

A SURVEY OF THE REFORM MOVEMENT IN MANITOBA 1910 to 1920

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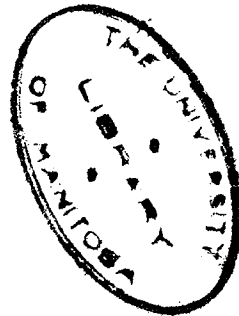


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ABBREVIATIONS

<u>Guide</u>	<u>The Grain Growers' Guide</u>
<u>Hansards</u>	A collection of newspaper clippings of the debates in the Manitoba Legislature. There is no official record.
<u>MFP</u>	<u>The Manitoba Free Press</u>
<u>PAM</u>	The Provincial Archives of Manitoba
<u>PN</u>	Referring to the page number in a collection of newspaper clippings on politics compiled in the Provincial Library of Manitoba.
<u>Telegram</u>	<u>The Winnipeg Telegram</u>
<u>Tribune</u>	<u>The Winnipeg Tribune</u>
<u>Voice</u>	<u>The Voice</u>

INTRODUCTION

Politics in Manitoba in the period before the First Great War were probably the most colourful and important in provincial history. A host of complex issues clamoured to be solved. To name a few of the more dominant: the role of the provincial government and the demands of a new economic society; a solution for questions of morals such as temperance; the demand by farming and urban wage-earners for a greater voice in government, and the place of Eastern and Central European immigrants in a community dominated by the Anglo-Saxon. Any one of these factors alone would tax the ability of the politicians of any day, but when several coincided, the end result was sure to be a profound transformation in Manitoba's political existence.

This thesis will attempt to deal with one aspect of the situation - the reform movement during the second decade of the twentieth century, relating the events primarily to the Anglo-Saxon community. In tracing them, attention will be paid to the conflict between the Conservative and Liberal parties, the weaknesses of the latter, and the drift of reform sentiment to that party. The first chapter will establish the economic, social and political background to the problem. In the next, the main objects of reform sentiment - single tax, direct legislation, woman suffrage, temperance, social gospel - will be described. The third will deal with the growing labour movement, its aspirations, growth and handicaps. The farmers' economic and political movement, together with its inability to league with

labour to form a true reform in Manitoba, in the fourth. The fifth chapter will draw together the activities of the various reform groups from 1910 to 1914. The conclusion of this section will deal also with the defeat of the Conservative Government in 1915. The final chapter deals with the collapse of the reform spirit during the years 1915 to 1920.

The story will explain why Manitoba underwent a five-year period of advanced social reform from 1915 to 1920. It will answer the questions: was this progressive legislation the result of an aroused sympathy for woman's suffrage, direct legislation, single tax and other reform planks; why did the reform groups only flourish during this period; was the character of the reformers radical or moderate; what influence did the reform sentiment have on the politics of the day? Another aim is to describe the developments within the provincial labour and farmers' political groups during a period that has been hitherto largely neglected with the exception of the Winnipeg strike of 1919 and the rise of the progressive movement of the same period.

The bulk of material for this work came from newspapers in the Provincial Library of Manitoba. Other reading matter - books, pamphlets, government documents - came from the same source as well as the Library of the University of Manitoba. The shading and detail in the election maps were compiled by the author from election results found in Political Scrapbooks and the map file of the Provincial Library.

I wish to express my appreciation to all those who have assisted in compiling this work. The staff of the Provincial Library, particularly Miss Melba Verge; Miss Anne Slavin and Mr. Clare Irwin for aid in proof-reading; and for typing of the finished copy, Mrs. I.M. Temple. Of special mention, Professor W.L. Morton, who suggested the topic and provided moral support throughout the term.

CHAPTER I

MANITOBA IN THE FIRST DECADE OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

The Conservative party of Manitoba was practically annihilated in the election of 1915, but that defeat can only be partially explained by the happenings of that year. The events that built up to the Liberal party's landslide go back at least 20 years to the 1890's with the Manitoba School Question and the Patrons of Husbandry. The following decade saw the growth of such groups in the Liberal movement, as suffrage, single tax, direct legislation, temperance and the social gospel, which were to play a strong role in the Conservative rout. Underlying political changes, social and economic factors as well were very important. The Liberal victory, therefore, was not one for that party per se, but a climax of a series of incidents.

a. The Province Undergoes a Complex Series of Internal Changes

The population of Manitoba changed rapidly, not only in numbers, but also in composition as to age, sex and nationality during the first decade of the twentieth century. Within the ten year span from 1901 on, the province's population jumped from 255,211 to 461,630.¹ So great was the increase, that during the 1901 to 1906 period, the numbers rose by 43.29%. While the rural population of the province remained larger than the urban, it was declining in proportion, falling from 72.40% in 1901 to

¹ See: C.B. Davidson, H.C. Grant, F. Shefrin, Population of Manitoba (Winnipeg: Economic Survey Board, Province of Manitoba, January, 1938), Census of Canada, 1911. Vol. I (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1912).

56.57% ten years later. Winnipeg, the capital city gained a much larger share of new citizens than did the rest of the province; some rural areas showed absolute decreases in numbers.²

The composition of the province as to age, sex, birth distribution reveals how close Manitoba was to the frontier stage. It was a young province with the age group under twenty years comprising nearly one half of the total for all ages. The proportion of males to females was socially unhealthy being 121.3 to 100 in 1911. This discrepancy was even greater in the 20 to 30 year class which contained the highest number of marriageable young people. Another unsettling factor was the utter lack of familiarity of many residents with their province, much less Canadian institutions. In 1911, only 38.20% of the people had been born in Manitoba; 20.5% came from other provinces; a like number from Great Britain and a slightly larger percentage were of foreign birth.³

The combination of the various races that made up the population had undergone many changes. Near the commencement of the twentieth century, the Anglo-Saxons had been dominant with a minority of French, Mennonites and Icelanders. While the former group maintained its preponderance, growing numbers arrived from Eastern and Central Europe. By 1911, those born on Continental Europe numbered 78,056, one-seventh from Scandinavia, the remainder divided between the latter areas. Settlers from Eastern and

² The federal district of Lisgar dropped from 26,899 in 1901 to 25,978 ten years later. Population of the Prairie Provinces, 1916 (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1918), p. 5.

³ C.B. Davidson, et al., Population of Manitoba, p. 35.

Central Europe could be found in numerous parts of the province, however, many concentrated in the rougher and wooded areas, such as the area between Lakes Winnipeg and Manitoba, an area which had been abandoned or ignored by earlier settlers. Accustomed to a low standard of material wants and employing the labour of large families, they turned these lands to a profit.

Economically, Manitoba underwent a mild revolution just as complex as that in population. Agriculture remained the basic industry and wheat dominated agriculture. Its supremacy was due to a number of factors: the fertility of the soil, the semi-arid climate favoring wheat specialization, the use of large-scale agricultural machinery and the development of early maturing and drought resistant varieties.⁴ Combined with a period of rising prices and generally favorable weather conditions, the acreage and value of wheat rapidly rose.

While Manitoba farmers rode along on the crest of the wheat boom, other crops began to occupy a larger share of farm production. In the main, these were rye, oats, barley. The demands from a rising urban population stimulated other agricultural endeavors. Market gardening spread out along the banks of the Red River and increased attention was paid to poultry, livestock and dairying.

Industry expanded rapidly. Winnipeg became the centre for the Western grain trade and by reason of its strategic position was called

⁴ G.E. Britnell, The Wheat Economy (Political Economy Series, Vol. 4. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1939), p. xv.

the Gateway to the West and the Chicago of the West. The city's expansion was not based upon heavy industry. Most manufacturing was of a light nature, such as garment trades, public utilities, transportation, administration and wholesale houses. Such was this city's growth, that in 1910 its building record topped that of all Canadian cities.⁵ Brandon and Saint Boniface also shared in the new prosperity, although Portage la Prairie lagged behind.

b. Growing Economic and Social Problems Demand Relief

This active climb in economic prosperity and population was matched by a serious surge in economic and social problems.

The farmer and the urban labourer had to establish new relationships with the economy.⁶ The former no longer produced for subsistence but for a surplus. He had become part of a world economy, facing many situations over which he had no control - in particular, those of transportation costs and prices generally. The high price of the former he resented and the complexities of the latter he failed to comprehend and therefore resented. If he could overcome the man-made restrictions over marketing, the perils of hail, frost, drought and grasshoppers could wipe out his crop. The farmer's main concern was to earn a greater profit from his product.

In the city, the connection of the worker, male, female, and child -

⁵ Winnipeg Saturday Post, June 4, 1910, p. 1.

⁶ W.A. MacKintosh, Economic Problems of the Prairie Provinces (Canadian Frontiers of Settlement, Vol. 4. Toronto: The MacMillan Company of Canada Limited, 1935), pp. 8-46.

toward management had to be fitted into an economic society which had lost the familiarity of the small shop. Trade unions were of minor, yet mounting importance in the province. Their activity was hampered by numerous factors, the most significant being non-recognition by employers. And like the farmers, they believed that they were not obtaining a fair share of national income.

Socially, Manitoba was in more of a turmoil.

The main problem that had to be solved was the position of the recently arrived European immigrant to that of the dominant Anglo-Saxon. Both races conflicted in many fields, such as education and labour. A solution to their problems, if there was one, was complicated not only by race, but also by language, religion and culture. These immigrants from Continental Europe had emigrated from a totally different environment and found it difficult to establish themselves in the new land. The period of adjustment was even more herculean in that their institutional structure was not strong, they had few leaders during the first few years, and the practice of settling on blocs of their own racial group cut them off from Anglo-Saxon leadership.⁷

There was little opportunity to bring the two races together. Inter-marriage was infrequent; the common meeting ground of occupation rarely existed. When many maintained old country patterns - the Byzantine style churches, ceremonies, holidays, embroidered clothing - the immigrants

⁷ P.J. Giffen, Adult Education in Relation to Rural Social Structure: A Comparative Study of Three Manitoba Communities (Winnipeg: Mimeographed, 1939), pp. 115-118.

appeared almost barbarous to their Anglo-Saxon neighbors' unaccustomed eyes. Little understood, they became the butt of many rude jokes;⁸ the word Galician, the label erroneously applied to those of Central and European stock, became synonymous with drinking brawls. Together with the contempt exhibited towards them, there was often an element of fear. Many Anglo-Saxons were deeply concerned over the rapid increase in Galician numbers. Their concern was well founded, since:

Continental immigration was increasing on such a scale in the prewar years, that, if the war had not come in 1914, it is safe to say that Canada, by the years 1917 and 1918, would have been faced with a preponderating Continental influx.⁹

Generally, these new immigrants received little aid in solving their adjustment to Manitoba. Spiritually, Protestant and Catholic churches each sought to gain their souls. Materially possessing little, if any, literacy and few skills, they wound up on railroad construction gangs and the poorer lands in the province. Rare was the individual or organization in the community calling for more joint responsibility towards the state of the immigrant.

There were other tremors within the social fabric. Fewer restraints from parental and family ties and that of a more established community, combined with the winter influx of labourers from railways and timber crews into Winnipeg, led to an undue emphasis upon drinking, gambling and other social vices. This nonconformist spirit towards social mores and institutions was further enhanced by the presence of

⁸ Winnipeg Saturday Post, May 14, 1910, p. 2.

⁹ Robert England, The Colonization of Western Canada (London: P.S. King and Son Limited, 1936), p. 82; also, W.J. Dafoe, Clifford Sifton in Relation to His Times (Toronto: The MacMillan Company of Canada Limited, 1931), (Hereafter: Dafoe, Clifford Sifton), p. 318.

representatives from many different cultural milieus. Those immigrants who had fled restraining influences at home - economic, political and cultural - to find a fresh outlet for their belief, also were a disturbing factor. In contrast to these three groups were those rather puritan groups, usually Anglo-Saxon in origin, who supported such movements as prohibition. Thus, the problem of reconciling many opposing modes of social behavior arose.

c. Manitoba Politics Attempts to Meet Some Problems of the Day

Provincial politics had to adapt itself to the new conditions.¹⁰ The increased populations year by year left the political parties uncertain where their support would come from. This unsteady situation forced both parties to compete for the immigrant vote. In a day when party loyalties were intense and electoral victories won by a small margin, the immigrant could play a decisive role in political affairs since he seldom had party ties.

Both Liberals and Conservatives did not hesitate to use all the resources at their command to attract supporters, perhaps the most infamous of which was that of liquor. Reverend J.S. Woodsworth has graphically portrayed its use during one campaign:

All the foreigners in the West know about their responsibility as voters was that if they cast their ballots 'right', it meant a bottle of whiskey for them. In a recent election in Winnipeg,

¹⁰ E. Scott Reid, "The Saskatchewan Liberal Machine Before 1925", CJEPS, II, 1936, pp. 27-40; J.J. Sentura, "Political Corruption", Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1931), pp. 448-451.

260 kegs of beer were delivered to the foreigners on two streets./¹¹

The party in power had a decided edge in this contest to provide the greatest number of favours, by the virtue of its control of the general administration and public purse. The usual rural immigrant lived in a district that required many improvements and a vote for the opposition would not assure a new road or bridge. Then, during a period of cleavage between different social institutions, the government could win favour with religious or national groups by granting them special privileges, such as in respect to schools. Newspapers, parties, clubs, drink and money were provided for their entertainment.

While this campaign for the immigrant was dirty, political practices were just as rough in other aspects. Politics during the prewar period were: "in its more primitive and organic manifestations . . . not a game nor a sport but a form of civil war, with only lethal weapons barred."¹² Everything possible was employed in this struggle: misrepresentation of opponents, the outright purchase of votes and the full use of the government apparatus to place as many obstacles as possible in the opposition's way. By actual count in the 1910 provincial election, only seven candidates out of nearly 90 were not called liars, boodlers, or crooks, by their opponents.¹³

A whiff of party feelings can be seen in the party newspapers

¹¹ Carman Standard, March 24, 1910, p. 4.

¹² Dafoe, Clifford Sifton, p. 172.

¹³ Tribune, July 9, 1910, p. 1.

of the period. There were three dailies:¹⁴ the Winnipeg Telegram was the subsidized press of the Conservative government; the Manitoba Free Press was the organ of the opposition Liberals; and the Winnipeg Tribune was an independent that gradually moved closer to the provincial Liberals in the period between the 1910 and 1914 elections.¹⁵ Backing these dailies were a host of rural weeklies, many of which were influenced by government printing contracts to follow the Conservative line.¹⁶ A noted occasion when a paper turned its political allegiance occurred in 1910, when the Brandon Times, which had hitherto extolled the virtues of the Conservative party, completely reversed its support ten days prior to the election.¹⁷ The basis for this change was the failure of the

¹⁴ Circulation figures for 1915. The Manitoba Free Press a total of 70,797, with 36,074 in urban Winnipeg and 34,723 in the country. The Tribune had 24,503 in Winnipeg and 6,900 outside for a total of 31,458. See the Publishers' Semi-Annual Statement of Circulation, Annual Revision of Audit Circulation Bureau (Chicago: 1915). For the Telegram, figures vary, since large numbers were given away outright or disposed of in promotional schemes. A rough approximation obtained by the author from the circulation departments of the Winnipeg Free Press and Winnipeg Tribune would place its total about 15,000 to 18,000. Figures cited in the Telegram gave its circulation as 32,000 in 1910 and 12,000 more by 1915. Telegram, July 11, 1910, p. 4; Ibid., August 3, 1915, p. 4.

¹⁵ R.L. Richardson, the publisher, ran as a straight Liberal in Lisgar in 1896. He later broke with the party and ran as an independent in 1900; in a similar independent campaign, he was defeated in 1904; four years later he met defeat in Assiniboia, Saskatchewan; 1913 saw Richardson run as an independent with Liberal support in a by-election in Macdonald. In 1917 he was elected as a Unionist in Springfield. After selling his paper to the Southam chain in 1920, he soon passed away.

¹⁶ Norman E. Wright, In View of the Turtle Hill (Deloraine: Deloraine Times Publishing Co., 1951), p. 112. "By reason of politics there are about twice as many newspapers being published in Manitoba as there is a decent living for ..."

¹⁷ Tribune, July 9, 1910, p. 4; Telegram, July 8, PN 100.

conservative party to furnish it with sufficient money. Throughout most of the party press of the time, political news was almost always distorted out of real meaning to gain favour. Two other weekly journals of the day were the Voice, representative of trade union opinion, and the Grain Growers' Guide, an organ of the organized farmers.¹⁸

While Manitoba attempted to grapple with her internal problems, further difficulties arose out of ideas which came from abroad, winning a certain degree of influence among many Anglo-Saxon residents. The tenets of Teddy Roosevelt, William Jennings Bryan, La Follette and Woodrow Wilson, calling for a greater role for the common people in government and restricting the power of corporate industry, were very attractive. From England came further stimulating examples to local social reformers in the rising Labour Party, the flourishing co-operative movement and the Lloyd George budgets. These ideas found a fertile soil in the West and were to provide a background for local movements.

The strains placed upon the provincial government were almost monumental. Not only did it have to deal with the assimilation of the immigrant and the acceptance of new social modes of behaviour, but its very foundation had to be reexamined as the province evolved from a simple agricultural community to a complex one of the twentieth century. Fields that had long dominated the provincial budget, like education and

¹⁸ Circulation figures. The Grain Growers' Guide in 1913 had 6,803 subscribers in Manitoba and 26,006 others in the West. The Guide, January 5, 1913, p. 3. The Voice had about 2,000; figures obtained from A.W. Tuttee, editor of same.

general administration, were taxed by the influx of new settlers. Then there were those others that a modern community demanded - public health inspection, roads, power. Agriculture, as the province's leading industry, had to have a considerable degree of attention through weed control measures, agricultural education, et cetera. In a semi-frontier province many looked to the local government to furnish those services, such as the telephone, that the community desired at a quicker rate than private enterprise could profitably provide. Each increase in service required additional capital, forcing the provincial government to enter new fields of taxation. Another aspect was the dominant place of the federal government in providing monies, the provincial government continually going to Ottawa to obtain better treatment, in particular, a higher subsidy and control of public lands to help defray the heavy capital expenditures.

.. The Record of the Conservative Government

The Conservative administration that swept into power in 1899 over Liberal premier, Thomas Greenway, on a programme of economy in finances, temperance reform and provincial rights, had to face many of these problems.¹⁹ The group held office through four successive elections - 1903, 1907, 1910, 1914 - and was decisive in the federal victories in the province in 1908 and 1911. Their stay in office for fifteen years was the longest for any government during the first fifty years of Manitoba's political history. A strong measure of its success was due to the

¹⁹ See Appendix A.

influence of its leader and lieutenant, whose personalities often counted for much in a day when the party follower often identified himself with the leader. Premier Rodmond Palen Roblin was a powerful platform speaker; the shrewd political generalship of Robert Rogers, the minister of public works, was ever alert to popular issues of the day.

The true test of their adroitness is revealed in their ability to gain Conservative support from the bulk of both ultra-protestant Orangemen and the French Roman Catholics. Various favours strengthened the loyalty of both groups. Educational favours granted the several national minorities, many of whom were Catholics, attracted their allegiance.²⁰ The success of such a policy was in a large part the cause for those districts - following a rough line of settlement of Central and Eastern immigrants concentrated in a narrow crescent shape from Vita to near Ethelbert²¹ - returning Conservative members. Many Anglo-Saxons retained a deep attachment to the Old Country and the Premier continually appealed to them in a flavour much reminiscent of those of John A. Macdonald. In this regard, Roblin's passage of an act requiring all provincial schools to fly the Union Jack, was strongly flavoured with emotional appeal: "Who with a single drop of British blood in his veins does not honor and love the old flag"²² declared the Premier.

Of fundamental importance was the deeper Conservative character of

²⁰ See Carman Standard, August 11, 1910, p. 4, report on the French attitude to Conservative stand on schools, reprinted from Les Cloches de Saint Boniface.

^{21/} R. England, Colonization of Western Canada, p. 203.

^{22/} Record of the Roblin Government (Winnipeg: Printer Unknown, 1907), 1900-1907, p. 38.

Manitoba when contrasted with the two other western provinces. This can be partially explained by the province's more settled character - politically, socially, economically. The local and federal Conservative parties had strong progressive records. John A. Macdonald's name is linked with the development of Western Canada, and every federal election, save two, saw a majority of Conservative M.P.'s go to Ottawa.²³ A strong group within the community, stronger than their numbers warranted, was the Ontario Irish with its local Orange association. These people were intensely Conservative. Political principles moved very few, and with such a strong backbone of support, the government of Premier Roblin was in a powerful position.

The doctrine of laissez-faire could never be a popular one in the west and the Manitoba administration by necessity if not conviction, found itself entering many fields to aid local residents, in particular, the grain growers. Railways played a dominant role in the opening up of Manitoba to further settlement and expansion. From all parts of the province came demands for more feeder lines to facilitate delivery. The Roblin government attained an outstanding success in this field, largely by the liberal employment of provincial guarantees for railroad securities. Under this scheme, the Canadian Northern Railway constructed over 1,200 miles of track within provincial boundaries. These guarantees were granted

²³ Results: Conservatives (C), Liberals (L). 1872 - (C) 3, (L) 1; 1874 - (C) 2, (L) 2; 1878 - (C) 3, (L) 1; 1882 - (C) 2, (L) 3; 1887 - (C) 4, (L) 1; 1896 - (C) 4, (L) 2; 1900 - (C) 3, (L) 2. Parliamentary Guide, 1914, p. 268.

on condition that the C.N.R. reduce its freight rates, a deed that compelled the Canadian Pacific Railway to follow suit. The enthusiastic optimism of the times swept away most doubts as to any dreaded possibility of the government being forced to pay such a burden. To the Manitobans, the Conservative plan was much more attractive than that of the late Premier, Thomas Greenway, viz., to pay a direct cash subsidy of \$1,750 per mile of trackage laid.

The purchase of the Bell Telephone System in 1907 heralded the entrance of the Conservative administration into large-scale government ownership. A virtual monopoly was established, only a small number of local municipalities continued to operate their own plants while sharing the province's long distance lines. The expansion of the Bell Company in rural districts had not satisfied local residents, many desiring a government operated scheme, offering service at cost. During the years of government operation from 1907 to 1910, over 9,000 subscribers were added to the system, with nearly a third of these in rural areas.

Less spectacular, but tangible reminders of the provincial government's work, were those public works carried out all over the province. They ranged from purely routine expenditures to those accepting provincial responsibility for social control. Building construction was extensive, including, land titles offices, the Manitoba Agricultural College, normal school, Industrial Training School, and additions to the hospital for the insane and the Deaf and Dumb Institute.

There was a growing need for higher technical efficiency in an

age with the tempo of a second industrial revolution. From many quarters came a demand for a more practical slant in education to help meet the need. The Manitoba Agricultural College not only scientifically trained farmers on its campus, but also offered household science subjects and co-operated with the Department of Agriculture in holding agricultural extension courses about the province. A commission to examine technical education had been set up and soon Winnipeg could boast of two technical schools, Kelvin Technical High School and St. John's Technical High School.

Provincial expenditures reveal the large expansion of government duties. In 1900, they amounted to \$905,331.06; within ten years, they had mounted nearly fourfold to \$3,376,892.50. This rapid rise was matched by an increasing dependence upon new fields to taxation, such as on corporations. All increased services were achieved without any resort to direct taxation, a power within provincial jurisdiction heretofore avoided as bad politics. While the government could be praised for its endeavours, the extensive capital expenditures were a serious liability upon the future of the province. The Conservative government was fortunate, it had attained office during the commencement of a world-wide boom. An economic dip, however, would provide a different situation, particularly as the province's lands were sold. By 1913, so heavy were Manitoba's liabilities, that they exceeded those of neighbouring Ontario, a province much larger in population.

Whatever the financial situation might have been, the government entered new fields during the 1910 legislative session. To aid the

farmer carry his produce to market, \$500,000 was appropriated for the development of rural roads. Provision was made for the erection of a public abattoir to stimulate the nascent livestock industry. A workmen's compensation act was passed for the benefit of the growing urban labourer. The outstanding bill of the session was the passage of enabling legislation providing for a system of government line elevators.

On the surface, the strength of the Conservative party was quite impressive. Election victories in 1903 and 1907 revealed the approval of the electorate and its forgiveness for the failure of the government to enact a number of planks in its 1899 platform. But all was not right. While legislation had been passed placing the government in new fields, the elevators and the telephones were still too new to have been tested. The government had yet to meet the test of hard economic times.

The loose coalition that supported the government could easily split on the explosive school issue. The Premier maintained both by following a status quo course on the latter. More Anglo-Saxons, however, were becoming interested in the question of racial assimilation, and saw that the schools were the medium for such a course. Particularly was this the case among those of the Methodist and Presbyterian affiliation, and to a lesser degree, Congregationalists and Baptists. Their voice could not be discounted since they compassed over 185,000 of the province's population with an influence much greater than their numerical strength would warrant on a strict percentage basis.²⁴ It was from this

²⁴ Presbyterians, 103,621; Methodists, 65,897; Congregationalists, 2,997; Baptists, 13,992.

group as well that came the majority of supporters for the protest groups on temperance, woman suffrage, direct legislation, single tax and reciprocity. A partial explanation for their interest lay in the fact that many came from the more settled parts of the province and had more time to take an interest in public issues. Many of the proposals they made, crossed party lines. As these groups grew in strength, Premier Roblin would have a difficult time attempting to appease them and their criticisms.

As the 1910 election approached, the Premier could afford to ignore these groups. The suffrage movement found itself without any strong central guiding body, and the women of the province could not vote against the Conservatives. The ills that the single taxers hoped to cure were buried in the boom period. Direct Legislation had not gained widespread support. The trades unions and farmers' organizations had still relatively few members. Temperance was a perennial question, but its forces could not agree on what further measures were necessary.

e. The Provincial Liberal Party in Difficulties

The Conservative government was all the more secure since it faced a weak Liberal opposition. The latter had little electoral appeal. The party leadership was quite unsteady and within a decade, there had been four leaders chosen. T.C. Norris²⁵ was the immediate one, while

²⁵ T.C. Norris represented Lansdowne constituency. He was elected to the House in 1896, 1899, 1907, 1910, 1915, 1920, 1922, 1927. His only defeat was suffered in 1903. T.C. Norris led the Cabinet from May 12, 1915 to August 8, 1922.

Edward A. Brown, a former one, although weak at the polls, still retained an important voice in party counsel. The Liberals were split into several factions because of the insurgency of R.L. Richardson, editor and publisher of the Winnipeg Tribune, and the withdrawal of Clifford Sifton, the one-time political manager for Manitoba, from active politics. Among independent voters, the party was viewed askance because of the heritage of the Liberal administration of Thomas Greenway - one noted for its rough and tumble tactics.

One major handicap of the Liberals was its apparent close attachment to the federal government of Sir Wilfrid Laurier. The federal Liberals were none too popular with the majority of Manitobans, as the election results reveal. Many party stalwarts were quite disappointed over the abrupt change of the federal party after its election in 1896. President R.C. Henders of the Manitoba Grain Growers, could understand the high tariff views of the Conservatives, but the "course of the old Liberal (party) is inexplicable." It has indeed become much similar to the federal Conservatives. There had been no extensive downward revision of the tariff and little had been done on the Hudson Bay Railway. A number of scandals had also left the group with a bad reputation. Ottawa had particularly antagonized Manitobans by its refusal to grant what many local citizens labelled equality with the other provinces. Not only had Laurier refused to extend the provincial boundaries, thereby keeping Manitoba a postage stamp province, but he also had refused to increase her subsidy and to return the province's natural

resources and school lands to her exclusive control.²⁶ It was alleged that Laurier, a Catholic, did not wish to extend the boundaries, as the school issue would be aroused again due to the separate schools in the northern territories.²⁷ Premier Roblin could pose as the defender of Manitoba's interests and could continually snipe at the Liberals for not being fair to the province. Provincial Liberals tried to escape part of the public odium in co-operating with the Conservatives in chastising the federal group for not aiding Manitoba. An important part of Conservative strategy was to play up the close connection between the local and federal Liberals, underlined by the prominent number on the federal payroll, such as T.C. Norris, a Dominion lands auctioneer, George Walton, the same, the doctors J.W. Armstrong and R.S. Thornton, Dominion doctors, and J.B. Baird, a Dominion postmaster.²⁸ In this strategy, Premier Roblin continued a Manitoba tradition of hostility to the federal government.

The Liberal's main failing was its lack of a constructive appeal. One example is the review published in the Manitoba Free Press on the party's "highly satisfactory results" of the 1910 legislature.²⁹ The

²⁶ C.C. Lingard, Territorial Government in Canada (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1946), pp. 8-16. When Manitoba was created a province, she was denied the control of the public domain within her boundaries. The four original members of the Dominion - Quebec, Ontario, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick - retained control of the Crown lands.

²⁷ Ibid., p. 201; Dafoe, Clifford Sifton, p. 280.

²⁸ Record of the Roblin Government, 1900-1914 (Winnipeg: Publisher Unknown, 1914), p. 172.

²⁹ MFP, April 29, 1910, FN 144.

following were enumerated as major accomplishments: a demand to investigate an alleged scandal involving the Premier; the discovery of the "systematic plundering of the public accounts"; a proclamation that the Agricultural College employees were used as electioneering agents; the disclosure that the telephone department revenues were subsidizing the provincial budget and the urging that the provincial government accept the territory offered by the Dominion government. There was little constructive in the list, indeed the majority revolve about various scandals. These charges were rather impotent against an administration that appeared to be doing a successful job.

When "the Flower of Manitoba Liberalism" met in their 1910 convention, they still had little to offer the electorate.³⁰ The tone of the meeting was set by Edward Brown, who demanded that "the people should rule." Professor W.F. Osborne sounded another theme - the need "for a higher standard of public morality in the province of Manitoba". The depredations of the Conservative government were dwelt upon and certain remedies proposed: remodelling the election law; placing the telephones under an independent commission; the removal of judges from politics. A number of Liberal planks like the establishment of a provincial university, the remodelling of the public lands policy, the creation of a separate portfolio for agriculture and a more equitable distribution of taxation to the municipalities, had little popular appeal. The party capped their list of promises, by pledging

³⁰ MFP, April 1910, PN 135. See Appendix B.

themselves to reduce provincial expenditures by \$200,000 a year, although increasing services and omitting any concrete economics. Of more significance, were the inclusion of several planks, the use of Direct Legislation, the extension of restrictive liquor legislation and the introduction of compulsory education, that were to mount in importance in the next half decade after 1910.

f. The 1910 Provincial Election

While only three years had passed since the last general election, the Conservative government announced a snap election in 1910 on three issues: to test the popularity of the administration; to have a verdict on the boundary issue; and to have the views of the electorate on the elevator question.³¹ It is more probable that the contest was called to win immediate political advantage on the latter question. The boundary issue was a repeated election issue that helped distract electors from some of the administration's shortcomings by arousing their anger against the federal government.

There were interesting incidents during the rough campaign. The Liberals attempted to appear as the party of purity by hurling charges of Conservative scandals and extravagances going back as far as 1902. The government, in its turn, continually re-emphasized its fine record. The Conservatives virtually ignored the Liberal programme. On three issues alone was there any interest: on temperance, the

³¹ Eye-Witness, Birtle, June 28, 1910, p. 1.

virtues of the existing system of local option were extolled; Direct Legislation was denounced as a fad; and it was stressed that any tampering with compulsory education would raise the old question of the Manitoba Schools Act - the latter stand being endorsed by the independent Winnipeg Tribune.³² One Liberal tactic aroused some notice. That party completely aligned itself with the Manitoba Grain Growers' Association in its controversy over the administration of the proposed elevator system with the government. The Liberals received few accolades for their pains. In brief they were told to keep the elevator question out of politics. The large number of petitions requesting the government to provide elevators indicated the support given by many farmers toward the Conservative government.

As election day approached on June 11, more and more recriminations were flung about on charges of graft, disenfranchisement of party followers, stuffing of voters' lists with bogus names, the employment of detectives and the use of imported crooks. Conditions were so crude that the Winnipeg Tribune lamented the fact that there was so little to choose between both parties and that those days when principles counted were now gone.³³

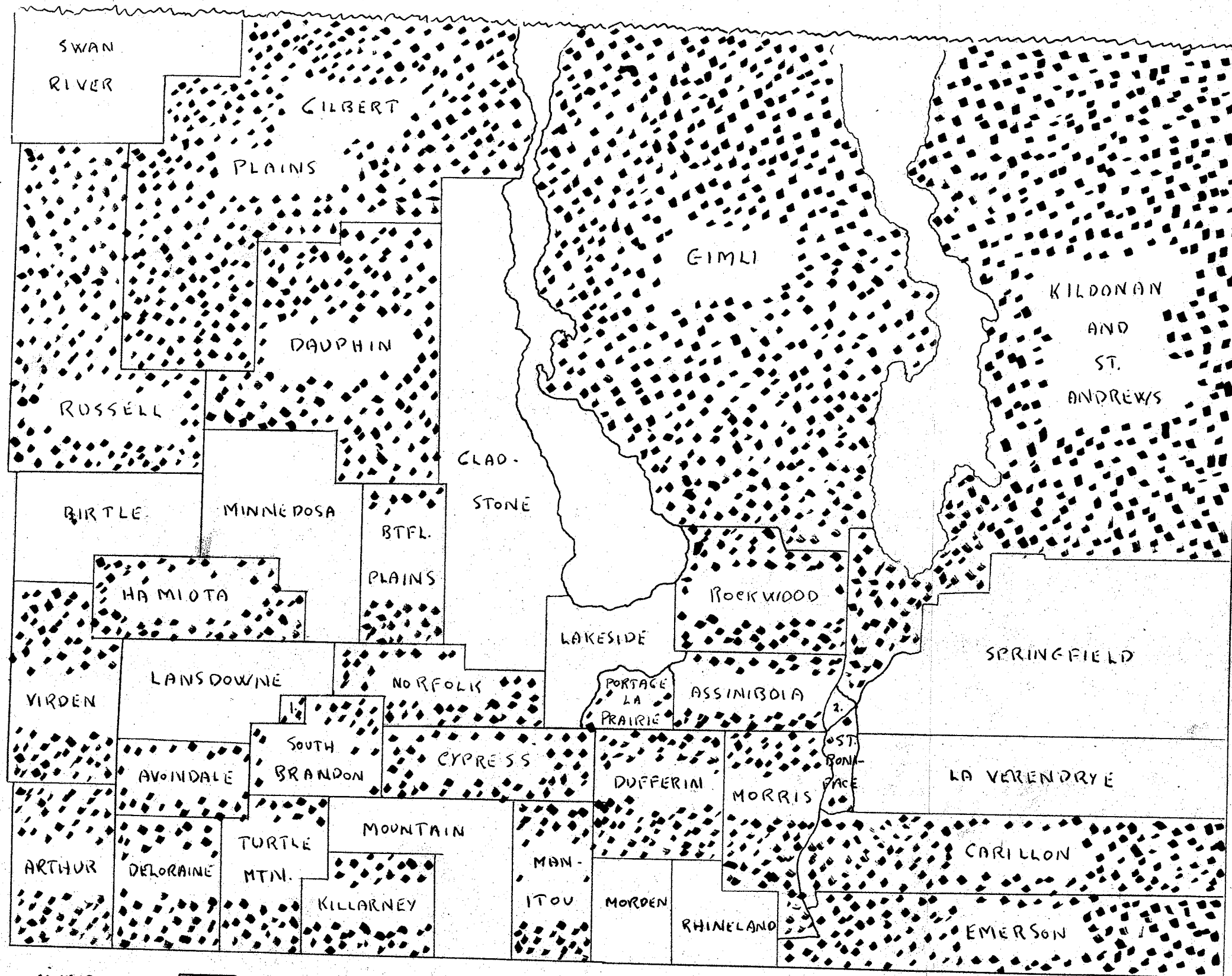
The election results gave both parties the same number of seats as they had previously held in the Legislature, though a few changed

³² Tribune, July 9, 1910, p. 4.

³³ Ibid., July 8, 1910, p. 4.

PROVINCIAL ELECTION 1910

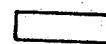
1910



CONSERVATIVE



LIBERAL



- 1. BRANDON
- 2. WINNIPEG

hands.³⁴ With so little that was appealing to offer the electorate, the Liberal party did well in managing to retain thirteen seats in a house of forty-one. With slightly over 44% of the total vote, they were somewhat underrepresented. The bulk of Liberal support came from Winnipeg and southwestern Manitoba. Socialist and Independent candidates all trailed the field. While the Government made a strong showing in most parts of Manitoba, the French districts and the northern seats gave them their greatest support.

There were few surprises recorded. In Centre Winnipeg, F.J. Dixon, the Liberal-Labour candidate, was narrowly defeated by less than 100 votes. Ed. Brown, the former Liberal leader, failed to gain the Winnipeg South seat. S. Hart Green's election in Winnipeg North signalled the first Hebrew to sit in the Manitoba Legislature. R.A. Bonnar, long prominent in the organized farmers' movement, suffered a stunning defeat - placing last in his field. The government majority of fifteen, was increased by one in 1912 with the creation of the new constituency of Le Pas, a result of the boundary extension of that same year.

The electoral results adequately summarized by one rural paper:

Lessons of the election are that the people will support a government that is aggressive and progressive despite that in some instances it may waste public money; that a negative policy

³⁴ The total vote was 75,222 distributed as follows: Conservatives, 38,116; Liberals, 33,092; Independents, 838; Socialists and Labour, 3,176. F.J. Dixon is included in the latter column. If his total is added to that of the Liberals, the latter's percentage would rise to 47 per cent. Parliamentary Guide, 1914, pp. 474-476.

does not appeal and that mud slinging reacts in favour of the party maligned./³⁵

The Tribune headlined the result: "People of Manitoba Refuse to Support Men Closely Identified with the Ottawa Administration."³⁶ Labelled the prophets of Gloom and Doom by the Conservatives, the Liberal party had little appeal during this boom period. Too much emphasis, however, should not be placed upon the Conservative employment of crude political methods to gain office. Of more importance was their ability to be skillful opportunists, seizing on issues as they became popular. This chameleon - like quality gained support for the Tories from not only those true Conservatives - the French and Orangemen, but also from the independents who saw little within the Liberal party of the day.

f. Conclusion

Within four years, many of these independents had turned on the incumbent administration. The 1910 election marked the high tide of the Conservative's fortunes. Within a short period, one that coincided with the slackening away of the boom economy, a number of issues became paramount, which the provincial government proved incompetent or unwilling to solve. If these issues had not become so important in Manitoba, it is doubtful if the Conservative administration would have been turned out in 1915. The combined use of provincial patronage, as well as federal spoils after 1911, would have made its position practically impregnable. The political story of the four years following

³⁵ Eye-Witness, Birtle, July 12, 1910, p. 5.

³⁶ Tribune, July 12, 1910, p. 1.

1910 is that of an opportunistic Liberal party, more realistic than previously, seizing the protest movements for its own, and in so doing, becoming a more positive political force.

CHAPTER II

ELEMENTS OF THE MANITOBA REFORM MOVEMENT

Several issues - woman's suffrage, temperance, direct legislation, compulsory education and bilingual teaching, the single tax - demanded some solution in the early two decades of the twentieth century. A few gained a wide measure of popular support, other causes could only claim a small number of adherents. While the progressive influences from the United Kingdom and the United States influenced each ideal to varying degrees, the political, economic and social conditions in Manitoba were most influential. In a few instances, there were certain Manitobans who supported all of these movements, but more common to all was their drift into the anti-Roblin camp. It was this movement that began those shocks that upset the political balance of Manitoba.

a. Mounting Dissatisfaction with the Provincial Government's Administration of the Liquor Trade

There is a long history of temperance feeling in Manitoba. The Women's Christian Temperance Union celebrated its thirtieth anniversary in 1910; the Aurora Council No. 1 of the Royal Templars of Temperance, nearly as old, with 1,000 members, was the largest local temperance society in the world. The provincial Liberals had stressed temperance back in the 1880's and the Conservatives had followed suit in 1899. Four years later, the Liberals again inserted a temperance plank in its program.

Unfortunately for the followers of temperance, few successes

had been achieved. To a large degree this was due to the amazing ability of both political parties to conveniently forget their promises after the temperance groups had been used. Possibly, what was of more importance to frustrate temperance success was the deep division with its own ranks. Some groups like the W.C.T.U., sought complete curtailment of the sale and use of liquor; others, more moderate, only wished to see certain restrictions placed on the liquor trade in order to remedy its worst evils. Thus it was difficult to unite the many views on restricting the sale of liquor. At the 1911 temperance convention, for example, delegates split three ways on the issue with each of these methods of attack having support: forming their own political party; amending the Canada Temperance Act; or amending the existing Manitoba legislation.¹

It is difficult to gauge temperance strength. Manitobans supported two prohibition plebiscites, the first in 1892 and the second in 1898. Neither indication of anti-liquor feeling in the province brought action to back up prohibition.²

In 1902, the proposed, controversial Hugh John MacDonalld Temperance Act went to referendum and was defeated largely because of a split in the temperance forces. Notwithstanding these defeats the anti-drink enthusiasts continued to press for more restrictions. In 1903, they swung their support to the Liberals and both were

¹ Eye-Witness, Birtle, June 27, 1911, p. 1.

² Referenda results: 1892 - 18,637 for and 7,115 against;
1898 - 1902 - 15,607 for and 22,464 against.

defeated. Several years later, in 1907 a petition signed by some 9,000 for the early closing of bars was presented by a delegation led by the Archbishop of Saint Boniface, with the support of these groups prominent in Temperance spirit: The Independent Order of Good Templars, the Presbyterian church, the Methodist church, the Salvation Army, the Anglican church, the Baptist church, the Congregational church, the Winnipeg Trades and Labour Council.

A medium of common action was achieved in 1907 with the formation of the Manitoba Social and Moral Reform Council: "a federation of the religious and social reform bodies for consultation and co-operation with respect to legislative reforms growing out of our common Christianity."³ At the initial conference, a resolution was passed on "banish the bar," a moderate proposal to cut the evils out of the liquor trade. Each year, new groups joined the Council. They represented influential bodies: the Icelandic Lutheran Synod, the W.C.T.U., Unitarian Conference, the Manitoba Grain Growers' Association, Scandinavian Anti-Saloon League, Polish National Catholic Church, Ruthenian Catholic Church, Russian Orthodox Greek Church. In brief, the Council represented labour, farmers, temperance groups, and practically all major religious bodies in Manitoba. For several years before 1915 the council sponsored a tabloid newspaper, The Statesman.

While it appeared that a seemingly invincible assembly of organizations supported the Council, it is fairly certain that its basic strength was not as great as first might appear. One rough yardstick is the number of districts in the province that exercised the local

³ Statesman, August 28, 1913, p. 4.

option bylaw to veto the sale of alcoholic beverages in their communities. There was not a majority of local veto districts until the fall of 1914. An illuminating appraisal of the temperance strength was given by a strong supporter, Reverend J.L. Gordon.

Sir Rodmond is a splendid interpreter of public sentiment. He knows that our temperance people are not dangerous and that our good people are half asleep. We'll never win in Manitoba until there is an upheaval. The temperance sentiment in this province is great if aroused, but if the record of the past years continues, it will take a hundred years.⁴

Like other movements for social reform, the temperance drive, while receiving inspiration from contemporary events elsewhere, in the main sprang out of Manitoba conditions. As has been pointed out, the province was still in a pioneer state. Its population was still unstable and filled with abnormal ratios as to age and sex that were socially unsettling. For many men the bar became a social centre. To the anti-liquor forces, the liquor traffic represented "a certain method to flood the country with crime, disease, misery, insanity, violence and pauperism."⁵

There were three locations where liquor could be legally sold. First, the wholesale shops, selling only a certain minimum, not to be consumed on the premises. Second, the clubs; this group had to receive a special charter from the legislature. Originally organized for social purposes, a growing number overemphasised drinking and gambling.

⁴ MFP, January 22, 1914, PN 92.

⁵ Statesman, November 13, 1913, p. 2.

The third and largest outlet was the bars.

A municipal district in the province could prohibit the sale of liquor within its boundaries by use of the local veto, a scheme that aimed at taking the explosive liquor problem out of politics and leaving the responsibility for any decision to the local area. The veto was divided into two operations: the machinery for taking a vote and bringing the vote into operation; then that which provided for its operation and enforcement. The second part, the temperance forces agreed was "remarkably satisfactory" and had "no superior, of its kind, on any statute book."⁶

They were convinced that the former, however, was "practically unworkable" almost as if "the law is designedly defective."⁷ The resentment of the Council, later to become the Social Service Council, stemmed from the manner in which many local option contests were frustrated. This was serious: in 1909, 60% of 82 petitions had been refused and the next year, 21 more were stopped by technicalities of law. During voting, the importing of non-residents by the liquor distributors to vote against local veto was quite common. If the proposal could survive these hurdles, then the measure still could be thrown out if there had been the slightest breach of any regulation.

Carman, for example, had many difficulties.⁸ Local option votes had passed in 1909 and 1910, but had been quashed on technicalities.

⁶ Statesman, November 13, 1913, p. 2.

⁷ Loc. cit.

⁸ Carman Standard, June 2, 1910, p. 1; Ibid., April 10, 1913, p. 4; Ibid., November 23, 1912, p. 4.

In 1910, clause 66 of the Liquor Licence Act to carry notice of local option in some municipal paper was followed, but clause 376 of the Municipal Act, that an ordinary bylaw must be posted in four or more places, had been omitted. With many details to comply with, it was quite possible for there to be some slight deficiency in the prescribed legal procedure which the liquor "interests" could protest in court. These court cases were a severe strain upon the usually low financial resources of the temperance groups.

Two major remedies were proposed that might avoid such abuses of the liquor law. One aspired to get the government's promise that in a district where a local option vote had carried, but met with a set-back in court, the government would not grant any licences there. Premier Roblin so agreed in 1912, but his promise was never honoured. He even broke it two years in a row in his home constituency.⁹ In 1910 Robert Rogers also failed to keep a similar promise. Also desired was a saving clause, to be passed by the Legislature: "to make it impossible to set up petty technical objections to the procedure for bringing on a vote and should make the decision of the electors final when once registered."¹⁰ After a period, such a clause was passed in 1912, but soon proved a failure. One temperance sympathiser concluded after these difficulties: "This experience made it clear that it was useless to make a campaign for the extension of the veto."¹¹

⁹ Statesman, August 28, 1913, p. 4.

¹⁰ MFP, February 14, 1913, PN 36. This had been requested in temperance delegations of February 16, 1911; February, 1912; April 1, 1912; February 13, 1913; January 7, 1914; February 6, 1914.

¹¹ Hansards, MFP, March 2, 1911, p. 14.

Other proposed remedies were: to eliminate the non-resident vote in the voting and to eliminate the distinction between a village not having local veto while the surrounding district did, that is, making a unit of that area directly interested in the liquor question. The concern over the flaws in local option was a real one for in the period 1910 to 1914, not one municipality was added to local veto.

After having met repeated obstacles to an extension of the restrictive policy, temperance forces concentrated upon "banish the bar" as their chief restrictive policy. The bar was singled out for two reasons: one, that it "is the most prolific agency in the distribution of drink and the production of intemperance";¹² and the other, to end the "Bar-room sociability." "The weakness of the bar-room type consists of the fact that you can't be social unless you drink." As such, the bar was regarded to be "the breeding place of vice, crime and hoodlumism."¹³ The bar by far outnumbered the other distributive agencies, since wholesale outlets were limited to twenty-four towns and four cities by various statutes and only Brandon and Winnipeg contained clubs. The Premier opposed the contention that bars bred evil and should be abolished, arguing that it not only was impossible to legislate against drinking but that there was a good feature in bars, in that:

The treating system was a manifestation of the social side of man. It was an evidence of neighborliness and a method of showing good will. The social side of man was the thing

¹² Statesman, November 6, 1913, p. 2.

¹³ Ibid., November 6, 1913, p. 1.

that distinguished him from the brutes. The bar . . . was the outcome of ages of experiment. It was hedged about by law and custom in every way. What was now proposed was to tear down all these safeguards./¹⁴

The temperance feeling began to mount in strength. A petition of some 15,000 asked for local option to be extended over the whole province in 1911. The next year saw 21,000 petition to "banish the bar", and that same year saw some 400 resolutions come from diverse groups in Manitoba in its support. Even the Anglican Church, which had virtually ignored the temperance movement, had its social service committee ask for a more vigorous approach on the topic.

Despite the mounting dissatisfaction with the local option law, Premier Roblin continued to regard it as the bulwark of his policy with regard to the question. He based his stand on several premises: the gradual extension of local option through the province would eventually make it a "banish the bar" province; local option was democratic in that it allowed each district to decide on its own policy; and the belief that if a referendum on "banish the bar" was taken, it would be defeated. He further emphasised that even with the bar eliminated, liquor would still be consumed, although out of public sight, leading to more deleterious effects. The political aspect was also quite important, as with local veto, the problem was left to local bodies, and the provincial government could escape criticism from both anti- and pro-drinking forces. With general good points in

¹⁴ Statesman, January 15, 1914; p. 1.

his favour, the Premier further dulled the Council's attack by asking them: "Come out and say frankly that a total prohibition bill is what you want - I am with you." ¹⁵ The Council could not take this position as complete prohibition would split its forces now loosely bound on "banish the bar".

The many Conservative refusals to grant the Council's wishes, plus, the unworkability of the local option law, naturally led some temperance workers into believing that the Government was attempting "to protect the special privileges of the liquor party." ¹⁶ A further reason for their mounting suspicion was Roblin's refusal to test his statements that the "banish the bar" advocates only represented a minority of the province. One group told him:

If you contend that this delegation represents only a minority of the electorate then we accept your ruling, we only want British justice. We ask you to test public opinion by a referendum and if the majority reject the law we will abide by the decision, but we will never cease our agitation./¹⁷

In a 1914 Council delegation Reverend Dr. Wilson lost his temper and assailed the Premier:

It is impossible to doubt that you are a foe of temperance . . . for all the facts point to a working understanding between your government and the liquor interests of this province./¹⁸

The Conservative party was connected by a section of public opinion with the liquor interests by the presense of T.W. Taylor, Conservative M.P.P. on several delegations of the liquor interests; the govern-

¹⁵ Statesman, January 15, 1914; p. 1.

¹⁶/ Ibid., December 25, 1913, p. 1.

¹⁷/ Ibid., January 15, 1914, p. 1.

¹⁸/ Ibid., February 12, 1914, p. 1.

ment's ignoring the 1911 petition on a referendum for "banish the bar"; the alleged connection of the premier and certain government officials to a brewery; and in 1914, the Conservative defeat of a Liberal proposal to investigate the notorious clubs.

The Conservative government was not totally insensitive to the demand for further restrictions. To name a few: 1906, brewers were licenced; 1908, a smaller majority authorized for local option; 1910, the licence commissioner was granted more power in cancelling licences; 1912, licence fees were raised; and in 1914, election year, the bars were to be closed on Sunday, closer regulations were placed on clubs, local option was extended to the unorganized territory of the province, and a saving clause were passed.

The Liberals, while the Conservatives became more embroiled with the temperance groups, became more solicitous to their wants. If elected, the former group proposed to submit the banish the bar measure to a referendum. To avoid conflict with the pro-bar forces, the Liberal Party reasoned that the need for the referendum was the sole question concerned and not the advantages or disadvantages of the bar.¹⁹ Several motions to that effect were defeated in the House, in addition to various proposals for restrictive measures. The Liberals still did not commit themselves on abolishing the liquor traffic, if elected. As the 1914 election approached, however, the Statesman announced that many Liberals, but no Conservatives, could have been endorsed by

¹⁹ MFP, March 4, 1912, PN 174.

independent temperance conventions.

The temperance forces were still unprepared to give the Liberal party its complete support without definite pledges. At two temperance meetings there was a strong feeling against both political parties; however, it was decided at their meeting on March 19-20, 1914, to give support to the party advocating banishment of the bar. At the same meeting, a motion of censure of Roblin had been withdrawn to avoid any controversy. The Liberal party assured the temperance forces of its adherence to the referendum, and a Council group helped draft the "Banish the Bar" plank in the Liberal platform. At the Liberal convention, Reverend Dr. Gordon read a resolution from the Council: "for a debt of gratitude to the Liberal party for its actions in promoting a referendum and for its pledge to submit one if it comes into power."²⁰ Despite the assurances received, there was still some concern that the Liberals might again betray temperance, a few still broached the possibility of nominating strictly temperance candidates.

b. Some Protestant Churches Became More Involved in Local Politics

The church, in particular those of Protestant affiliation, was forced to meet the demands of a new economic and social era brought by the second industrial revolution. Many pressures compelled a reassessment of the church: the doubts and anxieties caused by the growth of scientific criticism; the evolutionary dogma of Darwinism;

²⁰ Statesman, April 2, 1914, p. 1.

the study of comparative religions; the social disintegration attendant with the rise of an urban society; and the growth of a floating population addicted to evangelism.²¹ All served to undermine the strength of the church as it had existed.

The Protestant bodies were losing many adherents. The bulk of immigrants stayed with the Orthodox and Catholic bodies. In the city, the urban worker felt that the church had nothing to offer his class. This theme was brought out in replies to a request by the Winnipeg Tribune on the subject: "Why Some People Don't Go To Church": ministers "too abstract"; "church life empty"; "clothes too poor"; "too much class distinction."²² The rural community also faced the problem of declining church attendance as the number of farm tenants mounted.²³

One explanation was that the church had become too institutionalized, and in so doing, offered little, if any, solution for the ills of society. Spiritual remedies held little immediate practical advantage, and so a number of the clergy attempted to widen the scope of their religion by making it more practical. Their view of Christianity was one "which stressed man's responsibility for the

²¹ See - S.D. Clark, Church and Sect in Canada (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1948), pp. 388-431; J.A. Riddell, Methodism in the Middle West (Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1946), pp. 228-235. (Hereafter: Riddell, Methodism).

²² Tribune, September 28, 1910, p. 16.

²³ Prepared for the Departments of Social Service and Evangelism of the Methodist and Presbyterian Churches, Rural Survey: Tuttle Mountain District Manitoba (Privately printed, 1914), pp. 57-58.

social as well as the moral and spiritual well-being of his fellowmen." ²⁴
This spirit can be expressed in a number of ways: practical Christianity; a daily application of the Golden Rule; a brotherhood of men; and what was more common, the social gospel.

There were many ministers within the Methodist and Presbyterian churches during this time in Manitoba who wholeheartedly supported this movement. Reverend Salem Bland, J.S. Woodsworth, C.W. Gordon, have received the most recognition for their efforts. Bland, in particular, in his position as a faculty member at Wesley College influenced many ministers in training. While these three were leaders in many of the trends within the church, the influence of the movement can be seen in the support the social gospel received from both clergy and laymen. This ideal was bound to have a profound effect on Manitoba, since the Methodist and Presbyterian churches exerted a greater influence than their numbers would otherwise warrant.

The report of the Commission on Social Questions at the 1910 Methodist General Conference illustrates the degree the church was entering the field of practical Christianity. ²⁵ The body condemned the lack of understanding between rich and poor; deplored the inequality of economic conditions; opposed war and intemperance; sought penal reform; approved the eight hour day; and stressed the need of brotherliness, or community versus individuality.

²⁴ Riddell, Methodism, p. 228.

²⁵ Voice, September 29, 1910, p. 7.

Since one of the main aims of the social gospel was to see that "Religion in the future will no longer be identified with the church and Sundays and prayers and proceeds; it will become the everyday life of the common man - that or nothing,"²⁶ it follows that those members who supported that doctrine would enter new fields. St. Stephen's Broadway Church, under Reverend C.W. Gordon became a week-long centre for the community in offering a broad number of facilities: lecture halls, a gymnasium, reading rooms and dormitories for young men. In Winnipeg's North End, All People's Mission directed by J.S. Woodsworth, offered somewhat similar programmes for immigrants.

They sought to do much, and in so doing they had to change the morals of the community. Reverend Salem Bland made the following statement at Grace Church:

Society is steeped in unrighteousness, and nowhere as in this Canadian West. Our ethics are the ethics of the gambling saloon. We have the elements of moral destruction among us. I say frankly that you cannot expect a businessman to live a Christian life to-day. Let us blame ourselves who have allowed conditions to become so utterly corrupt that men feel that it is hopeless to succeed by being righteous. We must begin the great work of attacking all the ties of our commercial life, all the rascalities of high finance, all the abominations of our political system./²⁷



To help achieve this aim the social gospelites attempted to work more closely with the two organizations that embraced many of the working people both in the cities and the rural areas of Manitoba, viz., The Manitoba Grain Growers' Association and the Winnipeg Trades and Labour Council.

²⁶ Guide, July 7, 1915, p. 18. "Sermons for the Unsatisfied" by J.S. Woodsworth.

²⁷ Tribune, August 4, 1913, p. 5; Guide, August 6, 1913, p. 15.

In their work with the labouring classes, the ministers were not just content to speak of their good intentions, but to identify their goal with the aims of labour. The Winnipeg Ministerial Conference in 1909 appointed J.S. Woodsworth as its representative to the local labour body. Reverend Salem Bland, for example, in speaking to a meeting of the Social Democratic Party, proclaimed the need for a gradual nationalisation of monopolies since wage earners could not get a decent living by simply raising wages.²⁸ At a meeting of the Winnipeg Ministerial Association, two ministers actively defended Socialism against the attack of a Professor A.B. Clark of the University of Manitoba. This active sympathy was especially marked during a strike at the Great West Saddlery Company. Noteworthy among several issues involved in that strike was the attempt of the Company's management to prohibit its workers from joining a union by compelling them to sign a contract to that effect. After an investigation of the situation, the Ministerial Association placed itself strongly on the side of labour.

The demand of the Great West Saddlery Company which if generally enforced, would wipe out all labour organizations, traverses the sacred right of personal liberty, ignores the teaching of the Sermon on the Mount, stands squarely across the advancing march of modern economy, science, opposes the opinions of the most progressive employers of labour all the world over, and outrages every instinct of British fair play.²⁹

²⁸ Tribune, February 20, 1912, p. 1.

²⁹ Grace MacInnis, J.S. Woodsworth (MacMillan and Company of Canada Limited, 1953), p. 83.

In much the same fashion the ministers co-operated with the local Grain Growers. Bland and Woodsworth frequently wrote religious articles in the Grain Growers' Guide. At the annual "Farmers' Parliament", Bland reiterated the aims of social gospel while supporting the work of the Association. In 1915, he declared that in principles, aims, organization and enthusiasm, the association stood "second to nobody in Canada except the Christian Church in the power for good."³⁰ Their work was stimulated by the close ties of many farm leaders to the Protestant church. Among the 1910 Grain Growers' executive for example: D.W. McCuaig had been a commissioner to the Presbyterian General Association for several years; D.D. McArthur was a retired Baptist minister; R.C. Henders was a retired minister as well; and Peter Wright was a superintendent of the Myrtle Sunday School.

It was inevitable, that as the ministers who followed the social gospel attempted to reconstruct society on new foundations, they should deal in issues that were political in nature. Thus by 1910, the Methodists and Presbyterians in particular, had a rich experience in politics, and what was also noticeable, generally on the Liberal party's side. In practically every representative gathering of Methodists of Manitoba and the North West since 1890, there had been some reference to the Manitoba School Question. That body was "practically a unit in their support of a National School system."³¹ The Presbyterians also supported this stand. Temperance was a par-

³⁰ Guide, January 20, 1915, p. 4.
³¹ Riddell, Methodism, p. 227.

particular concern of the both churches and they consistently agitated for further restrictions of the liquor traffic. Their attitude can be summarised by the declaration of one minister: "Society must be built up of men who loved purity, justice and nobility of character, not the type which depended on the barroom for its inspiration." ³²

In their advocacy of national schools and temperance, the ministers were placed in unofficial opposition to Premier Roblin. This was a touchy situation. An open rupture between the Conservative government and a number of Methodist and Presbyterian ministers was imminent by 1912. The occasion for this breach was two by-elections, one fought in the federal district of Macdonald and the other in the provincial district of Gimli.

There were two contests at Macdonald, one in October of 1912, and the other, held because the former was void, slightly over a year later. Both political parties sent their strongest forces into the district. In terms of organization, the Conservatives were the stronger since they could employ federal and provincial workers throughout the campaign. They were used generously, even to the extent of arresting the Liberal election workers. Shortly after the election, the Presbyterian Synod of Manitoba passed a strongly worded declaration against the "deliberate prostitution of justice to personal or party ends the trampling underfoot the sacred rights of citizens to individual liberty and fair trial."³³ This stand was reaffirmed one year

³² MFP, March 12, 1912, p. 3.

³³ MFP, November 16, 1912, PN 170.

later after the second by-election in Macdonald.

The condemnation of the Conservatives occurred again in the provincial by-election at Gimli. So intense was that campaign that the Conservatives themselves claimed to have spent \$93,000 of the \$130,000 total provincial budget for roads, bridges and drains in the Gimli district.³⁴ One Liberal M.P.P. levelled nine specific violations of the Elections Act, plus 100 instances of corrupt practices against the Conservative organization. Both parties engaged in a frantic orgy of charges and countercharges on respective use of booze, heelers, and boodlers. It was moved at the meeting of the Methodist Conference, that the charges of corruption made by the party press should be proven, and if they couldn't, the latter were "guilty of subverting public morality."³⁵ Incensed by the resolution, the Winnipeg Telegram proclaimed that J.S. Woodsworth, the mover, was under "complete domination . . . by the Liberal machine."³⁶ The paper failed to deal with the charges.

The aforementioned resolutions and subsequent ones respecting Roblin's stand on temperance, represented the culmination of a long period when many clergymen stood on the opposite side of the political fence to the Conservatives. In the interval before the 1914 election,

³⁴ A Royal Commission on the question reported that about \$52,440 had been dissipated in "an orgy of dissipation." See, Report of the Royal Commission Constituted to Enquire into and Report on all Expenditure for Road Work During the Year 1914, p. 49, Hon. G. Paterson, Commissioner.

³⁵ MFP, June 18, 1913, p. 219.

³⁶ Telegram, June 18, 1913, PN 220.

Premier Roblin engaged in an unseemly campaign of vituperation against the churchmen whom he labelled "Liberal partisans." Reverend C.W. Gordon and D.S. Hamilton earned the greatest abuse from the Conservatives, even being attacked from the floor of the House. While official church bodies rallied to the ministers' defence, it was often forgotten that there was basis of fact to the Conservative statements that the two were "Liberal partisans." Gordon had worked against the Government for several elections and Hamilton presided over a Centre Winnipeg Liberal meeting in 1914. The Government, in its turn, also succeeded in obtaining several ministers for their endorsement.

As the Protestant churches became more practical, they dwelt more on those topics that interested the average working man: single tax, temperance, direct Legislation to name a few. Their support of such measures led them into conflict with the Conservative government of Manitoba. The statements of the Premier, though provoked to a certain degree, were crude and bound to lose him further support:

That the Methodist Conference should undertake to injure me, persecute me, I may say, is not without parallel. The Saviour of mankind was persecuted by one Saul of Tarsus and there is no question but he was honest./37

c. The Conservative Government Refuses to Legislate for Woman Suffrage

The new economic age altered the status of women in many ways. With the trend towards smaller families and more labour-saving

³⁷ Telegram, June 17, 1914, PN 137.

devices about the home, many housewives, particularly within Anglo-Saxon middle-class families, spent less time with household chores. An increasing number of girls from the lower classes entered factories and department stores to win an independent living. A few competed with men in the professions. A vast majority, nearly 80 per cent, of Manitoba teachers were women.³⁸

A dramatic part of this trend was the drive for equal suffrage, one that had existed since the early 1890's in Manitoba.

By 1910, the local suffrage movement began to gather momentum. The Women's Labour League, organised to better the conditions of the working girl, had a suffrage plank in its platform. At the annual Women's Christian Temperance Union convention, the delegates resolved to foster suffrage, and to that end, began to organize local associations.³⁹ Early the following year, the Winnipeg Local Council of Women, approached the law amendments committee of the provincial legislature to ask for amendments to the dower law.⁴⁰ Partially because of that committee's refusal, a number of women became interested in winning the vote so that their views would be more fairly heard. The Local Council of Women, however, shied away from political issues. Thus, the Winnipeg Political Equality League, soon to become the Manitoba Political Equality League, was formed in May of 1912 "to unite all those in sympathy with the movement to gain political

³⁸ Canada Year Book, 1914 (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1915), p. 119.

³⁹ Guide, May 18, 1910, p. 28.

⁴⁰ Hansards, MFP, February 12, 1911, p. 8.

equality for the women of Manitoba," and to that end "to disseminate knowledge with regard to the legal status of women; to stimulate public opinion by all lawful means; to promote the organization of affiliated leagues."⁴¹ The group was fortunate in securing the active support of such people as Mrs. A.V. Thomas, Dr. Mary E. Crawford, Mrs. Cora E. Hind, Mrs. Nellie McClung, Mr. and Mrs. F.J. Dixon, Mrs. C.L. Clendennon, Mrs. A.A. Percy and Rev. Dr. A.G. Sinclair.

The suffrage campaign, as led by the Political Equality League grew in momentum during the 1912 to 1914 period. A steady, moderate, educational campaign on the arguments for suffrage featured their campaign, rather than the militant disturbances which marred the campaign in England. The League constitution provided for the expulsion of any member guilty of violent or unlawful act.⁴² Late in 1913, the League organized a Women's Civic League to co-ordinate Winnipeg's women voters. Mrs. Emily Pankhurst - the ardent suffragette from England - spoke to local supporters in 1911. Speakers provided by the league, were sent to many points throughout the province, proclaiming that justice must be done to women, and that if it was, society would benefit from women's higher ideals. In particular, one suffragette pointed out, women would clean up politics as they had cleaned up other departments of life.⁴³ In numerous tracts, women's legal handicaps were cited, such as, failure to provide a woman

⁴¹ Political Equality League Constitution 1914 (Winnipeg: Farmers' Advocate Printer, 1914), p. 3.

⁴² Farmers' Advocate, April 24, 1912, p. 616.

⁴³ Tribune, November 11, 1913, p. 7.

factory inspector, and the inadequate dower legislation. Justice was the keynote of the campaign, for it was claimed that women were classified with idiots, lunatics and convicts.⁴⁴ A further persuasive argument was voiced by L. St. George Stubbs at the Manitoba Grain Growers' Association convention: "surely my wife is more capable of voting than the ignorant Galician."⁴⁵

The movement received a strong measure of support from the farmers' organizations within the province. This was largely because there was little inequality between the sexes on the farm. Due to the widespread lack of farm help, the woman became a true working partner as well as wife, directly sharing the life of her husband.⁴⁶ Other groups lent themselves to promoting equal suffrage: the Winnipeg Trades and Labour Council, the Guide, the Farmers' Advocate, the Manitoba Free Press, the Winnipeg Tribune, as well as the Methodist and Presbyterian Conferences. Other organizations, such as the Good Templars, supported woman suffrage hoping that the female vote would go anti-liquor.⁴⁷

The provincial government, however, flatly opposed any change in the legal status of women. To a 1911 deputation aiming for a dower law, Premier Roblin gave little satisfaction in stating that such a problem was "a vexed question and would militate against the

⁴⁴ Tribune, May 15, 1912, p. 9.

⁴⁵ Ibid., February 2, 1912, p. 9. A speech at the M.G.G.A. convention.

⁴⁶ E.B. Mitchell, In Western Canada Before the War, pp. 48-56.

⁴⁷ Tribune, February 20, 1914, p. 3.

province's material prosperity.⁴⁸ A 1914 suffrage delegation, perhaps the most representative yet to meet with R.P. Roblin, heard him enumerate many of the common objections employed against suffrage. The premier pointed out that he believed in the home "as the type of every national excellence," but,

Look at the States across the line where there is woman suffrage. In Chicago there are women's clubs scattered everywhere, showing how women are deserting the home, yet even then, when they have suffrage, they are not using the privilege. In Colorado, they shrink from the polls as from a pestilence. I believe woman suffrage would be a retrograde movement, that it would break up the home, and that it would throw the children into the arms of the servant girls./⁴⁹

There were other objections employed - such as that women favoured the liquor traffic and that there was no corruptness in provincial politics for women to clean up.

But the main argument of the Premier to suffrage enthusiasts, was to point out the lack of widespread support for their movement. His contention is borne out to a degree by the series of public opinion polls held by the Guide. Although it had publicised suffrage through the articles and editorials of Frances Mary Beynon for several years, still the referendum it held in 1912 and 1913 saw suffrage pass by a much smaller majority than did other topical questions.⁵⁰ Even at the Political Equality meeting of October, 1912, several speakers pointed out that general feeling in the West was indifferent,

⁴⁸ Hansards, MFP, February 21, 1911, p. 11.
⁴⁹ Ibid., January 28, 1914, pp. 44-45.
⁵⁰ Guide, February 4, 1914, p. 4.

while many women exhibited outright apathy.⁵¹ At the 1914 Methodist conference, a number of ministers opposed a suffrage motion, arguing that women were naturally inferior and that "to give all women the ballot would be to increase the liquor vote."⁵² A good deal of community hostility was the outgrowth of the patriarchal system of family organization practiced in many homes which had the wife and children in practically the same status as unofficial servants.

Since the government of the day offered the suffragettes little if any hope, it was natural for them to drift closer to the opposition, and in return the gentlemen opposite supported several motions on suffrage in the House. In 1914, after the Premier had again refused a request for suffrage, the Political Equality League presented a Mock Parliament at the Walker Theatre, featuring Nellie McClung as premier, and parodying Roblin in refusing the request of a delegation of men asking for the vote.⁵³ As the 1914 election approached, the League continued its agitation by sending speakers about the province and organizing campaign committees in Winnipeg.

d. A Proposed Remedy for Society's Economic Ills

The Manitoba League for the Taxation of Land Value - a group that had few members - could claim a wide number of sympathizers. Although many did not comprehend the details of single tax as expres-

⁵¹ MFP, October 10, 1913, PN 335.

⁵² Tribune, June 13, 1914, p. 5.

⁵³ Guide, July 7, 1920, article by Anne H. Perry; also C.L. Cleverdon, The Women Suffrage Movement in Canada (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1950).

sed by Henry George, they could still become quite enthused over many ideas expressed in his books, two of the most popular being "Progress and Poverty" and "Social Justice".⁵⁴ Throughout his writings, George attempted to deal with the problems of the new industrial society. Two questions he frequently asked were very provoking. They were - why should the poor become poorer while the economy produced more goods at an ever-increasing rate? - and why should a small minority of individuals grow ever wealthier on the labour of others?

Attacks on the interests held a particular appeal to Western farmers during the early period of the twentieth century. Canadian industry, transformed by the merger movement and buttressed by tariffs and subsidies, appeared to be receiving a disproportionate share of the national income at the expense of the wage earning classes. Their large holdings in western lands were quite injurious to the farmer.

Many of these lands were held for speculative purposes. They brought in a rich source of revenue without any apparent effort by the corporations. The average price per acre of the land held by the Canadian Northern Railroad nearly doubled in a half dozen years. In 1906 the price was \$6.01 per acre; by 1913 the value was \$13.95.⁵⁵ It seemed strange to many farmers that a corporation could reap so much profit in so little time by merely leaving the lands empty.

⁵⁴ Henry George, Social Problems (Chicago and New York: Belford, Clarke and Co., 1884).

⁵⁵ J.W. Dafoe, Four Decades of Economic Growth (Adam Shortt and Arthur G. Doughty, editors. Canada and Its Provinces, Vol. 20. Glasgow: Constable for the Publishers' Association of Canada Limited, 1914-1917), p. 315.

Land speculation placed other unnatural strains upon western farmers. Because the system of bidding prices was used, land was sold for much more than it was worth. This high price handicapped those settlers who desired land but did not have much capital. Also, in leaving his lands empty while waiting for a higher price, the speculator levied a toll upon the farmer by not contributing a fair share to the social life of the community, the repair of the roads, local taxes, et cetera. With the day of cheap land disappearing in Manitoba, speculation was even more serious. The Hudson's Bay Company, controlled "by distant land owners in England" and the Canadian Pacific Railway which held a reported 7,539,722 acres in the West, exempt from land taxes averaging ten dollars per acre,⁵⁶ were two corporations under special attack in this matter. The percentage of occupied farm land that was rented rose by nearly seven per cent during the 1901 to 1910 decade.⁵⁷

It is difficult to imagine the speculative craze stimulated by the unbounded optimism of that day. Winnipeg was deeply affected by it. One New York magazine reported of the Winnipeg boom: "There is accommodation on paper for more than two million people and at prices that would be hardly justified if the population even now numbered that many."⁵⁸ From Portage and Main to Headingly, sixteen miles west, practically every square foot of land was on the market. There were

⁵⁶ Guide, November 13, 1912, p. 9.

⁵⁷ W. Burton Hurd, T.W. Grindley, Agriculture, Climate and Population of the Prairie Provinces, (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1931), p. 51.

⁵⁸ Winnipeg Saturday Post, June 3, 1911, p. 1. Reprint of an article from the New York Commercial.

numerous reports of families who had bought three acres of land for \$1,300 and were offered \$6,000 for it a year later. Real estate promoters produced lucrative ads to further excite potential investors:

"Buy Notre Dame Lots Now and Let Newcomers Complain of Your Wealth."⁵⁹

"Can't you see Transcona is destined for the Great Industrial Town of Canada?"⁶⁰ Many engaged in these speculative activities and involved

as well were some members of the Manitoba cabinet, who gained from the land booms caused by the oft-changed site of "the perambulating

University"⁶¹ - the University of Manitoba. While the province might

gain an illusion of prosperity from a land boom when real estate was

bought and sold like wheat and potatoes, but each boom was usually

followed by a shaken provincial credit and depression.

Land was an important bulwark of fortunes. A good part of Lord Strathcona's wealth of \$2,488,934 was based on land values about

Winnipeg⁶² while the C.P.R. held property valued at \$8,115,000, but were exempted from paying taxes of \$97,380.⁶³

To many of these ills, the members of the Manitoba League for the Taxation of Land Values, had a simple remedy: the single tax or the taxation of land values. In essence single tax taught that improvements on land should not be taxed, i.e.

. . . the untaxing of industry. When that is done men would be free to produce all the wealth they wish to consume, and they

⁵⁹ Voice, March 25, 1910, p. 7.

⁶⁰ Tribune, March 25, 1913, p. 3.

⁶¹ MFP, January 18, 1912, FN 239.

⁶² Single Taxer and Direct Legislation Bulletin, October, 1916, p.6.

⁶³ Guide, December 4, 1916, p. 13.

will no longer be compelled to share what they produce with those who 'toil not, neither do they spin'.⁶⁴

By simply taxing the land, the farm which was undeveloped and held for speculative purposes would pay the same tax as one that was developed with buildings and tilled fields. The single tax on land would virtually compel the owner to put the farm into production to pay the cost of taxes. In so doing, there was a remedy to the problem that "existing poverty is not due to the withholding of supplies by the Creator, but rather to human mismanagement in their distribution."⁶⁵

The single tax aimed to provide relief from other pressing problems of the day. At the Manitoba Grain Growers' Convention in 1911, F.J. Dixon outlined how the single tax was the logical alternative to the customs tariff. Facts and figures were liberally employed in issues of the Grain Growers' Guide to corroborate his statement: in New Zealand higher land taxes had reduced customs' duties; during the fiscal year 1914, the Canadian customs tariff raised \$85,000,000 while a land tax would produce \$150,000,000, and do it easier, "as the tariff adds 25% to every article purchases." The tax on land values would solve the housing problem by taking the tax off buildings thus stimulating more building construction and at the same time, with a higher land tax, speculators would be eager to sell land thus helping to lower rents. And as the unemployment problem grew near the end

⁶⁴ Single Taxer and Direct Legislation Bulletin, January, 1915, pp. 1-2.

⁶⁵ Loc cit.

of 1913, single tax would relieve that situation. Since "all employment arises directly from the land and without it man is helpless," a tax on speculative land would "make it easy to get and profitable,"⁶⁶ thereby making it easier for the unemployed urban worker to go into agriculture.

While the Manitoba group did not possess any strong numerical strength, a number of prominent personages in the progressive movement were active in it. Leaders were D.W. Buchanan, who was also prominent in the Social Service Council; T.C. Crerar, president of the Grain Growers' Company; Rev. Salem Bland, preacher of the social gospel, and F.J. Dixon, association organizer and 1910 Manitoba Labour Party provincial candidate. Others active in the local group were R.L. Scott, R.M. Mobius, P.M. Clemens, N.T. McKittrick and R.L. Richardson. Then from those organizations where these men were active came supporting resolutions on the topic; for example, at the Methodist Conference in Winnipeg in June, 1915, a resolution passed urging ministers of the Conference to study Single Tax. The Single Tax was part of the broad educational campaign carried on as well as in other fields: Reverend J.S. Woodsworth spoke to the Saskatchewan Grain Growers' Association of the virtues of Single Tax and F.J. Dixon spoke on the same topic at a number of Winnipeg churches such as Central Congregational Church. A decisive role in the movement was the support of Joseph Fels, the American soap millionaire. An enthusiastic follower of Henry George, he had contributed nearly \$6,000 to the Manitoba campaign.⁶⁷

⁶⁶ Single Taxer and Direct Legislation Bulletin, September 1915, p. 7; Ibid., December 1915, p. 1.

⁶⁷ Tribune, February 23, 1914, p. 2. Also article of Fels, Tribune, April 20, 1910, p. 2.

In legislation, the Single Tax movement was connected to the demand for home rule in taxation. A number of municipalities and districts desired to levy higher taxes upon vacant land, but were prevented from so doing by the Manitoba Assessment Act. That Act, however, did exempt agricultural improvements from taxation. At the 1914 session, a resolution in the House to exempt certain forms of property from taxation in Winnipeg and Transcona was refused.⁶⁸ Later that same year, the Union of Manitoba Municipalities requested that legislation be passed to enable municipalities to tax municipal uncultivated land and to exempt the resident taxpayer on property up to 640 acres.⁶⁹

Though it could boast of few legislative successes, Single Tax was part of the progressive spirit. Direct Legislation was to cure the ills of the body politic; Single Tax was its complement in revamping society.⁷⁰

e. An Increasing Number of Manitoba Groups Turn to Direct Legislation

During the first two decades of the twentieth century, the political reform labelled Direct Legislation, held a strong appeal for many Manitobans. Drawing upon contemporary movements both within and without the provincial boundaries, the advocates of Direct Legislation could present strong arguments for its adoption. Centre

⁶⁸ MFP, June 1914, PN 111.

⁶⁹ Ibid., January 21, 1915, PN 124; Guide, December 2, 1914, p. 5.

⁷⁰ For a criticism of Single Tax arguments, see a letter to the editor by Jacob Penner, Voice, February 3, 1910, p. 6.

of its agitation was the Manitoba Direct Legislation League formed in 1906. Among its earnest followers were S.J. Farmer, A.W. Puttee, D.W. Buchanan, Dr. R.S. Thornton, F.J. Dixon, J.S. Wood, and John Williams. Precedent, examples and such speakers as F.C. Coulter of Portland Oregon, were provided by sympathizers within the United States, but it was affairs in Manitoba which largely explained the growth of the local movement.

Basic to Direct Legislation was the belief that the governmental apparatus had grown too distant from the people and in so doing had become unresponsive to their wishes. This notion had a particularly strong appeal to two classes at that time. The western farmers and urban workers felt, with good cause, that both the Liberal and Conservative parties did not represent them. Not only were few active farmers and labourers represented in Parliament, but neither party offered adequate relief on such questions as better labour laws and revision of the tariff. As these two classes were a majority of the country's population, it appeared that there was something basically wrong within the political system. Judging by the number of favours that business organizations readily received from the public treasury, it was easy to conclude that the interests, working through the cabinet, controlled the legislature. The question, "shall representatives, bosses, machines, lobbyists, corporations, monopolies, dominate our government,"⁷¹ was then raised.

⁷¹ Guide, February 7, 1912, p. 7.

To cure many of the ills of the body politic, a simple remedy, aiming to "re-establish the sovereign rule of the people," was proposed.⁷² This fiat could be accomplished by employing the tools of Direct Legislation: the initiative - the authority for the people to originate measures, the referendum - the submission for public decision on any measure on demand of a certain percentage of the electors; the recall - the right to recall any official who does not follow the wishes of the people. Those were the three main measures, though others were also mooted, such as the commission form of government, proportional representation and civic home rule.

The manipulation of such a scheme rested upon the assumption that the average citizen would take an active as well as a well-informed interest in contemporary political affairs.⁷³ Such an optimistic state was seen as a distinct possibility at that time. The sponsors of Direct Legislation could cite the Darwinian theory of evolution which pointed out that mankind had progressed to a such higher level than an ape and could still develop further. Consequently it seemed natural that with the spread of education and the more general dissemination of knowledge among the masses, the people would demand a closer control in the government of their country.

In practice, the work of a number of organizations was evidence that the public was greatly interested in and taking an active role in contemporary events. It would be quite easy to conclude that not

⁷² D.W. Buchanan, Towards Democracy, p. 38.

⁷³ Ibid., p. 15.

only would these groups continue to flourish but additional ones would spring up. Most outstanding example of participation was the People's Forum, which met each Sunday, 1910 to 1917, to hear lectures on a broad list of topics.⁷⁴ As well several non-party organizations carried on year-round educational activity in politics and related affairs. The Political Equality League was prepared to send speakers about the province to preach the suffrage and temperance causes. Members of the Manitoba Grain Growers' Association could point with pride to the deliberations of their local groups and their annual "Farmers' Parliament" where "No time was lost in 'hot air' and there was no playing politics."⁷⁵ The activities of the Direct Legislation League itself is indicative of the great degree of political interest. In the 1912 report, its organizer F.J. Dixon, summarized the groups he had contacted: 140 meetings with an attendance of from six to 600 for a total of 9,000, comprising temperance, church, farmers' organizations, trade unions and plain open air meetings.⁷⁶ While most of these groups were comprised of Anglo-Saxons, it was possible as various immigrants became assimilated, they too would engage in these same activities. The high proportion of Manitobans of the voters' list who voted in federal elections is of significance as to the high degree of political interest: 1896, 50%; 1900, 65%; 1904, 69%; 1908, 80%; and 1911, 78%.⁷⁷

⁷⁴ Grace McInnis, J.S. Woodsworth, p. 66.

⁷⁵ Guide, January 22, 1913, p. 22.

⁷⁶ Tribune, December 23, 1912, p. 8. In 1910, over 40,000 pieces of literature were distributed.

⁷⁷ Resume of General Elections, 1896-1911, (J.G. Foley, Ottawa: King's Printer, 1916), pp. 14, 35, 56, 77, 98.

In the sense that Direct Legislation aimed to make the legislature more receptive to the general will, there was a very practical need for it. Several issues touching upon temperance, education, and suffrage, required solution. As they crossed party lines, provincial political parties were hesitant to touch them, and when they did, they often exploited them for immediate political advantage. On temperance, for example, both the Liberal and Conservative parties had used the temperance forces with scant relief to the latter. The question of education, many thought, was not one that should be tossed about in the political arena.

By employing the machinery of Direct Legislation, economic questions as that of public ownership of elevators, would be decided upon their merits without consideration of partisanship. Groups that desired certain reforms could avoid the perils of political controversy in attaining them. By bringing issues directly to the people, the referendum would assure that each problem would be decided upon its respective merits, and not confused by many others that a party might present during an election. In brief, if the legislature refused to introduce a certain piece of legislation, the initiative would be employed; it was then referred back to the electorate by referendum; and if the legislators acted contrary to the public will they could be recalled.⁷⁸

⁷⁸ An early movement for several of the ends envisaged by Direct Legislation was the Political Reform Union formed during the 1903 election campaign in Manitoba. Among other aims it wanted the electorates of the provinces and Dominion to be able to initiate, ratify, veto legislation; ownership of public franchises; abolish the spoils system; abolish the sale of liquor profit. J. Castell Hopkins, Canadian Annual Review, 1903, p. 185.

During this early part of the twentieth century, there were many questions that had to be decided at election time - many more than today. Such groups as the Southern Manitoba Temperance Association, that found their particular plank a political football on election day, thus turned to Direct Legislation, while still declaring that they would not enter politics.

The arguments of its advocates might be clinched by already present examples of its operations. Premier Roblin had employed the referendum in 1902, and the local option system operated by referendum as did other local issues. On the initiative, it was frustrating that many petitions by prominent groups in the province were ignored by the Conservative administration.

The intransigence of the Premier and the rather high handed attitude of the administration did much to spark the growth of Direct Legislation sentiment. The introduction of a bill to charter a group named the Manitoba Power Company in 1912 is an example.⁷⁹ Sponsored by the Reese Syndicate from New York, connected to the MacKenzie and Mann interests, the group hoped to establish a corporation with wide rights to develop the power potential of the province. They asked for permission to acquire municipal plants, such as sewage, and the right to carry on business as a gas or waterworks company. The bill threatened to give them a monstrous potential monopoly in provincial natural resources.

⁷⁹ Hansards, MFP, March 13, 1912, p. 28.

A great furor was aroused over a clause dealing with the Winnipeg Electric Railway Company.⁸⁰ The latter was active in street railway, gas, electric lighting, heating and power, and the bill provided that the Reese syndicate would take over all but the street railway. At the same time, provision was made for a Rural Railway Company to increase its capital from \$500,000 to \$10,000,000 and to build into as well as outside Winnipeg.

Winnipeg's city council was perturbed on a number of counts: first, a private monopoly of electric power was being created in the province; second, a threat was posed to the city purchasing the street railway system in 1927; and third, the bill was suspected to be part of some attack upon the popular municipally owned City Hydro.⁸¹ Despite the almost solid non-political protest movement that sprang up in Winnipeg, the bill passed the committee stage before it died.

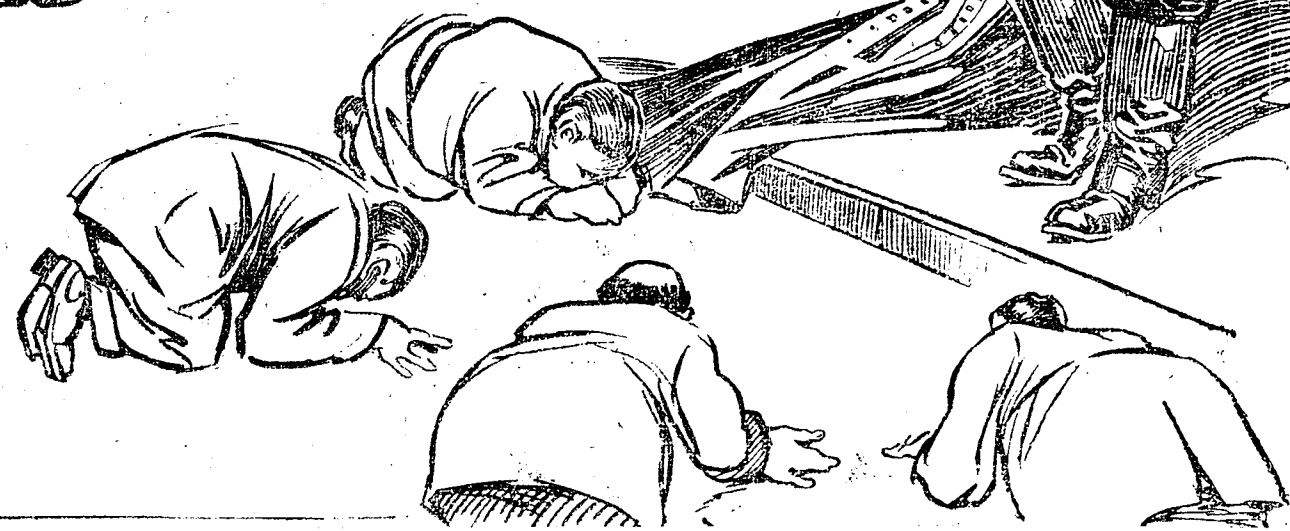
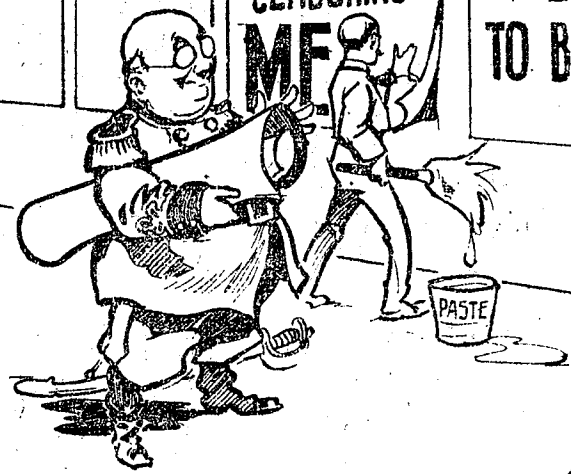
The power question is important to an understanding of the government's attitude which was directly counter to the progressive currents of that day. First, it involved a give-away of a tremendous power potential to a private concern, which was contrary to the growing demands for public ownership. Second, the cabinet's readiness to run roughshod over the wishes of the city as expressed by its council was significant, and third, what might be more serious, Premier Roblin threatened to invoke Section 29 of the criminal code to break up any demonstrations

⁸⁰ Hansards, MFP, March 23, 1912, p. 53.
⁸¹ Ibid., March 21, 1912, p. 45.

MANDATE
LEGISLATURE
FORBIDDEN TO
DEBATE MOTIONS
CENSURING
ME

UKASE
CITIZENS SUPPORTING
CANDIDATES
OBNOXIOUS TO
ME
TO BE JAILED

EDICT
CITIZENS IN PUBLIC
MEETING CRITICIZING
ME
AND THE LEGISLATURE
SUBJECT TO 14 YEARS
IN JAIL



against his policy.⁸² To guard against this threat, the Opposition, with the aid of abstaining Conservatives, passed a bill guaranteeing the rights of citizens to meet in any number and to send delegations of any size to the House or any committee.

Despite the number of organizations that supported Direct Legislation, the Conservative administration refused to grant their requests, even though at first it had been assumed that Roblin would pass such an enabling act. On the boundary question, he had written to Laurier:

If you will make your preparations and it turns out to be such as I cannot accept, I will, with your approval, submit the two propositions directly to the people of the province, for their consideration and decision, on the principal of the initiative and the Referendum./⁸³

In 1911, Direct Legislation supporters had further cause for optimism when the Premier informed a deputation that while he could do nothing at the present time, he intimated that if the Direct Legislation League continued its educational work he might be converted to their views at a later date.⁸⁴

None the less, their hopes were soon crushed. The 1912 delegation, composed of representatives from the Manitoba Grain Growers' Association, the Trades and Labour Council, the Land Value Taxation League and the Royal Templars of Temperance, waited upon the Honourable Colin Campbell and asked that the government approve the principle of

⁸² Hansards, MFP, March 30, 1912, p. 74.

⁸³ Guide, December 7, 1910, p. 6.

⁸⁴ Hansards, MFP, February 15, 1911, p. 3.

Direct Legislation. The minister replied that the Cabinet would give the matter its "serious consideration," but speaking for himself, "I am absolutely opposed to such legislation," for United States conditions could never be obtained in Manitoba.⁸⁵

The 1913 session of the Manitoba legislature crystallized Direct Legislation arguments. A deputation from the group presented a petition signed by some 10,000 Manitobans requesting such a step. Liberal speakers in the House hammered out many of the arguments already cited in its favour. The leader of the opposition, T.C. Norris, pointed out that Direct Legislation would help educate the people, allow the people to pronounce upon important questions, and in addition such a system would prevent hasty legislation.

Their reasoning, however, failed to soften the hostility of the Premier, who dwelt upon its dangers to the British constitution: "I am absolutely opposed to it because it was inapplicable, unwarranted, socialistic and un-British." After dwelling upon the debauchery of American politics in part due to a system of government of "degenerate republicanism," Roblin condemned the proposal because it stated that Switzerland and the United States had a better form of government than the Canadian, furthermore, "It was socialistic because it was so revolutionary to destroy what had taken eight hundred years to build up."⁸⁶ He then moved the following amendment to a Liberal motion for

⁸⁵ Tribune, February 16, 1912; MFP, February 16, 1912, FN 131; Telegram, February 16, 1912, FN 134.

⁸⁶ Hansards, MFP, January 28, 1913, p. 27.

Direct Legislation: "This legislature affirms its belief that the British form of responsible government, as enjoyed by the province of Manitoba, is the best form of government in the world."⁸⁷ The Liberals had to support the amendment, while the original motion was defeated on strict party lines, 22 to 11. Before its defeat, Minister Coldwell reminded the House that the referendum had been first adopted in France during the Revolution, "and we all know the untold horror of the misgovernment under that regime."⁸⁸

As Direct Legislation became more popular, Conservative objections featured the point that the money of the privileged classes and liquor interests could initiate unfavourable legislation by petitions, the same as other groups.

Despite the number of groups supporting Direct Legislation, its popularity might have been much less. A referendum on Direct Legislation in Saskatchewan failed because of outright apathy on the part of the electorate. Conservative arguments implicating Direct Legislation with republicanism and cancelling the British constitution did much to counter its popularity, especially in Manitoba, a province with many Anglo-Saxons possessing strong ties to the Old Country.

f. Conclusion

By 1914, it appeared that an almost politically invincible com-

⁸⁷ Hansards, MFP, January 31, 1913, p. 35.

⁸⁸ Loc. cit.

bination of forces from Manitoba groups had indicated their opposition to the Conservative Government. Prominent among them were the Manitoba Grain Growers' Association, the Winnipeg Trades and Labour Council, the Methodist and the Presbyterian churches and the Loyal Orange Lodge. They had reached this position either by outright condemnation of the Conservative party or by supporting those subjects - such as temperance, direct legislation, suffrage - that Premier Roblin refused to grant.

The Premier opposed these measures as much on political grounds as by personal conviction. Politically, it would be unwise for him to consider concessions in education or temperance. The reform groups were of indeterminate strength. Temperance sympathy had met with several defeats in Manitoba. Woman suffrage and direct legislation had to overcome a strong conservative feeling in the province. Single tax claimed few supporters and the message of the social gospel was largely confined to a certain section of Manitoba Protestants.

Of more immediate concern to practical politics of that day was a factor which was directly opposed to the reform sentiment. One rural weekly adequately summed up this state of mind:

. . . the idea of graft has got such a firm hold on the average voter that it is useless for any political party to appeal to the people without holding out hopes of 'something for nothing' to each constituency! What does the average elector care for compulsory education, or direct legislation, or a reduction of \$200,000 a year in the expenses of civil government? Not a continental! What they want is a telephone for \$20. a year that costs the government \$25. to provide, or some other such cheap graft as an offset to the big grafts enjoyed by ministers and private members./89

A true conservative, Premier Roblin neither appreciated nor understood the movements that threatened the traditional order. Direct legislation, in particular, threatened to overthrow the very foundation of British parliamentary government. While he had accomplished the public ownership of grain elevators and telephones, both systems had yet to be tested. Thus failing to discern the goal that the local social reformers sought, Roblin branded them as agitators and faddists. The reform movement was further condemned in his eyes when many drifted closer to the Liberal party.

Future events would justify a number of the Premier's criticisms of these movements. At the time, however, his hostility served to enhance his already notorious reputation as leader of one of the most corrupt governments in Canadian political history.

CHAPTER III

THE ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT OF ORGANIZED
MANITOBA LABOUR TO 1914

While there had been unions in Manitoba since 1880's, organized labour played only a negligible role in provincial politics in 1910. This was largely due to the nature of the province's economy, one based on the shipment of wheat and the distribution of manufactured goods. There were few industrial centres, Winnipeg, St. Boniface, Brandon, and Portage la Prairie being the only ones of consequence. There was little heavy industry even in these centres, the works being primarily engaged in light industry, public utilities, processing plants and railroad yards. Thus trade unions in Manitoba lacked a strong economic foundation upon which to organize.

a. Handicaps to the Growth of Manitoba Trade Unions

Immigration was the second factor that hampered the local labour movement. It was not the Anglo-Saxon immigrant, however, who presented the problems. Readily assimilated, he generally possessed a technical skill or a supply of money to help himself get established. It was this group that supplied the bulk of the trade union membership. Those that had emigrated from Central Europe presented many more difficulties. Generally lacking capital, they could not become established as farmers and would drift into the city. Once there they drifted into

casual labour, since few possessed any technical skill. This group could be found on railway construction crews and public works during the summer, attempting to earn enough to tide them over the slack winter season.

It was difficult to devise any immediate remedies for their precarious existence. Initially, they were an impossible group to organize. Unimbued with the spirit of unionism and solidarity, and illiterate, they were further separated from the trade union leaders by differences of nationality and language. Any success in raising their pay by organization could only be temporary, since there were countless new immigrants arriving daily to take the places of those who might cause any trouble for their employers.¹

Trade union members, though in a stronger bargaining position than the European immigrants, also faced the threat of losing their jobs to new Manitobans. In 1905, a strike by the International Typographical Union was broken after the management conducted an overseas canvas for more help. Several years later, the Winnipeg Electric Company broke a local strike by importing immigrants arriving in Toronto.² If it were possible to curb the union, it was much more easy to do so to the immigrant, who worked in a situation where the forces of supply and demand operated unhampered.

The trade unions faced another restraint through the employment

¹ Voice, April 8, 1910, p. 1. A reference to a local tailors' strike.

² Ibid., February 3, 1911, p. 3.

of women in industry.³ The relatively low level of wages for female employees reflected the general confusion as to women's status in industry. Should her wage scale be regulated on her status as a member of the family, an independent worker, or as breadwinner of a family? It was difficult to ascertain the appropriate wage. But the question became quite serious as the numbers of woman workers became more numerous. By 1911, there were 11,364 in Winnipeg alone, and double that throughout the province. Three-quarters of these women were employed in workshops, offices and retail establishments.⁴ Stenographers and bookkeepers averaged \$35.00 to \$75.00 per month, salesladies, a lower wage. Many found employment as domestics at from \$15 to \$25 per month; this field rarely had the supply of women catch up to the demand. Such miscellaneous industries as mattress making and cigar rolling were particularly noted for their low wages. In one survey of 165 girls in industry, one-eighth were over twenty years of age, one received \$15 per week, a second \$12, six more \$10, seventeen from \$7 to \$9, the remaining 140 had wages as low as \$2 per week.⁵ It was commonly agreed that it required about \$9 a week as a basic minimum to keep the girls decent. A small number of professional women could earn higher salaries, the range in teachers' salaries being from \$500 to \$1200 a year.

³ A. Oddson, The Employment of Women in Manitoba (Economic Survey Board, Province of Manitoba, Mimeographed 1939).

⁴ Labour Gazette, May 1915, p. 1284.

⁵ Manitoba: Report of the Royal Commission on Technical Education and Industrial Training (Winnipeg: King's Printer, 1910), pp. 332-333.

While women were an important part of the labour force, there were few laws to protect them from exploitation and the ones that did were not too restrictive. The Shops Regulation Act, for example, although it regulated the number of hours a girl might be employed, still permitted those under sixteen to work up to seventy-four hours in one week. The level of their pay, in some cases scandalously low, caused little public concern and when it did, it was usually among private groups that wished to protect the working girls from temptations upon their morality. Characteristic of this attitude was the investigation carried out by the University Women's Club of Winnipeg, which after finding out that the average saleswoman failed to earn \$9 a week, strongly recommended the provision of boarding homes for the latter's protection, completely ignoring the question of granting them higher pay.⁶

The majority of women were non-unionist. There was one female union of 400 members in the garment trade, and in a few trades they shared joint organizations with men. Few groups became interested in their plight except for sporadic investigations. One organization that did was the Women's Labour League, a small group mainly composed of wives of active trade union members. The League attempted, among other objectives, to organize the working girls into unions, to campaign for suffrage, and to strive for equal pay for equal work.⁷

⁶ Work of Women in Department Stores In Winnipeg, p. 15.
⁷ Voice, July 15, 1910, p. 3; Ibid., August 12, 1910, p. 9.

The Courts played an important role in curtailing the operations of trade unions during this early period. The structural iron workers, machinists, moulders and plumbers union in Winnipeg had lost their organization in unsuccessful strikes for higher wages and shorter hours. Their employer, the Vulcan Iron Works, had taken court action against its striking employees. Judge Mathers awarded the Company \$500 damages and costs of some \$5000.⁸ against the union, plus an injunction prohibiting strikers from picketing. The local lodges found it difficult to pay such a large sum. The employment of the injunction was not uncommon. When, in an action directed against the plumbers, union payment of damages proved to be heavy, the union was forced to disband. Faced by such a threat, many local unions were reluctant to undertake aggressive action, as one local labour spokesman commented: "It is not likely that these lodges are anxious for any more lawsuits."

Notwithstanding these difficulties, unions continued to agitate for higher wages, shorter hours and recognition. They met with varying degrees of success. During the long period of economic prosperity, wages generally lagged behind the price rise; with the outbreak of the Balkan Wars in 1913, many workers were laid off while others had their wages cut. Strikes were uncommon. A few of notable ones concerned the Vulcan Iron Works, the Winnipeg Electric Railway Company⁹

⁸ Voice, February 18, 1910, p. 1.

⁹ This strike is interesting in that it was one of the earliest recorded sympathy strikes in Winnipeg. The garment workers and cap workers refused to make uniforms for the strike-breakers employed by the Winnipeg Electric Railway Company. Labour Gazette, November, 1910, p.536.

and the Grand Trunk Pacific, three firms with poor reputations among labouring folk. Another strike of interest concerned the Great West Saddlery Company, when that Company attempted to compel its men not to join a union.¹⁰ The general intolerance of many firms towards the aspirations of the organized labour left a residue of hatred for the future.

b. Trade Union Numbers and Leadership

Nevertheless, union organization continued, until by 1910 there were 104 locals in the province.¹¹ The railway unions with 43 and the metal and building trades with 19 each, dominated the others. The unions in the province were united under the Manitoba Trades and Labour Council. Under this body there were four local Trades and Labour Councils, two in Winnipeg, one each in Portage la Prairie and Brandon. Other locals were scattered about the province, primarily in railway towns, like Dauphin and Souris. The two Winnipeg Councils were divided into those unions concerned with the railways and then the other trades. It is the latter council, the Winnipeg Trades and Labour Council, that dominated union affairs in Manitoba by virtue of its numbers and strategic position in the province's capital. The leader-

¹⁰ Labour Gazette, November, 1911, pp. 430, 477; Voice, October 13, 1911, p. 1.

¹¹ Ibid., April, 1911, p. 1,090; Canada, Department of Labour, Sessional Paper No. 36, 1936, pp. 110-111. Membership figures are difficult to ascertain. Of 132 locals in 1915, only 58 with 8,610 members reported. Trade union numbers would be higher before the war, since the depressions and outbreak of hostilities had decreased their rolls.

ship of local labour was strongly influenced by men with British labour experience, consequently it was gradualistic and concerned with moderate demands in the legislative and economic spheres.

c. Growing Dissatisfaction with the Labour Legislation of the Manitoba Government

Relations between the local Trades Council and the Manitoba Provincial Government on matters of labour legislation usually were none too cordial. Legislation that had been passed for labour was primarily concerned with conditions at work, safety at work, regulations on minors' and females' hours of labour and also compensation for injury. The three acts concerned with conditions were the Factory Act, regulating the hours of work and working conditions; the Shops Regulation Act, which specified the hours of opening and ages of those employed; and the Building Trades Protection Act, which dealt with the provision of certain protective devices at work.

The Factory Act was constantly under fire by the Council for its lack of enforcement. In 1910, the provincial factory inspector's report stated that he had made 1,073 inspections, a fact that the Voice found hard to believe unless "the inspection was from the outside."¹² Early in 1911, a delegation to Premier Roblin asked for a woman factory inspector as well as appointment of a Shop Inspector and better enforcement of the Factory Act. By September of the same year, the government had done nothing. Another meeting was held,

¹² Voice, April 8, 1910, p. 1; Ibid., April 19, 1910, p. 1.

this time with Robert Rogers, Works Minister, who assured the delegation that the proper enforcement would be made. It took until the beginning of 1913 for an amendment for more enforcement to be made by the Government. By that time, the Winnipeg Trade and Labour Council had passed a resolution that "the work of the present factory inspector justifies the conviction that to all practical purposes there is no factory act in the province."¹³

In July of 1912, the provincial factory inspector, D.A. Smith died. While he had held the job for thirteen years, his duties had been sufficiently light that he could continue to be a practicing architect. He had been under fire from the Trades Council since 1907 and allegedly retained his position by "political influence."¹⁴ On his death, the government was in little haste to appoint a successor, and for three months, the act was practically suspended. The appointment was quite important, since the statute left it open to either the lieutenant-governor-in-council or the municipality to be responsible for this duty and the latter was quite loath to take advantage of the opportunity. After a worker was killed on the construction of the Fort Garry Hotel, the government appointed W.H. Reeve, the provincial fair wage officer, as inspector. The numerous requests for a lady factory inspector from such diverse organizations as the Political Equality League, the Winnipeg Social Science Club and the Trades and Labour Council, were ignored. By 1914, quite

¹³ Voice, November 8, 1912, p. 1.

¹⁴ Ibid., November 22, 1912, p. 1.

annoyed with government's poor record, the Voice proclaimed: "How many men will be killed in this Province through the failure of the Government to enforce its own factory laws and see that the machinery is properly protected?"¹⁵

The Shops Act was another poorly enforced statute. In 1912, an editorial in the Voice stated that this act founded in Manitoban statutes twelve years ago was "impotent and lifeless."¹⁶ The provincial fair wage schedule was altered in 1914 without the provincial officials making any attempt to consult the trades concerned. The carpenters, for example, whose rate was 55¢ per hour with a fifty hour week under the former schedule, now were divided into three classifications, the lowest scale being a sixty hour week at 35¢ per hour.¹⁷ While the government might have done this for efficiency and to give higher pay to those who were experienced artisans, union sentiment felt that this was an attempt to lower the wages of the majority of workers.

Annual delegations from the Trades and Labour Council attended the provincial government with recommendations of a moderate nature for legislation. Many of these requests dealt with amendments to existing laws, such as a provision for better and safer conditions on street cars, the provision of an inquest to be held in case of violent death and the inclusion of the Chinese laundries under the Factories

¹⁵ Voice, July 30, 1914, p. 1.

¹⁶ Ibid., January 26, 1912, p. 1; MFP, February 2, 1914, PN 222.

¹⁷ Voice, April 17, 1914, p. 1; Ibid., March 25, 1910, p. 3.
The lowest schedule in the 1910 schedule was the ordinary labourer, who worked a ten hour day at 20¢ per hour.

Act. Three perennial applications were for the abolition of the election deposit in provincial elections, one prompted by the small amount of union campaign funds; the use of the union label on all government printing; and the establishment of a free employment Bureau.

The administration's record in satisfying these requests was none too impressive, and many were the delegations who would report that "on most items the response was unsatisfactory."¹⁸ While minor matters could be adjusted, such as the regulation prohibiting boys under sixteen from operating elevators, the government appeared to reserve any more legislative activity until just before an election. Prior to the 1910 contest there was the passage of the Workmen's Compensation Act; then a flurry of concessions before the election four years later, such as the promise by the premier to pass legislation for a Labour Bureau and the appointment of more factory inspectors. In the latter case, the Premier apparently forgot an earlier statement he had made disparaging such a request. After concluding a quick tour he had made of Winnipeg factories, he believed that there was no such need for an inspector, and felt "I am able to congratulate the employers on the excellent conditions prevailing."¹⁹

Not that the provincial government was totally backward in its legislation, for in 1910, the Workmen's Compensation Act was revamped. The Trades and Labour Council exclaimed that "the Manitoba Act excels all other Canadian compensation acts in the number of classes of work-

¹⁸ *Voice*, March 8, 1912, p. 1.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, January 9, 1914, p. 1.

men to which the act applies." ²⁰ "A radical change from previous legislation in Manitoba," ²¹ declared the Labour Gazette. The act was not lavish in its scope, but judging from the conditions of the day, was satisfactory. It was not applicable to agriculture, or any work involving machinery on the farm. It excluded those earning \$1200 or more per year and payments were not to exceed \$1500 and not more than \$10 a week. It excluded all but manual labour and a person could only collect if the accident were not the fault of the workman. The Act is noteworthy in the large number of union men that sat on the Royal Commission preparing the background on it. The relationship between the government and the Trades Council rarely clashed on the operation of the Act. Many cases coming under its provision were settled without any resort to courts or lawyers, a factor that had previously eaten up the meager payments that might be won through court action. Amendments to the Act were won in future years extending its provisions. It is interesting to note that Premier Roblin would not grant further extensions unless the local Manufacturers' Association agreed to them. In June of 1913 such a meeting was held between the government, manufacturers and trade unions, deciding on a further extension.²²

²⁰ Voice, January 6, 1911, p. 1; Ibid., January 14, 1911, p. 4; Ibid., March 18, 1911, p. 1; Ibid., August 4, 1911, p. 6.

²¹ Labour Gazette, November 10, 1910, p. 601.

²² Voice, January 24, 1913, p. 1.

d. A Feeling of Political Isolation

The root cause of legislative indifference to labour was their complete lack of representation in the Legislature until 1914. In all city ridings but North and West Winnipeg, those seats ~~where there was not a~~ concentration of organized workers, Conservatives were M.L.A.'s. As the Conservative party was not known as a friend of labour, the mantle of being the unofficial spokesman for labour fell upon the shoulders of S. Hart Green, the North Winnipeg Liberal member. While unconnected to the Trades and Labour Council, he still represented many of their views of labour legislation during the 1911 to 1914 sessions.²³ Mr. Green was also active in seeking a superannuation plan for provincial civil servants and obtaining better working conditions for telephone employees, some of whom only received \$25 per month.

Labour faced another handicap in that a large majority of the provincial members did not understand the aspirations of the labouring group. Many were farmers and had little experience with the urban worker. Others who have had more experience, were only familiar with the small shop, in a country village, where employer-employee relations were generally intimate and friendly. In Winnipeg and the few other provincial urban centres, closer sympathy was hampered because the city was "separated by class as to residential districts, social life and to a degree, worship."²⁴ Trade unions further lost approval by the community because of the belief that their function was unnatural,

²³ Hansards, MFP, February 17, 1911, p. 7.

²⁴ S.D. Clark, The Social Development of Canada (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1942), p. 452; J.S. Woodsworth, On the Waterfront, pp. 29-30.

being contrary to the popular belief in the efficiency of laissez-faire and the free flow of supply and demand. As unions sought artificial restrictions, they would bring increased suffering upon other classes.²⁵

Labour thus felt politically isolated. The prime reason stated by Voice was that "the politician of the day has no sympathy with Labour."²⁶ This feeling was emphasised by the complete absence of labour representation, not just of party, but a member of their own class, in the Legislature. R.A. Rigg, secretary of the Winnipeg Trades and Labour Council for a number of years, attributed the lack of representation to be the reason for the non-enforcement of Manitoba labour statutes.

e. Organized Labour Plays a Larger Role in Manitoba Politics

To obtain a greater voice in the Legislature became a more important interest of local unions during the second decade of the twentieth century. Their interest centered on politics, federally, provincially, and municipally. While this feeling began to intensify about the 1910 to 1915 period, labour's role in provincial politics went back two decades in Manitoba history. The record was one of few notable victories and many defeats. In 1895, the first labour alderman, Charles Hislop, was elected in Winnipeg. That same year saw the organization of the Winnipeg Labour Party, the first of a succession of short-lived labour parties. A federal by-election in

²⁵ Winnipeg Saturday Post, April 6, 1910, p. 1; Ibid., August 27, 1910, p. 1.

²⁶ Voice, May 6, 1910, p. 1.

sions for all persons over fifty years of age, and adequate provision for all widows and disabled workers; taxation of land values; equal suffrage to women. The numerous planks expressed by the growing liberal movement reveal the influence of its leaders over labour. The previous labour political group, the Winnipeg Municipal League, was absorbed into this new group.

The 1910 election brought few rewards for the nascent labour party. After prolonged debate, the original intention of the party to run several candidates was dropped and it was decided to focus attention upon one seat. The reasons for this move were the lack of support and finances, the newness of the organization and the necessity of avoiding any clash with the Socialists. Early in June, F.J. Dixon was nominated as the party's candidate for Centre Winnipeg. While Dixon has often been described as a Liberal with a large "L" in this period, the evidence points to his position as an independent Liberal-Labour man. His platform contained planks from both the Manitoba Labour and Liberal parties and these, in addition to several others, were the main planks: direct legislation, public ownership of public utilities, making the local veto operative, compulsory education, and what he considered to be most important, the need for single tax. On several occasions, Dixon stressed his labour affiliation.²⁸ In 1910, it should be remembered that the labour party first nominated him. It was only when the Liberals

²⁸ See: note by F.J. Dixon that he was an independent, not a Liberal, in the Voice, February 19, 1915, p. 1; his speech on the need for labour representation in the Manitoba Legislature, Tribune, July 7, 1910, p. 11; Telegram, July 4, 1910, p. 9; and Manifesto to the Electors of Winnipeg Centre, P.A.M. For a short sketch see: Roy St. George Stubbs, Prairie Portraits (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart Limited, 1954), pp. 85-118.

saw that they would be defeated if they ran another man of their own, that party gave Dixon their endorsement. As it turned out, F.J. Dixon was quite successful in the 1910 campaign, only being defeated by the strong opponent, T.W. Taylor, by less than 100 votes out of a total of 4000.²⁹ In Assiniboia, John Colvin, ran under the label of a Liberal-Labour, but his platform revealed that he was more Liberal than Labour.³⁰ It included most points incorporated in the Liberal platform and such planks for Labour's approval as the eight hour day for workers and technical education at government's expense. He ran far behind his only opponent, a Conservative. The Socialist Party of Canada ran three candidates, who trailed the field. The main feature of their campaign was an attempt to defeat Dixon. The Socialists accused him of deserting labour to make "a compact with the Liberals."³¹ This charge was rebutted by the Voice which stated that the only deal was one "between the Socialist Party and the Conservatives to defeat Dixon."³²

During the interval between the 1910 and 1914 provincial elections, labour activity in political action did not cease. Each year candidates were nominated in the municipal elections of Winnipeg and suburbs. It was particularly important that they gain some representation on the local bodies since the latter controlled "housing, sanitation, public

²⁹ Results: T.W. Taylor, Conservative - 2012; F.J. Dixon - 1939; W.S. Cummings, Socialist - 99. Parliamentary Guide, 1914, p. 476.

^{30/} Voice, July 8, 1910, p. 7. Election advertisement. Also, MFP, June 3, 1910, PN 109.

^{31/} Voice, August 19, 1910, p.6.

^{32/} The conflict between the two groups was a long-standing one. See Ibid., January 29, 1909, p. 3.

health, parks, charity and other departments of public effort."³³

Among the issues that were pressed on the local scene were the establishment of a municipally owned and operated hospital, the extension of the franchise to all those over twenty-one years of age and a municipal housing scheme. Little success came their way in the civic field, with successive defeats being their lot until 1914. That year saw three candidates elected, one of them being Mrs. J.K. Brown, the first woman on the Winnipeg school board. In 1909, Robert Shore, became the first labour alderman since 1895.

Two labour candidates were nominated to run in the 1911 federal election, one in Winnipeg and one in Selkirk. R.A. Rigg, the Winnipeg nominee, attempted to steer the interest of the election away from reciprocity to matters he considered more pressing.³⁴ In his platform, Rigg called for the eight hour working day, the abolition of child labour, the abolition of the Senate, direct legislation, state support of all workers disabled by sickness or old age, abolition of election deposits, and compulsory weekly payment of wages. Little is known of the other candidate, W. Holowacky, who ran with the backing of the Social Democratic Party. Both candidates failed to make a showing in the election.³⁵

³³ Voice, November 27, p. 1. Municipal Election Platform, Ibid., November 25, 1910, p. 1.

³⁴ Ibid., September 8, 1911, p. 6.

³⁵ Results: Winnipeg: A. Haggart (C), 12,754; J.H. Ashdown (L), 8,049; R.A. Rigg (Labour), 2,725. Selkirk: G. Bradbury (C), 3,098; A.R. Bredin (L), 3,011; W. Holowacky (Labour), 234. Parliamentary Guide, 1912, pp. 251, 268.

Soon after, it was decided that the working class required a political arm greater in reach than the influence of the Manitoba Labour Party, which was primarily concerned with the trade unions. A new organization was founded, the Labour Representation Committee, modelled "along the lines of the Labour Representation League of Great Britain."³⁶ With an elastic constitution, it aimed at drawing together the various working classes' political groups into one fighting force. At the organizational meeting, some thirty unions were represented, plus delegates from the Socialist Party of Canada and the Social Democratic Party. The presence of the two Socialist groups did not mean that labour was shifting further left. A motion that the party's object be the "establishment of the Socialist commonwealth" was defeated. A very mild one was substituted: "To secure labour representation on all legislative and administrative bodies."³⁷ The platform that was drawn up was quite similar to that of the 1910 Manitoba Labour Party, although there was more prominence given to civic affairs and the planks on direct legislation, suffrage and the single tax were omitted. Moderates as R.A. Rigg, S.J. Farmer and A.W. Puttee were prominent on the executive. In its first venture into politics, the 1913 civic elections, the group met with defeat.

As the 1914 provincial election approached, active preparations were made for the nomination of labour candidates. Official labour opinion ignored the advances put forth by the Liberal party to attract

³⁶ Tribune, March 3, 1913, p. 4. See Appendix D.
³⁷ Voice, October 18, 1912, p. 1.

their vote. The growing feeling among the labouring group was that "we cannot expect a class whose interests are absolutely opposed to the wage earner, when something material is involved, to legislate against their own interest." ³⁸ During the course of the campaign, they became further estranged from the Liberals. Their view of the important Liberal plank on temperance was attacked, as organized labour did "not believe that banishing the bar will be of the slightest use in overcoming the evils it proposes to abolish." ³⁹ The Political Equality League was branded as "a left wing of the Liberal party," ⁴⁰ when it failed to invite a Labour candidate but did invite a Liberal to one of its meetings in Elmwood. These statements are in definite contrast to those uttered in favour of the local Liberals in the previous provincial election.

f. Local Socialists Experience a Critical Period

The Socialists in the province were also going through a period of transformation. 1910, in particular, was a crucial year which saw the decision made whether the group would remain a voiceless minority or move forward politically. Most of the Socialist membership was drawn from the immigrant class. One exception was George Armstrong, born in Eastern Canada, and one of the prime movers behind the founding of the local Socialist Party of Canada shortly after the turn of the

³⁸ Tribune, April 10, 1914, p. 1.

³⁹ Ibid., June 22, 1914, p. 1.

⁴⁰ Ibid., May 8, 1914, p. 1.

century. Members were scattered about the province, but its numbers were few. One important reason for the numerical weakness was the group's attention to theory and its failure to offer any interest in immediate conditions. It was somewhat devoid from reality and had scant appeal among the practical workmen, from whose ranks it would have to gain converts in order to succeed. Those measures dealing with factory regulations and fair wage laws were sneered at as merely postponing the day of capitalism's collapse, thus being unworthy of the Party's attention. The three fundamental principles of the Party were:

The Materialistic Conception of History which shows that socialism is no dream, but that it has an historical basis; The Theory of Surplus Value points out quite clearly that the workers produce far more than they get in return for their labour and that they are robbed as producers; The Class Struggle shows that the interest of the workers is not that of their masters and that the workers must unite as a class if they ever hope to gain emancipation from economic servitude.⁴¹

The Socialist Party of Canada nominated candidates at an early date before the 1910 election. George Armstrong was to contest West Winnipeg and Ed Fulcher North Winnipeg. During the campaign no attempt at co-operation with the Manitoba Labour Party was made. The antipathy towards the moderate party was dramatically shown with the last minute entry of W.S. Cummings against F.J. Dixon. The Voice called this "treachery" and the defeat of Dixon helped to sustain the poor relations between the two labour groups. All three candidates trailed the field, but were important, insofar as they did provide

⁴¹ Voice, March 25, 1910, p. 1.

some focus for working class votes.⁴²

The Socialist Party of Canada had not only antagonized the feelings of organized labour, they had also split their own ranks. The Winnipeg group was divided into several racial locals, English, Ruthenian, German, Jewish and Lettish. The English group which assumed the leadership of the whole party, nominated an Anglo-Saxon for North Winnipeg, a district that was heavily populated by the members of the other four ethnic groups. Naturally, they resented this mark of subordination and at the same time felt uncomfortable over the unfriendly act done to Dixon.

For those and other reasons, the four groups, comprising the majority of the Socialist Party of Canada membership, broke away on July 24, 1910, and formed the Social Democratic Party. The new party's aims are contained in a statement of H. Saltzman attacking the "impossibilism" of the other Socialist group for ignoring the actual needs of labour and fighting all who disagreed with them.

Upon the basis of immediate demands, upon a closer relation between the Socialist Party and the trade unions, we shall be able to unite the working class of the country without surrendering for one moment the one great demand of International Socialism./43

⁴² Results; Centre Winnipeg: T.W. Taylor (C), 2,012; F.J. Dixon (Labour-Liberal), 1,939; W.S. Cummings (Socialist), 99. Due to the antipathy between the Socialists and Dixon it is doubtful if sufficient votes from the former group would have gone to Dixon to elect him. North Winnipeg: S.H. Green (L), 2,175; J.F. Mitchell (C), 1,555; E. Fulcher (Socialist), 892. West Winnipeg: T.H. Johnson (L), 2,578; A.J. Andrews (C), 2,538; G. Armstrong (Socialist), 246. Parliamentary Guide, 1912, p. 476.

⁴³ Voice, August 12, 1910, p. 1.

This statement, he explained, meant that while the Party was still "based on Marxian principles," the interpretation and application to everyday problems would be changed, repudiating "the idea that any legislation short of the abolition of the wage system can do other than further enslave the working class."⁴⁴ Active in this group were Myr. Stecheshin, John Queen and R.A. Rigg, president for a period, who later declared that the party's appeal would be made because it was modelled on Fabian lines.

In subsequent years, the Social Democrats campaigned for such reforms as the use of the referendum in the purchase of utilities, limitation of female hours of work, old age pensions, the abolishment of child labour, woman suffrage, and the abolition of the Senate. During the 1910 civic elections, the Social Democrats and the Manitoba Labour Party co-operated while also attacking the Socialist Party of Canada. By 1914, the two had reached such an understanding, that they agreed not to run candidates against each other, a proposal the extremists refused to ratify.

g. The Urban Worker and Trying Economic Conditions

While the wage earner advanced politically and organization wise, his economic condition had scarcely improved. The boom that Canada underwent from near the close of the nineteenth century to 1913 was a

⁴⁴ Voice, August 12, 1910, p. 1.

mixed blessing to labour.⁴⁵ Employment conditions were good, barring such recessions as in 1907, but the workingman's expenditures rose much more quickly than did his wages. Rents, for example, which were usually the largest item in his budget, shot up from about \$16 in 1900 to \$35 thirteen years later for a typical six room dwelling in the workingman's section of Winnipeg.⁴⁶ In some localities, rents rose by 75 per cent and overcrowding was so prevalent that many families had to live and sleep in one room. So harmful, in the social sense, was this, that infant mortality per 1,000 births in ward five of Winnipeg, a workingman's district, was 282.3 as contrasted to 111.6 in ward one, occupied by a relatively higher economic class.⁴⁷

The wages the average workman received were far from lavish. The strong unions in the province, particularly the carpenters who had secured the 44 hour week at 65¢ an hour by 1913, were in a fairly comfortable position, but they were in a decided minority. Unskilled packing house employees could attain as much as 19¢ per hour. Reverend J.S. Woodsworth estimated before the Canadian Conference of Charities and Corrections that \$1260 was necessary to keep the average family in the barest of necessities.⁴⁸ Of interest are those figures obtained at random by a Royal Commission from fourteen working class families of Winnipeg shortly before the World War. Only four had an income sur-

⁴⁵ For a summary see The Rise in Prices and the Cost of Living in Canada, 1900-1914, Part III (Ottawa: The King's Printer, 1915), p. 46.

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 461.

⁴⁷ Voice, January 31, 1913, p. 4.

⁴⁸ See report of Methodist Conference in Voice, June 20, 1913, p. 1; Ibid., July 25, 1913, p. 3.

passing that minimum of \$1260. Not one provided for insurance, holidays or Christmas, while scarcely five managed to put away some for savings. Frequently the wife and the children went out to work, and lodgers helped supplement the budget.⁴⁹ So serious was the problem that "officials of various charitable organizations and, any prominent citizens" met to discuss the serious state of low wages in 1912.⁵⁰ Alex McDonald, an ex-mayor of Winnipeg, condemned the low salaries, which he described as "a blow at the very foundations of society." With scant funds for existence, much less to put away in case of accident or unemployment, hard times would be extremely cruel. Hard times arrived in 1913 when the boom broke and continued until 1915.

As the western world went into a depression, the sensitive prairie economy was severely hit. Railway and construction, the two dominant employers, began to drastically cut operations. Building permits in Winnipeg fell from \$10,334,650 in 1914 to \$1,826,300 the next year. Other shops began to operate on short hours and cutting staff. Figures on unemployment vary, but by early 1914 it was recognized that it was larger than in any previous period in the city's history. The Labour Gazette estimated that more than 30% of local union labour was out of work; local unions stated that some unions had 60 to 90%

⁴⁹ "Here is the case of a little girl sent out at 12 years to earn her board so that she could stay at school. At 15 she is out of school, having reached only grade 6. Her father, who is working for the city at 25¢ an hour could not afford even to buy her school books." Article on city workmen in the Guide, April 22, 1914.

50/ Tribune, February 26, 1912, p. 2.

of their members unemployed; then one newspaper made a "conservative" estimate that 13,000 unionists and some 35,000 others were out.⁵¹

The government offered little relief to the unemployed. Indeed, the federal authorities continued to promote immigration, a factor which could only accentuate the difficulties. The Winnipeg Council organized city woodyards and a City Free Employment Agency for those that were married and out of work. This relief was soon swamped by the large numbers of unemployed who poured into Winnipeg from all over the West.

To attract some attention to their plight, a few labour demonstrations were held. In Market Square, behind Winnipeg's City Hall, on November 27, 1913, a demonstration of over 2,000, largely of British mechanics and town workers, called for work, not charity.⁵² After some fiery speeches, some food stores were looted. The mayor dismissed their agitation, alleging that there was little unemployment since he had seen many men hanging about in bars. The next spring, after a rumour on job openings which had attracted a great number looking for work and proven false, a crowd gathered in a vacant lot where they were addressed by speakers. Police broke up this meeting and several present were charged with unlawful assembly. The condition of the unemployed had been little relieved. So wretched were conditions that a number of British craftsmen emigrated back to the Old Country. It was only with

⁵¹ Labour Gazette, February, 1914, p. 944; Voice, December 11, 1914, p. 1; Ibid., January 30, 1914, p. 1; Tribune, November 26, 1913, p. 1.

⁵² Voice, November 27, 1913, p. 1; Tribune, December 1, 1913, p. 1.

the growing demands of the war effort, as men joined the forces and entered munitions factories that unemployment ceased. With so little concern by government in their distress, labour might well ask:

If the state still persists in subsidizing transportation companies and bonusing industries in the interests of certain classes, why should it not interfere in the interests of the immigrant and the workmen who are most seriously affected?⁵³

h. Conclusion

During this prewar period, labour was growing in strength in economic and political affairs. Their success was noteworthy in the light of the handicaps that had to be overcome. Economically, union organization had to counteract competition from immigrants, women and those fellow workers who were scabs. Politically, the obstacles were just as formidable: the meager financial resources that were at the labour parties' command; the lack of a strong organization to get the labour vote out; the discouraging lack of early success; and the failure of many workers to vote as the polls were only open until suppertime. What was of more serious import, was the widespread apathy on the part of many workers to support their own candidates. Clearly the older parties still had a strong hold on Manitoba labour. Not only were there no labour candidates or political activity outside of Winnipeg and suburbs, but in the urban area, the vote given to labour candidates was far below its potential. As the 1914

⁵³ Labour Gazette, February 20, 1914, p. 1. Also, E.B. Mitchell, In Western Canada Before the War, p. 185.

election approached, the Liberals prepared to intensify their appeal to this class, whose vote was a decisive factor in many constituencies.

CHAPTER IV

THE ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT OF
MANITOBA FARMERS TO 1914

The farmers of Manitoba had been active in provincial politics for several decades before 1910. They had come to the fore on several occasions - the Manitoba and Northwest Farmers' union of the 1880's and the Farmer's Alliance and the Patrons of Industry during the first half of the subsequent decade.¹ The three had been short-lived, and with the disappearance of the latter by 1896, Manitoba farmers had ceased to play an active role in provincial politics as an independent group.

a. The Manitoba Grain Growers' Association and the Grain Growers' Grain Company

With their removal from politics, local farmers became more absorbed in organizing economically. In 1903 the Manitoba Grain Growers' Association was formed with the primary object of developing a feeling of class-consciousness among farmers. As a group, this Association played an important role in transmitting the wishes of the rural workers to the government of the day. J.W. Scallion, R.C. Henders,

¹ A partial list on background material: Hopkins Moorehouse, Deep Furrows (Toronto and Winnipeg: George J. McLeod Ltd., 1918); L.A. Wood, A History of Farmers' Movements in Canada (Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1924); W.L. Morton, The Progressive Party in Canada (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1950); Paul Sharp, Agrarian Revolt in Western Canada (Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1948); G.E. Britnell, The Wheat Economy (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1939).

R.C. McKenzie and D.W. McCuaig were among the charter organizers of the group and were to play a dominant role in its activities until the end of the Great War.

By 1910, membership had reached 5,500 and an intensive drive the following year saw its numbers rise to 7,500 - 15 per cent of Manitoba's farmers -- combined in some 230 locals. With few exceptions, the members were drawn from the Anglo-Saxons in the province. Several attempts were made to organize the foreign born, but handicaps of language frustrated success.² Another farm organization, the Grain Growers' Grain Company, a farmers' grain company which had branched out into such diverse activities as lumber mills, printing and wire manufacturing was more actively concerned with the economic development of the farmer. In the eight years of operation from its founding in 1906, its assets had risen from \$25,000 to \$1,371,153.³

b. Local Farmers Avoid Organizing a Farmers' Party

In spite of the growth of the two farmers' organizations, there was little indication of the entry of independent farmer candidates into local politics. Memories of the failures of farmers' organizations in the United States and elsewhere in Canada that had been wrecked when their officers had entered politics were still bright in Manitobans' minds. In a day of intense party loyalties, the suggestion of partisan-

² Guide, October 7, 1914, p. 10; Ibid., January 20, 1915, p. 10.

³ Ibid., January 14, 1914, p. 19. Also W.A. MacKintosh, Agricultural Co-operation in Western Canada (Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1924), pp. 21-22.

ship might wreck a group that contained adherents of both parties. The edginess of party feelings is revealed in a Guide editorial containing a letter from a Conservative attacking the partiality of that journal to the Liberal party together with one from a Liberal claiming the reverse.⁴ The threat of politics was clearly underlined after the Reciprocity election of 1911, when the activities of the M.G.G.A. against the Conservative party played an important role in that organization's membership decline by nearly one-third. At least one local president is reported to have resigned because of the Association's stand on Reciprocity. At that the Guide, in 1911, had cautioned its readers on the dangers inherent in political action.

Far too many of our people are still held in thrall by the party fetish . . . The certain value of the farmers' organization is of far more importance to the welfare of the west than the possibility of electing a few representatives pledged to the Farmers' Platform, and the certainty of alienating from the organization a large number of strong party men./5

In provincial matters, the M.G.G.A. had little cause to enter the political arena by 1910. The local government seemed ready by disposition - if though somewhat tardy in act - to co-operate with the wishes of that body. The Conservative administration had passed favourable railway legislation, extended the Manitoba Agricultural College, compelled the Winnipeg Grain Exchange to accept the Grain Growers' Company as a member, and inaugurated public ownership of telephones. One farm journal summarized majority opinion:

⁴ Guide, January 4, 1911, p. 5. Also, Ibid., April 6, 1910, p.5.
⁵ Ibid., August 2, 1911, p. 5.

It is a government that has brought Manitoba into line with the most progressive and generally beneficent ideas of modern times . . . a government that has never turned down the farmers or grain growers in anything they asked for . . .⁶

This warm regard cooled during the interval between the 1910 and 1914 elections.

c. The Manitoba Government's Two Major Ventures Into Public Ownership

Since 1907, the Manitoba Grain Growers' Association had asked the provincial government to enter the public ownership of the province's grain elevators.⁷ Premier Roblin, and the other Western premiers who faced similar demands, hesitated, offering several objections, such as the need for a uniform scheme for the three prairie provinces and not just in one province; the constitutional issue of the government entering this field; the necessity for the complete control of transportation companies and grading and weighing of grain and a full monopoly of storage facilities. Though the M.G.G.A. insisted that the government did not have to have a legal monopoly, thereby by-passing the constitutional hurdle, but only to acquire sufficient storage at each point to handle the crop. Premier Roblin maintained, as late as 1909, that such a step was ultra vires.

During the 1909 session of the Manitoba Legislature the Conservative government requested the federal administration either to provide for storage facilities or to pass such legislation to allow the

⁶ Manitoba Echo, July 7, 1910, p. 1.
⁷ Wood, Farmers' Movements.

province

. . . to deal with the functions of storage, transportation and grading of grain. It would be necessary that such amendment be made in the British North America Act as would give the Provinces authority and power to deal with the several measures and interests which the proposition involved.⁸

Later in December of that same year at the M.G.G.A. convention, G.R. Coldwell, the minister of education, dramatically announced that the government had decided to enter the elevator field and would co-operate with any proposals that might be drafted by the Grain Growers' body. The Conservative administration's reasons for this decision were the fact that grain growing was the province's basic industry and that the government policy was public ownership of public utilities. Of more importance was the defeat of the Conservative nominee in a provincial by-election in Birtle largely because of the government's elevator policy. One author pointed out that: "The Manitoba Government executed a right about face on the issue of seemingly so pronounced a character that it caused no end of wonderment throughout the province."⁹

While the grain growers were elated over the province's decision, they advised the provincial government not to pass any "hasty legislation," to keep it out of party politics and to judge the many problems strictly on their own merits.¹⁰ The friendly relations between the government and M.G.G.A. soon disappeared.

In the draft bill presented by the Association, there was a request

⁸ J. Castell Hopkins, Canadian Annual Review, 1909, p. 443.

⁹ Wood, Farmers' Movement, p. 21.

¹⁰ Guide, January 12, 1910, p. 5.

for an independent commission to run the system. The commission of three were to be named by the M.G.G.A. directors and appointed by the Government. They were to be independent and to hold their positions for life unless removed by a two-third's vote of the Legislature. The Cabinet objected to this proposal and several other demands on the establishment and purchase of elevators. On the former issue, the Cabinet based its stand on the principle that it would violate responsible government by delegating responsibility to the M.G.G.A.¹¹ Another argument in the government's favour was that the M.G.G.A. represented only a minority of Manitoba farmers. This logic carried no weight to local grain growers as the Association still asserted that they would not tolerate a situation where "the commissioners, in the discharge of their various duties, shall be subject to the dictation and direction of any government that may be in power in Manitoba."¹² The provincial Liberals gave their full support to the latter, demanding that full powers be given to the Commission rather than have it under the close supervision of the Cabinet.

The friction between the Association and the Government was soon allayed. The appointment of D.W. McCuaig, who had been re-elected as president of the M.G.G.A. for several years, as chairman of the Commission, appeared to convince most farmers of the Government's good intentions.¹³ The president took the post though his act was contrary to an

¹¹ Hansards, MFP, February 26, 1910, p. 51.

¹² Guide, March 16, 1910, p. 31.

¹³ D.W. McCuaig had come to the aid of the Provincial Government previously. On the eve of the 1907 election, McCuaig sent out an open letter declaring that the Government had treated the M.G.G.A. all right. Telegram, March 4, 1907, PN 19.

earlier decision by a M.G.G.A. committee that no officer of that group should take a post on the commission without permission. Other opinions now prevailed, with some grain growers even suggesting that McCuaig could hold both the presidency of the M.G.G.A. and be chairman of the commission.¹⁴

Grain Growers' approval of the elevator scheme continued for some time. T.C. Crezar, president of the Grain Growers' Grain Company, submitted figures that showed the scheme would provide an annual surplus of from \$150,000 to \$160,000 "after every contingency." His figures were based on the optimistic assumption that the provincial elevators would win a monopoly of the province's grain trade, for

"in a short time all the grain would pass through the public elevators, since the loading platform or the privately owned elevator could not commence to give anything like the advantages a public one afforded./¹⁵

A swelling number of petitions came from many points asking the Provincial Government to commence operations. The Guide still asked for some tangible proof of the administration's good intentions, but would concede that the proposed system would "afford considerable relief from the oppression which has been felt in years past."

On the other important measure concerned with government operation of a public utility, the telephones, there was widespread approval of its operations. These policies, together with others favourable to farmers, made farm opinion generally favourable to Premier Roblin.

¹⁴ Resolutions from the Hamiota and Pierson locals: Guide, June 29, 1910, p. 49; Ibid., July 6, 1910, p. 6.
¹⁵ Ibid., March 16, 1910, p. 6.

After the 1910 election, the Guide commented:

The record of the government was a decidedly progressive one, particularly in regard to the telephones, the agricultural college, and the elevator system. Even though there may be legitimate criticism levelled at the method of operating some of these systems, yet they are decidedly progressive in principle and in keeping with the spirit of the twentieth century.¹⁶

This cordial feeling carried over into the first period of the elevators' operations. Repeated Guide editorials called on the Manitoba farmers to support the elevator scheme, and at the same time, chastised those who neglected to join. After the elevator commission for the Saskatchewan government published its report - a remarkable document that outlined the Manitoba System's failings as well as forecasting its probable "end in financial disaster" - the Guide leapt to the Manitoba Government's defense and editorially told the Saskatchewan group to mind its own business.¹⁷ Perhaps the high point of good feeling was at the 1911 Grain Growers' convention, when the assembled farmers gave Chairman McCuaig their unanimous backing after he had outlined the difficulties of the first year's operations. By this time there were provincial elevators operating at over 100 points. By May of that same year, the Guide still felt the system would be financially successful, although the independent Winnipeg Tribune had begun to roast the Premier for falling down as an exponent of public ownership in inefficiently managing the elevators.¹⁸

The next M.G.G.A. convention was far different than that of 1911.

¹⁶ Guide, July 13, 1910, p. 6.

¹⁷ Ibid., November 27, 1910, pp. 7, 12.

¹⁸ Tribune, July 19, 1911, p. 4.

With few capital expenditures, the elevators had lost \$80,000 in one year. Once again, McCuaig reiterated his arguments on the failure, but this time, his explanations were no longer satisfactory. One R.J. Dutton declared that the politician played a role in appointing elevator operators - a motion was passed denouncing this practice. The need for an independent commission was again mooted and it was alleged that there was graft in the elevator purchases.

An open rupture between the grain growers and the administration was only a matter of time. The Premier soon lashed back at those critics of the government elevators by accusing the farmers of being guilty of demonstrating a lack of faith in not patronizing the system and berating the Guide for being demagogues in implying that it spoke for the farmers of Manitoba. He later expanded his remarks on the elevators' failure:

. . . when a large percentage of farmers were of the opinion that the government of the day, no matter what its political **color** might be, should be dismissed, and to that end would be willing to embarrass anything it might propose along these lines./¹⁹

The Guide replied in a lengthy editorial reviewing the operations of the provincial government which pointed out the latter's "lack of sympathy" and "arbitrary action . . . has made the public elevators a failure."²⁰ No blame, the journal continued, should be placed upon the grain growers, since all their suggestions had been ignored. Regardless of which party was guilty of perfidy, D.W. McCuaig soon announced that the government scheme would cease operations.

¹⁹ Telegram, July 19, 1912, FN 187.

²⁰ Guide, April 10, 1912, p. 8.

This losing game when there is an insufficient support from the people and where there are certain operating expenses which cannot be overcome and which would scarcely be covered by the amount of business handled is beyond doubt the reason for the move. We can't get the grain to handle to make it a paying business./²¹

The mutual recriminations soon ended, insofar as this matter went, when the Grain Growers' Grain Company leased the elevator chain in the summer of 1912 and began to experience many of the same problems that the government had undergone. Indeed, their problems should have been less, since the province paid for a number of operating expenses, such as local taxes, assessments, repairs, et cetera. By the date of the 1913 Grain Growers' Company convention, the delegates were undecided on whether they should continue in the field.²² Many felt that such an unprofitable agency should be disposed of. The directors were further depressed when they heard from "an unquestionable authority that they can only secure a renewal of the line at a rental figure higher than previously paid." Whether the "unquestionable authority" had erred, or the government feared an aroused farmer group during a forthcoming election as problematical, but the lease was renewed on favourable terms to the farmers' company.²³

About the same time as the storm grew on the failings of the provincial elevators, the telephone system was also in difficulties.²⁴

²¹ MFP, May 9, 1912, PN 151.

²² Guide, November 19, 1913, p. 12.

²³ W.A. Mackintosh, Agricultural Co-operation in Western Canada, pp. 39-43.

²⁴ For a detailed criticism of the Manitoba Government's manipulations in this field and an attack on Public Ownership, see, James Mavor, Government Telephones: The Experience of Manitoba, Canada (New York: Moffat, Yard & Co., 1916).

The announcement, near the end of 1911 that telephone rates would be raised, aroused a province-wide storm of protest. An almost solid opposition came from Winnipeg where the Industrial Bureau, which represented such diverse groups as the Trades and Labour Council, the University of Manitoba faculty, the Winnipeg Garden Club, and others, tried to reason with the government. Even the partisan Winnipeg Telegram turned on the Conservative administration.²⁵

The controversy quickly magnified itself into a study of the history of operations of the government telephones. The Conservatives were particularly embarrassed because of several incautious statements that had been made by cabinet ministers in the provincial election of 1907. In brief they were that the government not only would operate the telephone system at cost, but it could also cut that rate in half. Unfortunately, while rates had gone down a degree, there had been a loss of some \$150,000 in 1911, though there had been three previous years of surpluses. Liberal opposition dwelled on the influence of politics as being the prime reason for the system's failings. Robert Rogers was attacked for appointing political hacks to positions and building lines to expensive but politically advantageous points. This criticism was later confirmed in an impartial survey of the telephone system: "It would appear . . . that the major contributing factor to the difficulties experienced by the Telephone System at that time were excessive supervision by the government."²⁶ In the latter regard,

²⁵ Telegram, January 12, 1912, p. 4.

²⁶ H.C. Goldenberg, Report of the Commercial Enterprises Survey for the Province of Manitoba (Winnipeg: King's Printer, 1940), p. 6.

by instituting a remarkably short-sighted policy, the government had provided scarcely any funds for replacement from 1908 to 1912 when over \$1,000,000 was necessary for that item.²⁷ The rate increase was further vexing, since the government had promised to operate the system at cost, and with the first deficit after four years, immediately raised the tolls. Independent feeling was roused over what was considered "a serious blow . . . to government ownership of public utilities,"²⁸ and the fact that "with a certain torystic instinct, it (the government) stood in with the interests."²⁹ Combined with the apparent failure of the provincial elevators, the government was in bad straits.

Political skill salvaged most of the government's prestige. A partisan commission was appointed by the Conservative majority in the Legislature to report on the telephone system. Its subsequent report branded the commissioners culpable for the system's failings and also insisted that there had been no outside political interference to hamper operations.³⁰ The system's commissioners were criticized for failing to keep proper accounting records and for managing the system in an "inexcusably" extravagant fashion. The three commissioners resigned. The administration of this department was re-organized under a single commissioner who worked under the general guidance of the Public Utilities Commissioner. Under this setup, political influence was curbed

²⁷ H.C. Goldenberg, Report of the Commercial Enterprises Survey, p.217.

²⁸ Carman Standard, January 18, 1912, p. 4; Farmers' Advocate, December 29, 1911, p. 1793.

²⁹ Ibid., April 6, 1912, p. 4; Reprint from The Public

³⁰ Telegram, January 11, 1912, p. 89; Mavor, Government Telephones, pp. 96-112.

and the instituting of a moderate rate increase, approximating the level when the Bell Company still owned the system, met with general approval.

d. The Conservative Administration Enters New Fields for the Benefit of Rural Areas

While the farmers and government had had certain difficulties, that did not mean that the latter body was insensitive to farm opinion. The bulk of the provincial house came from rural seats and to ignore them was to court political suicide.

The farm labour question had always been difficult for farmers to solve. This question was partly due to the state of farm wages which had risen by 40 per cent in the ten years preceding 1914. One solution inaugurated by the M.G.G.A. was the securing of United Kingdom immigrants by advancing transportation costs and finding them employment. This system was a success and by 1913, the organization had brought over more than 200 Britishers.³¹ The provincial government was quite ready to assist the project in lending the M.G.G.A. \$5,000 plus establishing a Manitoba Government Immigration office in England.

During 1912, interest was revealed in hail insurance through letters to the Guide and resolutions of local grain growers.³² At the 1913 M.G.G.A. convention, a committee was set up to arrange a draft bill and present it to the Cabinet. This was done, but the minister concerned did not present the proposal to the 1913 legislature. An earlier start

³¹ Guide, January 29, 1913, p. 12.

³² Ibid., April 17, 1912, p. 12; Ibid., December 4, 1912, p. 32.

was made the following year, and the bill passed in 1914. The scheme envisaged a municipal effort financed by a local tax per acre.

The need for cheap rural power was important for economic as well as social reasons in giving the farm some of the modern conveniences. Rural cities and towns, like Portage la Prairie and Brandon, desired cheap power to attract manufacturing industries. The farmers had before them the example of the Winnipeg City Hydro, which had been set up to provide competition to a monopoly and had cut rates from 20 to three and one-third cents per K.W.H. from 1906 to 1912. Late in 1911, a deputation from Manitoba towns and municipalities approached the government about a provincially operated power plant. So desperate were they for cheap power that they did not mind whether the government provided it alone or in conjunction with municipalities or private corporations, just so long as they received cheap power. While the government delayed - it was making a fuller investigation of the situation - the Manitoba Power Corporation nearly managed to establish a private power monopoly in the province in 1912. A committee was set up at the M.G.C.A. convention of that same year that no sites should be handed over to any corporation or individuals and that the provincial government should enter that field. The Liberals in the Legislature were quick to follow the wishes of the grain growers and moved that an investigation be made ". . . towards the nationalization of hydro-electric power in Manitoba." The Public Utilities Commissioner, H.A. Robson, was assigned to investigate the matter and his 1914 report recommended that the provincial government stay out of the field and allow municipalities or groups of

them to join together in erecting transmission lines.³³ By the provincial elections of that year, the Government had done little to satisfy demands for hydro-electric power, though with valid reasons.

One of the banes of farming was the high rate of interest the farmer had to pay for agricultural credit. One Manitoba farmer, for example, is recorded as having borrowed \$4,000 on a land mortgage with a five year amortization period at 8 per cent interest payable with a \$300 bonus on the principal, making a total payment of \$6,296.³⁴ The problem became more pressing as Manitoba passed out of the frontier stage. The days of cheap land were fading away and farming took on a new character. More reliance was placed upon intensive rather than extensive agriculture; the cost of maintenance per acre rose as greater interest focused on mixed farming. At the end of the boom period, farmers required additional credit to tide them over the slump in wheat prices.

A number of farmers felt that they were being discriminated against as they saw other economic groups win concessions from the government:

If the public credit can be pledged to such an enormous extent and public lands devoted to the same purpose of the extension of railways, it is reasonable to assume that extraordinary efforts should be made to assist the agricultural industry to secure cheap credit./³⁵

The banking system had failed the farmer as well in not only not granting cheap rates but also by not modifying other banking practices as well.

³³ Manitoba: The Public Utilities' Commissioner, Annual Report, 1914 (Winnipeg: King's Printer), p. 44.

³⁴/ Ibid., June 30, 1915, p. 11.

³⁵/ Ibid., January 6, 1915, p. 3.

The Provincial Government in the 1914 Speech from the Throne announced that it would undertake some scheme of agricultural credit. Nothing had been done by the session's end, and Premier Roblin announced that the Government would not enter that field until more research had been done.

Generally, the farmers had received the legislation that they desired from the provincial body. Hail insurance legislation was provided, although it was never acted upon because of the lack of municipal initiative. Co-operation with the Grain Growers was expressed through the farm labour scheme. Preparations were made towards entering the new fields of agricultural credit and rural power. While the government did not provide vigorous leadership in the latter two fields, its hesitancy might be traced to the troubles experienced with the elevator and telephone schemes. Though both were immediate failures, the government managed to save face by placing the onus of responsibility upon the telephone commissioners and by leasing the elevators to a farmers' grain company. During the same period better facilities for stockyards had been provided; a good roads system for market use was established; the elevators were controlled by the farmers; and the telephone system was still expanding.

g. Dissatisfaction with the Conservative and Liberal Parties

Notwithstanding the apparent willingness of the Conservative administration to follow the suggestions of the organized grain growers, there was a noticeable rift growing between the two bodies. The conflicts over the elevators and telephones were important. The main issues

that went against the Premier were the ones that crossed party lines - reciprocity, suffrage, temperance, and direct legislation.

The Roblin organization was closely linked to the federal Conservative party. It was natural in the 1911 Reciprocity election for the local group to aid its federal counterpart in embarrassing Sir Wilfrid Laurier. To that end, the Manitoba Legislature passed a motion condemning reciprocity. At that, a storm was raised in local grain grower circles. The Guide exclaimed that the provincial government had no business dabbling in such a matter and furthermore the Conservative members had no business in voting down such a proposal as in so doing they went against the wishes of the farmers.³⁶ Prominent officers of the Grain Growers' organization were quickly marshalled, and such men as J.S. Wood, M.G.G.A. vice-president, R. McKenzie, secretary of the same body, and J.W. Scallion, the Honorary president, declared that the government had misrepresented the people who had elected them. Not that these gentlemen should be recognized as the representatives of farmer opinion. The Farmers' Advocate claimed that the 1911 election results accurately reflected the opposition of the majority of farmers to Reciprocity.³⁷

Their statements produced a flurry of recriminations. Robert Rogers, the minister of Public Works, attacked them thus: ". . . the farmers of Manitoba have been stampeded by the officers of the Grain Growers who are Grits, first, last and all the time, and are ready to work for the Liberal party under all circumstances."³⁸ To which J.W. Scallion replied

³⁶ Manitoba: Annual Report, March 8, 1911, p. 6.

^{37/} Farmers' Advocate, October 4, 1911, p. 1337.

^{38/} Guide, March 19, 1911, p. 6; also, Dauphin Herald, January 6, 1910, p. 4.

that the president, vice-president, and himself on the grain growers association executive were strong Conservatives; besides what right had Rogers to be the advocate of the farmers. He concluded with a suggestion that farmers break party ties for united action.

This sense of betrayal by the Conservative legislative representatives was further stimulated by that party's actions in several movements in which the grain growers had become interested. Equal suffrage resolutions were passed at each Manitoba Grain Growers' Convention from 1911 to 1915. The banish at the bar sentiment had received their support in the same manner. Single tax was preached by several prominent leaders as a means of curbing speculators. Direct Legislation proved their dominant theme in political action. All these proposals received much publicity from the Guide where they were played up in editorials, feature stories, cartoons, letters to the editor, and reports of local meetings.

With regard to these objectives, the Manitoba Conservatives were on the wrong side of the fence. Thus it was easy for the local grain growers to label the provincial government as the same as the federal body which had become too involved with the interests with their grants by subsidies and the tariff. Traditionally, the Conservative party had been regarded as the party of big business, while the Liberals were regarded as being somewhat more progressive.

During the Laurier administration, the Liberals had done little to distinguish their party from that of the Conservatives. Their failure to pass certain farmers' requests particularly antagonized the

farmers. The provincial Liberals, however, tried as hard as possible to capture the farmer vote. To that end, they quickly fell in with requests of the M.G.G.A. for an independent commission and expropriation in the elevator issue. Reciprocity found these two groups working together once again and the Liberals did not allow the farmers to forget the Conservative betrayal by annual renewals of the reciprocity motion in the Manitoba Legislature.

f. Other Avenues of Political Expression for Manitoba Farmers

While the Liberals got more into the good graces of the farmers' political spirit of the day, they did not completely win their favour. The farmers were attracted by three alternatives: independent party politics on their own; a farmer-labour alliance; and the use of direct legislation, to avoid direct participation in politics.

Since there was a growing number who believed there was little to choose between the two old parties, there was a natural sentiment to have their own political representatives. When and if independent action had been agreed upon, it could either take the form of working through the older parties, primarily the Liberals, or running their own representatives.

The idea of a Liberal alliance did not appeal very greatly, in a large part because of the belief that there was scant distinction between the federal Conservative and Liberal parties. There was a natural inclination of the farmers to seek representatives from their own economic group. Before the farmers could form their own independent

groups, sizable numbers of them had to leave the older parties, a difficult move in a day of passionate partisan feeling. Particularly in Manitoba, more settled and conservative than the other western provinces, was this the case. Some progress toward independent political activity had been made by 1914. The record crops of this period ~~removed~~ much of the strong impetus for political action that might have been produced by economic need.³⁹

During the provincial campaign of 1910, the greatest degree of partisanship shown by the Guide was not for any particular party, but rather for one man, R.A. Bonnar. This candidate who ran in Assiniboia as an independent Conservative against a regular Conservative, was promoted because he echoed the sentiments of the Grain Growers' Guide on the elevator question. He lashed out at the Roblin administration: "I tell you frankly that I do not believe it is the intention of the government to go on with the elevator proposal after July 11,"⁴⁰ as it failed in its promises on the telephones. Throughout his speeches, he dwelled on other matters: direct legislation, the recall, the intention of the government to smash the Grain Growers' Association, and a desire for a "pure and even handed administration of justice." Despite strong support, and the record of long campaigning for the interests of grain growers, Bonnar was decisively defeated. Another

³⁹ Manitoba: Department of Agriculture, Annual Report, 1910-1918 (Winnipeg: King's Printer), Total grain crop of 1909 - 113,504,484; 1910 - 96,008,517; 1911 - 161,000,000; 1912 - 183,000,000; 1913 - 178,775,946.

⁴⁰ Guide, August 3, 1910, p. 22.

incident was the accusations by J.W. Robsen, a Conservative running for re-election, that the Manitoba Grain Growers' Association had been instrumental in his defeat.⁴¹

A dramatic **portrait** of some of the periods of independent party activities for farmers occurred in the Beautiful Plains constituency in 1914. Certain gentlemen concerned with the Springhill Grain Growers' Association decided to sponsor an independent candidate for that provincial riding. After a convention was held, publicity releases carefully pointed out that of the twenty-six in attendance, one-half were Conservatives and the other were Liberals.⁴² At that meeting, a platform was drawn up, including planks on direct legislation, a national school system, and compulsory education, title to all natural resources to remain the property of the state and to be conserved, the right of municipalities to assess lands, **single** tax with a view to the gradual abolition of taxation on food, shelter, clothing, a new provincial franchise act, revision of the liquor laws and equal rights to all special privileges to none.⁴³

Notwithstanding that imposing platform, it took four more conventions before a candidate was chosen who did not resign. Thomas Dravson senior, the first nominated, later had his name put up at the local Liberal convention, and after being defeated was asked to resign as the independent candidate. Soon afterwards at a joint convention of

⁴¹ Telegram, July 12, 1910, PN 152.

⁴² Guide, July 23, 1913, p. 3. Note the early nomination - a full year before election day.

⁴³ Reminiscences of J.A.M. Poole, P.A.M., pp. 18-19.

Liberals and Independents, Reverend R. Patterson, an unsuccessful Liberal candidate at Portage la Prairie during the 1911 federal election, received the nod. He soon resigned as a candidate, later was renominated, and then resigned for a second time. At the fourth convention, Reverend W.R. Wood accepted the bid and ran as an independent Liberal in 1914. Before running a candidate, independent farmers had to overcome the serious handicaps of finding a distinctive platform and attracting candidates and supporters.

Another alternative for farmers in the political field was to construct a labour alliance.⁴⁴ A continuous trickle of requests for such a step had come from both groups. On the executive strata, at least, the two were continually coming into contact. Delegates from the Winnipeg Trades and Labour Council and the Manitoba Grain Growers' Association met at joint meetings for furthering suffrage, temperance and direct legislation. For a number of years, speakers, as F.J. Dixon, went about Manitoba stressing the common bond that linked the two working classes.

Despite many declarations of mutual interest, little was accomplished. Indeed, a series of resolutions, but little, if any action, might accurately sum up the situation. Early feelers had been put out by the Trades Council at Winnipeg to the Manitoba Grain Growers for joint action but they had been ignored. The union group then decided to

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A brief background of early attempts on labour and farmer cooperation was the failure of the Dominion Grange and the Trades and Labour Congress to reach common objects in 1886. Dean E. McHendry, the Third Force in Canada (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1950), p. 7.

wait for the farmers to make the next move. At the annual convention of the farmers' group in 1913, three resolutions passed expressing a hope for closer co-operation. One of them suggested that the two could form an association "with the object of uniting the producers of the city and country on one platform and ultimately in one political organization."⁴⁵ In 1914 President R.C. Henders declared that the only cure for the farmers' ills was "to combine with the robust and independent labour party and act entirely loose from the influence of insane partyism, and judge men and measures on their respective merits."⁴⁶ The most striking example of co-operation on a political level was the support shown by the substantial contributions by a number of prominent grain growers to the campaign of F.J. Dixon. The importance of their actions is somewhat dimmed when it is remembered that they supported him not so much as the Manitoba Labour Party candidate as an independent.⁴⁷

The basic line of difference between the two groups was a widespread conviction that there was an absence of common objectives.⁴⁸ The farmers were workers to a degree, but they also were, in addition, business men, and to that end they attempted to raise profits by improving the means of marketing and producing. The tariff and agricultural

⁴⁵ Guide, January 22, 1913, p. 8. The other two resolutions were on co-operation to lower the cost of living and an invitation to the Trades and Labour Council to send delegates to the next M.G.G.A. convention.

⁴⁶ Ibid., January 14, 1915, p. 7.

⁴⁷ Single Tax and Direct Legislation Bulletin, September, 1915, p. 3. T.A. Crerar contributed \$100 and G. Chipman \$15.

⁴⁸ Resolution by the Franklin Manitoba Grain Growers' Association, see Voice, April 1, 1910, p. 1.

credit played an important role in their strategy. Labour was concerned with higher wages, recognition of unions and shorter hours-problems that the rural population found difficult to understand, particularly as it was commonly believed that with each wage increase to labour, the cost of necessities to farmers was raised. On the 8 hour day, for example, one rural journal commented: "Has the urban labourer degenerated so that he cannot do over 8 hours a day, or does he want more time for sport?"⁴⁹ Unemployment was another bone of contention. During the 1914 to 1915 period when there were many out of work in the Canadian urban centres, farmers could not understand the union man's dilemma since there were many jobs open on the farm. One farmer wrote the Guide that he had offered \$500.00 a year to a married couple (no children) if they would come to the farm, and as none accepted, he concluded that any labour problems they might have were their own fault.⁵⁰ The refusal of unemployed labourers to come to the country to work almost suggested that they placed agriculture in an inferior light. The solution of one correspondent for labour's problems was this:

The city authorities should give such agitators the choice of death by bomb or bullet and see that he gets it. A few and very few of such executions would quickly solve the labour problem in large or small cities. There is no excuse for an honest working man begging for bread in the west if he is able bodied and willing to work./51

⁴⁹ Farmers' Advocate, March 30, 1910, p. 478.

⁵⁰ Guide, June 3, 1914, p. 15.

⁵¹ Pilot Mound Sentinel, June 3, 1915, p. 4.

g. Conclusion

While the more politically independent farmers floundered about trying to seek an avenue to express their views, the majority of farmers were content to retain the old party ties. They ignored the suggestions of two prominent independents - R.L. Richardson and D.W. Buchanan to form an independent party in 1914.⁵² An earlier attempt by the Tribune to draft J.W. Scallion for leader of provincial independents died stilborn.⁵³ The low level of interest in direct political action was matched by the failure of the vast majority of Manitoba farmers to support the Manitoba Grain Growers' Association.

In spite of the 1911 Reciprocity contest which had done much to break the traditional hold of the two older parties, the farmers, as a class, still had less class feeling than labour. For disgruntled Conservatives and independents, the provincial Liberal party became more attractive. Not only had the opposition group been quick to rally the farmers' interest on such questions as a low tariff, the government mismanagement of elevators and telephones, but also favoured those measures on suffrage, direct legislation and single tax that had been supported by the Manitoba Grain Growers' Association. It was easy to follow the advice of John Kennedy that farmers be independent and support whatever party followed the aims of farmers⁵⁴ - hence the

⁵² Tribune, January 13, 1914, p. 4; Ibid., January 15, 1914, p. 4.

⁵³ Ibid., March 8, 1911, p. 1.

⁵⁴ Guide, March 4, 1914, p. 9.

Liberals. Thus, as the 1914 election approached, rather than taking up independent political action or a farmer-labour alliance, many organized farmers supported the provincial Liberal party - capturing nominating conventions of a party depressed by years of exile from office.

CHAPTER V

THE MANITOBA REFORM MOVEMENT AND THE LIBERAL PARTY
ATTAIN POLITICAL SUCCESS

Manitoba was in a state of political unrest from early 1910 until the 1915 provincial election. Each year had a number of political incidents, that taken together, contributed to the Liberal's 1915 victory. In 1910 there was a provincial election; the following year there was the Reciprocity contest; the government's failures in elevators and telephones were announced in 1912; 1913 saw notoriously corrupt by-elections; the election of 1914; and then the climax of the Parliament Building scandals.

a. The Strength of the Manitoba Liberals in 1914

As the 1914 election approached, the Manitoba Liberal party appeared much stronger than in 1910. Economic conditions had turned against the Conservative administration. Socially, the problem of the assimilation of the foreign ethnic groups demanded immediate government action, which the Conservatives would or could not give. The main source of Liberal strength lay in its new appearance. For a number of years it had hammered at the theme that it was ready to carry out the will of the people. Direct Legislation was the linchpin. On temperance, for example, the party was ready to enforce stricter liquor restrictions, but only if such a measure was directly approved by the electorate. On suffrage, Premier T.C. Norris declared that his

party would support such a proposal if the women wanted it, not that he himself believed such a step would be a panacea for women's ills.¹ The party was much shrewder and were quick to seize the support of those groups dissatisfied by their reception from Premier Roblin. In 1912, for example, after the introduction of the Power Bills, the opposition leader declared that his party would favour home rule and greater electoral representation for Winnipeg.² Another phase of Liberal strategy was to convince the electorate that their Liberal party was one that did not have to rely upon **corrupt** methods but was one that accurately mirrored the people's wishes.

By its readiness to sponsor certain issues, an impressive list of provincial groups had passed resolutions favouring the Liberal party. Some of the more prominent were the Methodist and Presbyterian Conferences, Baptist ministers, the Social Service Council, the Orangemen, the Political Equality League and the Direct Legislation League. Of equal importance, the Winnipeg Tribune and the Grain Grower's Guide were stronger supporters than in 1910, indicating how a large number of the independent vote had swung from the government. Many of these groups had not granted their support to the Liberal party per se, but were after one specific object and looked to the Liberals to supply it if elected. Some supporters still distrusted the Liberal party's motives but in seeking their private object, they actively worked for

¹ Hansards, MFP, February 4, 1914, PN 59.

² Tribune, April 23, 1912, p. 2; MFP, April 23, 1912, PN 68-

the Grits, and were thus contributory to the growing sentiment against the government.

The support of some of these groups could just be carried so far. Past a certain point their interests and that of the Liberals became too similar. When this occurred, they antagonized labour sympathy. On at least two occasions was the Winnipeg Trades Council aroused. The labour body broke its affiliation with the Direct Legislation League in 1913, alleging that it was adjunct of the liberal party.³ This move was particularly significant, since labour had long been active supporters of Direct Legislation, carrying it as an election plank in 1903. The Political Equality League was also criticized for its partiality to Liberals.

Another important obstacle to victory that had been removed was the alleged connection to the federal party. The Winnipeg Tribune had long advised provincial Liberals to follow such a course. Commenting on a resolution endorsing the federal Liberal opposition sponsored at a nominating convention in Gimli, the daily warned the Liberals to avoid such tactics, since the majority of independents were arraigned against Roblin, and that any attempt to bolster the Ottawa group would weaken this independent support.⁴ This advice was well founded, for federally, the Liberal party was quite unpopular. The local group tried to appear as a provincial party, concerned with provincial issues, and at the conclusion of the 1914 Liberal convention, while three cheers

³ Canadian Annual Review, 1913, p. 577.

⁴ Tribune, March 14, 1914, p. 4.

were given for T.C. Norris, various convention officers and the King, the federal party leader, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, was studiously ignored.⁵

With such a number of groups under its wing and hence such a wide popular appeal, the Liberal party made it quite difficult for any independent group to organize in 1914. Other handicaps such as the importance of deep-rooted party allegiance and the fear of splitting the anti-Roblin vote by running third candidates also eliminated independent opposition at the polls. When an independent was nominated, many of the planks in his platform only duplicated those of the Liberals, and the Grits had a much better chance to pass them into legislation.

One example of the pressure of practical politics upon independent candidates is the case of T.W. Knowles, a farmer of the Emerson district and active in the M.G.G.A. Early in 1910 he had spoken of the need for farmer candidates.⁶ For several years he contributed numerous letters to the editor on the virtues of independent farmers in politics, attacking machine politics and reminiscing about the Patrons. In one letter of 1914, he commented on "the unjust laws that are crushing the farmers' because the legislature is working closely with the interests. He further pointed out that "The respectable portion of the community are sick of political partisanship and are looking in the direction of Independence in politics for their emancipation."⁷ He concluded by demanding that a farmer be M.P.P. for his

⁵ MFP, March 28, 1914, PN 138.

⁶ Emerson Journal, February 11, 1910, p. 1; Grain Growers' Guide, November 2, 1910, pp. 12-13.

⁷ Emerson Journal, February 20, 1914, p. 1.

constituency. Little more than a month after writing this letter Mr. Knowles appeared at the local Liberal nomination meeting, willing to give the Liberals a chance. Some six months later, at the M.G.G.A. convention, Mr. Knowles again stomped for independence in politics.⁸ The drift of many Independents to the Liberal fold was a common one. Thus the call by D.W. Buchanan for all dissatisfied groups - the Direct Legislation League, the Social Service Council, the Trades and Labour Council, the Land Value Taxation League - to combine, passed unheeded.⁹

Not all Independents were completely crushed. A few, such as W.R. Wood, ran as independent Liberals. Another, James Willoughby, Liberal candidate in North Winnipeg "B" was also in the progressive spirit:

I reserve the right not only to take an independent position toward any legislation the Liberal party may later see fit to take up, but also towards the party itself should they fail to manfully and honourably deal with the reforms and pledges contained in their platform./10

The Liberals were quite prepared to endorse non-Liberals. This support was publicly announced by T.C. Norris, and carried out in the case of F.J. Dixon, who had openly renounced any Liberal connection.¹¹ Elsewhere, T.D. Ferley in Gimli and A.D. Craig in Mountain ran as straight independents, the latter as candidate of the People's Progressive Independent Political Party. Craig is interesting in many respects.

⁸ Guide, February 10, 1915, pp. 16-17.

⁹ Tribune, January 12, 1914, p. 4.

¹⁰ Ibid., July 4, 1914, p. 9.

¹¹ Ibid., July 9, 1914, p. 4. A letter to the editor by F.J. Dixon that he was an Independent Progressive candidate and that all parts of his platform were covered in resolutions of the Trades Congress of Canada.

In his platform, he recognized that no party had a monopoly of good legislation and thus he could support "any righteous legislation" as a true independent. The scope of his platform was somewhat similar to that of the Liberals, though going further on some issues:

Unswerving fidelity to the British flag and constitution, total prohibition; Direct Legislation; universal suffrage; proportional representation; single tax; an equitable and proportional rate of interest./¹²

Buttressed by many Independents, the provincial Liberals held their convention in March of 1914 with all confidence of victory. As one delegate exclaimed: "Why should we not win? We have a popular leader who has a united party behind him; we have a splendid cause; we are fighting the people's battle."¹³ Speaker after speaker lashed out at the graft and corruption of the Roblin government, the "selling out of the birthright of the province" in not attaining more on the boundary settlement; the Conservative failure to approve Reciprocity; and governmental extravagance in public works. The address of one of the speakers, Nellie McClung, was particularly notable in that it was the first time in the history of Canada that a woman had addressed a political convention.

The main feature of the convention was the drawing up of the party platform. It encompassed many of the questions that had become more pressing since 1910.¹⁴ Temperance, direct legislation and education, for example, were more in the public eye than in 1910. The party

¹² Guide, March 4, 1914, p. 27.

¹³ MFP, March 26, 1914, PN 226.

¹⁴ See Appendix E.

pledged itself to enter new fields of government activities, such as, providing cheaper credit for farmers and encouraging power development in Manitoba. An historic source of embarrassment was removed with the demand for the federal government to give the province control of its natural resources. The document was a clear statement of party aims - it had to be, since the supporting groups were not willing to be toyed with. Continually was it emphasized that the platform was not one of idle promises, but rather one that heralded a new era in provincial history. In making the keynote speech, T.C. Norris declared: "There is a great wave of public opinion passing over the United States and Canada demanding that politicians keep their promises. (Loud cheers)." After citing the deeds of President Wilson, he continued, "If I am given a chance I will show the people of Manitoba that a Manitoba politician can keep his promises too. (Loud cheers)."¹⁵

The education planks of the Liberal platform were the most important politically. Events during the 1912 to 1914 period had served to break the French Catholic - Orange Lodge alliance that had been the bulwark of the Conservative government. As had been the case with other dissatisfied groups, provincial Liberals rallied to defend their cause against the provincial Government. Since the days of the schools question in 1890 to 1896, both Protestants and Catholics had been concerned with the maintenance of what each considered their rights. Premier Roblin had kept peace between the two by avoiding

¹⁵ MFP, March 28, 1914, PN 142.

any clash over his school policy, for example bilingual instruction, compulsory education, the development of a provincial university.¹⁶

The passage of the amendments to the school law in 1912 which aimed at relieving the double taxation which Brandon and Winnipeg Catholics had to pay for their separate schools as well as public schools, touched off a series of incidents to the political embarrassment of the Roblin Government.¹⁷ Many Orangemen believed that the amendments were passed to give aid to sectarian schools. Their belief was strengthened by the inclination of Joseph Bernier in the provincial cabinet - the first Roman Catholic in nearly twenty years.¹⁸ The extension of the provincial boundaries in 1912 also led many to believe that the amendments would guarantee separate schools in the new territory. The Liberals were quick to play upon these fears and were joined by supporting resolutions from such diverse groups as the Royal Black Knights of Ireland, the School Trustees of Manitoba Educational Association and the Provincial Sunday School convention. The convention of French Liberals, held two days before the Liberal convention, pledged support to any party that would restore minority schools to the **Roman** Catholics.¹⁹ Though T.C. Norris attempted to win their confidence, his statement

¹⁶ For a detailed story of the Manitoba School's controversy, see: W.L.Morton, "Manitoba Schools and Canadian Nationality, 1870-1923," Canadian Historical Review, 194; C.B.Sissons, Bi-Lingual Schools In Canada (London, Paris, Toronto: J.M.Dent and Sons, 1917); George M. Weir, The Separate School Question in Canada (Toronto: The MacMillan Company, 1934); D.S.Woods, Education in Manitoba, Part I (Manitoba Economic Survey Board, mimeographed, February, 1938). There are a host of other works.

17/ MFP, November 20, 1912, FN 182.

18/ Ibid., April 18, 1913, FN 129.

that "I can never promise you separate schools" did not enhance his popularity among his French supporters.

The few months between the Liberal convention and election day saw a closer feeling develop between the Liberals and the Orange association. Within the provincial Orange group, a growing number had become dissatisfied with the executive's friendliness towards the Roblin government. By the end of May, this sentiment had reached a climax, when the Orange Grand Lodge of British America, met in Regina and condemned the Coldwell amendments "as a concession to the Roman Catholic hierarchy of the province and an encroachment upon the non-sectarian school system."²⁰ The group also demanded the abolishment of bilingualism and the inauguration of compulsory education. After the Roblin government had been condemned, it was natural that the Orangemen would approach the Liberals. This soon occurred when the Orange Lodge of Manitoba asked the candidates for the House their views on the school question.²¹ Thirty-five of the opposition and not one of the government pledged themselves to act in accordance with the Orangemen views. To keep the school question boiling, Liberals kept hammering at the need for competent school inspectors, the dangers of a low school attendance and the activities of Professor Karmansky of the Ruthenian Training School as a Conservative campaigner. By election day, education had become the main part of the Liberal programme.

²⁰ MFP, May 30, 1914, PN 44.

²¹ Ibid., July 6, 1914, PN 146.

Throughout the same campaign, the other groups also supported the Liberal party. Nellie McClung spoke on temperance and suffrage at many rallies.²² The Independent F.J. Dixon, appeared as he had for a number of years on Direct Legislation. The Presbyterian churches and the Methodist union, though declaring both parties were none too satisfactory, felt justified in withdrawing support from Premier Roblin because of his stand on the liquor traffic. In the latter connection, numerous church meetings roasted the Conservatives, while other temperance supporters organized local political action committees. In its pre-election issue the Guide raked the Roblin government over the coals on several charges: "it has employed the officials of the civil service . . . to bribe and debauch the electorate" also, "It has proved itself the friend of the saloon keepers"; it has "used law enforcement machinery to persecute political opponents and to shield its own tools."²³

The Liberal party dwelled on several other issues. In the field of finances, the old slogans of more services with less expenditure were raised. The Conservative party was attacked for raising the bonded debt of the province from the \$2,500,000 of 1899 to an alleged total of some \$19,000,000.²⁴ Perennial charges of extravagance and corruption were dredged up. Continually, the voter was made to feel that this was no ordinary election, but one where there was a

²² Swan River Star, July 2, 1914, p. 4; Gladstone Age, June 4, 1914, p. 1.

²³ Guide, July 8, 1914, p. 5.

²⁴ MFP, April 4, 1914, PN 158.

tremendous moral issue: viz., to eradicate a group of politicians "who have grown bold in their manipulation of matters pertaining to elections and patronage."²⁵

b. The Weaknesses of the Government's Position

The Roblin government appeared headed for disaster. In 1910, although boasting a strong record, the Conservative party had only succeeded in capturing slightly over fifty per cent of the total vote. A pronounced swing of independents plus some regular Conservative support could easily topple the government. Many of the issues upon which the Conservatives had gained support were now gone. While the settlement of the boundary issue in 1912 was a feather in the premier's cap, it became an increased source of irritation to the government. First, the government could be attacked for not obtaining control of the province's natural resources. Second, in the new territory, was its school system to be administered under the Laurier-Greenway compromise or the separate schools of the Territorial Government? The mounting unpopularity of the federal government was embarrassing to local Conservatives because of its close association as underlined by the presence of three Manitobans, including Robert Rogers in the federal cabinet.

A crucial factor in Conservative fortunes was the state of Premier Roblin's health. At certain times he demonstrated a mounting lack of self-control, perhaps accountable to growing fatigue and ill-

²⁵ MFP, June 22, 1914, PN 180.

ness. Some of his more unguarded statements antagonized the public. The attacks on Sir Herbert Samuel, several clergymen and the Winnipeg city council were all uncalled for. One rural paper ungraciously commented that "Premier Roblin's tongue is the one member of the Roblin government which the Premier cannot control."²⁶ After Robert Roger's removal to Ottawa, the Premier relied upon the Honourable C.H. Campbell as his chief lieutenant. Campbell retired in late 1913 because of ill health, and his latter's successor the Honourable W.H. Montague, public works minister, was soon reported to be ill as well. As various sections of public opinion had been alienated after 1910, more stress had been put on rough political methods to win important by-elections.

e. The Basis of Conservative Success 1910-1914

Although the debit side of the picture was grim, the Conservative administration still had several positive factors to its credit. During the sessions since 1910, the government had passed a number of noteworthy acts. In 1914, \$2,500,000 was provided by a Good Roads Act for cash grants to the municipalities in order to improve market roads in rural districts. The long standing cold storage and abattoir problem was settled the same year in allowing for facilities in the city of Saint Boniface. A significant act was the appointment of a Public Utilities Commissioner in 1912 with extensive control over the province's

²⁶ Dauphin Press, June 25, 1914, p. 4.

various utilities. The appointment of H.A. Robson as the first holder of the office met with widespread public approval.²⁷

The Public Health Act of 1893 was extensively rewritten in 1911.²⁸ The former act occupied 41 pages and 124 clauses - the amended bill had 118 pages and 441 clauses with new sections on infectious diseases, tenement homes and buildings, the protection of water supplies and sewage disposal. There had been no lag in public works development. Operations had begun on the new provincial Parliament buildings, the new Manitoba Agricultural College, and lesser works about the province. To forestall the sale of fraudulent stocks, - "A Sales of Stock Act" passed in 1912, which soon pushed out promoters of non-existent coal mines, oil wells, et cetera.

On several of the great controversial matters, the government had not adopted a completely negative attitude. Several minor changes had been made towards a greater restraint upon the liquor trade. While the Premier would not approve the principle of compulsory education, a Truancy Act was passed in 1914, aimed at the parents of those children who did not attend school.

The old slogan of loyalty to the British Empire as an exclusive preserve of the Conservative party was exploited vigorously. The debates on Direct Legislation allowed the Premier to swell on the virtues of British institutions as opposed to the American. The attacks on the Liberals for being disloyal were particularly marked during the

²⁷ MFP, May 15, 1912, PN 123.

²⁸ Ross Mitchell, "The Development of Public Health in Manitoba", Canadian Public Health Journal, February, 1935, p.64.

debates on reciprocity. T.C. Norris was portrayed as "the co-partner of Champ Clark in staying millions of dollars and thousands of settlers from flocking to our shores."²⁹ Prominently displayed at Conservative election rallies were such banners as the following: "Is the Roblin government not trying to carry out the will of the people and keep both hands on the Union Jack;" "The Conservatives stand for a British Empire-made policy."³⁰ The Premier could also point with pride to the knighthood with which he was honoured in 1912.

Strongest support for the government came from the party machine. Compared to its use in the 1910 election, it was now much more vigorously active and its efficiency should never be underrated. One good indicator was its success in the 1911 federal election. While the Conservative party only received 52.7% of the total vote in Manitoba, the local party which directed the federal campaign in the province, carried eight out of ten seats available. So well were the Conservative voters mustered that three of these seats were won by less than 90 votes and another by less than three per cent of the vote cast.³¹ With the pressure on, the party sent its forces to crucial areas, and turned what might have been a much closer contest, into a Liberal rout.

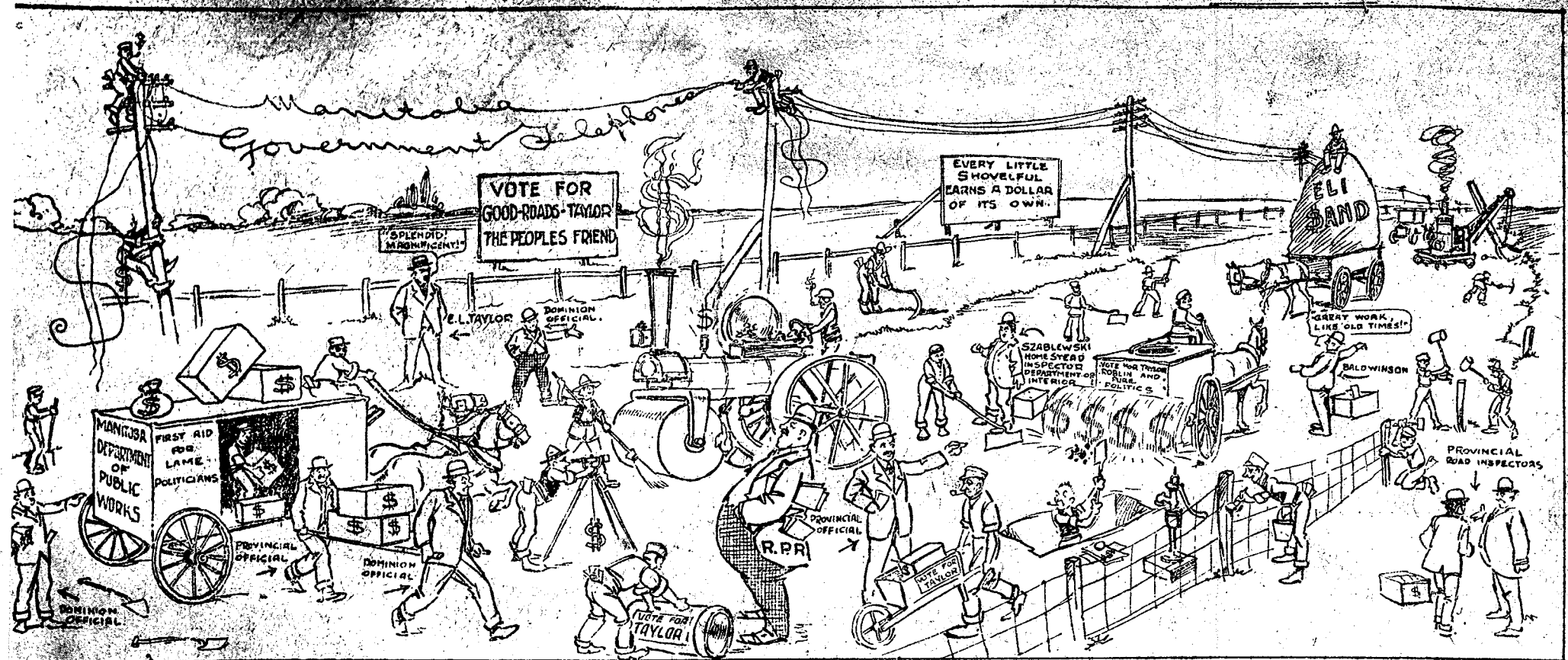
The judicious use of governmental public works has always played an important role in politics. In a rapidly developing area

²⁹ Tribune, April 1, 1912, p. 4.

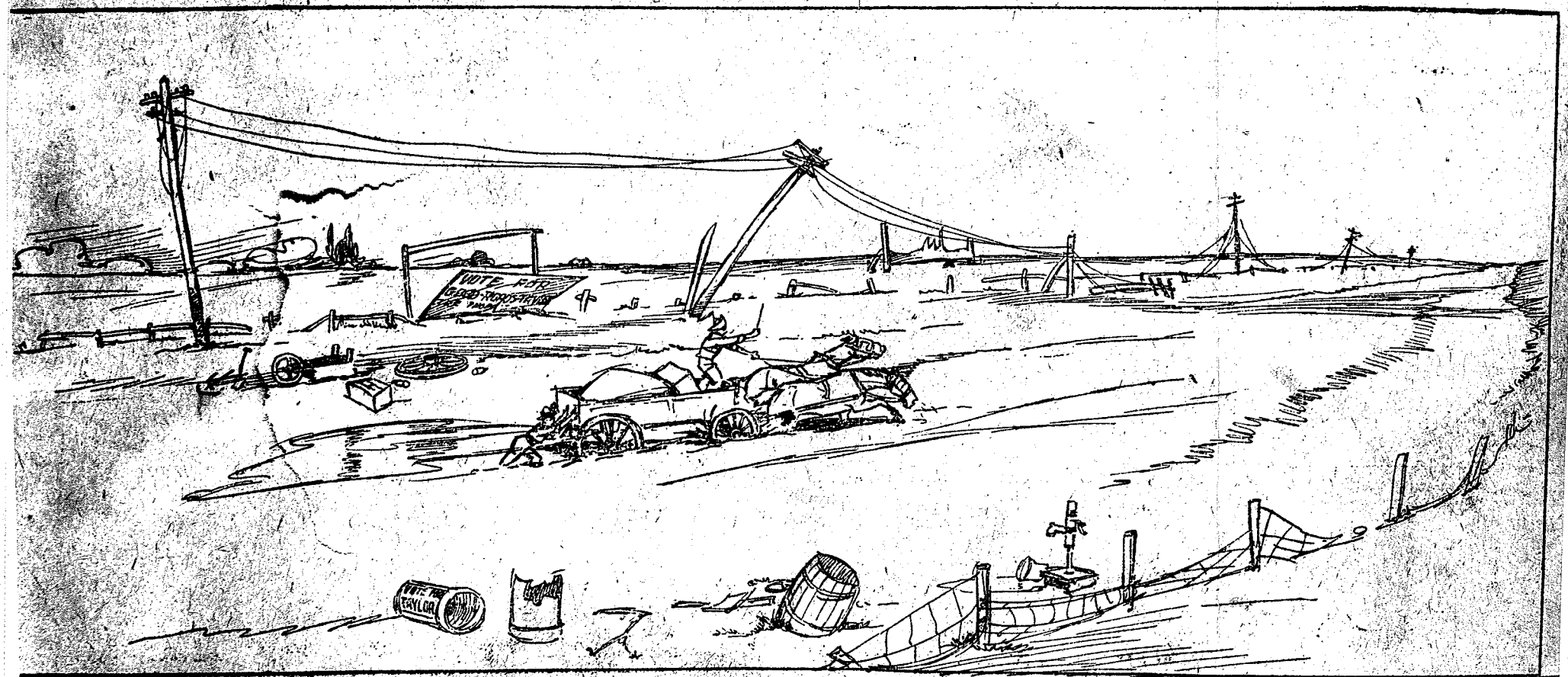
³⁰ Telegram, February 11, 1910.

³¹ Parliamentary Guide, 1911.

ROADMAKING IN GIMLI



BEFORE ELECTION.



AFTER ELECTION.

as was Manitoba during its early history, these became of even more importance as new areas required the conveniences of a settled community within a relatively short period. One country paper in an undeveloped district advised its readers that it was "ordinary common sense" and not politics for its district to return a government candidate. The paper would allow those older districts having all the public buildings, railways, roads and bridges desired to supply an opposition member. Public works were important as well in representing a tangible record of government activity during its term of office. The Conservatives frequently pointed with pride to the many new buildings built for a rapidly growing community. This was put more forcefully to the constituents of Selkirk in 1913 by E.L. Taylor: "If you are interested, then, in the development of your own constituency in this regard, I ask you to support me in this constituency."³² He was elected.

It was natural that these operations could be channelled into projects that benefitted the party. One newspaper summed up local government political activity prior to the 1914 election:

Three weeks ago the Roblin Government kindly donated or inflicted on us a party of surveyors and this week they sent us a party of twelve telephone men. The telephone service has been on the hummer here for at least two years that we know of and it's as if the powers that be have just found out about it. Elections are undoubtedly coming off soon if present indications mean anything. It seems too bad that the Roblin government let their elevators go, for if they had them now they could have sent up a party of forty or so to paint them. Has anyone heard when the road gang would arrive?³³

³² Telegram, May 6, 1913, PN 146.

³³ Emerson Journal, March 20, 1914. Reprint from Dauphin Press.

Many others in government service could be called into service: bailiffs, county court officers, provincial **policemen**, truancy officers, road inspectors, homestead inspectors, forest rangers, game wardens, immigration officials, police magistrates, foreign school inspectors, licence officials and Agricultural Society members. Patronage distributed in the right places built up Conservative support. A glaring example of this is advertising and other printing contracts supplied to the party's Winnipeg Telegram. In 1910, for example, that paper received over \$26,500 to the \$145.46 of the opposition Manitoba Free Press.³⁴ Firms doing business with the government could receive contracts in consideration of any contributions they might bestow the government. One of the West's largest construction firms, after receiving the Manitoba Agricultural College contract, (in the period 1911 to 1914),³⁵ was asked for a total of \$22,500 for the Conservative war chest.

The elaborate Conservative organization paid off in innumerable more ways as election day approached. Immigrants could be bribed to vote Conservative by having their naturalization papers hurried through ahead of the regulation minimum. T.H. Johnson concluded that at least 1,500 such instances had occurred before the 1914 election day to influence the Winnipeg results. With the use of election officials it was possible to get more voters "by changing the spelling of the almost unspellable and quite unpronounceable names of some of the foreign

³⁴ Province of Manitoba: Public Accounts, 1910 (Winnipeg: King's Printer, 1910). Unofficial tabulation compiled by author.

³⁵ MFP, May 21, 1914, FN 21.

electors."³⁶ To forestall any success by Liberals in any election day disputes, the government cancelled the licences of those justices of the peace who happened to be Liberal. Generous distribution of liquor and money would send out hoards of men to vote at a number of polling booths under different names. There were many names to go around for them - one voters' list contained seventeen residents on a vacant lot on Winnipeg's Maple Street. More special methods were reserved for crucial contest. In Centre Winnipeg, the phone number of Liberal-Labour candidate F.J. Dixon's campaign headquarters was changed on election day after his campaign literature had carried another one.³⁷

To ensure that none of their own failed to vote, Conservative scrutineers at each polling station had voters' lists marked so that they knew: "Who are for us; who are against us; who are doubtful; who are absent; who are dead; who to swear; who won't vote."³⁸ Manitoba was covered by an unparalleled organization.

The enormous power that was wielded by such a strong organization was not lost upon the Liberal party. To forestall a snap election, as had occurred in 1907 and 1910, Liberal nominating conventions were called in the winter of 1913. The party realized that: "The government is too strongly entrenched in its actual control of the public business to be defeated by mere cononades of resolutions or by platform attacks."³⁹

³⁶ MFP, July 10, 1914, PN 226.

³⁷ Voice, July 15, 1910, p. 1.

³⁸ Scrutineer's Handbook for Conservative Workers in Manitoba 1910 (Winnipeg: T.W. Taylor Co. Ltd., 1910), p. 1.

³⁹ MFP, May 1, 1914, p. 220; Ibid., March 13, 1914, p. 100.

The Liberals were further handicapped by the loss of federal support that they had possessed in 1910 and called for aid from the Liberal government of Saskatchewan. Little could be legally done to stop the Conservative machine. Within the House, for example, direct charges of violation of law were made against one member - names, dates, et cetera - but the government paid no heed.⁴⁰

The administration had further ensured its victory in redistribution of the seats. Winnipeg, which had grown more Liberal and Labour was unfairly discriminated against. Although the city had grown much more rapidly than the rest of the province, the extra seats she received were far below what it deserved. After redistribution, Winnipeg had six, an increase of two, while three seats went to the northern territories of the province where there were very few residents. As the latter were deferred until after the rest of the province had voted and since they required many public improvements, they usually went to the government by acclamation or by a landslide. While there were a number of Liberal charges of gerrymandering, it is doubtful if much was employed as a floating population would diminish its success. One interesting incident was that which happened to the only two Conservative members of the legislature who lost their seats by redistribution. Both had happened to vote against the government, on one of the rare occasions when such a thing occurred.

The French Catholic vote was still a strong prop of the Roblin

⁴⁰ MFP, Jun 3 12, 1914, PN 95.

government. There were several indications that the two had maintained their long-standing friendship. In 1911, after the federal election, one French newspaper pointed out it had helped the Conservative party and expected Joseph Bernier to be appointed to the provincial cabinet to take the place of Robert Rogers who had entered the federal cabinet.⁴¹ The Honourable R.P. Roblin resigned the portfolio of Provincial Secretary in April of 1913, Bernier assuming that position. In the interval, the government had refused to repeal the ambiguous Coldwell amendments, thereby sacrificing Orange votes for those of Roman Catholics. The Conservative party was rewarded for their stand as the 1914 election approached. La Liberte boldly stated that there was little alternative for French voters:

Votons et votons dans notre interet naturel et religieux. Dans cette lutte, cela prime toutes les autres questions: suffrage femin, legislation directe, referendum, abolition de la buvette, etc. Votons contre ceux que veulent amoindrir, le droits qui nous avons regagnes depuis quelques annees, votons couteur ceux qui trouvent que nous enseignons trop de francais et maintenons trop d'atmosphere catholiques dans nos ecoles: votons pour ceux dont l'action - interessee ou des interessee, peu importe - a favorise un amoindressement de l'injustice dont nous souffrons, votons pour ceux qui ont prouve par leur conduite que le bilinguisme n'est pas un mot vide dan nos ecoles./42

d. The 1914 Election

Conservative strategy was to remain on the offensive. Emphasis was placed upon "Fourteen years of constructive statesmanship" that

⁴¹ Dauphin Press, October 6, 1911, p. 1. Reprinted from Le Soleil.

⁴² La Liberte, July 7, 1914, p. 1.

had brought more public buildings, the boundary settlement, telephones, lower railway rates and construction, good roads, agricultural aid, education and liquor legislation.⁴³ Much emphasis was placed on the government's success in providing all these services while still achieving annual surpluses. The Conservative concern for "the material development of prosperity of our province" was strongly contrasted to the "fads and fancies to catch the Socialists and the restless" by the Liberals. The Liberal platform was described as "Socialist" and "all that was needed to make the Liberal platform complete as a Republican concern was marriage as a civil contract and police court divorce."⁴⁴ Their strategy undoubtedly earned dividends with the defection of certain regular Liberals. One such was the Honourable E.H.G.G. Hay, a long-time active member of that party, who could not follow the Liberals into Direct Legislation and suffrage.^{44a}

A special attempt was made to sow discord between the temperance forces and the Liberals. Roblin pointed out that with direct Legislation, the liquor interest could employ it to destroy any restrictive acts. Also, if the proposed referendum of the Liberals was defeated, then it was likely that the local veto areas would disappear. Continually the Premier stressed that "the policy of the recent government is total prohibition by use of the total veto - eighty per cent of the total

⁴³ See Record of the Roblin Government 1900 to 1914.

^{44/} Telegram, April 17, 1914, PN 181.

^{44a/} E.H.G.G. Hay was a member of the first Manitoba Legislature. He led the Liberal party before relinquishing this post to E. Greenway. Active in the Riel Rebellion, he also was the first Liberal to run federally in the Province. MFP, January 10, 1913, p. 1.

area of this province is total prohibition today."⁴⁵ He neglected to point out, however, that liquor licences had doubled in Manitoba since his accession to office and that the eighty per cent figure included the large unorganized territories of the north with its low population.

On education, an attempt was made to mollify both Orangemen and Roman Catholics. At the annual banquet of Western Catholics, Joseph Bernier reassured the group that, "We shall never permit anybody to prevent us from teaching our own language."⁴⁶ The Minister of Education, Coldwell, stressed that the Coldwell amendments made the 1890 and 1897 acts more effective and that "Manitoba has the most effective compulsory school clause in the Dominion."⁴⁷

Two notable features of the Conservative campaign was the emphasis it played on clergymen and labour. At Miami, a month from election day, the province's first minister lashed out at the condemnation of his government by the Methodist Conference, declaring that that body had fallen into Liberal hands. Three days later at Emerson he condemned those ministers who spoke out against him: "I brand as a coward the minister who will criticize me and will not allow me to stand on the same pulpit to defend myself."⁴⁸ A more conciliatory spirit was exhibited towards organized labour. Several weeks before the end of the campaign, the premier suddenly announced that the government would soon establish a labour bureau, an object sought by

⁴⁵ Telegram, June 17, 1914, FN 137.

⁴⁶ Ibid., April 17, 1914, FN 187.

⁴⁷ Ibid., June 21, 1914, FN 174.

⁴⁸ Ibid., July 6, 1914, FN 92.

the local Winnipeg Trades and Labour Council for several years.

To conclude their campaign, the Conservatives resorted to two old slogans:

Never were our institutions threatened by parties so directly as now. Never were men so unscrupulous in their efforts to defeat those who are British, and I appeal to you as Manitobans, and I appeal to you as citizens worthy of your heritage to stand together. Be always Manitobans, be always Canadians, be always British, be always Conservative./49

The connection between the federal and provincial Liberals was dwelled upon, particularly with regard to the federal scandals and the absence of any criticism from provincial Liberals.

One prominent minister viewed the election in a different light.

We are at the crossroads. The defeat of the government is not at stake. It is whether the ideals which animate the progressive politicians of Manitoba are the ideals that are going to be permanent and have the dominating place in the minds of the citizens of this country./50

Thus the two parties faced each other as the July 10 election day approached. The Conservatives possessed a fairly progressive legislative record, successive by-election victories both in provincial and federal contests, the settlement of the boundary issue and, what proved to be of crucial importance, a strong party organization. The government labelled their opponents as:

. . . composed chiefly of banish-the-bar advocates, female suffrage enthusiasts, initiative and referendum elements, disappointed annexationists, single-taxers, anti-vice crusaders and a sprinkling of disappointed office-seekers. Imagine Manitoba at the mercy of this hysterical aggregation! /51

49 Telegram, July 6, 1914, PN 92.

50/ Statesman, February 19, 1914, p. 1.

51/ Telegram, February 14, 1914, PN 37.

The Liberals, on the other hand, had succeeded in capturing a much larger part of the Anglo-Saxon independent vote than four years previously in their willingness to carry out the wishes of several dissatisfied groups. They sneered at the Conservatives as: "Premier Roblin, His Government, the Liquor Traffic, and every form of organized vice and crime."⁵²

The election results were surprising in several respects.⁵³

The government, although retaining office, did so with a reduced majority, 28 of 49 seats, and with their lowest percentage of the total vote since their accession to office. Many of their members were re-elected with decreased majorities, and the Honourable H. Armstrong was defeated in the normally strong Conservative seat of Portage la Prairie.⁵⁴ The Honourable W.H. Montague narrowly missed defeat by a margin of one vote.

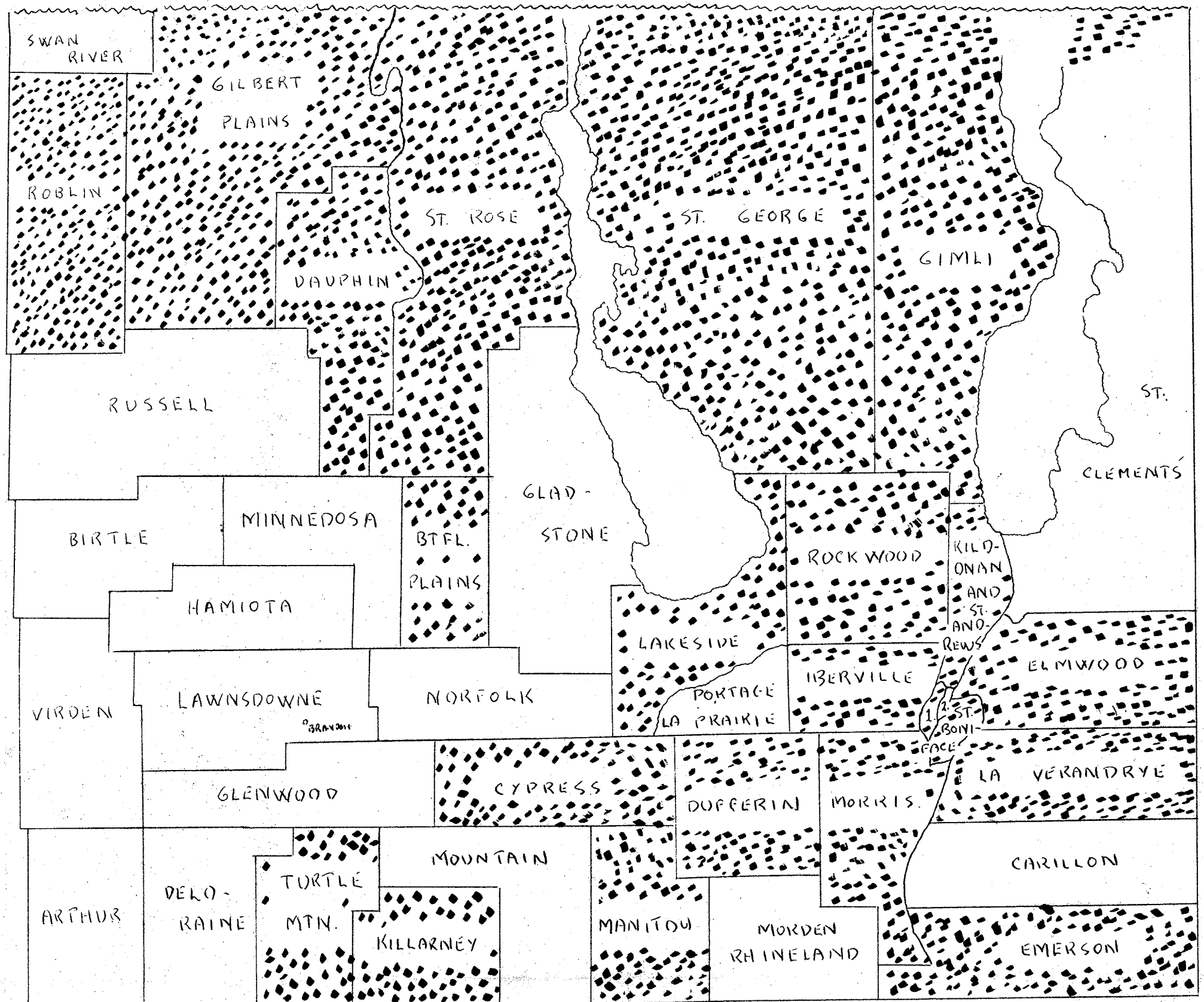
The government was fortunate to win in several respects. Winnipeg, which voted more for Liberal and Labour candidates, was vastly under-represented. In four seats, Labour candidates had forced three-cornered contests, with the Conservative candidate, winning on a split vote. It is probable that if Labour strength had not risen so markedly since 1910, the Liberals would have won. With the four seats

⁵² Statesman, June 25, 1914, p. 4.

⁵³ Parliamentary Guide, 1915. Election results. Total vote, 146,905. Conservatives, 68,474 or 46.7%; Liberals, 62,777 or 42.7%; Independents, 570 or 0.3%; Labour, (including F.J. Dixon) 15,084 or 10.2%, (without F.J. Dixon) 6,879 or 4.7%.

⁵⁴ The minister later obtained a seat in the deferred election in Grand Rapids.

PROVINCIAL ELECTION 1914



that would not have been lost on the split vote, the Liberal party would have had twenty-five instead of twenty-one seats. The deferred elections for the northern seats would then have undoubtedly voted Liberal, as it was dominant.

As it was, the Liberal party attained a higher percentage of the total vote than that of the Conservatives¹, if F.J. Dixon's was included with the former. The percentage would stand at 48.1 for the opposition and 46.7 for the government. The Liberals picked up large gains in the southwestern part of the province, an area which was more mature economically and more heavily populated by Anglo-Saxons than the rest of the province. In that district the strength of the protest groups supporting the Liberals was the strongest outside Winnipeg.⁵⁵ The Conservatives explanation of Liberal gains was the change in Orange support. Undoubtedly this was important, but a number of districts where the Order was quite strong, such as Manitou, Killarney, Turtle Mountain, Beautiful Plains, still returned Conservatives.

Other groups in the election also had made considerable gains since 1910. Labour's advance was very significant. An interesting sidelight to the election is that the total vote of F.J. Dixon was greater than the combined sum of the whole cabinet of seven.⁵⁶ In six contests, those candidates representing the Labour Representation

⁵⁵ The Conservatives expected this southern area to be the bulwark of their vote. Telegram, July 8, 1910, p. 1.

⁵⁶ Results: F.J. Dixon (8,205). The cabinet - Howden (1,102); Coldwell (1,897); Roblin (1,204); Armstrong (271); Montague (1,087); Lawrence (758); Bernier (1,603) - a total of 7,992.

committee, Social Democratic Party and the Socialist Party of Canada, received 7,000 votes. Most independents joined the Liberal party. T.D. Ferley and A.D. Craig, the only two candidates who ran against both older parties, trailed the field.

e. Reform Groups Still Dissatisfied with the Conservatives

Although the Conservative government was returned, several Liberal demands were now partially solved. The furor aroused their supporters that the government would not dare to tamper with them. The Manitoba Free Press continued to press for many of the same election issues as suffrage, temperance, education, right after election day. It was only the outbreak of the Great War in August that gave a temporary respite to party conflict. As the months passed, however, more prominence was given to issues that might have otherwise been neglected in peacetime, thereby forcing Premier Roblin to some form of action, rather than evasion.

As the war progressed, temperance feeling mounted rapidly. There were many more arguments against the sale of liquor. A number focused about the needs of wartime; economically, the military uses to which the ingredients of alcoholic beverages could be put; socially, the detrimental influence of liquor in lowering the vitality of the troops. In the cry for an all-out war effort, liquor was out of place. Additional nonpolitical groups; such as the Winnipeg Canadian Club, asked for more restrictions on the liquor traffic.⁵⁷ Rising temperance spirit revealed

⁵⁷ Statesman, August 13, 1914, p. 2.

itself in the majority of local option contests that passed the veto in December of 1914.

The provincial government responded by inaugurating fresh restrictions. The seven proprietary clubs in Winnipeg were closed and Manitoba was the first province in Canada to enforce the early closing of bars and liquor stores during wartime. These regulations were enforced - 72 liquor licences being temporarily suspended for violations of the liquor act near the end of the year. The 1915 session of the Manitoba legislature saw further restrictions, one of the more noted ones raised the age of a minor from sixteen to eighteen for purposes of drinking.

While the temperance forces commended the Premier for these measures, they were far from satisfied. By now, sentiment stressing prohibition was rapidly mounting. Their first request to close the bars during wartime was denied. Roblin refused to meet a Social Service Council in the fall of 1914.⁵⁸ The Premier still maintained that local option was the best prohibition scheme and was achieving a restriction of the liquor traffic. His statement was borne out in December of 1914, when the vast majority of 22 local option contests decided for local veto.⁵⁹ The few concessions that had been made were roundly condemned by the Winnipeg Saturday Post, hitherto an intense Conservative partisan, alleging that the government was too arbitrary in its actions.

⁵⁸ MFP, September 21, 1914, FN 166.

⁵⁹ Telegram, December 16, 1914, FN 27.

On the other fiery topics of education and suffrage, the administration took little action, although altered conditions warranted some change in its attitude. The important contribution of many women to the war effort made a deep impression and converted a number of anti-suffragettes. When the suffrage delegation met the Premier, however, he refused to consider their request. He was conciliatory this time though and held out the hope that he might grant their request after they had conducted an educational campaign on the topic.⁶⁰ A few weeks later, the government defeated an opposition motion for suffrage on the grounds that the time was inopportune and that women were not interested in such a bill.⁶¹

While the government might have been able to temporize on some issues, education was a field it could not. The Orange Lodge of Manitoba moved again for the repeal of the Coldwell amendments as well as the Laurier-Greenway agreement.⁶² The Manitoba Convention of School Trustees asked for an impartial commission to investigate G.R. Coldwell's statements that there was no provincial school where English was not properly taught.⁶³ As was the case in other fields, the demands of war prompted a new educational policy. Prior to the outbreak of war, there had been some measure of toleration exhibited to the immigrants. As hostilities continued, anti-foreigner sentiment quickly mounted. Bitterness reached such a pitch that a delegation of

⁶⁰ Hansards, MFP, March 10, 1915, p. 27.

⁶¹ Ibid., March 30, 1915, p. 125.

⁶² Telegram, February 25, 1915, PN 185.

⁶³ MFP, March 3, 1915, PN 196.

Anglo-Canadians went to the Legislature petitioning that all Manitoba Ukrainians be interned or deported because they were "preparing a revolution."⁶⁴

The Conservatives still did not budge. Minister Coldwell declared that there had been a sharp rise in school attendance since the passage of the Truancy Act; that English was taught satisfactorily in the province; and that the Coldwell amendments had been drafted to relieve Winnipeg Catholic Schools, not to restore separate ones. Subsequent Liberal motions to abolish the Coldwell amendments and implant compulsory education, were defeated.

Notwithstanding the announcement by the government of the intention to establish a Bureau of Labour, general labour sympathy did not move closer to the Conservative party. Two incidents had antagonized organized labour. When a number of amendments were made to the provincial fair wage schedule, revising it downward in several cases without consulting the trades concerned, the Labour Council concluded that the provincial government and the Parliament building contractor "are in league with each other for the purpose of taking advantage of the present depressed conditions of the labour market to depress the wages of the workers."⁶⁵ The second incident was that all public works of the government had been suspended with the outbreak of war. That act left many workers unemployed and without relief from government.

⁶⁴ Iysenko, Men in Sheepskin Coats (Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1947), p. 115.

⁶⁵ Voice, January 8, 1915, p. 1.

Although narrowly missing defeat in the 1914 election, the Conservative government did not undertake the bold action that was required in several fields. To a number of protest groups, the government had a stock reply for their procrastination:

There was no paramount issue and the only problem that mattered at the present juncture was the problem of how to save the Empire? What was party politics at a time like this?/66

f. The Conservative Administration Resigns

The Roblin Government might have weathered these storms, but the notorious Parliament Building scandal that erupted in the 1915 session of the Legislature defeated that administration. Tenders had been called in May of 1913 and Thomas Kelly and Sons received the contract at a bid of \$2,859,750. Until early 1915, there commenced a tangled web of events between the administration and the contractor on changed contracts and enlarged estimates of construction costs.

The minister of Public Works, W.H. Montague, announced on September 18, 1914, to the War Session of the Manitoba House that due to errors by the architect, the original cost of the Parliament Buildings would be exceeded by 50 per cent, or a total cost of \$4,500,000 instead of \$3,000,000. The Liberal opposition soon pressed for an investigation of the construction. Reluctantly, in the 1915 Session, Premier Roblin allowed the Public Accounts Committee, packed by a Conservative majority, to look into the matter. As expected, this body reported that there

⁶⁶ Hansards, MFP, February 11, 1915, p. 8.

were no malpractices. The Opposition called for the appointment of a Royal Commission. On the eve of dissolution, when it was apparent that the Premier would not accede to such a request, T.C. Norris went to the Lieutenant-Governor, D.C. Cameron, presenting him with a memorial signed by the Liberal M.P.'s to the effect that the House not be prorogued until a Royal Commission had been established. The next day, the Premier, after being closeted with the Lieutenant-Governor, announced that one would be appointed. The Commission of three judges of the Court of the King's Bench was chaired by Mr. Justice T.C. Mathers, and assisted by D.A. Macdonald and Sir Hugh John Macdonald, former Conservative Premier of Manitoba.

On May 12, Premier Roblin resigned his office, and with his Cabinet, retired from public life. The Liberals, led by T.C. Norris assumed office. The subsequent report of the Royal Commission in August severely indicted the Roblin Government not only for overpaying the contractor by the sum of \$701,093.59 for the purpose of acquiring election expenses, but also for the alleged part that several cabinet ministers were directly implicated.⁶⁷

The shock upon the community was immense. It was not so much the fact that there had been a scandal - it was the enormity of the graft involved. The many charges that had been levelled at the Government over a period of years bore fruit. Memories of other conservative failures were dredged up - the site of the Manitoba Agricultural College, and the over-evaluation in purchasing the Bell Telephone Company, to

⁶⁷ See: Report of the Royal Commission into the Manitoba Parliament Buildings, T.A. Mathers, Commissioner (Manitoba: King's Printer, 1915).

name a few.

In a letter to Lieutenant-Governor Cameron, Redmond P. Roblin retired as first minister. The late premier gave as his reasons for his action: his acceptance of constitutional responsibility for his officials; the lessened public confidence as shown in the past election; the need for a new government to make adjustments with the contractor.⁶⁸ The rest of the cabinet retired from their seats and public life.⁶⁹ T.C. Norris became Premier on May 12, and soon announced that there would be a provincial election that summer. The new premier was called upon to end the machine politics that caused this scandal and clean up the mess.

g. The 1915 Election

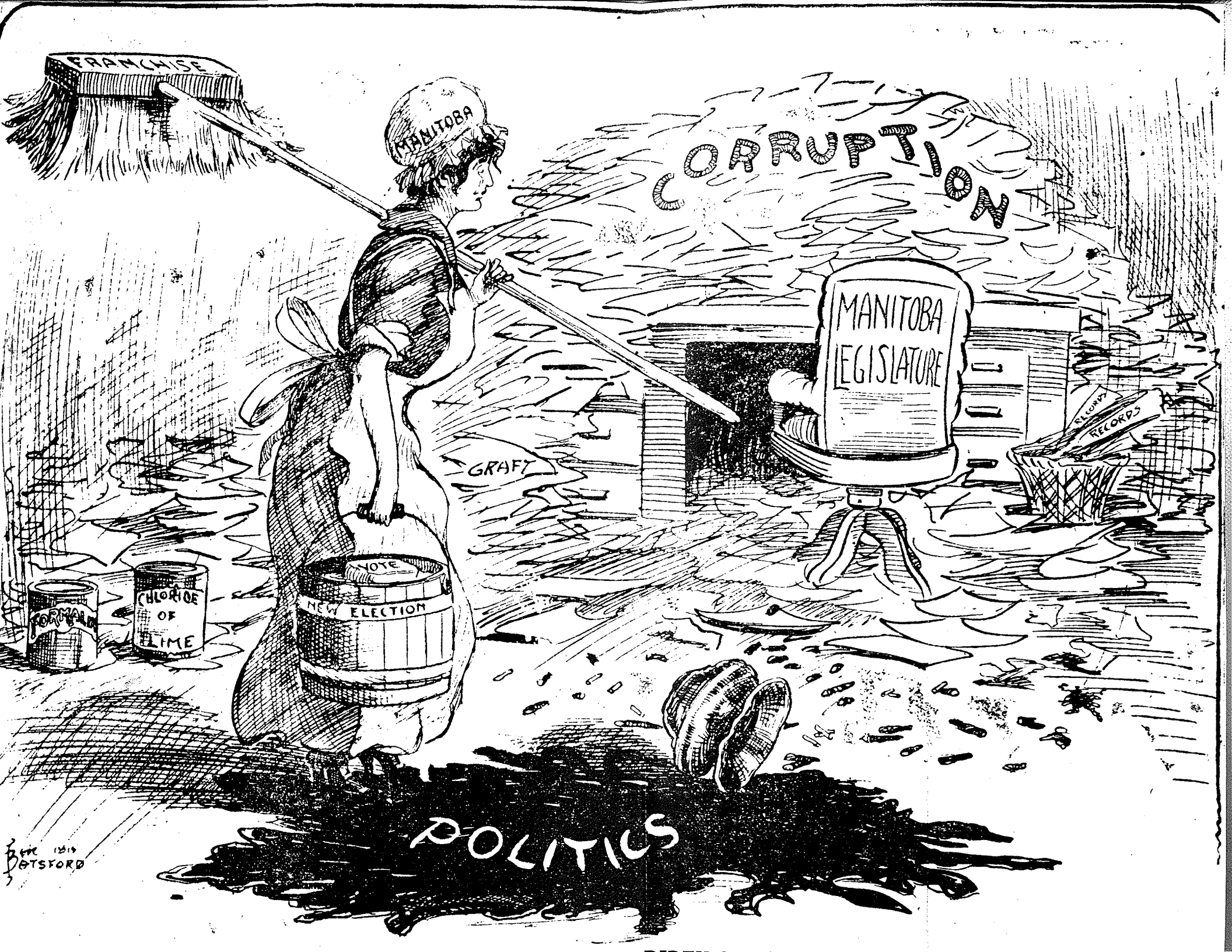
Seriously weakened by the loss of their leaders, their machine disrupted, the loss of the fruits of office and the dark stain of scandal upon the party, left the conservatives at a serious disadvantage for the forthcoming election. A meeting of presidents from provincial Conservative clubs, however, decided to fight the election. "A free and open convention" was called to found a new Conservative party; the first convention of that party in twelve years.

Keynote of the convention was the declaration that Manitoba Conservatism disassociated itself from old-line parties and machine rule:

The rank and file of both parties have been largely unthinking onlookers; while the professional politicians - and this is used in no contemptuous sense - have forgotten that they were the

⁶⁸ Telegram, September 21, 1915, PN 64.

⁶⁹ MFP, May 13, 1915, PN 91; Telegram, May 15, PN 92.



CORRUPTION

MANITOBA

MANITOBA
LEGISLATURE

RECORDS

GRAFT

NOTE
NEW ELECTION

CHLORIDE
OF
LIME

FORMALIN

POLITICS

E. H. BOTSFORD
1919

representatives of the people, and have become obsessed with the idea that they are, united, the peoples' sole proprietors.⁷⁰

A fourteen point radical platform was passed to match that brave declaration, including: total prohibition; compulsory education; the repeal of the Coldwell amendments; retaining bilingual training, although English was to be predominant; women suffrage; a federal investigation into the Laurier government graft on the National Transcontinental Railroad; a revision of the Elections Act; and the abolition of the patronage system. The party called upon a new leader, J.A.M. Aikins, whose "integrity is beyond question," to lead them into battle.⁷¹

It was heralded that the new group would sound "the death knell of party prejudice, of so-called party loyalty, and of indifference to public duty that springs from machine politics."⁷²

In reality, though, the Conservatives had little attraction. The Liquor question, which their leader made the groups main plank, saw them promise prohibition, whereas the Liberals would only use the referendum to test the people's wishes. Several attempts were made to sully the integrity of the Liberal group: it was intimated that the latter was in league with the liquor interest; that their leaders had entered a "deliberate conspiracy" with the Lieutenant-Governor to dismiss the late government; and then as election day approached on August 11, 1915, there was some talk that T.C. Norris and the discredited

⁷⁰ Telegram, June 30, 1915, FN 144. See Appendix F.

⁷¹ J.A.M. Aikins was president of the Canadian Bar Association; Honorary Colonel of the 99th Regiment; Chairman of the Board of Directors of Weyley College; and appointed Lieutenant-Governor in August of 1916.

⁷² Winnipeg Saturday Post, July 31, 1915, p. 1.

Conservative leaders had plotted to not prosecute the latter. These were but sidelights - the essential feature of the revived Conservative party saw it proclaiming its nonpartisan character and resurrecting the rallying cry of "supporting the sound principles of British government."

Unfortunately, its brave platform undoubtedly did the party considerable harm. The party had completely reversed itself on several basic issues. On banish-the-bar, repeal of the Coldwell amendments, compulsory education and the enfranchising of women, the party had voted against these reforms only some four months previously. And while there were many protestations of founding a new party, many old faces were still present. A prominent one was George Lawrence, a former cabinet minister of Premier Roblin. J.A.M. Aikins, himself, notwithstanding his fine community record, suffered from his close association with the C.P.R. and the former Conservative party.

To convince the public of their good intentions, the Conservatives had to completely disassociate themselves from their disgraced political brothers. Throughout the campaign they should have insisted:

. . . on the fullest possible probing, not only of the legislature, but other recently erected buildings, restitution of assets grafted, and adequate punishment of those responsible for the grafting, no matter how high positions they have held./73

The Liberal group had little to worry over Conservative strategy. Each day's newspaper contributed a further story on the graft of the late government. It was natural for a popular demand to develop asking T.C. Norris to clean up the mess. The election campaign was the quietest

⁷³ Eye Witness, Birtle, July 6, 1915, p. 1.

in several decades of Manitoba politics.⁷⁴

The election on August 16th almost completely wiped out the Conservative party.⁷⁵ They carried five seats in a house of 49. Four of these were held by French Catholics and one by an Anglo-Saxon, F.Y. Newton, who soon resigned his seat after an investigation of road-building irregularities in his constituency.⁷⁶ The Conservatives received one-third of the total vote, but perhaps more significant is the fact that the drop of 30,000 in the total votes cast in Manitoba was equal to the drop in Conservative votes from the previous election of 1914. It suggests that there were a large number of partisans who had become disillusioned with their party, but rather than vote for another, abstained from the polls. In St. Rose, Joseph Hamelin,⁷⁷ the sitting member, refused to be nominated except as an independent; A.S. Argue in Dufferin told his followers that if he was elected, he would remain

⁷⁴ The campaign expenses for F.J. Dixon were \$345.99 one-tenth of the 1914 election. See, the Single Taxer and Direct Legislation Bulletin, September, 1915, p. 1.

⁷⁵ Election returns. Conservatives, 38,623 or 33.2%; Liberals, 64,423 or 55.1%; Independents (straight), 1,139 or 0.9%; Labour (including F.J. Dixon), 12,762 or 10.8%. Total vote, 116,947. The totals cited in the Parliamentary Guide on the 1915 election are those of the 1914 election.

⁷⁶ "Frederick Y. Newton, the candidate and the central figure around which all these padded, raised, forged, fictitious pay-rolls and spoliation of the public funds took place, and to advance whose political campaign \$24,930.75 was spent - over half of it wasted - shared directly in the booty." Mr. Newton was re-elected to the Legislature in 1922. Other investigations were pursued into - the active Conservative government's road building in the districts of Gimli, Rockwood, and Roblin, and the conduct of the provincial purchasing agent. Province of Manitoba: Report of the Royal Commission on Expenditures for Road Work During the Year 1914, G. Paterson, Commissioner, p. 31.

⁷⁷ Dauphin Herald, July 29, 1915, p. 1.

independent.⁷⁸ The drift of these displaced Conservative voters is vital to future Manitoba political history.

The strength of the independent vote is difficult to assess. No straight independents were elected, though R.A. Rigg⁷⁹ and F.J. Dixon were returned as Labour representatives in Winnipeg, and W.R. Wood together with T.O. Ferley, 1914 independents, were elected as Liberals. The independent influence cannot be judged on the number of seats they failed to win. Their votes were important to the Liberal victory. The latter had been forced to adopt such a broad platform to attract various groups, that there was little left to distinguish the platform of an independent candidate. One exception, at least, was J.W. McCuaig, independent nominee from Dauphin, who pledged himself to resign if he didn't carry out his constituency's wishes, plus advocating such measures as the discouragement of election expenses, the abolishment of patronage and the regulation of party funds. Somewhat similar declarations were made by regular candidates of both the Liberal and Conservative parties.⁸⁰ Interesting incidents were the conventions of "Peoples' Progressive Independents" held at Brandon and Baldur. Due to the shortness of time to election day, the group did not enter the

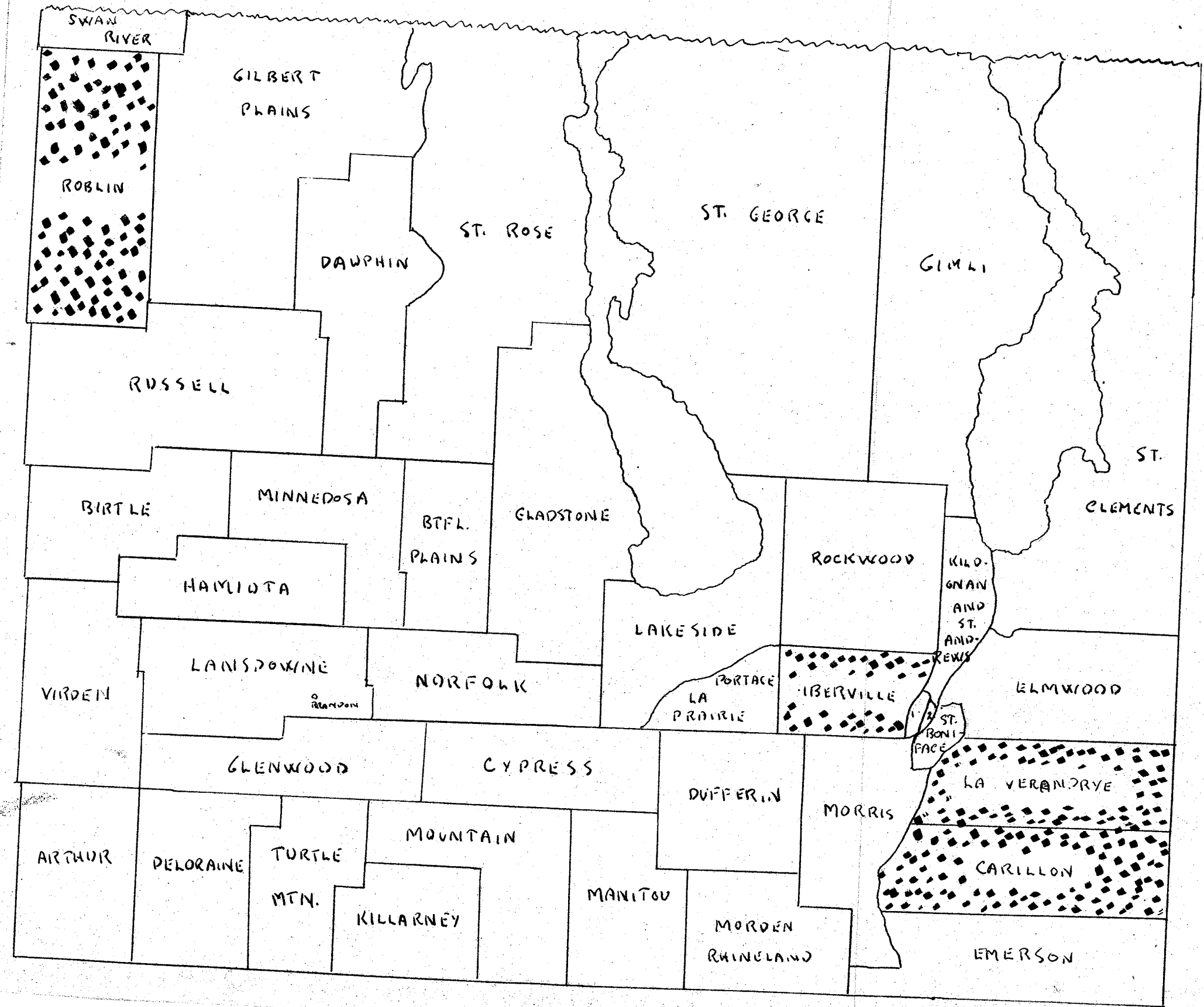
⁷⁸ Dufferin Leader, July 29, 1915, p. 1.

⁷⁹ R.A. Rigg resigned his seat to contest Winnipeg North in the 1917 federal election. Running as a Labour candidate, he attained 3,500 votes in losing to a Union Government candidate. After several years in the army, Rigg returned to Winnipeg in 1919 to help re-organize the Trades and Labour Council

⁸⁰ Dauphin Herald, July 29, 1915, p. 4.

PROVINCIAL ELECTION 1915

1915



1. ASSINIBOIA
2. WINNIPEG.

lists.⁸¹

h. Conclusion

The Liberal victory, therefore, was not one merely of the party. Liberals, Conservatives and Independents had joined together on a wide number of issues to defeat the Conservative party. An editorial comment by the Winnipeg Tribune adequately describes the situation:

It is commonly recognized that the glaring apostasy of Liberal leaders during the last fifteen years, especially in federal politics, if it did not wholly destroy, absolutely paralyzed and discredited Liberalism in this province. During the last fifteen years, when 'Liberalism' attempted to 'turn the trick' off its own bat, it was annihilated. It is, therefore, right and proper that the victory achieved . . . should be credited to the factions responsible for it./⁸²

Thus ended an exciting era in provincial politics.

⁸¹ Pilot Mound Sentinel, July 29, 1915, p. 1.
⁸² Tribune, July 11, 1914, p. 4; Ibid., April 4, 1915, p. 4.

CHAPTER VI

THE MANITOBA REFORM MOVEMENT SUBSIDES

Two unique political incidents occurred during the Liberal administration of T.C. Norris. Foremost was the actual carrying out of the Liberal campaign promises of the 1914 election. The other was the defeat of this same government in 1922 despite its unparalleled legislative records. The Liberal reverses at the polls in 1920 and 1922 can be largely explained by the break-up of those elements which had joined forces in the five-year period following 1910.

a. The Liberal Government's Legislation 1915-1920

The first five years after 1915 were politically quiet ones in Manitoba when compared with the intense struggles of the Roblin era. On many issues, the small opposition voted with the government. Manitoba experienced a time of virtual nonpartisan politics. A mounting independent feeling among some Liberal members and the frequent opposition of the two Labour representatives were two irritants the government had to face within the House.

The pledge made to the Temperance forces was soon redeemed. Their representatives drafted a bill, the "Manitoba Temperance Act," strongly resembling the proposed Macdonald Liquor of 1900. This was to become law after being submitted to a referendum. Despite an unprecedented level of temperance feeling in Manitoba, its sympathizers conducted an intensive campaign in each district. The liquor forces were

not idle, bringing the eminent barrister, Clarence S. Darrow, to speak in their behalf. Their efforts were in vain, as the referendum on the question: "Are you in favour of bringing the Manitoba Temperance Act into Force?" passed with a two to one majority early in 1916. Only three districts in the province voted to the contrary.¹ Even then there was not complete prohibition after June 1, 1916. There was some local sale for medicinal and manufacturing purposes plus a degree of importing from outside the province to private individuals. Many looked forward to beneficial effects arising from the closing of retail outlets.

Legislation advancing the status of women was comprehensive. The most celebrated was the passage of the women's suffrage act. Before the Legislature had complied with the Women's demand, a petition requesting such a measure had to be signed by 17,000. The Political Equality League secured 39,584 within a short period; a separate list of 4,250 names was collected by 94 year old Mrs. Amelia Burrett of Sturgeon Creek. The subsequent passage of the bill precipitated a scene of great joy in the Legislature, with members and suffrage workers joining in dance and song.² Still a section of the French population openly voiced disapproval.³

¹ Vote. Affirmative 50,484; negative 26,502.

²/ In the draft bill for suffrage, Manitoba women were granted the right to vote but not to sit in the Legislature. It was only the threat of revealing this at the Manitoba Grain Growers' Association that women obtained this other right. See, C.L. Cleverdon, Woman Suffrage in Canada, p. 63.

³/ Winnipeg Saturday Post, February 5, 1916, pp. 1-2.

Women gained further relief from electoral handicaps in 1917, when they were rendered eligible for all municipal offices providing they had the required property qualifications. Two years later they had obtained complete equality with men in municipal and school affairs. A dower bill, to protect the interests of provincial women in their husbands' estates, assured them a portion at his demise. Some degree of controversy occurred over the size of the wife's share and the principle of a bill that one member termed "a vote of want of confidence in the men." Although mothers' allowances was not included in the 1914 platform, some relief was granted widows. By the end of the fiscal year, 1919, 413 dependent mothers and 1,291 children had so benefitted.

With a view to eliminating the scandals that plagued provincial elections, the Electoral Laws were remodelled in 1917. An attempt was made to curb the influence of the interests, and to that end, secret contributions by business firms were prohibited by requiring their official disclosure. A \$500 limit, excluding advertising, was placed upon campaign expenses. Other practices liable to abuse were dealt with, such as, the prohibition of vehicles for transportation on election day and the use of proxy registration. A proposal by the Winnipeg Board of Trade for compulsory voting and some measure of an educational test was declined.⁴

Municipalities were granted greater autonomy in taxation in 1916. It was assumed that many municipalities would legislate for single tax,

⁴ Telegram, October 17, 1916, PN 46.

although the act itself, did not so decree. The idea of the province entering the single tax field was not forgotten, as the local single tax group continued to press for such a measure. Former arguments on its virtues against speculators were again employed plus new ones on the value of single tax as a means to raise war revenues and to aid soldier rehabilitation. Faced by growing financial difficulties, and not too influenced to single tax arguments, the province levied a one mill tax on all assessable property in 1918, the first direct tax in Manitoba.

The growing importance of the urban working class was recognized in several bills putting the province into several new fields. The provision for a minimum wage for women was one of the government's more generous acts. Before the bill was passed, criticism came from both right and left: the right felt that if wages were raised, many factories would be forced to close; the latter, represented by the Trades and Labour Council, believed the proposed payments were too low. A Minimum Wage Board was subsequently set up, empowered to fix the minimum weekly wage, the maximum hours per day and week, the conditions under which the girls worked and to examine local industries. During its first year of operation, the Board was instrumental in advancing the wages of 3,664 employees to an average of \$11.00 per week.⁵ The passage of the Industrial Conditions Act in 1919 provided a medium for capital, labour and government to meet in a Joint Council of Industry, chaired by

⁵ Labour Gazette, July, 1918, p. 537; Ibid., December, 1918, p. 1121.

Reverend C.W. Gordon. The commission was granted wide powers in what might be considered a sincere attempt to help cure the economic ills of the day. Some of its duties were to examine unfair profits made at the expense of employees' wages, to investigate conditions in any industry, to publish statistical reports and to help employees with complaints with problems as to the working of this law. The local Trades and Labour Council at first refused to have anything to do with the latter act, alleging that what they wanted was legislation providing for peaceful picketing and "prohibition of strike injunctions."

Several acts respecting labour, which had been passed by the previous administration, were extended. The Factories, Building, Trades Protections and Bake Shop Acts, that had come under such heavy fire by labour critics, were amended and placed under the supervision of the Bureau of Labour. The Workmen's Compensation Act was radically altered to ensure speedier payment. That act still dealt primarily with the city labouring force engaged in manual labour.

The agricultural section of the province received much attention. Outstanding among many acts were two that provided cheaper credit facilities for the farmer: the Manitoba Farm Loans Act and the Rural Credits Act. Under the former, farmers could obtain long-term loans at six per cent, a sizeable reduction when compared to insurance company rates. The act was a co-operative venture with the government and borrowers both holding shares in the Association. Its co-operative and self-supporting nature was partly the result of the government's aim to have its legislation not regarded as benefitting

one class at the expense of others in the community. The Rural Credits Act, passed in 1917, provided for short term loans. Rural Credit Societies were organized in various parts of the province with Government and Municipal co-operation. Each year, the number of local societies increased, until loans amounting to \$1,051,876, were issued in 1919. These associations were primarily concentrated in the more agriculturally backward sections of the province, i.e., the south end of Lakes Winnipeg and Manitoba and along the western provincial boundary.⁶ Another aid to the needy settler was the Settlers' Animal Purchase Act, labelled "Winkler's Cow Scheme," after the Minister of Agriculture. 4,605 cows and 10,000 calves were supplied to 1,128 settlers in 1918. Other fields they entered included legislation facilitating the formation of co-operatives and the encouragement of better methods in the dairy industry. Valentine Winkler, the minister, for a number of years, was under much criticism from several groups in the province for his arbitrary administration.

The Norris administration achieved some of its most noteworthy legislation in the field of education. During the 1916 session, the disputed Coldwell amendments were repealed by a unanimous vote of the House. The same year, a compulsory education act was passed requiring parents and guardians to see that their children were properly educated. This act lost some degree of effectiveness because its enforcement was left to the local school district, which often paid scant attention to the letter of the law. The policy of the Department of Education,

⁶ Guide, March 26, 1919, p. 25.

under Minister R.S. Thornton, to appoint official trustees in districts where local school boards were backward or indifferent to school requirements, achieved marked success. In one community, the official trustee, on his appointment, had found 110 children in one room. Two years later, he had managed to see that an additional 28 schools or school rooms had been provided.⁷

The government's most controversial achievement was the curtailment of bilingual instruction in the province's public schools. Despite the avoidance of this topic in the 1914 Liberal platform, R.S. Thornton felt that bilingual instruction threatened the province's whole educational system.⁸ Bilingual school enrolment amounted to one-sixth of the provincial total at that time. In outlining the defects of bilingual instruction, the Minister stressed that utter chaos would occur with the growing number of nationalities seeking to take advantage of the act. One district, for example, as a result of local petitions, had engaged in a fruitless search to employ a teacher who could speak Gaelic, Polish and English. The arrival or departure of a single family could alter the bilingual situation at any time in smaller schools. Thornton emphasized that English could be better taught to non-English people where a straight English curriculum was adopted. English became the only language of instruction recognized in Manitoba public schools, and the several ethnic normal schools were abandoned in favour of the English.

The Legislature extended its activities into many other fields.

⁷ Guide, December 18, 1917, p. 7.
⁸ Hansard, MFP, January 13, 1916, p. 58.

The growing status of the University of Manitoba was recognized and that institution came under the closer supervision of the provincial government. At the war's conclusion, temporary quarters were granted the University on Broadway Avenue in Winnipeg. In keeping with the growing functions of government, the civil service was re-organized. A Civil Service Commission was established to increase efficiency and to curb political appointments by supervising entrance and promotion. A pension scheme was established. Returning veterans received a number of benefits in taxation relief, allowances to dependents and such rehabilitation programs as education, housing, employment. Important to the future development of Manitoba was the pushing ahead of hydro-electric power with the appropriation of close to \$1,500,000 to link power sites on the Winnipeg River to numerous points about the province. Manitoba became the first province in Canada to provide a salary for the leader of the opposition.⁹ Two key planks from ex-Premier Roblin's record were extended when the provincial grain elevators were sold to the Grain Growers' Grain Company and automatic dialing was introduced on the government telephones. The Public Health Act was extended with provision for free vaccine and diphtheritic antitoxin, government instruction in the prevention of disease, and the sending of some four dozen public nurses about the province.

⁹ Telegram, February 17, 1916, PN 47.

b. Mounting Political Difficulties for the Administration

Though the Legislature was dominated by a heavy Liberal majority, all was not politically tranquil. On educational issues, debate was bitter both within and without the House. So incensed over the bilingual stand of the government was P.A. Talbot, Liberal member for La Verendrye, that he went to the opposition side. The French in the province also felt discriminated against on the University question. They feared that their own Saint Boniface College would become part of a state university with no religious training.¹⁰ A Central Ukrainian Committee was formed to fight the government's stand on bilingualism.

Elected during a period when there was an ever-mounting criticism of the use of politics in government, the Norris administration had to act with a large measure of nonpartisanship. This was easy to accomplish, since there was little need to tighten party lines. On several occasions, the Liberals emphasized that they were interested in good government and not politics. The provincial Liberal organization supported the federal union government when it was popular to do so. Nonpartisanship in politics was carried over into provincial affairs, when both Conservatives and Liberals supported R. Jacob, in a by-election in North Winnipeg.¹¹ On that occasion, Premier Norris declared that the latter's election marked the end of party politics in Manitoba. The Conservative

¹⁰ Hansard, MFP, February 22, 1917, p. 90.

¹¹ Telegram, January 7, 1918, FN 120; R.S. Jacob was appointed Attorney-General in the Norris Government in June of 1922, shortly before the resignation of that group.

organ disagreed, assailing the government for being "Liberals first, and unionists afterwards."¹² The lengthy investigations by the Liberal administration conducted into the actions of the late Roblin government, stiffened this feeling. The Winnipeg Telegram began its steady campaign of government extravagance at this time. The failure of the Liberals to curb the independent spirit in Manitoba is dramatically revealed in the defection of two members of the House, G.W. Prout, and J.W. Wilton, to independent ranks.

The problem of provincial finance rapidly mounted. By the date of the Norris ministry's retirement in 1922, the bonded debt of Manitoba had risen to \$62,000,000, a large jump from the \$26,500,00¹³ left by the Conservative administration in 1915. The manifold services that had been pushed through in seven short years, plus the financial burdens bestowed by the Conservatives was a difficult problem to solve. Unfortunately for provincial treasurer E.A. Brown, the lush days were over. Immigration was declining and sales of provincial lands were drying up as most of the good lands were occupied. New sources of finance had to be found - expenses could be cut little because of the large fixed charges upon the government debt. Some relief was obtained through doubling the tax on auto licences and levying a tax on amusements and unoccupied land. Two courses were open to the government: to enter the field of direct taxation, which it was reluctant to do or

¹² Telegram, January 16, 1918, FN 131.

¹³ W.J. Waines, Provincial Debt of Manitoba (unpublished M.A. Thesis, University of Manitoba, 1925), p. 11.

to practice rigid economies, a habit it adopted too late.

Despite the unparalleled record of the Liberal government during its first term of office, it had to contend with a growing independent spirit and a reviving Conservative party. Of more importance to the future fortunes of the provincial Liberals, was the breakup of those elements that had combined to affect the victory of 1915. Not only did many of these groups break from the government, but the majority of them disappeared as political forces.

c. Organized Labour Conflicts with Other Elements in the Community

The dominant factor of the period might be the position of organized labour in Manitoba and the effect of the war upon its character, strength and affinity to other liberal groups. Because more men went into defence production and the armed forces, unemployment had virtually ceased by the second year of the war. Despite full employment, the social and economic position of labour became more strained. As demand kept far ahead of supply, prices mounted much faster than wages. In the building trades, for example, wages only rose by 18% during the war while the cost of living advanced by 80%.¹⁴ Many staple items, such as flour, attained record prices. Rents also ascended quickly. Main cause for high rents in Winnipeg was the virtual cessation of construction. E.H. Rodgers, city building inspector, declared that the city required some 3,000 dwellings and

¹⁴ Western Labour News, May 2, 1919, p. 1.

66 apartment buildings to house some 15,000 people.¹⁵ Many families were forced to double up and in one district, the City Health Department found 1,031 families living where only accommodation for 361 existed.¹⁶

Politically, labour was in conflict with the federal government on several issues. Their opposition on national registration and conscription led to the ostracising of the two labour members in the Manitoba legislature.¹⁷ The banning of several labour newspapers by the federal government and the growth of war profits with little government interference did much to enhance labour solidarity. Manitoba trade unionists, however, were quite active supporters of the war effort, as over ten per cent of their numbers had marched to the colours by the end of 1917. R.A. Rigg, prominent labour figure, served overseas for several years.

Labour's role in politics grew in importance. In the annual Winnipeg and suburban civic contests, labour candidates registered victories that were a decided contrast to the many defeats of the pre-war period. By 1918, its civic strength was such that it only lost control of Winnipeg's city council by the vote of the mayor. Brandon also experienced this mild labour political revolution, electing its first labour candidate in history.¹⁸ Another attempt to bind all the labour elements in the province together occurred in early 1918 with

¹⁵ Tribune, February 27, 1919, p. 1.

¹⁶ Ibid., January 1, 1919, p. 3.

¹⁷ Voice, January 26, 1917, p. 1.

¹⁸ Ibid., October 19, 1917, p. 4; Western Labour News, December 6, 1918, p. 8.

the formation of the Dominion Labour Party.¹⁹ This, like earlier groups, was a moderate one, opposed by the Socialist Party of Canada, and including in its platform the abolition of the election deposit, equal pay for equal work, and the public ownership of natural monopolies.

Eclipsing all other events were the two Winnipeg strikes. Their course has been treated in detail elsewhere and is incidental to this thesis.²⁰ One occurred in 1918 and the other, the more celebrated one, the following year. The latter strike, which brought out some 25,000 to 30,000 workers, had a profound influence upon the liberal movement in Manitoba. Already some of that group's components had begun to disappear from the local scene, but the strike served to focus the stand of others. Many of the genuine liberals continued to have an affinity for the labour movement. Others drifted away. To the Winnipeg Tribune this strike marked another step in its march away from being the province's foremost liberal journal. Now a staunch partisan of the local Liberal Party, it could not support nor comprehend the aspirations of organized labour after the strike. Violent conflict was abhorrent, and since the onus was on the trade unions for starting the general strikes, the principle upon which they sought their ends, was fundamentally wrong. The unions also had sought to take by force from another class:

¹⁹ Voice, February 1, 1918, p. 1; MFP, January 5, 1918, p. 8.

²⁰ See D.C. Masters, The Winnipeg General Strike, (University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 1950); Royal Commission on the Causes and Effects of the General Strike, H.A. Robson, Commissioner; and article by S.H. Adams, "one of America's leading writers on economics," Tribune, July 26, 1919, p. 9; O.D. Skelton, "Current Events", Queen's Quarterly, July, 1919, pp. 121-128.

. . . not what an employer can get out of his employees, or what the employees can get out of the employer, but that which both can get in spirit of humanity, fair play and justice, the thought of more gain shoved to the background./²¹

In its new found strength - some unions had gained several thousand members within three months - labour was somewhat hastier to ignore compromise. But the two Winnipeg strikes only served to momentarily estrange any of its true friends in the liberal movement.

d. Manitoba Farmers Reject Urban Labour

As was the case before the war, there were many pronouncements by representatives of farm and labour organizations on joint political action. The Voice and the Western Labour News carried a number of articles on this plan.²² Labour editorials generally dwelt upon the fact that farmers and labourers faced the same economic enemies, and since both Liberal and Conservative parties were identified with "big interests," it was natural for both working classes to make common cause. The local labour politicians were all the more interested in an alliance with the farmers, since without their support, the urban workmen could never attain a majority of seats.

Farm reception was quite varied. Before the strike, the Grain Growers' Guide did much to effect an accord. A number of favourable articles on labour were printed, even though sometimes farm interests were harmed. In the case of a strike on the terminal elevators

²¹ Tribune, May 21, 1918, p. 6.

²² Voice, March 23, 1917, p. 1; Western Labour News, January 3, 1919, p. 4.

(although it held up some 12,000,000 bushels of grain), the Guide approved the union's stand since it was after the right of recognition.

More typical of rural opinion, however, were the many anti-labour statements that were spread after the Winnipeg strikes. The letters of that voluminous correspondent, T.W. Knowles of Emerson, are illuminating.²³ Commenting on labour's demand for higher wages, he suggested that labour should only get them with a concurrent rise in working hours, maintaining production, and thereby the high cost of living would be kept down. Contrary to the labour assertion of mutual interests, Knowles contended that any alliance was fundamentally impossible because the two groups worked at cross purposes, i.e., as labour demanded shorter hours and higher wages, by raising the price of necessities this inflicted a greater burden upon the farmers. A common accusation was that labour would strike, paralyzing the economy, while farmers and their wives, working under supposedly worse conditions, carried on with the job. The question of a strike was not understood, as one rural paper commented, "The farmer, as a matter of course, (carries on) for those who depend on him for his bread."²⁴ In this line, many farmers believed that industrial unrest was due to a marked disinclination of urban workers to actually work. ". . . A great chattering about rights and only a few whisperings about work", commented the Brandon Sun.²⁵

²³ Tribune, May 9, 1918, p. 4; Farmers' Advocate, May 28, 1919, p. 935; Guide, February 10, 1918, p. 17.

²⁴ Gladstone Age, June 26, 1919, p. 4; also, Reston Recorder, July 29, 1920, p. 1; Swan River Star, June 27, 1919, p. 1.

²⁵ Brandon Daily Sun, January 17, 1920, p. 4.

Suspicion of the Labour movement was strengthened by the strike. The generally conservative Manitoba feared the reported radicalism of labour. Even the Guide changed its course and attacked labour for defying constituted authority when it has the opportunity to settle any problems by use of the ballot box. This sentiment was echoed by that staunch liberal, D.W. Buchanan.²⁶ Generally rural weekly newspaper comments were even more unfavourable. The position of labour was further depressed by its inability to publicize its own case. Their economic opponents did not miss such an opportunity and used the press to outline their position. In one ad, for example, the underlying cause of the strike was "a deliberate attempt to raise the head of Bolshevism in Winnipeg and place the city under the administration of the Soviet Government" thereby posing the problem of "whether the Union Jack shall float over Canadian cities or the Red Flag of Revolution."²⁷

The chance of a labour and farmer alliance in politics appeared remoter than at any time since several years prior to the war. Even the periodic resolution for joint action passed at the Manitoba Grain Growers' Association was watered down to read in 1919 that the association should "strive for closer co-operation with labour unions and returned soldiers and all kindred associations."²⁸ The passage of such a resolution was no longer of any significance in this time of intense policial agitation. A similar request from the Canadian Council of

²⁶ Guide, June 25, 1919, p. 10.

^{27/} Ibid., pp. 4-5. A two page ad of the Citizens' Committee of One Thousand.

^{28/} Ibid., January 15, 1919, p. 29.

Agriculture to get better acquainted with labour brought forth a rather exasperated counter query from the Trades Council for a better expression of aims after so many years.²⁹

Despite these formidable handicaps, there was still a measure of co-operation. At a farmers' meeting in Dauphin, its members went on record as still continuing their sympathy with the legitimate aspirations of the Canadian Labour movement. A number of active members of the United Farmers of Manitoba worked for such an alliance. Walter Harvey in Springfield was designated as the UFM representative to the Dominion Labour Party provincial convention; Ben Richardson, UFM organizer for Neepawa, spoke on the few handicaps there were to any organization, although he admitted the need for further education on such among the farmers; R.A. Hoey, at the Dominion Labour Party gathering, declared that both groups could not fail to meet.

Early in 1920, the Dominion Labour Party announced that a convention would be called in April with a view to electing a Farmer-Labour government in the 1920 election.³⁰ At the meeting, the Norris government was condemned for not carrying out a progressive policy and for squandering public money, giving in to reactionary forces and opposing progressive measures.³¹ A number of farmers attended and it was later announced that fifteen farmer-labour candidates would enter the lists, exclusive of those labour men nominated in urban Winnipeg.

²⁹ Western Labour News, March 26, 1920, p. 7.

³⁰ Tribune, February 20, 1920, p. 1.

³¹ Western Labour News, April 16, 1920, p. 7.

e. The Followers of the Social Gospel and Labour

The post-war period also witnessed a turning away of followers of the social gospel within the Methodist and Presbyterian churches. This break occurred in spite of the continuance of much that pre-war trend. Through the columns of the Grain Growers' Guide, the Voice and the Western Labour News, Dr. Salem Bland wrote of "The New Christianity" as did J.S. Woodsworth in article, book and pamphlet.³² Many of the criticisms of the church were reiterated in their drive to make the church more practical. A number of the clergy continued to be active in questions of the day: the Winnipeg Ministerial supported the strikers at the Crescent Creamery, Winnipeg's largest dairy, in their right to organize; and fairly common was the sermon of a Dauphin minister on, "How is it possible under our present industrial system to live as competitive antagonists and Christian brothers?"³³

A number of issues contributed to the withdrawal of many ministers from actively supporting the labour movement. The main factor was the suspicion of a number of ministers in labour's use of the strike. Reverend Dr. Horace Westwood, a long-time friend of labour might, typifies the withdrawal of a majority of ministers. While he could support the trade union movement, he felt that he could not accept the use of the strike. He rather preferred that labour would seek all

³² Even the socialist influenced union newspaper gave Salem Bland coverage. O.B.U. Bulletin, August 27, 1919, p. 1; Ibid., June 17, 1920, p. 2.

³³ Dauphin Herald, June 5, 1919, p. 4.

means of compromising its differences with capital, largely by the employment of arbitration. This failure to be moderate, Dr. Westwood attributed to the dominance of radicals among labour leaders and class consciousness. The decisions of the Winnipeg Trades and Labour Council to expel the delegates from the Ministerial Association and to demand the removal of Canadian troops from Russia, only served to confirm, to his satisfaction, that organized labour repudiated religion and was backed by revolution.³⁴

Although more ministers became estranged from the labour movement, others, - a minority - came closer to that group. Three that merit attention are Reverends Salem Bland, William Ivens, and J.S. Woodsworth. The former underwent a number of dramatic experiences on account of his views on the war and labour. For his criticism of the poor food given to the troops, one journal labelled him "a menace to . . . national welfare."³⁵ His labour experiences brought him more personal discomfort. First, he was dismissed from the faculty of Wesley College, allegedly because certain business interests in Winnipeg had bribed the College Council by offering to pay off the College debt.³⁶ His dismissal was later condemned by the Methodist Court of Appeal as not being in harmony with the usage and law of the church. Second, although Bland had been the first candidate to be nominated on the Union banner and also the first to speak on Union government in Winnipeg,

³⁴ Tribune, December 28, 1918, p. 7.

³⁵ Winnipeg Saturday Post, April 1, 1915, p. 1.

³⁶ Voice, June 8, 1917, p. 1.

he had been forced to retire from the contest in Centre Winnipeg after hostile Conservatives called another convention and nominated another candidate. Third, on his subsequent move to Toronto, he lost his charge because of his labour views.

Of more direct importance to the relationship of the church and labour in Manitoba, was the dismissal of Rev. Wm. Ivens and the founding of the Labour Church. Ivens was quite active in the 1918 strike, and in his official station at McDougall church, had issued many statements favouring the strikers. His pro-labour stand and his pacifist attitude toward the war antagonized the more conservative part of his congregation and they petitioned that he be replaced. This request was granted. At no time was there any criticism of his work at the church, for he had attracted many working class members to a church that had had a dwindling congregation and had halved a debt of some \$33,000.³⁷ With such a record, it was natural for Ivens to state:

Since there is no charge against my religious and theological views, it is very evident that the Methodist church has come to the place where political convictions stand higher in its conception than does a man's attitude toward God. Moreover, it is equally clear that the Methodist church no longer accords to her ministers the right to think for themselves.³⁸

In commending his stand, the Voice declared: "His only sin was that he proclaimed himself a foe to capitalism, a friend of the workingman, a believer of social equality, and a hater of wars and bloodshed."³⁹

The main effect of the estrangement of Ivens and the Methodist

³⁷ Tribune, June 22, 1918, p. 19.

³⁸ Ibid., June 18, 1918, p. 1.

³⁹ Voice, June 21, 1918, p. 1.

Church was the establishment of the Labour Church. It sprang directly out of the religious services that that minister gave during the 1919 strike. The Labour Church quickly grew to number several thousand workingmen in nine branches scattered throughout Metropolitan Winnipeg. The unique feature of the organization was not its working class character, but that it had no formal constitution nor creed, indeed, "All are welcomed into it who seek the establishment on the earth of an era of justice, truth, and love."⁴⁰ In carrying out the social gospel, this church attempted to meet the needs of the poor by providing "for that simple, undogmatic, comprehensive, democratic, and above all, brotherly and practical kind of church into which all present churches will merge."⁴¹ In Brandon, Rev. A.E. Smith, inaugurated a similar movement with the foundation of the People's Church, based on the thought of the need for and possibility of a better human society.⁴²

f. An Eruption of Anti-Alien Feeling

While Labour events tested several liberal groups, aliens in Manitoba played a similar role. As in the pre-war period, a number of local liberals continued to agitate for a better understanding of the so-called foreign races. From scattered reports, it was evident that Central and Eastern European immigrants were being assimilated to their adopted country. Economically, a number were better off, and in some

⁴⁰ Tribune, August 30, 1919, p. 12.

⁴¹ Voice, June 28, 1918, pp. 1-2.

⁴² Brandon Daily Sun, June 9, 1919, p. 1.

instances attempted to organize grain growers' elevators and become active in the Manitoba Grain Growers' Association. In the field of education, much progress was made among the first generation Canadians.

The stresses of wartime, however, stimulated some dangerous class hatreds that overshadowed these advances. Since a large number of immigrants came from countries at war with the Allied Powers, they were regarded with suspicion by the rest of the community. Their loyalty was suspected and a number of foreign language newspapers in Winnipeg were banned from the mails. It was commonly believed that the immigrant class did not enter the armed forces as readily as did Anglo-Saxons.

Racial antagonism became particularly bitter with the return of the veterans. It was natural for the ex-soldier to be antagonized when he found his peace-time job occupied by a foreigner. This situation was aggravated by rising unemployment as the country changed from a war to a peace-time economy. The situation was further complicated by a mounting belief that many foreigners supported the Russian Revolution. D.A. Ross, the M.P.P. for Springfield, claimed that a revolution, incited by the priests of foreign churches, was being hatched in the Birds Hill District near Winnipeg.

With such a turbulent background came the 1918 anti-foreign riots in Winnipeg. In late January of that year, local socialists held a rally on Market Square to show their sympathy with German Communists. A group of veterans marched up and dispersed the gathering, forcing a number present to kiss the Union Jack. The incident soon developed

The One Big Issue in the Winnipeg "Strike" is Plain

THE PEOPLE MUST CHOOSE

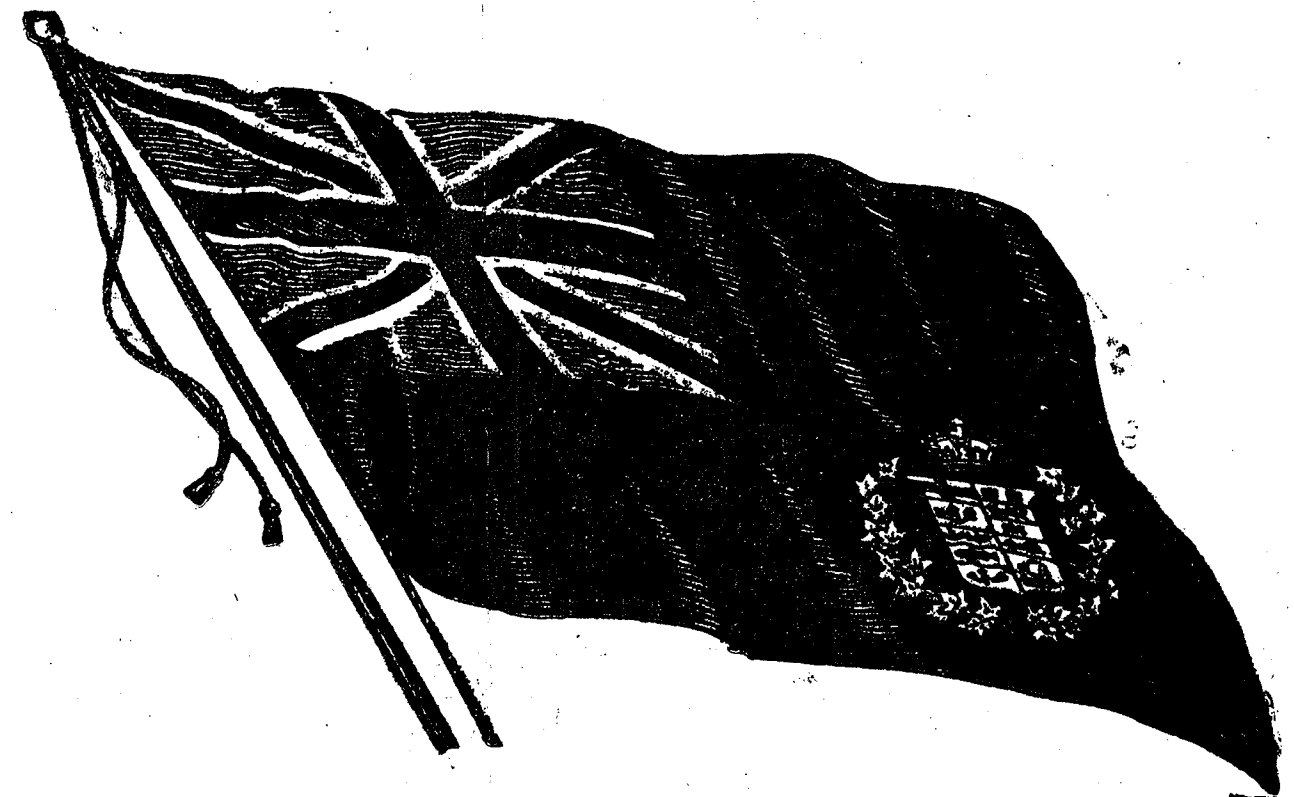
Between This



And This



The Alien Enemy



The Flag

That is the symbol of law and order in this country; that guarantees to every man, woman and child in this country the right to live; that represents the authority which now enables the people of Winnipeg to get the necessities of life "without permission of the strike committee."

Who openly or secretly supported Germany and Austria during the war, who contributed money for bombs used in blowing up munitions plants on this continent, who danced for joy when the Lusitania was destroyed, who rejoiced over the long lists of Canadian casualties.

The Strike Committee, Ivens, Mrs. Armstrong, Dixon, Queen and the rest twist and squirm and lie in an effort to evade this issue. To fool the returned soldiers they say NOW: "We go on record that we will support all efforts on the part of the authorities to deport all the undesirable aliens in our midst." They ask returned soldiers NOW:



The Alien Enemy

Who openly or secretly supported Germany and Austria during the war, who contributed money for bombs used in blowing up munitions plants on this continent, who danced for joy when the Lusitania was destroyed, who rejoiced over the long lists of Canadian casualties.

The Strike Committee, Ivens, Mrs. Armstrong, Dixon, Queen and the rest twist and squirm and lie in an effort to evade this issue. To fool the returned soldiers they say **NOW**: "We go on record that we will support all efforts on the part of the authorities to deport all the undesirable aliens in our midst." They ask returned soldiers **NOW**: "What does the alien question amount to so far as the strike is concerned? Are the strikers defending undesirable aliens? Most assuredly they are not."

The people who say this today are the same people who voted for this resolution at the Calgary convention last March:

"That the interests of all members of the international working class being identical, that this body of workers RECOGNIZE NO ALIEN but the capitalists." (Endorsed by the Winnipeg Trades and Labor Council, March 18, 1919.)

They are the same people who voted endorsement to this statement, made on the floor of the Calgary convention:

"We are asking for the release of those whom they consider as enemies, that is, actively working for the German government in this country." (From official Calgary convention report, endorsed by almost unanimous vote by Winnipeg Trades and Labor Council March 18, 1919.)

They are the same people who say: "All strikers (including the hundreds of aliens now on strike) must be given back their jobs before we call off this strike."

They are exactly the same people who did everything in their power to hinder Canada's war efforts, to prevent re-inforcements being sent overseas. They are the same people who fought conscription, tooth and nail.

They are the same people who are doing everything in their power, at the present moment, to prevent babies and invalids, including the sick returned soldiers at Tuxedo hospital, from obtaining milk.

There is no room in Canada for the undesirable alien who insults our flag, intimidates our citizens and demands soviet government.



The Flag

That is the symbol of law and order in this country; that guarantees to every man, woman and child in this country the right to live; that represents the authority which now enables the people of Winnipeg to get the necessities of life "without permission of the strike committee."

The Citizens' Committee of One Thousand

into a demonstration against aliens in general, and certain establishments, such as the Socialist Party headquarters and several cafes, were wrecked. Climax of the day came when the veterans marched to the Swifts' Packing Plant to successfully demand that all "Alien enemies" employed there be fired. No veteran organization was officially connected with this affair. Now feeling their power, however, 4,000 veterans rallied several days later, and asked Premier T.C. Norris, among other resolutions, to discharge enemy aliens from the province. This demand was later extended to include all Socialists, I.W.W.'s and "other agitators." The veteran organizations then undertook to see that any undesirable citizens who were aliens were deported after all their property and money in excess of \$75 had been confiscated. Another aspect of this anti-foreigner feeling appeared with a growing request by such groups as the Winnipeg section of the Canadian Club, advocating a "white Canada," with particular reference to the Hutterites.⁴³

The gravity of anti-foreigner feeling reached a climax at the time of the 1919 Winnipeg strike. The dominant Committee of One Thousand declared that its members would try to replace all aliens with veterans as far as possible. Of equal import is the flagrant miscarriage of justice occurring in the arrest of a number of aliens for alleged disturbances during the strike. The arrest without warrant of five, Almazoff, Charitinoff, Blumenberg, Schappelrei and Verenchuk, posed a serious threat to civil liberties since they were to be tried

⁴³ Tribune, April 9, 1919, p. 12; Ibid., April 14, 1919, p.2.

under the amended Immigration Act, subject to deportation without any jury trial. Two of these men were veterans, one having been twice wounded in action. Few in the community rallied to their defence. The ladies' Orange Benevolent Society protested against these actions directed on those not of British birth; ⁴⁴ from D.W. Buchanan came several letters on the importance of these immigrants to Canada. Both requests met with scant popular support.

g. Other Reform Groups Meet Reverses

Those associations that had spearheaded the drive for suffrage, met with some success as well as many disappointments in the few years after 1915. The high tide of their success occurred when various women's groups presented a petition of some 1,159 feet in length containing 35,584 signatures calling for a suffrage act. Manitoba women gained several accomplishments besides the winning of the franchise. A small, but growing number, were elected to local school boards. Several women's groups did beneficial community work: the Homemakers of Manitoba aided those women of foreign extraction. There was a campaign held by the Local Council of Women for a home for mental defectives. Within the Manitoba Grain Growers' Association, farm women made notable advances. Early in 1916, Mrs. A. Tooth was elected vice-president. Two years later a women's section was formed and the women were granted an equal position with male members. The Women's Section rapidly grew

⁴⁴ Western Labour News, July 7, 1919, p. 1.

from six to 43 locals within a year, and by 1920, encompassed 71 groups with 1,700 members.⁴⁵ Among other aims, it was primarily concerned with such community interests as sanitary laws, the betterment of rural schools and the establishment of rural hospitals, better food laws.

The spirit that had carried Manitoba women to its suffrage success soon broke. The W.C.T.U. drifted away to concentrate on such issues as lengthening ball gowns and banishing cigarettes, - ones that held little appeal. A deep class rift arose when a number of city women became identified with the anti-strike group by taking strikers' places. Because of the alleged connection of the Winnipeg Local Council of Women with the anti-strikers, the Women's Labour League withdrew from the Political Education League, formerly the Political Equality League.⁴⁶ The Women's Labour League became somewhat estranged from rural support, when it passed a resolution asking for the resumption of the sale of light wines and beers in the province.

The entry of women into politics was far from successful. When the National Council of Women attempted to inaugurate a women's political party, the Winnipeg local disassociated itself by withdrawing its affiliation.⁴⁷ Early in 1920, two members of the Political Education League were nominated to contest Winnipeg seats in the provincial election. One ran on the strength of being what she termed "a progressive independent," while the other expressed a strong feeling to win the Conservative party's nomination.⁴⁸ However, female interest

⁴⁵ Guide, January 15, 1918, p. 8; Ibid., January 14, 1920, p. 9.

⁴⁶ Western Labour News, October 4, 1918, p. 8.

⁴⁷ Guide, November 27, 1918, p. 38.

⁴⁸ MFP, April 28, 1920, PN 14.

in the ballot was quite disappointing. Their vote was light during the 1918 provincial by-election, and a small minority registered, much less voted, in the provincial election of two years later.

The Direct Legislation League had not managed to survive the travails of the war period. Although direct legislation had been a major plank of the 1914 Liberal platform, it was not yet put into legislation. The Initiative and Referendum Act, which had embodied its principles, had failed to win the approval of the Appeal Court of Manitoba, which has based its refusal on the contention that such legislation would impair the Lieutenant-Governor's use of the veto. There were few who bemoaned the demise of direct legislation. With the passing of Premier Roblin from provincial politics, groups that had done much to popularize direct legislation, achieved their especially desired piece of legislation, thereby losing interest in politics as well as direct legislation. The latter had been a means to an end, and with the legislative success of temperance, suffrage and anti-Roblin forces, there were few actively behind direct legislation. Even the Guide, long-term advocate, soon ceased to report direct legislation after it could not pass the courts. Only a few long-term liberals such as D.W. Buchanan, S. J. Farmer and F. J. Dixon, unsuccessfully continued to press for its adoption.⁴⁹ The government quickly forgot Direct Legislation, despite the presence

⁴⁹ Guide, June 21, 1916, p. 5; MFP, January 6, 1917, PN 197. Letters from S.J. Farmer and M.T. McKittrick, president of the Direct Legislation League.

of at least fifteen members of the Direct Legislation League.⁵⁰ That did not mean that the question had died in vain. During its days of popularity, direct legislation had provided a focus around which the anti-Roblin forces could gather. Then, with the advent of the Liberal administration, it was employed in a limited way. The need for women to gain a certain required minimum of signatures for suffrage might be regarded as a form of initiative; the Manitoba Temperance Act had to be ratified by referendum. Another example of its use occurred in 1917, when a number of citizens tried to oust F.J. Dixon from the Legislature because of his war views.⁵¹

The report of a Royal Commission enquiring into various modes of taxation virtually crushed the Manitoba single taxers.⁵² After a thorough investigation was made of those Western Canadian cities that had used this system, it was found that the recession after the economic boom had proven financially embarrassing to these communities. The Commission concluded that single tax "appears to be not so much a method of tax reform as a panacea for human ills."

The abnormal conditions which had produced the temperance victory in 1916 had now somewhat abated. There were many violations of the prohibition law. Centres situated on the provincial boundary - Kenora,

⁵⁰ The Single Taxer and Direct Legislation Bulletin, September, 1915, p. 3.

⁵¹ The Liberal Government was not prepared to undertake such legislation since it was not of their platform. Hansards, MFP, February 7, 1917, p. 26.

⁵² Manitoba: Report of the Assessment and Taxation Commission (Winnipeg: King's Printer, 1919), pp. 16-21.

Yorkton, Regina - did a boom trade of exporting liquor into Manitoba. In numerous instances, druggists and doctors collaborated in obtaining "medicinal" liquor for friends. Elsewhere in Manitoba, provincial police were hard put to curb a rising traffic in bootleg liquor. In one police raid, it required three drays to haul away the liquor sent into the province in cases of chewing bum. Much earlier, in 1915, the Statesman had disappeared due to lack of finances. Temperance sentiment was quite divided, with some now desiring a relaxation of the liquor laws, and others tightening up. The Liberal party did not officially commit itself one way or the other, only stating that it would follow the wishes of the people in the matter.

In education, politically, the Liberal party had not increased their supporters. Naturally, those nationalities that desired separate schools had been antagonized. The strong support of the Orange Lodge was now lost as well. Prior to the 1920 election, an attempt was made by the Liberals to imply that the Orange body was throwing its support to them in gratitude for the legislation that had been passed by the Legislature. A letter from the Grand Secretary of the provincial Lodge, S. Larkin ended such an attempt. Mr. Larkin declared that the Orange executive had not discussed the subject of supporting the Liberal party, and furthermore, the Lodge "does not lend itself as an electioneering agent to any particular form of government."⁵³

⁵³ Tribune, June 29, 1920, p. 4; MFP, June 26, 1920, PN 118.

h. The 1920 Election

The 1920 election marked the termination of several movements that had played an important role in provincial affairs for several years. There were no deep conflicts over the merits of temperance, education, direct legislation, entry into public ownership, which had occupied the province's attention. With a rising demand for less politics and the breakup of the once all-powerful Conservative machine, politics lacked the intensity of the past. Less than three months from voting day, not a single candidate had been nominated in Manitoba.⁵⁴ This was a far cry from 1914, when candidates entered the lists 19 months in advance.

This unusual state was largely due to the watchful attitude of the two older parties to see what political action the farmers of Manitoba would undertake. Within Manitoba farmers' ranks, there still remained much indecision on political action as was the case in previous elections.

Many Manitoba farmers were still reluctant to enter politics. As was the case before the Great War, there was still a strong fear of involving the farmers' associations in politics. The Grain Growers' Grain Company in ten years of operation from August 1906 had increased its shareholders from 100 to 18,163, a paid up capital of \$1,000 to \$1,073,000 and a yearly profit of \$790 to \$579,000.⁵⁵ The widespread

⁵⁴ MFP, April 7, 1920, FN 73.
⁵⁵ Guide, December 6, 1916, p. 6.

beneficial legislation for agriculture passed by the Liberal administration was not forgotten by many. The two traditional political parties still maintained a strong - though much weaker - hold. One example of the latter occurred in Norfolk constituency in the case of James Bousfield, who was instrumental in calling a convention for an Independent candidate and drafting his platform. Notwithstanding these activities, Bousfield came out strongly for the Government shortly before election day. Another serious deterrent to the Manitoba Grain Growers' Association, which had changed its label to the United Farmers of Manitoba or U.F.M., was its position as a minority group among provincial farmers. By the end of 1919, its membership only equalled the peak year of 1910 with 7,600 out of some 51,000 Manitoba farmers.⁵⁶ A vigorous campaign and several contemporary incidents doubled the U.F.M. numbers in two years. But the ties of many of these new members were loose ones and within a year, enrolment had dropped to over 11,000 in total.

A larger number of provincial farmers, however, became more disposed to political action. The Union Government had antagonized rural opinion on several issues, particularly on the question of conscription and its effect on farm labour. Within Manitoba, the lush economic days of the pre-war period were forgotten. Although crop acreage had increased, harvests, hampered by noxious weeds, grasshoppers, rats, lower soil fertility, were decreasing in total. In 1913 the local wheat crop totalled 62,755,455 bushels and that of oats, 81,410,174.

⁵⁶ Manitoba: Department of Agriculture, 1920

The 1920 harvest only brought in 37,542,000 and 57,657,000 bushels respectively.⁵⁷

After a speech by Premier T.C. Norris advising Manitoba farmers to seek Federal but not Provincial politics, a motion was passed at the 1920 United Farmers' of Manitoba convention that the association itself would not implicate itself in the provincial election. The matter was left to the locals to decide, and if a majority declared for political action, then the parent organization itself would make plans for entering the next provincial contest. Before election day, some twenty-six farmer and independent candidates had entered the lists,⁵⁸ others joined with the Dominion Labour Party. U.F.M. secretary, W.R. Wood, was criticized in some farm circles for alleged hostility to farmer politics. Wood had written an open letter than cautioned many farmers to look out for the political adventurers who were attempting to take over the farmers' movement for their own ends.⁵⁹ His advice was ignored.

Public apathy in the elections was remarkable considering the profusion of candidates and parties offered for its inspection.⁶⁰ By election day on June 29, there were 25 two-sided contests, thirteen with three, one of four, two with five. Candidates represented Government, Conservative, Socialist, Laurier Liberals, Soldier and Sailor Labour, Social Democrats, Soldier Independents, Soldier Government,

⁵⁷ Manitoba: Department of Agriculture, 1920 (Winnipeg, King's Printer, 1921), pp. 87-91.

⁵⁸ L.A. Wood, Farmers' Movements, p. 342; W.L. Morton, The Progressive Party in Canada, p. 98.

⁵⁹ Morris Herald, May 27, 1920, p. 7.

⁶⁰ In the redistribution, the number of seats was raised from 49 to 55. Winnipeg received four more seats; in the northern seats, Grand Rapids and Churchill were combined into Ruperts Land.

Farmers, Independents, United Farmers of Manitoba, Liquor reform, and even a candidate from Winnipeg as Isaac Brock Community Club.⁶¹ Winnipeg had over forty candidates running for ten seats to be decided on the principle of proportional representation.

The Liberal government was believed by many to be in an invulnerable position. In five years of office, the large proportion of its 1914 platform had been put into effect. The party had striven to bend itself to the political currents of the day. Party leaders had frequently pointed out that the government was nonpartisan, representing the will of the people. One reflection of this statement is the decision of the government to remain in office for its full five year term and not call a snap election. The bulk of the provincial Liberal organization still stressed the provincial character of the party. The 1917 federal election had caused some disunion in local ranks, with the majority of the party becoming Liberal Unionists. Laurier Liberals were also active, calling a separate convention to the regular one in late 1918. Two other serious portents for liberal success were the split in an early 1920 Liberal meeting when a group walked out after expressing its disapproval with the government's labour stand,⁶² and the strong showing of E. Levinson in a 1918 by-election, who won support from a collection of anti-Norris groups. Notwithstanding these dark clouds, the Government entered the election with a well warranted confidence in success. Pointing to their record with the slogan of "Deeds

⁶¹ Tribune, June 28, 1920, p. 1.

⁶² Telegram, June 28, 1920, p. 1.

Better Than Promises," the party as well promised to extend existing legislation plus reorganizing the Provincial Police Force, establishing a Public Savings' System and extending the development of northern Manitoba and its natural resources. The government newspaper predicted certain victory in 32 seats.

The Conservative party attempted to revive a group shattered by the 1915 debacle, and undoubtedly still suffering from its legacy. Their organizational work commenced at an early date in 1919, when a representative group of the party met. The two key points of the party then became evident. The main appeal of the party was that it was progressive. The group now became the Liberal-Conservative party. The election platform, completed in April of the following year, assured the electorate that this party stood committed to the preservation of adequate English instruction in the elementary schools, that any change in temperance regulations would only be the result of "the will of the people," to promote agriculture and hydro-electric development, to see that women gained full equality with men, and the creation of a labour portfolio in the cabinet.⁶³ A direct appeal was made to the urban workers of Winnipeg and the provincial farmers. Little success came of the former appeal, although three candidates were nominated with alleged labour backgrounds - all finished close to the bottom of the polls.⁶⁴ The party met with a somewhat more success in their other

⁶³ MFP, June 29, 1920, p. 1. See Appendix H.

⁶⁴ Results: J. Turnbull - 88; M. McInnes - 218; J. McMartin - 189. Parliamentary Guide, 1922, p. 458.

appeal. Rather than naming a city lawyer or businessman as leader, a farmer, R.G. Willis, was chosen. In mid-February of 1920 he announced that his party would support any farmers nominated:

. . . provided that farmer was broad enough and was out for the good of the people. A farmers' government might be all right . . . if its platform was for the good of the whole people and not smacking of class legislation./65

These were no idle words, as an analysis of electoral contests shows that the instances of a Conservative opposing a farmer candidate was far less common than that of a government candidate opposing a farmer.⁶⁶

The Conservatives also dwelt long on the record of the Liberals in office. Particular attention was paid to the government's financial activities. The Conservatives promised to work for reduced expenses.

The party leader stated:

A great many people are disgruntled and dissatisfied because of the excessive taxation and inefficient government which has followed the election of the Norris regime. . . . we are going to work for the best interests of the province in the direction of lower and more equitable taxes and constructive administration./67

It was pointed out that a Conservative government could save a minimum of

⁶⁵ Tribune, February 13, 1920, p. 13.

⁶⁶/ Of the 17 Conservatives contesting rural seats in only two cases did a Conservative meet an independent or farmer in a two-way fight, while in only 3 more instances, did the two and another third candidate meet. The Liberal average was much larger, with 16 of 37 rural candidates of that party in straight fights with independents and farmers and six more in three-cornered contests. This breakdown was produced by the author from the Parliamentary Guide, 1922, pp. 456-457.

⁶⁷/ Tribune, November 7, 1919, p. 1. Also, Manitoba: Report of the Royal Commission on the Workmen Comensation Act, 1918, p. 5. This group found that \$55,000 was spent in one department where \$21,000 could have done.

of \$2,000,000 a year by employing such economies as few by government commissions and cutting the numbers in the civil service.⁶⁸ The party also pledged itself "To maintain unimpaired the principle of British Constitutional Government," once again by cutting down the number of commissions; to remedy the abuses in administering the Manitoba Temperance Act; to construct new University buildings; to see to the construction of the Hudson Bay Railway; and to secure full control of Manitoba's natural resources.

Notwithstanding the fact that they lacked leaders, organization, platform and any coherent view on aims, a number of farmer and independent candidates entered the provincial election. The first one did not enter until the third week of May. Those that ran under the farmers' label included many legitimate believers of the progressive spirit as well as political adventurers prostituting the farmers' label for their own ends. In Roblin constituency, H.R. Richardson, had the active support of Liberal workers and openly stated that he would vote for the Government if elected. Joseph Hamelin, who had run as a straight Conservative in 1914 and 1915, now ran as an independent farmer candidate in St. Rose. Three other Conservatives now using the independent banner were R.J. Dalglish in Gilbert Plains, ex-M.P.P. William Ferguson in Hamiota, and Joseph Bernier, former provincial secretary in the Roblin Cabinet, in Saint Boniface. Others who ran as Conservatives stressed that they were Independent Conservatives,

⁶⁸

The Farmers' Telegram and Family Magazine, April 28, 1920, p. 4.

emphasizing their opposition of T.C. Norris. This insurgent spirit was strong within the Liberal party. Two candidates, for example, Dr. E.R. Bissett in Springfield and E.A. McPherson in Portage la Prairie, indicated that they were independent and could support the Government only if they saw fit. The independent tag was a valuable one in 1920. John Williams, the sitting Liberal member for Arthur, packed a U.F.M. nominating gathering with his own followers to gain farmer endorsement. At a later more representative gathering, D.L. McLeod became the nominee after Williams had been repudiated.⁶⁹

There was little that was radical in the platforms of those farmers who were nominated. Many lacked a clearly defined goal. A frequent point was the need for economy in government finances. S. Fletcher, the candidate for Killarney, ran to show his opposition to the federal government's attitude on such questions as the tariff, railways, et cetera. On the provincial scene, however, "He had nothing particular against the Norris Government and would support them if in his judgement the Legislation was in the best interest of the country as a whole."⁷⁰ This followed the policy of some farmers who hoped to be independents, but not obstructionists, by supporting good legislation from whatever source it sprang. Some opposed the Norris Government because it was part of the federal political machinery, and to destroy the federal parties, the provincial group had to be killed off at

⁶⁹ The Farmers' Telegram and Family Magazine, April 28, 1920, p.5.
⁷⁰ Killarney Guide, June 10, 1920, p. 3; Ibid., June 17, 1920,
p. 3.

the roots.

Labour groups entered the largest number of candidates they were ever to sponsor in a Manitoba provincial contest. Recognized labour nominees were backed by several political groups. The largest was the Dominion Labour Party which had representatives running at several provincial points. The platform set out by this group was a comprehensive one including the need for Direct Legislation, a measure of Single Tax, the establishment of state banks, and an extension of Mothers' Allowances.⁷¹ F.J. Dixon, who was elected leader of this group in the provincial House at a future date, gave many speeches in the province on the value of a farmer-labour alliance.⁷²

Ten labour candidates were endorsed in Winnipeg, four each from the Dominion Labour Party and Socialist Party of Canada, and one from the Ex-Soldiers' and Ex-Sailors' Labour Party and one from the Social Democratic Party. In seven other seats in Manitoba were Dominion Labour Party candidates with joint labour and farmer backing. There were indications of labour support in a number of other seats as well. In one, the Dominion Labour Party candidate had not run because of an error made in his nomination papers;⁷³ in another, a local labour man had been nominated, but stood aside, on the contention that as the district was predominately farmer, it should have a farmer nominee.⁷⁴

⁷¹ See Appendix I.

^{72/} For example, Swan River Star, June 23, 1920, p. 4.

^{73/} Grandview Exponent, June 24, 1920, p. 4. A.R. Berry was later elected under the U.F.M. label in 1922.

^{74/} MFP, June 9, 1920, PN 101. This was Glenwood constituency.

Although the Socialist Party of Canada still believed that parliaments and politics were only transitory pallitives as long as capital exploited labour, it entered the contest on the basis that the election was another means for labour to emancipate themselves through their own organization.

The labour group still had many problems. Some of the farmer-labour candidates did not stress the labour part of their backing; one, indeed, A.E. Kristjansson, elected as a Labour candidate in St. George, soon announced that he was an outright independent. George Palmer, a trade union man, although he received the unanimous support of all U.F.M. locals in the Dauphin district, was only to receive a margin of victory from the town of Dauphin, thus suggesting that farmer opinion was not as solidly behind him as indicated. The cleavage between the Socialist Party of Canada and the moderates continued. The Western Labour News, Trades and Labour Council weekly, virtually ignored Socialist candidates, largely because of their O.B.U. ties. A certain degree of labour support was transitory, springing from the Winnipeg strike. John Queen, in an election advertisement, based his whole appeal on the effect of the strike arrests on civil liberties. Labour activity at this time, should be remembered as part of that continual growth from 1910.

There were a number of other groups represented in the election. A number of returned veterans had contemplated entering politics on the principle that the veterans would benefit the country in drawing support from all classes to form an independent party. At a Winnipeg

meeting with several thousand in attendance, a Returned Veterans' Party was organized. Captain J. Wilton, former Liberal member of the House, now an independent, was the group's adviser. A broad program featuring many social reforms was drafted, including, the need for an excess profits tax, a graduated real income tax and aid to the re-establishment of veterans.⁷⁵ Leo Warde, president of the Manitoba command of the Great War Veterans' Association, was nominated to contest a Winnipeg seat. Dr. W. Morden sought election in Winnipeg, attempting to capitalize on the growing sentiment for a relaxation in the liquor laws. He sought legislation for the sale of beer and light wines.⁷⁶ An indication of the rapid growth of community clubs in Manitoba came with the nomination of E.B. Fisher from Isaac Brock Community Club.⁷⁷ Reverend F.C. Middleton organizer of such clubs in Manitoba had previously said that "The community club will prove the medium through which the great middle-class is organized."⁷⁸ Racial antipathy still smoldered, and in Emerson constituency, D. Yakimischak, a law student and non-resident of the district, was to sweep to victory with an almost solid Ukrainian vote over two Anglo-Saxon opponents.⁷⁹ A number

⁷⁵ Tribune, November 8, 1919, pp. 1-2; Ibid., November 10, 1919, p. 5; also - Elkhorn Mercury, January 15, 1920, p. 1.

⁷⁶ MFP, June 23, 1920, Pn 113.

⁷⁷ E.B. Fisher was a former conservative party organizer.

⁷⁸ Tribune, April 6, 1919, p. 9. Isaac Brock, for example, went into the coal business.

⁷⁹ Emerson Journal, June 25, 1920, p. 1; Ibid., July 2, 1920, p. 1. D. Yakimischak did not receive one vote in nine of 26 polls, presumably where Anglo-Saxons voted. In an Ukrainian one, however, he received 189 votes to only eight of both of his opponents.

of Eastern and Central European extraction ran on a number of issues, a strong one being that of the Government's curtailing bilingual schools. Three Laurier Liberals - N.T. Carey, D.S. Lyon, J.F. Gislason - ran on a platform of rehabilitating provincial finances. There were 144 candidates contesting 52 seats - three went by acclamation. Notwithstanding all these issues, the election on June 29th was a quiet one. The newspapers carried few election advertisements.⁸⁰ There was an almost complete absence of name calling by candidates. A grasshopper plague in southern Manitoba diverted the attention of some farmers from politics. One incident is of interest in the campaign; Premier T.C. Norris became the first party leader to use an aeroplane in a Manitoba election. The confusion of party lines, the use of proportional representation in Winnipeg, the large numbers - women and those of foreign extraction - eligible to vote for the first time, all combined to render any predictions on the results difficult.

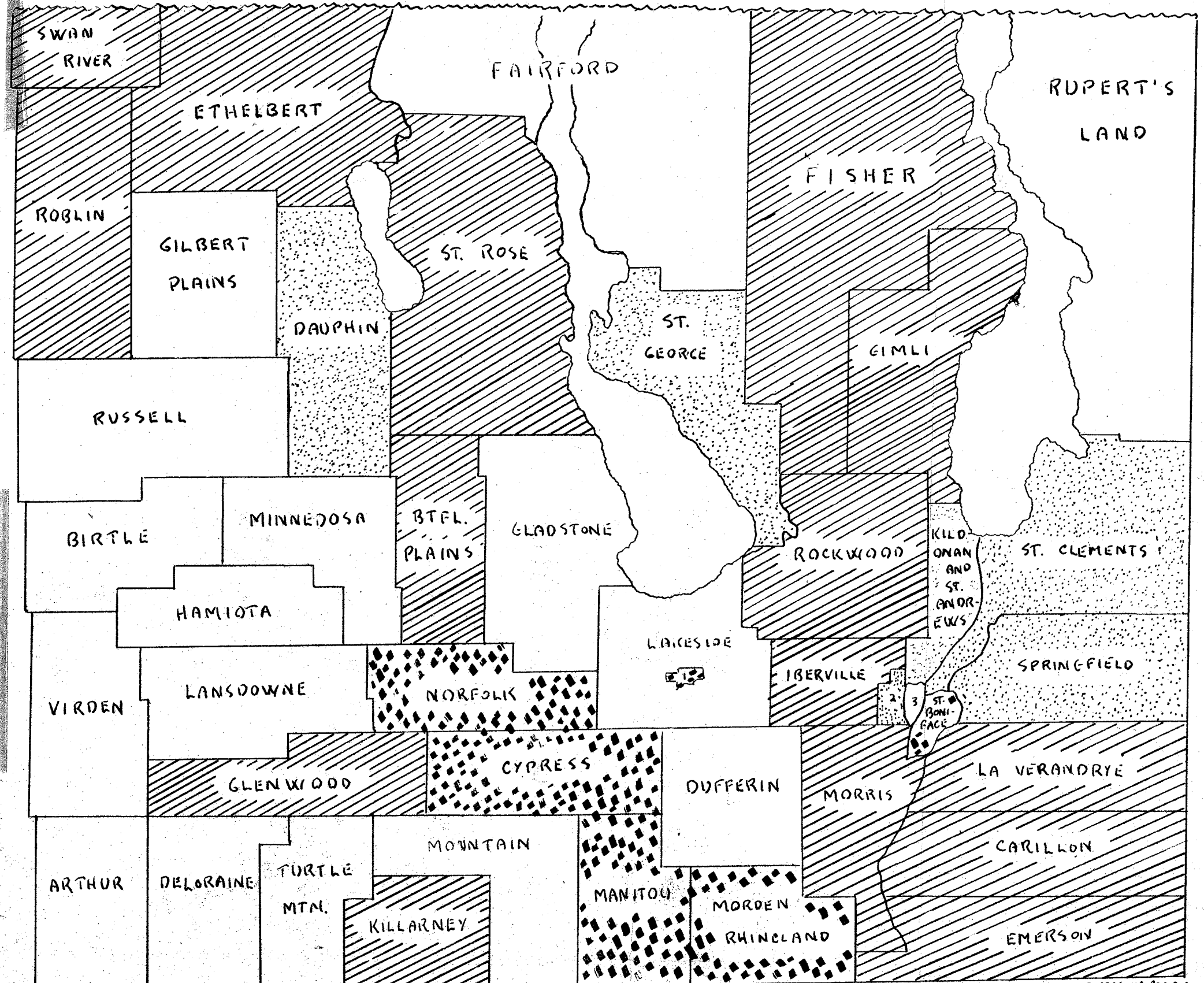
The Liberal government, despite its fine record, failed to win a clear majority in the Legislature.⁸¹ With twenty-one seats of 55, it still remained the largest group. The showing of labour was a complete surprise to most. Labour gained eleven seats in the province. The Conservative party increased its representation to seven, while former

⁸⁰ A comparison of advertising in the daily newspapers reveals a decided contrast between those of 1914 and 1920. The Government in 1920 carried the preponderating number of ads, the Conservatives none. Survey by Author.

⁸¹ Results. Liberals - 51,659 or 35.89%; Conservatives - 24,210 or 16.85%; Farmer - 22,739 or 15.84%; Independent - 15,163 or 10.55%; Labour - 29,869 or 20.79%. Total vote - 143,640. Parliamentary Guide, 1922.

PROVINCIAL ELECTION 1920

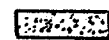
1920



FARMERS-
INDEPENDENTS



LABOUR



1. POSTAGE LA PRAIRIE
2. ASSINIBOIA
3. WINNIPEG.

Conservatives were elected under other labels. A group of farmers and four independents comprised the balance of the legislature. The total vote was lower than in 1914, although the enfranchisement of women and a natural increase in population had increased the numbers eligible to vote.

The composition of the House was interesting in several respects, the dominating one being its complexity. In the spirit that parliament should represent as many shades of public opinion as possible, more regarded the Manitoba House's membership as reflecting an evolutionary progressive principle. W.D. Bayley was the first active school teacher elected to the provincial legislature; Mrs. E. Rogers was the first woman M.L.A. The labour group had William Ivens and A.E. Smith who had been Methodist ministers; and four labour members were still in jail as a result of their activities during the 1919 Winnipeg strike. The religious complexion of the Legislature was altered with the heavy preponderance of Presbyterians yielding to a more representative cross section of Manitoba. The number of representatives of rural constituencies were more actively engaged in farming than those in previous Houses. From the immigrants came D. Yakimischak, a Ukrainian, and N. Hryhorczuk, a Galician.

C. Conclusion

Despite the apparent tranquility of provincial politics during the 1915 to 1920 period, the 1920 election revealed a great change in the standing and make-up of the provincial parties. Premier T.C.

Norris' Liberals not only had furthered administrative reforms, but also had entered new fields of government activity. Notwithstanding this fine legislative record, the Liberals lingered on as minority government for two more years before defeat. The Conservatives had made some gains from the debacle of 1915, but still were few in number. Labour achieved its greatest success at the polls. The disorganized entry of farmers into politics had brought them an astonishing number of representatives.

Though the farmers and urban labourers had been staunch advocates of the reform movement, that did not necessarily mean that the reform spirit was dominant in Manitoba. Distrust and hatred prevented co-operation. Many of the reform groups had fallen since the political victory of 1915. No longer was there that bond of unity that tied the diverse reform groups together to effect a victory at the polls.

The spirit of reform that had built up to such an intensity during the half-decade prior to the Great War had now subsided.

CONCLUSION

The decade following the provincial election of 1910 was one of political agitation in Manitoba. During that period, Manitoba experienced four provincial elections and two federal ones. The many shocks to the political structure of the province during those contests profoundly altered the character of its politics.

In 1910, the Conservative party under Redmond Palen Roblin had been re-elected for the third time. By being acute opportunists, this party had captured a strong measure of support. The government had won the favour of provincial farmers by such measures as the acquisition of telephones and grain elevators. That party gained additional support from Roman Catholics and Orangemen. In contrast, the provincial Liberals laboured under the strain of being associated with an unpopular federal government and internal weaknesses within its own ranks. Reform spirit was of a minor, yet growing, importance. The trade unions had experienced little success at the polls; the grain growers were reluctant to enter direct political action; and the other groups, such as temperance, were disorganized and ineffectual.

Within four years, the Government had become increasingly unpopular among Anglo-Saxon groups. This lack of appeal was due to two main circumstances. First, the rise of those groups - the social gospel, woman suffrage, temperance, single taxers, direct legislation - that had marshalled a large number of independent voters against the government. In their opposition, they joined with the Liberal party. Manitoba farmers, largely retained traditional political ties, though a number

shifted from the Conservative to the Liberal party. The urban workers about Winnipeg became more politically conscious, but their large-scale entrance into politics created three-cornered contests in 1914 that enabled Conservative candidates to win by minority votes. A second contribution to the government's unpopularity was its poor record since 1910. Its two major ventures into public ownership had failed and the Orangemen had been antagonized over the question of schools.

Despite these black-marks the Conservative government managed to be re-elected in 1914. A strong party organization did much to bring out the Tory vote. The administration had not marked time in the legislature and still could claim a certain measure of popularity.

In view of the overwhelming opposition to the Government shown by provincial newspapers and resolutions from Protestant churches, the explanation of the Conservatives' return to office in 1914 cannot be explained simply by its party machine. Perhaps, the answer lies within the reform movement itself. Temperance, as has been mentioned, attained a small degree of success despite the support shown for banish the bar by practically every religious body in the province. Woman's suffrage would not be popular among men who believed in a male-dominated household. While other western cities, such as Vancouver, established the principle of single tax, in Manitoba, there was little done in that direction. The spirit of social gospel held sway among a certain section of the Protestant population. The anti-republican arguments against Direct Legislation would be sure to turn many, with strong ties to the Old Country, away from that proposal. Another weakness of the reform

14 CONSERVATIVE SEATS

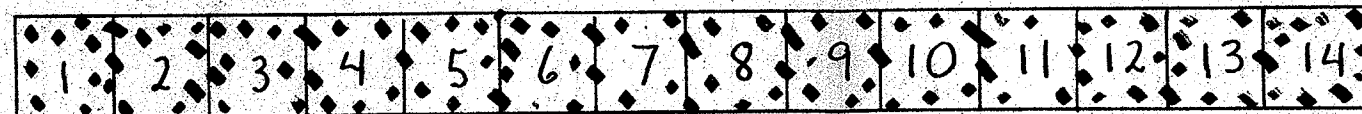
1910-1927

209

1910



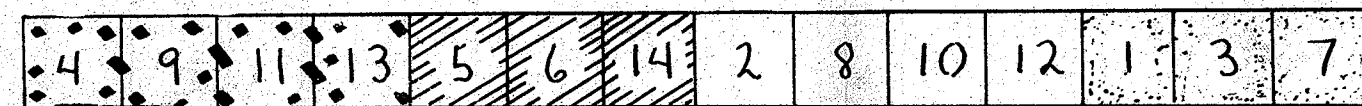
1914



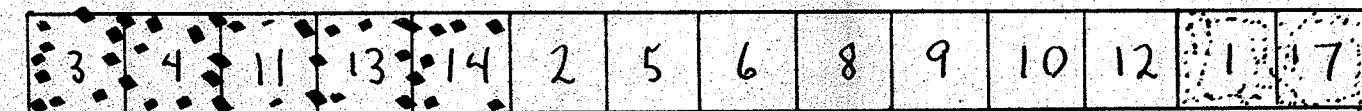
1915



1920



1922



1927



1. ASSINIBOIA
2. BEAUTIFUL PLAINS
3. BRANDON
4. CYPRESS
5. DUFFERIN
6. GILBERT PLAINS
7. KILDONAN ST. ANDREWS
8. KILLARNEY
9. MANITOU
10. MORRIS
11. PORTAGE LA PRAIRIE
12. ROCKWOOD
13. ST. BONIFACE
14. TURTLE MOUNTAIN

groups were their close association to the Liberal party. The trade unions withdrew their affiliation to several because of this relationship. In a day of intense political bitterness, a number of Conservatives would be reluctant to leave their party to support groups led by Grits.

Events of the 1915 to 1920 era bear out the shallowness of reform spirit in Manitoba. As quickly as the reform movement had mounted in strength, it subsided. By 1920, there was little of the enthusiasm of 1914. Fear, hatred and bitterness prevented any effective co-operation. Many of the reform groups had subsided. The mantle for continuing the reforms introduced by the Liberal party during the 1915 to 1920 legislative sessions was left to the Labour and Farmers' groups. After all the resolutions for joint action between the two, little was accomplished. A number of incidents during the Great War placed the urban workers in an unfavourable light. Any leadership along reform lines was left to the Manitoba farmers who looked to independent action. This group had little to offer. With no clear goal in sight, an amazing number of elected farmers' independents were former Conservatives. When the United Farmers' of Manitoba attained office in 1922, this Conservative influence would work against reform success.

The reform groups that came to power in 1915 with the Liberal party did so by a very fortunate set of circumstances, that had coincided during a close period. They were a general reform sentiment that swept the west; the refusal by the Conservatives to grant concessions in woman's suffrage, temperance, workable labour legislation,

et cetera; the failures of the government's attempts at public ownership in Manitoba; and the controversy over the place of the European immigrant, particularly on the school question, which weakened the administration's Roman Catholic - Orange alliance. Manitobans had tolerated the boodling by the Conservatives for many years. Despite the thunderings by the independent and Liberal press on the corruption in the Macdonald by-election, the Conservative nominee had his election voided for wrong-doing and then was re-elected by an increased majority. The Government, however, outdid itself with the scandal over the Parliament Buildings. Thus, the government defeated itself, rather than being defeated by reform sentiment.

The fact that the reform movement in Manitoba did not achieve a lasting political success and so quickly disappeared does not mean that it was not of great importance to Manitoba. Materially, the influence of this spirit had a deep effect upon the Liberal party of that day and undoubtedly influenced the government's entrance into many new fields of legislative activity. Spiritually, the concern by reformers for their fellow man stands as an example for future generations.

APPENDIX A

THE 1899 CONSERVATIVE PLATFORM

1. Economy in the management of finances.
2. Reduction of Cabinet Ministers to three and the addition of two Ministers without Portfolio.
3. Reduction of the Sessional Indemnity to \$400.00.
4. Reform in the Franchise Laws.
5. Enforcement of the Alien Labour Law and encouragement of desirable immigration.
6. Freeing the Educational System from partisan control and the application of proceeds of School Lands to supplementing ordinary school grants.
7. Establishment of an Agricultural College.
8. Adoption of principle of Government ownership of railways, whenever practicable, and Government control of rates over all newly laid lines, together with right of purchase.
9. Transfer of Crown Lands within the boundaries of Manitoba to the Provincial Government.
10. Aid to municipalities by guarantee of interest upon debentures, when desirable and necessary.
11. Compensation for injuries received by workmen in their usual employment.
12. Extension of Provincial boundaries and construction of a line of railway to Hudson's Bay; assumption of control and administration of the Fisheries of the Province.

Appendix A

13. Giving effect to public opinion by Prohibition of the Liquor
Traffic so far as the powers of the Province would permit.

APPENDIX B

1910 LIBERAL PLATFORM

1. Increased grants to rural schools.
2. Compulsory Education.
3. A provincial University.
4. Direct Legislation by means of the Initiative and Referendum.
5. Co-operation with municipalities in building good roads.
6. Voters' lists prepared only for elections from municipal lists supplemented by personal registration.
7. A non-partisan telephone commission responsible to the legislature.
8. Settlement of the boundary question by Manitoba receiving the lands and all natural resources of the added territory.
9. A reduction of \$200,000 a year in the cost of administration.
10. Resident majority vote in local option.
11. Municipal electors to have power of limiting or reducing number of licences.
12. All licences to be passed or refused by county court judges instead of licence commissioners.
13. Public lands to be sold by public competition, except where sold to settlers with settlement duties.
14. Swamp lands to be drained before sale and the government to share expenses of drainage districts when crown lands form part of the district.
15. A non-partisan elevator commission subject only to the legislature.

16. A definite policy on agriculture.
17. Railway taxes to be distributed on an equitable plan among the municipalities.

APPENDIX C

THE 1910 MANITOBA LABOUR PARTY PLATFORM

1. Industrial and Political organizations of the working class.
2. The immediate adoption and enforcement of an 8 hour day and 6 days to constitute a week, and a general policy of reducing the working hours in keeping with the increased productiveness of machinery.
3. The abolition of the contract system on all public works.
4. The union label to be placed on all manufactured goods where practicable, and on all government and municipal supplies.
5. Prohibition of prison labour in competition with free labour.
6. The abolition of property qualification for all public offices.
7. An efficient government inspection of all factories and workshops and mines.
8. The raising of the age of child labour to 16 years.
9. The abolition of the power to issue injunctions against organized labour.
10. Direct legislation, through the initiative and referendum, with the right of recall.
11. Proportional representation and abolition of municipal wards.
12. The abolition of the Dominion Senate.
13. The transformation as rapidly as possible of the system of production for profit to production for use.
14. The collective ownership of all industries in which competition has virtually ceased to exist, such as railways, telegraphs,

- telephones, lighting, et cetera.
15. The conservation of the public domain by stopping the alienation of mines, quarries, oil wells, forests, water power, and all other natural resources into private property.
 16. The municipalisation of hospitals, to be operated on a free basis and managed by a board directly responsible to the people, together with all necessary institutions which are at present operated as charities.
 17. The extension of the municipal franchise to all adults of 21 years of age and over; full political rights and privileges for women on the same terms as granted to men.
 18. The freedom of press, speech, and peaceable assembly.
 19. State pensions for all persons over fifty years of age, and adequate provision for all widows and disabled workers.
 20. Tax reform by the abolition of all taxes upon industry, and the raising of all public revenues by the taxation of land values.

APPENDIX D

THE 1912 LABOUR REPRESENTATION COMMITTEE PLATFORM

Municipal ownership of all public utilities of a municipal character. The extension of the franchise to all adults of the age of 21 years and over - this to include the right to vote on money by-laws. The abolition of property qualifications for all public offices. The eight hour day on all municipal and government work and contracts, and support of the movement for a universal eight hour day. The adoption of a comprehensive scheme of municipal housing.

APPENDIX E

THE 1914 LIBERAL PLATFORM

1. Compulsory education; obligatory teaching of English; larger grants for schools; educational facilities for every child; repeal of the Coldwell Amendments.
2. Referendum on "Banish the Bar"; reduction of licenses; abolition of Proprietary Clubs; resident municipal electors to control number and class of licenses.
3. Woman Suffrage.
4. Direct Legislation.
5. Strict laws against electoral corruption; impartial administration of justice.
6. Protection of industrial wage earners.
7. Encouragement of agriculture; extension of practical education; development of co-operative methods, including cheaper money; a Public Abattoir.
8. Good roads through co-operation with municipalities.
9. Encouragement of Hydro-Electric development.
10. Natural resources for the Province.
11. Municipal autonomy in local taxation.

APPENDIX F

THE 1915 INDEPENDENT CONSERVATIVE PLATFORM

1. To maintain unimpaired the principles of British constitutional government.
2. To regard the adequate development of our educational system as the first duty of government; to ensure to every child in the province a sound elementary education, irrespective of race or creed; to make a thorough knowledge of English essential in every school; to elevate the status of the teaching profession; to assist school boards in maintaining a high standard of efficiency; to promote and support agricultural education in the college and schools; to assist in developing and rendering more efficient the University of Manitoba.
3. To advance agriculture, the basic industry of Manitoba, through every means made available by the best modern scientific thought.
4. To repeal the Coldwell amendments.
5. To reenact immediately and put into operation without referendum the Hugh John Macdonald Liquor Act of 1900, providing for provincial prohibition.
6. To construct and operate a system of public abattoirs.
7. To eliminate the spoils system and to establish the civil service on a basis of merit and efficiency alone.
8. To abolish the patronage system, and to appoint an auditor-general removable only by two-third's vote of the legislature.

9. To amend the Controverted Elections Act, so as to ensure the compulsory bearing of protests, and to expedite and simplify procedure.
10. To adopt the principle of compulsory voting.
11. To conserve for the public use all the resources of water power of the province.
12. To enact legislation providing for woman suffrage upon receiving a mandate from the women for the franchise.
13. To pass legislation to safeguard and advance the interests of the workingman.
14. To preserve and uphold democratic principle by the holding of an annual convention of the Liberal-Conservative party and by eliminating machine rule.

APPENDIX G

THE 1920 LIBERAL - CONSERVATIVE ASSOCIATION PLATFORM

1. To maintain unimpaired the principles of British Constitutional Government by abolishing, in so far as practicable, all boards and commissions exercising functions which the Government itself should directly exercise.
2. The abolition of the tax on rateable property.
3. The practice of rigid economy in the cost of civil government and the elimination of much of the new taxation.
4. The creation of a Labour portfolio and a Labour department.
5. The continued abolition of the bar and to ascertain the will of the people by way of referendum regarding the use and control of liquor.
6. To secure for Manitoba control of her own natural resources.
7. To develop the educational system by elevating the school teaching profession, promote agricultural education, develop the University of Manitoba, and ensure that English thoroughly known in the primary grades.
8. A vigorous roads policy.
9. To grant the women full political equality.
10. To abolish the Provincial Assessment Commission.
11. To extend the government's aid to agriculture, primarily by the promotion of immigration and the construction of public abattoirs and cold storage plants.
12. The immediate development of Hydro-Electric power.

13. To secure the immediate completion of the Hudson Bay Railway.
13. To provide support for the development of mineral resources.

APPENDIX H

THE 1920 LIBERAL PLATFORM

1. To maintain and improve a high standard of education and to insure to all a knowledge of English. To develop the University.
2. The extension of these laws passed for agriculture's benefit.
3. The development of the Bureau of Labour and the Joint Council of Industry plus a more generous compensation to injured workmen.
4. Development of hydro-electric power at cost.
5. Maintenance of present prohibition measure as far as maintained by popular vote.
6. Further extension of rural health nursing, proper care of mental defectives and the improvement of Provincial Hospitals.
7. To use all possible means in encouraging the development of northern Manitoba and natural resources.
8. Improving the automatic dialing system on telephones and extending lines to all rural points when feasible.
9. The establishment of the reorganized Provincial Police force.
10. Public Savings' System, by which the Government shall accept deposits from the people to finance the Rural Credit scheme and ultimately other provincial requirements.

APPENDIX I

THE 1920 LABOUR PARTY PLATFORM

To reform capitalist property into social property; collective bargaining; proportional representation; direct legislation; abolish election deposits; abolish property qualifications for school trustees on school boards; a better workmen's compensation law; enlargement of the Mothers' Allowance Act; equal pay for equal work; extension of compulsory education; technical and vocational training; publicly owned cold storage and abattoirs; home rule charters for cities; established state banks; public ownership of natural resources under provincial control; land for veterans; property tax on land values.

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