

"To each according to his need, and from each according to his ability.  
Why cannot the world see this?":  
The politics of William Ivens, 1916-1936

by

Michael William Butt

A thesis  
presented to the University of Winnipeg  
in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of  
Master of Arts  
in  
History

Winnipeg, Manitoba

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THE POLITICS OF WILLIAM IVENS, 1916-1936

BY

MICHAEL WILLIAM BUTT

A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of the University of Manitoba in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

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## ABSTRACT

Following capitalism's arrival on the Canadian Prairies, the desire to challenge the existing order grew within a number of sharply divided communities. Immediately following World War I moderates and radicals alike, responded to the grim realities of unemployment, starvation wages, poor working conditions, and unsanitary housing by challenging a contradictory system of social relations in a battle over the meaning of "democracy". It was a golden age of social criticism, as pioneer reformers reached out to the large community audiences. In colleges, in churches, and in a radicalized press, the arrival of reform was heralded as the coming of a new day. Few persons were as outspoken or were able to gain as wide an audience as William Ivens. As a Methodist minister, a Labour Church leader, a working-class intellectual, and eventually as a member of the Manitoba Legislative Assembly, William Ivens challenged the existing order. He represented a tendency in Western Canadian thought throughout the 1910s, 1920s, and 1930s.

His Labour Church as a working-class institution helped forge a political space in the community. Ivens offered Manitobans a new social order based not on competition, but rather on co-operation. His tendency was the result of passing various elements of Marxism, and Labour Marxist thought through the lens of a non-conformist Christianity and Methodism. The end result was an ethical socialist social philosophy that effectively addressed the social problems of the period. As a spokes-person and as an



agitator for social reform, Ivens' ethical socialist outlook achieved a consensus among radical and moderate labourists. His importance as an activist in the community and the type of reforms that he was advocating, make him an important, interesting and worthwhile study in Western Canadian history.

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For Lisa Draho, a friend, a companion, and the most important person  
in my life.

## ABBREVIATIONS

A.F.L.	American Federation of Labour
B.T.C.	Building Trades Council
C.B.R.E.	Canadian Brotherhood of Railway Employees
C.C.F.	Commonwealth Co-operative Federation
C.P.	Communist Party
C.P.C.	Communist Party of Canada
D.L.P.	Dominion Labour Party
F.L.P.	Federated Labour Party
G.W.V.A.	Great War Veterans Association
I.L.P.	Independent Labour Party
I.W.W.	Industrial Workers of the World
L.R.C.	Labour Representation Committee
M.L.A.	Member of the Legislative Assembly
M.L.P.	Manitoba Labour Party
M.P.	Member of Parliament
M.T.C.	Metal Trades Council
N.D.P.	New Democratic Party
O.B.U.	One Big Union
R.N.W.M.P.	Royal North West Mounted Police
S.D.P.	Social Democratic Party
S.P.C.	Socialist Party of Canada
T.L.C.	Trades and Labour Congress
W.L.N.	Western Labor News
W.T.L.C.	Winnipeg Trades and Labour Council

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In every realm, in every age  
Time stamps her impress page by page.  
Religion, State, must, day by day  
Conform to progress, or decay. . . .<sup>1</sup>

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That socialism appeals to outstanding thinkers  
in all nations is evidenced by membership  
in its ranks for many years.  
Karl Marx, founder of scientific socialism,  
was a mastermind. . . .<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Extract from, "Old and New: Hymns for the New Day"- composed by William Ivens and found in D.F. Pratt, "William Ivens M.A., B.D., and the Winnipeg Labor Church", B.D. Thesis., St. Andrew's College, Saskatoon, 1962, p. 56.

<sup>2</sup> Public Archives of Manitoba, (hereafter cited as P.A.M.), William Ivens Collection, Box 8. Quote taken from 'notes from socialism file.'

Chapter I  
Introduction To The Study

Described as "one of the most colorful figures in the history of organized labor in Canada,"<sup>3</sup> William Ivens is best remembered as a strike leader indicted for sedition in 1918-19 during the Winnipeg General Strike. Some people remember Ivens as well for his founding role in Winnipeg's Labour Church and for his sixteen year term as an M.L.A. for Winnipeg. A few people remember Ivens for his editorial leadership in the workers' paper the Western Labor News.<sup>4</sup> Through an illustrious career devoted to social change, William Ivens, a working-class intellectual, made a substantial contribution towards the development of Western Canadian life.

Born in England in 1878, Ivens emigrated to Manitoba in 1896, as he declared, "to make his fortune on the Canadian Prairies."<sup>5</sup> He worked as a farm labourer for a number of years in towns in rural Manitoba.<sup>6</sup> Then, seeking an education, in 1902, he settled in Winnipeg and began attending Wesley College where he came under the influence of a group of progressive Social Gospellers.<sup>7</sup> In the spring of 1908, he was ordained a minister in the

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3 See A.R. Allen, "William Ivens," in Gen. ed., Nolan, B. Harmon, Encyclopedia of World Methodism: Vol. 1., ( New York: United Methodist Publishing House, 1974), p. 1244.

4 The Western Labor News, was an eight page weekly sent to press Friday mornings and published by the Trades and Labor Council, Winnipeg.

5 P.A.M., Manitoba Strike Trials, Testimony of William Ivens.

6 David Jay Bercuson, Confrontation At Winnipeg: Labour, Industrial Relations, and the General Strike. (Montreal-Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1974), Rpt. 1991, p. 66.

7 Vox Wesleyana , Vol.XII, 6 (May: 1908), p.129. Most influential were J.S. Woodsworth, Rev. A.E. Smith, and Salam Bland.

Methodist Church. After several successful stops in rural communities, Ivens returned to Winnipeg as pastor at McDougall Methodist church in 1916. At McDougall, Ivens' developing ideas of progressive reform found increasing expression in the labour movement and in his activities as a community spokesperson on social issues. In 1918, he was expelled from the Methodist Church because of his commitment to political and social reform and for expressing views that he would retain for the remainder of his life.

Despite Ivens' obvious importance to the history of progressive reform in Canada, little has been written about his political thought, especially the content of his critique of capitalism, his strategy for social reform, and the vision of society that he attempted to create. Doug Pratt's "William Ivens, M.A., B.D., and The Winnipeg Labor Church" (1962) and Duncan Irvine's "Reform, War, And Industrial Crisis in Manitoba: F.J. Dixon and The Framework of Consensus 1903-1920" (1981) have portrayed Ivens as essentially a passive character, whose ideas were on the road to social change. Irvine suggests further that Ivens and the other strike leaders "were not really revolutionary at heart (despite the revolutionary appearance of their actions)?"<sup>8</sup> In fact, Irvine's characterization of Ivens is contradictory, and it epitomizes the problems of past conceptual attempts to locate Ivens within a study of progressive reform movements in the West. Irvine's work, like the writings of a number of others, fails in its attempt to locate Ivens

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<sup>8</sup> D.N. Irvine, "Reform, War and Industrial Crisis in Manitoba: F. J. Dixon and The Framework of Consensus, 1903-20." M.A. Thesis., University of Manitoba, 1981.



primarily because of the denial of the importance of class as Ivens' central tool for analysis in historical inquiry.<sup>9</sup>

The central problem of this thesis is to identify and explain the tendency that Ivens' inclusive ideology represented in urban politics in the era of the Winnipeg General Strike. The mainstream working-class ideology of the period was labourism, but it was during this period that Ivens' unique brand of politics emerged and made its contribution to the advancement of radical reforms. His political philosophy identifies most easily with the British ethical socialism that was popular during the 1880s and 1890s.<sup>10</sup> In Britain and similarly in Canada, ethical socialism drew much of its vitality from its "moral" and "religious" sentiments, something that "had ceased to find satisfactory expression in the churches and the chapels."<sup>11</sup> It was the desire to find a new way of life "inspired" by a "higher social ethic."<sup>12</sup>

In Manitoba politics during the second and third decades of the 20th century, Ivens' political philosophy offered Manitobans an alternative to the "status quo" of mild reformism, and to the revolutionary tactics of the Socialist Party of Canada (S.P.C.). His vision looked beyond the existing system of capitalist social relations and saw a world that supplied justice, true democracy, and a spirit of brotherhood. In short, he envisioned a world that would replace competition with co-operation. It was an ethical socialist world order that attempted to achieve a classless society in which all would

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid., pp. 2-3. Irvine explicitly argues that there are problems with the 'class conflict' model in historical analysis.

<sup>10</sup> Stanley Pierson, Marxism And The Origins of British Socialism: The Struggle for a New Consciousness. (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1973), pp.140-173.

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

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., p.140.

toil equally for their means. Ivens offered Manitobans a compromise between a violent bloody revolution and a seemingly endless and perpetual gradualism. His own "lived experience" was at the centre of his developing ideology and it was most amazing that he could unite others of competing world-views behind a common banner.

In order more clearly to identify and explain the specific tendency that Ivens' life is representative of, there is an essential need to explore three significant bodies of secondary literature. Consideration must be given to the existing material on the emergence of the Social Gospel and its growth and development on the Canadian Prairies. Second, there is a need briefly to identify the tenets of pacifism, which was an influential voice during World War I, and has had a particularly prominent influence in the historiography of Ivens' career. Finally there is a need to make a further inquiry into the literature that explores the debates surrounding the events of 1919 in industrial-capital relations in Canada. The 1919 debates are many, but for this study of Ivens they have been broken down into essentially two problems: one centers on the theoretical constructs surrounding the "Western Exceptionalist Debate", the other involves our understanding of the nature of labourism during this period. The remainder of this chapter sets out to identify these bodies of literature.

In popular Canadian histories, Ivens' role as a working-class intellectual receives only a cursory treatment. Often he is overshadowed by other progressives, and more often, he appears as only a supporting character. In his work, Manitoba: A History, W.L. Morton writing of the events of 1919, distinguishes between the "Marxian apostles of the O.B.U." and the "militant Methodist ministers, William Ivens, Salem G. Bland, and

J.S. Woodsworth."<sup>13</sup> The difference between the two groups Morton suggests lies in their differing ideologies. For unlike the "class war frenzy of the Marxists,"<sup>14</sup> Ivens (and the other Methodist ministers) preached

a 'social gospel' drawn from Scripture, from the muckraking literature of the day, and from their own evangelical creed, [and they] were prophesying a new age and a new order, in which labour would come into its own and social justice prevail. Their message was in the right Christian and British tradition which ran from John Ball to George Lansbury.<sup>15</sup>

By doing this, Morton's work dismisses the individual incongruencies and that has all too often resulted in the blurring of our understanding of the movement.<sup>16</sup> Vera Fast's work continues in this tradition that tends to obfuscate the competing tendencies within the complex Winnipeg progressive reform movement of the period. She emphasizes only that "[m]en such as J.S. Woodsworth, Salem Bland and William Ivens were certainly progressives, while A.E. Smith stood staunchly with the radicals, as did R.B. Russell and William (Bill) A. Pritchard."<sup>17</sup> Essentially, to appreciate further the dynamics of the working-class movement (or movement culture) of early 20th century Winnipeg, a better understanding of

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13 W.L. Morton. Manitoba: A History. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1957), Rpt.1970, p. 367.

14 Ibid., p. 367.

15 Ibid., p. 367.

16 For example Ivens unlike the other 'militant Methodist ministers' did support the philosophy of the O.B.U.

17 Vera Fast, "The Labor Church in Winnipeg", in ed., Dennis L. Butcher, Prairie Spirit: Perspectives on the Heritage of the United Church of Canada in the West. (Manitoba: University of Manitoba Press, 1985), p. 234.

the working-class intellectuals is necessary; William Ivens is an obvious choice for such a study.

Ivens was a remarkable figure in early 20th century provincial politics. He traded in the formalism of the Methodist church, preferring instead a mixture of social revivalism, a "religion of socialism,"<sup>18</sup> and an independent voice in Manitoba politics. He had a sincere commitment to progressive reform. As a talented campaign organizer and fund-raiser for a number of organizations, he stood apart from others. Thus with a long history of involvement in both provincial and federal politics<sup>19</sup> it is surprising to find Ivens absent from the work of Gerald Friesen<sup>20</sup> and given only a cursory treatment by John Kendle. In his study of the Bracken years, Kendle notes in passing only that Ivens was a likable character, known primarily for his "long windedness" and his ability to filibuster in the House.<sup>21</sup> Ivens escapes mention again in a number of other relevant works and even in Doug Pratt's study of Ivens, his politics are largely absent.<sup>22</sup>

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18 This is a term borrowed from the work of Stephen Yeo, "A New Life: The Religion of Socialism in Britain 1883-1896", History Workshop, 4(Autumn 1977), p. 7.; Yeo cites Pierson, pp. 140-173; Pierson says that the term gained currency first in the writings of Conway and Glassier, see Katherine St. John Conway and John Bruce Glassier, The Religion of Socialism: Two Aspects. (Manchester, 1894).

19 Ivens was elected to the legislature for the years 1920-36, and during much of this time he was actively involved in the federal campaigns for Woodsworth and Heaps. He would seek federal candidacy for the C.C.F. in Kenora-Rainy River in 1943-44.

20 Gerald Friesen, The Canadian Prairies: A History. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984), Rpt. 1987.

21 John Kendle, John Bracken: A Political Biography. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1979.), p. 1.

22 D.F. Pratt, "William Ivens B.D., M.A., and the Winnipeg Labor Church", B.D. Thesis., St. Andrew's College, Saskatoon, 1962.

The Protestant Christian tradition in early twentieth century Canada, the rise of the Social Gospel, and the movement away from religion towards "respectable" secular forms of social regeneration have been explored by numerous articles and full length studies during the last two decades.<sup>23</sup> At the centre of this exploration has been the historian's fascination with the Social Gospel movement and either its organic growth or its adaptation to the Canadian Prairies.<sup>24</sup> On the Canadian Prairies, the Social Gospel has properly been recognized as one of the most important movements of the first two decades of the twentieth century. Historian Richard Allen suggests that the Social Gospel rested on the premise that "Christianity was a social religion, concerned . . . with the quality of human relations on this earth. . . . It was a call for men to find the meaning of their lives in seeking to realize the Kingdom of God in the very fabric of society."<sup>25</sup> Allen's typology suggests that there were three divergent groups within the movement: the "conservative", the "moderate" and the "radical".<sup>26</sup> What distinguished these groups from other reform movements, he suggests, was that each type had its own approach to seeking the Kingdom of God in the "very fabric of society". The conservatives were closest to the tradition of "evangelicalism".

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23 Two introductory works covering this process are: Ramsay Cook, The Regenerators: Social Criticism In Late Victorian English Canada. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985), Rpt. 1987; more recently see, David B. Marshall, Secularizing the Faith: Canadian Protestant Clergy and the Crisis of Belief, 1850-1940. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992).

24 See G.N. Emery, "Methodism on The Canadian Prairies 1896 to 1914: The Dynamics of an Institution in a New Environment." Ph.D. diss., University. of British Columbia, 1970.

25 Richard Allen, The Social Passion: Religion and Social Reform in Canada. 1914-1928 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971), p. 4.

26 Ibid., p. 17.

They identified "sin" with "individual acts" and "took as their social strategy legislative reform of the environment."<sup>27</sup> The "radicals" believed that in order to achieve personal salvation, they first had to achieve social salvation. They argued that the very nature of God's will was a calling to give his kingdom birth in this life. Somewhere between the radicals and the conservatives in Allen's typology were the moderates. The moderates, acting as conciliators, held the two extremes together as the Social Gospel expanded numerically between 1890 and 1914.<sup>28</sup>

Ivens has been rescued from the archives of historical obscurity essentially as a representative of the radical wing of the Social Gospel.<sup>29</sup> Typically, these works have highlighted Ivens' expulsion from the Methodist Church, and have subsequently cited the establishment of his progressive Labour Church as part and parcel of the radical tendency.<sup>30</sup> However a closer examination of Ivens relationship to the Social Gospel movement reveals that it was a peculiar one, and this requires further historical inquiry. Ivens' Canadian Labour Churches were originally patterned after a British variant and they were unquestionably influenced by tenets of German positivism and by American and British theories of creation, evolution and social Darwinism. In Britain, John Trevor, a social agitator, was responding to his discontent with Unitarianism and he drew upon his growing admiration of the Socialists when he established the first Labour Church in Manchester during the fall of 1891.<sup>31</sup> Historian Stephen Yeo suggests that

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27 *Ibid.*, p. 17.

28 *Ibid.*, p. 17.

29 See Morton and also see Fast.

30 Allen, p. 17.

31 Pierson, pp. 230-31.

as the British Labour Churches grew in size and number during the 1890s, they forged their own political space over time, a space that created substantial room for the emergence of the British Independent Labour Party (I.L.P.).<sup>32</sup> In British studies of the Labour Church, the relationship between the church to the working-class political movement of socialism has received much historical attention. However, in Canada similar studies remain to be written. The need for such a work is as apparent in Canada as it was in Britain, for the Canadian Labour Churches were born out of a similar discontent with the formalism of the old religion; but, in Canada, the opposition was to Methodism. Similar to John Trevor, Ivens was developing an acute understanding and sympathy towards socialist ideals. In fact, Ivens identified clearly with the tenets of socialism, even prior to the establishment of the first Labour Church in Winnipeg.

The emergence of the Canadian Labour Churches were peculiar, as they originated and developed as a central working-class institution. It was at the Labour Church that practical solutions to the very real problems of poverty, drink, and unsanitary conditions had to be met. For all their philosophical rhetoric and imported theoretical ideas, the Labour Churches were really local in origin, national in number, offering an overarching ethical socialist outlook or world view. What was most attractive about the ethical socialism espoused at the Labour Churches was what both Stanley Pierson and Henry De Man call its "eschatological sentiment", its offering of a radically different way of life.<sup>33</sup> Linked inextricably to the science of the last four things: heaven, hell, death and judgment; ethical socialism heralded

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<sup>32</sup> Yeo, p. 7.

<sup>33</sup> Pierson, p. 226. Pierson cites Henry De Man, Psychology of Socialism. (New York, 1928), p. 133.

the arrival of a new age in which social hope would be awakened in all. It drew upon Biblical imagery in its portrayal of the future and emphasized man's ability to overcome his burdens by challenging the existing social order.

With its emphasis on "reason and social intuition of the people" as the moral imperative and authority for socialism, Ethical socialism often possessed a utilitarian note.<sup>34</sup> Like many other strands of socialist thought, British ethical socialism emphasized the importance of education, but it was largely moral and subjective in outlook.<sup>35</sup> In Canada, the same case can be made. As pastor of the Labour Church, Ivens became the bridge between God and the worker on earth as he attempted to meet the immediate needs of the worker. In the Labour Churches, the assumption was that "Christ was not just a savior, Christ himself was the ultimate social reformer."<sup>36</sup> From their inception, the Canadian Labour Churches had adopted superior grounding over their British counterparts as they had had the benefit of twenty years precedence. Hence they more ably faced the objective conditions of social and economic life.<sup>37</sup>

Why the Labour Churches collapsed in Canada by the mid 1920's, only a few historians have seriously commented. Richard Allen suggests that they declined because there was not the same need in Canada for the Labour Churches that had occasioned their rise in Britain during a period of ecclesiastical revolution in the social and political attitudes of British

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34 Ibid., p. 145.

35 See Katherine St. John Conway and John Bruce Glassier, The Religion of Socialism: Two Aspects, (Manchester, 1894), pp. 11, 15.

36 Fast, p. 248.

37 Pierson, pp.140-174.



nonconformist churches.<sup>38</sup> The effects of the British ecclesiastical revolution had been "transmitted" to Canada and the formalism of the old churches had been eschewed. The Labour Church had little reason for existing in Canada, argues Allen. In Canada too, Allen suggests, there was no "large, self-conscious working class. . . . the Church was not a viable institution in this country."<sup>39</sup> However, Vera Fast has more recently challenged Allen's views by suggesting that even in Britain where there was a large working class, there was still little support for the Labor Churches after World War I. Blame for the Labour Church's decline, therefore, lies in its

internal weakness rather than external pressure . . . Basically, the leadership generally and William Ivens particularly were overly simplistic in assessing both the problems of society and the competence of their church to redress these problems.<sup>40</sup>

Fast and Pratt both suggest that the "gospellers" were informed by a theology which "deprived the leadership of weapons in a spiritual warfare."<sup>41</sup> The leaders more often than not failed to realize that "faith" must "work through love", and in particular William Ivens was responsible for the ultimate downfall of the Church.<sup>42</sup> The separation of the moderates and the radicals within the Labour Church, or the inevitable "dichotomy", (or ideological divide) generated by these two groups, Fast also believes, was "largely responsible for the collapse of the religion that the Labor Church

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38 Allen, p. 173.

39 Fast, p. 248 and Allen, pp. 173-174.

40 Fast, pp. 248-249.

41 Ibid., pp. 248-249.

42 Ibid., pp. 248-249; also see Pratt, p. 113.

was disseminating."<sup>43</sup> If the Labour Church's failures rest with its leadership, and in its internal dynamics, or if its failures rest in the radicalization of Methodism and traditional religion, then a thorough study of Ivens' role in the life of both the Methodist and the Labour Churches is essential.

Also what is missing from the literature on early twentieth century religious and social experiences are studies that contribute directly to an understanding of the intersection of the religion of socialism that the Labour Church was advocating and the labour movement.<sup>44</sup> It has become apparent to me that a more useful theoretical approach for analysis of this intersection might be found outside of the Social Gospel tradition, rather than from within. In undertaking such a study, the role of the Labour Church would more properly be situated within the context of working-class politics, as a working-class institution rather than within the traditional liberal framework that permeates past studies of the movement. This approach might ultimately offer a series of seemingly more plausible answers to the questions like why the Labour Church declined in the 1920s. This fresh approach would simply be an extension of the work already begun by Kenneth McNaught. McNaught had originally argued against fellow historian, A.R.M. Lower,

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<sup>43</sup> Fast, p. 234.

<sup>44</sup> Ken Fones-Wolf, Trade Union Gospel: Christianity and Labor in Industrial Philadelphia, 1865 - 1915. (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1989); See also Doris O'Dell's review in Labour / Le Travail, 27 (Spring1991), pp.325-26. Also, noting the same absence is Craig Heron "Labourism and the Canadian Working Class," Labour / Le Travail, 13 (Spring1984), p. 62. One notable exception in this process is Stephen Yeo, "A New Life: The Religion of Socialism in Britain 1883-1896", History Workshop, 4 (Autumn1977), pp. 5-56.

that Methodism rather than "father[ing] a larger proportion of Canada's radicals perhaps . . . "expelled" [them]."<sup>45</sup> Methodism and late 19th century British socialism of a particular variety were clearly important sign-posts in the development of Ivens' intellectual thought.

A number of early 20th century reform movements in Canada, contained pacifist ideals which helped broaden and define a number of competing world views shared by Canadians of all backgrounds. However, during World War I, the most popular view in Canada seemed to be an outright support of the state and respect for British values, institutions, and generally accepted customs in common. Insofar as an extremely small number of individuals opposed World War I on pacifist grounds, pacifism forged a central place in a number of competing belief systems. In his recent study of pacifism, Thomas P. Socknat argues there were a number of distinct branches of pacifism within the Canadian tradition.<sup>46</sup> He suggests that among the competing strands, there were the sectarians, those persons who held the view that "war is absolutely and always wrong,"<sup>47</sup> but there were also the liberal- progressive pacifists who argued that "war, though sometimes necessary, is always inhumane and irrational and should be prevented."<sup>48</sup> Ivens had developed a strong Social Gospel system of values by 1914, argues Socknat, but he displayed no visible signs of pacifism. The conscription issue in 1917 radicalized Ivens' opposition to the war and

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45 Kenneth McNaught, A Prophet in Politics: A Biography of J.S. Woodsworth. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1959), Rpt. 1975, p.98.

46 Thomas P. Socknat, Witness Against War: Pacifism in Canada 1900-1945. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987).

47 Ibid., p.7.

48 Ibid., p.7.

ultimately it was "his pacifism, not his radicalism, that led to a crisis in his church."<sup>49</sup> According to Socknat, a new "pacifist ethic" emerged with men like Ivens and Woodsworth.

By linking war and capitalism, they combined a socialist anti-war critique within the radical Christian Belief in the moral necessity of pacifism in any meaningful social revolution. Thus they staunchly opposed the existing social order, the state's war effort in particular; as a result pacifist ministers lost their churches and others were forced from their jobs.<sup>50</sup>

In disagreement with Socknat, Kenneth McNaught offers a slightly different interpretation of the events leading to Ivens' expulsion from Methodism. McNaught suggests that "inside the church they [ Ivens included] were frustrated by dependence upon wealthy men, and if they exerted an influence politically, were informed that a minister's job could not include such activity."<sup>51</sup> Politics were at work in the church, and social critics like Ivens were unable to speak of meaningful 'reforms.' Pacifism in his opinion was more the excuse, rather than the cause for their dismissal.<sup>52</sup> McNaught's interpretation is unclear because at certain points he gives primacy to politics, and at other points he emphasizes pacifism. Both interpretations, however, require a clearer understanding of Ivens' views during the war as well as a subsequent inquiry and re-assessment of his role at McDougall Memorial Methodist Church.

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<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, p.72.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, p.73.

<sup>51</sup> McNaught, p.49.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.98-99.

Through Ivens' early experiences the influence of progressives Salem Bland, J.S. Woodsworth, and Rev. A.E. Smith, then through his rural mission work and involvement with various social crusades (temperance and pacifism), his commitment to progressive change helped define and reformulate his own politics. By 1918 Ivens had forged his own identifiable brand of socialism. His socialism was increasingly exhibited through the Labour Churches, but it also found expression in the workers' paper the Western Labor News, (in his activities leading up to the Winnipeg General Strike of 1919).

As a study of William Ivens political thought, this thesis rests most comfortably among those persons who accept the premise that "over several decades, Canada's prairie region was the site of concerted and diverse attempts to reconstitute the democratic experience within the Canadian polity."<sup>53</sup> Insofar as historians emphasize the importance of political economy in assessing the events and the scope of the 1919 Winnipeg General Strike, a number of contentious issues have received vigorous scrutiny over the last two decades. Ivens' prominence in the events of 1919, as pastor of the Labour Church, as editor of the strike paper, and as a working-class intellectual who had achieved prominence within the community, merits a study of his political contribution.

Since the early 1970s and with origins that pre-date D.C. Master's pioneering study The Winnipeg General Strike in 1919, a number of debates have materialized over the nature of the Winnipeg General Strike. Was it a strike for a living wage, for better working conditions, or for the right to

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<sup>53</sup> David Laycock, Populism and Democratic Thought in the Canadian Prairies, 1910 to 1945. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), p. 3.

bargain collectively, as many of the early working-class histories suggest. Or was it an attempt to overthrow constituted authority and challenge the existing social order, as others have argued. Did it have its roots in a failing 19th century liberal ideology, or did it more properly exhibit radical impulses reflecting either nativist, American, British, or European influences, or a combination of any thereof? Beginning in the late 1960s in response to the emergence of the new left in labour history, and most definitely by the 1970s, the debate surrounding the Winnipeg General Strike was transformed as a number of gaps in its historiography became more closely examined and a process of re-thinking the past undertaken.<sup>54</sup> By the end of the 1970s, the debate over the Winnipeg General Strike centred on claims made by historian David J. Bercuson. In a series of articles and books, Bercuson drew the conclusion that in its final analysis, the Winnipeg General Strike was an event that occurred in response to a unique set of regional circumstances.<sup>55</sup> The problem in Bercuson's work was its inability

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54 A number of examinations offer opinions on the successes and failures of the trends of the 1970s. See Kenneth McNaught, "E.P. Thompson vs Harold Logan: Writing about Labour and the Left in the 1970s", Canadian Historical Review, 62 (1981), pp.141-168; Michael S. Cross, "To the Dartmouth Station: A Worker's Eye View of Labour History", Labour/Le Travail, 1 (1976), pp.193-208; David Jay Bercuson, Confrontation At Winnipeg: Labour, Industrial Relations and the General Strike. (Montreal and Kingston: McGill- Queen's University Press, 1974), Rpt.1990, Chapter #13 "A Longer View", pp. 196-207.

55 See David Jay Bercuson, "Labour Radicalism and the Western Industrial Frontier, 1897-1919", Canadian Historical Review, vol., LVIII No.2 (June 1977), pp.154-175; also see David Jay Bercuson, Confrontation at Winnipeg: Labour, Industrial Relations, and the General Strike, (Montreal and Kingston: McGill- Queen's University Press, 1974), Rpt.1990 ; and others who share similar views see Gerald Friesen, "'Yours in Revolt':

to situate Winnipeg's General Strike within a period of great upheaval between capital and labour along national and international conjectures.<sup>56</sup> It was American historian David Montgomery who argued that "Strikes can only be understood in the context of the changing totality of class conflicts, of which they are a part."<sup>57</sup> Canadian historian Greg Kealey argued that Winnipeg could not be studied in isolation of national or international trends.<sup>58</sup> Others have since confirmed this position and Bercuson's own work, has since been properly characterized as the "western exceptionalist" plank of the debate.<sup>59</sup>

Exploring the debates of the 1970s and 1980s, ultimately, a number of scholars over the last two decades have made substantial in-roads into the

Regionalism, Socialism and the Western Canadian Labour Movement", Labour/ Le Travailleur, 1 (1976), pp.139-57; A.R. McCormack, Reformers, Rebels and Revolutionaries: The Western Canadian Radical Movement 1899-1919, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1977), Rpt. 1991.

56 Gregory S. Kealey, "1919: The Canadian Labour Revolt", Labour/Le Travail, 13 (Spring1984), pp. 11-44.

57 David Montgomery, "Strikes in Nineteenth-Century America", Social Science History, 4 (1980), p. 100.

58 See also Nolan Reilly, "Introduction to Papers from the Winnipeg General Strike Symposium, March 1983", Labour/Le Travail, 13 (Spring1984), pp. 7-10.

59 See Larry Peterson, "The One Big Union in International Perspective: Revolutionary Industrial Unionism 1900-1925", Labour/ Le Travailleur, 7 (1981), pp.41-66.; also see David Frank, "The Cape Breton Coal Industry and the Rise and Fall of the British Empire Steel Corporation", Acadiensis, Vol.VII, No.1 (Autumn1977), pp.3-34.; David Frank and Nolan Reilly, "The Emergence Of The Socialist Movement In The Maritimes, 1899-1916", Labour/ Le Travailleur, 4 (1979), pp.85-113; and most recently, James Naylor, The New Democracy: Challenging the Social Order in Industrial Ontario 1914-25. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991).

nature of working-class politics along international, national, and regional conjectures.<sup>60</sup> Studies have examined such diverse elements of working-class history (at both the macro and micro levels) as the attempts to formulate international labour alliances during the 1910s and 1920s, to an expanding of our understanding of the ways in which shop floor power was negotiated between the supervisors and the supervised and the regional variations of working-class experiences. Larry Peterson suggests that during this period 1900-1925 labour in a number of the advanced capitalist countries was facing similar challenges of new technology, and the rise of the second wave of industrial capitalism. Responding to the threat of unemployment and the erosion of standards of living, unskilled workers sought increased organization, and all workers increasingly rejecting traditional union forms in favour of a "revolutionary general worker's unionism."<sup>61</sup> Nationally, during the same period, Craig Heron suggests that labourism easily became the dominant urban working-class ideology east of

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60 Beginning with Nolan Reilly's, "The General Strike in Amherst, Nova Scotia, 1919", Acadiensis, 2 (Spring1980), pp.56-78.; Gregory S. Kealey, "1919: The Canadian Labour Revolt", Labour/Le Travail, 13 (Spring1984), pp.11-44; Larry Peterson, "Revolutionary Socialism and Industrial Unrest in the Era of the Winnipeg General Strike: The Origins of Communist Labour Unionism in Europe and North America", Labour/Le Travail, 13 (Spring1984), pp.115-131; Linda Kealey, "No Special Protection--No Sympathy: Women's Activism in the Canadian Labour Revolt of 1919", in D.R. Hopkin and G.S. Kealey, eds., Class, Community and the Labour Movement: Wales and Canada, 1850-1930. pp. 134-159.

61 Larry Peterson, "The One Big Union in International Perspective: Revolutionary Industrial Unionism 1900-1925," Labour/ Le Travail, 7 (Spring1981), p. 41.



the Rockies before 1920.<sup>62</sup> Labourism, Heron argues was a distinct ideological form in Canadian politics, resembling but differing from agrarian populism, contemporary liberalism, and socialism, and the brand of social democracy which emerged after 1930."<sup>63</sup> It could best be defined by its social composition (predominantly craft and skilled workers), its ideological debt to 19th century radicalism, its faith in liberal-democratic parliamentarism and a commitment to gradualism. Heron also argues that it offered an "idealized view of the state and a naive perspective on political economy."<sup>64</sup>

Labourist ideology peaked when it was transformed during World War I and, Heron argues, that "for the first time on a national scale, working-class liberalism had linked up with elements of Marxist and ethical socialism in a dynamic alliance, which, under the old label of labourism, provided the ideological dimension of the unprecedented post-war upsurge of the Canadian working class."<sup>65</sup> It collapsed by 1925 for several reasons Heron argues, including: the disintegration of socialist-labourist unity, the waning membership, the failure of the Winnipeg General Strike, and the final defeat of craftworker in Canadian industry.<sup>66</sup>

The labourist movement, however, was variegated even within the limited Canadian experience and Heron and others have recognized its contradictions. For example, (within the same over-arching framework of exploitative relations) Southern Ontario faced challenges unique to its own

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62 Craig Heron, "Labourism and the Canadian Working Class" Labour/ Le Travail, 13 (Spring1984), p. 45.

63 Ibid., p. 45.

64 Ibid., p. 60.

65 Ibid., p. 67.

66 Ibid., p. 71.

circumstances, as did labour in the West.<sup>67</sup> Along national conjectures, however, Winnipeg remains the most difficult place to draw the connection between the tenets that set the labourist ideology apart from various other competing ideologies. During this period, historians such as Heron have suggested, that Labourism in Winnipeg had a social composition that was predominantly middle class.

[F]or their electoral battles in the early 1920s, the beleaguered labourist craftworkers turned more often for candidates to the articulate middle classes who had drifted into their political camp towards the end of the war. In 1920, Manitoba's new Labour caucus included the former clergymen A.E. Smith and William Ivens. . .<sup>68</sup>

A study of prominent labour figures in Winnipeg will inevitably help historians to define better the labourist ideology of the city, and Ivens is again an obvious candidate for such a study.

To establish a clearer understanding of working-class politics during the 1910s and 1920s, there is an essential need to explore the life of William Ivens. Ivens represents a unique tendency in the provincial labour movement as he distinguished himself from his peers in both the Independent Labour Party (I.L.P.) and in the Socialist Party of Canada (S.P.C.). Unlike the labourism associated most readily with fellow ILPer's Fred Dixon and S.J. Farmer,<sup>69</sup> Ivens argued that revolutionary change was essential. His early Christian idealism was mixed with a clearer understanding that capitalism

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<sup>67</sup>For an exceptional analysis of the unique problems of Southern Ontario in the economic and political realms see, Naylor, pp. 3-10.

<sup>68</sup>Heron, p. 72.

<sup>69</sup>For views on Farmer and Dixon see D.N. Irvine's thesis. Also see Allen Mills, pp. 33-56; and Dewalt, p. 187.

was irreconcilable with the true meaning of the words "justice" and "democracy". He supported direct legislation while recognizing that it was only a band-aid solution for a far more serious set of economic, and social problems. In both the economic and the political realms revolutionary changes in social organization were needed, but it was here that Ivens remained confused and clouded. For unlike Dick Johns of the S.P.C. who saw in the Marxism of the S.P.C. the simple solution for everything, Ivens argued that revolutionary change could and would come through parliamentary means once the way was paved clear for its arrival. However, like the majority of labourists, and with a similarly shared understanding with D. J. Johns and R.B. Russell, Ivens recognized that in the capitalist system the political realm was linked inextricably to the economic realm. The need for a new social order was essential and working towards the change was his life's ambition. Ivens believed that capital had parliament by the "throat" but ultimately, he opted for a revolution that would occur within the present parliamentary system. This revolution would inevitably be carried from parliament into the economic realm, although his plan for workplace democracy was unclear.

In Manitoba and nationally in 1919, the ideology of Ivens and other like-minded radicals "challenged the existing social order in a dialogue over democracy."<sup>70</sup> Between 1918-1920, Ivens forged a working relationship with the moderates and the radicals in the provincial working-class political arena. The Labourists, represented best by Dixon and Farmer, and the Radicals, represented by the S.P.C. could all accept Ivens as a broker between the two ideological divides and throughout the 1920s and the 1930s,

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<sup>70</sup> Naylor, p. 8.

he maintained his affinity with both camps. During Fred Dixon's tenure as a labourist leader (1916-1923), Dixon had managed to achieve a consensus among people who were not labourists themselves but had sympathy with and for the ideals and aspirations of the working man. A far more difficult task during this period in the history of Manitoba labour was to find a successful broker who could maintain a common ground between the moderates of labourist persuasion, and those radicals of the S.P.C., like R.B. Russell, who were actively working towards the overthrow of the state. It would take an exceptional individual to act as a broker between various left wing and moderate groups. It had to be a person that had earned the respect of all parties, a person who would separate issues of principle from personality conflicts in a continuously erupting political environment. Furthermore, it would help if the person although actively involved in labour circles, had no vote on council, a person who could always appeal to the collective good while remaining an irritant to few. In labour circles the person chosen was himself a paid worker, the editor of the workers' paper. It was Ivens who could best fill this role. His developed ethical socialist outlook, and his over-riding world view became the best way for the labourists and the radicals to forge a common alliance in a dire time of need.

With the collapse of the strike, Ivens resumed his editorship of the workers' paper. But his support for moving beyond traditional craft union organization found him increasingly isolated from the growing conservative ranks within the Winnipeg Trades and Labour Council (W.T.L.C.). He was forced to resign his position as editor of the Western Labor News shortly thereafter. This act marked the permanent isolation of the conservative members in the labour camp. The international unions sold out to capitalism as their conservative approach to industrial disputes failed to address the

problem of conflicting class interests. The W.T.L.C. became a sign-post for reformism, as it attempted to find accommodation within the existing system of economic and social relations.

Throughout the 1920s, Ivens continued trying to find common ground in his role as a broker between the progressives and the radicals. His own unique brand of ethical socialism forged by his mixing of early Methodism with Marxism remained with him throughout his life. Paradoxically, it was because of this ethical socialist outlook that his own concepts for the revolutionary transition from capitalism to socialism could never be fully explained. Perhaps it was for this reason too that those who spoke of him in later years all recognized that he had challenged the social order, but were of the opinion that he never knew what exactly it was that he wanted. However, perhaps what they had really meant to say was that Ivens did know what he wanted, but did not know how to achieve it?<sup>71</sup> Ivens was not alone in his search for affecting a socialist order and political scientist Allen Mills is correct to note that,

Dixon's and Farmer's world views were not the only elements in the ideological make-up of the early I.L.P. . . . In the early 1920s the I.L.P. encompassed neo-Georgeites, simple labourites, social gossellers, progressive farmers, democratic socialists, and even some O.B.U.'ers.<sup>72</sup>

Through a study of the life of William Ivens and the contributions that he made to the community, it is hoped that our understanding of the

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<sup>71</sup>PAM., Lionel Orlikow Tapes, Interview with Fred Tipping.

<sup>72</sup>Allen Mills, "Single Tax, Socialism and the Independent Labour Party of Manitoba: The Political Ideals of F.J. Dixon and S.J. Farmer", Labour/Le Travail, 5 (Spring 1980), p. 66.

intricacies of the 1910s and 1920s provincial and national labour movement will be substantially enriched.

The second chapter of this thesis re-introduces Ivens to the reader and explores the impact of his early experiences in the development of his ideas on progressive reform. Locating Ivens in relation to the growing progressive movement, internationally and on the Canadian Prairies, helps us better understand the motives central to Ivens growing awareness of the acute need to defend the positions of the underprivileged. As the rapid expansion of industrial capitalism transformed the Prairies the need to challenge the existing order became apparent to many progressive individuals. How the challenges could best be fought became the contested terrain of debate in labour and reform circles. Ivens own approach was becoming increasingly influenced outside of the dominant Methodist tradition, and he was increasingly becoming more closely associated with the labour camp. By 1918 his own views of political and social reform had alienated him from within the Methodist church. The conflict grew and resolution only came once he had completely left its ranks. In the interim he was "left without station", and given the opportunity to take up his life's calling: the establishment of a Labour Church that took the real interests of the people to heart.

The political suppression of Ivens' views of progressive reform, his views towards World War I, and a growing awareness that community interests were constantly being subordinated to the interests of material gain marked a significant cleavage in Ivens' career. Ivens moved beyond the limiting orthodoxy of the Methodist church, and took up a series of new challenges during the spring of 1918. Chapter three explores the challenges that Ivens faced in his opposition to the status quo during the tumultuous

months leading up to the events of the Winnipeg General Strike in May 1919. Through an exploration of the rapid rise of the Labour Church and the political coup in the W.T.L.C. throughout the summer and fall of 1918, light is cast on Ivens' role in these important events as he was thrust into a position of prominence within a highly volatile and active labour camp. It was during these months that the Labour Church actively began to forge its own political space within the Winnipeg community, and it was during these months that Ivens, the central spokesperson for the Labour Church articulated his own vision of a new social order. Increasingly Ivens' own brand of socialism was being put through the ultimate acid test which was the ability to meet the practical needs of the working-class through the W.T.L.C. as elements in it became set to challenge the legitimacy of the social order in the spring of 1919.

Ivens involvement in the Winnipeg General Strike and in its aftermath placed him securely at the foreground of the movement to challenge the existing order. Hence, his own role in the events of 1919, the numerous mass meetings, the strikers' paper, and the subsequent trial of one of the most remarkable political figures in Western Canada over the last century becomes the centre of study for the next chapter. In this chapter Ivens' own views on the state, on progressive reform, the true meaning of democracy and his struggle with "the powers that be" are explored.

Ivens' prominent role in the community did not die with the collapse of the Winnipeg General Strike in 1919. He remained discontented with the existing social order throughout his life. Throughout the 1920s and well into the 1930s, Ivens carried his progressive views into the provincial house where he sat as an M.L.A. The final chapter of this thesis identifies the issues which he felt demanded his attention as a working-class

representative. Moreover, the final chapter also offers an assessment of the decline of the Labour Church during the mid 1920s.

The methodology of this thesis has been affected by the shortage of available material on Ivens' personal life. It is perhaps truly a reflection of the man, and more properly of the period itself, that among his papers deposited at the Provincial Archives of Manitoba there are few letters to family members. There is little information about his relationship with his wife, and only a few letters of correspondence with his son Milton, and a distant nephew who remained in Britain. Most of the correspondence is of the 1940s and of the 1950s and as such has found little use in the central body of this thesis.

For information on Ivens' public life in general, the most important sources remain the workers' journals in Manitoba during the 1910s, 1920s, and 1930s: The Voice, Western Labor News, Independent and Weekly News, and Manitoba Commonwealth and Weekly News. For the period covering Ivens early life in Winnipeg, and his life in the Methodist Ministry, a number of secondary sources were useful. Of particular use are D.F. Pratt's (1962) thesis on Ivens, Vera Fast's article (1986) on Ivens and the Winnipeg Labour Church, the work by Kenneth McNaught (1959) on J.S. Woodsworth, and A.R. Allen's work on the social gospel. Primary sources offering insight in this period are The Sidney Spectator, and the Wesley College (University of Winnipeg) student newspaper Vox Wesleyana. I have relied heavily upon the Minute Books of McDougall Memorial Methodist Church, (held at the University of Winnipeg/ United Church Archives) as the sources for the work done on Ivens brief period at McDougall. On the events covering his subsequent dismissal the Ivens Collection housed at the United Church Archives, Toronto, offer a number of additional documents. Finally,



for the period surrounding the Winnipeg General Strike, in addition to numerous other secondary sources, I have relied heavily upon the Manitoba Free Press, The Special Strike Edition, The Winnipeg Citizen, The Tribune, the R.B. Russell collection and the strike pockets (both held at the Public Archives of Manitoba), the I.L.P. Minutes of the Winnipeg Branch 1920-23, the Lionel Orlikow interview Tapes (including interviews with R.B. Russell, Fred Tipping, J. Aikens, J. Tanner, and an anonymous Labour Church member) also held at P.A.M. In addition, I have also benefited immeasurably by the Microfilm collection compiled by historian J.E. Rea, on the coverage of the Winnipeg General Strike in national papers (available at the University of Winnipeg), and by the 1919 Royal Commission Study into the Inquiry of Industrial Relations which is also available on microfilm.

## Chapter II

### Conversions and Crusades:

#### Ivens and The Methodist Church, 1878-1918.

William Ivens was born in Barford, Warwickshire, England on the 28 of June 1878, the son of William Ivens and Sarah Weller, both of English descent.<sup>73</sup> His home town was one hundred and fifty kilometers north-west of London in the Avon valley; ten kilometers north of Stratford, nine south east of Leamington Spa, and eight south of Warwick. Three kilometers west of Barford was Snitterfield and just beyond, lay the edge of the forest of Arden. It was an area, steeped in the history of Shakespeare's pen as it formed the idyllic countryside in As You Like It, Love's Labour's Lost, and the Merry Wives of Windsor.<sup>74</sup> Barford was an agricultural community. In 1881, its population was 720, boasting 192 houses, one local church, and resting upon just 677 acres. As steam and rail pushed through Warwick county in the 1870s and the 1880s, many of Warwick's larger towns were connected as hinterland centers -- servicing goods and marketing local agricultural products. The smaller towns like Barford were by-passed by the

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<sup>73</sup> Ernest J. Chambers,[ed.], Canadian Parliamentary Guide; ( Ottawa, 1921), p. 428. Canada's Who's Who, vol.II, 1936-37 incorrectly states that Ivens was born in June of 1873.

<sup>74</sup> John Lisle, Warwickshire, (London,1936), p. 85. Shakespeare's father was from neighbouring Snitterfield, his mother from Wilmecote, a small hamlet four kilometres northwest of nearby Stratford. In his early summers, the myth has it that Shakespeare explored the area between the two towns.

rail, and there the world of the local hamlet was dwarfed by the rapid changes underway elsewhere.<sup>75</sup>

Historian John Lisle suggests that the local Barford church was the center of activity in town during the 19th century. It was the home of the parish of St. Peter's which was under the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the Archdeaconry of Worcester and it had been since 1539.<sup>76</sup> The church was rebuilt in 1844<sup>77</sup> and in the chancel of the church was a memorial to Thomas Warde, "[a] local hero and gentleman-parson of Barford, who died in 1632."<sup>78</sup> Joseph Arch, the founder of the National Agricultural Labourers' Union and M.P. for north-West Norfolk from 1885-95 was born just several cottages away from the church.<sup>79</sup> It was probably here, near Barford, that Ivens spent "seven years of his early youth . . . upon an English farm."<sup>80</sup> But beyond this, Ivens' early life in Barford has proven exceedingly difficult to reconstruct for there remains little else that we know. Although these years obviously help to explain the British context that shaped much of his later political thought.

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<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 301. In the year 1066 there were in total 94 mills in the Warwickshire region. There were three settlements with four mills or more in them, six settlements with three mills in them, 18 settlements with 2 mills in them, and 67 settlements with one mill in them. F.W. Burt, a long time friend of Ivens, in 1952 recalled of the early years in Barford: "The wife says there were 5 houses in a row, they lived in the 1st and your folks lived at the other end in the 5th." P.A.M., William Ivens Collection, Box 1, folder "F.W. Burt", letter Burt to Ivens, 1952.

<sup>76</sup> Cecil Humphery-Smith [Ed.] The Phillimore Atlas and Index of Parish Registers. (Phillimore and Co: Sussex, 1984). p. 35.

<sup>77</sup> Lisle, p. 87.

<sup>78</sup> Lisle, p. 87.

<sup>79</sup> Lisle, p. 87.

<sup>80</sup> Vox Wesleyana, vol. XII No.6., May, 1908. p. 129.

Ivens emigrated to Canada in 1896, "to make his fortune on the Prairies," and he arrived in Winnipeg shortly thereafter.<sup>81</sup> He began his career working as a farm labourer in rural communities. Several years later he returned to Winnipeg finding work as a market gardener.<sup>82</sup> He joined McDougall Methodist Church and McDougall's pastor was Reverend A. E. Smith, a prominent Social Gospeller.<sup>83</sup>

When Ivens first met Rev. A. E. Smith, Rev. Smith was already well established in the West. McDougall church was an important urban church as it had the third largest congregation in the region.<sup>84</sup> It was especially important because it was one of few churches that met the needs of the

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81 P.A.M., Ivens testimony at the strike trials, and also reported in the Winnipeg Free Press. On emmigration to Winnipeg and the reasons behind see Alan F.J. Artibise's "Advertising Winnipeg: The Campaign for Immigrants and Industry, 1874-1914," Historical and Scientific Society of Manitoba Transactions, Series III, No. 27 (1970 - 71), pp. 75 - 106.

82 Ivens probably spent time in Benito as another couple from Barford, the F.W. Burts emmigrated there in 1896. see P.A.M., William Ivens collection, Box 1, folder "F.W. Burt" correspondence Burt to Ivens, May 20, 1952.

83 A. E. Smith, All My Life, (Progress Books: Toronto, 1949), p. 13. Smith's background was British, his father had come to Canada as Private William George Smith of the Seventeenth Rifle Brigade and his mother Elizabeth Bilsen, had arrived at about the same time. The Bilsens had settled in Grey County, Ontario a few kilometres outside of Hanover (now Kitchener). Smith's father met and married Elizabeth Bilsen in Quebec and A.E. Smith was the third child. In 1890, at the age of 19, A.E. Smith was working as a bindary apprentice in Hamilton with his name entered for candidacy in the Methodist Ministry. Through a letter sent by Dr. Woodsworth, the "Superintendent of Missions for the Methodist Church" Smith learned of his acceptance for candidacy. So in June of 1890, he travelled west to Winnipeg and his ministry officially began in 1891. Like other pastors of his day, Smith began preaching after just two weeks of training on a circuit of rural towns.

84 McDougall Memorial Methodist Church was the Church's full name, and it was at 931 Main Street near Selkirk Avenue.

swelling numbers of North End immigrants. Ivens roomed nearby the church and he began taking an interest in the life of the congregation, showing up regularly at the lawn bowling club, and attending Rev. Smith's services. After one of the services Ivens "told the Reverend that he wanted to gain an education and Rev. Smith told him that he had better start studying right away."<sup>85</sup>

With Smith's advice in mind, William Ivens entered Wesley College in the fall of 1902, and he began studying towards the completion of a Bachelor of Arts degree.<sup>86</sup> The next four years he spent studying, market gardening, and during three summers he traveled to Little Grand Rapids,<sup>87</sup> where he worked as a missionary.<sup>88</sup> During the winter months he studied to complete his B.A., and demonstrated exceptional ability winning the Alma Mater scholarship for his first year in Arts and a second scholarship for his third year of the General Course.<sup>89</sup> His teachers at Wesley College were impressed with his work ethic and in 1908, they praised him as a "man of executive ability in the handling of affairs."<sup>90</sup> One of those persons most impressed with Ivens was Salem Bland<sup>91</sup> a newer member of the college who was described as

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<sup>85</sup> Smith, p. 55.

<sup>86</sup> Henderson's Directory, (1906), lists six practicing market gardener companies in Winnipeg at this time. It is not known whether Ivens worked for one of them or whether he worked independently.

<sup>87</sup> Little Grand Rapids is one hundred and twenty-five miles inland from Beren's River on the eastern shore of Lake Winnipeg.

<sup>88</sup> Vox Wesleyana, vol. XII , No.6. May, 1908. pp. 129-30.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid., p. 129.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid., p. 129.

<sup>91</sup> Dr. Salem Bland had arrived in Winnipeg from Ottawa in 1903. He was recruited by Dr. J. W. Sparling, the principal of the College, to teach several courses on the Bible.

one of the brightest ministers in the Church . . . radical, a single taxer, a defender of labour's right to organize and a proponent of extensive state provision of cultural amenities and social schemes to equalize conditions in society.<sup>92</sup>

Both Bland and Rev. A.E. Smith played significant roles in Ivens' education and in the advancing of his career. Of Ivens, Bland would later say that "he put himself through college, under the greatest difficulties, leading meanwhile a life of extreme simplicity."<sup>93</sup> After four years of study, in 1906, Ivens graduated from Wesley College with a Bachelor of Arts degree. He returned to the college the following year and "devoted one year to the study of Theology, much to the enlightenment of the Professors and all concerned in the department."<sup>94</sup> His positive association with the college and the college faculty had been long standing. During a Wesley College "sustenance fund" drive in 1905, Ivens had donated several days wages, supporting the cause.<sup>95</sup> He played sports on the school teams and wrote with humor and wit for the school paper Vox Wesleyana. He wrote an article about life near Little Grand Rapids, "Tripping on Lake Winnipeg". In it he told the tale of John Doggie' "keeper of the lighthouse at Cox's Reef."<sup>96</sup> He also worked to develop his writing skills, submitting a poem to the student paper. The poem, called "The Three Voices," spoke out against leading a

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92 Richard Allen, "Salem Bland and the spirituality of the social gospel: Winnipeg and the West, 1903- 1913." in ed. Butcher et al, Prairie Spirit: Perspectives on the Heritage of the United Church of Canada in the West, (University of Manitoba Press: Winnipeg, 1985), p. 218.

93 Toronto Star, 17 June, 1919.

94 Vox Wesleyana, vol. XII , No.6. May, 1908. p. 130.

95 Minutes of the Manitoba, Assiniboia and Alberta Annual Conferences of The Methodist Church. 1905, (United Church Archives: University of Winnipeg), p. 43.

96 Vox Wesleyana, vol. XI, No.2. December, 1906, p. 25.

materialist, unproductive, and hedonistic lifestyle. In it he wrestled with the problems of human error and conscience, seeking a "guide infallible". In 1906, his guide was God.

Must I then blindly wander round  
Because such guide cannot be found?  
surely he who brought me here  
Will make the path of life appear  
Will come again and lead me through.

Twas then there came a still small voice  
"I am the Way, make me your choice."  
Then o'er the mountain and the plain  
No more I sought a path in vain,  
For I had found my faithful guide.<sup>97</sup>

After graduating from the Bachelor of Divinity program in the spring of 1907, Ivens was sent to his first permanent circuit posting at Sidney, Manitoba, in the Portage La Prairie district. Like other ministerial candidates who had recently graduated, Ivens was placed on a period of probation. Probation lasted for two years or until one had completed the structured reading courses. The general course was a two year program, but it could be completed in one year. Towards its completion in 1907, the first year graduate candidates were expected to read Daniel Steele's Substitute for Holiness, W. Somerville's Wesley on Christian Perfection, and Wallace's The History of Canadian Missions. In addition, the candidates were expected to study Greek testament, scripture selections, and demonstrate ability in

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<sup>97</sup> Vox Wesleyana, vol. X, No.5. March, 1906, p. 107. Here are the first signs that Ivens shared the same "agony of doubt" that John Bruce Glasier faced on his "conversion" from Presbyterianism to ethical socialism. See Stanley Pierson, Marxism and The Origins Of British Socialism: The Struggle for a New Consciousness, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1973), pp. 141-142.

English bible study. In the second year of circuit comprehensives, the works to be studied were on church history, including Fitchett's Wesley and His Century, Sutherland's The Methodist Church and Missions, and John Raleigh Mott's The Pastor and Modern Missions. Ivens was ambitious. He completed both programs in a year, and was ready to convocate at the conference held in May 1908. At the annual conference of the Methodist Church in 1908, Rev. A.E. Smith asked "What Probationers for the Ministry are now received into full connection and ordained?"<sup>98</sup> The last of six names was William Ivens, B.A., B.D.

In 1907 while working in Sidney, William Ivens met Louisa Davis the daughter of Elwin Davis. The Davis family were all active Methodists; Elwin Davis was a local farmer and an active part time preacher in town. After a courtship that lasted a year, William Ivens and Louisa Davis were married at the local town church in July 1908, two months after his graduation.

As a Methodist minister, Ivens quickly learned of the rigors of circuit life. He filled many roles in the daily operations of the church. Some were ordinary time-consuming functions like feeding and grooming his circuit transportation- a horse which remained standard transportation on the Methodist circuit and the subsequent United Church circuit as late as the 1930s. As the pastor he was also responsible for raising the funds needed to meet the church's operating budget. This was carried out in co-operation with the church stewards who were appointed for two years on the recommendation of the outgoing committee. In addition, he held numerous

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<sup>98</sup> Minutes of The Manitoba Annual Conference of The Methodist Church, 1908. (Presented by Wesley College: United Church Archives: University of Winnipeg, 1908), p. 7; See also A.E. Smith, p. 55.



baptisms, burials, weddings, organized Sunday school services, visited the sick and the elderly, and gave sermons regularly at nearby outposts. While at Sidney, Ivens had as many as six outposts to visit.<sup>99</sup> It was not an easy life. Everything was budgeted and accounted for. The Stewards presented him his meager salary which remained between \$800.00 and \$1000.00 dollars, per annum. He was paid his salary, in installments after each of the quarterly meetings and quite often at Sidney they were late in paying him his full amount owed.<sup>100</sup> As G.N. Emery has suggested, financially many pastors lived at or below what would have been considered the poverty line. In fact, poverty was one of the major reasons cited by Methodist pastors leaving the service of God.<sup>101</sup>

In these early days of Methodism in Canada, the district played an important role in the advancement of a young minister's career.<sup>102</sup> Sidney was the eleventh and final church in the Portage La Prairie District. The large central church in the district was at Portage and its pastor and district supervisor was Ivens' friend, the Rev. A.E. Smith. In 1908 and in 1909, it was common for Ivens and his wife to visit their friends at Portage.<sup>103</sup>

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99 "Minutes #25 of Sidney Circuit - 1889- 1915." (United Church Archives: University of Winnipeg, August 22, 1907), p. 122.

100 *Ibid.*, p. 122.

101 See G.N. Emery, "Methodism on the Canadian Prairies 1896 to 1914: The Dynamics of an Institution in a New Environment", Ph.D., dissertation, University of British Columbia, 1970.

102 The pastors of all the prairie 'districts' between 1896 and 1914 were predominantly from Ontario. In Manitoba in this time period, there were for example 132 pastors from Ontario (like Rev. A.E. Smith), 9 from other provinces, 15 natives, 5 from the United States, and 9 from Britain (including Ivens). The total number in Manitoba in this period was 170, and in the three prairie provinces 296. Those of British origin were a small minority; See G. N. Emery, p. 155.

103 The Sidney Spectator, April 1, May 13, May 27, June 3, and July 1 of 1909. On microfilm at the Legislative Library, Winnipeg.

Several times a year Ivens also traveled to Portage for district meetings, spending time with Rev. A. E. Smith and the Smith family, and at least four times a year Rev. Smith arrived at Sidney to chair the local committee meetings. Rev. Smith was a major influence in Ivens' life during this time, and Smith was increasingly agitating for social reform.

Promotion in the ministry came with service and merit. It was measured by a regional committee and Ivens, like other ministers, was most likely to be graded by his ability to attract new members to the Methodist Church, insuring the financial independence and stability of the church. Like other pastors, Ivens would have been evaluated in the church by his number of years of service and through his performance at the regular district meetings. At Sidney, with Smith as district supervisor and with his marriage to Louisa Davis a Sidney women, the local community became an ideal starting point for his career. The number of people who attended his Sunday night services steadily increased during the two and one half years that he and Louisa spent together there.<sup>104</sup>

It would be unfair to suggest, however, that the primary reason attendance increased at Ivens' services was completely due to his marriage to a Sidney women. Fair enough, in part, but Ivens was already an effective, compelling speaker who offered a service that was balanced with musical accompaniment whenever he could.<sup>105</sup> In his sermons at Sidney, he was developing an interest in addressing social problems, "The Christianization of our Civilization"<sup>106</sup> becoming a favorite topic. As early as 1907, Ivens had also become an active supporter of the temperance movement and he

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104 Ibid., June 3, 1909, p. 1.

105 Ibid., April 15, 1909, p. 8.

106 Ibid., June 3, 1909, p. 1.

remained committed to this cause throughout his life. He frequently addressed this social problem in speeches, in sermons and in 1920 he published a sixteen page pamphlet on the subject.<sup>107</sup> It is not at all surprising therefore, that during the Winnipeg General Strike, Salem Bland, would speak so fondly of Ivens' work at his early postings. Bland would again say that Ivens was "an earnest student and a hard working minister, with unusual interest in public questions and [he] took an active part in the young people's work in Manitoba. He is naturally a radical thinker."<sup>108</sup>

Linked to Ivens' concern for social issues were his interests in education and reform. Over the winter of 1908-09, he spent the little free time he had pursuing an M.A. in political economy at the University of Manitoba. His thesis, "Canadian Immigration", like the majority of immigration studies available, argued for a hierarchy of immigrants suitable for emigration to Canada. He argued that immigration in general should be curbed as he believed that it had detrimental effects in Canadian society. During periods of growth, he argued, immigrants undercut the value of Canadian labour causing the erosion of workers' living standards. Ivens was in close contact with J.S. Woodsworth (a prominent Social Gospeller) during this year, and Woodsworth had shown him an early draft of his second book to help him in the writing of his thesis. He finished his degree requirements in time to graduate at the spring convocation in 1909.<sup>109</sup>

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107 "Minutes #25 of Sidney Circuit- 1889-1915", November 1907, p. 123.

108 Toronto Star, June 17, 1919.

109 William Ivens, "Canadian Immigration", M.A. Thesis, University of Manitoba, 1909. Also see J.S. Woodsworth Strangers within our gates.(Toronto: Young People's Forward Movement, 1909).

With three degrees completed, Ivens' career was enhanced further in the summer when he was appointed secretary of the District, by District Supervisor, Rev. A. E. Smith.<sup>110</sup> Smith had helped Ivens in his pursuit of an education and was now actively promoting Ivens within his own charge.

Later that year another career advancement was made when Ivens was assigned to a new posting at Makinak, in the Dauphin district north-west of Portage.<sup>111</sup> In early July, the Ivens' left Sidney embarking on a four day journey to their new posting. The move to Makinak was a step forward and one towards greater independence. The congregation at Makinak was larger and it had eight additional circuit posts that required ministering too.

In 1909, Rev. A. E. Smith similarly left his position as district supervisor of the Portage District and the Smith's moved into the Dauphin District too. It was likely that the Ivens' and the Smith's had planned their moves together, but in terms of a career move, for the Smith's it was only a lateral one. The Dauphin district covered a larger area but it commanded a fewer number of circuit postings.<sup>112</sup>

For the Ivens', the move to Makinak would be only the first of a series of moves made during the next six years. In 1912, Pastor Ivens served the community at Ochre River, from 1913-15 they were stationed at Pipestone in the Souris district. In 1916, they settled in Rivers, in the Brandon district, a move which coincided with Rev. Smith's appointment as chair of Brandon district, and stewardship of the congregation at Brandon. Shortly after his

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<sup>110</sup> The Sidney Spectator, June 3, 1909, p. 1.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid., July 8, 1909. The Spectator probably gets the name of the Ivens' next station confused because according to the Methodist Directory, the Ivens' arrive at Makinak in 1909. Surprisingly enough however, they will arrive to Ochre River briefly in 1912.

<sup>112</sup> Minutes of the Manitoba Annual Conference of The Methodist Church, 1909, p. 20.

arrival in Smith's district, Rev. Ivens in 1916, was once again filling the position of district secretary.

By 1916, Ivens was rising rapidly within the church. He was competent, and he had developed a close association with Rev. Smith who was an obvious friend and mentor to the aspiring, young minister. Ivens' commitment to social issues by now was obvious, and his friendship was with others of similar experience who held strong a desire to serve the community.<sup>113</sup>

In June of 1916, Ivens attended the annual Western Methodist Conference which was held in Winnipeg. Typically during the conference's proceedings, pastors' were ordained, assigned postings; elections were held for executive positions, and committees were selected to discuss finite matters of doctrine, discipline, and regional finance. As well, a number of special services were held during the week long festivities. At several of the earlier conferences Ivens was invited to give a number of sermons and he was invited to preach again, in 1916.<sup>114</sup> Because of the audience, these were the always the toughest sermons to give and being selected to preach at the annual conference suggests that Ivens was already considered an accomplished preacher.

At the Western Methodist Conference of 1916, it was Rev. Smith who again helped to facilitate Ivens' next major career move. A position had opened up for the charge of McDougall church in Winnipeg, and Smith who had been McDougall's pastor twenty years earlier, recommended Ivens for the position. Bro. Summerfield of McDougall's Official Board also gave

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113 "Minutes #25 of Sidney Circuit- 1889- 1915", November 1907, p. 123.

114 United Church Archives, University of Winnipeg, "McDougall Church File", Box 1.

Ivens a favorable representation at the selection meeting.<sup>115</sup> A month after the annual Western Methodist Conference Ivens was offered the position of pastor at McDougall Church. The Ivens' accepted the new position, they moved to Winnipeg, and eventually into a house at 309 Inkster. They were officially welcomed by the congregation at an annual Picnic held in Kildonan Park on July 25, 1916.<sup>116</sup>

McDougall Methodist church was on Main Street, near Selkirk Avenue in the North End of the city. It had never been considered a wealthy church, although in the 1890s and early 1900s it had managed to cover its operating expenses. It was during these early years that the Trustee's of McDougall had purchased a number of vacant properties on Ellice Avenue, intending to expand operations at some point in the future. In more recent times, however, McDougall had faced financial difficulty and the properties had gone undeveloped. In fact, things had gone so poorly for the church in the years after 1910 that by 1916 the church had assumed an enormous debt of some \$ 33 000.00.<sup>117</sup> A general decline of the number of regular members attending church services and the war effort with its active recruiting of church members had placed McDougall in this financially unstable position. Not only was the church's financial base continuously shrinking, but in addition, the over extension and growing value of the property mortgages held in trust for the church were creating further

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<sup>115</sup> The Minutes of the Official Board, McDougall Methodist Church, Winnipeg, Minutes 1909-1923, (The United Church Archives: University of Winnipeg, March 21, 1918), p. 1.

<sup>116</sup> D. F. Pratt, "William Ivens and the Winnipeg Labor Church", B.D. Thesis, St. Andrew's College: Saskatoon, 1962., p. 1.

<sup>117</sup> Lionel Gordon Orlikow, A Survey Of The Reform Movement In Manitoba, 1910 to 1920. M.A. Thesis, University of Manitoba, 1955. p.182; See also Tribune, June 22, 1918, p. 19.

difficulties. Ivens' arrival at McDougall could not have been more untimely for one looking towards a secure, stable, and "rewarding" career in the ministry. Only a few weeks after his arrival, Bro. Lowery of the Official Board "outlined the present financial conditions of the church, and the situation in general . . . [t]otal amount wanted for the year. \$5, 500.00, & . . . we were about \$2,900.00 short."<sup>118</sup> The solutions presented were drastic, initially some members even speculated that the debt meant the sale of the church itself.

To discuss impending financial difficulties, McDougall church had been represented at the annual Western Methodist Conference earlier that year sending several members of its Board along with members representing St. Johns and All People's Mission. At a Conference meeting, McDougall's delegates explained their financial situation identifying a decline in memberships and the over-extension of mortgages as their main concerns. During the meeting delegates from all three North End ministries voiced their opposition to the sale of any property held in trust for McDougall Church. A discussion followed, but no decision was reached during the Conference and it was decided ultimately that the sale of any of the church's property should initially be left to the Trustees at McDougall.

During Ivens' initial months at McDougall, the financial difficulties of the church occupied an increasing amount of his time. At a McDougall Board meeting in September, Ivens listed the options he thought were available to the church in the upcoming year. There were four and each involved the secondary McDougall properties held by the Trustees. Initially the options that Ivens outlined did not directly involve the property that

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<sup>118</sup> "McDougall Church Box", (The United Church Archives, University of Winnipeg, Report from the Trustee meeting of May 30, 1916), p. 1.

McDougall itself was on. At the meeting Ivens said that under the present circumstances the Church could "[allow]owners to take back the property" or it could "hold the property and in the end loose all" or the church could encourage the owners "to sell the property & the Church to assume the difference" or lastly the church could make plans so that "the Trustees [could] buy the property."<sup>119</sup> Ivens believed that under the present circumstances the only real option was to get rid of the properties and in that sense it might be possible "to float the Church indebtedness."<sup>120</sup> Freeing up properties that were increasingly becoming a financial burden to the church would help secure the main property on Main Street. Towards the close of the meeting Ivens asked that full reports be submitted "from the Sunday School, Finance Committee and all Departments of the Church, at the Congregational meeting"<sup>121</sup> which would be held within two weeks time.

After briefly reviewing the reports submitted at the Congregational meeting, Ivens explained further the church's future if the McDougall Board attempted to hold the properties for the next four or eight years. He stated that economically the situation had deteriorated so much that it was financially impossible to hold the Ellice properties for even one more year. Bro. Summerfield, a board member, went even further suggesting that there was no "foreseeable relief" even if the local Missionary Board granted McDougall \$2000.00 which was what was needed to float the properties for the year. He believed that it would only postpone the financial crisis not solve it, and he was "doubtful if they would grant anything next year."<sup>122</sup>

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<sup>119</sup> "McDougall Minutes", U.C.A.W., September 13, 1916, p. 2.

<sup>120</sup> Ibid.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid.

<sup>122</sup> Ibid., September 21, 1916, p. 2.



Ivens had already proven himself a skilled fund raiser in his rural pastorates, and he drew upon all available avenues of financial support while at McDougall. He approached the Mission Board after the Congregational meeting asking for a \$2000.00 grant. At a meeting held in early November, he reported to the McDougall Board that the mission would recommend the grant provided the church would donate \$200.00 to missions.<sup>123</sup> The money needed to float their properties was subsequently granted, and the process took only a few more weeks to complete. In the interim, however, the McDougall Board met and had decided that whether the Mission Committee money was granted or not, changes had to be made. As a result of this meeting, the McDougall Board decided that they would release the Ellice property regardless of the outcome. In February 1917, the Trustees reported that they had signed the transfer of the Ellice property over to the City of Winnipeg.<sup>124</sup> The sale of this property and the grant that Ivens secured from the Mission Board provided McDougall with the funds to cover its operating expenses, and its financial situation looked like it might begin to improve slowly.<sup>125</sup>

During the fall and winter of 1916-1917 Ivens became increasingly involved in the labour movement in the city and his sermons began appearing in the city's labour paper, The Voice.<sup>126</sup> His addresses openly

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<sup>123</sup> Ibid., November 6, 1916, p. 1.

<sup>124</sup> Ibid., February 28, 1917, p. 1. Notes only Bro. Lowery on the Trustee Board did not sign the transfer. There is no reason given for him not signing the transfer so whether it was in protest or just impossible for him to get to a copy of the document is not known for sure.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid., May 14, 1917, p. 1.

<sup>126</sup> The Voice was a weekly paper owned and operated by Arther Puttee, a British immigrant and active conservative in the Winnipeg Trades and

explored the seemingly endless possibilities that existed for the emancipation of labour if the intersection of labour and the church could be affected. His central thesis during this period was that the rich were becoming richer, the poor increasingly poorer and, unless the church came to the aid of the worker, the labour movement and the workers in general would "make it alone."<sup>127</sup> Throughout 1916 and 1917 he was preaching change. His analysis of the "spirit of capitalism" was calling for industrial democracy, which he considered was "the last great bar to emancipation". He believed that in this age

The contest is between Money and Men; between Dividends and Life. Labor demands a more equitable share of the products of labor. The share of labor is decreasing as the means of producing wealth multiply.<sup>128</sup>

The call was for co-operation and a movement towards greater democracy. By the end of 1916 Ivens argued that there were essentially three labour bodies or movements trying to realize this change

Socialists, I.W. of W., and the trades unions. The Socialist would seize the machinery of production; the I.W.W. programme [sic] appeals only to irreconcilables, it aims to hamper industry; Labor unions stand for craft contracts and look for political action. The extremes will not deal with each other.<sup>129</sup>

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Labour Council. Puttee had been elected to parliament as labour's first M.P. in 1900 and he would lose the seat in a by-election in 1904.

<sup>127</sup>The Voice, September 8, 1916, p. 3.

<sup>128</sup>Ibid.

<sup>129</sup>Ibid.

From the pulpit the choice was becoming increasingly clear to Ivens, either the church backed the worker in his outward struggle to achieve democracy or the church would be left behind, missing the opportunity of the century. Clearly Ivens already also believed that in the labour camp a consensus among the competing labour factions, among radicals, moderates and conservatives alike, had to be achieved in order to insure success. He was sure that tolerance was the solution and was interested in forging that common ground.

But with the War effort well under way during the fall and winter of 1916-1917, recruiting drives were stepped across the country, and in Winnipeg as across the country, church pulpits were increasingly becoming active recruiting centers, a trend that disturbed Ivens. The war was also aggravating the financial problems of McDougall as a significant number of McDougall's men had gone off to war leaving church envelopes unfilled and by autumn, falling revenues were once again crippling the church.<sup>130</sup>

Ivens was not among those actively engaged in the recruiting of the young from behind the pulpit. For like a small minority of other prominent figures in the community, he was opposed to the war. He opposed the implementation of service cards and the very idea of conscription.<sup>131</sup> As conscription was introduced in May, Ivens, like others who were becoming increasingly radicalized in the community, stepped up his criticism of the

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130 "McDougall Minutes", U.C.A.W. February 28, 1917, p. 1.

131 For a brief overview of the views of labour towards conscription see, A. Ross McCormack, Reformers, Rebels, and Revolutionaries: The Western Canadian Reform Movement 1899-1919. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1977), Rpt. 1991, pp. 125-128.

whole war effort.<sup>132</sup> His critique of the war was harsher than J. S. Woodsworth's and as a result, his situation was eventually handled differently.<sup>133</sup> But for his effort to pull McDougall out of its severe difficulties in less than a year, Ivens earned praise and almost all tolerated his views. By May of 1917, reports indicated a significant increase in revenues even amid his open attacks against the war. New members were being attracted to his lively services, the reports of the McDougall Board announced. In recognition of his work at the church, at the year end meeting held in May, the Rev. Dr. Hughson suggested that, although

he did not want to influence the Board in any manner . . . our Pastor had done good work and was worthy of an increase in salary. That the revenue had increased during his Pastorate . . . would warrant an increase . . . Rev. Dr. Hughson again stated that if our Pastor stayed another year, he would, no doubt further increase our revenue.<sup>134</sup>

That revenue had increased during Ivens' tenure at McDougall was an understatement. By 1918, the \$33 000.00 debt that McDougall had when he first assumed charge of the parish would be cut in half.<sup>135</sup> A subsequent motion granting Pastor Ivens a year's extension in his calling at McDougall,

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132 For a basic overview on how the labour community in general reacted see, Kenneth McNaught, A Prophet In Politics: A Biography of J.S. Woodsworth. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1959), Rpt., 1975, pp. 75-77.

133 Ibid., p. 86.

134 "McDougall Minutes", May 14, 1917, pp. 1-2.

135 Orlikow, p. 182.

a vacation, and a raise in his salary from \$1200.00 to \$1400.00 dollars, per annum seemed an obvious choice, and it was subsequently granted.<sup>136</sup>

By the fall of 1917, the financial situation at McDougall was worsening again. The transfer and sale of the Ellice properties only helped to delay the underlying problem that revenues were failing to cover growing operating costs. In an effort to stem an approaching crisis which had the full potential to force the closing of McDougall itself, the Trustees with the support of Ivens, moved that the two remaining lots be transferred. They found a purchaser and when the transfer was completed, McDougall had a balance of \$553.13.

As quickly as the transfer of the remaining lots was settled, however, McDougall faced another crisis. With all assets liquidated in an effort to float the church property, the Trustees realized that they now faced yet another deficit at the end of the next quarter. An appeal to the City Mission Board for \$1200.00 again had helped them during the last quarter but without another successful appeal, Ivens informed the Trustees that it was his belief that they faced a deficit of \$650.00 during the next quarter, and roughly double that for the following year.<sup>137</sup> Without further properties to sell and having already reduced operating expenses to the minimum possible, a further reduction of operating costs by half was needed, an impossible task. All the members, the Trustees and the pastor could do now was watch as the financial crisis overtook them. By the end of November

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<sup>136</sup> "McDougall Minutes", September 12, 1917. This was a joint meeting at which both the Official and Trustee Boards met and Ivens salary was finalized at \$1400.00 per anum.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid., November 17, 1917.

1917, as the crisis mounted, suggestions were made that the church would have to be closed.

By January 1918, McDougall was on the brink of financial ruin. Drastic actions were proposed when a Joint Board of McDougall met for the first time "to discuss the proposed sale of the Church."<sup>138</sup> At the meeting, those present agreed that "[a]lthough it was in the general opinion that the church was not in a right location, we had no idea of closing the church."<sup>139</sup> The church was poorly situated on several counts, it was in the North End where money was tight at even the best of times, and it was located in an area of the North End that had a number of religions competing for an increasingly central European immigrant population. Ivens informed the Joint Board that since their last meeting an offer of purchase had been made by a priest of the nearby Greek Orthodox Church.<sup>140</sup> The Board was fully aware that the financial ruin of the church was upon them and proposed a motion that "having received an offer [for] the church and if satisfactory terms could be made we would be willing to make an offer."<sup>141</sup> The Joint Board felt that the church should command a market value of approximately \$30 000 .00.

In the debate that followed one member suggested that they should sell the church and build another at a better location. This was rejected because any talk of building a new church with the \$30 000. 00 that might be gotten from the sale was deemed "nonsense" in "today's market". Ivens argued that the church should be taken over by the Mission Board and

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138 *Ibid.*, January 3, 1918.

139 *Ibid.*

140 The Greek Orthodox Church was at the corner of McKenzie Street and Manitoba Avenue.

141 "McDougall Minutes", January 3, 1918.

become "the central church for Foreign Missions."<sup>142</sup> Bro. Summerfield, a prominent Board member, who had been largely responsible for Ivens arrival at McDougall, argued that a central church for foreign mission was out of the question because it "would be a wrong policy to have only one Church to take care of Methodism in north Winnipeg, and it would look bad when our boys returned who had left our church and found no church for them."<sup>143</sup> A motion was eventually passed for the sale of the church and this began Ivens' isolation from the overseers of the church.

Despite the success of the motion, the Methodist Board was reluctant to sell the church to the Greek Orthodox Church. The Board was not in a financial position to bargain and the Greek Orthodox Church must have known this fact. But the McDougall Board still felt comfortable foolishly asking the Greek Orthodox Church for \$5 000. 00 more than what they themselves had deemed a fair market value for the Main Street property. The Orthodox Church, however, was more interested in the property than initially assumed and, at the next meeting of the McDougall Board, it was reported that the decision as to whether or not the Church would be sold to a representative of the Greek Orthodox Church was pending legal governance and a subsequent final transfer in the deal for the final lots.<sup>144</sup> However, there is no record in the minutes of the McDougall Board that the offer was pursued with the Greek Orthodox church. When the deadline for the purchase expired, the church was still in the control of the McDougall Board, and the Board was no closer to solving the enormous debt crisis.

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142 Ibid.

143 Ibid.

144 Ibid., February 14, 1918.

During the debates on the financial situation, Ivens raised the question of renewing his pastorship at McDougall for another year. He had been at McDougall for two years now, and if the church desired his continued services then, under the current guidelines a pastor could remain in charge of a parish for a period of up to four years. But instead of having his request considered during this financial crisis, the question of his tenure was pushed to the side for three weeks.<sup>145</sup> The McDougall Board met in March 1918, and the issue of Ivens' tenure was dealt with squarely. At the beginning of the meeting, Ivens "outlined the purpose for which the meeting had been called, and what had lead up to matter of making a change from the present limit of four years."<sup>146</sup> Several members of the Congregation were present for this meeting and the evidence suggests that both sides knew well in advance that this meeting would be called. A vote was called and the question put to the group was "Are you in favor of the continuance of the present limit?"<sup>147</sup> Eight members voted yes and sixteen voted no. Those voting no did so with the intent of dismissing Ivens from his pastorship before the four year period was over. Those who were most active in the attempt to force his resignation were Bros. Lowery, Hardy and Summerfield. But why would anyone want to force his resignation after he had done so much to keep the church running?

A second meeting followed several weeks later and Ivens asked Bro. Lowery to speak first who

referred to the last sermon our Pastor preached in 1916, also the matters that had been taken up at the Board meeting in February, 1917 and stated that

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<sup>145</sup> Ibid., memo of February 15, 1918.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid., March 3, 1918.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid.



our Pastors attitude on the War had not changed since that time, and was reluctant in stating that it would be advisable to have a change.<sup>148</sup>

Bro. Hardy then spoke 'very strongly' towards conscientious objectors and

went so far as to say they should be all interned in a Detention [sic] Camp, and was very much mistaken if we could go on as we are doing, and could not see how our Pastor could stay in the Methodist Ministry, while his attitude and sympathies were against war and holding boys of our Church who had given their consent for them to enlist.<sup>149</sup>

After Bro. Hardy spoke Ivens asked the secretary to introduce and read several letters of support from members of the congregation which stated that "owing to the good work our Pastor had done for the church his services be retained, which had been very creditable, financially and otherwise, and it would not be advisable to replace him."<sup>150</sup> One of the petitions read to the McDougall Board from the choir members said that

We . . . feel that it is not in the best interests of the Church, and does not lend to induce a Christian spirit, to make any attempt at muzzling Free Speech, among any body of Workers! [both emphasis' in the original].<sup>151</sup>

The petitioners also argued that

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148 Ibid., March 21, 1918.

149 Ibid.

150 Ibid.

151 William Ivens Papers, (Victoria University Archives, University of Toronto), 86.153/TR, file 1.1. "To The Board, McDougall Methodist Church", March 20, 1918. As archivist Ruth Dyck Wilson has kindly noted that in this collection "Most of the correspondence consists of letters of support; it makes one wonder where the opposition was?"

We have not, as far as we are aware, heard anything uttered from the pulpit at McDougall, that could be misunderstood or construed as regards the War, in any way detrimental or derogatory to our beloved forces overseas.<sup>152</sup>

The petitioners were North End working-class residents, one a butcher, another a small local proprietor; a number were choir members, some were just attendants active in the life of the Church, and still others were just outraged members in the community.<sup>153</sup> To many of these people, it was their opinion that the debate forcing Ivens' dismissal was essentially the issue of "Free Speech". At the center of the debate lay an obvious different understanding towards the war. The North End residents found nothing wrong with Ivens' comments about the war. That Ivens was a declared pacifist and that he was opposed to this war was a clear sign of his commitment to fight against autocracy at home and abroad, wherever it existed. That his grounds for opposition to this war were rooted in his understanding of its imperialist, and capitalist nature sat especially well with the overwhelming majority of the congregation.<sup>154</sup> The gross inequalities that the war had created was plain for all to see. He hated the profiteering of

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<sup>152</sup> Ibid.

<sup>153</sup> Frank Palmer who lived at 646 Notre Dame Ave worked as a Butcher. See Hendersons Directory, (1909) p. 1062. A.E. Ghorne lived at 496 Atlantic Ave, Bess and L. N. Funnell at 480 Bowman, J. G. Alexander 289 Arnold Avenue, Geo. Wildeman 486 Kilbride Ave, Mr. & Mrs. W. M. Cunningham at 386 College, J. C. Watts and Mrs. Watts at 226 Vaughan St., V. Orval Watts also at 226 Vaughan, Winona Flett Dixon at 609 Lipton, Joseph Wm. Murdeu at 399 Lipton St., Hugh Mackenzie 237 Oakwood Ave.  
<sup>154</sup> At Victoria University Archives, University of Toronto, there is a petition with some 1800 signitures and it has been estimated by Masters, McNaught, and others that at least 60% of the congregation (or a greater portion) signed this petition favouring Ivens' continuence.

the idle few at the expense of the vast majority of North End workers. One petitioner who supported Ivens in his battle agreed that the age was a "spectacle of the Landlords, the Church and the Breweries lined up openly together, hand in hand to fight all democratic legislation or encroachment of the workers."<sup>155</sup> It was evident in Scotland, it was still worse when he went to England, and, in Manitoba where he expected things to be better, they were not. To him, Ivens was a "breath of fresh air", and Ivens had earned the respect of this North End worker because of his honesty, for he was a man who gave the people a "good straight forward talking to."<sup>156</sup> The church had failed to reach the people, this petitioner said, for "we are only ordinary people in the North End."<sup>157</sup> He said that "Ivens is in close touch with the workers in our midst"<sup>158</sup> and as a result, it was not surprising that the workers in the North End community and in McDougall Methodist church were supporting him and found little he said offensive.<sup>159</sup> The petitioners greatly outnumbered the overseers at McDougall and had the affairs of the church been democratically handled, then Ivens could have continued his work there. For collectively the petitioners argued that

Mr. Ivens has drawn to the Church a special class of people who for some time have been out of

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<sup>155</sup> William Ivens Collection, (Victoria University Archives, University of Toronto), correspondence William Shepherd to President of Methodist Conference, Rev. A. E. Smith. June 7, 1918.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid.

<sup>157</sup> Ibid.

<sup>158</sup> Ibid.

<sup>159</sup> The people that supported him lived in the North End, along Oakwood Ave, Notre Dame, College Ave, Arnold Ave, and Vaughan St.; See William Ivens collection, (Victoria University Archives, University of Toronto), Box 1, "Petition Re Return of Rev. Ivens To McDougall Church".

sympathy with the Church. His strong sympathy with labor and the confidence of the working men he has won, would seem to us to guarantee that by a continuance of his ministry he could build up a strong and efficient church community. the special constituency of McDougall Church is one which we think Mr. Ivens is peculiarly fitted to reach.<sup>160</sup>

The meeting held to discuss Ivens' future at McDougall on 21 March, as Ivens' noted, was "strained" and he appealed to all to show reason stating that "we should go carefully on the subject." At one point he questioned an overseer of the church saying, "Does Mr. Hardy, think he is a Patriot and I a Traitor, [who] had given his life to the church and to the world in the service of the people."<sup>161</sup> Hardy replied that it would be "manly" if he left McDougall, but that he himself "had not the slightest thought of getting him out of the Church, but would he be acceptable to the Church."<sup>162</sup> Ivens argued that if they forced his resignation from McDougall on grounds of his stance towards the war, then how could he be fit to serve another congregation? Bro. Summerfield then spoke stating that he disagreed with the previous two speakers. He argued that Ivens should leave not necessarily because of his attitude towards the war, but rather "it was the want of common sense". He referred to some of the sermons that Ivens had preached and Summerfield had "absented" himself from the service because of their "very nature". He also believed that Ivens lacked "common sense" in his "use" of the press and that "some of the boys at the front were wondering what was going on in the Church."<sup>163</sup> Although he had the "greatest

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<sup>160</sup> Ibid.

<sup>161</sup> "McDougall Minutes", March 21, 1918.

<sup>162</sup> Ibid.

<sup>163</sup> Ibid.

respect" for Ivens, Summerfield argued that he "lacked discretion", that he lacked "tact" and he believed that the Church "should not be used for such plans & propaganda . . . If he was Pastor of a church, and if he knew the people would resent anything said, he would quit rather than cause a split in the Congregation."<sup>164</sup> The meeting continued and at the halfway point Ivens said that he would leave for the remainder of the discussion if they so desired. But Bro. Lowery asked him to stay because they told him it would be more "satisfactory" that he should be present and "know all" that took place.<sup>165</sup> Other letters were read and again one from the members of the Choir stated that they wanted "fair play for all".<sup>166</sup> The members of the choir had characterized their pastor as "straightforward," "conscientious," and also a "hardworking man . . . who we believe . . . is working to attain the highest ideals in the ministry."<sup>167</sup> The members of the Choir concluded their appeal by stating that they "sincerely hope[d]" and "trusted" that "no biased opinion will at this meeting, be allowed to undermine any prayerful thought that may have been made on the subject."<sup>168</sup> The meeting continued and Bro. O'Neill then stated his belief that "politics should be left out of the Pulpit and was not favorable of keeping our Pastor in the Church, as many of our old members who were very active and had carried a heavy burden of the church are leaving the Church."<sup>169</sup>

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164 Ibid.

165 Ibid.

166 William Ivens Papers, (Victoria University Archives, University of Toronto), 86.153C/TR, File 1/1 , Letter Choir to the Board, March 20, 1918.

167 Ibid.

168 "McDougall Minutes", March 21, 1918.

169 Ibid.

Politics behind the pulpit was most certainly at the center of this issue. At issue was the role that the church should play in the community, and the issue of free speech. The issue was not about pacifism for as Dr. Salem Bland noted Ivens had refrained from preaching his pacifist views from behind the pulpit.<sup>170</sup> Instead his critique of the existing social order had offended the overseers of McDougall, and it was this view that had also earned the sympathy of the workers and the younger members of the church. Before the meeting was over, several people spoke on Ivens behalf stating the good work that he had done for the Church, his help in the "Red Cross work," and one lady referred to his commitment "in visiting homes that otherwise may not have been touched."<sup>171</sup> As the same issues were bantered about by the same group of overseers one more time, Ivens made one final appeal in his defense saying that new members were "joining the church" which would offset the potential problem of any of those who might choose to leave. But it really did not matter what he said for he had entered into a meeting that appeared to have had a predetermined outcome. The meeting drew to a close with Bro. Lowery asking for an open vote on a resolution. The resolution "included a protest against our Pastor's opinion on the war, it was moved by Bros. Wilson-Forster, that the Resolution be divided. . . . Carried."<sup>172</sup> With 19 ballots cast, 12 were in favor, and 7 were against the resolution. Ivens as Chairman of the meeting declared the vote approved, which secured his removal, and instantly it was suggested that the matter of "pulpit supply" be taken up and reported on at a meeting next Sunday night. Ivens career as a Methodist Minister was all but over. He had

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<sup>170</sup> Toronto Star, June 17, 1919.

<sup>171</sup> "McDougall Minutes", March 21, 1918.

<sup>172</sup> Ibid.

worked in the interests of "the people," only to find that within the limited confines of the Methodist Church, control resided in the hands of a few at the expense of the vast majority. He had preached this with increasing vigor and before he finished his tenure at McDougall, he left his message on record in a powerful sermon delivered to a packed house.

It was a crime against heaven, said the speaker, that children should starve amid plenty . . . There was but one solution to this monstrosity. The workers must own the tools of production: they must own the land they till: and all production must be for use instead of for profit. . . . The church could not stand idly by, said the speaker. She has her own life as the stake in this industrial unrest. Today wealth was in control of the church the world over. Wealth was not necessarily virtuous. Too often it was wholly viscous and unchristian. This meant that those who were not animated by the spirit of Christ controlled the church. This can mean nothing else but death for the church. . . .<sup>173</sup>

Those in power shared the vision of the ruling class, Ivens continued, in support of a capitalist system and state structure which legitimized the exploitation of those in greatest need. This was in contradiction to the very teachings of Christ, and the fundamentals of true justice and true democracy. He said, "If Jesus were here at this hour he would be swallowed up in an impassioned denunciation of the system of capitalism of today. It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to get into the kingdom. . . ."<sup>174</sup>

Nearly fifteen years of service from the time that Ivens had first entered Wesley College was quickly coming to a close. His only recourse

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<sup>173</sup> The Voice, June 7, 1918.

<sup>174</sup> Ibid.

now remained a series of formalities. A protest for re-instatement could be made at the upcoming annual Manitoba Conference. If that failed, then Ivens could launch a final protest before the national executive court of appeal at the General Conference of the Methodist Church of Canada. However, if his initial protest at the Manitoba Conference failed, then an appeal before the national executive would in all likelihood not succeed too.<sup>175</sup>

William Ivens left his position as pastor of McDougall church in the spring of 1918. Although officially he remained in charge of the meetings at McDougall until after the annual Western Conference, for all practical purposes his position lacked authority. At a meeting on the 15 May 1918 Ivens wanted the Board to carry out the "regular business" of the meeting before any "unfinished business" was to be "taken up". Bros. Hardy and Summerfield appealed and Ivens motion was overturned. Instead Ivens position was discussed further. It was moved by two of his opponents "we request Conference not to send Mr. Ivens as Pastor of McDougall Church"<sup>176</sup> in anticipation that Ivens would appeal to the Manitoba Methodist Conference, and the motion was carried with a vote of 11 in favour and 2 against. Ivens was playing a waiting game at McDougall. He was determined to appeal the McDougall Board's decision and his best bet was to prepare for his defense at the upcoming annual Conference. Rev. A. E. Smith, whose own career had risen and was now Pastor at Grace Church,

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<sup>175</sup> The United Church Archives, University of Winnipeg, Journal of Proceedings Of The Tenth General Conference Of The Methodist Church Canada: 1918, (Toronto: William Briggs, 1918), p. 181.

<sup>176</sup> William Ivens Collection, (United Church Archives, Victoria University Archives), University of Toronto, correspondence Wilson to Rev. Dr. John MacLean, June 7, 1918.



Winnipeg, would be the President of the Conference this year and Ivens probably assumed that this could work to his advantage.<sup>177</sup>

The overseers of McDougall also were preparing for the approaching Conference too and enlisted the Superintendent of the District. Rev. Dr. John Maclean, a conservative who had a history of church involvement as a pastor and administrator.<sup>178</sup> The problems at McDougall were made public in an article published in the Manitoba Free Press in May. It announced that a change in pastorship would probably be made for the next ecclesiastical year as the McDougall "congregation is badly divided now over the attitude on public questions of Rev. W. Ivens."<sup>179</sup>

The Manitoba Methodist Conference was held in Winnipeg during the third week of June 1918. Under the guidelines set out in the constitution of the Methodist church both the McDougall Board and Ivens had the right to representation at the hearing.<sup>180</sup> Ivens was not charged officially with anything and the meeting before conference was simply to determine whether or not it was an "absolute necessity for the good of the Church, to make a change in the Ministry."<sup>181</sup> Both parties presented their case. A petition favouring Ivens' return to McDougall had been circulated during the weeks prior to the meeting, and it had 1 800 to 2 000 signatures. It was estimated that more than 60 per cent of the members of the congregation had signed it before it was sent directly to Rev. A.E. Smith and the

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<sup>177</sup> "McDougall Minutes", May 15, 1918.

<sup>178</sup> Ibid., June 5, 1918.

<sup>179</sup> The Winnipeg Free Press, May 30, 1918. "McDougall And Zion Churches May Be United".

<sup>180</sup> William Ivens Collection, (United Church Archives, Victoria College, University of Toronto), Wilson to Rev. Dr. John MacLean, June 7, 1918.

<sup>181</sup> Ibid.

stationing committee.<sup>182</sup> Ivens argued during the meeting that if he was not fit to work at McDougall because of his views towards the war, then how could he remain at any station for the duration of the War?<sup>183</sup> The outcome after a long deliberation, however, was that the stationing committee found in favour of the McDougall Board. Upon finding out this decision Ivens gave a statement to the press that read

I am informed by the stationing committee that I have been moved from McDougall church at the request of the Board of that church, and that in so doing, there is no prejudice whatever against me as a minister of the Methodist church, and that another circuit would be given me in Winnipeg, if so desired.

My position is that I have been removed primarily because of my pacifist views, and since these would not be changed merely by a change of circuit, I must refuse to accept any other pulpit in the Methodist church at, this time.

As I see it, it is clear that since the Methodist church lays no charge against my character or my religious views, it has come to the place where it puts a minister's political connections on a more important plane than his religious convictions. Furthermore, it seems also to be clearly demonstrated that the Methodist church no longer stands for free pulpit and for freedom of conscience. To me, this is a serious matter and presages a serious time for the future of Methodism.<sup>184</sup>

Ivens asked the Conference Board that in the event of such a decision, that he be allowed to remain "left without station" for a year's time to carry out his own mission work. It was not uncommon to be left without station

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<sup>182</sup>Ibid.; See also the Voice, June 14, 1918.

<sup>183</sup>Toronto Star, June 17, 1919.

<sup>184</sup>Voice, June 21, 1918.

for periods of up to a year due to any one of a number of reasons including sickness and bereavement. Being left without station for one's political beliefs towards the war, for a conflicting view towards the role of the Methodist church in society, and in general for a differing political and philosophical outlook that criticized capitalism, was however, a substantially new and novel reason for removing a minister.<sup>185</sup>

The Voice announced that Ivens was "left without station" at his own request, and added that he was determined to establish a new Labour Church to meet the growing needs of North End workers. The Labour Church, would from inception, be a church that clearly identified with the workers and others who fared poorly in this existing capitalist system of social relations.<sup>186</sup> The new church would be spawned in direct opposition to the politics of the "status" quo and the religion that had buttressed the natural course of progress.

It was Ivens' political views towards the war and by extension to the existing system of social relations that had caused his dismissal from McDougall. During his tenure at McDougall, in the stormy spring months of 1917, Ivens had brought an increase in envelope returns. No one would argue that a few wealthy patrons had probably chosen to boycott the Church because of Ivens' views, but as Ivens himself said, many new members were being attracted. Blame for the financial problems of McDougall lay ultimately with the war and with an inherited debt, not with Ivens' own views. The overseers simply did not like Ivens' politics, his views on the role of the church in society, and specifically their own church in the North

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<sup>185</sup> Manitoba Free Press, March 19, 1920.

<sup>186</sup> Voice., June 28, 1918.

End. For these reasons and for his financial mastery, it was no wonder that the stationing committee believed that they could place Ivens again at another church in Winnipeg, "if he so desired".

For the few overseers who felt threatened by Ivens, it was obvious that they needed a reason to fire a competent pastor. In a period of jingoist hysteria, they had fixed upon his pacifism as a means to purge him. The evidence suggests that even the overseers knew that the inherited debt and war itself, not Ivens, were the primary reasons that the church was suffering financially. A workable solution was considered in the June minutes for the duration of the war.

Mr. R.J. Hardy was appointed to see the Rev. Geo. F. Salton regarding the advisability of uniting with Wesley Church for a year or until the war was over.<sup>187</sup>

This also obviously implied that things would again pick up at the church once the war was over-- the men returned, and the envelopes once again filled. At the quarterly Board meeting held a month after Ivens' dismissal, McDougall's new Pastor Rev. S. O. Irvine was asked by Bro. Summerfield whether "\$1400.00 per year would be satisfactory or \$1500.00 as recommended by the Laymen."<sup>188</sup> An inexperienced minister was to make more money from the start than Ivens after two years of hard work.

Ivens' commitment to labour was indisputable by this point. His life had seen a series of dramatic shifts. His earliest goals had been to make money in the West, and at one time he had even told a "brother" to cross a picket line as he was initially unsympathetic to the cause of labour. But his

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<sup>187</sup> William Ivens Collection, (United Church Archives, Victoria College, University of Toronto), Wilson to Rev. Dr. John MacLean, June 7, 1918.

<sup>188</sup> "McDougall Minutes", July 30, 1918.

experiences had helped reformulate his own politics, and his own views towards his "fellow man". His experience at Wesley College and his education helped him redefine what one's responsibility to one's "fellow people" was. As progress overtook his own responsible development, he realized that things had not always been as they appeared, nor would they remain as they were. The existing capitalist system was vicious and it had to be challenged and replaced with a system that offered a new world order that was built upon an understanding of production for use, not for profit. By the summer of 1918, Ivens had seen all that he wanted of the traditional church, it was time to use new vehicles to supply the true needs of the oppressed.

### Chapter III

#### "For Human Uplift":

#### Political Action and Social Justice, 1918-1919.

In the summer of 1918, William Ivens turned his attention towards the establishment of a Labour Church. In the following months, he increased his profile within the labour movement, especially once he assumed the editorship of the Western Labor News. Throughout 1918-1919 it took little to convince the readership of the W.L.N. that the world was in a terrible state of affairs. With four years of war, the failures of capitalism had become most readily apparent. It had brought chaos, not order, suffering, not sanity of policy, and instead of being the best system that could be conceived, had proven itself with all its bloodshed to many, to be the worst system conceivable. At least, these were essentially Ivens' views during this period. The immediate post-war period was a time of action, an opportunity for ushering in urgently needed reforms. In Winnipeg, Ivens was increasingly at the center of the reform movement. The focus of the chapter is on Ivens' expanding role in the labour movement during the period leading up to the tumultuous events of May of 1919.

In February 1918, the Winnipeg Trades and Labour Council (W.T.L.C.) organized a new provincial party called the Dominion Labour Party (D.L.P.). Formed initially by members of the Labour Representation Committee (L.R.C.), and by members of the Social Democratic Party (S.D.P.) the formation of the D.L.P. marked the end of an "eight year

hiatus"<sup>189</sup> in the history of Manitoba Labour. The "hiatus" is best described as a period in the history of the Manitoba Left in which factional infighting over labour's future made it impossible to reach any sort of lasting consensus. After losing his church, Ivens, for financial and political reasons accepted gratefully an offer from the D.L.P. as an organizer. In April of 1918, he left on a speaking tour traveling to Brandon, Regina, Moose Jaw, Swift Current, Medicine Hat, Calgary, Edmonton, Saskatoon, and Yorkton. His subject was "Commerce, Diplomacy, and War". An article in the Voice advertised that "he is a thorough and ardent student whose voice needs to be heard in these days of much concern about peace and reconstruction."<sup>190</sup>

Ivens' western trip successfully laid out the initial framework for a broader reform movement. He carried a message that was remarkably similar to the one promulgated by the D.L.P.'s forerunner, the Manitoba Labour Party (M.L.P.).<sup>191</sup> The D.L.P. platform initially called for

public ownership of public resources, the abolition of child labor under the age of sixteen, and, inevitably, 'the transformation of capitalist property into working class property to be socially owned and used.' In keeping with tradition, a single tax plank would be added later. A committee struck to draft the party's constitution and by-laws also added planks calling for the

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<sup>189</sup> Duncan Norman Irvine, "Reform, War, and Industrial Crisis in Manitoba: F.J. Dixon and the Framework of Consensus, 1903-1920." M.A. Thesis, University of Manitoba, 1981. p.147.

<sup>190</sup> Voice, April 12, 1918; See also Irvine, p. 148.

<sup>191</sup> On the M.L.P. see Allen Mills, "Single Tax Socialism and the Independent Labour Party of Manitoba: The Political Ideas of F.J. Dixon and S.J. Farmer," in Labour/ Le Travail, #5 (Spring, 1980), p. 38; See also The Voice, May 20, 1910; The M.L.P. was active early in the Manitoba labour movement and it died just after the provincial election of 1910.

furtherance of democracy through 'direct legislation,' 'Proportional Representation within grouped constituencies,' and 'Representation on the basis of Population.<sup>192</sup>

Working as an organizer for the D.L.P., Ivens made the transition from the ecclesiastical world to the secular, and he became increasingly occupied by provincial politics. The organizational work gave Ivens an opportunity to meet a number of labour and political activists and to broaden his understanding of community. Upon his return from his brief organizational campaign, Ivens turned to his real interest, the Labour Church. The idea had first interested him during his time at McDougall in Winnipeg's North End.

While at McDougall, Ivens' struggle for the emancipation of the working-class became a significant part of his life's work as he was increasingly radicalized by his experiences of class politics in the church and by national and international events. Now outside of the Methodist Church, he sought a new arena to expose the exploitative nature of capitalism. The idea of establishing a Labour Church, one that would not be subservient to the hypocrisy of the moneyed "ruling class" nor the rituals of Methodism with their non-participatory and doctrinal services appealed to Ivens most. It was a logical development in his thinking, because it challenged the class nature of the existing order and the orthodoxy and formalism of the old. The idea of a Labour Church was something that could truly better recognize the interests of the worker as it was by its very nature a working-class institution in origin. Ivens was already well on his way to becoming something of a local hero in North End Winnipeg during his battle with the establishment,

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<sup>192</sup> Irvine, pp. 147-8.



and his popularity grew even greater once he broke away from the Methodist Church.<sup>193</sup>

In the summer of 1918 a number of strikes were under way in Winnipeg and amid increasing industrial tensions, in the 'sweltering heat' on 8 July 1918 in room 10 of the Labor Temple on James Street, Ivens called the inaugural meeting of the Sunday night Labour Church. It was a success from its very beginning.<sup>194</sup> This first meeting turned into a weekly ritual that lasted more than eight years. In its first six months alone, the Labour Church grew in membership from 400 to 4000 persons.<sup>195</sup> Eventually Ivens organized afternoon workshops at the Labour Church, and along with J. S. Woodsworth would later also run mid-afternoon study classes that looked primarily at sociological questions.<sup>196</sup> Its motto quickly became, "If a man will not work, then neither shall he eat." A women's committee was established and it handled the behind the scenes affairs of the growing organization along with bake sales, dinners, and skit nights. At its peak, there were as many as a dozen meeting places in the city. Each had its own council with a democratically elected committee that attended to the needs of the individual hall. The movement grew nationally in scope with over twenty weekly gatherings across the country. In future years, the Labour Churches closed for the summer months, but through the summer of 1918

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193 P.A.M. MG10F2, Orlikow Tape #12. Interview with an anonymous women.

194 Ben Smillie, Beyond The Social Gospel: Church Protest On The Prairies, (Saskatoon, Toronto: United Church Publishing House and Fifth House Publishers, 1991), pp. 98-99.

195 Ibid., p. 98.

196 P.A.M. MC10F2, Orlikow Tape #12. Interview with an anonymous women.

the Labour Church met regularly. In a show of solidarity with postal workers out on strike during the summer of 1918, Ivens and the Labour Church membership donated one half of the collection taken from their first services to aid the workers.

In step with the social and economic conditions that summer, Ivens' sermons at the Labour Church offered a mixture of politics, philosophy, and religion, informed largely by a Marxian analysis of class relations. The sermons were well received, and they quickly became the centre of Sunday night activity. At a typical Sunday night service, the James St. Labor Temple was filled with a capacity crowd of over 400. Many had to stand at the back and occasionally not all could be accommodated. The service opened and closed with a prayer, but the majority of time was given to spirited lectures. The lectures often appealed to issues of absolute moralism, right and wrong, justice and brotherhood, or tyranny or servitude. Ivens' lectures addressed social issues ranging from the "fundamental [sic] problems underlying the state", the "problems of the peace table" and even the "fundamental problems of the home". Quite often he spoke of human nature and of "man's" [sic] immediate needs on earth. In his outlook he was by no means a scientific Marxist as he spoke of "man's mystic nature", and suggested that "man pondered over creation and destiny and formed a philosophy whether he would or not."<sup>197</sup> Ivens believed that humans were "fundamentally reverential", and that people had "an instinctive reverence for the power or personality that created and controlled the world."<sup>198</sup> Apart from this, Ivens believed that humans also were practical beings and that they had a "material

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<sup>197</sup> The Western Labor News. August 16, 1918, p. 1.

<sup>198</sup> Ibid.

side that must be ministered to."<sup>199</sup> His philosophy suggested consequently, that because of these two sides of human beings, people often failed to realize for themselves a proper balance between the spiritual and the material. Often people had wholly neglected an essential component. Ivens believed that his church was an attempt to correct this problem of ministering needs. He himself was the "bridge" between the worker and the church. He believed that now more than ever a creedless church was needed. He argued that

[t]he search for a universal religion is the search of the ages. But the orthodox religion that insists on set articles of belief makes universality an impossibility. The peoples of different times and ages have different temperaments and different conceptions and as a result a stereotyped religious conception becomes impossible... Universality means flexibility, therefore a universal religion must be creedless.<sup>200</sup>

Sermons at the Labour Church usually ended with an appeal from Ivens compelling men to rise to meet the challenges of the day. Lectures held a fragile balance between an escape from the harsh economic realities of working-class life and a very real dialogue that struggled with the issues of the day. The forum itself was a constructive social setting, a place where women felt at ease and more often than not, found his pulpit style appealing.<sup>201</sup> Some persons attending the Labour Church occasionally

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<sup>199</sup> Ibid.

<sup>200</sup> The Western Labor News., August 19, 1918, p.1.

<sup>201</sup> P.A.M. MG10F2, Orlikow Tape. #12. interview with an anonymous women.

likened Ivens' approach to that of other entertainers noting that "he was to some degree an actor."<sup>202</sup>

As the number of Labour Churches in Winnipeg grew, Ivens increasingly relied upon the support of prominent labour activists to speak at the services. Fred Dixon, Salem Bland, J.S. Woodsworth, W.D. Bayley, and Ivens' old friend Rev. A.E. Smith were all familiar guest speakers. The Labour Church was similar to, and reminiscent of, the old worker's forum started originally by the D.L.P. and the single-taxers around 1910. What had distinguished the Labour Church from earlier forums was its intensity, and its leadership, especially Ivens whose towering and powerful oratorical flourishes conjured up emotions that could electrify thousands of people at a time. When Rev. Smith was "called on to speak" from the floor of one of the Sunday night gatherings, he told those present that

When I entered this hall and heard my friend Ivens reaching out above all that was petty and quarrelsome into the great realms of infinity, I was proud of him, I was never prouder of him in my life.<sup>203</sup>

Addresses to Labour Church offer insight into Ivens' social and political world view. This particular Sunday, Ivens' address was "on the problems underlying the fundamental institutions of society."<sup>204</sup> His theme that night was "the home" and he "broke" considerable "new ground". He questioned why homes were disintegrating in the present age. He cited statistics to demonstrate that divorce had increased with the "advance" of "civilization" and questioned whether this was necessary? He argued that it

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<sup>202</sup> Ibid.

<sup>203</sup> Western Labor News. August 19, 1918, p.1.

<sup>204</sup> Ibid.

was not. The problem he believed, lay in "hasty and indiscreet marriage, the double standard of morality . . . poverty followed by sickness and abandonment, wealth that brought luxury, vice . . . and the growth of materialism."<sup>205</sup> He argued that the "environment" and "heredity" were the two "greatest influences" on the home and that to a certain degree they could "counteract each other". Combined however, they played an important role in the "building up or destroying of society and social ideals."<sup>206</sup>

While busy organizing the Labour Church, and perhaps partly because of the prominence this activity brought to Ivens, he soon found himself accepting the editorship of the W.T.L.C.'s the Western Labor News. As editor of the official voice of organized labour, Ivens increasing importance was assured. The W.L.N. started operating in August 1918, as a replacement for the Voice whose editor, Arthur Puttee, was now seen as too conservative.<sup>207</sup> John Queen, a prominent socialist, was hired with Ivens. While Ivens concentrated on editing the weekly paper, Queen concentrated on its financial operations. However, the realities of publishing such a paper meant that the two worked closely together on all its operations. For example, both solicited subscribers and edited the news to make their Thursday publication time.

In mid September, Ivens announced to his readership that the W.T.L.C. was taking "preliminary steps towards the formation of a joint stock company for the Western Labor News."<sup>208</sup> The circulation of the

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<sup>205</sup> Ibid.

<sup>206</sup> Ibid.

<sup>207</sup> Bryan Thomas Dewalt, "Arthur W. Puttee: Labourism and Working-Class Politics in Winnipeg, 1894-1918." M.A. Thesis, University of Winnipeg, 1985, esp., pp.168-212.

<sup>208</sup> Ibid., September 20, 1918, p.1.

paper was growing and by September it had risen from 1200 (with only approximately one half of the accounts paid up) to 1500 paid subscriptions. In a community that had only 12 000 organized workers, this was no small feat. A concerted effort too was begun to increase further circulation and Ivens announced a "Boost or Bust Campaign" as the "October Task".<sup>209</sup>

Hating what he called John W. Dafoe's organ the Winnipeg "Free???? Press", Ivens saw in the W.L.N. an educational vehicle for the worker that shared a special affinity with the labour community because, like the worker, both the paper and the Labour Church were forced to make similar financial sacrifices. Ivens viewed the W.L.N. and the Labour Church as vehicles to educate, and organize the working class. Ivens' message was that "Humanity evolved a civilization to fit its economic status."<sup>210</sup> He believed that humanity had traveled through distinct historical phases. The first stage, which he called Nomadism, was the era in which humans wandered on the face of the earth, fishing and hunting. It was a period in which family was the only social relation. This was followed by the Pastoral age during which "animals were domesticated, lands were tilled, and through tribal formations, ownership of property found its rudimentary origin."<sup>211</sup> Feudalism was the third stage, and it was characterized by human labor having a "definite value for the first time, slavery found its origins, and the days of the crag baron surfaced."<sup>212</sup> Feudalism, gradually gave way to capitalism, the final stage of humanity. The fourth age was the one that we were presently living in and Capitalism was an economic system that "governed the development of the

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<sup>209</sup> Ibid., September 27, 1918, p.1.

<sup>210</sup> The William Ivens Collection, Box 8, Card 16.

<sup>211</sup> Ibid.

<sup>212</sup> Ibid.

machine and dictated production and distribution for profit, not for use."<sup>213</sup>  
It became the first clear cut age in which workers had nothing to sell but their labour power.<sup>214</sup>

Ivens' theory of history and society argued that each of the stages represented an evolutionary step towards the ultimate aim and highest level humanity could achieve which was a "parliament of man", a federation of the world, and a workers' state. In his understanding, the economic transformation of civilization had always preceded the social. In spite of his emphasis on evolution, Ivens believed that in each coming age of civilization, the new economic status achieved is revolutionary in its transformation of old relations. For example, when feudalism evolved, its transformation of human labour into having a direct value was something that was revolutionary to pastoralism. Likewise, Ivens believed that when capitalism as an economic system evolved from feudalism, production and distribution for profit, not use, in which workers no longer had anything to sell but their labour, was revolutionary to feudalism. Since capitalism like past ages was part of an evolutionary process, and had since matured bringing with it a higher standard of living, it did not discount the fact that as an economic organization it was now decaying. Ivens believed, there would be a new system, and it would inevitably be revolutionary in terms of its transformation of capitalist relations of production. The new age, he believed, would eventually have to destroy the cyclical nature of capitalism and the very foundations of production for profit.<sup>215</sup>

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213 Ibid.

214 Ibid.

215 The William Ivens Collection, Box 8 , folder 41, "Socialism File" p. 9.

In his understanding that history was progressive, evolutionary and often revolutionary, Ivens believed that real meaningful " [i]deas cannot be stopped by dollars or dynamite. Socialism will not come because it is willed. It will come because no power on earth can stop it."<sup>216</sup> Ivens was by no means alone with these ideas in 1918, for this was quite typical of much socialist thought of the era. It can be considered "social scientific" although it was tempered by an ethical perspective, and writings in the W.L.N. reinforced his belief that these were the important questions of the day.

From its first issue, and continuing until Ivens stopped editing it just over a year later, the W.L.N. raised many of the important questions that challenged the early Canadian Left. In the first issue, an article spoke of the "compelling need" to look at the "influences" of "economic causes upon the whole of life."<sup>217</sup> It argued that civilization had been an "age long scramble for privileges, and a game of grab."<sup>218</sup> The "natural-- inevitable" result of what it labeled as this streak of "individualism" was the "tragedy of the present day civilization with its national, political, industrial, and religious strife."<sup>219</sup> Like so many subsequent articles, this one posed the question: could we change our ways and if so would the evolutionary process be possible, or would a violent revolution be necessary? Its author made no pretense to having all the answers, but he heralded the "day of reckoning" that was coming. He also warned that "the workers do not have all the say in

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<sup>216</sup> Ibid., p. 12.

<sup>217</sup> The Western Labor News, August 2, 1918, p. 1.

<sup>218</sup> Ibid.

<sup>219</sup> Ibid.



this matter and that others somewhere in Canada may drive them to the verge of distraction."<sup>220</sup>

Just as Ivens was assuming the editorship of the W.L.N. a divisive issue confronted the labour movement and Ivens was called upon to help settle the matter. The dispute revolved around the metal trades strike and involved R.B. Russell, president of the Metal Trades Council (M.T.C.), and Fred Tipping, President of the W.T.L.C.

Responding to industrial relations which were at an all time low during 1918, the federal government established a Royal Commission to inquire into the reasons for the intensifying industrial unrest in Winnipeg. The commission consisted of T.G. Mathers as chair, Fred Tipping, and George Fisher.<sup>221</sup> The metal trades workers were one of a number of unions in Winnipeg who were eagerly awaiting the commission's findings. However, by late July, tensions were so high in the city and, especially among the trades shops, that R.B. Russell led the metal trades out on strike. The decision to strike was solidly backed by over 80 percent of the trades workers and it appeared that the strike might even become national in focus.

The Royal Commission Report was released to the public on 8 August. The Commission's findings reported that suspicion was the key problem between the employees and their employers.<sup>222</sup> The wages of the metal trades workers were also reported as generally pretty good when compared with government workers.<sup>223</sup> Fred Tipping's signature to the

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<sup>220</sup> Ibid.

<sup>221</sup> George Fisher was a city alderman.

<sup>222</sup> Labour Gazette, August 1918, pp. 604-610.

<sup>223</sup> For a more elaborate detail of the reports findings see David J.

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report was viewed by the Metal Trades representatives as a sell out to capital, and it infuriated R.B. Russell. Tipping's signature to the report they argued, challenged the legitimacy of the workers grievances. They argued if Tipping, their own president in the W.T.L.C. could not be counted upon to support labour, then who could be?

On the floor of the W.T.L.C. and more discreetly in the pages of the W.L.N. an intense debate followed the release of the report. Tipping wanted the opportunity to explain his actions and his position taken at the commission first to the M.T.C. then the W.T.L.C. Russell insisted that Tipping was accountable to the whole organization for his actions taken in signing the report, not simply to the M.T.C. Russell demanded that the W.T.L.C. sit immediately. As a result, tempers soared and arguments came to full fruition at a meeting held in early September, by which time the strike had long since been broken. At the meeting, the whole council went into committee to discuss Tipping's action in "sanctioning the report of the other two commissioners in the Metal Trades dispute."<sup>224</sup> Russell

urged that President Tipping tell the Council whether the delegates who presented the case to the commission had erred in their presentation of the case of the Metal Trades Council. Mr. Tipping, However, still insisted that his criticism of the whole matter would be better made before the Metal Trades Council.<sup>225</sup>

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General Strike, (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1974), Rpt. 1990. pp. 72-77.

<sup>224</sup> The Western Labor News. September 6, 1918, p.1.

<sup>225</sup> Ibid.

Delegate Fix, a radical representing the metal trades workers, argued that since President Tipping had "virtually refused to report on his stand on the commission, that he be disposed from the presidency."<sup>226</sup> Before the night was through, Delegate Simpson, of the M.T.C., moved that a vote be taken whether or not the request of the President to appear first before the M.T.C. then the larger W.T.L.C., should be granted. This request was not acceptable to the council and an "amendment was moved that Pres. Tipping stand suspended until he made a report to Council."<sup>227</sup> After a roll-call the suspension was carried and the meeting was then adjourned. Debate continued throughout September and Tipping was forced to resign. The radicals had captured control of the W.T.L.C.

Ivens had sided with the moderates in arguing that Tipping should be given the opportunity to address the M.T.C. before defending his position before the whole W.T.L.C. and ultimately before a decision over Tipping's future as W.T.L.C. president would have been made. If Ivens had been a self-serving political maneuverer, he would have sidestepped the issue altogether. For the debate was especially awkward for Ivens as editor of the W.T.L.C.'s weekly organ. The editorship was an appointed position by the whole of council and dependent upon its support. Ivens made little from his Labour Church services and most of his salary was earned through his work as the editor of the organ. Politically it was not astute "politicking" to move openly against the W.T.L.C. president, especially for a newcomer to provincial labour politics. But it was also not wise nor astute "politicking" to move against a group of radicals who were slowly being empowered within

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<sup>226</sup> Ibid.

<sup>227</sup> Ibid.

the W.T.L.C. and most importantly a group on whom Ivens was finding himself increasingly in agreement with issues. But since Ivens always spoke what he felt was the "truth" he honestly believed that the right thing to do was to defend not Tipping, but rather the right of the President to report to the Metal Trades Council.<sup>228</sup> Ivens separated the issue of personalities from the issue of principles and, although he had sided with the moderates, the radicals could still see him as someone with whom they could work. Ivens had acted in a positive capacity for the time being as a link between the moderate and radical factions emerging in the Winnipeg labour movement. However, the most telling outcome of the whole event would occur in August of the following summer when Ivens would himself be removed from his position as editor by the right wing of the moderate group.

The Tipping issue was just one of a number that raged through the W.T.L.C. in the autumn of 1918 and in which Ivens was centrally involved. The most important debate focused on craft versus industrial unionism. The W.T.L.C. was concerned primarily with the direction that labour should take in the immediate future. The issue was whether or not labour should maintain its traditional craft based organization or reorganize along industrial lines to meet the challenges of a changing capitalist order? To explore this matter, a special meeting of the W.T.L.C. was held to discuss the resolutions to be put forward at the upcoming annual Dominion Trades and Labor Congress (T.L.C.) in Quebec in September. The position the conservatives adopted was that labour was "like a house of cards" that lacked any sort of "class consciousness" and they expected that little would be accomplished in organizational restructuring in the near future at Quebec

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<sup>228</sup> Ibid.

or elsewhere.<sup>229</sup> The moderates said they were "out for results" at the upcoming national conference, while suggesting that the conference would be "hard to move along the lines of industrial reorganization."<sup>230</sup> The radicals argued that the T.L.C. as it was presently organized was "practically a useless institution" and that what was needed now was organization in the political field. In order for the political field to be organized successfully, a new form of organization was needed. Craft unionism was a thing of the past, the radicals argued, and a new era demanded new forms of organization. The radicals called for a more scientific organization of industry.<sup>231</sup>

Ivens predicted that the T.L.C. convention would be an "epoch making gathering". He noted that there were over five hundred delegates attending the conference which was a number exceeding that of any other year. The agenda of the conference was to deal with issues of economic and social reconstruction for labour after the war.<sup>232</sup> Debates at the T.L.C. conference in some respects, were in many ways echoed from those that had occurred within the W.T.L.C. meetings during August and early September. A new theme that surfaced at the conference that concerned Ivens was that of regional differences.

The East and the West are today radically different in temperament and it will take wisdom and patience to keep labor true to its highest ideals in union[?]. One branch will be satisfied with nothing but root and branch radicalism, while another

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<sup>229</sup> The Western Labor News., August 30, 1918. p. 1.

<sup>230</sup> Ibid.

<sup>231</sup> Ibid.

<sup>232</sup> The Western Labor News, September 20, 1918, p. 1.

division wants to proceed by the road of evolution.  
Compromise is the only solution.<sup>233</sup>

Ivens argued that the need was now to bridge the divisions of labour, only this time between the East and the West. In Winnipeg circles, and in his thinking along national lines, Ivens remained sympathetic to both the moderate and the progressive positions. He argued that labour should be re-thinking its present organizational structure, as he was clearly in his own thinking moving away from traditional craft forms of organization towards industrial organization. To him, part of this re-thinking meant understanding and educating oneself on the broad issues, issues of international importance and of global consequence to progressives the world over. Ivens surveyed recent developments in the United States, Britain, Australia, New Zealand, Soviet Russia and Continental Europe and attempted to relate these international experiences of labour to the challenges faced in Winnipeg.

Local experiences help to explain Ivens' support of a more militant industrial unionism. On the other hand, he was influenced also by his reading of the activities of British and European activists. Ivens looked to national and international labour movements and personalities as role models in analyzing the condition of the Canadian worker. A major influence on Ivens during this period was Karl Liebknecht.<sup>234</sup> In the young Liebknecht, Ivens' saw strength in his "seething denunciation" of war, and in his particular denunciation of World War I, the "imperialist war" provoked by his own country. Not only did Ivens and Liebknecht share similar anti-

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233 Ibid.

234 The Western Labor News, August 9, 1918, p. 7.

imperialist, pacifist sentiments, but both shared a similar commitment to the fighting of autocracy.<sup>235</sup>

Autocracy existed everywhere in the world order of 1918. It was an issue that had presented itself as well in many of Ivens' writings and addresses, especially throughout the fall of 1918. Autocracy existed in government and it needed to be confronted, but it also existed in the church. Methodism he argued was at its very core autocratic, not democratic, for

one strong man had a religious conception and he was sure he had a revelation from heaven to tell him he had the whole truth and the responsibility of propagating that special theory. He alone knew how to interpret the Book of God, and all who agreed with him could belong to his church.<sup>236</sup>

Ivens' solution to the autocratic nature of the church just like the government in 1918 was to undergo a process of transformation towards democracy. Personalities could no longer dominate, Ivens argued, as the formation of the best policies meant the participation of all.<sup>237</sup>

Internationally Ivens in a series of articles called "War and its Problems" suggested that labour was "clamorous for peace and a voice at the peace table."<sup>238</sup> He watched as socialists began to organize to make their case heard and wondered how they might influence the peace terms. He believed (and it became problematic) that labour will have "no controlling voice even if it is given its grudging recognition."<sup>239</sup> He also carried a voice of prophecy when he argued soundly that "If the just claims of labor are not

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<sup>235</sup> Ibid.

<sup>236</sup> The Western Labor News, August 16, 1918, p. 1.

<sup>237</sup> Ibid.

<sup>238</sup> The Western Labor News, November 22, 1918, p. 4.

<sup>239</sup> Ibid.

recognized and met the settlement will prove abortive."<sup>240</sup> He wondered if the politicians would be wise and give labour the voice that it needed so that the "future" could be "safeguarded". Above all else, what Ivens feared the most about war was the permanent psychological problem that war created in the hearts and minds of men. He referred to writings of H. N. Brailsford:

Above all, the constructive, idealistic purposes which men emphasized at first in the effort to reconcile themselves to the horrors of war, fade from their inner vision: they adjust themselves to the hatreds of the moment, persuaded that these hatreds must govern the rest of their lives.<sup>241</sup>

It was this problem that the "common people" needed to study most, and if they were successful then they could compel their representatives to listen. Ivens supported the spirit at work behind Wilson's fourteen point peace initiative, but he was also wary of its potential failure. Ivens predicted trouble because he argued that ultimately the plan had to satisfy Germany, Austria, and Turkey as well as the Allies and the United States if it was to be lasting.<sup>242</sup> As a result, he believed that there were three possibilities for the next century. The first option was "status quo" which he likened to "international anarchy". He argued that today was the result of such an anarchy running rampant world-wide. Further, he "discredited" the "individual anarchist", so how could he approve of "international anarchists?"<sup>243</sup> The second option that presented itself was what he called "a fully armed concert of the nations."<sup>244</sup> This option, he believed, was

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240 Ibid.

241 Ibid.

242 Ibid.

243 The Western Labor News, September 13, 1918, p. 4.

244 Ibid.



probably the most likely outcome of the war. However, this option at best was only a compromise between anarchy and the third and most effective, the "parliament of man".<sup>245</sup> This final option consisted of an international parliament that would send delegates from every nation on earth representing every interest, not only political, but economic, social, and religious. It promoted the establishment of an "international judiciary". One that would establish a set principle of laws which would govern over all lands, and adjudication that would be the only method of resolution of disputes between nations. Finally, it established an "international police". The police, he argued, would require an international navy, an international army, and would be responsible for enforcing the outcome of the adjudicated disputes. Ivens argued that under this parliament of man, if nations failed to accept the verdict of the international judiciary, then they would be subject to a process of international ostracism and then, if that failed, force could be issued. Ivens quoted Victor Hugo who when speaking of the spirit behind the parliament of man said that this dream is "not only practicable, but it is inevitable."<sup>246</sup> Although Ivens' vision of a new world order sounded promising in the fall of 1918 (after four years of war), the simplistic view he expressed was surely a vision open to much criticism. At its best it offered an interpretation that was prone to charges of naive internationalism. At its worst, his understanding of post war reconstruction revealed the simple cracks reflected by the limits of a social scientific thought that used as its base an ethical socialist world overview built largely upon absolute moral invective. Ivens' thought on national issues had clearly made advances since

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245 Ibid.

246 Ibid.

his 1909 thesis which openly expressed signs of bourgeois nationalist sentimentality -- the idea of isolating and protecting one's own workers within a nationalist structure, but his internationalist outlook remained naive and undeveloped.

With the World War nearly over it made sense to look towards the peace process. In September of 1918, Ivens began giving a series of lectures that were labeled "live issues" at the Labour Church and were presented in the W.L.N. He spoke of the relationship between war and society. He traced the origins of civilization and noticed that "war has brought many empires to the dust: the proud empires of the past have all disappeared in blood and lust, and luxury and injustice."<sup>247</sup> He then questioned whether or not "civilization of today [is] also tottering to its fall."<sup>248</sup> His articles were titled "War and its Problems" and many of them had been published in the Voice during the previous winter. Ivens surveyed international social conditions and evaluated the prospects of international peace for the future. The hope for the future he believed lay in "the parliament of man, the federation of the world, a world reign of universal law."<sup>249</sup> He realized that today this hope was only a "beautiful dream", a dream that others regard as "wholly utopian", but still for others like himself faith in the parliament of man became "a glorious hope and the present world conflict is the door of hope through which the vision may be realized."<sup>250</sup>

However, throughout the fall of 1918, Ivens was kept extremely busy and had little time to reflect further on these issues. Now, a "Real High

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<sup>247</sup> The Western Labor News, September 6, 1918, p. 4.

<sup>248</sup> Ibid.

<sup>249</sup> The Western Labor News, September 13, 1918, p. 1.

<sup>250</sup> Ibid.

Priest" (according to a W.L.N. correspondent), Ivens was writing for and editing the W.L.N., leading services at the Labour Church, and in one week he even lead the services at four weddings. Increasing community respect and confidence in Ivens, meant that "the workers seem to accept him in real earnest for their weddings, baptisms, and funerals."<sup>251</sup> It was only logical for the workers to turn to the pastor of the Labour Church "when they need the assistance of a preacher."<sup>252</sup> The following week, Ivens commented on just where in his eyes the immediate hope for the future lay. He pointed out that one writer contributing to the W.L. N. had seen

in the 'Internationale' the ultimate solution of the world problem. Perhaps he is correct in his impression, but since the world will not be reformed at a single stride the editor personally believes that the next forward step along the path of progress is the League of Nations and so advocates the principle of the control of the national parliaments by the workers. If this were accomplished and a world league formed where the workers were in control the result would be a consummation devoutly to be wished.<sup>253</sup>

In October, Ivens used the Labour Church to organize support for labour candidates in the municipal election. The Labour Church was now regularly "jammed to the doors", and during the campaign discussions were underway to secure a larger meeting place.<sup>254</sup> A committee was quickly

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<sup>251</sup> The Western Labor News, September 20, 1918, p. 4.

<sup>252</sup> Ibid.

<sup>253</sup> The Western Labor News, September 27, 1918, p. 2.

<sup>254</sup> The Western Labor News, October 4, 1918, p. 3.

established and the first of several moves was made in mid October to the Dominion Theater, then to the Rex, and finally to the Columbia.<sup>255</sup>

Ivens campaigned for the D.L.P. for the November civic elections. He likened the resources of the party to those of the country noting that both were "illimitable". He wondered, however, whether or not the party was capable of moving nationally and continentally. Were we even ready in local politics? he asked. He said, "have we empires in our thinking and new eras in our brain? If we have we shall win in the coming civic elections."<sup>256</sup> Ivens' thoughts were "engrossed" in the problems created by "industrial strife" but he said that "today we must bestir ourselves for the vote in three weeks' time."<sup>257</sup> He had faith that through education and hard work that the system could be changed from within. He noticed the electoral changes occurring in Britain and predicted that British labour would go "over the top at the next election. He said that if the constitution at home was fine, then in Winnipeg there would be "something doing at this election."<sup>258</sup> Ivens called for the support of as many workers as was possible, asking them to report to room one of the Labour Temple. He expressed his belief that there was a fight on their hands and pointed out to the worker that help was needed. Declaring his own resolve to his growing readership, Ivens said that "even the pacifist parson . . . is ready for this fight, so come on in."<sup>259</sup>

During the civic elections campaign, an influenza ban was enacted by Dr. Douglas, the city's medical health officer. The result of the ban was an

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<sup>255</sup> The Western Labor News, October 11, 1918; November 15, 1918; November 29, 1918; December 20, 1918.

<sup>256</sup> The Western Labor News, November 8, 1918. p. 1.

<sup>257</sup> Ibid.

<sup>258</sup> Ibid.

<sup>259</sup> Ibid.

interesting episode on the class nature of medicine. The ban prohibited public meetings and that hindered the organizational efforts of the D.L.P. The meetings of the Labour Church were closed, making the running of labour candidates difficult. Criticism of the ban and the way it was carried out, provided Ivens with further evidence that, although constitutionally sound, the political system did have severe limitations under its present control. Unlike labour, the Board of Trade was given permission to hold several public meetings to oppose the establishment of a policeman's union. Ivens argued that it was incredible that the city's medical health officer would announce a ban halting all religious services, but then would defy the ban himself and attend the meeting to break the formation of a union. Douglas, he pointed out to his readership, had even accepted the billing as guest speaker at the meeting. Ivens argued that, Douglas who represented the medical and business establishment thought nothing of putting the city's health at risk when there was a union to be broken. Ivens was educated further when he found out that theater's that were publicly owned had to remain closed, but department stores were allowed to open for Christmas shopping. On this issue, Ivens concluded that "Not only must this brilliant assemblage [ Board of Trade and the Chief Medical Officer] defy the health laws, but they must also fight against the 'spirit of the times.'"<sup>260</sup> It was what Ivens called "another taste of special privilege."<sup>261</sup> Speaking for the labour movement, he wrote, it was all right for the Board of Trade to organize but neither labour at election time nor the policemen were to be granted those rights. Profit and revenue were maintained at the expense of

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<sup>260</sup>The Western Labor News, November 15, 1918. p.3.

<sup>261</sup> Ibid.

public safety. Ivens was not alone in his condemnation of the whole affair. The flu ban seriously hampered labours' efforts to campaign as the election drew closer.

Ivens used the elections as an opportunity to elaborate his ideas on labour and politics. Ivens argued that change was on its way and that sentiment for the past was "useless". Equally as useless were "philosophical speculations". What was needed, he argued was

some solid ground whereon we may plant our feet for the present moment, and some program that we can follow with assurance in the coming months and years.<sup>262</sup>

He suggested that to solve the problems of Russia the Tsar had to be dethroned. However, in Canada, Britain, and other democratic countries, Ivens argued, labour could make similar gain through the ballot. In Canada, he quoted a cabinet minister as having said the government "has the right to put down all opposition to its mandates and all radicalism by force." Ivens replied that

force did not solve the problems of Central Europe- it overthrew them. Nor will force and oppression on the part of our government solve our problems. We urge the government to remove the causes of unrest at this time instead of persecuting those who are restive under the conditions- the abnormal conditions- of this time. In this way salvation lies.<sup>263</sup>

An extension of this thesis was Ivens' belief that the "Canadian government no longer has any mandate from the people."<sup>264</sup> He argued that

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<sup>262</sup>The Western Labor News, November 15, 1918. p.4.

<sup>263</sup> Ibid.

<sup>264</sup> Ibid.

it was easy to make the case that the government had been given a mandate to carry out the war, but once the war was over it had no mandate and therefore no authority to carry out post-war reconstruction. Ivens made the further argument that "in all charitableness . . . the present legislators are not equal to this task."<sup>265</sup> Citing as an example of the failures of the existing parliamentary rules, Ivens said that

Canada has the ballot. She can change conditions constitutionally by the ballot. But in this case the government was not elected by the full ballot, but by a part of the ballot. Those opposed to conscription were disfranchised in large part, while those who were supposed to be in favor of conscription even the women-- were enfranchised. Because of this fact, the task of the government is finished the very moment the war is won. A new election, based on 'the rights of small voters' with special privilege to none, is now in order. We call for an election that the great common people may solve the problems of the hour. The common people and none but the common people can solve the worlds' problems in this great hour of stress.<sup>266</sup>

What Labour needed nationally, Ivens argued, was the election of the true representatives of the working class to parliament where justice and democracy would find expression.

But political democracy through the franchise was narrowly and inadequately defined by Ivens. In 1918, to Ivens enfranchisement sometimes appeared as the exclusive right of males. Ivens continuously sent out mixed signals on issues of gender. He was clearly supportive of a narrowly defined role for women in society. On one hand, he blamed the feminist movement

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<sup>265</sup> Ibid.

<sup>266</sup> Ibid.

as one of the prime causes along with capitalism for the destruction of the home at a number of Sunday night Labour Church services. On another, Ivens spoke of the absence of women at D.L.P. and other political meetings. His speeches expressed a paternalist, but sympathetic understanding that "[w]omen was coming to her own and must be regarded more in the future."<sup>267</sup> It was a period of confusion among socialists like Ivens who were attempting to begin to confront the issues of gender. But with the deepening of his radicalism during the 1918-1919 revolt he became increasingly sympathetic to feminism and when it came to facing issues of gendered inequality among those in the Winnipeg progressive community, Ivens, along with Fred Dixon, were certainly at the fore. By the spring of 1919 Ivens' views towards women's roles in politics, and in society in general, became better defined as women became increasingly central participants in the 1919 General Strike and in the Labour Church.<sup>268</sup> In January at the Labour Church, Ivens was heralding the times as "women's dawning day. In education, business, industry, and religion, she must take her full place. In politics she may well be the dominant factor in the years to

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<sup>267</sup> Western Labor News, September 6, 1918, p. 8.

<sup>268</sup> For a brief introduction see, ed., Linda Kealey and Joan Sangster, Beyond the Vote: Canadian Women and Politics, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989). On specifically the 1919 Winnipeg General Strike and women's role also see Linda Kealey, "No Special Protection-- No Sympathy: Women's Activism in the Canadian Labour Revolt of 1919." in D.R. Hopkin and G.S. Kealey, eds., Class, Community and the Labour Movement: Wales and Canada, 1850-1930, (Wales: Llafur/CCLH, 1989), pp.134-159; Also see Pam Tranfield, "Girl Strikers." NeWest Review 14, no.5., June/July 1989; and Mary Horodyski, "Women and the Winnipeg General Strike of 1919." Manitoba History 11, Spring 1986.



come."<sup>269</sup> As a social reformer, Ivens made a transformation in his attitude during the period of the General Strike and there is no evidence that Ivens ever looked back. In January, a progressive step was taken in Winnipeg when the Labour Church became the first church in the city to hand its pulpit to a women. Ivens announced this with pride. At a meeting held in the Columbia theater, Mrs. F.J. Dixon spoke on "women's work" and Mrs. Flett discussed "The Religious significance of the Women's Movement."<sup>270</sup>

The Flu Ban was lifted during the week of 22 November and the services of the Labour Church were resumed at the Rex Theater.<sup>271</sup> The Rex Theater was on Main Street, between Logan and Alexander. The theme of the opening service after the Flu Ban became "Canada and Victory" and the speakers were S.J. Farmer on internationalism, and Ivens on the "sign of the times" with the W.T.L.C.'s acting president H. Veitch leading all in a discussion that followed. At the forum, Ivens argued that "religion still finds a response in the hearts and lives of the people, but they are tired to death of theology and creeds. This is proven by the popularity of the Winnipeg Labor Temple."<sup>272</sup> Ivens' theme in his popular sermon was that the farmers, the

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<sup>269</sup> The Western Labor News, January 10, 1919, p. 1.

<sup>270</sup> Ibid. A report on the success of the event and the content of the speakers discussions in Ibid., Jan. 17, 1919, p. 1.

<sup>271</sup> The Western Labor News, November 22, 1918. p. 8. Notes that the Dominion Theatre has been rented and they shall go there as soon as the ban is lifted and public meetings permissable. See also Ibid., November 29, 1918. p.1., notes that "Crowded out of the Labor Temple the management have leased the Rex Theatre, Main Street West, between Logan and Alexander, and will re-open there next Sunday, on Canada's National Thanksgiving Day, with a strong program of speakers and themes."

<sup>272</sup> The Western Labor News, November 29, 1918. p. 1.

returned soldiers, and the workers, "should get together."<sup>273</sup> A unity of force was needed and at a meeting of the D.L.P. in the week following, Ivens argued again that it was time for the three groups to get together at a convention in Alberta to form a "radical, progressive, and constructive political platform."<sup>274</sup> The civic election arrived at the end of November and the election results were more than labour had hoped for.<sup>275</sup> Labour candidates secured their largest number of seats ever, with four seats on city council.<sup>276</sup> The campaigning at the Labour Church during its short period of operation had unquestionably helped forge a consciousness that was evident at the polls. However, the activism at the working-class institution was expanding at a rate that even out-paced the growing support for labour at the polls.

At a D.L.P. meeting held in early December, it was recognized by everyone present that a continued broadening out of support was needed to achieve further electoral success. Ivens spoke at the meeting and he pointed out that in Britain recently, the Labor Party had taken in all workers "by hand or brain". In Winnipeg, it was time to move in a similar direction, argued Ivens. He believed that "wherever possible candidates be selected at an early date for aldermanic seats, for school trustees and, if possible, the mayor, and moved that this matter be referred to the executive." He saw success ahead if the D.L.P. get busy under the banner of a "full slate for a full year". If the British Labor Party's inclusive program of accepting all

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<sup>273</sup> The Western Labor News, December 6, 1918. p. 1,4.

<sup>274</sup> The Western Labor News, December 6, 1918. p.4.

<sup>275</sup> Manitoba Free Press, December 2, 1918. p.12.

<sup>276</sup> See D.N. Irvine, pp. 159-161. Also passing during this election was a vote to abolish election deposits in civic elections and a property qualification law passed.

workers who worked by either hand or brain was "adopted with enthusiasm" in Winnipeg, Ivens believed "the party will be able to contest successfully any and every seat in the city."<sup>277</sup>

Ivens presented his ideas at the famous "Mass Meeting" held at the Walker Theater under the auspices of the T.L.C. and the S.P.C. on 22 December. The meeting was called to "protest Orders-In-Council- Allied Intervention in Russia- And To Demand Release of Political Prisoners."<sup>278</sup> Ivens article in the W.L.N. that week was "War and its Problems: War or Revolution" and its title alone had captured the spirit of the community. At approximately 2:30 P.M. the curtain rose to a capacity crowd when Queen opened the "Mass Meeting" and was followed by Hoop, Armstrong, and then Ivens.<sup>279</sup> Workers cheered as it was declared a "Red Letter Day in History of the Labor Movement, [as] Monster Mass Meeting Cheers The Russian Revolution."<sup>280</sup> In one of his most impressive speeches, Ivens linked his social theory to an immediate political agenda when he introduced the following resolution

Whereas, since the outbreak of the recent European war, certain men have been imprisoned for offenses purely political: whereas, any justification that there may have been for their imprisonment vanished when the armistice was signed therefore, be it resolved that this mass meeting of the citizens of Winnipeg urges the government to liberate all political prisoners, and be it further resolved, that a

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<sup>277</sup> The Western Labor News, December 6, 1918, p. 4.

<sup>278</sup> The Western Labor News, December 20, 1918, p. 1.

<sup>279</sup> For a fuller treatment of this meeting see D.C. Masters, The Winnipeg General Strike, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1950), pp. 3-5.

<sup>280</sup> The Western Labor News. December 27, 1918, pp. 1,5.

copy of this resolution be sent to the Acting Premier and the Minister of Justice.<sup>281</sup>

Exploring his understanding of human nature, Ivens argued that people were "inherently restless". He believed that "men who were full-blooded always had, and always must protest. Progress was impossible without protest." Ivens argued that men who refused to accept the "dictation of the powers that be" were in light of human nature, and therefore not necessarily "criminals". Often he believed, that posterity would recognize these men as the "saviors" of their people and of the whole of civilization. One needed to distinguish between the government and the people and it was at this point in his talk that Ivens worked in a favorite theme of his, preaching that like the Canadians, the German people and the Austrian people were engaged at home, in a fight against "autocracy". In a world wide spirit of brotherhood, Ivens argued that the Germans and the Austrians were really our allies. Ivens believed in the spirit of the Second International as he concluded that like our allies "the day for their release was here."<sup>282</sup>

Ivens continued his appeal to the crowd suggesting that there was a second "class" of "political prisoners". In Canada there was the "citizen enemy". He noted that under the orders-in-council it was a crime in Canada to belong to certain organizations. Some men were shot, others fined, while still others imprisoned. Responding to actions of injustice, Ivens called for the immediate release of all those imprisoned, arguing that they were "at worst", only "crimeless criminals".<sup>283</sup> He noted that still others had been

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281 Ibid.

282 Ibid.

283 Ibid.

imprisoned for circulating literature and for having it in their possession. He quoted Milton who

demanded freedom to THINK, to have convictions, and to EXPRESS those convictions above all other liberties. The Stor [sic] Chamber that oppressed had gone, but freedom lived on. So, too, would go the Canadian government that, in the name of liberty, oppressed men and women with convictions.<sup>284</sup>

As he spoke, Ivens took the position that "conscience and the Divine command was the higher authority . . . than the state." Again it was the appeal of an ethical socialist outlook to which many could agree. He argued that the "voice of the nation" should never be the "supreme voice" and that the individual must always listen for that higher calling. He argued that ultimately man had a right to conscientiously object to war on both religious and socialistic grounds. Ultimately he argued that "either the system that made the oppression of man with ideals and convictions possible must go, or liberty must go."<sup>285</sup> Dixon seconded Ivens' resolution. Before the meeting was out, R.B. Russell had spoken on the withdrawal of troops from Russia.

What was significant about this meeting, Ivens recounted later, "was not so much anything that was said as the meeting itself."<sup>286</sup> It had attracted wide attention beyond the large numbers that had packed the Walker Theater, and provided an opportunity for various tendencies in the labour movement to come together and break new ground. Ivens described the meeting as

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<sup>284</sup> Ibid.

<sup>285</sup> Ibid.

<sup>286</sup> The Western Labor News, December 27, 1918, p. 4.

not an ordinary meeting, but an outlet for the explosive body of discontent that is gradually manifesting itself. In Russia the popular discontent went the whole way and dethroned both monarchy and capitalism. In Germany the same tendency is being manifested.<sup>287</sup>

For what was presently similar to the Russian experience in Canada became self-evident, he believed.

Russia naturally tried to suppress the spirit of revolution by oppressive measures; but revolution thrives on oppression-- hence her final overthrow. So, too, Canada has, by orders-in-council, tried to smother discontent-- and finds it on the increase. the day has come when the people are challenging the orders-in-council themselves and meet to condemn them. When a meeting in which is to be found a large number of soldiers passes resolutions of congratulation to the Russian Soviets, and cries "Long live the revolution-- Long live Karl Liebknecht!" it is time for our government to quit its repression and try some plan of conciliation.<sup>288</sup>

Ivens believed that this meeting exposed the "temper of the times" in general. Surprisingly enough, he saw the meetings as a solution and believed that "if such meetings as that of last Sunday can be held once a month a bloody revolution may be averted and a sane policy of reconstruction be evolved."<sup>289</sup> It was the workers' who were more fired up than Ivens, and through a sane process of working out their energy through faith in an educational forum, Ivens believed that a democratic solution to today's crisis of social organization could be achieved.

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287 Ibid.

288 Ibid.

289 Ibid.

Increasing working-class militancy and likely Ivens' personal popularity resulted in a subscription boom for the W.L.N.. The workers paper had moved in 23 weeks from 1 200 copies (50% of which were unpaid subscriptions) to a phenomenal readership of 11 000 as of January 1, 1919, the majority of which were now paid subscriptions. As the strength of labour swelled in the city, Ivens began a campaign drive to reach a circulation total of 20 000 copies weekly.<sup>290</sup> The influence of the W.L.N. was increasingly becoming a significant educational weapon in the struggle to challenge the existing social and political order, and therefore so was Ivens.<sup>291</sup>

At a January meeting of the W.T.L.C. Ivens reported on the W.L.N.'s success. He observed that for the first time ever a locally operated workers' paper was profitable. Ivens informed the council that with all its creditors paid, it had a substantial sum of approximately \$4 500.00 in the bank. The W.T.L.C. quickly established an educational committee shortly after they became aware of the papers good fortunes to keep closer charge of its finances and content. The educational committee had on its roster, Bros. Pickup, Johns, Anderson, Highley, and Logan, with Johns elected chairman and Brother Anderson, Secretary and they stated that "credit is due the editor and his staff for the work done in the short time they have been on the job" and recommended that "the council [should] consider increasing the salaries of staff" if the paper's profitability continued.<sup>292</sup>

In an attempt to assert control over the paper's editorial policy the W.T.L.C. educational committee, the majority of whom were radicals, began making a series of requests during January, February, and March. They

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<sup>290</sup> The Western Labor News, January 3, 1919, p. 1.

<sup>291</sup> Ibid.

<sup>292</sup> The Western Labor News, January 10, 1919, pp. 1,8.

asked that advertising in the W.L.N. be limited and that the condition of the front page be improved further, by removing all advertising. At the base it soon became obvious that Ivens was caught in a struggle between the labourists and socialists, especially the S.P.C., for control of the paper's political line. In matters of editorial policy the educational committee suggested that the front page be set aside for issues that concern specifically Winnipeg labour and that the first column of the fourth page be set aside for

an editorial, and that the editor use such columns for the discussion of local, provincial, national, or international matters directly affecting the interests of the industrial worker.<sup>293</sup>

The educational committee was arguing that the role of the industrial union in the politics of the working-class be emphasized in the editorials.<sup>294</sup> Of a general nature, the educational committee then also made a direct appeal to Ivens to "reply to the criticisms advanced by the capitalist press against organized labor." Ivens said that "we are glad to note that this suggestion has already been followed by the editor."<sup>295</sup>

Talk then centered upon any problems that Ivens was facing in trying to increase the circulation of the paper. A conclusion was reached that there should be an increase in the staff, but the real issue remained who should control the running of the papers affairs. Some S.P.C. members wanted to establish their hegemony over the paper and it was not without considerable consternation that it was decided that the ultimate authority would reside

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<sup>293</sup> Ibid.

<sup>294</sup> On the traditional importance of this relationship see Geoffrey Foote, The Labour Party's Political Thought, (London: Coom Helm, 1985), pp. 1-16.

<sup>295</sup> The Western Labor News, January 10, 1919, pp. 1,8.



with the editor of the paper. In spite of all the papers success, radical Delegate Fix (most probably in an attempt to make sure Ivens now knew where the power in council really lay), tried to have the paper audited. His attempt failed. Alderman Simpson's name was subsequently mentioned in regards to the new position needed at the paper. He had experience in the paper business and a delegate asked that he be given a position in the running of its circulation affairs. This request was acceded to after a final controlling move was made and disposed of when a conservative, Delegate Miller, argued that "positions on the newspaper staff should be by ballot of the Council."<sup>296</sup> The conservatives wanted to secure the input they still had in the running of the paper but their motion failed when R.B. Russell argued that Miller's suggestion would challenge the authority of the editor. Russell took the ground that "the manager alone must have the power to hire and fire the staff." Ivens asked that "his responsibility in this matter be clearly defined, but that the Council, nevertheless, express its preference of men if it had such, for his guidance." In the debate over the future of the paper, and over its ultimate direction and control, Ivens acted in a diplomatic manner. He was the compromise candidate around which the majority of the labourists and socialists could unite. However, Ivens was more sympathetic to the socialists than he was to the labourist. Following the first W.L.N. editorial policy debates, Ivens ran a number of stories in the W.L.N. on the success of the O.B.U. in the international arena, and especially in Australia. He was clearly favouring the position of the radicals; at the Labour Church during the late spring he was giving a number of lectures that supported the

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<sup>296</sup> Ibid.

idea of an O.B.U. and there are no signs that Ivens was doing anything but happily conforming to the policy set out by a radical press committee.<sup>297</sup>

Also in January the S.P.C. held a "Mass Meeting" in the Majestic Theater. At the meeting George Armstrong, Dick Johns, R.B. Russell, and Sam Blumenberg, spoke on the fundamental problems of capitalism, capitalist and semi-capitalist reform parties, reconstruction policies, and religion. The same day as the Majestic Theater "Mass Meeting" Ivens and a number of others representing the W.T.L.C. traveled to Selkirk to address a mass meeting of the workers with a view to getting them affiliated with the Winnipeg and District Council. Ivens "gave an address on the organization of the big interests financially, and politically to gain their ends. Labor must organize to hold their own. He predicted great changes in the very near future if labor would awake to the issues of the hour."<sup>298</sup> Labour was actively engaged in broadening out its support base, campaigning hard, and again Ivens' popularity was being put to use. <sup>299</sup>

As class consciousness in working-class Winnipeg was developing into an increasingly cohesive force during these months, it was becoming more and more important to tighten editorial control of the W.T.L.C. In March and April, Ivens spent a substantial amount of his time at the center of debates in the W.T.L.C. that focused on the educational direction of the W.L.N. The educational committee of the W.T.L.C. was scrutinizing the paper and they were questioning the educational value of a number of articles appearing during this period. Its members

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<sup>297</sup> Ibid.

<sup>298</sup> The Western Labor News, January 24, 1919, p. 1.

<sup>299</sup> Ibid.

moved and seconded that the Educational Committee deploras such articles sent in by Vernon Thomas which eulogizes individuals to the extent of makin [sic] martyrs and Heroes of them and that we recommend that the Council instruct the Press Committee to exercise more care in the selection of material to be printed.<sup>300</sup>

The Educational Committee chairman Johns had objected to Thomas's articles on the grounds that they were an attack on the "policy" of the T.L.C. Appearing in most favorable light before the W.T.L.C. Johns pointed out that "it was not persons individually who helped the labor movements but the workers as a whole."<sup>301</sup> Vernon H. Thomas was a friend of Ivens', and this debate had become an ideal opportunity for Johns to attack Ivens. Johns was attacking not Ivens' successful operation and running of the paper, rather he was attacking Ivens' politics. It was also no secret that on a personal level, Ivens and Johns could not even stand being together in the same room. Both were remarkable at rising above personal conflicts, in almost every instance, except when they were together. Ivens responded to criticism levied at the meeting by suggesting that he would "appreciate" any help that the press committee could give him. However, he stated that "the continued stone-throwing on the floor of the Council did not help him in bettering the paper."<sup>302</sup>

Clearing the air, Delegate Russell said that the educational committee was not attacking the position of the editor, but conservative elements on the press committee. The reality was that the S.P.C. who dominated the educational committee with the personalities of Johns, Armstrong, and Fix,

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<sup>300</sup> The Western Labor News. March 7, 1919, p. 8.

<sup>301</sup> Ibid.

<sup>302</sup> Ibid.

was against the conservative elements on the press committee, but generally supportive of Ivens (of course Johns himself was not). Russell believed that

if articles appeared in the paper the editor should express his opinion thereon. The press committee must meet regularly and dictate the policy of the paper. The editor must obey the orders of the press committee. The personal question was always injected, but it was not a personal question. He realized that the editor was working hard. But any employee or the Council must be subservient to the Council. The great man idea was detrimental to the whole labor movement. It had been so in the U.S.A.<sup>303</sup>

Before this particularly heated meeting was over Ivens suffered one last series of attacks from Del. Johns who said that

he intended to continue to throw stones on the floor of the Council because he believed that it would bring results. He did not intend to go to the office of the W.L.N. It was in the best interest of labor movement to attack on the floor of the Council. Personalities should not count but principles.<sup>304</sup>

Of course it was most ironic in this instance coming from Johns' mouth, that "personalities" should not count but "principles" should because when it came to Ivens' relationship with Johns and visa versa, it seemed that little but personalities mattered. Again Ivens found himself in a delicate position as editor of the paper. Without a particular union fully supporting him, his editorship could be ended with a short notice. Ivens was removed from his delicate position when Delegate Reynolds of the press committee came to Ivens' defense. He informed the council that it was his belief that if

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303 Ibid.

304 Ibid.

there was criticism then "the right party should get it", that the press committee was at fault and that otherwise criticism should be levied only at the meetings of the press committee. The issue was settled for the time being, and before the meeting was adjourned, the report of the educational committee was carried. This meant the radicals now had clear control of the running of the W.L.N.

Much of the internal bickering was set aside temporarily as eyes turned to Calgary and the Western Labour Conference, where Russell and Johns were instrumental with other S.P.C. members in the formation of One Big Union, (O.B.U.) a radical form of industrial organization.<sup>305</sup> Meanwhile in Winnipeg industrial strife was leading towards a General Strike. Ivens' prominence as a working-class intellectual, as editor of the W.L.N., and as pastor at the Labor Church put him squarely at the fore of this radicalized movement. Like other progressives of various persuasions, in a period of great upheaval along national and international conjunctures, Ivens was getting set to challenge the existing order in a battle over the meaning of democracy.<sup>306</sup>

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<sup>305</sup> For important, but conflicting views see David J. Bercuson, Fools and Wisemen: The Rise and Fall of the One Big Union, (Toronto: McGraw, Hill Ryerson Ltd., 1978); Also see Gerald Friesen, "'Yours In Revolt': The Socialist Party of Canada and The Western Canadian Labour Movement." Labour/ Le Travailleur, 1(Spring) 1976, pp.139-157.

<sup>306</sup> See, Naylor, esp. pp.3-10.

## Chapter IV

### General Strike and Strike Trials, 1919-1920

Interest in the One Big Union (O.B.U.) increased throughout the spring of 1919. In March the Western Labour Conference held in Calgary passed a resolution calling for labour organizations to take a vote on withdrawing from craft internationals in favour of forming along industrial lines into the O.B.U. In the W.L.N., and at the Labour Church, Ivens articulated his views on the rising movement. In defense of the principles of the O.B.U., Ivens argued that "the day has come when the worker who advances beyond the orthodox theory and practice of craft unionism is an industrial heretic, and is at the same time a political heretic of the Bolshevist stamp."<sup>307</sup> The "loyalty" cries of the craft unionists he referred to as simply "moonshine". In the W.L.N. Ivens wrote that

Labor does not advance from craft unionism because it has been a complete failure. Rather it casts off and dons a new role just as the ox cart has been replaced by the car, and just as mechanized roads have replaced the Red River mud roads. The latter is better than the former, so, too, will the ONE BIG UNION be better, than craft unionism.<sup>308</sup>

He argued similarly that political democracy cannot and will not come without industrial democracy. The O.B.U. was the next step forward in this movement towards democratic reform. In a speech at the Columbia

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<sup>307</sup> Western Labor News, April 18, 1919. p. 4.

<sup>308</sup> Ibid.

Theater called "The Philosophy of the One Big Union"<sup>309</sup> Ivens reinforced this idea. He announced his outright support for the governing principles behind the O.B.U. His outlook, he said, was similar to the views held by Russell. At the Labour Church gatherings, he traced the O.B.U.'s origins to Australia. He argued that the plan of the O.B.U. "was simple enough for all to understand."<sup>310</sup> It involved the formation of a more "effective" workers' organization. In its construction, it was "simply the practical uniting of various separate trades councils into one federation instead of the 112 several and distinct craft unions at present in existence."<sup>311</sup> The audience listened attentively, and a lively discussion followed.<sup>312</sup> To Ivens the O.B.U. meant little else. It was neither a syndicalist operation, an Industrial Workers of the World (I.W.W.) blueprint, nor a Bolshevik directive. It was just the next logical step forward for workers in a world that demanded working class solidarity against an increasingly hostile capitalist form of social organization. The social strife in the community was to Ivens, the most vivid sign that alternative forms of working-class organization now needed to be considered.

In April, Ivens took up the cause of the Building and Metal trades workers. Their demands for better hourly rates and improved working conditions deserved the support of all, he declared, in the W.L.N.<sup>313</sup> These

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309 Western Labor News, May 9, 1919. p. 8.

310 Special Strike Edition, June 13, 1919. p. 3.

311 Ibid.

312 Western Labor News, April 18, 1919. p. 4.

313 The details of the General Strike are well known, the focus here is on Ivens. For further reading on the General Strike see, D.C. Masters, The Winnipeg General Strike, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1950); also see David J. Bercuson, Confrontation at Winnipeg: Labour, Industrial

and other events were moving quickly towards a general strike and on 9 May, Ivens reported that the "General Strike Seems Inevitable."<sup>314</sup>

By May, tensions had increased further as both the Metal Trades Council (M.T.C.) and the Building Trades Council (B.T.C.) issued a new series of demands to their employers and were seeking the support of the W.T.L.C. for their actions. The M.T.C. went out on strike to enforce their own demands, and a vote for a General Strike soon followed. Paralleling the mood in the trades councils, a mood of militancy swept through the halls of the Labour Churches, the Labor Temple, and other working-class organizations. By the evening of Friday, 9 May, over 9 000 votes had been cast to launch a general strike in support of the striking trades workers. The Saturday morning edition of the Free Press reported that "while no official returns are made, it is declared on all sides that the vote is overwhelmingly in favor of a general strike."<sup>315</sup>

It was during this time of militancy and of heightened industrial unrest that the Royal Commission on Industrial Relations came to Winnipeg. Under the chairpersonship of Chief Justice Mathers of Manitoba, the Commission held hearings in Winnipeg on 10 May and 12 May. The W.T.L.C. declined to "give any official recognition to [the] industrial commission,"<sup>316</sup> but did decide to have Ivens informally represent the labour movement. Ivens told

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Relations, And The General Strike, (Montreal & Kingston: McGill- Queen's University Press, 1974), Rpt. 1990.

314 Western Labor News, May 9, 1919. p. 1,4.

315 Manitoba Free Press, May 10, 1919. p. 3.

316 Manitoba Free Press. May 12, 1919. p. 1.



the commission that "capitalism had parliament by the [throat]."<sup>317</sup> He criticized the commission for only devoting a hurried two or three days to the worsening situation in Winnipeg. If the commission was serious about confronting the conditions faced by workers, Ivens argued, it must first "get a grip of the real facts by going into the homes of the men who represented labor. They would find the one class living in mansions and the other in shacks."<sup>318</sup> Ivens commented that in the present system of social relations "capital" could be likened to a "game". He said that "on one side they had an increasing hoard and on the other increasing poverty."<sup>319</sup> However, he predicted the commission would do little for workers because it had been appointed by a government that was "opposed to labour."<sup>320</sup> However, Ivens had a solution to the present industrial crisis. He personally advocated "a parliament of workers, nationalization of all essential industries, a democratic press, a democratic judiciary and [the] abolition of the profit system"<sup>321</sup> through the nationalization of all essential services. The need for a press that expressed labour's views was essential. Furthermore, a democratic parliament was needed because things had to be done "constitutionally". Ivens was presenting his strategy of change which called for "a democratic parliament, not an industrial parliament, but a parliament representing the workers, [one] in which the whole life of the country would

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317 Ibid. Also see the Department of Labour, Library, HD8039 I51 1919, V I-II, Royal Commission On Industrial Relations. Reel two, microfilm,. Ivens p.1456-1483.

318 Manitoba Free Press, May 12, 1919. p.1.

319 Ibid.

320 Ibid.

321 Ibid.

be represented."<sup>322</sup> The whole life would be represented because as he would later conclude "all would be workers". He then discussed the judicial transformation that must take place. He argued that a judiciary needed to be established where "the worker would get justice, [and] where money, which enabled appeal after appeal, would not beat the workman out of his rights."<sup>323</sup> Ultimately however, the most substantial change that could and would be made was the nationalization of essential services.<sup>324</sup> There was, he believed,

no hope of a permanent solution until human labor became the basis of exchange and none other: one hour of adult human labor to the unit. People must work to live and the worker should get the whole product of his toil.<sup>325</sup>

What was most important about Ivens' appearance before the Commission was that he had been selected as the unofficial representative of a diverse body of competing tendencies within the W.T.L.C. The majority in the W.T.L.C. accepted him as their spokesperson at the commission's hearings. Among the radicals, the moderates, and even the conservatives in the W.T.L.C., Ivens' own views represented the best consensus achievable. That he spoke of the need for the direct participation of the producers of the community in the political life of the country, reflected his ethical socialist outlook, and it was something that the rising majority of labour leaders in the W.T.L.C. could agree upon. His demands were largely moral invectives, as he called for the ushering in of a new age. His labour theory of value was

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<sup>322</sup> Ibid.

<sup>323</sup> Ibid.

<sup>324</sup> Ibid.

<sup>325</sup> Ibid.

"one unit of human labour for one unit of human labour."<sup>326</sup> Who in a decent frame of mind and of sound conscience, he asked, could argue against a philosophical outlook like this? Until this day was realized Ivens believed that there would be more and more industrial unrest.

Ivens' presentation to the commission was largely prophetic. The next day a special evening session of the W.T.L.C. was held and the Council voted unanimously to call a general strike in support of the trades for Thursday, 15 May.<sup>327</sup> On Thursday morning, the greatest strike in Canadian history began as scheduled. It would last exactly six weeks. Factories were deserted, street car transportation was shut down, telephones silenced, and restaurants were abandoned as thousands joined the strike. Reports running as high as 35 000 workers struck,<sup>328</sup> in a great display of solidarity.<sup>329</sup>

As editor of the W.L.N. and as a popular labour leader, Ivens was swept up quickly into the events of the strike. His first assignment was the organization of a daily edition of the W.L.N., the Strike Bulletin.<sup>330</sup> With

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326 Ibid.

327 Western Labor News, May 14, 1919. p. 1. See also Manitoba Free Press, May 14, 1919. p. 1.

328 McNaught, Kenneth, and David J. Bercuson. The Winnipeg Strike: 1919, (Don Mills: Longman. 1974), p. 45; See also Western Labor News, May 17, 1919; Manitoba Free Press, May 15, 1919.

329 Again the purpose of this thesis is to explain Ivens' role. For an overview of the General Strike see, David Jay Bercuson, Confrontation At Winnipeg: Labour, Industrial Relations, And The General Strike, (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1974) Rpt.1990; also see D.C. Masters, The Winnipeg General Strike, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1950).

330 From 15 May until 21 May, the strike committee supervised the running of the organ and once the immediate issues of the strike were settled, then the body responsible for the running of the weekly changed hands.

the support of the Central Strike Committee he remained in charge of the Strike Bulletin until 21 May. The Strike Bulletin was initially run in a similar manner as the W.L.N. However, on 21 May, the Central Strike Committee met to restructure the running of the strike, including the organization of the Strike Bulletin, the central strike organ. Fifteen persons were nominated by the W.T.L.C. and they met separately to form a new Central Strike Committee while "the whole Strike Committee, apart from the fifteen formed themselves into the General Strike Committee."<sup>331</sup> Out of this General Strike Committee,<sup>332</sup> the election of various officers was made and a number of committees were established immediately, two of which, the editorial and press committees, affected Ivens work. Through these two committees the Strike Bulletin was to be brought more directly under the control of the W.T.L.C.'s new General Strike Committee. The formation of two new publicity committees it was hoped, would also allow for better co-ordination among the various bodies of the strike.

The formation of the two publicity committees appeared as a result of the political tensions re-emerging from the early spring between the radicals and the conservatives in the W.T.L.C. Politics was very much alive in all facets of the strike, including the running of the Strike Bulletin. The daily needed a full time reporter, and the conservatives managed to get A.G. Cowley of the Civic Employees Federation hired. The editorial committee was also expanded through election, and it came under the radicals influence to include: Brothers Simpkin, F.W. Law (of the C.B.R.E.),<sup>333</sup> and George

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<sup>331</sup> Special Strike Edition, May 23, 1919. p. 3.

<sup>332</sup> The General Strike Committee representing 300 delegates from various councils, as well as representatives from the returned veterans associations.

<sup>333</sup> Canadian Brotherhood of Railway Employees

Armstrong (S.P.C.). The election of George Armstrong was an important event because in the recent past, Ivens had faced the direct confrontations in council of R.J. Johns (S.P.C.) for whom he had little personal liking. In the intense moments of the strike under this new structure, Ivens would now have a direct link to the S.P.C. through party member George Armstrong with whom he was on more friendly terms. In addition to his press responsibilities Ivens was appointed to the press committee.<sup>334</sup>

Ivens mastered his heavy editorial responsibilities throughout the strike, demonstrating an ability that had been consistent since his days at Wesley College. Not only did he effectively operate a daily paper, but he also maintained the Labour Church, a crucial institution of the strike. During the strike Labour Church meetings were virtually indistinguishable from the majority of the other meetings held. Both were attended by the membership of the G.W.V.A.,<sup>335</sup> the S.P.C., organized and un-organized workers, and even labour sympathizers from the middle class. Like other rallies the Labour Churches too were attended by government spies from the R.N.W.M.P.<sup>336</sup> sent to record the dangerous invectives of the strike leaders. In a period that spanned six weeks, there were 171 recorded mass meetings, including Labour Church services, outdoor rallies, and meetings in which the public was encouraged to attend. The total number of actual meetings held far exceeded this number too, as there were daily meetings of the W.T.L.C.'s unions, as well as individual, and General Strike Committee meetings that

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<sup>334</sup> Special Strike Edition. May 23, 1919. p. 3.

<sup>335</sup> Great War Veterans Association

<sup>336</sup> Royal North-West Mounted Police

went unrecorded.<sup>337</sup> The strike was orderly, effectively run, and Ivens was near the very center of its operation. He participated regularly, speaking at many of the mass rallies held at various spots in the city and most often, at the meetings held in Victoria Park, St. James Park, Central Park, Weston Park, Norwood Park, Dufferin Park, Lord Selkirk School, and by the corner of Stella and Main.

The Labour Church was proving itself a working-class institution through and through. At one meeting early in the strike W.T.L.C. President Winning, Secretary Robinson, R.B. Russell, and Ivens all spoke of the current problems faced by labour. Estimates were as high as 5 000 people attending the service, and Ivens wrote that

Winnipeg has never had a church service like it [that night] in all her history. It was throbbing with interest and enthusiasm. The people felt that here was one church that really did voice their sentiments at this hour and they thronged the place.<sup>338</sup>

The service began with a hymn, which was followed by an opening prayer given by Ivens. Ivens announced his "desire that the workers might succeed according to the justice of their cause and fail so far as their demands were unjust." When it became his turn to speak again, he read from

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<sup>337</sup> A List of all the mass meetings announced in the pages of the individual Special Strike Editions.

#1:3	#5:2	#9:4	#13:4 (Sat.)	#18:9	#22:8	#26:6	#30:6
#2-	#6-	#10:3	#14:7	#19:5 (Sat.)	#23:6	#27:8	#31:9
#3-	#7:3	#11:3	#15:6	#20:7	#24:7	#28:7	#32:7
#4-	#8-	#12:6	May30	#17:6	#21:8	#25:6	#29:6

Number obtained from recording meeting announcements and reports in Special Strike Editions.

<sup>338</sup> Special Strike Edition, May 20, 1919. pp.1,3.

the "OLD BOOK" mixing his Christian nonconformity and social idealism with the grim realities of the present situation. He "told of the miracles performed by the MAN of Galilee" believing that the day of miracles "was not past". He had faith that miracles were, in fact, taking place presently at James Street. He then called out to the multitudes present that "Brotherhood was there triumphant. It was each for all and all for each." He addressed the fact that the strike was approaching its fifth day and equated it with the calling of a few for the help of others-- when the response was "the tramp of thousands of feet to their rescue." Ivens wondered whether or not "so complete a response had ever been seen in any country at any time to the call of Labor." Then he heralded the significant strides that labour had made over the past year and then went on to attack the Free Press. He assured the workers that they could count on their own daily, "to tell the whole truth and nothing but the truth" to which there was a great adulation and round of applause. Ivens stressed the national trajectories of the strike. He said that the strike would spread Dominion wide, and that it "will not end until it has tied up every city from Halifax to Vancouver." Ivens then stated that across the nation the Trades and Labour Councils had sent messages stating their willingness to drop their tools immediately when given the signal. To another round of applause Ivens argued that the "greatest trouble" in Winnipeg so far was that there was "no trouble", and he expressed his belief that the justness of their cause meant that trouble was not needed. In fact, he took the opportunity at the meeting to clearly state the need for calm, asking the workers to "Stand solid. Keep your heads. Keep away from trouble

makers. Leave no loophole for the other side to foment [sic] trouble. You have nothing to fear."<sup>339</sup> As the meeting finished, Ivens predicted

that in a short time there would be no need to use the weapon of the strike. We shall not need to strike when we own and control industry,-- and we wont [sic] relinquish the fight until we do control. This is not revolution. The workers are docile, as Pres. Winning had said. But the workers realize their importance and they see no reason why they should not own and enjoy, since they produce all. Today, now their labor power was withdrawn there was no production.<sup>340</sup>

This was truly Ivens at his best and it was not surprising that years later, historian D.C. Masters would write of Ivens' "great capacity for appealing to the imagination."<sup>341</sup> The "imagination" to Ivens was a positive, constructive, and important force. But his imagination remained distinguishable from that of the late 19th century British socialists like William Morris or Edward Carpenter. For Ivens' imagination had also clearly identified more closely with a spirit of very real and meaningful reforms. It was not John Smith in News From Nowhere that Ivens was addressing at mass meetings; but rather Ivens was a local activist, an outspoken and engaging social critic talking of meaningful changes to a crowd that had already been inspired and driven to take action for itself. It was a time of heightened working-class consciousness and what was now being considered was a workable agenda. The proper strategy and tactics to affect change were under discussion.

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<sup>339</sup> Ibid.

<sup>340</sup> Ibid.

<sup>341</sup> Masters, p. 10.



As a result of their activities, at the many triumphant Labour Church services, Ivens and the other strike leaders were often labeled by the business interests as "wild eyed revolutionaries who thirst for blood and revolution."<sup>342</sup> They were also accused of leading workers "unwillingly" into the strike and were accused of deluding them with visions of a new better order that threatened the status quo. On one occasion, Ivens himself was described by the press as an "ex-preacher" to which he said "--guess that means excellent."<sup>343</sup>

To counter the moves made by the strikers a group of business interests created the Citizens Committee of 1000 that published its own paper the Winnipeg Citizen beginning on 19 May. The Citizen ran until 29 June and from the pages of its very first issue until its very last, it dubbed Ivens, Russell, Johns, Armstrong, and Robinson, as the "red five". Its propaganda campaign ruthlessly attacked Ivens and the other working-class leaders. Again and again Ivens responded to the attacks upon himself and other working-class leaders in the Citizen. In turn, articles in the Citizen replied that Ivens spoke with "ferocious belligerency", and charged that in his position as editor of the Strike Bulletin his "ferocity is apparent to all."<sup>344</sup> Articles attacked the democratic nature in which the strike was persecuted, insinuating that Russell, Robinson, and Ivens had pooled the votes of the various unions to strike a majority, bringing those that voted against the strike out with them. To this Ivens noted that all had become "the targets for the explosive poison bullets of The Citizen."<sup>345</sup>

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342 Ibid.

343 Ibid.

344 Special Strike Edition, May 26, 1919. p. 2.

345 Ibid.

In the right wing press, Ivens symbolized the growing image of unconstituted authority. His name was associated with Bolsheviki underpinnings and fears of alien influences, and all of the strike leaders became images representative of the worst attributes of the human spirit. The Citizen told of the "naked facts" of "revolution" and spoke of the need for the elimination of the reds. Its articles were supported with quotes from persons representing constituted authority like Premier Norris and Mayor Gray.<sup>346</sup>

Ivens wrote of his own slanderous representation in the pages of the ruling class papers. He made a mockery of their attempts to smear him and the other labour leaders. Jokingly, on one occasion, he offered the writers for the Citizen a fictitious lineage as a new angle of attack to pursue their campaign of inflaming issues and distorting truths. In the W.L.N. Ivens wrote

the General Strike was engineered by Five Men. Five red men. Some of these have English names such as Robinson-- but this is merely a corruption of Rubenstein-- so, though Robinson is English born, he must be a Jew/ Ivens-- yes, yes that sounds like Ivan-- so he must be Russian-- "Ivens the Terrible", is an excellent rendition of his name. Veitch-- Veitch-- where can that come from, ah-- got it-- he must be Bukowinian. Winning-- Winning-- they stick on Winning-- They must not talk about that name. The strikers must not win-- they must not even think they are winning, so his name is passed up. Russell-- Russell is easy-- The first letter gets him. R--R--R he must be Scotch.

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<sup>346</sup> The Winnipeg Citizen, vol.1. #5., May 23, 1919. p. 3; vol.1.#8., May 28, 1919. p. 1.

Thus, by an analysis of names the Red Five are the leaders of the strike.<sup>347</sup>

Ivens argued throughout the strike and into the strike trials that to the Citizens Committee of 1 000 "the simple facts did not matter"<sup>348</sup> for they were actively engaged in writing their own version of history. Had truth been important to them, then Ivens believed that they would have realized that

the simple facts are that the men who are classed as the red five had little to do with the calling of the strike. Ivens cast no vote for a strike, neither did he speak one word either for or against it. Russell, Winning, Robinson, etc. were in the same boat. These are officers of the Council or the several unions and so have no vote. the rank and file decided the issue.<sup>349</sup>

Although Ivens could laugh off the character assaults in the pages of the Tribune, Free Press, and Citizen, there was a bitter side underlying these attacks that could not so easily be disregarded. In fact, by early June, a correspondent for the Strike Bulletin reported that at one recent Victoria Park Labour Church service one fellow had said to another, "If we could put that fellow out of the way, [a soldier speaking] and Veitch, and Ivens, and Russell, this strike could be ended, tomorrow. It is these agitators who are the cause of all the trouble."<sup>350</sup> Ivens opposed the use of violence to further the interests of the strikers, but it was becoming a very serious threat to his own well being as Machevellian reports of being done away began to circulate in labour circles.

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347 Special Strike Edition, May 24, 1919. p. 2.

348 Special Strike Edition, June 13, 1919. p. 3.

349 Ibid.

350 Special Strike Edition, June 3, 1919. p. 3.

John W. Dafoe, the editor of the Free Press, quickly became the strike's leading critic. Ivens' relationship with Dafoe had never been pleasant and throughout the war, Ivens and Dafoe had disagreed over the most serious of philosophical issues. Ivens' anti-imperialist pacifism and his outright opposition to the "capitalist War" stood in stark contrast to Dafoe's own position of all out support for the war.<sup>351</sup> In 1919, during the strike, Dafoe was quick to remind the readership of the Free Press of Ivens' wartime position. "The Rev. William has long troubled this community-- first with his pacifist, anti-war propaganda, and now with chatter about the 'impending revolution,'" wrote Dafoe.<sup>352</sup> During the first week of the strike, the Free Press typesetters had walked off their jobs, shutting down the paper's operation as they went. Dafoe was enraged by this action and immediately he installed a radio transmitter on the top of the Free Press building to carry his message to the outside world.<sup>353</sup> When the paper's operation resumed the following week, Dafoe lashed out at Ivens and other strikers. In a front page article, "The Great Dream of The Winnipeg Soviet", on 22 May, Dafoe wrote of Ivens' "charming disposition", and argued that in an attempt to create their revolution, Ivens and the other leaders of the general strike had created a

conspiracy against the daily press. The bright idea here was to give Rev. Wm. Ivens-- the notorious pacifist-- a good start with the daily which he has long yearned to publish by putting the regular dallies-- which give employment [sic] to many hundreds of workers-- out of business. Mr. Ivens,

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351 Murray Donnelly, Dafoe of the Free Press, (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada: 1968), pp. 80-85.

352 Manitoba Free Press, May 26, 1919. p. 1.

353 Donnelly, p. 104.

who has been upifted [sic] by his new associations to the point where he regards the commandments against stealing and covetousness as effete [sic] and reactionary ideas, was very busy last week expounding to his cronies his great business idea which, in its practical application, was to commit mayhem on the daily press and while they were thus out of action to steal some of their business. Blood Bolshevik doctrine and practice this! Brother Ivens' joy was unbounded last Friday when he thought he had achieved his purpose. But to take liberties with a book with which our friend Ivanovitch once had some acquaintance, Joy endureth for a night but sorrow cometh in the morning.<sup>354</sup>

Later Dafoe attacked Ivens as the "self-nominated announcer of the 'Revolution.'"<sup>355</sup>

During the strike, and partly in response to those highly personalized attacks by Dafoe and others, Ivens quoted Ruskin, who as a young man "declared that his one hope in life was to arouse some dissatisfaction."<sup>356</sup> Ivens believed that progress was necessitated through discontent or this dissatisfaction in the spirit and that "only through discontent can changes come."<sup>357</sup> Ivens argued that unless one believed that the world is "perfect" because one "[has] enough to eat" then one should be discontented. With discontent as one's guiding spirit, Ivens believed fundamentally that the greatest advances and the most promising progressive reforms were

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354 Manitoba Free Press, May 22, 1919. p. 1.

355 Manitoba Free Press, May 26, 1919. p. 1.

356 Special Strike Edition, May 22, 1919. p. 4.

357 Ibid.

made.<sup>358</sup> The social agitator was in all persons and one just had to trigger it through education. Similarly, Ivens argued that it was true that you could tell when a person had reached their natural 'limit' of "development". People reach it when they "cease to be discontented-- or at least to show discontent actively."<sup>359</sup>

As discontent flowed on both sides of the river, the political challenges in the press continued throughout the strike, as the Citizen's Committee took out ads in the Free Press attacking Ivens' war record. They anointed Ivens as the "the official orator and apologist for the strike" and accused him of siding with Germany and against their own "Sir Edward Grey and the British."<sup>360</sup> Ivens fought back, accusing the Citizen's Committee of "Prostituting The Flag" and by questioning whether or not their dismissal of the city police and the formation of temporary police was really the creation of their own Soviet, and he called for public debate on the issue.<sup>361</sup> On several occasions the Citizen's Committee demanded that the strike must be called off before issues could be settled. Ivens responded to these demands, appealing to the absolute moral authority saying that the will of the people would reign supreme. He addressed over 5 000 workers in Victoria Park on one occasion, asking them several times if they were willing to call off the strike.

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358 Ibid.; Perhaps this is what Vera Fast meant when she argued that ultimately Ivens failed to recognize that Christianity had to work through love.

359 Ibid.

360 Manitoba Free Press. May 31, 1919. p. 7.

361 Special Strike Edition, May 25, 1919. p. 3.

"No!" Five thousand times "No!" was the answer of the strikers to the ultimatum of the citizens' committee given in Victoria Park.

Rev. Wm Ivens-- the terrible-- called out: "The Citizens' Committee say you must call off the sympathetic strikes. What is your answer?" Five thousand men and women answered "No!" These speak for 35, 000 more... So the strike is still on.<sup>362</sup>

From the very beginning of the strike, the Strike Bulletin was used as a source of information for the strikers, reporting the strike's successes, suggesting as well, who to patronize and who to avoid. This was one of the crucial roles that Ivens performed as the editor of the strikers' paper. He was the essential link, the bridge between the numerous strike committees and the workers on the street. His written word helped to shape and define the policies of the committees and his influence was instrumental in guaranteeing the successful control of community services. Coal deliveries were stopped, water was run at a minimum pressure, entertainment was controlled allowing workers access to movie theaters to keep them off the streets, and only emergency telegrams were sent. Although these actions were taken through the various committees, to the workers on the street the final word often came from the strike organ and from Ivens.

During the first week of the strike, a bureau of information was established, a food committee was organized, and permit cards were issued to protect the workers who remained at their jobs to handle the running of essential services.<sup>363</sup> On the issue of permit cards Ivens argued that the

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<sup>362</sup> Special Strike Edition, May 27, 1919. p.3.

<sup>363</sup> On the control of coal see Special Strike Edition. May 22, 1919. p. 1.; on the problem of water: May 21, 1919. p. 3, and May 22, 1919. p. 4.; on the establishment of a Bureau of Information: May 21, 1919. p. 3.; on the Food

cards were in no way an attempt to usurp constituted authority, as argued by the Citizens Committee. He referred to the issue as a "red herring", an attempt to confuse issues and deny the workers the justice that their claims deserved.<sup>364</sup>

Throughout the strike Ivens' message was essentially that the workers should maintain their "do nothing" and "say nothing" composure. He was constantly wary of those who would try to subvert the strike. Ivens argued that since the justness of the workers claims could not be legitimately challenged, the only way the workers could lose was if their cause was undermined by outside interests who gave the appearance that constituted law and order was threatened. The workers had to act at all times in their own best interests, Ivens argued. Therefore, it was important to avoid insobriety,<sup>365</sup> to be wary of the arrival of hired thugs,<sup>366</sup> and agent provocateurs.<sup>367</sup> Perhaps the greatest threat of all, Ivens considered, were those trying to convince the strikers to return to work.<sup>368</sup>

Beginning in the first days of the strike, Ivens argued that its success depended on a national mobilization of workers. Widening the strike, Ivens believed, was the only solution all along and he had faith in the power of working-class unity. He argued that if the owners did not accede the

Committee: May 16, 1919. p. 2.; and on the control of media: May 21, 1919. p.1.; On the use of permit cards see next footnote.

364 On the R.N.W.M.P. ordering their removal see Special Strike Edition.

May 21, 1919. p.1.; On the city council debate: May 21, 1919. p. 4.; On Ivens' response see May 23, 1919. p. 4. and; May 25, 1919. p. 3.

365 Special Strike Edition, June 6, 1919, p. 2.

366 Special Strike Edition, June 6, 1919. p. 4.

367 Special Strike Edition, June 3, 1919. p. 1.

368 Special Strike Edition, June 7, 1919. p. 1.



demands of the workers, the strike would grow until the whole Dominion was moved by the power of the worker who withheld his labour.<sup>369</sup> It was a moral, as well as physical force that he conjured. His plan for action locally was revealed as he addressed numerous mixed crowds of strikers and returned soldiers. At one meeting, he said, that "when the funds of the strikers were exhausted, and they were facing starvation, they would not starve. They would march to city hall and demand that Mayor Gray write out a cheque so that they might buy food."<sup>370</sup> At a mass meeting held in early June, Ivens said, that he was "against the Hun everywhere . . . whether he is wearing overalls in Germany or a silk hat in Winnipeg."<sup>371</sup>

With his speech Ivens was forging a consensus among the workers. He said that there was no turning back for the world was watching the events in Winnipeg and he warned Premier Norris that his hair would be gray before the sympathetic strike would be called off. Ivens spoke of the meaning of the spirit of brotherhood evident by the sympathetic strike, and he stated that he knew why some could not understand why others would risk their jobs for their fellow man. He argued it was because many did not have an understanding of the true spirit of brotherhood. To reinforce the values that Ivens believed he shared with the returned veteran, at one meeting Ivens offered a parable, likening brotherhood between strikers to the brotherhood amongst countries fighting a common enemy.<sup>372</sup>

When war was declared . . . Canada had no quarrel  
with Germany. Australia had no quarrel with

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<sup>369</sup> Special Strike Edition, June 5, 1919. p. 3.

<sup>370</sup> Manitoba Free Press, June 7, 1919. p. 7.

<sup>371</sup> Ibid.

<sup>372</sup> Ibid.

Germany. But when the mother Land was attacked,  
Canada was into it, every man and every dollar.<sup>373</sup>

An attempt was made to discredit Ivens in the Free Press when a "disgusted worker" accused Ivens of having a direct share in the 10 June riot. Referring to the "Monster Meeting" of the previous evening, the autonomous letter claimed that Ivens had

told the crowd (many of them foreigners) that their homes were in danger from attack by these special police, that they had already begun, and gave two alleged stories, one which took place at 7 o'clock on Sunday morning, and the other in Point Douglas. here the special watched the man of the house go away and then using his baton to threaten the wife, and children, robbed them of every dollar they had. Mr. Ivens then solemnly warned his audience that this was the kind of thing which would happen all over the city through the mayor's action in handing the city over to the mercy of such characters.<sup>374</sup>

Responding to the character assault, at the Labour Church on the Sunday following, Ivens reminded the crowd of his objections to the use of violence and denounced the anonymous worker for trying to create divisions between him and the strikers. The revolution that Ivens sought would arrive, but it could and would come democratically through the ballot, not the bullet, nor through any other violent insurrectionary means. His understanding of the need for peaceful change owed an intellectual debt that could be traced back to Marx and Engels. Marx and Engels had called for a democratic transformation in the existing system of social relations in their Communist

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373 Ibid.

374 Manitoba Free Press, June 16, 1919. p. 5.

Manifesto, argued Ivens. The Communist Manifesto was a "gradualist" program of reform, he believed, and reform in Britain and other advanced capitalist countries (including Canada) could and would come through the parliament.<sup>375</sup>

Ivens had the first two pages of Strike Bulletin #27 ready for press on the night of Monday, 16 June, when he left the office to travel up North Main to his house at 307 Inkster Boulevard. In the middle of the night, at approximately 2:30 A.M., he and Mrs. Ivens were rudely awakened when the police broke into his bedroom and pulled him from his bed. After a few words were exchanged, Ivens was arrested and was hurried off in a car to Stony Mountain penitentiary.<sup>376</sup> The Ivens' story was reported in the Strike Bulletin the next morning. It described how Mrs. Ivens

a young Canadian wife and mother sobbed out her story. Nervously upstrung [sic], almost hysterical, she closed her eyes to try to shut out the vision of the band of men who had broken into her room and carried off her husband without even permitting him to learn the crime with which he was charged.<sup>377</sup>

Later that morning, Louisa Ivens went to the Labor Temple. She spoke of her greatest fear which was that "they [the police] would beat him up or do away with him." She told the people gathered at the Labor Temple, that her "little children still in their night-clothes looked on half in fear, half in wonder " as Ivens was taken from their home. Mrs. Ivens was in shock

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<sup>375</sup> P.A.M., William Ivens collection, Box 8, Notes from Socialism File.

"From the Communist Manifesto"

<sup>376</sup> For a more detailed overview see, Masters, pp. 104-106; Also see Bercuson, "Confrontation At Winnipeg," pp. 163-167.

<sup>377</sup> Special Strike Edition, June 17, 1919. p. 1.

and the workers' paper commented that "Little had she thought that her husband--a Christian minister--would be treated as the most dangerous of criminals. Is this Canada? Is this British law?"<sup>378</sup> Mrs. Armstrong and Mrs. Russell reported similar experiences. Other reports indicated Alderman Queen and Alderman Heaps were missing and presumed arrested. In all six leaders, Wm. Ivens, R.E. Bray, R.B. Russell, George Armstrong, A. Heaps, and J. Queen were arrested during the police raids.<sup>379</sup> Following Ivens' arrest, Fred Dixon and J.S. Woodsworth took over publication of the Strike Bulletin.<sup>380</sup>

A committee was formed to begin work on freeing Ivens and the other working-class leaders. It worked late into the morning of 18 June, but it had little to report. The committee found out that Ivens and company were, in fact, being held in separate cells at Stony Mountain penitentiary. The committee was also informed that the prisoners were "remanded for eight days when the preliminary hearing will be given, probably in Winnipeg." The committee was also told that there "was no use applying for bail."<sup>381</sup>

The Free Press ran its version of the arrest story on the day following their initial internment. Its leading article "Extremists Among Strike Leaders Quietly Placed behind Prison Bars", described Ivens as "editor of the Western Labor News, [a] former Methodist minister, now pastor of the

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378 Ibid.

379 Special Strike Edition, June 18, 1919. p. 3.

380 Kenneth McNaught, A Prophet in Politics: A Biography of J. S. Woodsworth, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1959), pp. 120-121.

For a fuller account of the transition see Masters, pp. 109-110, and see also Olive Ziegler, Woodsworth, Social Pioneer. Toronto, 1934. p. 98.

381 Special Strike Edition, June 18, 1919. p. 4.

Labor Church: English born."<sup>382</sup> The article reported that the on-lookers who surveyed the damage at a midnight raid of the Labor Temple carried out on the night of the arrests described that offices had been smashed, literature scattered about the room, drawers left open with their contents rifled. It was also reported, that even greater damage was done to the Ukrainian Labor Temple on Pritchard Avenue and Salter Street building.

On 18 June, the Citizens Committee began an intense campaign to discredit Ivens and the others and to justify their imprisonment.<sup>383</sup> Heralding the action as the "proper" arrest of "men of pronounced revolutionary tendencies"<sup>384</sup>, the *Winnipeg Citizen* identified Ivens as one of the central leaders of the strike and attacked him for supposedly declaring himself "For a Revolution, by peaceful Means if Possible."<sup>385</sup> Its author suggested that if by this, Ivens meant that "if he and his fellow radicals failed to capture the government at the polls and were left in a minority they would, nevertheless, attack the majority and capture the government by shooting the majority into submission"<sup>386</sup>, he warned Ivens and others like him that "Canadians who think they can put a Russian scheme of minority dictatorship on the necks of the people of Canada will have a tale to tell from their graves."<sup>387</sup>

On 18 June, as Ivens spent his second full day at Stony Mountain Penitentiary, his opponents in the Manitoba Methodist Conference moved to have him "located". In the Methodist church, "locating" a pastor meant

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<sup>382</sup> Manitoba Free Press, June 18, 1919. p. 4.

<sup>383</sup> The Winnipeg Citizen, June 18, 1919. p. 1.

<sup>384</sup> The Winnipeg Citizen, June 19, 1919. p. 1.

<sup>385</sup> The Winnipeg Citizen, June 19, 1919. p. 3.

<sup>386</sup> Ibid.

<sup>387</sup> Ibid.

demanding that he return to service and accept a posting. Ministers were typically "located" for any one of a number of reasons, the most common being after a period of leave due to illness. However, Ivens' case was special. For a year, he had been "left without station" but his term was now up. He wanted to remain free to continue his work at the Labour Church and also at the W.L.N. for another year. He notified the Conference of his wish to remain free from the church rank especially since he was being persecuted for his politics. The church had insufficient grounds to expel him, as no legal charges had ever been laid, and therefore his opponents in the Methodist Conference had to choose a "notice of location" tactic, "an action sometimes taken in the case of a man who has ceased to be efficient as a minister"<sup>388</sup> to force his dismissal. In this case the grounds were that Ivens was refusing to accept a regular pastorate.<sup>389</sup> His opponents were successful following a vote, when Ivens was expelled from the Methodist Church.

This action was clearly political; other ministers had been left to carry out their own work for periods of more than a year. Following his expulsion a conference official informed him that he did have legal recourse, if he so desired. As the decision was handed down, Woodsworth wrote in the Strike Bulletin, that it was rather unfair in his eyes that the Methodist Church would demand Ivens to locate under the present circumstances.<sup>390</sup> But there was clearly little that could be done now with Ivens being held at Stony Mountain Penitentiary.

In spite of all the worries with which he now had to contend with, Ivens sent a message to the workers from Stony Mountain that said, "Have

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<sup>388</sup> Special Strike Edition, June 19, 1919. p. 4.

<sup>389</sup> Ibid.

<sup>390</sup> Ibid.

no fear on my account. My conscience is clear."<sup>391</sup> Mrs. Ivens was devastated by the arrest of her husband, and one report suggested that she would never fully recover from his imprisonment.<sup>392</sup> Like the other women who found their husbands rushed off to prison, letters and telegrams expressing support, began arriving immediately from places all over the country. The Labor Women's Council of Calgary quickly set up a support group to help out financially the families of the interned strike leaders, other centers followed suit.<sup>393</sup>

On Thursday, 19 June, a group at the Labor Temple learned that Ivens and at least the five other arrested strike leaders were going to be released. What was needed, Solicitor T.J. Murray informed them, was \$2000.00 bail in the form of a personal bond for each of the six men and two sureties of \$1 000.00 each. Twelve men as creditors were selected to provide the bail money and were taken to the police station to work out payment arrangements.<sup>394</sup>

Ivens and the other strike leaders were released on bail with the added condition that they refrain from further participation in the Strike "until their cases have been disposed of."<sup>395</sup> John Queen made plans to move temporarily to a farm, and the others decided to channel their energies towards establishing a defense fund.<sup>396</sup>

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391 Special Strike Edition, June 20, 1919. p. 1.

392 P.A.M. Lionel Orlikow interviews, Tape #12, with an anonymous woman.

393 Special Strike Edition, June 20, 1919. p. 4.

394 Special Strike Edition, June 20, 1919. p. 1.

395 Special Strike Edition, June 20, 1919. p. 1.

396 Ibid.

A number of "foreigners" had been added to the list of those persons picked up during the raids, and the same day that Ivens was released, the R.N.W.M.P. arrested W. A. Pritchard of the S.P.C. on a train at Calgary heading for Vancouver. Like the others, Pritchard was charged with seditious conspiracy.<sup>397</sup> The charges that Ivens and the others faced now were six counts of seditious conspiracy and one count of seditious libel. On the first charge all eleven men were said to have conspired at one time or another with one another to incite the public in an attempt to overthrow constituted authority. The second charge referred to an article printed in the W.L.N. to which all eleven were also held accountable.<sup>398</sup>

Following the strike leaders releases, public protest meetings in support of the strike leaders and in support of the release of their foreign brothers continued despite a ban on such meetings. On Saturday, 21 June, a protest event turned ugly when the R.N.W.M.P. and Specials assaulted a veterans' and strikers' parade. "Bloody Saturday", as it became known was directly responsible for two deaths, dozens of casualties, and the strike's collapse which occurred just five days later.<sup>399</sup>

Monday's coverage of Bloody Saturday in the W.L.N. offered a scathing denunciation of the use of force against the demonstrators. The paper was suppressed and its editor, Woodsworth arrested.<sup>400</sup> The Winnipeg Printing and Engraving Company was ordered to stop printing the paper as the headlines in an eastern paper ran "Strike Organ At Winnipeg is

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397 Ibid.

398 Special Strike Edition, June 21, 1919. p. 1.

399 Special Strike Edition, June 23, 1919. p. 1.

400 Kenneth McNaught, and David J. Bercuson. The Winnipeg General Strike: 1919, (Don Mills: Longman Canada, 1974), p. 92.



Under Seizure."<sup>401</sup> A warrant was subsequently issued for Dixon's arrest and Dixon went into hiding for two days to continue publishing the paper. When Dixon turned himself in, Ivens resumed editorship of the W.L.N. Dixon and Woodsworth were given bail and released a day later.<sup>402</sup>

Ivens also returned to his work with the Labour Church, and in early July, with a number of other strike leaders, he held a series of public meetings speaking out against state intervention in the strike and against the actions of the Citizen's Committee during the stormy weeks of May and June. In his denunciation of the way the strike was handled, he was violating his conditions of bail.<sup>403</sup>

The Labour Church meetings offered a brief moment to reflect on the events of the spring of 1919. The arrest of Ivens and of the other strike leaders had clearly marked a significant turning point in the strike, as the conservatives quickly re-gained control of the W.T.L.C. and of the strike. In the wake of the saddening events of Bloody Saturday, the conservatives ultimately bear the responsibility along with the state for the strike's tragic collapse on 26 June, six weeks to the day it had begun.<sup>404</sup>

Writings in the W.L.N. immediately following the strike acknowledged a mixture of victory in defeat. Articles realistically noted that the employers had one clear victory and as a result, workers by the thousands would be "inconvenienced"-- some having to leave the city and others would lose their jobs or would have to live on lower wages.<sup>405</sup> But in

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401 Montreal Gazette, June 24, 1919.

402 Western Labor News, June 30, 1919. p. 1.

403 Western Labor News, July 5, 1919. p. 1.

404 On the control of the Conservatives in Council see Masters, pp. 109-111.

405 Western Labor News. July 2, 1919. p.2.

spite of the collapse, and all it implied, rising out of the strike was a spirit of underlying solidarity. According to Ivens

It can never be forgotten that over thirty thousand workers struck [sic], not for themselves, but for others. In this they manifested the truest spirit of brotherhood, and magnanimity.<sup>406</sup>

Defeat was linked not wholly to the economic power of the employers, but also to the power of the press and of parliaments. That lesson, it was said, would not be forgotten, as "already there are men and women who have dedicated their lives to the remedying of these defects."<sup>407</sup> Ivens promised that labour would have its own paper in the next two years, and he stressed the need to continue to adopt further the locomotive of parliamentary action. He said that "the time has come when it must be a consuming passion to the workers to get control of the parliaments for the very reason that they are the majority of the nation."<sup>408</sup> Ivens stated that parliamentary action was difficult, especially with labour in the past who has successfully "sold the ballot for a bottle of booze, or a five dollar bill"<sup>409</sup> to either the Grits or the Conservatives. He predicted that two issues would be important in the civic elections planned for November; first, labour must take control of city council; and secondly, the reinstatement of all employees with full seniority must be part of the campaign. In the provincial government, Ivens argued for proportional representation to increase the power of the urban vote. Once this was accomplished there would be no less than 23 city members in the provincial legislature of the current 55 seat

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406 Ibid.

407 Ibid.

408 Ibid.

409 Ibid.

house, he believed. However, he observed that the "destinies" of labour in the future "must be wrapped up with the farmers."<sup>410</sup> Combined, Ivens suggested, that these moves would strengthen labour's political voice. It did not mean a lessening of economic action, merely that both must continue "side by side."<sup>411</sup> Gains had been made in the strike, Ivens concluded for now "the future belongs to the workers."<sup>412</sup> The day after he wrote this article on the essential need for change, Ivens faced his preliminary trial.

## II

The preliminary trial hearings were heard in the magistrates court throughout July and August. Chief Magistrate R.M. Noble listened to A.J. Andrews, K.C., and J.B. Coyne, K.C., representing the prosecution, and T.J. Murray, E.J. McMurray, Hugh MacKenzie, and Marcus Hyman, representing the defense.<sup>413</sup> The preliminary hearings centered on the question of admissibility of evidence that was not linked directly to the strike leaders. Bloody Saturday, for example, was dealt with by both the defense and the prosecution, with the defense arguing that the strike leaders did not

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<sup>410</sup> Ibid.

<sup>411</sup> Ibid.

<sup>412</sup> Ibid.

<sup>413</sup> It is not the purpose of this thesis to retell the whole picture of the strike nor the strike trials, but rather to simply explore Ivens' own role in these events. For background information on the strike trials see, Masters, pp.113-134.

organize, nor even wish the silent parade to be called. The court upheld the prosecution's argument that the evidence was admissible on the grounds that the actions of the sympathizers of the 21 June parade were not what the leaders were being charged for as conspirators, but that it was admissible on the grounds of supporting evidence.<sup>414</sup> Historian D.C. Masters makes the important distinction that the admissibility of evidence came from a

difference of initial premises. The prosecution assumed that the accused were ringleaders in a conspiracy. . . . The defense refused to accept the premise either that a common design had already been proven or that it would be proven in the course of the trial, but in this they were not upheld by the bench.<sup>415</sup>

As the preliminary hearing of evidence against Ivens and the others was drawing to a close, talk shifted away from what was acceptable as legitimate evidence and focused briefly on the specific utterances made by the strike leaders. The press also examined some of the evidence of meetings at which time Ivens and others were to have uttered revolutionary phrases. One of the most important meetings that Ivens spoke at, the crown's evidence suggested, was on 2 May 1919. Referred to as the Liberty Hall meeting, several undercover detectives and a member of the R.N.W.M.P. reported that Ivens and Solomon Almazoff<sup>416</sup> had spoken to a group under the auspices of the Young Jews Labor League. At the meeting Ivens was to have stated "Once I was a preacher . . . but I found out that the preachers were deceiving the workingman. I would now rather commit suicide than

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<sup>414</sup> Masters, p. 116. For the full original account see Preliminary hearing, *The King v. William Ivens et al.* P.A.M.

<sup>415</sup> Masters, p. 116.

<sup>416</sup> He was a radical S.P.C.er who was later served deportation orders.

preach and keep the people in darkness." 417 He and Almazoff had reached an agreement of revolutionary conspiracy together it had been concluded. However, the reality was that Ivens' views on reform were far more moderate than the militant views expressed by Almazoff who advocated the use of force.418

To get his views out during the preliminary hearing, Ivens spoke at the Labour Church. At one sermon he told the audience that he had never agreed with the views of Almazoff at any meeting and he reiterated this point again during his trial. Clarifying another charge that he was linked directly to the O.B.U., Ivens at another gathering of the Labour Church, stated that at the meeting referred to, he had simply been ". . . comparing the Whitley council programme with that of the O.B.U. and trying to find some middle ground."419

The Labour Church almost became the people's court during the preliminary hearings. At one Sunday night sermon Ivens continued with his most common theme arguing that the "supreme need of the world today is for men and women who can rise above circumstances and see things as they are, then bring to men the solution of their problems."420 Ivens argued that "only in this way can there be proper conditions in the realms of religion, humanity, industry, and government."421 He also took the opportunity to outline the whole Labour Church movement and in so doing recounted much of his life's work. He suggested that "it was not by design that he started

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417 Manitoba Free Press, August 12, 1919. p. 8.

418 Again compare Manitoba Free Press. August 9, 1919. p.7. with August 12, 1919. p.8.

419 Manitoba Free Press, August 11, 1919. p. 2.; and August 9, 1919. p. 7.

420 Ibid.

421 Ibid.

it."<sup>422</sup> It was started because he had been pushed out of the Methodist Church because he was a pacifist, and he felt a need to preach to God, and "the attitude of the Methodist church made no difference."<sup>423</sup> Ivens said that the Labour Church had as the only alternative "caught the imagination of the people, and was attracting people who had not been inside the regular church for years, and was spreading all over."<sup>424</sup> Ivens told the audience about his childhood and how he had come to the "country as a boy of 18, with the intention of making money, but he had caught the vision of service and consecrated himself to helping humanity."<sup>425</sup> It was sad to learn that a rumor had spread in the community that he had received \$60 000 for all that he had done during the strike. Ivens said that he had a "passion of ideals" and that it was "hypocritical" for anyone to accuse him of selling himself. He considered himself a man who had caught a vision of religion and the ministry. What he said was that he "meant the real work of a pastor, a shepherd, who looked after all that affected his flock."<sup>426</sup> He argued that a new world was coming and an old was passing away but that it would happen "naturally", "not by revolution". His belief lay

not [in] revolution, but evolution, by the clearest thinking men on both sides getting together and co-operating to overthrow the system of production for profit.<sup>427</sup>

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422 Ibid.

423 Ibid.

424 Ibid.

425 Ibid.

426 Ibid.

427 Ibid.

During the preliminary hearings Ivens' political views differed little from his views held either immediately before or during the strike. In August, he was still arguing that governments all over the world were "chaotic", and that in Canada, "Conservative and Liberal succeeded each other, going from bad to worse, but the Union government was the worst of all."<sup>428</sup> He told one gathering of the Labour Church in August, that he did not know enough about the Russian situation to express an intelligent opinion, but he was equally as sure that ultimately

there is need for someone to rise above all the chaos and work out a system which will be in the interests of humanity, and born of God. With such a system, he would have no fear of the future, and would consider the sacrifices of the war well made if they should result in such a solution.<sup>429</sup>

Ivens was a Christian socialist who emphasized the "socialist" during the strike and the "Christian" during the trials. Clearly talk of God and the heady mixture of Christianity became more prominent now in Ivens' discourse than it had been at any point during the strike. The strike and his subsequent arrest and indictment had made him only too aware of the force harnessed against any radicals who stood to challenge the authority of the existing social order. He must have realized like a number of other radicals, that he had miscalculated on the degree to which the state would actively participate in the suppression of the workers. He had always thought that the workers would succeed because their cause was just. Both progress and evolution suggested its inevitability. One would have to work towards its arrival, fair enough, he believed, but he had obviously been naive about the

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<sup>428</sup> Ibid.

<sup>429</sup> Ibid.

role that the state would play. The state as a force was clearly engaged in impeding progress and it had proven that it would side with the employers. It was not surprising that Ivens occasionally buckled at times under the duress of the hearings, or that his language regained some of its religious invective. He said to the audience at the Labour Church one night that "he had no apology to make for speaking of religion."<sup>430</sup> What was most important, however, was that he had recognized, the change himself.

The preliminary trial ended on 12 August, after 69 hours of testimony. It was one of the longest in Manitoba's history, extending over three weeks, with 1 650 exhibits filed, and 118 witnesses.<sup>431</sup> The defense council then acknowledged that they wanted a trial by jury.<sup>432</sup> Several days later at the court of Mr. Justice Cameron the eight strike leaders were refused bail because "they had not adhered to the undertaking they had given after arrest."<sup>433</sup> Ivens speeches at the Labour Church and writings for the W.L.N. were used to deny him release. Ivens and the others were committed for trial.<sup>434</sup>

While preoccupied with his preliminary trial and Labour Church activities, Ivens found himself in the midst of another controversy related to his editing of the W.L.N. Among the radicals and conservatives in the W.T.L.C., confrontation over the editorial direction of the W.L.N. resumed immediately following the strike. The factional infighting that had subsided largely during the strike intensified in July and August. The conflict erupted

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<sup>430</sup> Ibid.

<sup>431</sup> Manitoba Free Press, August 13, 1919. p. 10.

<sup>432</sup> Ibid.

<sup>433</sup> Manitoba Free Press, August 15, 1919. p. 10.

<sup>434</sup> Masters, p. 116.



and Ivens' own involvement in the growing dispute peaked during the final week of the preliminary trials.

The left wing radical unionists, like W. Logan, R.B. Russell, G. Armstrong, and R.J. Johns pursued actively the formation of the O.B.U. in opposition to the craft based unions of the T.L.C./ W.T.L.C., and were actively working towards industrial re-organization. Opposed to this move in the ranks of the W.T.L.C. were conservative elements, who took control of the council after the collapse of the general strike. They were ideologically committed to craft unionism and formed a substantial number in the bureaucracy that were threatened by the potential outcome of industrial reorganization, perhaps fearing the loss of their jobs. The conservative craft unionist attacked with vigor the concept of the O.B.U. and its supporters.<sup>435</sup> Ivens was one individual who bore the brunt of such attacks.

As the conservatives in council moved further to the right, Ivens sided with the radicals taking many moderates with him. At the centre of the struggle was a battle over the control of the W.T.L.C.'s property, offices, funds, and especially the W.L.N. In the first week of August, as the gulf in council grew, Ivens was forced to play his hand, and he ran a header "bearing the superscription altered in such a manner as to constitute an announcement that the property rights of the paper had been transferred to the One Big Union."<sup>436</sup>

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<sup>435</sup>This battle for control of the mass by the competing tendencies in the W.T.L.C. has really been well covered elsewhere, and as such I offer only a survey to lead in the discussion of Ivens' role. see especially David Hall, "Times Of Trouble: Labour Quiescence In Winnipeg 1920 - 1929." M.A. Thesis, University of Winnipeg, 1985.

<sup>436</sup>Manitoba Free Press, August 11, 1919. p. 4.

Responding to Ivens' actions, a meeting of the W.T.L.C. was called by R.A. Rigg, a conservative, on behalf of the T.L.C.<sup>437</sup> At the meeting a new press committee was appointed and its membership reflected the conservative mood of the council. The committee met with Ivens, then passed a resolution favouring his dismissal and the appointment of Ald. W. B. Simpson as manager of the paper.<sup>438</sup> Simpson was supportive of the present bureaucracy, and was already familiar with the running of the paper as he had recently been appointed to the position of circulation manager. But before the change in editorship could be affected, Ivens released a copy of the W.L.N. that had been suppressed by the T.L.C., selling thousands of copies. The suppressed copy had "contained considerable matter devoted to the sedition trials and the conflict between the O.B.U. and International forces."<sup>439</sup> Ivens fate was sealed by his own doing, and there was never any sign of any regret on his own part for his actions taken. His support for the radicals over the conservatives in a battle over industrial reorganization versus craft unionism marked the end of his close association with the W.T.L.C. On Friday, 9 August 1919, Ivens prepared his last paper as the editor of the Western Labor News.

The Free Press reported that

Mr. Ivens dismissal is considered an important development in the fight for the control of the Western Labor News which has been occasioned as a result of the situation which arose when, at a meeting of the Trades and Labor council some weeks ago, a motion was carried transferring all property and funds of the Trades council to the

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437 Masters, p. 140.

438 Manitoba Free Press, August 11, 1919. p. 4.

439 Ibid.

Central Labor council, the One Big Union organization. It was charged by the "Internationals" that this meeting had been packed.<sup>440</sup>

The writer of this editorial in the Free Press could not have been more on base. The dismissal of Ivens brought to the fore the essential need to establish a new industrial organization and by further implication political organization for workers. Because of this split in the W.T.L.C. others who were of a more moderate disposition like Dixon, Queen, Farmer, and Woodsworth were also drawn into the radical camp. Following the split, the W.T.L.C. became an increasingly irrelevant vehicle in the political life in the city, while it remained a significant force in the labour movement. Labour was once again permanently divided by an enormous gulf that centered on fundamental questions of organizational strategy. By Christmas time, the moderates and radicals formed a new political party that could better express the needs of the workers.

Following the end of the preliminary hearings, Ivens and the other strike leaders spent twenty six consecutive days in jail without bail. Numerous protest rallies and gatherings were arranged to try and affect their release. At one protest meeting of the Labour Church chaired by T.J. Watts: J.S. Woodsworth, Dr. Bland, and S.J. Farmer spoke. Speaking to a crowd estimated at between 1 500 to 2 000 persons, Bland said that the refusal of bail was "a denial of the principle of British justice, that a man was innocent until he was found guilty."<sup>441</sup> At the meeting a resolution was put forward by S.J. Farmer and seconded by Bland regarding the refusal to grant bail to the strike leaders. The resolution read

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<sup>440</sup> Ibid.

<sup>441</sup> Manitoba Free Press, August 18, 1919. p. 4.

That we, Canadian citizens in public meeting assembled, condemn the gross discrimination shown in the refusal of bail to," naming the eight accused. "We remind the Dominion government that bail has never been refused in the cases of far more serious offenses than those charged against these men, who have not yet been found guilty of any offense, and we demand their immediate release on reasonable and unconditional bail.<sup>442</sup>

Other protest meetings followed. For example, meetings were held by the D.L.P., Women's Labor League,<sup>443</sup> the O.B.U. and the W.T.L.C.<sup>444</sup> At the end of August, F.J. Dixon, speaking to a crowd of several thousand, warned the government that if Ivens and the other strikers were not released from the provincial jail "organized labor throughout Canada will be called upon to take a holiday for 24 hours on Sept. 17 to protest against the treatment meted out to these men."<sup>445</sup> He also threatened a labour boycott of a federal industrial conference planned for Ottawa. Finally Dixon announced that protest meetings were planned throughout the Dominion to denounce the treatment of the strike leaders.<sup>446</sup>

On 10 September, after much public pressure, Ivens and the other strike leaders were granted bail. Justice Mathers informed the court that it had not been proven that the accused would not show up for their trials, so they could be released on \$4 000.00 bail, and two sureties of \$2 000.00

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442 Ibid.

443 Manitoba Free Press, August 20, 1919. p. 4.

444 Manitoba Free Press, August 20, 1919. p. 1. This is not contradictory because the W.T.L.C. was increasingly becoming conservative, and also, because by no means did all the radicals nor moderates disassociate themselves from the organization or even from their internationals.

445 Manitoba Free Press, September 1, 1919. p. 1.

446 Ibid.

each.<sup>447</sup> Ivens was the first to be released and it was reported that "his appearance in the doorway of the gaol was the signal for cheers from the crowd of workers, numbering over 1,500, who had gathered to greet their leaders."<sup>448</sup> Before the event was over, Ivens was chaired and paraded around the square to a chorus of "For he's a jolly good fellow".

Several days after his release, Ivens attended a Central Labour Council meeting of the O.B.U. called to report on R.J. Johns tour in the West for the Defense League. At the meeting it was decided that the O.B.U. would send Ivens to eastern Canada to raise money for the fund and to promote the O.B.U.<sup>449</sup>

While preparing for his trip to the East, Ivens devoted some time to the civic election campaign and the Labour Church. The mood in the community was virulent. Labour supporters planned to make it the first of many opportunities to redress the injustices of the summer months. Ivens left Winnipeg at the end of September to begin his well publicized speaking tour of Montreal, Toronto, Hamilton, Windsor, Sarnia, Port Aurther, and Fort William.<sup>450</sup> When he reached Sarnia, a local "Citizens Safety Committee", attempted to keep him from speaking.<sup>451</sup> A band marched up and down the streets, and arguments arose over his lecture visit. The Mayor spoke out strongly against Ivens' visit. The G.W.V.A. came to his aid, however, and Ivens spoke to a gathering of some 300 citizens in Sarnia's Moose Hall.<sup>452</sup>

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447 Manitoba Free Press, September 11, 1919. p. 1.

448 Ibid.

449 Manitoba Free Press, September 17, 1919. p. 2.

450 Manitoba Free Press, October 6, 1919. p. 1.

451 Ibid.

452 Manitoba Free Press, October 9, 1919. p. 3.

While Ivens was fighting to get a fair hearing in some of the more conservative quarters of southern Ontario, in Winnipeg, Tom Clancy, a radical, put Ivens' name forward to stand as labour's candidate for mayor for the upcoming civic election.<sup>453</sup> Unknown to Ivens, he was nominated, beating out runner up candidate S.J. Farmer by 16 votes the final count being: Ivens 222, S.J. Farmer 206.<sup>454</sup> S.J. Farmer moved that Ivens nomination be declared unanimous. A second motion was passed stating that, if for any reason Ivens declined or could not run then Farmer's nomination would be declared unanimous.<sup>455</sup> At the meeting, it was reported that the likelihood that Ivens would stand as mayoralty candidate was pretty remote. In particular, officials from the Labour Church stated that before Ivens went on his speaking tour of the East, he had made a firm commitment to resume fully his work at the Labour Church upon his return. The decision to stand Ivens' name was complicated further because R.B. Russell thought that under present circumstances (the pending trials) it was a mistake to put Ivens up for nomination. The Soldiers and Sailors' Labour Party was also surprised by Ivens nomination, but they stated that they would nevertheless support him. When Ivens was wired in Windsor of his nomination, he sent a telegram to the D.L.P. stating that he could not possibly stand for office. The D.L.P. then declared S.J. Farmer as its candidate.<sup>456</sup>

In early November, Ivens returned home on the train from his successful speaking tour to be greeted at a massive welcome home organized

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<sup>453</sup> Manitoba Free Press, October 6, 1919. p. 2.

<sup>454</sup> Manitoba Free Press, October 6, 1919. p. 1.

<sup>455</sup> Manitoba Free Press, October 7, 1919. pp. 1, 4.

<sup>456</sup> Manitoba Free Press, October 14, 1919. p. 5.

by the Defense Committee. Ivens spoke to the crowd of the funds raised in the East under the slogan of "One day's pay for Winnipeg."<sup>457</sup> He reported that a defense council established in Toronto had promised \$50 000.00 and had engaged in actively selling victory bonds for \$1.00 a piece. In Port Arthur and Fort William, Ivens had reported that he had raised \$363.00 collectively, and he told the crowd of yet another instance in which a Montreal capitalist, and millionaire donated \$100.00 saying "Ivens, your fight is my fight."<sup>458</sup> A passing of the hat at the Winnipeg meeting, that evening raised another \$968.00.<sup>459</sup>

He had returned to Winnipeg just in time to immerse himself in the civic election. Throughout November, the campaigning for the civic election took precedence over virtually every other event in the city for Ivens and for other labour activists. They saw an opportunity for labour to set straight the events of the previous summer, especially to put back to work a number of strike supporters who had had their civic jobs terminated as a result of the strike. What mattered most to Ivens and to others in the community was that these grievances see proper restitution. It was with these thoughts in mind that Ivens spoke to a Sunday night audience in mid November about his decision not to run as mayoralty candidate. Ivens stated that he believed that "Farmer was a much better choice for mayor than he would have been, and said that if he should have the casting vote in a tied vote between himself and Mr. Farmer, he would give it to Mr. Farmer."<sup>460</sup> Ivens campaigned hard for Farmer and the other labour candidates for the three

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<sup>457</sup> Manitoba Free Press, November 3, 1919. p. 5.

<sup>458</sup> Ibid.

<sup>459</sup> Ibid.

<sup>460</sup> Manitoba Free Press. November 10, 1919. p. 3.

weeks leading up to the election.<sup>461</sup> When the vote was held, Mayor Gray was re-elected over Farmer by some 3 116 votes. The city council, however, had almost an even split between business and labour.<sup>462</sup> Labour had done well at the polls, although not as well as it would have like to have done.<sup>463</sup>

Following the election, it was time again to turn attention to the impending trials. First up, was the Russell trial in mid December. Ivens was called as a witness on several occasions throughout the trial.<sup>464</sup> During the trial, Russell was asked of his association with the others who had been indicted. He described Ivens in familiar terms, unlike Bray and Pritchard. Russell also made the distinction that Ivens, like Queen and Heaps, were not members of the S.P.C., although he knew them better than Pritchard who was a member.<sup>465</sup> Politically Russell stated that he was opposed to Ivens, Queen, Heaps, and Bray, but that "as far as trade unionism was concerned, however, he agreed with them."<sup>466</sup> All had of course, announced their

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461 On the 14th Ivens spoke at Eary Grey School see Manitoba Free Press, November 15, 1919. p. 2.; On the 16th Ivens spoke at the Labour Church, see November 15, 1919. p. 3., See also November 17, 1919. p. 3., and again, November 21, 1919. p. 10.

462 Manitoba Free Press, Noveember 29, 1919. p.1. Those aldermen [sic] elected were: Mayor C.F. Gray, Alderman J.A. Sparling, J.G. Sullivan, F.O.Fowler, A.H. Pulford, Geo. Fisher, H. Gray, E. Robinson, F.H. Davidson, J. Queen, A. A. Heaps, W. B. Simpson, J. Blumberg, J.L. Wigington, and H.Jones.

463 For further information about city council, and its debates see, Ed Rea, "The Politics of Class: Winnipeg City Council, 1919-1945," in eds., C.Berger and G. Cook, The West and the Nation: Essays in Honour of W.L. Morton, (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1979.) pp. 232-249.

464 Manitoba Free Press, December 18, 1919. p. 4.

465 Manitoba Free Press, December 18, 1919. p. 5.

466 Ibid.



support to various degrees of the O.B.U. concept at various times during the summer.

On 22 December, Mr. Justice Metcalfe began his charge to the jury. He told it that "Speaking to you as a judge . . . if I were on a jury there is much in that matter that I would find no difficulty in concluding was seditious."<sup>467</sup> He continued his summary suggesting that Russell and Ivens had given the word "capital" a meaning which he could not understand. The definition given could only lead Metcalfe to conclude that Russell and Ivens had "been carried away with the stuff."<sup>468</sup> A clear suggestion made to the jury and a grim warning for Ivens quickly followed when Metcalfe said that "dealing with Ivens . . . he was the editor of the Western Labor News, and possibly the jury might find that sufficient, to show that the propaganda was seditious."<sup>469</sup>

After a brief deliberation the jury found Russell guilty on seven counts of seditious conspiracy. He was handed a two year sentence for each of the first six counts and one year for the seventh. Metcalfe told Russell that the seven counts would run concurrent and that the length of time that Russell spent in prison "largely rested with himself."<sup>470</sup> Russell was then lead out of the courtroom by Deputy Sheriff John Pyniger "With the cheers of his friends and supporters ringing in his ears."<sup>471</sup> The Russell trial had lasted 27 days, some 800 000 words were spoken, and more than 800 exhibits called.

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<sup>467</sup> Manitoba Free Press, December 24, 1919. p. 10.

<sup>468</sup> Ibid.

<sup>469</sup> Ibid.

<sup>470</sup> Manitoba Free Press, December 29, 1919. p. 3.

<sup>471</sup> Ibid.

The cost of the trial apart from the council's fees was estimated at \$25 000.00 dollars.<sup>472</sup>

On the night following Russell's sentencing, Ivens spoke to a record breaking audience at the Central Labor Church saying "I take it that your coming here tonight is meant as a tribute to Bob Russell."<sup>473</sup> Ivens delivered a passionate and angry speech charging Russell's conviction was the result of a "poisoned judge," a "poisoned press," and a "poisoned council."<sup>474</sup> Generally, emotions ran high at the meeting as the outcome of the Russell trial had "occasioned considerable alarm in labor circles throughout the country."<sup>475</sup> Unity was needed again. That night a meeting of the W.T.L.C. and the O.B.U. was announced "for the purpose of arriving at an understanding of the exact position which organized labor now occupies as a result of the recent court decisions."<sup>476</sup>

The trial of the remaining strike leaders began in late January. Ivens, Pritchard, Heaps, and Queen declined the services of a council and opted to appear for themselves. The three others: Bray, Johns, and Armstrong, were represented by defense lawyers.<sup>477</sup> The jury selection process was difficult, and took more than a week of jostling among competing councils before it

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<sup>472</sup> Manitoba Free Press, December 26, 1919. pp. 1-2. The seven counts are summarized in an article see same, December 26, 1919. "The Seven Counts." pp. 2,4.

<sup>473</sup> Manitoba Free Press, December 29, 1919. p. 5.

<sup>474</sup> Manitoba Free Press, February 4, 1920. p. 1.

<sup>475</sup> Manitoba Free Press, January 3, 1920. p. 2.

<sup>476</sup> Ibid. The appeal in the Russell case was quick, and it upheld Russell's conviction. The ruling denied the defense any recourse to the Supreme Court of Canada, but still allowed for an appeal to be made to the Privy Council in London.

<sup>477</sup> Manitoba Free Press, January 24, 1920. p. 7.

was finalized. All the jury members were farmers and a strong protest was made by the defense that the jury had been rigged, selecting right wing, conservatives rather than a balanced group.<sup>478</sup>

The trial of Ivens and of the other leaders was expected to be a long drawn out process. The council for the crown, A.J. Andrews, wanted the court to sit night sessions until two or three in the morning in order to speed up the process. Ivens and other strike leaders argued, however, that this would not give them the proper amount of time needed to prepare their own cases since they would have to attend court sessions and then work on their own cases. Ivens showed determination to settle this issue quickly in favour of the defendants. On the evening of 30 January, Ivens began his cross-examination of his first witness, Sergt. F. E. Langsdale, promising that he would not take up a lot of the court's time. He began the cross-examination at 10 P.M., and was still going strong at 11 P.M., proving to others that each of the hundreds of examinations could be extremely long, drawn out processes. Shortly after 11 P.M. Ivens was interrupted by Mr. Justice Metcalfe who spoke "expressing the hope that the cross-examination by the defendants would not be quite so wide as Mr. Ivens was apparently going to make his . . . He also took the opportunity to warn Mr. Ivens that a general cross-examination from the mouth of an accused person 'was a very, very dangerous thing.'<sup>479</sup> Ivens replied to Metcalfe, "But, surely, my lord, a man has a right to defend himself."<sup>480</sup> "Of course," his lordship replied, and then repeated his warning."<sup>481</sup> Ivens replied to Metcalfe that he believed that he

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478 Manitoba Free Press, January 29, 1920. p. 4.

479 Manitoba Free Press, January 31, 1920. p. 1.

480 Ibid.

481 Ibid.

could be finished within a half hour if the court adjourned there and then. Because all wanted to go home for the night, Ivens' request was granted, and the question of evening sessions never arose again after it was agreed that the night sessions would be restricted to alternate nights in the interests of all concerned.

The prosecution relied heavily on Ivens' speeches at the Labour Church, and especially his speeches at the meetings of 2 February, and 16 February, and 2 March, and 13 April. The themes of Ivens' lectures at these Sunday night services had been "The League of Nations", "The Immorality of the Profit System", "The Collapse of the Gold Standard", "Human Labor as the Standard of Exchange", and "The Significance of The One Big Union."<sup>482</sup> As the evidence was examined, Ivens objected to the reading of only part of the speeches because the quotes were being taken out of context. He argued, as did Ward Hollands (council for D.J. Johns), that either all of the individual speeches or none of them should be presented as evidence. Ivens also objected on occasion to the way that his Labour Church was being referred to by a number of the witnesses. He argued that labeling it as the "so-called Labor church" undermined its proper status.<sup>483</sup> All objections, however, were over-turned and found in favour of the council for the crown.

A. E. Reames of the R.N.W.M.P. and witness for the prosecution, argued that at several of the meetings Ivens had called for the end of the profit system and its replacement with industries controlled by workers. He quoted Ivens as saying that capital "had to be rooted out and the toilers would then take over the industries. It was just a matter of time until this

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<sup>482</sup> Manitoba Free Press, February 2, 1920. p. 1.

<sup>483</sup> Ibid.

would be done."<sup>484</sup> Reames accused Ivens of saying that "[a]ll you have to do is to walk into the factory and tell the owner you are going to take it away from him and the thing is done."<sup>485</sup> But the witnesses offered the most simplistic phrases and expressions, and proved to have virtually no understanding of the issues at stake, especially lacking was an understanding of the diverse strands of socialist thought. Ivens cross-examined Mr. Langsdale who had on record stated that Ivens said "the Germans are our friends."<sup>486</sup> Ivens asked Langsdale if he had heard him make an appeal a higher authority, God, and Langsdale replied that he had not. Ivens then argued that he was "making a plea in the interest of humanity on that occasion."<sup>487</sup>

New evidence was entered by the crown in their case against Ivens when, during the first week of February, Ivens was charged with an additional count of contempt of court for comments made at a Labour Church after the conviction of Russell in December. Metcalfe informed the court attendants that it was in his opinion such a serious charge that he "placed the matter in the hands of the attorney-general and the chief justice of the court of king's bench."<sup>488</sup>

Poor relations with Metcalfe were most apparent when Ivens was trying to cross-examine witnesses to demonstrate how his words at the Russell service and others had been removed from their proper context. Often Metcalfe was inflamed by Ivens' comments, and at one point in the

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<sup>484</sup> Manitoba Free Press, February 2, 1920. p. 3.

<sup>485</sup> Ibid.

<sup>486</sup> Ibid.

<sup>487</sup> Ibid.

<sup>488</sup> Manitoba Free Press, February 4, 1920. p. 1.

trial he leaned over to Andrews and told him in a voice all could hear, that he would not allow Ivens to abuse the witnesses, nor the court and its administration. Ivens attempted to interject and Metcalfe said "You sit down till I give you a chance to speak."<sup>489</sup> Again about to press for the opportunity to speak, Ivens was encouraged to sit down by the other defendants.

The day before Ivens' contempt of court case was to be heard, Ivens was granted early leave of the court to prepare his defense.<sup>490</sup> The contempt charge against Ivens was heard on the morning of 18 February at 10:00 when Ivens appeared to "answer a motion made by the crown to show cause why he should not be committed to common jail, or otherwise punished..."<sup>491</sup> Ivens read from two affidavits and while admitting to his famous "poisoned judge" address following the Russell trial, insisted that other comments had been taken out of context. The outcome of this "trial within a trial" was that Ivens was found guilty of contempt the following week, and bound over to keep the peace under an additional surety of \$1 000.00. John Wilcocks, secretary of the Labour Church acted as sponsor on behalf of the church before the central trial resumed.<sup>492</sup>

The central trial continued with counsel for the accused R.A. Bonnar, applying to have copies of the Free Press placed as evidence because they were advertising in his opinion "some terrible stuff at the time of the strike."<sup>493</sup> Metcalfe ruled that they were inadmissible and Ivens

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489 Ibid.

490 Manitoba Free Press, February 18, 1920. p. 1.

491 Winnipeg Telegram, February 18, 1920.

492 Manitoba Free Press, February 24, 1920.

493 Manitoba Free Press, February 4, 1920. p. 2.

immediately took objection. He asked the judge to explain "why the Western Labor News and similar papers were received and, when the defense tried to put in a paper that they thought important, it was ruled inadmissible."<sup>494</sup> Metcalfe replied that Bonner could explain to Ivens after the session why he ruled it was inadmissible. Bonner then told the judge and Ivens that he did not know and Metcalfe replied, "the matter was irrelevant and ordered the court to proceed."<sup>495</sup>

By the end of February, the defense had been issued a number of ultimatums by Mr. Justice Metcalfe stating that "the continued reference by the defense to the citizens' committee was irrelevant to the issue."<sup>496</sup> Metcalfe said that references to the Citizen's Committee were only attempts to cloud issues and to raise a questionable hearing of parties actions across the board. His ruling at the end of February made it impossible, in the eyes of the defense council's E.J. McMurray, to place the events in proper context and in protest he "discontinued" the cross-examination of a witness on the stand.<sup>497</sup>

Questions were asked about Ivens' position taken at a Grain Growers meeting held in Brandon in February 1919. Ivens was accused of having said that workers were "fools to let the government put conscription over"<sup>498</sup> and arguing that "the capitalist system was all wrong and was responsible for the war." He had also attacked the press, a witness for the crown said,

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<sup>494</sup> Ibid.

<sup>495</sup> Ibid. Ultimately the judge explained them away because they were "irrelevant to the issue".

<sup>496</sup> Manitoba Free Press, February 27, 1920. p. 1.

<sup>497</sup> Ibid. On the same issue see also February 28, 1920. p. 1.

<sup>498</sup> Manitoba Free Press, February 27, 1920. p. 2.

"calling those who worked for those in charge 'slaves.'"<sup>499</sup> At another meeting, the speaker also said that both Dixon and Ivens had spoken to a group that were 75% foreigners, heralding anti-conscription propaganda. This meeting the witness said, was broken up by returned soldiers who had "hunted the speakers of the platform and tore Dixon's hat to shreds."<sup>500</sup>

The case of the crown against Ivens and the six other strike leaders neared its conclusion as the council for the crown added a number of photographs of the Bloody Saturday incident. Bonnar protested their admittance on the grounds that they were entered at a "late hour". Mr. Justice Metcalfe replied "that he did not consider it a 'late hour' to admit evidence of the riots."<sup>501</sup> Bonnar then asked the judge if he thought that these pictures referred to "were riots". Mr. Justice Metcalfe replied, that "Yes, from what I have seen I would call it a most vicious and villanous riot."<sup>502</sup> Metcalfe added later that "The public of this city . . . must understand that if they think they have as much right on the street as a policeman, they are mistaken. To impute to the contrary is a contempt of this court."<sup>503</sup>

At the "eleventh hour" of the trial, W.H. Truemen was added to the roster of defense council members to appear for Ald. Queen and Ald. Heaps.<sup>504</sup> With Ivens' help, Truemen entered the admissibility of evidence debate, arguing that the evidence from the W.L.N. should be complete articles, not quotes taken out of context. The defense lost again when

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<sup>499</sup> Ibid.

<sup>500</sup> Ibid.

<sup>501</sup> Manitoba Free Press, March 2, 1920. "Defence is Undecided On Calling Witnesses."

<sup>502</sup> Ibid.

<sup>503</sup> Ibid.

<sup>504</sup> Manitoba Free Press, March 3, 1920. p. 1.



Metcalfé ruled that "only such portions of articles as were explanatory of the portions used by the crown could be accepted."<sup>505</sup> Ivens still refused to give up on the issue and attempted to have a full article included as an exhibit. The motion was refused and Ivens remarked that "I think it would have been the duty of the crown to put in the whole of that."<sup>506</sup> to which Mr. Justice Metcalfe replied that, "we shall not discuss that. I don't know how many times I have said that the crown could put in whatever portion they desired."<sup>507</sup> The debate was declared over, and Ivens set forth a list of articles, some of which were accepted as evidence and others that were not.<sup>508</sup> At one point, in early March, in an address before Metcalfe, the strike leaders and their councils made a motion to have the trial stopped because the "evidence was insufficient and irrelevant."<sup>509</sup> The motion was dismissed.<sup>510</sup>

Since all knew that the trial was coming quickly to a close, both sides jockeyed to address the jury last. Justice Metcalfe informed the council for the defense that if they tried to include further evidence in support of their innocence, then the crown council would be granted the final position to address the jury.<sup>511</sup> Both the council for the defense and the council for the crown cited British precedents for their case of adding further evidence and addressing the jury last. The outcome of the jockeying was that the defense

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505 Ibid.

506 Manitoba Free Press, March 3, 1920. p. 6.

507 Manitoba Free Press, March 3, 1920. p. 1.

508 Ibid.

509 Manitoba Free Press, March 5, 1920. p. 1.

510 Ibid.

511 Ibid.

withdrew their point as to the admission of exhibits in exchange for the "privilege of addressing the jury last."<sup>512</sup>

To demonstrate conspiracy and sedition senior council for the crown, A.J. Andrews began his address to the jury by arguing that "the accused had taken part in a campaign aimed at creating discontent among the workers and inducing them to support the establishment of a Bolshevistic form of Government in Canada."<sup>513</sup> He summed up the events of the famous Walker Theater meeting and he reminded the jury that Ivens had spoken at that meeting and even quoted several of Ivens' speeches.<sup>514</sup> He reminded the jury that Ivens said "I am not afraid of Bolshevism. It stands for liberty and democracy. The German people are our friends . . ." <sup>515</sup> and that he was opposed to the war. Andrews argued that the jury must

Remember, this language spoken when our poor boys were coming back from the war: they had been seeing the atrocities of the German people, They [sic] had been fighting against fiends and they heard that. Is there wonder that there followed riots on the 26th and 27th of January?"<sup>516</sup> Andrews continued, saying that Ivens considered Liebknecht and Eugene V. Debs as the true patriots of the time.<sup>517</sup>

Before he was finished his address to the jury, Andrews argued that conservative elements in labour "believed the cause of labor had advanced in

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<sup>512</sup> Manitoba Free Press, March 5, 1920. p. 3.

<sup>513</sup> Manitoba Free Press, March 6, 1920. p. 1.

<sup>514</sup> Manitoba Free Press, March 6, 1920. p. 3.

<sup>515</sup> Ibid.

<sup>516</sup> Ibid.

<sup>517</sup> Ibid.

a wonderful measure in Canada, because labor has not been down-trodden in this country."<sup>518</sup> He spoke to the jury saying

I do not believe the accused in this case can so hypnotize you as to the evidence of your own eyes, and your own experience, when you know that never in the history of the country was labor in such a position as it is at the present time... Never have they been wearing such god [sic] clothes; never have they had so much of the good things of life as they have at the present day. I will go further and say -- and I will say I am proud of it-- that there is no country in the world where workmen are better treated than right here in this Canada of ours.<sup>519</sup>

Andrews summation continued for three days, and in his attacks on Ivens, Andrews commented on a number of other speeches Ivens had made over the past two years.<sup>520</sup> Andrews closed his address to the jury with a final assault on Ivens' role in the Labour Church.<sup>521</sup> Andrews said that the Labour Church was "camouflage for the teaching of seditious doctrines and to fan the flames of discontent"<sup>522</sup> and that,

Teachings at this church [Labour Church]. . . were intended to make the hearers forget all that was taught them at their mothers' knee: to put self before country; to put before the hearers the vile doctrine of Bolshevism, which teaches duty to class first.<sup>523</sup>

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518 Ibid.

519 Ibid.

520 Manitoba Free Press, March 9, 1920. p. 1.

521 Manitoba Free Press, March 16, 1920. p. 1.

522 Ibid.

523 Ibid.

Ivens, Andrews warned, was "an impostor, a seditionist and a revolutionary . . . stirring up hatred and discontent and all the rest."<sup>524</sup>

Ivens was one of the last of the defendants to address the jury and he rose from his seat and pointed his finger at the crown council.<sup>525</sup> He told the crown council that he would, rather be on his side of the courtroom defending his rights, than ever be associated with the likes of them. Turning to the jury, he said that he would make his defense as short as possible, but an address of "great length"<sup>526</sup> followed. Reports of the event said that Ivens

spoke with calm deliberation for the most part, but there were times when he got worked up into making passionate outbursts in his efforts to convince the jury that he was entirely innocent of the charges against him, and that so far from his having entered into a conspiracy of any kind, there was a conspiracy against him.<sup>527</sup>

Ivens was occasionally scolded by Metcalfe for not getting on with it. Ivens argued that the crown had by no means proven that he was a member of a revolutionary group. He had been accused of a number of actions building on this theme of violent revolution. What he advocated was only "gradual change from the present system to that of a more equitable justice by legal and constitutional methods"<sup>528</sup>, and he "challenged any man to produce any evidence that he had done any other thing than that."<sup>529</sup> Ivens took the high ground in his defense of his own moral being. He colored his

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<sup>524</sup> Manitoba Free Press, March 19, 1920. p. 11.

<sup>525</sup> Manitoba Free Press, March 19, 1920. p. 1.

<sup>526</sup> Ibid.

<sup>527</sup> Ibid.

<sup>528</sup> Manitoba Free Press, March 19, 1920. p. 11.

<sup>529</sup> Ibid.

appeal with his temperance beliefs, arguing that he had not fallen from good character because he had not "ate and drank with publicans and sinners."<sup>530</sup> He argued ultimately that "imputations as to my motives I will not answer. I will leave them to God and Humanity. . . ."<sup>531</sup>

Ivens then told the jury how he came to the labour movement. He had earlier in his life in fact, been opposed to the movement and its goals. At one point he had even "urged a brother to go out and break a strike."<sup>532</sup> Since that time, however, he had developed a social consciousness, as he had learned more about the living condition of the workers. He wanted to preach to the people he stated without taking a salary, but he needed to live. Therefore when asked, he had agreed to edit the W.L.N. which offered him the money that he needed to carry out his work with the Labour Church.<sup>533</sup> Ivens then asked the question "What is a Red?"<sup>534</sup> in response to the charge that he was a violent revolutionary. He argued that "reds" in the labour movement "were the men who were a little bit ahead of their time. The term did not mean that they were I.W.W.'s revolutionaries or anarchists, but that they were radicals, who went to the root of the problems they faced."<sup>535</sup> Ivens was clearly, by this definition, a "red". He said, "If you think I am like the Kaiser, then I ought to go down and never receive a release, but I stand for the rights of humanity."<sup>536</sup> Ivens finished his defense for the day at

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<sup>530</sup> Ibid.

<sup>531</sup> Ibid.

<sup>532</sup> Ibid.

<sup>533</sup> Ibid.

<sup>534</sup> Ibid.

<sup>535</sup> Ibid.

<sup>536</sup> Ibid.

10:00 p.m., and Ivens said that he would complete his defense the next morning.<sup>537</sup>

In the morning session, Ivens told the crown that he was exhausted from his two day defense. At times during the morning session, his voice became hoarse and strained as he argued that the strike was justified. In fact the strike was part of an international restlessness the world over and this unrest could only be settled by getting at its root causes. Ivens challenged the defense council's address to the jury. Ivens argued that the organization of the O.B.U. was not revolutionary, but simply a planned measure to prevent strikes.<sup>538</sup> He responded to further accusations by the defense council that he had tried to usurp the authority of Ottawa. Ivens told the jury that it was simply his own personal conviction "that the men in power at Ottawa today are not capable"<sup>539</sup> of the reconstruction task that lay ahead. He called for evolution, not revolution, with "justice and exercise of brain."<sup>540</sup> Ivens said that system had failed and part of its failures lay in the lobbying that went on in Ottawa. It was undemocratic in his opinion and parliament was thwarted as a result of the initiatives undertaken by only a few. Ivens had not submitted evidence of his 26 days incarceration following the preliminary hearing. When he spoke to the jury on the subject addressing its undemocratic nature he was interrupted by the Justice and informed that there was no proof of his incarceration, because no proof had been submitted. Ivens continued his defense through the day and evening but still had not concluded by 10:00 p.m. when the court was again adjourned.

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<sup>537</sup> Manitoba Free Press, March 20, 1920. p. 4.

<sup>538</sup> Ibid.

<sup>539</sup> Ibid.

<sup>540</sup> Ibid.

The next morning, at the Saturday session due to a strain placed upon his voice, Ivens could no longer talk. At noon he told Metcalfe he was sick and he was allowed to go home until Monday morning when he was expected to return to conclude his defense.<sup>541</sup>

On Monday Ivens returned to the courtroom and it was not until Monday night that Ivens finished his address to the jury with an impassioned declaration that "his fate but not his destiny were in the hands of the jury."<sup>542</sup> In the night session he broke down under the strain of the whole event's ordeal, mentioning the "hardship which his family would suffer if he were sent to prison."<sup>543</sup> Reports of the trial say that regaining composure "he declared that although imprisonment might cause his family hardship, he would accept it, knowing that he was innocent of preaching sedition, of engaging in a seditious conspiracy, or of entering into an illegal strike."<sup>544</sup> All that he now wanted was the mission to be continued if he were sent behind the walls of Stony Mountain Penitentiary, and a guarantee that his family would be cared for. His final moments in the lengthy defense were carried out in "a peroration delivered with vigorous eloquence"<sup>545</sup> as he asserted that he preached "brotherhood, based on equity and justice."<sup>546</sup> He defended his Labour Church as a real Christian church and he stated his belief that "a better system of society is possible. We ought to try to evolve

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541 Manitoba Free Press, March 22, 1920. p. 3.

542 Manitoba Free Press, March 23, 1920. p. 1.

543 Ibid.

544 Ibid.

545 Ibid.

546 Ibid.

it, and it will never come unless some man or woman will dare and will do in order that it may be established."<sup>547</sup>

Pritchard, Heaps, and Bonar followed Ivens with their summations and then with the other defendants, Ivens listened to Metcalfe as he began his charge to the jury on Friday afternoon. When Metcalfe finished closing his charges, the jury retired and the court adjourned shortly after 11:00 p.m. Ivens and the other strike leaders were allowed to go home for the night while whole city awaited the outcome of the trial with great anticipation.<sup>548</sup>

The verdict was returned the following afternoon. Ivens, Johns, Queen, Pritchard, and Armstrong were guilty on all counts; R. E. Bray was found not guilty of seditious conspiracy, but guilty of common nuisance, and A.A. Heaps was found not guilty on all counts.<sup>549</sup> It was reported that the six men "accepted the verdict quietly. Heaps showed no signs of elation over his acquittal."<sup>550</sup> When the first of the verdicts was reached finding William Ivens guilty, "a groan escaped from the crowd."<sup>551</sup> In response, Metcalfe had the court room cleared before he continued the proceedings.<sup>552</sup>

Ivens was remanded in custody until the sentencing hearing. Immediately following the verdict, some of the wives comforted their husbands at the front of the court room, with tears running down their cheeks. However, Mrs. Ivens, was at home ill, unable to attend the final session. Ivens asked Metcalfe if he might at least be allowed to phone home and notify her of the outcome. His request was granted and no more than an

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<sup>547</sup> Ibid.

<sup>548</sup> Manitoba Free Press, March 27, 1920. p. 1.

<sup>549</sup> Manitoba Free Press, March 29, 1920. p. 1.

<sup>550</sup> Ibid.

<sup>551</sup> Ibid.

<sup>552</sup> Ibid.



hour later he, Johns, Pritchard, Queen, and Bray were taken from the court house out the back door to the provincial jail.<sup>553</sup> A crowd of 2000 to 3000 gathered outside of the court house and as the prisoners were led away, Ivens first, followed by the others, cheers went up from the crowd and a number of the prisoners acknowledged the cheers waving hands and smiling.<sup>554</sup>

On 6 April 1920, the six men appeared before Justice Metcalfe for sentencing. With every seat occupied in the court house and the wives and families of the prisoners seated in the jury box, Metcalfe began the proceedings. He sentenced Ivens to one year on each of the first six counts and to six months on the final count of the indictment. The sentences were to run concurrently. An article in the Winnipeg Telegram reported that Ivens "took his sentence calmly and walked out of the court in a most unconcerned manner."<sup>555</sup> The sentencing of the others followed, a number of them took the time to protest their incarceration. Johns, Pritchard, Queen, and Armstrong, challenged the degree of justice reached in the court. They received reprimands from Justice Metcalfe and were each handed the same sentence as Ivens. Bray was the last to be sentenced and he received six months for his involvement in the strike. Before the court was adjourned, Metcalfe expressed his opinion that "the attitude adopted by several of the

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<sup>553</sup> Manitoba Free Press, March 29, 1920. p. 2.

<sup>554</sup> Ibid.

<sup>555</sup> Winnipeg Telegram, April 6, 1920. "Bray receives Six Months and Remander Get One Year-- Men Are Taken to Task for Their Attitude in Open Court." Other reports of the sentencing, Toronto Mail and Empire. April 7, 1920. "Seditious Conspiracy." The fullest account is in the Manitoba Free Press. April 7, 1920. "One Year In Jail Is Strike Leaders' Term."

strike leaders . . . was a direct attempt to bring discredit on the judiciary." 556  
 He also spoke of "the enormity of the offense and said that in the interests of society he must impose a sentence which would act as a deterrent to others." 557

Ivens and the others were then taken to jail. Mrs. Ivens was left alone to take care of their two young children and manage the household. The burden that the sentence put on his wife and the wives of the other strike leaders was devastating, as Ivens had argued it would be. 558

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556 Winnipeg Telegram, April 6, 1920. "Bray receives Six Months and Remander Get One Year-- Men Are Taken to Task for Their Attitude in Open Court."

557 Manitoba Free Press, April 7, 1920. "One Year In Jail Is Strike Leaders' Term."

558 P.A.M. Orlikow Tape #12. Transcription available (Folder 2.) interview with an anonymous women. Also see the Manitoba Free Press, March 9, 1921. Ivens spoke in the provincial legislature as "He referred to the midnight raids on their homes. His wife had never been strong, but had never complained of her hear till that night, and since then she had never been out of the doctor's hands."

## Chapter V

### Practical Realities?:

#### Elections and Reforms, 1920 - 1936.

The Winnipeg General Strike Trials<sup>559</sup> marked a significant turning point in the Winnipeg labour community. From this period forward, no longer were the primary aims of labour resting in the arena of direct action. Instead, radicals and moderates alike were increasingly taking to the polls, attempting to advance working-class interests through the ballot. The decade following the strike became a critical period of re-thinking strategies as both its successes and its failures were debated within a sharply divided community.<sup>560</sup>

In no greater quarter were the effects of 1919 -1920 felt than in the lives of the working-class leaders sentenced to serve gaol and subsequently elected to office. This chapter follows Ivens' electoral career from 1920 to 1936, suggesting that during this period his views on reform and on the transformation of capitalism into a new, more just and equitable system of social relations changed remarkably little. If anything, his experience in the Provincial House helped to re-affirm his commitment to parliamentary

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<sup>559</sup>For a brief introduction on aspects of the Strike Trials see Leslie Katz, "Some Legal Consequences of the Winnipeg General Strike of 1919", Manitoba Law Journal, (1970), pp. 39-52.; Also see Ken Kehler and Alvin Esau, Famous Manitoba Trials: The Winnipeg General Strike Trials- Research Source. Legal Research Institute Of The University of Manitoba, 1990.

<sup>560</sup>J.E. Rea, "The Politics of Conscience: Winnipeg After The Strike," Canadian Historical Association, Historical Papers, 1971. p. 283.

action. Education of the working-class and the ballot remained the cornerstone of Ivens' hope for affecting the socialist state.

That Ivens views changed remarkably little during these years is especially significant because the world of 1920 differed greatly from the world of 1936. The arrival of the depression in 1929 reinforced the critique of capitalism and the desirability of the new social order that Ivens and other working-class leaders were working towards. Given the dramatically different conditions that the Great Depression brought, this chapter has been divided into two sections with the break at 1929. However, both sections examine the role that Ivens played as legislator, as intellectual propagandist and as I.L.P. candidate and party organizer during the periods.

With the growth of a national labour party in the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (C.C.F.) during the 1930s, as early as 1936 and definitely by 1940 an older generation of socialists had been passed over in favour a new group within the labour political movement. New ideas on what exactly a party of the left should be had gained currency among a rising group of new party figures in the 1930s. Whether their new ideas offered a more coherent and systematic understanding of the existing social realities, or whether they simply represented a growing bureaucracy that had eschewed a religious-like commitment in favour of winning elections is something still largely to be determined. However, the changing ideas and the shifts towards "partyism" beginning in the mid 1930s marked the end of Ivens' political career.<sup>561</sup> He would run again in Winnipeg in 1941 without

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<sup>561</sup> See Michael S. Cross, The Decline And Fall Of A Good Idea: C.C.F. - N.D.P. Manifestoes 1932-1969, (Toronto: New Hogtown Press, 1974); and Leo Zakuta, A Protest Movement Becalmed: A Study of Change in the C.C.F., (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1964).

much success, and in 1943-1944 he would fail to gain the support of the federal Ontario C.C.F. after months of hard organizational work in the Kenora-Rainy River District. For all essential purposes, his political career ended in 1936, in Winnipeg, with his defeat on the joint I.L.P.-C.C.F. ticket and as such marks the perfect ending point for this chapter and for this study.

## I

During the strike trials of 1919-1920, the gulf widened between the craft unionist internationals affiliated with the Winnipeg Trades and Labour Council (W.T.L.C.) and the American Federation of Labour (A. F. of L.), and the supporters of the One Big Union (O.B.U.) . In August Ivens had been fired from his job as editor of the Western Labour News by the W.T.L.C. for supporting the radicals in the O.B.U. In October, he won the Dominion Labor Party (D.L.P.) nomination for mayoralty candidate, but he resigned his candidacy as the W.T.L.C.- O.B.U. dispute began to spill over into the political arena. The Social Democratic Party (S.D.P.) and the Socialist Party of Canada (S.P.C.) were favouring revolutionary changes and as David Hall suggests, the bulk of their respective memberships were joining the O.B.U.<sup>562</sup> All that was preventing the left from officially endorsing the O.B.U. in the union dispute was that several prominent radicals: Armstrong (S.P.C.) , Heaps, and Queen (S.D.P.), remained within their internationals.<sup>563</sup> However, throughout the fall, winter, and spring of

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<sup>562</sup> Dave Hall, "Times of Trouble: Labour Quiescence In Winnipeg, 1920 - 1929," M.A. Thesis, University of Manitoba, 1983, p. 71.

<sup>563</sup> Ibid., p. 71.

1919-1920, factional infighting permanently separated the left from the right.

During this period of great upheaval, the D.L.P. remained the largest and most significant working-class party in Winnipeg. The D.L.P. housed the vast majority of non-union radicals and Ivens was one of its most distinguished members. With as many as 40 to 50 new members<sup>564</sup> joining the party at its regular bi-monthly meetings, membership in the D.L.P. was expanding because the strike had polarized classes in the community and heightened interest in politics in general.<sup>565</sup> The dispute among the internationals and the O.B.U. too was causing the sudden surge in D.L.P. membership. To prevent each other from gaining control of the influential party and using it against the other, both camps were joining its ranks in record numbers.<sup>566</sup> As well, the D.L.P. platform was more radical than it had ever been and by the spring of 1920 when Ivens and the other strike leaders went to jail it was calling for the restructuring of society and the transformation of capitalist relations into socialist relations of production.

When Ivens had been sent to prison he feared that he would emerge from his sentence bitter. He lacked the support of extended family in the city and was unable to support his wife and their three children when, two months before his 41st birthday, he was ushered into prison in April 1920. Two weeks following his incarceration, his youngest son died from diphtheria at one and a half years of age and Ivens was released in custody for two days to comfort his family.

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<sup>564</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 71-73.

<sup>565</sup> Rea, "The Politics of Conscience"

<sup>566</sup> Hall, p. 73.

Following Ivens return to jail, protests calling for the release of the prisoners mounted. On May 1, thousands of workers, men and women, took to the streets during this protest and they marched with banners flying along Portage Avenue. The legends of the banners read: "'We fought for democracy. Where is it?' . . . 'Prison bars cannot confine ideas'. . . 'Workers of the world, unite'. . . 'Our brothers should be with us, or we with them.'"<sup>567</sup> The parade eventually made its way to Market Square where the crowd was addressed by radicals and progressives Joe Knight,<sup>568</sup> S.J.Farmer, J.S. Woodsworth, and a number of other prominent labour leaders.<sup>569</sup> In a great display of solidarity with the incarcerated labour leaders, 12, 000 miners in Nova Scotia also took a holiday on May 1, "as a demonstration of sympathy for the Winnipeg strike leaders."<sup>570</sup> To secretary J. B. McLachlan of the United Mine Workers, Ivens and the other leaders had become labour martyrs.

It was during these days that Ivens and the other strike leaders were transferred from the provincial jail to the provincial prison farm, located seventy-five miles east of Winnipeg and accessible only by train.<sup>571</sup> At the farm, prisoners were worked six days a week. Quite often on Sundays, their families and friends traveled to the farm for pre-arranged visits and outdoor

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<sup>567</sup> Winnipeg Tribune, May 1, 1920.

<sup>568</sup> Joe Knight would shortly thereafter join the Communist Party of Canada see, Ian Angus, Canadian Bolsheviks: The Early Years Of The Communist Party Of Canada, (Montreal: Vanguard Publications, 1981), p. 70.

<sup>569</sup> Winnipeg Tribune, May 1, 1920; For the events leading up to the parade day see also Manitoba Free Press, April 26, 1920.

<sup>570</sup> Sydney Post, May 1, 1920.

<sup>571</sup> Ottawa Citizen, April 30, 1920. Of course R.B. Russell was the only strike leader who remained at Stony Mountain where he was serving a two year term.

picnics. Ivens was given the position of "head gardener"; and for almost a year he was to tend the prison gardens and to undertake general maintenance of the grounds.<sup>572</sup>

The exposure that Ivens gained through his involvement in the strike and the strike trials expanded his role in the community and in labour circles. His increasing popularity made him an obvious choice for public office. A provincial election was called for 29 June, 1920 and Ivens won the nomination as a D.L.P. candidate.<sup>573</sup> Labour was divided during 1920, as it had been since the strike, and as a result a number of parties were nominating candidates to contest the provincial elections. Although the various political parties could not unite under a joint slate, they did manage to limit the number of candidates to maximize labour's chance of success at the polls. The different working-class parties settled upon 1 S.D.P., 1 Ex-Soldiers and Sailors, 4 S.P.C., and 4 D.L.P to contest the election.<sup>574</sup> Running on the D.L.P. platform along with Ivens, were W.A. James, F.J. Dixon, and Fred Tipping. The other labour candidates running were John Queen, W.A. Cartwright, W. A. Pritchard, R.B. Russell, D.J. Johns, and G. Armstrong. Together they were a group of committed working-class intellectuals representing a diverse political spectrum. They shared the singular aim of protecting the interests of the working-class; but collectively, they did indeed offer an inchoate picture of the road towards a new social order. Many of the candidates were declared socialists, but some were not, and many advocated the need for direct extra-parliamentary action while

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<sup>572</sup> Mary V. Jordan, Survival: Labour's Trials and Tribulations in Canada, (McDonald House: Toronto, 1975), p. 165.

<sup>573</sup> Manitoba Free Press, May 13, 1920.

<sup>574</sup> See Western Labor News, May 28, 1920., June 4, 1920., June 11, 1920.



others were advocating revolutionary changes to the existing parliamentary system. That it had taken more than a month for the various parties involved to work out an acceptable slate of candidates attests to their diverse ideological landscape.<sup>575</sup>

Ivens' old friend and founder of the Brandon People's Church, Rev. A. E. Smith, was running in Brandon under the labour banner.<sup>576</sup> With Ivens and three other candidates in prison, Labour depended on F.J. Dixon, Smith, and others to get their message out. On a Brandon platform on the eve of the election, Rev. Smith spoke for over twenty minutes quoting from the press statements of a recent Methodist conference, noting that "it was as progressive as he was."<sup>577</sup> The Social Gospel was active within the church and for the past two years Methodist conferences had increasingly called for the active transformation of capitalist relations into a more effective, and productive system of planned social organization. Rev. Smith used the growing radicalism among Methodist clergy to buttress potential criticism of charges of his own radicalism.

The strongest planks of the Norris campaign for re-election were the popular social service programs that it had implemented during the last sitting of the legislature. A minimum wage law was established, Mother's Allowances were provided, women were given the vote, and farm loans established.<sup>578</sup> The Labour candidates charged the Norris administration with "extravagance" and poor fiscal management; three out of its five years

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<sup>575</sup> Rea, p. 283.

<sup>576</sup> Western Labor News, June 28, 1920. p.1.

<sup>577</sup> Ibid.

<sup>578</sup> Ibid.

in office the government had racked up enormous debts.<sup>579</sup> Even with a number of popular programs established during the last legislature support for the Norris administration had fallen off between 1918-1920. Rising levels in unemployment and the General Strike of 1919 had weathered Norris' electoral strength. By election time, as W.L. Morton suggests, it had become clear that the Norris government platform was "exhausted of ideas."<sup>580</sup> As the election drew closer it appeared doubtful as to whether or not Norris could earn the vote needed to escape a humiliating loss.

In the election, Labour passed the Conservatives in the polls and were now the official opposition in the province. In Brandon, it was soon clear that Ivens' old friend, Rev. A.E. Smith had been elected, "earning a big majority with the electorate."<sup>581</sup> In the Winnipeg riding under the new proportional representation system<sup>582</sup> only Labour candidate Fred Dixon and government member T.H. Johnson achieved quota on their first choice ballots. Dixon had won with an overwhelming number of 11 586 votes. Ivens was in fifth place with 1 928 first choice votes.<sup>583</sup> With the first count

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<sup>579</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>580</sup> W.L. Morton. *Manitoba: A History*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1957), Reprinted 1970. p. 374.

<sup>581</sup> *Ibid.*, June 30, 1920. p.1. Smith (lab.) won with 2 009 votes and his opponents showed: Clement (lib.) 1415, and Kirkcaldy (Cons.) 1 234.

<sup>582</sup> *Manitoba Free Press*, May 13, 1920. In Winnipeg a redistribution act had been implemented creating a single based constituency with proportional representation. There were ten Winnipeg seats to be won in the provincial election and the electors marked their first and second choices on the ballots. Through a process of counts and transfers either a candidate was declared elected having made a determined quota (which was created by taking the total number of ballots cast and dividing by the number of seats in Winnipg 10 and adding one) or a candidate was scratched from the race.

<sup>583</sup> *Ibid.*, July 1, 1920. p. 1.

completed and Dixon's seat secured, a surplus of 7 000 transferable votes remained. On Dixon's transfer Ivens received a surprising 3 600 second choices and he was officially declared elected.<sup>584</sup> Benefiting from Ivens' transfer were John Queen (Labour), W.A. James (Labour), W.A. Pritchard (Socialist) , and R.B. Russell (Socialist).<sup>585</sup> Before the complex process of counts and transfers was over, the ten Winnipeg seats had been distributed with four to the Liberals, four to Labour, and two to the Conservatives.<sup>586</sup> It was a victory for labour, as three of its four successful candidates were incarcerated working-class intellectuals.<sup>587</sup>

In 1920, support for Ivens was heavily concentrated at eight of the 143 polling stations.<sup>588</sup> He polled well along Logan, Alfred, North Main, Mountain, and Atlantic Avenues in the north end of the city. He also did particularly well at Cecil Rhodes School in Weston. Many of these polls were areas having Labour Churches in them during the peak period of the movement in Winnipeg, from 1919-1922.<sup>589</sup> Although Ivens had been popular at election time in the Labor Church areas, and particularly among North End and West End voters, he had ultimately counted on transfers from others. In 1920, he was fortunate to have earned the support of voters who coupled Ivens with F.J. Dixon. In the future, Ivens would rely on others for electoral support who were much more radical than Dixon.

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584 *Ibid.*, July 2, 1920. p. 1.

585 *Ibid.*, July 2, 1920, p.1.

586 *Ibid.*, July 3, 1920, p.1.

587 *Ibid.*, July 3, 1920, p.1. Ivens, Queen, Armstrong, were all in the provincial farm penitentiary at the time of their election, the fourth, Fred Dixon had been acquitted after a brilliant defense, and was free.

588 *Ibid.*, June 30, 1920. p.8.

589 *Ibid.*, June 30, 1920, p.8.

In Winnipeg, the Labour campaign paid royal dividends with the electorate. Labour candidates had achieved a remarkable 48 per cent of overall first votes cast. It was a triumphant redemption for the Strike for working-class supporters in the community. Compared to the Liberals who had only achieved 30 per cent of support at the polls, the Conservatives who had only gained 14 per cent, and the Independents who had earned 13 per cent of the city's total first votes cast, Labour demonstrated that it had a strong base from which to build.<sup>590</sup> The news of their success reached the candidates at the provincial prison farm on Thursday, 1 July, 1920, as relatives and friends went out for a visit and was "received with the liveliest satisfaction."<sup>591</sup>

For Ivens and the other successful candidates it was a time of celebration. The editorials in the increasingly conservative W.T.L.C. organ, the W.L.N. shared in the mood as they properly announced "Labor-Farmer Movement Victorious."<sup>592</sup> Less than two weeks after the election, and with a post election fever still carrying the day, the Winnipeg Labour Church too, held its second anniversary service in celebration of labour's victory at the polls. Rev. A. E. Smith, M.L.A. for Brandon appeared as one of its principle speakers along with J.S. Woodsworth (M.P. Winnipeg North Centre), W.D. Bayley (M.L.A. Assiniboia), and F. J. Dixon (M.L.A. Winnipeg). The W.L.N. reported that during the service W.D. Bayley moved a resolution

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<sup>590</sup> Ibid., July 2, 1920, p.2.

<sup>591</sup> Ibid., July 2, 1920, p.8. For R.B. Russell, the outcome of the election was only a minor disappointment. He was eliminated only after the 37th and final count, it was yet another tough break but he would be set to campaign once again in 1922.

<sup>592</sup> Western Labor News, July 3, 1920. p.1.

demanding the release of the working-class intellectuals imprisoned as a simple demand of justice.<sup>593</sup>

The period between the provincial elections of June until just after the civic elections in November of 1920 was marked by a degree of infighting in labour circles seldom paralleled. In August a debate between craft unionists and two O.B.U. advocates, had been arranged to voice the merits of both forms of industrial organization. It was a phenomenal gathering with over 5 000 in attendance. Tensions were high and at the debate W.T.L.C. organizer Bill Hoop (a craft union supporter), announced to the crowd that the O.B.U. was the reason that the strike was lost. Hoop's speech outraged Dixon who was somewhat radicalized by the O.B.U. position<sup>594</sup>, Ivens (who was at the prison farm) and a number of others who were "trying to maintain some semblance of Labour unity."<sup>595</sup> Dixon, Ivens, and others tried to have Hoop expelled from the D.L.P. during the fall. But Hoop was backed by the W.T.L.C. and they threatened to withdraw their support during upcoming November civic elections if Hoop was forced to resign from the D.L.P.

The debate subsided for a brief period, only to be resumed in October at the nominating convention for the D.L.P. candidates. The explosion occurred when Hoop appeared with a slate of candidates, himself included, for the civic elections. Hoop had opposed Dixon during the 1910 and the 1914 elections helping to insure Dixon's earlier defeats and at this convention, far from forging any consensus, Dixon saw it as an opportunity

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<sup>593</sup> *Ibid.*, July 16, 1920. p.1.

<sup>594</sup> On Dixon's social philosophy see Allen Mills, "Single Tax, Socialism, and the Independent Labour Party of Manitoba: The Political Ideals of F.J. Dixon and S.J. Farmer" *Labour/ Le Travailleur*, 5(Spring 1980).

<sup>595</sup> *Ibid.*, July 16, p. 76.

to exercise retributive measures. Fred Tipping, the former W.T.L.C. president, had attended the meeting and he later recounted that "I remember Fred Dixon getting up and saying to the meeting-- and it was a large meeting-- 'I wouldn't support Bill Hoop's nomination as a candidate for dog-catcher,' and with that there was uproar and the meeting broke up in noisy disorder."<sup>596</sup>

In the civic election of November 1920, S.J. Farmer, ran again as D.L.P. labour candidate for mayor.<sup>597</sup> Like the candidates for the provincial election held earlier that year, the civic candidates were considered to be an equally diverse group representing a wide body of opinions.<sup>598</sup> But together they looked for a "common policy which is [sic] a specific application to the affairs of Winnipeg of the general ideas of the Labor platform."<sup>599</sup> The D.L.P. platform rested upon thirteen points calling for public ownership of all utilities, changes in street transportation acts (including the application for the repeal of the Public Utilities Act), municipal housing, tax reform, developing further medical reforms towards the establishment of free medical services, equal pay for equal work, the right to organize and to associate freely for all civic employees, and the implementation of the initiative, referendum, and recall in all important civic affairs.<sup>600</sup> The school trustees candidates' platform offered an eleven point program calling

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<sup>596</sup> P.A.M., Lionel Orlikow interviews, tape #7 interview with Fred Tipping.

<sup>597</sup> Western Labor News, November 5, 1920. p.1.

<sup>598</sup> See E. Rea., p. 283.

<sup>599</sup> Western Labor News, November 12, 1920. p.4.

<sup>600</sup> Ibid., November 19, 1920. p.1. As a plank also in the Norris government's bid for re-election, the initiative, referendum, and recall would eventually be struck down as unconstitutional.; Also see W.L. Morton, chapter 15.

for free text books and supplies in all grades, the abolition of property qualifications for school trustees, and recommendations that schools be used as social centers.<sup>601</sup> The outcome of the civic election was only a partial victory for labour. Defeats were attributed to changes in municipal voting and to changes in Ward divisions.<sup>602</sup> Three labour school trustees were elected, but with six labour aldermen, and twelve opposition candidates, labour went into 1921 with fewer representatives than previously held. With over 30 000 votes cast in the mayoralty race, Farmer, however, had lost by only 920 votes and this was viewed as a positive sign. Another sign of encouragement was that popular support for labour had increased in this election, and similarly the anti-labour vote had declined.<sup>603</sup>

The outcome of the factional infighting was realized in December following the civic elections when a number of prominent Winnipeg labour leaders including Dixon and Farmer called a meeting "for the purpose of discussing the question of forming a new political party."<sup>604</sup> The new party, the Independent Labour Party of Manitoba (I.L.P.), was created, as Fred Tipping suggests, primarily because of personality clashes but also because of differing views towards working-class organization.<sup>605</sup> The D.L.P. had allowed for a number of people from outside the labour movement to gain prominent positions in the party. In the new party Dixon and others hoped

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601 *Ibid.*, November 19, 1920. p.1.

602 Ed Rea notes that the League gerrymandered through two amendments to the City Charter to help the right in the Civic Elections. See Rea, pp. 282-83.

603 *Western Labor News*, December 10, 1920. pp.1,4.

604 P.A.M., MG 14 D4, Minutes of the Independent Labour Party, Winnipeg Branch, 1920-23. p.3.

605 P.A.M., Lionel Orlikow interviews, tape #7 interview with Fred Tipping.

that persons whose records demonstrated that they had worked against the "general good" would find no place in the new party.<sup>606</sup> The D.L.P. would collapse and the I.L.P. would become the primary vehicle for labour in Winnipeg and it would play an increasingly significant role in Ivens' life during the next fifteen years.

The I.L.P. would eventually pride itself on being a socialist party and it actively worked towards the transformation of capitalism into a new social order. From its inception it was more radical than the D.L.P. and as a party, the I.L.P. would transform labour politics in Winnipeg until the formation of the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation in the 1930s.<sup>607</sup>

In December, 1920, R.B. Russell was released from Stony Mountain Penitentiary after serving almost a year of his two year sentence and hope was growing in many quarters that the early release of Ivens and the other working-class leaders would soon follow.<sup>608</sup> However, hopes were premature and it was not until Monday, 28 February, 1921 that Ivens was released. Press reports suggested that there were some visible signs that his health had deteriorated but no further comments were made.<sup>609</sup>

Just days following his release, on 4 March 1921, and with a rekindled spirit, Ivens took part in the debates in the provincial legislature for the first time. In the hallowed halls he spoke, predicting the "doom of the Norris government, claiming that sooner or later it would have to give way to those who were better able to deal with the changing circumstances of society." He spoke of his internment, saying that it had not made him bitter as he had

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<sup>606</sup> Ibid., interview with Fred Tipping.

<sup>607</sup> P.A.M., Lionel Orlikow interviews, tape #8., Interview with Mr. Aiken

<sup>608</sup> Western Labor News, December 17, 1920. p.1.

<sup>609</sup> Manitoba Free Press, March 5, 1921.



feared but rather only more determined. At one point in his opening address, he spoke of the structural similarities between the new legislative grounds and the jail that he was all too familiar with. He drew upon his own experiences and stated that he would ask of the government only the same questions that an old inmate did of a new arrival. The two questions he asked were "what are you here for?" and subsequently, "How long are you here for?" Ivens added in a refreshing manner that

whether the government stays in for the session or goes out at once is a matter of sublime indifference to me. I do not care what party is in power. I am not here to put out any government or to support any government. I am here in the cause of humanity. That is my only care.<sup>610</sup>

Ivens' attitude towards political power was most commendable for he always put the interests of people first.

When the legislature resumed, Ivens attacked the courts, the Manitoba Free Press, and the failures of the legal process during the 1919 Strike Trials. Finally, he stressed the symbolic importance of the Winnipeg General Strike in the hearts and minds of all members of the community. Of the Strike and subsequent Strike Trials he argued, ultimately, that

the institutions of this country were never in danger. Distasteful as it is, I must say it: these trials and prosecutions have shaken the confidence of thousands of workers. They have shaken the constitution of this country as never before. The workers know that the whole forces of the country can be marshaled against them. They know that parliaments can be stampeded. The Labor movement is simply honeycombed with spies. The

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<sup>610</sup> Ibid., March 5, 1921.

workers know they may constitutionally elect members to the legislature: and they know the government can keep those members constitutionally in jail. 'Have these things solved the problems?'<sup>611</sup>

He concluded his opening address in the legislature with a declaration that the labour movement was the harbinger of justice.<sup>612</sup> He was off to a great start in the provincial house emphasizing less his interest in the process as the goals.

Little was accomplished in the provincial house in these last two years of the Norris government.<sup>613</sup> For Ivens, the 1921 session offered only a brief introduction to the rules and procedures of the provincial body. He made a number of inquiries in the conditions and salaries of employees at the Provincial Gaols in the years 1914 to 1920,<sup>614</sup> and along with Queen, and Tanner, he called for a return showing a number of documents relating to the Winnipeg General Strike and in particular the strike trials.<sup>615</sup> He supported the government's Rural Credits and Farm Loans scheme calling for their natural extension which was the development of the Provincial Savings Offices into a "complete Provincial banking system."<sup>616</sup> This was a foretaste of Ivens' demands for the socialization of all essential services.

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611 Ibid., March 9, 1921.

612 Ibid., March 9, 1921.

613 Morton, p.377.

614 Journals of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba. vol. LIV., King's Printer. 1921. March 8, 1921, pp.87, 89.; March 31, 1921, pp.170-71.

615 Ibid., March 8, 1921. p. 87.

616 Ibid., April 5, 1921. pp. 170-71.

The role of class politics was evident in the legislature in a battle over a proposed visit by the Duke of Devonshire to Winnipeg during 1921.<sup>617</sup> In light of the acute problems of unemployment, both Queen and Ivens attempted to restrict spending on his visit. Together they motion that it be resolved

that this House is of the opinion that no public monies should be spent on banquets, or reception to his Excellency the Duke of Devonshire on his proposed visit to this Province, believing that such monies [sic] as might be available for banquets or receptions could be spent to better advantage to relieve to some extent the distress existing amongst the workers of the Province.<sup>618</sup>

Ivens was frustrated by extravagance in government and by its misplaced priorities, and would remain so throughout his life; the motion that he and Queen had proposed failed.

In early June, Ivens and his family left on a long vacation to see the West.<sup>619</sup> It was a well deserved rest, but it was also a working trip for Ivens. Plans were made to remain out West until September spending a good deal of time with some friends in Kelowna, British Columbia. Leaving Kelowna in early September, as the main speaker Ivens held a number of engagements in smaller centers like Revelstoke, Salmon Arm and Enderby, hoping to reaching Vancouver by 10 September.<sup>620</sup> The issues Ivens

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<sup>617</sup> This recession and its widespread effect has often been neglected. See David Hall, "Times of Trouble: Labour Quiescence In Winnipeg, 1920-1929," M.A. Thesis, University of Winnipeg, 1983.

<sup>618</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 154-55.

<sup>619</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 154-155.

<sup>620</sup> P.A.M., William Ivens Collection, Box., 15. Industrial Productivity File; also in The Independent, Friday, September 2, 1921. p.4.

addressed during these speaking engagements unfortunately are not known. But after a short visit to Victoria and Nanaimo, Ivens and his family then traveled up the coast to Prince Rupert, returning to Winnipeg after several further speaking engagements in Edmonton and Saskatoon.<sup>621</sup>

In Winnipeg during the summer of 1921, members of the I.L.P. had recognized the need to get out their own message and were actively engaged in establishing their own weekly called The Independent. S.F. Farmer was named the editor, and Ivens along with Bayley, Farmer, Dixon, Tanner, And Thomas Brown were added to the editorial committee. By the time Ivens had returned to the city, the paper had already printed six issues and hopes were high that the readership could rapidly be expanded.<sup>622</sup> Well rested, Ivens resumed his role as pastor of the Labour Churches, as a labour journalist, and his duties as a Winnipeg M.L.A.

As an opposition member in the provincial house, Ivens' role was limited in shaping and affecting government policies. In the 1922 legislative session he joined the Select Standing Committee for Municipal Affairs along with Rev. Smith and Dixon and during the question periods he focused on the problem of unemployment.<sup>623</sup> He was studying the gendered differences in unemployment in the province, and in a study of hiring practices was demanding that gendered and age discrimination be abandoned.<sup>624</sup> He put forward amendments to The Civil Service Act in an attempt to remove graft, but the amendments just passed second reading before being permanently

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621 Ibid., p.4.

622 Ibid., p.4.

623 Journals of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba. vol. LIV., King's Printer. January 19, 1922. p.12.

624 Ibid., January 19, 1922. p.12.

sidelined to the Select Standing Committee on Law Amendments.<sup>625</sup> Ivens also put forward a number of requests ranging from information pertaining to the Winnipeg General Strike of 1919, to information about money allocated for unemployment relief.<sup>626</sup>

Between 1920 and 1922 the two most important bills to be introduced to the House called for the government to make its cabinet proportionally representative of the composition of the provincial house, and for the abolition of the Public Utilities Commission. The first bill was introduced by A.E. Smith. It was a radical measure that Ivens supported and was defeated only after the casting vote of the Speaker had been used.<sup>627</sup> The second called for the abolition of the Public Utilities Commission that had been established during the first term of the Norris government. The Norris government considered this a motion of confidence and, as Labour, Conservatives and Farmers united in opposition, Norris tendered his government's resignation and an election was subsequently called for 18 July, 1922.<sup>628</sup>

In the provincial election of 1922, Ivens was entered on the I.L.P. ticket. The main issue of the campaign was Norris' leadership. In the Winnipeg riding two Conservatives, two Liberals, one Progressive, and four

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<sup>625</sup> *Ibid.*, February 14, 1922.

<sup>626</sup> *Ibid.*, Ivens orders were the following: Grand Jury, Report of E.J.D., Legal fees to Crown Prosecutors, New Parliament Buildings, total cost of construction, charges, legal fees, The cost of the Provincial Gaol and the Industrial Farm, numbers of unemployed people and unemployeed monies spent, and finally, voters and voters lists for the 1919 elections.

<sup>627</sup> Morton, p. 377.

<sup>628</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 377-78.

Labour members: Ivens, Dixon, Queen, and Farmer were elected.<sup>629</sup> It was a close race with Ivens elected eighth after the 32nd count. Ivens had relied on the support of Dixon's second choice ballots and a number of subsequent small, but significant transfers.<sup>630</sup> In the broader provincial picture, the Norris administration suffered a humiliating defeat at the hands of the newly formed Progressive Party of Manitoba.<sup>631</sup> The Progressive Party selected political newcomer John Bracken as its leader and with that began their domination of the provincial politics for more than two decades and for the remainder of Ivens' parliamentary career.<sup>632</sup> Throughout these years, Ivens challenged with increasing vigor, Bracken's technocratic and "common-sense" administrative approach to government and decision making. Ivens argued that Bracken's style of government was increasingly inhumane and incapable of resolving the complex problems facing the community.

Ivens returned to the running of the Labour Church and to expanding his own role in provincial politics during the first term of the Bracken administration which lasted until June 1927. During his prison sentence, the Labour Churches in the city had continued to flourish with the support of other talented and inspiring intellectuals. In 1921 and 1922 their founder continued tirelessly running them to growing audiences week in and week

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<sup>629</sup> Manitoba Free Press, July 22, 1922, p.10.

<sup>630</sup> Ibid., July 21, 1922, p.1. Voter turn-out was down marginally in 1922 the determined quota was just 4 030 votes and Ivens earned 3 648 votes.

<sup>631</sup> John Kendle, John Bracken: A Political Biography, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press: 1979), p. 28. (U.F.M.) with 24 seats, the Liberals with 7, the Conservatives with 7, the Socialists and Labour members with 6, the Independents with 8, and three elections deferred until the autumn.

<sup>632</sup> Manitoba Free Press, July 22, 1922, p.1.

out. The Labour Churches had still "undoubtedly caught the imagination of the people, not only in Winnipeg, where there are numerous branches, but also in other parts of the Dominion."<sup>633</sup> In Brandon, Rev. A.E. Smith's People's Church established in 1919 was still extremely active too.

In the Labour Church, during the fall of 1922, Ivens gave a series of lectures along international lines called "The Divine Plan of the Ages and the Wars of 1914 and 1922."<sup>634</sup> He was studying a variegated mixture of international issues-- the problems faced recently at election time by the British Labour Party, the problem of War reparations, the arguments for and against capital levy, and the problems of unemployment at home.<sup>635</sup> In October, he drew up a list of recommended reading materials and pamphlets for the O.B.U. organ, The Bulletin,<sup>636</sup> and he wrote a series of articles on foreign affairs for the same. During these months Ivens worked freely among the radicals in the O.B.U. and proved equally effective among the moderates like F.J. Dixon. The magazines that he was reading regularly during this period were New York city's The Nation, and The Freeman, as well as The London Nation, and The Manchester Gaurdian, all popular intellectual left-wing publications. The pamphlets that he was recommending were published by the National Labor Press in Manchester, the British I.L.P. from London, and a series on Foreign Affairs from West Minster, South West Ireland.<sup>637</sup> The books that Ivens was recommending on international affairs, were works by A. Gibb, including How the War

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<sup>633</sup> Ibid., July 9, 1920. p.1.

<sup>634</sup> O.B.U. Bulletin, October 26, 1922. p. 5.

<sup>635</sup> Ibid., December 14, 1922. p. 5.

<sup>636</sup> Ibid., October 26, 1922. p. 5.

<sup>637</sup> Ibid., December 14, 1922. p. 5.

Came, and More Can Now Be Told, and H. N. Brailsford's The War of Steel and Gold, E. D. Morel's Diplomacy Revealed, R. A. Fischer's Memories of The War, and Jay Nock's The Myth of a Guilty Nation.<sup>638</sup> He was offering a broad assortment of works for individuals interested in a sweeping program of social reconstruction. Far from reading the "muck-raking literature of the day"<sup>639</sup> as one historian has called it, Ivens was reading the latest and many of the most widely respected books of the day.

As a legislator during the 1920s Ivens was consistently drawn to addressing issues that enriched quality of living, understanding of community and human relations. He tried to translate his moral invectives into a practical series of meaningful reforms that aimed at moving the community away from competition and closer towards a co-operative system of social relations. The areas that he focused on were health care reforms (closely linked to this were family concerns and gender issues), changes to the educational system, improvements in workplace conditions, and finally increasing the role of government in business and growing the socialization of essential services. All four areas that Ivens concentrated on through his role as legislator and public propagandist deserve further mention.

Since his time at McDougall Methodist Church in 1916, Ivens spoke of the need to improve the medical services and facilities for all in the community. In the 1920s through his role as legislator, his advocacy of health reform remained consistent with his earlier views. Substance abuse directly hurt the poorer members of the community in far greater numbers than any other group and he wrote "Workers! The Time to Think -Not

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<sup>638</sup> Ibid., December 14, 1922. p. 5.

<sup>639</sup> Morton, p. 367.



Drink- Has Come," in 1920 and reprinted it again in 1923. His pamphlet emphasized the need to make communities dry. He warned the incautious through sermons, speeches in the legislature, and song, especially of the danger of the "corn."

### The Song of the Corn

I was made to be eaten and not to be drank  
 To be husked in a barn, not soaked in a tank;  
 I came as a blessing when put in a mill,  
 As blight and a curse when run through a still.  
 Make me up into loaves and your children are fed,  
 But if into drink, I'll starve them instead;  
 In bread I'm a servant the eater can rule,  
 In drink I'm a master, the drinker a fool.  
 Then remember my warning, my strength I'll employ.  
 If eaten to strengthen, it drank to destroy.<sup>640</sup>

Through the 1920s, he addressed the joint problems of drug addiction and alcohol abuse<sup>641</sup> and demanded legislation that would better recognize the problems of drug addicts in the province emphasizing the need to provide proper treatment facilities. Under the existing system, addicts were sent to the penitentiary and both Ivens and Tanner argued that "the interest both of drug addicts and the general public can be better served by speedy and scientific treatment of the patients."<sup>642</sup> Substance abuse he saw as a prescription for bawdy houses and the destruction of the home and for

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<sup>640</sup> University of Winnipeg, U.C.A., Ivens Box, "Workers! The Time to Think -Not Drink- Has Come." 1923. p. 16.

<sup>641</sup> O.B.U. Bulletin, May 17, 1923.

<sup>642</sup> Journals of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba. vol. LVI., King's Printer., 1924. p. 58.

depression that could lead to insanity, crime, unemployment. It would destroy the very morality so much a part of Ivens' thought and the most important pillar in improving the consciousness of the working-class.<sup>643</sup> His convictions led him to claim in a referendum on prohibition in 1923 "If we want an alert, well-informed aggressive, working class movement, shall we find an ally or an enemy in alcohol? If an enemy, then 'No.'"<sup>644</sup>

Through his concern for others disadvantaged by the current system, Ivens also spoke out on the care of elderly patients.<sup>645</sup> On many occasions he traveled to Brandon and to other rural communities to check into the conditions that Manitobans faced upon entering home care facilities. During the 1926 session of the legislature Ivens made a number of inquiries into the living conditions of the elderly at homes in Portage La Prairie.<sup>646</sup> Often Ivens and Farmer found that the basic health standards at the facilities were not enforced, that the facilities were short staffed and underpaid, and as a result the quality of care at the facilities suffered immensely. This work with the elderly led him into the struggle for old age pensions too in the 1920s<sup>647</sup> as he made numerous inquiries into the conditions of proposed old age pension schemes.<sup>648</sup> Age was exploited just like any other weakness under

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<sup>643</sup>University of Winnipeg, U.C.A., Ivens Box, "Workers! The Time to Think -Not Drink- Has Come." 1923. pp. 1-16.

<sup>644</sup> *Ibid.*, p.16.

<sup>645</sup> Journals of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba. vol. LVI., King's Printer., 1924. p. 222. On the Canadian Federation of the Blind see P.A.M., William Ivens Collection, MG 14 10A, Box 1. folder. Canadian Federation of the Blind.

<sup>646</sup> Journals of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba. vol. LVIII., King's Printer., 1926. pp. 169-70,

<sup>647</sup> *Ibid.*, 1924. p. 222.

<sup>648</sup> *Ibid.*, 1925. p. 420.

the existing system of social relations and facilities for treatment and security needed to be improved in a movement towards a better understanding of community.

Ivens concern for justice, for fair handedness, morality, and common decency saw him pushing for amendments to the doubtful paternity act in 1925. In the past if an un-wed mother appeared before a judge suing for child support, the case typically was thrown out if two men would swear that they had been with the mother. Under the proposed amendments "when an unmarried woman has a child of which one of two or more men might be the father, the judge before whom the case is brought may order each of the men to contribute to the Public Welfare Board for the child's support."<sup>649</sup> The fear of blackmail, which had stopped the passage of similar bills in the past, could now be avoided both D.L. Campbell (progressive Lakeside) and Ivens argued, because under the proposed amendment, payments would be made to a Board instead of the woman herself.<sup>650</sup> However, the new proposal was "vigorously opposed by J.T. Haig. He denounced it as an outrageous proposal, a legal recognition of sin in our courts. This class of woman, he said, was entitled to no consideration."<sup>651</sup> Ivens replied to his opponent in the House arguing that

the class of women to whom Mr. Haig referred would not be affected by this amendment, as they did not have children. It was the unfortunate and trusting girl who needed this protection. One thing this bill would do-- it would stop men coming into court and swearing they had known a girl, in order to save a friend from being adjudged father of the

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<sup>649</sup> The Weekly News, March 27, 1925. p. 5.

<sup>650</sup> Ibid., March 27, 1925. p. 5.

<sup>651</sup> Ibid., March 27, 1925. p. 5.

girl's child It would stop that and it should be stopped.(Applause)<sup>652</sup>

The class and gendered nature of courts and of the medical establishment did not escape Ivens' attention. Both offered challenges that Ivens confronted in the legislature during the 1920s. As the Bracken government really began to move on the deficit by cutting social services, Ivens sharpened his criticisms of the powers that be. One of the first services to be hit with a series of budgets in the mid 1920s were cuts to Mothers allowances. Responding to the cuts, at Labour Church lectures, in the pages of Winnipeg's new labour paper, The Weekly News, and throughout more than one spring sessions in the House, Ivens accused the government of "Robbing Peter to Pay Paul."<sup>653</sup> He traced the history of the Mothers allowance bill and outlined the Bracken government's steady decline in payments to widowed mothers. Ivens argued that it was the result of Bracken's

single-eyed regard for the economy from a money point of view [that] has been to cut the very heart out of the legislation; to say nothing of reducing the widows themselves below the bare subsistence line if they are unable to go out and earn a little to make up the deficiency. The principle of keeping homes together and enabling the mothers to care for their own children instead of the latter being placed in public institutions has been seriously menaced by the reductions.<sup>654</sup>

Widowed mothers and single mothers most dependent on the services of the allowance were those of the lower class, believed Ivens. The cuts were

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<sup>652</sup> Ibid., March 27, 1925. p. 5.

<sup>653</sup> Ibid., June 5, 1925. p. 4.

<sup>654</sup> Ibid., June 5, 1925. p. 4.

the result of a unthinking and inhumane policy that put these women out on the street to raise their families. Ivens believed that its direct impact was that it would increase prostitution and would perpetuate the cycle of poverty. Ivens argued that the very idea of giving out mothers allowances was built on the premise of a social good and that the community would suffer greater harm in the long run failing their disbursement. For if children were not raised as unconstructive members of the community because their mothers were forced to work all hours of the night and day, then society would pay many times over and in many ways in the end. The cuts to mothers allowances continued throughout the 1920s as Ivens' petitions to Bracken had little effect.

Medical services, the care of the elderly, the fate of women by a patriarchal political and medical establishment were all fair terrain in Ivens' crusade for justice and a new social order. His work for pensions, his growing concern for gender issues, his insistence on health care reform, in 1927 and later found him actively engaged in work for other challenged groups including work for the blind.<sup>655</sup> Subsequently, Ivens became an active supporter of the Canadian Federation of the Blind in the 1930s and 1940s.<sup>656</sup>

The importance of education had always been stressed by Ivens, as it had by a long line of British Socialists such as Bruce Glasier and William Morris. Ivens had helped out in the young workers' educational league

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<sup>655</sup> Journals of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, vol. LVII. King's Printer., 1925, p.92, pp. 72-73, pp. 71-72.

<sup>656</sup> Ibid., 1924. p. 222. On the Canadian Federation of the Blind see P.A.M., William Ivens Collection, MG 14 10A, Box 1. folder "Canadian Federation of the Blind."

during his years in the Methodist Church. As pastor of the Labour Church in 1921 his belief in change through education had led him to establish a weekly labour class at the Central Labour Church. The classes offered a full program of educational activities and a strong curriculum that probed into the heart of the reasons behind the failure of capitalism.

Ivens was aware of the class based nature of the educational system and he was especially wary of its manipulation by interest groups. During the 1923-1925 sessions of the provincial legislature Ivens made inquiries into the running of the provincial school system that included the penetration of the cadet movement into the classroom. Historian Thomas Socknat has suggested that in the 1920s there was a substantial opposition to cadet training in schools.<sup>657</sup> As a pacifist, and again in his opposition to militarism, Ivens opposed the very idea of cadet recruiting and training courses run through the public school system, for they instilled a very harmful set of values into the lives of the young.

He continued pressing for educational reforms, studying the condition of both rural and urban schools in the province, the number of months that they were open each academic year, and the number of children who received less than one hundred days of schooling in the province.<sup>658</sup> During question periods Ivens requested information into the conditions of library facilities at the province's penal institutions: he wondered what grants, if any, had been allotted for the maintenance of such facilities.<sup>659</sup> Education

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<sup>657</sup> See Thomas Socknat, Witness Against War: Pacifism in Canada 1900 - 1945, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1977). p.7.

<sup>658</sup> Journals of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba. vol. LVII., King's Printer, 1925., p. 92, and pp. 71-73.

<sup>659</sup> Ibid., p.170.

was at the very heart of Ivens' program of reconstructing a better society and all persons in the community were worthy and equally as deserving of educational opportunities. If the new socialist order was to eventually be ushered in, the full potential of each and every individual had to be realized and this could only come through education.

For those persons who had their formal education behind them and were now actively engaged in contributing to the community through work, Ivens offered a series of immediate reforms that would better conditions of the workplace environment. His practical reforms during the 1920s and 1930s dealt with changes to individual acts proposing amendments to the Steam Boilers Act and the Barbers Act<sup>660</sup> and also amendments to acts like the Garnishment act that affected all workers.<sup>661</sup> One of these latter bills that Ivens supported was introduced by John Queen calling for a 24 hour continuous rest period for workers in every seven days with the exception being only in emergencies. The bill passed two readings before it was held up in a law amendments committee meeting.<sup>662</sup> When this bill was eventually thrown out, both Ivens and Queen fought to have it re-considered.<sup>663</sup> Again the limits of working within a parliamentary system as an opposition member were made known.

Throughout the summer and fall of 1925, Ivens activities in the community found him writing a number of articles in The Weekly News. He traced in a very basic manner the historical development of "Labor

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660 Ibid., p.435.

661 O. B. U. Bulletin. May 17, 1923.

662 The Weekly News. March 6, 1925. p.1.

663 Ibid., March 6, 1925. p.1.

Legislation in Canada,"<sup>664</sup> and he expanded his study during the fall to include a comparison of labour legislation in Canada to legislation in Great Britain. At the Labour Church on Sunday nights, he was exploring the "geographical monstrosities of the Peace Treaty, using a map prepared by J.S. Ewart, K.C., of Ottawa, to illustrate the unnatural remapping of Europe by the Great Nations at Versailles."<sup>665</sup>

In 1926, the inquiries Ivens made were into the working conditions, hourly wages, sickness benefits, overtime pay, and deductions under the provincial liquor control commission's agreement with employees.<sup>666</sup> He asked the government what efforts had been made to improve the living conditions of men at lumber camps in the province, and what steps had been taken to make irresponsible companies comply with government regulations.<sup>667</sup> During this particular session Ivens also had in hand a Trades Dispute bill dealing with the right of peaceful picketing, and another for the regulation of working hours.<sup>668</sup>

Together, Ivens' critiques of health care, of the old age pensions his demands for improved facilities for treatment and for education, for safer working conditions, for more humane legislation, all combined to form an overarching call for the socialization of the community. In the great movement from competition towards co-operation, everything was linked to a need and a desire on the part of Ivens to transform the existing system of social relations. As he studied, debated, and wrote about the issues that

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<sup>664</sup> Ibid., June 26, 1925. p.6. This series continued for several months.

<sup>665</sup> Ibid., August 14, 1925. p.4.

<sup>666</sup> Journals of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba. vol. LVIII., King's Printer. 1926. pp.169-70, pp. 196-97, pp. 230-31, pp. 256-57.

<sup>667</sup> Ibid., 1926, p. 92, pp. 72-73, pp. 71-72.

<sup>668</sup> The Weekly News. February 4, 1927. p.1.



concerned all thinking members of the community and that all members of the community faced, he emphasized the urgency of change.<sup>669</sup>

During the 1925 session, a strike situation in coal mining in Nova Scotia had risen to a level of 'urgent' public importance. Responding to a national outcry made by labour, in March, 1925 Ivens asked leave to move the adjournment of the house in protest over the treatment of workers. A debate followed, and the motion was only withdrawn as Ivens stormed out of the House.<sup>670</sup> For a number of days debate in the House centered on responsibility for the mining strike. In the House and on the pages of the local press, Ivens called upon all Winnipeg dailies to set up strike relief funds for the miners and their families.<sup>671</sup> He remained in touch and deeply concerned about the conditions that all workers faced on the job and its effects on the community. Underlying this problem at the Nova Scotia mines was a social order that allowed the Corporation to water its stock to the tune of \$230, 000, 000. 00, argued Ivens. Socialization was the road to a better future for all and here was a good example of a need to expand government's role in business.<sup>672</sup>

During the 1927 session of the provincial legislature Ivens continued his critique of capitalism. In a study of insurance premiums, Ivens noted that from 1923 until the end of 1926, the government had paid out to private businesses \$300 000.00 more than they had collected in claims.<sup>673</sup> Ivens

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<sup>669</sup> Ibid., May 17, 1923.

<sup>670</sup> Journals of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba. vol. LVII., King's Printer. 1925. p. 209.

<sup>671</sup> The Weekly News, March 27, 1925. p. 7.

<sup>672</sup> Ibid., March 27, 1925. p. 7.

<sup>673</sup> Journals of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba. vol. LIX., King's Printer., 1927. p. 24.

suggested, that the establishment of a provincially-owned insurance company for government properties was what was needed. Socialization could be profitable in more ways than one, he clearly believed. Until the establishment of the co-operative commonwealth, Ivens argued that it was necessary to continue expanding government's role in business through the socialization of industries. In the 1920s Ivens' message in the House was that changes had to be made in social relations for the betterment of all in the community. Individual gain had to be sacrificed for the communal good. Increasing the role of government was a positive, constructive and profitable venture if all members of the community were willing to do their part.

Continuing with his focus on education and progressive reform, during the summer of 1925 at the Labour Church, Ivens gave a series of lectures called the "Race Between Education and Catastrophe: Civilization yesterday, today, and tomorrow."<sup>674</sup> Like sermons Ivens had given in 1918, these addresses asked "whether the necessary changes can be brought about before the whole civilization ends in one colossal convulsion of destruction."<sup>675</sup> Ivens argued that people were in the "greatest intellectual revolution that has ever overtaken mankind,"<sup>676</sup> and that it was only a matter of time before either "evolution" or "catastrophe" directed all along an ultimate path of "social salvation" or "social destruction".<sup>677</sup> As historian Stephen Yeo suggests, this was just one of several ways in which gradualism was marked by a sense of urgency.<sup>678</sup> In the lectures Ivens explored the

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<sup>674</sup> The Weekly News, June 19, 1925. p. 2.

<sup>675</sup> Ibid., June 19, 1925. p. 2.

<sup>676</sup> Ibid., June 19, 1925. p. 2.

<sup>677</sup> Ibid., June 19, 1925. p. 2.

<sup>678</sup> Stephen Yeo, "A New Life: The Religion of Socialism in Britain 1883 - 1896," History Workshop, 4( Autumn 1977) p. 21.

development of civilization from its very "crude" beginnings unto the present, tracing the concepts of private property and social servitude from their "rudimentary origins" until "the present".<sup>679</sup>

Federal elections were announced by the King government for the fall of 1925 and the I.L.P. planned to run several new candidates. At the same meeting that passed the final draft of the I.L.P.'s federal election platform Ivens was appointed organizer for the party.<sup>680</sup> His duties were to "began immediately."<sup>681</sup> Running federally under the I.L.P. banner and as party leader was J.S. Woodsworth, Winnipeg. He was joined by John Kelly for Winnipeg South, A. Henry for Winnipeg, and A.A. Heaps for Winnipeg North.<sup>682</sup> As campaign organizer, Ivens established a new Morse Place branch of the I.L.P. in Winnipeg. Throughout the fall work sent him traveling to a number of communities throughout the province promoting I.L.P. candidates and, in Springfield, Dauphin, and Brandon, attempting to forge a working relationship with the Progressives.<sup>683</sup> The outcome of the federal election saw the return of the King government. For the I.L.P. the election saw the return of A.A. Heaps in North Winnipeg following a by-election defeat in 1923, Woodsworth was re-elected and only Henry and Kelly who had been long shots to begin with, went down to defeat. On

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679 The Weekly News, June 19, 1925. p. 2.

680 Ibid., September 18, 1925. p.1.

681 Ibid., September 18, 1925. p.1.

682 Ibid., September 18, 1925. pp.1, 2.

683 Ibid., September 25, 1925. p.1.

balance it was reported that Ivens' organizational efforts had paid off and had helped to secure their victories.<sup>684</sup>

Federal elections were held again in 1926, as the outcome of the King-Byng affair, and I.L.P.ers J.S. Woodsworth and A.A. Heaps were returned with large majorities. Also elected was William Irvine of Calgary, who had lost the election in 1925. The I.L.P. majorities were three times as large as their victories the year earlier and it was seen further as an encouraging sign for labour organizing for the upcoming municipal and provincial seats.<sup>685</sup> Ivens' organizational work included promoting a monster picnic in July, 1926.<sup>686</sup> The event was a success as were most fundraising activities that he was involved in, and the picnic become an annual event for a number of years to follow.

The Labour Church held its final service of its 1925-26 regular season on the 28 of June. The members were treated to a guest lecture by Dr. David Coull from the Manitoba School of Chiropractic who spoke on "The Human Body and Its Functions."<sup>687</sup> The study of chiropractic, according to Coull, aimed at "a perfect human body in a perfect social order so that there may be a perfect mentality [in] the Labor Movement."<sup>688</sup> The first school of chiropractic in North America was established in the 1840s by D.H. Palmer at Davenport, Iowa and the field of chiropractic study was rapidly expanding in the 1920s. Claims in the 1920s were that chiropractic had developed into a

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684 For a further sketch of the results affecting labour see Kenneth McNaught, A Prophet in Politics: A Biography of J.S. Woodsworth, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1959), reprinted 1975. pp. 178-9.

685 The Weekly News, September 17, 1926. p. 1.

686 Ibid., June 18, 1926. p. 4.

687 Ibid., June 18, 1926. p. 4.; June 25, 1926. p.4.

688 Ibid., June 18, 1926. p.4.

"naturopathic" form of medicine with the alleged potential to cure numerous ailments. In Manitoba, by the 1920s an active School of Chiropractic had been established and was well-advertised in local Winnipeg papers, including the Weekly News.<sup>689</sup> Ivens entered the school for study in his spare time, probably with the intention to eventually supplement his income as an M.L.A. He graduated in August of 1926, and began a practice out of his home on Inkster Boulevard. In October he opened an office with Dr. Hugh Munro in the Somerset Building.<sup>690</sup> He became actively involved in his new profession, his hours were 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. daily, Monday to Friday. Just prior to the opening of his new office he published a sixteen page pamphlet on the subject claiming that "already he has some rather remarkable 'cures' as a result of adjustments given."<sup>691</sup> As an "oppositional" form of medicine, and as a limited but direct challenge to the medical establishment, it became the ideal professional vocation for the discontented.

The Labour Church had suffered a minor organizational setback the week before it closed in the summer of 1926 when the guest speaker, chiropractor Dr. Coull, had failed to appear for a scheduled lecture and it was reported that 50-100 members of the church were left locked out of the hall and standing in the rain. It was the first time that a service had been canceled in eight years, apologies had been offered, and Dr. Coull had appeared the week following to give his lecture at the closing service for the summer. However, this event and a number of others that would follow,

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<sup>689</sup>There are no known records of the early school, nor papers, at P.A.M., or the Medicine Library, or the Legislative reading room at the Provincial Legislature. The only records that I have found are notes in The Weekly News, and in the Ivens collection.

<sup>690</sup> The Weekly News, September 10, 1926. p. 4.

<sup>691</sup> Ibid., October 1, 1926. p. 4.

soon became a clear sign that the church had lost some of its earlier spirit. Membership at the Labour Church had significantly declined over the past few years. After its longest summer recess, in the first week of October Ivens once again opened the Church doors and he was predicting a good fall turn-out. As the shortened season began for the 1926-1927 year, J.S. Woodsworth appeared as the first guest speaker as it had become something of a tradition to have elected M.P.s (or M.L.A.s) give talks following the success of their campaigns. The Woodsworth lecture drew a packed audience to the hall, and it was announced the week following his lecture that "The Labor Church is planning an active campaign for the winter months."<sup>692</sup> Ivens' addresses at the Labour Church remained indistinguishable from addresses that he had given eight years earlier. A topic on one occasion was, "Why has Christianity heretofore not tackled the social problem, and why has it allowed Capitalism to exist until today?" and on another occasion Ivens compared "Jesus the Carpenter of Galilee and Paul of Tarsus the scion of Nobility" as Ivens again stated that he would "spell out the great change that Paul brought over Christianity and the effect of this upon the world's workers."<sup>693</sup> To re-introduce people to the Labour Church services, a re-union dinner in the West End Labour Hall was planned for an upcoming Friday.<sup>694</sup> However, unlike most events that the Labour Church held throughout its history, the dinner went unreported in the Weekly News.

From almost its inception in 1918, a "ladies committee" had been established in the Labour Church and they had made enormous contributions

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<sup>692</sup> Ibid., October 8, 1926.

<sup>693</sup> Ibid., October 22, 1926.p. 4.; October 29, 1926. p. 4.

<sup>694</sup> Ibid., October 8, 1926.

to the operations of the church: holding bake sales, dinners, and a number of social functions to raise money for the church. In October of 1926, these women of the Labour Church held a social event for late November and although it "was a splendid success from the standpoint of program and social spirit" reports acknowledged that "the attendance was not all that was hoped."<sup>695</sup> Similarly a Christmas bazaar, originally planned for 18 December was canceled "on the account of not being able to secure a suitable place"<sup>696</sup> and it was again postponed in mid- January noting that "the ladies of the Labor Church hope to have their sale of work a little later in the winter. All ladies are requested to prepare for this event."<sup>697</sup> Somewhere among the competing interests for the workers' leisure time, the running of the church had lost its priority. Perhaps its social utility had been called into question by its toughest critics, the workers and the support staff who operated it. It appears that the idea of a "church" had become an anachronism, an old idea that no longer met the interests or the needs of the workers. In January, two services of the Labour Church were canceled so that the membership could attend more attractive lectures, one of which was given by Agnes Macphail and from this point onward the services of the Labour Church were irregular.

The Labour Church died a slow death during the winter of 1926-27. New opportunities had presented themselves for Ivens, the church was entering into its eighth year and other interests competed for the attention of the support staff. The Labour Church ultimately became one of the sacrifices. The support base for the Labour Church, the women's committee,

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<sup>695</sup> Ibid., November 26, 1926. p. 4.

<sup>696</sup> Ibid., December 17, 1926. p. 4.

<sup>697</sup> Ibid., January 7, 1927. p. 3.

was proving to be increasingly inactive, and a number of the churches key speakers were increasingly occupied with other campaigns. Perhaps it was a sign of the times that although there would remain forever supporters of the old church, (one women wrote to Ivens as late as 1952 asking him to start another church) the Labour Church closed in favour of new vehicles of social criticism. It would soon be followed however by a Sunday Labour Forum.

Co-inciding with the decline of the Labour Church in the fall and winter of 1926-27 (and also a contributing factor) was Ivens' chiropractic practice. In November, 1926 a number of chiropractors from all parts of the province (including Ivens) formed the Manitoba Chiropractic Health Bureau and Ivens was elected an officer of the new organization. There were now over sixty practicing chiropractors in the province and plans were made for regular monthly meetings to discuss problem cases.<sup>698</sup> It was announced that "the purpose of the association, which takes the place of the Manitoba Chiropractors Association are Scientific Research, Publicity and Mutual protection."<sup>699</sup> The expanding association hoped to "include all drugless physicians . . . and a number of the visiting Chiropractors, Naturopaths, etc., met on Sunday with a view to organizing at an early date. This may take on an organization similar to that of the Trades and Labor Council in Labor circles."<sup>700</sup> Advertisements celebrating both the profession in general, and Ivens' new practice, were placed in The Weekly News and the chiropractic campaign quickly overshadowed the Labour church:

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698 Ibid., October 29, 1926. p. 4.

699 Ibid., October 29, 1926. p. 4.

700 Ibid., October 29, 1926. p. 4.



Chiropractic Steadily Advances: Millions Now taking Adjustments, Old prejudices are hard to break down, and the healing art is no exception. yet the sick and ailing are increasingly adopting the new scientific Chiropractic method. Why? It delivers the goods!<sup>701</sup>

The 1927 provincial election was held on 28 June and seeking election for labour were Queen, Farmer, Duward, James, Cartwright, and Ivens all of the I.L.P., and Penner as a Communist candidate.<sup>702</sup> This was the first election in nearly two decades that Fred Dixon did not contest.<sup>703</sup> The quota for the 1927 election had increased and was 4 610 votes as 50 706 votes were cast and after the eleventh man counted out, Ivens was declared elected.<sup>704</sup> As in the elections of 1920, and 1922, Ivens fared best at the Atlantic Avenue, Logan Avenue, Redwood Street, and Main Street polling stations. He also drew support from three Osborne Street polling stations this year.<sup>705</sup> He was consistently strong in the working class areas: the North End, the West End, and the Fort Rouge district. In transfers, he benefited chiefly from Penner, the Communist candidate, receiving 899 ballots from transfers following Penner's elimination.<sup>706</sup> That Ivens had garnered the majority of second choice ballots from Dixon in the elections of 1920, and 1922, and subsequently that he had gained a sizable number of Penner's (Communist) second choice ballots in 1927 suggests that he was

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701 Ibid., November 19, 1926. p. 3.

702 Manitoba Free Press, June 1, 1927. p. 1.

703 Ibid., June 30, 1927. p. 1.

704 Ibid., July 2, 1927. p. 4.

705 Ibid., June 29, 1927. p. 8.

706 Ibid., July 2, 1927. p. 4.

continuously successful at appealing across the full spectrum of labour political supporters.

The election was a disappointment for the Winnipeg I.L.P. as it had marked the loss of one of the city's traditional labour seats as Queen and Farmer were the only two other city labour members elected. Blame was attributed to changes in the court of revision in urban constituencies prior to the election and to the early retirement of Dixon. With just three labour M.L.A.s, Ivens, Queen, and Farmer from the city, labour had the necessary experience, but lacked the numerical strength to be effective during the sessions of the 18th legislature. For unlike the years 1920-1922 when the opportunity to unite with the other parties to defeat the minority government presented itself, after 1922 and especially after 1927 labour had relatively little strength in the House and even coalitions were options not worth considering.

In the 1928 and 1929 sessions of the legislature Ivens stepped up his attack on the Bracken administration's continuous cuts in mothers allowances. During these sessions he also made a number of inquiries into interpretations of the child welfare act and into the government's enforcement of safety legislation regarding working conditions at mines located in the northern and eastern parts of the province. This effort was made especially in response to the tragic disaster that had happened at the Hollinger mines in Ontario.<sup>707</sup> Throughout these years Ivens continued to demonstrate his concern for the conditions facing workers in especially

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<sup>707</sup> Journals of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba. vol. LX., King's Printer., 1929. p. 31, pp. 38-39, p. 94, pp. 98-99, pp. 119-121.

Manitoba, but also along national and international lines. Safety, education, and general welfare were his number one priorities in the legislature.<sup>708</sup>

## II

The collapse of the stock markets in 1929 marked the arrival of the Great Depression. In the years that followed, unparalleled problems of unemployment, housing and food shortages, and the threat of social upheaval became the central focus of vigorous debate in the House.<sup>709</sup> For Ivens and a number of other Labour representatives in the Provincial House, the depression only marked a re-affirmation of the failure of the existing social order and the contradictions that were inherent to capitalism. As a result, the philosophy Ivens espoused in the House changed remarkably little over the next six years. Consistently, from 1916, he had been campaigning for revolutionary changes in the existing social order. Since his first term in office he had addressed the problems of unemployment and the arrival of the Depression only helped to further his interest and similarly foster a great concern for unemployment issues.

The crisis of capitalism led him to publish a series of articles in The Weekly News, on the 'mystery of money' in the early 1930s. These articles

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<sup>708</sup> Ibid., p. 98.

<sup>709</sup> David Hall suggests that the 1921-1926 depression was perhaps only second in its severity to the depression following the crash of 1929, adding that it has often been overlooked by persons studying the history of Manitoba. Perhaps this only helps to sustain the argument that Ivens philosophy on social issues changed relatively little. See David Hall, esp. chapter III, pp.84 - 123.

sparked a friendly debate with the editor of the O.B.U. organ on the nature of the gold standard as a medium of exchange. Throughout these articles Ivens repeated a number of central themes. He argued that behind the depression and the existing currency crisis there was a global conspiracy whereby "the bankers now control parliaments, and their finance systems, operated for private gain, has filled the world with poverty. It is shattering industry and commerce, and month by month engulfs an ever widening mass of people."<sup>710</sup> Ivens had traced the origins of the development of this control to Europe during the 1840s during the period of industrialization. With the abolition of slavery following the American Civil War, and with the rapid industrialization of the American continent beginning in the 1860s, Ivens argued that the conspiracy had entered America as an emerging capital class traded in the yoke of chattel slavery for a purely economic autocracy. The financial conspiracy then made its way into Canada. The current crisis was the inevitable response of its expansion and development globally. In his articles on money, Ivens also wrote of a time before money, a period of basic bartering. Money's arrival however, had revolutionized the whole exchange system and it was his belief that in the immediate monetary reform was essential and possible. However, Ivens proposed a socialist rather than a narrow "monetary" solution to the crisis of money. Ivens' proposal for a world monetary unit which would have as its exchange one unit of labour to one unit of labour, was "closely connected with the demand for planning and socialization of the whole industrial and social order."<sup>711</sup> These articles appeared weekly for over a year. In his study of money and the economic

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<sup>710</sup> The Weekly News, February 9, 1934. p. 1.

<sup>711</sup> Ibid., February 2, 1934. p.1,3.

crisis of the 1930s, ultimately, Ivens turned to Marx in 1934, as he had in 1918 to expose the fundamental flaws in capitalism:

The contradictions inherent in the movement of capitalist society impress themselves upon the practical bourgeois most striking in the changing of the periodic cycle, through which modern industry runs, and whose crowning point is the universal crisis.<sup>712</sup>

In the community Ivens was especially active between 1930-36. The Labour Church had been superseded by a new workers' forum that met every Sunday at 11 a.m. Ivens was a regular guest lecturer at these meetings speaking on topics that included social insurance, labour's activities in the legislature, and the importance of education to the labour movement.<sup>713</sup> For the civic elections held in the fall of 1930, Ivens sought the I.L.P. party's nomination as candidate for mayor against Marcus Hyman. At the nominating convention Ivens tied Hyman. A second vote was subsequently called and Ivens lost by only a slim margin. The contest had not been acrimonious and in 1931, Ivens was elected General Chairman of the party for 1931.<sup>714</sup>

The year 1931 also marked the death of Fred Dixon. Ivens wrote a memorable eulogy to one of the towering figures of the early 20th century western Canadian labour movement. Ivens said that

Fred Dixon blazed for himself a path into the hearts of the people. Scorned and buffeted for his connections, he nevertheless he held firm in spite of all opposition, and thus won the approbation of even those in opposition. His thinking was clear,

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<sup>712</sup> *Ibid.*, February 9, 1934. p.4.

<sup>713</sup> *Ibid.*, October 3, 1930. p. 2; January 9, 1931. p. 2; March 6, 1931. p. 3.

<sup>714</sup> *Ibid.*, July 3, 1931. p. 4.

his concepts noble; his advocacy of reforms steadfast, his criticism trenchant and withering. . . . The forces of progress have lost a noble champion, but he has left those forces, with an example that should inspire them to carry on from where he laid the task aside to where the victory awaiteth.<sup>715</sup>

The qualities that Ivens admired most in others, he incorporated into his own social philosophy. This was another reason why Ivens own brand of socialism found in earnest the friendship and the support of almost all in labours' ranks. Moderate members of the labour camp like Dixon, and progressives alike had all found common ground with Ivens. Central to Ivens' understanding of the labour movement as a whole was his belief in "service," and in the idea that there were in fact "noble concepts," at the heart of any meaningful convictions. The instrument necessary to implement the cooperative commonwealth was the I.L.P. and, in 1931, the time was right. "This is the hour for religious fervor on the part of those workers who have the vision of the hour and the message."<sup>716</sup>

Towards this end a radio committee was established under the leadership and direction of Ivens in 1931 and a campaign was launched to generate the substantial funds needed to place adds on the local radio station.<sup>717</sup> The new technology created new obstacles as Ivens and the other labour members were yet again forced to compete against other interest groups who had a far greater access to funds.<sup>718</sup> The goal of the I.L.P. with Ivens' involvement was to begin broadcasting a series of talks starting on 15

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<sup>715</sup> *Ibid.*, March 20, 1931. p. 1.

<sup>716</sup> *Ibid.*, May 29, 1931. p. 3.

<sup>717</sup> *Ibid.*, March 20, 1931. p. 1.

<sup>718</sup> *Ibid.*, May 15, 1931. pp. 1,3,4.

September 1931.<sup>719</sup> It was an enormous effort and the projected funds needed involved a commitment by 100 workers to donate a dollar a month for a year, as well as annual pledges from unions.<sup>720</sup> The radio plan took off to a roaring start and instead of 15 September 1931, as the date of the first broadcast, the day was pushed ahead to 12 August 1931. The first address was a report on the issues facing the Labour caucus in Ottawa by J.S. Woodsworth. Ivens chaired the historic event and the same week it was announced that a weekly I.L.P. broadcast would soon begin.<sup>721</sup> By October however, the radio program was badly in need of funds. Nevertheless, money was found and the radio program of the I.L.P. was continued and Winnipeg had its own regular "voice of labour". In the 1932 provincial election the I.L.P. candidates targeted the dinner audience over airwaves with a number of quick platform program plugs.

The depression encouraged Ivens to continue his assault on capitalism. Speaking to the Speech from the Throne in 1932 he noted that "Manitoba faced the most difficult economic problems of its history. Everyone was looking to the legislature to see what the various groups had to offer."<sup>722</sup> In his speech, he challenged the authority of capitalism and argued that socialism was the "only hope of humanity."<sup>723</sup> The only real choice that the electorate had for the upcoming election was the I.L.P. who

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719 *Ibid.*, June 5, 1931. p. 3.

720 *Ibid.*, June 19, 1931. p. 2.

721 *Ibid.*, August 14, 1931. p. 1. Similar radio programs were being held in a number of places throughout the country including, Regina, Calgary and even in British Columbia; see *Ibid.*, October 16, 1931. p. 1.

722 *Ibid.*, March 11, 1932. p. 1.

723 *Ibid.*, March 11, 1932. p. 1.

consciously challenged the present social order based as it was on property rights instead of ministering to human need. They realized that capitalism would fail because it had within itself the seeds of its own decay, and neither Mr. Bracken nor Ramsay Macdonald nor R.B. Bennett could make an impossible system function successfully.<sup>724</sup>

Ivens pledged that if elected in the next election with sufficient power to change things, then "the I.L.P. would abolish capitalism and these problems with the social system that created them."<sup>725</sup> Almost wholly in contradiction to his underlying belief in gradualism, with the promise of one great sweeping reform, at times Ivens believed that the problems of unemployment, cuts to mother's allowances, and cuts to old age pensions would disappear, and that justice in a new social order would be realized. The existing economic and social crisis was behind this language that was becoming more resolute in its denunciation of the existing social order as Ivens campaigned for the upcoming provincial elections.

Ivens' political thought in the 1930s had changed remarkably little from his earlier period. Ivens argued that there were essentially three roads that a society could travel. The first road was to continue the one that we were on yesterday which meant trying to correct or repair capitalism.<sup>726</sup> The second road was some sort of compromise with capitalism. However, Ivens personally believed that this was no real option. For Ivens it was either capitalism and the existing catastrophic events, or the third choice, which was in 1918 and still remained a new socialist world order. Canada was now

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<sup>724</sup> *Ibid.*, March 11, 1932. p. 1.

<sup>725</sup> *Ibid.*, March 11, 1932. p. 1.

<sup>726</sup> *Ibid.*, March 11, 1932. p. 3.



at the "crossroads" and it was either move forward or take a great plunge backwards beginning with the 1932 provincial election.<sup>727</sup> Like others of his period, Ivens said that Russia was heading down the road to socialism and he believed it was no surprise that it was "going up" while Canada was "going down".<sup>728</sup> For Ivens, the third way was the choice confronting Manitobans in the 1932 provincial election, but the third way in Canada, would come through the I.L.P. not through the Communist Party (C.P.), believed Ivens. The Communists in Canada, throughout the 1930s as Ivens would later argue, were seeking "entrance into other groups to destroy them. Any pretense of cooperation [by the C.P.] is an insidious move to gain control so that the organization can be disrupted, then destroyed."<sup>729</sup> They were not interested in building a strong united working-class movement, he believed, and that is primarily why in 1932 and at later elections the I.L.P. would refuse to unite with the C.P.<sup>730</sup>

The provincial election was called for 16 June and labour was expected to see significant gains in the polls. At the very least the labour candidates hoped to recover the seat they had lost in Winnipeg in the 1927 election. Better organized in 1932 than in 1927 and with a series of economic crisis' that demanded immediate solutions, it was not at all surprising that John Queen, leader of the Labour group speaking to an open air rally several days before the election, assaulted the economic system for not meeting "the needs of the people" and predicted a substantial increase for

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<sup>727</sup> *Ibid.*, March 11, 1932. p. 3.

<sup>728</sup> For anyone interested in noting the similarities, see his critique of capitalism, especially *Ibid.*, April 22, 1932. p. 1.

<sup>729</sup> P.A.M., William Ivens Collection, Box 5, folder 21-30. "What C.C.F. Socialism Is and Is Not?"

<sup>730</sup> *Ibid.*

labour at the polls.<sup>731</sup> At this open air meeting, Woodsworth addressed concerns facing farmers, S.J. Farmer attacked the Bracken administration for failing to tax wealth and for increasing the taxes on the salaried classes. Ivens told those in attendance that the banking and credit system had no other alternative in this province than to be socialized. He argued that the time had come for us to do away with interest on debt and on accumulated capital and that a national currency not based upon gold be set up for internal use, with gold as a standard reserved for payment abroad.<sup>732</sup> The primary issue of the election was the increasing problem of unemployment. Throughout the province and in the city relief proposals for the dislocated, the unemployed, and the starving, all whose numbers were swelling, increasingly became the center of the campaign. The city planned to implement promissory notes that once things returned to normal, formerly unemployed men would be required to repay their relief payments as their first priority. Both Ivens and Queen challenged this proposal on the grounds that it was humiliating and that the hand-outs were scanty enough as they were; other labour supporters even argued that this kind of "relief, even the way it is at present administered, causes physical and mental deterioration."<sup>733</sup> Ivens said that he knew there was a group of concerned tax-payers behind this move in an effort to save money for the city, but as he himself was a tax-payer, he "urge[d] council not to save taxes in this way."<sup>734</sup> Ivens and the other labour members argued ". . . that it is both

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731 Winnipeg Free Press, June 15, 1932. p. 6.

732 Ibid., June 15, 1932. p. 6.

733 Ibid., February 19, 1932. p. 1.

734 Ibid., February 19, 1932. p. 3.

unfair and unjust to ask a man to mortgage his future that his children might eat today."<sup>735</sup>

During the 1932 election campaign approximately 200 meetings were attended by members of the I.L.P. The day following the election, the headlines in the Winnipeg Free Press announced "RURAL MANITOBA GIVES OVERWHELMING VOTE FAVOURING BRACKEN GOVERNMENT."<sup>736</sup> The final results of the 1932 election in Winnipeg saw four Independent Labour members elected (Hyman, Queen, Ivens and Farmer), three Liberal-Progressives, and three Conservatives.<sup>737</sup> It had been a surprisingly tough fought battle for the labour candidates facing a coalition of Liberals and Progressives and through the counting Ivens' election was in question. It was not until the 24th count following the final transfer of 4, 720 votes that the final spots were guaranteed. Ivens finished in ninth place with 5 470 votes. His electoral victory was secured again by a number of significant transfers.<sup>738</sup>

Again in 1932, Ivens' polling strength in the North End was along Atlantic Avenue; and in Fort Rouge it was along Osbourne, around Earl Grey school, and similarly at Cecil Rhodes school in Weston.<sup>739</sup> In the

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<sup>735</sup> Ibid., February 19, 1932. p. 3.

<sup>736</sup> Ibid., June 17, 1932. p. 1.

<sup>737</sup> Ibid., June 20, 1932. p.1,5.

<sup>738</sup> Ibid., June 20, 1932. p. 5. Ivens gained the second choice of Brigden, Armstrong, MacLennan, Anderson, and C. Andrusychen, the Independent Ukrainian candidate.

<sup>739</sup> Ibid., June 17, 1932. p. 8.

North End, Ivens had established quite a significant electoral machine led by Peter Cornes, a popular supporter of the I.L.P. and long-standing activist.<sup>740</sup>

Following the provincial election Ivens attended a number of local post election meetings with the I.L.P. before heading into a summer vacation. His year long term as general chairman of the I.L.P. had ended at the annual convention on 14 May (just prior to the election) and S.J. Farmer had been elected to the position for the following year.<sup>741</sup> But, before his summer recess began at the end of June, he was honored for his public service by the Canadian Federation of the Blind for his work done in advancing the interests of physically challenged persons.<sup>742</sup>

In the summer of 1932 Ivens purchased a lot on the north shore of Clear Lake. The cottage became a central part of Ivens life during the summer months and it remained with him and the family until it was sold in 1945.<sup>743</sup> To Ivens, the cottage provided a small respite in his regular round of election campaigning, writing articles for The Weekly News, and speaking at I.L.P. Sunday forums.<sup>744</sup>

In a series of articles and lectures published in The Weekly News throughout the fall of 1932, Ivens explored the relationship between the party and the workers. With so many federal, provincial, and municipal

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<sup>740</sup> Ibid., June 5, 1931. p. 3. The radio broadcasts along with the I.L.P. forums helped to minimize the losses suffered by the decline of the Labor Church by 1927.

<sup>741</sup> Ibid., May 20, 1932. p. 1.

<sup>742</sup> Ibid., June 30, 1932. p.4.

<sup>743</sup> P.A.M., Ivens collection, MG 10 4A, Box 1, folder "Clear Lake Property." correspondence Ivens to Mr. John Trent, September 11, 1941; same of September 7, 1932; also see Ivens to F.C. Meggison, July 2, 1945.

<sup>744</sup> See The Weekly News, November 4, 1932.; also November 11, 1932. p. 3.

elections, all within such a short period of time, he believed it was essential to address questions like, "When civilization seems to be tottering to its fall why should the workers bother about civic elections?"<sup>745</sup> Ivens noticed that in 1932, labour had cast its largest poll ever in the provincial elections and he believed, like others, that it was now time to continue to "proceed in a well organized campaign of education of present day conditions."<sup>746</sup> In Ivens social philosophy, education remained the cornerstone of the I.L.P. agenda.

The I.L.P. appeared to be gaining strength over the winter of 1932-33. Electoral prospects seemed good in the fall of 1932 and the outcome of the November civic elections saw a gain of two seats in council and a two seat gain on the School Board.<sup>747</sup> John Queen had lost the mayoralty by only 771 votes and blame was largely placed upon the Communist candidate who had gained some of the traditional labour vote.<sup>748</sup> The depression had given rise to a number of new movements and acted as a catalyst to unite various regional labour groups into one national movement. In the West there were held a series of Western Labour conferences, in the East there was the famous meeting in William Irvines' office in parliament and the outcome of these meetings was the conferences at Calgary in 1932, Regina in 1933, and the creation of the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (C.C.F.).<sup>749</sup> A

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<sup>745</sup> *Ibid.*, November 11, 1932. p.3; November 18, 1932. p.1.

<sup>746</sup> *Ibid.*, June 24, 1932. p. 1.

<sup>747</sup> *Ibid.*, December 2, 1932. p.1.

<sup>748</sup> *Ibid.*, December 2, 1932. p.1.

<sup>749</sup> There is no space to deal even scantily with the platforms, nor even a general overview of these events. For a discussion of the former see Alan Whitehorn, Canadian Socialism: Essays On The CCF-NDP, (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1992); For a discussion of the latter see Kenneth

number of Manitoba delegates were sent to both conferences, but Ivens was not among those who attended either. During the 1932 meetings Ivens was actively engaged in provincial election campaigning. In March of 1933, just months before the Regina Conference, Ivens had collapsed in the Legislature, suffering a nervous breakdown.<sup>750</sup> He recovered slowly throughout the summer, first at St. Boniface Hospital and then at his cottage. He underwent an operation for Toxiadenomatous goitre slotted for the first week of August.<sup>751</sup>

Ivens' recovery was slow and he eased his way back into work in the fall. There is no reason to suggest that Ivens would have initially opposed the move towards a federal party. He had often spoken of the need for such a move as early as 1918. He always wondered whether the working-class community was ready for the challenge, or was up to the task. Had their education sufficiently advanced to this point he would have questioned? However, later on in his career he would return to the idea of a federal party with growing disdain. In the 1940s Ivens spoke and wrote of the decline of personal freedom within the party, policy was increasingly centralized among a select group in Ottawa. He had several nasty letters of correspondence with David Lewis over policy and the lack of support from the party in his organizational efforts at Kenora during 1943-44. He wrote of the spirit and of the principles that had originally built the Co-operative Federation having been sacrificed for electoral gains. He also would later

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McNaught, A Prophet in Politics: A Biography of J.S. Woodsworth, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1959), reprinted 1975. pp. 255-266.

750 The Weekly News, April 7, 1933. p.4.

751 Ibid., July 28, 1933. p. 3.

accuse the central office and Lewis of trying to "crib, cabin, and confine enthusiasm and even experience." But this attitude was not displayed until the mid 1940s, and in the mid 1930s following the federal party's creation, there is no reason to believe that Ivens had not supported the creation of the new federation.<sup>752</sup>

Throughout most of 1934, Ivens wrote his second series of articles on the Mystery of Money for the Weekly News. The I.L.P. was continuing its radio broadcasts at peak periods, during civic, provincial and federal elections, and the radio committee had developed into a polished organizational body, with its own "Voice of Labor" in the person of James Aiken.<sup>753</sup> In January 1935, Ivens' broadcast an address called the "New Social Order"<sup>754</sup> in which he linked Canada's increasingly undemocratic political culture to an 'invisible government' that pulled the strings in Ottawa and Winnipeg. In 1935 the directors of just three of Canada's ten banks were also directors of some 832 of Canada's most important industries.

Not only do the large banks control the banking and business of this country, but their directors control trust companies, mortgage and loan companies, bond and investment houses, insurance companies, railways, public utilities. Through their control of finance the group of men already referred to exercise more power over the economic life of the people than does any government. . . . Regardless of who wins the next election it seems

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<sup>752</sup> For Ivens' views towards the C.C.F. and Lewis etc. see P.A.M., William Ivens Collection, Box 1, file C.C.F. National Office, letter D.Lewis to Ivens, June 19, 1944; Doris French tries to defend Lewis to Ivens in another letter, see Box 1 Co-operative Press Association, French to Ivens, February 21, 1948.

<sup>753</sup> P.A.M., Lionel Orlikow Interviews, Tape # 8, interview with Jas. Aiken.

<sup>754</sup> Manitoba Commonwealth and Weekly News, January 25, 1935.

clear to me that those who are going to be in power after the next election are Canadian kings of finance.<sup>755</sup>

This critique of finance and of the concentration of wealth in the hands of such a select few was in fact, part of a long-standing populist critique of the financial autocrats.<sup>756</sup> In his address's of the 1930s, Ivens repeated his own trenchant critique of banking, of government and of the capital conspiracy; he stressed the need to achieve socialism, a view that was part and parcel of his early philosophy. <sup>757</sup>

In the 1920s and 1930s Ivens was openly calling for radical change. He understood what it was that he wanted in the new system of social ownership and social control but just how society would arrive there was unclear. He believed that the new order could be attained through the ballot, and he was equally as clear that the party that stood on principles would be the only party that would affect that change. In 1934 and in 1935 the I.L.P. was such a party.

In the 1936 election, Ivens again took his message of change to the electors. He was calling for the socialization of resources, the nationalization of banks, and the establishment of a socialized workers' state that would be achieved through the spirit of the co-operative commonwealth. In the house during 1936 Ivens' energies were devoted to producing a report that stressed

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<sup>755</sup> Ibid., January 25, 1935.

<sup>756</sup> On similar populist strands of criticism levied against eastern autocratic interests see, David Laycock, Populism and Democratic Thought in the Canadian Prairies, 1910 to 1945. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), esp. pp. 69-136.

<sup>757</sup> Manitoba Commonwealth and Weekly News, January 25, 1935.



the need for vocational schools in Manitoba and he would serve on another similar committee, that reached similar findings in the mid 1940s.<sup>758</sup>

The 1936 election was called following a short session in the House.<sup>759</sup> Voters had five parties to choose from during this election and in addition there were a number of independents. The Liberals had for the second consecutive time formed a coalition with the Progressives, there were also the Conservatives, the I.L.P.-C.C.F.ers, the Communists, and the Social Credit.<sup>760</sup> In Winnipeg there were 78 181 votes cast and on 28 July, the day following the election, it was reported that a former judge, an independent and committed socialist, Lewis St. George Stubbs had polled a remarkable 24 671 first choice votes, setting a new record and out-polling the second place person by almost 19 000 votes.<sup>761</sup> The official quota was 7, 108 and Stubbs was the only person to be declared elected after the first count. In second place was James Litterick (Communist) who polled 5 780 after the first count. Ivens earned only 1 139 first choice ballots and held a distant 17th place.<sup>762</sup> Of the I.L.P.-C.C.F. group running six candidates in Winnipeg, Ivens was in a distant fourth. Ahead of him and leading the I.L.P.-C.C.F. group was Marcus Hyman with 3 402 votes, followed by Queen with 2 876, then Farmer with 1 953. Following Ivens was Beatrice Brigden with 597, and Alistair Stewart with 331.<sup>763</sup> With Stubbs' transfer Ivens gained

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758 P.A.M., William Ivens Collection, Box 7, file "Education." March 6, 1936.

759 ed., Kathryn M. Flanagan, and Katherine J. Miller, Canadian Parliamentary Guide.(Toronto: Globe and Mail Publishing: 1992), p. 585.

760 Winnipeg Free Press, July 27, 1936. p.1.

761 Ibid., July 28, 1936. p. 1.

762 Ibid., July 28, 1936.p. 7.

763 Ibid., July 28, 1936. p. 7.

944 ballots but he only moved up from 17th to 16th place. In the provincial race earlier that morning the I.L.P.'s 'Voice of Labor', James Aiken surprisingly enough, had been elected in Assiniboia.<sup>764</sup> Ivens position looked grim after the initial count and following Stubbs' transfer his defeat was almost certain. Ivens was eliminated on the ninth count marking the end of his career in public office.<sup>765</sup> In the 1936 election Ivens finished in 15th place. He was more than one thousand votes short of 14th place and over 3 600 votes short of being elected for the 20th sitting of the legislature.<sup>766</sup>

Why had Ivens fared so poorly in this election? Was the joint C.C.F.-I.L.P. banner an asset or a hindrance? Were the electorate simply disgruntled and determined to make a drastic change? What insight does Ivens' record of campaigning tell us about this election? The 1920 election had been an exceptional election. It was held immediately following the Strike Trials at a time when his prominence in the community and in the Labour Church were at a high. Similarly, in 1920 Ivens was in fifth place following the initial tally with 1 928 first choice votes. In 1920 he benefited from Dixon's transfer by 3 600 and it must be seen that under these exceptional circumstances he was declared the third person elected as he quickly outdistanced the quota which was 4 319.<sup>767</sup> In 1922, he had earned only 1 200 first choice ballots, and following Dixon's transfer his total was just 2 354. He made a number of significant gains and secured eighth place with

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<sup>764</sup> *Ibid.*, July 28, 1936. p. 4.

<sup>765</sup> *Ibid.*, July 28, 1936. p. 1. On Ivens' transfers John Queen was declared elected fourth person after the tenth count. S.J. Farmer was elected following the twelfth count, and the third and final I.L.P.- C.C.F. candidate to be declared elected was Hyman following the 17th and final count.

<sup>766</sup> *Ibid.*, July 30, 1936. p. 1.

<sup>767</sup> *Ibid.*, July 2, 1920. p. 1.

3 648 votes in total, but in 1922, he had failed to meet quota. The quota in the 1927 election was up slightly over the 1922 election and in 1927 Fred Dixon's retirement put into question at least 1 000 votes that Ivens by then had traditionally counted on. In 1927 Ivens still depended on the pull from second choice ballots. The support Ivens needed came from the Communist candidate Penner who filled Dixon's role by passing 899 ballots on to Ivens. Ivens went over the top at the very end of the race with more than 4 700, but only after the eleventh man was counted out. The 1932 election saw Ivens finish in ninth place with 5 470 votes, but still well short of the quota of 7 000, after a number of substantial gains from Brigden and Mrs. MacLennan who together, filled the supporting role of Penner and Dixon in the past.<sup>768</sup> In the 1936 election Ivens polled 17th after the first choice ballots had been cast achieving only 1 136 votes out of a growing total of 79 344 votes city wide. He was over 3 600 votes short of the amount needed to secure seat number 10 in the city. But what can we make of all this?

In general, Ivens depended as did many candidates in elections on a significant number of transfers from either surpluses or counts following exits. Second, with the exception of 1920, which can be seen as a special case, Ivens was always the final I.L.P. candidate to secure a seat. He was never a front runner and after 1920 was always potentially squeezed out by more popular figures. In the 1927 election Ivens was the third and final I.L.P. candidate to secure a seat. In the remaining elections Ivens was the fourth and final I.L.P. candidate elected. In 1932, Marcus Hyman had pulled third among the I.L.P. candidates in his first provincial election, and Ivens had polled a distant fourth. The fortunes of Queen's remarkable success in

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<sup>768</sup> Winnipeg Free Press, June 20, 1932. p. 5.

the 1932 election and the defeats of Penner, Armstrong, Brigden, and Maclennan helped secure Ivens successful entry. In 1936 the electoral reservoir that Ivens could draw upon had all but evaporated. The overwhelming success of Stubbs who preached anti-partism, and the success of Litterick who had preached a popular front tactic but had been turned down by the I.L.P.-C.C.F. candidates<sup>769</sup> were at the centre of only part of the problem. For in 1936, the front runner I.L.P.-C.C.F. candidates had only polled 9th (Hyman) and 10th (Queen) place after the first ballots. Farmer was in 13th place and it would remain a struggle to pull even the three of them into the top ten. Ivens could not rely on the support of any candidate in 1936 and the I.L.P.-C.C.F. only had two others Brigdon and Stewart for a total of 1 613 votes to gain by transfer. Unlike previous elections where Ivens could count on the support of Dixon, Penner, Armstrong, and Maclennan, the reservoir of support had dried up in 1936.

The 1936 election revealed the limits of an ethical socialist outlook taken to the polls in a world that was beseeched by the grim realities of industrial capitalism in a period of crisis. As an ethical socialist, Ivens appealed to progressive persons of all persuasions. Various critics of the status quo and of the existing system of capitalist relations could all agree that Ivens was a popular alternative. Although not often the voters first choice, his over-arching ethical appeal became one of the most popular alternatives in a period of critical rethinking. But the limitations or

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<sup>769</sup> Stubbs makes this statement in one of his post election statements to the Winnipeg Free Press. In the Ivens collection Ivens comments on the Communist Party really only date beginning in the 1940s. He denounces the party, their tactics of 'boring from within' arguing that the C.C.F. can and will never unite with those that are out to destroy the labour movement.

repercussions that such a political outlook carried with it was increasingly evidenced at the polls following the 1920 election. Ivens needed the support of moderates, radicals, and labour conservatives alike. More often he needed to acquire a significant number of transfers from either a front runner or from a series of fringe members with a significant number of votes who were ultimately doomed to fail. In 1936, the state of the economy and the existing social conditions convinced many persons that the most radical elements of the ideological election gamut in the Social Credit, and especially the Communist member, proved worthy and potentially viable alternatives. It was a drastic measure taken during a drastic crisis. As a result not only could Ivens not rely on fellow I.L.P.-C.C.F. party members to provide polling support, the Communist member far from being a maligned marginalized candidate who was eliminated in early counts, successfully contested a seat and Ivens lost his traditional radical support as well. In 1936 we are witness to the collapse of the ethical socialist outlook. The popular vote became increasingly polarized as frustration had properly replaced apathy and patience. For more than sixteen years Ivens had challenged the existing order, but the order still remained. The 1936 provincial election, marked the demise of an older generation of socialists. The election and Ivens' defeat within the party and with the electorate were only the signposts of a larger national defeat that would follow. A defeat that would cause waves that still reverberate on occasion, even today, marking the ultimate defeat, defeat from within, which as one historian would later note marked "The Decline And Fall Of A Good Idea."<sup>770</sup>

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<sup>770</sup> Michael S. Cross, The Decline And Fall Of A Good Idea: CCF - NDP Manifestoes 1932 to 1969, (Toronto: New Hogtown Press, 1974).

## Chapter VI

### Epilogue

William Ivens ran for the C.C.F. in the Winnipeg riding in the 1941 provincial election and he contested the federal nomination for the C.C.F. in Kenora-Rainy River during the winter of 1943-44.<sup>771</sup> In both campaigns victory alluded him and his importance in electoral politics was permanently sidelined. While he never commented on his defeat in the provincial elections, in the federal arena he blamed the Communists who were trying to subvert his "crusade for labour" with attacks in the local press and by running alternative candidates to divide the labour vote.<sup>772</sup> Ivens also ascribed his federal defeat to both the Ontario and the National C.C.F. organizations who were slow in responding to his requests for help in building an effective organization in the riding.<sup>773</sup>

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<sup>771</sup> See P.A.M., William Ivens Collection, Box 1., correspondence with H.W. Dalton (National office C.C.F.), H.W. Dalton to Ivens, November 4, 1943.

<sup>772</sup> See P.A.M., William Ivens Collection, Box 2., correspondence with Dick Rigg, Rigg to Ivens, May 18, 1945. Ivens asking for M.J. Coldwell, Angus McInnis and Tommy Douglas to come to Kenora-Ft. Francis [sic] constituency. See Ivens Collection, Box 1., folder "C.C.F. National Office" correspondence Ivens to Lewis, October 27, 1942, and reply Lewis to Ivens October 27, 1942. Also see same, folder "C.C.F. Saskatchewan" correspondence with C.M. Fines (Provincial President of C.C.F.), C.M. Fines to Ivens, March 11, 1944; Also see same, folder "Lucas, Louise" correspondence Lucas to Ivens, March 3, 1944.

<sup>773</sup> See, P.A.M., William Ivens Collection, Box 1, folder "C.C.F. National Office" correspondence Lewis to Ivens, June 6, and June 19, 1944. Also see Box 1, folder "Kenora - Election 1948." correspondence Mrs. H.R. McAteer

In the wake of his Kenora defeat, Ivens turned his attention towards writing pamphlets and articles on the world condition in the 1940s, on post war reconstruction, on the rise and fall of fascism, and on the successes and failures of Communism in Russia. Financially, he was dependent on the success of his chiropractic practice and his pension from public service. How lucrative his practice was is not known as there are no written records, but in 1945 his cottage at Clear Lake was sold and financial considerations were cited as having been one of several reasons for its sale.<sup>774</sup>

Throughout the 1940s and 1950s Ivens' health greatly deteriorated and at several points he was hospitalized.<sup>775</sup> By 1955 a "left side rupture", combined with multiple adhesions and a colonic diverticulum, sent him to a warmer climate. He left Canada permanently to live with his son at Chula Vista, California, and his move eventually forced him to sell his house to pay for medical services.<sup>776</sup> Hospitalization fees for three months during

Box 1, folder "Kenora - Election 1948." correspondence Mrs. H.R. McAteer (C.C.F. Kenora Club) to Ivens December 8, 1947 and reply of December 12, 1947.

<sup>774</sup> P.A.M. William Ivens Collection, Box 1, folder "Clear Lake Property." The cottage was sold on July 2, 1945 to F.C. Meggison of Goodlands Manitoba for \$1700.00.

<sup>775</sup> In 1933 he had had an operation which was already noted in the text. In December of 1947 he was taken down with Layrynthitis. See P.A.M. William Ivens Collection, Box 1., folder 'Christie, A.' Ivens to Christie, December 23, 1947. During Christmas of 1952 Ivens was in hospital for four weeks. See P.A.M., William Ivens Collection, Box 1. folder 'Chiropractors' correspondence with Ida and Ted Wells. Wells to Ivens, December 19, 1953.

<sup>776</sup> The Commonwealth, February 1, 1956. Letter to the editor from Ivens. Milton graduated from the University of Manitoba faculty of Medicine in 1935, and continued practicing in rural Manitoba communities before

the 1955-56 winter season alone amounted to \$2 894.37.<sup>777</sup> He blamed the provincial government for not covering the costs of his medical treatment, for forcing him to sell his house, and for making it impossible for him to return to Canada, even if he so desired. His final words on the matter were a lasting testament to his faith in the parliamentary system as a vehicle for change and to the C.C.F. as its motor. He declared that in light of his medical fiasco that it was reasonable to desire a C.C.F. government in the province. It was the C.C.F. , he believed, who would make a difference in the community and it was through their election that the socialization of medicine would quickly follow.<sup>778</sup> He died quietly at the home of his son on 20 June, 1957.<sup>779</sup>

William Ivens remains a remarkable and important figure in the development of Western Canadian thought. His inclusive ideological outlook inspired other members of the labour community. Like his peers in the I.L.P.-C.C.F., Dixon, Woodsworth, Farmer, and Tipping; and like Russell, and Armstrong of the S.P.C., Ivens spurned opportunism and took great pride in personal integrity and service to the community. He left an abundant legacy of example and a commitment to progressive change for others to follow. In the legislature and at the Labour Church he outlined the glaring inequalities inherent to capitalism and he preached practical reforms.

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leaving for the United States during the late 1940s or early 1950s. Record of his registration with the Physicians association stops in the early 1980s.

<sup>777</sup> *Ibid.*, February 1, 1956.

<sup>778</sup> *Ibid.*, February 1, 1956.

<sup>779</sup> A.R.Allen, "William Ivens," in Gen. ed., Nolan, B. Harmon, Encyclopedia of World Methodism: vol.1, (New York: United Methodist Publishing House, 1974), p. 1244.



Accusations that his vision was simply a withdrawal from the world or a Utopian fantasy or that his ideas were impossible to translate into the practical politics of government met with fierce opposition in the House and were challenged consistently by his writings.

Ivens' political philosophy forged what can best be described as a "religion of socialism." Owing its intellectual debt to late 19th century British thinkers, the religion of socialism was created neither out of an attempt to attract alienated working-class Liberals, nor was it simply the "dress" worn by socialists because of British "peculiarities."<sup>780</sup> Stanley Pierson correctly argued that the religion of socialism was the inevitable outcome when "Marxist ideology cracked when it met class organization in a national culture."<sup>781</sup> Extending the boundaries of Stanley Pierson's study, Stephen Yeo argued that the religion of socialism in Britain went further creating a political space and forging its own distinctive phase in the social history of socialism that eventually was filled by the rise of the Labour Party.<sup>782</sup> The religion of socialism was a movement with an international scope. It was distinguishable from other ideologies by its socialist conversions, its idea of a "crusade," its "morality mongering," and its ability to achieve a meaningful symbiosis between "moral imperative" and "social agency." Other concepts that helped to identify its ideological composition were its anti-statist or populist sentiment, its connection to ungradual inevitability, and its unrelenting commitment toward the ushering in of a

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<sup>780</sup> Stephen Yeo, "A New Life: The Religion of Socialism in Britain 1883-1896." History Workshop, 4(Autumn 1977), p. 6.

<sup>781</sup> Ibid., p. 7.; See also Stanley Pierson, Marxism And The Origins Of British Socialism: The Struggle for a New Consciousness, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1973), pp. xi-xiv.

<sup>782</sup> Yeo, p. 7.

new system of social relations based upon equality, justice, and cooperation. In Canada, the religion of socialism emerged in response to a set of similar conditions. For with the emergence of capitalism on the Canadian Prairies, different ideologies including Marxism, Labourism, and Populism were reformulated in the day to day experiences of radicals who attempted to win the support of the working-class. William Ivens was one of these radicals and the religion of socialism that he helped foster was a tendency that fared well in a prairie-capitalist environment.

In Manitoba, during the 1910s and 1920s, a commitment to radical reform grew in opposition to capitalism with its traditional party politics and to the formalism of old religion. During his years as a student at Wesley college, Ivens passed through his lens of Methodism, a Marxism that would define his own socialist conversion. Bland, Woodsworth, and Smith, challenged him to struggle with the grim economic realities and, as a result, Ivens began asking fundamental questions about the nature of society. He soon became aware of a great struggle occurring to achieve social equality and to better the condition of all in the community. In organized religion, the true "Spirit of Brotherhood" had been made subordinate to political corruption, greed, and materialistic desires that had gone unchecked. Opposed to what he saw as the hypocrisy of all organized religion, Ivens turned to the founding of a working-class institution that could directly appeal to the people. Alive to his own "conversion" and awake to a spirit of reform that was growing within, by 1918 William Ivens had forged a religion of socialism that was sensitive to the peculiarities of time, place, and space, in its Canadian environment.

Ivens' religion of socialism accepted the Marxist theory of class struggle as a central role in the engine of history but he was also committed

to the view that revolutionary change would come through the ballot and strictly through parliamentary action. Ivens' social philosophy was colored by a tinge of populist sentiment as he challenged a system that allowed for the majority of wealth to be accumulated in the hands of the idle few. Canada was controlled by a hidden government of finance, he declared, and until the tumultuous events of the 1919 Winnipeg General Strike, Ivens really believed that socialism was coming in the immediate, for the times were genuinely unique. No power on earth could stop its arrival, only how it would arrive could be debated. The moral spirit of change came as much from his understanding of the crisis inherent to capitalism, as it did from a familiarity with Methodism and its "judgment day." His social theory was an attempt to reconcile the two fundamentally different outlooks and to unite them in a common bound of discontent. For in Ivens' politics, the spirit of "social judgment" was alive and awake, and often just looming up ahead in the not so distant future.

The Winnipeg General Strike strengthened Ivens' resolve in the moral imperative of a socialist critique of society. The Strike polarized the community along class lines and the state had sided with the capitalists in its suppression. Following the Strike, Ivens' social views remained consistent but he argued with increasing vigor that socialists had to be active agents in heralding the arrival of socialism at the earliest possible date. In order to bring about this change, Ivens' religion of socialism forged and filled a political space during the decade following the Winnipeg General Strike. The Labour Churches under Ivens' direction provided a forum for the dissemination of the ideas and the politics of the labour community during crucial periods. As the regular meeting place of working-class intellectuals and workers in the community, practical issues were hammered out at the

Labour Church. As well, an awakening spirit was fostered among its adherents. Workers were exposed to a political philosophy which articulated their grievances, giving a sense of further immediacy to their cause and an understanding of their own position within the community. Ivens philosophy was filled largely with absolute moral invectives and as such it drew criticism from the more scientific strand of socialists. In 1949, A.E. Smith claimed that among the labour caucus of the 1920s, "There was not a Marxist student or thinker among us."<sup>783</sup> Ivens disagreed:

Geo. Armstrong, one of the men [Smith] names, was a prominent member and speaker for the Socialist Party of Canada, the only organization that was publishing the "Communist Manifesto" and circulating Marxist at that time. John Queen, as a prominent Social Democrat, and William Ivens, as a labor editor and omnivorous student of all social philosophies, were unquestionably familiar with the Marxist theories. Smith knew this. So it could only be that his later conviction, that only those who interpreted Marx as Lenin and Stalin interpret him is a Marxist, could cause him to deny the presence of any "Marxist student" in the labor group in the legislature.<sup>784</sup>

Ivens saw Smith's comment as sectarian and polemical. He could never accept the doctrinaire approach of D.J. Johns in the S.P.C. or of A.E. Smith

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<sup>783</sup> Rev. A.E. Smith, All My Life: An Autobiography, ( Toronto: Progress Books, 1949), reprinted 1977. p. 65; See also P.A.M. William Ivens Collection, Box 2, f 39, "Notes for a review of 'All My Life' by A.E. Smith" p. 1.

<sup>784</sup> P.A.M. William Ivens Collection, Box 2, f 39, "Notes for a review of 'All My Life' by A.E. Smith" p. 1.

following his conversion to the C.P. in 1925. Ivens and his former mentor had followed diverging paths, and he believed that Smith's reasoning was

a revelation of what happens when even a man of great sincerity and notable gifts accepts a series of propositions to the effect that there is only one true road to social emancipation (the Communist Party); that it is the instrument of destiny and only under its leadership will history fulfill its design; that the 'class war' must be fought to a victorious conclusion; that the means employed in winning the 'class war' will more than justify themselves in the end; that 'those who are not for us are against us', etc.<sup>785</sup>

Drawing significantly upon his mixing of Marxism and Methodism, Ivens' social philosophy had an ecumenical nature that attempted to achieve consensus, to build bridges, and to shake the foundations of the existing social order. The inevitability of a new social order would be reached through a constructive, not destructive, force. This was the spirit that Ivens carried away with him as he traveled beyond the Social Gospel.

Ivens increasingly emphasized the importance of change through an active working-class party that would gain control of the legislature and eventually national parliaments. In keeping with what he viewed as "the sign of the times," the pastor of the Labour Church and similarly the Labour Church's grass roots turned their attentions towards other working-class institutions that could better serve their collective interests. Slowly the Labour Church was surpassed by the I.L.P. organization which was expanding its role in the community. The political space that the Labour

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<sup>785</sup> P.A.M. William Ivens Collection, Box 2, f 39, "Notes for a review of 'All My Life' by A.E. Smith" p. 2.

Church forged was absorbed into the I.L.P. and it indirectly gave rise to the I.L.P. Forum.

The arrival of the depression at the end of 1929 simply re-affirmed Ivens' belief in the need for a new social order. He believed that capitalism was cyclical, that it entered a series of crises' which were inherent to its very nature, and further that it was doomed as a system of social relations. Ivens blamed capitalism with all its competition for the rise of Fascism in the 1930s and for World War II. Until people abandoned capitalism in favour of socialism, Ivens believed that there would be war and more war.<sup>786</sup>

Since Ivens had always emphasized the spiritual and moral side of socialism and the developing of a spirit that had to remain "true to itself," it was not surprising that he would find himself increasingly displaced by the growing centralization and the rising bureaucracy within the ranks of the C.C.F. Beginning in the mid 1940s, Ivens complained bitterly about the role of the National Office in suppressing the views of its members and he was especially critical of David Lewis.<sup>787</sup> His moralism had no place nor time for those who were not part of the constructive movement. Paradoxically, since Ivens held such strong beliefs towards achieving consensus and cooperation among social activists, and among members of the community, there was some truth in criticisms levied that he himself was doctrinaire. Ivens helped to create and define a better quality of living in Manitoba, and

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<sup>786</sup> P.A.M. William Ivens Collection, Box. 5., "Hands of The Clock Turned Back" an article written by Ivens in 1945 argues that the period following World War II is the same as the period following World War I.

<sup>787</sup> P.A.M. William Ivens Collection, Box.1., folder Co-operative Press Association" correspondence with Doris French., Doris French to Ivens February 25, 1948 and again of March 1, 1948.

his seminal contribution to the community was to make people re-evaluate what their responsibilities are to one another.

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