

LABOUR AND POLITICS

IN

OSHAWA AND DISTRICT

1928 - 1943

by

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TO THE WORKERS OF OSHAWA AND DISTRICT

It is interesting, at this time, to consider the growth of the City of Oshawa in the last eighteen months. If a history of its social trends should ever be written, the historian would most certainly note the rapid emergence of the workers of this city from company vassalage to comparative economic freedom within that time. He would also observe the increase of cultural outlets for the workers—institutions which did not exist before, and for which there was no provision. He would comment upon the absence of company patronage in these things, and the ability of such projects to stand upon their merits. But while the historian would be able to grasp these things, it is an unfortunate fact that those who are able to partake of these advantages are often too close to them to be able to recognize their worth.

- from "Workers' Progress Reviewed"  
an article in The Oshawa Labor Press,  
November 24, 1938.

## ABSTRACT

This thesis is a history of the working class of Oshawa and district between the years 1928 and 1943. It commences with a description of the historical background and the social, economic, and political characteristics of the community as they had evolved up to 1928. Oshawa was an automobile manufacturing centre and the peculiar problems of this industry that affected its workers are outlined and a detailed account and evaluation in the auto industry in Canada is made. Following the "boom" period of the 1920's, Oshawa fell victim to the Great Depression, a period of stress that created social, economic and political conditions which in turn acted as catalysts in the rise of new labour, political, and ideological groups crying for economic and political power. The evolution of these groups is discussed in detail as they struggled against the older established élites and thereby demonstrated the class structured nature of the community. Oshawa was not isolated from the main currents of labour and leftist movements in the 1930's but was in the forefront of many of these developments, the most important being the birth of modern industrial unionism in Canada during the historic strike at General Motors in early 1937. The labour and progressive elements demonstrated the popularity and viability of united political action during the "popular front" period of the late 1930's and illustrated the failure of the C.C.F. to take full political advantage of the new developments in the working class movement during this period. The influence of events in Oshawa and district and of personalities such as Charles Millard and George Burt on the broader political and labour scene is discussed and related to other trends and developments that were of a provincial, national and international nature. Locally, the new labour and political organizations had set out to realize the potential power of the majority of the citizens in the community but

this new movement met with limitations. These limitations were caused not only by external opposition but by internal dissent and factionalism. In addition, as the complexity of labour and left-wing politics becomes apparent, it is clear that such events should not be reduced to a mere conflict between Communists and C.C.F.ers. The thesis concludes by analyzing the shift of decision making power between 1928 and 1943 from a situation in which power was monopolized by the city's traditional élites to one where power had to be shared with the rising labour and progressive elements. It is the story of a community in transition and illustrates the fact that a colourful and dynamic labour and left-wing tradition is part of Canadian history.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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

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J.A. Pendergest

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
LIST OF TABLES .....	ix
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS .....	x
KEYS TO ABBREVIATIONS .....	xi
INTRODUCTION .....	xii
CHAPTER	
I "FROM THE 'MANCHESTER OF CANADA' TO THE DETROIT OF CANADA!" .	1
II "FIGHT THE WAGE CUTS TO THE END!" .....	7
III "WHERE HAVE ALL THE RADICALS GONE?" .....	43
IV THE YEARS OF DARKNESS AND OF STRUGGLE .....	63
V THE PROPHETS AND SOLDIERS OF THE NEW SOCIAL ORDER .....	97
VI "WHEN THE UNION'S INSPIRATION—" .....	128
VII "SOLIDARITY FOREVER!" .....	150
VIII "WHICH SIDE ARE YOU ON—?" .....	193
IX "PLUMP FOR LABOUR" .....	222
X "UNITED WE STAND, DIVIDED WE FALL" .....	262
XI "LABOUR DEMANDS A SQUARE DEAL" .....	314
BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE .....	357
BIBLIOGRAPHY .....	359
APPENDIX	
A. A HISTORICAL LIST OF LABOUR UNIONS IN OSHAWA UP TO 1940 .....	372
B. DETAILED RESULTS OF PROVINCIAL AND FEDERAL ELECTIONS BETWEEN 1928 AND 1943 IN OSHAWA AND DISTRICT .....	375
C. COPY OF AGREEMENT BETWEEN GENERAL MOTORS OF CANADA AND ITS EMPLOYEES AT OSHAWA, APRIL, 1937 .....	377
D. THE OSHAWA LABOUR REPRESENTATION COMMITTEE'S PLATFORMS FOR THE 1939 MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS .....	380
VITA .....	383

## LIST OF TABLES

	PAGE
TABLE 1: SELECTED STATISTICS ON AUTOMOBILES; 1926-1937 .....	66
TABLE 2: INDEX NUMBERS OF EMPLOYMENT IN THE AUTOMOBILE AND PARTS INDUSTRY IN CANADA; 1925-1943 .....	67
TABLE 3: MONTHLY INDEX NUMBERS OF EMPLOYMENT IN OSHAWA: 1929-1932 .....	69
TABLE 4: NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF ALL WAGE-EARNERS AND NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF MALE WAGE-EARNERS NOT AT WORK ON JUNE 1, 1931, AND NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF MALE WAGE-EARNERS REGISTERED AS UNEMPLOYED, AUGUST, 1931 .....	70
TABLE 5: TREND OF SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CONDITIONS IN OSHAWA; 1929-1934 .....	70
TABLE 6: THE VOCATIONS OF THE 184 CITIZENS SUPPORTING THE C.I.L. ..	93
TABLE 7: RESULTS OF THE MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS IN OSHAWA FOR THE YEAR 1938 .....	227
TABLE 8: RESULTS OF THE MUNICIPAL ELECTION IN OSHAWA FOR THE YEAR 1939 .....	253
TABLE 9: RESULTS OF THE MUNICIPAL ELECTION IN OSHAWA FOR THE YEAR 1941 .....	324
TABLE 10: RESULTS OF THE MUNICIPAL ELECTION IN OSHAWA FOR THE YEAR 1942 .....	325
TABLE 11: RESULTS OF THE MUNICIPAL ELECTION IN OSHAWA FOR THE / YEAR 1943 .....	326
TABLE 12: LABOUR COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP IN OSHAWA AND DISTRICT; 1938-1952 .....	329
TABLE 13: RESULTS OF THE MUNICIPAL ELECTION IN OSHAWA FOR THE YEAR 1944 .....	346



## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

	PAGE
"UPSET THE WHOLE BLOOMIN' BEE HIVE" .....	157
"SCARED BY HIS OWN SHADOW?" .....	168
"SWEEPING BACK THE SEA" .....	173
"FIXING IT ALL RIGHT" .....	181

## KEYS TO ABBREVIATIONS

## Key to Abbreviations Used in the Text.

A.C.C.L.	All-Canadian Congress of Labour.
A.F. of L.	American Federation of Labour.
A.W.I.U. of B.C.	Auto Workers' Industrial Union of the Border Cities.
A.W.I.U. of C.	Auto Workers' Industrial Union of Canada.
C.B.R.E.	Canadian Brotherhood of Railway, Transport and General Workers.
C.C.F.	Co-operative Commonwealth Federation.
C.C.L.	Canadian Congress of Labour.
C.C.Y.M.	Co-operative Commonwealth Youth Movement.
C.F.L.	Canadian Federation of Labour.
C.I.L.	Civic Improvement League (Oshawa).
C.I.O.	Committee for Industrial Organization/Congress of Industrial Organizations.
C.L.D.L.	Canadian Labour Defence League.
C.P. of C./C.P.	Communist Party of Canada.
I.A.W.I.U.	International Automobile Workers' Industrial Union.
I.L.P.	Independent Labour Party.
L.R.A.	Labour Representation Association (Toronto).
L.R.C.	Labour Representation Committee (Oshawa).
N.U.W.A.	National Unemployed Workers' Association.
R.I.L.U.	Red International of Labour Unions.
S.W.O.C.	Steel Workers' Organizing Committee.
T.L.C.	Trades and Labour Congress of Canada.
T.U.E.L.	Trade Union Education League.
T.U.U.L.	Trade Union Unity League.
U.A.W.	United Automobile Workers.
U.E.	United Electrical, Radio & Machine Workers of America.
U.F.L.T.A.	Ukrainian Farmer Labour Temple Association.
U.F.O.	United Farmers of Ontario.
U.S.W.	United Steel Workers.
W.U.L.	Workers' Unity League

## Key to Abbreviations Used in the Footnotes.

C.A.R.	<u>The Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs</u> , J. Castell Hopkins, ed. Toronto, Annual Review Publishing Co. Ltd.
C.C.F. Papers	Co-operative Commonwealth Federation Papers.
C.L.C. Papers	Canadian Labour Congress Papers.
P.A.C.	Public Archives of Canada.
P.A.O.	Public Archives of Ontario.
Q.U.A.	Queen's University Archives.
U.A.W.	United Automobile Workers Archives, The Collections of The Archives of Labor History and Urban Affairs, University Archives, Wayne State University, Detroit, Michigan.
U.T.A.	University of Toronto Archives.
W.M.C.	J.S. Woodsworth Memorial Collection.

## INTRODUCTION

In the city of Oshawa, there arose during the years between 1928 and 1943, a new and significant force that directly affected the lives of thousands of people. This dynamic force was composed of the individuals, movements and organizations of the progressive and labour elements that evolved out of a struggle to extend democracy in industry and the community. This thesis is a detailed study of that new force and the social, economic and political transformation which took place.

The purposes and conclusions of this thesis are multiple. First, Oshawa was a new industrial city which had just emerged from the status of a small town and thus provided an excellent example of what happened to such a community and its social, economic and political power structures during a period of unrest. Although the thesis begins in a period of economic "boom" and ends in a period of wartime prosperity, many of the key events occurred during the years of the Great Depression—the only decade in the twentieth century when the city's growth remained relatively small. It was mainly during periods of stress—not just the Great Depression but other times such as the epic strike of 1937 and the various municipal and provincial elections—that a class structured and factionalized community was revealed. Indeed, it was the periods of stress that acted as catalysts in the rise of new labour, political and ideological groups crying for economic and political power.

Secondly, Oshawa was a city caught up in many of the labour and left-wing political developments of the 1930's and was not only greatly affected by them but also had its history moulded by its own characteristics and was able to draw upon its human resources and play an important role in many of these developments in Canada. Oshawa was a city populated largely by British working class immigrants and recruits from Canadian

farms. Its economy was dominated by and depended upon the highly specialized production of automobiles by General Motors, a powerful international corporation. Therefore, any history of the city's working class was mainly governed by the fortunes and actions of the auto workers. This thesis is the history of how the city's working class, conditioned by its peculiar industrial environment, drew on an inheritance of British labour and political experience, Canadian rural radicalism and the social gospel tradition, and American industrial unionism, in an economic struggle against corporate power and a political struggle against traditional local élites and senior levels of government. The effects of this struggle were twofold. On the labour side, Oshawa could be considered the birthplace of modern industrial unionism in Canada. In Oshawa, unionization was quick and dramatic, causing what might be termed a peaceful revolution in the community and serving as an inspiration for labour in industrial centres throughout Canada. From a political standpoint, Oshawa was a leader, not only by providing important unionists and political leaders such as George Burt and Charles Millard, but also in the sense that labour and left-wing political action was very pronounced and met with moderate success in the late 1930's, whereas in other industrial centres such developments often compared unfavourably. These political events in Oshawa not only preceded the rising tide of support for the C.C.F. in the early 1940's, but provided an example of united labour and left-wing political action in a period dominated by the concept and appeal of the "popular front."

Third. Although this thesis is mainly a local history which concentrates on the evolution of organized labour and left-wing politics in Oshawa and district, the events which occurred and the personalities who emerged were of such significance that it was necessary to relate them to developments on the broader scene such as the emergence of the United

Automobile Workers and the United Steel Workers, and the history of the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation and the Communist Party of Canada.

Forth. Since most of the material dealt with was both new and composed of primary sources, an important by-product of the research has been the questioning of accepted interpretations of labour and political history. (See BIBLIOGRAPHY.) Some conclusions which can be drawn are different from accepted versions and thus suggest that new approaches to research in this field be taken. The classic history of Canadian labour by Harold Logan is quite dated now, and not only makes but brief references to the important developments in Oshawa but has been found to contain errors. Charles Lipton in his recent history of labour, deals very superficially with the strikes of 1928 and 1937 by the auto workers in Oshawa and ignores important figures such as Charles Millard. Neil McKenty published the first lengthy account of the strike of 1937 in his biography of Mitch Hepburn but it contained many shortcomings which have been only recently rectified by Irving M. Abella's account. Aside from the historic strike of 1937, almost nothing has been written about labour and politics in Oshawa and district. This account attempts to fill part of that gap.

Finally, in this thesis an attempt has been made to place the importance of political parties such as the C.C.F. and the C.P. of C. in their proper historical perspective. This has been done by avoiding reliance on simple political labels which tend to create a distortion of the true character of the labour and left-wing politicians of the period studied. Instead, a stress has been placed on the role of character and personalities and the variety of philosophies of political action too complex to designate with a simple C.C.F. or C.P. of C. label, as many historians have done. In addition, considerable attention has been given to rank and file opinion whenever possible and to the role of factionalism. This

has meant that many names have been mentioned, which might initially seem confusing to the reader but which is unavoidable if the true complexity of events is to be understood. Failure to investigate adequately the political composition and power structures of labour and of political party organizations has led to misinterpretations. An example of this has been the exaggeration of the power and influence of the communists in the U.A.W. by Gad Horowitz who did not interview George Burt, Canadian Regional Director of the U.A.W. from 1939 to 1968.<sup>1</sup> Extensive interviewing of both primary and secondary leaders of various factions and exponents of various philosophies is a necessity if a balanced account is to be presented. This applies to left-wing politics as well as to labour history. Gerald Caplan, the major historian of the C.C.F. in Ontario, dealt to some extent with the issue of factionalism in the early-1930's and Myrtle Armstrong offers some discussion of the issue in the 1940's, but further research is needed. It is only when the study of personalities and factional struggles is added to ideological and organizational studies, that labour and left-wing political history not only develops a sense of maturity but also comes closer to historical reality and makes such accounts more colourful and interesting to read and study.

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1. Interview with G. Burt.

## CHAPTER I "FROM THE 'MANCHESTER OF CANADA' TO THE 'DETROIT OF CANADA'"

From the business man's and merchant's point of view, Oshawa is an ideal town. Not only are there large manufacturing establishments situated here, but the farmers for miles around make Oshawa their shopping point and trading centre.... Her business streets contain prosperous, up-to-date and progressive firms, engaged in every line of commerce, while her manufactories comprise some of the largest and best known concerns in Canada.... Altogether Oshawa is an up-to-date town with a magnificent future.<sup>1</sup>

Oshawa has always been the home of an exceptionally fine class of mechanics, and during the fifty-one years we have been established here, we have gathered around us one of the best groups of workmen to be found anywhere in the world.<sup>2</sup>

About the year 1750 the French established a trading post near the mouth of the Oshawa creek. Some time after the British conquest of Canada in 1759 the post was abandoned and the district left undisturbed until 1790 when United Empire Loyalist families began to settle along the lake front in what came to be known as Cedar Dale. It was not until after the beginning of the nineteenth century that settlement began to take shape in what is now the business section of Oshawa. Land was cleared and a little cluster of houses was located at what is now the main corner of the city, King and Simcoe Streets. This intersection, which is now often referred to as "the Four Corners," was originally called "Skae's Corners." This name was changed to "Oshawa," meaning "The Crossing of a Stream," at the suggestion of an Indian chief in 1842. In 1849 Oshawa was officially incorporated as a village and in 1879 it attained the status of a town. Then in 1924, with a population of 16,659,

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1. The Manchester of Canada. Oshawa, The Reformer Printing and Publishing Company Limited, 1911, p. 5.

2. A letter from R.S. McLaughlin to the Oshawa Chamber of Commerce, July 19, 1928, published in Chamber of Commerce, Manufacturing Data of the City of Oshawa, Mundy Printing Company, Ltd., 1928, p. 56.

Oshawa became the twenty-fifth city in Ontario.<sup>3</sup>

During the second decade of the nineteenth century a second wave of settlement with its origins in the British Isles arrived. The harbour facilities of Whitby and Oshawa were developed and the Oshawa creek afforded a primary source of prosperity for the community by providing the power to turn the water wheels of the first lumber and grist mills. During the Crimean War the harbour facilities provided a funnel for the grain trade of the area through Oshawa, and with the completion of the Grand Trunk Railway between Toronto and Oshawa in 1856, the latter was soon on its way to becoming known as the "Manchester of Canada." Business and industry had crept into the settlement so that by the second half of the nineteenth century Oshawa was becoming a notable manufacturing centre with agricultural implement factories, several iron works, tanneries, woollen mills and even a piano company. The Pedlar People Limited commenced manufacturing in 1861, Malleable Iron Co. in 1872 and the Fittings Limited in 1902.<sup>4</sup>

There probably was no very great difference between the possibilities of development of Oshawa as compared with those of other communities similarly situated in the surrounding district such as nearby Whitby, the county town of Ontario County. Although there was a fairly constant growth of Oshawa in the nineteenth century, the real upsurge of development only came in the second and third decades of the twentieth century. The reason for this development was a basic change in the nature of the

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3. M. McIntyre Hood, Oshawa, "The Crossing between the Waters" A History of "Canada's Motor City", Oshawa, The Alger Press Limited, 1968, pp. 1-31; L.R. Barrand, compiler. City of Oshawa, Municipal Manual 1957, Oshawa, City Clerk's Office, 1957, pp. 12, 218.

4. Hood, op.cit., pp. 32-105.



manufacturing taking place.

Oshawa is basically a twentieth century city with its economy based on a product of the twentieth century, the motor vehicle. What started out as the McLaughlin Carriage Company in 1877 eventually became the nucleus of General Motors of Canada. In 1907 the McLaughlin Motor Car Company was formed as a subsidiary of the Carriage Company and contracts were made for Buick Manufacturing rights in Canada. The rights for Chevrolet were acquired in 1915 and the plant was enlarged to accommodate the extra output. The company had been closely allied with the General Motors Corporation as far back as 1910, although the Oshawa plant continued under its own name and as a separate entity. A movement to co-ordinate the holdings of the American concern led to the merger of the McLaughlin Motor Car Company and the Chevrolet Motor Car Company of Canada into a Canadian subsidiary known as General Motors of Canada. Later, the Olds Motor Works of Canada Division was added to produce Oldsmobile cars in Canada. The 1920's were great boom years in the auto industry as exemplified by the fact that the total number of motor vehicles produced in Canada had increased from 94,144 in 1920 to 262,625 in 1929.<sup>5</sup>

By 1928 Oshawa had become a booming city with a rapidly increasing population and a considerable amount of construction taking place. It had acquired several advantages as an industrial centre: harbour facilities, cheap electrical power, complete banking facilities, excellent

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5. Cecil Howard Aikman, National Problems of Canada. The Automobile Industry of Canada. McGill University Economic Studies, No. 8, Toronto, The Macmillan Company of Canada, Limited, 1926, p. 12.; Hood, op.cit., pp. 114-136.; Canada, Automobile Statistics For Canada: 1940, p. 5.; For a history of the financial relationship of the General Motors Co. of Canada, Ltd. to the General Motors Corporation see: United States, Report on Motor Vehicle Industry, House Document No. 92, 76th. Congress, 1st. Session, pp. 454, 479-480.

communication and transportation, as it was situated on the main Toronto to Montreal lines of the Canadian National and Canadian Pacific Railways and the provincial highway No. 2. There was also an excellent market with 650,000 people living within a radius of fifty miles of the city. One advantage noted by several of the city's manufacturers was the availability of a good labour force. According to a pamphlet published by the Oshawa Chamber of Commerce, in 1928 there were over 8,000 people employed in the local industries. The pamphlet also went on to say:

The labour conditions in Oshawa are pleasant and home-owning is within the reach of moderate income. 80% of the residents of Oshawa own their own homes. The workers are conservative, productive and permanent.....

The happy labour condition in Oshawa is verified by the letters received from manufacturers at present operating in the city....

Owing to the close proximity of the City of Toronto a ready supply of all male help is available. A branch of the Ontario Government Employment Agency is located in Oshawa.

Manufacturers requiring female help will find in Oshawa an immediate supply available.

The regular working week consists of fifty hours and the prevailing rate of wages are unskilled 35 to 40 cents per hour and skilled metal trade workers from 55 to 85 cents per hour.<sup>6</sup>

This was characteristic of the vigorous boosting carried out by the powerful five hundred man Chamber of Commerce in its attempts to encourage the establishment of manufacturing industries in the city. It welcomed the economic penetration of American capitalists and even provided them with the advice that they should build a local branch plant in order to capture the Canadian and British markets and take advantage of British preferential tariffs.<sup>7</sup> Another powerful force which tried to "boom" Oshawa was The Oshawa Daily Times, the major newspaper in the district and although it became officially politically independent in 1927, it continued

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6. Chamber of Commerce, op.cit., p. 17.

7. Ibid., pp. 32-33.

to give a good press to the Liberals, the traditionally dominant political party in the community and district.<sup>8</sup> The Oshawa Daily Times often printed special issues about the growth and industrial potentialities of the city which, through its new role as a motor vehicle manufacturing centre, was being transformed from the "Manchester of Canada" to the "Detroit of Canada." Generally, the newspaper's columns presented an overly optimistic picture of the community characteristic of the mood and fashion of the times. However, to the socially conscious critic, it also turned out to be a picture in which the majority of working class people in the community were not really involved or represented except as the contented toiling masses, and the conventional wisdom about the happy workers expounded by the local corporations and the Chamber of Commerce went unchallenged.

Of course the local establishment had been challenged at an earlier date by progressive working class organizations. Oshawa had been a major labour centre in the nineteenth century with several local assemblies of the Knights of Labour and trade unions of moulders and coopers (See APPENDIX A). Oshawa even had one of the earliest Trades and Labour Councils

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8. The Oshawa Daily Times had previously been the Ontario Reformer (1871-1927), a definite Liberal supporter and strong opponent of its rival Conservative paper, the Oshawa Vindicator (1854-1917). Microfilm Committee of the Canadian Library Association, Canadian Newspapers on Microfilm (a cumulative catalogue), Ottawa, Canadian Library Association, November, 1965. See also: Roderick Lewis, compiler. A Statistical History of All the Electoral Districts of the Province of Ontario Since 1867. Toronto, The Queen's Printer, (1963), pp. 178-184.; Colonel Ernest J. Chambers, ed. The Canadian Parliamentary Guide. 1922. Ottawa, The Mortimer Co. Limited, 1922, pp. 253-255.; Major A.L. Normandin, ed. The Canadian Parliamentary Guide. 1928. Ottawa, The Mortimer Co. Limited, 1928, p. 284. The riding comprising Oshawa should not be regarded as a 'safe' Liberal seat. The only third parties to have run candidates were the Progressives in the 1921 federal election and the United Farmers of Ontario (U.F.O.) in the provincial election of 1923.

in the country, formed in 1886, making it about the fifth or sixth council established in Canada.<sup>9</sup>

In the first three decades of the twentieth century there was a substantial organized labour force in Oshawa but it did not survive the changing nature of the local economy. With the suspension of Local 136 of the Moulders Union of North America in 1926, the last organization of factory workers came to an end in the city to which the term "company town" could be justly applied. All that remained were a few unions of workers in the service and construction industries.<sup>10</sup> To outsiders and those who depended on the Chamber of Commerce for their information, Oshawa was full of happy and contented labourers. From the workers' point of view, such was not the case.

Indeed, the working class of the community of which the unorganized employees of General Motors were the vast majority, was far from contented. This thesis is the history of how these workers rose from a position of obscurity to one of relative prominence and power. It is a detailed study of the extension of democracy through the social, economic and political transformation that took place in Oshawa and district between 1928 and 1943.

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9. Voice of Labour, Oshawa, The Oshawa & District Labour Council, 1969, pp. 44-45.

10. Canada, Annual Report on Labour Organization in Canada. 1926. pp. 116-234.

## CHAPTER II "FIGHT THE WAGE CUTS TO THE END!"

Can you imagine an individual occupied constantly every hour of his or her life repeating one single operation over and over and over? Can you imagine the state of mind of the individual who is occupied in screwing a nut on a bolt his entire life time? Can you imagine the state of mind of that individual when he has left the shop for the day or the night?<sup>1</sup>

We, the employees of General Motors of Canada, do hereby pledge ourselves to establish a trade union organization. Furthermore we pledge ourselves to use every possible means to secure one hundred per cent organization.<sup>2</sup>

The great majority of the members of the labour force in Oshawa worked in the automobile factories where a particular industrial environment imposed a certain character or temperament upon them. It is only possible to comprehend the later militancy and radicalism of the automobile workers by first understanding their environment. From the point of view of size, the mechanical perfection of its products, the number of its employees, its gigantic output and its dizzy profits, the automobile industry has been called one of the wonders of the twentieth century. It was an industry that poured a torrent of riches into the pockets of its owners but only a thin trickle into the pay envelopes of the workers.<sup>3</sup>

The "gospel of high wages" extending back to 1914 and Henry Ford's misleading announcement of a five-dollar-a-day minimum wage were character-

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1. From an address before the 1926 A.F. of L. Convention by Sara A. Conboy, Secretary of the Committee on Organization on the Proposal of the inauguration of a general organizing campaign in the automobile industry. Report of Proceedings of the 46th. Annual Convention of the American Federation of Labor. Washington, The Law Reporter Printing Co., 1926, p. 171.

2. Pledge of striking autoworkers at a mass meeting in the Oshawa Armouries on March 30, 1928, as they were about to join the International Automobile Workers' Industrial Union. The Oshawa Daily Times, Mar. 30, 1928.

3. Edward Levinson, The Rise of the Auto Workers, U.A.W. Education Department Publication No. 28 (Detroit, 1944?), p. 1.

istic of public misconceptions held about the automobile industry. Though wage rates were often higher than in many industries, except in most skilled trades, the popular impression created outside automobile cities was that the auto workers were a prosperous lot. According to G.D. Blackwood the automobile industry never paid its workers more than an average of seventy-five cents an hour before 1935.<sup>4</sup> Edward Levinson noted that the average weekly wage in the industry back in 1907 when the industry was in its infancy was \$11.50. Ten years later it had climbed to \$15.40 a week and in 1924 figures showed that each worker took home the "handsome" wage of \$30.30 a week. The best year, was 1928 with average weekly earnings of \$33.00 for 44 hours, but from that high point income dropped until in 1933 the average weekly wage was \$19.80 and the average hourly wage was 55 cents.<sup>5</sup> What the relatively high hourly wage rates did not reveal, though, was that the annual wage was low because of seasonal lay-offs. The real wages of the auto workers had increased very little over the years and there was very little for the workers to set aside a fund to see them through a time of stress. Thus, with no unemployment insurance in Canada, the seasonal lay-offs lasting several months inflicted great hardships.

"Labour's share" did not match the enormous increases in profits and the production of cars. Indeed, a downward trend often characterized wages.<sup>6</sup> One device used by the corporation, often with little or no

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4. George Douglas Blackwood, "The United Automobile Workers of America 1935-51," Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, The University of Chicago, 1951, p. 4.

5. Levinson, op.cit., p. 1. Levinson claims these figures are to be found in the reports of the Automobile Manufacturers' Association.

6. See: United States, Report on Motor Vehicle Industry. House Document No. 92, 76th. Congress, 1st. Session.; United States, Wages And



publicity, was the "wage cut," carried out in a piecemeal process whereby workers' pay was cut group by group, department by department, instead of in the entire plant. This was done to prevent the simultaneous resentment of a large number of workers. With one wage slash implemented, employers would then explain to another set of workers that the other group had seen the "reasonableness" of the move and they should too. The "wage cut" itself could be achieved by various methods such as reductions in straight time or in piece rates or by a "readjustment" or "correction" of the often complicated bonus system. Other methods included discharging workers and rehiring them at lower rates or hiring new men at lower rates, robbing the workers of bits of time, getting extra pieces of work done free, and docking workers a half hour for a moment's tardiness. Often it was difficult for workers to understand the basis upon which their wages were being paid due to complex "bonus systems and incentives" sometimes based on the group or gang. Under the group-piece-work system the intention was to make the employees push each other and cut the cost of supervision. With the men driving one another bad feelings would be caused, thus keeping the workers divided. Under such a system the men rather than the company carried the expense of a new worker's training. Finally uncertainty concerning the amount of the "bonus" meant that the workers never knew what they would receive in

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6. Continued from Page 8.

Hours Of Labor In The Automobile Industry: 1922. Bulletin of the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics No. 348. United States, Wages and Hours Of Labor In The Motor Vehicle Industry: 1925. Bulletin of the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics No. 438.; United States, Wages And Hours Of Labor In The Motor-Vehicle Industry: 1928. Bulletin of the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics No. 502.; Robert W. Dunn, Labor and Automobiles, New York, International Publishers Co., Inc., 1929, pp. 117-125. Dunn's book is a communist tract and should be regarded as such, but even so it contains many valuable insights and keen observations of the automobile industry.

their pay envelopes, a factor providing a perfect opportunity to "gyp" the men.<sup>7</sup>

A second factor that greatly affected the auto workers stemmed from the manufacturing process itself. Skilled workers, such as carriage and wagon builders, enginemakers, moulders, metal tradesmen, machinists, carpenters and furniture craftsmen, predominated in the days before World War I. The numerical superiority of such craftsmen soon disappeared, though, as the steady mechanization of the industry left only the "typical auto worker" who was just "a mere machine operator with a job that can be picked up in a few minutes or a few hours."<sup>8</sup> A survey conducted in Detroit in 1910 revealed that many of the jobs in the automobile factories were skilled or semi-skilled in nature but by 1916 not more than one per cent were skilled.<sup>9</sup> These statistics reveal a rationalization of production resulting from the complete expertness of the machine itself and the standardization of the operations which required little experience and skill of the machine operator. Thus the terms skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled became irrelevant; more accurately descriptive were such categories as (1) the tenders who operated machines, (2) the technical force who designed, planned, scheduled, routed and costed the work, and (3) the foremen, inspectors and clerks who checked the quantity and quality of production, kept watch on the flow of material and recorded all the activities of the shop. The new qualities required of a machine tender were an ability to eliminate all waste and false motions, to meet and maintain a constant machine pace, and to follow with precision printed

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7. Dunn, op.cit., pp. 125-132.

8. Ibid., p. 59.

9. Levinson, op.cit., p. 2.



instructions emanating from an unseen source in some far off planning department.<sup>10</sup>

The key to the process of manufacturing an automobile was the assembly line technique. It involved not only a final assembly line but also the axle, carburetor, crankcase, motor and many other lines with their driving pace which made the "lines" a famous illustration of the dehumanizing process within the auto factories. What most characterized the "lines" was the conveyor system, the minute specialization of labour, and the standardization of products which in turn made mass straight-line production possible. As one observer noted:

The conveyor started as a simple means of carrying articles, but became a tyrant dominating the workers. When the conveyor is speeded up the workers are forced to follow its dictates, and to hurry with their jobs accordingly. The conveyor's speed invariably determines the worker's speed.... The conveyor is the master. If the management in a factory decided to increase its speed by ten per cent...tens of thousands of hands...must work ten per cent faster. The workers are bound to the conveyor the way the galley slaves were bound to the vessel.<sup>11</sup>

What this infamous "speed-up" meant in human terms was vividly described by a young worker whose father had been worn out by the terrific pace:

The men work like fiends, the sweat running down their cheeks, their jaws set and eyes on fire. Nothing in the world exists for them except the line of chassis bearing down on them relentlessly. They come along on a conveyor, and as each passes the worker has to finish his job before the next one bears down upon him. The line moves fast and the chassis are close together. The men move like lightning. Some are underneath on their backs on little carts propelling themselves by their heels all day long, fixing something underneath the chassis as they move along....<sup>12</sup>

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10. Charles Reitell, "Machinery and Its Effect upon the Workers in the Automotive Industry," The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, Vol. CXVI (Nov., 1924), p. 38.

11. Arthur Feiler, America Seen Through German Eyes, cited in Dunn, op.cit., p. 85.

12. Cited in Dunn, op.cit., p. 90.

Subjection to such a monotonous and health-destroying process meant that the industry had a great turnover in man-power. After spending fifteen or twenty years in the industry many men were no longer fit for work. Thus a man over thirty-five found it hard to obtain a job and after forty he was a has-been, played out as far as the automobile industry was concerned.<sup>13</sup>

There was a third factor which constantly plagued the auto worker and can be summed up in the single word "insecurity." The industry was characterized by a system that was utterly lacking in personal security for the individual worker. Since new workers could easily be trained, a man could be discharged because of age or, if he had been employed long enough to move up the wage scale, he could be replaced as it was cheaper to hire a new man at a starting wage. Foremen had the power to fire at will and men could be discharged without a minute's notice. Automobile production seasons did not last an entire year, and months of enforced lay-offs created tremendous insecurity since there was no guarantee that a worker would be rehired once production began again. As Edward Levinson of the U.A.W. Education Department later wrote:

Kowtowing to the foreman, and willingness to translate this subservience into concrete items—like an occasional pint of whiskey, Christmas and birthday presents, cutting the foreman's lawn or painting his garage on a Sunday—these sometimes helped to insure re-employment when the plant started up again.<sup>14</sup>

Added to this uncertainty was the daily fear created by the spy system, which made it impossible for a worker to know whether the man next to him was a friend or a company "stool pigeon," either induced by an additional few dollars to "stool" on his fellow workers or hired outright

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13. Levinson, op.cit., p. 2.

14. Ibid., p. 2.

for that purpose. Such a system both ensured management's control and prevented or destroyed any union activity.<sup>15</sup> As a matter of fact, the corporations had even formed an association of their own<sup>16</sup> and had tried to offset agitation for trade unions among the workers through employee representation (company unionism) and by a variety of "welfare" schemes with the intention of "increasing labour's morale," heightening efficiency, developing plant loyalty and tying the men to the company.

The automobile industry produced what might be termed the classic alienated worker but this is a fact that only leaves the observer with questions. Why did labour unions not grow along with the industry, and why did the U.A.W.-C.I.O. succeed in a few years where other organizations had failed? The answer partly lies in the characteristics of the industry already outlined and partly in the earlier attempts to unionize the workers. The early unions, however, left few traces of their existence; only the all powerful corporations remained.

The Carriage and Wagon Workers of North America, an industrial union first affiliated with the Knights of Labour (1893-95) and then with the American Federation of Labor, was the first organization in the industry. In spite of its industrial constitution, the union was basically

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15. *Ibid.*, p. 2.; According to C.H. Millard, General Motors in Canada did not use Pinkerton detectives as the company in the United States did and this he attributed to R.S. McLaughlin, who tried to maintain the Canadian plants more in the image of a family concern with a paternalistic relationship with the workers. Interview with C.H. Millard.

16. Levinson, *op.cit.*, p. 3. Levinson notes that the first corporation organization was the Automobile Board of Trade, which later became known as the National Automobile Chamber of Commerce and in 1934 changed its name again to become the Automobile Manufacturers Association. Companies co-operated closely. "After the planning division of the N.R.A., a Federal Government agency, made a first-hand investigation in Detroit in 1934, it concluded that the companies had an inter-locking black-list system: to be fired by one company for union or other forbidden activities meant you were barred from the entire industry."

a craft organization until after 1911, at which time it became clear that the only future for the union lay among the auto workers. The A.F. of L. broadened its charter so it could organize more freely and, within a decade, the membership greatly increased. It was also during this period that the Industrial Workers of the World unsuccessfully tried to organize the auto workers. In 1914, the jealous craft unions in the A.F. of L. combined to try to have the Carriage Workers drop the word "automobile" from their name but the union refused. Finally, in 1917, the A.F. of L. convention authorized the suspension of the Carriage Workers but before this was done the union changed its name to the United Automobile, Aircraft, and Vehicle Workers of America and became known for the next fifteen years as "the Auto Workers Union." Early in 1919 this outlawed union began an ambitious organizational drive but it met with only limited success.<sup>17</sup> The union only survived in a precarious way and was faced with tremendous problems: the high labour turn-over in the industry, the "red scare," and the employers' offensive of the post war period.<sup>18</sup> Perhaps

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17. Blackwood, op.cit., pp. 7-14.

18. Lewis L. Lorwin, with the assistance of Jean Atherton Flexner, The American Federation of Labor, History, Policies, and Prospects, Washington, the Brookings Institution, 1933, pp. 233-240. Changes in industrial structure and control resulted in large-scale enterprises and consolidation of control with important consequences for labour because these industrial changes facilitated personnel and plant policies which deeply affected industrial relations. This meant that the new industrialism based on scientific method and mass production worked to create a successful antidote to organized labour through techniques of employee representation, financial incentives, profit-sharing, insurance, and social and recreational activities. The results of the new industrial changes created complex sociological and psychological effects on the workers, one of which was the emulation of the middle-class standard of living. People of small means could participate in the speculative movement, thus allowing many workers to share in the get-rich-quick psychology which characterized the period. Rather than a desire for independence and individual freedom, the desire for steady employment and high earnings became dominant. The automobile provided a sense of relative mobility and the radio and motion picture

one of the greatest problems lay with the A.F. of L. itself in that during its organizing campaign it recognized railroads, steel and coal but not automobiles as "basic industries." The A.F. of L. failed to recognize that the new key to the American economy and society was the automobile; thus the craft unions concentrated their efforts on steel in 1919 with results that were rather poor.<sup>19</sup>

During these early years Detroit had been the major centre of organization with only a few penetrations being made into Canada. Various major cities had seen a bit of organization at different times but there had been only two attempts to form a union in the major automobile centres of Oshawa and Windsor. The Carriage Makers had formed a local at the McLaughlin Carriage Company in Oshawa and on February 18, 1903, 263 workers had gone on strike for union recognition and increased wages. After a month no settlement had been reached and many of the men had returned to work on the old terms.<sup>20</sup> In 1920 the United Automobile, Aircraft and Vehicle Workers of America, Local 28, established itself in Windsor. The Annual Report on Labour Organization in Canada lists a membership of 40 in 1920 and 36 in 1921 but in the 1922 edition the union is no longer mentioned.<sup>21</sup> Thus the automobile industry in Canada had almost no or-

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18. Continued from Page 14.

displaced the older forms of recreation based upon collective association with fellow workers. The resulting use of the new social inventions made the worker more individualistic in his way of life and may partly explain the marked decline in the frequency and intensity of industrial struggles in the late 1920's.

19. Blackwood, op.cit., pp. 14-15.

20. Canada, The Labour Gazette, Vol. 3 (1902-1903), p. 804.

21. Canada, Annual Report on Labour Organization in Canada 1920, 1921, 1922. 1921 (p. 254), 1922 (p. 244), 1923.

ganization throughout its early decades and was only to witness a short lived major attempt in the late 1920's during another period of A.F. of L. organization.

Because of the added interest created by the Machinists' Union's efforts to organize garage mechanics and in reaction to the attacks by communists on the A.F. of L., James O'Connell, the president of the Federation's Metal Trades Department, brought the question of organizing the autoworkers to the convention of his department in 1925. A committee appointed to consider the subject recommended that the automobile workers be organized along industrial lines. The craft unions opposed this and the committee then suggested that the workers be organized into federal labour unions with the intention that they would later be parcelled out to the appropriate international unions. This recommendation still seemed too drastic, however.<sup>22</sup>

In 1926 the Metal Trades Department decided to ask the A.F. of L. to undertake an organizational campaign among automobile workers and a resolution to that effect was introduced at the 1926 convention of the A.F. of L. in Detroit. The result was the passage of a resolution authorizing the officers of the A.F. of L. to begin a general organization campaign and to call a conference of all the officers of the national or international organizations connected with the automobile industry for the purpose of working out jurisdictional details.<sup>23</sup> The subsequent conference decided:

- (1) that the question of jurisdiction should be suspended in all

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22. Lorwin, op.cit., p. 244.

23. Report of Proceedings of the 46th Annual Convention of the American Federation of Labor, Washington, The Law Reporter Printing Co., 1926, p. 98, 171-173.



plants where the conveyor or assembly line prevails or some other method of mass production under which specialization has subdivided the craft into repetitive operations; and (2) that workers in the automotive industry, except those engaged in the construction and maintenance of plants, equipment, parts or tools, shall be organized into local unions directly chartered by the A.F. of L. A local union shall include all workers employed in one plant unless the size of the plant required division into smaller units, or unless it is desirable to combine workers in a number of plants into one local union: (3) that the members of directly affiliated automobile workers' unions shall be recognized by all national and international unions of the A.F. of L. and shall be given exchange privileges when changing their work from one automobile plant to another; and where possible shall be given membership in international unions without further cost, where such unions hold jurisdiction. Where a local union has been established chartered by an international union it shall be recognized and those who are members will be permitted to retain their membership in the local organization to which they belong.<sup>24</sup>

However the most important point made by the conference was included in the closing reference to the later disposition of the unions and reads as follows:

It shall be the definite aim and avowed purpose of the American Federation of Labour to bring about the transfer of those organized in the automobile industry to the jurisdiction of the respective national and international unions, this transfer to be brought about as speedily as possible. The workers to be educated to their unions' responsibilities and to be prevailed upon to accept affiliation with the international union having jurisdiction over the trade and calling in which they are engaged. The ultimate purpose being to organize works committees representative of all the organizations having jurisdiction within the industry.<sup>25</sup>

Thus it became clear that the A.F. of L. still had not recognized the need for industrial unions and was only going to waive jurisdictional claims during the organizational campaign. When it came to implementation, though, the A.F. of L. met with little success. Three conferences of unions with interests in the auto industry were called in 1927 and only the last

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24. Canada, Annual Report on Labour Organization in Canada, 1928, p. 184.

25. Cited in Ibid., 1928, p. 184.

two achieved anything. When the A.F. of L. finally began its campaign conditions were not favourable: the support of the international unions was luke-warm; there was no money for strike benefits; the main auto centre of Detroit was filled with a surplus of workers, with the Ford works being closed for model alterations; and finally, the A.F. of L. had mistakenly tried the new tactic of trying to conciliate the employer while sending organizers among his workers. Thus, the first large campaign to reach the workers just fizzled out.<sup>26</sup> In Canada, however, the auto workers were not going to wait forever for the A.F. of L. and took action on their own.

The auto industry was thriving in the late twenties and General Motors was growing ever richer.<sup>27</sup> By the 23rd of March, 1928, General Motors' stock values had undergone two weeks of sensational sky-rocketing, giving the company a market value of \$2,500,000,000.<sup>28</sup> Despite tremendous increases in profits and production, the company could only see fit to reduce the wages of its workers at Oshawa. Despite company claims of high wages, the men claimed to have been averaging only 44 to 52 cents an hour.<sup>29</sup> The straw that broke the camel's back, though, was a new 30 per

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26. Lorwin, op.cit., pp. 245-248.

27. See: Canada, Automobile Statistics For Canada: 1940, p. 5; United States, Report on Motor Vehicle Industry, House Document No. 92, 76th Congress, 1st. Session, p. 431. The net profit after income taxes of the General Motors Corporation and consolidated subsidiaries was: \$47,660,984 in 1924, \$115,673,294 in 1925, \$193,246,941 in 1926, \$262,268,840 in 1927, and \$296,256,203 in 1928; The press often quoted a profit figure of \$210,000,000 for General Motors in 1927. The Mail and Empire, Mar. 27, 1928; The Oshawa Daily Times, Mar. 27, 1928.

28. The Oshawa Daily Times, Mar. 23, 1928, Mar. 26, 1928, Mar. 27, 1928; The Globe, Mar. 24, 1928.

29. The Oshawa Daily Times, Mar. 27, 1928, The Globe, Mar. 28, 1928.



cent wage reduction in the trim department of the Chevrolet and Pontiac divisions which had just followed a 45 per cent reduction in December. Three hundred trimmers, some affected by the cut and others in sympathy with them, spontaneously walked out in protest on the morning of Monday, March 26, 1928.<sup>30</sup>

The Executive of the Employees' Association, a company union, had previously rubber stamped management's decision, which had been based on the alleged need to bring the wages of the trimmers in line with those paid in the United States Division of the corporation. General Motors, with its attempts to maintain a paternalistic public relations image, saw the workers as having "been unduly influenced by a small group who have rather radical ideas" and, though it considered all striking trimmers released from its employment, it claimed to be willing to deal with the men individually but not collectively.<sup>31</sup> At the same time, the company threatened that the strikers could easily be replaced and hired eighty

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30. The Oshawa Daily Times, Mar. 26, 1928, Mar. 28, 1928; The Globe, Mar. 29, 1928; According to a statement issued by H.A. Brown, General Manager, the men had been averaging \$1.12 an hour and under the new scale they would average 82 cents an hour. The previous scale was 40 per cent. above the Buffalo and St. Louis plants, and also higher than the Flint plants. Ibid., Mar. 28, 1928; R.S. McLaughlin, President of General Motors, was in Florida when the strike started. The Evening Telegram, Mar. 28, 1928; The cut which actually caused the strike was one which was put into effect in the trimming department on March 22. On March 15, there had been a cut in the rates paid the men on the Chevrolet and Pontiac assembly lines, but these men did not strike until after the trimmers had walked out. The Mail and Empire, Apr. 2, 1928.

31. The Oshawa Daily Times, Mar. 26, 1928; The Globe, Mar. 27, 1928. According to management's statement, the Employees' Association consisted of about 80 representatives elected by popular vote from every department. From this group of representatives a governing Board of Directors was elected. The fine details of this system were not explained, however. According to 'Slim' Phillips, the scheme was first thought of by a salaried man whose plan operated on the principle that there would be a vote in the office for every one in the factory and the deciding vote in any matter would be cast by the chairman, the man who thought up the system. Inter-

"scabs" as strikebreakers. This was to no avail, however, as the company soon found it impossible to maintain production or fill the vacant places fast enough with blackleg labour. The position of the trimmers in the chain of production was strategic enough that other groups of workers soon became idle and this, coupled with the sympathetic action towards the trimmers on the part of other workers, meant that by Tuesday about two thousand employees were idle.<sup>32</sup>

When the trimmers walked out they immediately affected the people just down the assembly line who were equally dissatisfied with the piece work efficiency bonus system. It was from this group that a leader emerged, A.C. 'Slim' Phillips of the closed body hardware department. Instead of returning to work in the afternoon these men decided to go out in support of the trimmers. Phillips suggested that they post someone at each gate so that General Motors would know that they were officially supporting the trimmers. When a representative of the Employees' Association tried to dissuade the men from acting they turned to Phillips and asked him to represent their department. He agreed and suggested that the men get together and arrange some meetings. The whole affair was spontaneous, there

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31. Continued from Page 19.  
view with A.C. Phillips. The Worker, Apr. 7, 1928, commented on this "Yellow Dog Association" by citing some of its rules: "Rule 1 - All employees are members of the Association. Rule 4 - The accepted procedure in dealing with suggestions, requests or grievances is through the representative, the foreman, superintendent and central executive committee. Rule 5 - The primary object of the Association is to develop and maintain on a definite and permanent basis, a spirit of mutual confidence and good will between those charged with the responsibility of directing the affairs of the company and employees generally; and so by friendly and sympathetic co-operation one with the other, to bring happiness and prosperity to all members of the General Motors family."

32. The Toronto Daily Star, Mar. 27, 1928; The Oshawa Daily Times, Mar. 28, 1928.

were no pickets at any gate all week (except a token picket on Friday), all the departments that came out did so because they were fed up and anyone who wanted to work could do so, although he would not have much to do for long.<sup>33</sup>

In the afternoon 700 men went over to the Bradley Arena for a mass meeting at which they were told, according to The Oshawa Daily Times, that a deputation from the men affected by the wage cut had waited upon the management and offered a fifty-fifty basis as a compromise which management had refused. As a result, the men decided that they would not return to work until their former wage rates were forthcoming.<sup>34</sup> The next mass meeting was scheduled for Tuesday morning at the arena but, as the weather was bad, Slim Phillips had the meeting shifted to the New Martin Theatre where he told the representatives of the departments to meet backstage. At this meeting a nucleus of an organization was formed. Phillips, a tall, outspoken man with a strong, loud voice, was made chairman and pushed out on the platform to address the men and to present his suggestion that a list of demands be drawn up and presented to General Motors so that they would know where the men stood.<sup>35</sup> A deputation of department representatives did as Phillips suggested<sup>36</sup> but was only able to

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33. Interview with A.C. Phillips; The Oshawa Daily Times, Mar. 30, 1928. There was a token picket on Friday just to demonstrate that the strike was still on and it lasted until a settlement was reached. Slim Phillips warned the picketers to keep at least twenty feet away from the plant gates, not accost anyone, and keep moving. The Mail and Empire, Mar. 31, 1928.

34. The Oshawa Daily Times, Mar. 26, 1928.

35. Interview with A.C. Phillips.

36. The Mail and Empire, Mar. 28, 1928. The committee which interviewed H.A. Brown, General Manager, carried four definite demands. They were as follows:

"(1) Chevrolet and Pontiac closed body workers to go back to work at the old rate, and all 'scab' labor to be removed.

report back to the meeting that the company manager had rejected their demands and had issued an ultimatum that the trimmers, the first to strike, must return to work under the new wage scale and that the 'scab' labour would not be dispensed with. According to The Mail and Empire, the only concession promised was "an adjustment of the piece-workers' rate on the Chevrolet assembly line, so as to make the daily rate of 65 cents per hour, until the company was able definitely to set prices on Chevrolet cars." This offer was unanimously and loudly rejected, and the men who packed the theatre were solid for a continuation of the strike to the bitter end. John A. Young, Ontario secretary of the Machinists' Union, had been sent from Toronto by James Simpson, Vice-President of the Trades and Labour Congress of Canada (T.L.C.), and before the meeting closed, he read the workers a telegram that was being sent to Ottawa to the Hon. Peter Heenan, Minister of Labour, asking intervention to settle the dispute. He also called on the men to be orderly. His advice was well followed after the meeting when the strikers formed a parade which marched past the offices of the company and through the main streets of the city. Throughout the day the men had appeared cheerful yet gave every indication of their determination.<sup>37</sup>

On Wednesday morning a thousand men left a brief mass meeting, marched up to the company offices through a heavy snowstorm singing "Hail,

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36. Continued from page 21.

(2) Chevrolet and Pontiac chassis and final assembly to be given re-adjustment according to the basis stated by representatives of these lines.

(3) All other departments to have definite assurance that the present rates will remain in force.

(4) No one to be victimized, and all strikers to return to work in a body."

37. The Globe, Mar. 28, 1928; The Mail and Empire, Mar. 28, 1928, Mar. 30, 1928.

Hail, the Gang's All Here," and then proceeded past the factories beckoning the men inside to come out and join them. That afternoon a hundred female trimmers and stampers joined in the sympathy strike and a massive parade was led to the New Martin Theatre, where the workers reaffirmed their demands and John Young told them of the benefits which would accrue from having a union in the city. As yet the mood of the strike could hardly be called radical as speeches were moderate; the chairman of the workers' committee emphasized the necessity of maintaining work and even defended the action of some of the workers in going back to their jobs. The dispute itself was still in a deadlock but Peter Heenan had replied to the workers' telegram of Tuesday by wiring that M.S. Campbell, Chief Conciliation Officer of the federal Department of Labour, was on his way to Oshawa.<sup>38</sup>

Excitement reigned throughout the city on Thursday. M.S. Campbell met with both representatives of the strikers and officials of the company, in secret conferences during the morning. Although no definite news came out of these meetings, the impression rapidly gained ground that things were looking much brighter, and a report was given circulation that the men would return to work the next morning, pending a final settlement of their difficulties.<sup>39</sup> About 3,000 of the 5,000 General Motors employees were now out and, though the strike leaders hoped for an early settlement through arbitration, they proceeded with plans to organize an automobile workers' union with encouragement from several labour organizers who had arrived in town on Wednesday morning. No invitation had been sent to out-

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38. The Evening Telegram, Mar. 28, 1928; The Oshawa Daily Times, Mar. 28, 1928; The Toronto Daily Star, Mar. 28, 1928; The Globe, Mar. 29, 1928.

39. The Mail and Empire, Mar. 30, 1928; The Oshawa Daily Times, Mar. 29, 1928.

side labour organizations but the strikers knew that labour leaders like James Simpson were coming.<sup>40</sup> At a Thursday morning meeting definite steps for a permanent organization were taken, and officers were chosen pro tem.<sup>41</sup> No final decision was made as to the affiliation of the union. Behind the scenes, however, a debate was going on over the kind of affiliation the workers should have. Slim Phillips, an opponent of international unions, had opposed an A.F. of L. charter in favour of one from the All-Canadian Congress of Labour (A.C.C.L.) but he was outvoted by men who hoped to gain support from the American workers.<sup>42</sup> The mood of the strike itself remained jolly with no real attempt at picketing; only massive parades and meetings in the New Martin Theatre were held.<sup>43</sup> The strike committee had appointed twenty strikers to act as constables and even asked Chief of Police O.D. Friend to swear them in but, after a conference with the mayor, this was deemed to be unnecessary. The communists soon put in an unsolicited appearance. L.R. Menzies, representing the communist paper, The Worker, harangued the strikers and sympathizers, and

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40. Interview with A.C. Phillips; During the week James Simpson accompanied by William Varley, Secretary of the Building Trades Council, A.F. of L. Business Agent Gillanders and Fred Molineaux, came to Oshawa in order to complete the preliminary steps on behalf of the workers for the formation of one unit under Federal charter of the A.F. of L. Canadian Labor Press, Mar. 31, 1928.

41. The Mail and Empire, Mar. 30, 1928. The officers elected were as follows: chairman, Carol Phillips; vice-chairman, Robert Stewart; treasurer, Gerald Montgomery; secretary, George Lemee; business committee, Carol Phillips, Robert Stewart, A. Ralph, Douglas Stewart, Charles Wales and Harold McConkey; entertainment committee, Ben McGrath, George Cox and Howard Dell; publicity committee, R. McDonough, James Wilson and George Lemee.

42. Interview with A.C. Phillips. In addition to representatives of the T.L.C. and members of the Communist Party of Canada, W.J. McPherson, organizing secretary of the Canadian Brotherhood of Railway Employees (an A.C.C.L. affiliate), was also in Oshawa trying to organize the workers. The Mail and Empire, Mar. 31, 1928.

43. The Toronto Daily Star, Mar. 29, 1928.



Jack MacDonald, another communist and member of the Toronto Trades and Labour Council, spoke to the workers and passed out thousands of pamphlets telling them to organize and fight. The workers, however, responded by tearing up the pamphlets and throwing them in the streets.<sup>44</sup>

After the conferences with the strikers' representatives and management, M.S. Campbell decided to place the situation before the workers and called a mass meeting which, as the New Martin Theatre was unable to accommodate the crowd, took place in the Armouries. The company, he stated, had agreed to place itself under the terms of the Industrial Disputes Investigation Act and awaited only a similar agreement from the men. He suggested that the men return to work the following morning, at the same rate they were receiving when the strike commenced. This was to be followed by the appointment of a three-man Board of Conciliation which would seek to adjust the differences. The company had also agreed to take back all the strikers in a body, distributing the trimmers it had taken on to fill vacancies in various departments. Finally, the company also promised to adjust certain friction between superintendents and workers. After answering a salvo of questions from the crowd, Campbell left the meeting to decide on its course of action. A vote of the men was taken and the proposition was turned down. The decision came like a bombshell but, although the deadlock continued, all hope of a settlement was not lost. The executive committee of the strikers had favoured the offer and considered re-introducing it at two mass meetings planned for the next day, believing that further consideration on the part of the men might make

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44. Ibid.; The Oshawa Daily Times, Mar. 29, 1928, Mar. 30, 1928; The Mail and Empire, Mar. 30, 1928.

them amenable to the suggestion.<sup>45</sup> The company had realized that it was losing ground since the longer the men remained out on strike the more likely it was that a strong union would develop. That same night, though, the Chief Conciliation Officer told Slim Phillips that the men had won all they could. They could go back at the old rates and this they should do as soon as possible because the company had plans to import cars in order to beat the strike. This was what the men had asked for and it convinced Phillips that he should do all he could to get the men to return to work.<sup>46</sup>

Peter Heenan, Minister of Labour, had been invited to take part in the negotiations and arrived in town early on Friday morning. He went to work immediately by holding a conference with the strikers. He then took a list of their demands to the company officials and, after a lengthy conference, these conditions were met in full thereby confirming what the Conciliation officer told Phillips the previous evening. The conditions were the same as Campbell had presented the previous afternoon except for one crucial item. Whereas Thursday's offer demanded that the workers return at the cut rates, pending the sittings of a board, the new offer meant that the men were to go back at the rate they were being paid before the cuts took place in March on the Chevrolet and Pontiac lines and in

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45. The Toronto Daily Star, Mar. 30, 1928; The Mail and Empire, Mar. 30, 1928; The Oshawa Daily Times, Mar. 29, 1928, Mar. 30, 1928. L.R. Menzies and J. MacDonald had addressed the strikers in the New Martin Theatre in the morning and at a mass meeting in Alexandra Park during the afternoon, warned the men against returning to work on promises of future arbitration. However, judging from the questions which the workers had asked Campbell, it seems the main reason for rejecting the offer was simply that they did not trust the corporation to adhere to its agreement, especially if they returned to work at the new rates while their claims were being considered by a conciliation board.

46. Interview with A.C. Phillips.



the trimming room. Since both the strike committee and the management of General Motors favoured arbitration under the Industrial Disputes Investigation Act (a federal act and not legally binding in the dispute, which came under provincial jurisdiction) all that was needed was mass support for the new offer. This was to be decided at a mass meeting in the Armouries in the afternoon.<sup>47</sup>

The workers had an inkling that new terms were to be offered, as Slim Phillips had announced at the morning meeting that an announcement of the greatest importance was to come in the afternoon. As a result, there was almost a one hundred per cent attendance of the strikers. H.A. Brown had written a letter to Peter Heenan in which he accepted in detail the workers' demands and this document was read by Phillips through a megaphone to the thousands present.<sup>48</sup>

The first clause, offering the men the privilege of returning in a body, without prejudice, was received in silence. The second, which contained the proposal to move the new men taken on from the trimming department and distribute them throughout other parts of the plant, was greeted with "boos" and cries of "No!"

Slim, a picturesque figure, long and angular, his blond hair a veritable mop, stretched out his hands in an appeal for order. "Wait a minute," he repeated several times. Order sufficiently secured, he continued with his reading of the terms until the end.

"It is the opinion of your committee," he declared, "composed of

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47. The Mail and Empire, Mar. 31, 1928; The Oshawa Daily Times, Mar. 30, 1928.

48. The Mail and Empire, Mar. 31, 1928; The Oshawa Daily Times, Mar. 30, 1928.

representatives from every department, that we should accept these terms. I move that they be accepted. Can I get a seconder?"

There was a seconder in the audience and the vote was put. The "ayes" held up their hands, but not more than half of the audience signified its approval. Even some of these hands were lowered in response to shouted appeals from a large faction who opposed the terms of settlement. The fate of the strike hung in the balance for a few minutes.

"What about our union?" demanded many. "The company is bound to recognize the union," declared the chairman.

"Nothing doing," was the shouted response. "Organize the union before we go back."

"I don't think you understand this," was Slim's appeal. "Let me read it again."

He read the document again but even while he was doing so, there was a buzz of excited conversation. Little groups in the body of the crowd were arguing heatedly. Gradually, the favour of the workers was turning toward acceptance.

"We do not dare go too far," warned the chairman. "This is a victory. Everyone of our demands has been granted. Reason tells me that this is the best we can expect. My motion is that we go back. We are not bound to accept the terms of the board. If they are not satisfactory we can come out again."

"How are you going to get them out," demanded someone in the crowd.

"We are going to have a union," replied Slim. "If that can't get them out, then the union is no good."

Cheers greeted this statement. The crowd seemed to have at last reached an agreement. Slim again made his motion and put the vote. Almost every hand went up, and when the "nays" were called for, scarcely a

dozen hands were raised. The end of the strike was greeted by a great outburst of cheering that echoed to the roof of the building.<sup>49</sup>

A few moments later, Slim Phillips was half carried from the platform and out of the hall in a state of semi-collapse. Since Monday, he had spent long, heartbreaking hours in organizing, advising and directing the strikers whose number had risen to more than 3,000. On him rested the chief responsibility of conducting the strike and maintaining orderliness of the great mass of workers throughout the trying week. Despite his state of exhaustion, it was only a few minutes before he again mounted the platform to resume charge of the meeting.

After a few brief speeches by Peter Heenan, Ernest Marks, proprietor of the New Martin Theatre, and Mayor Robert Preston, attention was turned to the matter of organizing a union. At the morning meeting, a resolution had been unanimously passed, pledging all employees to establish a trade union organization, and to secure 100 per cent. membership in such a body. The union was to be known as the International Automobile Workers' Industrial Union and already, hundreds of workers had paid an initiation fee and were carrying temporary union cards. James Simpson, the first speaker in the afternoon on the topic "Union Organization," declared:

A union is the most important thing you have to deal with now. Steps will be taken immediately to secure a charter for you which will take in all employees of General Motors in one body. Your officers would immediately begin the task of preparing data to lay before the Board of Conciliation, so that your case may be presented adequately.

You will have the support and sympathy of the great International Trades Union movement, from one end of Canada to the other. I have had word from Tom Moore, president of the Canadian Trades and Labor Congress, promising you his full support.

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49. The Mail and Empire, Mar. 31, 1928.

William Varley, secretary of the Building Trades Council, also spoke, stating that he would remain in Oshawa long enough to supervise the actual organization of the union.<sup>50</sup>

The new union at Oshawa was granted an A.F. of L. charter and became officially known as the International Auto Workers' Union, No. 18011. It eventually enrolled at least 3,774 members and became the largest local labour body ever organized in the Dominion at one time. Subsequently other auto workers' unions were formed and granted A.F. of L. charters. One at Windsor became No. 18023 and one at Tilbury became No. 18027 but little was ever heard from these locals after their formation because they never developed any real strength.<sup>51</sup>

The issues of the strike were placed before a Board of Conciliation and Investigation consisting of three people, a company representative, a labour representative (James Simpson) and a chairman, and on May 4, 1928, a report was handed down. The Company agreed to remedy the complaints of the workers and specific reference was made to the two following points in the report:

- 1st. The Company has consented to continue to pay, until the new 1929 Models of cars are introduced, the rates of pay in force before reductions were made in March. When these new Models are introduced, a new rating will be established and submitted to the employees. When the new rates are accepted they shall continue in force (subject to such minor changes as are not of a fundamental character) as long as such Models are in vogue.
- 2nd. The Company agrees that in the employment, dismissal or treatment of their employees they will not discriminate between

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50. Ibid.

51. Canada, Annual Report on Labour Organization in Canada, 1929, p. 184. The Oshawa Daily Times, Apr. 7, 1928, reported that 4,000 applications for membership in the union had been taken out. Officers of the union elected for 1928 were the same as those which acted as an executive committee during the strike. (see footnote 41). T. Maguire became Financial Secretary. The Mail and Empire, Apr. 2, 1928.

such as are members of a Labour Union and such as are not.<sup>52</sup>

According to the first issue of the union's newspaper, The Steering Wheel, the gains made by the workers were the abolition of the Employees' Association, the checking of the wage-cutting process at least until the 1929 car models were introduced, abolition of the "accumulative earnings system," non-discriminatory treatment of union members, abolition of the practice of reducing piece rates after prices were once fixed on new models, re-grouping of certain classes of workers with higher rates of pay, and the settlement of certain minor grievances.<sup>53</sup> However, no lasting contract was signed, a factor which would prove to be a major failure in the settlement as far as the workers were concerned.

The strike was of such importance and prominence that it could hardly help becoming an issue for radical political elements and competing labour organizations. During the strike itself, Jack MacDonald had called for the formation of an industrial union entitled The Canadian Auto Workers' Industrial Union with an application fee set at one dollar. The Worker blamed James Simpson for playing on the ignorance of the men by talking them into joining a non-existent "International" as opposed to "Canadian" auto workers union.<sup>54</sup> The Communists especially warned the men of the danger of depending too much on the government and arbitration and presented a list of steps the workers must immediately take.

(1) Picket the Plants and Secure 100 Per Cent Support for the Strikers.

(2) Organization of an Industrial Union.

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52. Canada, The Labour Gazette, Vol. XXVII (May, 1928), 1929, p. 453; Canadian Congress Journal, Vol. VII, No. 6, (June, 1928), p. 27; The Oshawa Daily Times, May 7, 1928.

53. Dunn, op.cit., pp. 201-202.

54. The Worker, Apr. 14, 1928; The Mail and Empire, Mar. 30, 1928.

- (3) Recognition of the Union through Direct Negotiation with its Representatives.
- (4) Restoration of the Rates Prevailing Before the Two Wage Cuts.
- (5) No Victimization and All Workers to be Reinstated.
- (6) No Return to Work on Promises of Future Arbitration.<sup>55</sup>

The Communists, who had been purged from the T.L.C.,<sup>56</sup> had taken a friendly attitude towards the industrial unionism of the A.C.C.L. and had supported the move to have the auto workers' union join the nationalistic A.C.C.L. The T.L.C. (A.F. of L.) struck back with smear tactics by claiming that during the strike the communists and the A.C.C.L. had worked jointly in an effort to have the workers become part of the A.C.C.L. The workers, however, openly repudiated any sympathy with communism and similar policies.<sup>57</sup>

As far as the operation of the new union was concerned all seemed to go well at first, mostly because the company bent over backwards to do all it could to appease the workers. In fact the company killed the union with kindness. Proper union organization and education were not carried on and many men forgot the raison d'être for their organization, ceased to pay dues and thus caused the membership to drop.<sup>58</sup> Once the membership had been reduced below fifty per cent the company took the offensive against the workers again. The warnings of the leftists should also have been heeded. After the strike was settled and while the men were waiting

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55. The Worker, Apr. 7, 1928.

56. For a description of the situation within the Communist Party of Canada see William Rodney, Soldiers of the International: A History of the Communist Party of Canada, 1919-1929, Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1968.

57. Canadian Congress Journal, Vol. VII, No. 5 (May, 1928), p. 27.

58. Interview with A.C. Phillips; According to The Labour Leader, Nov. 9 1928, some 3,800 auto workers at Oshawa had paid an initiation fee of \$1.00 each, but of these only 1,800 remained with the union for more than three months.

for the conciliation report, a prominent A.F. of L. labour leader from Toronto approached Slim Phillips and asked him to organize the men into crafts. A further blow to the organization came when the union lost its leader, Phillips, the man who had worked so indefatigably on behalf of the workers. For reasons of health, Slim needed a rest after his strenuous activities during the strike and was able to obtain a leave of absence for a while. When he returned to work he was offered a foreman's job by the superintendent. Slim asked the opinion of the men on the line as to whether or not he should accept. They told him to accept and so he resigned his union position. When the rumour had circulated that Slim had "sold out to G.M." his name became "mud." He became completely alienated from the men, lost his job with the seasonal lay-off, and then left Oshawa.<sup>59</sup>

In the Windsor area the communists tried to embarrass organizers from the Oshawa local and disrupt their meetings. They continually attacked James Simpson and the settlement made by the conciliation board.<sup>60</sup> In Oshawa the local, which had never been officially recognized by General Motors, was being continually weakened by the evasive and equivocal approach to industrial unionism taken by the A.F. of L. The charter received by the Oshawa workers from the A.F. of L. described their organization as the International Auto Workers' Federal Labour Union and many men began to see in the nomenclature the intention to segregate the principal crafts from the main body. The A.C.C.L. had been too young and too

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59. Interview with A.C. Phillips. He would not identify the A.F. of L. leader who approached him. The attempt to organize the workers into crafts should have been expected as it was A.F. of L. policy and had even been mentioned in the Canadian Labor Press, Mar. 31, 1928.

60. The Worker, June 9, 1928; Canadian Congress Journal, Vol. VII, No. 6 (June, 1928), pp. 30-31.



weak to carry out organizational work in Oshawa effectively during the strike but it constantly painted a picture of the workers at Oshawa being "sold down the river." To quote the A.C.C.L.'s organ The Canadian Unionist:

The notorious red-turned-yellow Simpson managed to put himself in charge of the negotiations and to set himself on the conciliation board that was set up, as workers' representative. When his thirty-dollar-a-day job as board member could not be spun out any longer he joined with the bosses' representative and the "neutral" chairman in a report that everything was lovely in the service of General Motors.<sup>61</sup>

A more radical workers' organization was a necessity and on June 1, 1928, the Automobile Workers' Industrial Union of the Border Cities (Windsor, Walkerville and Ford) was formed. The July 14th issue of The Worker carried an article signed "H.M." urging the workers to organize in a union that was willing to fight for better conditions. The same paper carried a membership application blank which the workers were requested to sign and mail to the secretary, together with a one dollar initiation fee.<sup>62</sup> Support for the A.W.I.U. of B.C. also came from the A.C.C.L. The comments of The Canadian Unionist were filled with optimism:

...the men of the Border cities are showing that they have not yet lost their individuality and are asserting their claim to freedom and to better conditions of work and wage. Regardless of all opposition, the new union must advance; it offers the workers their only hope--emergence from craft unionism. As long as the union retains its autonomy and its all-embracing scope it will be a militant body, able to serve the workers' interests with the same degree of efficiency as is achieved by the capitalists in their grouping of productive units under one management. Just as obsolete

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61. The Canadian Unionist, Vol. II, No. 2 (Aug., 1928), p. 21; The Worker, June 23, 1928, outlined the bad aspects of the conciliation report. It took references to "efficiency" to mean a "speed-up" and saw a wage cut in the wage changes when the new 1929 automobiles came out.

62. Canada, Annual Report on Labour Organization in Canada, 1928, p. 184; The Worker, July 14, 1928. The union referred to in The Worker may or may not have been the Automobile Workers' Industrial Union of the Border Cities.



tools in the factories are discarded unhesitatingly, so the workers in the automobile industry must discard the effete tool of craft unionism and adopt a more modern instrument to confront the industrial solidarity of the employers by the industrial solidarity of Labour.<sup>63</sup>

The auto workers' union in the Border Cities was local in nature but the formation of a broadly based, purely Canadian union was soon made possible by developments taking place in Oshawa during October. A scandal broke in the Oshawa local (A.F. of L.), the facts of which only became public in November. In early October a workers' committee, appointed to examine the affairs of the local, reported that the Federation, through its Canadian officers, had betrayed the local to the employers, had broken the promises by which the local had been brought into the Federation, and had kept the members of the local in complete darkness as to the real state of the finances and conditions of the union. The committee reported:

We would summarize the situation with regard to the American Federation of Labour as follows—Whereas it is apparent that the automobile industry in Canada is in great need of a sustained organization campaign and that organization of the industry should be of an industrial nature, and whereas the American Federation of Labour has shown no interest or desire to conduct such a campaign, be it therefore resolved that this local union take steps to become affiliated with a more aggressive body and that the local executive be instructed to take the necessary steps.<sup>64</sup>

The day after this report was made, T.E. Maguire, secretary-treasurer of the local, left Oshawa. Thereupon, the committee of the union seized all the papers of the local before the A.F. of L. could rush organizers to the scene to regain control of the situation. An examination of the papers showed that of all the funds contributed to the support of the union since its beginning, only seventy-five cents remained. The correspondence between Maguire and the Federation headquarters revealed that the local had

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63. The Canadian Unionist, Vol. II, No. 2 (Aug., 1928), p. 21.

64. The Evening Telegram, Nov. 2, 1928.

been under suspension by the Federation since August for nonpayment of the per capita tax. This was news even to the officers of the local since Maguire, it was discovered, was receiving official correspondence at his residence instead of his office. Furthermore, since the local had been under suspension, its delegates to the T.L.C. convention in Toronto in September technically lacked credentials, without the right to any voice in the proceedings. J. Dowling, acting secretary-treasurer in place of Maguire, claimed that James Simpson had been in Oshawa a week before the T.L.C. convention and had appointed thirty-eight delegates. Dowling also thought that since copies of all letters sent to the local by the A.F. of L. should have been received at the Labour Temple in Toronto, James Simpson, should have already known that the Oshawa local was suspended and could not send delegates to the convention. When interviewed, Simpson, using language in which there were obvious contradictions, stated that the local was not under suspension when its delegates voted at the convention and that he was aware that it had not paid its per capita tax to the A.F. of L. since May and was under notice of suspension. However, Simpson also claimed that he had written privately to the secretary of the Federation and had asked that the part of the constitution providing for suspension in such cases be overlooked since the Oshawa local was in poor financial condition. Simpson had notified Maguire of his action and could only state that, "If Maguire did not see fit to notify members of the local what the situation was, it is not my fault."<sup>65</sup> Simpson had tried to ignore the constitutional aspects of the financial issue and he also drew fire from the workers for misleading them into the belief that the A.F. of

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65. Ibid., Simpson stated that the men to whom organizational work had been entrusted "were not competent." He also claimed as a reason for the union's decline, the seasonal closing down of the factory, causing about 2,000 men to be thrown out of work. The Toronto Daily Star, Nov. 2, 1928.

L. was going to support them in building an industrial Union. According to Dowling:

Unknown to us it was the intention of the Federation to split our local into a number of craft organizations such as sheet metal workers, boiler makers, firemen, trimmers, painters, etc. This policy has weakened automobile trade unions in the United States and we had no intention of being reduced to such an impotent organization. Mr. Simpson promised us we should be permitted and helped to organize industrially. Soon after we joined the Federation, however, officials at Washington wrote to the secretary of our local and forbade any such proceeding. This information was also withheld from us.<sup>66</sup>

Part of this letter of April 12th from Federation headquarters in Washington said: "It is distinctly understood that in granting a charter to your Federal Labour Union the purpose is to organize from among its members trade unions and that your union shall conform to the constitution, policy and principles of the American Federation of Labour."<sup>67</sup>

Organizational support promised by the Federation did not come except as a last minute attempt to stop the rebellion. As expected, any move away from the T.L.C.-A.F. of L. to the A.C.C.L. was seen by men like James Simpson to have been engineered by the Communist Party of Canada. As a matter of fact, Simpson became quite outraged over the revolt in the Oshawa local and denounced the rebels as traitors to the Federation. He said:

They are allowing themselves to be made the tools of the Communists. Any troubles they have here are due to themselves and their lack of experience. They are all fools down there, anyway. They don't know what they want, and wouldn't know how to get it if they did. Their strike last spring was simply an expression of temperament and should never have been held.

The majority of the automobile workers in Oshawa are nothing but transplanted farmers, and they behave as such. They haven't the merest conception of what a labour organization is.<sup>68</sup>

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66. The Evening Telegram, Nov. 2, 1928.

67. Ibid.; The Worker, Nov. 10, 1928; The Oshawa Daily Times, Nov. 3, 1928.

68. The Evening Telegram, Nov. 2, 1928.

The scene was shaping up for a fight in the local plants between the A.F. of L. and the A.C.C.L., or what Simpson denounced as the All-Canadian Rats inspired by Moscow. He claimed the A.F. of L. local would continue to remain in Oshawa because "We only need about 10 members to hold the Federation charter there." He was very confident that the A.F. of L. would win over the workers, prophesying, "They'll be crawling back to us within a year."<sup>69</sup> However, the day after Simpson had made these statements he was in Oshawa denying or modifying most of them and succeeded in gaining some support for his position. Even Dowling was supporting him now, retracting statements which he had given to The Evening Telegram. A meeting had been held that night (Nov. 2, 1928) at the office of the Oshawa local and according to press reports, the men had decided to remain with the A.F. of L. and not affiliate with the A.C.C.L. The reason for this change was the discovery of correspondence between the A.F. of L. and the late secretary T.E. Maguire, exonerating the A.F. of L. in the matter of lack of support and showing that the A.F. of L. had done all it could to build up industrial unions within the auto industry. In the presence of James Simpson, Dowling stated that the Oshawa local was sound financially. It was also stated that the local would not send delegates to an organizational meeting to be held the next day at the Prince George Hotel in Toronto.<sup>70</sup> Such a statement, however, could no longer be made authoritatively on behalf of all the auto workers in Oshawa.

In October a communication had been received by the A.W.I.U. of B.C. from the secretary of the "Oshawa Local of the Automobile Workers" inquiring as to organizational work and methods, and suggesting some measure

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69. Ibid.

70. Ibid., Nov. 3, 1928; The Globe, Nov. 3, 1928.

of co-operation between the various local units of the auto workers organized in Canada. The call for "unity" was discussed and unanimously supported and the A.W.I.U. of B.C. issued a call to all local unions of automobile workers in Canada to send delegates to a national conference to be held in Toronto on November 3rd.<sup>71</sup> The national conference was successful; on November 4th the Auto Workers' Industrial Union of Canada (A.W.I.U. of C.) was organized and soon became affiliated with the A.C.C.L. in the hope of laying the basis for the organization of the 30,000 auto workers in Canada.<sup>72</sup> The national conference was composed of representatives from the A.W.I.U. of B.C., representing workers in the Ford, Chrysler, General Motors, Gotfredson and Studebaker plants; a representative from the A.F. of L. union of automobile workers in Windsor; representatives from the local union at General Motors in Oshawa, and from the Dodge, Durant, Willys-Knight and Ford plants in Toronto. Also in attendance were fraternal delegates from the United Automobile, Aircraft and Vehicle Workers' Union of America, as well as Messrs. S. Sykes and R.I. Bradley from the executive board of the All-Canadian Congress of Labour, and Tim Buck, secretary of the Trade Union Educational League. Officers were elected, as was a temporary executive board of seven members that was to function until the next convention which was to be held in about six months' time.<sup>73</sup> As a result of the formation

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71. The Worker, Oct. 27, 1928.

72. The Canadian Unionist, Vol. II, No. 6 (Dec., 1928), p. 115; Vol. II, No. 8 (Feb., 1929), p. 150; The Toronto Daily Star, Nov. 5, 1928.

73. Canada, Annual Report on Labour Organization in Canada, 1928, p. 184; The Worker, Nov. 17, 1928; The Mail and Empire, Nov. 5, 1928; The Globe, Nov. 5, 1928, listed Sykes as a representative of the One Big Union. It also stated that P. Raymond, Secretary of the United Automobile, Aircraft and Vehicle Workers' Union in Detroit was present at the formation of the A.W.I.U. of C. The following officers of the new union were elected: James Malcolm, President; Joseph Smith, Vice-President; and Harvey Murphy, Secretary-Treasurer. The Evening Telegram, Nov. 5, 1928.

of the A.W.I.U., the problem of dual unionism now presented itself to the auto workers of Oshawa.

Conflict within the existing local grew and the police had to be called to expel hecklers and organizers of the A.W.I.U. of C. from a meeting held by Simpson, Dowling and others representing the A.F. of L. supporters. The purpose of this meeting had been to carry out what Simpson had stated earlier, to organize a small group to hold on to the A.F. of L. charter. Simpson's cause was a losing one, though. At two previous meetings the Oshawa local had voted unanimously against staying with the A.F. of L. Of the 43 men who attended Simpson's meeting only 11 stayed behind to listen to him. Obviously most of the workers were in favour of the Auto Workers' Industrial Union of Canada and of being affiliated with the A.C.C.L.<sup>74</sup>

The locals supported by the A.F. of L. did not last long. The unions in Windsor and Tilbury disappeared first and early in 1929 the local in Oshawa ceased to function. The Auto Workers' Industrial Union of Canada met with only limited success. At the close of 1928 it claimed to have three local branches, one of which was the Border Cities Union, with a combined membership of 680. Early in 1929 this industrial union began to wane and according to the Annual Report on Labour Organization in Canada, 1929, it had ceased to operate by November, which meant that no unions of auto workers remained in Canada.<sup>75</sup> Just before the A.W.I.U. of C. passed out of existence the Communist Party gained control of it. The union's president had called on the militant union members to support the Communist

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74. The Oshawa Daily Times, Nov. 13, 1928, Nov. 19, 1928; The Toronto Daily Star, Nov. 13, 1928.

75. Canada, Annual Report on Labour Organization in Canada, 1929, p. 180.



Party candidates in the forthcoming provincial election.<sup>76</sup>

Obviously the half-hearted attempts by the A.F. of L. to organize the auto workers and its efforts to form "federal" trade unions instead of the necessary industrial unions only served to alienate the auto workers from the A.F. of L. in the future. The financial weakness and limited organizational capacity of the nationalistic and industrial union-oriented A.C.C.L. meant that it could not match the rival A.F. of L. when the workers were willing to make the one major attempt to form an all-Canadian auto workers' union. The puny efforts of the workers were no match for the powerful international automobile corporations, which soon took the offensive again. Early in 1929 the A.W.I.U. of C. uncovered two spies (operatives of the Corporations Auxiliary Co.) in its local in the Border Cities. The reports of these spies had resulted in the discharge of 15 union men from the Ford plants in Canada.<sup>77</sup> At the General Motors plant in Oshawa the pre-union conditions returned. A.A. Heaps in a speech before the House of Commons read correspondence he had received from workers who indicated that wage cuts, speed-ups, and the old policy of intimidation and victimization had returned.<sup>78</sup>

Perhaps there were also other reasons for the failure of the union. The leadership was not only poorly versed in union activities and lacking in militancy but also lacking in a more comprehensive and suitable political philosophy only found on the radical or moderate political left. Not only could the union not effectively "get off the ground," it is questionable where it would have gone if it had. Social democrats were conspicuously

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76. The Worker, Oct. 26, 1929.

77. Dunn, op.cit., p. 175.

78. The Canadian Unionist, Vol. II, No. 10 (Apr., 1929), pp. 179-180.

absent and only the handful of communists seemed to have any long range goals of a social or political nature for the auto workers to adopt. Even the workers themselves needed the harsh experience of what it was like to lose a union. They needed to have the optimism of the twenties smashed by the depression years of the "dirty thirties." They still had a lot to learn.



## CHAPTER III "WHERE HAVE ALL THE RADICALS GONE?"

Two years have passed since the C.C.F. was formed in Toronto and Ontario. We must not forget that we in Ontario started the first C.C.F. clubs; up to that time it was only a federation of farmer and labour groups, but here in Toronto we established C.C.F. clubs to give all those who held advanced political ideas a chance to join the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation....

However, clubs had to be formed, and over one hundred were founded in the first six months. Each club had to have an executive, and the committee deemed it wise to have those executives elected in the most democratic manner. The people assembled to form a club did not know each other, the committee did not know any of these people either, and those who had the gift of a fluent tongue, had the pluck to get up and speak at these meetings, who in many cases were sincere, in other cases, however, just mere office seekers, were elected to the most important executive positions. Then provincial and district councils were formed and again delegates were elected who in their democratic ideals were believed to be designated to form, to shape and to interpret the ideals and the policies of the C.C.F.

Unfortunately, however, so many of those delegates were only reformers who tried to patch up the capitalist system....<sup>1</sup>

By the late 1920's the Communist Party had failed in its attempt to bore from within the T.L.C., thus, when the Comintern "requested" the party to adopt a new policy at its 1929 convention, the opportunity for change was quickly taken. Following shifts in Soviet policy, the Sixth Congress of the Communist International dropped all thought of a united front "from above," maintaining only the united front "from below," a move to the left which signaled a wholesale attack on all of the existing social reformist organizations throughout the world.<sup>2</sup> When applied to the trade union movement, this theoretical change called for new tactics involving the launching of a militant trade union centre directly under the leadership of the C.P. of C. Such an organization already existed

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1. A letter from Bernard Loeb to the editor of the New Commonwealth, Nov. 24, 1934.

2. Colin D. Grimson, "The Communist Party of Canada, 1922-1946," Unpublished M.A. thesis, McGill University, 1966, p. 113; H.A. Logan, Trade Unions in Canada, Their Development and Functioning, Toronto, The Macmillan Company of Canada Limited, 1948, pp. 336-339.

in the form of the Trade Union Education League (T.U.E.L.) which on August 31, 1929, changed its name to the Trade Union Unity League (T.U.U.L.) and adopted a new program. By 1930, The Canadian section of the T.U.U.L. had altered its name to the Workers' Unity League of Canada (W.U.L.).<sup>3</sup>

The purpose of the W.U.L. was to create industrial unions to organize the unorganized; to build "left wing opposition groups" within "reformist unions" in order to expose the reformists "for what they were" and create "nuclei of industrial unions within the framework of the craft and patriotic unions;" and to organize the unemployed workers.<sup>4</sup> The W.U.L. was affiliated with the Red International of Labour Unions (R.I.L.U.) but terminated this connection in 1932.<sup>5</sup> The W.U.L. was never an official part of the C.P. of C. but it was, in fact, an important organ of it. It was a purely national union centre and by September of 1931 it had a membership of over 25,000 of which less than six per cent were party members. Party members, however, held all of the five executive positions in the W.U.L.<sup>6</sup> As a central organization the W.U.L. consisted of opposition groups, unions, and associations. With the advent of the depression, the unemployed were a prime target so the W.U.L. established the National Unemployed Workers' Association (N.U.W.A.). Work among the unemployed was a major task of the W.U.L. and the C.P. of C. in their hope of building a mass revolutionary movement. The Worker explained what had to be done:

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3. Canada, Annual Report on Labour Organization in Canada, 1930, p. 162; Grimson, op.cit., p. 119; Melvyn L. Pelt, "The Communist Party of Canada, 1929-1942," Unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Toronto, 1964, p. 65.

4. Grimson, op.cit., pp. 119-120; Pelt, op.cit., p. 66.

5. Canada, Annual Report on Labour Organization in Canada, 1934, p. 138.

6. Pelt, op.cit., p. 67.

A uniform membership card, programme and policy must be introduced in the building of the N.U.W.A. and every assistance must be given to the development and promotion of unemployed papers and bulletins. The resident unemployed workers who are being partially maintained and completely pauperized by the municipal administrations must be ferreted out and drawn into the general movement, constituting as they do the most serviceable base for the building of permanent unemployed councils, and committees.

...also in the development and preparation of economic strikes; the adherents and supporters of the W.U.L. must stimulate and support the smallest economic struggles, and continually proceed with the perspective of developing them into mass political struggles against the bosses and their state apparatus. These movements must not be cramped by mechanical control on the part of our own Party comrades, but on the other hand, every effort must be made to develop the fighting initiative of the workers, by drawing them into the leadership of the struggles. Only in this way will we be able to overcome the isolation of the Party from the economic struggle and develop new cadres of leadership for the W.U.L. and consequently for the party.<sup>7</sup>

Despits all their efforts the communists were not very successful at attracting new party members. The party lacked sufficient funds and when eight of its leading members were arrested in 1931 and sent to the Kingston Penitentiary,<sup>8</sup> considerable effort had to be re-directed through the Canadian Labour Defence League (C.L.D.L.). In spite of the fact that the W.U.L. was the only major labour organization which was successful at organizing workers during the depression, its victories were often short lived.<sup>9</sup> Part of the problem lay with the mechanical method of operation in the C.P. of C. Typical of small radical parties, the C.P. of C. had a rigid system of discipline based on "democratic centralism" whereby all decisions came from the top. Thus because members were not allowed the initiative, petty squabbles and chaotic organizational methods plagued

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7. The Worker, Feb. 7, 1931.

8. For a discussion of the issues see F.R. Scott, "The Trial of the Toronto Communists," Queen's Quarterly, Vol. 39, No. 3 (Aug., 1932), pp. 512-527.

9. For a case study of the W.U.L. see James D. Leach, "The Workers Unity League and the Stratford Furniture Workers: The Anatomy of a Strike," Ontario History, Vol. LX, No. 2 (June, 1968), pp. 39-48.

the party and its instruments.<sup>10</sup>

The automobile industry was among those basic industries where there was a great mass of unorganized workers whom the W.U.L. wanted to bring into the "general struggle" of the working class. Early in 1930 the W.U.L. sent George Wanden on an organizational tour of the auto centres to reorganize the locals of the old Auto Workers' Industrial Union on a shop basis.<sup>11</sup> Almost a year later, however, the W.U.L. still had not penetrated the industry.<sup>12</sup>

Oshawa was not the main target but whenever the workers offered the slightest resistance to wage cuts, such as even threatening to strike, The Worker would call upon the men to organize by using the struggle against the wage cut as the means of establishing and building up an organization. As far as The Worker was concerned, "General Motors still possesses the hundreds of millions of dollars which it derived from these workers who are being made to bear the whole brunt of the present crisis and price-cutting war....," and only where the militant leadership of the W.U.L. was to be found were the wage-slashes prevented.<sup>13</sup> Most of the efforts by the workers in Oshawa to improve their conditions were very limited in their scope and achievements. In 1932 a short, successful strike was held at the Coulter Manufacturing Company but no permanent organization was established;<sup>14</sup> and in 1935, the moulders at Fittings

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10. Pelt, op.cit., pp. 75-76.

11. The Worker, May 31, 1930.

12. Ibid., Feb. 7, 1931.

13. Ibid., Apr. 9, 1932.

14. Ibid., Nov. 26, 1932; Canada, The Labour Gazette, Vol. 32 (1932), p. 1293.

Limited were only able to establish a Moulders Social Club which briefly tried to function like a union.<sup>15</sup> Generally though, Oshawa remained an "open shop" city throughout the first half of the 1930's and any organization of workers took forms other than those of unions.

Windsor, a city which already had a significant number of trade unions and had suffered more than Oshawa from the depression, remained the main centre of communist activity because it was there that the C.P. of C. had provided significant leadership to the jobless and had already been involved in politics and elections.<sup>16</sup>

At Windsor the first definite steps to form an Auto Workers Union affiliated to the W.U.L. were taken at the Auto Specialities plant which employed over 200 workers. Over a period of several months in 1934, a small group of the W.U.L. had succeeded in rallying the workers in a struggle for better working conditions as outlined in the following demands placed before the employers:

1. Increases in wages--a minimum wage of 40 cents for women.
2. Abolishing of the vicious piece work system and the institution of a flat day rate of pay within the minimum.
3. Recognition of the shop committee of the Auto Workers' Union.
4. No discrimination against any worker.
5. The enforcement of the eight hour day, with time and a half for overtime after eight hours.<sup>17</sup>

Following a short strike during which the men maintained a strong picket line for two days and completely tied up the plant, the workers had most

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15. The Worker, Nov. 2, 1935; Nov. 5, 1935; Nov. 7, 1935; Nov. 14, 1935; Canada, The Labour Gazette, Vol. 35 (1935), pp. 1001-1002.

16. For a full description of the C.P. of C.'s activities see Francis Graham Stevens, "A History of Radical Political Movements in Essex County and Windsor, 1919-1945," Unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Western Ontario, 1948.

17. The Worker, Mar. 31, 1934.

of their demands granted.<sup>18</sup> This success led the W.U.L. to try to enlarge the movement to include all the automobile workers in the district. Soon, auto workers at the Ford plant in Scarboro began to organize<sup>19</sup> and when the workers at the Motor Products Co. in Detroit went on strike, they were followed by the Canadian employees of the same firm in Windsor. A wave of strikes swept the border cities, with men out at the Canadian Motor Lamp and the Windsor Bedding Plants. Fred Collins, leader of the famous furniture workers' strike at Stratford and the man who led the victory at the Auto Specialties plant, took charge of strike operations.<sup>20</sup> The cry went out to the W.U.L. for organizers, especially from the shops in the auto and allied industries, and the W.U.L. in turn wanted to turn the trend of strikes into a second "Stratford." Attempts were made to organize the Ford and Chrysler plants but the granting of wage increases headed off the attempts at unionization.<sup>21</sup> Generally, the success of the W.U.L. seems to have been limited to the smaller plants in the Windsor area but, though the W.U.L.'s history was short, it implanted germs which were eventually to ripen because the work of the League in Windsor's auto industry was the real beginning of the C.I.O. activity in that area.<sup>22</sup> On the broader scene, the W.U.L.'s success in Windsor was held up as a lesson for the auto workers in Oshawa and Toronto. It was a simple lesson just as The Worker claimed:

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18. Ibid., Mar. 31, 1934; Apr. 7, 1934.

19. Ibid., Apr. 9, 1934.

20. Ibid., Apr. 14, 1934.

21. Ibid., May 5, 1934; Stevens, op.cit., p. 136. Local communists Raycraft, Cochrane, and Morris were also connected with the unionization movement.

22. Stevens, op.cit., p. 136.



The Auto Workers' Union, upon whose militant policy the Auto Speciality workers have organized and struggled for two days, winning their strike, has shown the way to every worker in the industry, and has shown what unity can gain for the workers. By the organized strength of the workers wage-increases and improvements in working conditions can be won.<sup>23</sup>

A change in strategy and tactics was again dictated from Moscow. Though the Comintern had been gradually shifting from the left to the right since the end of 1931, the C.P. of C. made the change appear to be rather sudden when it officially adopted the new united front "from above" policy in 1935.<sup>24</sup> The implications of this new theoretical basis of action meant the end of the W.U.L. as a separate national centre of industrial unionism in Canada. The first sign of a change in union policy came with an announcement in February when the National Executive Board of the W.U.L. issued an "open letter" calling for trade union unity.<sup>25</sup> This was followed by a trade union resolution passed at the W.U.L.'s third national convention in November of 1935. The resolution called upon

...the national council to speedily develop the widest campaign for the achievement of trade union unity in Canada and that the national council be authorized to seek the co-operation and assistance of the Trades and Labor Congress, the All-Canadian Congress of Labor, the Catholic Unions, as well as independent unions, to achieve this end; and be it further

Resolved that each affiliated union to the W.U.L. be called upon to take up the question of unity in its own industry and on the basis of the concrete conditions prevailing in each industry, strive to establish one union of all workers in such industry and be it further,

Resolved that the national council of the W.U.L. should encourage and give guidance to its affiliated unions and help them to achieve unity in the speediest fashion.<sup>26</sup>

After six years of fierce struggle, the W.U.L. finally passed out

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23. The Worker, Apr. 7, 1934.

24. Grimson, op.cit., pp. 113-119.

25. The Worker, Mar. 2, 1935.

26. Ibid., Nov. 14, 1935.

of existence in August of 1936. Most of its members had amalgamated with the A.F. of L. unions, but they were unsuccessful at winning the A.C.C.L. unions to such a policy of amalgamation. The new future aims and tasks of the communists were quite clearly outlined by the Executive Board of the dying W.U.L., which called for:

The organization of the unorganized; the bringing in of hundreds of thousands of workers in the unorganized industries to the unions of the A.F. of L., the strengthening of the existing craft unions of the A.F. of L. by amalgamation into single and powerful industrial bodies, and the basic structural principles of the Committee for Industrial Organization (C.I.O.) applied throughout, both as to the organization of new industries and the consolidation of those already organized. A gigantic unionization campaign undertaken by the Trades and Labor Congress in steel, rubber, auto, textile, metal, mining and smelting, pulp and paper, and extending into the light industries such as food, needle trades, office and store workers.

In addition, the trade union movement of this country must face the task of further unifying our divided trade union movement. The Trades and Labour Congress and its affiliated Central Labor Councils must do everything in their power to do away with the internecine war, to establish closer co-operation with the unions of the A.C.C.L. and the Catholic Syndicates, with a view to unity and one trade union organization in the country.<sup>27</sup>

Since craft unionism was viewed as an antiquated structure unfitted to the requirements of mass production methods, it provided the main block to the organization of the two million potential trade union members in Canadian industry.<sup>28</sup> Industrial unionism and the C.I.O. were to be the main objectives of the communists. Nationalism played only a small part, that is to the extent of trying to "advance the Trades and Labour Congress of Canada from a 'legislative mouthpiece' of organized labor in Canada to a mighty centre of economic struggle, consolidating all the forces of organized labor against poverty, fascism and war, and the foul spawn whose privilege and exploitation breed these evils...."<sup>29</sup> It was, however, not the C.P.

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27. Daily Clarion, Aug. 29, 1936.

28. The Worker, Apr. 24, 1936.

29. Daily Clarion, Aug. 24, 1936.



of C's new "boring from within" tactics that contributed to the party's success during the late thirties but the fact that the party was able to play an important role in the formation of a new form of unions. In this way the communists were able to establish their influence in these unions from the very beginning.<sup>30</sup>

The development of a social democratic party--the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation--meant that the C.P. of C. would have competition for the support of left-wing sympathizers in Canada. The C.C.F. program advocated evolutionary socialism and this was in conflict with the revolutionary aims of the C.P. of C. during the united front "from below" period. The C.P. of C. regarded the C.C.F. as a third party of capitalism led by J.S. Woodsworth, a "capitalist lackey."<sup>31</sup> The Worker claimed that the C.C.F. was anti-trade union because it attempted

to create the idea that only the parliamentary vote will get the workers anything. The C.C.F. would make of the trade unions a voting machine for their ideas of peaceful collaboration by constitutional means.

The C.C.F. therefore...is NOT a working class party and by denying the role of the trade unions in the daily struggles and in the struggle for Socialism, shows that they are out to make the education of the workers in those unions an "education" for building votes for the C.C.F. and not the building of organizations among the workers against capitalism.<sup>32</sup>

The C.P. of C. strategy became one of condemning the C.C.F. leaders while trying to convert the rank and file to "unity" of action with the communists.<sup>33</sup> This trend became even more pronounced after 1935 when the

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30. Grimson, op.cit., p. 150. See also Myrtle May Armstrong, "The Development of Trade Union Political Activity in the C.C.F.," Unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Toronto, 1959, pp. 26-27.

31. Pelt, op.cit., p. 128.

32. The Worker, Sept. 2, 1933.

33. Ibid., Feb. 3, 1934.

communists changed their strategy to a united front "from above," a move that allowed the C.P. of C. to take on the garb of a social reform party which many people were willing to support.<sup>34</sup> The C.P. of C.'s schizophrenic attitude towards the C.C.F. meant that the C.C.F. leadership had to be continually on guard against infiltration and defections, a reaction that could become extreme and was exemplified by expulsions from the party and by the refusal to have anything to do with labour groups that might be connected with the communists. Therefore, there is little doubt that the external influence of the C.P. of C. was instrumental in preventing the C.C.F. from developing closer relations with labour and left-wing groups.

By the 1930's the T.L.C. leadership, influenced by A.F. of L. political quietism, was conservative, concerned with preserving an existing structure and maintaining established relationships with the Canadian business and political elites.<sup>35</sup> Unlike the A.F. of L., which rejected the idea of an independent labour party, the T.L.C. admitted that labour parties were fine but would have nothing to do with them. The T.L.C. had tried independent political action and it had, for the most part, failed. At the 1935 Annual Convention, the T.L.C. reiterated a policy it had been following and was to follow for a number of years. The resolution on political action read:

Whereas, following the decision of the Ottawa convention in 1917, the Congress took steps to co-ordinate the different working-class political bodies in the various provinces which action has later resulted in the creation of a Dominion-wide Labour Political Organization; therefore, be it resolved, that labour political autonomy be left in the hands of the established labour political

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34. Pelt, op.cit., pp. 136, 151.

35. Gad Horowitz, Canadian Labour in Politics, Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1968, p. 63.

parties, and inasmuch as the Platform of Principles of this Congress contains the epitome of the best thought of organized labour during the whole period of its existence and struggles, that the Congress continue to act as the legislative mouthpiece for organized labour in Canada independent of any political organization engaged in the effort to send representatives of the people to parliament, or other elective bodies of the country.<sup>36</sup>

Another important factor contributing to the T.L.C.'s disinclination to align itself with the C.C.F. was the party's association with the A.C.C.L., the T.L.C.'s bitter rival. A.R. Mosher, President of the A.C.C.L., had taken a direct part in the formation of the C.C.F. Though the A.C.C.L. favoured the principle of independent political action by trade unions and criticized the T.L.C. for political inactivity, the C.B.R.E., the largest union in the A.C.C.L., did not affiliate with the C.C.F. Although the A.C.C.L. was friendly to the C.C.F., the relationship did not develop into actual support, and the Congress through its journal, The Canadian Unionist, was even critical of the C.C.F. for its lack of revolutionary aims and for not being socialist enough.<sup>37</sup> The A.C.C.L.'s relations with C.C.F. implied that the C.C.F. was opposed to international craft unionism, thus alienating the T.L.C. unions.<sup>38</sup> Added to those who condemned the C.C.F. for its association with the A.C.C.L. were those unions following the traditional A.F.L. policy of nonpartisanship and those unions under the influence of communist leaders who blocked affiliation with any

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36. Cited in Logan, op.cit., p. 433; Blair Seaborn, "Organized Labour and the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation," Unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Toronto, 1948, pp. 19-20.

37. Walter D. Young, The Anatomy of a Party: The National C.C.F., 1932-1961, Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1969, p. 77.

38. Horowitz, op.cit., pp. 61-62.

but communist groups.<sup>39</sup>

Indeed, the C.C.F. could be criticized for its lack of a specific and comprehensive declaration of aims and objectives in relation to labour and unions. The Regina Manifesto dealt with labour in vague ideological generalities. It called for a "national labour code" which included many of labour's social aims but only referred to organizational structures by stating that "workers must be guaranteed the undisputed right to freedom of association, and should be encouraged and assisted by the state to organize themselves in trade unions."<sup>40</sup> It was a "fence sitting" position on the controversial issue of craft vs. industrial unionism, a position which had not really gained much support for the party. As a matter of fact, the communists with their W.U.L. had taken a lead on the issue of industrial unionism and they were also the first to call for a C.I.O. type of movement in Canada. Even by mid 1936 the C.C.F. National Convention was holding to a rather vague resolution of "The C.C.F. and Trade Unionism" in which it "emphasized the necessity of organization in the industrial field [but pointed out] that industrial organization of itself is not sufficient to ensure the working class the full value of its labor; that only social ownership of industry, made possible by the assumption of political power by a workers' party, can give the workers full control over the wealth they produce."<sup>41</sup> The same National Convention did, how-

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39. Richard Ulric Miller, "Organized Labour and Politics in Canada," Canadian Labour In Transition, Ed. by Richard Ulric Miller and Fraser Isbester, Scarborough, Prentice-Hall of Canada Ltd., 1971, p. 208; Armstrong, op.cit., p. 35.

40. Cited in Young, op.cit., p. 309; For some comments on the attitude towards labour in the C.C.F., see Leo Heaps, The Rebel In The House. The Life and Times of A.A. Heaps M.P., London, Niccolo Publishing Company, 1970, pp. 137-134.

41. New Commonwealth, Aug. 15, 1936.

ever, take a more positive step when it also resolved that "the C.C.F. invite Trade Unions to set up advisory committees to meet C.C.F. councils to discuss matters that affect their interests, and that the C.C.F. set up a committee to investigate and report on the possibilities of more important co-operation between the C.C.F. and Trade Unions."<sup>42</sup>

The C.C.F. did produce an organization which displayed a considerable interest in organizing labour. This was the Co-operative Commonwealth Youth Movement (C.C.Y.M.) which was formed at the 1934 National Convention; it provided an excellent means of attracting young people who saw themselves as part of that international radical youth movement which believed that the 1930's was to be the decade when socialism or communism would conquer the world. At their first Ontario Convention the delegates pledged themselves to the "overthrow of capitalism and the establishment in Canada of the co-operative commonwealth." Their objectives were the dissemination of the principles of the Regina Manifesto, the education of young people in socialism, the organization of youth to "combat the joint terrors of war and fascism," and the promotion and support of trade unions, co-operatives and allied organizations. The "promotion of trade unions" was more than a pretentious cliché of youth because many C.C.Y.M. members eventually became influential union officials in Canada,<sup>43</sup> and it was the C.C.Y.M. which took the lead in educating party membership when the C.I.O. drive was under way. The C.C.Y.M. claimed that "the only union system which can successfully cope with the present organization of mechanized

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42. Cited in Seaborn, op.cit., p. 23.

43. Gerald Lewis Caplan, "The Co-operative Commonwealth Federation in Ontario, 1932-1945: A Study of Socialist and Anti-Socialist Politics," Unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Toronto, 1961, pp. 177-178, 189. Murray Cotterill, Fred Dowling and Eamon Park were just three C.C.Y.M.ers who became prominent in the labour movement.

industry is the industrial union. Hence, any movement to organize the workers on industrial lines must be supported...."<sup>44</sup> The C.C.Y.M. became so active in the new union movement and worked with left wing groups to a point that eventually caused it to be disbanded in 1938 due to "communist infiltration."<sup>45</sup> That event in turn raised the whole issue of the structure and political attitudes of the C.C.F. in Ontario, Canada's industrial heartland, where C.C.Y.M. members became intimately involved with the C.I.O. and where provincial C.C.F. policy was bound to affect the relationship between C.C.F. units and local labour groups.

When the C.C.F. organized in Ontario in 1933, a Provincial Council and Executive were elected by a Provincial Convention. The Provincial Council was federative in nature because it was composed of equal representation from the associated C.C.F. clubs, the United Farmers of Ontario (U.F.O.) and the Ontario Labour Conference.<sup>46</sup> This attempt at uniting the different points of view was, however, to end in failure. No longer was the U.F.O. the powerful spokesman for rural Ontario since its membership had been reduced from sixty thousand in the early twenties to barely five thousand in 1935. In addition, the affiliated labour groups were small and uninfluential. The Independent Labour Party, The Ontario Labour Party, and the Socialist Party of Canada were more of doctrinaire sects of politically-minded trade union radicals than viable political organizations.<sup>47</sup>

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44. New Commonwealth, Oct. 17, 1936.

45. Armstrong, op.cit., p. 33.

46. Ibid., p. 25.

47. Gerald L. Caplan, "The Failure of Canadian Socialism: The Ontario Experience, 1932-1945," The Canadian Historical Review, Vol. XLIV, no. 2 (June, 1963), p. 94.

Trouble began when Elmore Philpott,<sup>48</sup> President of the C.C.F. Club section, wished to cut the C.C.F. off from contact with the communists. While he began attacking the communists who were allegedly in the Labour Conference, he was also trying to establish a new provincial structure for the party in Ontario. The result of his efforts would be to eliminate much of the influence of the U.F.O. and Labour Conference in the party ranks and make the leaders of the club section virtually leaders of the entire Ontario party. His charges of infiltration by the communists may have been valid, since that was their strategy, but at no time were the anti-communists able to document their accusations with figures and facts. It is more likely that Philpott's "Communists" were in fact not supporters of that party but were just theoretical Marxists and labourites of a less extreme radical tinge who saw no harm in co-operating with communists in order to achieve similar aims.<sup>49</sup>

On September 9, 1933, a month after opening his anti-communist campaign, Philpott submitted two controversial resolutions which were adopted by the Provincial Council only by the combined vote of the U.F.O. and Club sections over the Labour Conference section. The first resolution dealt with party reorganization. The change meant that one central Constituency Council would be established in each riding, and each C.C.F. unit within the constituency would be entitled to representation on the Council in exact proportion to the numbers of their registered membership. It seemed like a realistic move as the Club section had grown tremendously

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48. Neil McKenty, Mitch Hepburn, Toronto, McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1967, pp. 35,38. Elmore Philpott had resigned as editor of The Globe to run against Mitchell Hepburn for the leadership of the Ontario Liberal Party in 1930.

49. Caplan, ["The C.C.F. in Ontario, 1932-1945"], op.cit., pp. 84-85.



and the old equal representation of groups on the Council actually gave them disproportionate representation but the problem for labour arose when a new arrangement for nominating candidates was announced the following week. It stated that selections would be made according to the numerical strength of each section in a riding. Unlike the rural ridings where the U.F.O. was supreme, in urban areas the labour members were often outnumbered by the Club members; thus organization on a constituency basis was not suitable for the Labour Conference. In reaction to this change the Labour Conference rightly objected that labour units would lose their voice and the tri-section basis of the Federation would be destroyed.<sup>50</sup>

Along with reorganization, Philpott's resolution also dealt with discipline. It stated:

...since it is essential there be unity of purpose and action throughout the whole structure of the Ontario C.C.F., no individual, group or organization affiliated with the Ontario C.C.F. shall pursue any course of action prejudicial to the welfare of the movement. The Provincial Council [chosen by the convention which would presumably be dominated by Club members] shall have full power to discipline all members and local organizations, including the power of suspending, expelling or refusing any application for membership subject only to the Provincial Convention.<sup>51</sup>

Added to this resolution was a second by which Philpott had the Provincial Council recommend to all C.C.F. units that "no former officer of the Communist Party be accepted as a C.C.F. member, be chosen to represent any unit at a provincial convention, or be nominated as a C.C.F. candidate in any election."<sup>52</sup>

These anti-communist resolutions brought opposition from the Ontario Labour Conference and at a convention it threatened that if an unaccept-

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50. Ibid., pp. 85-87.

51. Cited in Ibid., p. 86.

52. Cited in Ibid., p. 86.

able new structure was demanded the Labour Conference would "forthwith withdraw its affiliation to the C.C.F. and organize for political purposes as a distinct party."<sup>53</sup>

Philpott continued to conjure up the threat of communists and trouble-makers and advocated a re-organization that in effect sounded more like the C.P. of C.'s principle of "democratic centralism"—a constitutional principle harshly regimenting individual initiative. The issue continued to disrupt the party and the internal struggle was further intensified when the labour groups supported the C.L.D.L. in its civil liberties campaigns and united front appeals. Though many C.C.F.ers were sympathetic to the civil liberties cause, they were placed in a dilemma because if they united with the C.L.D.L. they would be identified with the communists and face expulsion from the C.C.F. The Labour Conference decided to challenge Philpott and his followers on the Council and so it announced that it would hold a public meeting on behalf of A.E. Smith, a well known communist. The issue laid bare the C.C.F.'s dilemma. As a rebel party the C.C.F. was attempting to bring "true" democracy to Canada but was refusing to tolerate rebels within its own ranks. The rebels were among those who insisted that democracy should be extended within the party by allowing the minority the right of not conforming to the majority's opinion, especially within the "federated" party structure. Still, the C.C.F. had to resolve this fundamental contradiction of the reconciliation of individual liberty of action with the majority's necessary assertion of authority.<sup>54</sup>

On February 5, 1934, the U.F.O. and Club sections separately

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53. Cited in Ibid., p. 90.

54. Ibid., pp. 105-110.

petitioned the National Executive to expel the Labour Conference from the provincial party. Philpott hoped this would be the final showdown but Woodsworth believed that the proposal was too rash and called for the expulsion of only those members who refused to accept executive authority. Woodsworth had hoped the issue could be solved by the Provincial Council so he and the National Executive refused to take action and referred the matter to the Provincial Council. Before the latter could meet, however, the U.F.O. gave notice it was withdrawing from the party and, though it promised to keep the matter secret until the Council meeting, it did not send its delegates. Thus, deadlock resulted when only the Club and Labour sections faced each other. The Labour Conference was determined to maintain its sectional position and carry on its own activities as an autonomous section of the "federation." Responsibility was again given to the National Executive; it decided that each C.C.F. unit was to rid itself of communist influence and that the Ontario section of the party would be disbanded and reorganized. The new structure was to be simplified and based on a single cohesive unit with actual control in a central council instead of autonomous groups joined in a loose federation.<sup>55</sup>

As a result of the entire affair, Philpott resigned from the C.C.F. to follow the U.F.O. and eventually rejoined the Liberal party from which he had originally come. His foolish and opportunistic behaviour had damaged the representative nature of the Ontario C.C.F. The crisis had caused a drop in membership and, except for Arthur Williams, none of the labour representatives on the new Provincial Council had been identi-

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55. Ibid., pp. 112-125.

fied previously with the extremist wing of the Labour Conference.<sup>56</sup>

Philpott's demand for a "housecleaning" raises the whole issue of who in fact were the "communists" that had to be expelled. According to Agnes Macphail's biographers, it was Trotskyites, not Stalinists, who had infiltrated the labour groups and pressed for "labour unity" in defending A.E. Smith.<sup>57</sup> But according to Gerald Caplan, the major historian of the Ontario C.C.F., only two of the troublemakers were other than radical socialists. Caplan claims that one was

William Moriarty,...the Trotskyite who gained national prominence for advocating violent revolution if necessary at the Regina convention; he was on the executive of the Labour Conference's Toronto Council. The other was Jack MacDonald, a member of the labour Conference, but a Lovestonite, a believer in the theory of "American exceptionalism," not a Trotskyite.<sup>58</sup>

Therefore it seems that if any "housecleaning" was needed, it should have concentrated on only these two men. It was hardly a situation that called for the disruption of the party but the incident did show how one man or a group could use the communist bogey to convince party leaders and members that "political heretics" should be purged and party structures reorganized. The issue had also changed the party's structure so that the middle class-dominated Clubs were now in control of the party and labour groups were expected to affiliate with the C.C.F. directly as riding units. Individual membership was the key to the new Ontario C.C.F. and reorganization gave the new Council complete disciplinary power over each member.<sup>59</sup>

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56. *Ibid.*, pp. 125-126, 141. A. Williams had accepted office against the express wishes of the East York Workers' Association which he represented. P.A.C., C.C.F. Papers, The Statement of the Labor Conference, (n.d.); A Review of the Internal Situation within the C.C.F. in Ontario (1934?); Report on Ontario by E.B. Jolliffe (1940).

57. Margaret Stewart, and Doris French. Ask No Quarter. A Biography of Agnes Macphail, Toronto, Longmans, Green and Co. Ltd., 1959, p. 176.

58. Caplan, ["The C.C.F. in Ontario, 1932-1945" ], *op.cit.*, pp. 129-130.

59. *Ibid.*, p. 134.

No longer would there be group affiliations which offered an opportunity to a member of a group to belong to another political party yet be entitled to represent himself as a C.C.F.er. This was a situation that definitely appeared to have an anti-labour bias as far as labour groups were concerned. Added to this situation were the twin factors after 1935 of electoral defeats and fear of the communists' "united front" which left the party in a depressed condition. In general, the Ontario C.C.F. remained in a state of limbo between 1935 and 1942, assuming as it did all the characteristics of an isolated sect, a factor that hardly made the party attractive to labour organizations. Thus, if the C.C.F. was to ever attract labour support it was going to be up to local leaders whose personalities and political attitudes would be responsible for any new arrangements with labour and the organizational forms and degree of success that would result. It is to this changing local situation in the Oshawa district that consideration must now be given.

## CHAPTER IV THE YEARS OF DARKNESS AND OF STRUGGLE

The following figures should be of interest to every citizen in Oshawa for they show that General Motors of Canada, like many other large corporations used the so-called depression to hide an increasing profit percentage, while workers starved and merchants were forced to the wall.

Most of us do not understand such phrases as "inflated currency," "watered capital," but the Dominion Bureau of Statistics shows that in "depression years" in the Canadian auto industry, in terms of costs, the rate of profit rose by 17 per cent. in terms of selling value by 16 per cent.

On the other hand wages dropped by 52 per cent. between 1928 and 1933, while the cost of living fell only 29 per cent., so that labor in the auto industry suffered an absolute loss in real wages and made sacrifices in its living standards by over 20 per cent. This indicates the fact that wages as a ratio of selling value fell 18 per cent. while company profits rose 16 per cent. It can safely be said that the auto industry shifted the full burden of the depression square on the shoulders of labor, and it was labor alone that bore the brunt of that burden.

General Motors of Canada maintained its capital fixed at \$6,940,000 throughout the depression so that it did not even suffer any capital loss and may thus be said to have weathered the bad years without any strain whatever.

By 1936 wages were still 24 per cent. below the 1928 level, yet company profit had risen 185 per cent. and were only 13 per cent. below the former level.

Could General Motors afford to restore the old wage rate? A computation of figures show that they could have done so and still had an aggregate profit of 11 million dollars, after restoring the four million lost by the workers since 1928, a profit of 24 per cent. on their capital.<sup>1</sup>

After the failure of the Auto Workers' Industrial Union of Canada, radicalism and militancy in Oshawa either disappeared or went underground for a while as the Great Depression started to take its effect. The seasonal slump hit the auto workers hard by August of 1929<sup>2</sup> but the electorate was still able to witness the last of the old style elections. The 1929 Ontario provincial election was fought in a style and on issues that were quite traditional. Party platforms were not really oriented towards

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1. From an article entitled "Depression In Auto Industry?" in The Oshawa Labor Press, Feb. 9, 1939.

2. The Oshawa Daily Times, Aug. 1, 1929.

satisfying the true social and economic needs of an urbanized industrial proletariat. Emphasis was placed on roads, agriculture, development of northern Ontario, hydro, and the grand old chestnut--the liquor question. As a matter of fact the liquor question was made the dominant issue in Ontario South riding where William E.N. Sinclair, leader of the Liberal Party in the Ontario Legislature since 1923, was running for re-election against Frank L. Masson, a Conservative. Sinclair called for a plebiscite on the liquor question but Masson, a temperance man who wanted to "eliminate the curse of drunkenness," opposed such action as unnecessary and supported Premier G. Howard Ferguson's Liquor Control Act.<sup>3</sup> Either the liquor issue was not taken seriously or the people were satisfied because Ferguson's Conservatives were swept back into power with an increased majority. Sinclair, however, was re-elected. With the once powerful Progressives reduced to four members, all trends seemed to be pointing to a return of the two party system to the province.<sup>4</sup> Economic forces were at work, however, that would soon end such a political situation.

By 1930 the annual capacity of the automobile industry in Canada had reached 400,000 vehicles but in 1929 the production of 263,000 vehicles, though the highest figure until that time, was well below this capacity. From that peak in 1929, production dropped until it reached the lowest point in the fourth quarter of 1931. There was an immediate increase thereafter but for 1932 as a whole there was a further decline. The turning point in automobile sales was due to export sales which rose in the last half of 1932 and even more rapidly in 1933. Still, by the

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3. Ibid., Oct. 14, 1929; See McKenty, op.cit., pp. 30-32.

4. The Oshawa Daily Times, Oct. 31, 1929.



third quarter of 1933, automobile production was only 40 per cent of the 1926 level.<sup>5</sup> As indicated by TABLE 1, not until 1937 was the industry well on its way to recovery.

Because of the condition of excess capacity in the pre-depression years there was no reason to invest in the auto industry. The durable nature of automobiles meant that there would be a sharp decrease in Canadian sales in the economic downswing as purchases were postponed, a factor accelerated by the large sale of cars in the last half of the twenties which tended to aid this postponement. Sales were effectively cut back not only by the possibility of postponement for a number of years but also by the capital investment involved in a car, the fall in income, and the uncertainty of income.<sup>6</sup> Thus, the social and economic effects of the depression were directly felt by centres engaged in the production of automobiles and their parts.

The workers in the auto factories were directly affected. With open shop conditions in existence, the workers had no mechanism for protection and the great drop in trade union membership across the country only sapped the strength of labour bodies in existence. There being more workers than jobs, a man had to take whatever he was offered. The depression only added to the misery of the auto worker because reduced production meant that there were fewer jobs and a shorter production season than before; thus the average auto worker could expect to be unemployed and destitute for considerable portions of each year during the first half of the 1930's. (See TABLE 2.)

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5. A.E. Safarian, The Canadian Economy in the Great Depression, Toronto, McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1970, pp. 52-54, 112.

6. Ibid., pp. 213-216.

TABLE 1

## SELECTED STATISTICS ON AUTOMOBILES, 1926-1937

(numbers, to nearest thousand)

Year	Production	Imports	Exports
1926	205	29	75
1927	179	37	58
1928	242	47	80
1929	263	45	102
1930	153	23	45
1931	83	9	15
1932	61	1	13
1933	66	2	21
1934	117	3	44
1935	173	4	65
1936	162	10	56
1937	207	20	66

SOURCE: A.E. Safarian, The Canadian Economy In the Great Depression, Toronto, McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1970, p. 215.

TABLE 2

## INDEX NUMBERS OF EMPLOYMENT IN THE AUTOMOBILE AND PARTS INDUSTRY IN CANADA: 1925-1943

(AVERAGE 1926 = 100)

YEAR	INDEX NUMBERS BY MONTH											
	Jan. 1	Feb. 1	Mar. 1	Apr. 1	May 1	June 1	July 1	Aug. 1	Sept. 1	Oct. 1	Nov. 1	Dec. 1
1925	41.2	50.0	84.7	91.1	91.9	91.7	87.3	64.4	86.0	97.5	91.6	88.8
1926	52.6	87.0	104.9	108.7	113.2	113.1	104.5	97.3	106.0	105.4	98.7	97.2
1927	64.0	99.1	114.7	96.6	118.8	116.6	96.3	89.5	89.7	92.7	87.4	85.3
1928	82.8	96.4	120.3	140.2	154.7	170.0	160.3	179.9	171.0	158.6	132.3	122.7
1929	130.1	177.7	194.9	209.0	215.2	182.9	145.3	130.3	129.1	126.8	115.2	94.0
1930	104.7	125.1	137.7	151.0	153.2	138.3	119.4	100.8	99.9	89.4	89.1	90.8
1931	69.7	87.9	94.4	105.9	110.7	99.7	75.3	52.9	57.6	59.6	51.2	62.8
1932	56.9	70.3	74.8	75.6	81.7	86.3	87.8	72.5	57.3	46.0	47.5	50.9
1933	57.9	64.4	69.3	76.3	78.6	75.0	73.8	73.3	68.8	65.9	60.0	61.3
1934	67.6	87.3	96.2	105.5	116.8	117.7	105.4	99.2	79.4	71.4	71.2	69.8
1935	92.9	126.6	152.0	156.6	154.6	145.8	131.0	109.2	100.1	110.8	131.5	120.0
1936	119.9	138.2	135.8	149.3	154.1	139.0	124.2	99.5	92.0	111.5	127.4	140.5
1937	149.0	157.1	161.8	166.8	164.9	165.4	160.3	125.1	108.7	129.8	151.9	159.1
1938	156.7	160.2	161.2	155.5	151.9	152.6	132.7	86.4	103.5	115.9	132.5	159.0
1939	138.4	150.0	151.3	147.6	148.9	143.3	108.6	94.7	101.6	114.7	139.9	154.9
1940	155.4	155.4	156.5	163.4	164.9	168.0	144.2	139.5	163.5	180.0	200.0	202.9
1941	208.3	224.1	239.2	252.0	256.8	256.5	258.2	245.6	247.9	230.7	253.4	260.0
1942	263.7	266.9	278.9	280.7	276.8	284.3	288.4	293.1	296.7	303.0	308.1	308.8
1943	310.1	317.7	316.3	313.8	311.1	306.7	306.2	306.6	304.5	301.9	298.4	306.4

SOURCE: Canada, Department of Trade and Commerce, Dominion Bureau of Statistics, The Employment Situation. 1930, 1935, 1940, 1943. Ottawa, The King's Printer, 1930, 1935, 1940, 1943.

Oshawa quickly fell victim to the depression. By December of 1929 it was estimated that there were at least 4,000 unemployed workers in town,<sup>7</sup> about 2,000 men engaged in the building trades lost their jobs, the population dropped 3,106 in the three years following the crash, many workmen remaining in the city only worked a few hours a day while others walked the streets.<sup>8</sup> The statistics in TABLES 2,3,4 and 5 can provide only a partial picture of the human suffering that was involved. A better picture is provided by the comments of a one time striker in Oshawa who wrote:

Many of them [unemployed workers] have lost their houses. Most of the rest have no means to pay their mortgages and taxes so the future is pretty dark.... The G.M.C. plant is practically shut down and the workers, who have made millions for the company in profits, are now left to shift as best they can, and they can starve insofar as the "benevolent" corporation which sweated them to build up its millions is concerned.

Many of the workers have left town in the dim hope of finding work elsewhere. A lot of them are still hanging on by the skin of their teeth with the forlorn hope of "prosperity" returning, and a great many are reduced to the worst desperate straits....

Men who are residents of the town, as a great "privilege" of their "citizenship" are allowed to stay in a recently improved barracks. They get three meals a day and are allowed to flop on the floors and benches, no blankets provided, in return for sawing cordwood daily. As for those unfortunate workers who have not attained the dignity and "rights" of "residents," they are forced to either flop in the prison cells of the police station and rely on hand-outs of mush, or starve and freeze. It's a great life!

Speed the day when this rotten capitalist system will be buried deep!<sup>9</sup>

This was the new reality and this worker had attained a degree of radical-

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7. The Worker, Dec. 14, 1929.

8. The Oshawa Daily Times, Oct. 7, 1935; According to The Toronto Daily Star, Jan. 2, 1935, almost 1,000 homes had been confiscated in Oshawa during the previous four years due to owners being unable to meet mortgage payments.

9. The Worker, Dec. 19, 1930.

TABLE 3

## MONTHLY INDEX NUMBERS OF EMPLOYMENT IN OSHAWA: 1929-1932

(average Calendar Year 1926 = 100)

Date	Index for Oshawa	Date	Index for Oshawa
1929 - Aug. 1	144.3	1931 - Jan. 1	80.7
Sept. 1	126.4	Feb. 1	100.7
Oct. 1	-	Mar. 1	113.6
Nov. 1	-	Apr. 1	113.4
Dec. 1	-	May 1	113.6
1930 - Jan. 1	-	June 1	103.2
Feb. 1	-	July 1	62.1
Mar. 1	-	Aug. 1	59.7
Apr. 1	-	Sept. 1	58.0
May 1	128.1	Oct. 1	61.4
June 1	115.0	Nov. 1	77.4
July 1	90.5	Dec. 1	93.7
Aug. 1	100.7	1932 - Jan. 1	84.4
Sept. 1	95.8	Feb. 1	96.7
Oct. 1	84.2	Mar. 1	82.5
Nov. 1	85.2	Apr. 1	79.0
Dec. 1	87.6	May 1	91.4

SOURCE: H.M. Cassidy, Unemployment and Relief in Ontario, 1929-1932, Toronto, J.M. Dent and Sons, Ltd., 1932, pp. IV-V.

TABLE 4: NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF ALL WAGE-EARNERS AND NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF MALE WAGE-EARNERS NOT AT WORK ON JUNE 1, 1931, AND NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF MALE WAGE-EARNERS REGISTERED AS UNEMPLOYED, AUGUST, 1931.

City	All Wage-Earners			Male Wage-Earners				
	Number	Not Working June 1, 1931		Number	Not Working June 1, 1931		Registered Unemployed Aug. 1931	
		Number	Per Cent		Number	Per Cent	Number	Per Cent
Oshawa	8,050	2,850	35.4	6,660	2,630	39.4	2,580	38.3

SOURCE: H.M. Cassidy, Unemployment and Relief in Ontario, 1929-1932, Toronto, J.M. Dent and Sons, Ltd. 1932, p. 33.

TABLE 5: TREND OF SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CONDITIONS IN OSHAWA, 1929-1934

Year	Population	Tax Arrears	Total Roll Tax	Net Per Capita Debt	Number of Vacant Houses	No. of Fam. on Relief	Customs and Excise Receipts	Post Office Receipts
1929	25,550	\$230,301	\$821,954	\$123.25	-	-	\$9,132,000	\$113,340
1930	23,687	368,901	958,195	155.15	300	-	5,539,000	112,171
1931	23,002	458,485	950,400	156.61	400	836	2,943,000	94,785
1932	22,444	580,365	930,112	156.12	500	1,474	-	-
1933	22,506	144,112	-	-	100	1,296	1,954,000	94,541
1934	23,430	563,511	-	130.40	20	1,064	3,926,000	-

SOURCE: The Oshawa Daily Times, Oct. 7, 1935.

ism that would take several years for others to reach or partially reach. The working class as usual was one of the first segments of society to feel the impact of the depression but of such magnitude was the depression that even the middle class became affected. Those who formerly considered themselves better than working class in economic and social position were forced into dire poverty and eventually into destitution. The meeting of the elementary needs of people such as food, clothing and shelter by community action reached monumental proportions with the consequence that unemployment relief became a general concern for all.

Unemployment was an experience that provided a radicalizing force. It afforded a chance for old ties and traditions to be broken and new social and economic ideas to take root. It provided an opportunity for new leaders to arise and new organizations to develop. The depression was a reality that never seemed to be taken as seriously by the daily press as by the unemployed workers. Except for the standard and traditional Christian benevolence and philanthropy indulged in by the "old establishment," the unemployed found that they had to act for themselves if they were to improve their condition. Thus, the year round during the early thirties, the unemployed workers were always a political factor. In addition, the sections of the middle and working classes that became radicalized by the depression experience were bound to carry their ideas and activities into the recovery period in fields such as organized labour.

Unemployment meant dependency, and relief for the first year of the depression was usually a matter of local effort.<sup>10</sup> In Oshawa there

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10. H.M. Cassidy, Unemployment and Relief in Ontario, 1929-1932, Toronto, J.M. Dent and Sons, Limited, 1932, p. 52.



was no organization to deal with welfare, which previously had been left up to the churches. To deal with the problem the Associated Welfare Societies organization was formed with Mayor A.R. Allaway as president and George W. McLaughlin (brother of R.S. McLaughlin) as vice-president. This was just a co-ordinating body to supervise existing organizations to prevent duplication of services.<sup>11</sup> Typical of one of the groups was the newly formed volunteer Women's Welfare League which concerned itself mainly with the administration of relief in the form of clothing and food. Money was raised through campaigns until relief administration became a civic problem. Finally a Public Welfare Board was formed with G.W. McLaughlin as chairman. Initially the government paid two thirds of Oshawa's relief costs and eventually paid eighty per cent, a figure which rose to ninety per cent when the city came close to bankruptcy.<sup>12</sup> Unfortunately it took years for the authorities to realize the seriousness of the depression. The move from ad hoc and private social and charitable associations of various kinds to a system of public relief was slow and tended to remain in the hands of the old socio-economic "establishment" of the community. These people did not suffer the personal hardships of the depression as the workers and middle classes did. They could afford to be confident that the acute unemployment problem would soon end.<sup>13</sup> This alienation from the mass of people was a point that eventually came to cause friction and polarize politics in the community over issues of unemployment and relief. The first signs of a new grass roots political participation came in March of 1930 with the attempt to form Ratepayers' Associations

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11. The Oshawa Daily Times, Nov. 27, 1929.

12. Hood, op.cit., p. 283.

13. The Oshawa Daily Times, Nov. 27, 1929.

in the various wards of the city. Cedardale and the South West end led the way with a plan to canvass the various wards for members and acquaint and involve people in municipal affairs.<sup>14</sup>

By the time the federal election took place in July of 1930, thousands of men were unemployed and industrial activity was at a standstill. The workers were willing to listen to those who would plead their cause, as exemplified by the fact that over 250 workers came out to Memorial Park to listen to the election program of the Communist Party.<sup>15</sup> The Communists did not run a candidate so the field was left to the two old parties to battle it out. Though the Liberal Prime Minister, Mackenzie King, had refused to recognize the depression,<sup>16</sup> unemployment nonetheless played a prominent part in the election. The local Conservative candidate, Dr. Kaiser, called for protection to cure unemployment but the Liberal, W.H. Moore, who was running for re-election, attacked protection as the cause of unemployment. Moore won the election, greatly increasing his support in Oshawa where he had presented a clear cut and definite program for unemployment councils "composed of representatives of employers and employed" along with "representation men of the church, men of the Service Clubs, and men and women of the Benefit Societies...."<sup>17</sup> Since the Conservatives under R.B. Bennett formed the next government, Moore never got a chance to try out his ideas, and while the different levels of government muddled through various schemes to solve the economic crisis, the

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14. Ibid., Mar. 28, 1930; Apr. 2, 1930.

15. The Worker, July 30, 1930.

16. Cassidy, op.cit., pp. 54-55; Canada, Debates of the House of Commons, Vol. II, 1930, pp. 1224-1243.

17. The Oshawa Daily Times, July 10, 1930; July 22, 1930; July 29, 1930.

unemployed were organizing.

The spectacle of parading demonstrators returned to Oshawa in late September of 1930 when three hundred unemployed men marched through city streets under the leadership of 'Eddie' McDonald in an endeavour to attract the attention of citizens to the unemployment situation. Preceding the parade, a meeting of over six hundred men and women had been held in Memorial Park during which McDonald stated that, although official figures placed the number of unemployed at 1,600, there were over 3,000 jobless men and women residing in Oshawa. Demands expressed at the meeting called for "unemployment insurance, the resignation of Miss D. Farncomb, city social service worker; and the substitution of [i.e. for] steam shovels for the new subway job by pick and shovel labor."<sup>18</sup> Eddie McDonald had started his colourful career as the popular hero and leader of the unemployed. Soon support for his struggle came from the North East Ward Ratepayers' Association when Mayor Mitchell closed the city council chambers as a meeting place for the unemployed. The Ratepayers became active and called upon the mayor to counter his order.<sup>19</sup> The unemployed quickly became a political factor and by the end of 1930, Eddie and his followers were ready for political action.

They challenged the local political élite, especially those in the "Thirty Club" composed of prominent professional and business men such as George McLaughlin. These were the dominant factor in the affairs of the city and were politically oriented towards the status quo.<sup>20</sup> Supplied

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18. Ibid., Sept. 26, 1930.

19. Ibid., Dec. 19, 1930.

20. Interview with F.M. Dafoe; In an article in the Daily Clarion, Dec. 31, 1938, George Oakes, Secretary of the Communist Party in Oshawa, wrote:

with information by an informer in the Club,<sup>21</sup> Eddie carried on a muck-raking campaign, charging extravagance and mismanagement of municipal affairs and demanding economy.<sup>22</sup> Following up his accusations, he stepped into the political arena for municipal office. Backed by the unemployed, Eddie announced his intention to run for Mayor. It was a last minute decision and, though he lost, he drew a significant protest vote in a three cornered contest, coming third with 1,253 votes to 1,440 for George Hart and 2,749 for Ernie Marx, the new mayor.<sup>23</sup>

Eddie McDonald talked too straight for some and raised the ire of the opposing élite which tried to eliminate his aggravating presence in the community. By late May of 1931, Eddie was faced with deportation proceedings for the second time. Months before, such proceedings had been started against him on the grounds that he and his dependents were or were likely to become a public charge. McDonald thought the proceedings

20. Continued from Page 74.

"Like any other city, Oshawa has a 'Cliveden set.' They meet in the heart of the city at 6 Simcoe Street north, over the Dominion Bank, just off the Four-Corners.

"On the entrance door a copper plate is emblazoned with the name, The Thirty Club. Walking up a flight of stairs, one comes face to face with a door leading to the office of George W. McLaughlin, brother of R.S. McLaughlin, president of General Motors."

"This is the only office on the floor. The city directory does not list it under any specific business office of any sort."

Another flight of stairs takes one to the quarters of the Thirty Club. It is furnished with lounge chairs, billiard tables....

"It is here that the 'élite' and the controlling moneyed clique have gathered sometimes, perhaps to idle time away and at other times perhaps to designate the policies to be foisted on the 25,000 citizens residing in Oshawa."

21. Interview with W.E. Noble.

22. The Toronto Daily Star, Oct. 24, 1930; The Oshawa Daily Times, Dec. 30, 1930.

23. The Oshawa Daily Times, Dec. 29, 1930; Dec. 30, 1930; Dec. 31, 1930; Jan. 6, 1931.

had been dropped because he had never received relief from the city of Oshawa and was in fact a taxpayer who worked at General Motors. The Department of Immigration, however, informed him that proceedings were continuing under the Immigration Act on the grounds that he belonged to a "prohibited class" because he had been convicted by a court. McDonald decided to appeal this action.<sup>24</sup>

As soon as Eddie's case became public, strong protests were raised. The city council met to discuss the issue and a resolution calling for the Department of Immigration to revoke its decision was put forward by Alderman Kerby. McDonald was regarded as one of Oshawa's public citizens and the deportation move was viewed as a policy savoring of "persecution and despotism." Kerby claimed the issue savored of Russia or Germany, and council members saw the people behind this move as a bigger menace than Eddie could ever be because they feared similar actions could be taken against others.<sup>25</sup>

Once the issue became public, Mayor Marx admitted that he, with the advice of other aldermen, had been responsible for giving the Department of Immigration information which had been previously collected on Eddie. Following this admission council held another meeting and by a vote of eight to three decided to ask the Department of Immigration to revoke its order to deport Eddie McDonald. Dr. A.J. Swanson, counsel for McDonald, said that it was Eddie's failure to tell the immigration officials that he had spent time in a mental hospital which had constituted the breach of the Immigration Act. Nothing would have come of the matter

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24. Ibid., May 23, 1931. For the details of McDonald's case, see this issue.

25. Ibid., June 2, 1931.

if Eddie's public utterances had not aroused opposition. Swanson also stated that Eddie would no longer meddle in municipal politics and that the outcome of the whole issue was that Eddie had lost his job. The matter fizzled out over a debate as to whether or not the mayor's information should be tabled. The information was not tabled thus ensuring the secrecy of the plot to eliminate Eddie.<sup>26</sup>

Trying to eliminate popular protest was like trying to behead a hydra. With hundreds of unemployed men in the city, mass demonstrations calling for "work or bread" and "work or relief" were certain to be popular. Even with a small army of unemployed demanding immediate attention to their condition, the mayor could only reply with the old story that no help was being obtained from the government and that "the unemployed would have to bear with it as best they can."<sup>27</sup> The leadership and actions that the unemployed were to take were important to anyone desiring to mobilize this new force for political ends. The communists were ready to take advantage of the situation; they held meetings and parades calling for men to join the National Unemployed Workers' Association (N.U.W.A.) but these were not very successful.<sup>28</sup> Except for a minor amount of activity during the 1930 election and a bit of publicity over the "Boy Scout Trial" in the fall of that year, there was little communist activity. In the latter incident two of three workers representing the Young Communist League (Y.C.L.) were found not guilty and the third case, on a charge of "distributing fake news calculated to harm a public interest," was dis-

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26. Ibid., June 3, 1931.

27. The Worker, June 13, 1931.

28. The Oshawa Daily Times, July 4, 1931.

missed. The men had passed out leaflets charging that the Boy Scout movement was a "scab and Fascist organization."<sup>29</sup> The local communists had not been well received by the so-called "loyal" or "British" element and consequently they had not been very active. The C.P. of C. itself owned no property in the city but members operated through the Ukrainian Labor Temple Association, which held meetings in what was often referred to as the "Communist Hall."<sup>30</sup> The party members and supporters were mainly among the ethnic groups of the southern part of the city and often clashed with non-leftist ethnic groups in the same area. This "alien" stigma was a difficult one for the local communists to overcome, as was brought out by an incident that returned Eddie McDonald to the headlines.

In late July a feud between some of the unemployed and the communists flared up in Memorial Park when Eddie McDonald was challenged by John Farkas who called, "Come and fight, you are an English faker." McDonald took him at his word, summoned a group of the unemployed to hold Farkas' "Red" followers at bay, and the pair went at it hammer and tongs. Farkas, bleeding profusely, got the worst of the fight but both men were taken to the police station. They were released but the police still intended to press charges. The unemployed were willing to give all the information they had about the communists. It was claimed that there were eight paid operators of the C.P. of C. in Oshawa as well as four female teachers who taught communism to many of the children of foreign birth at the "Red" school.<sup>31</sup> The fact that Farkas was a Hungarian was

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29. The Worker, Oct. 25, 1930; Canadian Labor Defender, Oct.-Nov., 1930. The C.L.D.L. defended the men.

30. The Oshawa Daily Times, Nov. 14, 1931. The U.L.T.A. could not be officially classified as part of the Communist Party.

31. Ibid., July 24, 1931; The Toronto Daily Star, July 24, 1931; Workers'  
- continued Page 79



stressed in The Oshawa Daily Times, which described the literature he had distributed prior to the fight as "of such a description to raise the anger of any loyal citizen of the British Empire."<sup>32</sup> Such attitudes were typical of the defensive patriotism used to rationalize and justify the suppression of protest among ethnic groups during the 1930's. Organized protest might be accepted but it was not well received if it was by "foreigners" or by "Reds." This attitude was later revealed when The Oshawa Daily Times applauded Eddie McDonald's public expulsion from the Unemployed Association of Harry Jack Grey, an active leader, on the grounds that he was a "Red" sympathizer.<sup>33</sup> The exclusion of extreme radicals proved to be an illusive goal, however, because progressive radicalization and politicization were corollaries of prolonged depression conditions.

Not only were the Communists showing signs of activity but a move had been made by the Independent Labour Party of Canada (I.L.P.) to form a branch in Oshawa. It publicized its acceptance of the British model of following constitutional methods and refused to have anything to do with the Communists. It did not advocate force or destruction of property and diplomatically sympathized with the unemployed even though the Unemployed Association had made unfair accusations about the I.L.P. The local I.L.P. branch started with thirty members and planned to hold regular meetings at which leaders of the Canadian Labour movement and academics would speak on social problems. In an editorial, The Oshawa Daily Times

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31. Continued from Page 78.

Unity, Aug. 6, 1931, claimed that McDonald had been supported by Independent Labour Party members.

32. The Oshawa Daily Times, July 25, 1931.

33. Ibid., Aug. 12, 1931.

even wished the I.L.P. well because of its British tradition and Canadian record.<sup>34</sup> As a community organization, however, the I.L.P. was not destined to survive. It broke up along left-right lines into little groups which in turn faded into obscurity.<sup>35</sup>

Eddie McDonald and the unemployed were still the persistent activists. McDonald made a small mistake, however, that was eventually to prove a fatal error. He had been charged with stealing railroad ties from the C.P.R. He had done this to provide firewood for a needy family but humanitarian reasons did not stand against the law. He was given a suspended sentence and placed on probation for two years.<sup>36</sup> Eddie just could not be kept down and so he entered the mayoralty race for 1932. His opponent was P.A. Macdonald, an alderman with six years' experience. The election turned into a good two-man contest with Eddie increasing his support over the previous year. P.A. Macdonald won with his 2,750 votes to Eddie's 1,785 but the latter had led by substantial majorities in several divisions in the southern half of the city, a working class area that was the first to become politically active.<sup>37</sup>

When the government arrested and tried eight leading communists the authorities only provided the C.P. of C. with another cause to rally the masses. The Canadian Labour Defence League (C.L.D.L.) formed a local organization in January of 1932. The C.L.D.L. was in charge of the defense of the eight communists and it publicly called for the repeal of

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34. Ibid., Sept. 10, 1931. The officers of the I.L.P. were: J. Smith, President; J. Wattison, Vice-President; A. Broad, Treasurer; A. Ayres, Secretary.

35. Interview with F.M. Dafoe.

36. The Oshawa Daily Times, Oct. 8, 1931.

37. Ibid., Dec. 30, 1931; Jan. 5, 1932.

the infamous Section 98 of the Criminal Code and the release of the Communist prisoners. Publicized aims included a call to

organize campaigns of protest against the "white terror" in other capitalist countries and to give moral and financial aid whenever possible to the victims of such terror; to collect materials and give publicity to facts regarding the persecution of workers and to expose anti-labor activities, labor spy systems, etc.....<sup>38</sup>

The aims of the C.L.D.L. were attractive to the growing popular organizations. Even the Central Council of Ratepayers in Oshawa joined in the call to repeal Section 98, not so much for the sake of the eight communists as because it was "to be in the best interest of working men." It was a popular protest by the "little man" and the opportunity was used to condemn the Senate as a political pasturage because it had been responsible for preventing Section 98 from being repealed.<sup>39</sup> The Ratepayers were becoming increasingly political but the degree of their radicalism was uncertain. At a meeting of the South East Ward Ratepayers, President F.L. Folke called on other Ratepayers to elect their own aldermen who were to be a check on expenditures made by the city. Yet, at the same time he symbolized the political inactivity of many representing the new popular movements when he hoped that the old élites would set things right again. He expressed this view when he asserted,

...the world has lost its balance and was under the control of the capitalists, industrialists and scientists...and it would not be until the capitalists get together and change the whole system that relief would be felt from the present conditions.... The working man has as much love for his wife and family as the rich man and there is no reason why he should not have the means with which to make them happy.<sup>40</sup>

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38. Ibid., Jan. 25, 1932.

39. Ibid., Feb. 27, 1932.

40. Ibid., Feb. 18, 1932.

To the proliferation of local groups another soon emerged in the city to represent the property owners. An instrumental factor was the provincial government's scheme by which the Public Welfare Board could pay landlords a rental allowance of one and a half times the annual taxes, divided by twelve for monthly payments. The landlords found this most unattractive and formed the Oshawa Property Owners' Association but their protests proved unsuccessful in changing the government's plan.<sup>41</sup> Feeling the strain of taxation, the Property Owners turned their activities toward the municipal council. In March of 1932 their Association passed the following three resolutions which were presented to the City Council.

1. That the Property Owners' Association endorse the action of city council in abandoning relief work under the present scheme and that any such work now under way be discontinued at once.
2. That the Association endorse the Council's plan to open a store and depot to carry on relief distribution and that the Association are of the opinion that the unemployed be given one week's work in the depot each month as help and that the pay be applied to defray arrears on taxes on property.
3. That the city council try to devise ways and means of raising money other than by direct property taxation.

These resolutions indicate that the so-called middle class "little man" was greatly upset at having to bear the cost of looking after the depressions's victims. It was symbolic of the many groups of people who were once politically un-involved but were now becoming active and forming pressure groups.

Chance again catapulted Eddie McDonald into municipal politics. In May of 1932, Mayor P.A. Macdonald resigned to take up a position with the Public Utilities Commission. Before council could meet to discuss the issue, Eddie, the defeated mayoralty candidate, arrived with a large body of the unemployed and seated himself in the mayor's chair, a position

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41. Hood, op.cit., p. 283.

which he refused to leave even after council had elected Alderman Thomas Hawkes as mayor for the remainder of the year. Eddie claimed he had more right to sit in the mayor's chair than anyone. The clerk provided authority from the city solicitor in support of the council's action but this was again challenged by Eddie. He claimed that the Municipal Act had been amended and that it was only after the first of July that council could appoint a mayor. Eddie remained in the mayor's chair as a protest even though he knew he could not make his position legal. The clerk gave a signal and three policemen ejected him from the room amid the shouts and boos of his followers. This did not deter Eddie and he returned, continued to protest and forced the council to adjourn.<sup>42</sup>

The next day he addressed a large crowd of unemployed in the city council chamber and revealed his eccentric and confused radicalism. He claimed that the action taken by the city council was illegal and stated that every taxpayer had the right to have some say in the election of a new mayor and that council had no right to take away that privilege. His address resembled a sermon as he ranged over many and varied topics.

[He was] opposed to Section 98 of the Criminal Code, criticized ministers of religion for not preaching and acting Christianity, opposed to establishment of a relief depot by the City Council, advanced unity among the laboring classes and the formation of a labor organization in Oshawa, accused ex-Mayor Macdonald of being a "stool pigeon" for the millionaires, attacked The Times for failure to publish his criticism of Mrs. Farmcomb, City Relief Officer; prophesied the almost immediate second coming of Christ; declared himself "not a member of any organization" and "drifted" (to use his words) from one subject to another during an hour and a quarter of his characteristic oratory....<sup>43</sup>

The meeting remained perfectly orderly and received the harangue without either objection or enthusiastic applause. His speech, however, contained

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42. The Oshawa Daily Times, Mar. 19, 1932.

43. Ibid., Apr. 20, 1932.

a list of the ideas and frustrations held by many citizens that only required organization and direction. It also indicated that he was becoming more alienated and radical.

Hotly pursuing the issues the next day, Eddie headed a deputation of unemployed to urge the Mayor to abandon the idea of establishing a relief depot. Eddie had interviewed many of the city's merchants who, fearing they would be put out of business, were found to be opposed to the idea of a food store. He stated that the men wanted work, to be paid for it and be allowed to spend it for their families. This argument was based on the claim that food allotments just contributed to people becoming professional welfare recipients. Eddie also noted that hundreds of citizens had received notices that they must leave their homes and wanted the Mayor and council to make some provision for these people.<sup>44</sup> This was Eddie's last major protest because within the next few days he was remanded for one week and then taken to the county jail at Whitby for breaking the conditions of his probation imposed on him when he was convicted of theft the previous October and placed on suspended sentence. He was unable to obtain the required \$2,000 bail and went to trial.<sup>45</sup> He vanished from the columns of the daily press and was held for months awaiting deportation which eventually took place, the reward for all his efforts and protests.<sup>46</sup>

While Eddie had led the deputation to see the mayor, the main body

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44. Ibid., Apr. 21, 1932.

45. Ibid., Apr. 27, 1932; The Toronto Daily Star, Apr. 27, 1932. The details about why Eddie was arrested were not stated.

46. Canadian Labor Defender, Oct. 1932; The Worker, Oct. 1, 1932; Interview with F.M. Dafoe. Eddie returned to Canada during the Second World War dressed in a Canadian uniform.

of the unemployed met in Memorial Park where the chair was taken by Sam Elliott, the man who had been responsible for the formation of the local Canadian Labor Defense League and was active in the N.U.W.A. This meeting was followed by a street parade to publicize the protest.<sup>47</sup> Eddie's leadership had now been eclipsed by organizational structures and by Sam Elliott, who led the May Day parade under the auspices of the N.U.W.A. in a demonstration against the food depot plan. Evidence indicates that while there was a trend to the left among some of the unemployed, there was probably also a split in their ranks since there were only a hundred men in the parade to City Park where Elliott pronounced the capitalist system to be dead and referred to the workers as wage slaves.<sup>48</sup>

Not only was Eddie McDonald removed from the local scene but Dominion authorities, affected by a new outbreak of "bolshophobia,"<sup>49</sup> were quick to act against that old bogey, "the Red menace." Starting three days before May Day, the R.C.M.P. put into effect a Canada-wide roundup of "militant leaders of the working class." As one of those arrested wrote:

Workers were awakened in the early hours of the morning..., snatched away from their families, loaded into automobiles, taken miles from their homes, shipped aboard a train, bound for somewhere unknown to their families, friends or themselves.

Once aboard a train, they were kept handcuffed and guarded by a heavily-armed escort of "Mounties"....

On arrival at Halifax, these militant workers were placed in a huge dormitory at the Immigration Headquarters on the pier. For two days they were not allowed to communicate with their friends or to obtain defense counsel.

Upon appearance before the Board of Enquiry a postponement of two days in each case was obtained in order to secure legal counsel.... At the second hearing, these workers were forced to

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47. The Oshawa Daily Times, Apr. 21, 1932; The Worker, Apr. 30, 1932.

48. The Oshawa Daily Times, May 3, 1932; The Worker, Apr. 16, 1932, indicated that the Oshawa jobless were joining the N.U.W.A.

49. Felix Walter. "Bolshophobia," The Canadian Forum, Vol. XI, No. 121 (Oct. 1931), pp. 9-11.



appear before the Board of Enquiry without counsel.<sup>50</sup>

Oshawa housed one of the communists involved. John Farkas, the man who had fought with McDonald the year before, was one of those arrested. The arrest came as a surprise to those who knew him as a quiet, inoffensive member of the unemployed. Farkas and a friend had operated a grocery store on Albert Street until they went bankrupt, losing about \$3,000 because they gave too much credit to the unemployed. Farkas went to live with a family as a form of repayment of a hundred dollar debt which they owed him. His life style had been simple and quiet. He would get up at about eight in the morning, go downtown and not return until ten or eleven at night. When he stayed home he read in his room. He had not been active in any communist activities since his fight with Eddie McDonald when he was arrested for disorderly conduct, the incident which first brought him to the attention of the Oshawa police. Farkas, an immigrant from Hungary, had applied for his naturalization papers the previous fall and so when the R.C.M.P. came for him he thought they were bringing the papers. At first they even told him that they were. They then asked him if he was a communist. Farkas, not careful with his words, declared: "You would be too if you had been out of work for a year." The R.C.M.P. searched his room, found a book and newspaper they claimed were communistic and then searched the entire house. Asking him if he would like to go to Russia, Farkas replied, "I can't go too soon. I only wish I had the money, and I'd go to-morrow." The R.C.M.P. then took him away.<sup>51</sup>

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50. Canadian Labor Defender, June, 1932.

51. The Toronto Daily Star, May 7, 1932; The Oshawa Daily Times, May 7, 1932.

Farkas was one of the group sent to Halifax for deportation and was charged along with others that they, each personally, "advocate the use of force and violence for the overthrow of the government of Canada and Great Britain."<sup>52</sup> The men were not tried by a regular court but by a board of inquiry under the Immigration Act. It was the C.L.D.L. that came to the aid of eleven "political prisoners" in the Halifax shed by providing counsel to go before the board and by carrying on a nation-wide campaign of protest. The incident only provided more martyrs for the leftist cause. The communists saw it as an excellent opportunity for thousands of unorganized workers "to have their eyes opened." As one of the prisoners claimed, "[The workers] have lost any respect that might have remained for Bennett's 'Peace, order and good government.' The Bennett regime...has initiated a country-wide attack upon the revolutionary movement and against any protests that the workers might organize against starvation and destitution."<sup>53</sup> According to the Canadian Labor Defender's analysis of the whole deportation campaign:

The deportation policy pursued by the ruling class of Canada through both capitalist parties in power, is a deliberate policy of terrorizing the working class. It seeks to divide the native and foreign born workers, whether the foreign born be British or others. It seeks to strengthen national hatreds, and develop strong chauvinism, to give the native worker the conception that the foreigner is taking his job and that the government "protects" the native worker. It is an open Fascist policy that breeds fascism among the working class and is closely allied

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52. Canadian Labor Defender, June, 1932. Two of the men arrested and bound for Halifax were released because one was Canadian born and the other was a naturalized Canadian. Such an error shows that the real aim of the arrests was to eliminate radicals more than aliens. The fact that the others were not citizens just provided an opportunity for their elimination. See also F.R. Scott, "Freedom of Speech in Canada," Papers and Proceedings of the Fifth Annual Meeting of the Canadian Political Science Association, Vol. V (1933), pp. 169-189.

53. Canadian Labor Defender, June, 1932.

with the growing police terror throughout the country.<sup>54</sup>

The government's policy during the depression had several effects. For an unnaturalized immigrant to become unemployed and on relief it could very well mean deportation.<sup>55</sup> For workers with leftist views who had come from Britain or other European countries where there were strong working class traditions, and who were likely to be working in the unorganized mass industries such as steel and auto manufacturing, the policy of deportations only served to prevent union activities which might be labeled as "communistic." These were factors which were directly relevant to the workers of Oshawa, a former "boom" city of the twenties with a

54. Ibid., June, 1931; After the country-wide round-up, the Canadian Labor Defender, June, 1932, commented on the government's policy:

"The object of this chauvinism, sedulously cultivated by the ruling class, is of course to split the forces of the Canadian workers, to pit the native against the foreign-born workers, to point the native Canadian as the 'white man' who has sole authority to speak on Canada, while the foreign-born worker is contemptuously sneered at as of inferior human status,—a 'hunky,' 'dago,' 'pollak,' etc.

"It is a fact that among the most militant workers in Canada are the foreign-born workers. The reason for this becomes clear when it is remembered that these workers are under the influence of the finest working class traditions of Europe, while only during the last generation (mainly the war and post-war years) has the political development of Canada been of such a character as to give a boost to the development of the revolutionary movement among the native Canadian workers. The effects of the present crisis have likewise further accentuated the class struggle in Canada and broken down the bourgeois ideas of thousands of native Canadian workers."

55. Ibid., According to an analysis of government figures for 1930, "...of the 4,025 people deported, 1,806 were because they were 'public charges,' 70 for miscellaneous causes, 510 were dependents of deportees, 763 were very sick or incurables or mentally defective, 102 had entered the country illegally and only 771 were for criminal offences which could be due to convictions arising out of vagrancy charges, demonstrations, small thefts and similar acts of desperation of workers who could not find means of support." Also, to check the foreign nature of those deported, 2,864 were to Britain. See also: "Political Deportations," The Canadian Forum, Vol. XI, No. 128 (May, 1931), pp. 284-285; F.R. Scott, "Communists, Senators, And All That," The Canadian Forum, Vol. XII, No. 136, (Jan. 1932), pp. 127-129; J.F.W. "Deportations," The Canadian Forum, Vol. XXI, No. 142 (July, 1932), pp. 367-368.

large number of immigrants. The fears of the foreign workers were very real because the Citizens' Advisory Relief Committee of Oshawa requested the city council to look into the matter of "foreigners on relief" and an editorial in The Oshawa Daily Times saw the deportation policy as striking a blow "at an evil which is costing the city money." There were close to 500 unnaturalized foreigners registered as unemployed and The Oshawa Daily Times admitted that if the men had been working the issue of their deportation would not have been raised; but since "the times were not normal" drastic measures were acceptable to relieve the "taxpayers of the city."<sup>56</sup>

The Oshawa city council decided to start proceedings to have the federal government deport all foreign-born workers who were in receipt of unemployment relief. The immediate result of this decision was that many foreign-born unemployed workers quickly left town to avoid impending deportation.<sup>57</sup> The Worker commented on this move:

[The workers'] labor has helped to enrich the General Motors Corporation and other exploiters of labor who operate in this city. Now that these workers have been thrown out of employment and have consumed all their reserves, rather than give them meagre unemployment relief which is dispensed in Oshawa, the bosses of the town are determined to uproot them from the little homes they have established and ship them away to countries with which they have long severed all ties.<sup>58</sup>

Deportation was a very real form of intimidation for the workers in Oshawa. The same thing might happen to them as happened to John Farkas who, after eight months of confinement, was finally deported along with the nine others detained in the Halifax shed.<sup>59</sup>

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56. The Oshawa Daily Times, June 6, 1932.

57. The Worker, Sept. 3, 1932; The Oshawa Daily Times, Aug. 19, 1932.

58. The Worker, Sept. 3, 1932.

59. Canadian Labor Defender, Jan.-Feb., 1933. The Canadian Labor Defender,  
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With the colourful leadership of Eddie McDonald gone and numerous, confused popular organizations on the left, there was a drop in radical activity and protests.<sup>60</sup> It was the "establishment's" turn to take the offensive. In the fall of 1932 the depression was at its worst and the "leading citizens," fearing the city might become bankrupt, held "quiet meetings" to discuss the situation and organize.<sup>61</sup> In mid-December, the Oshawa Civic Improvement League (C.I.L.) was formed at a meeting called as the result of joint action by the Chamber of Commerce, the Retail Merchants' Association and the Property Owners' Association. Its aims and objectives were set forward in a constitution stating:

1. The name of this organization shall be 'The Civic Improvement League.'
2. The membership shall be composed of taxpayers and others who have pledged their support to the following aims and objects of the league.
  - (a) To arouse and sustain interest in the affairs of the city, especially with regard to its present financial situation.
  - (b) To induce suitable men to offer themselves for nomination to civic office.
  - (c) To impress upon the electorate the importance of exercising their franchise with care and judgment.
  - (d) To assist in getting to the polls, a larger percentage of the electorate.
3. The officers of the organization shall be as follows: President, Vice-President, 2nd Vice-President, Secretary-Treasurer.

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59. Continued from Page 90.

Jan.-Feb., 1933 even reprinted a letter from Conrad Cessinger, Hans Kist and John Farkas from on Board the S.S. Dresden, via New York to Bremen, Dec. 19, 1932.

60. The communists protested the deportations but the Ratepayers refused to take up the issue. The Oshawa Daily Times, Aug. 23, 1932; The local communists were also active in trying to penetrate the Fathers' Association and get it to swing to the left with the unemployed councils but they were unsuccessful. The leaders of the Fathers' Association moved to the right when he switched from advocating the placing of working class men on the city council to supporting the Civic Improvement League. The Worker, Dec. 24, 1932; Dec. 31, 1932.

61. Hood, op.cit., p. 284.

4. An executive to consist of the former named officers and the chairman of the five standing committees.
5. The standing committees shall be--Publicity, Finance, Resolutions, Nominating, and Elections.<sup>62</sup>

At the organizational meeting, 184 citizens signed pledges supporting the League. An analysis of the list of signatures by vocation (TABLE 6) shows that the upper and upper middle class elements were dominant.

This list of municipal candidates was equally impressive. W.E.N. Sinclair, M.L.A. and former mayor, was selected for mayor and elected by acclamation. With the council consisting of ten aldermen, the League nominated six candidates: Allin F. Annis, a prominent lawyer and former member of the Board of Education for six years; George W. McLaughlin, a former alderman; ex-Mayor Thomas Hawkes who had served for nineteen years on the council and board of education; ex-Mayor H.P. Schell, ex-Mayor T.B. Mitchell, and W.J. Locke, a prominent business man.<sup>63</sup> This election marked the change from a ward system to that of election by general vote,<sup>64</sup> a change that gave an advantage to prominent candidates and those using the political party form of organization. Thus with a powerful organization and such well known candidates there was little hope of any opposition to the C.I.L. being successful.

The election of 1933 resulted in only two members of the previous council being re-elected so that now the council consisted of three lawyers, three industrialists, three retail merchants, and a physician. The election proved the possible advantages of a party type of organization but it also revealed that the concept of socio-economic deference was still strong

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62. The Oshawa Daily Times, Dec. 15, 1932.

63. Ibid., Dec. 23, 1932; Hood, op.cit., p. 284.

64. The Oshawa Daily Times, Dec. 28, 1932.

TABLE 6

THE VOCATIONS OF THE 184 CITIZENS SUPPORTING THE C.I.L.

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Vocation	Number
Lawyers, doctors and other professions	16
Manufacturing Executives	21
Retail merchants	28
Employees of industry and business	50
Real estate and Insurance	13
Builders and Contractors	19
Distribution services	5
Retired property owners	11
Bankers	2
Transport services	3
Painters and publishers	4
Miscellaneous services and occupations	7

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SOURCE: The Oshawa Daily Times, Dec. 16, 1932, p. 4.



in the minds of the voters. It was a belief that many citizens would pay a "human" cost for. The chief aim of the League had been to secure a city council of such "calibre" as to persuade the banks to allow the city another year to improve its financial condition.<sup>65</sup> To the unemployed radicals it appeared that the needs of the bond holders were to come before those of the great number of workers in the city who were in desperate straits. Indeed, the city was saved from bankruptcy, accomplished through drastic cuts in civic expenditure. An example of the cuts in the name of economy was the discontinuation of the school children's dental service, which cost an average of only fifty cents per head per year.<sup>66</sup>

Due to the disarray of forces on the left there was no organization that could claim to represent all of the unemployed. To deal with this organizational deficiency, the communists supported the formation of a Provisional Central Committee of Unemployed Councils and called for a United Front Conference of the various working class organizations for March 14.<sup>67</sup> The communists wanted leadership positions in order to weld the unemployed into a fighting organization. The C.I.L.'s policy of economy provided an immediate grievance around which the Provisional Council could organize the unemployed single men. A dispute arose when the single unemployed, who ate in Oshawa's "soup kitchen hostel," were forced to sign a statement that they were willing to go and work on a farm for five dollars a month under the threat of getting no dinner and no more relief. The response to this move was the formation of a committee of single men

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65. Hood, op.cit., p. 284-285.

66. The Worker, Mar. 11, 1933.

67. Ibid., The range across the political spectrum among the unemployed is implied by a call in The Worker, Feb. 4, 1933, to build "...an Unemployed Council movement that will embrace all sections of the unemployed and defeat the splitting tactics of the reformist misleaders."

in the hostel to attend to any grievance the men had and to work in co-operation with the Provisional Council of Unemployed. The issue was sufficient to develop the organizational movement. The Provisional Committee set out to organize block committees and divide the city into sections, placing Committees in charge of each section. A hall was even rented at 13 King Street West to serve as headquarters of the Unemployed Councils of Oshawa and it was open to all workers daily from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m.<sup>68</sup>

The issues continued to arise. A demonstration of united front action by the Fathers' and Mothers' Associations, the Women's Industrial League and the Oshawa Unemployed Council was successful in forcing the Welfare Board to continue issuing relief to the single unemployed men who refused to go to the government airport at Trenton to work for twenty cents a day. This was only a temporary postponement however, as hundreds of men were eventually to leave for the camps at Trenton and Barriefield. The issue arose again as The Worker reported that two hundred men were cut off relief for refusing to go to the Trenton camp and relief for families was reduced by 40 cents to 70 cents per week. Militancy grew in response as the united front movement assumed a broader character. Married unemployed men on relief work downed tools in opposition to new methods of issuing relief and in solidarity with the single unemployed who refused to go to the Trenton camp. With only about twenty men working, most of the work gangs remained solid in their strike. The unemployed prepared a petition with the following demands:

1. That the Welfare Board open the hostel for all single men immediately.
2. That the Welfare Board cancel the contract with the Dominion Stores for bread, and that the unemployed be allowed to obtain their bread from whatever store they wish.

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68. Ibid., Apr. 8, 1933; Apr. 15, 1933.

3. That the continual rise of prices of goods in the relief store be stopped, and that prices be stabilized on the basis of the lowest price during the last ten weeks.<sup>69</sup>

The petition was signed by 2,423 citizens and it was presented to the Oshawa Welfare Board by delegates from the Unemployed Council and Fathers' and Mothers' Associations. The Board refused to consider the petition, stating that they wanted to see the names and addresses of those who signed. This the delegates refused to allow, in order to protect the signatories from possible discrimination, and instead presented a sworn affidavit to the number of signatures, which was correct and lawful.<sup>70</sup> When the matter was pursued further in a letter to Mayor Sinclair asking him to state his position on the action of the Welfare Board, he stated that without discussing the question from the standpoint of party politics, the Welfare Board was a body by itself and that it was not advisable for the city council to interfere with its actions. On this The Worker bitterly commented: "...Liberal party policies are no different from Conservative. Although they may differ in words, their actions are the same. Like Liberal administrations in other cities and provinces, the mayor of Oshawa supports fully and carries out the slave labor and starvation policies of Bennett."<sup>71</sup>

No matter how hard they tried, the unemployed could win only minor concessions or none at all. They had no real economic lever to change the positions taken by Welfare administrators. Still, their efforts at or-

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69. Ibid., Apr. 15, 1933; Apr. 22, 1933. The Welfare Board gave the contract for bread to the Dominion store. Previously, local bakeries supplied the bread to the workers on relief and delivered it. The bakers and bakery drivers supported the petition.

70. Ibid., May 20, 1933; The Toronto Daily Star, May 2, 1933; May 4, 1933; May 6, 1933; May 11, 1933.

71. The Worker, May 20, 1933.

ganization continued by rallying the workers against relief cuts and work in the relief camps, and by providing defence for "individual cases."

While the depression was a period of industrial inactivity there was a great deal of political activity on the part of groups which previously had not been active in politics. Organizations were formed at the municipal level first because that was the level where the implications of government policies were felt quickly and directly. Municipalities administered such day-to-day services as relief which could become concrete issues around which amateurs like Eddie McDonald could easily become active leaders of the unemployed. The comparatively low cost of political involvement on the local level facilitated the formation of more formal organizations such as the Ratepayers' and Property Owners' Associations. Slowly these organizations acquired a political character because their protests and policies brought them into conflict with the older establishment groups in the community. This conflict added to the depression experience slowly led to a radicalization of most of the new elements. Thus when the C.C.F. emerged as a national congealment of socialist and left wing groups, the new local organizations were provided with a coherent social democratic ideology and a mechanism of further political mobility and involvement at the provincial and federal levels.

## CHAPTER V THE PROPHETS AND SOLDIERS OF THE NEW SOCIAL ORDER

The Oshawa C.C.F. club is on the move and gaining momentum. There was a good attendance at the weekly meeting which dealt with many important matters. A letter was sent to the Minister of Education protesting against the prohibitory charges for meetings in the Oshawa schools. The report of the open-air meeting on the previous Saturday night resulted in a strong letter being sent to Mayor Sinclair asking for an explanation of the statement of the police that no political meetings could be held on the streets of Oshawa. It was pointed out that a religious meeting was not interfered with and that in view of the announced policy of the government in Queen's Park to allow absolute freedom of speech and assembly we intend to assert our rights to speak and work for a New Social Order.

"Here's freedom to him who would speak;  
Here's freedom to him who would write  
For there's none need be feared  
That the truth should be heard  
Save he whom the truth would indict."

The meeting closed with the lusty singing of "'O, Canada!  
We Stand on Guard for Thee."<sup>1</sup>

Just as the communists were increasing their influence among the unemployed, a new challenger for the leadership of the workers appeared on the scene. This new political element that was emerging in Oshawa was the C.C.F. At a mass meeting called by the Central Ratepayers' Association, about four hundred people heard D.M. LeBourdais, Secretary of the C.C.F., speak about the aims and objectives of the Federation. He described it as a purely political party "whose purpose is the establishment in Canada of a Co-operative Commonwealth in which the basic principle regulating production, distribution and exchange will be the supplying of human needs instead of the making of profits."<sup>2</sup> LeBourdais also called for a mass participation type of politics when he claimed, "It is time for the people of Canada to conduct their own affairs instead of leaving them in the hands of the politicians...."<sup>3</sup> Some seven or eight communists led

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1. From a report of C.C.F. activities in Oshawa, New Commonwealth, Sept. 1, 1934.

2. The Oshawa Daily Times, May 3, 1933.

3. The Toronto Daily Star, May 3, 1933.

by Vera Rock and J. Houston were present to challenge the speaker. The first question was asked by Vera Rock, who wanted to know what the C.C.F. was doing to improve the condition of the "Voikers" in Canada. LeBourdais answer was that the C.C.F. was primarily a political organization, "having for its objectives the changing of the system which makes such conditions possible, and no one else can change the system in any other way."<sup>4</sup> Here was the type of constitutional political party which many members of the middle class and workers could support. The C.C.F. could involve people in meaningful political activity, yet at the same time avoid the extremism of the Communist Party. Even The Oshawa Daily Times admitted that the C.C.F. could no longer be ridiculed; it would have to be reckoned with as a political force because of the growing interest which,

In times like those through which Canada has been passing, any panacea which promises a change is eagerly received. Even if only because it is different from the established political parties, the C.C.F. will gain the allegiance of many who have no fixed political affiliation, just because they see in it a movement towards change. And they feel that any change would be for the better in the present state of things.<sup>5</sup>

That LeBourdais was successful in his visit became evident when between fifty and sixty men and women expressed themselves as favouring the organization of a C.C.F. Club in Oshawa. Within two weeks a local club had been established and officers elected. The first President was Ed Cheetham who had been prominent in the activities of the different rate-payers' organizations and similar bodies in Oshawa. Finley M. Dafoe, who had been active in the Ratepayers' and the Property Owners' Organizations, became Vice-President. Grant Smith became Secretary-Treasurer. These three men, together with Arthur Broad (former Treasurer of the local

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4. The Oshawa Daily Times, May 3, 1933.

5. Ibid., May 4, 1933.

I.L.P.), J. Nicholls, William Connor, J. McCubbin, D. Jones, Arthur Trueman and H. McCubbin, several of whom had been prominent in the Oshawa Fathers' Association, formed the temporary Executive Committee.<sup>6</sup>

The first business that faced the club was a communication from the Oshawa Unemployed Council seeking the co-operation of the local C.C.F. Club. This was referred to the Executive Committee for consideration and report, a matter with ideological implications since J. Houston, Vera Rock and J. Nicholls had recently assumed leadership of the Unemployed Council. As policy eventually evolved, the C.C.F. did some work with the unemployed in the city and many of them became C.C.F.ers but the C.C.F. was never as assiduous at cultivating the unemployed as the communists were.<sup>7</sup>

There was evidence of a strong left-right clash in the new club which was almost unable to transform itself from a temporary to a permanent organization due to dissatisfaction among the members of the Executive Committee. An "advanced" leftist minority was present as indicated by the passage of a resolution demanding "the immediate release of all political prisoners in Canada" and asking the national convention of the Federation to adopt a policy advocating "complete nationalization and socialization of our entire monetary structure."<sup>8</sup> Also, a heated argument ensued when a slate of permanent officers for the club was presented to the meeting for approval; J. Nicholls and A. Douglas, members of the temporary Executive, both contended that they as well as many of their fellow

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6. Ibid., May 3, 1933; May 15, 1933; Caplan, ["The C.C.F. in Ontario, 1932-1945"], op.cit., p. 21, notes that "...to the Clubs were expected to flock a 'vast body of clerical and professional workers...which only now has realized it has been exploited...for them alone was the Club Plan conceived'"

7. The Oshawa Daily Times, May 15, 1933; Interview with W.E. Noble.

8. The Oshawa Daily Times, July 12, 1933.



members had neither been notified of the proposed slate nor been given an opportunity to consider it. Cheetham's explanation was that it had been physically impossible to notify everyone and that nominations were still open--the slate was only a suggestion. The suggested slate was, however, practically adopted in full. The officers were: Harry M. Mallett, President; Ed Cheetham, Vice-President; C.H. Millard, Secretary; R.C. Bird, Treasurer; F.M. Dafoe, A. Douglas, A. Trueman, A. Broad, and W. Connor on the Executive Committee.<sup>9</sup> Thus the original founders generally remained in control. They represented the various moderate middle and working class groups that had previously formed to help the ratepayers and unemployed. Their movement into the C.C.F. was an indication that this newly politicized element in the community was expanding its activities from the municipal arena into the larger provincial and federal fields.

It was at this time that Charles H. Millard made his political debut. In 1930 he had operated a small plant, the C.H. Millard Manufacturing Company of Oshawa, and had secured the contract for the manufacture of the products of the Bundy Incubator Company. Millard's career as an entrepreneur was short lived because he went bankrupt, another victim of the depression.<sup>10</sup> He found himself unemployed and on the bread line, a

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9. Ibid., The Toronto Daily Star, July 12, 1933.

10. The Oshawa Daily Times, Oct. 28, 1930; The Toronto Daily Star, Oct. 29, 1930; C.H. Millard was born in St. Thomas, Ontario, on August 26, 1896. He attended public and high schools at St. Thomas and Gravenhurst. As his father was a T.B. patient, he had to quit school and learn the carpentry trade. When World War I broke out in 1914, he enlisted in the Canadian Expeditionary Force, and served in France. He became one of the youngest warrent officers in the service, and held the rank of company Sergeant Major when he was honourably discharged in 1919. At the war's end, he established himself in Oshawa as a body builder in General Motors. Bitten by the free enterprise bug, which was rampant in the new industrial town, Millard launched out as a carpenter, graduated to a builder and finally ended up as a full-fledged small capitalist with a small planning mill

degrading experience which he rebelled against. Since his misfortune had occurred just as the C.C.F. was being formed, his entrance into politics was almost simultaneous. Millard had planned to go to the Regina Convention but his financial difficulties prevented him from making the trip. Instead he met Finley Dafoe and Frank McLellan and joined the new C.C.F. Club in which he very quickly became an active member with the enthusiasm

10. Continued from Page 100.

and employees. He had married and was raising five children—every inch a respectable pillar of the status quo. The depression, however, soon destroyed the career of this local "Horatio Alger" and drove him back into the ranks of the proletariat.

Millard's father had been so staunch a Conservative that he had named his son "Charles Hibbert" after the son of Sir Charles Tupper. Millard, however, claims that there was a radical streak in both himself and his father but at the turn of the century there was no political vehicle through which to express it. As a youth, Millard had thought of a career as a clergyman and missionary, but these dreams remained unfulfilled. He did become quite active in youth groups in the Methodist church at Gravenhurst and later in the United Church at Oshawa. He was greatly impressed by J.S. Woodsworth and read Salem Bland's writings constantly, thus his personal philosophy contained a strong element of the social gospel tradition, a characteristic which remained with him throughout his career. He had voted for the Union Government during the war, but in the next election, voted for a U.F.O. candidate and became a supporter of Agnes Macphail.

Millard had the appearance of a good natured carpenter and was somewhat of a Puritan who did not drink, smoke or chew. "While he could get angry upon occasion his language on such occasions could hardly be called picturesque." Of Millard's personality, C. Ross MacEwan later wrote: "It was said of a pirate in fiction that 'never a milder-mannered man slit a throat or scuttled a ship.' Upon those who visualize 'C.I.O. leaders' as beetle-browed, raucous cigar-smoking rabble-rousers, Millard must have a similarly disconcerting effect." However, behind the Millard good nature was a toughness that could often approach ruthlessness. In 1940, Murray Cotterill wrote: "Mr. Millard belongs to the 'let's discuss it' or 'ask and you shall receive' school. He is deceptively quiet and easy-going, loves paying out rope in which his opponents can get snarled. He never interferes where he is not wanted, yet, for some amazing reason, invariably gets his own way in the long run." Interview with C.H. Millard; "Vice-President C.H. Millard Appointed I.C.F.T.U. Director of Organization," Canadian Labour, Vol. 1, No. 5 (Aug., 1956), pp. 3-4; C.R. MacEwan, "Millard is a Labor Man Who is Shooting High," Saturday Night, Vol. 59, No. 44 (July 8, 1944), p. 14; Harry Rasky, "New Man of the World," Saturday Night, Vol. 71, No. 14 (Sept. 15, 1956), pp. 19-20; Murray Cotterill, "Meet Mr. Millard," The Canadian Forum, Vol. XX, No. 233 (June, 1940), pp. 80-83.

of a religious convert.<sup>11</sup> It was Millard, the new Secretary, who introduced a formal resolution at the permanent organizational meeting. It dealt with the following points of policy:

...Whereas the present capitalist system has utterly failed to function for the common good, that we heartily endorse the advent of a new political body known as the C.C.F., to bring into being by constitutional methods, a new social order based on the principle of supplying human need rather than private gain—and—

Whereas the present private control of finance and resultant restriction of credit and currency appears to be largely responsible for present depression conditions, that we ask the (National) Convention to adopt complete nationalization and socialization of our entire monetary structure as the policy of the C.C.F.—and—

Whereas general and local conditions are so acute and political action so urgent, that the Convention make its platform known to the group comprising the Federation as quickly as possible, that organization work in the ridings may be completed.

We also demand the immediate release of all political prisoners in Canada.<sup>12</sup>

This resolution was adopted without a dissenting vote and thus may have revealed popular sentiment (300 members were present) but it was too radical for Harry M. Mallett, who returned from a fishing trip the next day. He saw the demand for the release of political prisoners as "entirely outside the interests of the C.C.F." The result was that a special meeting of the club withdrew the demand for the release of prisoners and passed a general resolution calling for the abolition of Section 98 of the Criminal Code.<sup>13</sup> It was clear that the leadership wanted to keep the club acting along orthodox party lines.

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11. Interview with C.H. Millard; Interview with F.M. Dafoe; MacEwan, op. cit., p. 14. The local establishment came to regard Millard as a dangerous radical. He remained unemployed for a couple of years but became active in the Ratepayers and the Unemployed Association. He caused enough agitation on behalf of the unemployed that the Relief Administrator got him a job in General Motors in order to "get him out of his hair."

12. The Oshawa Daily Times, July 12, 1933.

13. Ibid., July 13, 1933, July 14, 1933; The Toronto Daily Star, July 14, 1933.

The club first functioned in an educational manner by having the C.C.F.'s platform explained by visiting provincial party officials at mass meetings. The club preached a reassuring line to the citizens; before a gathering of 3,000 people, President Mallett stated, "I wish to have it clearly understood, that we have no affiliation whatsoever with any Communistic, Bolshevistic or any other 'istic' organization...."<sup>14</sup> By September the C.C.F. Club had about 350 members in Oshawa and had completed ward section organizations in each ward of the city. Section meetings in ward headquarters were to be held for every week or two weeks during the winter so that each point in the C.C.F. platform could be debated. The general club was to hold an open meeting each month. Educational and organizational work was further expanded by arranging for a week of mass meetings at various points in the district, including Port Perry, Whitby, Bowmanville, Pickering and Brooklin.<sup>15</sup>

The club was loyal to the provincial leaders who were endeavouring to purge the party of "Red" tinted organizations, as was revealed by the instructions the Oshawa C.C.F. Club gave its delegates to the Provincial Association meeting. They were to oppose any affiliation with irregular labour organizations linked with the Communist Party. Specifically singled out as not to be allowed representation on the Provincial Council were the regional labour councils and the United Front Workers' Union. Moving the resolution, F.M. Dafoe declared that

the regional labor organizations were small, irresponsible groups organized by hotheads and not actually representative of any large number of labor votes [and]...if allowed a foothold in the C.C.F. party they would undermine it from within. These small groups... wanted an undue representation on the council and would endeavour

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14. The Oshawa Daily Times, Aug. 16, 1933.

15. Ibid., Sept. 18, 1933.

to swing the policies of the party.<sup>16</sup>

This policy of having no connection with the communists was supported and encouraged by Millard, who, with a small group, tended to be dominant in the club through "executive leadership and action." This had been exemplified when Millard, who as Club Secretary, announced the annual election of officers. The point was that it appeared to be a "machine directed" type of election; an appointed nominating committee consisting of Arthur Broad, Frank M. McLellan, Ed Cheetham and M. Bank, along with Millard himself, was to draw up a "slate of candidates" to be submitted to the election meeting.<sup>17</sup> This was the type of procedure that had caused disputes at the club's foundation and was bound eventually to encourage and lead to the development of an opposition within the club, a justifiable response to not holding open nomination meetings without the introduction of "slates."

The new C.C.F. Club soon became involved in its first municipal election. After weeks of negotiations an alliance was formed among the Property Owners' Association, the Central Ratepayers' Association and the local C.C.F. Club. This triple alliance set out to elect members to the city council in opposition to the Civic Improvement League.<sup>18</sup> The C.C.F.'s role in the campaign was minor by choice. According to a statement by the club's executive:

[The club] reiterates its stand taken at the joint meeting of delegates from the Property Owners' Association, the Ratepayers' Association, the Unemployed Council, and the C.C.F. Club, that the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation is not primarily interested in

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16. Ibid., Nov. 17, 1933.

17. Ibid., Sept. 18, 1933; After the elections F. McLellan became President and Millard remained Secretary, May 17, 1934.

18. Ibid., Dec. 18, 1933.

municipal politics as such, as measures obtained municipally are merely treating the symptoms of the disease that has laid hold of Oshawa and Canada, rather than the cause thereof, and on this basis only we voice our approval of the proposed measures adopted from the deliberations of the meeting, and commend such measures to the approval and support of our members and adherents....<sup>19</sup>

The C.C.F.'s representation was therefore a token one and based mainly on ideological reasons. The result of this policy was that there were only five candidates representing the alliance. In all there were only sixteen candidates contesting the ten council seats. With so few candidates and terrible weather conditions on election day the result was that a light but close vote was cast. Seven of eight candidates from the previous council were returned and only two men, John Stacey and A.N. Sharp of the Property Owners' Association, were elected as representatives of the triple alliance.<sup>20</sup> What the alliance did indicate was that there was an increased polarization on the moderate left.

The C.C.F.'s first major political effort came with the 1934 provincial election in which they faced the strong Liberal candidate, William E.N. Sinclair. He had been replaced by Mitch Hepburn as leader of the Ontario Liberal Party but remained as the party's Legislative Leader until January of 1934; when he was dismissed from that post by a vote of seven to two at a caucus meeting that was carefully planned without his knowledge.<sup>21</sup> Despite this set back, Sinclair was again unanimously chosen as Liberal candidate in the constituency of Ontario.

Spurred on by the political demise of Sinclair, the Conservatives thought they had a good chance to capture the riding. They acknowledged

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19. Ibid., Dec. 20, 1933.

20. Ibid., Jan. 2, 1934.

21. Ibid., Jan. 8, 1934; Jan. 15, 1934.



that "the Conservative machine has been too inactive in this riding during the last two or three years...." Thus, the party became interested in forming a Conservative Club especially to attract more young men as "many good Conservatives have been led away by the exuberance of the moment and persuaded to endorse the platform and policies of the C.C.F...." In order to recapture lost support the Conservatives decided to mobilize early and unanimously chose ex-mayor Ernie Marx as their standard bearer.<sup>22</sup>

It was long after the Liberals and Conservatives started their election machines rolling that the C.C.F. decided to make it a three-cornered fight. The decision was based on the view that "with considerable dissension in the Liberal ranks, and with lack of strength seen by the C.C.F. observers in the Conservative Party in the riding, South Ontario was ripe for the injection of a C.C.F. candidate...." The personal popularity of the Liberal and Conservative candidates was admitted but "neither one appeared to realize the changing conditions in the world today...."<sup>23</sup>

At a public meeting C.H. Millard, acting as chairman, made it clear that the C.C.F. depended on the "masses" for support in carrying out the election campaign, and then he surprised the crowd with the claim that, "Although we have been offered \$500 by the other Party for campaign funds we refused because we must be independent...."<sup>24</sup> Millard was not prepared to say which Party he meant but his statement did have the effect of convincing the crowd to give a generous response when the hats were passed for contributions. Millard, however, had stirred up a hornet's nest because both the Liberal and Conservative candidates denied that their parties

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22. Ibid., Feb. 21, 1934; May 14, 1934.

23. Ibid., May 17, 1934.

24. Ibid., May 21, 1934.



had offered \$500 to the C.C.F. They challenged the C.C.F. to prove Millard's claim but no proof was forthcoming, in the long run the incident was bound to be damaging to the C.C.F.<sup>25</sup>

Not until the very end of May was Andrew Glen, a farmer from Locust Hill and former Independent Labour Party member, chosen as the C.C.F. candidate.<sup>26</sup> The party's obvious strategy was to hope for the support of the labourers who were in a majority in Oshawa and to try and attract sufficient rural support. At an open air meeting Andrew Glen "advanced the necessity for co-operation between the city and rural labourer claiming that both were being exploited by the same monopolies." He followed the social gospel tradition in his speech, calling for applied Christian principles and for the substitution of the high ideals of service for selfishness and greed. Glen was supported on the platform by the Rev. Booth, who carried the crusade to great heights of idealism. He prophesied that "Ultimately it will succeed for right must inevitably triumph over might, and the world must turn to the teachings of Jesus who commanded us to love our neighbours as ourselves."<sup>27</sup>

In the city the C.C.F. had an uphill battle because both Sinclair and Marx were from Oshawa, while Glen was from the Township of Pickering. The only overt activity the communists took was to place their stickers on C.C.F. signs to give the impression that the C.C.F. was linked to them. The C.C.F. quickly reacted by denying any association with the communists and even reported the matter to the police. Although neither the Conserva-

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25. Ibid., May 23, 1934; May 28, 1934; Millard could not remember who had made the offer. Interview with C.H. Millard.

26. Ibid., June 1, 1934; The Toronto Daily Star, June 1, 1934; The Globe, Oct. 23, 1922; The Worker, Nov. 15, 1922.

27. The Oshawa Daily Times, June 11, 1934.

tives nor Liberals made a special local appeal to labour, Mitch Hepburn had tried to woo labour in his general campaign and, locally, Ernie Marx did call for a minimum wage act for industry, arguing as well that unemployment insurance and health insurance should be conducted under one plan.<sup>28</sup>

The election outcome could have been predicted. Sinclair retained his seat which he had held for so long. With 11,409 votes he had a majority of 5,046 over his nearest opponent, Ernie Marx, who had 6,363 votes. Surprisingly for a novice, Glen received 2,375 votes even though he was handicapped by the lack of a complete organization. The protest vote by those who were dissatisfied with the Henry Government had gone as much or more to "Billy" Sinclair as to Glen. It was the Conservative Party's vote that had declined by over two thousand votes since 1929. Sinclair's victory was a complete vindication by the local electors of the man who had been former head of the Ontario Liberals. Even Sinclair was surprised by the great majority he had.<sup>29</sup> (See APPENDIX B.)

Just before the provincial election a new organization had appeared on the Oshawa scene. It was the Associated Federation of Workers, a branch of the Ontario Workers' Federation which had been formed the previous year in Toronto as a result of a workers' conference held in Belleville. The President of the Oshawa branch described the organization's aims and objectives as, the education of labourers on "municipal matters and larger questions of provincial and national importance which were for the betterment of humanity." To carry this out, the branch's members would be

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28. Ibid., June 18, 1934; McKenty, op.cit., p. 49.

29. The Oshawa Daily Times, June 20, 1934; Ontario Returns from the Records of the General Election 1934; Sessional Paper, No. 25, 1935, pp. 153-156.; The Toronto Daily Star, June 20, 1934; The Globe, June 20, 1934.

divided into groups with a capable leader in charge of each group for the instruction and guidance of that group and the listening to complaints, ideas and constructive criticisms, since these were easier to obtain in small groups than in large open meetings. The organization wanted to bring out the potential in the working class because, according to the President, "Changes are coming, and every man should know what to do, how to act if these changes are to be beneficial to mankind in general."<sup>30</sup>

The Federation sought the co-operation of existing organizations and hoped to have its own executive formed of members and officers of these other organizations in the community. Indeed the membership was quite varied and even though the Secretary of the Oshawa Unemployed Council, who was also a member of the Advisory Executive Committee of the Oshawa branch of the Workers' Federation stated that "Communism is not permitted in the ranks of the organization," at least two representatives of the C.L.D.L., J. Nicholls and R. Pritchard, were members of the Advisory Executive. The group became active very quickly by deciding to participate in the "Hunger March" and demonstration planned by the Provincial body and to be held in Toronto on August 1. Though the Federation was supposed to be non-partisan the "Hunger March" was "for the purpose of showing the strength of the workingman's vote...."<sup>31</sup> The "Hunger March" appeared to be too radical for some groups because President A.N. Sharp of the Property Owners' Association claimed it "savoured of communistic propaganda" and

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30. The Oshawa Daily Times, June 28, 1934; Apr. 13, 1934.

31. Ibid., June 28, 1934. The Advisory Executive Committee of the Federation was composed of: President, F.H. Towers (C.C.F.); Vice-President, F. Yakenchuk; Secretary, A.C. Jones (Secretary of the Oshawa Unemployed Council); J. Nicholls (C.L.D.L.); W. Pelby; A. Douglas (C.C.F.); and R. Pritchard (C.L.D.L.)

the city council refused to give any assistance.<sup>32</sup> Still, the Federation became closely allied with the unemployed but kept its radical tone by having A. Campbell, district organizer for the C.L.D.L., as a speaker.<sup>33</sup>

In the municipal contest for 1935 the C.C.F. Club did not run a slate of candidates. However, two men, Ed Cheetham and C.H. Millard, had been approached by "the labouring men of the city to represent them as a class at the civic elections...." and so they decided to run not as C.C.F.-ers but as candidates sponsored by the workingmen, as were John McCullough and Robert H. Pritchard. Millard directed his efforts at drawing labour support, claiming that the "platform of the workmen was along similar lines as that of the C.C.F. and was worthy of the support of all C.C.F. members...."<sup>34</sup> With encouragement from another C.C.F.er, F.M. Dafoe, the Oshawa Property Owners' Association decided to run a slate of candidates. Its President added to the criticisms of the city council when he said, "I think it is about time we took a vote on this clique who are operating the city to accumulate money to satisfy the bondholders...."<sup>35</sup> The result of all this activity was that for the first time in some years, there were contests for all municipal offices and the election acquired a political character.

On election day the voters indicated that they were not satisfied with the Civic Improvement League regime of the past two years. There was about a fifty per cent turn out of those entitled to vote, one of the highest votes cast in any municipal election and a big change in comparison

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32. Ibid., July 9, 1934.

33. The Worker, Nov. 24, 1934.

34. The Oshawa Daily Times, Jan. 3, 1935.

35. Ibid., Dec. 31, 1934; Jan. 2, 1935.

to the previous year. The mayoralty campaign was close, with W.E.N. Sinclair winning by a majority of only 310 votes. Of the first five places for council, three went to new men and the other two went to former aldermen who had, during the last year, been insistent in their attacks on the majority group, and one of whom now led the poll. The 1935 council had four new members and six of the 1934 council but the new alignment meant that the group which was sponsored by the Civic Improvement League was now in a minority position. The labour representatives did not gain any seats but A.N. Sharp of the Property Owners' came third in the running for council.<sup>36</sup>

After the 1934 provincial election the C.C.F. Club became a social as well as a political centre. The club rooms were opened to the unemployed on two afternoons each week and speakers like William Irvine and James Mc A. Conner were brought in. Generally the organization became a cultural centre of its own with members' meetings, youth study groups, euchre parties and Sunday open forums. Activities were even expanded further with the development of a C.C.Y.M. unit in which C.H. Millard became quite active.<sup>37</sup> All was not well within the political organization, however, and a dispute soon revealed to the public what seemed to be the real internal political operation of the club.

The first signs of trouble came in the fall of 1934 when executive officers of the Central Committee at Toronto had to visit the Oshawa club to straighten out local differences. Suspicions, apprehensions and charges

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36. Ibid., Jan. 9, 1935; Jan. 10, 1935.

37. New Commonwealth, Sept. 15, 1934; Sept. 22, 1934; Oct. 6, 1934; Oct. 27, 1934; Dec. 8, 1934; Dec. 15, 1934; Millard did not really gain as much knowledge of the trade union movement from the C.C.Y.M. as other members who became labour leaders because by 1934 he was really too old for the C.C.Y.M. Interview with C.H. Millard.

of disloyalty had been rife in the party ranks and had reached a critical point owing to misunderstandings in the appointment of an electoral committee with a separate treasurer and a concealed election fund. This separate treasurer, it turned out, was for the receiving of election funds from people who wished their identity kept secret. The matter, however, appeared to have been cleared up by the executive officers.<sup>38</sup> Then, in late December a report in the press indicated that a shake-up in the executive of the Oshawa C.C.F. Club was forecast. The statement claimed that elaborate plans for the coming federal election had not been carried out due to dissension in the club and indicated that Andrew Glen, the club's President, might retire.<sup>39</sup> Within a few days Glen replied to this report by dropping a political bombshell.

In a report in The Toronto Daily Star, he denied that he was going to resign and lashed out at the "sabotage and obstruction which has hindered the club." He charged that an attempt was being made "to build a machine along the lines of the old political parties with the object of buying votes instead of winning them." Glen explained events leading up to his acceptance of the C.C.F. nomination in the provincial election and his experiences as President of the Club. Glen, who was a close friend of J.S. Woodsworth, claimed that:

At the last provincial election...they were very anxious for me to run, and I decided to do so against my own wishes. That election revealed to me a lot of irregularities and machine tactics which I despise. I had no idea it would be so dirty as it turned out to be.

An attempt was made...to get me to lean favorably toward the Hepburn administration because of a peculiar situation in Ontario riding, where W.E.N. Sinclair the sitting member, had been co-operating to a certain extent with the Conservatives in the House,

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38. The Oshawa Daily Times, Nov. 15, 1934.

39. The Toronto Daily Star, Dec. 27, 1934.

much to the chagrin of the regular Liberals.

They thought there would probably be no need to put up an independent Liberal if I ran. An attempt was made to use the C.C.F. as a 'cat paw' to defeat Sinclair and it was made plain to me that it would be to my advantage if I would fall in with these plans which were proposed by our own club executive and certain Liberal organizers.

I was quite unaware of all this when I decided to run. I thought all the members of the Oshawa C.C.F. club were straight C.C.F. members, enthusiastic for our platform, and I could not say much about it during the election.

I did not submit to any dictation...I went ahead and that meant that I lost the election.

Glen made up his mind that a lot of irregularities could be corrected if he became a very active member of the C.C.F. Club in Oshawa. He kept his word and did not miss a trip until two weeks prior to his press statement.

As Glen pointed out:

My whole policy was to stir enthusiasm and action among club members, but from the start I could see there was an element that objected to my participation. I was obstructed in everything I attempted to do. It almost appeared as if the influences behind the club during the election were still at work to get rid of someone who would not fall in with their plans.

Things came to a head...over an episode in connection with the visit of William Irvine, M.P. to Oshawa. The suggestion came from provincial headquarters that we get him to speak and I moved that we write him. From that time I tried to make a big meeting of it.

...It was proposed we hear him on Saturday night and somebody said that was not a good night. It was arranged that the then president, John [sic] McLellan, go to Toronto and arrange another night but he did not go. Then the executive did not want any advertising or handbills. I wanted a big meeting in Alexandra Park, but afterwards they started working behind the scenes to get it into a little Oshawa hotel. It was finally arranged to have it in the hotel if it was a bad night.

At an executive meeting,...I accused some of them of obstruction and said I would take the responsibility myself of getting the bills out and my wife and I distributed them.

Glen went on to charge that the meeting was "sabotaged from the beginning to the end," and he stated that he found the president in conference with one of the Liberal organizers, a Mr. Connor. Glen brought this matter up at the meeting but

...it was denied that Connor had anything to do with the Liberals. One little item after another was neglected and we found on the



night of the Irvine meeting that it had been arranged to hold it at the Hotel. Although I was informed by various people that from 800 to 1,000 people collected at the park, it was denied that any were there.

As a result of that fiasco, I asked for McLellan's resignation and the resignation of some of the executive...I said it was disgraceful to treat the people like that. Open hostilities began and a few nights later the annual election of officers was held.

Quite a few had told me of the dirty work that had been going on and the club members turned out in force and elected me president. McLellan had apparently determined to resign and a man called C.H. Millard ran against me and although he was unsuccessful, he was appointed vice-president. After the election, McLellan came up to me and said: 'Congratulations, I am sorry for you.' That meant they were going to continue their obstruction with me in the chair. Millard came in late at the first executive meeting we held a few nights later. He suddenly burst out in a rage and said that Mrs. Glen and I had to get out of the club.

At the next executive meeting...Millard brought in a report of the electoral committee of which he was a chairman. The report which had to do with the formation of a constituency council was carefully drawn up. This report wanted to give complete control of the council to the electoral committee. Millard also had plans for raising \$1,000 which he claimed could be easily secured and led me to believe that probably they were getting it in a lump sum. I protested I was accused of obstruction. The proposals were absolutely unconstitutional and outside the practice of the C.C.F.

The scheme appeared to me to be one whereby units of the C.C.F. would be formed throughout the riding and each would be allocated a certain sum in proportion to voting strength at the last election. There was to be no supervision from the club.

Those that backed me up...either left the club or turned around. Some of them were intimidated and money was used in other cases to win them over. One of the men, in whom I had seen a change, confessed to me that he had been given work by one of my opponents.

Then I found the minutes being 'cooked' to suit the other crowd.... Important motions were omitted or not properly acted upon.

When winter approached, Glen continued, Millard sprang it on the club that he wanted to have a forum but it was not to be connected with the C.C.F. Millard also started a youth movement which he claimed was "outside the club." When the C.C.F. did have its own forum, sabotage appeared again. Glen said that when they arrived at the hall they found there was no heat and the building was locked. Glen had given the secretary a notice of the meeting to put in the local paper, but he had changed it

by omitting the place. Some of the members had said they would put chairs in the hall and erect a sign announcing the meeting but it was not done. After this incident, Glen drew up a motion asking the members to pledge him their wholehearted support and "refrain from unconstitutional and irregular practices, collaboration with any other political parties, the formation of cliques to obstruct the normal function of the club, and the manipulation of any fund not coming within full scrutiny." This resolution was adopted but after the vote was taken somebody objected that the meeting had not been regularly called and it was decided to have another. It was this next meeting that Glen was unable to attend due to a snowstorm and after which he saw the press report that he might resign. Glen summed up his whole case when he said:

They are determined to get me out because of the unconstitutional way in which they have been carrying on. They are too clever to leave tracks to show from where they are getting support. What they are attempting is to build a machine along the lines of the old political parties, with the object to buying votes, instead of winning them. They want to carry on in their own way with this little Tammany rule. I have defied them to prove that I have ever done anything unconstitutional.

He had made it clear on several occasions that he would leave the club as soon as the thought everything was as it should be but he also stated that as long as the "dirty work" continued, he was going to stay and fight.<sup>40</sup>

Glen's report to the press signaled the beginning of a shake-up in the local club. A special meeting had to be called and officials of the Central Committee at Toronto were asked to assist in straightening out the dispute. Glen's statements to the press were not denied but some of the members claimed that they were uncalled for and that Glen should have questioned the members of the executive rather than have taken the

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40. Ibid., Dec. 31, 1934.

press report about his resignation as authentic. According to the account given to the press, the special meeting reached a happy conclusion when on a vote being taken, Andrew Glen was elected as honorary president of the club.<sup>41</sup> The solution was really an attempt to cover up the internal conflict and at a meeting held a week later the club elected a new executive. F.M. McLellan became President, C.H. Millard, Vice-President, A. Payton, Secretary-Treasurer, and E. Cheetham, F. Kent, T. King, A. Broad, H. McDonald, A. Shultz, and Mrs. C. Hunter were chosen as Directors.<sup>42</sup> Glen seems to have had his fill of the whole operation and struck out on his own by having an article entitled "Looking Forward" published the following day in The Toronto Daily Star. In the article, Glen discussed R.B. Bennett's "New Economic Policy" and how even a Conservative premier, after strenuous efforts to make capitalism work, was compelled to admit that it could not be done. Bennett's change was to be regarded as sufficient evidence to all intelligent people that the public must decide to accept inevitable changes. Glen then stated in a non-partisan way that:

If we want the profit motive abolished forthwith, we will need a powerful dictatorship. Without that we will be compelled to wait till we have raised a new generation of young Canadians imbued with the great ideal of co-operative service. That is the task of the schools.

In the meantime, Canada could take a great step forward if the hireling politicians could be brushed aside and if the C.C.F. would not protest, "It doesn't go far enough." For years the Socialists have been pumping out their propaganda. When it begins to take effect, are we to say "They cannot be sincere." If a man offers to come with us one mile, should we drive him back or try to persuade him to go with us twain?"<sup>43</sup>

After such a formal break with the party line, Glen was no longer a factor

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41. The Oshawa Daily Times, Jan. 3, 1935.

42. Ibid., Jan. 10, 1935.

43. The Toronto Daily Star, Jan. 10, 1935.

in the local political equation and his shadowy clique of opponents now seemed to be in control of the local club.

Millard, however, claimed that Glen had a personal quarrel with him and also with Frank McLellan for similar reasons. To Millard, Glen, despite his background as a member of the Independent Labour Party, was an "arm-chair" socialist who took an academic approach to both socialism and labour. Millard had argued with Glen that it was necessary to "get right down there in the muck with the fellow workers" and work for the cause by starting "where the people were." In contrast, Glen was too idealistic and academic in his approach, lacking a companion sympathy for the labour movement and tending to "look down on it as a practical means of bringing about his own ideals as an Independent Labour Party man." Indeed, Glen, who often wrote for the newspapers, may not have shared Millard's more practical views. Millard had learned his ideas about labour and socialism from men such as John Mitchell, President of the Ontario C.C.F., and a personal disciple of Kier Hardy before coming to Canada, and John W. Buckley of the Toronto Trades and Labour Council, a man who was "a socialist first and a trade unionist second." Millard did not read widely but concentrated on a few socialist works, his political bible for a long time being a book about the life story of Kier Hardy. As a result of this influence, he developed a personal philosophy by which he regarded labour as having two arms—one the trade union arm and the other the socialist arm—and it was on the basis of this concept that he operated and built. This in turn explains much of Millard's interest in trying to cultivate support for the C.C.F. amongst the city's working class.<sup>44</sup>

As early as mid-January, the C.C.F. decided to run a candidate

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44. Interview with C.H. Millard.

in Ontario County in the forthcoming federal election. There were signs that general political activity was shifting to higher levels than the municipal one. The Central Ratepayers' Association had been declining, especially in terms of attendance, for more than a year. This was in contrast with the more conservative Property Owners' Association, which had developed into an influential body simply because it maintained year-round activities.<sup>45</sup> The C.C.F. was moving towards a closer relationship with the workers' organizations. An example of the interrelationship of persons and groups on the left was provided when a ten per cent cut in relief was made in September. A. Douglas, President of the Oshawa Workers' Protective Association, and also President of the Oshawa Ratepayers' Association presided over a protest meeting of the Oshawa Workers' Protective Association held in the C.C.F. hall and at which C.C.F.ers W.E. Noble and C.H. Millard spoke.<sup>46</sup>

There was a growing realization that real power lay at the provincial and especially the federal level. Local politics was very frustrating with its lack of party traditions and the handicap faced by many potential C.C.F. supporters. Only property owners or householders had the municipal franchise in Oshawa. It was a situation where few young people owned a house and even though a poll tax was collected from them, they were denied the privilege of voting. It was an issue that was bound to affect a considerable number of workers and was of significant political importance that the Oshawa C.C.F. Club even petitioned the city council by calling for an amendment to the municipal act to extend the franchise

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45. The Oshawa Daily Times, Jan. 14, 1935.

46. Ibid., Sept. 18, 1935.

in municipal elections to all persons twenty-one years of age or over.<sup>47</sup>

The C.C.F. Club busied itself with establishing an election machine and to a degree it was successful in attracting new members. To raise funds, over 1,000 cards were distributed throughout the riding appealing for funds to carry on the election campaign. The response was so generous that the election committee thought that a resolution should be placed before the general meeting asking that a candidate be selected at an early date. This was done, the resolution was approved and the task of selecting a strong candidate was given to the election committee under the chairmanship of C.H. Millard.<sup>48</sup>

There also were growing signs of efforts to secure a united front on the left. According to The Oshawa Daily Times, among those organizations championing the C.C.F. cause were the Workers' Unity League, Federated Workers', the local communists, and the Unemployed organizations.<sup>49</sup> The C.C.F. was feeling the impact of this drive, which seemed to it rather like the kiss of death. For most of April and May there were, with one exception, only communist speakers at the Sunday Night Open Forums. One was Sam Scarlett, who went so far as to attack the C.C.F. and the integrity of J.S. Woodsworth. This sort of thing and the United Front on May Day with the communists had created a certain amount of antipathy between the C.C.F. and members of the local C.C.Y.M. unit.<sup>50</sup> Added to this problem was, that of defections when Edward Cheetham, a very prominent

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47. Ibid., Jan. 23, 1935; Mar. 8, 1935.

48. Ibid., Mar. 8, 1935.

49. Ibid., May 22, 1935.

50. U.T.A., W.M.C., Report to C.C.F. Provincial Council, June 30, 1935.

member of the C.C.F. Club, pledged his support to the Liberal candidate.<sup>51</sup>

Despite all the early activity of the C.C.F., the Conservatives were the first to select their candidate, Alex C. Hall. The Liberals quickly followed suit with the acclamation of William H. Moore, the M.P.<sup>52</sup> The protest vote was also being drawn away from the C.C.F. by a new political party that was emerging in the riding. A Stevens Club was formed to run a candidate for H.H. Stevens' Reconstruction Party. It was suggested that A.N. Sharpe accept the nomination but he refused to commit himself until he knew definitely what the platform of the Stevens Party was. The Reconstructionists finally chose Robert M. Holtby, a farmer from Port Perry, as their standard bearer.<sup>53</sup>

When the C.C.F. Club finally got around to choosing a candidate they selected William E. Noble, a young man just over thirty years of age and proprietor of Noble's Tire and Radiator Shop. At a membership meeting he had defeated F.M. Dafoe and James Owens for the C.C.F. candidature. Noble had been President of the local C.C.Y.M. and a chairman of the C.C.F. Constituency Council of Ontario<sup>54</sup> but the real reason for his success was that he was a compromise candidate. There really was a three way contest among F.M. Dafoe, C.H. Millard and F. McLellan. Dafoe was a radical political maverick who wandered across the political spectrum. McLellan was rather conservative, due to his background as a builder, but supported the C.C.F. because he had suffered from the depression. According to Noble, C.H. Millard was not in either the left or right camp but had no fixed

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51. The Oshawa Daily Times, July 16, 1935.

52. Ibid., July 10, 1935; July 16, 1935.

53. Ibid., July 9, 1935; Oct. 7, 1935.

54. Ibid., Aug. 1, 1935.



convictions and would move to left or right according to "whatever was best for Charlie Millard." Noble was a compromise candidate between Millard and McLellan, who did not want Dafoe to run because he appeared to be too radical for them. But despite all this, personalities were more important than ideology and were the deciding factor in the final selection of Noble as the C.C.F. candidate.<sup>55</sup>

Once Noble's candidature was announced the C.C.F. Club membership greatly increased and the club began issuing a weekly organ, The Co-Operator. The communists also became active and pretended that a state of unity with the C.C.F. existed in Oshawa. When Noble spoke at the Ukrainian Labor Temple Association hall, The Worker claimed in its comment on his speech that, "Considerable election unity has been achieved in Oshawa. The Co-operative Commonwealth Federation has accepted the eight points of the communist election platform and are pledged to fight for them." The Worker also claimed that a member of the Ukrainian Labor-Farmer Temple Association had been elected to the C.C.F. constituency Council and that fourteen working class organizations were working together for Noble's election.<sup>56</sup> When confronted with this report of what he had said, Noble declared that it was absolutely untrue. He stated:

I did address an organization in the city whose policies lead to the extreme left.... I pointed out...that seven of their planks were covered by four of the planks of the C.C.F. manifesto. I referred to freedom of speech, a national labor code to secure for the worker a maximum income and leisure, and a socialized health program.

I certainly never endorsed any part of the communist platform.... I pointed out that the C.C.F. by constitutional means,

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55. Interview with W.E. Noble; F.M. McLellan was listed as being a member of the Civic Improvement League at its inception. The Oshawa Daily Times, Dec. 15, 1932.

56. The Worker, Sept. 14, 1935.

if elected, would carry out a program to a complete and successful conclusion with no bloodshed.<sup>57</sup>

Despite all this internal activity on the left, the campaign was relatively quiet, speeches did not deal in personalities, meetings were not as numerous as usual and on the whole no great effort was made to arouse the electors to a high pitch of interest.<sup>58</sup>

On election day, however, approximately seventy-five per cent of the electors in Ontario riding voted, the highest vote polled in any election, federal or provincial, ever held in the constituency. The city of Oshawa, which had been traditionally Conservative and which had given Dr. T.E. Kaiser a majority of 32 over W.H. Moore in the 1930 election, swung over to the Liberal side and gave Moore a majority of 1,146 over Alex Hall. In the 72 polling sub-divisions in the city, Moore had a majority in 57, while Hall led in 15. (See APPENDIX B.) After the city had suffered so badly from the depression and with the Liberals coming forward with slogans like "King or chaos," Hall was bound to have a tremendous handicap. Holtby was both too little known and lacked a proper organization. Noble also suffered from the lack of an effective organization. Despite attempts to set up other clubs in the riding, the Oshawa club was faced with the task of carrying on all of Noble's campaign. Even in Oshawa the 1935 vote for the C.C.F. was less than that obtained in 1934, but this may be explained by the fact that the candidates facing Noble were of a higher calibre.<sup>59</sup>

After the federal election the C.C.F. withdrew into itself and did

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57. The Oshawa Daily Times, Sept. 18, 1935.

58. Ibid., Oct. 11, 1935.

59. Ibid., Oct. 15, 1935; Interview with W.E. Noble.

not run any candidates in the forthcoming municipal contest. The only party man who came forward was F.M. Dafoe but he claimed that he was not sponsored by any political organization and was "free from all influence." Typical of his radicalism was his demand "to know if Oshawa was going to set up a civic structure that would battle the banks and bondholders." On election day there was only a forty-one per cent voter turnout despite a close, keen fight for mayor in which Allin F. Annis was defeated by John Stacey, an active ratepayer and political veteran who had won seventeen out of twenty-four contests in the previous 28 years. Interestingly enough, F.M. Dafoe just missed election to council, coming in eleventh place.<sup>60</sup>

The main issue that drew mass protest in 1936 was the cancellation of cash relief. Several unsuccessful attempts had been made by the Oshawa Unemployed and Part-Time Workers' Association to meet with the Public Welfare Board and when such a meeting was finally achieved the Board replied by refusing to reinstate cash relief, insisting that all men receiving voucher relief work one week in four on pain of losing their eligibility. The Association attempted a relief strike but those who did not show for work were removed from the rolls, thus forcing the strike to be called off. Actually it was the provincial government that was determined to throw the burden of relief on the small taxpayers of the municipalities, and had issued an ultimatum that cities must meet their full share by increased taxation. A small concession finally did come when the city council acquiesced in a request by the Ratepayers' Association that a representative of the unemployed be appointed to the Welfare Board. This person was to be selected from suggested appointees made at a conference composed of the Ratepayers' Association, Unemployed Workers' Association, and several

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60. Ibid., Dec. 31, 1935; Jan. 7, 1936.

other organizations connected with the unemployed. This marked a significant admission that those affected by the policies of the Welfare Board should have a say in its operation.<sup>61</sup> It was also a sign of changing attitudes towards the people but one made only after organized mass protest; it was therefore also a lesson on success to be learned by the public.

By late 1936 the local communists were still trying to build a "popular front." Their activities amongst the Ukrainian community, however, met with organized opposition. This took the form of the Oshawa Ukrainian Committee and consisted of representatives from eight local Ukrainian organizations, which had been approached by the communists and asked to support the launching of a "popular front." But instead of sending representatives to a conference proposed by the communists, the Ukrainians formed their own committee and held a mass meeting against the "popular front."<sup>62</sup> With the opposition of such a powerful committee, neither the communists nor any leftists were able to gain much popular support from the Ukrainians, the most highly organized ethnic group in the city.

In their relations with the C.C.F. the communists were met with a formal refusal to co-operate in such activities as holding joint open forums on Sunday nights. As a result of the C.C.F.'s anti-unity attitude, the communists organized their own forums and sounded their own cry for "progressive members" for city council at the approaching municipal election. Praising the "attempts of Mayor Stacey and the 1936 council to make wealthy homes and business properties pay more of their share of taxes" and condemning the "big shots" who were "gunning for the mayor's

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61. Ibid., Mar. 17, 1936; Mar. 19, 1936; Mar. 25, 1936; Mar. 30, 1936; May 5, 1936.

62. Ibid., Sept. 22, 1936.

new assessment plan behind the smoke screen of the Civic Improvement League," the Daily Clarion called on all "labor-progressives" to "defeat the reactionaries fighting to unload their share of taxes on the small business man, householder, and worker."<sup>63</sup> The Civic Improvement League was running a slate of candidates with Alex Hall for mayor, the man the Daily Clarion described as the "lawyer for the Taxpayers' Association at the Court of Revision, where they (the big shots) are busy appealing the assessments."<sup>64</sup> The C.C.F. was only indirectly represented by its members in the move to counter the Civic Improvement League. The fight was mainly carried on by the Oshawa Ratepayers' Association of which C.H. Millard was now president, and the Unemployed and Part-Time Workers' Association which endorsed their own slate of candidates. They supported John Stacey for Mayor, a man who "has taken the part of the unemployed and small taxpayer on more than one occasion" and for aldermen they recommended C.H. Millard, A. Poloz, C. Harman, A. McLeese, and A. Douglas. The election of these men was to be considered "of benefit to 90 per cent of the citizens of Oshawa" and an appeal was made to all workingmen and small businessmen to turn out and vote for them.<sup>65</sup>

With only thirty-seven per cent of the people voting, Alex C. Hall, a Conservative, beat John Stacey, a Liberal, for Mayor by 38 votes. Only two of the candidates endorsed by the ratepayers and unemployed were elected and Charles Millard placed thirteenth in the running.<sup>66</sup> Obviously

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63. Daily Clarion, Dec. 30, 1936; The Evening Telegram, Dec. 24, 1936.

64. Ibid., Jan. 2, 1937.

65. Ibid., The Evening Telegram, Dec. 29, 1935.

66. The Oshawa Daily Times, Jan. 5, 1937; Jan. 6, 1937. Alex S. McLeese and Clifford Harman were the two candidates elected.

the great majority of citizens were still apathetic or voted along traditional patterns. Still, a polarization had taken place in the sense that new leaders had emerged and new groups had organized in opposition to those who had been the dominant political element before the depression. What was missing was the mass organization of citizens and a polarization on a scale that only a major issue or event could cause. That catalytic event came with unionization in 1937.

The local C.C.F. leaders in Oshawa were not the "normal" community leaders and thus they still appeared as alien and radical to the majority of the community. The workers in the city were not conditioned to active participation in politics and the fear of losing their job was a factor that tended to prevent many from becoming active.<sup>67</sup> The C.C.F.ers with their particular type of campaigning were not as attractive to the workers as they could have been. On the whole the C.C.F. failed to offer something specific, concrete, and easily explainable to their audience. The C.C.F.ers spoke instead of vague generalizations about the inequities of capitalism and the glories of the coming socialist order. Most important of all, the control of the party lay with the middle class club section and the intellectuals and pseudo-intellectuals at Toronto who had not endeared themselves to the workers who judged politicians by results not talk. There was also a troublesome trend developing within the C.C.F. over the fear of the communists' "popular front." This was a trend that could lead to the growth of a paranoid style of politics. The trend did have two specific affects. First, it had alienated the Labour Conference and left wing labour groups. Second, it offered an opportunity for those within the party who operated on the basis of personalities rather than

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67. Interview with W.E. Noble.

ideology to use ideology to build personal careers on and in the end make personalities and thus patronage count for more than ideology and merit. Careers could be built by having an opposition in order to lead a struggle against it. If an opposition did not really exist an opposition could be created and "the communists" were a favourite enemy.<sup>68</sup> Thus any effort to rid the party of "communists" by ambitious local leaders was bound to be praised by party officials and all "right thinking citizens."

By 1937 there was a complete infrastructure of centre and left of centre organizations in Oshawa. They had provided a form of mass education through participation in politics and issues of various kinds. The issues that arose in both political and labour matters signaled a shift in attitude on the part of a significant minority from one of "acceptance" to one of "demands." These people had learned the value of key concepts such as militancy and industrial unionism by the experiences of unemployed protests, relief strikes, and the proof provided by the experience of the W.U.L. that even in the midst of the depression, workers could be organized if they were militant and used the industrial form of unionism. All of the activity in the early thirties produced a new cadre of leaders that could turn their skills to efforts at organizing labour. Since the local communists were not very effective, the C.C.F.ers were in a good position to take advantage of any situation when the wave of the new C.I.O. industrial unionism that was sweeping the United States spilled over into Canada.

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68. Ibid.



## CHAPTER VI "WHEN THE UNION'S INSPIRATION--"

If there is trouble in Canada and in this province tonight, it is because of the autocracy, the inhuman working conditions, and the low wages of the workers who toil for the corporations, whom the Premier seeks to protect. If there is dissatisfaction in Canada, as there is in the United States, it is because the great mass of the population have been permitted and have been forced to live under conditions that have been the next thing to slavery, while the great part of the product of industry has been shunted into the pockets of a relatively few people.<sup>1</sup>

The eyes of the world are turned on us in Oshawa. This is the battleground of labor's struggle for its rights.<sup>2</sup>

The crystalization of the struggle to organize the unorganized workers in the United States took place in the years between 1934 and 1938. Under the leadership of John L. Lewis and his United Mine Workers and with the aid of New Deal Labour legislation, the new force of industrial unionism was being pushed forward by the Committee for Industrial Organization (C.I.O.) whose members were aggressive, militant and often held radical thoughts on politics and ideology. The C.I.O. was a direct challenge to the A.F. of L.'s old concept of craft unionism and this in turn eventually led the A.F. of L. to first suspend and then expel the C.I.O.<sup>3</sup>

In Canada the T.L.C., by virtue of its craft union composition and its association with the A.F. of L., was placed in a difficult position with the advent of the C.I.O. The T.L.C. reacted to this dilemma by generally avoiding the issue of industrial unionism. On the other hand,

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1. U.A.W., Shultz Papers, Homer Martin's speech at Oshawa, Ont., Mass meeting, Apr. 10, 1937.

2. Charles Millard quoted in The Globe and Mail, Apr. 15, 1937.

3. I.M. Abella, "The CIO, The Communist Party and the Formation of the Canadian Congress of Labour 1936-1941," Historical Papers 1969, The Canadian Historical Association, 1969, pp. 112-113.

Canada's national industrial union centre, the A.C.C.L., was in a weakened condition in the early thirties because of conflicts between unions within the Congress, reduced revenue from dues during the depression, inadequate resources to organize the mass-production industries and personal animosities among its officers. Added to these problems, the A.C.C.L. split in 1936 when a group broke away to form the Canadian Federation of Labour, leaving the A.C.C.L. with little more than the solid core of the C.B.R.E.<sup>4</sup> Thus by default, leadership in the organizing of the mass industries fell to the C.I.O.

The C.I.O. had not planned massive drives in Canada and from the beginning its activity in Canada was the result of the forceful demands and activities of Canadian workers. The C.I.O. was too involved with its organizing campaigns in the United States to be concerned about Canada but it was literally forced to become involved by young militant socialists and communists. These shared the aims of the C.I.O. and began organizing tiny locals which they identified with, though the C.I.O. had never heard of them. Canadian organizers used the name of the C.I.O. because it appeared to have magic to the workers. "Wherever they heard it, they flocked; whoever used it they trusted. Canadian workers obviously believed that the C.I.O. charm would rub off on them; that what the C.I.O. was achieving for its workers in the United States, it would also achieve for its members in Canada." But modern industrial unionism in Canada was born on the assembly lines of Oshawa and the automobile workers were responsible. The C.I.O. only provided its mystical name while the International U.A.W. provided leadership and expertise to ensure the success

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4. Logan, op.cit., pp. 356-360; Seaborn, op.cit., p. 21.

of the dedicated amateurs.<sup>5</sup>

In 1934, the A.F. of L. convention at San Francisco instructed its executive council to press its organizing campaign in the automobile industry and to allow the setting up of a national union which would include all but skilled craftsmen. After nine months of delay the International Union, United Automobile Workers of America, came into existence at a constitutional convention of auto workers in Detroit on August 20, 1935. The C.I.O. soon became the guiding influence of the U.A.W. and it joined the C.I.O. on July 2, 1936. With the aid and encouragement of other C.I.O. affiliates, the U.A.W. organizational drives of 1936 bore fruit with the signing of a number of agreements in Detroit. With the examples of success just across the river and the ease with which ideas and organizers crossed the border, it was natural that the auto workers of Windsor began to organize.<sup>6</sup>

Local 195 became the first U.A.W. local in Canada when a charter was granted by the A.F. of L. to fifteen union members in the Kelsey Wheel Company in Windsor on December 11, 1936. When five workers were

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5. Irving Abella, "The C.I.O.: Reluctant Invaders," Canadian Dimension, Vol. 8, No. 6 (March-April, 1972), pp. 20-23; Eugene Forsey, "The Influence of American Labor Organizations and Policies on Canadian Labor," The American Economic Impact on Canada, Durham, Duke University Press, 1959, p. 135. Abella claims that "international unions were necessary to create a powerful labour movement in Canada only because Canadian workers thought they were necessary." The international unions were "simply responding to pressing invitations sent by Canadian workers who had more confidence in the capabilities and strength of the American unions than they had in their own." He claims that this feeling was not based on fact but on the "colonial mentality of the Canadian workingman," the "typical Canadian belief that Americans can do things better than we can, that they are more capable, aggressive people, and that therefore American unions could assure the better life the Canadian workingman so desperately wanted."

6. Louis Joseph Veres, "History of the United Automobile Workers in Windsor 1935-1955," Unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Western Ontario, 1956, pp. 18-21.

discharged by the company for union activity, the new local called a meeting to decide on a plan of action. Tom Parry, a U.A.W. organizer, was sent over from Detroit to provide direction. A few meetings followed and a list of demands was drawn up and presented to the company but Mr. Malcolm Campbell, President of the company, stated that he was willing to make adjustments but definitely refused to recognize the union or deal with outsiders. On December 16, further negotiations were halted when one hundred and forty workers staged the first "sit-down" strike in Canada. A special city police detail was soon called in, however, and the strikers were ordered to leave the premises. The men left peacefully and under Perry's direction they began to organize for picketing. The next day the organizational director of the U.A.W., Richard T. Frankenstein of Detroit, gave the men a "pep" talk. "You have the support of every organized worker in Detroit. It's up to you to go out and make sure that no one goes into that damned plant tomorrow. If they do get in, they have to eat, they have to get food, and you know what to do, I don't have to tell you."

The strikers were out in force on the picket line on December 21 when the company tried to bring in "scabs" by taxicabs. A fracas broke out outside the gate and the police were called in. Though the company promised not to bring in any more men, the factory continued to operate on a reduced scale with non-union employees. Further negotiations proved fruitless and due to this impasse both parties consented to conciliation by a mediator from the Federal Department of Labour. Four days of closed conferences followed and the strikers returned to work on December 30, after a fourteen day strike. The settlement involved wage revisions and reinstatement of the five discharged employees but, as it did not recognize the U.A.W., a formal agreement was not signed by Local 195. The union had won its immediate demands and felt that another strike could be called

if other grievances arose.<sup>7</sup> Thus, the U.A.W. was precariously established in Windsor but it was to be in Oshawa where the U.A.W. would quickly gain a foothold.

In 1935 General Motors established in its Oshawa plant a company union which, according to President R.S. McLaughlin, consisted of "thirty-nine [elected] representatives who would be able to present to management any suggestions or grievances which might arise from time to time."<sup>8</sup> This organization was a sham but it did provide a vehicle through which militant workers could demonstrate leadership by example. The most militant group of workers was strategically located in the body shop, the root of production. One of the leaders in the body shop was a skilled plumber with trade union experience. This was George Burt who first began to work in General Motors in 1929 as a torch solderer. By 1936 these men were ready for a union as indicated by the increasing number of work stoppages, particularly in the body shop. Burt was one of the men picked to go on a committee to see the company and he described the affair as follows:

This was a wonderful experience to complete my education. The company would hardly speak to us. They were careful never to make commitments. Essentially they engineered us into accepting the old company explanations of what was happening, the metal was bad, bugs had not been ironed out yet. Naturally there were strikes which generally took place at the start of the season.

We were learning. Some other guys and I agreed that a certain time, all at once, so there would be no discrimination, we would shut the line down. The button was right beside me. The signal for my guys, there were about forty in my group, was that I would take off my overalls.

I took my overalls off, gave the signal, and the people on the final metal finish, the rough metal finish, the production

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7. Ibid., pp. 22-28.

8. The Oshawa Daily Times, Mar. 12, 1937; Logan, op.cit., pp. 232-233, notes that the movement toward employee representation was encouraged by the Auto Industry Board in the United States set up under the N.R.A. and the pattern was copied in Canada.

welders, the door hangers and fitters, and the metallers...we were all supposed to get out.

The first time only my group went out, the others did not go, but that was enough to shut her down.

This time we went over to the loading docks and there we decided we would need the cooperation of the rest of the group anyhow.

By late 1936 we had moved along so that the company was meeting with our committee in the presence of Chief Conciliation Officer of the Department of Labour, Louis Fine.

This way we did manage to get our prices increased a little and our working conditions somewhat rectified.

All these things were planned downtown in a beer parlour, sometimes in each others homes. There was no union but we were conscious in thirty-six that there was a union. We knew what was taking place in Detroit.<sup>9</sup>

The General Motors Corporation and its consolidated subsidiaries had a net profit after income taxes of \$239,550,075 in 1936 and could well afford to pay decent wages.<sup>10</sup> Still, there was no significant improvement in working conditions.

Hours were brutal. When the plant was going we worked 59 hours a week, five ten-hour days and on Saturday we got off an hour earlier.

During the busy season, starting about January, we went on twelve hours a day—all straight time. Twelve hours three days a week, ten hours two days, and nine hours on Saturday, our short work day. That is the way we used to work, when we worked, in the busy season.<sup>11</sup>

By 1937 the workers had a legacy of bitterness left by the depression. They did not care for the company or what the company thought. The men had no set plan as to which direction they should take but they were talking all the time. In the words of many who reminisce: "We had nothing to lose!"—an almost classic degree of Marxist alienation.<sup>12</sup> By

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9. Where Was George Burt?, Windsor, U.A.W. International Union Education Department, 1968, pp. 14-16.

10. United States, Report on Motor Vehicle Industry, House Document No. 92, 76th. Congress, 1st. Session, p. 431.

11. Where Was George Burt?, p. 18.

12. Ibid., p. 16; Interview with George Burt; C.H. Millard listed the  
- continued Page 134



1937 the workers had been "conditioned" for action as they had not been in 1928.

General Motors sent industrial engineers to Oshawa to speed up production, a sensitive point among auto workers.<sup>13</sup> Soon an issue arose in the body shop over a speed-up-wage-cut. The workers had been turning out 27 jobs at a base rate of 52 cents an hour on a 140 percent efficiency basis and were told to increase production to 32 jobs at a rate of 57 cents an hour on the same efficiency basis. The men claimed that they could not do this and that it would mean a net decrease in the wage scale by 13 percent.<sup>14</sup>

Opposition to this new move started with about 800 men in the two body shops. On the night of Wednesday, February 17, 1937, the C.C.F. hall was rented and a meeting was held to elect a committee to interview management. Failing to get satisfaction, about a hundred men met on Thursday night and voted to strike the following day.<sup>15</sup> On Friday morning,

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12. Continued from Page 133.

following reasons why the workers were ready for unionization. First, there was a determination on the part of the workers that their sons and daughters would never have to go through another paralysing depression. Second, many of the workers came from rural areas and they had given up their so-called independence on the farm for dependence on General Motors. To these people, General Motors represented by management always stood watching them from 'just around the corner' or from 'behind a near-by pillar.' Third, the previous attempt in 1928 at forming a union along what was neither craft nor industrial lines had resulted in a failure that had produced several discrimination cases in town who had been evangelists for industrial unionism. Fourth, the workers were greatly encouraged by the U.A.W. union drives in the United States. Fifth, there was a lot of encouragement and help from socialists such as Sam Lawrence and John W. Buckley. Interview with C.H. Millard.

13. Veres, op.cit., p. 29; Norman J. Ware, H.A. Logan, Labor In Canadian-American Relations, ed. by H.A. Innis, Toronto, The Ryerson Press, 1937, p. 64.

14. The Oshawa Daily Times, Feb. 19, 1937; Daily Clarion, Feb. 19, 1937; New Commonwealth, Feb. 27, 1937.

15. Daily Clarion, Feb. 19, 1937; Where Was George Burt?, p. 18.



over 240 workers in the body shop quit work while a four man delegation including George Burt met with Harry J. Carmichael, Vice-President and General Manager of General Motors of Canada Ltd., Louis Fine and O.E. Jeanette of the provincial Department of Labour, and the Mayor of Oshawa. At about two o'clock in the afternoon the delegates reported back to the men, who voted to return to work on Saturday and try out the new price rate for two weeks.<sup>16</sup>

After the strikers had agreed to return to work a slight, neatly dressed, carefully groomed man who looked more like an automobile salesman than an automobile workers' organizer, was at last given permission to address the men. This was Hugh Thompson, a man fresh from the struggles at Flint, Michigan. He did not harangue or "agitate" but spoke quietly and evenly to the men about the U.A.W.-C.I.O.'s program. He told them of the victory of the strikers at General Motors in Flint. He told them of wiping out discrimination against union men, of the increase in wages, of winning time and a half for overtime. He told them that all these things, and more, could be won by the workers of General Motors at Oshawa too, if only they would organize. Then came the question period. The first question was: "When can we join?" And they joined immediately--sixty of them inside of fifteen minutes. The response was overwhelming. All the strikers paid their dollar and signed membership in the U.A.W. From that moment nothing could stop the union in Oshawa; Thompson's arrival signalled the beginning of a virtual political revolution in the community.<sup>17</sup>

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16. Daily Clarion, Feb. 20, 1937; The Oshawa Daily Times, Feb. 19, 1937; Interview with George Burt; Canada, The Labour Gazette, Vol. XXXVII (1937), pp. 300-301.

17. New Commonwealth, Feb. 27, 1937; Daily Clarion, Feb. 20, 1937; Where Was George Burt?, p. 20; Felix Lazarus, "The Oshawa Strike," The Canadian  
- continued Page 136

Thompson had been invited to come by the workers but not by George Burt's group. It was another group of militant activists in the body shop. Most of these men were of Welsh or Scottish background with union experience within the militant miners' union in Britain; they became appalled at the primitive state of unionism in Canada and the terrible working conditions at General Motors. There were some communists but most of these men had been members of the Independent Labour Party (I.L.P.) in Britain, a party to the left of the British Labour Party and one following a "popular front" position in the thirties, which in turn accounts for the ease with which these immigrants formed a "unity group" within the U.A.W.<sup>18</sup> The first meeting to discuss the formation of a union was held in the home of Malcolm Smith on November 11, 1936 with only three other people present. In order to avoid people who could not be trusted, they decided to sign only fifteen members, the number necessary to apply to Detroit for a charter. It was one of this second small group who was the instigator of the move to get Thompson. He was Bill Gelech, a known communist.<sup>19</sup>

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17. Continued from Page 135.

Forum, Vol. XVII, No. 197 (June, 1937), p. 88; Hugh Thompson had a native Irish wit which was a great asset to him in attracting workers to the union. Interview with C.H. Millard.

18. Where Was George Burt?, p. 18; Interview with George Burt; Interview with Mrs. G.S. Thomson; G.D.H. Cole, Raymond Postgate, The Common People 1746-1946; London, Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1968, pp. 595, 605; This "unity group" was an opponent of many of the C.C.F.ers whose views on labour and socialist subjects were regarded as conservative. Interview with C.H. Millard.

19. Hood, op.cit., p. 312; Official Opening, U.A.W. Hall, Oshawa, Education Committee U.A.W. Local 222, 1951, p. 13; Interview with Mrs. G.S. Thomson; Logan, op.cit., p. 341. Joe Salasberg, the director of the C.P. of C.'s trade union section, was also claimed to have engineered a call to U.A.W. Headquarters. Logan claims that James and Malcolm Smith and Robert Stacey were former members of the Workers Unity League and operated

Hugh Thompson, his wife and daughter arrived in Oshawa on Friday, February 19. About one hour after his arrival at the Hotel Genosha he received a call from Allen Griffiths, a C.C.F.er. Griffiths informed Thompson that some of the General Motors workers were holding a meeting in the C.C.F. hall; Thompson immediately went there and spoke to the workers.<sup>20</sup> The C.C.F.ers were fairly successful at "capturing" Thompson and took a great deal of the credit for organization away from the original group that had called in the U.A.W. They were somewhat successful with this because the unionists did not want their infant local identified with Bill Gelech and the communists, a fact which would have been used against them.<sup>21</sup>

A union was definitely being established in Oshawa as over 500 men had signed applications the first weekend. It was the type of progressive industrial union that the workers had desperately wanted. The

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19. Continued from Page 136.

in Oshawa and Windsor, laying the basis of radical leadership in the industry. Logan labels them as communists, a label he does not justify with evidence and one that has been denied by others (e.g. Mrs. G.S. Thomson); For a description of Malcolm Smith's background, see: "Malcolm Smith," The Canadian Unionist, Vol. XXVII, No. 9 (Sept., 1953), p. 345. The Financial Post, Apr. 10, 1937 published an article on Hugh Thompson in which he said in relation to the call to Detroit by G.M. workers: "We weren't quite ready to branch into Canada because we were still involved in the battle in the United States. But we would have come eventually, and when we got the hurry-up call for help, I went to work."

20. The Oshaworker, May 18, 1967 contains a letter written in 1951 by Hugh Thompson of his reminiscences of the founding of U.A.W. Local 222. According to C.H. Millard it was Allen Griffiths who had arranged to have the workers hold their meeting in the C.C.F. hall, and it was also Griffiths who had been in contact with the U.A.W., requesting that an organizer be sent. Allen Griffiths was a neighbour of Millard and a very active C.C.F.-er. He had had trade union experience in Britain and, in 1937, was retired as a representative of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Co. Interview with C.H. Millard.

21. Interview with Mrs. G.S. Thomson; Interview with W.E. Noble; According to the New Commonwealth, May 6, 1937, Oshawa was soon visited by E.B. Jolliffe, Graham Spry, and Felix Lazarus of the C.C.F.

organization of the workers was to come first, a point Thompson made clear when he said, "I don't care where a man works or what factory he works in, he can join our union until enough organize to get a charter from their organization in the trade" a point especially directed at General Motors' subsidiary steel plants.<sup>22</sup> Meetings by department were held every night, allowing one hour for each department, starting at 6:00 o'clock through 10:00 at night and sometimes departmental meetings were held for organizational purposes after 4:00 p.m. Hugh Thompson explained what the U.A.W.-C.I.O. stood for and answered questions while Mrs. Thompson signed up the members.<sup>23</sup> In less than a week over a thousand workers had joined the union and others were signing at the rate of about 200 a day. Thompson had even run out of application forms twice.<sup>24</sup> The enthusiasm was tremendous. As one trimmer commented, "The fear has all gone. The workers have a confidence they have not had since 1927 [sic]."<sup>25</sup>

By Thursday, February 25, Sam Kraisman, business manager of the International Garment Workers, and Hugh Thompson were able to draw an overflow crowd to the Legion Hall. To lusty cheering, Thompson stated, "There are 120,000 auto, rubber and steel workers in Canada, The C.I.O. is going to organize them all." Thompson gave the impression that the C.I.O. was about to wage a full scale campaign and amid applause he said that the C.I.O. would organize every auto manufacturing plant in Canada

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22. Daily Clarion, Feb. 23, 1937.

23. The Oshaworker, May 18, 1937.

24. Daily Clarion, Feb. 24, 1937.

25. New Commonwealth, Mar. 6, 1937; Daily Clarion, Feb. 24, 1937. Even the small business men and storekeepers were beginning to express approval of the new unionism in Oshawa which meant higher wages which in turn meant more business.

and would stay with the job until it was done. The drive was already under way in the Windsor district, in St. Catharines, in Oshawa and Toronto, and "the great happy family" of General Motors advertising would not exist until every G.M. worker was in the union.

Sam Kraisman also drove home his points of union organizational strategy, lifting the audience to cheers time after time. He said that it was the responsibility of the workers, first, to set up a 100 per cent union; second, to increase wages and decrease hours, and third, to divide hours so that there was not a single unemployed auto worker. The unemployed had to be considered by the employed workers. They had to be provided for, not with relief but with work and wages and unions were the method. He declared that governments and employers wanted a surplus of labour. That meant a labour market which could be used as a threat to enslave the employed worker, to keep down wage levels, and to weaken unions. "The unions must strive to secure arrangements with the employers so that there are no unemployed. A job for every man and every man with a job, that is the duty of the union to the unemployed; and that is in the interests of the unions...."<sup>26</sup>

The union was soon issued its new charter as U.A.W. Local 222 and set up new headquarters in Engell's Hall on Simcoe St. N.<sup>27</sup> Before an audience of 900 on Sunday, March 14, a total of 175 people were nominated

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26. New Commonwealth, Mar. 6, 1937.

27. Ibid., Mar. 13, 1937; The Oshaworker, Oct. 26, 1967 (special anniversary issue). U.A.W. Local 222's charter affiliated the local to the A.F. of L. not the C.I.O. The C.I.O. was not mentioned in the charter dated Mar. 2, 1937. The following list of charter members makes it quite obvious the role played by the C.C.F.ers and the British I.L.P.ers: "C.H. Millard, A.G. Shultz, Malcolm Smith, Harry Gibbs, Murdock McIndless, Finley Dafoe, William Gelech, Robert Mitchell, Reginald A. Jones, Irvine McLean, Norman E. Knapp, William Powell, John Sanford, Dennis Spratt, Donald A. Lang, Eric Armitage, Sidney J. Lang."

for office in the local and all positions except Sergeant-at-Arms were to be contested at an election. After a week of voting the list of victorious officers contained the names of many who had gained publicity by being active in labour and left wing political movements before Thompson's arrival and shortly thereafter. While organization was not yet complete in the feeder plants, a representative was accepted from each of Ontario Steel Products, Skinner Mfg. Co., Coulter Mfg. Co., and Phillips Glass Co., thus making Local 222 a huge, all inclusive amalgamated local.<sup>28</sup>

Charles Millard became one of several men chosen for the bargaining committee who, along with Hugh Thompson, set out to seek recognition of the union as the sole bargaining agency for General Motors employees, along with seniority, a forty hour week and an eight hour day with time and a half for overtime. Already an agreement had been signed with Ontario Steel Products but it did not recognize the U.A.W., only the "local factory committee for the union."<sup>29</sup> This was soon followed by a short strike at the Coulter Manufacturing Company which, with the aid of Louis Fine, was

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28. The Oshawa Daily Times, Mar. 15, 1937; Mar. 19, 1937; Official Opening, U.A.W. Hall, p. 8. The officers were: President, C.H. Millard; Vice-President, E.E. Bathe; Recording Secretary, W.H.J. Harmer; Financial Secretary, A.G. Shultz; Treasurer, George Burt; Trustees, George Day, G. Frise, and T. King; Sergeant-at-Arms, H. Farrow.; C.H. Millard, who had no previous union experience, owed his election to the popularity he had gained through his relief activities among the unemployed. The alternative would have meant the election of a representative from the "unity group" whose members some dubbed as communists but Millard regarded as "fellow travellers," Millard defined a "fellow traveller" as a "hanger-on" with the Communist Party; as a person who would neither want to be regarded as a full fledged Communist nor sign a Communist Party membership card and thereby lose their independence and have to take direction from above. Interview with C.H. Millard.

29. The Oshawa Daily Times, Mar. 16, 1937. The workers gained a wage increase, seniority, and no discrimination. This was the first agreement negotiated and was signed on Mar. 12, 1937. According to Official Opening, U.A.W. Hall, p. 12, Hugh Thompson signed as International Representative.



also a success for the workers.<sup>30</sup> The steel plants in the city were speedily coming into their union under the Steel Workers Organization Committee, C.I.O. In this drive however, the communists with their S.W.O.C. organizer, Dick Steele, played a much more active role.<sup>31</sup> A tide of industrial unionism was sweeping the city, even the baker and dairymen drivers, garage and service station employees, store workers and barbers were organizing. Soon the new slogan throughout the community was "Make Oshawa a Union City."<sup>32</sup>

General Motors still remained the real prize. Negotiations commenced in a friendly attitude on the afternoon of March 18 between J.B. Highfield, Factory Manager, and Colonel Frank Chappell, Director of Industrial and Public Relations, for the company, and a committee chaired by C.H. Millard. Issues of seniority, hours, overtime, and the steward system were dealt with but Highfield did not recognize the union as the exclusive bargaining agency, nor was the company willing to apply the agreement signed by General Motors in Detroit to the Oshawa plant as the union had hoped for. On this last point the company claimed Canadian autonomy and it gradually became apparent that United States procedure in the matter of union action or recognition was not to be followed. As a result of this first meeting, Highfield admitted that there was "a tentative verbal agreement...but there is nothing signed as yet, and all terms of the agreement are subject to the approval of the president and vice-president

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30. Daily Clarion, Mar. 31, 1937; The Oshawa Daily Times, Mar. 18, 1937, Mar. 23, 1937; Mar. 24, 1937. The contract contained a wage increase, seniority, and no discrimination but did not mention the U.A.W.

31. Daily Clarion, Mar. 31, 1937.

32. Ibid., New Commonwealth, Mar. 20, 1937; Mar. 27, 1937.



of the company."<sup>33</sup>

Two further brief meetings were held with the company. The first was called by Millard and his committee who, though they were quite willing to talk to Highfield, expressed the wish of the employees that Hugh Thompson be present. Though many different members of the committee argued the relationship of General Motors of Canada to its American parent, Highfield emphatically refused to discuss matters with anyone who was not employed by the company. As a result nothing definite was agreed upon so the union delegates decided to withdraw.<sup>34</sup>

On Thursday, March 25, Ed Hall, Second Vice-President of the U.A.W., who was visiting Oshawa, announced the appointment of Millard as a full-time U.A.W. organizer who was to work under the direction of Hugh Thompson. Hall also addressed a mass meeting of union members where he made it clear that the U.A.W. was not encouraging a sit-down strike or any kind of strife. He did advise the workers how to deal with their grievances: "...try to counsel it out around the table first, and then if you are dealing with the type of employer who does not recognize that type of gentlemanship then leave the factory and picket it so damnably tight...." Finally, Hall had been informed that General Motors would not deal with Hugh Thompson and to this he reacted by telling of a meeting he had in Detroit with C.E. Wilson, an Executive Vice-President of General Motors. Wilson had told

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33. The Oshawa Daily Times, Mar. 19, 1937; P.A.O., Hepburn Papers, Notes Arising Out of Meeting Between Deputation of Union Employees and the Management, Mar. 18, 1937. Hugh Thompson was not present at this meeting in Highfield's office. Members of the bargaining committee were E.E. Bathe, W.A. Walker, George Day, R.P. Murphy, George Frise, and Charles Millard. The members of this committee were amateurs and had no previous experience in such negotiations. Interview with C.H. Millard.

34. P.A.O., Hepburn Papers, Further Notes Arising Out Of Meeting Between Deputation Of Union Employees And Management, Mar. 23, 1937.

Hall that the Oshawa plant was not covered in the American agreement with the U.A.W. but had promised to "call that plant manager up there on the telephone and I think if I talk to him they will get along all right with those people." According to Hall, Wilson actually made the call.<sup>35</sup>

Throughout the month of March the workers were achieving a high state of organization and discipline as the company was being organized on the basis of departments. Each department had a head steward with several sub-stewards under his leadership. Each of the sub-stewards was responsible for 50 men. In addition to there being this excellent plant organization, militancy was growing and only became heightened when the company moved to ship out all cars on hand.<sup>36</sup> The men were recognizing that the company started to treat them better once they had an organization and thus they were more willing to support their union's demands. Meanwhile, the role and status of Hugh Thompson was emerging as a major issue.

On the evening of Tuesday, March 30, a mass meeting of union stewards arrived at a decision to call a walk-out on Thursday unless Hugh Thompson was included in the bargaining committee. Following the stewards' direction, Millard informed the company of the decision and called for a conference. Highfield agreed to a meeting but not with "any person not an employee of General Motors." Highfield was suddenly expressing the opinion that the "local labor movement is by no means a spontaneous drawing together of workers for mutual protection and betterment, but the result of

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35. The Oshawa Daily Times, Mar. 29, 1937; P.A.C., Lapointe Papers, Verbatim and Unedited Report of an Address by Mr. Fred [sic] Hall, Mar. 25, 1937. It should be noted that Premier Hepburn of Ontario probably knew of the contents of this speech because it had been sent to Lapointe by one of Hepburn's cabinet ministers, H.C. Nixon.

36. Daily Clarion, Apr. 1, 1937; Apr. 2, 1937; It should be noted that G.M. never did recognize the steward system and an alternate form of shop committee men were used.

careful strategy, skilled solicitation and coercion by a highly organized wing of labor in a foreign country." To him the workers of Oshawa were being used as the spearhead of C.I.O. operations in Canada. Carmichael saw the threat of a walk-out as an attempt to force recognition of the U.A.W. and spoke of "outside domination and methods so foreign to Canadian practice," a strange statement indeed from a man who earlier had admitted he had been sent to Oshawa to see that the Canadian plant of General Motors was making a profit.<sup>37</sup>

The strike was postponed, however, when Colonel Chappell and Hugh Thompson met with Louis Fine and David A. Croll, Minister of Labour, in Croll's office at Queen's Park. Chappell reiterated the company's position with regard to its opposition to the presence during negotiations of "any foreign organizer not an employee of the company." Croll then turned to Thompson and said, "Well, this narrows the issue down to one thing. It looks as if these people could get along alright if it were not for one person. I would suggest that you withdraw out of the picture." Thompson objected but Croll suggested that he could be represented by someone else. Thompson thus agreed to withdraw from the negotiations, his place to be taken by Charles Millard. Chappell accepted the new arrangement and after four unsuccessful attempts at drafting a statement for the press, Croll decided to make one using his own judgement.<sup>38</sup> The company and union were to meet for preliminary negotiations in Croll's office on Friday morning.

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37. The Oshawa Daily Times, Mar. 31, 1937; Feb. 19, 1937; Carmichael was a British subject, as was Hugh Thompson; but Carmichael had taken out naturalization papers. The public could not buy any shares in General Motors of Canada as they were controlled by the American corporation. The New York Times, Apr. 12, 1937. It should be noted that Highfield and Carmichael could have taken their cue for their anti-C.I.O. line from Premier Hepburn and/or The Globe and Mail editorials.

38. P.A.O., Hepburn Papers, Notes Arising Out Of Meeting, Mar. 31, 1937.

Thompson could be present in the building and available for consultation only, and Millard, an employee on leave of absence, was to be the International Representative of the U.A.W. The threatened strike had again been postponed pending the results of this meeting.<sup>39</sup>

Publically, Millard claimed that he would sit in negotiations as an international officer of the U.A.W. rather than as an elected representative of the employees of General Motors. He also stated that Homer Martin, President of the U.A.W., had sent him a telegram authorizing him to assume his duties in Canada under Hugh Thompson. Even Thompson declared that Millard had resigned his position as chairman of the bargaining committee and was acting as an employee of the International U.A.W. Morale was high among the workers and a Thursday night vote by the shop stewards gave Hugh Thompson the power to call a strike. This same power was also vested in him by Local 199 in St. Catharines and Local 195 in Windsor, which the union hoped to have included in the negotiations.<sup>40</sup>

As soon as the conference started on Friday, the status of Millard was raised by management who protested that, according to press reports, his status had been changed since the previous day from that of an employee on leave of absence to that of an accredited official of the C.I.O. After some discussion on the point, Croll asked Highfield and Chappell to retire with him and Louis Fine to an adjoining room for a further conference. Highfield claimed that all that had been done so far was to change the name of "Thompson" to the name "Millard" and he would have no dealings with the C.I.O. or their representatives. Croll tried to alleviate his worries by commenting, "I can read men and as I look at that bunch in

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39. The Oshawa Daily Times, Apr. 1, 1937.

40. Ibid., Apr. 2, 1937.

the next room, I can tell by the eyes of most of them that they are a bunch of fanatics. As for Millard, I think he is a weakling who can't do anyone much harm." Over Highfield's protests Croll tried to cloud the issue by advising that Millard could call himself what he liked while the company could still consider him as an employee on leave of absence. With Highfield still protesting that he would not sign an agreement with the C.I.O., the men returned to the next room where the bargaining committee was waiting. When Millard spoke up to ensure that his status was clear, Croll interrupted with "Everything is understood" and then left the negotiations in charge of Louis Fine. The meeting ended on a note of optimism as bargaining procedure had been outlined and negotiations were to continue in the Company Board Room at Oshawa on Monday afternoon.<sup>41</sup>

On Monday the confusion over Millard's status became apparent. Millard contended that according to Croll's official statement he represented the international union but Highfield would recognize him as only an employee on leave of absence. The negotiating committee was being continually frustrated. Highfield would commit himself to very little that was definite in regard to the basic issues. He was unwilling even to sign an agreement let alone one with the international union. Thus with many of the issues still unsettled after over four hours of bargaining, the meeting adjourned.<sup>42</sup>

On Monday night the committee reported to the stewards, who displayed a general feeling of dissatisfaction. The stewards even wanted to over-rule the committee but were held in check by Hugh Thompson who had

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41. P.A.O., Hepburn Papers, Notes Arising Out Of Conference, Apr. 2, 1937; Daily Clarion, Apr. 2, 1937; Apr. 3, 1937. It seems that the union had been led to believe that G.M. had accepted Millard as an International Representative of the U.A.W.

42. P.A.O., Hepburn Papers, Report On Conference, Apr. 5, 1937.

just returned from Detroit after a conference with Homer Martin.<sup>43</sup> Millard, however, was instructed to discover whether or not the company was willing to accept an agreement with the union.

At 2 p.m. on Tuesday the union and company met again but with Louis Fine present. A more conciliatory attitude seemed to prevail as Highfield agreed to seniority and to a compromise suggestion for a forty-four hour week, excepting maintenance, power house and parts workers, and even to time and a half for overtime. These points were accepted by the committee for presentation to the men. What is more, Highfield "appeared" to accept Millard as President of Local 222 and as a representative of the international union; that is he did "not mind what kind of monikers Mr. Millard attaches to his present duties" and made no objection when Fine remarked that "the company was taking no exception to Mr. Millard acting on the committee representing the union." On the matter of actually accepting an agreement with the union, Fine told Millard that the issue would definitely be answered the following day.<sup>44</sup>

The committee met again with General Motors on Wednesday. Millard gave notice that a vote had been taken on the offer of the forty-four hour week and the men had decided to hold out for the forty hour week and eight hour day. He felt, however, that the point was open for further negotiations. The management started to take a hard line, though, as discussions progressed. Highfield refused to accept the steward system, changes in the wage structure, and would not sign an agreement until all issues had been straightened out. Thus the meeting ended and was to re-

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43. The Oshawa Daily Times, Apr. 6, 1937.

44. P.A.O., Hepburn Papers, Report On Conference, Apr. 6, 1937; All during the afternoon's negotiations Millard had been conferring with Hugh Thompson by telephone. The Oshawa Daily Times, Apr. 7, 1937.

convene on Thursday at two o'clock. It was never resumed.<sup>45</sup>

After several postponements of a strike the workers decided to take action. Almost three hundred plant stewards met on Wednesday night for five hours and after receiving final approval of strike plans from U.A.W. headquarters in Detroit, issued a strike call for the next day to all union members at General Motors. It was clear that there was general dissatisfaction with the manner in which negotiations had been proceeding. As Hugh Thompson claimed, "We are through fooling around...."; peaceful negotiations had been attempted but the workers "never knew where they were at."<sup>46</sup>

Five minutes after filing into the plant as usual at 7 a.m., about 3,700 workers made a peaceful exit. With pre-arranged precision, four hundred pickets were quickly flung around the works. There was no attempt at a sit-down and as Millard stated, "A sit-down strike was never contemplated for Oshawa." On Millard's advice Mayor Alex Hall had all the liquor outlets in Oshawa closed and Hugh Thompson, the chief "of John L. Lewis's paid propagandists in Canada" issued the following orders: "It will be peaceful picketing and violence will not be tolerated.... Drunks will not be allowed on the picket lines and it will be conducted as efficiently as the company's assembly line." To ensure that these orders were carried out the union set up its own strike police force, its fifty members being identifiable by black and white armbands with the letters U.P. (Union Police). These men had orders to turn over anyone disorderly in the picket lines to

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45. P.A.O., Hepburn Papers, Summary Of Conference, Apr. 7, 1937.

46. The Toronto Daily Star, Apr. 8, 1937; The Globe and Mail, Apr. 8, 1937; Hugh Thompson had been in favour of a strike and he had been the man most responsible for setting a deadline for strike action. Interview with C.H. Millard.



the local police any striker found drunk and disorderly on the city streets. Thus began the famous Oshawa strike, perhaps the real turning point of industrial unionism in Canada.<sup>47</sup>

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47. The Toronto Daily Star, Apr. 8, 1937; The G.M. plant at Windsor was just closed. There was no strike there. Apr. 10, 1937; Interview with C.H. Millard; Abella, [The C.I.O., the Communist Party and the Formation of the Canadian Congress of Labour 1936-1941], *op.cit.*, p. 116; The Oshawa Daily Times, Apr. 8, 1937. The U.A.W. was watching the border and as one union spokesman declared, "If any attempt is made to ship any cars of the four groups manufactured in Oshawa, the International Union will take action in the United States to stop building those cars." C.H. Millard claims that one of the secrets of the strike was that H.J. Carmichael, the Vice-President of General Motors of Canada, Ltd., came to him after an agreement had been reached and said that the strike might not have happened if he had been able to take part in the early negotiation sessions. For personal reasons, Carmichael, who at one time had had union experience as a pattern maker when he worked for Pierce Arrow, was absent, and as a result, a confrontation situation had been allowed to develop, especially because of the presence of F. Chappell, a local social climber who knew nothing about unions and resented their challenge to management. Interview with C.H. Millard.

## CHAPTER VII "SOLIDARITY FOREVER!"

Mr. Speaker, I desire to ask leave to move the adjournment of the house to discuss a definite matter of urgent public importance, namely, the strike at Oshawa and the concentration of federal and provincial police at Toronto, and the urgent necessity of government mediation.<sup>1</sup>

Referring to the Lewis Committee for Industrial Organization and the Communist Party, you are quoted as saying "there is a definite tie-up between these two forces." The implication is definitely to be found in your quoted remarks that the Oshawa strike represents the "threat of Communism."

As the Secretary of the Ontario organization of the Communist Party, permit me to point out that the definite statements and implications of these statements are entirely erroneous. There is no tie-up between the Lewis C.I.O. and the Communist Party, either in the United States or in Canada. Any information you may have to the contrary is entirely unreliable, and misrepresents both the position of the C.I.O. and the position of the Communist Party. It misrepresents the position of the C.I.O. unions of the A.F. of L. by tying them up with a political party with which they have no connection and the obvious purpose of this is to utilize prejudice against the Communist Party to try to frustrate the efforts of workers to build up their unions.<sup>2</sup>

Perhaps the most important factor making the strike at Oshawa famous was the arrival of Premier Mitchell Hepburn from a ten-day holiday in Miami. The issues of the strike quickly became distorted and blown out of all proportions. The first day of the strike, H.J. Carmichael, J.B. Highfield and Colonel F. Chappell spent most of the time in conference with government officials and Premier Hepburn. As a result of this meeting and according to press statements, the company changed its line and was now prepared to meet all the demands of the local union except recognition of the U.A.W. as the sole bargaining agent. The government, however, suddenly became deeply involved in the entire matter and began

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1. J.S. Woodsworth in Canada, Debates of the House of Commons, Vol. III, 1937, p. 2811.

2. P.A.O., Hepburn Papers, Stewart Smith to Hon. M. Hepburn, Apr. 14, 1937.

to raise the spectre of riots and violence.<sup>3</sup>

On March 3, 1937, some seventy workers<sup>4</sup> conducting a sit-down strike at the Homes Foundry (an American subsidiary) at Point Edward were brutally attacked and removed by a club wielding mob from Sarnia. The Sarnia police force refused to prevent the violence, claiming that the foundry was outside their jurisdiction. These same police, however, did arrest the strikers and charges of petty trespassing, were laid. No charges were laid against the strike-breakers. When Sam Lawrence, the lone C.C.F. member in the Ontario Legislature, asked Attorney-General Arthur Roebuck in the House if an investigation was to be conducted, Mitch Hepburn jumped to his feet declaring, "...those who were guilty of striking were trespassing and that was illegal. There will be no sit-down strikes

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3. The Oshawa Daily Times, Apr. 9, 1937; The Toronto Daily Star, Apr. 8, 1937; The following letter was sent to H.J. Carmichael from C.E. Wilson in Detroit. It showed the company's view of the status of the Canadian plant in the American agreement. "In order that there be no misunderstanding on your part, you are advised that the negotiations carried on with the representatives of the United Automobile Workers affecting the 17 plants, where strikes occurred, exclude the Canadian divisional."

4. Abella, [The C.I.O., The Communist Party and The Formation of the Canadian Congress of Labour 1936-1941], op.cit., pp. 114-115; The Canadian Forum, Apr. 1937, Mar. 8, 1937; The Evening Telegram, Mar. 3, 1937; Mar. 4, 1937; Mar. 5, 1937; Canada, The Labour Gazette, Vol. 37 (1937), p. 410. The workers were members of the Amalgamated Iron, Steel and Tin Workers of America and had been organized by a S.W.O.C. representative in Ontario, Milton Montgomery. He had been invited by the workers early in February and though the plant was ripe for organization, Montgomery's efforts were doomed from the start. At the time of the strike the plant was only a quarter organized and most of these men were foreign born (East European). Frustrated yet encouraged by the success of the sit-down at Flint Michigan, some of the workers began the sit-down without the union's sanction. Racial hatred was mainly used to incite the mob of strike-breakers, many of whom were not employees, and thus the first major sit-down in Canada became an ignominious failure. It should also be noted that requests had been sent to the Attorney-General for O.P.P. to aid the one man police force at Point Edward but these requests were not acted upon until after the strike had been crushed.

in Ontario. I have no sympathy with them. In fact, I am more or less in sympathy with those who went in and ejected the strikers from the plant."<sup>5</sup> Though Hepburn talked of law and order it was clear that he was more interested in crushing militant labour; that is, he was not interested in justice being done to the mob of strike-breakers and in fact actually encouraged violence by sanctioning it in his statement.

Though he was a former U.F.O. member, Hepburn's rural social conservatism was pronounced. His experience with labour was limited to his Bannockburn farms, where a feudalistic client-patron relationship with workers provided him with no understanding of industrial disputes and the aims of organized labour. Hepburn's rhetoric was radical but his policies were not. On the whole he only paid lip service to supporting labour. His government's Industrial Standards Act and Minimum Wage Act were of limited benefit to labour without the presence of bona fide unions.<sup>6</sup> Hepburn expressed the claim that labour's struggle for higher wages was a threat to the primary industries like mining on which the province's economy depended. In fact there was a reason beyond this economic rationalization given by the Premier.

Hepburn had made use of his big-business and political friendships to win the premiership of Ontario. One of these friends was George McCullagh, publisher of The Globe and Mail and one-time broker, who had purchased a block of shares in Hyslop Gold Mines for himself and for Hep-

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5. The Globe and Mail, Mar. 5, 1937.

6. Ontario, Statutes of the Province of Ontario. 25 Geo. V (1935), Chap. 28.; Ontario, Statutes of the Province of Ontario. 1 Geo. VI (1937), Chap. 43.; The Worker, Mar. 9, 1935. There was an absence of positive labour legislation in Ontario. The Industrial Standards Act did not define the right of workers to choose their own unions and it did not outlaw company unions, instead it may have even encouraged them.

burn. (Of course, the latter's name did not appear anywhere in the transaction.) The stocks had done well and a good deal of money stood to be made. Hepburn was listening very closely to McCullagh's advice on both economic and political matters. This relationship partly explains the Premier's concern over the C.I.O. moving into the mining areas of Northern Ontario<sup>7</sup> and especially the establishment of a C.I.O. beachhead at Oshawa. A few days after the Sarnia incident Hepburn declared, "We are not going to tolerate [sit-down strikes] and I point that out to those people now in this country--professional agitators from the United States--to agitate and foment unrest in our industrial areas." In support of any municipality asking for aid, he promised "the full strength of the Provincial Police, if necessary, and other resources at the Government's disposal."<sup>8</sup> The issue of law and order and sit-downs was actually secondary. As records show, the direction of Hepburn's threat was clearly aimed at the auto workers of Oshawa in whose unionization he had taken an unusual interest.

As early as February 24, just a few days after Hugh Thompson's arrival in Canada, Hepburn had inquired of his friend Ian Mackenzie, Minister of National Defence, whether C.I.O. agents could be prevented from entering Canada. Conferences among Mackenzie, Labour Minister Norman Rogers and Mines and Resources Minister T.A. Crerar produced no immediate results.<sup>9</sup> Hepburn then ordered Attorney-General Arthur Roebuck to have Thompson kept under surveillance and to conduct a secret investigation in the hope that

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7. McKenty, *op.cit.*, pp. 92-104; Brian J. Young, "C. George McCullagh and the Leadership League," *The Canadian Historical Review*, Vol. XLVII, No. 3 (Sept., 1966), pp. 204-207.

8. *The Globe and Mail*, Mar. 8, 1937.

9. P.A.O., Hepburn Papers, M.F. Hepburn to Ian Mackenzie (telegram) Feb. 25, 1937; Ian Mackenzie to M.F. Hepburn (telegram), Feb. 25, 1937.

something could be discovered in order to force federal authorities to deport him.<sup>10</sup>

Once again Hepburn contacted the federal authorities. On March 3, he telephoned Crerar (whose department included the Immigration Branch) and asked him to exclude the organizers of the C.I.O. from Canada. Crerar wrote to Hepburn the following day to confirm what he had explained over the telephone. The substance of the explanation was that "accredited representatives of international trade unions" could not legally be excluded from Canada, under existing law, unless they encouraged illegal activities in this country. On March 5, Crerar sent to Hepburn a copy of a report by Inspector Collins of the Immigration Department on the activities of Hugh Thompson. Inspector Collins had examined the file on Thompson that was held by the Department of Labour at Queen's Park and after being unable to find anything that looked dangerous, proceeded to Oshawa and interviewed Thompson. Thompson was thirty-four, born in Ireland, had come to Canada in December, 1923, and remained there until 1934 when he was legally admitted to the United States where he married an American girl. He had re-entered Canada on February 19, 1937 and carried credentials showing himself to be a salaried official of the U.A.W. Hugh Thompson, according to his own testimony and that of the Chief Engineer of General Motors, had not "advocated a 'sit-down' strike nor anything else beyond the usual course that strikes ordinarily take in this country."<sup>11</sup>

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10. P.A.O., Hepburn Papers, Memorandum, Hepburn to Roebuck, Feb. 26, 1937; Abella, op.cit., p.116.

11. P.A.O., Hepburn Papers, T.A. Crerar to Hepburn, Mar. 4, 1937; T.A. Crerar to Hepburn, Mar. 5, 1937; Memorandum to Hon. Mr. Crerar, Mar. 5, 1937; P.A.C., King Papers, Memorandum for the Prime Minister, Re: Mr. Hepburn and the Federal Government by J.W. Pickersgill, Sept. 23, 1938.

Hepburn was foiled again but he did not give up. He went on vacation in Florida but was kept fully informed of events in Oshawa. On April 6, Hepburn's secretary, Roger Irwin, had informed Harry Nixon, Acting Minister of Labour, that negotiations had taken a turn for the worse and that a strike could be anticipated. Hepburn knew this and, following the claim of The Globe and Mail that the threat of a strike was more serious once the recognition of the C.I.O. affiliate became the central issue, he cut short his holiday and returned to Toronto.<sup>12</sup> With the tacit support of the Premier it was no wonder that General Motors had been holding out against recognition of the U.A.W.

The scene in Oshawa was quite; even the report from the provincial police in Oshawa detailed to keep Queen's Park informed stated that the strike had begun peacefully. It was clear, however, that the Premier was ignoring official sources of information. He relied on others, one being a lawyer in Oshawa connected with General Motors.<sup>13</sup>

Since Hepburn had only seventy-five trained provincial police available without impairing other necessary services throughout the province, he telephoned and telegraphed federal Justice Minister Ernest Lapointe. He requested the assistance of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police be made available to the provincial government to assist in the maintenance of law and order in strike areas, specifically Oshawa where he claimed the situation was "becoming very acute and violence anticipated any minute."<sup>14</sup> Lapointe responded by immediately ordering the dispatch of men

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12. P.A.O., Hepburn Papers, Memorandum to H.C. Nixon by Irwin, Apr. 6, 1937; McKenty, op.cit., p. 106.

13. The Toronto Daily Star, Apr. 8, 1937; McKenty, op.cit., p. 107.

14. P.A.C., Lapointe Papers, M.F. Hepburn to E. Lapointe (telegram). Apr. 8, 1937; P.A.C., King Papers, Memorandum for the Prime Minister,



to Toronto, with the expenses as usual to be paid by the province. At Lapointe's instance, however, instructions accompanying the men made it clear that the R.C.M.P. were to be kept in the background as much as possible and should occasion arise they should act "in support rather than taking initiative in any action that may become necessary." Hepburn was obviously not satisfied with the number of men being sent because he telephoned J.H. MacBrien, Commissioner of the R.C.M.P., and told him that "he believed that the main crisis may not come for two or three days." He wanted to know if the R.C.M.P. could supply further reinforcements. MacBrien informed him that sixty-seven men had already left for Toronto and thirty-three mounted men would join them at 7:30 the next morning. In addition, fifteen men from Toronto were being made available. MacBrien also told him that another hundred men could be concentrated in Toronto in two days' time but only Lapointe could authorize such a deployment.<sup>15</sup>

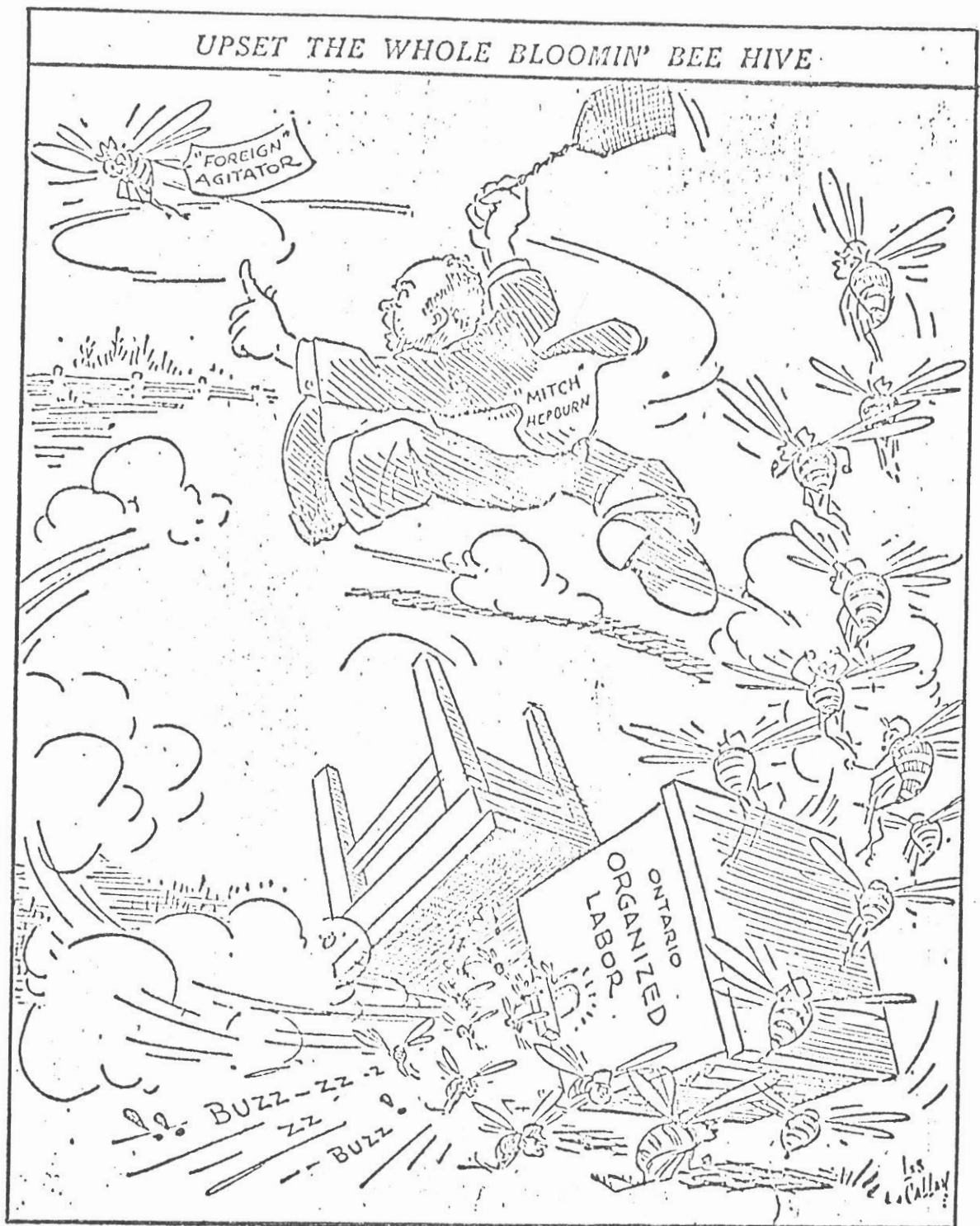
In contradiction of Croll's promise of relief to strikers the previous week, Hepburn declared a total war on the workers. He issued instructions to the Department of Public Welfare that relief was not to be granted to the strikers at the General Motors plant in Oshawa because he felt they "are rejecting the opportunity of work at fair wages and fair

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14. Continued from Page 155.

Re: Mr. Hepburn and the Federal Government by J.W. Pickersgill, Sept. 23, 1938; Hepburn thought he had a friend and ally in Lapointe after he had declared sit-down strikes to be illegal in Canada. P.A.C., Lapointe Papers, H.C. Nixon to E. Lapointe, Mar. 30, 1937; Hepburn even hoped to have some of the Toronto police force sworn in for use in Oshawa but the Mayor of Toronto objected to such a move. P.A.O., Hepburn Papers, Memorandum for the Prime Minister by John Miller, Apr. 8, 1937.

15. P.A.C., Lapointe Papers, E. Lapointe to M. Hepburn (telegram), Apr. 8, 1937; J.H. MacBrien to L.P. Picard, Apr. 12, 1937; J.H. MacBrien to the Officer Commanding R.C.M.P., Toronto, (radiotelegraph), Apr. 9, 1937; J.H. MacBrien to Lapointe, Apr. 8, 1937.



SOURCE: The Toronto Daily Star, Apr. 13, 1937.

hours and that, as a result, they need not look to the Government for relief assistance."<sup>16</sup>

All these moves were made by Hepburn without consulting his cabinet. Both Roebuck and Croll were on Easter holidays so Hepburn took charge of the government's negotiating team. During Thursday afternoon he held conferences with his cabinet colleagues, Labour Department executives and General Motors officials.<sup>17</sup> Totally ignoring the workers and the facts of the strike situation, he then issued a public statement that was almost a carbon copy of George McCullagh's lead editorial the next morning. Hepburn claimed the Oshawa strike was "the first open attempt on the part of Lewis and his C.I.O. to assume the position of dominating and dictating to Canadian industry.... We believe that the time for a showdown is at the start." Expressing the belief that the "impossible demands" of labour would result in the loss of Ontario's increasing auto export trade, Hepburn claimed that the government completely concurred in the company's opposition to the C.I.O. Then showing his real concern, Hepburn said, "We were advised only a few hours ago that they were working their way into the lumber camps, the pulp mills and our mines. Well, that has got to stop--and we are going to stop it. If necessary we'll raise an army to do so."<sup>18</sup>

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16. P.A.O., Hepburn Papers, Secretary to Miss N.H. Wark, Assistant Deputy Minister, Department of Public Welfare, Apr. 8, 1937; The Toronto Daily Star, Apr. 9, 1937.

17. The Globe and Mail, Apr. 9, 1937; P.A.O., Hepburn Papers, Memorandum for the Prime Minister by R.H.E., Apr. 8, 1937; Copy of statement by H.J. Carmichael, Apr. 8, 1937; McKenty, op.cit., p. 107.

18. The New York Times, Apr. 9, 1937; The Globe and Mail, Apr. 9, 1937; McKenty, op.cit., pp. 107-108.

At 2 p.m. on Thursday, Millard and the bargaining committee showed up at the General Motors head office for the continuance of negotiations as scheduled on Wednesday but the company officials were absent and there was no conference. The men returned to union headquarters and issued statements on the changing situation. Homer Martin had been expected for a mass meeting that night but had been unable to make it. Still, about 3,000 men packed O.C.V.I. auditorium. In reply to Hepburn's cutting off of relief, Hugh Thompson declared that the union had funds and though the international was too young to pay strike benefits, a relief allowance of no settled amount would be paid. "A committee will handle that question," he declared, "Money will come from international headquarters. No one will go hungry."<sup>19</sup> Norman Rogers had telephoned Thompson to tell him that the R.C.M.P. were being sent and public resentment quickly grew at this move.<sup>20</sup> Thompson got in touch with Mayor Alex Hall, claiming the R.C.M.P. were unnecessary and offering to provide the Mayor and Chief of Police O.D. Friend with extra men to police the town. This suggestion was commended by the mayor who felt that "outside police" interference would be bitterly resented by the men and might lead to disastrous consequences. That night at the mass meeting, Mayor Hall, who was also an Honorary Vice-President of the union, appeared on the platform and declared he wanted to be impartial. He then went on to say:

Mounted Police passed through Oshawa tonight.... In an hour's time 300 armed men can be here, in twenty-four hours 3,000 militia can be here. As I understand it, the enforcement of law and order and the punishment of disorder is the duty of a municipality. If

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19. The Toronto Daily Star, Apr. 9, 1937; P.A.O., Hepburn Papers Verbatim and Unedited Report of Address by C.D. Leslie, Organizer of The Rubber Workers, and Hugh Thompson, C.I.O. Organizer, Apr. 8, 1937.

20. The Oshaworker, May 18, 1967.

the position is ever reached when you men can't keep law and order, then reinforcements can be sent—but at our request.

The speaker was interrupted by a storm of applause. "Neither the Chief of Police nor I have made any such request for assistance," continued the Mayor. "You won't have to," shouted a striker. "I'm sure of it," responded the Mayor.<sup>21</sup> Thus it was clear that whatever were Hall's views on the strike and the union, he was not going to let Hepburn try to "bust the strike" with force and create a bloodbath.

Early on Friday afternoon Millard called Hepburn and told him that he would like to have a group of workers present their side of the story. The men went to Toronto, met Hepburn and Louis Fine and, though they went to talk primarily about wages, conditions and the like, a prospective settlement was hinted at. Hepburn decided to meet the General Motors executive in his office the next morning and in the afternoon Millard was to return with his delegation. Millard assured Hepburn that those going into the plant the next day for replacement parts for trucks and motor cars all over the province would not be molested. Even though Millard stated that "we expect recognition of our status in the international union," Hepburn seemed quite optimistic that a settlement would be reached. Shaking the hands of the delegation, Hepburn told the newspaper men, "These men have been quite reasonable in their demands, very reasonable in fact. I don't think we are very far apart now, and we know that there will be no disturbance." He even admitted, "I have a much better understanding

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21. The Globe and Mail, Apr. 9, 1937. Millard maintained that the Oshawa citizens were behind the strikers and that the union's only fear was that General Motors would attempt to reopen the plant before a settlement was reached with the union. He made it clear however, that "We would resent any one breaking faith by going back to the plant before a settlement is reached but we have no thought of using violence.", The New York Times, Apr. 9, 1937.

of the men's problems than I had before and I shall be able to deal with the situation more intelligently."<sup>22</sup>

This rainbow of peace which arose in the evening over Queen's Park soon faded before it reached Oshawa. Hugh Thompson declared that "the committee which visited Toronto had no power to discuss terms or reach an agreement. He [Millard] and that committee which visited Toronto had no power in the world, no right, to make a decision." Thompson also met with two or three hundred stewards in conference behind locked doors for nearly two hours. When he emerged he made a statement on the move by the company that day to ship out supplies from the Parts and Maintenance Division.

He said:

The stewards believe that anyone going to work at the request of General Motors are strike breakers, regardless of what they may think. Representatives of the union promise that these people will not be molested going into or out of the plant, if they wish to go to work, but after they leave the plant and return to their homes we will not take any responsibility for anything that may happen to them.

This statement drew comment from Mayor Hall who thought it "smacks strongly of a threat."<sup>23</sup> Hall contacted Constable A. Wilson of the O.P.P. who had been reporting to the provincial government on events in Oshawa. The mayor told him of what Thompson had said and believed he had sufficient grounds to have Thompson charged with intimidation. Wilson merely told Hall that he was responsible for law and order in Oshawa, that it would be up to him to see that any charges were laid and referred him to the

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22. The Toronto Daily Star, Apr. 10, 1937; The Globe and Mail, Apr. 10, 1937; The Oshawa Daily Times, Apr. 10, 1937.

23. The Toronto Daily Star, Apr. 10, 1937; Mayor Hall and Chief Friend had supported the move to ship parts on Friday and threatened to call the Provincial Government for police if any violence or intimidation was offered by pickets. P.A.O., Hepburn Papers, Secret Provincial Police Report from Constable A. Wilson, Apr. 9, 1937.



Crown Attorney and Deputy Attorney General for a decision on the nature of Thompson's utterances.<sup>24</sup> Once informed of the Mayor's objection, however, Thompson decided to take no chances and issued another statement.

Because of the danger of the statement I made earlier being misinterpreted, I want to retract it and I want to say that no one who wants to go to work in the plant will be molested at any time and if the workers request it we will provide an escort to see they reach their homes safely.

Thompson also stated that the stewards had made it clear that he was to be present as a committee member when they were to meet at Queen's Park the next day. Thompson had previously withdrawn because he thought a settlement was near but, now that the strike was on, he was back in a move to force recognition of the C.I.O. by the company. If there had been any disagreement between Millard and Thompson over the Queen's Park conference, it had been quickly patched up.<sup>25</sup>

Shortly after eleven o'clock on Saturday morning, H.J. Carmichael and J.B. Highfield met with Hepburn and Louis Fine. According to the press it was believed that the Premier would "advise company officials to sign the agreement with the union so long as Mr. Millard signs for the men and not Hugh Thompson, C.I.O. Organizer with whom the company has resolutely refused to do business." It was significant that it was the bargaining committee that left for Toronto with Hugh Thompson, not the five man committee that had seen Hepburn on Friday.<sup>26</sup> But when Hepburn discovered that Thompson was to attend, the negotiations collapsed like a pricked

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24. P.A.O., Hepburn Papers, Staff Inspector to the Commissioner (telephone report of A.S. Wilson), Apr. 10, 1937.

25. The Toronto Daily Star, Apr. 10, 1937.

26. Ibid.



balloon. The Premier refused point-blank to allow Thompson to be included in the deputation, or to meet him subsequently "under any circumstances." Thus the meeting was called off. Afterwards, Hepburn told the press, "Thompson is the issue in the strike right now...I will have nothing to do with any paid agitator from a foreign country...." He was still willing to act as a mediator but he insisted that the next move was up to the union which would have to send a new delegation without Thompson.<sup>27</sup>

After this abortive meeting the bargaining committee met Homer Martin, International President of the U.A.W., who had just flown in from Detroit. They motored to Oshawa where a crowd of over three thousand people had gathered at the city limits and formed the biggest parade ever witnessed in the city. Led by a band and stretching out for five blocks, it passed the Genosha Hotel and then wound around the strike bound local auto plants.<sup>28</sup> The character of this new movement and this new freedom was described by Felix Lazarus in the New Commonwealth.

Oshawa has fallen! One week ago it was known as "The Home of General Motors." Today it belongs to the United Automobile Workers, International Union. There is no doubt about that. The demonstration of welcome accorded Homer Martin...proved that beyond a shadow of a doubt.... Hundreds of cars tooting their horns simultaneously. Thousands of men, women and children cheering the passage of Mr. Martin's flag-bedecked car. Never in the history of the Canadian Labour movement has a town so completely been captured by the sentiment of trade unionism. And all in the space of six weeks! Eight weeks ago, the sentiment in this auto-company town was in direct contrast to that now prevailing. The common expression was that Oshawa is different, that it could never be organized, that General Motors is too powerful, that the workers in their Sunday best flaunt their union-buttons to the public eye and every second person one meets wears a button. This town has certainly gone union, and with a vengeance.<sup>29</sup>

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27. The Globe and Mail, Apr. 12, 1937; The New York Times, Apr. 12, 1937; The Oshawa Daily Times, Apr. 12, 1937.

28. Daily Clarion, Apr. 12, 1937; The Oshawa Daily Times, Apr. 12, 1937.

29. New Commonwealth, Apr. 17, 1937.

It was with such a spirit prevailing that Hugh Thompson was given a vote of confidence as a bargaining representative for the union by over 3,000 strikers who jammed O.C.V.I. auditorium that evening. In a fiery speech the bespectacled Homer Martin, a graduate of Yale and former Baptist minister, berated "Herr Hepburn," the "General Motors' puppet." In a soft drawling voice which rose in volume till it thundered, he declared:<sup>30</sup>

I don't care whether I meet the Premier or not. I'm not really interested in meeting him. I could go to almost any museum in the country and find mummies more advanced than he is. I'm going to meet General Motors and I'm going to see that an arrangement is made whereby your International representatives will meet with these great plant managers over here.... We only desire that the agreement reached in the United States shall apply to the plants in Canada, as was agreed to by Mr. Knudson and his representatives.

...The thing we want to say to you, without equivocation, is that the International is squarely behind you with every bit of resource and strength we have, and if they don't make cars in Canada under union conditions, they won't make them at all in the United States! <sup>31</sup>

While building the morale of the strikers, such language only fanned the flames of the dispute and further incensed Hepburn. Martin flew back to Detroit the next morning but he had left the workers with the impression that the strike was to be settled in the United States: that is, he claimed that the agreement signed with General Motors on February 11, included Canada and he threatened another General Motors strike in the United States if the company did not sign a Canadian contract.<sup>32</sup> Martin's arrival in

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30. Daily Clarion, Apr. 12, 1937; The New York Times, Apr. 12, 1937; The Globe and Mail, Apr. 12, 1937; McKenty, op.cit., p. 108.

31. U.A.W., Shultz Papers, Mr. Martin's Speech at Oshawa, Apr. 10, 1937.

32. The New York Times, Apr. 12, 1937; According to Martin, he understood that the agreement with G.M. included workers in Canada and he based that contention on a clause in the agreement entered into on Feb. 11, 1937. That clause read, "The corporation hereby recognizes the union as the collective bargaining agency for those employees of the corporation who are members of the union." Martin claimed, "Inasmuch as there were members of the union in the Canadian plant, we feel that the agreement of

Canada did, however, bring in its train a development which was hailed as a distinct achievement by union officials. The Oshawa local became affiliated with the Toronto District Trades and Labour Council. This move definitely made the U.A.W. a part of the recognized Canadian Labour movement.<sup>33</sup>

Though the strike situation was in deadlock, all avenues of negotiation were not closed. The issue of "the grave situation developing at Oshawa" had been raised on Friday by J.S. Woodsworth, the C.C.F. leader, who rose in the House of Commons and criticized Ernest Lapointe for sending R.C.M.P. to support a Premier who had already announced his support of General Motors. Answering a challenge of Angus MacInnis (C.C.F.) as to whether the Department of Labour was ready to help, Hon. Norman Rogers, Minister of Labour, said that all the resources of his Department were ready to assist in bringing about a peaceful settlement. However, he did not want to give the impression that his Department would directly interfere, particularly because Ontario had a mediation department of its own to deal with such matters.<sup>34</sup> Rogers wrote to Mayor Hall the same day and informed him that the conciliation services of his Department were available upon request but Hall would not approach the Dominion Department of Labour until he became convinced that help would have to be secured.<sup>35</sup>

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32. Continued from Page 164.

Feb. 11, is inclusive of Canadian workers and we will proceed on that assumption." The Toronto Daily Star, Apr. 13, 1937.

33. The Globe and Mail, Apr. 12, 1937.

34. Canada, Debates of the House of Commons, Vol. III, 1937, pp. 2811-2817. The Toronto Daily Star, Apr. 9, 1937.

35. P.A.C., King Papers, Memorandum for the Prime Minister, Re: Mr. Hepburn and the Federal Government by J.W. Pickersgill, Sept. 23, 1938.

On the evening of Monday, April 12, a meeting of three hundred stewards gave a unanimous vote of confidence to David Croll for his efforts at the beginning of negotiations and expressed "regret that he was not given a free hand to continue along the lines which he so well began." Since Premier Hepburn refused to recognize the bargaining committee chosen by the workers, they also went on record as accepting "the offer of the Dominion Government's Department of Labour as expressed through the Mayor of the city of Oshawa."<sup>36</sup> Rogers had stated to Hall that the services of his department were available "upon request of either of the parties to the dispute or upon your own request" but Rogers preferred to have both the union and the company make a request. Hall was trying to contact Carmichael and get his approval as well as the union's but was having no success. If General Motors remained firm in refusing to ask the federal Department of Labour to interfere, Hall stated that he was uncertain if he would act himself. It was clear that the company was unwilling to turn to federal authorities until it was sure their ally Hepburn was out of the negotiations. He was not, as events were to show.<sup>37</sup>

On Tuesday, Hepburn began a new phase of his campaign against the "C.I.O. menace." Despite a flow of police reports indicating

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35. Continued from Page 165.

Rogers' offer was made after Hepburn had requested the R.C.M.P. The Dominion government had, in other words, taken no step which could be fairly interpreted as an attempt to supercede the efforts of the provincial authorities. The Oshawa Daily Times, Apr. 12, 1937.

36. P.A.O., Hepburn Papers, W. Harmer, Secty, Local Union No. 222 to Premier Hepburn (telegram), Apr. 13, 1937; The Oshawa Daily Times, Apr. 13, 1937.

37. The Oshawa Daily Times, Apr. 13, 1937.

no apparent change in the rather peaceful strike situation in Oshawa,<sup>38</sup> Hepburn wired Ernest Lapointe at ten o'clock in the morning that the situation at Oshawa was becoming more intense and requested at least another hundred R.C.M.P. to be sent to Toronto in case of disorder. Lapointe replied that he had communicated with his colleagues and they were going to discuss the matter the following day before acting. But he made it clear that all possible help would be sent in case trouble actually broke out.<sup>39</sup> This reply did not satisfy the Premier, who sent a note to the Lieutenant Governor in Council recommending an amendment to the regulations governing the Ontario Provincial Police Force so that:

The Commissioner of Police for Ontario may appoint, from time to time, such Special Constables as he may deem necessary, and when so appointed such Special Constables shall have jurisdiction within any part of the Province of Ontario, and shall have and exercise the like powers, authorities and advantages, and be liable to the like duties and responsibilities, as any Provincial Constable within the Province of Ontario.<sup>40</sup>

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38. P.A.O., Hepburn Papers, Staff Inspector to the Commissioner, O.P.P. (Report of Constable A.S. Wilson), Apr. 10, 12, and 13th, 1937; The Toronto Daily Star, Apr. 13, 1937, noted that the only threat of violence on Tuesday came from outsiders. This threat took the form of car loads of provocateurs driving up to the picketers and trying to provoke fights. The picket lines were so orderly that an American cameraman even offered two picketers five dollars each if they would stage a mock fight. He was soon moved on by those who realized the implications of such a scene.; Interview with C.H. Millard.

39. P.A.C., Lapointe Papers, E. Lapointe to M. Hepburn (telegram), Apr. 13, 1937; P.A.C., King Papers, Memorandum for the Prime Minister, Re: Mr. Hepburn and the Federal Government by J.W. Pickersgill, Sept. 23, 1938.

40. P.A.O., Hepburn Papers, M.F. Hepburn to the Honorable The Lieutenant Governor in Council, Apr. 13, 1937; McKenty, op.cit., p. 109, thinks that Hepburn's action may have been influenced by George McCullagh who was afraid that federal intervention might cause G.M. to cave in on the crucial issue of C.I.O. recognition. See The Globe and Mail editorial of Apr. 14, 1937, entitled "Canada's Man of the Hour," In contrast, Abella, [The C.I.O., The Communist Party and the Formation of the Canadian Congress of Labour 1936-1941], op.cit., p. 117, claims that what prompted Hepburn to increase his pressure on the C.I.O. in Oshawa were not reports from Oshawa itself, but rather from his agents in Northern Ontario, which warned that



SOURCE: The Toronto Daily Star, Apr. 15, 1937.



Next, Premier Hepburn telegraphed Prime Minister Mackenzie King and protested against what he called "the unwarranted interference on the part of the Honourable Norman McL. Rogers, who projected himself into the strike issue and definitely played into the hands of the Tory Mayor of Oshawa, a dismissed official of this Government." Hepburn made it clear that even though he had not consulted with General Motors, he was "satisfied they will not be a party to such treachery." As far as he was concerned, "This action is quite in common with the treatment that this Government has received from most of your Ministers and in my opinion constituted an overt act."<sup>41</sup> King replied the same day, repeating Rogers' explanation, that the Department of Labour had no wish to interfere with the provincial authorities, and that the conciliation services were offered merely in the hope that they might prove helpful in reaching a settlement.<sup>42</sup>

The following day, Lapointe replied to Hepburn that the cabinet had considered his request for more R.C.M.P. and they had decided that "under existing circumstances having regard to our responsibilities in all parts of the Dominion it would not be advisable to withdraw a larger

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40. Continued from Page 167.

the C.I.O. was stepping up its activities amongst the gold miners of that area. See P.A.O., Hepburn Papers, Secret Police Reports, Constable C.W. Hitch, Timmins, Apr. 10, 14, and 16th, 1937; Inspector Creasy, Haileybury, Apr. 14, 1937.

41. P.A.O., Hepburn Papers, M.F. Hepburn to Right Hon. W.L. Mackenzie King (telegram), Apr. 13, 1937.

42. P.A.O., Hepburn Papers, W.L. Mackenzie King to Hon. Mitchell F. Hepburn (telegram), Apr. 13, 1937; P.A.C., King Papers, Memorandum for the Prime Minister, Re: Mr. Hepburn and the Federal Government by J.W. Pickersgill, Sept. 23, 1938; Early on Tuesday, Mayor Hall had telegraphed Rogers and asked him to act as conciliator and Rogers responded by sending E.N. Compton, an investigator for the Dominion Department of Labour, to Oshawa. The Globe and Mail, Apr. 14, 1937.



number of the members of the force from their present location."<sup>43</sup> That same day, Rogers gave an interview to the press in which he amplified the explanation of the previous offer made by his department and the Prime Minister also explained the position taken by the Dominion Government. It was stated that the Department of Labour declined to intervene on the invitation of the Mayor of Oshawa and the local union on the ground that the Ontario government did not desire the intervention of the federal conciliation services, and that intervention would, in consequence, probably complicate the situation.<sup>44</sup> The federal government was avoiding the Oshawa strike situation and Hepburn wanted to wash his hands of them. Thus, the next day, he telegraphed Lapointe and complained about the "vacillating attitude taken by your government with respect to federal assistance in case of illegal disturbances." We have decided to no longer depend on federal aid and will take responsibility of necessary action to preserve law and order.... I would request that you withdraw your Dominion police...."<sup>45</sup>

With the passage of his Order-in-Council amending the O.P.P. regulations, Hepburn set about creating his "Gestapo agency," commonly referred to in Oshawa as "Hepburn's Hussars" or the "Sons of Mitches." Two

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43. P.A.C., Lapointe Papers, E. Lapointe to Hon. M.F. Hepburn (telegram), Apr. 14, 1937.

44. P.A.C., King Papers, Memorandum for the Prime Minister, Re: Mr. Hepburn and the Federal Government by J.W. Pickersgill, Sept. 23, 1938.

45. P.A.C., Lapointe Papers, M.F. Hepburn to Hon. E. Lapointe (telegram), Apr. 15, 1937; P.A.C., King Papers, Memorandum for the Prime Minister, Re: Mr. Hepburn and the Federal Government by J.W. Pickersgill, Sept. 23, 1938. Hepburn revived his grievance against Lapointe and Crerar on May 29th., when the bill was received for the services of the R.C.M.P., which he had earlier agreed, on behalf of the province, to pay. He stated that the R.C.M.P. had been useless and that the Immigration authorities had refused to co-operate in excluding C.I.O. agitators from Canada.

hundred of these special constables were immediately sworn in and within a couple of days the size of the force was doubled to four hundred. The recruits came from veterans' organizations and in some cases university students were sworn in. These men were to be uniformed, trained, and paid twenty-five dollars per week while on call and were placed under the command of Colonel Fred Fraser Hunter, a Liberal M.L.A. Hepburn's public explanation for this special force was that they were necessary because he had "definite information that communists have moved into Oshawa to foment further trouble."<sup>46</sup> Again, Hepburn's statement was in direct contradiction of the secret reports he was receiving several times a day from Constable Wilson in Oshawa. Wilson had made it clear that there was "no interference or disorder and...that conditions were the best since the strike."<sup>47</sup> A concerned and annoyed Mayor Hall had even wired Hepburn and invited him to "visit this city without notice to see first hand behaviour of men and remarkable condition of law and order existing."<sup>48</sup> Hall even went further and checked with the police, who disproved Hepburn's

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46. The Globe and Mail, Apr. 14, 1937; Apr. 16, 1937; The Oshawa Daily Times, Apr. 14, 1937; The Toronto Daily Star, Apr. 14, 1937; A few days later, Hepburn announced that the force of 'specials' would not be disbanded, even after the Oshawa strike was settled. He would not disband them "until all possibility of outbreak in the province appears to be at an end" thus he would "not be dependent on the Dominion government to maintain law and order in this province." The Toronto Daily Star, Apr. 16, 1937.

47. P.A.O., Hepburn Papers, Staff Inspector to the Commissioner, O.P.P. (Secret report of Constable Wilson), Apr. 14, 1937.

48. P.A.O., Hepburn Papers, Mayor Alex C. Hall to Premier Mitchell Hepburn (telegram), Apr. 13, 1937; According to The New York Times, Apr. 17, 1937, Hepburn caused the Provincial Board of Censorship to stop the showing of news reels of the Oshawa strike anywhere in the Province. He explained that he did not intend to allow any propaganda from either side to be shown on the screen. Strike leaders protested against the censorship, saying that the pictures would show the "peaceful and Canadian nature of the strike."

claim. "It appears to me," said Hall, "that Premier Hepburn is attempting to build up a red bogey which would allow him to send troops to Oshawa."<sup>49</sup>

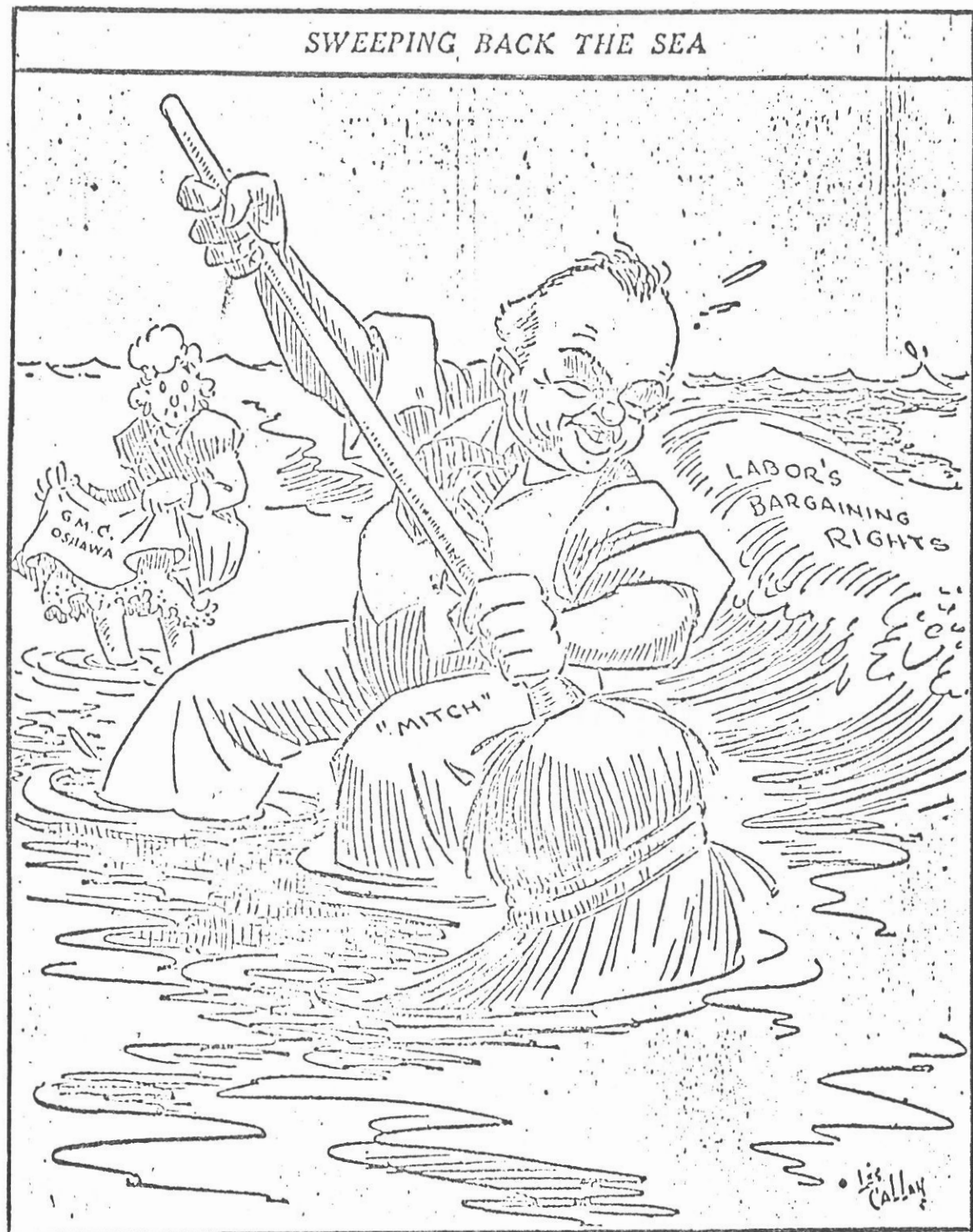
Hepburn would tolerate no opposition to his decisions; he demanded complete cabinet solidarity on the strike issue. In a dramatic way he took it upon himself to demand the resignation of two of his cabinet ministers who opposed his actions. The men were David A. Croll, Minister of Public Welfare, Municipal Affairs, and Labour, and Arthur Roebuck, Attorney-General, whom he charged with not being "in accord with the policy of the Government in fighting the inroads of the Lewis organization and Communism in general."<sup>50</sup> In announcing the move to the press, Hepburn stated: "This is a fight to the finish...we know that the Communists are standing by, by the thousands, ready to jump in at the first sign of disorder. If the C.I.O. wins in Oshawa, it has other plants it will step into. It will be in the mines, demoralize that industry and send stocks tumbling."<sup>51</sup> Croll and Roebuck submitted their resignations the same day. They made it clear that for the first few days of the strike they had been absent from Toronto and when they returned and offered their services, they were ignored by Hepburn until the day he demanded their resignations. Neither had broken cabinet solidarity but in resign-

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49. The Globe and Mail, Apr. 14, 1937; Mayor Hall had checked with the Deputy Attorney-General, Mr. R.A. Humphries, who said that it was the definite policy of the government that the maintenance of law and order within any municipality was entirely a municipal matter. The Oshawa Daily Times, Apr. 14, 1937; Yet, a week later Hepburn claimed, "The province has the right to step into a municipality at any time and assume policing of that municipality, even though a request for help has not been made by the local authorities." The Toronto Daily Star, Apr. 21, 1937.

50. P.A.O., Hepburn Papers, Hepburn to Croll, Apr. 14, 1937; Hepburn to Roebuck, Apr. 14, 1937; McKenty op.cit., p. 110, notes that McCullagh had promised to eliminate both Croll and Roebuck.

51. The Toronto Daily Star, Apr. 14, 1935.



SOURCE: The Toronto Daily Star, Apr. 16, 1937.

ing they both criticized Hepburn's stand and supported the strikers because as Croll put it, "In my official capacity I have travelled the middle of the road, but now that you have put the extreme alternative to me, my place is marching with the workers rather than riding with General Motors."<sup>52</sup> It was clear that Hepburn was too committed emotionally to his line of action even to brook the opposition implied by silence.

With all this political maneuvering, little attention was actually being paid to the workers on strike at Oshawa. They had put their faith in the International U.A.W. and Homer Martin, who was to confer with General Motors' officials in Detroit.<sup>53</sup> After the collapse of negotiations with the federal government, Mayor Hall decided to force an immediate showdown over support from the international union by issuing an "ultimatum" to Homer Martin to call a sympathy strike of the U.A.W. members in all the General Motors' plants in the United States by Monday. Failing this, Hall was going to advise "all Canadian workmen Monday night to abandon recognition of the international union idea."<sup>54</sup> The pressure was growing on Martin to react to Hall's ultimatum. Thus, after a day of negotiations, General Motors' officials in Detroit and the international executive of the U.A.W. jointly declared that the strike was to be settled between General Motors of Canada officials and the committees representing the various local unions involved.<sup>55</sup>

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52. P.A.O., Hepburn Papers, David Croll to Hon. M.F. Hepburn, Apr. 14, 1937; Hepburn assumed Croll's portfolio and Hon. Paul Leduc, Minister of Mines, became Attorney-General. The Toronto Daily Star, Apr. 14, 1937.

53. The New York Times, Apr. 13, 1937; The Globe and Mail, Apr. 13, 1937.

54. The Toronto Daily Star, Apr. 14, 1937.

55. The Oshawa Daily Times, Apr. 16, 1937; The New York Times, Apr. 16, 1937. Those at the conference were C.E. Wilson (Vice-President), H.W.

With this announcement of a seeming "surrender" by the C.I.O. of its "drive into Canada," a jubilant Premier Hepburn immediately wired C.H. Millard and his solicitor, J.L. Cohen, to meet the Government and H.J. Carmichael and J.B. Highfield in an eleven o'clock conference on Friday morning at Queen's Park. But as the union stewards had passed a resolution on Wednesday night asking the Premier to step out of the negotiations, Millard could make no definite commitments until the stewards met again. Thus, Millard called a stewards' meeting for Friday morning but it was postponed a couple of times till late afternoon and then the issue went before a general assembly meeting that night.<sup>56</sup> The cause of the delays was Homer Martin who arrived from Detroit to explain the position of the international. The strikers' enthusiasm for Martin had not waned; more than 3,000 cheering men greeted him as he arrived at the railway station and then paraded in columns of four, headed by their own band, to union headquarters.<sup>57</sup> That night, Martin explained the developments in Detroit to the workers. First, the conference had laid down certain fundamentals which were to be the basis of a final settlement in Oshawa and the other plants affected by the strike. With the workers, General Motors' executives, and the public finally being aware of this, there could no longer be any question as to whether the International Union

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55. Continued from Page 174.

Anderson (Director of Industrial Relations), and Floyd Tanner (Director of Manufacturing) for the corporation; Homer Martin (President), Ed Hall and Wyndham Mortimer (Vice-Presidents), for the U.A.W.

56. The Globe and Mail, Apr. 16, 1937; P.A.O., Hepburn Papers, M.F. Hepburn to C.H. Millard (telegram), Apr. 15, 1937; The Oshawa Daily Times, Apr. 16, 1937.

57. The Toronto Daily Star, Apr. 16, 1937; The Oshawa Daily Times, Apr. 16, 1937.



was involved in negotiations. Second, local unions of the U.A.W. were to be recognized and dealt with for the purposes of collective bargaining; and then after recognition had taken place, the various local plant managers would agree to negotiate an amicable agreement and sign it. Also, upon resumption of work, seniority as discussed at Detroit would apply in Canada and whatever agreement might be reached in Canada was to run concurrently with the agreement in the United States. This basis of negotiations outlined by Martin was to be subject to local approval. Martin made it plain that he was not interested in whether Hepburn mediated or not, he was interested only in dealing with General Motors. However, he was willing to meet the Premier at any time.<sup>58</sup>

Carmichael had bluntly made it clear that General Motors of Canada, Ltd. would not negotiate unless the men went back to work or Premier Hepburn was present at any negotiations. Thus, Hepburn's original offer on Thursday to Millard was accepted at the union membership meeting on Friday night. Martin was not to be a party to negotiations but was to remain in Oshawa and address the workers on Saturday afternoon at a mass rally in Memorial Park. Even Hugh Thompson was not going to intrude, as he had withdrawn in favour of J.L. Cohen, a Toronto labour lawyer, who was going to be counsel for the international union at the conference arranged for two o'clock on Saturday afternoon.<sup>59</sup>

At ten o'clock on Saturday morning, Homer Martin conferred by long

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58. U.A.W., Shultz Papers, Mr. Martin's Speech at Oshawa, Apr. 16, 1937.

59. The Globe and Mail, Apr. 17, 1937; P.A.O., Hepburn Papers, J.L. Cohen to Premier M.F. Hepburn (telegram), Apr. 17, 1937; M.F. Hepburn to J.L. Cohen (telegram), Apr. 18, 1937; J.L. Cohen was an experienced negotiator and able to provide the union with his much needed expertise. Interview with C.H. Millard.



distance telephone in a conference hook-up with the presidents of all forty-five U.A.W. locals in General Motors plants in the United States. Martin made them aware of the situation in Oshawa and they expressed themselves as being in unanimous support of the Canadian workers.<sup>60</sup>

In Toronto, while the General Motors' executives were in the Premier's own office, Millard and Cohen were admitted to the office of Hepburn's private secretary. After about ninety minutes of preliminary negotiations the way had almost been cleared for formal settlement conferences. During the discussions the Premier presented Cohen with a document to sign. It referred to Cohen and Millard as members of a local union without any defined identity and also that the union was not in any way connected with the "International C.I.O." Cohen objected by explaining that the term "International C.I.O." had no meaning and suggested that to describe the union inaccurately would be unfair to the Premier himself, as it would tend to suggest that the statement had been forced upon the parties. Instead, Cohen suggested putting in the document the statement that neither Millard nor he was retained by the C.I.O. because Millard's appointment and instructions came from the U.A.W. Premier Hepburn, who was continually going back and forth to his private office to confer with General Motors' officials, said the latter would not accept this phrase. Cohen on the other hand, declined to describe the union "in garbled fashion" and suggested a formula for getting around it at the moment. The phrase, "the organized workers of General Motors in Canada," was finally incorporated in the actual document.<sup>61</sup>

Premier Hepburn had already permitted Cohen to call Homer Martin

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60. The Globe and Mail, Apr. 19, 1937; The Oshawa Daily Times, Apr. 19, 1937.

61. The Toronto Daily Star, Apr. 19, 1937.

at Oshawa about this document. Later, after showing it to Millard and to Thompson who was in attendance, Cohen attempted to call Martin again to clear up related matters of seniority, duration of agreement and separate agreements for each plant which had been negotiated previously at Detroit and had now arisen and required further elaboration. It was necessary to get to a telephone quickly, any telephone. The nearest pay telephone booth in the parliament buildings was downstairs near the main entrance. It was a Saturday afternoon and most of the office telephones were dead. It was then that a newspaperman, one among many who crowded an anti-room, suggested that Cohen use the direct outside telephone in the "vault." On that suggestion Cohen, Millard and Thompson acted.<sup>62</sup> But before the call was complete, Premier Hepburn, his face flushed with anger, interrupted. "Is this another long-distance call?" he demanded of Cohen. "Yes," the lawyer replied. "Then that ends it," the Premier snapped. "Good afternoon. I'll have no more of this remote control." He swung about and strode to his office. The unionists stood in the doorway trying to comprehend what had happened.<sup>63</sup> Hepburn later claimed that the vault contained important government documents and his private files. However, when the men entered the vault, they thought they had left the Premier's office. Though the room had a vault door and a number of filing cabinets, it was large and furnished with tables, chairs, a wash basin and an electric cooking plate. Clerks used it every afternoon to make tea and newspapermen had already used the phone. To Hugh Thompson it looked more "like a coffee shop, with reporters sitting around the place drinking tea." It was hardly a place in which only the closest associates of the Premier

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62. The Globe and Mail, Apr. 19, 1937; The Toronto Daily Star, Apr. 19, 1937.

63. The Globe and Mail, Apr. 19, 1937.

were permitted to enter.<sup>64</sup>

For the second time Hepburn had slammed shut the door on any immediate hope of a settlement. Considering that the Premier had concurred in Cohen's first call, the charge of "remote control" seemed just an excuse to end negotiations. He wanted to break the C.I.O. at Oshawa and forestall any moves into the mines of Northern Ontario, a strategy that had always been in his mind and an issue on which he was continually receiving reports. As he emphatically declared, "Let me tell Lewis and his gang, here and now, that they'll never get their greedy paws on the mines of Northern Ontario as long as I'm Prime Minister."<sup>65</sup>

After the "vault incident," Hepburn refused to deal with the "hirelings of Lewis" and called "upon the workers of General Motors plants to organize and send to this office men who truly represent General Motors employees."<sup>66</sup> Perhaps one of the reasons behind this renewed bitterness was his claim that C.H. Millard had now identified himself with "the double-crossing treachery" of the C.I.O. agents. Apparently it had been Millard who had actually instigated the last set of negotiations. Allen Griffiths had telephoned W.H. Moore, M.P., and set-up a meeting with Millard and several others who persuaded him to arrange a deal whereby Hepburn would invite General Motors representatives and Millard and Cohen to a conference. It was a face-saving move on the part of Millard which Hepburn agreed to keep confidential and he did so until the "vault incident" on Saturday afternoon. The whole incident was too good for Hepburn to

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64. The Toronto Daily Star, Apr. 19, 1937.

65. The Globe and Mail, Apr. 19, 1937.

66. The Toronto Daily Star, Apr. 19, 1937; The Oshawa Daily Times, Apr. 19, 1937.

keep secret.<sup>67</sup>

In the meantime the workers were left to mark time, waiting calmly for the next move. Amongst the union men there was not talk of a long strike and committees were being set up to meet the eventualities. A stewards' meeting decided unanimously that they preferred financial support from the international union rather than a sympathy strike in the United States plants.<sup>68</sup>

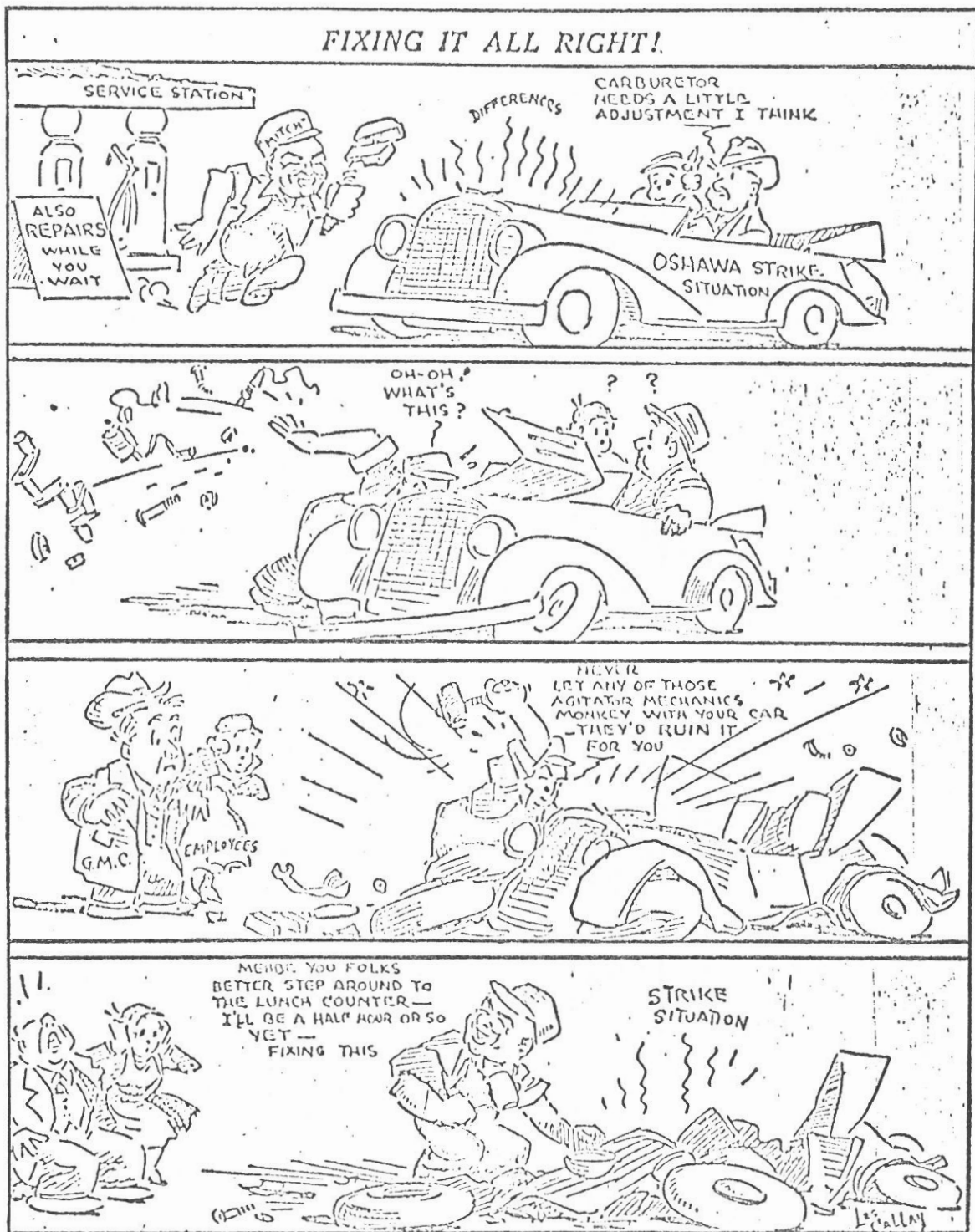
Homer Martin had set out for Flint, Michigan, after addressing the workers at Oshawa on Saturday afternoon, but had flown only thirty miles out of Toronto when he ordered the pilot to turn back. He had made up his mind to deal with the new situation. He telephoned to Detroit and spoke with C.E. Wilson, Vice-President of General Motors, and delivered an ultimatum that he would order a walk-out of the 110,000 workers at the General Motors plants in the United States by Tuesday unless the company did something to settle the Oshawa strike. As far as the U.A.W. was concerned, General Motors had already broken two agreements: the original agreement signed on February 11, 1937, and the agreement made the previous Thursday in Detroit regarding recognition of the local union in Oshawa.<sup>69</sup> Martin also called Thompson, Cohen, Millard and the bargaining committee

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67. The Globe and Mail, Apr. 19, 1937; P.A.O., Hepburn Papers, Statement by W.H. Moore, M.P., Apr. 19, 1937. According to Millard's side of the story, a man who worked for The Oshawa Daily Times had approached him. This man called Millard up one evening and wanted him to go up to the King Edward Hotel in Toronto and see Hepburn before he would "get into his cup" so to speak because at that time Hepburn was afflicted with alcoholism. It seemed Hepburn had a proposal to make but Millard did not go because he did not trust Hepburn and he did not want to lose the confidence of the union members. Interview with C.H. Millard.

68. The Toronto Daily Star, Apr. 19, 1937.

69. The New York Times, Apr. 18, 1937.



SOURCE: The Toronto Daily Star, Apr. 20, 1937.

to a conference at a Toronto hotel at ten o'clock that night. The men drove to Toronto and talked for three hours before Martin finally left for Flint by aeroplane early the next morning. No statement was issued but the men were assured of international support.<sup>70</sup>

On Monday, Martin flew into Washington from Flint to attend a special meeting of the General Executive Board of the U.A.W. It became clear that Martin's ultimatum to Wilson was not final. The international was faced with a decision between two alternatives. One would be a general strike of the 110,000 union men in General Motors' plants of the United States and the other would be a definite promise of sufficient financial support to enable the Oshawa workers to carry on their own strike indefinitely. U.A.W. Local 222 favoured the latter course of action. Also, John L. Lewis, President of the C.I.O., was against strikes except as a last resort and the U.A.W. had only recently won an agreement with General Motors and had little desire for a new strike with union funds depleted.<sup>71</sup>

Martin made his report to the Board and stated that he was "personally against a sympathetic strike to help the Canadian situation" because "we would be jeopardizing our entire union." Walter Reuther suggested that the "General Executive officers endeavor to have local unions terminate the General Motors Strike on the basis of a temporary agreement and that said temporary Canadian agreement be in effect until the termination of the U.S. General Motors Agreement, and when a U.S. General Motors Agreement is negotiated, all Canadian General Motors plants be included in this new agreement." It was clear that the strike would have to be

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70. The Toronto Daily Star, Apr. 19, 1937.

71. Ibid.

settled by the Oshawa local; however, the General Executive Board went on record as authorizing the General Officers to "give financial support to the Canadian strike, and to do everything within their power to negotiate an amicable settlement as soon as possible, even though the International Union is not recognized in the final settlement."<sup>72</sup>

To make the decision public, Martin wired Thompson in Oshawa that the Board had "unanimously voted necessary financial aid."<sup>73</sup> Martin explained that the money would be collected through the union locals in the General Motors plants in the United States but would be handled through the General Executive.<sup>74</sup> Beyond this the international did little except keep itself informed of events which Martin reported were moving towards a settlement.<sup>75</sup> On Wednesday, April 21, Martin telegraphed Local 222, "Finishing business in Washington and leaving later in the day for Oshawa. Will stay there on job until settlement. Money is coming through through [sic] the international union and locals in U.S.A."<sup>76</sup> Not one cent of aid actually came,<sup>77</sup> and though Hugh Thompson made statements in Oshawa

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72. U.A.W., Addes Papers, Minutes of Special General Executive Board Meeting, Apr. 19, 1937.

73. U.A.W., Thompson Papers, Homer Martin to Hugh Thompson and Officers and Members of Local 222 (telegram), Apr. 20, 1937.

74. The Toronto Daily Star, Apr. 21, 1937.

75. U.A.W., Addes Papers, Minutes of General Executive Board Meetings, Apr. 20, 21, 23, 1937.

76. The Toronto Daily Star, Apr. 21, 1937.

77. Abella, ["The C.I.O., The Communist Party and the Formation of the Canadian Congress of Labour"], op.cit., p. 118; If the strike had been prolonged financial aid might have actually been sent as the General Executive Board stated. A levy on U.A.W. locals would have taken time to implement and the strike ended a few days after aid was promised. However, such aid from the U.A.W. seems only theoretical. According to C.H. Millard, the irresponsible Homer Martin had made commitments about strike aid which



that money had arrived, "it was intimated that relief funds of the local union were being used to stave off the immediate demands."<sup>78</sup>

After nearly two weeks of strike, the company was anxious to resume production and the union, which was completely bankrupt, was desperate for a solution.<sup>79</sup> Thus, without Premier Hepburn's apparent knowledge, General Motors and the union began "remote control" negotiations. Early on Monday, Mayor Hall called Hugh Thompson and told him that he was going to go through with his intended address to the strikers that night. Thompson suggested that, instead of doing this, he step in where Hepburn had failed and attempt negotiations with General Motors. Hall agreed and all day long he rushed back and forth from the General Motors office to Hugh Thompson's room in the Genosha Hotel. As a result the company did agree to accept the conditions established by Homer Martin in Detroit as a basis for further negotiations: seniority, agreements with the local unions of Oshawa, St. Catharines and Windsor, and concurrent in length with the agreement made with General Motors in the United States by the U.A.W. They also agreed to time, wage and other conditions but did not agree to sign before the men returned to work. It was here that this step towards a settlement broke down.<sup>80</sup>

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77. Continued from Page 183.

Hugh Thompson knew the union was in no position to give. Interview with C.H. Millard.

78. The Globe and Mail, Apr. 22, 1937.

79. Abella, ["The C.I.O., The Communist Party and the Formation of the Canadian Congress of Labour"], op.cit., p. 118. G.M. was very interested in its production for the Empire markets.

80. The Toronto Daily Star, Apr. 20, 1937; Apr. 21, 1937. Hall later stated that Highfield knew he was dealing with Thompson.; C.H. Millard claims that local business men had been pressuring Hall to try and end the strike. This may partially account for his involvement. Interview with C.H. Millard.

To test the men's reaction, Thompson said that the agreement reached was satisfactory, but when he presented it to the bargaining committee they, with one exception, definitely turned it down. Then, before an emotion charged mass meeting of over 3,000 union members in O.C.V.I. auditorium, the Mayor got up to speak. At first they booed him but were quieted by a wave of Thompson's hand. Hall delivered an impassioned appeal to the men to accept General Motors' offer but an uproar ensued when he told them that the company wanted them to return to work first. The men definitely objected. They were going to hold out for a signed agreement and a deafening roar of "ayes" supported a motion demanding one. In his plan to prove that the international union had hoodwinked the men, Hall had dramatically lost to Thompson who, Hall charged the next day, had duped him and hatched a "scheme which prevented union men from showing their true feelings on the strike situation."<sup>81</sup>

On Tuesday morning Thompson again took the initiative and told Millard to call Highfield and find out if the company still wished to negotiate. Highfield accepted the offer and a meeting was set for 2 p.m. in the board room of the company's general office. Millard and the bargaining committee were to attend and Hugh Thompson was to stay at his hotel. The meeting did not take place however, because Millard requested a postponement to give the union officials further time to discuss their position.<sup>82</sup>

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81. The Globe and Mail, Apr. 21, 1937; The Toronto Daily Star, Apr. 20, 1937; The Oshawa Daily Times, Apr. 20, 1937; Apr. 21, 1937. Members of the bargaining committee denied Hall's charges and stated that their responses were not prearranged.

82. The Toronto Daily Star, Apr. 20, 1937; The Oshawa Daily Times, Apr. 20, 1937.

Though morale was high, there were signs that the solid strike front was starting to crack. At about noon that same day, a dozen or so men, claiming to represent those employees of General Motors at Oshawa who wanted to accept the company's offer and return to work, held a secret conference with Premier Hepburn. They wanted to accept the conditions outlined by Mayor Hall the previous night and claimed that they spoke for 1,000 or 1,200 workers, although they admitted that these were non-union employees.<sup>83</sup> Perhaps it was this meeting and knowledge that the union was in need of financial support that prompted Hepburn to resort to the extraordinary action of contacting Colonel R.S. McLaughlin, President of General Motors of Canada Limited, who was aboard the "Queen of Bermuda" and homeward bound from a holiday.<sup>84</sup> Hepburn's wireless read: "Would urgently request that you advise Carmichael to suspend any negotiations with strikers until your return Thursday morning. Would also ask you to give no statements regarding situation until I have had a chance to confer with you. Confidential reports indicate total collapse of strike imminent."<sup>85</sup>

There was a new turn of events the next day. The company decided to take a hard line again when Millard, after several unsuccessful attempts to contact Highfield, was finally put in touch with Carmichael who insisted that the men either return to work or negotiate through Premier Hepburn. Millard sounded out opinion on the matter and agreed to hold a conference in the Premier's office. J.L. Cohen at once telephoned the

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83. The Toronto Daily Star, Apr. 20, 1937.

84. McKenty, op.cit., p. 112; The Oshawa Daily Times, Apr. 21, 1937.

85. P.A.O., Hepburn Papers, M.F. Hepburn to R.S. McLaughlin (wireless), Apr. 20, 1937.

Premier and set an appointment for 2:30 p.m. that afternoon to discuss the basis of negotiations.<sup>86</sup> After three and one-half hours of continuous and separate conferences by the Premier with Cohen and Carmichael, Mr. Cohen issued a statement "that Mr. Millard and he represented the employees of General Motors at Oshawa" and that he gave assurances to the Premier "that neither he nor Mr. Millard were instructed by, or represented the Committee known as C.I.O." This was the simple truth, both being merely representatives of the U.A.W. Cohen also stated that Hugh Thompson would not participate in the negotiations or be in the buildings where the conference was to be held. Finally, Cohen declared that he had definite word from Mr. Martin that neither he nor Mr. Thompson would be returning to Toronto or Oshawa during the negotiations.<sup>87</sup> It had been reported that Martin was returning to Oshawa but he failed to appear. Hugh Thompson had left that evening (Wednesday) for Washington to confer with John L. Lewis and Homer L. Martin regarding the strike situation and in particular the issue of financial support for the strikers.<sup>88</sup>

The C.I.O. had not made a complete retreat. Tension was maintained by the arrival of Claude R. Kramer, an official of the U.A.W. from Massilon, Ohio, who registered at the Genosha Hotel and who had been in touch with Thompson and the union stewards. As a secret report on Kramer

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86. The Toronto Daily Star, Apr. 21, 1937. C.H. Millard claims that the union leaders were anxious for a settlement; that they would rather accept partial recognition than lose the strike and union completely because the local was still too immature to endure a prolonged struggle. As far as official recognition of the U.A.W. was concerned, it was something that could be won at a later date. Interview with C.H. Millard.

87. P.A.O., Hepburn Papers, Minutes of Meeting, Apr. 22, 1937; The Toronto Daily Star, Apr. 22, 1937; The Globe and Mail, Apr. 22, 1937.

88. The Toronto Daily Star, Apr. 21, 1937; The Oshawa Daily Times, Apr. 21, 1937.

noted:

The feeling in Union headquarters as voiced...by many men at 3:20 is that C.I.O. is still dominant in picture. They say even if negotiating committee agree to local settlement barring C.I.O. they at mass meeting will take matters out of hands of negotiating committee and hold out for recognition of International Union. Kramer's being here certainly holds potential dynamite.<sup>89</sup>

Kramer's mission remained a mystery and the C.I.O. issue seemed to fizzle out like the strike itself. As another report stated, the men were "reluctant to believe that Thompson has let them down completely" and were "suspicious of any statements that are not made or confirmed by their own officials." Finally,

A good many feel that their best policy is to complete negotiations with the company on the best terms available at this time and leave in abeyance the question of C.I.O. recognition until the expiry date of agreements in the United States, at which time they hope a new agreement will be made between the General Motors corporation and the union, on behalf of the plants in both Canada and United States.

Most employees interviewed still feel that eventually they are going to get some recognition of their union.<sup>90</sup>

It was "pay day" at the plant of a deferred pay and a large number of men were cashing their cheques. The strikers were not suffering in pocket or stomach any more than if they had been at work because they would not have been paid until this day anyway. Thus with this pay, the strikers could, theoretically, have stayed out for another two weeks without any strike relief. Generally it seemed as if the great majority of people were "simply waiting patiently the outcome of the conference in Toronto."<sup>91</sup>

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89. P.A.O., Hepburn Papers, Lorne to Queen's Park (telegram), Apr. 22, 1937; The Oshawa Daily Times, Apr. 22, 1937.

90. P.A.O., Hepburn Papers, Memorandum on Oshawa situation, Apr. 22, 1937.

91. The Oshawa Daily Times, Apr. 22, 1937; The Toronto Daily Star, Apr. 22, 1937; It should be noted that the workers had been paid just before the strike started.

On Thursday morning the bargaining committee, headed by C.H. Millard, drove to Toronto and conferred with J.L. Cohen in preparation for the meeting that was to take place that afternoon in Hepburn's office.<sup>92</sup> Hepburn had been upset by Kramer's arrival and before negotiations started, Cohen and Millard were required to sign a document stating that they did not know him, that neither had consulted him or intended to discuss the agreement with him. Then, following four and a half hours of negotiations, Hepburn announced that "a complete agreement" had been reached.<sup>93</sup> He immediately wired Defence Minister Ian Mackenzie and obtained the use of the armouries in Oshawa for use by the strikers to vote on the agreement. That night a meeting of stewards enthusiastically expressed themselves in favour of the agreement.<sup>94</sup>

On Friday morning a mass meeting of strikers voted by secret ballot and by an overwhelming margin of 2,205 to 36 decided to accept the agreement. The union bargaining committee and counsel left immediately for Queen's Park where the agreement was formally signed. The strike was over and the men were to return to work on Monday. Police Chief Friend congratulated the men on their conduct during the strike. "There was no law-breaking, not one drunken driver, not one assault, not one burglary," and there were no arrests except a vagrant seeking a night's lodging who asked to be locked up at the police station. The tents used by pickets were struck, boxing bouts were laid on for the afternoon and a dance was

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92. The Toronto Daily Star, Apr. 22, 1937.

93. P.A.O., Hepburn Papers, Minutes of Meeting, Apr. 22, 1937; Statement made by Prime Minister M.F. Hepburn, Apr. 22, 1937; McKenty, op.cit., p. 113. The Globe and Mail, Apr. 23, 1937.

94. P.A.O., Hepburn Papers, M.F. Hepburn to Hon. Ian Mackenzie (telegram), Apr. 22, 1937; Ian A. Mackenzie to Hon. Mitchell F. Hepburn (telegram), Apr. 22, 1937. The Globe and Mail, Apr. 23, 1937.



planned for that night. The city celebrated and Mayor Hall said that he would immediately see about opening the beverage rooms.<sup>95</sup>

All sides claimed a victory in the semantic war which followed. The workers had achieved many of their basic aims on matters that really counted, even though the contract was what was termed in labour circles as a "bare-bones bastard agreement." (See APPENDIX C.) On the central issue of recognition of U.A.W. Local 222 and the C.I.O. over which so much of the political squabbling had occurred, only one thing was clear: that the crucial clause in the contract signed by Millard and others read, "This agreement covering the Oshawa Factory of the company is signed by the union employees hereunder who signed on behalf of themselves and their successors in office representing the employees of the company who are members of the local union."<sup>96</sup>

To Homer Martin and Hugh Thompson, who returned to Oshawa<sup>97</sup> to address a victory celebration, the matter was clear. They maintained that the C.I.O. had not been repudiated because Millard and the bargaining

95. The Oshawa Daily Times, Apr. 23, 1937; The Toronto Daily Star, Apr. 23, 1937; McKenty, op.cit., p. 114; The Globe and Mail, Apr. 24, 1937; The Evening Telegram, Apr. 24, 1937.

96. P.A.O., Hepburn Papers, Copy of the agreement with General Motors, April, 1937; This pattern of collective bargaining written with a local but omitting mention of the international, continued for all agreements of the U.A.W. unions in Ontario until the war. Veres, op.cit., p. 32; Agreements similar to that with Local 222 were signed within a few weeks between new Local 199 at St. Catharines and McKinnon Industries Ltd., (a G.M. subsidiary) and between the new amalgamated Local 195 at Windsor and various firms there including Kelsey-Hayes Wheel Co. and a branch of G.M. Chrysler, though conceding the union a place in presenting the workers' grievances, signed no agreement at this time. With this, the first impressive drive of the U.A.W. came to an end. Logan, op.cit., pp. 234-235.

97. Hepburn tried once again but without success to have Crerar exclude Martin and Thompson from Canada because "it is known they are members of organization in United States whose acts have been wholly illegal." P.A.O., Hepburn Papers, M.F. Hepburn to Hon. T.A. Crerar (telegram), Apr. 23, 1937; T.A. Crerar to M.F. Hepburn (telegram), Apr. 25, 1937.



committee were members of the U.A.W., the Oshawa union was a U.A.W. local and therefore a C.I.O. affiliate. Before 2,000 auto workers, Thompson declared, "The strike was not settled at Queen's Park. It was settled at Grand Boulevard and Woodward Avenue, Detroit, between a foreign corporation and foreign agitators." He claimed that Martin had been conferring with General Motors while the conference was under way in Toronto and that Martin knew in advance what the terms of the settlement would be.<sup>98</sup> Charles Millard, the local's President, also made his claim. "The agreement is with the local union. I know and they know and the world knows that the union has been recognized. All of this business of trying to avoid saying so in so many words is just child's play."<sup>99</sup> But to Mitch Hepburn, George McCullagh and General Motors, the agreement was "a victory for those opposed to Lewisism." Because neither the U.A.W. nor the C.I.O. was mentioned (many failed to note that the agreement was to run concurrently with the contract signed between the U.A.W. and G.M. in the U.S.) the contract represented only an agreement between General Motors of Canada and its employees at Oshawa. As a Globe and Mail editorial claimed. "No matter what false and filmsy claims may be put forth by Lewis agents and their comrades the Reds, the C.I.O. is repudiated." In spite of all these semantics the U.A.W.-C.I.O. had gained de facto if not de jure recognition in Oshawa.<sup>100</sup>

Premier Hepburn had hoped for the "complete repulsion of the C.I.O. invasion" of Canada's major industries but instead of inflicting a "clear

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98. The Globe and Mail, Apr. 26, 1937.

99. Cited in McKenty, op.cit., p. 114.

100. The Globe and Mail, Apr. 24, 1937; Apr. 26, 1937; McKenty, op.cit., p. 115.

cut defeat" he had merely succeeded in "holding it at arm's length." No sooner had the Oshawa strike ended than the C.I.O. had formulated a new program. Ontario was to be split up into four zones and headquarters were to be established at Buffalo where Hugh Thompson would direct operations. Charles Millard, because of the publicity he received during the strike, now became number one C.I.O. organizer in Canada. The workers in Oshawa had taken on the most powerful corporation in the world and one of the most anti-labour governments in the country. That force which had been growing for years was finally let loose on the community. It had made its mark on the economic sphere and could make it on the political one as well. The success of the Oshawa unionists inspired other workers throughout Canada and thus gave the C.I.O. the impetus it needed to commence an organization of the mass production industries. The Oshawa strike had created the necessary psychology of success; thus it proved to be a landmark in Canadian labour history.<sup>101</sup>

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101. The Financial Post, May 8, 1937; The Globe and Mail, Apr. 26, 1937; Abella, ["The C.I.O., The Communist Party and the Formation of the Canadian Congress of Labour 1936-1941"], op.cit., p. 119; Abella claims the role of the C.I.O. in the Oshawa Strike was ambiguous. "The C.I.O. played no actual role, except in the minds of Hepburn, the mine owners, and more importantly, in the minds of the strikers themselves." The mystique of success about the C.I.O. doomed national unions in Canada. "Though the victory at Oshawa was a victory for Canadians, it was immediately hailed across the country as a great C.I.O. triumph. Because Hepburn had defined the enemy at Oshawa as the C.I.O., the C.I.O. was given full credit for a victory it had done little to win." Abella, ["The C.I.O.: Reluctant Invaders"], op.cit., p. 22.

## CHAPTER VIII "WHICH SIDE ARE YOU ON--?"

The man who takes it upon himself to decide what kind of a union you want is aping Hitler and Mussolini. Hepburn did not get his trade union policy from Great Britain or Australia or New Zealand. He got it from Germany and Italy. He rates as Ontario's Number One Foreign Agitator.<sup>1</sup>

As each day passes it becomes more apparent that oceans are no longer a barrier to plagues from Europe. In earlier days disease was brought to the shores of North America by rats aboard ships. Today human rats are spreading the scourge of fascism in Canada and America, but we still have time to stamp it out by the simple process of "election fumigation." Many of our good brains are today walking the streets or laboring at a factory bench while the country cries out for progressive, intelligent guidance. We have this type of statesmanship, if only the electors will abandon the old belief that ex-athletes, lawyers and "big business" tycoons have a monopoly on brains.... Fascism or progressive democracy the choice is yours, soon to be made--what are we going to do?<sup>2</sup>

All during the strike at General Motors, Premier Hepburn had kept himself informed of the press reaction to his moves. Only in the editorials of two Ontario newspapers, The Toronto Daily Star and The Ottawa Citizen, was Hepburn's stand opposed. Even The Oshawa Daily Times, which avoided editorial comment for some time, finally urged the strikers to avoid communism, and when judged by Hepburn's adviser it was decided that "the paper

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1. From an address delivered by John Mitchell, President of the Ontario C.C.F. at the Legion Hall in Oshawa. New Commonwealth, Sept. 25, 1937.

2. From an editorial, possibly by W. Noble, questioning the following skeptical remarks about Canadian democracy voiced by Ontario's Attorney-General Gordon Conant at a dinner in Oshawa: "Our problems might be solved if approached more in the spirit of that which is good for the state" - "It may be with us that personal liberty has run to extremes." - "Individualism, personal liberty and democracy are wonderful, but it is a question if they can be maintained in their present form and extent." The editorial commented: "That which is good for the state" - to what type of state does Mr. Conant refer? To the democratic state wherein the collective will be the workers, farmers, small business men and merchants have a voice, or to the totalitarian state of the fascist type? There cannot be such a thing as too much liberty for the producers of any nation. Labor and agriculture [*sic*] are the producers, and when we hear public men say that these people have too much liberty it is safe to assume that such speakers are voicing the paid opinion of the exploiters who realize that their stranglehold upon the masses is weakening." The Oshawa Labor Press, May 25, 1939.

leans towards the Government."<sup>3</sup> With such massive media support there was little wonder that Hepburn received tremendous public support. Even the Canadian Federation of Labour and the A.C.C.L. supported the Premier, with opposition coming mainly from C.C.F. clubs, union locals and various Trades and Labour Councils.<sup>4</sup> With most of the province hailing his handling of the Oshawa strike, it seemed that Hepburn's political position was unassailable by the end of April 1937. He had a large majority in the Legislature and the lack of a coherent labour policy on the part of Earl Rowe, the Conservatives' absentee provincial leader, gave the Premier complete freedom for political manoeuvre.

On Friday, April 23, the day the strike ended, Hepburn had told the Lieutenant Governor "how serious the trouble was getting in the Province and that he might be calling for a dissolution at any time and asking for a Union Government."<sup>5</sup> Within the next few days Hepburn sounded out opinion on a coalition. There were several factors influencing him. George McCullagh and several other mining magnates who had been prominent in the anti-C.I.O. policy had advanced reasons for a coalition government.<sup>6</sup> When these reasons were added to Mitch Hepburn's hatred of Mackenzie King, and

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3. P.A.O., Hepburn Papers, Memorandum for the Honourable Mr. Hepburn, Subject: Editorials Summarized by T.J. Madigan, Apr. 15, 1937; The Oshawa Daily Times, Apr. 2, 1937.

4. In the Hepburn Papers there is one file folder about one inch in thickness with unfavourable comments but there are two manuscript boxes filled with favourable comments from corporations, financial institutions, lawyers, some churches, and many individuals some of whom were Americans or ex-Canadians living in the United States.; The New York Times, Apr. 9, 1937; The Canadian Unionist, Vol. 10, No. 11 (Apr., 1937), pp. 273-274; The Labour Review, Vol. 1, No. 5 (Apr., 1937), pp. 115-119; Vol. 1, No. 6 (May, 1937), p. 144.

5. Cited in McKenty, op.cit., pp. 119-120.

6. According to McKenty's description of McCullagh's views about the functions of governments, the "key to good government was efficiency...Much of the debate in the Legislature was useless window-dressing, an artificial luxury that the province could not afford." Ibid., p. 122.

George Drew's strategy of ousting King by forming strong union governments in Ontario and Quebec, the Premier decided to act. Hepburn met Rowe and offered him half the cabinet, and the Premiership if he wanted it. An astonished Earl Rowe then met with Conservative party leaders in Ottawa to discuss the matter. While R.B. Bennett was inclined to union, Colonel Hogarth and Arthur Meighen were so opposed to the move that Rowe returned to Toronto with his mind made up to refuse. Hepburn reacted to Rowe's rejection of union by publically denying that he had proposed it and claiming the idea had been created by The Toronto Daily Star which had been leaking reports of the moves. Ironically, instead of hurting the Liberals, the affair split the Conservatives.<sup>7</sup> On May 5, Earl Rowe announced his party's position on labour. He claimed his party "stands for the right of employees to bargain collectively through the medium of secret ballot."<sup>8</sup> The next day, George Drew announced his resignation as Chief Conservative organizer and Rowe's lieutenant in Ontario. The reason given was that he disagreed with Rowe's labour policy, and he also indicated his support of Hepburn's anti-C.I.O. stand. However, Drew had already resigned on April 30 but this fact was not revealed until December 1938, when Drew replaced Rowe as Conservative Party leader. Thus Drew, the man who had most favoured a coalition, had resigned not because of Rowe's labour policy but because Rowe would not agree to a coalition.<sup>9</sup>

With the coalition idea shelved, the Premier could consider an election, and though for the next couple of months Hepburn assured his

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7. Ibid., pp. 119-123; The Toronto Daily Star, May 3, 1937.

8. Cited in C.A.R., 1937-38, p. 106.

9. C.A.R., 1937-38, p. 166; McKenty, op.cit., pp. 123-124; The Evening Telegram, Dec. 5, 1938.

followers that there would be no campaign in 1937, he was continually receiving reports of the political situation from organizers and canvassers. According to one observer, Hepburn seemed to be listening only to McCullagh and wanted to capitalize on the situation.<sup>10</sup> Hepburn's strategy was not so much to defend the record of his administration as to define the issues so as to place the Conservatives on the defensive, and on August 12, he launched his campaign even before announcing the election date. Evidence indicated that even timing could have been considered as a factor<sup>11</sup> in

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10. As one Liberal reported to Mackenzie King, "Hepburn listens to no one other than McCullagh" and "the continuance of labour troubles in the States would seem to suggest that his best strategy would be an early election, but he is apparently torn between the desire to capitalize on this situation or to wait until he can put through a redistribution." P.A.C., King Papers, Memorandum for Mr. King by W.J.T., June 25, 1937.

11. The following excerpts from secret police reports may have had some influence on Hepburn.

"W. Wolosyn of ULFTA in Toronto told me that radicals are somewhat scarred [sic] at this time as they think that provincial election will be held in September and that reds are not prepared for it, and they hope that election might be held late in October and if it is so reds are more hopeful to get stronger and by that time they will be able to organize workers into stronger organization.

Chas. BOWEN former organizer of miners in NORTH ONTARIO and who is a big shot in C.I.O. in Toronto told me that this outfit is controlled by C.P.C. headquarters and that it is getting lots of instructions from U.S.A. All the mail is received by Millard and as soon he read [sic] letters he destroys them but on many occasions he forgets to do so and the mail is left in the office over night.

Few adys [sic] ago C.I.O. in Toronto received instructions from U.S.A. to order all unions affiliated to it to join labor representation A'ss, and to support red and labor progressive candidates during next provincial election and to do all in its power to defeat premier Heppburn [sic]. It can be done according to Bowen by holding mass meetings and in the course of the next few days reds are going to hold meetings every day. It is hoped by C.I.O. that election will be held late in October and by that time reds will be prepared to put up a big fight against Heppburn [sic] but if election is held before that time reds will have not a slightest chance to win or to elect more than two of its members to, [sic] the parliament.

Reds fear it very much that Heppburn [sic] will get wise to red tricks and will held [sic] election in September and reds will lose all their hopes."

P.A.O., Hepburn Papers, Secret police reports, Aug. 6, 7, 1937 attached to Memorandum for Roy Elmhirst from Hon. Paul Leduc, Aug. 10, 1937.



Hepburn's campaign of which the first and foremost issue was his anti-C.I.O. policy. On August 23, the Legislature was dissolved and a general election was called for October 6, 1937.<sup>12</sup> It was going to be an interesting test for labour and particularly one for the unionists in Oshawa who were fresh from their struggle with General Motors and the Premier.

Until Hugh Thompson was able to set up his headquarters in Buffalo, Oshawa was to remain the C.I.O. headquarters for Ontario. The new number one C.I.O. agent, C.H. Millard, made his organizational policy clear to the press. He stated: "We do not intend to push ourselves in, we are only going to go to the cities where we have been invited." But even carrying out this policy was a problem because the demand for organizers throughout the province was tremendous and so many requests were coming into the office of U.A.W. Local 222 for aid that the staff could not cope with them all.<sup>13</sup> When Hugh Thompson made a short trip to Oshawa a few weeks after the famous strike had ended, Millard was still the only Canadian C.I.O. organizer. However, others soon were expected to be added as embryo organizations at Chatham, Windsor, Tilbury, Toronto, Hamilton and other Ontario points that had been asking for organizers to assist in completing their local unions. Thompson claimed there were now over 40,000 union members in Ontario directly affiliated with the C.I.O. Though he said that the C.I.O. did not intend to enter politics and any party that the Ontario union men decided to support would be of their own making, he did envision a new political party arising in the province as a result of the strike at Oshawa. It was his contention that the workingmen of the province were not satisfied and would prefer to support a labour party, if and when an election was called.<sup>14</sup>

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12. McKenty, op.cit., p. 128; C.A.R., 1937-38, pp. 175-176.

13. The Oshawa Daily Times, Apr. 28, 1937.

14. Ibid., May 3, 1937.



By the end of May, the U.A.W. had established a Canadian Committee "for the purpose of coordinating and conducting the affairs of the union in Canada." It was a temporary committee elected by 25 delegates from Oshawa, St. Catharines, Windsor and Brantford.<sup>15</sup> At a meeting in Toronto with U.A.W. Vice-President Walter Wells of Detroit present, the general policy of the union was outlined with respect to future work and activities in Canada. Wells was to act as the contact man between the Detroit head office and the Canadian organization and to assist the Canadians in the conduct of their affairs. Wells also announced that the U.A.W. would establish an office in Ontario to allow the Canadians to conduct their business under the direction of the International office in Detroit.<sup>16</sup> Finally, at the U.A.W. Milwaukee convention held in August, separate representation was allowed for the Canadian district and C.H. Millard was elected to the General Executive Board of the U.A.W. as the representative for the Dominion of Canada.<sup>17</sup>

In Oshawa the workers in the feeder plants had not been idle. Organization by the U.A.W. had gone on in Skinners and the W.E. Phillips Glass Co., and the Steel Workers Organizing Committee (S.W.O.C.) of the C.I.O. had organized the workers of The Ontario Malleable Iron Co. and The Fittings Ltd. into Locals 1500 and 1817 of the Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel and Tin Workers of North America. Contracts were signed

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15. The officers of the Canadian Committee were: President, C.H. Millard (Oshawa); Vice-President, H.W. Bains (St. Catharines); Secretary-Treasurer, R.M. Lawrie (St. Catharines); Recording Secretary, John Wright (Windsor); Trustees, A. Cooper (Brantford), W.A. Walker (Oshawa), J.W. Ratcliffe (Windsor). Ibid., May 31, 1937.

16. Ibid.

17. Ibid., Aug. 30, 1937.

and Oshawa was well on its way to becoming a model union city.<sup>18</sup> Finally, because of the rapid increase of unionization in Oshawa, the formation of a Trades and Labour Council was suggested at a regular meeting of Local 222 and a special committee was appointed to look into the matter.<sup>19</sup> At a conference of international union locals, it was unanimously agreed that a council should be formed. A committee<sup>20</sup> of the locals was established and given full authority to take the necessary steps to set up the council. When Robert Stacey, Chairman of Local 222's special committee, made his report, it was enthusiastically endorsed by a general membership meeting of the local, and as soon as endorsement from five locals was received, an application for a charter was to be made to the T.L.C. of Canada.<sup>21</sup>

After the successful strike at Oshawa, the cry had gone out for labour organizers. Though Young Communist League (Y.C.L.) and C.C.Y.M. members responded, it was the communists with their well oiled machine and experience in the W.U.L. who were most able to provide leadership with their militancy, experience and knowledge of how to chair meetings, make

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18. In the case of the organization of the two metal plants, Harry Hamburg, a communist and S.W.O.C. field representative played an active role.; Daily Clarion, May 7, 1937; May 11, 1937; May 31, 1937; The Oshawa Daily Times, May 6, 1937; Official Opening, U.A.W. Hall, Education Committee, U.A.W. Local 222, 1951, p. 9.; Voice of Labour, Oshawa, The Oshawa and District Labour Council, 1969, p. 67.; In April 1937, the International Union U.A.W. presented a charter to the Women's Auxiliary No. 27 of Local 222. Though it was stressed that political, denominational or social differences were to be firmly suppressed in all the meetings and activities of the auxiliary, the way was left open for sponsoring representation in municipal bodies. The Oshawa Daily Times, June 14, 1937.

19. Ibid., July 8, 1937.

20. The committee was composed of: W. Smith, Lodge 1817, Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel and Tin Workers; C. Phillips, Bread and Milk Drivers' locals; A. Bell, Typographical Union; Mrs. L. Weeks, Women's Auxiliary No. 27; and A.E. Howard of the Railway Trainmen. Daily Clarion, June 24, 1937.

21. Ibid.

motions, give speeches, mimeograph handbills, print pamphlets and organize picket lines. On the other hand the C.C.F. was almost totally ineffective. As Graham Spry complained to David Lewis, the C.C.F.'s National Secretary, places such as Guelph, Galt, Brantford, Hamilton and Kitchener were a "hive of labor activity" but the C.C.F. groups in these cities were "really out of touch with the community," were "almost useless" and in some cases were "for practical purposes dead."<sup>22</sup>

At the fourth annual convention of the Ontario section of the C.C.F. held in Toronto, a resolution condemning Premier Hepburn's conduct during the Oshawa strike as "a prostitution of law, order and good government" was heartily endorsed. The convention recommended to "the national convention that the National Council be instructed to investigate fully conditions throughout Canada with a view to setting up effective methods and uniform conditions for the affiliation and representation of economic groups such as co-operatives, farm organizations and trade unions."<sup>23</sup> However, the Ontario section of the C.C.F. drew criticism from the communists for its "anti-unity policies" and for pre-empting the name "Farmer-Labor Party of Ontario" as a sub-title, yet reaffirming "its independence of all other political parties whether communist or capitalist." The communists charged the C.C.F. with ignoring the "popular demand and urgent need" for an all-inclusive "progressive political movement." It was clear that there had been an internal struggle at the convention. When Thomas A. Sutton moved for "alternation [sic] of the provincial constitution to admit the affiliation of sympathetic trade unions," President John Mitchell

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22. Cited in Abella, ["The C.I.O., the Communist Party and the Formation of the Canadian Congress of Labour 1936-1941"], op.cit., p. 120.

23. New Commonwealth, May 19, 1937.

heatedly replied: "We are keeping our doors open for the trade unions... but refuse to weaken our program to take in unions." Dr. Lorna Cotton supported Mitchell, declaring, "We don't want the affiliation of liberals and conservatives." Graham Spry and David Lewis favoured Sutton's resolution, however, and as Lewis concluded, "The trade union developments are creating the desire amongst trade unionist [sic] for independent political action. I think that probably provisions will have to be made for trade unions to affiliate....Affiliation of the unions with the C.C.F. is entirely separate and distinct from united front and anything like that."<sup>24</sup>

It was clear that the C.C.F. was not to be the exclusive farmer-labour political centre. During the summer of 1937 a nucleus of a United Farmer-Labor Party was being established on the basis of a united front organization but it received little support from organized labour.<sup>25</sup> The centre which was receiving labour's attention was the Labour Representation Association (L.R.A.). As early as December 28, 1936, a number of prominent unionists had held a meeting and named provisional officers.<sup>26</sup> Later, on the decision of the Toronto Trades and Labour Council, a provisional committee for labour representation was set up and on the council's authori-

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24. Daily Clarion, May 24, 1937.

25. The Oshawa Daily Times, June 18, 1937. The United Farmer-Labor Party was composed of a strange assortment of political bed fellows, some of the organizing people being: Rev. Dr. Harold Young of Avenue Road United Church, Toronto; Tim Buck, Canada's leading Communist; Rabbi Maurice Eisendrath of Holy Blossom Synagogue, Toronto; William Newman, Liberal M.L.A. for Victoria; Allman Logan, Secretary of the Hamilton Branch of the Youth Council of Canada; Joe Hill, Secretary of the Ontario Federation of Unemployed; Professor Line of Victoria University; a Hamilton financial man; a northern Ontario missionary; and an Oakville fruit grower. The Oshawa Daily Times did not identify the last three.

26. Those chosen were: Mrs. Jean Laing, Joe Robson, Roy Gladstone, Harold Buckingham, E.E. Woolon, Edward Roach, George Watson and Mrs. Joe Deane. Daily Clarion, June 17, 1937.

zation, a call went out to all the international trade unions to send representatives to a conference to be held in the Toronto Labour Temple on July 8. The conference was to launch a wide labour representation movement whose more immediate objective was to secure "genuine labor representation of our municipal administration" for the protection of the "welfare of the community at large as well as of the trade unionists."<sup>27</sup> It was at this conference with some forty-odd trade unions represented that the L.R.A. was formed. After it was held, other progressive bodies could be represented.<sup>28</sup>

The C.C.F. "right wing" quickly reacted through the New Commonwealth to the formation of the L.R.A. and saw it as being organized by the Communists to "either smash the C.C.F. or to force it into an alliance dominated by the Communist Party." The Communists, however, openly denied that the formation of the L.R.A. was one of their manoeuvres and claimed the C.C.F. was just raising a "red bogey." As Robert F. Winter, Secretary of the Printing Pressmen and Assistants' union declared: "It's all ballyhoo. Ernie Woolon, who is a former member of the C.C.F. and by no means a Communist, introduced the resolution on labor representation in the Toronto Labor Council." It was believed that the C.C.F. was insufficient alone, and to achieve electoral success, it was necessary for labour itself to act. The L.R.A. did not want to disrupt parties but complement their efforts. The L.R.A. was to "be used as a direct means of getting parties and groups sympathetic to labor to work together for the welfare of the workers generally."<sup>29</sup> However, the C.C.F. Provincial Secretary,

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27. Ibid.

28. Ibid., July 16, 1937; June 17, 1937.

29. Ibid., July 16, 1937. E.E. Woolon was Secretary of the Bookbinders  
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Herbert Orliffe, made it public that the party would not participate in the L.R.A. which was, in "the belief of those of us who are watching events closely, under the instigation and influence of the Communist Party, represented in the Trades and Labour Council chiefly by Fred Collins."<sup>30</sup> In addition, Orliffe issued a circular letter to all local unions in Toronto stating that the C.C.F.'s "policy is to discourage the formation of the Labor Representation Association."<sup>31</sup> Clearly the L.R.A. and the concept it represented was a challenge to the C.C.F., which wanted endorsement by unions as the only political party of the workers. In contrast, the C.P. of C. with its "united front" appeal, was jubilant at the L.R.A.'s formation. It was a basic conflict between concepts of labour-political action and political interests that was to extend beyond the Toronto scene for a number of years to come.

The concept of the L.R.A. was popular and suited to the political climate of the times; it was quickly taken up by the Oshawa unionists. At a meeting of U.A.W. Local 222's stewards, it was unanimously decided that steps would be taken to investigate the possibilities of forming a L.R.A. in Oshawa. James Smith and Robert Stacey, two "unity" men, and George Day were elected as a committee to co-operate with the Trades and Labour Council organizational committee on the matter. A L.R.A. co-ordinating body was then to issue a call to all existing unions for a conference to discuss the coming provincial election and the possibility of uniting

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29. Continued from Page 202.

and Bindery Women's Union and became Secretary of the L.R.A. Ibid., Aug. 2, 1937.

30. P.A.C., C.C.F. Papers, Herbert Orliffe to Dear Comrade, Aug. 6, 1937.

31. Daily Clarion, Aug. 4, 1937.

labour and progressive forces to ensure the election of a progressive labour candidate.<sup>32</sup> However, by August, the C.I.O. organizational drive in Canada had come to a standstill<sup>33</sup> and there was little time left for labour to prepare for the forthcoming election. The unions in Oshawa were still in an embryonic stage and lacked both funds and experienced leadership; therefore there was a tendency to rely on the C.C.F.ers.

As early as August 20, Allan Griffiths, President of the Oshawa C.C.F. Club, announced that a labour candidate would be run in Ontario. He stated that many union members, dissatisfied with old-line parties, had urged that a labour candidate be nominated, and with the backing of the C.C.F. organization he felt that a real party could be formed in Oshawa.<sup>34</sup> The Conservatives nominated Dr. Grant L. Bird, an alderman and former President of the Oshawa Chamber of Commerce. The Oshawa strike was bound to be a major issue and Mayor Hall, who had been nominated at the Conservative convention but declined, challenged Premier Hepburn to a public debate in Oshawa on the strike issue.<sup>35</sup> Hall followed up his attack by stumping for the Conservatives throughout the province during the rest of the campaign.<sup>36</sup>

Two days after the selection of Bird, the C.C.F. chose its candidate to run on a C.C.F.-Farmer-Labour ticket. It was Finley M. Dafee,

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32. Ibid., Aug. 11, 1937; This same theme of unity and the need for labour representation was pushed by C.C.F.ers Sam Lawrence, M.L.A., and Arthur Williams before the Ratepayers Association of Oshawa. Ibid., Aug. 26, 1937.

33. Abella, ["The C.I.O., The Communist Party and the Formation of the Canadian Congress of Labour 1936-1941"], op.cit., p. 121.

34. The Oshawa Daily Times, Aug. 20, 1937.

35. Ibid., Aug. 31, 1937; Sept. 9, 1937.

36. The Toronto Daily Star, Sept. 20, 1937; The Windsor Daily Star, Oct. 4, 1937.



the fiery local contractor who had been a long-standing member of the local C.C.F., the Oshawa Property Owners' Association, the local Ratepayers Association, and a charter member of U.A.W. Local 222. When asked to comment after his election, he declared:

The present election issue is to me a most flagrant attempt on the part of Premier Hepburn to perpetuate an injustice upon the people of Ontario, the focal point being South Ontario constituency. The issue in this election is not the C.I.O., the A.F. of L. or any other organization, but the right of the workers to organize or affiliate with organizations of their own choosing.<sup>37</sup>

The Liberals who held the riding, took a few days longer to chose their candidate. W.E.N. Sinclair was the M.L.A. but since he had been replaced as Liberal Party leader by Hepburn, Sinclair was no longer a prominent force in the party. He appeared to remain friendly with Hepburn personally, but it seemed that his dealings with the Premier concerned only party patronage, a topic which had caused dissension within Liberal ranks in the constituency of Ontario.<sup>38</sup> After the federal election of 1935, Sinclair had remained rather silent until after the Oshawa strike and then he revealed his position to Hepburn. He had kept out of the strike situation because as he stated, he "felt it had to be handled as a Provincial problem and anything I might say or do would only complicate the situation." As far as the workers' struggle was concerned, he "would have liked to have seen a complete surrender and a few days more would have sickened the men with loss of work." Sinclair's advice on political strategy was that

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37. The Oshawa Daily Times, Sept. 3, 1937; New Commonwealth, Sept. 11, 1937. During the C.C.F. nominating convention A.W. Griffiths, F.L. Hobbs of Pickering, and James Owens of Port Perry were eliminated in the final balloting while Gene Forsyth of Greenbank withdrew his name after the first vote.

38. P.A.O., Hepburn Papers, W.E.N. Sinclair to M.F. Hepburn, June 8, 1934; W.E.N. Sinclair to M.F. Hepburn, July 17, 1934; W.E.N. Sinclair to M.F. Hepburn, Mar. 22, 1935; Hepburn to Sinclair, Mar. 25, 1935; D.R. Phillips to Hepburn, Sept. 5, 1934; W.E.N. Sinclair to M.F. Hepburn, June 19, 1935; Hepburn to Sinclair, June 20, 1935.

"if the fight continues...more publicity will have to be given to the communist end of the agitation." He claimed "they were in it here but the public knows it only by general statements." The public should be given proof and the "publication of names of members of the communist organization who are active locally in C.I.O. affairs would satisfy the public that the fight is not one for better working conditions but the first stages of a revolution." Redistribution had been contemplated with a reduction in membership in the House, and according to Sinclair's analysis:

The reduction may be dangerous as a lot of rural ridings will be handy in a C.I.O. fight. This riding will have to be enlarged if there is a reduction in ridings. It has not been changed for sixty years at least, although it has grown in population and is one of the largest in population of present ridings. For nearly sixty years, we have had only three members, Dryden, Calder and myself. It is not what you call a Liberal riding but has been good to me and the next fellow will have a lot of hard work to do. If there is an enlargement, it should be within the county. Uxbridge, Uxbridge Township, Scott and Brock Townships and Cannington could be added to make a riding large enough for the increased unit.

On the prospects of an election he stated:

Of course you will have a C.C.F. or Labour or some third party candidate. That will not be all bad in view of the trouble here. The Tories will lose as many as we will, and if they had not their own candidate might be forced to vote against us. There will not be enough to elect their own man, although they will do better than in the past.

But the picture changes quickly. These fellows forget quickly. They will holler their heads off to-morrow for the fellow they kicked yesterday.

The Liberals seemed to be waiting for the redistribution question to be settled and were unsure of what the party would do in the future, because as Sinclair admitted: "Dryden and myself have teamed so long that eligible successors have not been brought forward and are hard to find for lack of training."<sup>39</sup> One thing was clear, however: Sinclair was not going to run again.

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39. P.A.O., Hepburn Papers, W.E.N. Sinclair to M.F. Hepburn, Apr. 26, 1937.

Three weeks before the Liberal nomination convention, Sinclair had announced to the party executive that he had decided to retire and even though he was nominated, he withdrew his name. The unanimous choice of the convention was Gordon D. Conant, Crown Attorney of Ontario County<sup>40</sup> and one of Sinclair's former patronage appointments. Conant had been the man who had replaced Alex Hall as Crown Attorney in 1934 on Sinclair's advice<sup>41</sup> and because of this fact a personal feud was injected into the campaign. Conant took up Hall's challenge to Hepburn to meet him on a public platform and debate the C.I.O. issue. He declared, "I will tell you something about the strike in Oshawa that the Prime Minister does not know." He referred to the attempt to ship out parts on the first Friday of the strike, stating, "I was called at two o'clock in the morning [Saturday],...and I found that it was Mayor Alex Hall on the phone. He told me that Thompson had issued a statement which he thought criminal against the code. He stated that he wanted me to have Thompson arrested and taken out of town immediately." Conant had asked him what the statement was and what Hall wanted done. "I want Thompson arrested and taken out of town tonight" the mayor had said. Conant explained that the job was to be done in the dark, for some reason, but then went on to suggest that it might have been part of a deep, dark plot. He refused to give any instructions to the police and did not think that Thompson's statement was against

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40. The Oshawa Daily Times, Sept. 10, 1937.

41. The Toronto Daily Star, Oct. 11, 1934.; In 1914, Conant had been elected deputy reeve of Oshawa and in 1915 he was elected reeve of the municipality. In 1916-17 he was mayor and then served on the Board of Water Commissioners. He had been instrumental in setting up the Public Utilities Commission in 1928 and played a part in the re-organization and enlargement of the Oshawa Chamber of Commerce, and serving as a director of that organization. He had also been secretary of the South Ontario Liberal Association for about 25 years until he retired in 1934. The Oshawa Daily Times, Sept. 10, 1937.

the law. Hall then declared that he would "get someone higher up" and Conant provided him with some names. The next morning Conant called the Deputy Attorney-General, Mr. Humphries, (not a Liberal appointee) who also thought the statement to be "not within the code." Later that morning, Conant conversed with the O.P.P. constable in Oshawa who told him that Hall had called him at an early hour that morning, requesting that Thompson be arrested. The officer refused but during the conversation he asked Mayor Hall, who was bareheaded, where his hat was. Hall replied that he had "left it in Thompson's room." On the basis of this information, Conant raised the thought of a plot. "I don't need to tell you. The next day and thereafter Alex and Thompson were 'just like that.' You can draw your own conclusion. Think it over." Then Conant charged:

If Thompson had been arrested that morning there would probably have been bloodshed in the city of Oshawa.... Mayor Hall has said that the strike would have been settled long before it was if Mr. Hepburn had not intervened. If Alex had his way the strike would not have been settled in 18 weeks or 18 months. I doubt if the thing would ever have been straightened out.

Conant seemed to be directing his campaign against the Conservatives rather than labour and the unionists because he made it publically known that he regarded the C.I.O. as a communist controlled organization.<sup>42</sup> Finally, even Hepburn joined in the smear attack against Mayor Hall, repeating the charges which he had made during the strike that Hall had been dismissed as County Attorney because of his filing of false returns and

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42. Ibid., The Oshawa Courier, a paper very anti-labour in character, sided with Gordon Conant in the election and attacked Mayor Hall for trying to have Thompson arrested as Conant had claimed. U.A.W., Thompson Papers, Clippings of The Oshawa Courier, Sept. 30, 1937.; A line similar to Conant's was taken by W.H. Moore, M.P. for Ontario riding, who in a radio address in support of Hepburn raised the spectre of a crisis "in the shape of a movement backed by millions of foreign men and money, to change our social structure by revolutionary methods." The Toronto Daily Star, Sept. 22, 1937.

his failure to pay the government money he owed. He also charged that Hall had done everything possible to foment trouble at Oshawa, that he was playing both ends against the middle, trying to trade on the adversity of the people. Satirically he noted:

Now he poses as a great friend of the working man. Yet we have his words where he claims he was double-crossed by Martin and Thompson of the C.I.O. He said they made a fool of him, I'm going to give some credit to nature and not blame the C.I.O. for everything.<sup>43</sup>

Earl Rowe, who could not claim to back the C.I.O., handled the labour issue by reiterating his determination to uphold labour's right to free choice, so long as law and order was maintained.<sup>44</sup> His approach centred on attacking Hepburn and his policies such as the estimated \$40,000 a year it was costing the province to maintain the approximately 400 strike police raised during the Oshawa strike and still on the government's pay roll.<sup>45</sup> Rowe even had his own spectre to raise and charged that Hepburn was

sowing the seeds of incipient fascism. It is this same kind of fascism under which Hitler has banned Rotary clubs from meeting in Germany, it is the same kind of fascism which has closed churches at one time or another. Mr. Hepburn's policy adopted at the behest of his millionaire friends on Bay St. will establish a dangerous precedent if permitted to continue....<sup>46</sup>

When campaigning in Oshawa itself, Rowe's main theme was the attitude of Premier Hepburn towards the strikers and his fight with John Lewis's organization. Although the audience was large and orderly, there was no

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43. The St. Thomas Times-Journal, Sept. 30, 1937.

44. The Toronto Daily Star, Sept. 16, 1937; The Oshawa Daily Times, May 10, 1937.

45. The Toronto Daily Star, Sept. 28, 1937.

46. Ibid., Sept. 16, 1937; For an excellent article on the "fascist" theme applied to Hepburn, see "Hepburn and the C.I.O. 'Fustian and Melodrama'" in Ibid., Sept. 24, 1937.

overwhelming demonstration in Rowe's favour.<sup>47</sup>

The parties were throwing their political heavyweights into the local campaign. J.S. Woodsworth was to visit Oshawa on October 2, and John Mitchell, President of the Ontario C.C.F., and Edward Jolliffe, Provincial Secretary, chose Oshawa as the scene for firing the opening shot in their campaign because of the publicity Hepburn had given the city.<sup>48</sup> Before a packed auditorium in the Legion Hall, Mitchell delivered the keynote speech in the campaign and an enthusiastic audience cheered lustily as he denounced the labour policies of both Conservatives and Liberals and outlined the C.C.F. labour program.

Fair wages and working conditions will be guaranteed through collective bargaining. Employers will be compelled by law to negotiate with the representatives of unions chosen by their employees. Severe penalties will be on employers for intimidation, discrimination and the use of spies. Company unions will be prohibited. The use of injunctions in labour disputes will be abolished.

After reading from the C.C.F. program, Mitchell asked, "Will either of the old parties pledge themselves to pass such legislation if they are elected to power?"<sup>49</sup> He also declared that, "although all parties represented themselves as friends of the working people at election time, the working

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47. The Evening Telegram, Sept. 27, 1937; According to the C.A.R., 1937-38, p. 177, "The Conservative Leader appeared in Oshawa on Sept. 27, 1937, before a crowd of cheering workers; he was supported on the platform by Mayor Hall and a C.I.O. union representative, Hans McIntyre."; Millard claims that Hans McIntyre remained a Conservative but joined the "unity group" in the U.A.W. against him because of a personal dispute that had arisen when McIntyre had tried to organize the Phillips Glass Co. Interview with C.H. Millard.

48. U.A.W., Thompson Papers, Clippings of The Oshawa Courier, Sept. 30, 1937.; The Oshawa Daily Times, Sept. 17, 1937. Support from Local 222 was the key and William Walker, a member of the negotiating committee spoke at this initial meeting. J.S. Woodsworth, who had heartily supported the C.I.O. movement, had called on the unions affiliated with the C.I.O. to unite with the C.C.F. in the provincial campaign instead of splitting up the labour forces by attempting to elect their own candidates.

49. New Commonwealth, Sept. 25, 1937.



class never had any friends but themselves," they must elect their own representatives if they wanted their own interests served.<sup>50</sup> Hepburn had flirted with the idea of licencing trade unions and even though he denied this, it was seized upon by the opposition.<sup>51</sup> Mitchell claimed that there was no excuse for bringing on an election at this time as Hepburn had a clear majority and a further two years in office. He then suggested that the Premier "wants a further five-year term so that he may have a free hand to introduce the repressive trade union measures which he threatened a few months ago.... He is keeping quiet about it now because he knows he couldn't get elected if the people of Ontario knew what he, and his big business advisers had in mind." Mitchell challenged Hepburn to disclose the exact terms of the trade union legislation he proposed and warned that "his promise of unemployment insurance is a smoke screen for his plan to suppress international unions such as the United Automobile Workers." In closing, Mitchell called upon the people of Ontario riding to repudiate the old line parties by electing Finley Dafoe.

The common people who represent 90 per cent of the electorate must be true to themselves, by electing a man from their own ranks-- a man tied to no interests, but with the interests of the working class at heart. And this isn't Dafoe's job--it's yours. Go out and elect him.<sup>52</sup>

The real climax came on the afternoon of the day before the election when Premier Hepburn wound up his campaign by visiting Oshawa for a mass meeting in the armouries. The Premier was given a hectic reception, the noise starting as soon as he stepped out of his automobile. A loud blast of boos and cheers broke out from the crowd gathered at the front of the

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50. The Oshawa Daily Times, Sept. 17, 1937.

51. Ibid.; The St. Thomas Times-Journal, Sept. 30, 1937.

52. New Commonwealth, Sept. 25, 1937.



building and a bedlam of shouting burst forth when he came in. Cat-calls, howls, boos, cheers, all mingled into a chaos of jangling reverberation. All the signs pointed to a wild meeting. Amidst a thunder of boos and foot-stomping, directed at the Premier as he mounted the speakers' platform, several tiers of back benches collapsed and about 300 people tumbled to the hardwood floor amongst the breaking planks. For a few minutes it appeared as if there might be panic but police and firemen shouldered their way to the milling mob and restored order while the Ontario Regiment's band struck up a lively tune to calm those present. The few people who had been injured were taken across the street to the firehall for treatment, and Police Chief Friend assessed the cause to be an accident caused by the foot-stomping of the crowd.<sup>53</sup>

The meeting then settled into one of hectic argument and acrimonious heckling. Three times the chairman was howled down as he attempted to introduce Gordon Conant. Conant himself got a rough ride, although it appeared that the audience was about equally divided in venting its opposition and approval. Then, as the Premier took the microphone, a crash of wild shouting broke out again. Faced with the competition of the swelling boos and the hammering of carpenters fixing the platform, which also showed signs of collapsing, the Premier could scarcely make himself heard. For almost an hour, Hepburn stuck to his guns and finished his talk. While many cheered and applauded, about the same number, it seemed, booed and yelled. He was howled into silence several times, but the biggest demonstration against him came when he attacked the C.I.O. and its officials. When he finally got around to dealing with the Oshawa strike, he claimed he had been misquoted. He declared:

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53. The Toronto Daily Star, Oct. 6, 1937; The Evening Telegram, Oct. 6, 1937.

What I said was that I was 100 per cent behind General Motors in maintaining law and order. There was never a provincial policeman sent in to Oshawa. They were not for Oshawa, but because of possible uprisings in Hamilton and Toronto where the Communists are well organized. Do you know that a Communist candidate polled 20,000 votes in Toronto?

He was using the old scare technique, especially when he told his audience that "At the time of the strike 15,000 Communists were prepared to trade on your adversity. Some of them seem to be here today." Hepburn closed his address by predicting the return of his government and the election of Gordon Conant. Amid a clamour, slightly dominated by cheers and handclapping, he sat down, wiping his face and forehead with his handkerchief. The meeting ended with "God Save the King" and order reigned for the first time. Outside, the rain which had been merely a mist at the time of the Premier's arrival, had become a deluge. A crowd had lined the street and heard the address over a loud speaker. Hepburn made his exit surrounded with at least eighteen of his personal bodyguards making a passage through the mob. It had been Hepburn's first visit to Oshawa and one he would never forget.<sup>54</sup>

Hepburn's prediction came true. Gordon Conant won the riding of Ontario for the Liberals but had polled only 9,834 votes, a plurality but not a majority as Sinclair had with his 11,409 votes in 1934. E.G. Forest, a baker from Toronto running under a Socialist-Labour ticket and calling for outright revolution, had polled only a mere 79 votes but Finley Dafoe, the C.C.F.er, had almost doubled his party's vote of 2,375 in 1934 to 4,598 in 1937. It was in Oshawa and East Whitby, where most of the factory workers lived, that the C.C.F. had made its greatest gains. (See

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54. The Toronto Daily Star, Oct. 6, 1937; The Evening Telegram, Oct. 6, 1937.

55. Ontario, Return from the Records of the General Election, 1937, Sessional Paper No. 25 1938, pp. 164-167; The Toronto Daily Star, Oct. 7, 1937.

APPENDIX B.) Conant's victory was more apparent than real. The Liberal Party, which previously had done so well in the riding, was now losing considerable ground to a new labour and left-wing political rival with a power structure, leadership and base that were quite different, not only from its own, but also from those of the Conservative Party, the traditional opponent and alternative. Quite clearly the strike had left its mark on the political as well as the social and economic character of the community. It had been an election in which the strike, the C.I.O., Communism, and the charges and counter charges of party leaders had overshadowed the local candidates.

Outside of Oshawa, Hepburn had triumphantly swept the province while the C.C.F. lost its only seat and its total vote declined by about a third from that of 1934. No labour or left-wing candidates had been elected. Hepburn had succeeded in identifying the C.I.O. with communism and the public believed that he had saved them by keeping the C.I.O. out.<sup>56</sup>

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56. Both David Croll and Arthur Roebuck had been returned and Gordon Conant became Attorney-General in Hepburn's new cabinet. Both George Drew, who had run as an Independent, and Earl Rowe were defeated. McKenty, op. cit., pp. 130-138; C.A.R., 1937-38, pp. 177-179; According to the New Commonwealth, Oct. 9, 1937, Hepburn had used three central and long-standing Canadian political manoeuvres to confirm his hold on power.

"The first manoeuvre was to unite finance and Catholicism.... Mr. Hepburn's issue to accomplish that end, an end which his failure in the Separate school question required, was the C.I.O. That issue, wrapped up in an utterly false and unfounded communist, foreign-agitator bogey, won Mr. Hepburn financial support, as represented not only by the mining interests, but all the manufacturers and other business interests who feared unionization. It also obscured the Separate school issue, upon which the Liberals faced defeat by an aroused rural Protestantism. And it gave the Catholics, who hear often of the Communist menace, something else to consider than the repeal of the Separate school bill, a bill satisfactory neither to the Protestants, nor to the Catholics themselves.

"But what of the Protestants? Protestants are the Saxons, the pro-British, anti-American groups. It is true particularly of the urban labor groups which have been nourished by the old parties behind tariff walls to keep out American goods. To this Protestant section—strong in the rural areas as well at all times—Mr. Hepburn conjured up the vision of a new

Although there had been a considerable amount of unity among labour and left-wing groups in Oshawa during the election, there had been a debate going on within the C.C.F. party over the nature and direction of political action that was quite relevant to the developing political scene in Oshawa. Although both the national and provincial conventions had ruled against co-operation with other political parties, there had been a movement to win the confidence of the trade unions by having the C.C.F. support genuine labour candidates, even if they were communists, provided they were nominated before C.C.F. candidates and did not run as communists.<sup>57</sup> The issue even involved David Lewis, National Secretary of the C.C.F., in a debate with J.S. Woodsworth over support for the L.R.A. and specifically Lewis's advice to Herbert Orliffe that Simon, the C.C.F. candidate in St. Andrews riding, withdraw in favour of Joe Salsberg, a well known communist. In Woodsworth's judgment, Simon should stay in the field and there should be no saw-offs.<sup>58</sup> Lewis argued that Salsberg was nominated long before

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56. Continued from Page 214.

American invasion. It seems incredible that it could be accepted. There was no basis whatsoever in fact for it. But it was swallowed, and as the returns in the cities show, it was swallowed also by working class groups. Possibly, also, the use of the American division between the A.F. of L. and C.I.O.--a rift which has no official counterpart in Canada--may have had some influence among trade unionists."

"The third manoeuvre was equally obvious, and equally successful. And the same issue was used; the issue of the C.I.O. and the Oshawa strike. The manoeuvre was to turn the rural vote against the city, to separate labour and farmer."

It should also be noted that Graham (Spry?) was informed by a prominent Liberal in Ottawa that part of Hepburn's campaign fund came from the United States. Though the exact source was unknown, there would be obvious reasons why anti-C.I.O. forces in the U.S. would subsidize Hepburn. P.A.C., C.C.F. Papers, J. to David Lewis, Sept. 21, 1937.

57. P.A.C., C.C.F. Papers, Unsigned (possibly D. Lewis) to Herbert Orloff (sic), Aug. 30, 1937; See also John Charles, "Tactics in the Ontario Election." The Canadian Forum, Vol. XVII, No. 200 (Sept., 1937), pp. 194-196.

58. P.A.C., C.C.F. Papers, J.S. Woodsworth to David Lewis, Sept. 21, 1937.

the C.C.F. nominee was in the field and he was nominated, not as a communist, but as a labour candidate with the endorsation of the L.R.A. and therefore of the Toronto Trades and Labour Council. Lewis's aim was to win labour support through positive action and by being able to "approach the trade unions in Toronto and other places with evidence that the C.C.F. acts with sincerity in its relations to the trade unions...."<sup>59</sup>

The C.C.F. had not been looking forward to victory in the election but merely to use it to increase support and educate the electorate. Lewis was not suggesting a saw-off but wanted to follow a strategy which would simplify the progress of the C.C.F. after the election.<sup>60</sup> While the Communists had run or supported non-C.C.F. labour candidates and thus split the vote in some ridings, Lewis wanted the C.C.F. to be able to "point to a positive act in order to avoid splitting the labor vote and the other side could not point to any significant situation where we had split that vote, then our position as regards the trade unions, as regards any battle that we may have to carry on against the C.P., will be a thousand times stronger."<sup>61</sup> The C.C.F.'s failure to use the opportunity meant that the C.P. could always counter any criticism of their use of splitting tactics. At issue was not just the image of the C.C.F. and the decisions of the party's conventions, but also the party's future strategy and the nature of the party leadership in Ontario. As a post election analysis of the party's set-back stated, not only had the party "shown no capacity for

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59. P.A.C., C.C.F. Papers, Unsigned (Internal evidence indicates the author probably was D. Lewis) to J.S. Woodsworth, Sept. 29, 1937.

60. P.A.C., C.C.F. Papers, Unsigned to J.S. Woodsworth, Sept. 29, 1937.

61. P.A.C., C.C.F. Papers, Unsigned (probably D. Lewis) to Professor E. A. Forsey, Sept. 21, 1937.

seizing a situation like that presented by the Oshawa strike and exploiting it" but "C.C.F. speakers are still talking about socialism in general instead of concentrating their own and public attention upon specific and concrete issues."

Worst of all, the Ontario leaders seem to be quite happy with their little following, who now vote C.C.F. from a conservative devotion to habit; and it looks as if they will be content to fuss about with their petty obscure routine activities while the main currents of political developments sweep past them unobserved.<sup>62</sup>

It was clear that the provincial executive was largely to blame and charges of conceit were leveled at John Mitchell, President, and Lorna Cotton, Vice-President, and their friends. The poor situation in the party had developed because the provincial leaders had "been able to suppress most of the expression of any opinion in the movement which they didn't like."<sup>63</sup> Even before the election, David Lewis had analyzed the Ontario situation as follows:

...the lamentable condition of the movement in Ontario is due less to right wingers as a theory or attitude but more to right wingism, which is the result of simple secondrateness of the so-called leadership. Put in this way it may sound brutal and presumptuous but I think it is nevertheless true. The essence of the situation is that the people at the head of the organization in Ontario simply have not the necessary political imagination to understand the needs of the situation in general and of the party in particular.

Lewis then went on to elaborate on his own strategy for the party.

In concrete terms, the main concern of the C.C.F. in Ontario at the present time should be to find a way of tying the growing political consciousness of the Trade Unions to the C.C.F. If that cannot be done, then there should be sufficient courage and vision to reverse the process, viz: if necessary to tie the C.C.F. to the political consciousness of the Trade Union movement. The

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62. "The Ontario Election," The Canadian Forum, Vol. XVII, No. 202 (Nov. 1937), p. 262.

63. P.A.C., C.C.F. Papers, Eugene Forsey to David (probably Lewis), Sept. 17, 1937.



first, i.e., to bring the Trade Union movement to us would, I think, be preferable in view of the condition of the Trade Union movement and in view of the fact that no progress towards social improvement in Ontario is possible without considerable farm support, which could be won more easily, I am sure, to the C.C.F. than it could to a party controlled entirely by the Trade Unions. But, as I have said, if for one reason or another developments force the Trade Unions to form a Labor Party in the narrower sense, then we should have sufficient courage and vision to tie ourselves to that party and bring whatever farm support we have into it.

The crux of the matter is that the people in Toronto simply don't seem to get the significance of the present development in the working-class movement, simple though it may seem to you and to me. Add to this the fact that the C.P. has a large and growing influence in the Trade Union movement and that the political consciousness of the Trade unionists is being fostered, inspired, developed, lead and naturally used by the Communists, and you have another reason why the hidebound partisan C.C.F.'er will be cautious and ineffective.

Apply this narrow, but, I think, important analysis to the Ontario election and it is pretty clear that the C.C.F. policy here has been lamentable. The election should have been looked upon by the C.C.F., as it, I think, looked upon by the C.P., as a means of showing the trade unions towards independent political action and, if possible, towards left action. This should have been the objective aimed at even if temporarily it might be at some expense to the C.C.F. organization as such...if the C.C.F. has any basis in reality of the Canadian situation, it must in the long run gain by a growing political consciousness in the trade union ranks, even if in the short run it expresses itself as an apparent opposition to the C.C.F. organization.

...The Ontario people could not see the need for this sort of policy. They see in terms only of the black and white of party politics in the older outworn sense of that term...one of the underlying subconscious reasons for their failure to see the need for this policy, is their knowledge that they themselves are incapable of successfully carrying out such a policy.<sup>64</sup>

As Lewis had predicted, the C.C.F. played into the hands of the C.P. and the Daily Clarion attacked the C.C.F. for splitting the labour vote.<sup>65</sup>

Lewis had been correct in his analysis of the contemporary political mood of "unity" among the trade unionists and the need for a flexible political strategy. However, his party did not accept his suggestions. Although

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64. P.A.C., C.C.F. Papers, Unsigned to Professor E.A. Forsey, Sept. 21, 1937. Internal evidence indicates the author probably was David Lewis.

65. Daily Clarion, Oct. 8, 1937.



the C.C.F.ers in Oshawa were not faced with C.P. opposition, and in fact enjoyed its support during the election, the opposition of the provincial executive to the "united" or "popular front" left-wing alignment that was developing in Oshawa was bound to bring the local party into a confrontation with the policy of the controlling "right-wing" of the provincial executive at a future date.

The labour vote in Oshawa had not been properly organized. Finley Dafoe had polled a good vote in the election but, aside from the C.C.F. Club support, there had been no really strong organization behind him. In addition to the fact that labour usually split its vote, the old A.F. of L. non-partisan ideas of Gompers were still widely held.<sup>66</sup> Even by late 1937 the C.C.F. was not accepted in the community as much as men like C.H. Millard and A.G. Shultz would have liked it to be. The workers had joined industrial unions, not a political party. A great number of the rank-and-file of the U.A.W. still did not know what the C.C.F. was all about and would not vote for it even if their leader told them to.<sup>67</sup>

It was A.G. Shultz, now a professional labour politician,<sup>68</sup> who was mainly responsible for drawing a lot of unionists to the C.C.F. Through his position as Financial Secretary, he was able to have the educational committee of U.A.W. Local 222 sponsor workers' education classes in conjunction with Drummond Wren's Workers' Educational Association (W.E.A.),

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66. Interview with Mrs. G.S. Thomson; Interview with G. Burt.

67. Interview with A.G. Shultz; Interview with F.M. Dafoe.

68. A.G. Shultz had worked at General Motors for fifteen years when he was elected Financial Secretary of Local 222. He had been elected before the strike and had to quit his job as there was no leave of absence from the plant. His position was a full time union job paying \$35. a week and it was a position he would have to be elected to annually. Interview with A.G. Shultz.

a non-political organization. The first classes discussed three main subjects: economics with reference to the auto industry, trade unionism, and labour law; and the lectures were to be given by three professors from the University of Toronto and the University of Western Ontario.<sup>69</sup> The topics raised in these classes were not only informative but controversial and Shultz was able to take advantage of them to develop a new cadre of trade union leaders who could be used for political activity. At times Shultz was placed in a difficult position. When the union was formed many C.C.F.ers rose to top positions such as chief stewards but relatively few of the rank-and-file were identified with the party. Many C.C.F.ers wanted Shultz to push the party line more but Shultz was an excellent union politician and he preferred to follow a cautious policy. He wanted to convince the workers rather than coerce them and to do this he tried to sell politics and the reason for politics even if it meant soft pedalling the C.C.F. The union was to be a base for political action and he did not want to upset it.<sup>70</sup> Generally, Shultz's policy met with moderate

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69. The Oshawa Daily Times, Sept. 15, 1937; New Commonwealth, Sept. 18, 1937; Nov. 20, 1937.

70. Shultz used the technique of "buzz groups"—five or six men at a table discussing questions ranging from topics on propaganda to parliamentary procedure, and all the time he continually pushed the line to the men that "every decision around you is a political one." Shultz's job as Financial Secretary was one that kept him busy seven days a week and it was an office he held until 1951 when he was appointed Director of Political Action for the U.A.W. in Canada. Thus, Shultz's union positions as well as his political connections made him one of the more prominent and influential secondary leaders in the Canadian Region of the U.A.W. and his political philosophy well worth considering. Shultz was originally a Free Methodist but he broke with the church. He was much influenced by J.S. Woodsworth and came to be a great believer in environmentalism. When he applied this concept to trade unionism he saw the union leadership as having to follow the pressure from the rank-and-file below. Basically, Shultz was a "believer in the people." Shultz considered himself a social democrat, which he defined as a believer in group decision making by which individuals might disagree or "drag their feet" but not disrupt.

success; at least he never created enough opposition to defeat him as he continued to be returned to office year after year. Having had its baptism of fire in the provincial election, the opportunity to test labour-progressive strength again was soon offered in the field of municipal politics.

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70. Continued from Page 220.

He saw two different kinds of decision making in existence. One was "corporate" decision making which emphasized "leadership" and a second kind, which was opposed to the first, as being "democratic" or group decision making. Shultz was for the second kind because if the workers were "dictated to" by a leader, they would resent it. He noted, however, that there were problems with labour leaders who did not know enough about democratic procedure and who held "corporate" views. This he considered only part of a larger problem facing trade unions, that being the fact that they were caught in a "corporate" system and were moulded by their environment. He also saw a further problem and that was a bureaucratic threat which developed as union leaders acquired established positions and made compromises to maintain those positions. In order to solve these problems Shultz's basic solution was education. It was, perhaps, an idealistic answer, but it was one that Shultz worked at for the rest of his career. Interview with A.G. Shultz.

## CHAPTER IX "PLUMP FOR LABOUR"

Deprived of work and relief, single jobless men have made the best of the inconveniences of living in Oshawa's government chambers at the fire hall. Their most vital problem is food. Unless something is done by city authorities or by the sympathetic public, the demonstration which began Tuesday night may develop into a hunger strike.

The men, however, are resolved to stay in the council chambers until other arrangements are made. They place the responsibility for their condition and actions upon the seven members of the Oshawa Council who have obeyed the starvation policy of Queen's Park.

In the meantime the men are making the best of the facilities at hand. At night after their visitors have left, the men stretch out on benches and on the floor.... There are no blankets, no pillows.... What sleep is gotten must be on hard wooden 'mattresses.'

There are those who fail to win relief through sleep. They pace the floor or sit in seats staring into space or read to pass time. They stare into the vacant aldermanic seats in which the men had sat who had them disowned and ignored as outcasts of civilization.

In the morning they awake, but there are no washing facilities.... Water is carried up in a pail from the firehall. Shaving is an uncomfortable process.

For breakfast there is the odd sandwiches left over from the day before while coffee or tea is obtained from a restaurant. There is nothing left for dinner.

But by the time noon arrives, citizens have always come voluntarily to the chambers bearing in sandwiches, lunch boxes and bread....

Supper is a repetition of breakfast and dinner....

Between meals, the men try their best to amuse themselves with what they have on hand. Some will play checkers or cards, others may read while a steady conversation is carried on in regards to their fight to live in this country of great wealth.<sup>1</sup>

Shortly after the 1937 provincial election was over, attention was turned towards the approaching municipal elections. The Daily Clarion called for a united labour-progressive slate supported by C.C.F.ers and Communists which, with the trade unions in the van, could set out to "conquer important positions from reaction."<sup>2</sup> In their appeal to the C.C.F.ers,

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1. From a description of the 'stay-in' demonstration at Oshawa, May, 1939. The Oshawa Labor Press, May 11, 1939.

2. Daily Clarion, Oct. 12, 1937.

the Communists quoted David Lewis who had declared at the Quebec C.C.F. convention:

We are living at a time when the tempo of social and political development is so fast that we cannot measure our accomplishments by the ordinary political yardsticks. We cannot afford thirty years to build, as they did in Great Britain.

The C.C.F. must, in a planned, coordinated way, participate in every popular activity. Where possible it must lead; where that is not possible, it must work just as hard.

In the trade union, among the unemployed, the farmers, among youth, women, in the work for peace, civil liberties, the Japanese boycott, Spain, there must be C.C.F. people working in a co-ordinated planned way, to make these activities successful, to lead them in a progressive direction, and to establish contacts with as wide a section of the people as possible.

We must participate with imagination, without fear, no matter who else may be participating.<sup>3</sup>

Lewis's statement was hailed as indicating that great and promising changes were taking place within the C.C.F. Lewis, however, wanted to beat the C.P. at its own game. Unfortunately, the "old guard" C.C.F.ers prevented the party from being as "co-operative" as Lewis would have liked. Thus the C.C.F. may well have lost a golden opportunity to gain mass support because there was little doubt that the appeal of the "united" or "popular front" was extremely powerful among the rank-and-file of the C.C.F. and the unionists in the late thirties.<sup>4</sup>

In addition to the growth of the "unity" appeal, the old issue of unemployment was revived in Oshawa and an organization of unemployed, the General Workers' Union was formed. Premier Hepburn had cut off provincial financial assistance to the cost of relief for single unemployed men on June 1, 1937<sup>5</sup> and as winter approached the plight of the men became

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3. Ibid.

4. Interview with A.G. Shultz.; The Daily Clarion, Nov. 29, 1937 notes that its readers in Oshawa were holding social evenings to raise funds for Canada's Mackenzie-Papineau Battalion serving in the Spanish Civil War.

5. The Oshawa Daily Times, May 27, 1937.

serious. When Mayor Hall declared that Oshawa would not shoulder the burden of single unemployed men's relief and that it was the province's responsibility, the relief issue was to be another factor added to the approaching election.<sup>6</sup>

With the provincial election over, the unions in Oshawa were able to continue with the plans they had started in the summer for a labour council. On November 25, 1937, the Oshawa Trades and Labour Council was formed by six local unions and officers of the new council were elected.<sup>7</sup> A municipal election committee was established and when it reported on December 8, it was unanimously agreed that a slate of labour candidates would be supported in the municipal elections to be held on January 3, 1938. A general membership meeting of U.A.W. Local 222 also voted unanimously to support the labour candidates and to grant financial assistance and the use of union headquarters for campaign meetings. Hugh Thompson, who had made his first return appearance in Oshawa in six months, termed the decision for political action as "a stepping stone for labour which may help to block these 'isms' that are creeping into the country."<sup>8</sup>

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6. Daily Clarion, Nov. 27, 1937.

7. The officers of the new Council were: President, W.J. Smith; Vice-President, N. Williams; Recording Secretary, W. Pearne; Secretary-Treasurer, Angus Bell; Sergeant-at-Arms, James Smith. Some of the unions represented were the U.A.W., the Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel, and Tin Workers, the International Typographical Union, and the International Bartenders League. Ibid., Nov. 29, 1937. The Trades and Labour Council was not officially installed until April 7, 1938. At that time the officers were: President, W.J. Smith of steel workers' Local 1817; Vice-President, Nicholas Williams of the Typographical Union; Recording Secretary-Treasurer, Angus Bell of the Typographical Union. Ibid., Apr. 11, 1938.

8. The Evening Telegram, Dec. 9, 1937; The Globe and Mail, Dec. 9, 1937; Daily Clarion, Dec. 10, 1937; The Windsor Daily Star, Dec. 11, 1937; By December of 1937, U.A.W. Local 222 had grown to 4,300 members. Daily Clarion, Dec. 18, 1937.



Finally, six aldermanic, three Board of Education and two Public Utilities Commission candidates were nominated by the Oshawa Labour Representation Committee (L.R.C.), thus marking the first organized and united entry of labour-progressives on the municipal political arena in the city's history. The Oshawa Trades and Labour Council with the U.A.W. as its leading spirit, had at last initiated the L.R.C. representing the city's trade unionists and labour-progressive organizations.<sup>9</sup> As one L.R.C. spokesman declared: "We are out to obtain a real, democratic and representative civic administration. We want to clean out the doctor-lawyer clique which has run city affairs not always in the best interests of the people." To do this the L.R.C. platform called for a wide program of civic improvements, taxation reform, refunding of city debentures at low interest rates, adequate relief to meet the increased cost of living, house construction, and a sidewalk and road repair program. The L.R.C. was asking the electors to "plump" for its candidates and elect a majority of labour-progressives to city council.<sup>10</sup>

The intended highlights of the campaign were two mass meetings held at O.C.V.I. auditorium. At the first, held by the members of the 1937 city council, Mayor Hall tried to justify the stand he had taken during the General Motors' strike, claiming that the strike issue had made the election so important that it was "being watched closely throughout

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9. Some of the groups represented in the L.R.C. were: U.A.W. Local 222, the two lodges of the Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel and Tin Workers, Typographical Union, Beverage Dispensers, Bread and Milk Drivers' Union, General Workers' Union, and the Ukrainian Labor-Farmer Temple Association. These included affiliates of the C.I.O., the A.F. of L. and the A.C.C.L. Ibid., Dec. 28, 1937.; The C.C.F. was a minority in the L.R.C. and the Communists had no hold on it. The L.R.C., however, did contain a lot of British I.L.P.ers and militant trade unionists who could be termed as "more advanced leftists" than the C.C.F.ers. Interview with Mrs. G.S. Thomson.

10. Daily Clarion, Dec. 28, 1937; The Evening Telegram, Dec. 27, 1937.



the country and across the line." Fewer than a hundred persons attended this first meeting but the following night, five or six times that number turned out to hear the labour candidates. When a speaker quoted an alleged statement by Hall at a political meeting that "it was too bad I did not let the police come in here and clean up this bunch," the crowd booed.<sup>11</sup> Hall had been correct on one point: the strike was still fresh in the memory of the electorate and some of the L.R.C. candidates who had been on the union bargaining committee were well known and able to take advantage of this fact.<sup>12</sup>

All six of the L.R.C.'s aldermanic candidates were elected to council and one to the Board of Education. With the vote of the new mayor on their side, labour controlled the city council for 1938. (See TABLE 7.) As the results became clear late on Monday night, labour sympathizers and union members were jubilant and celebrated the sweep of their candidates. Nearly a thousand singing, shouting and drum beating members of the U.A.W. marched through the main streets with a Union Jack and the Stars and Stripes at the head of the parade. Of the victory C.H. Millard declared: "Oshawa has given the lead to all Canada."<sup>13</sup>

There was little doubt that Mayor Hall had been hurt by his fence-sitting position during the General Motors strike and later by the charges

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11. New Commonwealth, Jan. 8, 1938.

12. Interview with Mrs. G.S. Thomson.

13. The Globe and Mail, Jan. 4, 1938.; Although a lot of the L.R.C. candidates were C.C.F. members or supporters, it was organized labour in the L.R.C. rather than the C.C.F. that had succeeded in electing the labour council. Interview with Mrs. G.S. Thomson; The 1938 council had two professionals, two businessmen, and six labour representatives. Daily Clarion, Jan. 5, 1938; In East Whitby, C.C.F.er Harry Hazell was elected reeve and C.C.F.er Roy Trimm was re-elected to the council by acclamation. New Commonwealth, Jan. 8, 1938.

TABLE 7 RESULTS OF THE MUNICIPAL ELECTION IN OSHAWA FOR THE YEAR 1938

OFFICE AND CANDIDATES	NO. OF VOTES	POLITICAL AND OTHER AFFILIATIONS
A.S. McLeese	2,378	L.R.C., Honorary member of Local 222
Alex Hall	1,641	Honorary member of Local 222
A.N. Sharp	-	
Stewart Alger	-	
<u>ALDERMEN (10 to be elected)</u>		
Clifford Harman	3,022	L.R.C., C.C.F. supporter
John A. Coleman	2,840	
Dr. Grant L. Bird	2,792	
John Stacey	2,700	
E.E. Bathe	2,666	L.R.C., C.C.F. member, Vice-Pres. Local 222.
Finley M. Dafoe	2,590	L.R.C., C.C.F. member, Pres. of C.C.F. Club
J. Carroll Anderson	2,418	
William Walker	2,032	L.R.C., C.C.F. member
James Haxton	1,992	L.R.C., (of Scottish origin)
W.H.J. Harmer	1,787	L.R.C., C.C.F. supporter
R. Humphries	1,668	
Benjamin T. Ward	1,661	
Alex S. Ross	1,660	
William J. Lock	1,645	
A.J. Graves	1,607	
Michael Starr	1,334	
F.O. Kirby	1,292	
Eyton Warburton	1,156	
Sydney G. Carnell	769	
Foster Eastman	759	
Harry J. Werry	669	
Albert Douglas	460	
<u>BOARD OF EDUCATION (4 to be elected)</u>		
J.B. Lovell	2,692	
Dr. B.A. Brown	2,679	
John Naylor	2,405	L.R.C., C.C.F. supporter
Dr. Hartley Lewis	2,310	
Arthur Shultz	-	L.R.C., C.C.F. member, Financial-Sec. of Local 222
Mrs. Alice Batten	-	L.R.C.
<u>PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION (2 to be elected)</u>		
Norman Millman	3,087	
Samuel Babe	2,712	
A.W. Griffiths	-	L.R.C., C.C.F. member
George Burt	-	L.R.C., C.C.F. supporter, Treasurer of Local 222

SOURCE: The Oshawa Daily Times, Jan. 4, 1938; The Globe and Mail, Jan. 4, 1938; Jan. 5, 1938; New Commonwealth, Jan. 8, 1938; Daily Clarion, Dec. 28, 1937. A total of 6,193 electors cast ballots, an all-time high. The continuation of a city-wide vote for Aldermen was sustained when 4,259 voted for and 1,413 voted against.

brought against him by Gordon Conant during the provincial election. His defeat was perhaps symbolic of the new political alignment which was taking place in the community and the new fact of political life that politicians had to "choose which side they were on." But there were other factors than the strike that accounted for its victory. The old council had suffered a bad press just before the election because it had held closed sessions and the press had been excluded. In addition, labour's campaign and victory seemed to take the "old guard" by surprise.<sup>14</sup> As an observer later wrote of the election:

It was very apparent in all the campaign that the opposition was defeated...because of two things, a wave of fervour for Labor on the part of the workers and citizens of Oshawa and a lack of cohesion and organization on the part of the opposition who were divided into two main camps with possibly a third small dissentient group all of whom were at each others throats....<sup>15</sup>

According to one press description of the inaugural meeting of council, the labour aldermen literally "blew the lid off." Every new alderman had a number of motions to submit. One council member likened the banks to "loan sharks" and saw no reason why the city should pay four and a half per cent on bank loans when the banks paid only one and a half per cent on deposits. Finley Dafee declared, "The bank should be ashamed to ask high interest rates in view of the low interest they pay depositors and the way they have milked this city in the past." Thus, instead of authorizing the city treasurer to borrow \$250,000 at four and a half per cent to meet current expenses until taxes started coming in, the council authorized the borrowing of only \$100,000. In the meantime, negotiations were to be started to obtain a lower interest rate. In his inaugural address,

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14. Interview with G. Burt.

15. The Oshawa Labor Press, Oct. 24, 1940.

Mayor McLeese suggested that the small home owner should be given some exemption from taxes as provided for in the Assessment Act. Another bomb-shell exploded when Alderman Dafoe charged that some people had voted twice at the recent election. Alderman J.C. Anderson countered that if such were the case the whole election might be illegal. The council appointed a committee to investigate the matter.<sup>16</sup>

In appointments to the various commissions and boards, labour men replaced manufacturers and business magnates. The council eased out A.N. Sharp, local real estate man, from the position of Chairman of the Welfare Board as well as another member. In their place were installed four labour men.<sup>17</sup> Immediate action was taken on the relief situation at the first meeting of the 1938 Welfare Board when a decision was made that anyone applying for relief would receive a free medical examination and, if found unfit, receive relief at once. When the Unemployed General Workers' Union

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16. The Evening Telegram, Jan. 11, 1937; Daily Clarion, Jan. 19, 1938.

17. Ibid., Jan. 15, 1938; Sept. 20, 1938; Walter Bilski was also appointed to the Welfare Board and this caused a mass protest by over 400 members of the Ukrainian community. They claimed that he did not represent the Ukrainian community and that he was a Communist. Mike Harasynchuk, who said he was formerly a member of the Communist Party, claimed Bilski was put on the board at the instigation of the Communist Party. He said he was well acquainted with the workings of the Communist Party and stated: "The high-ups in the Communist Party dictate and the members do as they are told. I do not think that the Labor members of the Council are aware of the fact, that Bilski is a Communist. The Ukrainian Labor Temple was represented to the Labor Councillors as a labor organization and Bilski was introduced as a Labor member. In reality the labor Temple is a Communist organization and Bilski is a member." The Globe and Mail, Jan. 24, 1938. This led to counter charges a few days later. Ex-Mayor Hall was charged with having drafted the resolution condemning the appointment of Walter Bilski to the Welfare Board. This new charge was made at a mass meeting in the Ukrainian Labor Temple, addressed by Walter Bilski and Joe Derry, Secretary of the Communist Party in Oshawa. Derry claimed that the U.L.T. was not a Communist organization but that the Ukrainian National Hall was a fascist organization. Ibid., Jan. 31, 1938. The entire incident shows the sharp cleavage that existed in the Ukrainian community in Oshawa.

submitted a plea for the single men it was dealt with, the result being that the single men got a week's rations the following day.<sup>18</sup>

Throughout 1938, labour and its political representatives in Oshawa played a predominant role on the local scene for the first time. Issues were raised and dealt with as never before, and as the concept of the class struggle was brought to the foreground, people were forced to take sides.

In order to make its voice heard, the Oshawa Trades and Labour Council appointed a committee to establish a newspaper. As a result of the efforts of this committee and aid from the U.A.W., the Oshawa Labor Press Association was formed and the first issue of the Labor Leader made its appearance on April 14, 1938. It was a weekly "independent progressive paper" with William Noble as Manager and General Editor. By April 28, the paper could claim that 3,000 copies had been delivered to Oshawa citizens and by October, two months after the paper had changed its name to The Oshawa Labor Press, about 5,000 copies were being distributed.<sup>19</sup> In the first edition of the Labor Leader, an editorial explained the reason for the publication of the paper:

For some considerable time it has been apparent that if organized labour was successfully to present its point of view and take its rightful place in the life of the community it must be in a position to do it without let or hindrance. Since the trade-union movement made its appearance it has met with a mixed reception by such as were not in it and not of it. Although it has not always been met with outright and direct opposition, no opportunity has been lost for adverse criticism and upon occasion acrimonious hostility. When for the first time in the history of this city organized labor assaulted the stronghold of the city council and succeeded in scaling the heights it met with a lukewarm reception.

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18. As of January 11, 1938, there were 1,641 individuals on relief as compared to 2,201 at the same time the previous year, but the 1938 figures excluded single unemployed. Daily Clarion, Jan. 15, 1938.

19. Labor Leader, Apr. 14, 1938; Apr. 28, 1938; The Oshawa Labor Press, Oct. 27, 1938; Mar. 22, 1940.

by established so-called authority [sic]. A hyper-critical eye was cast in the direction of the labour aldermen and no opportunity was missed in trying to belittle if not actually discredit them. They were invariably damned with faint praise. Feeling that if labour representation was to survive and be accorded its true place in the sun some vehicle of expression was necessary.<sup>20</sup>

The Labor Leader duly set about its task of recording labour's achievements and indeed it had a fair number of topics to cover as the labour representatives had been very active. The depression problems still haunted the city. One of these was that of all the properties taken by the city for tax arrears in past years, only two per cent had been sold, and the city was left with over \$200,000 worth of property. To come to grips with the problem of tax arrears, the mayor and labour members of council proposed a scheme whereby canvassers would be sent to delinquent taxpayers to negotiate agreements with them to pay, in small annual instalments, the present year's taxes and the aggregate tax arrears, thus avoiding the sale of the homes of citizens or their being taken over by the city. Aldermen Bird and Anderson opposed the scheme, claiming that it would increase the number of properties to be sold. Mayor McLeese replied that such had not been the case in other cities such as Niagara Falls where the plan had been tried. He stated that less than ten per cent of tax arrears had been collected the previous year, thus ten years would go by, on that basis, before arrears would be cleared up; under the plan suggested, where it had been tried in other places eighty five per cent of the arrears had been gathered in five years. Thus the matter was settled and the necessary by-law passed.<sup>21</sup>

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20. Labor Leader, Apr. 14, 1938.

21. Ibid., Apr. 21, 1938; On the subject of the housing problem, Mayor McLeese claimed that it was not the Dominion's Housing Scheme but the high rate of property tax that made home owning unattractive. Since the



The city had also approached the Welfare Department in order to gain greater assistance for the relief budget. A limited goal was achieved when the provincial authorities announced they would grant \$27,933 to cover the excess costs incurred in the city above the estimate for the year up to the time of the appeal, and would consider future requests. It was a small concession but the council considered the effort worthwhile.

The labour presence on council was felt in a broad spectrum of issues. Certain lands held by the city were allocated as parks and playgrounds and selected so as to give every section of the city a place for boys and girls to play. When tenders were opened for new firemen's uniforms it was made clear that all clothing had to bear the union label. The labour aldermen also refused to have the relief labourers work out their relief at late hours in order to prevent the city from paying time-and-a-half for overtime to the regular city employees.<sup>22</sup> In fulfilling pre-election pledges, the labour council relieved the single men of a portion of the poll tax imposed upon them by previous councils and hoped to offset any loss of revenue by increasing the licence fee on slot machines. Labour representatives also stated that if they were re-elected the following year they would endeavour to reduce further the tax burden on the single men. Instead of all the road work being done in one section of the city, as had been the practice, the labour aldermen endeavoured to have it

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21. Continued from Page 231.

provincial government would not give the municipalities wider taxing powers so that the tax burden could be more evenly spread, he called for relief by having the province take over a small portion of the tax burden which was so heavy on property. Such a move would mean that a building program could be started and unemployment reduced. As far as McLeese could see, the problem lay with senior levels of government and the municipalities could do very little. Ibid., May 26, 1938.

22. Ibid.



distributed over the whole city. Adjustments of pay had been made to certain grades of workmen in the employ of council and although "a certain alderman had made sarcastic reference to garbage men doing their work in top hats and frock coats, the representatives of labour did not intend to be deterred from improving the conditions of the civic employees whenever and wherever possible." Finally, a public meeting was held at the Polish Hall at which some of the labour aldermen gave a résumé of their activities on council. This meeting had "sounded a new note in civic circles inasmuch as on no previous occasion had the burgesses of the city been privileged to receive an account of stewardship during their term of office from any of their elected aldermen."<sup>23</sup>

The Labor Leader fought to defend its class representatives on council because it was not uncommon to hear comments from citizens who reflected scornfully on the qualifications of any and all labour men. They bandied about remarks like: "What do they know about it? Isn't it ridiculous for a bunch of ignorant Labor men to run the affairs of a City?" In an editorial entitled "The Dignity of Labor," the Labor Leader chastized such people who, "if they are asked to explain what is meant by "ignorant Labor men," will, if they have the courage to express their belief, define them as those who work with their hands." These people would not like to "reduce the issue to such simple terms" but they still "feel that the mass of manual workers possesses an inferiority complex, which makes them far more receptive to criticism aimed at themselves than at business and professional men" who have held office at other times. Elaborating on the workers' inferiority complex, the Labor Leader commented:

In a snobbish world a man feels that he should apologize be-

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23. Ibid., Apr. 28, 1938; The Globe and Mail, Mar. 8, 1938.

cause he labors with his hands; that wealth confers immediate merit. He thinks it is shameful that he is a useful member of society, who makes a valuable contribution to the national wealth. This feeling is certainly enthusiastically endorsed by those who feel that a social awakening on his part would jeopardize their own position.

The "critics object to telling a man plainly that they believe him an ignorant dolt, and a fool, merely because he works with his hands." Even such gentlemen feel that a "man may resent such opinions, and, further, give physical expression to his distaste."<sup>24</sup>

It became necessary for labour to assert the "dignity and joy of creative work, to insist that manual toil is honourable and right; that those in the professions, in offices, and in the factories do not hang their heads." The Labor Leader called on the citizens not to receive the "gratuitously impertinent criticisms with smug silence" but to ignore the stock arguments and foolish fallacies trotted out to prove that "blue ruin will embrace us because of the devilish machinations of the radicals." The contributions of labour men in England, Sweden, Denmark, Norway, New Zealand, and Australia were conveniently ignored by critics who would say that Canadian labour is "peculiarly moronic" and that it is a "national trait." Admitting that labour representatives were not infallible and must be judged by their achievement, the Labor Leader presented its case for the election of more labour men.

Because a man is a producer it does not follow that he was born without brains, or that its use has been neatly sterilized. The mass of the people engage in this work, and they are as eminently qualified to think intelligently, and reason constructively, as any other class in the community. More, they are faced constantly with the grim realities of existence, and are more likely to show practical common-sense in administering the civic, provincial or Dominion economy than those who are merely theorists. Those who can be good "managers" and make small wages take care of the pressing needs of a household, can surely apply their in-

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24. Labor Leader, Apr. 28, 1938.

genuity to the needs of a group of families, with an enlarged income. For it has been somewhat wearisomely chanted that the national economy is the art of keeping the households of the country.<sup>25</sup>

Early in 1938, the General Workers Union in Oshawa presented the city's Welfare Board with a brief outlining relief conditions in Oshawa and offering suggestions for improvement. The brief compared present relief allowances with those of previous years. It reported that "since... 1933 the prices of all food commodities have increased sharply.... After conducting a careful survey of food prices, we find that there is an approximate increase of 30 to 35 per cent since the year 1934." This survey had been based on a comparison of price lists year by year of foods purchasable by the unemployed. The present relief allowances were hopelessly inadequate. With the great increase in living costs there had been "no increase in food allowances" and even the "scale of relief existing prior to the present increased prices was insufficient." The brief then advanced minimum recommendation figures arrived at by the Ontario Medical Association in 1933 based on the then prevailing food prices. The cost analysis of the weekly food budget submitted by the Association in 1933 for a family of five ranged between \$5.29 and \$7.07. The authors of the brief were cognizant of the difficulties of the municipality and noted that they had always advocated that relief should be a federal responsibility. Therefore, the municipality would have to not only take steps to remedy the present situation but also do everything possible to persuade the government to accept responsibility for relief. The General Workers Union assured the council of its whole-hearted support and asked the city to consider certain steps.

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25. Ibid.

In dealing with the existing system of relief the brief pointed out that

it is entirely unjust and opposed to all progressive principles. Work for relief is opposed to the interests of the community inasmuch as it creates two distinct categories of labor, wage labor and relief labor. It inevitably works out that relief labor is used as a means of lowering living standards and the municipality is in the position of giving the lead to those unscrupulous employers who use every excuse to reduce wage standards.

The Oshawa work system was seen as particularly unjust because it forced a man to work for every form of assistance received. While a municipality should do everything possible to assist a man to find employment in order that he might be self-supporting, the present system defeated that aim.

The brief attacked the principle of work for relief as one that has been "always staunchly opposed by the organized trade union movement as they recognize the threat it contains to the standard of life of the employed worker." The brief requested the council to discontinue this system and "take men off relief and pay them wages for all necessary work," and further requested the city to provide assistance to the single unemployed despite the refusal of the provincial government to assume this responsibility.<sup>26</sup>

The labour representatives listened and action was taken. The number of hours that the heads of families on relief had to work was reduced from eighty to forty each half month, thus giving the men more time to find regular employment. In addition, relief recipients were allowed to earn one-third of a voucher without reductions in their allowances. The Welfare Board also made it possible for the unemployed to get items such as hosiery, leather shoes for children, summer underwear, belts, braces

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26. Daily Clarion, Feb. 18, 1938.

and other necessities they never had before.<sup>27</sup>

By April the relief situation had rapidly deteriorated because the factories were slack, many men were laid off and others were working only two or three days a week. Unemployment was about double what it had been at the same time the previous year, and on relief pay days the lineup resembled that at a large factory.<sup>28</sup> Added to this situation was the problem of correcting old relief administration policies and practices, an example being a letter circulated by the relief officer without the knowledge of the present council or Welfare Board. The letter, signed by J.C. McGill, Administrator of the Oshawa Public Welfare Board, had been resurrected from the 1936 files of the board and sent to Oshawa workers, who, because they had once been on relief, received orders to establish a maximum family budget for themselves not greater than fifty per cent above the relief schedules. Any worker who refused to comply would not be entitled to welfare assistance in case of future unemployment.<sup>29</sup>

On May 24th., the Oshawa Branch of the Ontario Federation of Unemployed (O.F.U.) held a meeting in the city council chambers to discuss the problems facing its members throughout the province. Instead of the usual seasonal employment absorbing the unemployed, the summer relief rolls now were climbing and would soon reach the heights of the winter months rather than declining during the summer as they usually did. In addition, the government's reduction of relief grants to municipalities was forcing the municipal authorities to make drastic cuts, thus forcing the present sub-normal living standard of the relief recipients ever lower. The men

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27. Ibid., Apr. 13, 1938; Sept. 20, 1938.

28. Ibid., Apr. 13, 1938.

29. Ibid., May 30, 1938.

decided to join with other O.F.U. branches in a protest demonstration at Queen's Park and also to send a delegation of single unemployed to wait upon the Oshawa city council at its next meeting in order to ask that work be found for them or that relief be continued.<sup>30</sup>

When the O.F.U. delegation appeared before council, Frank Towers, their spokesman, charged Premier Hepburn with being determined to cut the living standard of all. The attack was being made on the unemployed first and if it were successful the next step would be to cut the wages and living standards of all the workers. He criticized Hepburn's policy of sending single men to farms because "the average man from the unemployed...was unable to do farm work and the farmers could not afford to keep such men."<sup>31</sup> In support of the delegation an enraged Alderman Dafoe declared:

There is an abundance of food in this country, and when this city can afford to pay thousands of dollars to professional money-loaners and make grants to the Chamber of Commerce, to mention only two instances, I consider it much more worthy to help the single unemployed than to add to the police force.<sup>32</sup>

Then Dafoe, seconded by Alderman Walker, moved that the single unemployed men be reinstated on the relief rolls, and that a strong protest be forwarded to the Dominion Government pointing out that the problem should be handled from Ottawa. With only one dissenter, the council voted to reinstate single unemployed men's relief, thereby reversing the previous decision that had struck all single men off the rolls on June 1.<sup>33</sup>

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30. Labor Leader, May 26, 1938.

31. Ibid., June 9, 1938.

32. The Globe and Mail, June 7, 1938.; Dafoe claimed that the city paid about a quarter of a million dollars in interest on debentures each year. Labor Leader, June 9, 1938.

33. The Globe and Mail, June 7, 1938; Labor Leader, June 9, 1938; New Commonwealth, June 11, 1938.

Issues discussed by the council covered a broad scope and some were quite controversial ideologically. Upon receipt of a resolution from the Niagara Falls city council opposing Quebec's Padlock Law, the Oshawa city council passed a resolution condemning the law as undemocratic and demanded its immediate disallowance by the federal government.<sup>34</sup>

When it was announced that the Toronto followers of Adrien Arcand's fascist party intended to hold a meeting in Oshawa, citizens of all sections of the population became thoroughly aroused. Both the Oshawa Trades and Labour Council and the Canadian Legion, Branch 43, urged the council to ban the meeting.<sup>35</sup> At a special council meeting called to discuss the problem, Alderman James Haxton declared that the fascists just wanted to start trouble. "They are against our principles, and we should stop it before it gets started here. If they want to be under a dictatorship let them go to Germany or somewhere where there is a dictator." Alderman Dafoe argued that "the threat of Communism in this country is a joke, but the threat of Fascism is a serious thing." He then moved that permission to

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34. The usual lines on council were drawn during the vote. Labor Leader, June 30, 1938; Daily Clarion, June 29, 1938.

35. Labor Leader, June 30, 1938; Earlier, the Labor Leader, May 12, 1938, commented on an article appearing in a local newspaper which described a paper it had received, the organ of the Fascists in Canada, in a way that "leads one to believe that its personal sympathies are with the aims of the shirt-wearing, Jew-baiting gang of toughs known as Fascists." The Labor Leader continued: "It has long been believed that this particular journal's animosity to the cause of the working class, and its attempts to organize in unions and other economic units, has been engendered by sympathy for dictatorial methods via the Fascist style. That it has come into the open with that sympathy to the extent of reprinting the propaganda of the party with favourable comment by the editor only goes to prove that events in the city are compelling more clearly drawn lines and forcing such people to declare themselves in their true colors.

"This city has no room for any organization that would use repressive measures to silence the voice of the working people or that would use any racial cry as a method of rallying blind prejudice to forward its own ends and the quicker any attempts to foster Fascism here are frowned upon the better it will be for all citizens."



meet on city property be refused the fascists, but Alderman J.C. Anderson moved an amendment to include Communistic bodies as well as Fascists in the motion. His amendment carried, despite Dafoe's argument.<sup>36</sup>

With Mayor McLeese's endorsement, the Oshawa Ratepayers Association immediately cancelled a regular meeting to organize a large demonstration at Memorial Park. In addition, the left-wing Ukrainians met at the Ukrainian Labour Temple to protest "the Polish fascist terror in western Ukraine" and the proposed fascist meeting in Oshawa. Although pro-fascist members of the Ukrainian Nationalist Party attended the meeting with the intention of provoking the speaker and audience, no incident occurred.<sup>37</sup> Over 2,000 people attended the anti-fascist rally in Memorial Park to pledge their support for democracy. Alderman Stewart Smith (Communist) and School Trustee William Dennison (C.C.F.) from Toronto, as well as Aldermen Dafoe and Haxton along with other community leaders, addressed the crowd. As a result of the meeting a resolution was sent to Prime Minister Mackenzie King, demanding that the "federal government organize an immediate investigation into Nazi activities in Canada."<sup>38</sup> In addition, an anti-fascist committee was established and later a move was made to form a permanent anti-fascist league.<sup>39</sup>

The fascists did carry out their plans to hold their first public

36. The Evening Telegram, July 16, 1938.

37. Daily Clarion, July 18, 1938.; Daily Clarion, July 6, 1938, claimed that nearly all of the Toronto members of the Ukrainian Nationalist Federation were present at a Massey Hall meeting held by Adrien Arcand. It was also charged that "a large number of Arcand's blue-shirted guard of muselemen [sic] were members of the Ukrainian Nationalist Federation."

38. Ibid., July 21, 1938.

39. The anti-fascist committee was composed of James Smith of the U.A.W.; Aldermen James Haxton and Finley Dafoe; A. Tierney, President of Branch 43 of the Canadian Legion; and Ed Cheetham. Ibid., Aug. 12, 1938.

meeting in Oshawa. The speaker was Joseph Farr and he addressed a gathering in a hall which had recently been purchased by the Ukrainian Sporting Sitch Association.<sup>40</sup> This move gave the Daily Clarion an opportunity to lash out at the Sitch by charging:

Like the hall owned by the Sitch in Toronto, the Oshawa building was purchased within the past few months. The Toronto hall, used regularly by the Arcand fascists for drill and meetings, cost \$18,000, with a down payment of \$7,000 made in cash. The Oshawa hall is less pretentious, but Oshawa is a smaller city.

The Sitch membership in Toronto...stood at about 35 prior to the purchase of the hall. In Oshawa the Sitch membership is under 20.

On November 15, 1937, Hetmanych Danylo Skoropadsky arrived in Canada from Berlin, toured the dominion and set up branches of the Ukrainian fascist organization. Shortly after his visit to Oshawa on May 14, 1938, the Sitch there were able to buy a hall.<sup>41</sup>

The whole incident had placed pressure on the ethnic community to prove its loyalty. In response, a good number of Ukrainian and Slavic people gathered in Cowan Park to condemn the invasion of fascists into Oshawa and to show their awareness of the need to defend their democratic rights. During the demonstration the people were addressed by speakers from the Ukrainian Labour Temple Association and Albert Douglas, President of the Central Ratepayers' Association, who congratulated the Ukrainian organizations for calling the protest meeting.<sup>42</sup>

In addition to the fascist affair, the subject of inefficiency and corruption also made the newspaper headlines. On instructions from Mayor McLeese, an audit was conducted of the City Engineer's Department

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40. Ibid., July 21, 1938; Aug. 12, 1938; A leaflet, printed in Ukrainian, was issued in Oshawa to advertise the meeting. It stated: "The party of Canadian nationalists will hold its information meeting against the Jews and their hirelings the Communists, Tuesday, July 19, 8:30 p.m. at 638 Oshawa Street." Ibid.

41. Ibid.

42. Ibid., July 26, 1938.

and it was discovered that the City Engineer J.H. Brown had misappropriated at least \$3,000 of city funds during the previous three years. Brown was charged, arrested and eventually sentenced to two years in the Guelph Reformatory.<sup>43</sup> The incident sparked further investigations. True to their election promise to "clean out the city hall" of maladministration, the labour aldermen set out to locate any other irregularities in the administration which might be sapping the taxpayers' money. The first general audit of all departments to be carried out in the past nineteen years was launched. A week after charges had been laid against Brown, the city council held another special meeting and dismissed the Tax Collector and his assistant. Alderman Finley Dafoe responded to allegations that this was high handed action by declaring, "I hope this Council is not going to be like Councils in the past. We have started in on this job and we are going to make a clean sweep of it."<sup>44</sup>

Oshawa never had a council as active or as controversial as the City Council of 1938 controlled by the labour aldermen, and this was a fact which led labour's foes and friends to engage in vigorous political action and debate. Realizing the reasons for their defeat in the previous election, labour's opponents began their campaign early, firing their first shots through the medium of the three local newspapers which they controlled. As usual, The Oshawa Labor Press championed its local heroes and attacked the "Babbetts" who view labour unions with suspicion. In mounting a counter offensive, The Oshawa Labor Press labeled The Oshawa Courier as the local "Slurrier," whose stock-in-trade was dirt and drivel.

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43. The Globe and Mail, July 16, 1938; Daily Clarion, July 25, 1938, Dec. 19, 1938.

44. The Globe and Mail, July 22, 1938.

The Oshawa Courier attacked not only the labour unions in Oshawa but especially vented its spleen on the labour aldermen. Mayor McLeese charged that the garbage pail journalism of half truths was being carried on with a purpose. He suspected the attacks of being paid propaganda to destroy the municipal careers of the labour men who "are evidently in the way of the plans of some group or interests who prefer to remain anonymous, but who have no scruples as to the methods or medium they would employ to eliminate or destroy said labor members."<sup>45</sup>

The Oshawa Labor Press even challenged the editorials in The Oshawa Daily Times, a paper which had "always been relatively silent during municipal elections" and found it "rather curious that it should choose this year to openly take sides."<sup>46</sup> A lot could be read between the lines of one editorial entitled "Oshawa's Civic Affairs" which in part said: "...one of the complexes that Oshawa is suffering from at the present time is too much dictation on the part of certain groups or individuals who think they have the cure for all the world's troubles." The Oshawa Labor Press stated in reply:

We heartily agree with the Times in its statement concerning the "dictation complex," but we strenuously disagree that they should specify "at the present time." If Oshawa is subject to "dictation," which we have every reason to question insofar as the working classes are involved, it is of an entirely different type to that which, in the past, has afflicted the poor taxpayers, while other privileged persons were enabled to pass the tax office with continued immunity. Now that we have a council that pays small heed to that kind of dictation--that makes a vast difference in some quarters.<sup>47</sup>

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45. The Oshawa Labor Press, Nov. 3, 1938.; A typical horror story published by The Oshawa Courier was the article "Oshawa Ghost City" in which an attempt was made to rouse the worn bogey that labour would drive local industries out of the city. Daily Clarion, Oct. 25, 1938.

46. The Oshawa Labor Press, Nov. 24, 1938.

47. Ibid., Nov. 17, 1938.

The "old guard" also raised the charge of "class representation" but The Oshawa Labor Press countered by claiming that all this raving about class representation as applied to labour was only "a smoke-screen to hide their own inefficient administration in the past." It continued: "...the non-Labor and anti-Labor elements in this and previous councils have nothing to learn outside their own ranks about class representation and its concomitant evils and abuses. They know all about them and is it too much to say that they practice them to the full?"<sup>48</sup>

For months, The Oshawa Courier, a paper distributed free from door to door, had openly attacked Mayor McLeese and the most popular labour aldermen. In recognizing the political threat contained in this underhanded campaign that was being drummed up against labour, the delegates on the L.R.C. decided to meet, elect officers and committees, and prepare for a campaign to acquaint citizens with the council's work on behalf of labour. At this initial L.R.C. meeting Mayor McLeese declared, "There are two distinct factions in the city. There are those who have worked and are continuing to work in opposition to this year's council, and those who are supporting its work. It is my belief that the latter group is by far the majority."<sup>49</sup> At a later meeting of the L.R.C., representation was increased to include some sixty delegates in order to help publicize the work of the labour representatives. Every trade union in the city endorsed the L.R.C. and sent delegates. Also seated were delegates from the Oshawa Progressive Co-operative, unemployed organizations, ratepayers, Women's Auxiliary of Local 222, Ukrainian people's organizations, the Communist

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48. Ibid., Dec. 22, 1938.

49. Daily Clarion, Oct. 4, 1938. William Noble was chosen as Chairman and Nick Williams, Acting President of the Trades and Labour Council, was elected Secretary of the L.R.C.

Party, and the C.C.F. This enlarged L.R.C. was even given a more formal structure when the delegates adopted a constitution which read in part: "The L.R.C. shall be composed of the main body of citizens with common interests for community betterment, namely trade unions, other labor organizations and economic associations and progressive labor parties." Unity was the keynote and the delegates solemnly pledged that they would allow no independent desire to harm the harmony and unity within the committee.<sup>50</sup>

As the election approached political action increased. The pre-election atmosphere was clearly evident at a hectic meeting of city council in mid-November when the resignations of six members of the Oshawa Welfare Board were accepted. It was also decided that the new board would be composed of the five remaining Welfare Board members with three additions for the remainder of the term. Ernie Cay, Chairman of the former Welfare Board, had stated that the Board had resigned en masse. The excuse or issue causing the move had been a council motion advising the Welfare Board to "buy union made goods whenever possible to purchase same at comparable prices."<sup>51</sup> Cay's statement was disputed by the labour representatives, who claimed that the motion to resign had only carried after Cay had cast the deciding vote after a tie. This was verified when the Welfare Board minutes revealed that five members had not voted to resign. Thus it was agreed, over the objections of Aldermen Stacey, Anderson, Coleman and Humphreys,<sup>52</sup> that resignations from the Board could only be accepted indi-

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50. Ibid., Oct. 18, 1938.

51. The Oshawa Labor Press, Nov. 24, 1938.

52. Dr. C.H. Bird, a member of the Board of Directors and a large shareholder in Ontario Steel Products, had resigned as Alderman and been replaced by R.D. Humphreys. Daily Clarion, Oct. 25, 1938.

vidually. When Alderman William Harmer swung in line with the four non-labour aldermen on the major motion, Mayor McLeese had to cast the deciding vote for the motion to reconstruct the Board.<sup>53</sup>

The anti-labour clique in the city possessed control over the principal means of publicity through the three local papers. The Oshawa Daily Times, the Free Press, and The Oshawa Courier were all headlining misleading stories unfavourable to labour. In particular, The Oshawa Daily Times was devoting considerable space to building up Alderman J.A. Coleman, its choice for mayor, and made it plain that it did not wish to have other candidates enter the mayoralty race in order that all anti-labour groups would unite behind the one candidate. In addition, Coleman supporters tried to induce the public to believe that he was "friendly to labour."<sup>54</sup>

With nomination day more than two weeks away, Oshawa's municipal election campaign got under way when a citizens' committee met to promote a slate of candidates to "represent all classes and groups in Oshawa." Alderman J.A. Coleman was endorsed as their candidate for mayor, and ex-Mayor R.D. Preston was named as his campaign manager. Speaking in support of this new group, Alderman J.C. Anderson tried to develop a rationale for its existence when he charged: "The so-called Labor members of City Council this year are not true representatives of Labor, I can't see that Dafoe and Walker and their man 'Friday,' Mayor McLeese, truly represent labor in Oshawa." He felt that Aldermen Dafoe and Walker wished to pro-

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53. Ibid., Nov. 21, 1938.

54. Ibid., Nov. 30, 1938; The Daily Clarion, Dec. 8, 1938, claimed: "Last week a Times editorial called for a meeting to select a slate opposing the one put forward by Labor. Following this, the Oshawa Property Owners' Association in which reactionaries are in control endorsed the calling of such a meeting after its Vice-President C.W. Connop read the Times editorial."



mote class warfare in their apparent efforts to assist labour. Of these men he declared: "If they are not actually Communists, they are certainly Communistic sympathizers."<sup>55</sup> This initial meeting was followed by another at which a slate of ten aldermanic aspirants was endorsed by the newly formed "Citizens' Committee."<sup>56</sup> In behalf of this "Citizens'" slate, R.D. Preston claimed: "We are going to run a gentleman's campaign and do it as economically as possible;" he denied a rumour that the "Citizens'" campaign was "being financed with \$10,000 put up by industries in this city." Preston then outlined some of the issues his group would stress:

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55. The Evening Telegram, Dec. 8, 1938.

56. The Daily Clarion, Dec. 20, 1938, claimed that the "representative citizens' group," which nominated a slate of candidates, themselves came from the "ranks of real estate and insurance companies which in turn have a close connection with General Motors." The Daily Clarion then provided the following information:

"The nominating committee is composed of:

W.B. White, insurance manager for the L.V. Disney Real Estate Co.

F.G. Chester.

J.P. Horton, salesman for the real estate firm of French and Sharp.

A.N. Sharp, ex-chairman of the public welfare board, ex-alderman and defeated candidate for mayor last year, partner in the French and Sharp real estate company.

J.E. McLeod, general manager of the Oshawa Electric Supply Ltd.

Thomas Farrow, building contractor.

C.W. Connop, salesman for Canada Oil.

L.V. Disney, real estate and insurance company head.

Roy Bond, partner in the Bond Brothers Service Station.

Walter Chapman, proprietor of the W.R. Chapman Auto Electric Co.

"This group nominated the following for aldermen: S.R. Alger, manager of the Alger Press; J.C. Anderson, lawyer and partner of W.E.N. Sinclair...; Ernest Cay, owner of the Ernie Cay Lumber Co., Thomas Farrow, building contractor; George W. Finley, representing the Dominion Securities Corp. and the H.R. Bain Co.; Dr. W.H. Gifford, dentist; Ald. R.D. Humphreys, lawyer; Alex S. Ross, representative of the Sun Life Assurance Co.; Ald. John Stacey, large property owner and Michael Starchewski (Starr), clerk at Pedlar People Ltd."

"The mayoralty candidate, Ald. Coleman, is owner of Coleman's Cartage and Storage Co., Robert D. Preston, campaign manager for Coleman, is salesman of the Mills Motor Service and an ex-Mayor."

Things have come to light in the past few months that have frightened men from offering their service for council.... People have come in to look for industrial sites and have been practically insulted by certain aldermen. Committees going to Queen's Park have antagonized the men with whom we have to deal by the insidious remarks of some of the members. We will never fill our empty factories under the group that is at present dictating this policy of our city.<sup>57</sup>

On Sunday, December 18, 1938, the official slate of L.R.C. candidates was announced at two largely attended meetings, and the L.R.C. Chairman, William Noble, released the L.R.C. program. (See APPENDIX D.) There

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57. The Evening Telegram, Dec. 14, 1938; The charge of "dictation" and the cry for "democracy" were frequently raised by labour's opposition and in particular by The Oshawa Daily Times. The Oshawa Labor Press took this paper to task by reproducing copies of correspondence sent to employees and made the following comments: "Let us go back to an editorial of a few weeks ago, in which they said: '...we cannot imagine free-thinking, red-blooded Canadians bowing the knee....' and also in the same article, '...there may be a few weak-kneed, spineless people who will submit to intimidation.'"

"After reading such magnificent, inspiring battle-cries calculated to rally us round the banner of the 'minority groups,' let us scan the Times democratic ultimatum to its employees, reproduced above. To quote in part:

"...After due consideration "we" decided it was in the best interests of all parties if we were to revert to the open shop basis of operation after June 30. We so advised the Union and have received a reply rejecting the proposition. It now becomes necessary to make enquiries of "individual members."

"Well, well, wasn't it ill-advised of the union to reject such an offer? No doubt these interviews with 'individual' members would have been real chummy affairs, no hint of intimidation, just a democratic get-together in which each employee would have received a cigar and an invitation to park his feet on the desk and be right at home?

"But alas, optimism is a frailty of human nature, for further on we read something that throws some light on the object of these personal interviews. Quote:

"'...necessary to enquire of individual members if they wish to continue in the employ of this company after June 30. If we do not hear from you by the time mentioned, we will assume that you do not wish to take advantage of this offer and we will proceed to fill the position without delay.'"

"...Can the workers, the labouring classes of Oshawa have any faith or hope of receiving a square deal from a group that are favored by a paper that derides every effort put forth by our labor member [sic] of council, a paper that screams democracy from the housetops, yet would take away the bread and butter of employees with years of service, because they claim the rights of being organized." The Oshawa Labor Press, Dec. 29, 1938.

were eight candidates for the ten council seats.<sup>58</sup> It had become apparent that there were two main parties running in the election but the "Citizens' Slate" was unwilling to confront the "Labour Slate" in public because not a single candidate of the "Citizens' Slate" put in an appearance at a public meeting of two thousand citizens held in the collegiate auditorium. Commenting on their absence, Mayor McLeese observed in closing his speech:

This is an open meeting, where all were expected to state their views. Not one of the opposition has appeared, and small wonder, considering the type of campaign they have put on. They are ashamed to appear before us, for they have nothing to defend but dirty, mudslinging tactics.<sup>59</sup>

The labour aldermen fought back against the vicious campaign that was being waged against them. Before an attentive audience in the Labour Temple, Alderman Finley Daffoe stated that three prominent public men, all ex-mayors of Oshawa, owed the city thousands of dollars in unpaid taxes. Even though efforts had been made to collect the amounts owed little success had been attained and one of the men even refused to pay. Daffoe thought it was only fair to the public that the men be named. The men

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58. Ibid., Dec. 22, 1938. For the City Council, the labour slate consisted of the five aldermen: Finley Daffoe, James Haxton, William Walker, E.E. Bathe and Clifford Harman. Two additional candidates were: Robert Stacey, a veteran in the labour movement, and Roy Hurst, an employee of The Oshawa Labor Press. Candidates for the Board of Education were: C. Phillips, Secretary of the Bakery and Dairy Salesmen's Industrial Union (also former union leader in the auto workers' strike of 1928); Mrs. Alice Patten, President of the Ladies Auxiliary of Local 222; Walter Bilski, President of the Bakery and Dairy Salesmen's Industrial Union; G. Tweedle and Tom King, both members of the U.A.W.; and A.W. Griffiths. For the Public Utilities Commission the L.R.C. named: George Burt, Treasurer of Local 222; and E. Hawke, an electrical worker at General Motors and U.A.W. member. Daily Clarion, Dec. 8, 1938; The Oshawa Labor Press, Dec. 29, 1938; Because he had been voting with the non-labour group on Council, William Harmer had been read out of the L.R.C. and he hinted that he would run as an Independent. He eventually sided with the "Citizens" group and attacked the L.R.C. Daily Clarion, Dec. 2, 1938; The Oshawa Labor Press, Dec. 29, 1938; The Evening Telegram, Dec. 8, 1938.

59. The Oshawa Labor Press, Dec. 29, 1938.

and amounts were: Alderman John Stacey (\$5,758.62), W.J. Trick (\$10,072), and Gordon Conant, Attorney General of the Province of Ontario (\$16,493.76).<sup>60</sup> Dafoe believed that all of these men, who had business firms operating in the city, could well have afforded to pay their taxes in full. Alderman John Stacey owned many properties in Oshawa and was also owner of Forest Hill Heights Ltd., while W.J. Trick, a lumber merchant, had recently been able to purchase a new automobile.<sup>61</sup> As Dafoe told his audience, "You who are low-paid workers were pressed hard for any little amount owing but these men were not." He assailed the policies pursued by these former mayors and councils which had saddled Oshawa taxpayers with huge debts and interest payments, exclaiming: "We are now paying through the nose for what these men did."

They had been part of the "old guard" and it was Dafoe's opinion that the "Citizens'" campaign to regain control of the city council in the election was impelled by motives that would add more to the debts of the city. He suggested that the old clique wanted to win in the hope that they would still be able to steer the provincial highway through the main street of the city, a project which would cost the Oshawa taxpayers from

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60. Daily Clarion, Dec. 7, 1938; Dec. 19, 1938. The figures given did not include penalties and interest charges levied to Dec. 31, 1938. The City Treasurer, Peter A. Blackburn, stated that if Oshawa's three ex-mayors would pay their tax arrears the city treasury would be out of "the red" in its 1938 budget. The city faced a \$54,135. deficit. This laxity in collecting taxes accounts for the dismissal of the former Tax Collector.

61. Ibid., Dec. 7, 1938; Dec. 19, 1938. Benson, Sayer and Davidson, chartered accountants, who had made a special audit of civic departments had this to say about tax payments: "Taxpayers apparently well able to pay have been allowed such latitude that at the present time a serious situation exists in connection with a number of properties or which arrears of taxes amount nearly to the full assessment of such properties at 1938 assessment valuations. It is quite apparent that this situation cannot be allowed to continue and those responsible are to be censured for the present situation."

\$1,000,000 to \$1,500,000. Such an expenditure in order to change the course of the highway from the present proposed route through the south end of the city to the main street could not be in the interests of the majority of Taxpayers but only to the uptown businessmen, he maintained. Work on the Toronto-Oshawa highway, which had been resumed late in the summer after the city council had sent delegates to Queen's Park, had been discontinued. Dafoe hinted that this might have been done "through the connivance of local reactionaries who were basing their hopes on re-electing their henchmen so that the course of the highway may be changed to conform with the desires of the uptown businessmen and to have the public pay the bill."<sup>62</sup>

The "old guard" "Citizens" had offered no constructive platform to the public, but spent their time vilifying the labour men, chanting the old bogey about "communism," "dictation," and "C.C.F.ers," repeating the old phrases over and over as would a flock of parrots. In contrast, the L.R.C. had produced an extensive platform, many of its candidates had a good record on council in their favour, and individual labour aldermen such as Finley Dafoe had more than countered the attacks of the "Citizens." With the slogan "Plump For Labor" the L.R.C. candidates closed their campaign by appealing to the public for support, calling for the election of labour men "who do not promise to hand you Utopia on a platter, but who will remember the promises they do make and fight to bring a fuller portion of prosperity to you and yours."<sup>63</sup>

On election day there was a record turnout of almost seventy per cent of the total possible electorate in what was probably one of the most

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62. Ibid., Dec. 7, 1938.

63. The Oshawa Labor Press, Dec. 29, 1938.

hotly contested elections in Oshawa's history. The results, however, spelled the end of Labour's rule in municipal affairs. (See TABLE 8.) The L.R.C. had elected only four members to council and its mayoralty candidate, Alex McLeese, lost to John Coleman by only 250 votes. It was a close election decided by narrow margins but it also indicated that labour had increased the size of its absolute vote even though it lost proportionately. What gave the "Citizens" their victory was their ability to arouse the traditional vote which they had always enjoyed. "With all the organization of the combined Tory and Liberal parties at their command, plus unlimited funds and multitudinous transportation for the convenience of their supporters,"<sup>64</sup> the "Citizens" had not had the overwhelmingly decisive victory they had hoped for. The L.R.C. supporters were told not to be despondent because "Labor will be able to re-adjust the balance at a future date." As The Oshawa Labor Press observed:

For the first time the "Citizens" found what it was to be up against a determined, factual force. They didn't like it. Many of them have provincial and federal political ambitions. The municipal ring, is, to them, of little importance. But they bear the brand of Cain. They are marked down as anti-labor. And the reflection worries them. It may worry the provincial member at present sitting for this constituency. The federal member will also "view with alarm."<sup>65</sup>

Though the L.R.C. raised the charge of irregularities in connection

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64. Ibid., Jan. 5, 1939; According to George Burt, one of the L.R.C. candidates, the Liberals and Conservatives combined their machines to "get labour" while the C.C.F. and Labour really didn't have a machine. Interview with G. Burt.

65. The Oshawa Labor Press, Jan. 5, 1939; In East Whitby Township, the labour candidate for deputy-reeve, Harry Hazel, defeated Roy Trimm by 827 votes to 821 votes. Trimm had originally been included in the Labour slate, but at the nomination meeting he formally declined to be listed on the slate. Hazel had been expected to contest the reeveship with Irwin T. Ormiston, but dropped to fight it out with Trimm for deputy-reeve. The labour slate for council was defeated, the results being: Everett Warne, 811; Norman Down, 802; A.E. Grass, 686; T.D. Thomas, 648; and Mrs. M. Mathews, 163. The Evening Telegram, Jan. 3, 1939.



TABLE 8 RESULTS OF THE MUNICIPAL ELECTION IN OSHAWA FOR THE YEAR 1939.

OFFICE AND CANDIDATES	NO. OF VOTES	POLITICAL AFFILIATION
<u>MAYOR</u>		
John A. Coleman	4,599	"Citizens"
Alex S. McLeese	4,349	L.R.C.
<u>ALDERMEN (10 to be elected)</u>		
J.C. Anderson	4,509	"Citizens"
Clifford Harman	4,479	L.R.C.
Dr. W.H. Gifford	4,415	"Citizens"
Ernie Cay	4,295	"Citizens"
S.R. Alger	4,216	"Citizens"
John Stacey	4,183	"Citizens"
E.E. Bathe	4,143	L.R.C.
R.D. Humphreys	4,020	"Citizens"
James Haxton	3,967	L.R.C.
Finley M. Daffoe	3,598	L.R.C.
George Finley	3,547	"Citizens"
Robert Stacey	3,417	L.R.C.
Alex Ross	3,368	"Citizens"
William Walker	3,201	L.R.C.
Thomas Farrow	3,077	"Citizens"
Roy Hurst	3,028	L.R.C.
Michael Starr	2,360	"Citizens"
Howard Edmondson	1,087	
F.O. Kirby	991	
Edmund Jackson	959	
H.J. Werry	902	
William Harmer	894	
<u>BOARD OF EDUCATION (5 to be elected)</u>		
Mrs. B.G. Colpus	4,575	
Dr. S.J. Phillips	4,310	
Dr. F.J. Donevan	4,282	
Dr. H.M. Cooke	4,162	
C.C. McGibbon	4,061	
Arthur C. Phillips	3,364	L.R.C.
Mrs. A. Patten	2,849	L.R.C.
George Twiddy	2,477	L.R.C.
A.W. Griffiths	2,257	L.R.C.
Walter Bilski	2,122	L.R.C.
<u>PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION (2 to be elected)</u>		
Charles Bowra	4,849	
William Boddy	4,697	
R. Edward Hawke	3,700	L.R.C.
George Burt	3,240	L.R.C.
TOTAL VOTE CAST	8,948	

SOURCE: The Evening Telegram, Jan. 3, 1939; The Oshawa Labor Press, Dec. 29, 1938; Daily Clarion, Dec. 20, 1938; The Globe and Mail, Jan. 4, 1939.



with the polling, it decided to take no action to ask for a recount. It considered the irregularities were more apt to have been caused by a lack of knowledge of the Election Act and inexperience on the part of the Deputy Returning Officers than to any desire to influence the results of the election. Also, the L.R.C. did not want to make a big issue of the matter because it was felt that they would play into their opponents' hands as being poor losers.<sup>66</sup>

With the "Citizens" back in control of the city council again, the old order was soon re-established. The new 1939 Oshawa Welfare Board reversed the policies and rehabilitation work started by the 1938 administration. Board Chairman A.W.S. Greer announced that the Board had assumed the authority to set down a regular standard for local employees not on relief. Letters were to be mailed to all the employees in the Oshawa industries who were compelled to accept temporary relief assistance during 1938. These people were to be instructed to spend within a budget laid down by the board or be refused assistance during 1939 lay-offs. It was a direct threat to the U.A.W. and other locals because it was an attempt to reduce the living standard of wage-earners by imposing a relief standard on those employed in industry. In addition to this move a further means of "effecting economies" was implemented when the Board signed itself in agreement with Hon. Eric Cross, Ontario's Welfare Minister, to launch a "complete investigation" of all persons and families on relief. This meant a new barrage of questions directed at relief recipients with a view to purging the relief rolls. There is little doubt it was a class administration with a vengeance but it did have the result of causing

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66. The Oshawa Labor Press, Jan. 12, 1939; For some of the complaints see the Daily Clarion, Jan. 7, 1939.

renewed activity by the local unemployed organization.<sup>67</sup>

The new Council also appointed a tax collector, Admiral Sharp. The first time the position had been advertised it had paid a salary of \$1,500 per annum. When the names of four applicants, one being Admiral Sharp, were presented at a council meeting, Alderman Anderson remarked that the council had not received the proper material for the position and suggested that the position be advertised again with the salary stepped up to \$1,800. In this he was backed by Aldermen Alger and Gifford. After this change, council then chose Admiral Sharp. It was a very strange move for a "business council" to have turned Sharp down as being "unsuitable material" at \$1,500 a year and then to accept him at an increase of \$300. Men like George Finley and George Burt had applied but it seemed that "being a good Liberal was a prime requisite for local civic favors." This affair led The Oshawa Labor Press to ask "Has Tammany Hall come to Town?" Finally, after the issue had been brought to public attention, Sharp resigned his position.<sup>68</sup>

When the provincial authorities intimated that the single unemployed would be cut off relief on April 15, a massive "popular front" movement protested to Oshawa's council.<sup>69</sup> Nick Williams, President of

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67. The Oshawa Labor Press, Feb. 2, 1939; For an example of the letters issued by the Welfare Department, see Ibid., Apr. 6, 1939.

68. Ibid., Feb. 16, 1939; Apr. 6, 1939; Another move typical of the "Citizens" on council was the abolition of overtime rates of pay for city employees. Ibid., Mar. 7, 1940.

69. Letters and resolutions read before council came from the Oshawa Welfare Board, the Ontario Department of Welfare, Bakers and Dairymen's Union, Oshawa and District Trades and Labor Council, Labour Representation Committee, Oshawa Ratepayers' and Citizens' Association, Oshawa Youth Council, Oshawa C.C.Y.M., Ontario Federation of Unemployed, Single Men's Unemployed Association, Oshawa Branches of the Communist Party of Canada, and the Oshawa Ministerial Association. Ibid., Apr. 6, 1939.

the Oshawa and District Labour Council, told the city fathers that to throw the single unemployed adrift would tend to lower the standard of living, be an incentive to crime and most certainly cause a large percentage of "scab" labour. He reminded council that "Just because a man does not happen to be married, he cannot live on grass." Alderman Dafoe presented a motion to have the council continue relief while necessary but Alderman Anderson moved an amendment to Dafoe's motion to the effect that, instead of the Council committing itself to any promise, the Ontario Government be asked to postpone the date for the cutting off of relief for single unemployed to May 1.<sup>70</sup>

A delegation from Oshawa had visited Queen's Park in April to ask Premier Hepburn to provide work with wages for the jobless, contending that until such work was available they should be given a living standard which would sustain health and vigour. Mayor Coleman had promised that he would join the single jobless in a delegation to the Ontario Welfare Department but he did not present himself. At Queen's Park, the Oshawa delegation joined in a Toronto jobless demonstration meeting. Hepburn flatly refused to meet the protesting delegates. Hon. Eric Cross, Ontario's Welfare Minister, also refused at first, to meet the jobless, but later, under the pressure of the large demonstration meeting in the Park, he assigned Mr. Horton, his assistant, to meet the delegation. Horton only announced the government's policy that no further relief would be extended to single jobless after May 1; that the recommendations of the Ontario Medical Report on a standard necessary to sustain health in a human body be set as a uniform standard of relief throughout Ontario; and that no works program was contemplated. Later, Cross himself consented

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70. Ibid.

to see a delegation of six but only reinforced what Horton had said. This incident had clearly placed the Ontario government on record as being in favour of depriving the single jobless of all means of existence while at the same time reducing the already appallingly low relief standards. Shortly after the Queen's Park demonstration, a large public open-air meeting was held in Oshawa to inform the public of the issues at stake. Those organizing the meeting saw it as an appeal for solidarity of the citizens with the single jobless in order to ask that they be fed, sheltered and clothed "as citizens in a civilized city and country" because "Our democracy must provide this or else it will perish."<sup>71</sup>

On Tuesday, May 2, a motion by Aldermen Dafoe and Haxton calling for the city to assume the full cost of relief for the single men, despite orders from Queen's Park, was defeated in Council by the passage of an amendment introduced by Alderman J.C. Anderson. The amendment called for the city to continue to pay its share of 20 per cent of the relief cost to maintain the single jobless and left the Oshawa Welfare Board with authority to raise the remaining 80 per cent (the provincial government's share) through public contributions. This face-saving amendment, providing 57 cents per week for each individual for both room and food, passed by a vote of six to four, reflecting the "Citizens" and "Labour" division on Council. This same division persisted when Dafoe moved a resolution asking official permission for the single unemployed to solicit funds and food stuffs and asking Council to make arrangements to shelter the men temporarily at the House of Friendship. This resolution was defeated by

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71. Ibid., Apr. 27, 1939; Oshawa's unions were deeply concerned about the whole issue because employment at General Motors was being reduced to two, three or four days per week and in about a month General Motors and its feeder plants were expected to close down for the summer months. Daily Clarion, Apr. 29, 1939.

a six to four vote to have the matter referred to the Welfare Board.<sup>72</sup>

Since being cut off relief on May 1, the single unemployed men had, through delegations, resolutions and sandwich-board signs, sought to be reinstated. Jobs were not available in the city or district<sup>73</sup> and the men's situation was becoming desperate. On the morning of Tuesday, May 9, when J.C. McGill, relief administrator, refused to issue tickets for their breakfast, about thirty-five single jobless men occupied the employment office and refused to leave until they got jobs or something to eat. The police were called by the employment officer and the men were evicted but they waited in a body in front of the door until their delegation sent to see McGill had returned. The delegation finally arrived, only to state that nothing was to be given in the morning and that the men should return at 4:30 in the afternoon. The men then moved off in a body to the S.W.O.C. Hall to discuss further activities to bring attention to their predicament.<sup>74</sup>

These men were members of the Oshawa Branch of the Ontario Federation of Unemployed which also planned to hold a regular membership meeting in the City Council Chambers at the fire hall that night. At that meeting about twenty-five single jobless men without means of subsistence decided to stage a sit-down demonstration in the Council Chambers and remain there until jobs or other means of livelihood were made available. A police officer then brought a message from Mayor Coleman to the effect

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72. Ibid., May 5, 1939; The "old guard" on Council denied the unemployed the right to hold a tag day "so sympathetic citizens could extend the hand of Christian help" but granted permission for such a day on behalf of dogs and cats. The Oshawa Labor Press, June 18, 1939; The City Council even increased the grant to the Humane Society. Ibid., May 13, 1939.

73. Daily Clarion, May 12, 1939.

74. The Oshawa Labor Press, May 11, 1939; The Evening Telegram, May 10, 1939.

that the men could stay until morning but were not to smoke or create a nuisance. The men stayed longer, however, and when news of the sit-down spread, sympathetic citizens came forward to encourage the jobless in their demands, while U.A.W. members provided food. The men maintained that their demonstration had succeeded more than anything else in bringing to light the disgraceful condition which had been imposed on them.

According to a statement of the men:

The entire nation knows now that we are hungry and want jobs or else relief to maintain ourselves.... This is the object of our demonstration. We intend to keep on demonstrating our protests against hunger. The people must continue to support us, or else we will be sentenced to beg, steal or starve. It is the only way that we can demonstrate that our condition is enough to drive men desperate. Through our organization, we have retained sanity ...to deal with this question in a responsible and determined manner.<sup>75</sup>

Although desperate, these men could hardly be considered as dangerous radicals because typical of their methods used to end their plight was the issuing of an open letter petitioning His Majesty King George VI who was visiting Toronto. In the letter the single unemployed of Oshawa pledged their loyalty, explained their plight and charged the governments at Ottawa, Toronto and Oshawa with failure to carry out their duties and obligations which they had accepted when swearing allegiance to the Crown. The men hoped that His Majesty's visit would "bring about a revival of allegiance on the part of those within the nation entrusted to legislate the laws according to the needs of every section of the people and thus in the interests of the nation and Empire as a whole."<sup>76</sup>

After the men had endured more than a week of demonstrating, the Oshawa police, acting under orders from Mayor Coleman, evicted the "stay-

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75. The Oshawa Labor Press, May 11, 1939.

76. Ibid., May 18, 1939.

in" jobless. After being forced out on the street, the men moved to Memorial Park to eat dinner and declare their determination to continue the fight for work and wages.<sup>77</sup> One anonymous Oshawa citizen had offered the single jobless "work for a dollar a week and their board." The men neither refused nor accepted the offer, but maintained that to work at such rates meant "scabbing" on their fellow workers who were employed and struggling to improve their wages. As Cyril Loscombe declared, "It would be establishing a new low in wages in this district. To agree to work at such conditions, would be striking against our staunchest supporters, the trade unions."<sup>78</sup> Finally, at the request of labour Alderman E.E. Bathe, several ministers came forward and offered shelter to the men. The men still continued to press their case by picketing Mayor Coleman's house. U.A.W. Local 222 passed a resolution urging the Mayor to call a special meeting of Council to deal with the problem. It soon became apparent, however, that the men were to be left on their own. After hearing a delegation from the Oshawa and District Trades and Labour Council, the "Citizens" on City Council turned down aid to the men by a vote of six to four.<sup>79</sup>

The unemployed and other progressive groups in Oshawa continued their struggle throughout the summer of 1939 but there seemed to be a certain hopelessness in their efforts. The news from Europe started to dominate the press and with the outbreak of war a new issue came to overshadow "unemployment," the issue of the decade of the thirties. "Come the next war there will be work and wages for everybody." That had been the cynical

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77. Daily Clarion, May 18, 1939; The Evening Telegram, May 17, 1939.

78. Daily Clarion, May 18, 1939.

79. Ibid., May 19, 1939; May 20, 1939; June 8, 1939.



prophecy of the unemployed Great War veterans and it seemed about to come true now that the struggle against "fascism" which leftists had been warning against and fighting for years had broken into open hostilities. Patriotism was all very well but as The Oshawa Labor Press warned: "...true loyalty to our country should not blind us to the dangerous enemies of democracy and liberty within our own boundaries and war profiteers are much more dangerous to our national well-being than shells and bullets on the battlefields." It was with this thought in mind that a motion moved by Alderman Dafoe and seconded by Alderman Haxton, was passed with slight alterations by the Oshawa city council. It petitioned Parliament that if it became necessary to send Canadians overseas for combat, "conscription of wealth be placed on the statutes before any Canadian is asked to leave the shores of Canada for the purpose of war."<sup>80</sup> The Oshawa Labor Press also brought to the attention of the public the fact that Canada's military forces "are receiving many recruits from the ranks of the various labor organizations of this city. This should be of special interest to those who in the past have been inclined to think that labor meant anarchism, or any other type of 'ism' but Canadianism." It went on to comment on the union men who remained at home.

They have a duty to their brother unionists who take up the tools of war. It is the duty of these men to maintain their organizations so that sweatshop conditions will not await the returning veterans.... Every worker must remember that the boys who go overseas are fighting against the greatest threat to labour's freedom in history...fascism.<sup>81</sup>

Thus the tone of the new struggle was set.

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80. The Oshawa Labor Press, Sept. 14, 1939.

81. Ibid.

## CHAPTER X "UNITED WE STAND, DIVIDED WE FALL"

"Those who seek to drive a wedge between the trade unionists who have been working affably side by side in Canada for improved conditions, are betraying the interests of the workers."<sup>1</sup>

Organized labour in Oshawa had to wage a struggle on many fronts. It had fought on the economic front against the corporations and it had fought on the political front against the municipal administration and the provincial government, but one of labour's greatest struggles was against the threats to internal unity. These threats came from both outside and inside the community and had disastrous consequences for labour political action in Oshawa. A principal outside disruptive factor was the growth of overt factionalism within the U.A.W. in the United States and its spilling over into the Canadian Region and Local 222, the largest local in Canada and the dominant labour union in Oshawa.

As a union leader, Homer Martin had serious shortcomings. His background had been as a Baptist minister not as a trade unionist. In the union's hectic early days his considerable oratorical ability made him very popular with the rank-and-file workers and thus a colorful public leader; but as a union administrator he left much to be desired. As an admirer of Martin once remarked, "He is a poor administrator, lacking all gift for detail. Though his aim is steady and his courage, especially in a tight situation, is magnificent, his daily tactics are often impulsive and his impromptu statements are likely to be injudicious."<sup>2</sup> Martin was completely lacking in ability to build up a bloc of support in the union upon which he could count for support in a crisis. This was a crucial

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1. Alderman James Haxton, quoted in Daily Clarion, August 31, 1938.

2. Walter Galenson, The C.I.O. Challenge to the A.F.L. A History of the American Labor Movement, 1935-1941, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1960, p. 152.

factor because in 1937 the U.A.W. "resembled nothing so much as a feudal kingdom. Martin, the principal leader, sat on an uneasy throne, surrounded by semi-independent and self-sufficient lords whose allegiance to him was minimal, and whose efforts to unseat him were tempered only by the fear of splitting the organization and leaving it at the mercy of outside foes."<sup>3</sup> Once the union had achieved a measure of security against external attack through collective agreements, organizational and internal political problems came to the fore.

The union had numerous political factions, each with a local base of operations that gave it stability. Wyndham Mortimer, the First Vice-President, led a strong Communist Party faction and Walter Reuther led a smaller Socialist Party faction. Richard Frankenstein was a former partisan of Father Coughlin, and although he had broken with him he was regarded as a conservative. R.J. Thomas and George Addes, The Secretary-Treasurer, were looked upon as political neutrals but also had substantial personal followings. In addition there was a small ideological group with no independent local base which derived power by providing intellectual guidance to Homer Martin. This group was the Independent Labor League headed by Jay Lovestone.<sup>4</sup>

The various groups coalesced into two principal "caucuses." The

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3. Ibid., pp. 151-152.

4. Jay Lovestone was the General-Secretary of the American Communist Party until 1929 when he was expelled for "right wing deviationism." He and his followers formed a group known as the Communist Party Opposition which changed its name to the Independent Labor League. They rejected the C.P. "dual union" policy of the early 1930's and, instead, favored working in the established trade unions. Their strategy was usually to establish intimate relationships with union leaders in order to influence them privately. Politically, they were bitterly opposed to the official Stalinist party. Irving Howe, B.J. Widick, The U.A.W. and Walter Reuther, New York, Random House, Inc., 1949, p. 71; Galenson, op.cit., p. 151.

Progressive Caucus was led by Martin and Frankenstein. This group was strongly anti-communist in orientation and was supported by the majority of the top U.A.W. leaders who naturally favored centralization of power, and by most of the more conservative secondary U.A.W. leaders. In the face of intense factional warfare the Progressive Caucus proved unstable, especially because of Martin's extraordinary political blunders which caused his followers to desert him. The second group was the Unity Caucus, an alliance of communists and socialists, made possible by the "united front" tactics then being followed by the Communist Party. It was an anti-Martin coalition which also contained a stratum of active members who viewed with suspicion any leader seeking to concentrate power in his person. The Communist Party faction was the strongest but the alliance was never very firm and fell apart when the common enemy, Homer Martin, was eliminated.<sup>5</sup>

In August 1937, the U.A.W. held its convention in Milwaukee and it turned out to be a very disorderly event. The disputes over wildcat strikes and union centralization were reviewed. The various factions came to the fore as the Unity groups wanted to keep power out of the hands of Martin and as decentralized as possible. Martin, on the other hand, wanted centralization and denounced his opponents as being dominated by the Communist Party. This was not accurate. The Communist Party was the most influential force in the anti-Martin coalition but was not its master. The coalition was held together not by a positive agreement on political or union matters but by a distaste for Martin's high-handed ways. Martin's attacks on the communist labour radicals were not well received because the communists had built up a wealth of good will by their leadership

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5. Howe, Widick, op.cit., pp. 70-71; Galenson, op.cit., pp. 150-152.

during the organization period. Martin's crys of "outside influence" were demagogic because what counted as far as the unionists were concerned was not whether people were "inside" or "outside" but whether they were honest or dishonest, and intelligent or stupid. In fact, Martin was guilty of listening to the "outside" anti-Stalinist Lovestone group. Finally, John L. Lewis took a personal hand in the convention and a compromise was adopted. The number of Vice-Presidents was increased to five, two of them, Mortimer and Hall, adhering to the Unity group, and three of them, Wells, Thomas and Frankenstein, being of Progressive persuasion. Martin also had a majority of 16 to 8 on the new Executive Board.<sup>6</sup>

A depression hit the auto industry, however, and threatened the union's bargaining position and indirectly Martin's position. Heavy unemployment caused a drastic decline in the union's income and staff curtailment became necessary. Martin used the occasion to dismiss adherents of the Unity Caucus. The factions exchanged blows but Martin failed to notice and take advantage of the evident coolness that arose early in 1938 between Reuther and the Stalinists. Martin had made Frankenstein "Assistant President" or number two man in the union but the Communists used Frankenstein's ambition for the union's Presidency to get him to announce a plan to end factionalism by calling for the abandonment of all caucuses in the union. Martin retaliated in May 1938, by having the Executive Board abolish Frankenstein's title of "Assistant President" and

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6. Howe, Widick, *op.cit.*, pp. 72-73; Galenson, *op.cit.*, pp. 154-156; The Daily Clarion, Sept. 1, 1937, lists and labels the Executive Board members as follows: Wisconsin-Illinois: F.J. Michael (Progressive); Ohio: Ellsworth Kramer, R.E. Resinger, Paul E. Miley (all Unity); Canada: C.H. Millard (Progressive); Southern: Michael Gallo (Unity); Indiana: Russell B. Merrill (Progressive); Missouri: Delmond Garst (Progressive); Eastern: Frank Trael (Progressive); Pacific: Irwin Carey (Progressive).

pass a twenty-point "unity" program which tightened the union's lines against "irresponsibility," guaranteed the rights of "groups" (factions) in the union, and endorsed the Ludlow Amendment.<sup>7</sup> Still, Frankenstein's break meant that Martin's majority on the Executive Board was reduced to a 14 to 10 margin. Martin's support dropped further until by June 1938, the Frankenstein caucus was able to announce that the anti-Martin forces were in a majority on the board. Martin reacted by suspending Vice-Presidents Hall, Mortimer, Wells and Frankenstein, and Secretary-Treasurer Addes, thus leaving only himself and R.J. Thomas as functioning officers. In protest, six members of the Executive Board--Reuther, Miley, Doll, Lamotte, Reisinger, and Cramer--walked out of the board. The split which had existed behind the scenes for several years was now public.<sup>8</sup>

This was the political situation in the U.A.W. by mid 1938 and it was extremely difficult to prevent it from spreading into Canada. Once the factional split became public and locals and the rank-and-file were forced to take sides, the Canadian Region was bound to be affected. The Canadians, however, did not want factionalism and had previously not been involved.

Homer Martin and Hugh Thompson had paid a return visit to Oshawa on March 12, 1938, to help celebrate the anniversary of Local 222. The factional dispute in the U.A.W. in the United States was still not a real

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7. Blackwood, op.cit., p. 97-101 & 102. The Ludlow Amendment, called for a national referendum before the American Congress could declare war. It had been endorsed by the Lovestonites and a majority of the U.A.W. Executive Board. It was opposed by the Communists who favored "collective security" as the proper American attitude towards the gathering war clouds in Europe. By supporting the Ludlow Amendment, the pro-Martin majority had split the factional sores open again.

8. Galenson, op.cit., pp. 157-161; Blackwood, op.cit., pp. 102-103; The New York Times, June 14, 1938.

issue and if there was any concern over labour's internal conflicts it was about the A.F. of L.-C.I.O. split. Martin and Thompson were still popular heroes as a crowd of 4,000 citizens led by a brass band greeted their arrival. That night, Martin told 2,000 listeners at the O.C.V.I. auditorium what they wanted to hear. "I say to the warring factions in the United States, there is a place for both industrial and craft unionism. Work together in the best interests of trade unionism and your labor troubles will vanish overnight. It has happened here in Canada. It is the only proper solution in the United States."<sup>9</sup> The popular interest still seemed to be centered in the extension of democracy that unionization had brought<sup>10</sup> and the need for further political action. Hugh Thompson, now a C.I.O. regional director, declared, "You must assert yourselves politi-

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9. New Commonwealth, Mar. 19, 1938.

10. Martin with his rhetoric seems to have captured this popular philosophy of the extension of democracy when he said to his Oshawa audience: "You have been part of an International Union with SERVICE and HONESTY and DEMOCRACY as its watchword, and collective bargaining as its foundation; which has been able to change the working conditions of the men and women who toil in this industry, from one where you were totally in the hands of the men who owned the industry--the Boss, who was a representative of the owners of industry, where your right to work depended upon the Boss' state of digestion, where your home and your kids, and the very existence of your lives depended upon whether the boss got up on the wrong side of the bed, or had quarrelled with his wife, or whether or not, as in some cases, you were able to shovel out the snow from the driveway of the boss' house--an organization dedicated to your betterment and the betterment of the nation; you have been able, by your collective power, now to look the boss in the face, to look the industry in the face, and say 'I am a human-being.' A place where men and women who, a little while ago, had no independence, now have independence, because their jobs no longer depend upon the digestion of the boss, but upon the years of service and the work you do. Now they don't fire you for the way you say 'Goodmorning,' because they don't like the color of your eyes; through your organization you have been able to wipe out in the automobile industry the dictatorship that governed the lives of your homes, your children--you have been able to lift up your face and look your children in the eyes, your friends and relations, and by your own power, your own right, and by commonsense have helped democracy as well as the citizens of the state." U.A.W., Martin Papers, Speech of Homer Martin, President, U.A.W.A., Mar. 12, 1938.



cally. You have scored a victory in the municipal field. You now have a provincial end to conquer and that is your next goal. It is time that the laborer and the farmer, through united action, reaped the harvest for themselves and not the privileged few."<sup>11</sup>

The Canadians were not interested in factionalism but labour unity and the growth of the U.A.W. This was brought out at a two day conference held in Brantford in late June, long after the smouldering factionalism in the International U.A.W. had become public. The delegates were from all the Ontario locals of the U.A.W. and their main interest was the discussion of plans to organize the 60,000 automobile workers in Canada. They acted by unanimously adopting a resolution to set up a Canadian Regional Committee for the purpose of formulating and carrying out plans for the U.A.W. in Canada. Delegates were to be chosen by the locals and the report sent to the Regional Office after which C.H. Millard would call a meeting and officers would be elected.<sup>12</sup>

When Homer Martin suspended the four U.A.W. Vice-Presidents, a dispute arose over the form of their trial and the issue split the rank-and-file of the union into two camps. Martin wanted to have the four tried secretly by an international executive of twenty-three on which he

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11. Daily Clarion, Mar. 14, 1938.

12. Labor Leader, June 30, 1938; Daily Clarion, June 28, 1938; Originally, Millard had only the locals to report to. It was thought that a district council was needed to co-ordinate efforts and provide a central body for him to report to quarterly. Interview with Mrs. G.S. Thomson; The locals represented at the Brantford meeting were 222, Oshawa; 199, St. Catharines; 502, Windsor; 195, Windsor; 397, Brantford; 570, Peterboro, with 33 voting delegates representing over 7,500 members. Two key resolutions adopted were as follows: "1. Trade Union Unity. A resolution was unanimously adopted against any efforts to divide ranks of organized labor and endorsing continued unity of the Canadian Labor Movement. 3. Political Action. Independent political action was recommended for all sections of Labor." Labor Leader, June 30, 1938.

had a majority. Those who were to be tried called Martin's plan "dictatorial" and "undemocratic," and, fearing a "frame-up," they demanded a special convention of the union to conduct the trial. At the Brantford conference, Charles Millard was instructed to make every effort to have a special convention try the suspended men. Millard, however, disregarded the wishes of the Canadian U.A.W. representatives and voted against the plan to call a special convention. The four suspended Vice-Presidents censured Millard and charged him with being a "rubber stamp" for Homer Martin. Ed Hall, one of the four, stated in reference to Millard's action, "We are interested in hearing what Canadian union members think of that."<sup>13</sup> Richard Frankenstein added: "...we will carry the decision of the international executive right to the workers in Canada and the United States to depose Martin."<sup>14</sup> Thus, factionalism had been introduced into the Canadian scene.

The exact impact of the open factionalism is rather difficult to assess. The election in early March of officers for Local 222, and in particular the vice-presidential election, had been heralded by the New Commonwealth as a "decisive defeat for the local unity-group candidate." However, the elections in July for representatives to the Ontario Regional Council of the U.A.W. showed a decided victory for the unity group, which captured all three positions. Intrigued by that surprise, New Commonwealth reporters journeyed to Oshawa and made inquiries. They concluded:

The unities showed the Oshawa local just what a well-oiled political machine could accomplish. All the technique of modern electioneering was employed. Election agents, canvassers, scrutineers and even cars were used to get out the votes. The result: an overwhelming victory for the Unities and a flock

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13. The Oshawa Daily Times, July 28, 1938.

14. Daily Clarion, July 28, 1938.

of complaints and resolutions for the election reform for the union executive to deal with.

Apparently the fact that the election was held during the slack season when most of the union members were out of town was a big help to the Unity Groups. Less than two hundred voted out of a membership of more than four thousand.<sup>15</sup>

The New Commonwealth made the election seem like a left-wing conspiracy but, in contrast, the Daily Clarion reported that Millard's action in allying himself with Martin was "causing wide disfavor among union members"<sup>16</sup> and thus would account for a genuine increase in political activity against the Progressives. Communist opposition to Martin and his factionalism was known but in the left-wing press war it was very easy to ignore the fact that the rank-and-file and many Unity group leaders, who were neither communists nor their unwitting tools, were also opposed to factionalism, and thus to perceive the struggle as being a simplified one of C.C.F.ers versus Communists within Local 222.

When Millard reported back to Local 222, he was shown several news reports of the statements made by the suspended officers, and in particular Richard Frankenstein's press release charging him with failure to carry out the mandates of the recent Canadian Regional Conference. Millard claimed that "he was entirely at a loss to understand how any real union leader could so grossly distort facts." Millard claimed that the Regional Conference acted in an advisory capacity only and all recommendations were submitted to local unions for ratification. U.A.W. Local 222, the largest in Canada, had taken no action in the matter and the Windsor

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15. New Commonwealth, July 30, 1938. This analysis was taken from the article "From the Lunch-box" by F.W.D. (presumably Fred Dowling); The results of the election of officers for Local 222 had been: President, C.H. Millard; Vice-President, Albert Elson; Recording Secretary, Gladys Wragg; Financial Secretary, A.G. Shultz; Treasurer, George Burt. Shultz and Burt were both elected by acclamation. New Commonwealth, Mar. 12, 1938.

16. Daily Clarion, Aug. 2, 1938.

local had voted non-concurrence. In reply to the accusation of being a "rubber stamp" for Homer Martin, Millard said, "...some people don't understand the meaning of loyalty and cooperation." As a result of Millard's report, Local 222 voted a form of endorsement of the stand he had taken. The endorsation took the form of a motion to take no action in regard to Millard's support of Homer Martin in his attempt to "rid the unions of communist elements."<sup>17</sup>

The possibility of Martin transferring the allegiance of the U.A.W. to the C.I.O.'s rival, the A.F. of L., arose when union leaders representing 46,000 of the U.A.W.'s membership met in Milwaukee and urged their executive board to discontinue paying the per capita assessment of five cents to the C.I.O. Millard immediately reacted to the news of these developments across the border by stating that the Canadian unions were "autonomous bodies and it is up to them to decide what they will do, or whether they will even call a meeting to discuss the situation, but it is my personal opinion that they will follow the lead taken at Milwaukee." Up to this time there had been no move on the part of Canadian branches of the union to split with Lewis and his C.I.O.<sup>18</sup>

Millard soon modified his position. Even though he was a member of the International Executive Board of the U.A.W., he had not been informed of any trouble but became "worried" about the reportedly widening split between John L. Lewis and Martin over U.A.W. affairs. He immediately set out for Detroit to "get to the bottom of the situation as far as it affects the Canadian membership." Local 222 had received no official com-

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17. The Oshawa Daily Times, Aug. 6, 1938; Labor Leader, Aug. 4, 1938; Martin had raised the communist bogey when dealing with the suspended officers and it seems that Millard, a Martin supporter and Progressive, who was also strongly anti-communist, followed the Martin line.

18. The Evening Telegram, Aug. 29, 1938.

munication regarding the Milwaukee meeting and thus did not officially discuss the split in the American ranks; but Millard, before he left to confer with Martin, declared: "Whatever action is taken in Canada will be only after consultation with the membership. We have local autonomy here. Our future depends on the will of the majority...If the majority voted to leave the C.I.O. we would leave with them, but I don't think that is likely."<sup>19</sup>

John L. Lewis had entered the picture after the suspended U.A.W. Vice-Presidents had appealed to the International C.I.O. Martin had denounced Lewis for interference in the U.A.W., thus alienating him even further. Martin, however, was at the helm of a weakened organization and he was urged by some of the remaining members of the Executive Board to compromise. Thus he reluctantly entered into negotiations with the C.I.O., represented by Sidney Hillman and Philip Murray.<sup>20</sup> John L. Lewis and the Executive of the C.I.O. had proposed to the International Executive Board of the U.A.W. that a return to the status quo ante of the last convention be made and the suspended and expelled officers be reinstated. This was welcomed by local unionists.<sup>21</sup> George S. Thomson, a prominent member of Local 222 and Chairman of the Canadian Regional Council of the U.A.W., firmly allied himself with the C.I.O.'s unity proposal, claiming that "It should receive full support and endorsement of every auto union in Canada." He continued by elaborating the position and real concern of many among the Canadian rank-and-file.

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19. Ibid., Aug. 30, 1938; The Globe and Mail, Aug. 30, 1938.

20. Howe, Widick, op.cit., p. 76; Galenson, op.cit., p. 163.

21. Daily Clarion, Sept. 5, 1938.

Auto workers can have no other desire but to heal the breach which threatens our ranks.... We must have organizational unity within our ranks in order to safeguard the victories that have been won and go forward to further improve the working conditions and living standard of the auto workers.

A split in the ranks of our union can only result in seriously crippling [sic] our organization and opening the way for the motor magnates to smash the gains we have made during the past two years....

Auto workers will realize that their sole strength lies within the C.I.O. movement.... It was the C.I.O. which fathered our union and built it to its present formidable strength. We can be proud of our achievements under C.I.O. leadership and our future can best be assured under its banner.

Those who advocate withdrawal from the C.I.O., the organization which brought our union into being,...are actually condoning disruption and weakening of the auto workers' union.

I can state as a member of local 222 that there has never been to my knowledge, any cause for any member to voice dissatisfaction with the C.I.O. It is my opinion that the rank-and-file members in Oshawa stand solidly with the C.I.O. and would be strongly opposed to any attempt to withdraw affiliation.<sup>22</sup>

While attending a special session of the International Executive Board of the U.A.W. in Detroit where Sidney Hillman and Philip Murray, special representatives of Lewis, were trying to reach an agreement, C.H. Millard sent to Local 222 a letter of resignation as its President. His resignation was accepted at a general meeting of Local 222, but the move caused enough speculation that Arthur Shultz, Secretary of Local 222, had to deny that Millard had been asked to resign as a result of the stand he took in connection with the four international officers. Shultz admitted, however, that some members thought that the president should have spent more time attending to local duties. This was closer to Millard's official reason for resigning, that he wanted to enable a local man to be elected

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22. Ibid., Sept. 3, 1938; Unity was the keynote of the times. The Oshawa Trades and Labor Council passed resolutions urging unity of the A.F. of L. and C.I.O. unions at the T.L.C. convention that was to be held at Niagara Falls beginning Sept. 12. Later, U.A.W. Local 222 urged the C.I.O. Executive officers to again seek to open negotiations with the A.F. of L. in an effort to promote a united labor movement. The Oshawa Labor Press, Aug. 25, 1938; Ibid., Oct. 6, 1938.

president.<sup>23</sup> Thus, at a subsequent meeting of the local, J.H. Cottingham, the former Vice-President, was elected President and James Smith was acclaimed as Vice-President.<sup>24</sup>

A settlement of the dispute in the U.A.W. was finally reached. The agreement provided that the case of the expelled officers was to be submitted to Murray and Hillman for arbitration, their decision to be final. A joint committee consisting of Martin, R.J. Thomas, Murray and Hillman was to be set up to handle further disputes in the U.A.W. and determine matters of policy between the union and the C.I.O. The U.A.W. affirmed its loyalty to the C.I.O. and the C.I.O. recognized the full autonomy of the U.A.W. The C.I.O. also pledged its support to the U.A.W. in "any disciplinary action against any violation of the constitution or policies of the U.A.W." Soon thereafter, Murray and Hillman ordered the expelled officers reinstated.<sup>25</sup> Millard, who was present in Detroit, declared that the agreement was "a major step in the direction of the extinction of factionalism."<sup>26</sup> Even the Daily Clarion claimed that Canadian auto workers were congratulating Millard for "taking a leading part in having the union's general executive board accept the C.I.O. pact to end

23. The Evening Telegram, Sept. 9, 1938; Daily Clarion, Sept. 10, 1938; Shultz also denied that Millard had been instructed by the membership of Local 222 as to what stand to take with regard to the suspension of the four Vice-Presidents; Millard's official reason for resigning seems to have been accurate and widely accepted. He had spent very little time in Oshawa because his duties as Regional Director had kept him elsewhere. Interview with C.H. Millard; Interview with Mrs. G.S. Thomson.

24. The Oshawa Labor Press, Oct. 6, 1938; James Smith was part of the "Unity group" and J.H. Cottingham was a Liberal. Interview with George Burt.

25. Galenson, op.cit., p. 163.

26. New Commonwealth, Sept. 24, 1938; Daily Clarion, Sept. 17, 1938.



factionalism and establish unity in U.A.W. ranks."<sup>27</sup>

With internal problems seemingly solved, a conference of U.A.W. locals in the Canadian Region tried to map out organizational strategy and plans.<sup>28</sup> Their efforts were soon doomed as the union suffered two serious blows almost at the same time. The first blow came when the Executive Council of the T.L.C. of Canada suspended all members of the C.I.O., including the U.A.W., under the threat of having the A.F. of L. establish an A.F. of L. Congress in Canada.<sup>29</sup> The second blow came with the renewal of the internal squabble in the U.A.W.

In an attempt to revive his prestige in the U.A.W., Homer Martin had entered into dubious negotiations with the Ford Motor Company in October 1938, and in January 1939 he even succeeded in having the U.A.W. Executive Board approve his conferences with Ford. However, these negotiations soon collapsed amid accusations which were never adequately proved or disproved, that Martin had been planning to make a "secret deal" with Henry Ford. Another blow was delivered to Martin in January 1939, when R.J. Thomas deserted him, charging that he had been present at meetings at which the departure of the U.A.W. from the C.I.O. and its affiliation

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27. Ibid., Sept. 20, 1938.

28. Ibid., November 30, 1938.

29. At the T.L.C. convention at Niagara Falls in September, the issue of the A.F. of L.'s expulsion of the C.I.O. was avoided by having the matter referred back to the executive for further study. At the A.F. of L. convention held at Houston in October, William Green, A.F. of L. President, demanded that the T.L.C. oust all C.I.O. affiliates. In mid-December, a conference of T.L.C. and A.F. of L. executives was held in Washington and the matter was discussed. It became clear that the T.L.C. had to "clean house" or the Federation would set up an A.F. of L. Congress in Canada within a year. The T.L.C.'s decision was inevitable; they had to choose between 25,000 industrial unionists and 150,000 craft unionists. The Evening Telegram, Dec. 15, 1938; The Windsor Daily Star, Jan. 19, 1939; Also see Logan, op.cit., pp. 360-366.

with the A.F. of L. was planned. The U.A.W. rank-and-file were loyal to the C.I.O. and for any U.A.W. leader to be associated with a proposal to join the A.F. of L. meant the end of his career. A desperate Homer Martin reacted by suspending fifteen of the union's twenty-four Executive Board Members in January 1939, after the Board refused to accept a program including dissolution of the C.I.O. co-ordinating committee. The suspended members in turn constituted themselves as the official Executive Board and, after consultation with the C.I.O., R.J. Thomas was chosen acting President. Both factions then moved to control the U.A.W.'s administrative apparatus. The Executive Board gained control of the mailing lists for the United Automobile Worker while Martin's forces gained control of union headquarters and all the records of the organization.<sup>30</sup> The Martin forces called a special convention for March 4 in Detroit<sup>31</sup> and the U.A.W. Executive Board, after being in session for ten days, stripped Martin of much of his authority as President and arranged for a special convention to be held in Cleveland. The majority members of the U.A.W. Executive Board voted unanimously to impeach Homer Martin by preferring eight charges against him, one being that he had conspired with representatives of the Ford Motor Company "to create a secession movement within the union with the view of destroying the union and building a dual organization among the auto workers."<sup>32</sup>

C.H. Millard, upon hearing that he was one of the fifteen suspended

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30. Galenson, op.cit., pp. 165-166.

31. Howe, Widick, op.cit., p. 77. The delegates who went to the Detroit Convention represented about 60,000 U.A.W. members. After the convention this group joined the A.F. of L. thus becoming the U.A.W.-A.F. of L. It was a small group which quickly slid into insignificance. The Windsor Daily Star, Jan. 20, 1939.

32. The Globe and Mail, Jan. 21, 1939; The Toronto Daily Star, Jan. 20, 1939.

board members, declared, "Martin's position is ridiculous, but in my experience it is not the first time he has contemplated the same foolish action of suspending a majority of the board so he could seize control." He lashed out at Martin, considering it "inconceivable that this kind of leadership from Martin will be allowed to continue."<sup>33</sup> During the period of confusion when the union was splitting apart, Millard had flirted with the idea of leading the Canadian U.A.W. locals out of the international union and setting up a national organization.<sup>34</sup> This idea was soon dropped, however, and he publicly declared that he was confident the Canadian membership was very much in favor of industrial unionism as exemplified by the C.I.O. and would maintain their affiliation with that body. He also stated that the Canadian Regional Board of the U.A.W. would meet in St. Catharines on January 28, to discuss the situation and that he believed the majority of Canadian members would adhere to the constitutional body represented by the suspended officers.<sup>35</sup> Upon his return to Oshawa, Millard received support from the steward body of Local 222, which voted to concur in his action on the International Executive Board in reference to the Canadian policy and the affairs of the International Union. The stewards also tendered a vote of confidence in his future activities as an international representative. Millard defined the issue at stake as "not one of factionalism but...clearly a matter of democracy versus dictatorship." He claimed that his and the other suspended officers' position was that the constitution had to be observed until changed by the convention

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33. The Windsor Daily Star, Jan. 20, 1939.

34. Interview with Mrs. G.S. Thomson; C.H. Millard claimed that at that time he could see no alternative but to form a national union if the factional fighting in the international union was going to continue. Interview with C.H. Millard.

35. The Windsor Daily Star, Jan. 20, 1939.

called for March 20 at Cleveland, a position which had the full support of the C.I.O. He pointed out that the Executive Board of 24 members was the highest governing body of the U.A.W. between conventions; the President, according to the constitution, was invested with certain powers between the meetings of the Executive Board but at board meetings his status was only that of a board member.<sup>36</sup>

Before going to the Cleveland convention the Canadians held their previously scheduled regional conference at St. Catharines. It was a stormy two day session held behind closed doors and all the issues and future direction of the U.A.W. in Canada were reviewed. Even Homer Martin had announced that he would attend in order to explain why he had ousted the fifteen international executive members. He was uninvited, however, and did not come.<sup>37</sup>

The main issues besides the routine reports and business were unification of the U.A.W., loyalty to the C.I.O., and unification of the trades union movement in Canada through the T.L.C. On Millard's suggestion, Silby Barrett, Regional Director of the U.M.W. and the S.W.O.C., and Canadian representative to the C.I.O., was invited to address the delegates. Barrett stressed the "need of loyalty and wholehearted support by all Canadian C.I.O. Unions to the C.I.O. and pointed out that any secession from the C.I.O. would leave us at the mercy of the forces of reaction." Millard also stated his support for the C.I.O., believing that

Brother John L. Lewis, Sydney Hillman, Phil Murray, and the C.I.O. Executive Board, who have endorsed the position taken by the International Executive Board, led by Brother R.J. Thomas, will do

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36. The Oshawa Daily Times, Jan. 23, 1939. The U.A.W. unions at Windsor also endorsed Millard's stand.; Daily Clarion, Jan. 25, 1939.

37. The Evening Telegram, Jan. 25, 1939.

all in their power to support us in our fight to unify the U.A.W.A. in spite of the Martin inspired group, supported by Ford, the Manufacturers Association, and the Hearse[ sic ] Newspaper.

He also pointed out that any "attempt of secession or national unionism was a betrayal to our membership."<sup>38</sup>

According to the resolutions put forward at the conference, there was no support for the Martin faction, yet a strong resolution condemning Homer Martin's action as "Dual Unionism and Union wrecking" and calling for one hundred per cent support for the C.I.O., was withdrawn. The resolution that was finally carried by a convention basis vote of 22 for and 4 against, affirmed that the union would be best served by retaining affiliation to the C.I.O. It recommended that the Canadian locals send delegates to the Cleveland convention "at which time they shall have the opportunity to pass judgement on the officers and the International Executive as a whole." A special meeting of the Regional Conference was to be called and held in Windsor where the executives of the locals who were to be invited, were "to go into more detail on the Canadian situation prior to the Convention."<sup>39</sup> This resolution, which did not mention Homer Martin, seemed to be cautious and moderate but it still put the Canadian Region clearly on the side of the C.I.O. faction and can be contrasted with the following neutral and nationalistic resolution which was ruled out of order.

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38. Private, Thomson Papers, Minutes of the Regional Conference held in St. Catharines, Jan. 28, 1939.

39. Private, Thomson Papers, Resolutions at U.A.W. Canadian Regional Conference, Jan. 28, 1939. A roll call was taken on this resolution and the delegates voted as follows:

Local 222: For: Brother Cooper and Brother Thomson.  
           Against: Brother McLean.  
 Local 199: For: Brothers Smith, Steve and Hiller.  
           Against: Brother Lawrie.  
 Local 195: For: Brothers Johnson and Grondin.  
           Against: Brothers Cockbain and McCartney.  
 Local 502: For: Brother Emery.

Whereas:

This Conference is in accord with the general program of the C.I.O.

And Whereas:

This Conference is in accord with the principles of Industrial Unionism as exemplified by the Constitution and general set-up of the U.A.W.A.

And Whereas:

This Conference is of the opinion that at various times many members of the International Executive Board of the U.A.W.A. of bothe [sic] parties in the present strife, have conducted themselves in a manner detrimental to the welfare of the members of the U.A.W.A.

And Whereas:

This Conference finds it impossible at the present time to determine the program which either of the two International Board parties engaged in will take in the future.

Be it further resolved:

That this Conference recommends to the membership of their Region that they withdraw from the I.U.U.A.W.A. until such time the International, through the actions and program of its officers clearly shows its ability to again assume the leadership which is necessary to regain the Confidence of the membership here in Canada.<sup>40</sup>

The majority of delegates were definitely in favor of the concepts of international unionism, the C.I.O., and "unity."<sup>41</sup> In a supplementary motion, they expressed feelings of "regret" rather than "antagonism" to the unions in the A.F. of L. for what they hoped was only a "temporary suspension" from the T.L.C. They went on record as appreciating the co-operation extended to the I.U.U.A.W.A. by the T.L.C. and urged that C.H. Millard "consult and strive with other C.I.O. and A.F. of L. leaders to bring about an understanding whereby we will again be within the Trades Congress to unite the labor movement and thereby strengthen the forces of

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40. Private, Thomson Papers, Resolutions at U.A.W. Canadian Regional Conference, Jan. 28, 1939. Wm. Emery, Secretary to the Regional Conference, even wrote to A.G. Shultz urging him to "carry on the task of uniting the Oshawa boys behind the C.I.O. and the U.A.W.A." He also wrote to George Thomson asking "what went wrong with Tommy" referring to T. McLean and the way he had voted on the resolutions.

41. Private, Thomson Papers, Wm. Emery to Regional Council Delegates, Feb. 1, 1939.

Progress against Fascism and reaction."<sup>42</sup>

At a membership meeting of Local 222 held just after the conference, an overwhelming vote was given in support of standing solidly in the ranks of the U.A.W. under its international Executive Board affiliated under the C.I.O.<sup>43</sup> Also, before the Cleveland convention, the local elected its new officers and convention delegates and the Unity group forces became a bit more prominent. John Cottingham did not stand for re-election and it became a contest between two unity candidates for the Presidency. An experienced unionist, James Smith, because of his abrupt manner of speech and Scottish twang which made it difficult for him to be understood by the men, lost the presidential election to another Scot, George S. Thomson. In addition, Malcolm Smith, another unity candidate and James' brother, was elected Vice-President.<sup>44</sup>

Despite the attempts to cover up the internal debate that was going on inside the U.A.W., the fact of its presence and its causes and implications could not be ignored. Even the union as a collective bargaining agency was threatened. During the factional struggle with Homer Martin, General Motors refused to bargain with either side, claiming that

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42. Private, Thomson Papers, Resolutions at U.A.W. Canadian Regional Conference, Jan. 28, 1939; The Toronto Daily Star, Jan. 30, 1939; The Oshawa Labor Press, Feb. 2, 1939; Daily Clarion, Jan. 30, 1939; Millard stated after the conference: "The question of withdrawal from the international union was raised but found little support and the final resolution on this subject indicated clearly the feeling of the large part of the Canadian membership." Daily Clarion, Jan. 31, 1939.

43. Ibid., Feb. 4, 1939.

44. Interview with Mrs. G.S. Thomson. Other officers elected were: Trustee, Alex McKean; Sergeant-at-Arms, J.L. Gorman; Guide, Robert Mitchell. Acclamations were given to A.G. Shultz, Financial Secretary, Miss Gladys Wragg, Recording Secretary, and George Burt, Treasurer. The convention delegates elected were: George Burt, Charles Millard, A.G. Shultz, Thomas Cassidy, and Thomas McLean. Daily Clarion, Mar. 6, 1939.



they did not know who represented their employees.<sup>45</sup>

The union organization itself was in poor condition. The depressed condition in the automobile industry in 1938 had caused numerous and extended lay-offs and factionalism had hampered organizational work. Once the union had been formed in Oshawa and the drama of the 1937 strike was over, the union's main activity, as far as the men were concerned, was grievance solving. But since few people had grievances the men lost contact with the union. Since there was no compulsory check-off, people just quit paying dues. This became critical in December of 1938. Local 222 had just gone through a four month lay-off period when the International's office announced an assessment of one dollar a month for the two months of December and January. The result was that hundreds of men stopped paying their dues. The local had paid per capita dues on over 3,000 members for December of 1938 but by January the membership had dropped to about 700. When the return of factionalism was added to make the situation even worse, the local suspended per capita tax payments to the International until the mess was cleared up and new directions established for the union.<sup>46</sup>

Political troubles had been brewing in Local 222 which received literature from both sides in the International's factional fight. George

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45. U.A.W., Canadian Regional Office Papers, Brief History of U.A.W. in Canada, pp. 2-3. (Internal evidence indicates that it was probably written by George Burt.) This state of insecurity continued until after the Cleveland convention when the union in Canada quickly knitted itself together and using its organized power, influenced General Motors to resume bargaining with the U.A.W.-C.I.O.

46. Private, Thomson Papers, Minutes of the Regional Conference held in St. Catharines, Jan. 28, 1939; Interview with G. Burt. By the time of the Cleveland convention the number of dues paying members was very low but this did not affect representation at the convention because representation at that time was based on the membership for the previous eighteen months or two years.

Burt and Harry Benson had been chosen as a sub-committee of the executive with the task of reviewing all the factional literature which the local received. After their examination of the material they concluded with regard to the factions, "A plague on both your houses." But while the local union did not become involved in the factionalism, C.H. Millard did.<sup>47</sup> For a long time he had been pro-Martin and he had also tried to exert a strong pro-C.C.F. influence in the union which was resented, especially by the old country trade unionists and I.L.P.ers who regarded the C.C.F. as too middle class in character and incapable of building a mass labor party because of its rigid and cliquish club structure.<sup>48</sup> Millard also had a habit of labelling those opposing Martin and himself as communists or fellow travellers. It was a convenient device to put an opponent on the defensive and in a position where he would have to prove that he was not a communist; but it was also a tactic which caused trouble for Millard in Local 222. There were a number of unionists who were neutral and did not want to have anything to do with a dispute in the international's Executive. In addition, the men opposed to Millard--the group he had been calling communist--were quite strong in the local and they fought him. These were the Unity group members, the old country people like Malcolm Smith and Tom McLean, men who were not communists. In contrast, Millard had only a few supporters, the principal one being Arthur Shultz.<sup>49</sup>

The factional fight was even more bitter in Windsor because it was close to Detroit and representatives of the factions would come over and

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47. Interview with G. Burt.

48. Interview with Mrs. G.S. Thomson.

49. Interview with G. Burt. Shultz had worked near Millard in the plants and was very close to him as a member of the inner circle of the local C.C.F. Interview with A.G. Shultz.

harangue the men. A big split developed among the General Motors workers in Windsor and membership greatly declined. In addition to the heightened factional struggle in Windsor, Millard had several failures at organization on his record, one being at Chrysler. The plant was only partly organized and Millard had been responsible for calling an abortive strike. Out of about 2,000 Chrysler workers only about 150 walked out. These men had been lucky to retain their jobs. Little wonder that there had been considerable resentment built up against Millard by the time of the Cleveland convention.<sup>50</sup>

When the delegates set out for Cleveland, they went by way of St. Catharines and Windsor to pick up the other delegates from Locals 199 and 195 and to have their pre-convention discussions as previously arranged. Burt had originally intended to support Millard but when he met John Daughtry, the President of Local 199, and they discussed the situation, they realized that Millard was in trouble, but as yet did not know who would replace him. When they reached Windsor they found that Millard could not be elected no matter what happened. The key question became, who was to be the new Regional Director?<sup>51</sup> Some of the men wanted George Day as a candidate. Since it was not necessary for a person to be at a convention to be elected, a phone call was put through from Cleveland to Ethel Thomson in Oshawa. George Day was contacted and agreed to run but only if local autonomy in the sense of a national union was obtained.<sup>52</sup> This condition made him unacceptable. The delegates had a small group meeting at which

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50. Interview with G. Burt; For a brief description of the labour situation in Windsor see: Veres, op.cit., pp. 36-40.

51. Interview with G. Burt.

52. Interview with Mrs. G.S. Thomson.

Shultz did not show up. Thomas Johnson of Local 195 wanted to run, as did Leo Grondin, also of Local 195, but the Oshawa delegates, who had the largest number of convention votes and were the dominant element, refused to support Grondin. Thomas McLean, a much maligned opponent of Millard, approached Burt and asked him to run because he had been elected with the highest vote from the biggest local in the region. Burt considered the offer and since he was chairman of the meeting, he decided to call a meeting with Millard to hear what he had to say. Millard had only recently switched his support from Homer Martin to R.J. Thomas, having done so because Sidney Hillman and Philip Murray had promised him a job with the C.I.O. if he found himself in trouble. Burt raised this point before Millard and then told him that he would contest the Regional Directorship.<sup>53</sup> The whole move probably came as a surprise to Millard who no doubt thought it was part of a left-wing plot.<sup>54</sup> Millard responded to Burt's declaration

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53. Interview with G. Burt.

54. Millard seems to have given little previous indication that he felt his position was in serious jeopardy. Prior to the convention he wrote to Burt who he knew was a delegate and claimed that the union had suffered many handicaps before and since the last convention. For this there had been three chief causes; "major (outside) opposition, inexperience, political (internal) ambition." Millard did not dwell on the first two points but the third point he considered to be the "most important." It had "been very much misunderstood by most of the members of our great union...Due to our youth, officers of the Union were in many cases, chosen on a popularity basis rather than merit. They were elected by membership which in a large part failed to appreciate the problems which faced us, in other words on past records, rather than ability to administer the affairs of the Union. Internal politics resulted from recognized weakness on the part of some and from a sincere desire to correct the situation on the part of others. I will not pursue this question further, except to say that the delegates will be required to use their best judgement in making constitutional changes and election of general officers and board members, with a view of reducing to a minimum friction and inefficiency. Some are advocating a policy of a complete change of personnel, I disagree with that policy because I believe that some of the experience gained should be retained...we should guard against any outside political influence in the selection of our officers or the changes necessary in the constitution....

by charging that he was lacking in the sense, judgment, and political background necessary for the job. This only stiffened Burt's resolve and Tommy McLean and the other delegates put the pressure on. All the delegates except Shultz came to Burt and promised him their support if he ran. Even Johnson was willing to forego his desire to run. By then Burt had definitely made up his mind to stand as a candidate.<sup>55</sup>

Only the Canadian delegates at the convention chose the Director of the Canadian Region. Shultz voted for Millard<sup>56</sup> and Millard voted for himself, the others voted for Burt. According to the latter, Millard was bitter about his defeat and never forgot it.<sup>57</sup> The results of the Executive Board elections for the American section of the International U.A.W. must not be confused with the particular situation in the Canadian Region. The vote for Burt was an anti-Millard vote but not a pro-communist vote or

54. Continued from Page 285.

All political parties and power groups should be denounced and discouraged from participation." U.A.W., Canadian Regional Office Papers, C.H. Millard to George Burt, Mar. 21, 1939. In the letter, Millard noted that there was an opposition to the incumbent officers but did not intimate that it was a serious personal threat. His main worry seems to have been the "outside political influence" which, given Millard's frame of mind, he presumably considered to be the communists.

55. Interview with G. Burt.

56. Interview with A.G. Shultz. Shultz stated that, when it was realized that Millard was not going to be elected, he found that he himself was under pressure to run.

57. Interview with G. Burt; According to C.H. Millard's side of the story, George Burt canvassed the delegates to the convention and found that he had a half of a vote more than he did, and, being a bit of an opportunist at that stage, decided to run for the position of Regional Director. Afterwards, Millard asked Burt if he would have been elected by the Canadian membership of the U.A.W. in a referendum vote. Burt replied that he would have lost to Millard. Thus Millard considered Burt as not being really representative of the U.A.W. membership in Canada. Millard believed that he would have won a majority on any referendum vote because he had been a U.A.W. "pioneer" and because of his publicity, was better known by the membership. Interview with C.H. Millard.

a vote that placed Burt in a position of dependence upon communist support. It was a protest and "unity" vote in the sense of being leftist and pro-trade union unity in the special Canadian meaning of the word, that is, an end to factionalism of all kinds that was destroying the labour movement. Millard and Shultz<sup>58</sup> could be categorized as pro-Reutherite socialists, especially because of their C.C.F. background; but it must be remembered that there were C.C.F.ers opposed to them in addition to the members of the British I.L.P. unity group which had been in the union since its inception.<sup>59</sup>

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58. Shultz noted that when he was at the Cleveland convention he was "looked after" by a C.I.O. man who introduced him to the Reuthers as "comers" in the trade union movement. For a while, Shultz was the only pro-Reuther official on the executive of Local 222 until he was joined by Albert Elson, another C.C.F.er. Interview with A.G. Shultz.

59. Interview with Mrs. G.S. Thomson; Interview with G. Burt; This interpretation of Millard's defeat differs from those already written. Horowitz, op.cit., p. 108, claims: "The U.A.W. in Canada was dominated by its two big locals in Windsor, Ontario, Locals 195 and 200. In both the communists controlled the executive. In the U.A.W. as a whole they were the best organized and most powerful political force. The Canadian director of the U.A.W., George Burt, had been the treasurer of Oshawa local 222 during the strike of 1937. In 1937, with communist support, he had ousted Charles Millard as U.A.W. director in Canada. From 1939 to 1947, though he never became a communist and therefore not to be placed in the same category as C.S. Jackson and Harold Pritchett, he was dependent on Communist support, his staff was predominantly communist, and he usually took a position identical to that of the communists on the issue of political action. Horowitz does not adequately document this claim. Abella, ["The C.I.O., The Communist Party and The Formation of the Canadian Congress of Labour 1936-1941."], op.cit., p. 123, makes a similar claim and notes C.H. Millard as the source. Neither men ever interviewed Burt, who denies the strong communist influence in the U.A.W. Indeed, it seems that the sources for much of the established interpretation are C.H. Millard and his close supporters in the C.C.F. and trade union movement. Burt declares that he does not know where his opponents found all the communists in the Canadian Region of the U.A.W. in 1939. In fact the only prominent people he could name were John Smith at St. Catharines and William Emery, Secretary of Local 502 in Windsor, and neither was present at Cleveland. He reviewed the Canadian delegates to the Cleveland convention and made the following comments:

(1) Local 195, Windsor, representing 400 members. (2 voter per delegate, total: 4 votes)

Leo Grondin - a French Canadian and Roman Catholic. He dropped out

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On the broader scene at the Cleveland convention the principal point at issue was the election of officers. The communists and socialists were now at sword's point and the Unity Caucus broke apart. Frankenstein, a Progressive at the convention held in 1937, shifted to an alliance with the communists against Walter Reuther, who emerged as the key spokesman of the socialist group. The C.I.O. sent Sidney Hillman and Philip Murray to the convention to prevent its seizure by the Communist Party. They told the Communist Party people to refrain from using their votes and a "compromise" slate of R.J. Thomas (neutral in the C.P.-socialist struggle) as President and George Addes (a member of the pro-Frankenstein alliance) as Secretary-Treasurer, was put forward and accepted as a means of keeping the union free from control by ideological groups. The Frankenstein-communist supported group won a clear majority on the Execu-

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59. Continued from Page 287.

of the union and became a real estate agent and "communists don't drop out."

Thomas Johnson - not a communist but a strong C.C.F.er. He was Vice-President of Local 195 and Chairman of Kelsey Wheel.

(2) Local 199, St. Catharines, representing 500 members. (2.5 votes per delegate, total: 5 votes)

John R. Daugherty - President of the local and not a communist, "Even Millard wouldn't accuse him of that."

Albert Hiller - left to go on plant protection.

(3) Local 222, Oshawa, representing 2,400 members. (4.8 votes per delegate, total: 24 votes)

Thomas McLean - not a communist.

George Burt - pro-C.C.F.

Tom Cassidy - "wouldn't know a communist."

C.H. Millard - a C.C.F.er.

Arthur Shultz - a C.C.F.er and pro-Millard.

Only the delegates from three locals were present, representing a total of 3,300 members, U.A.W., Canadian Regional Office Papers, Canadian Region, 1939 Convention Representation, (n.d.) (1965?); Interview with G. Burt; Proceedings of the Special Convention of the International Union, United Automobile Workers of America. Convened, March 27 to April 6, 1939, Cleveland, Ohio. (n.p., n.d.), pp. 28-29. Finally, Pat Sullivan, one time President of the Canadian Seamen's Union and formerly a leading member of the Communist Party of Canada, noted that the U.A.W. was not controlled by the Communist Party (1942). J.A. (Pat) Sullivan, Red Sails on the Great Lakes, Toronto, Macmillan, 1955, p. 99.



tive Board while the Reuther faction was able to place only four members.<sup>60</sup> On the whole, a note of unity prevailed at the convention. After the Board elections R.J. Thomas stated, "Labels attached to board members are more in the nature of convenient generalities than accurate descriptions. I feel confident in predicting that the only program the board will follow will be the program of the C.I.O., which is a program of industrial unionism clear of all political alliances."<sup>61</sup> In addition, Blackwood, one of the key historians of the U.A.W., noted about the election results:

The worst handicap of the U.A.W.-C.I.O. in the fight against Martin was still its press. The labor writers of the nation felt that the Frankenstein - Addes - Communist group held a thirteen to five edge on the new executive board. Only a few of the members of the old board were returned to office, several of them not running or being badly defeated. Thomas was overwhelmingly elected president over two "favorite sons" - Carl Shipley, a South Bend "pioneer" and Frank B. Tuttle, "the old Philosopher," from Detroit; but only four men generally regarded as "moderates" - Walter Reuther, Dick Leonard, William McCauley of Pontiac, and Delmond Garst - were on the Board.

From the point of view of the communists this board stands as the best ever elected by the U.A.W.-C.I.O. The thirteen-man majority group around Frankenstein was whittled down in the next two years until by 1941 there were two almost equal power centers, Frankenstein and Reuther, with Thomas keeping an uneasy peace. Two things must be emphasized about this 1939 Board, however; although the communists were pleased, men like Frankenstein, Addes, and George Burt were too powerful personalities to be rightly regarded as "captives," and no member of the International Executive Board of the U.A.W. has ever been revealed to be a member of the Communist Party. Although the communists were strong in the union

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60. Galenson, *op.cit.*, pp. 171-172; Howe, Widick, *op.cit.*, pp. 78-79. The press did not make fine distinctions and usually claimed there were two blocs elected: the middle-of-the-road group including R.J. Thomas, Walter Reuther, Richard Leonard, William McCauley, Delmond Garst; and the Frankenstein bloc including Richard T. Frankenstein, George F. Addes, Leo Lamotte, Reuben Peters, Arthur Case, William Cody, Richard Reisinger, Paul Miley, Ellsworth Kramer, L.H. Michener, Lawrence Smith, Leroy Roberts, and George Burt. The Oshawa Daily Times, Apr. 6, 1939; Daily Clarion, Apr. 8, 1939; All the Canadian delegates voted for R.J. Thomas. Proceedings of the Special Convention of the International Union, United Automobile Workers of America, Convened, March 27 to April 6, 1939, Cleveland, Ohio. (n.p., n.d.), pp. 743-745.

61. The Oshawa Daily Times, Apr. 6, 1939.

in 1939, charges of "control" could not be made except on the flimsiest of evidence.<sup>62</sup>

The U.A.W.-C.I.O. delegates at the Cleveland convention represented 371,213 workers, a majority of those organized. The locals had decided which version of the U.A.W. to support and thus the factionalism was settled democratically rather than judicially. There was a feeling about the power caucuses and the top leadership of both the U.A.W. and C.I.O. at the convention that was opposed to dictation. "In actuality, the rank-and-file delegates did control the convention, despite the play of the power caucuses and the C.I.O."<sup>63</sup> This was most evident in the rewriting of the constitution by which control was decentralized, thereby keeping as much power as possible on the local level and in the hands of the membership and thus making it more democratic.<sup>64</sup> It was also in this situation that the Canadians were able to take advantage of the rewriting of the constitution to increase their autonomy.

Even at the time of the Regional conference held at St. Catharines in January, it had been considered that the Canadian region, due to its vastly different political and economic character, should work out a relationship to the International Union that would give it a more "definite and positive" position in its relationship to the Canadian C.I.O. Unions and the T.L.C. It would necessitate constitutional changes but they were necessary because the Regional Conference had

gotten off to a wrong start by not being a chartered body, subordinate to the International Union and operating under by-laws

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62. Blackwood, op.cit., pp. 127-128. Blackwood claims that to the best of his knowledge, only a handful of the Board members consistently followed the C.P. "line."

63. Ibid., p. 125.

64. For examples see ibid., pp. 125-127.

endorsed by the local unions and the International. This left the Conference in a position where its jurisdiction and authority were an unknown quantity. Confusion as to the status of the Regional Conference would always be in dispute until it was a chartered organization operating under definite by-laws.<sup>65</sup>

When the Canadian delegates held their caucus meeting in Windsor before going to Cleveland, they decided to act as a group at the convention. As the week long sessions got under way, Millard, who was still Regional Director, announced that the Canadian delegates were going to demand that the union extend to them "more autonomy" than was granted to other U.A.W. regions. He indicated that the group would ask the International Union to provide for a separate educational campaign among Canadian auto workers, a separate union newspaper, and a separate organization committee.<sup>66</sup> During the convention proceedings, a majority report by the constitutional committee was accepted and it called for the election of seventeen board members from geographical locations. Canada would have one board member and be represented as Region No. 7.<sup>67</sup>

Following up the developments at Cleveland, the Canadians held their two-day quarterly regional conference in Windsor. About 150 delegates from Oshawa, Windsor, St. Catharines and Tilbury attended, and with the spirit of unity prevailing, they fully endorsed the policies of the International Executive Board. These included the new constitution drafted by the Cleveland convention offering privileges and autonomy to all locals, which were to be supported one hundred per cent by the International Board. The Canadians set about the complete reorganization of their region. They

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65. Private, Thomson Papers, Minutes of Regional Conference held in St. Catharines, Jan. 28, 1939.

66. The Oshawa Daily Times, Mar. 28, 1939.

67. Ibid., Mar. 30, 1939.

decided to apply to the International Executive for a charter which would give the regional conference power to legislate for Canadian members. George Burt announced the launching of a new membership drive extending into automobile assembly plants in Regina, Vancouver and the Maritimes.<sup>68</sup>

When C.H. Millard was Regional Director he had operated from an office in Toronto but Burt decided to establish the Regional Office permanently in Windsor because he believed it was "the key point to the whole situation in the Region" and because it had the "largest potential membership."<sup>69</sup> Burt had to make a fresh start as he was left with no union files--where they had gone he knew not. When he arrived in Windsor, Millard's staff even walked out on him.<sup>70</sup> Thus, upon Burt's recommendation, James Napier and Robert Stacey were appointed organizers for Region #7 and were to work in Windsor and Oshawa respectively or anywhere Burt deemed advisable.<sup>71</sup> On the whole, Burt tended to choose Oshawa men when he needed organizers. After the Cleveland convention there was further talk of Canadian autonomy but at that time it was impossible for the auto workers to afford a national union. The group that had been seeking local autonomy were made International Representatives. It had been a big blow to the C.C.F. when Millard was ousted from the U.A.W. but Burt did not discriminate against C.C.F.ers when he chose organizers. In fact, Burt

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68. The Oshawa Labor Press, Apr. 27, 1939; According to George Burt the only group of Canadian auto workers that was affiliated with Homer Martin's independent faction of the U.A.W. was a small local in Windsor. The Evening Telegram, Apr. 22, 1939; Ibid., Apr. 24, 1939.

69. U.A.W., Canadian Regional Office Papers, George Burt to Fred Joyce, May 2, 1939.

70. Interview with G. Burt.

71. U.A.W., Canadian Regional Office Papers, George Burt to Fred Joyce, May 2, 1939.

had supported the C.C.F. but he never came out openly for it in the way that Millard had.<sup>72</sup>

Finally, after Burt became Regional Director, he set about reorganizing the Oshawa local and called a number of meetings and gradually started to build up the union through in-plant leadership. His efforts were aided by H.J. Carmichael, Vice-President at General Motors, who made a big mistake. Burt asked for a meeting to renew the contract which would expire at the end of a year. The war came along and Carmichael sent a reply that the company was engaged in the war effort and did not have time to bother with unions. Local 222 was not able to get more than about a hundred people at membership meetings, so Burt put out a leaflet with the headline, "Carmichael Refuses to Bargain. You may lose Seniority, Grievance Procedure, etc." With this threat the response of the men was tremendous--the union hall was filled to overflowing. Burt told the men that Carmichael had taken the stand he did because they were weak. A committee was set up and men were sent from house to house to visit the local's members. Gradually the membership returned to a healthy size.<sup>73</sup>

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72. Interview with E. Thomson; George Burt was not openly anti-communist as Millard was. Burt was and still is willing to give credit to the communists who played an active role in the formative years of industrial unionism. To Burt, the communists were absolutely fearless men who did not worry if they lost their jobs. In times when there were no or few laws favouring unions, fearless men were needed and the workers were glad to have the communists on their side. Interview with G. Burt.

73. Interview with G. Burt. George Burt gives full credit to such men as Tom McLean and James Smith, the old country stalwarts of the union, because it was men like them who were really responsible for keeping the union going in the dark days of depression and factionalism in 1938-1939. Shultz could not understand why General Motors did not try to wipe the union out because when the membership was down so low the union was at the most only able to have its contract renewed. Shultz was involved in the reorganization of the union. He had men go in groups of two to visit unionists on a block basis in the city. Gradually the infra-structure was reformed on a much sounder basis through a steward body which Shultz used

Time and performance would prove that the delegates to the Cleveland Convention had chosen wisely when they elected George Burt as Regional Director. He was an able administrator and an excellent leader, capable of greater flexibility than Millard in keeping the U.A.W. united. In addition, his personality and performance won for him a large popular following among the rank-and-file workers. In the words of Art Shultz, George Burt was "the best union politician there was."<sup>74</sup>

After the Cleveland Convention, Millard was out of a job but not for long. Because he had decided to maintain the position of the U.A.W. in the C.I.O. during the factional struggle, Millard received a communication from Philip Murray asking him if he would serve as C.I.O. representative in Canada, and if he agreed, John L. Lewis would appoint him. Millard consented and was appointed as chief C.I.O. organizer for Ontario. Soon afterwards, Philip Murray appointed Millard as an Associate Director of the Steel Workers' Organizing Committee to work with Director Silby Barrett.<sup>75</sup> At that time (1939) there were about 7,000 union members in 11 locals, with most of the membership being concentrated in Nova Scotia. The locals in Toronto, Hamilton, and Hespeler were controlled by the Communists, who had just started to influence policy when the zealous anti-Communist Millard, a man rejected by his own union, was appointed rather

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73. Continued from Page 293.

for purposes of union education and sometimes political education. The system was so well established that by the time the check-off came, 85% of the plant was paying dues. Shultz was even opposed to the check-off because he was afraid that he was going to lose the stewards who were the real heart of the union organization. Interview with A.G. Shultz.

74. Ibid.

75. Interview with C.H. Millard; Interview with G. Burt; The Oshawa Labor Press, May 4, 1939.



than elected to an important executive position in their union.<sup>76</sup> Millard's appointment was very unpopular and aroused hostility which was extended to include Silby Barrett. Resolutions were sent to the International calling for the removal of both leaders. The Ontario locals, where Communist influence was strongest, largely withdrew and stopped paying dues, turning them over instead to a new body called the "Ontario Executive" with Dick Steele as Secretary and Harry Hunter as President. By the end of 1940 the official Barrett-Millard section of the union was reduced to 4,500 dues-paying members, most of them in Nova Scotia. By 1941 however, the "Ontario Executive" which had not succeeded in attracting new members, and had been cut off from the most lucrative source of union dues, the Nova Scotia locals, made gestures to the S.W.O.C. for re-entry. Two factors may have possibly influenced the communists. First, their organizational campaigns were not very effective without adequate funds and more might be accomplished, particularly the removal of Millard, if they worked inside the union. Secondly, the entry of Russia into the war meant that war production could only be increased through co-operation rather than disruption. Thus, in late 1941 the Ontario locals, which had never claimed more than 1,200 members, returned to the official S.W.O.C., and their leaders were unofficially banned from staff positions in the union.<sup>77</sup>

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76. Robert McDonald Adams, "The Development of the United Steelworkers of America in Canada, 1936-1951." Unpublished M.A. thesis, Queen's University, 1952, p. 79. Dick Steele, Harry Hunter, and Harry Hambergh were all active Communist Party members and had been prominent in organizing steel plants in Hamilton, Toronto, Hespeler and Oshawa. Abella, [ "The C.I.O., The Communist Party and the Formation of the Canadian Congress of Labour 1936 - 1941" ], op.cit., p. 121.; Silby Barrett's real base was the U.M.W.A. in which he was an International Board member. It was only in 1936 that he was appointed to lead the S.W.O.C. Logan, op.cit., p. 251.

77. Adams, op.cit., pp. 79-80, Logan, op.cit., pp. 255-256; Sec: "Steel Unionists Demand Dismissal of C.H. Millard" in The Canadian Tribune, Oct.



When the disruption had been at its peak, Philip Murray, President of the S.W.O.C., sent Philip Clowes from his Pittsburgh office to investigate the situation in Canada. Millard and Clowes reported that the communists were to blame for the union's problems and their suspicions were confirmed by Howard Hague and Tom Murray, who were also sent to conduct a further check. The upshot of the investigation was the appointment of Millard as the Canadian National Director with the sole responsibility and full power to reorganize the union.<sup>78</sup>

Because of the expulsion of the C.I.O. unions from the Trades and Labour Congress of Canada, it was necessary to set up a Canadian Committee for Industrial Organization. The Chairman of the Committee was Silby Barrett, who had been endorsed by John L. Lewis at the San Francisco Convention. C.H. Millard was made Secretary. This Committee which had been formed in Toronto, was composed of the leadership of the main C.I.O. unions which amalgamated with the All Canadian Congress of Labour in 1940

77. Continued from Page 295.

26, 1940.; George Burt claims that there was a revolt on the part of the steelworkers in Oshawa but that it was not controlled by the communists. This is denied by C.H. Millard who claims that Local 1817 was under the influence of Dick Steele. Interview with G. Burt; Interview with C.H. Millard; Millard's popularity among even the members of the official S.W.O.C. is questionable because Logan, op.cit., p. 256, footnote 15, notes: "In the spring of 1941 at the Canadian Conference in Hamilton certain Nova Scotia delegates led an attack on Millard as leader and at the end of a day's discussion the meeting by a large majority called for his retirement. A headquarters appointment, however, Millard defied the indictment and called on the delegates to get along with the task."

78. Adams, op.cit., p. 81; Logan, op.cit., p. 256; Vincent D. Sweeney, The United Steelworkers of America. Twenty Years Later, 1936-1956, (n.p.), 1956, p. 180; Millard claims that Silby Barrett was politically naive and did not realize how the communists were using the facilities, money and time of the S.W.O.C. for their own purposes. This was why Philip Murray gave complete control to Millard who was considered to have had a better political training. Interview with C.H. Millard.

to form the Canadian Congress of Labour (C.C.L.).<sup>79</sup> The C.C.F. forces were dominant in this new congress which desired direct political action. Views towards political action varied since the executive was composed of men like George Burt of the U.A.W., C.S. Jackson of the United Electrical Workers and Charles Millard. Millard, however, became one of the most important and dominating forces in terms of political leadership in the Congress. According to Myrtle Armstrong, ever since his defeat in the U.A.W., which he interpreted as due to the communists, Millard became "a self-appointed leader to disclose to the trade union organizations the hidden menace of communism."<sup>80</sup> The headquarters of the S.W.O.C. in Canada at 1207 Bay Street in Toronto became the center for non-communist trade unions and also proved to be the core of trade union political support for the C.C.F. In his crusade, Millard had the co-operation and assistance of the International Executive Board of the United Steelworkers, the executive of the C.I.O., and a majority of the executive of the C.C.L. Millard, as Director of what became one of the largest unions in Canada, was in a position to suggest to the C.I.O.-C.C.L. executive boards the personnel to head up organizational work in other jurisdictions, and as an executive member of the C.C.L. he was able to influence the independent Canadian unions. "To claim that trade union staffs of the new industrial

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79. U.A.W., Canadian Regional Office Papers, George Burt to Fred Joyce, Oct. 23, 1939; U.A.W., Canadian Regional Office Papers, Brief History of the U.A.W. in Canada, pp. 3-4., Jan. 26, 1938; Logan op.cit., pp. 386-387.

80. Armstrong, op.cit., p. 37. Armstrong was on Millard's U.S.W. staff. Millard does not seem to adequately differentiate among the various leftist political groups. He seems to place leftists in three general categories: social democrats (C.C.F.), communists, and "fellow travellers" of the communists. This may account for why he regarded groups such as the British I.L.P.ers in the U.A.W. as "fellow travellers" rather than as an independent political entity. Such an interpretation of Millard's political frame of mind may help to explain many of his actions.

unions at this time were hired solely on the basis of their political affiliations would not be an exaggeration."<sup>81</sup> In the case of a man like Millard, who continually worried about his struggle with the communists, this meant that the staff appointments to the head office of United Steel Workers included only active C.C.F.ers. Even after 1943 when a permanent organization was established and trade union organizers and office personnel began to arise from the membership of the local trade unions, "in a less open and direct way, their political attitudes were scrutinized prior to their appointment and then they were encouraged to participate and become members of the C.C.F."<sup>82</sup> Thus it was that Millard built up a powerful labour-political machine that owed allegiance not only to the C.C.F. but to himself. It was this machine which gave him the edge in any quarrel with his former opponents such as George Burt and members of the U.A.W.<sup>83</sup> Millard had been greatly influenced by his political and labour experiences in Oshawa and the old ideas, policies, methods of operation and quarrels would be carried to the higher levels of relations between international unions, the C.C.L., and federal and provincial elections. With such a machine he also had the power to reach down and influence politics and unions on the local level.

Millard's appointment as a C.I.O. Director was not popular, especially amongst some of the U.A.W. officials in Canada who laid bare their feelings towards their former Director and the reasons for them. Fred Joyce, Recording Secretary of U.A.W. Local 195 and Director of Research for the U.A.W. in Canada, complained to C.I.O. President John L. Lewis,

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81. Armstrong, op.cit., p. 41, pp. 37-41.

82. Ibid., p. 41.

83. Interview with G. Burt.

charging Millard with inefficiency, lack of cooperation and malicious interference.<sup>84</sup> This letter was referred to Allan Haywood, the C.I.O.'s Director of Organization. Haywood met with the Representatives of the U.A.W.A.-C.I.O. Executive Board during the time the C.I.O. Executive Board was in session in Washington and discussed the Canadian situation in general, which he later brought to the attention of the C.I.O. Executive Board. Nothing, however, was said on the subject matter mentioned in Joyce's letter. In fact Haywood replied:

...as soon as everyone starts dropping hammers and picking up horns and boasting the movement, the better off we all will be. Brother Millard's duties are to assist all C.I.O. affiliates in a constructive way consistent with the C.I.O. organization policies. So far I have had no complaint about him doing anything to the contrary.<sup>85</sup>

Joyce did not like the fact that nothing regarding C.H. Millard was said at Haywood's meeting with the representatives from Canada. He then informed Haywood that Local 195 had also written to Silby Barrett and that copies had been sent to George Burt and R.J. Thomas. Joyce then let loose his feelings about Millard which had been shared by many members of the unions.

Let us say had it not been for the loyal officers and members of our local Unions the C.I.O. in Canada these last two years would have been swept into oblivion. It is a matter of record that C.H. Millard spoke at Local 195, Windsor, insinuating that John L. Lewis was robbing the U.A.W. of its autonomy.

This record, if we can call it such, is a black page of dismal failures--Peterborough, Chatham, Brantford, Walker Metal Products in Windsor, Chrysler in Windsor. The record speaks. As for factionalism this is the man who introduced it along with his satellites [sic] into Canada.

There comes a time when the rank-and-file grow tired of in-

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84. U.A.W., Canadian Regional Office Papers, Allan S. Haywood to Fred Joyce, July 11, 1940. Joyce sent the letter to Lewis on May 31, 1940; Joyce ran as a C.C.F. candidate in Essex West in the 1940 federal election. United Automobile Worker, Mar. 13, 1940; Stevens, op.cit., pp. 145, 205.

85. U.A.W., Canadian Regional Office Papers, Allan A. Haywood to Fred Joyce.

ternecine strife. This the rank-and-file found themselves at our historic Cleveland Convention. Out of the turmoil and chaos the reign of terror of Millard's [sic] regime ended—defeated 27 [sic] to 9 votes. Like the Jacobins, once more saddled with the millstone from above. For your reference attached is letter and resolutions to Brother Thomas and W. Smethurst. This Executive records its disgust of the proverbial buck-passing. You state that we should measure men by their service and loyalty to the Union. Quite correct. Let us state that there is no room for "pie card artists" in the C.I.O. in Canada. We feel that the C.I.O. should [sic] have looked [sic] for a man for Canada down among the loyal members who have proven their loyalty. Our U.A.W. members have run the gamut of the previous administration. Why prolong this effrontery?

Your letter states that C.H. Millard's duties are to assist C.I.O. affiliates in a constructive way. Enclosed is a letter we sent July 7, 1939. On enquiry from Brother Barrett we found that he never saw or received same. Local Unions are starved as far as information regarding the C.I.O. in Canada. As to the constructive way consistent with C.I.O. organization policy we believe the C.I.O. in Canada is now being prepared for a prostituted hegemony. Attached is a copy of his speech in the New Commonwealth, June 20, 1940. Attached are pieces of correspondence between C.H. Millard on Unity Group, red-baiting, etc. The G.M. Division files reveal a series of incidents of laxity, disruption, and jeopardy. The vouchers on Legal Fees, cigar butts for organizers, Long Distance calls to organizations and individuals not connected with our Union makes one wonder how long we suffered behind the Canadian shadow of Homer Martin.<sup>86</sup>

Haywood was now forced to reply in defence of Millard. He claimed that though Millard had at first supported Homer Martin, he had changed his point of view as others had and "Prior to the breach occurring and prior to the C.I.O. representatives moving into the picture, C.I.O. Director Millard, then International Board Member of the U.A.W.A. gave every

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86. U.A.W., Canadian Regional Office Papers, Recording Secretary, Local 195, U.A.W.-C.I.O. to Allan Haywood, June 27, 1940.

At the Ontario C.C.F. convention in May of 1940, C.H. Millard was unanimously chosen President, following the retirement of John Mitchell. The New Commonwealth, June 20, 1940, contained a statement by Millard that in part declared: "The trade union movement must be incorporated into the C.C.F. There must be no more haggling on this point. The C.C.F. is Canada's Labor Party. It will become what the workers themselves make it. Labor must take political action to supplement economic action. Therefore unions must affiliate to the C.C.F. Those C.C.F. members who are also union members are requested to let this office know of that fact and are requested to take immediate steps to work for affiliation of their union with the C.C.F."

co-operation possible to the C.I.O. representatives." Haywood then admitted that he was "not well acquainted" with the political situation in Canada, but "Millard would not have been selected or picked for the position he holds, had those of the C.I.O. dealing with U.A.W.A. problems lacked confidence in him." In reference to Joyce's original charges, Haywood stated that he could find no evidence of inefficiency; he had taken the matter of lack of co-operation up with Millard who stated "he would give the U.A.W. every cooperation...desired, if and when desired." Finally, on the question of malicious interference, Millard had denied it and stated he had "not been in Windsor for quite some time and has not interfered in the affairs of your local or International."<sup>87</sup> Thus, the exchange of letters ended with the C.I.O. asking for peace and co-operation on the part of everybody. Unfortunately this was an illusory goal and the politicking and sniping would continue.<sup>88</sup> The C.I.O. would do little

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87. U.A.W., Canadian Regional Office Papers, Allan S. Haywood to Fred Joyce, July 11, 1940; Silby Barrett took the same position with regard to Millard as Haywood had. Barrett stated that "There have been certain statements made and certain propaganda carried on regarding Brother C.H. Millard, but until someone is willing to make a definite charge, I think all this talk about Brother Millard should stop." U.A.W., Canadian Regional Office Papers, Silby Barrett to F. Joyce, August 7, 1940. Joyce's charge of inefficiency especially as related to Millard's position as Secretary to the C.I.O. Committee seemed to be substantiated by complaints George Burt made to Millard about the committee's inactivity. U.A.W., Canadian Regional Office Papers, George Burt to C.H. Millard, July 19, 1940.

88. An example of Millard's frame of mind and practice of meddling in U.A.W. affairs was his accusations about Thomas MacLean, President of Local 222, that in turn resulted in the trial of C.H. Millard. It should be remembered that MacLean was one of the delegates responsible for Millard's defeat at Cleveland in 1939. George Burt, who was called upon as a witness but was unable to attend, gave evidence in a letter with an attached affidavit setting forth the facts contained in the letter and sworn to before a notary. Burt wrote: "About one year ago, I visited the Toronto office of the Steel Workers Organizing Committee, and Brother Millard stated that he had something to tell me, which he considered important. He stated that he had been reading a book called the 'Labor Spy' and after studying this book he was convinced that Brother Thomas MacLean



more than ask Millard to co-operate but, since he was their man, he was bound to be favored in any struggle with the U.A.W. Millard had succeeded in gaining the ear of the top International C.I.O. officials and was now part of the dominant political group; they would listen to his advice on the Canadian situation and support him in his struggle on both the political and economic front.

All the factionalism and disruption that had taken place in the U.A.W. and the Canadian labor movement was bound to have disastrous ramifications in the already complicated labour-political situation in Oshawa, especially when the narrow partisan views of the leaders of the Ontario

88. Continued from Page 301.

was a labor spy, because in Millard's estimation, the activities of MacLean coincided with the application of the term 'labor spy' contained in the book, and that it was his opinion that MacLean should be carefully watched, as he believed that he was a labor spy.

"It will be noted that this accusation was made nearly a year ago, and I did not feel at that time that it was wise to make known these accusations to MacLean. I made it very plain to Millard, that I was not impressed with the accusation, and in fact I laughed at his fears, and told him I was convinced that they were unfounded, and also remarked that if this was made known to MacLean, he would become so angry that he would probably want to settle this thing man to man.

"During the time that General Motors negotiations were taking place, we made a request to the Company, that MacLean and McIntyre would accompany me to St. Catharines and Windsor in order to assist with negotiations. The Company agreed to the request, and during our trip to Windsor, I told MacLean that he had been accused by Millard of being a labor spy. Reaching Windsor, we went to the Regional Office, and MacLean told Brother Bob Stacey about the accusation. Brother Stacey remarked at that time that Millard had also warned him about his suspicions, and suggested that MacLean be watched very carefully.

"Sometime later when I returned to Oshawa, I was present when MacLean announced to the Executive and Bargaining Committee that he intended to lay charges against Millard under the constitution. At that time members of the Executive Committee made it known that they had also heard of their [sic] accusations against MacLean. Robert Mitchell, Sr., was the one who stated that he had heard this story. I do not know how far this story of the accusation has been spread, but I do say that it is unfortunate that the President of our Union, who is also a member of the Bargaining Committee should be under suspicion, as it not only hampers his work, but it also makes it impossible to retain the confidence of the membership if this story is known." U.A.W., Canadian Regional Office Papers, George Burt to the Trial Committee, Local 222, U.A.W.-C.I.O., June 24, 1940.



provincial C.C.F. were injected into the local scene. The popular front "unity" line in Oshawa's Labour Representation Committee had been accepted by the local C.C.F. Club and this was bound to cause a split in party ranks. As early as November 27, 1938, A.G. Shultz had written to the C.C.F. Provincial Secretary to draw to the attention of the Provincial Council, the decision of the Oshawa C.C.F. Club to affiliate with the L.R.C. Shultz also urged "some sort of disciplinary measure" in respect to the matter. At the Provincial Executive meeting on December 9, 1938, it was decided that action on the matter be deferred until after the municipal election in Oshawa and then arrangements would be made for someone to visit the Club.<sup>89</sup>

Added to this internal problem was the fact that the C.C.F. was still not realizing its potential strength in Oshawa. Organizational work was needed and early in 1939 when the Provincial Executive chose organizers for various zones in Ontario they recommended W.C. Grant for the Eastern Ontario Zone which included Oshawa.<sup>90</sup> At the next Provincial Executive meeting a delegation from Oshawa, consisting of F. McClellan and W. Noble, stated that though there was a great deal of support for the C.C.F. in Oshawa, a full time organizer was needed to co-ordinate this support. They expressed a desire that the Council send them Arthur Williams as their organizer. The chairman then informed them that their wishes would be given consideration by the Council.<sup>91</sup>

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89. U.T.A., W.M.C., Minutes of Provincial Executive Meeting, Dec. 9, 1938.

90. Q.U.A., Grube Papers, Minutes of Provincial Executive Meeting, Apr. 16, 1939. W.C. Grant of Oshawa was elected to the C.C.F. Provincial Council in 1939.

91. Q.U.A., Grube Papers, Minutes of Provincial Executive Meeting, Apr. 23, 1939.

When the Provincial Executive met again on May 12, 1939, the General Secretary, Bert Leavens, reported that he had interviewed F. McClellan, W. Noble and F. Dafoe in Oshawa and that all of them had been of the opinion that Grant would not be acceptable to the Oshawa group. The Oshawa club also felt that it had been discriminated against in the matter of the appointment of Arthur Williams. Apparently the Oshawa club had approached Williams before they had sent their delegates to the Council but the Council had not known of the move. C.H. Millard was then admitted to the meeting. He stated that "there was no personal animus towards Grant on the part of the Oshawa members, but that the situation in Oshawa made appointment of an outsider essential." He reported that at a meeting of the club held subsequent to Leavens' visit, it had been decided that "no organizer should be appointed at present, pending further developments." Arthur Williams, who had been selected for the Northern Ontario Zone, offered a suggestion that he be used as an organizer in Kitchener and Oshawa as well as in Northern Ontario, because of his contacts with the trade union movement in those centers and the strong possibility he envisaged of gaining trade union support for the C.C.F. Vice-President Orlicke replied by pointing out that the Council considered Northern Ontario of paramount importance because it offered the most fruitful field for activity and that was where the Council thought Williams should concentrate his efforts. It was then decided that Grant be appointed organizer for the Eastern Ontario Zone, excluding Oshawa, and to try to patch matters up, Arthur Williams was to represent the Council at a dinner in Oshawa at which J.S. Woodsworth was to be the speaker.<sup>92</sup>

Oshawa's organizational problems were not being solved and internal

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92. U.T.A., W.M.C., Minuted of Provincial Executive Meeting, May 12, 1939.

troubles continued. Bert Leavens visited Oshawa on October 18, 1939 and attended a policy meeting. Of his visit he reported that the "general condition of the unit is not very promising. I feel that so long as Griffiths and Noble are tied up in this unit there will be very little progress made. Fin. Dafoe is of the opinion that a successful unit cannot be maintained in Oshawa. He was guilty of grossly exaggerated pessimism!"<sup>93</sup>

The old issue of the C.C.F. Club's participation in the L.R.C. arose again just before the Oshawa municipal elections for the 1940 city council. On December 3, 1939, Arthur Shultz wrote to Bert Leavens and again asked that "action be taken to discipline the Oshawa Club for participation in the Labour Representation Council of Oshawa, of which the Communist Party was a member...." Leavens then wrote a letter to the Oshawa Club in which he stated that "as the club had repeatedly ignored his advice and had violated the Constitution,<sup>94</sup> the club was dissolved; that

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93. U.T.A., W.M.C., (Report of Bert Leavens, General Secretary) Visit to Windsor - Oct. 10-15, (1939).

94. In the light of Shultz's emphasis on acting constitutionally, the following circular letter explains part of the reason for his actions and those of the party leaders.

"On the recommendation of the Provincial Executive, the following resolution was carried at the 1939 C.C.F. Convention. It governed all C.C.F. clubs and members in respect to their relations to other political parties.

(a) The C.C.F. (Ontario Section) reaffirms its policy of prohibiting the co-operation of its affiliated groups or members thereof, with the Communist or any other parties in Federal, Provincial or Municipal elections.

(b) The C.C.F. (Ontario Section) forbids any of its affiliated groups, or members thereof, to extend to or accept from the Communist Party any invitation to co-operate on any specific matter, political or otherwise.

(c) This Convention instructs the Provincial Council to expel any C.C.F. member or group which violates the provisions of this resolution.

The foregoing resolution has been included in full because there seems to be some misunderstanding as to the meaning of section B.

The section simply means this:-

certain members were appointed trustees for the Provincial Council and that arrangements for re-organization would be made immediately." Leavens read both of these letters at a meeting of the Provincial Executive on January 13, 1940. He also described a meeting of the Oshawa club which he and Jolliffe had attended, and at which no action had been taken because there was a very small attendance. Jolliffe corroborated Leavens' report and pointed out that though the Oshawa club had originally voted against participation in the L.R.C., it had reversed this decision at a subsequent meeting. A motion was then carried that the Executive endorse the action of the General Secretary.<sup>95</sup>

A couple of months before the elections for the 1940 municipal council, the L.R.C. elected new officers, overhauled its constitution, and prepared to wage a united front campaign.<sup>96</sup> The Provincial government,

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94. Continued from Page 305.

- (1) That no C.C.F. unit shall invite any Communist Unit to co-operate on any matter, political or otherwise.
- (2) That no C.C.F. member shall invite any communist unit to co-operate on any matter, political or otherwise.
- (3) That no C.C.F. Unit shall accept from any Communist Party, unit or group an invitation to co-operate etc.
- (4) That no C.C.F. member shall accept from any Communist Party, unit or group, an invitation to co-operate etc.

"If however a member of the C.C.F. is an official of a Trade Union, Ratepayers Organization, Workers Association, or any non-political body, and is instructed by his organization to assume or accept an invitation to or from the communist party, he will not be violating the C.C.F. constitution, as he (or she) will be acting as an official of the Trade Union or Ratepayers Organization and NOT as a member of the C.C.F." Q.U.A., Grube Papers, Herbert Orliffe, Provincial Secretary, to Dear Comrade Secretary, Apr. 26, 1939; The resolution referred to had been passed at the 1939 C.C.F. (Ontario) Convention by a vote of 49 to 31 and only after considerable debate. "The proceedings threatened several times to get out of hand as delegates banged desks and shouted to various speakers to 'sit down' when they objected to the resolution." The Oshawa Daily Times, Apr. 10, 1939.

95. U.T.A., W.M.C., Minutes of Provincial Executive Meeting, Jan. 13, 1940.

96. The officers for the 1939-1940 L.R.C. were: President, Wm. E. Noble; Vice-President, F.M. Dafoe; Recording Secretary, Robert Stacey Sr.; Secre-

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by its ruling that municipal bodies elected for 1940 would remain in power for the duration of hostilities, caused increased activity and interest in the elections and could have made an excellent issue in Oshawa where the working class comprised almost eighty-five per cent of the population, and the threat of continued "dictatorship" by the minority "old guard" of 1939 could have been made an issue for labour to organize around.<sup>97</sup> The move by Bert Leavens, however, proved fatal to the leftist cause. An officer of the C.C.F., disclaiming any association with the Oshawa L.R.C., inserted a letter in the local press. It cast reflection on the L.R.C. and reported that the Oshawa C.C.F. Club had been suspended for having sent delegates to the L.R.C. This move caused not only "a large percentage of members to disassociate themselves with the movement, but lost the party a great deal of the support of the labor following it enjoyed." Because this letter was released for publication at the same time as the labour candidates were contesting the municipal elections in Oshawa, many labour men considered it to be "a knife in the back." "Particularly was this thought emphasized when it was remembered that the L.R.C. had received considerable criticism for allowing delegates from the C.C.F. to become members of the Committee."<sup>98</sup>

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96. Continued from Page 306.  
 tary-Treasurer, Frank Ostrowski; Chairman of Finance, Wm. Walker; Chairman of Publicity, Nick Williams. The Oshawa Labor Press, Oct. 19, 1939.; The L.R.C. selected all but two or three of the members of its municipal slate from the ranks of the C.C.F., The Oshawa Labor Press, Mar. 7, 1940.

97. The Oshawa Labor Press, Nov. 2, 1939.

98. Ibid., Feb. 22, 1940; The results of the municipal election held on January 1, 1940 were:  
 Mayor: J.C. Anderson, 4,140; James Haxton, 2,465; S.J. Carnell, 130.  
 Council: W.H. Gifford, 3,818; S.R. Alger, 3,783; Ernie Cay, 3,773; J.A. Coleman, 3,705; Bryce A. Brown, 3,634; John Stacey, 3,523; Clifford Harman, 3,482; R.D. Humphries, 3,293; E.E. Bathe, 3,152; Finley M. Dafee, 2,860.  
 - continued Page 308

It gradually became clear who had been responsible for the move when Bert Leavens sent a letter to The Oshawa Daily Times at the end of February. The Oshawa Labor Press immediately berated him for what it considered his "most insipid, yet treacherous attack upon Labor and its press...."

Mr. Leavens referred in his epistle to the democratic principles of the C.C.F., yet:

On the complaint of one man, not a member of the Oshawa C.C.F. the local club was suspended without so much as a hearing.

A meeting of a few hand-picked members was held at which certain decisions were made. The executive of the former club and the majority of its members weren't even notified that such a meeting was to be held.<sup>99</sup>

The attack was not on the C.C.F. party itself even though the organization in Ontario had "fallen on evil days." The C.C.F. had every right to "pro-

98. Continued from Page 307.

Board of Education: E.A. Lovell, 3,806; H.L. Lewis, 3,501; William J. Naylor, 3,387; Stephen J. Saywell, 3,142.

Public Utilities Commission: N. Millman, 3,771; S.J. Babe, 3,406.

The Globe and Mail, Jan. 2, 1940.

99. The Oshawa Labor Press, Mar. 7, 1940. The Oshawa Labor Press attacked Leavens personally for his about-face regarding his political outlook.

"Around 1935 Mr. Leavens was more or less of a sore spot in the ranks of the right-wingers of the C.C.F. due to his inclination to favor a closer association with those of a pinker tinge, in fact when he intimated in a public statement that this very, very radical party and the C.C.F. were practically one and the same party he caused a furor among the more conservative members of the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation. His extremely radical ideas on religious matters also made his presence in many C.C.F. clubs leave much to be desired.

"However, since Mr. Leavens has received a "paid" position in the C.C.F. Ontario Section, and has been appointed an executive officer of the International Fur Workers' Union, he is no longer the fiery radical of the past, but now devotes a great deal of his time and effort to "witch hunting" within the two organizations, and apparently would like to see certain officials eliminated. This anti-radical obsession was intensified, it is claimed, following a heated argument in which he indulged with an official of the Communist Party in Greenwood riding.

"What changed Mr. Leavens' outlook on matters political? Is it purely an honest change of mind and heart which is every man's privilege, or is a "paid" job, an argument with a former henchman, and a desire to cater to the reactionary element within the Ontario Section of the C.C.F. to be taken into consideration?" Ibid.



tect its organization from the inroads of communist agitators, or any other agitators, but 'red-baiting' and 'witch-hunting' should be strictly taboo." The members of the C.C.F. should also be "warned against the inroads of reactionary cliques, who are equally as dangerous to the policies and objectives of the Federation as the most rabid followers of Comrade Stalin." The true supporters of the C.C.F. were asked not to "desert the cause." In an optimistic note the paper argued, "...if those members who have been the cause of the friction within the ranks cannot be brought in line and shown the error of their ways, they should be requested to withdraw." The C.C.F. was the only party with a definite labour program and should receive the support of the workers, but "if it desires this support and friendship it must first show itself friendly to the workers of Ontario." The C.C.F. had to "live up to the meaning of the word co-operative or else leave that word out of its title so far as Oshawa and the province of Ontario was concerned."<sup>100</sup>

The Oshawa Labor Press had a reason for publicly exposing the circumstances of the rift between the L.R.C. and the suspended Oshawa C.C.F. Club. It explained:

Like the surgeon who probes with his scalpel down through the outer sores and infectious matter until he arrives at the malignant cause or growth that is responsible for the trouble, the Labor Press has gradually examined the tools or stooges of the master-mind behind the scenes until at last it believes it has enticed that individual to accept the bait, hook, line and sinker. Knowing his weakness for letter-writing, the Labor Press knew it would not be long before the suspected party would show his hand, especially when the probing scalpels started to prickle his sensitive hide....<sup>101</sup>

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100. Ibid., In correcting an error made by The Oshawa Daily Times which claimed that B.E. Leavens was general-secretary of the C.C.F. National Organization, The Oshawa Labor Press pointed out that the National Secretary was David Lewis, "a man who is held in the highest esteem by all C.C.F. supporters and Labor men." It seems that the "clique" was purely provincial.

101. Ibid., Mar. 22, 1940.



The paper reproduced a letter written by C.H. Millard and implied that he was the one really responsible for the whole affair. Millard complained about the destructive rather than constructive news that had appeared in recent issues of the paper and actually claimed that the Times was "now treating trade union reports much more fairly than does the Labor Press." The Oshawa Labor Press refuted Millard's charges and chastized him.

It is quite evident his ire has been aroused by the exposure of the part he and his associates played in the expulsion of the local C.C.F. Club and their attack upon the Oshawa Labor Representation Committee. Camouflage is a fine art, but it is useless after one is caught. ...it ill behooves him at this time to attempt to cause friction within the forces of labor just because he happens to belong to a certain clique in a political organization that refuses to see eye [ sic ] with the rest of the members. Mr. Millard's attempt to cause friction in the C.C.F. organization is the concern of the C.C.F. and Charles Millard, but any attempt on his part to spread such friction into the ranks of the U.A.W.A. and the Labor movement in Oshawa is the concern of the workers of Oshawa and the Oshawa Labor Press.<sup>102</sup>

Not only did labour suffer at the municipal election but the disruption ruined an excellent opportunity for labour-political action during the 1940 federal election. As early as June 12, 1939, the C.C.F. Constituency Association embracing all C.C.F. Clubs in Ontario Riding had held a meeting, elected officers and decided to place a candidate in the forthcoming federal election.<sup>103</sup> Optimism had prevailed and on August 30, 1939, the C.C.F. held a nominating convention. Although several people were nominated, they all declined in favor of Alderman Finley Daffoe who became the official candidate for Ontario Riding.<sup>104</sup> After the purge

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102. Ibid.

103. Ibid., Aug. 17, 1939. The following officers were elected: President, Frank McLellan; Vice-President, Nick Williams; Secretary, Gordon Crouse; Treasurer, William Noble.

104. Ibid., Aug. 31, 1939. Those nominated were: Finley Daffoe, William Noble, Frank McLellan, William Walker, A.G. Griffiths, J. Owens, and N. Williams.

of the local C.C.F. Club by the provincial office, the new "select" executive held several meetings with the provincial officers present in an effort to reorganize the local club and appoint a candidate.<sup>105</sup> Stalwarts who were no longer stalwarts of the club and, according to Bert Leavens, never had been, were approached with a view to getting them to run.<sup>106</sup> Since Finley Dafoe had been chosen as a candidate previously, Frank McLellan and two provincial representatives told him that if he withdrew from the C.C.F. candidature, they would get somebody who could win more votes. Dafoe refused at first but then he queried them about how many people had been involved in making the decision. They admitted that only seven people had been involved. Dafoe then withdrew and told them to find another candidate. They had James Haxton in mind because he had done well in the municipal election. Harold Winch from British Columbia was in the town and he tried to talk Haxton into running. Haxton told Dafoe about the move and then told Winch that Dafoe was a good friend and he would not double-cross him. Thus, the C.C.F. was unable to find a suitable candidate for the 1940 federal election.<sup>107</sup>

There was talk of running a straight labour candidate and though a number of names were mentioned, nothing definite was made public. The Oshawa L.R.C. may have discussed the matter and there were even rumors that an Independent, possibly a farmer from the north end of the riding, could be induced to enter the fray. Union support for a Farmer-Labour candidate could have been attempted but the lack of time and campaign funds

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105. Ibid., Feb. 22, 1940.

106. Ibid., Mar. 7, 1940.

107. Interview with F.M. Dafoe.

put a damper on any attempts.<sup>108</sup> David Lewis had written to George Thomson, President of Local 222, and the letter was discussed at a union executive meeting. "After much discussion it was considered advisable that Local 222 take no political action."<sup>109</sup> The final blow came when the popular James Haxton, a man prominent in C.C.F., L.R.C., and U.A.W. activities, an ex-Labour Alderman and once Labour candidate for mayor, endorsed W.H. Moore as the Liberal candidate before a gathering in the Regent Theatre at which Mayor Anderson and Attorney-General Gordon Conant also stood on the platform in favor of the incumbent.<sup>110</sup> Therefore, with left-wing and labour forces either disrupted or neutralized, and a powerful Liberal machine in operation, the National Government candidate, Harry A. Newman, was defeated by 12,176 votes to 7,914 votes. Election returns indicate that substantial gains were made in Oshawa and nearby areas where the Liberal candidate had picked up considerable support which could no doubt be classed as part of the labour vote.<sup>111</sup> (See APPENDIX B.)

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108. The Oshawa Labor Press, Feb. 22, 1940.

109. P.A.C., C.C.F. Papers, A.G. Shultz to David Lewis, Feb. 27, 1940; Interview with Mrs. G.S. Thomson.

110. The Oshawa Labor Press, Mar. 22, 1940. W.H. Moore, former Chairman of the Dominion Tariff Board, had been nominated in mid-February. The name of W.E.N. Sinclair had been placed before the nominating convention but he withdrew it. He also revealed that he had left the Ontario legislature in 1937 "because there were a lot of things in the Ontario house that I did not approve of and do not approve of now. The premier (Hepburn) said he had forgotten me. Well, a lot of my friends have not forgotten me." Gordon Conant became the fourth minister of the Hepburn cabinet to declare support of a federal Liberal government and who voted for the Ontario Legislature's resolution censuring the King administration's war effort. The Toronto Daily Star, Feb. 17, 1940; The St. Thomas Times - Journal, Feb. 17, 1940.

111. Canada, Report of the Chief Electoral Officer, 1940, p. 110. During the campaign The Oshawa Labor Press remained silent.; Gordon Conant charged that "every mother's son in the national party is a dyed-in-the-wool Tory" and described the Conservative appeal for a national government

What had once been a dynamic left-wing labour-political movement in Oshawa was now in a shambles. Two of the most prominent and active C.C.F.ers, Finley Dafoe and William Noble, had been among those purged, and the C.C.F. as a political unit was destined to lie dormant for a while. After the C.C.F.-L.R.C. dispute, The Oshawa Labor Press dealt less with labour and local issues to concentrate more on the war. Under Noble's editorship the paper enunciated a new editorial policy of "unbiased independence, which no pressure from individuals, institutions or otherwise will be allowed to influence."<sup>112</sup> Without the strong support of the local labour organizations and due to dwindling income, the content of the paper shrank and it disappeared from the Oshawa scene in early 1941. The L.R.C. seemed just to die out; the Labour Aldermen, Finley Dafoe, Ted Bathe and Cliff Harman, continued the struggle more as individuals than as representatives of an organization or a party. A decade of a particular kind of depression politics came to an end as news of the war, and issues caused by it, grew in such proportions as to dominate everything, left-wing politics and labour activities included.

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111. Continued from Page 312.  
as a "thinly-disguised Tory deception." The Citizen, (Ottawa) Feb. 17, 1940; While stumping for Moore, Conant even charged that the Nazis would be glad if King was defeated. The Toronto Daily Star, Mar. 20, 1940.

112. The Oshawa Labor Press, Aug. 22, 1940.

## CHAPTER XI "LABOUR DEMANDS A SQUARE DEAL"

The worker should know that weak as he is individually, collectively he represents the greatest force on earth. The greatest menace to the worker today is the man who believes that single-handed he can lick this thing himself, and so is not active in helping to build and maintain the democratic labor organizations that are his only means of protecting and bettering himself.

Next to the strength of organized workers is capital. It cannot develop as much economic power as the worker, but it has him beaten to a frazzle because it is wide awake and fully organized.

You may rest assured that every time an Act of Parliament or an order-in-council is passed at Ottawa, the financial giants of Canada had their fingers in it somewhere. They do not come out in the open always. They work through the people we send to Ottawa to represent us and their work has been so effective that we as workers have not received one single advantage either by act of parliament or order-in-council since the war began, with the exception of unemployment insurance. The benefits of this are still very small and big business chiselled it until it is just an act, and that is all.<sup>1</sup>

Since it was not until 1943 that Ontario, the largest industrial province of Canada, passed its first legislation making recognition of unions compulsory by employers under certain conditions,<sup>2</sup> the organized labour movement was placed in a difficult position when World War II broke out. Organized labour wanted to co-operate with government and management, not only to protect its membership but also to expedite the prosecution of the war effort. However, the federal government, whose powers under the War Measures Act superseded those of the provinces, refused to take organized labour into a full war-time partnership and instead, proceeded to regulate industrial relations in a manner which only alienated labour.<sup>3</sup>

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1. George Burt in United Automobile Worker, Feb. 1, 1941.

2. This legislation required an application by the union concerned to the new Labour Court of Ontario. A union had to appear before the Court to prosecute its case for recognition before it received legal certification. U.A.W., Oral History Collection, Transcript #14, George Burt. See H.D. Woods and Sylvia Ostry, Labour Policy and Labour Economics in Canada, Toronto, Macmillan of Canada, 1962, pp. 73-74.

3. See Logan, op.cit., pp. 521-522; Seaborn, op.cit., pp. 28-30.; U.A.W.,

When the war started the Dominion Government passed an Order-in-Council, P.C. 2685, which did little more than express a pious hope that management and labour would get together and management would meet a committee of the workers. At the same time an amendment to the Criminal Code of Canada (Section 502A) was passed making it an offence for an employer to refuse to employ someone for the sole reason that that person was a member of a trade union. There was a catch to this, however. In court cases, employers found a loophole in the word "sole" because it was possible to refuse to employ a person for any other reason and get away with it.<sup>4</sup>

The next step the government took was to apply the old Industrial Disputes Investigation Act to cover all industries engaged in the production of war materials. Trade union certification was not provided under this act, which simply allowed for a conciliation board to be set up in the event that the government received a sworn affidavit from an officer of a trade union stating that a strike would take place if a board was not granted. Only then would a conciliation board composed of one representative of labour, management, and the Dominion Government be established.<sup>5</sup> It was a system in which many problems were inherent for labour. In a brief on the subject, the U.A.W. used the following analysis

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3. Continued from Page 314.

Canadian Regional Office Papers, "To all U.A.W. Locals in Canada: Statement on Board of Investigation under the Industrial Disputes Act, & Compulsory Arbitration." (n.d. (1941?)).

4. U.A.W., Oral History Collection Transcript #14, George Burt; Woods and Ostry, op.cit., pp. 61-64. Industrial peace was supposed to be achieved by voluntary recognition of unions, negotiations, conciliation officers, and conciliation boards.

5. U.A.W., Oral History Collection Transcript #14, George Burt; Woods and Ostry, op.cit., pp. 64-69.

by C.S. Jackson of the United Electrical Workers to illustrate its objections to the difficulties placed before a unionist.

First he must build his union under the most difficult conditions of discrimination and intimidation, and deprived of the right to strike, thus further arming the employer in his attacks on the organizing workers. Then he must take a strike vote and secure a majority of the eligible votes for strike action. This action is mandatory first because the Act so sets forth, that his workers cannot strike anyway, and that Board procedure is long and drawn out thus giving him time to further weaken and divide the workers. Having secured a majority strike vote, the workers must then apply for a board, and set forth their demands in highly technical language and precise detail lest they be told that the wording of the application precluded discussion on wages etc. Then the workers must wait for weeks and months while the board deliberates and brings in a report. In most cases that report will be a weak compromise from the worker's point of view, but to even secure that much of a compromise he will probably have to take strike action.

Strike action was usually still necessary because there was no compulsion on either side to agree with the decision or recommendations of the board.<sup>6</sup>

The federal government also passed P.C. 7440 controlling wages and making it difficult for employees to obtain an increase in pay. The operation of this regulation only further alienated the workers who had not recovered from the unemployment and wage cuts of the depression. The workers had been projected into a wartime economy where the cost of everything rose before the government imposed price and wage controls. The result was that the standard of living of many workers went down and it was impossible to raise it in the face of legislation which adopted 1926-1929 levels as the standard, unless the workers were organized into unions with sufficient financial resources to prosecute a case through regional and national War Labour Boards. This fact illustrated the value of having an

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6. U.A.W., Canadian Regional Office Papers, "To all U.A.W. Locals in Canada: Statement on Boards of Investigation under the Industrial Disputes Act, & Compulsory Arbitration," (n.d. (1941?)).



organization and it thus became easier to organize workers.<sup>7</sup>

Finally, the rapid increase in war production and the exodus of thousands of young men into the armed forces meant that there were an increasing number of jobs; this diminished the fear of joining a union. On the whole, unfavourable government regulations and their administration alienated not only union leaders but many of the rank-and-file workers from government and business. These latter became associated in the minds of the workers as political allies and class enemies threatening to destroy even the limited gains labour had made before the war.<sup>8</sup> To the problems facing it, labour reacted first on the economic front and then turned to the political front.

Labour in Oshawa and district was swept up in the new wartime developments, and reinforced by its progressive tradition in the thirties, its unions, labour leaders, and left-wingers were able to play a leading role in these developments. Oshawa was a centre of wartime production and frustrated workers fought against the manufacturers and government regulations with the only weapon they had, the strike.

In early 1940 about 300 workers at the Fittings Ltd. joined about 200 men of the Ontario Malleable Iron Co. in a strike lasting about five weeks to win wage increases and other benefits.<sup>9</sup> By October, about 3,000

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7. U.A.W. Oral History Collection Transcript #14, George Burt; Logan, op.cit., pp. 530-535.; See "Order-in-Council 7440 Must Go!", The Canadian Tribune, Sept. 20, 1941.; For a C.C.F. interpretation of government regulations see "What is Ottawa's Labour Policy?", New Commonwealth, Vol. 9, No. 1 (Jan., 1943).

8. U.A.W., Canadian Regional Office Papers, "To all U.A.W. Locals in Canada: Statement on Boards of Investigation under the Industrial Disputes Act, & Compulsory Arbitration," (n.d. (1941) ); see also "Auto Workers Flay C.M.A. Labor Policies," The Canadian Tribune, July 12, 1941.; United Automobile Worker, Feb. 1, 1941.

9. The Canadian Tribune, Apr. 6, 1940; May 4, 1940; United Automobile  
- continued Page 318

members of U.A.W. Local 222 were threatening strike actions unless General Motors provided prompt settlement of grievances.<sup>10</sup> This intensified union activity led the next month to a one-day strike at the unorganized Skinner Mfg. Co. plant that resulted in the signing of an agreement bringing the workers several concessions.<sup>11</sup> The most notable strike, however, occurred when about eighty members of the Canadian Hosiery Workers' Union went out on a ten-day strike against the Schofield Woollen Company Ltd. after a conciliation officer of the Department of Labour suggested that their 17 cent hourly pay be frozen at that level under P.C. 7440 with a cost of living bonus added.<sup>12</sup> Since the plant had war orders and came under the Industrial Disputes Act, the strike was declared illegal because a board had not been applied for. Still, seven thousand members of the U.A.W. and other unions in the district supported the strikers<sup>13</sup> and Alex Welch, secretary of the Hosiery Workers' Union declared, "The labor people have finally decided to oppose P.C. 7440, by which the government is opposing increases to employees. Even if we are put in jail and our organization

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9. Continued from Page 317.

Worker, Apr. 10, 1940; The Melting Pot, Feb. 26, 1940, Mar. 19, 1940. The strikers were members of S.W.O.C. Lodge 1817.

10. The Canadian Tribune, Apr. 13, 1940; Oct. 12, 1940; Oct. 19, 1940, Nov. 4, 1940; The Evening Telegram, Apr. 18, 1940; The Globe and Mail, Apr. 23, 1940.

11. United Automobile Worker, Nov. 15, 1940.

12. Ibid., May 1, 1941; Alex Welch stated that the strike had been called as "The only means left whereby [the] 16, 22 and 25 cent an hour wages can be improved." He also noted that the workers had been "receiving \$8 and \$11 a week," and that the Government would not permit more than a 5 per cent bonus on the \$18.30 per week quoted by the Labor Department index as the cost of living in Oshawa. The Globe and Mail, Apr. 8, 1941; Apr. 10, 1941; Apr. 11, 1941; Apr. 12, 1941; Apr. 15, 1941.

13. Canada, Debates of the House of Commons, 1941, Vol. III, p. 2262.; United Automobile Worker, May 1, 1941.

is declared illegal, the struggle will go on even if we have to carry on from jail."<sup>14</sup> The strike brought a quick government response and the workers returned to their jobs pending the findings of a conciliation board. The government chose to ignore the fundamental economic reasons why the workers struck or any possible culpability of the employer in creating a strike situation. Instead, John J. Robinette was appointed as Commissioner<sup>15</sup> to investigate the culpability of any "who went on strike, or of any person or persons who incited, encouraged or aided any employee of the said Company to go or continue on strike contrary to the provisions of the Industrial Disputes Investigation Act as extended by Orders in Council P.C. 3495 and P.C. 1708." As a result of his investigation the Commissioner found that the strike which had commenced on April 7, 1941 was

spontaneous because the employees had become "strike minded," and recommended the prosecution of the president of the local union of the Canadian Hosiery Workers' Union and found that the National Secretary-Treasurer of the Canadian Hosiery Workers' Union was blameworthy in that he did not sufficiently warn union members of the significance of their action and for allowing the situation to get out of hand.<sup>16</sup>

Such a response on the part of the government only tended to convince the workers that the government had altogether different attitudes towards employers and employees and that they were fighting the government as well as the companies.<sup>17</sup>

It was under these conditions that the U.A.W. and George Burt not only provided leadership in the workers' struggles but also demonstrated \

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14. The Canadian Tribune, Apr. 19, 1941.

15. United Automobile Worker, June 15, 1941.; Canada, Debates of the House of Commons, 1941, Vol. III, p. 3216.

16. Canada, Report of the Department of Labour, 1942, p. 21. See Canada, The Labour Gazette, Vol. XLI, No. 5, pp. 505, 537, No. 6, p. 614.

17. See statement by George Burt in The Canadian Tribune, Apr. 19, 1941.

their freedom from domination by any political element, especially the communists. When the war broke out the communists changed their party line so that it would accord with Soviet foreign policy under the Hitler-Stalin Pact.<sup>18</sup> The communists became quite radical, desirous of calling strikes for political reasons. However, George Burt refused and would not call the workers out on strike unless they could make definite gains. Similarly, when the Soviet Union entered the war and the communist line changed to one calling for a popular front and a no strike pledge, Burt and the U.A.W. again refused to adopt that position. With the support of

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18. The popular front against fascism came to an abrupt halt on August 23, 1939, the date that the Hitler-Stalin Non-Aggression Pact was signed between the Soviet Union and Germany. World War II was seen as just another imperialist war and the C.P. of C., through theoretical gymnastics, frantically readjusted its policy to the new Comintern line. In the three months after the signing of the non-aggression pact, the C.P. of C. first weakened its attack on the policy of appeasement, then re-interpreted the war as an imperialist war and not an anti-fascist war, and finally adopted a neutralist position in support of the non-aggression pact. With this new policy, the working class was reminded that it had nothing in common with the imperialist interests of contemporary rulers. This new line did not change until Germany launched an attack on the Soviet Union on June 23, 1941. This assault on the communist mecca meant the revival of the "united front against fascism."

On May 14, 1940 the C.P. of C. was declared an illegal organization after its activities resulted in a conviction of a violation of the Defence of Canada Regulations. On June 4, 1940 by Order-in-Council the federal government declared the C.P. of C. illegal. Once illegal, the chief leaders of the C.P. of C. remained underground until September 25, 1942. Despite the U.S.S.R.'s becoming an ally, the C.P. of C. remained illegal because the party's creed advocated the use of force which contravened the Criminal Code. The dissolution of the Comintern took place in May, 1943 because it embarrassingly called for the revolutionary overthrow of the capitalist governments which had become the allies of the U.S.S.R. and this move created a new opportunity for the C.P. of C. to gain legal status. The C.P. of C. made plans and announced the constituent convention of a new party. This was the Labour Progressive Party (L.P.P.) founded on August 21 and 22, 1943. The L.P.P. sought a united front with the C.C.F. and again hoped to infiltrate it. The C.C.F. had shaken off the C.P. of C. at the start of the war when the former had abandoned its pacifist policy. The C.C.F. refused an alliance with the L.P.P. and the L.P.P. then set about trying to destroy the C.C.F. The new L.P.P. tactic was simple--oppose the C.C.F. in all elections and split the vote. The L.P.P. would also follow the revisionism of their American comrade Earl Browder and his

the International's convention, the Canadian Region of the U.A.W. remained exempt from the no strike pledge which the American section of the union had taken when the United States became involved in the war. Burt declined to commit the Canadian Region to the policies of the American section of the union because of the lack of adequate labour legislation in Canada and the poor treatment the Canadian labour movement had received from the federal government.<sup>19</sup>

It was not until April of 1942 that the last automobile rolled off the assembly line and the automotive industry converted to complete war production.<sup>20</sup> The government ignored the U.A.W.'s willingness to take part in the formulation of a joint production program for an all-out war effort<sup>21</sup> and, by failing to provide adequate relief for workers temporarily unem-

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18. Continued from Page 320.

co-operation with "progressive parties" with the result that there would be a Liberal-Labour (L.P.P.) coalition to defeat the agents of reaction, the Conservatives. Grimson, op.cit., pp. 161-188.; Pelt, op.cit., pp. 153-164.

19. Interview with G. Burt. Much of the U.A.W. Canadian Regional policy on the no strike pledge was formulated at a war emergency conference in Windsor. Representatives of Locals 195, 199, 200, and 222, the key locals, were present as were several International Representatives and members of Local 222 such as Robert Stacey, Thomas MacLean, James Smith and Hans McIntyre. P.A.C., C.L.C. Papers, Minutes of Canadian War Emergency Conference, Apr. 8th & 9th, 1942.

20. Official Opening, U.A.W. Hall. Oshawa, Education Committee U.A.W. Local 222, 1951, p. 10.

21. For some of the U.A.W. proposals in aid of the war effort see The Canadian Tribune, Jan. 24, 1942. The U.A.W. had approached the federal government with the proposal of Industrial Councils. C.D. Howe made no effort to call a conference so the U.A.W. wrote the Provincial government asking that consideration be given to Colonel George Drew's recommendation that the provincial government call a conference of industry and labour. P.A.O., Hepburn Papers, George Burt to Premier Mitchell Hepburn, May 29, 1942 and attached "Brief Submitted on behalf of all the Local Unions of United Automobile, Aircraft, Agricultural Implement Workers of America, and other associated plants who are members of the U.A.W.A. in Canada, dealing with the contention of the workers in the various plants, that plants operating on war work in these industries are not being used to the capacity necessary, for an all-out-war-effort."

ployed during the conversion period, the government only brought criticism from the U.A.W.<sup>22</sup> This latter problem was of crucial importance to the workers of Oshawa where for months, more than a thousand workers had been laid-off. Once again the ire of the workers was raised against government in general. In a brief to Oshawa's city council on the unemployment situation, U.A.W. Local 222 declared: "The tempo of conversion is not nearly rapid enough. The tool shops are still operating below capacity. General Motors is non-committal. Ottawa refused to give a satisfactory answer. The workers are alarmed and cynical."<sup>23</sup> However, this conversion period marked another turning point in the union's history. The lay-offs had caused a decrease in Local 222's membership in early 1942 but by the latter half of the year the trend was reversed. The growth in membership continued throughout 1943 and by late 1944, George Burt could report to District Council #26 that "The Oshawa local maintains its first-class position in the union and is the steadiest dues-paying local that we have."<sup>24</sup> Under the stimulus of war-time production and union organizational drives, this development was paralleled by other unions in Oshawa and district, and along with their organizational well-being came a return to political action.

After the purge of the Oshawa C.C.F. Club in late 1939, the party disappeared as an organized political force in the community for almost

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22. United Automobile Worker, Jan. 15, 1942. Many men had not worked the required 180 days since unemployment insurance came into effect in July of 1941.

23. U.A.W. Canadian Regional Office Papers, Brief on Unemployment Situation in Oshawa. Submitted on behalf of Local #222 U.A.W.A. to Oshawa City Council. (n.d.).

24. U.A.W. Toronto Sub-Regional Office Papers, Minutes of District Council #26 Meetings, June 27, 28, 1942; Nov. 7, 8, 1942; Jan. 16, 17, 1943; June 5, 6, 1943; Aug. 7, 8, 1943; Report to District Council #26 U.A.W.-C.I.O. by George Burt, Nov. 25, 26, 1944.



two years. Labour and left-wing political groups took little or no political action. There were "labour" candidates for municipal office for the years 1941, 1942, and 1943, and these men represented various political persuasions including the C.C.F.<sup>25</sup> (See TABLES 9, 10, 11.) However, these labour candidates did not represent an organized and concerted effort to control civic affairs as the L.R.C. had done previously. These elections of the early forties were characterized by some of the lowest voter turnouts in years and seemed to be symbolic of the low ebb which labour and leftist political action had reached in the community. It took a long time for a revival to occur, the major rejuvenating factors being the efforts of dedicated labour and leftist leaders of the earlier period and the new wartime conditions.

It was not until November 13, 1941, and only after receiving invitations from Bert Leavens, Secretary of the Ontario C.C.F., that a small group gathered at the home of A.G. Shultz, decided to take steps to establish a constituency association and elected temporary officers.<sup>26</sup> Re-

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25. One of the candidates who came forward in the elections for the 1943 city council was A.J. Turner. He was not only an outspoken and effective communist but as Chairman of the General Motors shop stewards he was also a prominent member of U.A.W. Local 222. He was a powerful opponent of A.G. Shultz. Interview with A.G. Shultz; Interview with Mrs. G.S. Thomson. In 1943, Turner claimed: "I am running for council with no desire to grind the axe of any particular group of citizens. All of us are anxious to advance the city's war effort and all groups must unite to this end." He ran on a platform calling for a reorganization and streamlining of the city's health department; an adequate housing program; maintaining and improving the wage standards of civic employees; financial and taxation policy reform; establishment of civic machinery to help enforce price control regulations; city council to interest itself in promoting union-management production committees to increase output; and council to arrive at an agreement with the C.N.R., owner of the municipal bus system, in order to reduce fares. The Canadian Tribune, Jan. 2, 1943.

26. Private, Sargent Papers, Minutes of Meeting, Nov. 13, 1941. Present at this initial meeting were Mr. and Mrs. Shultz, Mr. and Mrs. Waridel, Mr. and Mrs. Griffiths, F. Morrison, W. Bright, A. Sargent, Mr. Small.



TABLE: 9 RESULTS OF THE MUNICIPAL ELECTION  
IN OSHAWA FOR THE YEAR 1941.

<u>OFFICE AND CANDIDATES</u>	<u>NO. OF VOTES</u>	<u>POLITICAL AFFILIATION</u>
<u>MAYOR</u>		
J.C. Anderson	2,433	
Ernie Cay	1,233	
Alex S. McLeese	1,089	(Lab. ?)
<u>COUNCIL (10 to be elected)</u>		
W.H. Gifford	2,820	
E.E. Bathe	2,802	(Lab. ?)
B.A. Brown	2,753	
J.A. Coleman	2,693	
Clifford Harman	2,530	(Lab. ?)
James Haxton	2,504	(Lab. ?)
Hayden MacDonald	2,363	
John Stacey	2,347	
R.D. Humphreys	2,324	
Gordon Davis	2,153	(pro Lab., C.C.F. ?)
Alex Ross	1,847	
Nicholas Williams	1,364	(Lab. ?)
S.G. Carnell	1,109	(pro C.C.F. ?)
<u>BOARD OF EDUCATION</u>		
S.J. Phillips	accl.	
W.E. Babe	accl.	
Mrs. G. Colpus	accl.	
C.C. McGibbon	accl.	
F.J. Donovan	accl.	
<u>PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION</u>		
William Boddy	accl.	
C.E. McTavish	accl.	

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SOURCE: The Globe and Mail, Jan. 1, 1941; Jan. 7, 1941.

TABLE: 10 RESULTS OF THE MUNICIPAL ELECTION  
IN OSHAWA FOR THE YEAR 1942.

<u>OFFICE AND CANDIDATES</u>	<u>NO. OF VOTES</u>	<u>POLITICAL AFFILIATION</u>
<u>MAYOR</u>		
Dr. W.H. Gifford	accl.	
<u>COUNCIL (10 to be elected)</u>		
Dr. B.A. Brown	1,084	
James Haxton	1,045	Lab.
E.E. Bathe	1,042	Lab.
R.D. Humphreys	1,026	
Clifford Harman	1,002	Lab.
Gordon Davis	991	(pro Lab., C.C.F.?)
Hayden MacDonald	932	
A.S. McLeese	827	(pro Lab. ?)
John Stacey	823	
Harry O. Perry	788	
A.H. Robinson	436	
S.G. Carnell	422	(pro C.C.F. ?)
<u>BOARD OF EDUCATION</u>		
S.G. Saywell	accl.	
Harold Hart	accl.	
A.E. Lovell	accl.	
Arthur Alloway	accl.	
<u>PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION</u>		
W.G. Garner	accl.	
S.J. Babe	accl.	

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SOURCE: The Evening Telegram, Jan. 6, 1942; The Toronto Daily Star, Jan. 6, 1942. Eight of the previous year's aldermen were returned when only ten per cent of the eligible voters cast their votes. Mayor J.C. Anderson and Alderman J.A. Coleman had retired.

TABLE: 11 RESULTS OF THE MUNICIPAL ELECTION  
IN OSHAWA FOR THE YEAR 1943.

<u>OFFICE AND CANDIDATES</u>	<u>NO. OF VOTES</u>	<u>AFFILIATIONS</u>
<u>MAYOR</u>		
Dr. Wilfred H. Gifford	accl.	
<u>COUNCIL (10 to be elected)</u>		
Edward E. Bathe	1,337	Lab. (U.A.W. Local 222 member)
Clifford Harman	1,226	Lab. (U.A.W. Local 222 member)
A. Gordon Davis	1,124	C.C.F.
Russell D. Humphreys	1,058	
Hayden MacDonald	959	
John Stacey	923	
W.B. White	886	
Bryce A. Brown	847	
Frank McCallum	841	
Harry O. Perry	825	
A.J. Turner	809	Lab. (Communist, U.A.W. Local 222 member)
Michael Starr	724	
Sidney G. Carnell	474	(pro C.C.F. ?)
Allan W. Griffiths	464	C.C.F.
<u>BOARD OF EDUCATION (Two-year term)</u>		
Dr. Fred J. Donovan	accl.	
William E. Babe	accl.	
Dr. Stanley J. Phillips	accl.	
William J. Naylor	accl.	Lab. (pro C.C.F. ?)
Mrs. Gertrude Colpus	accl.	
<u>PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION (2 to be elected)</u>		
J.C. Anderson	1,430	
William Boddy	1,182	
Arthur G. Shultz	836	Lab. (C.C.F., Fin.-Sec. U.A.W. Local 222)

SOURCE: The Toronto Daily Star, Dec. 29, 1942; Jan. 5, 1943; The Evening Telegram, Dec. 31, 1942; Jan. 5, 1943; The Canadian Tribune, Jan. 16, 1943; United Automobile Worker, Jan. 15, 1943; Only 2,236 (17.03%) of the 13,088 eligible voters voted. The Oshawa Times-Gazette, Jan. 5, 1943.

gular monthly meetings followed and approaches were made to prospective members. However, support was slow in materializing. Ward chairmen were not chosen for organizational work until April 28, 1942, and on July 7, 1942, Shultz could only report that the local C.C.F. had thirty-five members in the riding and funds totalling \$12.70.<sup>27</sup> When the C.C.F. Ontario Riding Association was formally established on November 12, 1942, only about forty members were present. Generally, it seemed that only those favoured old stalwarts, who might be classed as part of the "right-wing caucus" and who had weathered the purge of 1939, were now in control of the C.C.F. organization.<sup>28</sup> Conspicuously absent were Finley Dafoe and William Noble. Although Dafoe was able to rejoin the local C.C.F. in late 1943, William Noble was not so privileged. He tried to rejoin but his application and fee were returned to him by the provincial office of the party.<sup>29</sup>

It was not until late 1942 and early 1943 that the local C.C.F. improved its structure through the creation of committees and began a serious effort to organize the riding and gain publicity, often by advertising C.C.F. policy in the daily press.<sup>30</sup> Still, by March 11, 1943, the

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26. Continued from Page 323.

Mr. and Mrs. G. Grube from Toronto were also present. This group elected the following as officers: Chairman: Frank McLellan; Secretary-Treasurer: Albert Sargent; Recording Secretary: A.G. Shultz; Executive Members: A. Waridel, F. Morrison, and W. Bright.

27. Private, Sargent Papers, Minutes of Meeting, Apr. 28, 1942; Minutes of Membership Meeting, July 7, 1942.

28. Officers of the new Ontario Riding Association elected were: President: A.H. Dean; Secretary-Treasurer: Albert Sargent; Executive Members: William Smith, Sidney Sharples, A. Griffiths, and A.G. Shultz. Private, Sargent Papers, Minutes of Meeting, Nov. 12, 1942.

29. Private, Sargent Papers, C.C.F. Membership, 1943; Minutes of Executive Meeting, Sept. 1, 1943.

30. Private, Sargent Papers, Minutes of Meetings, Nov. 19, 1942, Dec. 3, 1942, Dec. 17, 1942, Jan. 28, 1943, Feb. 10, 1943, Feb. 18, 1943.

party's local membership was only seventy-nine.<sup>31</sup> Up to this time, relations with the local unions had been very limited. During the summer of 1942, the Executive Committee of U.A.W. Local 222 had even reacted strongly to incorrect press reports which indicated the union had pledged support to the C.C.F. at a conference in Toronto on July 25. Their statement declared:

the local has not considered or acted upon a motion to affiliate with the C.C.F.

While on many occasions the Local Union has supported the C.C.F. on specific issues of trade union or other public policy, as it has supported other groups in the country, the Local as an all-inclusive body has within its ranks members who are supporters of various political parties.

The Union is prepared at all times to co-operate with the C.C.F. or any other group that wishes to advance labor's problems. With that understanding delegates from the Local were present at the above stated conference. The delegates, however, did not, nor had they the authority to pledge the union to affiliation to the C.C.F. as the press statements would indicate.<sup>32</sup>

It was not until the Oshawa C.C.F. executive held a meeting on April 29, 1943, that inviting union members to affiliate was formally discussed.<sup>33</sup> Even then, the first important negotiations between labour and the C.C.F. came from a new labour body, the Oshawa and District Labour Council.<sup>34</sup>

The former Oshawa and District Trades and Labour Council had been completely disrupted in 1939 when the industrial unions were expelled from the T.L.C. (See TABLE 12.) The need for a local co-ordinating labour body remained but it was not until the latter half of 1941, when some of the C.C.L. unions in Oshawa were discussing the possibility of establishing

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31. Private, Sargent Papers, Minutes of Executive Meeting, Mar. 11, 1943.

32. The Canadian Tribune, Aug. 8, 1942; The Evening Telegram, July 29, 1942; See The Globe and Mail, July 27, 1942. Albert Sargent appeared to be listed as representing the U.A.W. in Oshawa.

33. Private, Sargent Papers, Minutes of Executive Meeting, Apr. 29, 1943.

34. Private, Sargent Papers, Minutes of Executive Meeting, Apr. 29, 1943.

TABLE: 12 LABOUR COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP  
IN OSHAWA AND DISTRICT: 1938-1952

Year	Congress affiliation	No. of Unions affiliated	No. of members represented	Total no. of Unions in locality
1938	T.L.C.	5	3,415	14
1939	T.L.C.	6	3,390	11
1940	T.L.C.	4	103	13
1941	-	-	-	-
1942	C.C.L.	11	9,730	-
1943	C.C.L.	12	10,000	-
1944	C.C.L.	13	6,693	-
1945	C.C.L.	13	5,940	-
1946	C.C.L.	12	5,946	-
1947	C.C.L.	13	7,036	-
1948	C.C.L.	13	8,470	-
1949	C.C.L.	13	8,470	-
1950-51	C.C.L.	12	10,882	-
1952	C.C.L.	12	5,000	-

SOURCE: Canada, Department of Labour, Annual Report on Labour Organization in Canada. 1938-1952, Ottawa, The King's Printer, 1939-1953.

a labour council in Oshawa, that a request was sent to the C.C.L. for information on such an undertaking. Norman S. Dowd replied that if a group of C.C.L. unions were willing to elect and send delegates to a council, the council would then just have to apply for a charter.<sup>35</sup> Still, it was over a year before the local unions actually applied for a charter for what came to be known as the Oshawa and District Labour Council,<sup>36</sup> and it was not until well into 1943 that a Committee on a Constitution and By-laws

35. P.A.C., C.L.C. Papers, William Kellar, Rec. Sec. S.W.O.C. 1817 to N.S. Dowd, Exec. Sec. of C.C.L., Sept. 29, 1941; N.S. Dowd to William Kellar, Oct. 1, 1941. The council's charter fee would be \$10. and it would have to pay an annual fee of \$5. Delegates had to be from unions affiliated with the C.C.L. and "there should not be more than two delegates from any union."

36. The unions comprising the new council were:  
 United Steel Workers of America, Locals 1817; 2375; 2458; 2784;  
 United Automobile Workers of America, Local 222;  
 United Electrical, Radio & Machine Workers of America (Charter applied for);  
 Fur and Leather Workers Union, Locals 205; 218;  
 Oshawa Civic Employees Union;  
 Bakers and Dairymen's Union;  
 United Rubber Workers of America, Local 198.

These unions were located at Bomanville, Oshawa, Whitby and Ajax. The officers elected at the inaugural meeting of council were: President: William E. Noble, President of Local 2784, U.S.W.; Vice-President: Finley Dafoe, delegate of Local 222, U.A.W., Secretary-Treasurer: Alexander Welch, field representative of the U.E. P.A.C., C.L.C. Papers, Alex Welch to Pat Conroy, Dec. 14, 1942; P. Conroy to Alex Welch, Dec. 18, 1942; Unsigned Minutes of Oshawa and District Labour Council, Dec. 1942.; The Canadian Unionist, Vol. XVI, No. 8 (Jan., 1943), p. 205.

In March, 1943, F. Dafoe took over the Presidency from W. Noble who transferred to the jurisdiction of another congress affiliate in the district. The Canadian Unionist, Vol. XVI, No. 10 (Mar., 1943), p. 251.

In May, 1943, two more Executive Board members were elected. They were A.G. Shultz, representing U.A.W. Local 222 and E. Jones, representing Local 189 of the United Rubber Workers. Other officers at that time were: President: Finley Dafoe; Vice-President: M.J. Fenwick; Secretary-Treasurer: Alex Welch. In November, Alex Welch resigned as Secretary-Treasurer when he moved out of the district to take a post as Toronto organizer of the U.E., and M.J. Fenwick, representing the U.S.W., was named acting Secretary-Treasurer until the new elections in January. P.A.C., C.L.C. Papers, Minutes of Oshawa and District Labour Council, May, 1943; Nov., 1943. Millard considered Alex Welch to have been a "fellow traveler" and associated with the "unity" group. Interview with C.H. Millard.



chaired by M.J. Fenwick,<sup>37</sup> drafted a constitution. This constitution stated that decisions were to be made by a majority vote on a council whose "representation shall be in proportion of two delegates from each local union, division, lodge or unit for each 100 members or less and one additional delegate for each 100 additional members or major fraction thereof, but no local union, division, lodge or unit shall be allowed more than seven delegates."<sup>38</sup> Such provisions were an attempt to ensure a fair balance of power among the unions and check the overwhelming influence of the U.A.W. in the community. In addition, the establishment of three

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37. M.J. ("Mike") Fenwick had been a communist and staff writer for the Daily Clarion in the 1930's. He had covered the G.M. strike in 1937 for that paper. Fenwick was hired as a Business Agent in 1940 for S.W.O.C. Lodge 1817 in Oshawa. He organized the Bomanville Foundry in 1940, Pedlar People in 1943, and the R.D. Werner Co. in 1950. He was chosen Secretary-Treasurer of the Oshawa and District Labour Council in late 1943, and retained the position year after year until 1954 when he left Oshawa for Toronto where he became an assistant to District Director Sefton of the U.S.W., a new position he held for years. When C.H. Millard was given the job of cleaning out the communists in the S.W.O.C., Fenwick was placed in a difficult position. He could either change his politics or be released. He changed his politics. Part of Fenwick's radicalism had been due to the fact that he came from the lakehead area. Millard, however, claims that Fenwick was primarily a "fellow traveller" and had become associated with the Communist Party because his wife had been a member of the Y.C.L. and to keep peace in the family. Fenwick did not apply for membership in the Ontario C.C.F. Riding Association until early 1948 but the Riding Association sent a delegation to the Provincial Executive to protest acceptance of his application, not on personal grounds but because it would be inadvisable to accept him just prior to a by-election as it was well known that he had a record of support for the communist party line. They requested that consideration of the application be deferred until after the by-election. However, it was Millard who had sponsored Fenwick and he had made the decision only after Fenwick "had been on probation for almost four years." In 1947 he had been satisfied that Fenwick was "a sincere supporter of the Steelworkers' administration and C.C.L. political policy, [thus] Mr. Fenwick had been appointed to the Steel staff." Local opposition was overcome and Fenwick's application was accepted on the condition that he make "a public statement of his disagreement with the L.P.P. as well as his unqualified support of the C.C.F." Voice of Labour, Oshawa, The Oshawa & District Labour Council, 1969, p. 67.; U.T.A. W.M.C., Minutes of special Executive Meeting, Mar. 27, 1948; Minutes of Provincial Executive Meeting, Apr. 3, 1948; Interview with A.G. Shultz; Interview with C.H. Millard.

38. P.A.C., C.L.C. Papers, Revised Draft Constitution and By-Laws -- Oshawa & District Labour Council, (Mar., 1943).

standing committees, namely, organization, municipal and legislative, was essential to the council if it was to act as a central forum and an effective and powerful pressure group.<sup>39</sup>

It was this new political action-oriented body which, at its monthly meeting in April, 1943, adopted a proposal from Local 1817, U.S.W., that the council urge the C.C.F. Riding Association to co-operate with the labour unions in nominating a suitable candidate. M.J. Fenwick, Council Vice-President, declared: "We are sure any C.C.F. candidate nominated must have the support of the unions if he is to be elected. The C.C.F. party and the unions should, therefore, name a standard bearer who will receive the united support of the unions if he is to be elected."<sup>40</sup> In the next month this proposal was followed up and information was sought from the C.C.F. Riding Association as to any plans the C.C.F. might be making to nominate a candidate for the forthcoming provincial election. The Council also requested that it be "called in to consult and agree on a candidate acceptable to their organization." In reply, the secretary of the local C.C.F. was instructed to inform the council of the procedure necessary for it to qualify for such action.<sup>41</sup> It seemed that labour-

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39. Two of the committees, municipal and legislative, were highly political in nature. Their functions were outlined as follows:

"The municipal committee shall consider all questions arising in the city and all matters referred to it by council, as well as the general welfare of the city, and to report to council whatever action it may take or deem advisable for council to take."

"The legislative committee shall keep council informed on all matters of interest to labor that may come before the provincial legislature or the House of Commons, or that may be referred to it by council, and to make such recommendations as to the action it may deem advisable for the council to take."

P.A.C., C.L.C. Papers, Revised Draft Constitution and By-laws - Oshawa & District Labour Council, (Mar., 1943).

40. The Canadian Tribune, Apr. 24, 1943.

41. Private, Sargent Papers, Minutes of Membership Meeting, May 19, 1943.

progressive political action was about to return as a major force in Oshawa and district.

The solid, straight-laced Gordon Conant, the Liberal member for Ontario, had attracted considerable criticism from left-wing and labour groups during his years as Attorney-General of Ontario.<sup>42</sup> On October 21, 1942, Mitchell Hepburn resigned as Premier and Conant, his chosen successor, was sworn into office. Conant now headed an Ontario Liberal Party which had been disintegrating as a political force; moreover, he was not popular with the Cabinet and commanded little support in Caucus.<sup>43</sup> Conant was a weak Premier and only further alienated labour when he promised a genuinely

42. See: "Is Mr. Conant a Fascist?", New Commonwealth, May 18, 1939; "Attorney-General Would Introduce Star Chamber Procedure Says Roebuck," The Canadian Tribune, May 11, 1940; P.A.O., Hepburn Papers, George Burt to All Ontario Trades Union and Trades Unionists, Feb. 12, 1940.

C.H. Millard, National Secretary of the Canadian C.I.O., was arrested on Dec. 6, 1939, on a charge of making "statements prejudicial to recruiting" in contravention of Section 39 of the Defence of Canada Regulations. According to the police the alleged offence occurred during a public meeting at Timmins. It was stated that a shorthand transcript of Millard's remarks was made by someone in the audience and turned over to Attorney General Conant who ordered the arrest. The incident provided an excuse to raid the Steel union offices in Toronto, and the adjoining offices of other unions. Files and brief cases were searched, several documents were removed and the names and addresses of all the occupants demanded. Silby Barrett, C.C.I.O. Chairman, in a statement issued to the press but not used, termed Millard's arrest an "act by the most labor hating member of the most labor hating government in Canada." Millard's statements, which had been made during a speech on the general subject of unionism, isolated from their context were: 1. We should have democracy in Canada before we go to Europe to fight for it. 2. There is not a great deal of sense in going to Europe to fight Hitlerism when we have Hitlerism right here. 3. That men join the army to be sure of eating regularly, or "words of like intent." The whole incident finally ended when the charge against Millard was dropped. The Canadian Forum, Vol. 19 (Feb., 1940), p. 347; Vol. 20, (Apr., 1940), p. 20.

In November, 1941, Conant accused the C.I.O. of dynamite planting and "indicated that the C.I.O. are up to their old and well-known tactics--terrorism." The Evening Telegram, Nov. 26, 1941.

43. McKenty, op.cit., pp. 138, 250, 258-259.; See also: F.A. Brewin, "The Ontario Political Pot Boils," The Canadian Forum, Vol. XXII, No. 263 (Dec., 1942), pp. 266-267.; S. Levington, "What Kind of a Man is Ontario's New Premier?", Saturday Night, Vol. 58, No. 8 (Oct. 31, 1942), p. 6.

progressive labour bill and then failed to deliver. He had been petitioned by a number of labour bodies including the Oshawa and District Labour Council.<sup>44</sup> A delegation from his own riding headed by George Thomson of the U.A.W. presented Conant with a brief declaring: "Ontario is a backward province concerning labor legislation. There is probably no greater source of dissatisfaction among the workers than the state of our laws or lack of their dealing with labor legislation. In this instance the government has a definite responsibility." The brief urged the necessity of a bill to guarantee the right of workers to organize freely in unions of their own choice; make it mandatory that management recognize and bargain with unions chosen by a majority of employees; and outlaw company unions. The brief also noted:

Our members have been greatly disturbed by press reports that it is possible the proposed bill will not be enacted during the present sitting of the legislature. In our opinion, such an event would not improve industrial relations in Ontario, but make them worse.

Among us today are some who attended the banquet given in your honor in Oshawa when you became the prime minister of this province. At that meeting you declared that labor was a 'legal orphan' and that your government intended to end this status and give labor the recognition its position in society deserves.

We hope that those are still your views and that you will undertake to disillusion all those opponents of labor who wish to continue keeping the working people 'legal orphans' in this province.<sup>45</sup>

Conant's labour bill went before an all-Liberal select committee to which labour groups sent delegations and briefs.<sup>46</sup> Labour strongly objected to many of the proposed measures. The government became indecisive and the

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44. The Toronto Daily Star, Feb. 8, 1943; The Evening Telegram, Feb. 9, 1943; The Canadian Tribune, Feb. 20, 1943.

45. The Toronto Daily Star, Mar. 3, 1943.

46. The Globe and Mail, Feb. 22, 1943; Mar. 17, 1943.

bill finally enacted did not satisfy labour.<sup>47</sup> Labour's discontent not only remained but grew and support was given to the C.C.F., the only party with a program satisfying labour.

Conant resigned the Premiership on May 18, 1943, and was replaced by Harry Nixon who had been chosen at a Liberal Party convention in April. Nixon called an election for August 4 but it was one in which Conant would not be running as a candidate. He had been appointed to the position of Master-in-Chambers at Osgoode Hall, an appointment widely regarded as his \$7,000 a year political pay-off for stepping aside from the leadership of the Liberal Party.<sup>48</sup>

The Oshawa C.C.F. decided to contest the riding in the election and set up a committee to receive nominations.<sup>49</sup> Upon the request of U.A.W. Local 222, three representatives of the C.C.F. were chosen to meet with Local 222's executive. The C.C.F. also drafted a letter to all local unions requesting them to consider support or affiliation after studying the program and policy of the C.C.F. as recommended by the C.C.L. at its Ottawa convention.<sup>50</sup> Although M.J. Fenwick of the Oshawa and District Labour Council had sent a letter requesting the selection of a trade union

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47. The Toronto Daily Star, Apr. 1, 1943; The Globe and Mail, Mar. 26, 1943; Ontario, Statutes of the Province of Ontario, 7 Geo. VI (1943) Ch. 4.; F.A. Brewin, "The Ontario Collective Bargaining Act," The Canadian Forum, Vol. XXII, No. 266 (Mar. 1943), pp. 344-345.; G.M.A. Grube, "Legislating for Labor," The Canadian Forum, Vol. XXIII, No. 268 (May, 1943), pp. 30-31; The Conservatives refused to be represented on the select committee.

48. McKenty, op.cit., pp. 265-267; The Globe and Mail, May 13, 1943; The Evening Telegram, May 14, 1943; The St. Thomas Times-Journal, May 28, 1943; The Toronto Daily Star, June 11, 1943.

49. Private, Sargent Papers, Minutes of Membership Meeting, May 19, 1943; Minutes of Executive Meeting, June 17, 1943.

50. Private, Sargent Papers, Minutes of Executive Meeting, June 17, 1943; Minutes of Executive Meeting, June 30, 1943.

member as the candidate, the local C.C.F. executive handled the touchy subject by sticking to the party's constitution.<sup>51</sup> In a letter to The Times-Gazette, Frank McLellan, President of the Oshawa Branch of the C.C.F., wrote that the "possibility of a fourth candidate in Ontario Riding was not entirely a surprise to the executive of the C.C.F." He claimed that it had been known for some time that the communists intended to run a candidate in several industrial ridings and since the communists had a local branch of the Labour Total War Committee in Oshawa, it was expected that they might select Ontario Riding for a popular front candidate. McLellan described the communications that had taken place between the Oshawa and District Labour Council and the local C.C.F., and then went on to declare:

Recently certain individuals have attempted by means of the public press to impose upon the C.C.F. as a prospective candidate, one who has had no association with the C.C.F. since 1939.

This attempt to instruct the C.C.F. as to who the candidate would have to be was communicated in a letter received on Wednesday, June 30, advising us of the personal opinion of M.J. Fenwick, A.J. Turner, Finley Daffoe and Alex Welch.

This would mean, in fact, that these four gentlemen wish to determine for the C.C.F. Party who should contest the election on the C.C.F. ticket.

The various letters to the press expressed doubts as to the possibility of the successful election of a C.C.F. candidate should labor have two representatives in the field, inasmuch as the C.C.F. announced its intention of contesting the riding a month ago, the week-end decision of a so-called "Oshawa Trade Union Committee" can have but one objective and that is to endeavor to assist "big-business" in stopping the C.C.F. by splitting Labor forces.<sup>52</sup>

The threat of a split vote, however, came to nothing. The evening of the same day McLellan's letter was published, a convention of local trade unionists asked the Ontario County C.C.F. association to name a candidate for

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51. Private, Sargent Papers, Minutes of Executive Meeting, June 30, 1943; Minutes of Executive Meeting, July 4, 1943.

52. The Times-Gazette, July 6, 1943.



the provincial election who would represent both the party and the unionists. As a result, no candidate of the unionists was chosen at the meeting which had been called for that purpose. The main reason for the decision seems to have been the fear that if both a labour and a C.C.F. candidate ran, neither would be elected.<sup>53</sup> Thus, when a candidate was selected at a general membership meeting of the C.C.F. held in the Genosha Hotel two days later, it was only fully-accredited party members holding official blue cards who voted. These numbered between eighty and ninety people out of a total of well over two hundred in attendance.

This meeting began with the report of the C.C.F. nominating committee. Seven names were included. They were Arthur G. Shultz, Alderman A. Gordon Davis of Oshawa, Frank McLellan, Arthur Williams of East York, Horace Brown of Dunbarton, Frank Hayward of Greenwood, and Major Archie Woods of Toronto. This list included three trade unionists, two professionals and two business men. The meeting was then thrown open to the floor for further nominations from bona fide members of the C.C.F. and Albert Elson, A.H. Dean, and F. Dafoe were nominated. However, as Dafoe was not a member of the C.C.F. at the time, he was ineligible and his name was withdrawn. Major Woods was not present and McLellan, Dean, Davis and Shultz declined to run, thus leaving only four candidates.

On the first ballot, fifty per cent of the votes went to Arthur Williams, thirty-six per cent to Albert Elson, thirteen per cent to Frank Hayward, and eleven per cent to Horace Brown. Brown dropped out automatically and Hayward withdrew. It became a fight between Elson and Williams with the latter winning by a majority on the second ballot.<sup>54</sup>

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53. The Toronto Daily Star, July 7, 1943.

54. The Times-Gazette, July 10, 1943; Private, Sargent Papers, Minutes of Membership Meeting, July 8, 1943.



Upon his election, Arthur Williams, who was employed by the C.C.L. as Secretary-Treasurer of the Textile Workers' Organizing Committee, declared:

Some of you may not like me, but it is better for you to have me as a candidate for the party because you can count on my past record of struggle for the welfare of the working people to whom I belong. If elected, I would do everything in my power to see that never again could the police, on orders from higher authority, club and browbeat workers into submission. At the present time, I myself am under arrest, out on bail, arrested because I dared to go on the picket line up in Galt.<sup>55</sup>

It was clear that Williams had to prove himself. He was an outsider who had been brought in at the instigation of A.G. Shultz, not only because he had a lot of publicity but because there was a split in the local U.A.W.<sup>56</sup> This split had been partially evident at the nominating meeting as a dissenting element had disturbed the proceedings with a loud cry of "We want Elson." Albert Elson, the President of U.A.W. Local 222, had

55. Ibid., July 10, 1943.

56. Shultz had known Williams for a long time. Interview with A.G. Shultz. It should be noted that according to U.A.W., Toronto Sub-Regional Office Papers, John Eldon to J.L. Cohen, Nov. 13, 1943, Eldon stated that Arthur Williams was a member of C.H. Millard's staff.

Arthur H. Williams was a Welshman and ex-organizer of the British Labour Party who came to Canada in 1929. He was elected to the East York Township Council in 1934 and elected Reeve in 1936. He ran in East York in the 1934 and 1937 provincial elections and in the 1935 federal election. He had also been a member of the Ontario C.C.F. Council and Provincial Executive and for three years was President of the East York Workers' Association. He ran on a C.C.F. ticket in the 1945 provincial election in Ontario but was defeated, the labour vote being split. He was elected to the House of Commons at a by-election on June 8, 1948 for Ontario but was defeated in the general election of 1949 after the two rural townships of Scott and Uxbridge had been added to the constituency. Williams was a real fire brand, an oratorical spellbinder who had a natural advantage in public over Albert Elson who could not match his oratory. Williams, however, had one major weakness and that was he lost all sense of proportion when the public eye was upon him. It was a weakness which would eventually cause dissension between the C.C.F. and labour. New Commonwealth, Sept. 18, 1937; The Times-Gazette, July 10, 1943; J.K. Johnson (ed.) The Canadian Directory of Parliament 1867-1967, Ottawa, Public Archives of Canada, 1968, p. 602; Interview with C.H. Millard, Interview with Mrs. G.S. Thomson.

been a popular nominee with many of those who had no vote in the proceedings. It was a sensitive problem which Elson himself had touched on in a speech while the first ballot was being scrutinized. He declared:

I believe there is a breach among the labor people here. Whether it is justified, I cannot say, I am concerned that this breach should be healed because we need a C.C.F. candidate in the riding and if that breach is not healed, we may not have our candidate elected.

I don't know whether a local man or an outside man would poll the most votes. We are all concerned in getting the best man for the job. I rest my case with the members of the C.C.F. and what they do is all right with me.

After Williams' victory, Elson again appealed for unity. "I am asking all labor representatives to get behind Mr. Williams and for once in Ontario County to show unity and common sense by putting our candidate where he belongs, in Queen's Park."<sup>57</sup>

The choice of Williams proved satisfactory to all factions. At a well attended special membership meeting of U.A.W. Local 222, Williams not only received endorsement but a donation of \$500.00 was made to the C.C.F. campaign fund by unanimous decision. The U.A.W. locals followed the same pattern in Windsor<sup>58</sup> where George Burt declared:

It's natural for the working man to turn to the party which has given him support when he was down and out....

You can control the C.C.F. men through your labor organizations, but you can't control the Liberals and Conservatives, because they're controlled by the companies and banks....

When we were unorganized we couldn't get a hearing from the Liberal members, because we were electing the wrong people. Col. Drew wants the support of the C.I.O. yet a few years ago he was broadcasting that all C.I.O. organizers were Communists with criminal records. We have tested the sentiment of the people of Windsor and have come to the conclusion that voting C.C.F. will not cause a split in our organization, the C.I.O.<sup>59</sup>

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57. The Times-Gazette, July 10, 1943.

58. United Automobile Worker, Aug. 1, 1943; U.A.W., Toronto Sub-Regional Office Papers, Minutes of District Council #26 Meeting, Aug. 7, 8, 1943; The Canadian Tribune, July 24, 1943; See Stevens, op.cit., pp. 149-155.

59. The Windsor Daily Star, Aug. 3, 1943.

The C.C.F. became the beneficiary of the enthusiasm for political action among many labour organizations in 1943. In the case of the U.A.W. this support was given in a united labour-progressive cause rather than as part of a confirmed policy of support for the C.C.F.

In Ontario the Progressive Conservatives chose a well known Oshawa dairyman, George S. Hart, as their candidate<sup>60</sup> while the Liberals selected J.C. Anderson. The Progressive Conservatives tried to appeal to labour by declaring that George Drew advocated legislation which "would assure workers and employers of Ontario the fairest and most advanced laws governing labor relations...."<sup>61</sup> J.C. Anderson followed his party's strategy by standing on the Liberal government's record while W.E.N. Sinclair, who campaigned in Anderson's favour, raised the old "red bogey" and declared that he found it "distinctly disturbing to find the party friendly with the C.I.O. and the Communist Party. ...should the party gain power in the legislature it would upset the entire fabric of the country." A.N. Sharpe also spoke in support of Anderson and took another line by attacking Williams as an outsider. He contended that

the C.C.F. Party in Oshawa was controlled by a small group. In the present election residents of Ontario Riding had been ready to serve as C.C.F. candidates yet a man who had been defeated three times was brought in from outside. At the same time a former resident of Oshawa, C.H. Millard, was running in a riding in the vicinity of Toronto.<sup>62</sup>

The results of the provincial election indicated a complete upset. The Liberals were swept under. The C.C.F., a party which had previously

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60. The Evening Telegram, July 14, 1943.

61. Ibid. For a C.C.F. criticism of Drew's platform see "Col. Drew De-bunked" by George Grube in the New Commonwealth, July 22, 1943.

62. The Times-Gazette, July 29, 1943.

sent only one member to the Legislature—who was subsequently defeated—during its brief history of eleven years, emerged as the second largest party in a legislature where no party was given a majority. Commenting on the sudden change in the political fortunes of the Ontario C.C.F., The Toronto Daily Star editorial surmised that it was due largely

to the determination of the great masses of the people that a better day shall dawn for the common man. Yesterday's vote for C.C.F. candidates was a declaration of lost faith in the old way of doing things--the old way which is no longer good enough, and which the old parties will have to abandon if they are to retain the confidence of the people. Conditions which obtained before the war must not obtain after it. Whatever else electors may have felt or known about C.C.F. policies, many did feel that this party was facing forward and going somewhere, and that its older rivals, while moving somewhat, were still looking back wistfully over their shoulders to a social order which is no longer acceptable.

Labor voted strongly and elected candidates of its own as well as making an impressive contribution to the success of C.C.F. candidates. But the showing which these made was not by any means due entirely to Labor, although it does mark the entry of Labor into Ontario politics as a factor now to be reckoned with....

The Liberal campaign in 1937 was conducted, by the leader of that day, "to keep the C.I.O. out of Ontario." Now the present day C.I.O. organizer and leader, C.H. Millard, who was in 1937, president of the Oshawa automotive strikers, has been elected as a C.C.F. member in South York [sic]. How the wheel does turn.<sup>63</sup>

In Ontario, Arthur Williams was elected with a good margin over his nearest opponent, J.C. Anderson. Election returns indicate that it was in the urban industrial sections of the riding where Williams polled his greatest vote. (See APPENDIX B.) In overcoming the once dominant Liberal Party, organized labour had scored a major victory in Oshawa and district.<sup>64</sup> The riding of Ontario and numerous other ridings had changed

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63. The Toronto Daily Star, Aug. 5, 1943; The Times-Gazette, Aug. 5, 1943; See also, "Tide of C.C.F. Support Mounted Throughout Election Campaign" in the New Commonwealth, Aug. 12, 1943. C.H. Millard was elected in York West.

64. The Times-Gazette, Aug. 5, 1943; The Evening Telegram, Aug. 5, 1943; The C.C.F. organizational structure was mainly confined to Oshawa. It was not until 1944 that the C.C.F. Riding Association reorganized itself into

their political character by becoming part of a three party system which in turn radically altered the balance of power in Ontario and changed the nature of the party system in the province.<sup>65</sup> George Drew and his Progressive Conservatives formed a minority government while the C.C.F. became the official opposition. When this new House met, Arthur Williams, Ontario riding's new M.P.P., would continue to make headlines as a C.C.F. labour critic.<sup>66</sup>

In Oshawa the C.C.F., despite its electoral success, did not maintain a monopoly position on the political left. In the fall of 1943 a rejuvenated communist party under the name of the Labour Progressive Party (L.P.P.) established the Oshawa Labour-Progressive Club<sup>67</sup> which would prove to be a thorn in the side of the local C.C.F. After its partial venture into provincial politics, the Oshawa and District Labour Council remained eager to advance the development of the concept of labour political action and thus actively participated in the formation of the Ontario Federation of Labour, an organization which had first been proposed by the U.A.W. District Council #26.<sup>68</sup> In addition to interest in the Ontario

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64. Continued from Page 341.

units operating in each district under the authority of the Riding Association. Each unit was to elect a representative to the Riding Association Executive and a minimum of seven members were to constitute a unit. Private, Sargent Papers, Minutes of Membership Meeting, Nov. 25, 1943.

65. The Evening Telegram, Aug. 5, 1943; United Automobile Worker, Aug. 15, 1943. In the Windsor area the U.A.W. supported three C.C.F. candidates who were elected. They were Nelson Alles, William Riggs, and George Bennett.

66. The Toronto Daily Star, Oct. 9, 1943; The Times-Gazette, Nov. 11, 1943; See also: New Commonwealth, Mar. 9, 1944.

67. The Times-Gazette, Oct. 23, 1943.

68. George Burt declared at a preliminary meeting "the intention was to establish a basis for dealings with the provincial government and bring about a uniform policy on legislative and economic matters." With the

Federation of Labour, organized labour in Oshawa quickly decided to turn its attention to municipal politics. In August, a meeting of the Oshawa and District Labour Council recommended to its affiliates that they submit the names of any of their members who wished to run for municipal office in order that a labour slate could be placed in the election.<sup>69</sup> By November, an official slate of candidates had been formally named and definite participation in the election had been decided upon, the reason given being "the present administration's attitude to numerous city problems including the prevailing wage levels of civic employees whose rates are far below [those] enjoyed in private industry."<sup>70</sup>

The C.C.F. had announced in the press that a municipal slate of C.C.F. candidates was not planned<sup>71</sup> but the Oshawa and District Labour Council still submitted its list of candidates to the C.C.F. for endorsement. The C.C.F.ers discussed the matter and it was pointed out that their constitution did not permit endorsement unless a program was submitted and the entire slate was composed of party members. As a result,

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68. Continued from Page 343.

large number of C.C.F. candidates elected to the provincial legislature, it was considered all the more important to have an Ontario Federation of Labour to work on behalf of Labour with those people. P.A.C., C.L.C. Papers, Norman S. Dowd to Alex Welch, June 24, 1943; Ontario Federation of Labour Bulletin Vol. 3, No. 5 (Sept. 1951); Wm. A. Muir to Pat Conroy, Sept. 25, 1943; Norman S. Dowd to Dear Brother, Oct. 4, 1943; Minutes of Preliminary Meeting held at Toronto, Oct. 16, 1943.

69. The Canadian Tribune, Aug. 21, 1943.

70. P.A.C., C.L.C. Minutes of Oshawa and District Labour Council Nov., 1943: The following candidates were named: City Council: E.E. Bathe, C. Harman, Cephas Gay, Alfred Jones, W.J. O'Reilly, George S. Thomson, and A.J. Turner; Board of Education: F.S. Britten, Gordon Crouse, Albert Elson, David Henderson; Public Utilities Commission: Cliff Lang, and A.G. Shultz. The Canadian Unionist, Vol. XVII, No. 6 (Nov., 1943), p. 147. Not all of those labour candidates on this slate actually ran in the election.

71. Private, Sargent Papers, Minutes of Executive Meeting, Nov. 18, 1943.



it was left up to individual members to support the labour slate or not as they chose.<sup>72</sup>

During the election campaign The Times-Gazette raised its favourite bogey, "dictation," and came out against the introduction of party politics into civic affairs, claiming there was a left-right division in the election because "One of the candidates for the Oshawa mayoralty is well-known as an officer of the Progressive Conservative party. The other candidate belongs to the C.C.F."<sup>73</sup> To this editorial comment, F.M. McLellan, President of the C.C.F. Riding Association, replied that the C.C.F. had held no meetings in connection with the election and had nominated no candidates. The C.C.F. declared its independence of other political parties and listed C.C.F. members who happened to be among those running for office but made no special plea for them. McLellan's letter did, however, criticize an opposition group, the so-called Non-Partisan Voters' Association which was

first mooted as an organization which would devote its energies to persuading citizens to exercise their franchise, irrespective of party support, an ideal which the C.C.F. has always supported wholeheartedly. It has, however [sic] developed into something whose aims are far less altruistic, and it's apparently part and parcel of a nation-wide organization, with almost unlimited finances, and headed up by one Gladstone Murray, ex-manager of the C.B.C., with the sole object of defeating the C.C.F. anywhere and everywhere, and maintaining "private enterprise" with its ever-recurring depressions, and unemployment.<sup>74</sup>

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72. Private, Sargent Papers, Minutes of Membership Meeting, Nov. 25, 1943.

73. The Times-Gazette, Dec. 28, 1943.

74. The Times-Gazette, Dec. 31, 1943: The Oshawa Non-Partisan Voters' Association stated as its objectives, not only the "stimulation of interest by Oshawa citizens in municipal affairs," but also the "election of civic representatives who will give the city sane progressive municipal government." The officers of the Association included J.C. Anderson (former Liberal candidate), George Hart (former Progressive Conservative candidate), Dr. S.J. Phillips, Robert G. Mills, Hayden Macdonald (Progressive



Indeed, the only political party formally to support candidates was the communists<sup>74</sup> through their Labour-Progressive Club of Oshawa, which issued a circular supporting the labour slate in a fashion typical of their "hanger on" tactics.<sup>75</sup>

On election day, the labour candidates were not as successful as their sponsors had hoped but some members of the slate headed the polls. Voter turn-out had greatly improved over that of recent years but only three of the eight men on the labour slate were elected in Oshawa (see TABLE 13) with W. Noble and T.D. Thomas being successful in East Whitby Township. In contrast, six of the seven aldermanic candidates endorsed by the Oshawa Non-Partisan Voters' Association were elected. However, the new Mayor, A. Gordon Davis, although not sponsored by the Oshawa and District Labour Council, was supported by labour<sup>76</sup> and was a known C.C.F.er. The old struggle of labour and progressive forces versus the "old guard" was revived with the "old guard" under a new name but still holding the balance of power on council. This latter fact seemed less the result of continued weakness on labour's part than of the lack of labour-leftist unity and inadequate work in political education. The problem of political education had only recently been tackled by the creation of a new instrument in labour's arsenal, The Oshaworker, the new organ of U.A.W. Local 222.<sup>77</sup> Of the municipal election results, this paper stated:

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74. Continued from Page 344. Conservative), Cyril E. Souch and Stewart Alger. The Evening Telegram, Dec. 23, 1943.

75. The Times-Gazette, Dec. 29, 1943.

76. The Globe and Mail, Jan. 4, 1944; The Times-Gazette, Jan. 4, 1944.

77. The Oshaworker was published by the Educational Committee of U.A.W. Local 222. William Noble, who was Chairman of the Educational Committee, was also editor of the paper. The Oshaworker, Jan. 17, 1944.

TABLE: 13 RESULTS OF THE MUNICIPAL ELECTION  
IN OSHAWA FOR THE YEAR 1944

<u>OFFICE AND CANDIDATES</u>	<u>NO. OF VOTES</u>	<u>AFFILIATIONS</u>
<u>MAYOR</u>		
A. Gordon Davis	3,807	(C.C.F.)
Russell D. Humphreys	2,898	(Progressive Conservative)
<u>COUNCIL (10 to be elected)</u>		
E.E. Bathe	3,998	Lab. (O.D.L.C.) (C.C.F.)
Clifford Harman	3,478	Lab. (O.D.L.C.)
A.J. Coleman	3,475	
James Haxton	3,268	(Former Labour alderman seeking re-election on a non-partisan basis)
Frank McCallum	2,888	
Finley M. Dafoe	2,823	Lab. (O.D.L.C.) (C.C.F.)
Beverely J. Brown	2,760	
Harry O. Perry	2,551	
G. Thomas Brooks	2,497	
Michael Starr	2,471	
W.J. Lock	2,099	
W. Bertram White	2,059	
Cephas B. Gay	1,860	Lab. (O.D.L.C.)
George S. Thomson	1,710	Lab. (O.D.L.C.)
Alfred J. Jones	1,694	Lab. (O.D.L.C.)
William J. O'Reilly	1,656	Lab. (O.D.L.C.)
James M. Lownie	1,619	Lab. (O.D.L.C.) (C.C.F.)
Rae Halliday	1,169	
Charles Lancaster	1,122	
Sidney G. Carnell	803	(C.C.F.)
Edmund J. Pomeroy	308	
<u>BOARD OF EDUCATION (4 to be elected)</u>		
E. Arthur Lovell	3,433	
J. Lewis Beaton	3,243	
Stephen G. Saywell	3,112	
Arthur Alloway	2,587	
Frederick B. Anderson	2,131	Lab. (O.D.L.C.)
Albert Elson	2,025	Lab. (O.D.L.C.) (C.C.F.)
David W. Henderson	1,688	Lab. (O.D.L.C.)
Charles G. Crouse	1,429	Lab. (O.D.L.C.) (C.C.F. in 1944)
<u>PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION (2 to be elected)</u>		
Dr. W.H. Gifford	4,101	
S.J. Babe	3,706	
A.G. Shultz	2,784	Lab. (O.D.L.C.) (C.C.F.)

SOURCE: The Evening Telegram, Dec. 29, 1943; Jan. 4, 1944; The Toronto Daily Star, Dec. 18, 1943; Jan. 4, 1944; The Globe and Mail, Jan. 4, 1944; United Automobile Worker, Dec. 15, 1943; The Canadian Unionist, Vol. XVII, No. 6 (Nov., 1943), p. 147; Private, Sargent Papers, Minutes and Membership of C.C.F. 1943, 1944. A total of 6,707 votes were polled for the mayoralty candidates representing 51.28 per cent of the total of 13,088 eligible voters. The Times-Gazette, Jan. 4, 1944.

The ten unsuccessful candidates received a vote that ran very close together, in the main only a small percentage of votes separating them in the final result.

The hard core of Labor votes thus demonstrated, those who will support Labor men because of conviction, is proven to be steadily growing....

The splendid vote rolled up by His Worship Mayor Davis, who was supported by Labor, should put an end to "red-baiting" and "witch-hunting" campaigns in this city. It may still work elsewhere, but too many Labor-minded Oshawa citizens are awake to such trickery.<sup>78</sup>

By the close of 1943 the socio-economic and political fabric of the community of Oshawa had produced a dynamic plurality of left-wing and labour groups whose existence in 1928 was impossible and might then have seemed improbable in the future except to the most devoted disciple of Marxist inevitability. Nevertheless, through a progression of steps over a fifteen year period, the community had undergone a social and political metamorphosis. Oshawa had seen attempts at industrial unionism rise and fail; economic depression humble its citizens; the emergence of a number of left of centre protest groups; the birth of industrial unionism in the automobile industry, and the reverberations and ramifications of that revolution not only in Oshawa but throughout the rest of industrial Canada. Oshawa had been the focus of widespread political and economic attention and the centre of an experiment in popular front municipal politics. This environment produced a number of labour and labour-political leaders who attained considerable prominence and power in the Canadian left and labour movement. However, despite all these influences, Oshawa and its hinterland district had not seen a total victory for its working-class but only a partial one. The process of democratization had moved forward but many political tasks and problems lay ahead. In municipal politics the traditional élite of successful professional and business men, often members

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78. Ibid.

of the local Liberal and Conservative Party establishments who had frequently acted as a single party "old guard" under different labels at different times, had had its monopoly on civic office broken. A new left-right two party system had emerged at the municipal level, while at the provincial and eventually at the federal level of politics, the two party system had been transformed into a three party system. Indeed, most of these new developments not only heightened interest in politics but also vastly improved participation in the democratic process.

The new labour and progressive organizations and groups were by no means homogeneous elements. Collectively they came close to forming a mass party<sup>79</sup> of the left wing in times of unity, but individually they represented a diversity of sizes, resources, democratic organization in theory and practice, and different points on the spectrum of the political left. Perhaps most important of all were the different officers of the various factions and organizations and the character and personality of these leaders. This point is illustrated by the variety of officers elected to the Oshawa and District Labour Council for 1944.<sup>80</sup> The list

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79. See: Maurice Duverger, Political Parties: Their Organization and Activity in the Modern State, Translated by Barbara and Robert North. New York, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1963, pp. 1-132. Duverger distinguishes between mass parties and caucus or cadre parties. Mass parties organize a large proportion of the masses either by obtaining members directly or through affiliated organizations such as trade unions. They are usually centralized structures and function as educational movements as well as electoral machines. Active membership in caucus or cadre parties is narrowly recruited. They are decentralized parties and are primarily vehicles for winning elections and organizing governments.

80. Officers elected to the Oshawa and District Labour Council for 1944 were:

President: F.M. Dafoe, (acclaimed) U.A.W. Local 222 member (C.C.F. member)

Vice-President: W.E. Noble, (acclaimed) U.A.W. Local 222 member (pro C.C.F.)

Secretary-Treasurer: M.J. Fenwick, representative of U.S.A. (pro C.C.F.)

- continued Page 349

of names revealed that no one left of centre element controlled the council. The various key unions were represented and, although many of the officers were C.C.F.ers or C.C.F. supporters, they were not all what might be classified as "right-wing labour C.C.F. caucus" people. Old confrontations of personality and ideology often remained; they could and would flare up again to disrupt unity.

Perhaps the greatest threat to unity of action was the existence of different concepts of labour political action and the type of membership and organizational structure a labour-socialist party should have in the Canadian political environment. Although many points of view were expressed on these subjects before the end of 1943, their main impact and local significance in ridings such as Ontario was not realized until the 1945 elections.

At its fourth annual convention, the C.C.L. endorsed the C.C.F. as "the political arm of labor in Canada" and recommended to all its affiliated and chartered unions that they affiliate with the C.C.F.<sup>81</sup> It was a controversial issue, with left-wing opposition such as George Harris and the communists in the United Electrical Workers lining up against

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80. Continued from Page 348.

Executive Board Members: W.R. Cambers, President of U.E. Local 521. (Listed as a C.C.F.er in June 1944), Mrs. Margaret Henderson, President of the Ladies' Auxiliary, U.A.W.

Trustees: E.A. Jones, Paul Smith, Mrs. Mable Mayne.

Organization Committee: William Edwards, S.H. Atkinson, E.A. Jones.

Municipal Committee: Albert Elson (C.C.F. member), Mrs. Ethel Thomson, David Henderson.

Legislative Committee: Clifton Lang (C.C.F. member), James Corse, Edward Kitchen.

P.A.C., C.L.C. Papers M.J. Fenwick to N.S. Dowd, Jan. 13, 1944; The Oshaworker, Jan. 31, 1944; Private, Sargent Papers, C.C.F. Membership lists for 1943, 1944.

81. See: "Congress Endorses C.C.F.," New Commonwealth, Sept. 23, 1943; "Basis of Union Affiliation with C.C.F. Truly Democratic," New Commonwealth, Sept. 23, 1943; Horowitz, op.cit., pp. 66-84.

Eamon Park and C.H. Millard of the United Steel Workers on the grounds that affiliation was restricted because union representatives had to be members of the C.C.F. It was felt that there should be representation directly from the unions, not through the C.C.F. clubs, and that conditions covering the basis of affiliation should have been included in the resolution.<sup>82</sup>

Since many unions such as the U.A.W. had not formulated a definite policy for political action in the 1943 provincial election, it became necessary to reassess union positions in the light of the C.C.L. convention's decision. A meeting of U.A.W. District Council #26 in St. Catharines on October 16-17, 1943, requested George Burt to call a special convention "to discuss and formulate Canadian regional policy on united political action." Until the convention had formulated a uniform policy, all locals were urged not to take any action on political affiliation. A five-man political action committee was set up to report to the convention on the question of affiliation with the C.C.F. "and other matters relevant to political action."<sup>83</sup>

George Burt received the authority of the U.A.W. International Executive Board to call a special delegate convention. It was to be a strictly regulated affair and with delegates having the same power to act on behalf of their locals as at regular International conventions. Decisions made were to be final and binding on all union locals.<sup>84</sup> The convention

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82. See Seaborn, op.cit., pp. 33-35; Horowitz, op.cit., p. 74.

83. United Automobile Worker, Nov. 1, 1943; Nov. 15, 1943.

84. U.A.W., Toronto Sub-Regional Office Papers, George Burt to All Canadian U.A.W.-C.I.O. Local Unions, Oct. 28, 1943; All locals would be entitled to the same number of votes and delegates allowed at the last U.A.W. Buffalo convention. United Automobile Worker, Nov. 15, 1943.

was to be held in Windsor on November 26, and the five members of the Political Action Committee were to meet prior to the convention "to study complete question of united political action by Region 7, U.A.W.-C.I.O., with the purpose of compiling recommendations relative to such action and preparing a brief on the matter" to be placed before the convention for discussion.<sup>85</sup>

E.B. Joliffe had been invited to address the delegates and answer questions because "This is a provincial matter and any comments or commitments on affiliation should come from the provincial leader and not from some one the C.C.F. 'brain-trust' might select."<sup>86</sup> Although ill from the flu, Joliffe attended the convention and spoke. He stressed the need in Ontario of a broadly based farmer-labour party but came out strongly against unity with the L.P.P. During the question period a number of inquiries centred on the exact nature of the relationship the U.A.W. would have to the C.C.F. in the proposed affiliation. On the topic of candidate selection Joliffe stated: "As the thing stands now, a candidate would have to be either a full fledged member of the C.C.F. or a member of a union affiliated with the C.C.F. who had registered as a C.C.F. member."<sup>87</sup> This requirement of registration as a C.C.F. member would also apply to union delegates to C.C.F. decision-making bodies. In this respect there was a crucial difference between the C.C.F. and the British Labour Party which did not require its delegates to be party members.<sup>88</sup> In his address,

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85. U.A.W., Toronto Sub-Regional Office Collection, George Burt to All Canadian U.A.W.-C.I.O. Local Unions, Oct. 28, 1943.

86. U.A.W., Toronto Sub-Regional Office Collection, J.A. Taylor to George Burt, Oct. 18, 1943.

87. U.A.W., Shultz Papers, Proceedings of Special U.A.W.-C.I.O. convention on "Political Action," November 28th & 29th, 1943.

88. Ibid.



Joliffe continued to stress the one delegate, one vote principle and the individual membership basis of the C.C.F. On the whole, however, he did not seem to convince the delegates that they would have adequate voice and representation in the C.C.F.

When the five-man Political Action Committee reported they presented both a majority and a minority report. The minority report recommended

1. That we do not affiliate to the C.C.F. Party.
2. That we do not affiliate to any political party or Federation until each local union in Region #7 of the U.A.W.-C.I.O. has taken a referendum vote of its entire membership in good standing.

The minority report differed from the majority report only by the addition of the suggestion for a referendum. On a motion by Albert Elson, both reports were tabled and a Resolutions Committee elected<sup>89</sup> which in turn introduced a unanimous report.<sup>90</sup> During the discussion of the resolution, delegate Arnold of Local 200 observed.

it seems to me all we are doing here...is having a duel between three political parties. After all our organizations are composed of at least five political parties, and we are in a position now where we are not taking care of the other two political parties. That is as far as our locals are concerned. We have on our left, the Labour Progressive Party, wanting to affiliate with the C.C.F. with certain stipulations.

On the other hand we have the C.C.F. party fighting for affiliation

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89. Ibid., Members elected to the Resolutions Committee were: Townsley (200), Morillo (195), Carr (200), England (200), Hedrick (195), Poole (195), Baker (200). Those defeated were: Elson (222), White (200), Parent (195), Shultz (222), Muir (200), Campbell (275), Smith (222), Dupuis (195), Herage (200), Thomson (222).

90. Ibid. The report included the following resolution:

Whereas: We in the U.A.W.-C.I.O. realize the need for unity in our local unions, and

Whereas: We at this time of the open shop in Canada, have one of the biggest battles in organizing the unorganized;

Therefore be it resolved:

That we, as trade unionists, cannot afford to disrupt our trade union policy by affiliating to the C.C.F. or any other political party.

without any stipulation being brought into the picture. Then you have your labour group, who want to go straight labour.

The debate by the supporters of the various factions continued until George Burt made a positive contribution. He opposed the report, not because of the sentiments it expressed but because he did not think the union delegates were giving leadership to their members. In his opinion the membership was clamouring for political action and as leaders the delegates should give them more than a three paragraph report. He did not agree with the C.C.F. on the basis of affiliation it offered but in calling for a positive step, he asked the council to pass a resolution on the establishment of Political Action Committees in all local unions. After further discussion the Resolutions Committee met again and introduced the following resolution which was adopted by the fifty-two delegates, thus ending the two-day convention.

Whereas: Realizing that in order to defend our economic interests, it is necessary for us as genuine trade unionists to influence civic, provincial, and federal elections; and

Whereas: We in the U.A.W.-C.I.O. realize the need for unity in our local unions; and

Whereas: We at this time of the open shop in Canada, have, as our main task, that of organizing the unorganized; and

Whereas: We need an educational program in our local unions, as a large percentage of our membership has not had enough experience in either union or political action;

Therefore Be It Resolved: That we, as trade unionists, cannot afford to disrupt our trade union policy by affiliating to any political party at this time;

Be It Further Resolved: That the local unions set up labour political action committees, according to U.A.W. Convention basis, to educate their membership on the urgency of political action in the trade union movement.<sup>91</sup>

The text of the resolution had adequately expressed the concern of many delegates and if criticized it was usually because it was not positive enough. The C.C.F.-L.P.P. differences did enter the discussions

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91. Ibid.; United Automobile Worker, Dec. 1, 1943.

but were secondary. Objections to affiliation with the C.C.F. were not always to the principle but rather to the conditions of affiliation. Many of the unionists were critical of the C.C.F. because the union as such would only have what they considered a very limited voice in party decisions. These people were able to support their suspicions by noting that the C.C.F. had not adequately consulted the trade unions about selecting candidates in the previous provincial election. As George Burt later wrote of the 1943 election, "Our people ran on the C.C.F. ticket and while at that time we supported the C.C.F. we thought that they would co-operate with us and allow us to select our own members to run for position in the legislature with support of the Party. However, the C.C.F. did not agree to this but we supported them anyhow...."<sup>92</sup>

The C.C.F. policy was seen as narrow and many leaders in the U.A.W. feared that the C.C.F. was trying to gain control of the union.<sup>93</sup> It was this fear of C.C.F. domination that led many in the U.A.W. to call for a change in the C.C.F. constitution with regard to affiliation so as to permit unrestricted representation. C.C.F. leaders objected to such a move, fearing that the communist element in the unions would use it to "bore from within" and secure positions in the C.C.F.<sup>94</sup> However, U.A.W. leaders

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92. U.A.W., Toronto Sub-Regional Office Papers, George Burt to R.J. Thomas, Apr. 3, 1945.

93. Seaborn, op.cit., p. 37.

94. The Globe and Mail, Dec. 10, 1943; It should be noted that there were important divisions within the C.C.F. among academics, professional people, middle class members and working class trade unionists. See Armstrong, op.cit., pp. 57-69, and Kenneth McNaught, "Frank Underhill: A Personal Interpretation," Queen's Quarterly, Vol. LXXIX, No. 2 (Summer, 1972), p. 134. George Grube, in writing to a friend, listed two factions. One he named as the "Lawrence-Grube-Leavens-Madill group" which met with "hostility from the other" group. This second group consisted of "Millard, Dowling, Sedgwick, Mitchell, and to a large extent Joliffe" who "want to

also feared C.C.F.ers "boring from within." At the 1943 U.A.W. International Convention, George Burt had found a Reutherite and C.C.F.er, Albert Elson, President of U.A.W. Local 222, running against him for the position of Director. In addition, many of the delegates to the special convention in November, had also found C.C.F.ers running against them for their positions in their local unions. This fact as much as anything helped to contribute to the rejection of the idea of affiliating to the C.C.F.<sup>95</sup>

Unlike the heavily politicized U.S.W., so largely dominated by C.H. Millard for whom politics came first, the U.A.W. was decentralized; no one man or small group dominated the union, and under George Burt's leadership union affairs were placed before politics.<sup>96</sup> This not only accounts for the decisions the union often made but also helps to account

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94. Continued from Page 354.

get the unions in at almost any price--and to secure a large T.U. membership irrespective of their endorsement or otherwise of our program. We, on the other hand, believe that attitude to be dangerous and we welcome unions, but not at any price--especially as the trade union movement is not united and that, if we are not careful, every trade union squabble will tear the party apart. Also, though we definitely do want the unions in, we do not want to become a mere trade union party." Q.U.A., Grube Papers, George Grube to Frank, (n.d. Internal evidence indicates that the date is in the early 1940's). On the labour side, C.H. Millard, although he rose to important positions such as the Presidency of the Ontario C.C.F., thought that he did not have the complete support of the party leaders who had come into the movement as academics. The intellectuals used people like Woodsworth to prove that the movement did not begin with the trade unions. These members feared the unions because they believed that the unions would take over in their new found strength, both numerically and financially. Interview with C.H. Millard.

95. Interview with G. Burt.

96. Ibid; In 1940, Murray Cotterill wrote of Millard, "...he has never lost sight of his earlier socialist convictions. He still prefers to be known as a socialist who has gone into the union movement rather than a unionist who has gone into the socialist movement. ...Millard blithely gallops into all sorts of places where other union angels fear to tread. ...He firmly believes that, before long, all the unions in Canada will be taking political action through the C.C.F. and the urban C.C.F.ers will be taking economic action through the unions." Cotterill, op.cit., p. 83.

for the unique position it held in appearing to be neither entirely in the Communist nor the C.C.F. camp, yet at times supporting one or the other on certain matters. This was a crucial fact of union policy which affected all locals, including Local 222 in Oshawa. Therefore, since Oshawa and district included not only a powerful U.A.W. local but significant U.S.W. and other locals influenced by the "Millard labour-C.C.F. political machine," the local labour political scene could hardly be considered homogeneous. Indeed, it would be many years, and in some cases not until the formation of the New Democratic Party, before some of the old organizational and political problems would be solved.<sup>97</sup>

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97. According to George Burt the C.C.F. in Oshawa was a small tightly knit group and when he had been in Oshawa he found that he could not break into the C.C.F.'s inner circle. He claimed that this characteristic of exclusiveness also existed at the higher inner circles of the party and it was finally only broken by many labour leaders like himself when the N.D.P. was formed. Interview with G. Burt.

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One of the most important sources of information for this thesis was The Oshawa Daily Times. Unfortunately, during the course of my research, a fire at the Times' offices destroyed most of the only existing copies of the newspaper. Some damaged copies did survive but were in such a condition that they would have to be microfilmed in order to be of any possible use. This situation accounts for my limited references to this source after September, 1937. There were two other papers in Oshawa during the 1930's, The Oshawa Courier (1933-1939 + ?) and The Oshawa Free Press (1935-1939 + ?), but all efforts to find any remaining copies of these papers met with no success. Therefore, for the period from September, 1937 to the end of 1943, references to newspapers are from sources that are incomplete and often have a strong bias. The major sources for this "dark" period were the Oshawa Labor Leader (Apr., 1938 to Aug., 1938) and The Oshawa Labor Press (Aug., 1938 to Mar., 1941). In order to attempt to verify information and fill in the remaining gaps, it was necessary to rely on interviews, manuscript material, and brief references to Oshawa in the labour and leftist papers and in the Toronto daily press. Of particular value was the indexed microfilmed copy of Ontario Press Clippings kept by the Ontario Legislature. This excellent source did contain valuable clippings from The Times-Gazette. Other newspapers referred to in the Ontario Press Clippings include: The Evening Telegram, The Toronto Daily Star, The Globe and Mail, The St. Thomas Times-Journal, The Windsor Daily Star, and The Citizen (Ottawa).

Publication of The Oshaworker began in 1943 but existing copies only begin in January, 1944. The existence of a continuous run of The Oshaworker after 1944, of damaged copies of The Times-Gazette for 1944, 1945, and complete copies of the paper thereafter, as well as a complete

set of minutes of the Oshawa and District Labour Council in the C.L.C.

Papers, means that the closing date of this thesis marks the point where there is a vast improvement in source material on labour and politics in Oshawa.



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## APPENDIX A

A HISTORICAL LIST OF LABOUR UNIONS IN OSHAWA UP TO 1940Knights of Labour

Local Assembly 2355, "mixed" (all kinds of workers). Organized in November 1882 but lapsed in July 1884. It was reorganized the next month and lasted until at least 1887.

Local Assembly 4279, Iron Moulders. It existed from October 1885 until at least 1887.

Local Assembly 4428, Cedar Dale. It started in October 1885 as an agricultural implement workers' assembly, but later became "mixed." It lasted until at least 1889.<sup>1</sup>

There seems to be some conflicting evidence about these local assemblies. According to Eugene Forsey, the historian of the nineteenth century Canadian labour movement: "L.A. 4279, Iron Moulders...was certainly in existence as late as March 11, 1887. Indeed, it may have been in existence late in 1889, for the Ontario Bureau of Industry's Report for that year says that there was in Oshawa, at that time, an L.A. 4279 (Cedar Dale) mixed Assembly, but the Knights' official journal says the Cedar Dale L.A. was numbered 4428, was made up of agricultural implement workers and was organized in October 1885; and this appears in the Proceedings of the General Assembly of the Knights for 1886. The Bureau of Industry's Report for 1886 says there were two Local Assemblies in Oshawa, which may include the Cedar Dale 4428; the 1887 Report says three Assemblies (Moulders, Mixed and Steel); and the Report for 1888 says there were four altogether (this may, again, have included Cedar Dale 4428). There was something in the way of a Local Assembly still in Oshawa March 21, 1889, for the Knights' official journal says so. This was probably L.A. 4279. In 1889, the Ontario Bureau of Industry's Report mentions L.A.'s 2365 and 4279; 2365 is probably a misprint for 2355.

"It seems likely that in fact in 1886 there were the two actual Oshawa L.A.'s 2355 and 4279, as well as the Cedar Dale, 4428."<sup>2</sup>

Early Trade Unions

International Moulders' Union of North America, Local 136. It was organized in 1866 and lasted until April 1870. It was reorganized in February 1872 (or 1873?) and suspended in March 1896. It was reorganized in January 1900 and suspended in July 1926.

Coopers (international). There are references to it for May 1873 and January 1876. When it started and how long it lasted is unknown.

Cremakers, Local 67: January 23, 1901 - 1903.

Amalgamated International Woodworkers' Union, No. 148; formed February 19, 1902 - dissolved February 1905.

Carriage and Wagon Workers' Union, No. 99: formed May 9, 1903 - dissolved ?

Piano and Organ Workers' Union, No. 48: formed July 21, 1903 - dissolved April 1904.

Federal Labour Union: listed in April 1904.

International Piano, Organ and Musical Instrument Workers' Union, No. 23: formed May 5, 1906 - 1907 (+?)

Pattern Makers League of North America: formed in 1908 - 1913.



International Union of Steam Engineers, No. 711: formed December 19, 1901 - 1911 (+?).

United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners, No. 1,279: formed 1910 - 1911 (+?).

3

Labour Unions in Oshawa from 1911 to 1940 According to the Annual Reports on Labour Organization In Canada.

Year	Union and Dates of Existence
1911	Moulders' Union of North America, No. 136, International. (+) 1911 - 1925 (+). Pattern Makers' League of North America. (+) 1911 - 1913.
1913	Bricklayers, Masons and Plasterers' International Union, No. 20. 1913-1932. Carpenters and Joiners, No. 2627, United Bros. of (Amalgamated Section). 1913 - 1915.
1914	Maintenance of Way Employees, No. 20, Inter. Bros. of. 1914 - 1920.
1916	Machinists, No. 731, International Association of. 1916 - 1920.
1917	Painters, Decorators and Paperhangers of America, No. 644, Brotherhood of. 1917 - 1929.
1919	Carpenters and Joiners, No. 2209, United Brotherhood of. 1919 - 1923. Railroad Stationmen and Railroad Employees Alliance, No. 142, International Brotherhood of. 1919.
1920	Musicians, No. 503, American Federation of. 1920 - 1925.
1921	Letter Carriers, No. 53, Federated Association of. 1921 - 1940 (+).
1925	Postal Clerks' Association, Dominion. 1925 - 1927.
1926	Fire Fighters, No. 31, Provincial Federation of Ontario. 1926 - 1936.
1927	Carpenters and Joiners, No. 1385, United Brotherhood of. 1927 - 1930. Carpenters of Canada, Amalgamated. 1927 - 1929.
1928	Auto Workers' Industrial Union of Canada, No. 2. 1928. Federal Labour Union, No. 18011 (A.F. of L.). 1928. Postal Employees of Canada, United. 1928 - 1940 (+). Railroad Employees, No. 50, Canadian Brotherhood of. 1928 - 1930.
1929	Machinists, No. 587, International Association of. 1929.
1936	Shoe Workers' Union and Allied Crafts, No. 11, Canadian. 1936 - 1937.
1937	Automobile Workers of America, No. 222, International Union United. 1937 - 1940 (+). Bakers and Dairymen's Industrial Union (A.C.C.L.). 1937 - 1940. Carpenters and Joiners, No. 1951, United Brotherhood of. 1937 - 1940 (+). Fire Fighters, No. 465, International Association of. 1937 - 1940 (+). Iron, Steel and Tin Workers, No. 1500, Amalgamated Association of. 1937. Iron, Steel and Tin Workers, No. 1817, Amalgamated Association of. 1937 - 1940. Changed to Steel Workers Organizing Committee, No. 1817 in 1940. (+). Railway Employees, No. 258, Canadian Brotherhood of. 1937 - 1938.
1938	Typographical Union, No. 969, International. 1937 - 1940 (+). Civic Employees' Union (A.C.C.L.). 1938 - 1940.

- Hotel and Restaurant Employees' International Alliance and Bartenders' International League of America, No. 506, 1938 - 1940.  
 1939 Printing Pressmen and Assistants' Union, No. 332, International. 1939 - 1940 (+).  
 1940 Fur and Leather Workers' Union, No. 205, International. 1940 (+).  
 Railway and Motor Coach Employees of America, No. 1255. Amalgamated Association of Street, Electric. 1940 (+).

Number of Unions and their Membership in Oshawa 1911 - 1940 according to Annual Reports on Labour Organization in Canada.

Year	Number of local unions existing	Number of local unions reporting membership	Total membership reported
1911	2	2	22
1912	4	2	44
1913	4	2	44
1914	4	3	70
1915	4	2	39
1916	4	2	42
1917	5	1	15
1918	5	2	48
1919	7	3	284
1920	7	3	182
1921	6	3	60
1922	6	4	102
1923	6	4	106
1924	5	3	85
1925	6	3	61
1926	5	3	35
1927	6	3	114
1928	9	5	537
1929	9	6	119
1930	6	6	105
1931	4	3	56
1932	4	3	53
1933	3	3	43
1934	3	3	44
1935	3	3	44
1936	4	4	340
1937	11	10	4,877
1938	11	11	4,317
1939	11	11	3,417
1940	13	13	3,704

SOURCES: 1. Interview with Dr. Eugene A. Forsey.

2. Voice of Labour, Oshawa, Oshawa and District Labour Council, 1969, p. 44. This publication contains a letter by Eugene Forsey about the early labour movement in Oshawa.

3. Interview with Dr. Eugene A. Forsey.; Canada, Department of Labour, The Labour Gazette Ottawa, The King's Printer, Vol. I (1900/1901)-Vol. XII (1911/1912).

4. Canada, Department of Labour, Annual Report on Labour Organization in Canada, 1911 - 1940, Ottawa, The King's Printer, 1912 - 1941.

It should be noted that information on unions published by the Department of Labour may contain inaccuracies because the department depended on information submitted by local unions.

## APPENDIX B

DETAILED RESULTS OF PROVINCIAL AND FEDERAL ELECTIONS BETWEEN 1928 AND 1943  
IN OSHAWA AND DISTRICT

(a.) Results of Provincial Elections in Ontario South/Ontario Riding.

Location	Number of Votes						
	Liberal		C.C.F.				
	W.E.N.	W.E.N.	G.D.	J.C.	A.	F.M.	A.
	Sinclair	Sinclair	Conant	Anderson	Glen	Dafoe	Williams
	1929	1934	1937	1943	1934	1937	1943
Oshawa	4,396	5,529	4,622	2,387	1,585	3,474	5,380
East Whitby	1,086	1,105	960	551	407	731	1,207
Whitby Tp.	723	747	610	343	48	45	218
Whitby Town	900	956	937	566	85	107	430
Pickering Tp.	1,389	1,633	1,422	981	133	86	920
South Reach Tp.	832	-	-	-	-	-	-
Port Perry	339	377	386	206	23	23	113
Scugoy Tp.	126	130	109	63	30	25	48
Reach Tp.	-	930	768	377	64	99	212
Scugoy Indian Reserve	-	-	3	-	-	2	-
Service Vote	-	-	-	-	-	-	217
Advance Poll	-	-	17	-	-	6	-
Total Vote	9,791	11,409	9,834	5,575	2,375	4,598	8,745

Location	Number of Votes				
	Conservative		Socialist-Labour		
	F.L.	E.	G.L.	G.	E.G.
	Mason	Marks	Bird	Hart	Forest
	1929	1934	1937	1943	1937
Oshawa	4,573	3,064	3,697	2,337	49
East Whitby	1,018	670	771	549	7
Whitby Tp.	391	331	479	348	2
Whitby Town	876	718	860	539	10
Pickering Tp.	716	809	1,068	973	5
South Reach Tp.	417	-	-	-	-
Port Perry	325	296	330	259	0
Scugoy Tp.	92	66	73	48	1
Reach Tp.	-	409	481	344	5
Scugoy Indian Reserve	-	-	4	-	-
Service Vote	-	-	-	-	-
Advance Poll	-	-	12	-	0
Total Vote	8,408	6,363	7,775	5,525	79

SOURCE: Ontario, The Legislative Assembly, Returns from the General Election 1929, 1934, 1937, 1943. Sessional Paper No. 3, 1930; No. 25, 1935; No. 25, 1938; No. 40, 1945, Toronto, The King's Printer; In 1933 the constituency of Ontario South became the constituency of Ontario with boundaries unchanged. Roderick Lewis, compiler, A Statistical History of All the Electoral Districts of the Province of Ontario Since 1837, Toronto, The Queen's Printer, (196?), p. 184.

## (b.) Results of Federal Elections in Ontario Riding.

Location	Number of Votes							
	Liberal			Conservative			C.C.F. Reconstructionist	
	W.H. Moore 1930	W.H. Moore 1935	W.H. Moore 1940	T.E. Kaiser 1930	A.C. Hall 1935	H.A. Newman 1940	W.E. Noble 1935	R.M. Holtby 1935
Oshawa	4,959	5,201	6,741	4,991	4,055	4,084	1,230	519
East Whitby	1,181	1,094	1,230	1,130	732	869	262	123
Whitby Tp.	571	451	577	570	405	418	35	175
Whitby Town	878	1,008	1,146	907	608	737	83	86
Pickering Tp.	1,386	1,409	1,401	985	768	891	92	171
Reach Tp.	704	661	550	581	377	366	108	205
Port Perry	326	299	364	381	306	304	17	96
Scugoy Tp.	111	103	65	101	49	43	20	37
Military Vote	-	-	102	-	-	202	-	-
Total Vote	10,116	10,228	12,176	9,646	7,300	7,914	1,847	1,412

SOURCE: Canada, Parliament of Canada, Annual Departmental Reports. Report of the Chief Electoral Officer 1930, 1935, 1940, Ottawa, The King's Printer, 1931, 1936, 1941.

## APPENDIX C

COPY OF AGREEMENT BETWEEN GENERAL MOTORS OF CANADA  
AND ITS EMPLOYEES AT OSHAWA, APRIL, 1937

MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT entered into this day between

GENERAL MOTORS OF CANADA, hereinafter  
referred to as The Company

-and-

The Employees of the Company at Oshawa,  
hereinafter referred to as The Employees,

1. Hours of Work

The hours of work of employees shall be forty-four (44) hours per week, composed of nine (9) hours per day of the first four (4) days of the week and eight (8) hours on Friday. With the exception of maintenance men, a list of whom will later to agreed upon between the employees and the Company, and with the exception of the service parts department employees, all overtime shall be paid for at the rate of time and one-half. The question of overtime work of maintenance men so listed to be later dealt with between shop committee and management.

2. Wages

(a) Wages of female group bonus workers shall be increased by five cents per hour on base rate.

(b) Wages of all day workers now being paid fifty-five cents per hour or under shall be increased by seven cents per hour.

(c) Wages of all day workers now receiving over fifty-five cents per hour shall be increased by five cents per hour.

The question of a suitable minimum wage to be later discussed and negotiated by shop committee and management.

3. Seniority

Lay-Off, Transfer and Rehiring Procedure.

Employees shall be regarded as temporary employees for the first six months of their employment. There shall be no responsibility for the reemployment of temporary employees if they are discharged or laid off during this period.

After six months continuous employment, the names of such employees shall then be placed on the seniority list for their respective departments or occupational groups, in order of date of hiring. In any department in which both men and women are employed they should be divided into separate non-interchangeable occupational groups. Seniority shall start from the time of hiring and shall be by departments, or non-interchangeable occupa-

tional groups within departments by agreement, except where changes in methods, products, or policies would otherwise require the permanent laying off of employees, in which case seniority shall become plant-wide for the employees involved and they shall be transferred to other departments on work they are capable of doing and at the standard rate for such work. Up-to-date seniority lists for each department or occupational group shall be maintained by the supervisor of such department or group and shall be available to any affected employee.

When an employee is transferred from one department or occupational group to another for any reason, there shall be no loss of seniority. However, in case of temporary transfers not exceeding sixty days, an employee will retain his seniority in the Department or occupational group from which he was transferred and not in the new department.

Twelve (12) consecutive months of unemployment or a voluntary quit or discharge breaks seniority.

If an employee is notified to report for work and does not report within one day, or give a satisfactory explanation for not reporting, he shall be considered as having voluntarily quit.

#### 4. Grievance Procedure

(a) The Management of the Oshawa Factory recognizes a Shop Committee consisting of nine members who shall be variously elected from their fellow employees who are members of the local union. The Factory Manager shall be advised of the personnel of the Shop Committee and any changes made from time to time.

(b) Any employee having a grievance in connection with his work, or any group of employees having a joint grievance in connection with their work, should first take up the matter with the Foreman of the Department. The Foreman will attempt to make a satisfactory settlement.

(c) If the employee or group of employees is not satisfied with the Foreman's decision they may then take it up with the Superintendent or such convenient higher authority. If further action is desired, they may refer the case in writing to be considered by a meeting of the Shop Committee. The members of the Shop Committee may, upon receipt of such written request, investigate the circumstances of the complaint.

(d) If the Committee is unable to adjust the grievance the matter will then be taken up with the Factory Manager or such higher authority as in the opinion of the Committee is deemed necessary to deal with the case.

(e) Any cases not satisfactorily settled between the Shop Committee and the Factory Manager may be referred by a delegation from the Committee to the highest officers of the Company, when, if the matter is of such importance that it still remains unsettled, the case may be referred to an impartial umpire by mutual agreement of both parties.

#### 5. Rest Period

It is agreed that the employees shall be allowed a five minute rest period after the first two hours in the morning and after the first two hours in the afternoon.

6. Pay Day

Commencing May 7th all employees shall be paid every other Friday.

7. Production Basis

Beginning the production season of 1938 models, the objective of 140 will be reduced to 120, thereby increasing the base hiring rate in proportion.

The Company will co-operate to bring it down to one hundred per cent.

8. No Discrimination Clause

Both parties agree that no discrimination of any sort will be practised either by the Company or the employees, by reason of any activity, past or future, of any employee with, or in respect to, trade union activity or trade union membership.

Neither the company nor the employees shall intimidate employees either against or in favour of trade union membership.

This agreement shall continue in force until and so long as and concurrent with the agreement between General Motors Corporation in the United States, dated February 11th, and the United Automobile Workers of America.

This agreement covering the Oshawa Factory of the company is signed by the union employees hereunder who signed on behalf of themselves and their successors in office representing the employees of the company who are members of the local union.

C.H. Millard,  
President

H.J. Carmichael, Vice Pres.  
General Motors of Canada Ltd.

E.E. Bathe,  
Vice President

James B. Highfield  
General Factory Manager

G.H. Day  
Chairman

Witnessed: Louis Fine, Department of Labor, Ontario.



## APPENDIX D

THE OSHAWA LABOUR REPRESENTATION COMMITTEE'S PLATFORMS  
FOR THE 1939 MUNICIPAL ELECTIONSLABOR PROGRAM FOR CITY COUNCIL OF OSHAWA 1939

## Plank No. 1 - Municipal Fuel Yard Etc.

A thorough investigation of the possibility of establishing a Municipal coal and wood yard for the supplying of fuel for the Municipal buildings shall be carried out and if it is found possible such yard will be established during the coming year.

Clause b. - Labor promises the citizens of Oshawa a plebiscite vote as to whether a municipal bakery might not be established on the same basis as the municipal fuel yard, unless the bread prices are scaled, to meet the lowered costs of producing bread and eliminating some of the excessively high profits to bakery firms without a cut in wages or hours to employees.

## Plank No. 2 - Tax Arrears and Agreements.

A further drive for completion of tax agreements which were specifically instituted for the purpose of saving the home owners properties from tax scales shall be carried out. Three months further time approximately will be allowed all delinquent tax payers to complete these agreements and to begin functioning under their provisions. Those persons not attempting to assist themselves by use of the agreements will be understood to be willing to sacrifice their properties.

## Plank No. 3 - Further Provincial Subsidy.

Strong representations shall be made to the provincial government to grant a two mill subsidy to municipalities out of income, gas and beverage tax profits to relieve property taxation.

## Plank No. 4 - No Increase of City Debt.

No further unnecessary major expenditures shall be undertaken by Oshawa council until tax rates is materially lowered.

## Plank No. 5 - Supplementary Program, Unemployment, Housing and Relief.

Clause a. - The provincial and federal governments shall be urged to adopt work schemes in Oshawa to assist in solving the serious relief problem on a work and wages basis, and shall further urge that the relief food allowance be brought up to the standard set forth in the report of the special committee of the Ontario Medical Association under Tisall and issued for 1937, the recommendation therein being based on the figures given in the Labor Gazette for the increased cost of living.

Clause b. - The dominion government shall be urged to revise the present housing scheme to permit of the erection of workmen's homes at a cost in accordance with their incomes to cost approximately from \$1800 and up.

Clause c. - Efforts shall be made to induce the provincial and

federal governments to take over the entire cost of relief including the cost of administration and pending the complete responsibility being assumed by the government authorities, representation shall be made to the effect that Oshawa, be not called upon to bear more than 20 per cent of the total relief costs including administration.

Plank 2 - Re National Unemployment Insurance.

The federal government shall be urged by Oshawa's Labor representatives to set up a national unemployment insurance scheme on a 2-2-1 ratio basis; the government 2, employer 2, employee 1.

Plank 3 - Re Health Insurance.

The federal government shall be urged to adopt a national health insurance scheme patterned after that in effect in Great Britain.

LABOR PROGRAMME FOR OSHAWA BOARD OF EDUCATION, 1939

Plank 1 - Free School Books.

Labor members of the Board of Education, backed by the Labor men on the city council shall endeavor to have school books supplied free to all pupils in primary schools in Oshawa.

Plank 2 - Secondary Schools.

The provincial government shall be pressed to assume the cost of all secondary education and urged also to issue free books to all students attending.

Plank 3 - Use of Schools by the Ratepayers.

Schools shall be free for evening and holiday use by responsible parties whose object is cultural and educational uses and at actual cost for organizational or political meetings.

Plank 4 - Use of Schools on Election Days.

A school holiday shall be declared on election day to make the schools available for election purposes with a view to eliminating much of the present expense of an election.

Plank 5 - Value Revision of School Properties.

A revision of values of school properties shall be made with the object of effecting savings on insurance premiums.

LABOR PROGRAMME FOR PUBLIC UTILITIES, 1939

Plank 1 - Rates.

Labor representatives on the Utilities Commission shall work for

the equalization of Hydro rates to all users of electricity supplied by the Oshawa Utilities Commission.

Plank 2 - Store.

Labor shall work to establish a retail electrical store in the Utilities premises.

Plank 3 - No Free Ads. to Private Merchants.

Labor shall also endeavor to have no free show space given in our utilities premises to any merchant and no free advertising for any merchant in connection with Public Utilities Commission Advertising.

Plank 4 - Street Lighting.

Improved street lighting would be advocated when the commission equalizes hydro rates or lowering the costs per light to compare with that prevalent in other municipalities comparable in size to Oshawa which would result in the improvement desired without cost to the taxpayer.

Plank 5 - Deposits.

Labor members of the commission shall insist that at least 3 per cent per annum be allowed on all monies deposited with the commission for services.

Plank 6 - Discounts.

A change shall be made in the discount policy of the Utilities to the effect, that any householder using Hydro or Water and who has paid his last bill of the year before the discount date, shall have all discounts for the year allowed on his accounts, even though he may have lost one or more at time of due date, providing, his arrears have not extended beyond the end of the second discount period from the due date of account. Also that the rules and regulations of the Utilities relative to cutting off of services for non-payment be relaxed at such times as cause of dire need arises, such as illness and temporal financial stringencies due to sickness, deaths and lack of work at such times.

VITA

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