolution (Toronto, 1963), pp. 514-515.

⁹ Ibid., pp. 514-15.

Plekhanov); but regardless, from this early period in his life he did not hesitate to use the political institutions provided by liberal democracy and capitalism to further his revolutionary ends; and he saw nothing inconsistent with his position first as a Marxist and then a Marxist-Leninist in doing so.

By the early twentieth century Penner was well-versed in orthodox Marxist thought, and by 1903 he was so involved in the underground revolutionary movement that his parents, fearing for his life at the hands of Czarist troops, insisted that he accompany them to North America.¹⁰ Like others of his time and circumstances, Jacob's father, a one-time farmer and operator of a small flour-milling concern in Riga, had come into contact with Canadian (C.P.R.) immigration agents in the years just after 1896. Attracted by this "country of milk and honey"¹¹ Mr. Penner decided to homestead in Western Canada.

Thus it was that when emerging in 1904 from the C.P.R. railway station, on Higgins Avenue — the heart of Winnipeg during the boom period — the entire Penner family found themselves part of the second great wave of immigration to Manitoba. Fortunately they had relatives in the province and were not without a little capital; but they were not

¹⁰ This and other biographical information is found in Roland Penner (interviewer), "Interviews Between Roland Penner and Jacob Penner" (1965); copy in P.A.M. Information regarding Jacob Penner's pre-Canadian years has also been gathered from an unrecorded interview between the author and Roland Penner (youngest son of Jacob Penner), July, 1970.

¹¹ Jacob Penner, in Roland Penner (interviewer), ibid.

affluent, not Anglo-Saxons, and they found themselves gravitating to the section of the city where others like them were living. One needed only to cross Main Street to do so. Within a few weeks the family had rented a boarding house, west of Main Street, on Henry Avenue. Mr. Penner went to Morris, Manitoba, to visit his relatives, while the rest of the family remained in Winnipeg.

Winnipeg in 1904, like all boom-towns, showed the signs of social inequity only too visibly. Along with the construction of stone mansions on Wellington Crescent, on the south bank of the Assiniboine, was the rapid rise of the clapboard and tarpaper jungle which was quickly becoming characteristic of the North End. Pricked by a sensitive social conscience and attuned to the existence of inequity, Penner quickly noticed such discrepancies in life-styles. It was, then, not only the German burghers and landlords in Latvia — those who had controlled the municipalities and guilds and supported the Czar — who were perpetuating the highly-stratified, inequitable society which divided man from man according to his class.¹² Here he was, a quarter of the way around the globe from Riga, and the same inequality existed. These 'burghers' were Anglo-Saxons, and they too remained aloof. Their 'Czar' was not a human despot but an institution. It was 'Capitalism' to which these English burghers paid their homage. What Marx had maintained was therefore correct: the class struggle was truly an international one and could know

¹² Dr. Alfred Bilmanis, Baltic Essays. (Washington, D. C., 1945), pp. 141-142.

no sectarian boundaries, whether along national or Labour-factional lines.

As the depression worsened and as capitalism was beset by pessimism and the wails of dispossessed investors, as strikes and lockouts increased, discontent grew, and the policies of "Iron-Heeled Bennett" seemed to be fascizing political life in Canada, Penner could see each of these developments -- dictated by history and therefore to his mind inevitable -- reproduced in microcosm within Winnipeg. The city had from its earliest days been dominated and run by the bourgeoisie for the benefit of the bourgeoisie. It was they who had exploited the workers, run the government, ghettoized the North End, and rested in their Wellington Crescent mansions. The great strike of 1919 had clearly revealed to the world the class nature of the city and the domination of its politics by a group of citizens who consistently refused to reveal any political platform and for whom "politics", the means of affecting social and ethical improvement, was not a vocation of honour and trust, but a stigma!

The quiet period of consolidation, growth and prosperity during the middle nineteen-twenties had seen a tremendous growth in secondary manufacturing, especially in the needle trades; and along with this rise in the standards of living had come a relative decline in trade union activities and membership. The result had been the wholesale exploitation of a post-war immigrant population (especially women) by unscrupulous capitalists. For Penner and his colleagues the Winnipeg firms of

Jacob and Crawley and Western Packers epitomized capitalism at its worst.

But the bubble had burst, as Penner had known it would. "The end of the First World War", he felt, "had ushered in a revolutionary period in the world. The ruling classes had succeeded in putting the major hardships and sacrifices of the war on the backs of the workers and farmers".¹³ The workers in Canada had fought back, but always they had succumbed to the ways of capitalism. It had happened to Labour after the Winnipeg Strike of 1919, to the United Farmers, and to the local Independent Labour Party. The formation first of the Social Democratic Party of Canada and then the Communist Party of Canada, had been attempts to prevent this weakening of the socialist ideal. That the depression had occurred seemed a reward for patient adherence to the orthodox Marxist-Leninist principles through long years of frustration. The people of Canada and the world were finally awakening to reality. Capitalist greed had caused the depression, and now it was meeting its nemesis. It was inevitable. Marx said so. Lenin said so. History said so.

As the hectic 1932 mayoralty race sped to its conclusion the last of the three major political figures in Winnipeg politics began his campaign for the mayoralty. Like

¹³ Jacob Penner, "Reminiscences of Early Labor-Farmer Elections", undated manuscript (11 pp.) in possession of the Manitoba branch of the Communist Party of Canada, Winnipeg.

Webb and Penner, John Queen was well-known to the electors of the city. He had run for the position once before, in 1927, against Dan McLean and had lost.¹⁴ It seemed to many that Queen, like Webb, had been around civic and provincial politics forever. Those over thirty years of age in 1932 might perhaps have remembered his first election, as alderman, back in the autumn of 1915.¹⁵ He had continued in this office until 1921, when he had resigned because of his election (in 1920) to the Manitoba Legislature. He had maintained his position as alderman even during his year of imprisonment in Headingly Jail because of the role he had played in the leadership of the 1919 Winnipeg General Strike.¹⁶ During the nineteen-twenties, Queen devoted his attention to provincial politics, and was re-elected in 1922 and 1927 to the provincial House. In the latter year he polled the second largest number of votes in the ten-member Winnipeg constituency. Upon the death of Fred Dixon in 1930, he assumed the leadership of the Independent Labour Party in the provincial Legislature, and it was while he was still leader of the Labour faction within the Legislature that he entered his second mayoralty campaign.

¹⁴ The figures being: McLean 23,428; Queen 16,448. Winnipeg Tribune, November 25, 1933.

¹⁵ He had represented the old (pre-1920) Ward Five — that is, the new Ward Three. See Winnipeg Free Press, Nov. 16, 1932.

¹⁶ "Queen Retains Seat Despite Conviction — Act Applies Only to Men Sentenced to Five Years or Over — City Council Surprised" (uc), April 27, 1920. See also, Winnipeg Free Press Library Necrology file: "John Queen".

Early in the month of November, 1932, Queen had been nominated as the I.L.P. candidate for mayor, defeating William Ivens and Beatrice Brigden.¹⁷ There had been discussion at the nomination meeting, led by Thomas Flye, as to whether one man should be allowed to hold two public offices simultaneously, so before Queen consented to accept the nomination he determined to make one thing absolutely clear: "You are not offering me a job when you offer me this nomination."¹⁸ Queen was reacting to Flye's objections because Flye was accusing Queen of living "off" politics. Queen, like others of the ethic of conscience, lived "for" politics. He went on: "Don't select me if you have any-thing against the principle for which I stand in this matter. I would prefer to withdraw my name, but because I feel a party call on my services, I don't think it my duty to refuse the nomination."¹⁹ Like Penner, Queen felt no stigma attached to the concept of "Party" or with being associated with "Politics". For him, as for Penner, "Politics" was not simply a matter of administration and sound business, detached from questions of ethical consideration. It was, instead, a means by which moral and ethical philosophies might be applied to affect wholesale

¹⁷ "Penner Joined By Webb and John Queen" (uc), Nov. 2, 1932, CEF:1932. Others nominated but who refused to let their names stand were: A. W. Puttee, S. J. Farmer, John Blumberg, Marcus Hyman, and Gloria Queen-Hughes.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid.

changes which would raise the standards of human living. Queen and Penner differed vastly regarding 'means', but they both aspired toward a similar end, and they both saw "politics" as serving the same function. For both of them, "politics" was the touchstone of ethics.

During his campaign, Queen continued to emphasize the moral and ethical considerations which the problems of the depression had raised: "I don't think there ever was a period when there was so much distress, human agony, hunger and privation though there is abundance of food and other commodities and great wealth," he declared in his opening speech of the campaign. And he made it plain to his South End audience (at Gladstone School) that his solutions to the ills of the city were ones the moral bases of which might run contrary to the well-followed 'rules' of efficient economy and balanced ledgers practiced by the "watch-dog of the treasury".²⁰ He wanted all his audience to understand well that if elected he "would not assume office on the basis of denying people who are in need the food they needed, and the things required to bring a degree of comfort and well-being amongst them." This, he added, was the aim of the Independent Labour Party in Manitoba: to bring about "better conditions of living among the masses of the people." "At this municipal election ..., he concluded, "the candidates [for the I.L.P.] will again demonstrate that we are trying to build up a better

²⁰ J. A. McKerchar.

life for everybody in the community. The good life is our object."²¹

One of the high points of the 1932 civic election campaign was to occur at a meeting at Hugh John Macdonald School in Ward Two, called by the Unemployed Association of Winnipeg.²²

Both Queen and Penner were in attendance, and both were severely heckled at various points during their presentations. Under the pressure of prodding and loud questioning from the floor, both individuals revealed their relative positions on the scale of the ethic of conscience. When asked why he was running, Queen noted that "What I want you to remember is that in the past you showed by your vote that you were satisfied with the capitalist system. If you are not satisfied with it, then show it by your vote, not for me personally but for the party and the system I represent."²³ As a candidate he was synonymous with the movement and philosophical/ideological system he represented. If

²¹ This and the preceeding unacknowledged quotations from "John Queen Opens His Campaign For Chief Magistracy — I.L.P. Candidate Deplores Failure of Authorities to Meet Present Conditions" (uc), Nov. 15, 1932, CEF:1932. The main planks in Queen's platform were concerned with: 1) better methods of handling the unemployment problem; 2) a municipal housing scheme; 3) "no false education re-education".

²² The 1932 mayoralty results for that polling station were to be: Queen 330; Penner 44; Webb 274. Winnipeg Free Press, Nov. 26, 1932.

²³ "Penner and Queen Heckled in Lively Style at Meeting — Sparks Fly When United Front Candidate Launches Attack on I.L.P." (uc), November 19, 1932, CEF:1932.

the voter accepted Queen the politician he must then also accept Queen the ideologue. This was his only insistence.

But despite the good intentions of John Queen, Penner felt that he and his Independent Labour Party had simply bastardized the cause of Socialism. At his first opportunity he therefore let this be known. He insisted that Mr. Queen was no different from Ramsay Macdonald and his hated Means Test in England.

"You're a liar", shouted a woman.

"The Independent Labour Party has degenerated into a third capitalist party," Penner insisted, and he drew examples from the actions of some of the Winnipeg "Labour" aldermen. His assertion provoked a mixed and prolonged reaction.

"Why are you always attacking the I.L.P. and trying to split it up?", someone asked when the storm had subsided.

"Because the party continues the policy of the capitalist system", Penner replied.

"Why can't you attack Webb?"

"The Labor party is the third capitalist party", he answered, "and it has to be exposed as such."²⁴ With that, he stepped away from the lectern and left the meeting, accompanied by his wife, Rose. Mingled boo's and cheers, all loud, met his ears. The meeting broke up soon after and within a week the voters went to the polls.

²⁴ Ibid.

The significance of the election campaign for the present purpose, however, lies not so much in the electoral results as in the way that the speeches illustrate the differing basic approaches toward "party" and "politics" taken by Mayor Webb on one hand, and John Queen and Jacob Penner on the other. So far, these differences have been discussed largely in psychological terms by the use of hypothetical constructs, the "ethic of conscience" and the "ethic of responsibility". While this approach shall be continued, it is at the same time important to note that these two "ethics" may also be conceived in terms of social organization for political purposes. Consider this recent statement by political scientist, Walter D. Young, regarding the essential differences between a "party" and a "movement":

Whereas the "pure" party seeks electoral victory, the movement seeks some major social change or reform. The program the party presents to the electorate is designed as a means to victory. The program of the movement is an expression of its ultimate ideals and goals.... The major distinction is one of goals. A movement is "a group venture extending beyond a local community or a single event and involving a systematic effort to inaugurate changes in thought, behaviour, and social relationships." A movement seeks fundamental change and may or may not use political means to achieve it; a party seeks power for its leaders through electoral success. (25)

The distinction between the party, which is "designed as a means to victory", and the movement -- "an expression of

²⁵ Walter D. Young, Anatomy of a Party: the National C.C.F., 1932-61 (Toronto, 1969), pp. 3-4.

its ultimate ideals and goals" — seems analogous to the distinction between the two ethics previously made at the level of personality. He of the ethic of responsibility is attracted to the party, in which he may pursue electoral aspirations without being forced to consider large-scale ethical considerations. Since he lives "off" politics, he can remain somewhat aloof from "political" life and use it simply to gain victory. But he of the ethic of conscience is attracted to politics because it is the constitutional expression of the movement, the system of ethics, he represents. Hence the "ultimate" nature of the program of a movement.

This kind of fundamental distinction between these two basic approaches to politics does much to explain the apparent inability of each 'side' in Winnipeg civic politics to understand the other's approach. It also allows one to glimpse in no small measure why leaders of movements — social democratic such as the Independent Labour Party, or Communist such as the Workers' Unity League — could appear so relatively unperturbed by severe and indeed at times embarrassing defeats at the polls. Whereas "losing an election shakes a party, for this is the measure of its validity, ..." such is not the case for a movement, since its validity is contained not in the 'X' ballots it receives but in its ideology. "Failure to make converts does not alter or diminish the rightness of the cause: it merely demonstrates the need for more determined effort."²⁶ Thus, John Queen could respond

²⁶ Ibid., p. 4.

in the following manner after losing in his third mayoralty bid (1933):

I am not in the least discouraged because I represent a movement that is building for the future.... It's a movement that in increasing measure is making an appeal to the people of Canada, pointing to the only way out of this economic mess we are in.

Confident that the future belongs to us, I can say, 'What does it matter if we lose a battle, when we know we are going to win the war?' (27)

His statement was not mere rhetoric: he meant every word he said quite literally, and with the deepest conviction.

Similar statements are found in the writings and speeches of Jacob Penner. Indeed, since he is closer to the "pure" type of the ethic of conscience than Queen, one finds statements of this kind even stronger in tone. In what must be regarded as one of the classic statements of the dilemma of the dedicated Communist in Canada, Penner was (at a late stage in his career) to admonish one of his sons for "straying" from the "true" stance which the Canadian movement must always maintain:

I can now clearly see a crystallization of two fundamentally different viewpoints in our Party.... My characterization of these two viewpoints is this: the minority holds that the program, policies and structure of our Party must be fundamentally changed. The majority holds there must be changes, but not in the hitherto accepted principles on which our Party was founded, that it must continue to remain a Marxist-Leninist Party, a Party of a special type.

I very strongly adhere to this latter majority opinion. The minority is apprehensive of the

²⁷ "Winner and Loser Both Satisfied With Result of Election", Winnipeg Free Press, November 25, 1933.

fact that we are isolated from the masses, that we are looked upon not as a Canadian party, but as a Russian party.... From the correct position that each nation must find its own path to Socialism an incorrect deduction is made that in each nation a different type of a Communist Party must be organized....

A Marxist-Leninist Party is a Party of sharp, uncompromising struggle to unseat the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, bring to power the dictatorship of the working class, expropriate the expropriators and thus abolish the exploitation of the working class.

There is no other way of accomplishing this historical task. There is no other party that can lead the working class to victory, but a party of a special type — the Marxist-Leninist Party.

Such a Party for a long time yet because of the dominant Idealist ideology of the people, will remain a small party in Canada and at periods ... will be rather isolated from the masses. But other periods, because of the laws of development of capitalist society, are inevitable, during which our Party will be in the leadership of large sections of workers and farmers.... My purpose in bringing this out is to bring some of us down to realities, and to demonstrate that our isolation is a natural phenomenon, so that we would not seek an escape from this by the device of lowering our banner.... Such a party could not lead the working class in the sharp struggles that are ahead on the road to socialism. Such a party would fail the working class in a critical period....

No, that is not the way. Our task is to lift up the ideology of the working class and not for the Party to come down to that. Our propoganda [sic] must be veered in the direction of convincing ever larger sections of the working class that Socialism is the only way to abolish exploitation and in the measure that we succeed in this, and we certainly will succeed, our isolation and our unacceptibility will become less. (28)

28 Letter from Jacob Penner to Norman Penner, autumn, 1956.
Original in possession of Norman Penner, Toronto.

Throughout his Canadian political career Jacob Penner was always free from ideological doubt. From an early age he had made his commitment to a cause, and from the moment of that decision his life had been governed accordingly. The life of a totally committed man parallels that of his Idea; all else comes and goes and is relative to it. If the movement which the Idea inspired is successful it is because the bourgeoisie has finally become aware of the evils inherent in capitalism. If the movement is unsuccessful it is because the bourgeoisie has been indoctrinated by the capitalistic ideology. Followers of the Idea must then struggle to keep it pure until such time as the bourgeoisie can be brought to their senses. In both cases the Idea and its adherents must remain constant and true. The relationship of one to the other is teleological and encircling. Such is the nature of true belief.

The year following the 1932 civic election had been one in which conditions had continued to get worse, while civic political administration had remained basically the same. Webb's appeal to 'wait out' the depression had worked. He had beaten his opponents in the election by polling 25,079 votes, compared with 20,812 and 3,496 for Queen and Penner respectively.²⁹ Nevertheless, Webb had polled only 771 votes more than his opposition. But Citizens' Committee aldermen had remained well

²⁹ "Webb Wins By Clear Majority of 771 Votes", Winnipeg Tribune, November 28, 1932.

in control of the Council itself. Five of the six Ward One aldermen were Citizens, with wards Two and Three both split three apiece. Four of the six standing committees were controlled by Citizens' aldermen. These were the four in which the corporate and fiscal structure of the civic administration were housed: Finance, Public Utilities, Safety, and Legislation and Reception. "Labour" controlled the remaining two: Health and Civic Improvements.

But as the year progressed, it became ever more apparent that the end of the depression was a long way off yet. Indeed, most felt a further withering of the forced optimism of earlier years. It was at this stage in the depression that its disillusionment was immortalized by one particular American ballad:

They used to tell me I was building a dream,
And so I followed the mob —
When there was earth to plough or guns to bear
I was always there — right there on the job.
They used to tell me I was building a dream
With peace and glory ahead —
Why should I be standing in line
Just waiting for bread?

REFRAIN:

Once I made a railroad, made it run,
Made it race against time.
Once I built a railroad,
Now it's done —
Brother, can you spare a dime?
Once I built a tower, to the sun.
Brick and rivet and lime,
Once I built a tower,
Now it's done —
Brother, can you spare a dime?
Once in khaki suits,
Gee, we looked swell,
Full of that Yankee Doodle-de-dum.

Half a million boots went sloggin' thru Hell,
 I was the kid with the drum.
 Say don't you remember, they called me Al —
 It was Al all the time.
 Say, don't you remember I'm your pal —
 Buddy, can you spare a dime?

Thus, "Brother, Can You Spare a Dime?" was added to the long list of songs — such as "La Marseillaise," "The Battle Hymn of the Republic"/Dixie", "Finlandia", — which have epitomized the mood of a large body of individuals at a time of tremendous stress. It is a ballad of shattered ideals and stoic resolution, no less indicative of the mood of the depression in Canada than for the depressed nation to the south. In Winnipeg, as elsewhere, the depression meant the fading of a thousand dreams and the encouragement of a dozen visions. "When there was earth to plow or guns to bear", the Citizen of Winnipeg had always made his sacrifice: "I was always there — right there on the job." But the depression seemed to be undermining the institutions and ideals for which he had worked so hard, for reasons that he could not understand. The very factors which were making these men defensive and cynical served to reinforce the faith of others who saw in free enterprise not a means for achieving 'the good life' but a barrier to its attainment.

It was while such songs were being played over radio station CKY in Winnipeg that the two Labour parties were once again making their preparations to enter the civic election foray. Both claimed to be representative of the best interests of the Worker, and it was the Worker who was bearing the brunt

of the depression. The number of people on relief in the Province of Manitoba had been increasing relentlessly as the thirties progressed:

TABLE THREE: MANITOBIANS ON RELIEF, 1930-1933

November 1930:	16,001	people on relief			
" 1931:	56,410	"	"	"	"
" 1932:	64,590	"	"	"	"
" 1933:	74,195	"	"	"	"

(30)

The number had peaked in March of 1933, when relief figures for the province reached 91,210 people. The figures for unemployment relief cases (City of Winnipeg) as at December 31, 1933, break down by occupation as follows:

TABLE FOUR: UNEMPLOYMENT RELIEF CASES (Dec. 31, 1933)
BY OCCUPATION

Labourers	2,980	
Building Trades	1,298	
Factory Workers	933	
Office Help	672	
Technicians	478	
Railway Workers	468	
Merchants	290	
Professional	47	
Sundry	724	
<hr/>	<hr/>	
TOTAL	7,890	(31)

The classification of those on relief by ethnic background shows those indicated as "Canadian", "English", "Scottish", "Irish",

³⁰ Typescript of Budget Speech given by John Bracken, Friday, March 2, 1934 (Second Session, 19th Legislature), p. 7; in Bracken Papers (1934), P.A.M. For a full breakdown see Appendix.

³¹ City of Winnipeg Unemployment Relief Department, "Report on Operations and Costs, 1933", p. 6; in Bracken Papers (1934), P.A.M.

and "American", comprising 4,495 of the 7,890. The other 3,395 cases consisted of a total of thirty-three non-Anglo-Saxon nationalities.³² Since most of those in the non-professional classes lived North of Portage Avenue the opportunity was presented for a true Labour party to obtain the electoral support of an increasingly worse-off and discontented population within wards Two and Three. This is not to say that discontent was limited to the area north of the Assiniboine. It is simply that the discontent of the north wards was of a more visceral nature. All of the government soup kitchens were located north of the river. Their discontent was that born of hunger, with its hunger born of unemployment.

* *

Despite the differing ideological positions the two major Labour factions in Winnipeg had reached by the nineteen-thirties, both had grown out of the same local environment in a younger Winnipeg. There had always been a significant and vociferous Labour element in the city, and it was of two basic strains. These strains correspond roughly in their emergence to the two basic waves of immigration into the province. Prior to the great influx of non-Anglo-Saxon immigrants in the early twentieth century, Labour within the urban areas had been largely dominated by the "agrarian liberalism in the Grit tradition of Ontario".³³

³² Ibid., p. 7. For the full details see
Appendix

³³ Young, op. cit., pp. 15-16.

Labour partyism was largely in the British gradualist tradition, more an educational party -- a "gentlemen's club" -- than an organized political pressure group.³⁴ Conservative and craft-oriented, as much concerned with protection for its members as reform, the Labour factions in Winnipeg during the eightennineties had been reluctant to be associated with Socialism, "because in this new movement there are great numbers here who are yet so timid as to become greatly alarmed if they found themselves branded with the awful term 'socialist'".³⁵ But even at this time there was a movement within the Labour coterie in the city to "devise ways and means of forming an Independent Labour Party for the City of Winnipeg".³⁶ This attempt by the Winnipeg Trades and Labour Council to set up the machinery for the creation of an independent Labour party was the first in the Dominion. It was unsuccessful, however, and the organization lapsed. Nevertheless, the opinion that there was the need for some form of Labour organization beyond unionism persisted, and was given added impetus by the election of A. W. Puttee³⁷ to the federal Parliament in 1900.

³⁴ Robin, op. cit., p. 38.

³⁵ The Voice, March 7, 1896, ibid., p. 38.

³⁶ Ibid., pp. 37-38.

³⁷ Puttee was owner and editor of The Voice. He had been nominated as a Labour representative at a joint meeting of the Winnipeg Central Trades and Labour Council, and the Winnipeg Labour Party. Ibid., p. 62.

But with the coming of the post-1896 second wave of immigrants, largely eastern European, there arose in Winnipeg the increasing insistence that a "purely socialist" party be formed. By 1901, a faction within the Winnipeg Labour Party had moved an amendment proposing to change the party's name to the Social Democratic Party of Winnipeg.³⁸ The minority faction was unsuccessful in this attempt, and the party refused to support socialist principles on an official basis.

The change of ideological temperament which these immigrants had brought, however, was not to be denied for long. In 1902, J. M. Cameron, a Socialist League organizer, had been imported from Vancouver. With his help, the Socialist Party of Manitoba was formed in that same year. Its object was "the Socialization of the means of Production, Distribution, and exchange, to be controlled by a Democratic State in the interests of the entire community and the complete emancipation of Labor from the domination of Capitalism."³⁹ This attempt failed to establish itself on a broad basis. But by 1904, the year of young Jake Penner's arrival in Winnipeg, the socialist faction was demanding that the British Columbia provincial party organization be reorganized on a national basis as the "Socialist Party of Canada".⁴⁰

³⁸ The Voice, November 29, 1901; ibid., p. 39.

³⁹ The Voice, November 14, 1902, ibid., p. 39.

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 41.

someone told me that occasionally an elderly man used to come to the trades hall and sell a socialist paper there. And then I tried to find that man, and almost every second day I went to the trades hall and stood there for an hour or so expecting that this man would come there to sell the paper. And finally, after a few weeks trial, I saw this man. He was selling a United States socialist paper, "The Appeal to Reason", of which Eugene Debs was the editor. (41)

That was the beginning of Jacob Penner's long association with radical Labour in Winnipeg. He was soon one of a small band of local orthodox Marxists, of whom W. H. Hoop and W. S. Cummings were the leaders.⁴² Together, they rented a room in the Labour Temple and began meeting on Sunday afternoons. In November of 1906, a week after the Trades Union Congress had held its annual national meetings in Winnipeg, Penner announced at a public meeting in the Starland Theatre that on the following Sunday there would be a meeting of Socialists at which the Socialist Party of Canada in Winnipeg would be formed.

The meeting was held, attended by forty-four men, and by its conclusion the Socialist Party of Canada in Winnipeg had been ushered into existence. The move marked the culmination of a summer of street corner meetings, harrassment by the local police, competition on the sidewalks by the Salvation Army, and a lawsuit against one of the members for obstructing the side-

⁴¹ Jacob Penner, in Roland Penner (interviewer), op. cit., pp. 32-33. The following material regarding early socialist groupings is taken from Penner's reminiscences, unless otherwise marked.

⁴² Ibid., pp. 12-13. For the roles of Hoop and Cummings in Labour politics in Winnipeg see Robin, op. cit., pp. 109, 110, 111, 157, 211-212.

walks.

It was while Penner, Hoop and Cummings were attempting to form a truly "Socialist" party in Winnipeg that John Queen arrived. He had stepped down from the C.P.R. train, a twenty-four year old immigrant from Glasgow, wearing both a red "handle-bar" moustache and "the confidence of a Scotsman to make his way in the world no matter where he went."⁴³ It was Decoration Day. Soldiers were marching in full regalia down Main Street, Sarah Bernhardt was packing the old auditorium rink with people who wanted to see her play in "Camille", men were experimenting with bell-bottom trousers, and spring wheat was selling at seventy-eight cents a bushel. The town was bustling and booming, and on the surface at least, it seemed like everyone was "fat and happy and making money."⁴⁴ "I can well remember getting on street cars and getting into conversation with the man alongside me," Queen later recalled. "The topic was invariably real estate and the profits somebody made yesterday. Winnipeg was enjoying an orgy of speculation and get-rich-quick schemes."⁴⁵ The long rows of beautiful and huge homes on the south bank of the Assiniboine stood as silent testimony to the success of such ventures.

But the honeymoon was not to last for long. Queen soon found himself in an overcrowded Dorothy Avenue boarding-house, a

⁴³ "John Queen", Winnipeg Free Press, November 17, 1934.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

far cry from the housing he had seen on the other side of the river, and he thereby discovered the dual nature of Winnipeg life, accentuated by the river and the tracks. Once he had accustomed himself to the city, he found himself involved increasingly with radical Labour groups, even though he had never been a "socialist" when in Scotland.⁴⁶ By 1908 he had become a member of the Jewish local of the Social Democratic Party of Canada in Winnipeg. The party had been formed in that same year by a minority faction within the Socialist Party of Canada led by Penner, Saul Simkin, Matthew Popovitch, Fred Tipping, John Navizowsky and others who increasingly since 1906 had objected to the refusal of other S.P.C. members to descend from the level of ideological mental gymnastics to the level of party politics. Penner and Queen would remain members of the Social Democratic Party for the next decade, a period which saw the boom of the early period begin to slacken, and Labour slowly becoming more willing to accept doctrinaire socialists within its ranks. By 1914, the federal as well as local T.L.C. was "no longer safely in the Liberal and Conservative camps", a fact which prompted Winnipeg's R. A. Rigg to note that "six years ago you daren't as much as breathe the word Socialism at the Congress unless you wanted to be howled down. Today, the Socialists are coming into their own. It is remarkable to note the extent to

⁴⁶ Gloria Queen-Hughes, in Brian McKillop (interviewer), "Interview with Gloria Queen-Hughes" (oral history session), Winnipeg, July, 1970. Transcript in possession of interviewer.

which Socialist principles dominate the leading currents of thought at the Congress."⁴⁷

An alliance of Penners and Queens was an uneasy one. Penner was a orthodox Marxist; Queen was "a socialist in the British tradition", more familiar with the writings of John Stuart Mill than Karl Marx. Indeed, one of his daughters has recently remarked that she was "raised" on the book On Liberty.⁴⁸ Queen's strong belief in the "socialist" principles of Mill sheds considerable light on the brand of "socialism" exhibited by him. "Was Mill a Socialist?", one prominent British historian has asked. "In his Autobiography he called himself one, but it was a pragmatic and undoctrinaire socialism that he believed in."⁴⁹ The socialism of John Queen was not without its touch of pragmatism, but whereas Mill's belief had been the result of a long period of intellectual turmoil, of the consideration and rejection of various political doctrines, Queen had accepted from an early stage the pronouncements of Mill. In doing so, he raised this "pragmatic" British brand of socialism to the level of doctrine, and let his conscience be his guide in its application to human conditions. Many of the statements Queen made in the nineteen-twenties and nineteen-thirties may be found almost ver-

⁴⁷ Robin, op. cit., p. 118.

⁴⁸ Gloria Queen-Hughes, in McKillop (interviewer), op. cit.

⁴⁹ David Thomson, England in the Nineteenth Century (1815-1914), (Baltimore, 1950), p. 50.

batim in Mill's Autobiography, written sixty years earlier. Mill, like Queen, had chosen to see the end of social improvement as being "to fit mankind by cultivation for a state of society combining the greatest personal freedom with that just distribution of the fruits of labour, which the present laws of property do not profess to aim at."⁵⁰ And where Mill anticipated the coming of an era when "the rule that they who do not work shall not eat will be applied not only to paupers but impartially to all", Queen would attempt during the nineteenth-thirties to have this dictum applied to conditions of depression. Since there was no work for many, it was unfair to refuse the unemployed relief tokens when there were those in Winnipeg who did not "work", yet who lived on the interest payments of individual and corporate debtors.

Those belonging to the Social Democratic Party during the period from 1908 through 1917 seem to have been united more through a common opposition to certain social and political 'evils' than by common aims. The revolution in Russia in 1917 ended this marriage of convenience. For Penner, it was another sign of the inexorable process of history as it swept along the path to Socialism, and it told him that the Russian people — led by V. I. Lenin — would lead the way. For Queen, not altogether unsympathetic with the aims of the revolution, it meant a parting of the ways with the more extreme Social Democrats,

⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 50.

whose ideological commitment seemed to be obscuring the fact that they were living in a British land governed by British laws and institutions. The social and economic system, he was convinced, had to be changed. But this did not mean a severance of the British connection or British ideals in exchange for those of Moscow.

The shifting of political Labour parties within Manitoba in the early twenties was therefore a natural one. The 1919 Strike had seen members of various political factions — Socialists, Social Democrats, Single-Taxers, One Big Union adherents — coalesce into a united organization which had attempted to show the Citizens that they, too, were 'acceptable' members of the community and had a sizeable and significant interest in the community. But with the end of the Strike these groups had factionalized once again, culminating in a struggle for power in the Trades and Labour Council the next month,⁵¹ and in the political re-alignments of the nineteen-twenties. Within two years of the Strike, Penner had attended the founding meeting of what would later become the Communist Party of Canada outside Guelph (June of 1921), while Queen had helped to form the Independent Labour Party of Manitoba, along with

⁵¹ See "Trades Council Decides to Join One Big Union — Stormy Meeting in Which the Radical Faction Had Control of Larger Number of Votes — R. A. Rigg Says He Will Now Proceed to Carry Out Instructions for Re-Organization — Claims Many Who Voted Last Night Have Been Repudiated by Organizations", Manitoba Free Press, July 30, 1919; "Rigg Calls Constitutional Trades Council Meeting: O.B.U. Delegates Barred", Winnipeg Evening Telegram, July 30, 1919.

Fred Dixon, S. J. Farmer, and William Ivens -- who had all become dissatisfied by the conservatism of the Dominion Labour Party (to which they had formerly adhered).⁵² In the same year, Penner contested the federal election for Winnipeg North as a candidate of the newly-formed Workers' Party, while Queen ran for one of the City of Winnipeg seats in the provincial House under the I.L.P. banner.⁵³ As the twenties progressed, both men, having had extensive backgrounds in politics, reached the leadership⁵⁴ of their parties. And each, as leader of a "Worker's" party, was competing against the other for the support of the urban and rural proletariat.

Being regional leader of a party whose national leaders never wavered from the ideological "line" emanating from Moscow, Penner had had his course of action set out for him from the outset by a resolution of the Fourth Congress of the Communist International (1922), regarding the "United Front Tactic". The resolution had declared that:

the tactic of the United Front is the call for

⁵² Young, op. cit., p. 23.

⁵³ Robin, op. cit., pp. 214, 218.

⁵⁴ It is difficult to assess precisely who was the "leader" of the Communist Party in Manitoba. But Penner was on the National Committee of the party from its inception, and was considered in 1931 by J. A. Browne, an Inspector for the Manitoba Provincial Police, to be "head of the Communist Party" in Manitoba. J. A. Browne, "Report" to the Attorney-General of Manitoba re Communist activities, September 16, 1931, Attorney-General's Department: special [restricted] file, "Communist Activities, 1931-1936", P.A.M. See also William Rodney, Soldiers of the International (Toronto, 1968), p. 25.

the united struggle of Communists and of all other parties and groups, or belong to no other party whatsoever, for the defense of the elementary and vital interests of the working class against the bourgeoisie. Every struggle, even for the most trifling demand, is a source of revolutionary training, for the experiences of the struggles will convince the workers of the inevitability of revolution and of the importance of Communism....

The most important thing in the tactics of the United Front is and remains the agitational and organizational unification of the working masses. The real success of the United Front tactics is to come from "below", from the depth of the working masses below. (55)

The imprisonment of the leaders of the Communist Party of Canada (especially its Secretary, Tim Buck), an attempt on Buck's life while imprisoned at Kingston, the outlawing of the C.P.C., the consolidation of a national police force under an ultra-"bourgeoise" Prime Minister, the free use of Section 98 of the Criminal Code to deport without trial almost any person deemed to be capable of uttering a seditious word or belonging to an illegal organization⁵⁶, the onset of the depression -- each of these gave the party added inspiration and adherents. In Winnipeg, the policy of going "to the Masses" urged by the United Front

⁵⁵ "Resolution of 4th Congress on the United Front Tactic", The Worker, June 8, 1935, p. 4.

⁵⁶ Section 98 was another dubious legacy of the 1919 Strike in Winnipeg. Introduced in the House of Commons (as Sections 97a and 97b) by Acting Minister of Justice Arthur Meighen and Minister of Labour Hugh Guthrie in June of 1919 as a possible means of breaking the strike, the resolutions received all readings in both Houses within the span of twenty minutes. Later, they were consolidated as Section 98 of the Criminal Code, but not used until 1930, and then mainly against immigrants about to go on relief.

tactics was pursued with renewed energy by Creighton's "living dead of youth".

Whereas the Communists⁵⁷ pursued their objectives along two fronts -- electorally and by "coming from below" -- the I.L.P. chose to initiate the revolution by the purely political means of gaining power in the provincial Legislature and City Council. Consistently throughout the twenties, the I.L.P. had refused to consider unity with the Communists in a "united front", for fear of losing their base of support, and this policy had made them "the dominant political force in Manitoba" by 1928.⁵⁸ Largely because of their success, the Manitoba I.L.P. had called in 1929 a Western Conference of Labour Parties, which would "unify the activities of the affiliated parties, to arrange common actions and to bring about the entire unification of the labour and socialist movement throughout Western Canada."⁵⁹ The conference and ensuing political network was dominated by Mani-

⁵⁷ I shall continue to use the term "Communist", even though the Communist Party of Canada was declared an illegal organization in Rex vs. Buck and others (1931) by Mr. Justice Wright in the Ontario Supreme Court. The decision was confirmed by Sir William Mulock, Chief Justice of Ontario, for the Court of Appeal of Ontario (February 19, 1932). After these decisions, Communist politicians were elected under the "Workers' Unity League" banner to escape criminal prosecution, but the Communist Party of Canada never ceased operations. While members would deny affiliations with the C.P.C., they would seldom deny that they were communists.

⁵⁸ Robin, op. cit., p. 252.

⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 270.

tobans at the executive and organizational level.⁶⁰ Not the least among them was John Queen.

These were the differing political careers and traditions which the leaders of Winnipeg's two major Labour parties brought to civic politics during the depression. Shaped by the nature of the city's political and social life, they had their ideological roots on the other side of the Atlantic. Life and conditions in Winnipeg in the earlier part of the century had simply ignited the ideas which differing European heritages had planted in their minds, and had helped to channel them into different courses of action.

During the first three decades of the new century, Winnipeg was a ferment of ideological, political, and social ideas which constantly kept its central core of Labour leadership — its Queens, Penners, Ivens', Russells, and Dixons — tingling with the sensation that here was a community which both badly needed and was capable of affecting a changed conception of social justice. This central core differed markedly over the means of achieving its end, but was united by a common basic adherence to the call of "conscience" over the pragmatic "responsibility" which was the basis of the ethic of the community's dominating élite. It was also united on a social basis

⁶⁰ Alderman R. Durward and William Evans, both of Winnipeg, were elected secretary-treasurer and president, respectively, at the 1929 conference. Ibid., p. 270. See also Canada, Department of Labour, Report on Labour Organization in Canada, 1929 (Ottawa, 1929), pp. 172-173.

by common attendance at special lectures and meetings whose themes spoke of the need for social justice -- from the visit of Emma Goldman in 1906 (at which meeting of Winnipeg's anarchist community Jacob Penner met his future wife) to that of Scott Nearing, exiled American academic, at a somewhat later date. The ferment was manifested in a more lasting fashion with the fourteen-year lectureship established by "The Canadian Anti-Christ", Marshall J. Gauvin -- whose ruthless and rationalistic expositions of fundamentalist Christianity found him a considerable and loyal following amongst Winnipeg's labouring classes.⁶¹ At the judicial level, the social discontent exposed itself in 1930 with the removal of Judge Lewis St. George Stubbs from the bench because of the use of his position to provide illustrations for his belief that there was "a law for the rich and a law for the poor".⁶² The committee set up to defend Stubbs' actions saw among its members Jacob Penner, John Queen,

⁶¹ For further information on the career of Marshall J. Gauvin, consult James H. Gray, "The Canadian Anti-Christ", Canadian Forum, XV, Jan. 1935, or his The Winter Years (Toronto, 1968), pp. 94, 194, 196. See also, Brian McKillop (interviewer), "Interviews with Marshall Gauvin" (oral history session) Winnipeg, October 9, 1969. Copy in P.A.M.

⁶² See Lewis St. George Stubbs, "Aspects of The Law and the Poor", 40 pp., typescript in William Ivens Papers, P.A.M. Stubbs' "Judicial Crimes" (n.d.), and "The Macdonald Will Case" (n.d.), are also relevant in this respect. Copies in P.A.M. Marshall J. Gauvin has commented on Stubbs' career in general and the Macdonald will case in particular in McKillop, "Gauvin Interview", op. cit.

and members of both the Workers' Unity League and I.L.P. The committee's chairman was Marshall J. Gauvin. A detailed analysis of this committee in terms of its members' political and social origins within the community would reveal the extent to which the Winnipeg Labour community -- despite its ideological differences -- was in fact well-integrated along lines of social interest.⁶³

The coming of the depression simply underlined the need for political and social change in the city. The social basis for the unseating of the dominant political faction had long been present in the community, as was the quality of leadership. It remained to be seen, however, whether the

⁶³ For example, the individual who (besides the Attorney-General of Manitoba) seems to have been most antagonized by the actions and pronouncements of Judge Stubbs, was a fundamentalist preacher by the name of the Reverend J. N. Sturk. After Stubbs' dismissal, it was rumoured that he might run for political office under the I.L.P. banner (he later did and won the contest by the largest majority in the history of the province). This rumour provoked Sturk to produce a vitriolic tract, based upon the parable of the "Little Red Hen". It was entitled, as one might expect, "The Little Red Judge", and attempted to link Stubbs with Communism, free-thought, and whatever else Sturk felt might discredit the former judge in the eyes of the electors. But Sturk's invective was not simply provoked by his fear of a "red" former judge in politics. In 1929, Sturk had undertaken to debate against Gauvin on the subject, "The Doctrine of Evolution as Preached by Marshall J. Gauvin". He was beaten overwhelmingly by Gauvin's scientifically-based arguments before an overflow crowd in the Walker Theatre. "The Great Walker Theatre Debate" became an instant cause célèbre in Winnipeg, and remained so for many years. The chairman of that debate had been Judge Lewis St. George Stubbs. See James H. Gray, The Winter Years, pp. 92-5, 155, 194; McKillop (interviewer) "Gauvin Interview", op. cit., pp. 18-19.

population of the city as a whole, whose thinking was still largely dominated by the pragmatic foundation laid in earlier years, could be convinced of the wisdom and the necessity for social and political reform on a large scale.

CHAPTER IV

"WE MUST CLOSE OUR SCHOOLS, IF NECESSARY,
BUT WE MUST PAY OUR INTEREST!"

The Workers' Unity League set the 1933 campaign into motion with a pre-election convention attended by sixty-nine delegates representing thirty-four organizations and labour unions. "It is of vital importance that we have a militant worker on the city council", emphasized Martin Joseph Forkin, soon to be the League's candidate, first for alderman and then for mayor. "The conference must fight the I.L.P. and its leaders as strike breakers, who ally themselves with the bosses and Webbs to defeat the workers."¹ With that, the League launched its attack not only upon the forces of a corrupted capitalism, but also on I.L.P. "Reformism" in general, and the 'watered-down' socialism of John Queen in particular.

Three weeks later, the W.U.L. announced that its nominating conference had unanimously selected Jacob Penner as its candidate for the mayoralty. Leslie Morris, then in Bordeaux jail on a seditious conspiracy charge, was to run for alderman in Ward Three, and Martin Joseph Forkin would run in Ward Two. Whereas Judge Lewis St. George Stubbs had ruled in 1932 (shortly before his removal from the Bench) that Morris -- despite his imprisonment -- had civic voting rights and therefore rights of candidature, Judge Whitlaw now ruled

¹ "Workers United Front to Contest All Civic Posts", Winnipeg Free Press, September 25, 1933.

that Morris was ineligible because he did not maintain a household in the city. He therefore could not vote nor run for office.² This development meant a change in W.U.L. electoral strategy. Penner took the Ward Three aldermanic candidacy and Forkin moved to the position of contesting the mayoralty. Saul Simkin replaced Forkin as the W.U.L. aldermanic candidate for Ward Two.³

Speculation increased in October as to who would be the Independent Labour candidate for the mayoralty. The great popularity of ex-Judge Stubbs made him a prime candidate for the position. But Stubbs' candidature would depend largely upon how he fared in a federal by-election for the riding of Mackenzie, in Saskatchewan. If Stubbs should lose the contest, noted the Winnipeg Free Press at the time, "it is a foregone conclusion that he will be the ILP standard bearer for the mayoralty of Winnipeg." The ex-judge lost in a four-way

² "Jacob Penner Is Again Chosen For Mayoralty Fight - Leslie Morris, in Jail at Present, Nominated as One of United Front Candidates", The Worker, Oct. 16, 1933. "Applications of 141 Voters Are Approved - Revision Court Refuses to Reopen Case of Leslie Morris", Winnipeg Tribune, October 31, 1933.

³ "Forkin to Stand for Mayoralty in Place of Penner", Winnipeg Free Press, November 1, 1933. Penner's son, Norman, has maintained that his father brought to the attention of the Manitoba Central Committee of the C.P.C. the fact that in his previous mayoralty bids he had consistently received a large proportion of his votes from Ward Three, and that with the transfer of ballots in the aldermanic contest he could win a position in that ward. Hence the switches. See Brian McKillop (interviewer), "Conversations with Norman Penner", oral history session, Toronto, June, 1969, pp. 5-6.

⁴ "Candidates For Mayor Will Be Known This Week - L. St. G. Stubbs Will Probably Be I.L.P. Nominee if He is Defeated in Mackenzie", Winnipeg Free Press, October 23, 1933.

race,⁵ but his post-election antics convinced the leadership of the C.C.F. and the Manitoba I.L.P. that he was nothing more than a primadonna. "Woodsworth was quite disappointed", Stanley Knowles later related of Stubbs' actions. "[H]e thought the man had a social conscience and all he wanted to fight in the election was his ... dismissal from the bench.... He lost the election and he blamed us -- blamed our Party -- and the Party blamed him."⁶

By the thirtieth of October, John Queen had been selected by an I.L.P. nominating convention to try a second time to defeat Mayor Webb.⁷ While receiving the nomination for the mayoralty, Queen had also been re-elected provincial Party leader over Marcus Hyman, M.L.A., and Colin MacPhail. He had done so by a large majority. In his acceptance statement he sharply criticized the "hold the line" stance toward the depression taken by Webb's administrations:

An ever encroaching poverty has gripped the life of the people. There are forces that say we can't do anything about it, but that we must meekly acquiesce [sic] in the further depression of our standards of life instead of planning a distribution of the plenty available on every

⁵ The results were MacMillan (Liberal): 4,657; Stubbs (C.C.F.): 3,657; Edgar (Conservative): 1,156. "Stubbs Defeated By 1,000 Votes in Mackenzie Election", Winnipeg Tribune, Nov. 24, 1933. The United Front candidate's figures were not listed in the above article.

⁶ The Honourable Stanley H. Knowles, in Brian McKillop (interviewer), "Interview Between Stanley Knowles, M.P. Winnipeg North Centre, and Brian McKillop" (Ottawa: June 14, 1969), pp. 12-13. Copy in P.A. M. See also, "Stubbs Declares Dirty Politics of Liberals Beat Anything in Canada -- Worked with a 'Deadly and Ruthless Efficiency' To Defeat Him", Winnipeg Tribune, October 31, 1933.

⁷ "John Queen Nominated As I.L.P. Candidate for Mayoralty of Winnipeg --...", Winnipeg Free Press, October 30, 1933.

hand, these forces are now actually scheming for the creation of a condition of scarcity through curtailed production. The Independent Labour Party sharply challenges this attitude of mind. We know that a life without poverty is now possible for all of us, and we seek to organize the forces of society for the attainment of that life.... In short, our platform can be summed up in these words: 'The life and well being of men, women and children is the only thing that counts'. (8)

At the same convention a draft platform, which all aldermanic candidates were asked to support, stated in its preamble "that no permanent solution for present economic conditions can be found short of social ownership of the means of production, distribution, and exchange."⁹

While most of Queen's comments were directed against the administration of Ralph Webb, the Mayor had by the end of October not yet decided whether or not to run. Rumours had been circulating that the grand old man among the Citizens' aldermen, J. A. McKerchar — "the watchdog of the treasury" — would accept the nomination, in which case all Citizens' candidates (including the Mayor) would have stepped aside.¹⁰ But McKerchar had stated early in October that he felt it his duty to "keep faith" with his Ward Two electors, and complete his two year aldermanic term which would not expire until December 31, 1934. He kept his word.

Faced with a strong and experienced I.L.P. mayoralty contender

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid., For a partial party platform for the 1933 civic election, see Appendix C.

¹⁰ "Alderman J. A. McKerchar Declines Nomination into Mayoralty Race" (uc), October 7, 1933, CEF:1933. See also "Alderman McKerchar Being Pressed to Enter Fight", Winnipeg Tribune, October 20, 1933.

and no suitable Citizens' counterpart. Colonel Webb once again felt it his duty to assume the task of running the city. His announcement of candidature was a negative one, but it was consistent with his approach to "politics" in general. On Hallowe'en day he addressed the Four Leaf Clover Club (led by Mrs. Robert Rogers) and dismissed the position for which he had run seven times as one having "less power than an office boy ..., [as simply] a social butterfly".¹¹ But two days later, having just thrown his hat into the ring for the eighth time, he began to deem the position of more importance. "If I believed that John Queen could handle the situation better in the interests of all citizens I would vote for him and support him. But there are many planks in Mr. Queen's platform which, if put into effect, would set back ... the city's well-being."¹² Yet at the same time he was careful to stress that it was not his idea to seek office. "I believe our people know full well that I have not sought the mayor's chair", he exclaimed; while the chairman of the meeting added, "It was not that the mayor wanted the job, but that the citizens just now could not do without him. It would be disastrous for Winnipeg if it were to be broadcast throughout the world that Winnipeg had put itself into the hands of the Socialist Party."¹³

¹¹ "First Magistrate Explains Finance to Women's Club", Winnipeg Tribune, Nov. 1, 1933. The purpose of the club was to "foster patriotism, serve the Dominion, maintain law and order, strengthen the unity of the Empire, better the conditions of the people, and encourage political discussion."

¹² "Mayor Agrees To Seek Office One More Year", Winnipeg Tribune, Nov. 3, 1933.

¹³ "Mayor Agrees ...", op. cit., The chairman was Brigadier-General R. W. Patterson.

With all contestants in the ring, the election campaign began in earnest. Since both major Labour factions hoped to gain considerable support from the increasingly discontented sections of the community, it was they who initiated the action. With the steadfast refusal of the I.L.P. to countenance any "united front", the Workers' Unity League candidates had, since the early nineteen thirties, attacked their Labour counterparts as well as the forces of capitalism. But the real enemy of the people was still the bourgeoisie capitalist. "To find money you must go to where the bulk of the money lies", Forkin shouted as he delivered his opening speech of the 1933 campaign. "We leave it to you to judge where that is." But in case his listeners were slow in comprehending, he continued:

...For instance, in this city the tax mill rate is the same on rich men's mansions as it is on working men's little homes and shacks. We believe ... that the mill rate on big residences, the kind with three-car garages and servants' quarters, should be steeply increased, and the mill rate on small houses reduced. Civic revenue could also be enlarged by taxing such corporations as the big railroad corporations which are tax-free and which pay not a cent of taxes on the extensive property which they own within the city of Winnipeg. (14)

He also lamented the payment of millions of dollars to bondholders by civic institutions. "At present the needs of the people come last. Social services are curtailed in the sacred name of economy".¹⁵ The real issue of the campaign, he claimed, was nothing other than "the

¹⁴ "Forkin Advocates New Tax Plan at Campaign Meet — United Front Candidate Puts Forward New Policies of Party", Winnipeg Free Press, November 14, 1933. For a partial party platform see Appendix D.

¹⁵ Ibid.

conditions facing the workers in the city".¹⁶ The main concern of all W.U.L. candidates during the campaign was therefore to stress that their party had been more active than the others in fighting for an improvement in these conditions. Whatever the results of the election might be, Forkin felt W.U.L. presence "had assisted in exposing the conditions of the workers, and ... assisted in forwarding the class struggle."¹⁷

Toward this end, both Citizens and I.L.P. shared his condemnation. Alderman C. E. Simonite, who had recently admitted that many local workers were employed under "terrible conditions", received Forkin's wrath for not having made such revelations sooner. The City of Winnipeg Relief Department was criticized for deporting families expected to go on relief. "We know that during the past year scores of families have been deported because they applied for relief. They had resided in the city for five years and in some cases longer, but because they applied for relief they were put absolutely up against the wall. This is just a form of intimidation. Some of the workers have starved, or lived on scraps of food, rather than apply for relief."¹⁸ He attacked R. B. Bennett's "slave camps" which the local "employing classes" condoned, and singled out John Blumberg of the I.L.P. for admonishment because of his anti-Communist pronouncements. "The so-

¹⁶ "Says Conditions Facing Labor Big Election Issue — Forkin Says Mayoralty Campaign Well Worth While to United Front Movement", Winnipeg Free Press, November 23, 1933.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

called Labor aldermen are the kind of people who tell us there should be a Canadian brand of Socialism." Referring to the move to purchase the Winnipeg Electric Company (for \$50,000,000) he added: "'Let us have public ownership'; they said. 'Let us buy out the capitalist class.' ... The idea is ridiculous.... The workers cannot buy out the capitalist class.... What is the business of public ownership?", he asked. Then he gave his answer:

It means that the shareholders of the Winnipeg Electric will plank [sic] down their bonds, which are not of much value, and the city will give them perfectly good bonds in place of them, and on these you will be asked to pay five per cent every year, and \$2,500,000 will have to be paid year after year to the shareholders. (19)

"The only thing to do", he concluded, "is to tax the people who have got [the money]. That is the class that owns eighty-five per cent of the wealth of this city. We have got to see that they 'come across' in helping the unemployed."

With the exception of Alderman Blumberg, I.L.P. candidates made few references to W.U.L. platforms. They were, after all, reaching out for the same sources of working class support and could not afford to alienate workers who were sympathetic to the communist cause. All I.L.P. candidates vigorously attacked the policy of drift which had been characteristic of civic administration during the first years of the depression. They emphasized that unlike the Citizens, their party was one with "definite principles", whose members "were responsible to an organized body for the carrying out [of] the pre-

19 Ibid.

cepts of a party which is in being for the protection of the people vs. the financial interests."²⁰ M. W. Stobart added at a Ward Two constituency meeting that "a bold attempt should be made to challenge the right of the financiers to dominate the whole of our economic life."²¹

Queen launched his campaign for the mayoralty with an equally vehement attack on the financial interests which were dominating the city, and promised to call a Dominion-wide conference of municipalities "to present a united front against these financial interests that are demanding their pound of flesh."²² He admitted the difficulty which one municipality would face in trying to oppose "the money interests", but added:

...I think by using the position of mayor of this city I could start something of the nature of real assistance. That prosperity is just returning is the keynote of Mayor Webb's drive, just as it is the keynote of his political chieftain, R. B. Bennett, ... and yet in July, 1933, there were 25,000 more people on relief in Manitoba than in July 1932.

I would think Mayor Webb was warning you about me when he said this was no time to experiment.... This apparently is the time to stick by the ship so we can all go down together. (23)

A. W. Puttee, still active in Winnipeg Labour circles, had chaired the meeting. He agreed fully.

²⁰ "I.L.P. Candidates Attack Alleged Policy of Drift", Winnipeg Free Press, November 14, 1933.

²¹ Ibid.

²² "Queen Launches His Battle For Chief Magistracy — Denounces Payment of Interest While 'Citizens Hungry' and 'Education Threatened'", Winnipeg Free Press, November 14, 1933.

²³ Ibid.

Statements such as those Forkin and Queen had been making regarding the civic debt were clearly frightening to the Winnipeg business community. But Forkin's claim that "social services are curtailed in the sacred name of economy" was literally quite true. The Webb administrations since 1931 had tried desperately to put the city's finances back onto a cash basis. From 1920 into the depression, the city — having enjoyed a prosperous period of growth — had been overspending by using not only monies received in revenue but also the amount of the deficiency in tax collection, which had been borrowed from banks each year. When the city began to place its finances back upon a cash basis, it was compelled to place the deficit in tax collection of one year upon the budget of the next.²⁴ Its yearly deficit had consistently increased during the period:

TABLE FIVE: CITY OF WINNIPEG DEFICITS: 1921, 1926, 1931

FISCAL YEAR	TOTAL REVENUE	TOTAL EXPENDITURES	DEFICIT ON YEAR'S OPERATIONS
Dec. 31/21	10,618,657	10,801,046	182,389
Dec. 31/26	10,489,806	10,594,692	104,886
Dec. 31/31	12,099,779	12,544,642	444,863

(25)

In order to balance the ledgers in the face of the accrued civic debt

²⁴ "Winnipeg's Civic Problems" (editorial), Winnipeg Free Press, November 16, 1933.

²⁵ City of Winnipeg, Submission to Royal Commission on Dominion-Provincial Relations (Winnipeg, 1937), p. 25. Copy in P.A.M.

and a severe depression the City Council had cut the wages of civic employees, curtailed expenditures in education, and attempted to institute a minimal yet humane level of relief assistance.

It is not difficult to understand this stance taken by those who administered the city during the early years of the depression. The aldermen and mayor supported by the Citizens' committees, men of the "ethic of responsibility", were primarily men of finance — of facts and figures, determined to uphold the bulwarks of a shaken capitalism. As such, they naturally began to "prime the pump" from the top — paying the interest rates on the bonded debt (in order to maintain the city's credit, which in turn would bring added outside investment), keeping sound balance sheets, and so forth. They did so in the best interests of the community, even if the policy meant temporary hardship for the people in the way of curtailed services, slightly higher taxes, and more limited relief measures. This local version of the "trickle down theory" was a sound economic move but it tended to minimize the fact that a higher level of relief ration could have meant an injection of morale far beyond its cost in monetary terms.²⁶

While one might justifiably charge Citizens' aldermen with being crass and insensitive to human needs when setting civic fiscal policy, he might just as easily charge I.L.P. aldermen with being economically naive in thinking that problems of civic finances could be solved by the repudiation of its debts. But to do so in either case would be shortsighted. Both sides were sincerely working for the

²⁶ See James H. Gray, "The Sine qua non was \$1.50", in The Winter Years (Toronto, 1968), pp. 27-36, especially pp. 29-30.

betterment of the city, but were doing so from entirely different perspectives. Conservative politicians such as Webb, McKerchar, Alderman Rice-Jones, and John Bracken agreed fully with the Winnipeg Free Press that keeping finances within the cash revenue was "a requirement that is now [1933] absolutely inescapable."²⁷ They charged with good reason that Queen and Forkin ignored the economic facts of life. The facts were that by 1933 a record number of people had asked for relief. The facts were that more property was being abandoned by owners to the city for tax arrears than ever before. By 1937 the figure would reach \$7,500,000, and would represent 1/3 of the area of the city. By 1936, 30% of the taxpayers of the city would be in arrears one year or more, with a total assessed value of \$55,000,000.²⁸ The facts were that an abnormal number of people aged fifteen to twenty-four had been ready to enter the Winnipeg labour market just when the depression drastically reduced the number of available jobs. This had created an extraordinary burden on relief facilities and their sources of finance. The plain facts were that just when costs to the city treasury were soaring, the treasury was receiving less revenue per capita than at any time in its history.²⁹ Men such as Webb and McKerchar could not comprehend why John Queen

²⁷ "Winnipeg's Civic Problems", op. cit. A statement by the premier made at the time perhaps epitomizes his basic philosophic conception of the role of the State. Speaking before the University of Manitoba graduates, he said that it was "a mistake to teach that the state owed every citizen a living. What it [does] owe [is] an opportunity to make a living." "Bracken Lists Six Points in Recovery Plan", Winnipeg Tribune, October 26, 1933.

²⁸ Goldenberg, p. 10; also, see diagram II, Chapter 1 in the commission's report.

²⁹ Ibid., p. 7-14.

could be so willing to risk the loss of what little outside investment there was by repudiating the city's debt. But their inability to understand and to appreciate the other point of view was no different from that of Alex Hunter in the Schiller Barber Shop. It is the difference between the "ethic of responsibility" and the "ethic of conscience".

While the I.L.P. and W.U.L. politicians may have been economically naive, they did have the advantage of working more closely than C.E.C.-sponsored aldermen with those who really needed help. If they neglected the economic facts of life they were at least aware of the social and psychological pressures wrought by the depression. They could see at first hand the de-humanizing effect of a system that expected a family of four to live for fifteen days on a \$10.89 food voucher.³⁰ This seems not always to have been the case with Citizens' aldermen. C. E. Simonite noted late in his life that he and his colleagues were "amazed at the length of the [relief] line-up. It reached for blocks!"³¹ Labour aldermen paid little heed to the effects on the city's credit which their demands for increased relief allowances would bring, for were not the possible crumbling of the Board of Trade or collapse of the Winnipeg Grain Exchange only a few more

³⁰ Ibid., p. 137.

³¹ C. E. Simonite, in B. McKillop (interviewer), "Interview with C. E. Simonite", oral history session, July, 1970. Partial transcript in possession of author. See also, "Credit of City Must Be Saved Declares Webb — Repudiation of Debts or Interest Would Bring Tragedy of Unemployed", Winnipeg Tribune, November 17, 1933.

inevitable steps down the road to socialism?

The issue in the 1933 civic election which most divided Labour from Citizens' aldermen was therefore that of the City's credit. Two days after Queen made his attack on the civic administrator's "policy of drift", Webb opened his own campaign with an assault on the "empty phrases, cheap promises and threatened experiments with new theories" of his two opponents. In a meeting in Ward Three's Luxton School,³² Webb declared himself to be "a Socialist in the True sense of the word":

To me, Socialism is doing everything we can on the constructive side to serve the best interests of the people, the community and the country in which we live.... The past few years have been a great testing time for everybody, but we will be all the better for the sacrifices we have made and yet remained sound and loyal to the great fundamentals of British citizenship. (33)

He added that since 1929 the City Council had done the best it could to serve the "best interests of the city", and that if new members were elected to the council they would find it "easy to make a lot of promises; but what is the use of making promises that cannot be fulfilled?" He strongly advocated that more public works projects should be undertaken, especially that of a sewage disposal scheme. He also hoped that such a federally-financed scheme would be undertaken on a fair-wage basis. In concluding, he reserved his remarks for the

³² The results for this poll would soon be: Webb: 736; Queen: 624; Forkin: 55. Winnipeg Free Press, Nov. 25, 1933.

³³ "Webb Opens Fight With Attack on Cheap Promises", Winnipeg Free Press, November 17, 1933. See also "Webb Criticizes Those Who Urge Debt Repudiation", Winnipeg Free Press, Nov. 20, 1934.

subject of John Queen. "In spite of what Mr. Queen said the other night, I have no apology to make for feeling quite positive that the tide of the depression has turned. The improvement will be slow, but I think it is going to be more."

Queen's reply the next day was not unexpected. "We may ask where are Mayor Webb's promises," he queried. "...[He] belongs to a party that thrives on blah blah." His daughter, Gloria Queen-Hughes, running as a School Trustee, continued the rejoinder. "She could not see, wrote the Winnipeg Free Press reporter, "how the labor candidates could be classified as destructive Socialists when they aimed to keep the schools open, favored free education, opposed wage cuts for teachers and civic employees and other retrenchments of the School Board. Mayor Webb's Constructive Socialism meant to balance the budget at the expense of the working men's children and the rations of the unemployed."³⁴

On Wednesday, November 23, both Queen and Webb wound up their campaigns. Webb was at Lord Selkirk School in Elmwood; Queen addressed a meeting at Cecil Rhodes School in Weston (Ward Two), less than a block away from his own home. But Cecil Rhodes School was only the same distance from the home of Thomas Flye, whom the I.L.P. had recently dispossessed for refusing at inopportune times to vote with his party. The audience was composed almost entirely of Labour supporters, but they were split somewhat between Queen and Flye. Queen addressed himself to the questions raised by Webb and Flye. His

³⁴ "Labour Speakers Reply to Attack by Mayor Webb — Queen Urges People to Remember Promises Rival Had Made", Winnipeg Free Press, November 18, 1933.

attack on Webb was much along the same lines as it had been only a few nights before.

I accept Mayor Webb as an authority as to how easy it is for people on the outside to make promises.... He ran against Mayor Farmer, and in his speeches he declared that the city was being held back by a Labour mayor while prosperity was hovering over the city. Remember his promises then? He promised to bring us wonderful prosperity immediately. You elected Mayor Webb and you are getting his prosperity, and you are suffering his prosperity today. It is the same with the Dominion house, and you have to suffer their prosperity too. (35)

On a more direct note, Queen criticized the callousness of the mayor who was acting as if he were doing the city a favour by agreeing to run: "He offers himself as a candidate against his wishes, he tell us. ... He offers himself as a sacrifice because he knows a Labour mayor would make such a terrible mess of the city." Yet, Queen asked of his audience, consider Webb's actions regarding relief:

When we investigated relief cases at the legislature -- and Mayor Webb was chairman of the advisory committee -- his answer to one of my questions was, 'We never pretended to give them all they can eat, only what we think is enough for them.' ... In a country seeking to find some place to dispose of its wheat, some market for it, while we have people unemployed and not provided with enough food, we say, 'We never pretended to give them all they can eat, only what we think is enough for them.'

And Mayor Webb suggests that a Labour mayor would make a mess of the city. Why, the man doesn't know a mess when he's standing up to his knees in one. (36)

The only answer, Queen maintained, was a reorganization of

³⁵ "Webb and Flye are Targets For Queen's Attack", Winnipeg Free Press, November 23, 1933.

³⁶ Ibid.

social forces to provide enough food for everyone:

But Mayor Webb says it would be an experiment and that this is no time for an experiment. Rather we must acquiesce. We must not do anything about it. We must close our schools, if necessary, but we must pay our interest. To him it is more important that the bondholders get their usury out of this city than our unemployed should be fed.

Friday, it will be your choice to vote to continue this situation, to sacrifice your self to the bondholders, or to voice your protest, say you have suffered enough and to fight against the financial interest for your right to maintain a decent standard of living for yourselves.

I pledge you this, not as an election pledge, but as you would expect of me knowing my past political life, that, if elected, I will consider it one of my prime responsibilities to see that every man, woman and child has sufficient to eat. I don't want to be mayor of a city that doesn't provide sufficient food for its needy people. (37)

He stated his decision regarding the city's credit clearly. He "would choose to keep the schools open for the children and to repudiate on [sic] interest payments to bondholders, whereas Mayor Webb would decide that the bondholders should come first."

The remainder of Queen's speech concerned Thomas Flye, whom he declared had put himself into the position where his refusal to adhere to I.L.P. lines was hindering the progress of the party. Flye had been asked to appear before a party investigation committee, but before it had had a chance to meet Flye had submitted his resignation.

While Queen was being confronted by Flye supporters at Cecil Rhodes School, Mayor Webb was giving what was to be his most forceful speech of the 1933 campaign, and indeed the last of his political career. There were two "clearcut issues", he claimed: "whether we are going to carry on to the best of our ability in caring for the

credit of our city, or whether we are going to take a false step and suffer the consequences."³⁸ In his speech he appealed to the patriotism of the voters and asked them to stand by their British traditions in guarding the credit of the city. It deserves to be quoted at length because it reveals so much of the mind of the Citizen:

Our credit is the most important thing we have to guard. It is easy to repudiate our debts,... but it will not be long before disaster follows. I believe that the citizens are very jealous of the credit of our city.... It seems to me ... that the Independent Labour party is trying to fool our people....

[We] have to live within our means. We will do everything we possibly can towards that end. If the school board is not satisfied let them go and collect the taxes themselves. They have been spending far more than was collected....

The secret of the success of the British people ... always has been that their world is good. British people came here and built this city. Their thrift was a virtue, and now for some reason thrift is not to be a policy of the people. We are all to be leaners and joiners. Who shall we lean on? And who shall we join? The British people have always been people who stood by themselves.

We all know there are things that are wrong in our economic system, but there always have been, and always will be until the last trump is sounded. The vast average of our people are honest and want to play the game. I don't believe they are going to be fooled by that propaganda and false leadership....

I believe that our people are prepared to see things through. I believe things are on the mend. Winnipeg cannot solve the problems of the world, or of the empire, or of the Dominion. But I believe that it is my duty ... to see what can be done to solve the problems of the world.

If world conditions are improving, then Canada will be among the first to benefit. So let us keep up the good old British tradition, and be on the constructive side of

³⁸ "Webb Says City's Credit Is Most Important Thing -- 'Seems to Me Independent Labour Party Trying to Fool Our People,' Says Mayor", Winnipeg Free Press, November 23, 1933.

the picture, and not on the destructive side. One of the constructive things we can do is to live within our means, and see that our city lives within its means. You don't want anybody in the council or on the school board who will spend your money and make your taxes go up.....

Now I want to say a word regarding those greedy and selfish bondholders that the Independent Labor Party are saying so much about..... Who are the bondholders who own the city bonds? They are the vast mass of people, here and there, and all over the world, who bought our bonds because they had confidence and faith in our city, and believed its word was as good as gold. Are we going to repudiate them? ...

The theories that the Independent Labor Party are propagating are nothing new. They have been heard for years. But they have always failed and brought tragedy wherever they have been tried. So if I may say so, let us keep our heads and use British methods, because we are British.....

In conclusion,....the promise I make to you, and it is the only promise I have ever made at any time, is that if you elect me to the mayoral chair, I will serve to the best of my ability, doing the best I can for everybody. (39)

Much of the essence of the Citizen's Winnipeg is contained in those words.

* *

Webb's strong appeal to the loyalty (and perhaps the fear) of the city's Citizens was successful. He won by almost 9,000 votes. The final official results in the mayoralty race illustrate the run-away:

Webb	—	30,007	
Queen	—	21,273	
Forkin	—	4,745	(40)

39 Ibid.

40 Winnipeg Free Press, November 29, 1933. Other election results and figures for 1933 are from the same source unless otherwise noted.

The increase in the total mayoralty vote over that of 1932 had been 6,638: from 49,387 to 56,025.⁴¹ The increase in Webb's vote in the same period was 4,928: from 25,079 to 30,007. It seems, therefore, that the increased number of voters largely consisted of Webb supporters who heeded his appeal to guard the city's credit.

In the aldermanic race, two Ward One aldermen, Herbert Andrews and Cecil H. Gunn, were once again elected. Gunn surpassed the quota (4,946) without a transfer. The second transfer saw the election of Herbert Andrews and Margaret McWilliams. Mrs. McWilliams had run a surprisingly strong second in first choice ballots, but Andrews received 2,019 of the 2,752 votes transferred from four-year veteran, C. E. Simonite, who was eliminated on the second round. In terms of the final result, Andrews ran ahead of both Gunn (4,957) and McWilliams (4,897), having finally received 6,318 votes. Mrs. McWilliams, running on a Women's Federation ticket, had gained 427 of the transferable votes on the second (Simonite) transfer.⁴² She thus became the second woman alderman in the city's history.⁴³ All winning candidates were C.E.C. supporters. The breakdown of total first choice votes polled in Ward One for all candidates is as follows:

Mayoralty:			Alderman:		
Webb	—	13,577 E	Gunn	—	4,957 E
Queen	—	5,253	McWilliams	—	4,429 E
Forkin	—	359	Andrews	—	4,269 E
			Webber	—	3,115
			Simonite	—	2,736
			Brock	—	277

⁴¹ Ibid., November 25, 1933.

⁴² Winnipeg Free Press, Nov. 29, 1933. Henceforth figures given in the text within parentheses are final results.

⁴³ The first had been Mrs. Jessie Kirk, 1921-1922.

A hectic race of seventeen candidates in Ward Two went fifteen transfers before Paul Bardal (4,772), Thomas Flye (4,703), and M. W. Stobart (3,612) were elected. Bardal (C.E.C.) and Flye (independent Labour) were both incumbent aldermen; Stobart (I.L.P.) beat former Mayor F. H. Davidson for the third position. Flye's vote came largely by first choices, since he had gained only 445 votes by the end of the fifteenth transfer. Those of Bardal and Stobart came on various transfers. Total first choice ballots were as follows:

Mayoralty:

Webb	—	8,918
Queen	—	8,312
Forkin	—	1,096

(44)

Alderman:

Flye	—	4,258	E
Bardal	—	2,772	E
Stobart	—	2,084	E
Douglass	—	2,185	
Davidson	—	2,064	
Smith	—	947	
Jenkins	—	917	
Simkin	—	756	
Magnacca	—	583	
Clancy	—	508	
Wamsley	—	465	
O'Hare	—	335	
Henderson	—	316	
Vanderslip	—	252	
Woods	—	162	
Spence	—	137	
Owen	—	68	
(Quota)	=	4,703	

In Ward Three, veterans J. A. Barry (C.E.C.) and John Blumberg (I.L.P.) were returned after three transfers, with newcomer Jacob Penner being returned as the third member on the fourth transfer. After the fourth transfer the results stood: Barry: 4,660, Penner: 4,554, Blumberg: 4,465.⁴⁵ But Penner had in fact

⁴⁴ Winnipeg Free Press, November 25, 1933.

⁴⁵ Winnipeg Free Press, November 29, 1933.

topped the Ward Three polls in terms of first choices:

Mayoralty:

Webb	—	7,050
Queen	—	7,417
Forkin	—	3,226

(46)

Alderman:

Penner	—	3,900	E
Barry	—	3,774	E
Blumberg	—	3,641	E
Ferley	—	2,916	
Durward	—	2,251	
Fiddes	—	1,190	
Dingle	—	95	

The only extra-ordinary occurence of the election day had occurred in Ward Three at the Norquay School polling station. Alderman Barry had claimed that electors were being harrassed by Communists and that he had personally been threatened and insulted. The coverage that the incident received in the local press is perhaps a better indication of the synonymity of "Canadian" with "British" than it is of the truth of Barry's accusations. The Winnipeg Free Press reporter stated that Barry had claimed, "We're Canadian citizens and we won't be brow-beaten by Communists,... I'll beat them up myself...."; whereas the Winnipeg Tribune reported Barry saying, "I'm a British subject. Those Communists can't do that sort of thing and get away with it."⁴⁷

When all was over, the balance of power stood as follows: seven I.L.P., one independent Labour, one United Front. There were

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ "Police Reserves Rushed to School During Election — Alderman Barry Charges that Communists were Intimidating Voter at North-End Poll", Winnipeg Free Press, November 25, 1933. "Voters Allege Intimidation by Communists — Alderman Barry Complains of Treatment Near Norquay School", Winnipeg Tribune, November 24, 1933.

nine aldermen in the "Rightist"⁴⁸ group. Mayor Webb thus held the balance of power in what was interpreted openly and by all as a power struggle between Right and Left.

For the first time in the history of the City of Winnipeg, aldermen representing Labour were to have an equal voice with the members elected as representatives of the "best interests" of the community. For the second time in its history, a more than significant rift had developed between these two groups. At the time of the 1919 General Strike the community had divided; now, twenty-five years later, the community was once again split. But where the division of 1919 had largely been that of "Capital" against "Labour", the bifurcation of 1933 was in fact of larger dimensions. It represented not a division of classes but a difference in fundamental conceptions of the way a humane and free society should be run. It was one largely between liberal- and social democracy. The struggle would begin in earnest on January 1, 1934, when the inaugural meeting of the Winnipeg City Council would once again usher in the Rite of the Strike.

⁴⁸ "Amity Marks Inaugural of 1934 Council", Winnipeg Free Press, January 2, 1934. This habit of defining the 'other' group in terms of its opposition to the 'Leftists' on Council is indicative of the character of Winnipeg civic politics: although almost perpetually in the numerical majority, the 'Rightist' group in fact was always cast in the role of opposition. This, of course, was well suited to the "no politics" ("administration, but no government") philosophy of most 'Rightist' members. It also gave rise to another paradox. The strength of the Right would, for the most part, always be greatest when there was an insurgence of strength in the faction of the Left.

CHAPTER V

"SEND THEM BACK TO RUSSIA, THE COUNTRY OF THEIR DREAMS"

On January 2, 1934, Winnipeg's eighteen aldermen and its mayor took their seats in the council chamber and prepared to begin the year's civic administration. Most of them were seasoned veterans at the game of municipal politics; only two members had not sat in an alderman's chair before. But neither Margaret McWilliams nor Jacob Penner was a political novice, since both had long been prominent in civic affairs.¹

When the Mayor called the meeting to order, when newspaper reporters took up their pens, and the session went into the Committee of the Whole to elect the Standing Committees, faces within the chamber quickly hardened. Serious business was about to begin, with old animosities -- personal and ideological -- once again entering

¹ Mrs. McWilliams was born and educated in Toronto (University of Toronto). The wife of R. F. McWilliams, K.C., her first public work in Winnipeg had been as an organizer of a babies' milk depot, which by the mid-thirties had become "a flourishing civic undertaking". In 1926 she accompanied her husband to the world meeting of the Y.M.C.A. in Amsterdam, and in the same year she visited Russia and collaborated with her husband in the writing of Russia -- 1926. Two years later she and her husband together wrote Manitoba Milestones (Toronto, 1928), a popular history of Manitoba. In 1930 she was appointed by the Dominion government to act as an advisor to the federal government's delegation to the labour conference of the League of Nations at Geneva. The Women's Federation, which had sponsored her election to City Council, consisted exclusively of the wives and supporters of Civic Election Committee members. See "Only Woman on Council -- Lone Alderman Seeking Re-election in Ward One", Winnipeg Free Press, November 21, 1935.

the Chamber as if drawn by some spectre of deeds done but not forgotten. "The old spirit of give and take", wrote the Winnipeg Free Press reporter, "was conspicuous by its absence." Where earlier Councils had been willing and able to compromise in order to avoid head-on clashes, this one was not. Instead, "[t]he Labor and non-Labor sides of the Council fought tooth and nail for the key positions on the Council."² By the time the three and a quarter hour meeting was over, the memberships of the Standing Committees stood as follows (Chairman first in list):

Finance

McKerchar	CEC
Flye	iL
Honeyman	CEC
Gray	ILP
Barry	CEC
Rice-Jones	CEC

Improvements

Blumberg	ILP
Gunn	CEC
Lowe	ILP
Flye	ILP
Bardal	CEC
Penner	WUL

Public Utilities

Rice-Jones	CEC
Gunn	CEC
Simpkin	ILP
Stobart	ILP
Simpson	ILP
Oelkers	CEC

Safety

Barry	CEC
Andrews	CEC
McWilliams	WF (Women's Federation)
Simpkin	ILP
Penner	WUL
Stobart	ILP

Health

Simpson	ILP
McWilliams	WF
Lowe	ILP
Anderson	ILP
Bardal	CEC
Gray	ILP

Legislation and Reception

Honeyman	CEC
Andrews	CEC
Anderson	ILP
McKerchar	CEC
Oelkers	CEC
Blumberg	ILP

² "Webb Uses His Vote to Prevent Change in Chairmanships", Winnipeg Free Press, Jan. 1, 1934, WFPL, "City Council Scrapbook, 1934" (CCS:1934), p. 1.

The "Right" thus controlled the Finance and Legislation and Reception committees; the "Left" controlled Improvements and Health. Numerically, the two other committees were evenly balanced between Left and Right, but in both cases the Chairman was a member of the Rightist faction. The C.E.C. group, therefore, controlled the committees whereby they felt they could best relieve the depression. By controlling both Finance and Legislation committees they could ensure that no financially irresponsible measures would be adopted, either through poor budgeting or unsound legislation. The control of Health and Improvements by Labour reflects their closer contact with the daily needs of the people, and their belief that the depression should be relieved not by contraction from the "top" but from pumping new life into the "bottom". Selection of the various committee members was the sole item on the agenda of that first meeting.

With this annual battle over, Winnipeg City Council faced a long year of weekly confrontations between personalities and social philosophies, where the ever-increasing problem of coping with the needs of a discontented urban population had to be met. The evening meeting of the City Council that first day, with galleries packed, saw Jacob Penner — aged fifty-four — make his maiden speech in public office. Unlike Mrs. McWilliams, who contented herself with taking notes regarding procedure, Penner availed himself of the first opportunity to be 'officially' heard. His speech was lengthy and wide-ranging: from non-contributory insurance (which he highly favoured) to proper clothing for men on bush work. The oration — more a lecture than a speech — had been provoked by a motion by

C.E.C. alderman Herbert Andrews (seconded by Alderman Gunn) that Council approve a motion that had been passed by the Special Committee on Unemployment³ to the effect that all men physically fit be compelled to attend work camps or "be cut off relief". A division was called, and Council split as follows:

For:

Against:

Honeyman	CEC
Rice-Jones	CEC
Gunn	CEC
Andrews	CEC
McWilliams	WF
McKerchar	CEC
Bardal	CEC
Barry	CEC
Oelkers	CEC

Lowe	ILP
Flye	iL
Simpkin	ILP
Stobart	ILP
Anderson	ILP
Simpson	ILP
Gray	ILP
Blumberg	ILP
Penner	WUL

(4)

The tie was broken in favour of the "Leftists" in a surprising move by Mayor Webb. But from this first division the basic split on Council was made evident. This would be the way almost every division during the year would result. Only surprise defections (always temporary or strategic), or the absence of some aldermen, would alter the balance.

The major problem faced by the aldermen during 1934 was, of course, unemployment. Nearly every major legislative enactment — from the working-out of adequate cost-sharing agreements to the actual day by day administration of relief — revolved around this most central of the problems of the depression. By April of 1933

³ Its members for 1934 were the Mayor, Andrews (Chairman), McWilliams, McKerchar, Simpkin, Simpson, Gray.

⁴ City of Winnipeg, Minutes of the City Council, 1934 (Winnipeg, 1935), pp. 28-29.

there were 43,886 people on relief in Winnipeg -- a figure never to be exceeded during the nineteen-thirties.⁵ The total cost for that year alone had been \$3,635,185.87.⁶ Since 1931 the cost for relief had mounted to a staggering \$12,861,487.94.⁷ Between 1930 and 1932 the Department of Immigration, along with the departments of colonization of the two major railways, had aided 7,046 families,⁸ many of which had ultimately turned to relief because of lack of employment opportunities or an inability to procure assistance under the Province's "Back-to-the-Land" schemes.

The first major controversy within the 1934 City Council arose as a result of the inevitable conflict between an increasingly unemployed public and the measures taken by governments to avoid excessive expenditures for the care of those unemployed. Alderman John Blumberg, the I.L.P. alderman whose two pet hatreds were "the banking interests" and Communists, claimed that he had "definite proof" that "at least one family, whose only offence was that they were recipients of unemployment relief, had been deported." The head of the family had no criminal record. His only "crime" was that he was on the verge of becoming a naturalized citizen, while at the same time being forced to ask for relief. "In other words," he

⁵ Goldenberg, p. 145.

⁶ Ibid., p. 147.

⁷ Ibid., p. 141.

⁸ Bellan, p. 125.

claimed, "... it looked as though the government was trying to get them out of the country before that took place."⁹ Despite their ideological differences, Blumberg and Penner found themselves strongly allied on this point. Accusations of wholesale deportations of immigrants had been a major part of his comrade Forkin's mayoralty campaign; and Penner, therefore, found himself standing before Council claiming that he "knew of scores of families who had been 'scared off relief' with threats of deportation." The result, he added, was that "in spite of being unable to obtain employment and so become self-supporting, they went off relief and didn't dare go back." He then urged that "the Council should not rest ... until the matter had been settled satisfactorily."¹⁰

Two weeks later, Council decided to force a "showdown" with the Bennett government on the matter by passing a resolution declaring that the "minister of immigration and colonization be notified that unless the City of Winnipeg is officially notified that it must make the reports referred to in the Immigration Act, the City will desist from reporting any further cases to the department, whose only offence is taking unemployment assistance."¹¹

Penner maintained that the motion did not go far enough; that it be amended to add that all cases specially reported to

⁹ "Council Given Proof of Order For Deporting" (uc), Jan. 30, 1934, CCS:1934, p. 16.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 11.

¹¹ "City Council Acts to Force Showdown Over Deportations" (uc), Jan. 30, 1934, CCS:1934, p. 13.

Ottawa in 1933 be submitted to Council so that it might watch for any deportations arising out of these reports. In an allusion to Mayor Webb, Penner added that it was "quite clear" that "Ottawa was only deporting on special complaint of the city."¹² Mayor Webb then declared that he had "never found a single case where a man was deported for no other reason than because he applied for relief"; but this was challenged by Blumberg, who produced press dispatches from Ottawa which showed that out of 25,000 families deported since the beginning of the depression, 15,000 had been removed because they were public charges.¹³

The concern voiced by Council for the plight of the unemployed immigrant, however, ultimately backfired. The Federal government duly noted its decision and proceeded not to deport any families — even those who wished to go. The net result was to increase the city's relief expenditures even further. By July the original resolution was rescinded.¹⁴

Penner was soon involved in a more contentious issue. Early in May, the Council passed a motion which prohibited men who were on relief from picketing. To Alderman McWilliams, the only principle involved was "whether people, who accepted a livelihood

¹² Ibid.

¹³ "City Council Refuses To Be Party To Deportations" (uc), Jan. 30, 1934, CCS:1934, p. 16.

¹⁴ "Resolution On Deportations Is Rescinded — City Council Finds Some On Relief Wish To Leave Canada" (uc), July 17, 1934, CCS: 1934, pp. 94-95.

from the city," should take part "in a quarrel between two other groups of citizens with whom the city at large had nothing to do." But Penner felt that there was more to the question: "cutting a man off relief ... was equal to a death sentence by starvation. It was imposed not only on the man himself but on his whole family."¹⁵ He added that he thought since it was considered desirable to have peaceful picketing the Unemployment Committee was "stepping outside its jurisdiction to forbid it." A vote was taken on a motion which would have rescinded the original decision. The Council split along conventional lines, but through the absence of several "Rightist" members the Left was victorious.¹⁶ This was a particularly important decision for Penner, since it meant that the unemployed could be marshalled by United Front workers to support W.U.L.-supported strikes without fear of arrest.

The provision of adequate medical aid for those on relief constituted another serious problem for City Council. This situation was created by the decision of the Special Relief Committee of the Winnipeg Medical Society and the Manitoba Medical Association not to treat Medical Relief patients after February 15, 1933, "except in cases of extreme emergency."¹⁷ The previous year all members of these

¹⁵ "Ban on Pickets Of Relief Men To Be Lifted" (uc), May 22, 1934, CCS:1934, p. 75.

¹⁶ Mayor Webb and Alderman Gunn were in Ottawa; Alderman McKerchar (Acting Mayor) was also absent. The division: For rescinding: Lowe, Flye, Anderson, Stobart, Simpkin, Simpson, Gray, Blumberg, Penner (9). Against: Honeyman, Rice-Jones, Andrews, McWilliams, Bardal, Barry, Oelkers (7). Ibid.

¹⁷ "City Council Acts To Force Showdown Over Deportations" (uc), January 30, 1934, CCS:1934, p. 13.

associations had been instructed by Dr. E. S. Moorhead, Chairman of the Special Relief Committee, "to refuse to supply medical service, in the home or office, to cases on relief who ask that your services should be given for nothing."¹⁸ A temporary solution had been found through government-doctor negotiations and a confrontation had been avoided. Now it was time for negotiations to resume and once again the doctors were putting forth their threat.

The medical profession in the city was objecting essentially because no provision had been made for a regular medical service scheme when the Unemployment Relief Department was formed in 1930. Medical work for those on relief had been done from 1930 to 1933 without remuneration by doctors, outdoor clinics, and the Margaret Scott Nursing Mission, until in early 1934 the doctors made their demand.¹⁹

The Unemployment Committee of the City sent a special deputation to the Bracken government, but it was told that it would have to look elsewhere for money to pay the costs of medical relief; and that henceforth it was "going to be very difficult to get money from this government as long as any of the municipalities pay interest on their bonds and the public takes the attitude that it does.... If we are not going to get the support to raise the revenues of the

¹⁸ Letter from Dr. E. S. Moorhead to all members of Winnipeg Medical Society and Manitoba Medical Association, June 1, 1933, in Bracken Papers (1934).

¹⁹ Goldenberg, p. 142.

province we are going to be slow on new obligations."²⁰

This stance was consistent with Mr. Bracken's general attitude toward the city. Yet at the same time he was willing to hear and support Winnipeg's erratic genius and "man about town", R. Maxwell Moore, in his schemes for moving those on relief from within the bounds of the city to the rural site of an old provincial prison farm where they could be self-supporting, and once again productive members of society. "Dear old Cincinnatus," wrote Moore to Bracken. "Back to our plows. Mother Earth alone can soothe our nerves..... Of all the ivory headed numbskulls our City Councillors do certainly take the cake." He then commented on the stupidity of the City's aldermen for rejecting an offer by Moore in 1931 to send fifty families on relief to Birch Manor [the new name of the former prison farm] — an offer which he claimed would have saved the city over \$60,000 in relief costs. This plan, he felt, would have added a wholesomeness and purity to the lives of these city-dwellers which they otherwise would not have known. It would have:

take[n] the UN from the expression UNEMPLOYED. On the land — on a farm — there is no lack of WORK. Useful, interesting work, YET these Aldermen cannot see it.

The BLIND leading the BLIND — falling into the ditch.

And those City Aldermen are complaining because you the Premier cannot give them more money. TOO blind to see that ALTRUISTIC CITIZENRY want to help. Poor, poor WINNIPEG. (21)

²⁰ John Bracken, quoted in "Position on Medical Relief Is Revealed — Attitude of Province to Suburban Municipalities Stated By Bracken," Winnipeg Free Press, February, 1934, "Free Press Political Scrapbook, 1930-1935", P.A.M.

²¹ R. Maxwell Moore to John Bracken, September 27, 1934. Typescript in Bracken Papers, 1934.

Such was one rural response to an essentially urban problem. The lethargy of those in the city could be removed by returning its citizens to their origins; to the productive relationship between man and soil.

While John Bracken could not find the revenue required to help Winnipeg in its medical relief problems ²² he managed nevertheless to balance his budget. The headline of the Winnipeg Free Press on the day that the budget was brought down is indicative of his policy of fiscal restraint: "BALANCED BUDGET -- NO NEW TAXES TO BE IMPOSED -- No Changes in Taxes Proposed -- 2 P.C. Wage Tax is Unaltered -- Premier Estimates Revenue for Coming Fiscal Year at \$13,593,989.06, Leaving Surplus of \$28,015 -- No New Expenditures To Be Undertaken Except as May be Found Essential for Public Welfare -- Government Ready to Join Other Provinces in Working Out Interest Reduction Plan".²³

This and similar examples of seemingly callous disregard for the real plight of workers in favour of a more sound provincial

²² The city also had severe problems in the area of hospitalization. Late in 1931, the City Clerk of Winnipeg wrote the Department of Municipal Affairs, saying: "The City of Winnipeg is in a peculiar position of being on both sides of the fence so far as hospital accounts go. It is paying out enormous sums to the various hospitals in Winnipeg, St. Boniface and Ninette under the Act, and under the same Act is endeavouring somewhat unsuccessfully to collect from other municipalities accounts owing from contagious diseases patients coming from such municipalities. Preudhomme to Fisher, December 14, 1931. Typescript in "City of Winnipeg" file (1934), Department of Municipal Affairs, Province of Manitoba.

²³ Winnipeg Free Press, March 3, 1934, in "Free Press Political Scrapbook, 1930-1935", P.A.M.

ledger prompted bitter denunciation in the Legislature by John Queen, still leader of the I.L.P. in the provincial House. He noted the injustice of a man's being sentenced to nine months in jail "because he lied about his residence in order to get relief"; yet at the time he reminded his fellow M.L.A.'s that "employers not paying the minimum wage ... can get the protection of the state against the workers."²⁴ The Nineteenth Session of the Legislature was filled with such confrontations -- summed up perfectly by a Free Press editorialist: "Mr. Queen wants a new order of society and Mr. Bracken offers him law amendments."²⁵

Despite the cold shoulder turned to them by provincial authorities, City Council managed to find another temporary solution for the medical relief problem. In February an agreement was signed between the Winnipeg Medical Society and the City which provided a schedule of fees for doctors who wished to aid those on relief, and the mechanism for the establishment of a Medical Advisory Board the function of which would be to determine the employability of those on relief and to hear any cases under dispute.²⁶ By mid-year, the Province had made its position regarding medical relief (and relief in general) quite clear. "It is fully realized that the City of Winnipeg is carrying a very heavy load in connection with relief matters, and my colleagues and I look upon requests from Winnipeg

²⁴ "Under the Dome", Winnipeg Free Press editorial, February 25, 1934.

²⁵ "Under the Dome", ibid., February 14, 1934.

²⁶ Goldenberg, p. 142.

for assistance very sympathetically", wrote W. R. Clubb, the provincial Minister of Public Works. But "after careful consideration, I regret to have to advise you that the Province cannot agree to undertake any greater expense than it is already paying."²⁷ The Province's written statement to the City that medical relief was purely a municipal responsibility had shifted the full burden of cost to the City Treasury, prompting its guardian, J. A. McKerchar -- Chairman of the Finance Committee -- to demand that the city take a "strong stand" against the provincial government instead of simply "passing pious resolutions".

While medical relief posed an additional strain on the City's treasury, it was far from being adequate. Agreements with the doctors were carried out on a three month basis and at the end of each period the doctors consistently threatened complete withdrawal of services if no satisfactory scheme for payment could be drawn up.²⁸ No provision had ever been made by the City for medical treatment of the single unemployed, and the Council could only hope that their doctor bills would be paid by the Provincial Relief Commission out of the Province's revenues.²⁹ Meanwhile the Communists capitalized on the

²⁷ W. R. Clubb to M. Peterson (City Clerk, City of Winnipeg), June 16, 1934. Bracken Papers, 1934. "Province Not Able to Share Medical Cost -- Winnipeg Informed Care of Sick Jobless Must Rest On City Alone" (uc), June 19, 1934, CCS:1934, p. 84.

²⁸ See for example, "Threat of Doctors' Strike In Care of Sick Workless Is Averted For Time Being" (uc), Aug. 14, 1934, CCS: 1934, p. 101.

²⁹ "Medical Relief Burden Proves Heavy For City" (uc), May 26, 1934, CCS:1934, p. 77.

constant, time-consuming negotiations between doctors and Finance Committee for their propaganda value. One headline from The Worker during the original negotiations ran: "MEDICAL AID WILL ONLY COME IF NEAR TO DEATH — WINNIPEG CITY COUNCIL CALLOUSLY INDIFFERENT TO PLIGHT OF SICK UNEMPLOYED".³⁰

Also connected with the question of "balancing the budget" (thereby maintaining good credit) was the question of whether or not it was feasible to increase the amount of relief assistance given to each individual. The problem of medical relief had largely been one of jurisdiction, with the basic conflict being between City and Province. But the question of the amount of relief assistance was one which lay specifically within the bounds of the civic administration (except when drawing up cost-sharing agreements with provincial and federal governments). Factional polarization on this question therefore took conventional Left-Right lines on City Council. The same John McKerchar who had urged the City Council to press the provincial government for more funds, now found mice of a smaller scale attempting to nibble away at the reserves in his already meagre fiscal granary. Like his provincial counterpart, John Bracken, McKerchar tightened the purse strings in defense.

It was upon this issue of relief assistance that Council members divided most strongly, for they could still recall the final speeches, the emotion-charged words of both John Queen and Ralph Webb during the 1933 campaign. Appeals for "Repudiation" or

³⁰ The Worker, February 3, 1934, p. 1.

"Defense of the Credit" still evoked harsh memories and bitter words. But the division within Council on this issue was also a strong indication of the differing conceptions of each faction as to how the individual could best be helped in times of such stress. The defenders of capitalism held firm in their belief that although relief measures were meager, they were sufficient to live on until the economy recovered and the standard of living would rise once again. And the best way to hasten this return of prosperity, they maintained, was to keep finance on as sound a basis as possible.

In a sense, one can reverse the commonly-held picture of Leftists during the thirties. They were not simply irresponsible idealists. Given the fact that in 1934 there seemed to be no end in sight for the depression — that people everywhere were starving, that even such a formidable structure as Wall Street had collapsed to the point where many felt it would never recover — it seems that the true idealism exhibited was that of the man committed to capitalism; the man who could state (all newspapers, banks, investment houses, all farms, picket lines and relief voucher queues to the contrary) that, "There are now many indications that we are at last emerging from the depression."³¹ That is the statement of an idealist. Those of the Left, who neither respected the institutions of capitalism nor saw any need to defend them at all costs, were thus — in a way — realists. True, they were constantly reminded of their financial irresponsibility by the chairman of the Finance Committee, but given

³¹ John Bracken, in The Activist, Vol. X, No. 6 (September, 1934), p. 1.

their basic belief that all around them was evidence indicating that capitalism would never recover to the level of 1926, they could disregard such criticism as irrelevant. Risking a total loss of financial credit at banks by raising the amount of relief available (therefore adding to the city's debt) was to them no worse than having the people become more and more despairing and degraded through a long and probably futile wait for the return of the prosperity of yesterday. To a man with strong leanings toward an ethic of conscience, dedicated to his own conception of a just society, such economic measures as exhibited by John McKerchar's Finance Committee were not only idealistic, but they were immoral — notwithstanding the fact that they were 'sound' economics.

Within two weeks of starting the new aldermanic year, the Labour faction received its first opportunity to demonstrate its belief that people, and not the balance-sheets, should be the first concern of a politician. Alderman Herbert Andrews, Chairman of the Relief Committee, moved that: (a) since the Joint Unemployment Relief Committee had considered certain relief allowance proposals submitted by W. R. Clubb and had recommended that food allowances for incidentals be increased; and that (b) since the governments of the three prairie provinces had agreed "not to exceed the value of the food allowances as submitted" — that a committee (Simpkin, Gray, McKerchar, Andrews) be appointed to ask the provincial government for an upward revision of the incidentals. Aldermen Bardal and Honeyman then proposed an amendment which would have increased these incidental allowances by fifty percent, but this was amended further

by a Labour motion (Simpkin) that a twenty percent increase for the entire food value of each schedule be demanded.³²

The proposal of such an increase had never been considered by the original movers of the motion, since incidentals represented only a small fraction of the entire relief food schedule. Instead of an increase of less than fifty cents per family of four per fifteen day period, the Labour amendment meant an increase in excess of \$7.00 for the same period. A vote was taken on Simpkin's amendment and it was passed as follows:

For:		Against:	
Lowe	Simpson	Honeyman	McKerchar
Flye	Gray	Rice-Jones	Barry
Anderson	Blumberg	Andrews	Oelkers
Stobart	Simpkin	McWilliams	Bardal
Penner			

(33)

Webb and Gunn were still in eastern Canada negotiating with the federal government. The Worker naturally capitalized on this one-vote victory: "20% Raise For Those on Relief -- Alderman Penner Casts Deciding Vote".³⁴ But regardless of which vote was the decisive one, the outcome was a heartening victory for the Labour group on Council.³⁵

A month later Labour Aldermen Gray and Simpkin moved in

³² Minutes of City Council, 1934, January 15, pp. 56-57.

³³ Ibid., p. 57.

³⁴ The Worker, January 27, 1934, p. 5.

³⁵ For coverage of the local press on that meeting see "Council Asks for Increase in Allowance" (uc), January 16, 1934, CCS:1934, p. 9.

Council "that the Unemployment Advisory Board be asked for their decision ... [on] the motion passed at Council meeting held January 15th, regarding 20% increase...." This was amended by Aldermen Honeyman and Rice-Jones to read "that the communication from the Chairman of the Greater Winnipeg Unemployment Advisory Board be referred to the Special Committee on Unemployment for reconsideration and report and that in the meantime the motion be tabled."³⁶ Since the Special Committee on Unemployment was split evenly between Left and Right, with the Mayor as Chairman, this meant control of the Committee's activities by the Right. It also meant that "reconsideration" in this particular case was tantamount to removal of the motion from further consideration. By this time Mayor Webb and Alderman Gunn had returned, and Council was at full voting strength. A vote was taken on the "reconsideration and tabling" amendment, and once again the Council split rigidly into its two basic factions. The deciding vote was therefore in the hands of Mayor Webb, and he cast his vote in favour of the motion.³⁷ 'Rational' discussion about the sanity of Labour's demands regarding relief would be somewhat easier with the $\frac{4}{3}$ ratio in committee than it was on Council, where the Right-Left ratio was $\frac{10}{9}$.

The bitter disappointment felt by Labour members upon this defeat was somewhat alleviated in March, when increases ranging from

³⁶ Minutes of City Council, 1934, February 13, pp. 95-96.

³⁷ "Will Reconsider Plan To Increase Relief Schedule" (uc) February 14, 1934, CCS:1934, p. 25.

six to nine percent were made in the relief schedules. This was in line with recommendations which had been made by the three prairie provinces. It raised relief costs at the same time by ten cents per person. Under the revision the two week allowance for a family now stood:

TABLE SIX: 15 DAY FAMILY RELIEF SCHEDULE — 1934

Two persons	—	\$ 5.26	
Three persons	—	\$ 7.21	
Four persons	—	\$ 8.97	
Six persons	—	\$12.60	
Seven persons	—	\$14.23	
Eight persons	—	\$15.86	(38)

Literally scores of other battles arose during the course of 1934 out of the problems of unemployment and relief: how much a worker should be allowed to keep as casual earnings without being out of relief; whether the single unemployed should pay taxes; whether unemployed workers on relief works projects should receive union rates of pay, and whether they should be forced to eat in government dining halls instead of their homes.³⁹ Each time such battles occurred — whether on City Council or in the provincial House — they increased the deep-seated and historic cleavage between those who had vowed to wait the depression out and those who were eager to see change on a basic scale. The former, whose genuine concern for the plight of the masses was at the level of political economy and sound credit,

³⁸ "Relief Increases Are Provided For By City Council" (uc), March 13, 1934, CCS:1934, p. 36.

³⁹ See "Council Is Not Going To Change Wage Allowance" (uc), September 26, 1934, and "Flye Champions Single Jobless Men" (uc), October 23, 1934, in CCS:1934, pp. 116, 127.

often appeared callous:

The problem of unemployment continues to be a matter of grave concern for the community. With one out of every ten of our people now receiving relief the seriousness of this situation may be appreciated.... It is fitting that I should refer to the co-operation that has been shown by those who, through no fault of their own, are obliged to accept relief. The fortitude and courage exhibited by them under such trying conditions is highly commendable and the difficulties confronting them are worthy of the most sympathetic consideration. (40)

It was very easy for this attitude of 'grin and bear it' to become one of cold unconcern when formulated in some parliamentary sanctum and filtered through governmental departments and inter-office memos.

To those arguing from more abstract premises than John Bracken — to John Queen as well as Jacob Penner — this cold

⁴⁰ John Bracken, Speech from the Throne, Opening of the Nineteenth Session of the Manitoba Legislature (1934), Free Press Provincial Scrapbook, 1930-35, P.A.M. Bracken's economic traditionalism is well-illustrated in a speech he made regarding an act passed "to Confer Certain Emergency Powers Relating to the Control of the Sale, Delivery and Marketing of Wheat in 1934-35" (based upon an earlier agreement in London): "It assumes ... that an oversupply of wheat with consequent pressure of excess quantities on a limited market has the effect of lowering prices. It seeks to offset this fact by adjusting the supplies thrown up on the market to not more than the market will take. In other words, it seeks to reduce the pressure of an excess of exports on a limited market in the expectation that it will help to keep prices up and that it will encourage producers in the export nations to adjust their supplies to the effective demand." Canadian Annual Review (1934), p. 319. Other portions of the Speech from the Throne tell the same thing: An increase in provincial debt, even for unemployment relief, is in his eyes "justified only in the expectation that times would improve, and that then the increased obligation can be more easily borne. If times are not to improve, we must, if we are not devoid of courage and a sense of responsibility, steel ourselves to make the sum of our current expenditures and our expenditures for relief come within the amount of current revenues of the province." Canadian Annual Review, 1934, p. 314.

sympathy of a full stomach merely infuriated. In a two hour speech early in the 1934 session, Queen pleaded for higher relief food schedules. The problem, he exhorted, "transcends any financial problem that may face the government.... It is a problem of human welfare.... Evidently this is not a very important question ...", he added, as he saw some of the Honourable Members joking with one another.⁴¹ "I am going to say this, however, that any legislature that is not responsive to the cry of suffering humanity is a legislature that ought to get the treatment that Guy Fawkes is reputed to have tried in another parliamentary body."⁴²

City Council was also marked at times with a similarly frivolous note. In the shortest Council meeting in the memory of contemporaries, late in the year, Penner asked "if the unemployment committee was going to force single men to go to camps or farms this winter at \$5 a month."⁴³ Alderman Herbert Andrews (Chairman of the Committee) answered, in a manner indicative of the general frivolity of the meeting, that the Committee, " 'in its wisdom or unwisdom', had given him the job of deciding whether a young man

⁴¹ The jocularly found under the Dome was by no means confined only to M.L.A.'s. The Free Press reporter enjoyed laughing at the antics of the M.L.A.'s: "After an absence of nearly a year, deeply regretted by Winnipeg connoisseurs of the light fantastic, the members of the Manitoba Legislature came back to town yesterday for an indefinite engagement." "Under the Dome", Winnipeg Free Press, February 13, 1935.

⁴² "Queen Pleads For More Humanity In Relief of Manitoba's Unemployed", Winnipeg Free Press, March 28, 1934.

⁴³ "Council Makes Record By Finishing Regular Meeting In Less Than Half an Hour" (uc), Nov. 6, 1934, CCS:1934, pp. 129-130.

should continue on relief or go out. 'If I thought he should go to camp or farm I should have so decided,' ...".⁴⁴

Members of the "Rightist" majority on Council felt they had good reason for occasional levity. They had managed to produce a virtual balance of the civic budget for the year by whittling away in various areas. The Finance Committee had fought and won a battle with the I.L.P.-dominated School Board for a reduction of \$40,000 in teachers' salaries (by a ten percent reduction in maximum salary limits) and had sliced the general levy by \$70,000.⁴⁵ This left only a \$24,000 deficit, a paltry sum when one considered that at the beginning of 1933 the city's deficit was \$222,000.⁴⁶ and the province had during the past year increased Winnipeg's share of unemployment relief costs from 33 1/3 percent to 46 2/3 percent.⁴⁷

But the pride of C.E.C. aldermen had only been earned after constant battles with Labour aldermen over these reductions in civic salaries. Taking advantage of the absence of Gunn and Webb, I.L.P. aldermen earlier in the year had moved for a three and one-half percent wage increase in City Hydro workers' salaries and for the consideration by Finance Committee of "the raising of

⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 130.

⁴⁵ "Council Effects Virtual Balance of Civic Budget" (uc), April 25, 1934, CCS:1934, p. 60.

⁴⁶ "Large Cuts Proposed In Civic Expenditure" (uc), March 20, 1934, CCS:1934, p. 40-41.

⁴⁷ "Increase In City's Relief Bill Scored" (uc), October 10, 1934, CCS:1934, p. 121.

the wages of all other civic employes [sic] by 3 1/3%." ⁴⁸ In December, after a new slate of aldermen and a new Mayor had been elected for 1935 -- giving Labour the voting edge for the first time in the city's history -- clear indications were that in the new year a repetition of the ten percent general reductions in civic salaries which had been in effect since 1932 would not again occur and that the original wage level would be restored if possible. ⁴⁹

The effort to economize in civic operations, while bringing in as much revenue as the citizens could bear, brought forth many different types of tax proposals during the course of the year. As the time approached for the mill rate to be set for the 1934-1935 fiscal year, proposals were made for a tax on unearned increment, a tenants' rental tax, a poll tax, a wheel tax (on large trucks only), a retail sales (turnover) tax, a utilities (light, power, and gas) tax, a tax on succession duty, a civic income tax, a tax on the telephone system and liquor commission, and for the removal of tax exemptions for railways and churches. ⁵⁰

⁴⁸ "Hydro Workers' Pay Increased By 3 1/2 Percent -- I.L.P. Aldermen Force Through Measure After Caustic Battle" (uc), May 22, 1934, CCS:1934, p. 73. The vote -- For: Honeyman, Lowe, Flye, Anderson, Stobart, Simpkin, Simpson, Gray, Blumberg, Penner. Against: Rice-Jones, Andrews, McWilliams, Bardal, Barry, Oelkers.

⁴⁹ "Move To Increase Salaries of Civic Employees Seen -- Ten Per Cent Boost Regarded As Foregone Conclusion At City Hall" (uc), December 27, 1934, CCS:1934, p. 145.

⁵⁰ "City Considers New Forms of Assessments", Winnipeg Tribune, March 14, 1934. None of these particular proposals were acted upon in whole or in part.

Mayor Webb declared at the time that the measures were aimed at shifting "the [tax] burden so that it would rest more equitably on all the citizens' shoulders",⁵¹ but failed to add that taxes on retail sales, utilities, or tenants hit those with minimum incomes first and hardest. When none of the proposals were acted upon, the increasing cost of government for the year — as usual — was borne by decreasing expenditures and services; the problem of increasing or redistributing tax assessments was scarcely considered, and never reached the stage of a proposal from the C.E.C.-dominated Finance Committee.

* *

In the Council Chambers and committee rooms of Winnipeg City Hall the defenders of sound credit and liberal-democracy had generally been successful against sustained "attacks" from the socialists and lone Communist in 1934. The division lists generally attested to that. But during each of the Council's weekly Monday night meetings the din of shouting men half a block to the south-west frequently pierced the relative tranquillity of the Chambers. The voices rose from Market Square, the meeting place of Labour agitators since long before the turn of the century.

It was in the Market Square during the early twenties, that Communist organizers had sold their wares. Located in the central manufacturing and textile core of the city, ten minutes'

⁵¹ Ibid.

walk from Portage and Main, the same distance from the C.P.R. depot, a brisk twenty-minute tramp from the central relief depot on Tecumseh, and a stone's throw from the federal government soup-kitchens around the corner on Elgin, the Square was an ideal place for workers of the United Front to attempt to gain adherents and organize their followers against "the bosses" or the forces of fascism, which they saw emerging at every turn. One of the best-known leaders of the United Front workers, Jacob Penner, was each Monday night absent from the Market Square. He was pursuing the same battles elsewhere.

With a Communist on Council during the depths of the depression, its proceedings were reduced at times during 1934 to the level of a straight conflict of ideologies. The fact that Penner was articulate and outspoken while at the same time a dogmatic and well-versed Marxist-Leninist served to place him in a central position on Council, with enemies on both sides.

On one side, of course, was "Peg-Leg Webb",⁵² who was regarded by United Front workers as an out-and-out fascist.⁵³

⁵² The nickname was used in a recorded interview with the author by Michael Koral (June, 1969), the organizer of the Winnipeg "Young Communist League" during the early thirties. Koral was an occasional contributor to the Communist organ, The Worker (c.f. "The Youth Will March on Our International Day", April 21, 1934). He has since moved to Toronto where he edits a left-wing journal. See Brian McKillop (interviewer), "Interview Between Mitch Sago ... and Brian McKillop", oral history session, June, 1969. Copy in P.A.M.

⁵³ See "Winnipeg Fascists Are Aided by Die-Hard Webb — Mayor Salutes Nazis and Shows His True Colors", March 10, 1934, p. 1; also, "The Lessons of the Standard Knitting Textile Strike", The Worker, April 7, 1934, p. 3.

On the other were the I.L.P. aldermen, whom Penner and his comrades regarded as social-reformists -- as having sold out their socialist philosophy by settling for such capitalist reforms as "price regulation", "planning", and "bank reform" -- and who therefore had become social fascists.⁵⁴ But while as an ideological cousin Penner could regard the I.L.P. aldermen with contempt, as an aldermanic colleague he was forced by a common opposition to the right-wing policies of the C.E.C. faction into close coalition. This was further intensified by the fact that both groups were purportedly "workers'" parties and therefore vying for the same support. Penner thus became their voting mate, and found this support reciprocated, since with one C.E.C. absentee his vote meant a Labour victory. Relationships between Penner and his I.L.P. confreres were thus workable, even if at times strained.⁵⁵

⁵⁴ G. Pierce, "Intensify The Struggle For Marxism-Leninism!", ibid., January 13, 1934, p. 5.

⁵⁵ Part of the cooperation which Penner received from the I.L.P. members on Council was no doubt due simply to the fact that Penner was always so well prepared. Stanley Knowles, who sat with Penner on Council for a short period was to recall:

"... I just had a year with him on Council [1941-1942], but I had a great respect for him because one felt that he never let down his determination to achieve a Communist regime someday, but meantime, he was an awfully good alderman. He attended to his meeting thoroughly -- every problem that had to be coped with in Ward Three.... You couldn't disagree with the things that he opposed and worked for in the Council, and we found ourselves voting with him most of the time. He either voted with us or we were voting with him. He seemed almost in two compartments. On the one hand, there was this revolutionary Communist approach that he never got away from. But you couldn't fault him as a public representative." McKillop (interviewer), Knowles interview, op. cit., pp. 7-8.

But the Penner-Webb relationship was entirely different. It was also much less complicated. Webb's attitudes toward Labour and especially Left-wing extremists was well known. He had been conducting a one-man, nationwide campaign against "bolshies" since 1930. In 1931 he had written a confidential letter to the Prime Minister on the Mayor's stationery, asking for federal legislation which would make it possible "to deal with these agitators in the way they should be dealt with, and that is, -- to speak roughly, -- 'Send them back to Russia, the country of their dreams', because their own countries do not need them; I am quite sure of that, and I am perfectly sure we do not need them."⁵⁶ Two months later he telegraphed the Prime Minister: "LET US DEPORT ALL COMMUNISTIC AGITATORS STOP IF WE HAVE NOT THE LAWS NOW CANNOT WE OBTAIN THEM THIS SESSION".⁵⁷ Similar letters went to the Ministers of Immigration and Colonization and Labour. The former provided a list of fifteen men who had gone to visit Russia from Winnipeg and asked if their return could not be prevented. The latter defended the Western Packers' interests against Communist charges of unfair wages and working conditions. "I am sure you must realize", he concluded, that:

It is nothing short of ridiculous that such an organization should be permitted to carry on here in Winnipeg, pulling strikes almost every day of the week. Their whole policy is simply Bolshevistic, dictated from Moscow in an endeavor not to help the

⁵⁶ Webb to Bennett, February 25, 1931, R. B. Bennett Papers, M. G. 16, K, Series F, No. 141, P.A.C.

⁵⁷ Webb to Bennett, April 16, 1931, ibid.

faced bogeymen, and the troubles of the moment could once again be blamed upon "bolsheviks, anarchists and thugs". The Strike was ever-present during the winter years of depression in Winnipeg.

To a large extent the position of Ralph Webb, as Mayor of the City of Winnipeg and ex-officio head of the Police Commission, was justified. Did the PURPOSE of the organization which had elected Jacob Penner not boldly state that all politicians elected under its banner were "to fight for the defense and improvement of the conditions of the working class, mobilizing and organizing the Canadian workers for the final overthrow of capitalism and for the establishment of a Revolutionary Workers' Government"?⁵⁹ Did it not further avow that it was under the control of Moscow, being "the CANADIAN SECTION OF THE RED INTERNATIONAL OF LABOR UNIONS, pledged to a programme and policy of revolutionary struggle for

⁵⁸ Webb to W. A. Gordon, March 21, 1934, ibid.

⁵⁹ Draft Constitution of the "Workers' Unity League of Canada", in The Worker, June 23, 1930, p. 4.

want your Job and Salary and Everything else as well.

If you keep Such people in the Country, disfranchise them, and when Spring Comes Give Each Man and Woman a Hoe, and a bag of potatoes, and tell them to do as the old timers did "Root Hog or Die"....

Enough for such Cattle to let them Stay in our country provided they wash themselves and keep our Laws and Stay Where we Cant Smell them. (66)

Letters such as these, penned in varying degrees of extremist rhetoric, were received frequently by the major political figures in the province — especially William Major (the Attorney-General), Webb and Bracken. Together with equally extreme police undercover

⁶⁶ Ibid.

Manitoba since 1880 and felt strongly that since he and his generation had suffered many privations on the Manitoba frontier and had never sought "Charity", dole should not be handed out to immigrants without their working for it. "These peasants are pandered to Entirely too much by the Govts and Railways they get [sic] jobs on Railway Work that Should in Justice be given to Canadians and English Speaking people.... And then at Every opportunity they trample our Flag Shoot our Police burn our Schools", he added. For Mr. Ashe, the pleas which had been made in the past to "take these People to your bosoms and assimilate them Make [sic] them good Canadians" was simply "Sunday School Clap trap":

We were to assimilate them the Lousy Pock Marked Murdering Balkan peasants, which means lower our morals our Standard of living to deject [sic] them, and raise theirs....

Now you have them in the Shape of "Reds". They will be backed up by your labor members and they will want your Job and Salary and Everything else as well.

If you keep Such people in the Country, disfranchise them, and when Spring Comes Give Each Man and Woman a Hoe, and a bag of potatoes, and tell them to do as the old timers did "Root Hog or Die".... Enough for such Gattle to let them Stay in our country provided they wash themselves and keep our Laws and Stay Where we Cant Smell them. (66)

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66 Ibid.

reports,⁶⁷ such letters and warnings sensitized these officials to the point where, given the stamp of officiality when coming from an undercover agent or inspector, the documents took on a reality and credence which often had never existed.

In May of 1931, one undercover agent reported to the Attorney-General's department that "the Headquarters of the Communist Party have worked out a plan for conquering the city."⁶⁸ The report had been based upon unverified rumours that the local Communists had somehow obtained thirty machine guns. By whatever means, the police operative learned of their three point plan to capture the city. First, they would unexpectedly attack the Bank of Montreal at the corner of Portage and Main. They would therefore control the main arteries of the city as well as much of its wealth. Then they would attack the Minto Street Barracks. It was believed that the Communists thought there were three machine guns therein, and that they could capture these and the Barracks by "a small party with a truck". Finally, after the bank and barracks had been successfully taken, the utilities would quickly follow: Telephones, Telegraphs, Post Office, Railroad Stations. "The first thing to do", the operative added, "will

⁶⁷ This extremism was not without stereotypic reporting. Wrote one undercover agent: "Description of man named Friedman, alias Frieda, manager and organizer of the Junior Communist Association: Tall, broad shoulders, very straight bearing, swinging walk, dark hair, round fresh face with big fat nose, wearing dark overcoat without hat -- a typical Jew." "Synopsis of Reports on Communist Activities Commencing May 5, 1931" (8pp.), Special File, "Communist Activity, 1931-36", op. cit., p. 1.

⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 6.

Extreme reactions on the part of politicians after reading such reports, coupled with the incessant problems of trying to cope with industrial unrest caused by W.U.L.-led strikes and walkouts and revolutionary rhetoric emanating from the Market Square, added to the impatience with which civic and provincial leaders regarded Labour in general and the Workers' Unity League and its leaders in particular. And added to this was an increasing pressure from the local business community for authorities to quell the disturbances being wrought upon an already shaken industrial sector. In July of 1931, after a particularly violent unemployed riot in Winnipeg, the Employers' Association of Manitoba sent a wire to many prominent Ottawa officials. "ENCLOSING COPY OF NINE CLAUSE RESOLUTION PASSED BY EMPLOYERS ASSOCIATION OF MANITOBA REPRESENTING MAJORITY OF EMPLOYING INTERESTS IN PROVINCE". These resolutions, passed at the association's annual meeting were in part as follows:

- (1) Enlarging the authority of the Police within the Department of Justice in dealing with Communist Groups throughout Canada....
- (2) Strengthen the Immigration Laws....
- (3) Amend Naturalization Laws....
- (4) Cancel Naturalization Certificates of Communists....
- (5) Deny re-entry into Canada of an alien Communist who has visited Russia to secure training in Communistic Doctrines....
- (6) Amend Postal Laws to declare non-mailable all newspapers, and propaganda advocating Revolutionary Communism....
- (7) Amend Laws prohibiting transportation of foregoing periodicals....

- (8) Prosecute Communists or Publishers for spreading false rumours for the purpose of causing discontent among Workers.....
- (9) Declare illegal any Communist Party who advocates the overthrow of our form of Government by force or violence. (71)

Mayor Webb was not therefore acting solely upon a crusading impulse or the knack of a good politician to find a vote-getting "cause". His actions and words were representative of a large and important section of the community which was becoming increasingly impatient with 'foreign rabble' disturbing the peace and hindering the efficient running of government and industry. What irked this segment of the community even more was the grating irony that the very people who were causing the greatest social and industrial unrest in the North End were the same people who constituted the vast majority of those on relief and who were objecting most because they were not receiving enough! It bothered and frightened them, too, that many of these same people, the cause of much of the relief burden, had so little respect for the flag and institutions which supported them. May Day, when these people paraded en masse down Main Street and Portage Avenue, simply added to their distrust. Several thousand people, men, women and children, could be seen every year waving red flags defiantly and

⁷¹ Charles F. Roland (Secretary), Employers' Association of Manitoba, "Special News Bulletin" for members ["confidential and not for publication"] July 3, 1931, in "Communist Activity ...", op. cit.

singing Eugene Pottier's "The Internationale"

Arise, ye prisoners of starvation!
 Arise, ye wretched of the earth,
 For justice thunders condemnation,
 A better world's in birth.
 No more tradition's chains shall bind us,
 Arise, ye slaves; no more in thrall!
 The earth shall rise on new foundations,
 We have been naught, we shall be all.

REFRAIN:

'Tis the final conflict,
 Let each stand in his place,
 The International Soviet
 Shall be the human race.

Past the statue of Queen Victoria in front of the City Hall they would march, their red flags waving in the north breeze. "No more tradition's chains shall bind us". Down towards Portage and Main, past the towering Grain Exchange. "We want no condescending saviors,/To rule us from a judgement hall". Rounding the corner, heading west down Portage, they would pass James A. Richardson and Sons Securities and the massive Bank of Montreal. "The rich are free from obligations...." And finally they would turn down Memorial Boulevard and come to a halt on the steps of the Legislative buildings, just behind another statue of Queen Victoria. Their words, loud and defiant, would echo from the limestone walls and columns:

Toilers from shop and fields united,
 The union we of all who work,
 The earth belongs to us, the workers
 No room here for the shirk
 How many on our flesh have fattened!
 But if the noisome birds of prey

Shall vanish from the sky some morning,
The blessed sunlight still will stay. (72)

They would then return to the Market Square for a day of festivities and speeches, and afterwards, walk to the soup kitchen on Elgin or the Tecumseh Avenue relief station for their two weeks' supply of vouchers.

While Mayor Webb did what he could to discredit Penner and the Communists in the Council chambers, another group in the city was actively organizing to stamp out Bolsheviks in its own way. The Canadian Nationalist Party, organized by William Whittaker, had been meeting regularly to discuss the "Communist menace" and what to do about it. Although they claimed to be concerned only with ridding Winnipeg of a subversive and dangerous element, there is reason to believe that the group's motivations were deeper than those of over-zealous "one hundred percenters". At a meeting in the Transcona Legion Hall, for example, Whittaker wore his regular uniform of "knee boots, riding breeches, a brown shirt, black tie and a swastika sign and a beaver on the arm".⁷³ Nor is there any reason to believe that the group's affinity for European fascism was exaggerated by the Communist newspaper reports.

⁷² "The Internationale" obviously intrigued John Bracken, since several copies of the song are to be found throughout his papers. See Bracken Papers (1934), especially Box Four.

⁷³ " 'Peg Vest-Pocket Hitler Struts His Stuff' — In Full Hitler Regalia, Whittaker Speaks", The Worker, March 24, 1934, p. 3. The meeting was reported by The Worker correspondent as attended by twenty uniformed members of the party, members of the Transcona Independent Unemployed Association ("composed principally of Ukrainian Nationalists"), and others. The meeting was presided over by Simpson (no initial given), Transcona president of the N.P.C.

Early in the year, John Queen warned of the militant nature of the organization. Speaking in the Legislature, he produced its membership card on which, he said, "the new recruit was asked to state whether he could instruct in the use of rifles, machine guns, Lewis guns and other lethal weapons."⁷⁴ In his speech he declared that the party should be "suppressed as dangerous to liberty"; that material turned over to the Attorney-General of Manitoba by Winnipeg Police contained "Books and papers that ... revealed 'seditious conspiracy'"; that a translation of an official Nazi paper "said that the brown shirt organization in Canada was anti-semitic, aimed at over-throw of the government, abolishing the provincial government and the setting up of a strong central government."⁷⁵

City authorities were therefore confronted with two extremist factions. Webb was put into the awkward position of having to prevent clashes between the two groups, while having made pronouncements identical to the declared objective — if not the means — of the Nationalists: to get rid of Communism. His first attempt to avoid clashes between the "brownshirts" and "bolsheviks" was the cancellation in March of a W.U.L. meeting slated for the Dominion Theatre. He had done so at the request of Whittaker who had told him that "he could not control his followers and feared there would be trouble if the meeting were

⁷⁴ "Under the Dome", Winnipeg Free Press, Feb. 13, 1934.

⁷⁵ "Fascist Movement In Winnipeg Is Scored By Queen In House", ibid.

held."⁷⁶ Webb's announcement of the Police Commission's decision brought a heated and vigorous condemnation by Penner, in a Council meeting that was to last for six and a half hours. Placing himself in the position of a defender of free speech, Penner maintained that if Whittaker's organization was threatening to disrupt the meeting, then he should be arrested. The very meeting which had been cancelled was to have discussed the menace of fascism, Penner went on. "The greatest danger facing us today is Fascism. It brings the approach of war very close to our doors ... and all know what Fascism has meant in Europe to the working classes."⁷⁷

Webb became infuriated at Penner's pronouncements and left the chair, declaring that "your organization has been going around cursing everybody, telling everybody what they were going to do.... You have had four years of it and longer. Your organization does a lot of threatening. It has threatened in the market place time and again and it has threatened in the city hall.... We cannot make fish of one and fowl of another. Law and order are going to be enforced and I hope you will exert an influence on your own people to keep them within the law."⁷⁸

⁷⁶ "City Council Almost Breaks Record For Lengthy Session Sitting Six Hours, 32 Minutes" (uc), February 27, 1934, CCS:1934, p. 31.

⁷⁷ "Mayor Simply Did Duty, He Tells Penner — United Front Alderman Asks Webb Why Meeting Was Stopped" (uc), Feb. 27, 1934, ibid., pp. 28-29.

⁷⁸ "City Council Almost Breaks Record ...", op. cit., p. 31.

The Worker, as usual, made excellent use of this opportunity for propagandizing. "This is the most direct blow that has been struck at the working class so far in Winnipeg. If we allow this to stick, the last vestige of 'Free Speech and Assembly' is gone, all because Whittaker goes to Webb and demands it." The lesson to be learned from Webb's action was therefore plain: "This must serve to arouse every worker in Canada to the efforts of the Webbs to rally their cowardly, gang-murdering brother brown shirts to a sadistic bloody orgy. The Winnipeg workers may be depended upon to stamp this degenerate "brown shirt" menace out of existence."⁷⁹ Its Winnipeg readers learned their lesson well. On the evening when the Dominion Theatre W.U.L. meeting was to have taken place, they met in a North End hall and, led by Penner, organized the Anti-Fascist League of Winnipeg — which would prepare for the battle they knew was inevitably drawing nearer.

While both groups organized, debate continued in the provincial Legislature as to which faction was the more dangerous. The Attorney-General saw no distinction, having declared earlier that both were "cut from the same cloth."⁸⁰ At that time he had warned that the authorities would be willing to deal at a moment's notice with those who "by artificial propaganda, by demagoguery or malicious fabrication seek to create hatred or rancor against

⁷⁹ "Winnipeg Fascists Are Aided By Die-Hard Webb — Major Salutes Nazis and Shows His True Colors", The Worker, March 10, 1934, p. 2.

⁸⁰ "Agitators Are Told By Major In House To Give Province a Wide Berth", Winnipeg Free Press, Feb. 21, 1934.

any group of the population."⁸¹ A few days later, Webb, the member representing Assiniboia, ended the debate on the Speech from the Throne by making clear who the real enemies were:

People would be astonished if they learned how much was going out of Winnipeg every week for the needy of Russia.... Let us say to Mr. Bennett from this Legislature, that in view of extraordinary ramifications of the Communist organization in this province, that an ultimatum should be delivered to all those who don't like this country, giving them thirty days to go back to the country where they came from, and that if after thirty days they were still here then they would be deported. Some people are liable to think this a joke, but you don't know what I know or see. (82)

Marcus Hyman, Winnipeg-born and educated on a Rhodes Scholarship at Oxford, felt, however, that there was a basic difference between the two groups. The Nationalists, he maintained, were "racketeers", in that they distributed handbills at their meetings "asserting in 'an inverted way' that 'a certain group' in the population desired to kill everyone else. They 'preached inverted violence'."⁸³

Shortly thereafter Hyman introduced a motion before the Law Amendments Committee which called for the name of the printer and publisher to be attached to every printed advertisement, circular, poster and handbill. Hyman's motion was made mainly to

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² "Legislature Adopts Address in Reply to Speech from Throne", (uc, n.d.), in "Provincial Scrapbook, 1930-35", P.A.M.

⁸³ "Minimum Wage Law For Men ...", March 2, 1934, in ibid.

prevent the spread of anti-semitic propaganda. But it was attacked by the vigilant Worker, which only saw one more sign of creeping social fascism on the part of the motion of the I.L.P. deputy leader:

The social fascists, like Hyman, are assisting the open fascists, like Mayor Webb, in their attacks on the working class. Coming at a time when the workers are issuing a large amount of printed material in connection with the repeal of Section 98, the investigation into the shooting at Tim Buck, the numerous strike struggles, etc., it is a direct attempt to deprive the workers of this weapon of struggle. (84)

While carrying on his regular duties on Council as member of the Improvements and Safety committees, Penner -- who from the moment he entered public office ceased to work at any other occupation -- spoke regularly at Anti-Fascist League meetings, gave lessons that he had gleaned from Lenin's What Is To Be Done? to members of the Young Pioneers (the Communist children's movement) and exhorted the unemployed from the platforms of farm trucks packed on the Market Square. When speaking on the need for employment at one such meeting of 300 unemployed he found several men who had been cut off relief, and the men marched together to the government soup kitchen. The grievance committee spoke directly with the head of the Single Men's Relief Department and seven men were eventually granted temporary relief.⁸⁵

This was the essence of Penner's consistent support in

⁸⁴ The Worker, April 14, 1934, p. 4.

⁸⁵ "Regain Temporary Relief for 7 Men -- Alderman Penner Talks on Insurance Bill", The Worker, March 3, 1934, p. 4.

the north ward of the city. He was close to his constituents and he provided them with service. Michael Harris, long-time Free Press labour and ethnic reporter has recalled that during the depression:

[t]he working people had a lot of problems with the City Council and they couldn't get anywhere. Some aldermen wouldn't say anything, wouldn't do anything, or had no time -- they always had some excuse, but when they see Penner, well he never refused a single one: a request to him to do something in the City Council when they had a problem whether it was their homes or their jobs or anything like that that they needed City Hall assistance. (86)

As an example of "how well the people thought of" Penner, Harris recalled a meeting of the Ukrainian Conservative Party:

And at this meeting one fellow complained that he appeared at the City Council with a problem ... and what he wanted was something important for his family and his home and all that and the president of this Conservative group says: "Why don't you go and see Jake Penner? Jake Penner will do anything you want if it is at all possible". And I was surprised at -- here he was a Conservative man was advising him to see Jake Penner to help him and his problems. (87)

Harris also remembered a conversation with a "Ukrainian Leftist" in the Pritchard Avenue Ukrainian Labour Temple. " ... I said, 'John, how is it that the Communist candidates get such a heavy vote in North Winnipeg? There is not that many Communists in this constituency, in this area -- you know that.' He says, 'Of course not', he says, 'the people from St. Vladimir Cathedral, from

⁸⁶ Brian McKillop (interviewer), "Interview Between Michael Harris and Brian McKillop", oral history interview (Winnipeg, June 1969), copy in P.A.M., p. 2.

⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 2.

St. Nicholas Church, from all these places, they go and vote Penner because he is their friend; he helps them. Not anybody else'. ... [H]e was elected by these people ... and he put all his time and efforts to help them as much as it was possible for one alderman to do it. And the people, as this man told me, they're Catholics, and they're Orthodox and they're Protestants and of every different religion and of different political views -- they supported him as an alderman because he gave them service. He was their man..... He just helped a man because he needed help."⁸⁸

As spring melted into early summer the W.U.L. increased their industrial and labour activities. By the end of the year it would be officially "credited" with controlling eight industrial unions in Winnipeg,⁸⁹ and its influence permeated others. The Party Organizer, a handbook published by the Central Organization Department of the Communist Party of Canada (1931), had stressed the importance of "THE ROOTING IN OF THE PARTY AMONG THE WORKERS IN THE SHOPS".⁹⁰ Crowds were growing on the Market Square. The question of "free speech" raised earlier by Penner on Council was kept alive by a decision of the Police Commission to refuse a permit for the annual May Day parade.⁹¹ Penner objected strenuously on Council to

⁸⁸ Ibid., p. 3.

⁸⁹ Mainly in the needle trades. Canada: Department of Labour, Report on Labour Organization in Canada (1934), p. 141.

⁹⁰ Communist Party of Canada, The Party Organizer, Vol. I, No. 2 (May, 1931), p.1. Copy in special file, "Communist Activity, 1931-36", op. cit.

⁹¹ The refusal had been requested by the Nationalist Party; see The Worker, May 5, 1934, p. 4.

this sign of "fascization", and Mayor Webb once more "indulged in a characteristic attack against individuals and organizations which attempt to disrupt the good government of Canada."⁹² A coalition of Left and Right-wing aldermen forced Webb to ask the Police Commission to "reconsider" their decision,⁹³ but not without advising Penner that he should "lead his people back into the spirit that brought them to Canada.... If they didn't like Canada let them go back to Russia, the paradise they talked so much about.... The Unity League was not an organization which should expect rights and privileges."⁹⁴

Ultimately, however, the parade was permitted. Six thousand workers, led by Alderman Penner and School Trustee Andrew Bileski, marched. Later in the evening a crowd estimated (by The Worker correspondent) at "well over 8,000" met on the Market Square and were addressed by various speakers from the rear platforms of three trucks.⁹⁵

Other issues raised by Penner both in and out of Council kept civic politics constantly in a state of ideological ferment: the acquittal of nine members of the Nationalist party by Magistrate Graham; support of strikers of the needle trades against

⁹² "Council Battles On May Day Parade Ban" (uc), April 24, 1934, CCS:1934, p. 58.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ "Police to Hear Plea For May Day Procession" (uc), April 24, 1934, CCS:1934, p. 5.

⁹⁵ "Biggest May Day Parade For Years In Winnipeg", The Worker, May 12, 1934, p. 5.

the firm of Jacob and Crawley; support of the actions of the W.U.L.- spurred Flin Flon miners; similar support for Parkhill Bedding strikers and the employees of Western Packers.⁹⁶ In the latter, a particularly violent and bitter struggle, Penner carried the battle into the Council Chambers when he demanded a motion of censure against the firm for "paying wages below the subsistence level."⁹⁷ The motion was declared out of order by the Mayor on the grounds that he was "investigating" conditions in the plant. An even more vigorous debate occurred a few weeks later, when Penner attempted to gather support on Council for reversing a Police Commission decision banning the play, "Eight Men Speak". The play, a dramatization of the philosophies of the eight Communists imprisoned since 1931 in Kingston, had already been banned in Ontario, although no charges had been laid there. Penner failed to receive I.L.P. support for his motion.⁹⁸ Five days later, a meeting protesting the ban was held on Market Square. Attended by 2000 people, it was addressed by Oscar Ryan (co-author), E. J. McMurray, and Joe Zuken (the play's Winnipeg director).

⁹⁶ See The Worker: "Democratic Judge Frees Fascist Thugs (July 2, p. 2); "Winnipeg Cloak-Makers Out in General Strike -- Biggest Strike Since Historic Days of 1919" (July 14, p. 2); "Webb Attempts to Undermine Strike By Lies and Slander" (June 30, p. 2); "Winnipeg Packers Held Fast Under Communist Leadership As the Bosses United to Smash The Strike" (May 5, p. 4).

⁹⁷ "Alderman Penner Carries Struggle of Striking Packers Into Council", ibid., April 21, 1934, p. 7.

⁹⁸ "Penner Fails to Win Support For Move in Council -- Mayor Refuses to Allow Motion Censuring Authorities For Banning Play" (uc), May 9, 1934, CCS:1934, p. 69.

Penner was chairman.⁹⁹ Originally Mayor Webb -- being chairman of the Police Commission -- had banned it, too, but under considerable Labour pressure he had allowed it to go on.

Temperatures had been rising for a considerable period, both inside and outside City Hall, when the regular 7:45 p.m. meeting of June 5 began. I.L.P. aldermen had been frustrated by Webb and C.E.C. aldermen for months in their attempts to raise relief and loosen the purse strings. They had been hindered, too, by the militancy of United Front workers in their efforts to reach reasonable agreements at strike conciliation meetings. Webb and C.E.C. aldermen felt harrassed by the economically unrealistic requests of I.L.P. men and simply annoyed by the indignant crusades of Penner. And the United Front alderman was impatient with the lot of them for their constant obstruction at every turn.

The level of noise emanating from the Market Square that evening was unusually high, increasing the air of impatience and general irritation. At that point a clerk entered with the news that "in an affray in the Market Square ... a man had been stabbed, and several others injured". Alderman Barry, remembering only too vividly his experiences with Communist Party organizers during the 1933 election, then launched into a vigorous attack, charging that the Communists did nothing but "foment race hatred". Penner was

⁹⁹ "Indignation High When Protest Meet at 'Peg Under Ban -- 'Jail Them For Life' Cries the Fascist Mayor Webb; Penner Gagged", The Worker, May 19, 1934, p. 1.

ready with an equally vitriolic defence, but as he began Barry jumped up, his fists thrashing the air: "I won't sit still and hear you say that. I've heard you at the Norquay School tell your followers to go out and fight the Nationalists. And you come here like a hypocrite and talk like this. If an innocent man got stabbed in the Market Square tonight you're responsible, you snake in the grass." After tempers had cooled somewhat, Council put a final stop to the "Eight Men Speak" question by defeating the Penner motion which would have censured police authorities. The division was 9 - 7, with I.L.P. Alderman Blumberg voting with the "Rightist" group against the motion.¹⁰⁰

The battle which had just occurred outside during the Council meeting was thought by some to have been the largest and most violent since the days of the 1919 Strike. The Nationalist Party had scheduled a mass meeting for the Square that evening at 8:00 p.m.; but when they arrived they had found 2,000 workers already massed and singing the "Red Flag" and "The Internationale", while Young Communist League members sold Communist literature. This was the meeting for which the Communists had been preparing at their Anti-Fascist League meetings. A scuffle quickly broke out, with members of each side pushing and shoving the other.

¹⁰⁰ The division: For: Lowe, Anderson, Stobart, Simpson, Simpkin, Gray, Penner. Against: Honeyman, Rice-Jones, Andrews, McWilliams, Flye, Bardal, Blumberg, Barry, Oelkers. For accounts of the proceedings and remarks at the meeting see "Barry Clashes With Penner on Banning of Play" (uc), June 6, 1934, CCS: 1934, pp. 81-82; "Penner and Barry Near Fist Fight At Council Meet", June 7, 1934, ibid., pp. 79-80.

Then, in Communist eyes, the following happened:

... the fascist leaders gave their usual signal, by the blowing of a whistle and the fascist hooligans drew from their pockets and from beneath their shirts, blackjacks, knuckle dusters with knifelike points, pieces of hose-pipe loaded with lead (one taken from them weighed over nine pounds, a lethal weapon), lead piping and lashes of stranded wire threaded with knife-edged steel ribbon.

But then came the 'Communist Cavalry' to the rescue:

The workers, ... led by the disciplined ranks of the Anti-Fascist League members, who are by now showing tactical ability as a result of their mass physical culture classes, retaliated en masse, and laid the fascists low, with cracked heads, and with faces covered in blood.... During the fight, fascist leader Whittaker, late organizer of the Ku Klux Klan, arrived near the scene in an automobile with a body-guard of four 'storm troops'. The five of them unloaded, but when Whittaker saw his 'fascist Christian heroes' being routed, he leaped back into the auto deserting not only his followers who were on the Square, but being in such a hurry to save his rat's hide, also deserted completely his own special body-guard. (101)

101 "Fascists Driven From Market Square", The Worker, June 16, 1934, p. 6. The allegation that Whittaker was an organizer for the Klan in Winnipeg may or may not be true. There was an active Winnipeg branch of the Klan estimated at 2,000 in 1928. The Manitoba Free Press ran the following front page headline on January 17, 1928: "Ku Klux Klan Promises to 'Clean Up' Winnipeg — Organizer Tells Meeting Vice is Rampant in Winnipeg". The first paragraph, quoting from a speech by Daniel Grant of Brandon (the provincial organizer), reads in part: "We've cleaned up Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan! We've made it half decent to live in! Vice was wild in Moose Jaw and Wantonness, was not uncommon before the Ku Klux Klan abolished it. Winnipeg is Next! Vice, wantonness, graft and corruption walk hand in hand in this city! And the Ku Klux Klan is going to abolish all this. We're going to disembowel Winnipeg of vice! We'll clean up Winnipeg!"

The police were soon on hand, and the remnants of the Nationalists, who would never again attempt any show of force in Winnipeg, were whisked away to safety. C. Hitchin, Secretary of the Anti-Fascist League, then called an Anti-Fascist League meeting and members of the Jewish Anti-Nazi League spoke.

There would be more skirmishes in the future. The Nationalists would demand the resignation of Attorney-General Major because of his refusal to arrest the Anti-Fascist League leader, Penner: and Penner himself would continue his variegated struggles in and out of Council. But meanwhile, new winds were in the air, and as summer passed into fall, and September into October, election time was once again drawing near.

CHAPTER VI

"WE MUST TAX WHERE THE MONEY IS"

Throughout September of 1934 rumours increased in Winnipeg political circles that John McKerchar would finally stand as a candidate for mayor. His two year term as alderman was to expire on December thirty-first, and McKerchar was reaching the end of his long career in civic politics. He had been a member of the Winnipeg School Board for twenty-three years (1897-1920), and Chairman of the Board in 1907 and 1908. The turbulent civic election of 1920 saw him elected as alderman in Ward Two and he had remained one of its representatives until the expiry of his eighth consecutive two year term at the end of 1934. If he were ever to reach the prime administrative position in Winnipeg, it would have to be soon, for the quiet, silver-headed Scot -- now in his early seventies -- was not getting any younger.

Born in Glengarry, Ontario in 1862, McKerchar had been one of that first major wave of "Canadians" to emigrate to the new province of Manitoba. He had arrived at the St. Boniface terminal of the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Railroad on a dreary, wet day in June of 1879 and looked down Main Street as it was then: "A straggly row of frame buildings and ankle deep in mud..., [with] ox carts all over the street."¹ "I looked over the

¹ "J. A. McKerchar", Winnipeg Free Press, November 17, 1934.

city and soon found that the main activity centered in the old city market", he later reminisced.² From that time on, supplying the people of the growing frontier community with groceries became his main way of fulfilling his ambition in life: "getting on in the world".³

He was successful in achieving this aim. Starting at four dollars per week as an errand boy in a Main Street meat market, within five years McKerchar owned his own grocery store. Through a wise program of expansion and consolidation, by 1902 the business had become one of the largest of its kind in the city, employing twelve to fifteen people and three delivery wagons at all times. By the early twentieth century, John McKerchar had made his contribution to the growth of the city of Winnipeg. He had spent the industrious years of his early manhood building his business and therefore building the community of which it was a part. His energy, his thrift, and the wise investment of his time had made him "a good citizen and a rising power in commercial affairs."⁴

For McKerchar, the events of the new century in Manitoba — the coming of new immigrants, the rising demands of an organized Labour, the increasing powers of governments and their intervention in areas of 'private' domain — each of these was in some way a

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

threat to the position he had created for himself in the community. For John McKerchar, life in the new century was a constant defense of the community he had helped to see built, against new people, new ideas, and new doctrines. As the century progressed, it found him more and more on the defensive; the early passion in him to build had been transformed into one to preserve. By the nineteen thirties he found himself yesterday's progressive, suspended in a world which seemed to be thinking only of tomorrow.

The resurgence of Labour strength on City Council during the nineteen thirties had as its typical effect a general improvement in the quality of Citizens' members entering the civic field. While John McKerchar was still the 'grand old man' among C.E.C. members, several other younger, more aggressive men were aspiring to the leadership of the city in an attempt to eliminate the possibility of John Queen being elected. Mayor Webb was reserving his decision to run until he knew whether McKerchar would allow his name to stand in nomination. But two other progressive conservatives were not so patient. They were Cecil H. Gunn and Cecil Rice-Jones, both aldermen and both fairly new to civic politics in Winnipeg.⁵ On September ninth, they both announced their intentions

⁵ Alderman Gunn was born in 1894 in Stonewall, Manitoba. An engineer by profession, he was President of John Gunn and Sons and of the Winnipeg Builders' Exchange. He was also Chairman of the National Construction Council (Manitoba Committee) and Vice-Chairman of the Canadian Construction Association. He had served overseas during the Great War, was twice wounded, and had received the Military Cross. Not to be confused with Cecil S. Gunn, a prominent real estate man in Winnipeg during the nineteen thirties, with whom he was no relation, he was first elected to Council in

to run for mayor.⁶ This meant, however, that the Citizens' vote would have been split between two strong contenders, while Queen's

Ward One (1932) to fill the unexpired term of L. F. Borrowman. On Council, his most outspoken viewpoint was his belief in "the creation of work as remedy for unemployment". Normally mild-mannered, he could nevertheless become "very indignant" whenever he felt the spirit of British fair play had been outraged. Cecil Rice-Jones had been born in 1881 in Somerset, England, but took up ranching in Manitoba's Cypress Hills when sixteen. At nineteen he had gone to South Africa with the Lord Strathcona Horse, and returned in 1902 to take up ranching. He remained at this occupation, in Saskatchewan and Alberta for the next seventeen years. While ranching he became involved with the United Grain Growers and was brought to Winnipeg in 1917 by the company to fill the vacancy left by T. A. Crerar, who had just joined the Union government. [Indeed, the Toronto Daily Star believed that it was Rice-Jones who had "largely made it possible for the Union government to be formed. It was no small matter to get Crerar away from his job in Winnipeg", and the availability of a man with the capabilities of Rice-Jones made his move easier. (" 'The Spotlight' -- Cecil Rice-Jones", May 31, 1923)]. Rice-Jones had continued in the United Grain Growers as First Vice-President and Western Manager until 1928, when he retired and started an investment firm of his own. First elected to City Council in 1930, on a Civic Progress Association ticket, Rice-Jones was noted as being "probably the most versatile of the eighteen aldermen". He was "first and last a 'sound money' man", with a conscience which constantly checked visions of grand schemes with the nagging question, "'How are we going to pay for all this?'" Pictures of Rice-Jones in the local newspapers showing him wearing a winged collar, along with his hyphenated English surname, mask the real Cecil Rice-Jones. In fact, even by 1934, he had "never got very far away from the soil. He still has the cowboy's swinging gait. His legs look as though they should be wrapped around a horse's middle." For biographical information on Gunn and Rice-Jones, see "Two Cecils ... In Mayoralty Race", Winnipeg Free Press, September 21, 1934.

⁶ "Alderman Gunn and Rice-Jones to Seek Office -- Will Both Run For Mayor, They Announce -- Webb Defers Statement of Intentions", Winnipeg Free Press, September 21, 1934.

vote would probably have remained at its consistently high level. It meant, therefore, an almost assured Labour victory. The solution seemed to be to convince McKerchar to run; all other Citizens' candidates for Mayor would have automatically withdrawn, thus clearing the way for his entrance into the mayoralty race.

There were not a few Citizens who felt that the entrance of these two 'upstarts' into the race when Alderman McKerchar might conceivably still run was an affront to McKerchar's record. Alderman Barry was among these. "What claim has either Alderman Rice-Jones or Alderman Gunn for the office?", he asked, at a meeting of North End McKerchar supporters. "But what about Alderman McKerchar? He has been in public service ... for about thirty years, has been acting mayor on many occasions, and has been a member of the board of city sinking fund trustees, while I don't know how long he has been chairman of ... the Finance Committee." McKerchar, present at the meeting, spoke on the limited sources of the city's revenue and the high level of taxation on property owners. Property, he emphasized, was "very much overburdened", and if the property-owner was not relieved of some of this load the city would cease to "prosper and develop". But despite the vigorous and enthusiastic reception his speech received, he remained outside the mayoralty race.⁷

Within a week, however, the veteran alderman had accepted.

⁷ "North End Citizens Urge McKerchar To Contest Mayoralty", (uc), September 22, 1934, CEF:1934.

By the twenty-eighth, Alderman Gunn had announced that he would withdraw from the race should Mr. McKerchar decide to run; Mayor Webb did the same.⁸ The next day, a deputation of fifty McKerchar supporters was at City Hall asking for the reluctant alderman to run. "I am quite conscious of my personal limitations", he hedged. But the delegation pressed on, and with a deep breath he acquiesced: "Then ladies and gentlemen, I shall leave the matter in your hands." Someone called for "three hearty British cheers", and the Chambers rocked with the gusto of Citizens ready for an election fight. The "watchdog of the treasury" had finally agreed to enter a mayoralty contest.⁹

The next day, Mayor Webb urged that McKerchar be given an acclamation. This upset Cecil Rice-Jones, for Rice-Jones had no intention of withdrawing from the race. He would not have entered the race if Mr. McKerchar had entered before him, he felt, but in all fairness he could not withdraw at this late stage and disappoint his supporters.¹⁰ By the end of the month, however, Rice-Jones — under considerable pressure from his colleagues —

⁸ "Gunn Defers to McKerchar For Election — Alderman Will Withdraw From Race if Finance Chairman Consents to be Candidate — Rumours Persist", Winnipeg Free Press, September 28, 1934.

⁹ "Nomination Accepted by Veteran Alderman After Visit by Citizens' Body" (uc), September 29, 1934, CEF:1934.

¹⁰ "Webb Announces That He Will Not Seek Re-election — Pleads for Acclamation for McKerchar, Whom He Pledges to Support" (uc), October 1, 1934, CEF:1934.

had removed his name from candidacy and offered his support to John McKerchar.¹¹ No further obstacles, except John Queen, stood between "the watchdog of the treasury" and the mayoralty.

Queen had once again won the I.L.P. nomination, after a vigorous fight at the nominating convention between his supporters and those of I.L.P. general chairman, G. R. Davidson.¹² At the end of the first week in November, Queen and the I.L.P. issued their annual challenge to the voters to elect an administration which would bring about fundamental change. "[T]he I.L.P. re-affirms its stand", went the latest I.L.P. manifesto, "that the social ownership of the means of production, distribution and exchange is essential to the permanent solution of the problems arising out of social and economic ills."¹³ On a less revolutionary note, the manifesto dealt with the questions of unemployment, municipal services, revenue and taxation. The federal government, it stated, "should bear the whole cost of relief and maintain a standard of assistance sufficient to preserve the self-respect of individuals"; a sewage system should be built immediately (under federal, pro-

¹¹ "Announces Withdrawal from Campaign For Mayoralty, Believing McKerchar Should Be Elected to Position — Only Two Candidates Left in Field" (uc), October 31, 1934, CEF:1934.

¹² "John Queen Again I.L.P. Candidate in Mayoralty Battle" (uc), October 22, 1934, CEF:1934. The result of the final vote at the convention was: Queen, 39; Davidson, 35.

¹³ "Labor Issues Manifesto On Party Planks — Social Ownership of Means of Production is Held Necessary for Society" (uc), November 7, 1934, CEF:1934.

vincial, and municipal sponsorship) to prevent further pollution of the city's rivers; and the recommendations of the Bradshaw Commission on civic assessment and taxation should be rejected entirely.¹⁴

Alderman McKerchar's campaign opened a week later with a platform which was vague, yet indicative of his basic stance:

1. Give Winnipeg an efficient and progressive civic administration;
2. Maintain the present high financial standing of the city;
3. Seek to broaden the basis of taxation as between the several governing bodies;
4. Distribute the burden of taxation in a manner more equitable to the home owner. (15)

Other major planks were similar to those of Queen. He urged that the Dominion government assume full responsibility for relief. He also wished to see the plans for a new sewage disposal system completed and run on a cost-sharing basis. But it was obvious that the major election issue would be that of the tax distribution of the city.

In May of 1934 the City Council had appointed Thomas Bradshaw, a former Toronto finance commissioner, as chairman of a one-man commission to investigate "the fair and proper distribution of tax liability" and methods of tax assessment and collection.

¹⁴ Ibid. The recommendations and implications of the Bradshaw Commission will be discussed shortly.

¹⁵ "McKerchar, Opening His Fight for Mayor's Chair Outlines His Platform" (uc), November 15, 1934, CEF:1934.

The enquiry had been called for originally in 1932, when a number of prominent taxpayers had asked the Mayor and Chairman of the Finance Committee to have a commission investigate rates of assessment and look for ways of reducing expenditures. All of those who signed the letter of request had been appellants in assessment appeals that year before the Board of Valuation and Revision. The request was signed as follows:

C. C. Ferguson	---	Great West Life Assurance Co.
John A. Flanders	---	John A. Flanders Company
George Vale	---	Royal Trust Company
E. C. Ransby	---	Sec. Winnipeg Real Estate Board
W. J. Christie	---	W. J. Christie & Company
F. F. Carruthers	---	President, Winnipeg Real Estate Board
C. E. Joslyn	---	The Hudson's Bay Company
Sir Rodmond Roblin	---	
J. W. Briggs	---	Oldfield, Kirby & Gardner
Hugh Phillipps, K.C.	---	Barrister
M. W. L. Murray	---	London & Western Trust Co.
Theo. A. Hunt	---	Barrister
Sir Charles Tupper	---	
J. H. C. Lawrence	---	Canada Permanent Mortgage Corp.
J. A. MacAuley	---	Aikins, Loftus & Co.
J. E. Woods	---	Oldfield, Kirby & Gardner (16)

Bradshaw's Report, brought down on July 21, 1934, stated basically that property owners were finding it difficult and in many instances impossible to meet their taxes, and that "a substantial reduction in real estate taxes [was] both desirable and imperative".¹⁷

¹⁶ The above individuals to His Worship, Mayor Webb, Alderman McKerchar, Alderman Simonite, Mr. H. C. Thompson (City Treasurer), and Mr. Jules Preudhomme (City Solicitor), April 29, 1932; in Province of Manitoba, Department of Municipal Affairs, "Winnipeg City" file. Legislative Buildings, Winnipeg, Manitoba.

¹⁷ T. Bradshaw (Commissioner), City of Winnipeg: Report of Commission on Assessment, Taxation, Etc. (Winnipeg, 1934), p. 16.

But this reduction would not have been a general one; it would have applied only to "certain classes of property", namely business properties (situated on Portage Avenue and Main Street), warehouse property, trackage property, and residential property in business or semi-business districts.¹⁸ Bradshaw produced figures which showed that 92.93 percent of the total tax revenues of the city came either from real estate or business taxes.¹⁹ In order to compensate for the loss of revenue which would result from substantial tax reductions on property taxes, new areas of taxation needed to be found. Bradshaw's main recommendations in this respect were:

1. An additional share of provincial revenue through the return by the Province of one quarter of its total income tax, motor license fees, liquor profits, railway tax etc;
2. Retail turnover tax of two percent;
3. Ten percent tax on rents of rented homes and apartments;
4. Ten percent increase in water rates;
5. Ten percent increase in hydro rates;
6. Eliminating the tax exemptions, except in certain "extreme and meritorious cases"; (20)

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 12. W. Sanford Evans had presented, on behalf of the Property Owners' Committee, "very complete data in respect to a group of twenty-two representative business properties, eleven situated on Portage Avenue, eight on Main Street, and the others on adjoining streets." (p. 26).

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 10.

²⁰ Ibid., pp. 6-7.

Other possible areas of saving were the elimination of free tuition in Grade Eleven, and of free text books "except to the needy".²¹

Queen's campaign stressed heavily the seemingly close connection between the recommendations of the Bradshaw Report and the platform of John McKerchar. Since the publication of the Report the I.L.P. had campaigned against Bradshaw's definition of a "fair and proper" distribution of taxes. The first man affected by the new taxes, they claimed, would be the very man who could least afford it. Many of the proposed new sources of revenue -- increases in utility rates, the retail turnover tax -- would be catastrophic to the man who was barely making it through the depression without having to go on relief. And the very people who would benefit by this proposed extra burden upon the worker would be those whom Queen had been opposing for years: large businesses, banks, and insurance companies located in the central business district. Gone were the appeals for repudiation of the city's debt which had figured so prominently in his 1933 campaign. Thomas Bradshaw had provided him with a ready-made vehicle for propulsion into the Mayor's chair. His Report had not been favourably received by the average worker, for increased taxes on essentials -- regardless of their purposes or urgency -- never gained acceptance without incurring a grudge. A drastic redefi-

²¹ "Winnipeg Tax System Reviewed in Report", Winnipeg Free Press, July 31, 1934.

nition of Bradshaw's phrase, "fair and proper", a basic reorganization of the tax burden based upon ability to pay was needed. The working man would welcome that, and he would, Queen hoped, show his agreement with his vote.

What was needed was to connect the ideas of John McKerchar with those of Thomas Bradshaw. "With men in city council of a certain type of mind", Queen noted in opening his campaign, "there [is] some danger of certain recommendations in the Bradshaw Report being adopted..." He added, for the record, that as a member of the provincial Legislature he had twice opposed applications in the past by City Council to raise water rates. Despite the vigorous opposition of Labour members, the Legislature had approved the increase. As a result, rates had been raised by fifty percent to the householder (from forty cents to sixty cents); yet the city had "increased the rates of the two largest users of water in the city, the two wealthiest corporations in the Dominion, the railway companies, just about one-half of one percent."²² Queen added that Alderman McKerchar had been "the prime mover" for that increase:

[H]is opinion of me was not very high because I had blocked his efforts to put this extra load on the backs of the people who could least afford to bear it.... With men in the City Council of that type of mind you can understand the danger you will be in ... if you give such men control of the Council next year.

The city must have revenue, of course. The purpose of the other I.L.P. candidates and myself will be to see that in collecting the necessary revenue we do not depress the

²² "John Queen Opens His Battle for Chief Magistracy" (uc), November 13, 1934, CEF:1934.

life of the people for it is already too low. We will try to get the revenue where it is, not from the poor people, but from the wealthy classes. (23)

A week later, he challenged McKerchar to deny that if elected he would institute some, if not all, of Bradshaw's proposals. This forced McKerchar into a position where he had either to defend Bradshaw's unpopular proposals or issue statements which were clearly contradictory to pronouncements he had made in the past.

During November, the Home and Property Owners' Association of Winnipeg had been sponsoring a series of five "Radio Talks" which vigourously defended the Bradshaw proposals. The last of these was given on November 19, only a few days before the civic elections, and was devoted to rebutting the arguments of the Report's critics. It also clearly revealed the political leanings of the organization. "Certain candidates for civic office [have] seize[d] on one or two detailed suggestions made in the report", read the speaker,

with the idea of persuading the electors that taxation is going to be taken off the shoulders of the rich and placed on the poor.... Alderman Anderson, for example, tells the electors that the Home and Property Owners' Association ... would cut out City services in the way of medical aid, libraries, parks and playgrounds, ... and social welfare Can anything be more ridiculous? ... What ... we say, and what ... every good citizen will say is - that every single item of expenditure in these and all other departments must be closely examined with a view to carrying on these services in the most economical manner possible. If the I.L.P. don't believe in economy and efficiency in civic affairs, let them tell the electors so. (24)

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ "Radio Talk No. 5", November 19, 1934, P. 1. Copy in Bracken Papers (1934).

Then the Association aired the results of a questionnaire which it had submitted to all members of the City Council, and all candidates for office in the ensuing elections. The major question asked had been whether the candidate would do his "utmost" at the earliest opportunity to put into effect the Report's recommendations. All of the names given as supporters were C.E.C. candidates, including aldermen Honeyman, Rice-Jones, Davidson, and MacLean. But that of Alderman McKerchar was conspicuous by its absence. Queen's attempt to 'pin down' the mayoralty candidate on his attitude towards the Report had forced him to repudiate its findings.²⁵ The I.L.P. leader was thus able to gain an important tactical victory, since he could — and did — now claim that he had "converted" his opponent to his point of view.

The Workers' Unity League did not field a mayoralty candidate in the 1934 civic election. Jacob Penner, its most popular member, had another year to run in his aldermanic term. It chose to run its second most popular member, Martin Joseph Forkin, as alderman in Ward Three, in an attempt to duplicate Penner's success in 1933. The lack of a W.U.L. candidate for the mayoralty meant the possible acquisition of an important segment of the five or six thousand W.U.L. total vote for the city. This lack of competition from the other worker's party, plus the negative nature of John McKerchar's campaign, gave the I.L.P. a sense that perhaps victory was finally at hand.

²⁵ "Queen Promises To Be More Than Council Chairman ..." (uc), Nov. 17, 1934, CEF:1934; "McKerchar Will Not Support New Tax Proposals", Winnipeg Free Press, Nov. 17, 1934.

²⁶ "Queen Declares He Has Converted Ald. McKerchar — I.L.P. Candidate Warns Against Last Day Bogeys and Scares". Winnipeg Free Press, Nov. 20, 1934.

Because of the awkward stance that Queen had forced upon him regarding civic taxation, McKerchar drew upon the old plea for "no 'politics' on Council" in an attempt to raise support. He drew attention to the fact that "Mr. Queen is the representative and candidate of a political party", and found vigorous support from various quarters: "There are many who [like Mr. McKerchar] think it very undesirable that political parties should be active in the municipal field", wrote a Winnipeg Free Press editorialist.²⁷ Three days before the election, it once again felt it necessary to make it "clearly understood" to its readers that the civic I.L.P. was no different from that newly formed bastion of Socialism, the C.C.F.:

What does the CCF stand for? The taking over by the state of all the financial machinery, the banks and the insurance companies, and the control of currency and credit; also the nationalization, or municipalization, of all the transportation systems, and all electric power systems and many industries.... The electors of Winnipeg ... should keep in mind the larger activities of the party and the very advanced programme which it desires to carry out. (28)

The Home and Property Owners' Association had also stressed the I.L.P.-C.C.F. connection, with their common obsessions for "public ownership of everything -- including homes and properties",²⁹ but these last

²⁷ "The Mayoralty Campaign" (editorial), ibid., November 17, 1934.

²⁸ "Independent Labor Party" (editorial), ibid.

²⁹ "Radio Talk No. 5", op. cit., p. 3.

minute attempts to raise the old fears of "the Socialist menace" were too late. The electorate had made up its mind. It had by-and-large been a dull campaign, lacking the fire and dynamism of a Webb-Queen conflict. On Friday, November twenty-fourth, 1934, the voters of Winnipeg elected a socialist Mayor.

It was evident from the time the first results began coming in that the election would be a close one. In Ward One, McKerchar was polling, on the average, eighty votes per subdivision less than Ralph Webb had in 1933.³⁰ In Wards Two and Three McKerchar had dropped an average of one hundred nineteen and forty-five votes respectively.³¹ While the vote for Queen in Ward Two was nineteen percent greater than he had polled in 1933, the real electoral difference between the two years came in Ward Three, where his increase was more than forty-three percent.³² Much of this, it seems, was the vote which normally would have been cast for the Communist candidate.³³ The total mayoralty

³⁰ The exact figure is 80.2 votes, with two of the fifteen polls showing a total increase of thirty-three votes over 1933. See Appendix B for the mayoralty votes by polling subdivisions in 1933 and 1934. All average vote loss for the C.E.C. candidate in 1934 compared with 1933 are based upon those figures.

³¹ In Ward Two McKerchar's vote dropped an average of 119.4, with no polls showing an increase in C.E.C. vote over 1933. In Ward Three, McKerchar dropped an average of 45.9 votes per poll, with three of the twenty polls showing a total increase in McKerchar's vote over that for Webb of forty-two.

³² The actual vote increase in Ward Two: 1933, 8312; 1934, 9925. Ward Three: 1933, 7417; 1934, 10,625. See Appendix B.

³³ If the entire W.U.L. vote in Ward Three for 1933 was to have gone to Queen in 1934, and Queen is given a vote identical to what he polled in 1933, the hypothetical total [1933 W.U.L. vote plus Queen vote for mayor (7,417 + 3,226)] is virtually the same (10,643) as what Queen in fact polled in 1934 in Ward Three. Since the total vote in Ward Three dropped by only 527 votes from 1933 [from 17,693 to 17,166], it seems that the Communist vote simply shifted to Queen.

vote for the city reflected what a tight race it had been:

Queen	--	26,447	
McKerchar	--	26,227	(34)

Since the campaign had not been as exciting or intense as the 1933 Webb-Queen struggle, the total vote dropped from 55,208 to 52,674, with decreases in all wards.³⁵ Queen's margin of victory was by no means a clear mandate for far-reaching institutional change. Rather, it was more a reflection of the absence of the Webb mystique.

In the aldermanic contest for Ward One, Alderman W. B. Lowe, I.L.P. (3687), proved to be a fairly easy winner for the third seat, running behind Alderman E. E. Honeyman, C.E.C. (4832), and Cecil Rice-Jones, C.E.C. (4732), respectively. Both Honeyman and Rice-Jones had reached the quota (4,721) on the first count. Lowe's election required three transfers. The breakdown of total votes polled in the ward for those elected was as follows (first choice):

Mayor:		Alderman:		
McKerchar	--	12,567	Honeyman	-- 4,832 E
Queen	--	5,897	Rice-Jones	-- 4,732 E
			Lowe	-- 4,477 E (36)

There were fewer candidates (eleven) in Ward Two than there

³⁴ Winnipeg Free Press, November 24, 1934, p. 8.

³⁵ For an indication of the relative tranquility of the campaign, see "Friday Will See Nominations For Civic Elections" (uc), Nov. 5, 1934, CEF:1934: "A quiet ... campaign, with none of the contentious issues which marked some of the previous contests...". This article was written, however, before Queen raised the Bradshaw issue. Total votes are calculated from figures in Appendix B.

³⁶ Winnipeg Free Press, Nov. 24, 26, 1934. Unless otherwise cited, all mayoralty and aldermanic statistics are from these sources.

had been in 1933, but election of the third alderman for the ward nevertheless required eight transfers. Those finally elected were James Simpkin, I.L.P. (5,423), F. H. Davidson, C.E.C. (4,041), and V. B. Anderson, I.L.P. (4,610). First choice results for those elected in Ward Two were:

Mayor:		Alderman:	
McKerchar	— 7,119	Simpkin	— 5,423
Queen	— 9,925	Davidson	— 2,833
		Anderson	— 2,343

In Ward Three, nine candidates had contested the election. None passed the quota until the fifth transfer of ballots had been completed. The first choice ballots had been:

Mayor:		Alderman:	
McKerchar	— 6,541	Forkin	— 4,429
Queen	— 10,625	Gray	— 3,853
		McLean	— 2,218 (37)

The election of Martin Joseph Forkin, the only new member on Council, meant that for the first time in the history of the city, "Labour" would dominate its official affairs. There were nine Citizens' aldermen, seven I.L.P. aldermen (counting Flye, who normally voted with the party), and two Workers' Unity League members. The division on City Council for the year was thus:

CEC:		Labour:	
Honeyman		Lowe	
Andrews		Flye	
McWilliams		Simpkin	
Rice-Jones		Stobart	
Gunn		Anderson	
Davidson		Blumberg	
Bardal		Gray	
McLean		Penner	
Barry		Forkin	

³⁷ Ibid., November 27, 1934, p. 4. Final results after transfers were: Forkin, 4,668; Gray, 4,389; McLean, 3,643. Quota = 4,656.

John Queen's tie-breaking vote as Mayor gave Labour its first majority on Council. The Winnipeg Free Press made certain its readers were aware of the fact, with eight column headlines: "LABOR TIGHTENS GRIP ON COUNCIL"; "LABOR WILL DOMINATE COUNCIL — COMPLETE RESULTS SHOW GROUP IN CONTROL FIRST TIME IN CITY'S HISTORY".³⁸ The Winnipeg Tribune was somewhat more charitable in its response to the election. Queen "will probably make a good Mayor...", it stated. "His election is not a calamity. Some people think it is, and point to the somewhat radical I.L.P. platform and Mr. Queen's expressed views regarding bondholders...." But it hastened to add that "election platforms ... are made to get in on." Then it expressed its regrets about the end of Mr. McKerchar's political career, marred as it was by his first defeat in thirty-seven years of public service. "His was a negative campaign, without a single element calculated to arouse any enthusiasm for his candidature."³⁹

The Winnipeg civic election of 1934 marked the end of two political careers. Neither Ralph Webb nor John McKerchar would run again for public office. They had served their community for the best part of their lives and had done what they could to see that its best interests were served. There could only have been bitter disappointment in their eyes when the newspapers revealed the final election figures. The elements whose existence in civic politics they had spent so much energy trying to prevent — "politics" and "party" —

³⁸ November 26, 27, 1934.

³⁹ "The Mayoralty" (editorial) Winnipeg Tribune, November 24, 1934.

had gained a strong foothold on Council. The city which had been built by the investment of hard-earned capital was now at the mercy of men whose actions, they thought, would soon negate all the sweat, the concern, and the labours of their generation and their way of life. "As far as I am concerned, personally," admitted a tired and dejected John McKerchar, "I feel it may probably be better for me that things have happened as they did today."⁴⁰ Thus ended his political career.

* *

The inaugural meeting of Winnipeg City Council for 1935 was graced by the presence of no less than five ex-mayors. Ralph Webb, S. J. Farmer, R. D. Waugh, and Aldermen Davidson and McLean, along with the other civic councillors, heard John Queen give his maiden speech as Mayor of the City of Winnipeg. It was a speech which treated the questions that were then of paramount importance in Winnipeg and all over the world: unemployment, relief, deplorable living conditions, and the never-ending search for their solutions. As former-Mayor Webb listened to the speech, he must have contemplated Queen's coming year in office. He must have looked forward with anticipation to the point when Mr. Queen, at last bearing the responsibilities of office, would realize the limitations of ideals in politics. Webb knew through long years of experience, that the man of vision alone was usually a prophet or a fool, but seldom a politician, at least not a successful one. The essence of the game was compromise, and compromise could only

⁴⁰ Untitled editorial, ibid.

come at the expense of ideals.

Ralph Webb, like John McKerchar, had spent his political life trying to separate ethics and politics. Ethics — high and noble visions for changing the world — were found in political ideologies, and ideologies were found in political parties. At the national level, where large-scale direction was needed, parties played their role. But at the local level, where efficient and honest management was the most important contribution a civic leader could make, lofty visions merely obscured reality. In his attempts to keep parties and foreign, idealistic ideologies out of local politics, however, Ralph Webb had done not a little harm to his own cause. The outspoken manner which had been the mark of his career caused Labour to over-react in defense. When Webb and his fellow Citizens maintained that the preservation of the city's credit was "the only thing that counted", John Queen and his confreres had countered that the credit should be repudiated. A situation had been created in which political questions could not be discussed on Council without at the same time considering their ethical implications. Each response was a short-sighted one, a mixture of awakened antagonisms and fears of earlier days.

The balance of power on the 1935 Winnipeg City Council left the burden of decision largely in the hands of the Mayor. After the annual bartering period for committee memberships, all of the standing committees had been split evenly between C.E.C.-supporting aldermen and Labour aldermen:

Finance

Flye	iL
Rice-Jones	CEC
Lowe	ILP
Bardal	CEC
Barry	CEC
Gray	ILP

Improvements

Blumberg	ILP
Gunn	CEC
Honeyman	CEC
Flye	iL
* Davidson	CEC
Forkin	WUL

Public Utilities

Simpkin	ILP
** Andrews	CEC
Rice-Jones	CEC
Stobart	ILP
McLean	CEC
Blumberg	ILP

Safety

Gunn	CEC
McWilliams	WF
Simpkin	ILP
Stobart	ILP
Penner	WUL
Barry	CEC

Health

Gray	ILP
Andrews	CEC
McWilliams	WF
Anderson	ILP
Bardal	CEC
Penner	WUL

Legislation and Reception

Honeyman	CEC
Lowe	ILP
Anderson	ILP
Davidson	CEC
McLean	CEC
Forkin	WUL

* Died, August 27, 1935; replaced through one-year election (November 22, 1935) by C. Rhodes Smith.

** Accidentally killed, August 7, 1935.

Four of the six chairmanships (given first in the above list) were controlled by Labour men, but that of the most important committee, Finance, had been a compromise reached during the annual twenty minute break mid-way through the morning meeting. It was at this recess that the horse-trading took place for the chairmanships, and when it was over, Thomas Flye had emerged as its chairman. Alderman Rice-Jones had been replaced from the direction of the Public Utilities Committee by James Simpkin. John Blumberg and E. D. Honeyman kept their positions as chairmen of the Improvements and Legislation and Reception Committees, respectively. In general, the City Council had shifted from

1934 to 1935 slightly to the 'Left'. The four to two ratio of control which C.E.C. aldermen had enjoyed during 1934 was now reversed and the ratio stood in favour of the Labour faction on Council.⁴¹ The overall nine to nine division between 'Left' and 'Right' remained intact, and once again the divisions throughout the year would indicate the permanence and rigidity of the split. But the deciding vote now rested in the hands of a Labour Mayor.

For Mayor Queen, the middle years of the nineteen thirties were a trying period not only because he had accepted the responsibilities of office but because he was part of a larger political movement which was itself trying to gain the respect of an apprehensive national political community. He had been a member of the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation since its inception. Having played a major role in the coalescence of western Labour groups in the late nineteen twenties, he was elected to the provisional national council of the C.C.F. at Regina in 1932.⁴² Throughout the decade he continued to lead the Manitoba section of the party. But the party itself was changing. From the highly idealistic, doctrinaire socialist movement capsulized in the Regina Manifesto, it was evolving towards a party which by the

⁴¹ "Labor Aldermen Not to Take All of Chairmanships — I.L.P. Spokesman Asserts Too Much Business to Insist on Force Situation" (uc), Nov. 29, 1934, CCS:1934, p. 134. "New City Council Will Take Office Wednesday Morning" (uc), Dec. 31, 1934, CCS:1935, Vol I, p. 1. "Old Favourites Fall From Chairmanships As Council Gathers — Lefts Exercise Control at Inaugural Meeting ..., While Non-Labor Men Take Defeat With Smile as Elections Proceed" (uc), Jan. 2, 1935, CCS:1935, Vol. I, p. 2.

⁴² Young, op. cit., p. 42.

late nineteen thirties would be a social reform party. By 1936, all references to socialism were being removed from C.C.F. propaganda.⁴³ By 1938, C.C.F. policy was to put greater emphasis on government planning than government ownership.⁴⁴

Being mid-way between 1932 and 1938, the year 1935 perhaps caught the C.C.F./I.L.P. in Manitoba at the half-way point in the transition from movement to party.⁴⁵ This change was partly reflected in the actions and policies of its leader. "It is hard to know what to make of Mr. John Queen", wrote a Free Press editorialist early in the year. "Sometimes [he] is merely a Scottish haranguer and his speeches are moonshine and wind music.... At other times he stirs the heart by putting on what looks like a real battle for the improvement of life in Manitoba. Yesterday afternoon was one of these times. Mr. Queen for once was not talking a murky brand of socialism ... but firing at a target he could see and might hit."⁴⁶ Similarly, at the level of civic politics, gone were the cries for repudiation, although the Mayor was still vigorous in his condemnation of the way previous administrations had curtailed essential services in order to balance

⁴³ Seymour Martin Lipset, Agrarian Socialism (New York, 1968), pp. 162-163.

⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 164.

⁴⁵ Both Lipset and Young stress this transition in the C.C.F. Lipset does so implicitly in his seventh chapter, "Ideology and Program", ibid., pp. 160-196. Young is explicit: "Movement into Party, 1933-40", chapter four, op. cit., pp. 68-100.

⁴⁶ "Under the Dome", March 2, 1934. See also, the column on March 15. The columns, usually anonymous, sometimes were signed with the initials "J.B.M.".

the budget.⁴⁷

In part, this was a response to the realization that if the party was to become a permanent and important political organization in Manitoba and Canada, it was necessary to win the next election. The poor showing of the C.C.F. in the Saskatchewan polls during 1933 and 1934, together with the consistently high level of support shown for Citizens' mayoralty candidates in Winnipeg's north wards through these years, suggested to Queen and other members of the C.C.F./I.L.P. that although a sizeable portion of the electorate was vaguely socialist — becoming increasingly aware of the need for certain forms of collective ownership and regulation in the economy — it was nevertheless ultimately committed to capitalism. The "movement" in electoral politics is at a disadvantage. It "may crusade to convert the infidel but it can hardly expect to do so by going to elect a government pledged to eradicate their way of life."⁴⁸

The major piece of financial reform initiated by the Queen administration during 1935 was therefore legislation derived from the need for redistribution and reorganization through existing governmental structures. It was based upon Queen's earlier rejection of the Bradshaw proposals. Within two weeks after the year began, Queen was

⁴⁷ See the text of his letter to Prime Minister Bennett, reproduced in the Winnipeg Tribune, March 2, 1935; especially paragraph two. Yet in the same letter, his subdued attitude towards the city's credit is reflected: "What the city council is fearful of is that, if this load [the burden of relief] is not taken off its shoulders, the result will be a default in payment of our bonded indebtedness." (paragraph seven).

⁴⁸ Young, op. cit., p. 73.

found in the Hudson's Bay Company dining room, outlining his proposals to the young men's section of the Winnipeg Board of Trade. He once again flatly rejected Bradshaw's recommendations to increase water rates, and to tax rents and light bills. Instead, he urged a drastic readjustment of the business tax. Far from being taxed inequitably, he stated, "Winnipeg's major businesses were undertaxed. "The total business tax of the city of Winnipeg amounts to \$484,000." He went on:

In Toronto, one of the smaller department stores alone pays \$83,797, or more than one-sixth of the total business tax collected in Winnipeg.

Two chain store organizations in Winnipeg, having two warehouses and offices, as well as 44% retail sales, paid, in 1934, a total business tax of \$3,722. Two chain store organizations in Toronto paid on their two warehouses alone, \$24,589.

One department store in Toronto, with an assessed value of \$5,078,667, pays a business tax of \$83,797 while a department store in Winnipeg ~~alone~~ pays only slightly more than one-quarter as much tax. One trust company in Toronto pays annually over five times as much as the total paid by the four leading trust companies in Winnipeg. One bank in Toronto pays annually \$56,640 in business tax, while the eight largest banks in Winnipeg together pay a business tax of only \$9,939.... One insurance company in Toronto, occupying its entire building, assessed at \$452,000 paid last year \$11,206, while one insurance company in Winnipeg, occupying its entire building which had an assessed value of \$502,000, paid in the same year \$4,692. (49)

At the time, businesses were assessed at a rate of six and two-thirds percent of the annual rental value of the premises. Queen noted that a huge amount of capital might flow in and out of a business such as a

⁴⁹ "Mayor Outlines His Policy to Increase Winnipeg's Revenues — Queen Would Change System of Business Tax to Provide Different Rates for Different Classes of Business — Will Try to End Exemptions Enjoyed By Provincial Government and Railways" (uc), Jan. 12, 1935, CCS:1935, Vol. I., p. 12. See also "Queen Reveals Scheme to Jump Tax on Big Business..." (uc), Jan. 12, 1935, CCS:1935, Vol. I., p. 14.

bank or an investment house located in a relatively small building, and that the sales volume of a large retail company bore little proportion to the building's annual rental value. The means of assessment then in effect were therefore inadequate and unjust. "I am not trying to raise any antagonisms", he concluded, "but am saying this with the realization that with the concentration of wealth, we must tax where the money is. Taxes should only be levelled against surplus, after the necessities of life have been paid for, and not taken out of money needed to buy food and clothing."⁵⁰ In place of the six and two-thirds assessment levy, Queen proposed a scale based upon rental value, gross, and net incomes of the company. This had the effect of lowering the assessment rates on smaller businesses and increasing those of larger ones. This scale provided for an assessment rate ranging from five percent to forty percent of the annual rental value. For example, the proposed business tax readjustment would have affected the city's retail merchants in the following manner:

TABLE SEVEN: PROPOSED TAX ASSESSMENT CHANGES FOR
RETAIL MERCHANTS, 1935

Number of Stores Affected	Annual Rent	Proposed Assessment Rate	Reduction or Increase Over 1934 (6 2/3%)	Percentage Reduction/ Increase
1755	to \$750	5%	Reduction	- 25%
196	\$750 to \$1250	7 1/2%	Increase	+ 12%
64	\$1251 to \$1750	10%	Increase	+ 50%
69	\$1751 to \$2500	12%	Increase	+ 87 1/2%
94	\$2501 and over	15%	Increase	+225% (51)

⁵⁰ "Mayor Outlines His Policy...", *ibid.*, p. 13.

⁵¹ Copy of Address by C. F. Rannard to Legislative Tax Committee, given March 28, 1935, as part of a brief to that Committee by the Retail Merchants' Association. Bracken Papers ["Board of Trade" file] (1935). P.A.M.

At the end of his speech, the audience of one hundred and fifty young Winnipeg businessmen applauded him warmly. Few of them, if any, agreed with Queen's proposals, but they admired his sincerity.⁵²

Besides the question of equalization of taxation according to one's ability to pay, there were solid fiscal reasons for increasing the maximum ceiling on civic taxation. An increase in business tax to the level which Queen wanted, stood to bring an additional \$1,000,000 into the City's coffers for 1935. Such a sum was sorely needed. Whereas it was estimated that revenues for the year would drop by \$142,504 from those of 1934, there was to be an increase of \$696,256 in expenditures for the same period.⁵³ Early in the year, the Queen administration produced its counterpart to the Bradshaw Report. Dismissed by the Winnipeg Tribune as "thirty-five foolscap pages"⁵⁴, the "Ripley Report" — prepared by Assessment Appraisers, Ltd., of Toronto — showed that of fifteen Canadian cities ranging in size from Montreal to Keewatin, the proportion of business to realty tax in

⁵² "Mayor Outlines...", op. cit.

⁵³ "City Faced With Likely Deficit of \$392,876 in 1935 — Hope of Balanced Budget Virtually Abandoned Unless Business Tax Approved" (uc), March 9, 1932, CCS:1935, Vol. I, p. 62. Expenditures for 1934 were \$9,184,388; for 1935, \$9,041,884. Estimated increases in various civic areas were: school board, \$184,000; unemployment relief debt charges, \$186,000; Assessment Department, \$46,000; Police, \$54,000; Fire Department, \$19,000; ibid. Most of the departmental increases came through restorations of civic salaries to previous levels. This question shall be considered shortly.

⁵⁴ "Report Claims Business Taxes Less Than East" (uc, n.d.), CCS:1935, Vol. I, p. 77.

Winnipeg was lowest:

TABLE EIGHT: PROPORTION OF BUSINESS TO REALTY TAX IN
FIFTEEN CANADIAN URBAN CENTERS, 1932

City	Proportion Business to Realty Tax
Montreal	19.24%
Toronto	13.27%
Hamilton	10.51%
Ottawa	11.16%
London	10.92%
Brantford	13.77%
East Windsor	16.80
Walkerville	23.06
Windsor	8.60
Oshawa	14.60
Ste. St. Marie	13.90
Fort William	14.21
Port Arthur	13.39
Dryden	26.49
Keewatin	30.11
WINNIPEG	6.11 (55)

In the provincial Legislature, Queen kept up his attack on the current limits of taxation, since these limits were set there by amendments to the City Charter. It was there, too, that opposition to Queen's proposals were most vehement. Led by Sanford Evans, John T. Haig,⁵⁶ and the Attorney-General, William Major, they waged an intense campaign against the changes. The lobby was further aided by active support from the Winnipeg Board of Trade, the Home and Property Owners' Association, the Retail Merchants' Association, the Winnipeg Rate-

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Born in 1877 at Colborne, Ontario, a barrister-at-law, Haig was created a King's Counsel in 1927. President, Ontario and Western Land Co. Ltd., Director of Ontario Equitable Life and Accident Insurance Co., Vice-President of Financial Corporation, Ltd., Secretary-Treasurer of Security Construction Co. Ltd. Member for Assiniboia in the Legislature from 1912-1914. Re-elected for Winnipeg in 1920, 1922, 1927, and 1932. Biographical information from Canadian Parliamentary Guide (1935).

payers' Association, and large business and financial concerns in the central business district of the city. Opposition intensified as the proposals -- Bill 56 -- entered the committee stages. Newspaper headlines echoed the concern: "PREDICT DIRE RESULTS IF PROPOSED BUSINESS TAX PLAN IS ADOPTED -- ADVANCED BEFORE LAW AMENDMENTS COMMITTEE BY BATTERY OF LEGAL TALENT REPRESENTING DEPARTMENT STORES, CHAIN STORES, BANKS AND OIL COMPANIES".⁵⁷

On City Council, the Finance Committee based its calculations for the 1935 budget upon the fact that the business tax proposals would pass, in whole or in part, through the Law Amendments Committee of the Legislature. It therefore set the mill rate at the same level as 1934 (34 $\frac{1}{2}$ mills), despite large increases in expenditures, especially those of relief, hoping that the anticipated increased business tax receipts of \$220,000 would help cover the deficit.⁵⁸ Meanwhile the Law Amendments Committee rejected those aspects of the business tax classification scheme which were not proportionate with the proposals made in the Ripley Report, and demanded that changes be made. Arguments con-

⁵⁷ Winnipeg Free Press, March 22, 1935. The fact that the 1970 spring session of the Manitoba Legislature saw another "socialist" government under Premier Edward Schreyer introduce another "Bill 56" is one of the more interesting ironies in Manitoba's history. Schreyer's proposals concern government automobile insurance and have provoked equally vigorous opposition by the business community. The above newspaper headline, with minor deletions, might well have been from the Winnipeg Free Press of July 15, 1970: "PREDICT DIRE RESULTS IF PROPOSED ... PLAN IS ADOPTED", etc. The strength of the reactions to these two proposals have not been entirely without common roots in Manitoba's history.

⁵⁸ "No Change in City Tax Rate Recommended -- Finance Committee Votes Same Mill Rate as Last Year ...", (uc), April 1, 1935, CCS:1935, Vol. I, p. 91.

tinued in and out of committee rooms until the end of July, when a modified form of Queen's original proposals finally was accepted. This compromise provided for a variation in assessment ranging from five percent to fifteen percent. Even so, it meant a substantial increase in tax revenue for the City:

TABLE NINE: CHANGES IN ASSESSMENT RATE (%) ON BUSINESSES,
AND CORRESPONDING REVENUES

	Percentage	Tax
1934 business tax	6 2/3%	\$ 88 484,562.60
Requested by City for 1935	5% to 40%	\$1,273,500.00
Authorized by Legislature	5% to 15%	\$ 800,000.00 (59)

This agreement over business tax readjustment marked the final rejection of Bradshaw's proposals.

While there were general indications as the year progressed that a "socialist-dominated" City Council would not bring the city to ruin or destroy investors' faith in it, the presence of two Communists on Council nevertheless kept it from forgetting the promises it had made while in 'opposition'. Indeed, by 1935 the mood of the community and the country was such that it was coming to recognize the need for major change. Even Prime Minister Bennett, in a series of surprising radio broadcasts, had come to recognize that it was not sufficient simply to "wait out the depression". On the day that City Council

⁵⁹ Open letter from Board of Trade to all members, July 31, 1935, in Bracken Papers (1935). See also, "Business Tax Will Bring \$800,000 to City Coffers" (uc), July 22, 1935, CCS:1935, Vol. I, p. 9, for a summary of a report of City Assessment Commissioner, L. F. Borrowman.

first met in 1935, Bennett had been heard over the wireless sets of Winnipeg and Canada, saying that dole "was a condemnation of our economic system. If we cannot abolish the dole, we should abolish the system."⁶⁰

For Jacob Penner, words of reform coming from such a man were "nothing but a bluff"; nothing but half-measures. This was especially the case regarding the unemployment insurance scheme Bennett was urging. But a contributory scheme such as the Prime Minister wanted, Penner told Council, was unjust. The workers of the country were the only wealth producers, in his eyes, and they had already made their contribution to the country. A national, non-contributory unemployment insurance scheme should be non-contributory.⁶¹ The successful leadership of the campaign for non-contributory insurance by Communists also meant the "first step in the direction of the party assuming real bolshevik leadership in the struggles for the daily needs of the workers." So said the 1931 handbook for Communist Party workers.⁶² Penner followed the dictates of the Central Committee without hesitation or questioning.

Accordingly, he framed a resolution in Council which urged the Dominion government to provide a non-contributory unemployment insurance scheme, the revenues for which would have been raised by a special

⁶⁰ Canadian Annual Review (1935-6), p. 2.

⁶¹ "Council Urges Free Jobless Insurance Plan" (uc) Jan. 29, 1935, CCS:1935, Vol. I, p. 28.

⁶² The Party Organizer, op. cit., p. 4.

graduated federal income tax. The proposal by Penner and Forkin sparked considerable debate between Left and Right factions on Council. Alderman Bardal accused Penner of turning the meeting into a political forum, but John Blumberg -- acting Mayor in John Queen's absence -- decided that this was not the case. Objections by C.E.C. aldermen were perhaps epitomized by those of Alderman McWilliams, who refused to vote with the scheme because it "was a request for cash relief in the form of insurance. She believed it was misleading because insurance was something one had to pay for". But Penner's motion passed, with all Labour members except Lowe voting with the Communists. The resolution carried by a vote of eight to seven, with the chairman casting the deciding ballot.⁶³

The Communists on Council kept the I.L.P. faction aware of two other pledges it had made when not in a position of power: raising civic salaries to the level of 1932 and increasing relief allowances. The question of civic wages had been a constant campaign issue since 1932. In that year, the City Council had proposed to its employees that since the administration was finding it difficult to obtain revenue to meet its expenditures, they consent to a ten percent reduction in salaries. In that way, the City had saved over \$200,000. The following year the employees were told that a reduction totalling \$175,000 was now needed to balance the budget. This amounted to a wage reduction of $6 \frac{2}{3}$ percent. At the beginning of 1934 the City did not make any

⁶³ Minutes of Council (1935), January 28, 1935, pp. 51-53. See also, "Council Urges Free Jobless Insurance Plan" (uc), Jan. 29, 1935, CCS:1935, Vol. I, p. 28; "City Council Accepts Plan of Communist ...", ibid., p. 27.

announcement regarding the wages of its employees. It was then that the employees learned for the first time that the wage level of 1932 was now considered the permanent wage level of civic employees.⁶⁴ Civic staff complained, and the I.L.P. took up the issue.

The question of wage restoration could not be considered, however, until after the budget had been drawn up and the future of business tax proposals contemplated by the Finance Committee. In their 1934 election campaign the I.L.P. had promised the restoration of at least half of the ten percent reduction. But because of the general increase in civic expenditures, this restoration in wages (amounting to \$480,000 annually) could only be met by the increased revenues derived from the proposed business tax changes. Having rested their budget upon the hope that the changes would survive submission to the provincial Legislature, by the beginning of April aldermen could once again give the problem consideration. No sooner did the newspapers announce the fact that civic leaders were doing so,⁶⁵ when opposition converged upon the provincial Legislature. The Board of Trade, acting through the Winnipeg Civics Bureau, had been voicing its objections since the year began. In a brief to the Premier in February it had stated that although it was not against restoration of salaries per se, it nevertheless was "DECIDEDLY OF THE OPINION THAT THE CITY'S

⁶⁴ See the letter from a committee of civic employees to the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council, Province of Manitoba (2pp.), Bracken Papers (1934). P.A.M.

⁶⁵ "Aldermen Renew Talk of Restoring Part of Wage Cut Reductions" (uc), April 9, 1935, CCS:1935, Vol. I, p. 95.

PRESENT FINANCIAL POSITION DOES NOT JUSTIFY SUCH ACTION." [capitals in original] In order for the city to "attain normal conditions again", it added, "general business must survive, money must go back into enterprise....

To that end, stabilized conditions are requisite, ordinary business principles must prevail and confidence must be restored. The difficulty after such catastrophes as we have just passed through, has always been to restore business confidence and it requires ... dominance of business principles in civic life. (66)

There were therefore two "business" lobbies at work simultaneously in the corridors of the provincial Legislature. The appeals to the Province were successful. Within a week of the passing of the Board of Trade resolutions, Bracken had criticized the City Council for moving to restore the wage cuts while still receiving over one million dollars per year from the Province for relief.⁶⁷ The City Council laid the matter temporarily aside.

As winter slowly eased its grip on the community, and the anticipation of a prairie spring grew, so did the mobility of its population and its level of unemployment. As the snow receded, therefore, the problem of the Single Unemployed -- the living testimony of a vast socio-economic malaise -- was increasing. The revival of activity once again on the Market Square meant that plans, proposals, and counterproposals were being made both in the various meeting places

⁶⁶ Memorandum submitted on behalf of the Winnipeg Board of Trade by the Civics Bureau, July 29, 1935 (from a resolution by the Board of Trade dated February 18, 1935), Bracken Papers (1935), P.A.M.

⁶⁷ Winnipeg Free Press, March 3, 1935.

of the Workers' Unity League and in the various civic and provincial boardrooms where the problems of indigents and relief had to be met. For the Communists, especially those on Council, such activity meant that they once more had a vast and usually sympathetic audience and source of support; to government officials the Single Unemployed and those on relief meant primarily one thing: once again finding the revenue to meet their increasing needs.

Both City and Province were finding the burden of relief increasingly difficult to bear. Since 1932, the City had been unable to pay for its relief costs out of current revenue, and had accumulated a relief debt of \$4,325,890.⁶⁸ Estimated relief costs to the City for 1935 were in excess of \$1,900,000, with average costs per person per month \$9.45, and per family \$40.00.⁶⁹ By the end of April, the City had made an application to the Federal government (through the Province) for loans in excess of \$4,000,000, to finance its direct relief expenditures for 1934 as well as the proposed unemployment relief works for 1935.⁷⁰ Unable to come to a satisfactory agreement, Queen went to Ottawa in June to negotiate with Federal authorities.

The Province was not without its own financial difficulties. From August, 1934, to March 30, 1935, the Federal Government issued monthly grants-in-aid to each province, instead of paying for direct

⁶⁸ "City's Net Tax Arrears Show Reduction During 1934, Treasurer Reports" (uc), March 26, 1935, CCS:1935, Vol. I, p. 88.

⁶⁹ Winnipeg Tribune, December 30, 1935.

relief on a percentage basis. The effect of this had been to reduce the level of relief assistance from Ottawa.⁷¹ As with the City, the Province had been unable to meet the costs of relief out of its ordinary expenses, but found it necessary to borrow nearly all the money spent for this purpose. Provincial loans made during the depression (to 1935) by the Province amounted to \$16,273,838.51, of which only approximately \$300,000.00 had been paid out of its revenue. The net effect of this increasing burden on the Province — especially upon its urban municipalities was, as Bracken was to tell the Dominion-Provincial Conference late in the year, "surely and definitely forcing them into bankruptcy."⁷² It is against this background of tension and frustration both in the Federal Government soup kitchen where the Single Unemployed received their two meals a day and in the City Hall and provincial Legislature that events in civic politics during the early summer of 1935 must be viewed.

On June 4, while a contingent of dissatisfied British Columbia Single Unemployed were aboard various freight trains on their way to Ottawa, Jacob Penner reopened the campaigns to restore civic wages and increase the food schedule for those on relief. His motion regarding

⁷¹ Canada, Report of the Department of Labour (1935), Sec. X, "Relief Legislation", pp. 70, 72.

⁷² Memorandum from A. MacNamara [Assistant Deputy Minister of Public Works] to John Bracken and W. R. Clubb, November 26, 1935, "for use in replying to inquiries ... at the Dominion-Provincial Conference" [Dec. 9, 1935], p. 2, Bracken Papers (1935).

the wage restoration had in fact been one of censure against the Wage Committee [Legislation and Reception]. Although it was quickly amended by Alderman Simpkin to remove the element of censure, the amending motion had the desired effect of forcing the committee to "complete negotiations ... as quickly as possible". Objections to Penner's motion had come from the I.L.P. members, who wished to wait until July, when the final decision would be reached on the business tax proposals; but the motion as passed forced the committee finally to act.⁷³ Two weeks later the committee adopted a proposal of an eight and one-third percent increase in civic salaries. This had been a compromise between Penner's suggestion on committee for a ten percent increase and that of Alderman V. B. Anderson, for one of five percent. The vote upon the proposal in the Finance Committee was decided in favour of the recommendation by the tie-breaking vote of its chairman, Thomas Flye.⁷⁴ Once again the cries of "civic extravagance" were heard from the Legislative Buildings and the Board of Trade offices. Members of the Home and Property Owners' Association threatened a taxpayers' strike. The Board of Trade reiterated its February resolution that there was "no justification for the restoration of any portion of civic employees' salaries at the present time", and City Council was forced to reconsider its original decision. On the sixteenth of July

⁷³ Minutes of Council (1935), June 4, 1935, p. 293. See also, "Committee to Negotiate With Civic Employees — " (uc), June 5, 1935, CCS:1935, Vol. I, p. 129.

⁷⁴ "Boost in Pay of Employees of City Endorsed by Committee — " (uc), June 19, 1935, CCS:1935, Vol. I, p. 134; also "Civic Finance Committee To Urge Increase — " Winnipeg Tribune, June 22, 1935.

it recommended a three and one-third percent increase in civic wages. Opposition again arose. Finally, on August the thirteenth, by a vote of ten to six, Council voted in favour of the increase.⁷⁵

The motion regarding relief that Penner had introduced on June the fourth had been long anticipated. As early as January fourteen, a delegation had been heard — sponsored by the Communist aldermen — from the Manitoba Conference of Unemployed and the Working Women's League. They had demanded, among other things, a ten percent increase in the food schedules.⁷⁶ In April, Alderman Simpkin had moved that as a celebration of the Jubilee of King George and Queen Mary, Council draw to the attention of the Greater Winnipeg Unemployment Advisory Board the "desirability" of increasing the relief allowance by ten percent during the week of celebration. Penner proposed an amendment which would have made the ten percent increase permanent. He argued that if Council were willing to concede the fact that relief was insufficient during one particular week, it was illogical not to admit that the same relief schedule was insufficient on the next. His arguments were impassioned, logical, and consistent. The amendment was carried, in a rare mood of unanimity, by a vote of seventeen to one.⁷⁷

⁷⁵ "Salary Boost is Retroactive to January 1 — " (uc), Aug. 13, 1935, CCS:1935, Vol. II, p. 18. The division was: For: Honeyman [Chairman of the Legislative and Reception Committee], Lowe, Flye, Anderson, Stobart, Simpkin, Forkin, Gray, Blumberg, Penner. Against: Rice-Jones, Gumm, McWilliams, Bardal, Barry, McLean. Minutes of Council (1935), p. 433.

⁷⁶ "Relief System Change Urged Before Council" (uc), Jan. 15, 1935, CCS:1935, Vol. I, p. 14.

⁷⁷ Minutes of Council (1935), April 22, 1935, p. 217.

Sparked by this signal victory, Penner gave notice early in May that he was going to introduce a motion to increase the food allowance of the unemployed by ten percent.⁷⁸ This, like the issue of non-contributory unemployment insurance, was certain to win the W.U.L. adherents on the Market Square. Every man likes more to eat. A few weeks later, however, the Advisory Board reported that the food schedule then in effect was as high as permissible, and that a ten percent increase, "or, in fact, any increase cannot be justified".⁷⁹

Despite this sternly negative recommendation, a strong representation to Council by R. N. Towle, Chairman of the grievance committee of the Manitoba Conference of Unemployed, convinced Council that an upward revision in the relief schedule was drastically needed. "The unemployed", he emphasized, "were not interested in the relief financing question. They did not want dollars; dollars could not be eaten. They desired food and the stoppage of starvation of their women and children." He backed up his argument with cases of starvation within the city and "described hundreds of destitute persons rummaging for cans and old pots at the city dump to be used for cooking purposes." Penner made a speech lasting seventy minutes in which he severely criticized the findings of the Advisory Commission. At its end, he placed his motion for a ten percent raise in the relief food schedule. It carried by a vote of nine to eight, with all I.L.P. aldermen voting

⁷⁸ Ibid., May 7, 1935, p. 244. Also "Large Sums Sought To Repair Streets and Lanes in City" (uc), CCS:1935, Vol. I, p. 111; " 'Peg Jobless Ask More Food —', The Worker, May 14, 1935.

⁷⁹ "Advisory Board Decides Against Relief Increase" (uc), May 21, 1935, CCS:1935, Vol. I, pp. 116-117.

with the Communists.⁸⁰

For the third time, the Winnipeg Home and Property Owners set their lobby machinery into action. Since, however, its members were already working towards the repudiation of Queen's business tax proposals, and were also active in combatting wage restoration, it was necessary only to mimeograph another brief and see that the over-worked members placed it upon the correct desks.⁸¹ Within three days the Premier, through Mr. MacNamara, was threatening to reduce the Province's relief contributions.⁸² W. R. Clubb offered a few days later to review the food schedule, and invited the city "to submit any evidence it feels will warrant the proposed ten percent increase in the value of the food vouchers". Penner attempted to force the Council's decision to be binding regardless of Clubb's "recommendations", but could not gain the necessary support. Rather than have the decision

⁸⁰ Minutes of Council (1935), June 4, 1935, p. 299. The division was: For: Lowe, Flye, Anderson, Stobart, Simpkin, Forkin, Gray, Blumberg, Penner. Against: Honeyman, Rice-Jones, Gunn, Andrews, McWilliams, Bardal, Davidson and Barry. See also "Council Holds Schedules are Not Sufficient — Penner's Motion Carried by Aldermen by Vote of Nine to Eight — Extra Cost to City \$15,000 per Month — Possible Tie Avoided by Absence of Ald. Dan McLean", Winnipeg Tribune, June 5, 1935. "Food Relief in City Raised 10 Per Cent By Council's Action — ", Winnipeg Free Press, June 5, 1935.

⁸¹ "Increases for Men on Relief Protested — Home and Property Owners Protest Action of Council", Winnipeg Tribune, June 7, 1935.

⁸² "Province May Reduce Relief Contributions", ibid., June 10, 1935. At this time, the Province was paying one-third of the costs of relief; the City was paying approximately forty-six and two-thirds percent. "Province Makes Threat to Reduce City Relief Aid — ", Winnipeg Free Press, June 11, 1935.

of Council automatically rejected by the provincial Public Works Department, Queen was able to have the City's decision nullified on a technicality.⁸³

The courses which these measures took in and out of Council in 1935 were indicative of the altered state of civic politics and the positions of its political factions. Where the C.E.C. members of Council continued their attempts to exercise fiscal caution, the I.L.P. faction was caught between the extremes of 'Left' and 'Right'. On one hand, being a 'workers'' party, they were committed to raising the standard of living for the average worker; yet at the same time, they increasingly found that the responsibilities of office limited the possibility of creating statutory legislation based solely upon ideals. They were coming to acknowledge the reality of the conflict between what was immediately possible and what ought to be done.

The presence of two Communists on Council served to balance the arguments of C.E.C. members. Unlike members of the 'Rightist' faction on Council, they did not feel responsible for tempering their concerns with the knowledge of fiscal limitations. Their sole concern -- for whatever motives -- was for raising the standard of living for the worker, and they threw "responsibility" to the wind in stressing this. The Independent Labour Party members on Council benefitted from the arguments

⁸³ That "the motion required a majority on council, whereas only nine votes were cast in its favour". This was a weak excuse. Queen had defended the passage of the motion when attacked on lack of majority grounds before by stating that no one had objected when the motion was passed. [See "Food Relief in City Raised 10%...", op. cit.]. "Clubb Offers to Review Food Schedule -- " (uc), June 18, 1935, CCS:1935, Vol. I, p. 133.

of both, and the legislation which resulted during the year was an intricate synthesis of impassioned pleas, responsible arguments, idealistic rhetoric and harsh statistics. The I.L.P. constantly found themselves voting for W.U.L.-initiated motions. Besides the partial restoration of civic wages and the acknowledgement on Council that the relief schedule was insufficient, motions also passed calling for the removal of tax exemptions of railway property⁸⁴ and the extension of the vote to all British subjects over age twenty-one, regardless of whether they owned property in the city or not.⁸⁵ Both proposals, however, were rejected when they reached the provincial Legislature.

This refusal does not lessen the significance of the proposals passed by the City Council; it marks, instead, the fact that in the provincial House the even split between 'Left' and 'Right' found at the civic level did not exist. The efforts of Labour members such as John Queen, Marcus Hyman, and S. J. Farmer to the contrary, those in the provincial Legislature remained heavily attuned to the interests and needs of rural Manitoba. The fact that by the mid-nineteen thirties nearly one-half of all Manitobans lived in urban areas seems to have gone largely unnoticed. Under the great Dome, as in the City Hall, the shibboleths of an earlier Manitoba could still be heard, but the lack

⁸⁴ "Rail Tax Measure Passes Council By Eight to Six Vote -- Will Now Ask Legislature For Change in Railway Taxation Act and Authority to Remove Exemption on Companies' Properties" (uc), March 19, 1935, CCS: 1935, Vol. I, p. 80.

⁸⁵ "Committee Gives Approval to Adult Suffrage --", Winnipeg Free Press, February 23, 1935. A similar motion early in 1934 had been defeated.

of a Labour faction in the provincial House large enough to affect legislation consistently meant the application of rural solutions to urban problems, and the conflict of country values with those produced by life in a multi-ethnic, expanding city whose manner of growth almost from the first had been in conflict with the aims of its founders.

CONCLUSION

"A TIME OF NEED AND A TIME OF STRESS"

As was often the case in Winnipeg during the early and mid-nineteen thirties, by the time summer of 1935 had reached its mid-point the City Council had enacted its most important legislation. With the continued arrival of the Single Unemployed during June and July, the Council was forced to turn its attention to the problems which arose from the day to day needs of the young and restless men on the Market Square, who asked only that they be fed and sheltered by the city until they could hop another freight taking them further east.

On the first of July, their frustration and aggravation had led them to seize a federal government soup kitchen, and only the steadfast refusal of acting-Mayor John Blumberg to read the Riot Act saved violence from occurring. Council managed as best it could to find the necessary monies to feed and shelter the men; the crisis passed; and the dejected army drifted away, leaving as grim reminders of its presence only the trampled earth of the old Exhibition grounds where its tents had stood, and haunting letters mailed to the editors of local daily newspapers.¹

With the coming of early autumn, another event began to occupy the attention of civic politicians. This was the forthcoming civic election, which soon promised to exhibit the Rite of the Strike at its

¹ See letter to the editor, from "Canadian Youth", in Winnipeg Tribune, July 10, 1935, p. 6. See also the letter to the editor from "L.C.H.C.", on June 28, 1935, p. 8.

most forceful. For the first time in the history of the city, the administration of a Labour majority on its Council was to be judged. Citizens' candidates, led by their choice for Mayor, found it desperately wanting. Cecil Gunn, nominated by "a large number of the former supporters of ex-Mayor Webb and ex-Alderman J. A. McKerchar"², made the 1935 civic election campaign among the most vigorous and polarized since that of 1920. But whereas the Citizen's candidates^{of 1919} saw Bolshevism at every turn, their counterparts of 1935 saw Communism. "Two political groups are controlling municipal affairs", Gunn maintained. "The Independent Labor party and Communist party are in control, and when a small, vigorous minority group are running the affairs of the city, it is not good for the city."³ Whenever possible he made a connection between the two groups, trying to show how they really stood for the same principles.⁴ When accused of flag-waving by Marcus Hyman, his reply was, "Are citizens going to denounce a man for serving the flag in a time of need and a time of stress?"⁵

It was indeed a time of stress for Citizens of Winnipeg. The depression, the rise of Labour agitation, and especially the dominance of Labour on Council, had shocked the section of the community which for so long had controlled its best interests. Some, like aging John

² "Alderman Gunn Nominated To Oppose Mayor's Return — Forty-Six Enter Contest for Civic Honors", Winnipeg Free Press, Nov. 8, 1935.

³ "Alderman Gunn Tells Electors He is Labor's Champion", ibid., Nov. 21, 1935.

⁴ See Appendix A.

⁵ "Alderman Gunn Tells Electors ...", op. cit.

McKerchar, saw in such developments only a further indication of what they had been sensing for a long time: that the city was in an irreversible decline, the roots of which were multi-branched, malignant, and choking away the life-blood of the city. "We all know that Winnipeg is not making any headway", McKerchar lamented, as he declined the mayoralty nomination. "As a matter of fact, we know that Winnipeg has been going back ever since 1919."⁶ The city's strength was 'Enterprise', and the key to successful and profitable enterprise was, as his successor put it, to "create confidence, create confidence in ourselves, in the city, with the public, and with the outside world."⁷ Labour radicalism, "orders from Moscow",⁸ "Politics", and "Party" had made this return of confidence impossible, and in their eyes, the city was on the verge of total collapse.

It was a time of need as well as one of stress — the need to rid civic politics of a Socialist Mayor and Labour majority on Council. John McKerchar had withdrawn from the active attempt to combat the menace that a radical Labour majority on Council represented to the city and its credit. But the forces which made Citizens out of citizens were still strong, and there was no lack of younger, more vigorous men to take his place. The year 1935 was one of consolidation for these forces. By its end the Citizens' Election Committee had been formed, an organization which would sponsor and finance the campaigns of "independent" candidates

⁶ "Friends Told McKerchar is Out of Race — Refuses to Contest Mayoralty; Attacks Communists and I.L.P.", ibid., Oct. 19, 1935.

⁷ "Alderman Gunn Tells Electors ...", op. cit.

⁸ "Friends Told ...", op. cit.

for the next thirty-five years.

The economic, social, and psychological dislocation caused by the depression allowed the 'Labour' element in the community to make significant political gains, just as it had after the smaller scale dislocation caused by the great Strike of 1919. Subsequent years — the end of the depression, the return of prosperity — would prove, however, that the dominant ethic of the community was that of the Citizen. The ordinary worker — the labourer, the milkman, the railway-man — might grumble at his tax burden or the social inequity which existed within the city's boundaries, but beneath his complaint there usually resided the same hopes, visions, and aspirations which had built the city: the wish to run a Portage Avenue business instead of working for one, or to own an expensive home in River Heights, graced by wide, well-cropped boulevards. Such a man would tolerate change, indeed would welcome it; but the change would not be of a revolutionary nature. The majority of Winnipeg's citizens were conservative by inclination, appreciative of the accomplishments of their city, and thankful for the pioneering work of its citizens.

Yet while most citizens of Winnipeg shared the basic belief that one could achieve success given the proper opportunity, there remained the prime geographic fact of life in the city. It was a city that had been built around a railway and a river. The two major, differing waves of immigrants which had ushered the city into the twentieth century had dictated that there would be a 'wrong side of the tracks' and a 'right' side of the river, and would make these demographic facts as obvious as if the city had been divided by barriers of barbed

wire and stone walls.

The discontent, social and economic, of the second wave of immigrants was largely channelled into politics. That the 1919 Strike struck the city with the force that it did, and that it split the community into two basic factions, were indications of the depth of this discontent, with roots far deeper than those of post-war discontent.

The existence of two basic, fundamentally-opposed factions on City Council in the period after the 1919 Strike simply formalized the growing gulf between two sections of the community which each claimed to represent the "best interests" of the city. The Strike emphasized the cleavage between 'Left' and 'Right', between Socialist and Citizen; and for the next ten years civic political campaigns were waged along these lines. But the coming of the depression widened the scope of civic politics by bringing to the surface the ghosts of 1919 and by forcing each civic politician into a position where by necessity, he had to assess the merits and faults of differing social philosophies, the nature and purpose of social welfare, and the duties and obligations of the State. For some, such discussion meant a vigorous re-evaluation and defense of an ailing but fundamentally 'correct' economic and political system; for others, that ailment was an indication that the system itself was at fault and should be replaced -- either by means of reform from within or revolution from without -- by a more equitable, more humane one.

The two basic waves of immigration into the city had brought with them men of different backgrounds and different dreams. To no small extent, these backgrounds and visions were reflected on the City

Council at the time of the community's most violent period of tension: the depression. The depression laid bare the soul of the city, and revealed it at its best and worst.

The presence of two polarized factions on City Council during the middle years of the depression, men of two basic 'ethics' which varied in degree of proximity to their 'pure' form, made it both financially responsible and emotionally aware. Whether it dealt with purely financial matters or questions of human needs, Council was given by this mutual antipathy a breadth of understanding and compassion it had not contained in previous years. This was mainly due to the slight but significant shift that had occurred in the transition from 1934 to 1935. Whereas the 'Rightist'-dominated administrations of earlier years, including the early thirties, had often appeared incapable or unwilling to compromise with 'leftist' members over loosening the purse-strings to increase the level of wages or quality of essential services, the Labour-dominated Council of 1935 seemed more capable of comprehending the viewpoint of its opposition. This difference was reflected in the differing priorities of the Council during the years 1934 and 1935.

To be sure, this ability of the I.L.P. to comprehend the point of view of its opposition was not totally a conscious or willing gesture. The 1935 I.L.P. majority found itself in charge of a city which had been built and controlled for over sixty years by men with different backgrounds and different visions. The ethic of these men was largely the ethic of the city, and of the province. It was built upon a foundation held firm by a cement of capitalism, protestantism, and Anglo-Saxonism, and in those sixty years it had taken a steadfast hold

on the community and the vast majority of its citizens. Having only limited constitutional powers and with only a small majority of the population endorsing its platform, the I.L.P. faction led by the Mayor, felt it necessary to 'tread softly'.

In order to accomplish any task its members found it necessary to work according to the 'rules' dictated by the ethos of those who had controlled the community and the Council for so long; and in doing so, they were moving — often unwittingly — toward the position of the hitherto-dominant faction. This movement was facilitated by a similar transformation in the national political party to which many of them belonged, although few recognized the change at the time. The presence of two Communists on Council, however, kept this movement from being more rapid than it was.

Through the give and take of impassioned yet (usually) rational discussion civic policy during the depression reflected, for the most part, 'reasonable' measures tempered by sincere humanitarian concern. The vigilance with which both Leftist and Rightist factions on Council surveyed each other's proposals and views invigorated its members, and undoubtedly contributed to the generally high level of both leadership and administration which Winnipeg enjoyed during this most trying period in its history.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX A

EXAMPLES OF CITIZENS' CAMPAIGN ADVERTISEMENTS,
1933-1935


SAFEGUARD Your
City's Interests... and
Therefore YOUR Interests

The Civic Election Committee Endorses
These Candidates, Because They Are
"The Best Men For the Job"

for Aldermen *for School Trustees*

WARD ONE—	WARD ONE—
ANDREWS	CUDDY
GUNN	ROSEVEAR
SIMONITE	THOMPSON
WARD TWO—	WARD TWO—
BARDAL	MILTON
DAVIDSON	WARRINER
JENKINS	
WARD THREE—	WARD THREE—
BARRY	BOOTH

CIVIC ELECTION COMMITTEE'S HEADQUARTERS—PH. 22 440
GROUND FLOOR, LINDSAY BUILDING, GARRY ST.

 **Listen To "Election Facts"**
CKY-Wednesday, 9; Thursday, 9.15 p.m.

Winnipeg Free Press, Nov. 23, 1933, p. 2.

Vote Friday, 24th

FOR

The maintenance of Winnipeg's
credit!

Stability and safety of government!

General, not class representation!

More works, less relief!

Construction, not destruction!

VOTE EARLY!

WEBB, R. H. | 1

Central Committee

97 711

—439 Main—

96 602

Winnipeg Free Press, Nov. 22, 1933.

POSITIVE PROOF

OF THE

ALLIANCE between **LEADERS** of the I.L.P. and the Communist Party in their determination to hold control of the City Council in 1936.

MR. TIM BUCK, COMMUNIST CANDIDATE in the late Federal Election, on Monday evening of this week, speaking on the radio, specially requested all Communists to Vote John Queen for Mayor

Below are quotations in part from the Communist Paper — "The Civic Elector" —

"We are deeply interested in the return of a full slate of Labor and Communist members to the City Council and School Board, and the defeat of all anti-Labor candidates.

"It is with this basic question in mind that we are issuing the slogan of "Elect a majority of I.L.P. and Communist candidates to the City Council and School Board."

J. McNEIL, COMMUNIST CANDIDATE for Alderman in Ward 2 issued an election pamphlet dated November 19th, 1935. The following is a quotation in part:—

"VOTE THUS"

For Mayor John Queen 1
For Alderman John McNeil 1
For School Trustee Aubrey Brock 1

"VOTE A
FULL LABOR
TICKET"

Yours Sincerely, J. McNeil"

J. PENNER, COMMUNIST CANDIDATE for Alderman in Ward 3 issued a pamphlet dated November 19th, 1935. The following is a quotation in part:—

"We must at all cost prevent the representatives of the capitalist class from regaining control of the City Council and the School Board. It is with this object in mind that I am addressing this personal letter to the electors of Ward 3, and appeal to them to vote a solid Labor ticket on Nov. 22nd. Mark your ballot with the Figure 1 for all Communist candidates; give your second and third preferences to I.L.P. candidates and re-elect Mayor John Queen.

"VOTE FOR THESE CANDIDATES"

For Mayor John Queen 1
For Alderman Jacob Penner 1
For School Trustee Andrew Bilecki 1

"VOTE A
FULL LABOR
TICKET"

Yours Sincerely, Alderman J. Penner"

There is no Communist Candidate for Mayor in this election, although they have nominated Aldermen, as usual.

Are the **PEOPLE** of **WINNIPEG** willing to have this combination in control of the City Council?

VOTERS of **WINNIPEG**
the **RESPONSIBILITY** is **YOURS**

You must decide FRIDAY, November 22nd

Inserted by Gunn's Campaign Committee.

APPENDIX B

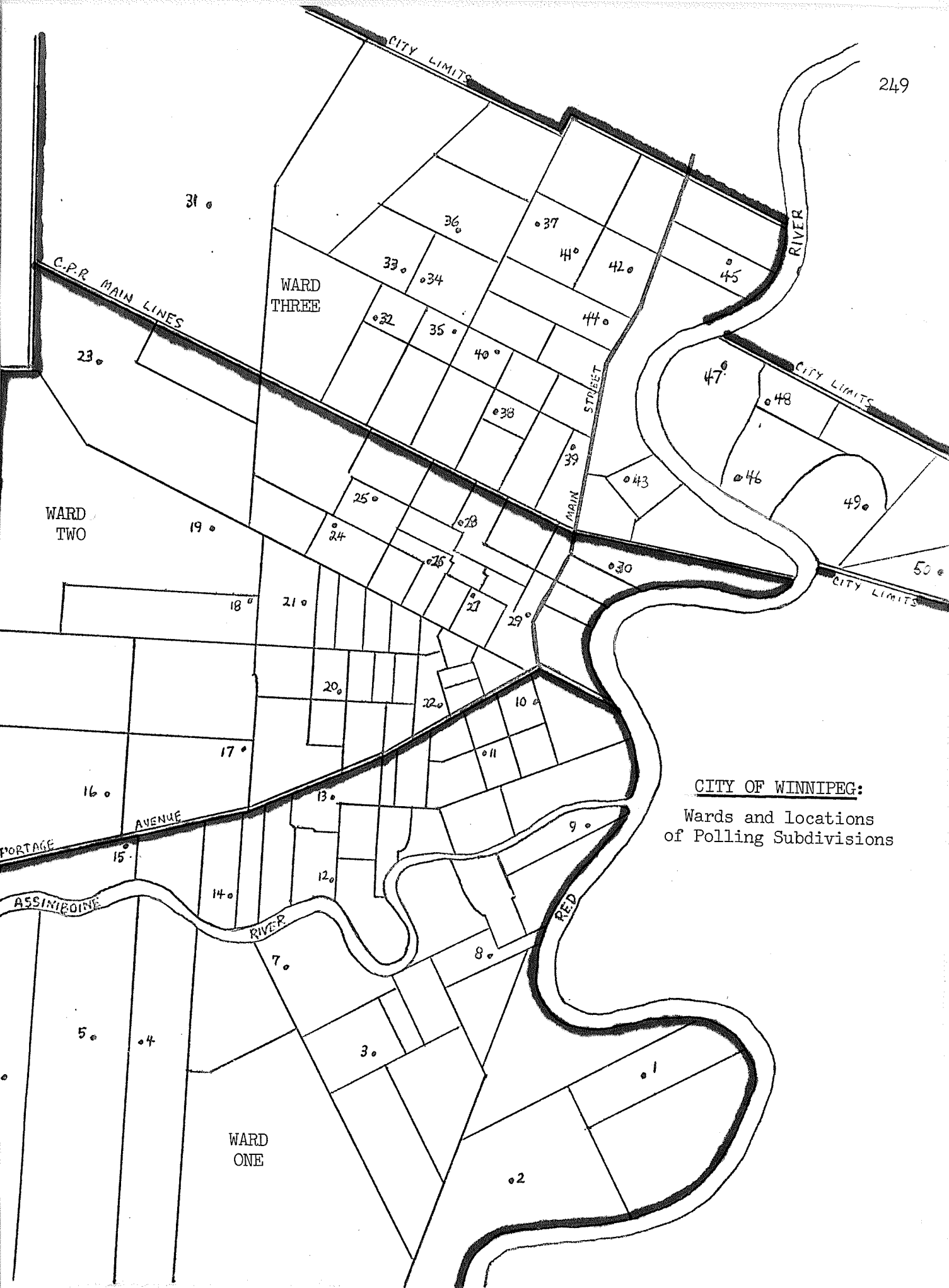
CITY OF WINNIPEG MAYORALTY ELECTION STATISTICS BY POLLING SUBDIVISIONS, 1932-1935

POLLING SUBDIVISION	1932			1933			1934			1935		
WARD ONE	CEC WEBB	ILP QUEEN	WUL PENNER	CEC WEBB	ILP QUEEN	WUL FORKIN	CEC McKERCHAR	ILP QUEEN	WUL NIL	CEC GUNN	ILP QUEEN	WUL NIL
1. Riverview	438	438	14	525	386	28	550	310	-	399	527	-
2. Lord Roberts	608	1094	47	740	1083	75	656	1221	-	496	1239	-
3. La Verandrye	716	565	66	808	584	73	687	702	-	619	782	-
4. Robert H. Smith	833	115	6	969	91	66	941	72	-	858	173	-
5. Queenston	814	195	3	1014	164	111	1022	153	-	714	344	-
6. Sir John Franklin	365	182	5	445	142	6	444	145	-	411	237	-
7. Kelvin Technical	1370	160	4	1453	151	9	1452	147	-	1305	323	-
8. Gladstone	808	484	21	911	449	36	733	616	-	683	643	-
9. Fort Rouge	658	243	15	773	242	16	635	319	-	558	424	-
10. Fire Hall No. 2	605	391	25	695	427	51	541	585	-	458	536	-
11. Alexandra	1013	394	13	1263	473	11	1062	553	-	907	646	-
12. Gordon Bell	525	103	2	549	98	0	530	77	-	424	193	-
13. Mulvey	1018	401	14	1215	417	18	1127	477	-	947	605	-
14. Laura Secord	1289	366	8	1470	337	9	1458	331	-	1202	565	-
15. Wolseley	626	224	0	747	209	10	719	189	-	585	287	-
TOTALS	11686	5355	243	13577	5253	359	12567	5897	-	10566	7524	-

POLLING SUBDIVISION	1932			1933			1934			1935		
WARD TWO	CEC WEBB	ILP QUEEN	WUL PENNER	CEC WEBB	ILP QUEEN	WUL FORKIN	CEC McKERCHAR	ILP QUEEN	WUL NIL	CEC GUNN	ILP QUEEN	WUL NIL
16. Isaac Brock	515	519	17	603	565	39	571	462	-	486	634	-
17. Greenway	710	571	19	900	613	35	787	652	-	823	1123	-
18. Daniel McIntyre	382	539	14	591	596	19	480	642	-	472	898	-
19. Principle Sparling	289	546	18	370	525	32	285	609	-	204	643	-
20. John M. King	1146	1202	47	1508	1221	91	1264	1417	-	669	1208	-
21. Wellington	628	721	37	817	831	60	644	1001	-	522	1004	-
22. Isbister	1229	1027	44	1501	1133	99	1139	1439	-	731	1131	-
23. Cecil Rhodes	452	892	106	579	738	355	430	1104	-	318	1206	-
24. Montcalm	196	244	9	255	276	26	205	305	-	176	377	-
25. Pinkham	210	363	39	296	433	45	179	564	-	169	497	-
26. Hugh John MacDonald	274	330	44	345	345	41	267	433	-	399	829	-
27. Victoria	291	335	46	383	367	69	262	464	218	318	756	-
28. Dufferin	238	287	64	268	328	1000	203	412	-	161	484	-
29. City Hall	292	186	12	338	181	13	241	203	-	239	248	-
30. Argyle	156	150	57	164	160	72	162	228	-	109	304	-
TOTALS	7008	7912	570	8918	8312	1096	7119	9925	-	5796	11244	-

POLLING SUBDIVISION	1932			1933			1934			1935		
WARD THREE	CEC WEBB	ILP QUEEN	WUL PENNER	CEC WEBB	ILP QUEEN	WUL FORKIN	CEC McKERCHAR	ILP QUEEN	WUL NIL	CEC GUNN	ILP QUEEN	WUL NIL
31. Florence Nightingale	104	122	141	113	139	170	104	235	-	67	305	-
32. King Edward	294	262	307	355	319	357	375	490	-	244	681	-
33. Margaret Scott	365	334	325	443	330	361	441	563	-	300	741	-
34. Isaac Newton	425	432	326	521	449	369	496	704	-	340	1014	-
35. Strathcona	463	421	281	536	376	341	436	676	-	365	981	-
36. Faraday	205	408	163	252	430	304	272	517	-	216	604	-
37. Ralph Brown	216	372	26	242	384	42	218	464	-	225	453	-
38. Aberdeen	274	251	112	276	231	144	163	423	-	143	544	-
39. David Livingstone	322	274	115	303	259	165	236	508	-	133	733	-
40. William Whyte	402	531	166	384	510	173	316	835	-	250	939	-
41. St. John's Tech.	278	380	43	335	394	49	312	518	-	241	606	-
42. Champlain	418	450	27	464	476	41	414	410	-	275	606	-
43. Norquay	326	248	303	412	298	384	404	466	-	255	855	-
44. Machray	423	491	115	448	441	119	432	653	-	256	882	-
45. Luxton	599	640	36	736	624	55	636	681	-	438	795	-
46. Anna Gibson	87	161	21	109	182	21	111	191	-	65	203	-
47. Glenwood	327	410	14	423	400	37	387	423	-	304	519	-
48. Lord Selkirk	286	594	38	347	499	70	255	670	-	215	684	-
49. Elmwood	281	435	76	284	591	36	252	645	-	184	617	-
50. Sir Sam Steele	57	151	28	67	181	38	51	231	-	36	210	-
Advance Poll	170	184	12	-	-	-	230	242	-	156	273	-
TOTALS	6322	7551	2674	7050	7417	3226	6541	10625	-	4108	13245	-

SOURCES: (Winnipeg Free Press, Nov. 16, 1932, Nov. 25, 1933, Nov. 24, 1934, Nov. 23, 1935).



APPENDIX C

PARTIAL I.L.P. PARTY PLATFORM, 1933 CIVIC ELECTION

1. The undertaking of necessary public works by the government with standard rates of wages.
2. Maintenance in cash on a standard that will reserve self-respect for those who cannot be provided with work.
3. That as far as possible all civic construction be done by the city.
4. Social ownership of all public utilities.
5. The acquisition of the public utilities of the Winnipeg Electric Company and subsidiaries at a price that is economically sound.
6. All hospitals municipal trading in milk and other necessities of life as rapidly as circumstances permit.
7. A shorter working week with no reduction in wages.
8. A municipal housing scheme.
9. Adequate provision for public libraries and extension of they system.
10. Resident adult suffrage and abolition of plural voting.
11. Drastic reduction of present interest rates on municipal borrowing.
12. Establishment of a municipal bank.
13. That City Council cease to default on its obligations to the school board.
14. Immediate restoration of Grade 12.
15. Free text books.
16. Free education in all grades under the jurisdiction of the school board.

Winnipeg Free Press, Oct. 30, 1933, pp. 1, 6.

APPENDIX D

UNITED FRONT PLATFORM, 1933 CIVIC ELECTION

A. UNEMPLOYMENT:

1. Immediate enactment of a non-contributory unemployment insurance bill, the funds for which shall be provided by the Dominion government and the employers.
2. Enactment of a bill providing for a seven-hour day and a five-day week without any reduction in wages and earnings of workers.
3. Enactment of a bill against mortgages or tax foreclosures on unemployed workers' homes.

B. RELIEF:

1. A 20% increase in the value of the present food tickets for the married unemployed.
2. A married rent allowance to the amount of \$20 to \$25 per month, according to the size of the family.
3. Relief-clothes vouchers redeemable at any clothing store and to the amount sufficient to provide for all necessary clothes and footwear, to be given out on the same system as food tickets.
4. Sufficient coal and wood to be provided for all heating and cooking needs of the unemployed.
5. Monthly cash allowances for incidental necessities.
6. Immediate abolition of the new regulations whereby men are sent to the salve [sic - slave] camps for six months after marriage; allowance for light and water for unemployed families, and provisions to supply homes of unemployed with furniture, utensils and bedding.

C. SINGLE UNEMPLOYED:

1. Immediate abolition of all slave camps for single unemployed
2. Twenty-one, twenty-five cent meal tickets per week to be accepted at restaurants, boarding houses or private houses as payment for meals.

3. Room rent allowance to the extent of eight dollars per month.
4. Relief clothes vouchers redeemable at any clothing store and to the amount sufficient to provide for all necessary clothes and footwear.
5. Monthly cash allowance for incidental necessities.
6. Current wages to be paid on all relief work.
7. Trade union rates to be paid on Lac Seul project.
8. No unemployed to be sent to private enterprise to work for relief received.
9. No deportation of workers on the supposed grounds of being a public charge.

D. OTHER PLANKS:

1. Cancellation of all interest payments on city of Winnipeg bonds.
2. Extension of the right to vote for every worker of eighteen years and over, of both sexes, irrespective of property or tenant qualifications.

The Worker, Oct. 16, 1933.

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