CAPITALISM UNCHALLENGED : A SKETCH OF CANADIAN COMMUNISM, 1939 - 1949

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ABSTRACT

The decade following the outbreak of war in September 1939 was a remarkable one for the Communist Party of Canada and its successor the Labor Progressive Party. It was a period during which the party experienced both unprecedented achievements and equally pronounced defeats. Although the party had been outlawed and forced underground as a result of its initial refusal to support the war, by the middle of the decade it had succeeded in establishing itself as a legitimate and influential political party. Prominent citizens and communists worked together in organizations like the National Council for Canadian-Soviet Friendship. Party members were elected to provincial governments in Ontario and Manitoba, the first communist member of parliament was elected when Fred Rose defeated David Lewis in a 1943 federal by-election and the party's strength in municipal governments in Toronto, Montreal and Winnipeg was formidable. Moreover, the party's authority within the trade union movement was substantial. Yet these successes proved to be fleeting. By 1949 leading members had deserted the party, its influence within the trade unions had been sharply reduced, its electoral standing had been damaged, the size of both its membership and press had severely diminished and Fred Rose had been arrested and convicted of espionage activity.

This thesis contends that the party throughout the decade, during the periods of prestige and those when it lacked

influence, concerned itself with issues and demands which left capitalism unchallenged. The party's principal concerns included its devotion to the defeat of fascism, its enthusiasm for unity among the allies, its proposed alliances with other parties, its post-war commitment to peace and Canadian independence and the performance of its elected politicians. The task of promoting a socialist transformation in Canada was ignored.

The party's pursuit of non-revolutionary goals was linked to its inability to distinguish between the interests of the international socialist movement, as embodied by the Soviet Union, and the particular requirements of the Canadian movement. This flawed conception of internationalism led to contortions and excesses which discredited the party and demoralized its supporters.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

A.C.C.L.	All-Canadian Congress of Labour
A.F.L.	American Federation of Labor
C.C.F.	Co-operative Commonwealth Federation
C.C.L.	Canadian Congress of Labour
C.I.	Communist International
C.I.O.	Committee for Industrial Organization
C.P.A.	Communist Political Association
C.P.C.	Communist Party of Canada
C.P.S.U.	Communist Party of the Soviet Union
L.P.P.	Labor Progressive Party
O.B.U.	One Big Union
R.C.M.P.	Royal Canadian Mounted Police
R.I.L.U.	Red International of Labour Unions
T.L.C.	Trades and Labor Congress
T.U.E.L.	Trade Union Educational League
U.L.F.T.A.	Ukrainian Labor-Farmer Temple Association
W.P.C.	Workers' Party of Canada
W.U.L.	Workers' Unity League

INTRODUCTION

This study attempts to sketch the development and the role of the Communist Party of Canada and its successor the Labor Progressive Party. Established in 1943 by leaders of the outlawed Communist Party, the L.P.P. soon grew to be the largest and most influential socialist organization, with the exception of the social democratic Co-operative Commonwealth Federation, in Canadian history. Confident and popular during the latter half of the second world war, by 1950 the L.P.P. had been reduced to an isolated sect, demoralized and confused. Despite its fleeting influence and a decade of intense activity no lasting gains were recorded for the socialist movement. Yet scholars have largely ignored both the party's remarkable rise and decline and the party's failure to create an enduring movement committed to a socialist transformation in Canada. Moreover, the few studies which do exist often approach the party with assumptions which tend to obscure rather than illuminate some of the party's principal features.

Three basic interpretations have dominated the discussion of Canadian communism. One view categorizes it as an alien philosophy inherently incompatible with Canadian society. This is the opinion for example of William Rodney who explains in his study of the party's first decade, Soldiers of the International, that fundamentally the failure of the C.P.C., "must be attributed to Marxist ideology which, based as it is upon class relationships,

proved to be an obsolete, ineffective tool."[1] Similarly, Gad Horowitz in Canadian Labour in Politics explains that, "Canadians do not speak the same language" as "other wordly" Marxists.[2] No less an authority than Donald Creighton has observed that, "Canadian history was a sadly imperfect vehicle for the exemplifications of the Marxian verities."[3]

Others rely on a conspiracy thesis. Among the more popular exponents of this theme is Pat Sullivan who assures his readers in Red Sails on the Great Lakes that:

> The Labor Progressive Party is not a political party in the popular acceptance of that term. It is not like the Liberal Party, the Conservative Party or the C.C.F., all of whose activities are limited to constitutional political endeavors. The Labor Progressive Party is composed of a group of people well trained in the science of preparing for revolution, who form part of a world wide intrigue to abolish free government....[4]

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[1]William Rodney, Soldiers of the International, (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1968) p. v.

[2]Gad Horowitz, Canadian Labour in Politics, (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1968) p. 24; cited by Jessie Lemisch, On Active Service in War and Peace, (Toronto, New Hogtown Press, 1975) p. 12.

[3]Donald Creighton, "Presidential Address," Canadian Historical Association Annual Report, 1957, p. 7, cited Lemisch p. 12.

[4]Pat Sullivan, Red Sails on the Great Lakes, (Toronto, MacMillan, 1955) p. vii.

Watson Kirkconnell repeats this charge in his, Seven Pillars of Freedom.[5] More significantly, Professor Avakumovic's study, The Communist Party in Canada, implicitly shares this view. Indispensible as the pioneering history of the party from its inception to the present, his treatment of the L.P.P., particularly his account of the Gouzenko spy trials in 1946, confirms his suggestion that communists are "unscrupulous schemers." In his view the espionage trials proved that, "What anti-Communists had always claimed that the Communists were doing and getting paid for, had actually taken place."[6]

A third view of the party is provided by histories and memoirs written by party functionaries. These "official" accounts tend to reduce and transform the history of the party into a series of consistent and unblemished victories. Invariably, these victories are presided over by an unerring leadership which resolutely defended and applied Marxist policies. For instance one party official, Stanley Ryerson claimed that:

> The Labor Progressive Party - is the living continuation in the conditions of today, of the spirit of struggle of the Reformers and Patriots of 1837, ... it is the Party of the

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[5]Kirkconnell's full title, Seven Pillars of Freedom: An Exposure of the Soviet World Conspiracy and its Fifth Column in Canada, (Toronto, Burns and MacEachern, 1955) succinctly expresses this theme. He views the L.P.P.'s moderation as a "masquerade ... in order to seduce the unwary." (p. viii)

[6]Ivan Avakumovic, The Communist Party in Canada, (Toronto, MacMillan, 1975) p. 173.

> bright future of the industrial workers and all who labor. It is typified by its leader, Tim Buck, the tested and devoted champion of the Canadian working people.[7]

These historians have overlooked a basic and outstanding feature of the C.P.C. - L.P.P. Despite its formal commitment, enshrined in its constitution, to scientific socialism, the party made few efforts to promote a socialist transformation in Canada. Both in substance and appearance the L.P.P. was hardly distinguishable from its social democratic counterpart, the C.C.F. Indeed, it was often less militant than the paternalistic and Fabian C.C.F. In short, both parties preferred to pursue immediate and realizable goals which in the L.P.P.'s case effectively excluded any conscious attempt to advance revolutionary, socialist aims. The party's complacent self-perception as the working class vanguard which "consistently" unfurled "the banner of socialism in our country"[8] is a myth. This study, based primarily on an examination of the party's newspapers, journals, pamphlets and convention proceedings will attempt to substantiate this assertion.

The party's activities were the result of complex and probably unavoidable factors. All socialist movements face one

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[7]Stanley Ryerson, A World To Win, (Toronto, Progress Books, 1946) p. 86. See also: Tim Buck, Thirty Years, (2nd. ed., Toronto, Progress Books, 1975); Tom McEwen, The Forge Glows Red, (Toronto, Progress Books, 1974); Oscar Ryan, Tim Buck: A Conscience For Canada, (Toronto, Progress Books, 1975), A. E. Smith, All My Life, (Toronto, Progress Books, 1949).

[8]Buck, Thirty Years, p. 7.

central problem. What activities do socialist revolutionaries engage in during non-revolutionary periods? How do they forge links between immediate and realizable gains and the ultimate and final goal, in other words how do they connect reform with revolution? In her famous polemic with Edward Bernstein, Rosa Luxemburg warned socialists that their movement was constantly threatened by, "two reefs: abandonment of the mass character or the abandonment of the final aim; the fall back into sectarianism or the fall into bourgeois reforms."[9] In the L.P.P.'s history both obstacles were present, it engaged in essentially pragmatic and reformist activities and it also lost its mass character.

This dilemma was particularly apparent during the 1940's when the prospect of a socialist revolution in Canada appeared to be slim. The observation of one historian about the American Communist Party, that it had relegated, "the need for a socialist revolution to the back rooms of party headquarters and the private lives of movement organizers,"[10] applied with equal truth to the Canadian party. The task of preparing Canadians for socialism was not renounced by the party, it was ignored. As one party leader conceded following the Stalin revelations in 1956, "We did not perform the

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[9]Rosa Luxemburg, Selected Political Writings, ed. Dick Howard, (New York, Monthly Review Press, 1971) p. 304.

[10]James Weinstein, Ambiguous Legacy, (New York, New Viewpoints, 1975) p. viii.

prime responsibility of a Marxist party - namely to work out our own Canadian path to socialism."[11]

This phenomenon was reinforced by the chief weakness of the party, its identification with and reliance upon the politics of the Soviet Union. There is no question that the enthusiasm of Canadian Marxists for the Bolshevik Revolution led to the creation of a dependent relationship. The process by which this natural solidarity and internationalism was distorted has been described by Jane Degras:

> Unable to establish their revolutionary reality in their own right, they (foreign communists) could assume a borrowed legitimacy by attaching themselves as willing and devoted auxilaries to a regime which seemed to embody their aspirations and could therefore command their loyalty.[12]

The L.P.P.'s consistent orientation to immediate and non-revolutionary goals was often encouraged by the activities of the C.P.S.U. and it is on this issue, loyalty to the Soviet Union, that the major distinction existed between the communist movement and the C.C.F.

This study has no pretensions to being a complete history. Several important areas are omitted. The fascinating

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[11] National Affairs Monthly, (hereafter referred to as N.A.M.) Vol. XIV, No. 1, January, 1957, p. 9.

[12] Jane Degras, The Communist International, (3 vols.; London, Oxford University Press, 1965) III, p. vi.

relationship between the trade union movement and the party has been discussed elsewhere.[13] Many of the internal party debates and conflicts will remain unrecorded until researchers are allowed access to the party's own records. Issues in the social history of the party have received only a cursory treatment. The geographical distribution of the party's forces, the composition of the party, the levels of consciousness within the party, the process of leadership selection, an examination of supporters outside the party, those who read its press and voted for its candidates are all inviting areas for future research. Biographies of the men and women in the party ought to replace the existing hagiographies. A more specialized examination of the party's electoral performance would also be welcome.

My account of the C.P.C. - L.P.P. is a sketch of ideological concessions and incredible compromises. Often, it is the story of damaging splits and expulsions. State repression was a constant feature, yet self-inflicted wounds were equally prevalent. Canadian communists had neither Bastilles to storm nor Winter Palaces to charge. Rather than a history of spectacular revolutionary upheavals the life of the party, particularly during the forties, involved the slow, steady, daily activities

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[13]See Irving Abella, Nationalism, Communism and Canadian Labour, (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1973); Walter Young, The Anatomy of a Party: The National C.C.F. (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1969) chapt. 9; Horwitz, chapt. 3; Avakumovic, p. 186-199.

of a group of militants unable to see that their performance was fundamentally little different from the social democrats whom they so frequentally criticized. Although the party enjoyed the genuine, if ineffective, commitment of thousands of people to creating a better world, it cannot be credited as one historian has done, with keeping, "Marxism alive in Canada, almost alone...."[14] On the contrary, Marxism and revolution (conspiratorial or otherwise) was valued less than the concrete reforms which the party pursued. This account is a history of day to day struggles in which no room was provided nor preparations made for a socialist future.

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[14]Norman Penner, "Canadian Communism As It Isn't," Canadian Forum, February, 1976, p. 33.

Chapter One

A SKETCH OF THE C.P.C. PRIOR TO 1940

The Communist Party of Canada began inauspiciously. Forced by repressive government legislation to meet secretly, the modest founding convention was held in a barn outside Guelph, Ontario in May, 1921. It was a belated birth as over three years had passed since the October Revolution and more than two since the founding of the Communist International. Only twenty-two delegates were present, none represented left-wing groups east of Montreal or west of Winnipeg, and among the delegates there was one police agent.

Unofficially, but in effect, the founding convention represented a merger of large sections of the Canadian socialist movement. The Bolshevik Revolution had inspired members of the Socialist Party of Canada, the Social Democratic Party and "practically all the members of the Socialist Party of North America,"[1] to join the new party. This was reflected in the composition of the first Political Bureau which consisted entirely of veterans of one of the three parties.

Although the party was rooted in the Canadian socialist

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[1] N.A.M., Vol. 3, No. 8, August, 1946, p. 24.

tradition, it was unmistakably different from its predecessors. The international contacts provided by the party's affiliation to the Comintern was one completely new factor. But a more significant distinction existed in the realm of ideology. From its inception the party was dominated by the conviction that association with the successful Bolsheviks was essential for the success of the Canadian revolution. Marxism was transformed into Marxism-Leninism. Fueled by the apparent stability of Canadian capitalism, the left's enthusiasm for and solidarity with the Soviet experience led to the understandable but simplistic perception of the triumphant Russian Revolution and confident International as a panacea. As Joseph Starobin put it, Canadian radicals, "were ripe for the hallucinatory non-sequitor that because the Revolution had succeeded in Russia its recipe must necessarily be applicable to all countries, and why not Canada.?"[2] This confidence and optimism was reflected in the first issue of The Communist which announced:

> Ours is an age of revolution versus imperialism. History is with us. Socialism is no longer the possession of a cloistered sect, nor a subject of parliamentary diplomacy. It is a bitter, relentless mass-struggle....[3]

The founding convention also made clear the party's unambiguously revolutionary intentions. As the first program

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[2]Joseph Starobin, "Origins of the Canadian Communist Party," Canadian Forum, Vol. 48 (1968) p. 202.

[3]Rodney, p. 39.

declared:

> ...the Communist Party of Canada (would) systematically and persistently propogate to the working class the idea of the inevitability of and necessity for violent revolution, and (would) prepare the working class for the destruction of the bourgeois state and the establishment of the proletarian dictatorship based upon Soviet power.[4]

However, the method of establishing a workers' state in Canada was clear to neither the C.P.C. leaders nor the International. As one party leader, Leslie Morris, later acknowledged, until 1929 the party's activities were generally confined to propaganda work.[5]

The celebrated question, "What is to be done?", was largely answered for the Canadian communists by focusing on trade union work. This orientation to the labour movement was not surprising as the bulk of the party's leadership were veteran trade unionists and both the Comintern and Lenin encouraged this policy. Although few of Lenin's writings were available to the early party, in 1921 the first of his works was published in Canada when the Vancouver Trades and Labour Council paper, the B. C. Federationist, printed a translation of Left-Wing Communism an Infantile Disorder. There could be

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[4]Ibid., p. 38.

[5]Leslie Morris, The Story of Tim Buck's Party, (Toronto, New Era Publishers, 1939) p. 18.

no doubt about the importance of trade union activity, for in it Lenin advised:

> It is necessary to be able to withstand all this (persecution), to agree to any and every sacrifice, and even if need be - to resort to all sorts of devices, manoeuvres and illegal methods, to evasion and subterfuge, in order to penetrate into the trade unions, to remain in them and to carry on Communist work in them at all costs.[6]

One of Lenin's main messages to the newly formed communist parties was clear; build support within the established trade unions. This excluded support for secessionist or syndicalist unions like the One Big Union movement. In February, 1922 a Comintern executive resolution confirmed this policy by instructing:

> In the forthcoming period the task of communists is to extend their influence in the old reformist unions ... and to carry out carefully and consistently the tactics of the united front in the trade union movement.[7]

In February, 1922 the outlawed party in an effort to establish a legal presence launched the Workers' Party of Canada. The outlawed Communist Party remained underground until the two wings merged and the C.P.C. publicly appeared in the spring of

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[6]V. Lenin, Left-Wing Communism an Infantile Disorder (New York, International Publishers, 1934) p. 38.

[7]Jane Degras, Vol. I, p. 321.

1924. The first W.P.C. convention endorsed the Comintern's labour policies by denouncing, on the one hand, the syndicalism of the O.B.U., and on the other, pledging itself to work within the conservative American Federation of Labour craft unions in the Trades and Labour Congress in Canada. Within the labour movement the party functioned under the auspices of the Trade Union Educational League which organized and co-ordinated left wing factions within the unions, promoted the amalgamation of craft unions into a single union for each industry, and where possible arranged for affiliation to the Profintern. The W.P.C. also emphasized the centrality of trade union work, which it felt could, "alone build up the necessary power leading to the establishment of the Workers' Republic."[8]

In fact, the party was involved so enthusiastically in the trade unions that confusion often existed about the distinction between party and union work. As MacDonald, the party secretary explained:

> It is clear that the work in the trade unions under the auspices of the T.U.E.L. has created the impression among certain sections that a left-wing block is all that is necessary. And that such a block ... eliminates the necessity for a political party....[9]

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[8]Rodney, p. 109.

[9]cited Penner, The Communist Party of Canada, (Unpublished draft of Ph. D. disseration, University of Toronto) p. 67.

Despite the zeal party members brought to the T.U.E.L., it met with little success. Its influence was limited to the coal miners of Alberta and Nova Scotia, and to sections of the lumber and needle trades industries. By 1927, the sole affiliate to the R.I.L.U. was the 3,000 member Lumber Workers Industrial Union.[10]

Party work within the T.U.E.L. continued until February, 1928 when the C.I. entered its "third period" and efforts to co-operate with union leaders like those of the A.F. of L. were abandoned. In the Comintern's view the years 1923-1927 had been a period of temporary capitalist stabilization which had now come to an end. The new period, as Bukharin reported to the sixth Comintern Congress, was one, "in which all imperialist antagonisms grow sharper ... and the contradictions in the capitalist countries grow more acute."[11] The approaching crisis in the capitalist west was accompanied by renewed revolutionary potential which could only be seized, the International's thesis continued, if the true role of social democracy was exposed. As the C.I. explained:

> From a shamefaced defence of capitalism, social-democracy has turned into its active supporter ...(Moreover) the ideology of class collaboration, which is the official social-democratic ideology has many points of contact with the ideology of fascism....[12]

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[10]Avakumovic, p. 49.

[11]Degras, Vol. II, p. 456.

[12]Ibid., p. 458.

The logic of the "class against class" thesis called for the termination of alliances with non-communists. Within the trade union movement the party was instructed to create new communist unions and to attempt to capture the leadership of existing ones.

In Canada the creation of new communist unions was delayed because of a major schism within the party. In November, 1928 the party's chairman, Maurice Spector, was expelled. Spector was one of the youngest and perhaps most talented of party leaders. At twenty-three he was elected to the party's first central executive committee and edited the first edition of The Communist. In the party's early nucleus, dominated by British born trade unionists like Tom Bell, Tim Buck, Jack Kavanagh, John MacDonald and the Buhays; Spector, born in the Ukraine and a law student at the University of Toronto when the party was formed was the exception. He quickly became the acknowledged theoretical leader of the party. But as early as 1923, following the defeat of the German Communist Party's October uprising, he began to harbor reservations about Comintern policy. Following Lenin's death and the struggle within the Bolshevik leadership these doubts gradually developed into open sympathy with Trotsky. Spector was instrumental in the C.P.C. taking a relatively independent stance following the indictment of Trotsky by Bukharin at the Fifth C.I. Plenum, when he wired the Canadian delegate:

> The executive committee is not convinced on

> the basis of evidence obtained, that the Comintern is actually menaced and confronted with a system constituting Trotskyism... We are of the opinion that the prestige of the Comintern has not been enhanced here by the bitterness of the anti-Trotsky attack.[13]

Despite a sharp reprimand from the Comintern's Organization Bureau, The Worker, which Spector edited, continued to run reviews and excerpts of Trotsky's writings until as late as December, 1925. As a delegate to the sixth Comintern Congress in the summer of 1928, he and the American party leader, James Cannon, came into possession of a translation of Trotsky's criticism of the C.I. The document consolidated the support of both men for Trotsky and plans were made to form opposition groups. Upon his return to Canada, Spector refused to endorse a campaign against Trotskyism and was subsequently expelled from the party.

However, his expulsion did not end the faction struggles in the party. Within months, the party secretary, John MacDonald, was labelled a "right deviationist" for holding two unorthodox views. One held that the Canadian economy could expand despite the crisis orientation of the Comintern's third period. The other emphasized the dangers to Canada from British and American imperialism, dangers which required alliances with Canada's national bourgeoisie. MacDonald's position resembled the "American exceptionalism" of U.S. communist and Bukharin supporter, Jay Lovestone. In July, 1929 MacDonald was given a

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[13]Rodney, p. 95.

leave of absence from the central committee and in May, 1930 he too, was expelled.

With the removal of Spector and MacDonald the party lost two prominent and capable leaders. Internationally, their removal reflected the triumph of Stalin over Trotsky and Bukharin and domestically signaled the ascent of leaders like Tim Buck, Stewart Smith and Sam Carr who unhesitatingly endorsed Stalin's leadership and promoted his particular interpretation of Marxism-Leninism. The loss extended beyond the personal lives of Spector and MacDonald, for the Canadian socialist movement now firmly committed to Stalinism had lost a slender opportunity to develop into a movement capable of both independence and imagination.

Tim Buck replaced MacDonald as party secretary. His succession marked the return of stability and enabled the party to begin implementing the trade union policy initiated by the Profintern. As the party executive reported to the sixth national convention in June, 1929:

> We accept entirely the line of the Communist International on our trade union work. Our objective in this field must be the building of a revolutionary Canadian centre, based on industrial unions and linked up with the world revolutionary trade union movement by affiliation to the R.I.L.U.[14]

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[14]Report of the 6th National Convention of the Communist Party of Canada, May 31-June 7, 1929, p. 16; cited Penner draft p. 74.

The International's instructions were completed in early 1930 as a new trade union centre, the Workers' Unity League was formed to compete with the T.L.C. and the A.C.C.L. Just as the T.U.E.L. had earlier been the focus of party activity, so now the W.U.L. assumed this centrality. As the central committee stated in February, 1931:

> The Plenum must once and for all dispel the misconception of many Comrades that the Workers' Unity League is only one of the various forms of trade union activity of the Party. It must be clearly understood that the W.U.L. is the centre of all revolutionary trade union and economic work of the Party and the left-wing.[15]

Led by Tom McEwen, a Scottish immigrant and a loyal and effective party organizer, the W.U.L. was far more successful than its predecessor. The league pioneered industrial unionism in the lumber, mining and textile industries and made important beginnings among rubber, steel and auto workers. Moreover, in another pioneering direction the league organized not only the unorganized but also the unemployed. Its efforts led to the formation of the Relief Camp Workers Union and the subsequent On to Ottawa Trek. Operating in a period when many felt that high unemployment precluded organizing new unions the W.U.L.

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[15]Report of the Enlarged Plenum of the C.P.C., February, 1931 p. 26; cited Penner draft p. 76.

membership grew to 40,000.[16] Yet during the same years, 1930-1935, the membership in the T.L.C. dropped from 138,887 in 1930 to 103,424 in 1934.[17] Tim Buck reported that of the 189 strikes in Canada during 1934, 109 were led by the W.U.L. and of these 89 were successful. Moreover, he claimed that, "the only strikes won by the workers during the crisis years were led by the W.U.L."[18] These successes were far more enduring than the depression. The Workers' Unity League's efforts helped establish industrial unionism in Canada and earned communist trade unionists respect and positions of authority. As Harold Logan observed, "it was communist leadership that gave the first fillip to industrial unionism...in Canada."[19]

Despite the W.U.L.'s claim to be a "revolutionary trade union centre," there was little evidence of revolutionary activity. Organizing the unorganized, fighting for better ways and working conditions were items the craft unions had previously fought for and which the C.I.O. would encourage in the future. While organizing the unemployed was innovative, it did not

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[16] McEwen, p. 149.

[17] Harold Logan, Trade Unions in Canada, (Toronto, Macmillan, 1948) p. 346.

[18] Buck, Thirty Years, p. 96.

[19] Logan, p. 341.

threaten the established order. Particular actions, like the Ottawa Trek, were militant but militancy is a matter of style not substance. Perhaps the only revolutionary aspect to the W.U.L. was its affiliation to the R.I.L.U. which had its roots in the October Revolution.

Just as the W.U.L.'s creation was inspired by the International's sixth congress, its dissolution was ordered by the seventh. The consolidation of Hitler's power in Germany, the growing fear of fascism and the threat of a war against the Soviet Union resulted in the adoption of the Popular Front policy at the Seventh Comintern congress in July-August, 1935. It was decided that in the future communists were to co-operate with all those non-communists who genuinely desired peace and the containment of fascism. This certainly applied to social democrats with whom communists would soon co-operate in the formation of Popular Front governments in France and Spain. Particular attention was paid to the need for trade union unity. Communist trade unions like the W.U.L. were regarded as obstacles to unity for they, in the C.I.'s view, "isolated the communists from the masses, leaving them to stew in their own juice."[20] Dimitrov, the architect of the united front policy, gave the main Congress report and explained how the new policy applied to the western trade unions:

In countries whose small Red trade unions exist,

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[20]Degras, Vol. III, p. 347.

> efforts must be made to secure their admission into the big reformist trade unions .... In the countries where big Red and reformist trade unions exist side by side, efforts must be made to secure their amalgamation .... It is the duty of communists to work actively in the reformist and united trade unions....[21]

The success of the W.U.L. notwithstanding, Dimitrov's position was explicit. The decisive factor in the activities of the C.P.C. was once again the C.I. By April, 1936 the league ceased to publish its paper, closed its offices and its affiliated unions made arrangements to enter the appropriate A.F. of L. unions. Shortly thereafter, many of the W.U.L. organizers began working for the embryonic C.I.O. The most prominent exception was the popular Nova Scotia miner's leader, J. B. MacLachlin who refused to lead his Mine Workers' Union of Canada back into John L. Lewis' U.M.W.A.

From the declaration of the Popular Front tactic to the outbreak of the second world war, the party attempted to form alliances wherever it could. Herridge's New Democracy movement, the Social Credit party, Civil Liberties Unions and progressive church groups were all welcomed as allies provided they were hostile to fascism. A particular effort was made to co-operate with social democrats. The C.C.F. was no longer attacked in the party press, the hysterical warnings about the

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[21] Ibid., p. 365-366.

"left-wing of fascism" ceased, and in some cases the party withdrew candidates in order to facilitate the election of C.C.F. candidates and promote harmony between the two parties. The C.C.F. leaders however, unlike some of their European counterparts, were irrevocably opposed to any form of alliance. Co-operation was limited to the participation of individuals like T. C. Douglas and Frank Underhill in front organizations like the Canadian League for Peace and Democracy.

Perhaps the most memorable of the party's anti-fascist activities was its organization of the Canadian contingent in the International Brigades, the MacKenzie-Papineau Battalion. Over 1,200 party members and supporters fought to prevent Franco's victory, including the legendary Norman Bethune. Half of these volunteers were killed.[22]

Electoral politics was not a priority for the early party. As the founding convention made clear, "while the Communist Party of Canada makes its major campaigns and activities among the working class in their mass-struggles outside of the parliaments, it will participate in elections and election campaigns for revolutionary propaganda and agitation only."[23] During the twenties federal and provincial elections were rarely contested by official party candidates, although three

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[22]NAM, Vol. 3, No. 9, September, 1946, p. 281.

[23]Rodney, p. 38.

"Labor" candidates were elected to the governments of Alberta, Manitoba and Nova Scotia who subsequently joined the W.P.C.[24] The party fielded only eight candidates in the 1930 federal election and only thirteen in the 1935. None were elected. The party's breakthrough in provincial politics came in 1936 when the constituents of North Winnipeg elected the party's provincial secretary, J. Litterick.[25]

Municipally, the party's electoral efforts became more pronounced during the Popular Front years. However, as early as 1926 the party had elected North America's first communist alderman, W. N. Kolisnyk, in Winnipeg's Ward three. Other party candidates including Tim Buck were not as successful. It was not until the late thirties that the party began to develop substantial support in Toronto and Winnipeg's municipal elections.

The membership of the party during its first decade indicates both its weakness and isolation. As Buck recalled, the membership "fluctuated between a high of 5,000 and a low of 2,500. Most of the time it was not much more than 3,000."[26] The membership in 1929 was 2,876 while by 1931 it had declined, largely as a result of the struggles with Spector and MacDonald,

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[24] Avakumovic, p. 50.

[25] Ibid., p. 137.

[26] N.A.M. Vol. 3, No. 8, August, 1946, p. 277.

to the dismal figure of 1,385.[27] This meagre size was aggravated by an ethnic composition confined almost exclusively to Finns, Ukrainians and Jews. Ninety-five percent of the membership was estimated to belong to these three groups.[28] There were few Anglo-Saxons in the party and French Canadians were completely absent. As the Comintern complained, "The C.P.C. has done practically nothing to organize French Canadian workers ... who form the most exploited section of the Canadian working class."[29] As the thirties progressed the party was able to partially overcome this isolation. Its response to the depression and fascism brought thousands into the party. Shortly after the dissolution of the W.U.L. the party claimed to have 10,000 members.[30] And by early 1939, Leslie Morris estimated that the party's strength had increased to 16,000.[31]

The accomplishments of the party prior to the second war; its indisputable contribution to industrial unionism, the aid to the Spanish Republic, the foothold in electoral politics,

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[27]Avakumovic, p. 66.

[28]Letter, Political Secretarial E.C.C.I. to C.E.C., Communist Party of Canada, April 8, 1929, p. 7.

[29]Ibid., p. 5.

[30]Avakumovic, p. 115.

[31]Morris, p. 30.

the growth in membership, occurred despite consistent and often unrestrained repression. For much of the period the party was illegal and forced to operate surreptitiously. Frequently, it was plagued with police informers. Its literature was confiscated, meetings and demonstrations attacked, leaders arrested and foreign members threatened with deportation. In a profound understatement Professor Avakumovic remarked, "The size of the R.C.M.P. and its varied duties did not prevent it from following assiduously the activities of the Communist leaders and activitis."[32] More accurately, the R.C.M.P. and federal governments often demonstrated an almost pathological obsession with the left which resulted in state repression becoming a hallmark of communist history.

As soon as the impact of the October Revolution became apparent, repression began. As early as September, 1918 the Borden government banned several left-wing organizations. Acting on a report which warned, "Russians, Ukrainians and Finns who are employed in the mines, factories and other industries in Canada, are now being thoroughly saturated with the Socialistic doctrines which have been proclaimed by the Bolshevikii faction of Russia...,"[33] his government outlawed fourteen socialist organizations, prohibited and seized socialist literature and imposed severe penalties upon radicals caught with the illegal

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[32]Avakumovic, p. 15.

[33]Rodney, p. 18

items. In January 1919, the first attempt to form a Canadian communist organization, The Workers' International Revolutionary Party, was blocked by a police raid facilitated by an informer.[34] In the spring of the same year, Sir Thomas White, Borden's acting Prime Minister, was so alarmed that, "Bolshevism has made great progress among the workers and soldiers" in British Columbia, that he requested a British cruiser be sent to the coast as a "steadying influence."[35] And in a vain effort to stifle the popularization of Lenin's writings, the editor of the B. C. Federationist was arrested in 1921 for printing and selling a translation of Left-Wing Communism and Infantile Disorder.[36] Indeed, it was not until 1924 that the party felt it was safe to publically emerge.

The election of the R. B. Bennett government in 1930 was accompanied by a major assault on the party. This successful Tory businessman completely misunderstood the character of both the depression and the left. He was convinced that the protests sparked by the depression were ultimately, if not immediately, the responsibility of the C.P.C. Vowing to stamp out communism with the "iron heel of ruthlessness," he set the tone for five bitter years of government during which W.U.L. led

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[34]Avakumovic, p. 12.

[35]Rodney, p. 21.

[36]Ibid., p. 44.

strikes were vigorously fought,[37] section 98 of the criminal code was employed to outlaw the party and jail its leader, and the deportation act was used to threaten foreign born communists.[38]

Much of the anti-communist activity was centered in Toronto where the party's national headquarters were situated and where the police chief, Brigadier Draper, was an enthusiastic enemy of the party. Measures under his guidance included threatening to cancel the licenses of hall owners who rented their premises to the C.P.C., police charges on party rallies in Queen's Park, and a ruling that all public speeches in Toronto must be in English, thereby excluding the party's foreign speaking supporters. One meeting during which two of the party's Jewish leaders attempted to speak to their supporters in Yiddish was tear gassed.[39] Draper justified his actions as being necessary to, "protect good law-abiding citizens from this curse of Bolshevism."[40]

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[37]For more information about specific strikes see Irving Abella, On Strike (Toronto, James Lewis and Samuel, 1974).

[38]For a detailed discussion see J. Petryshyn, "R. B. Bennett and the Communists: 1930-1935," Journal of Canadian Studies, Vol. 9, No. 4 (1974) p. 43-54.

[39]McEwen, p. 180.

[40]Toronto Star, August 22, 1939, cited by M. Pelt, The Communist Party of Canada 1929-1942, (Unpublished M.A. Thesis, University of Toronto, 1964) p. 73.

The harassment of the party culminated on the evening of August 11, 1931 when police raided and vandalized the party's headquarters and the offices of the W.U.L. Eight party leaders including Tim Buck, Sam Carr and Tom McEwen were arrested and charged under Section 98 with being members and officers of an unlawful association. The Act defined an unlawful organization as one whose:

> professed purpose or one of whose professed purposes is to bring any governmental, industrial or economic change within Canada by use of force ... or which teaches, advocates, advises or defends the use of force ... in order to accomplish such change, or for any other purpose....[41]

It was no surprise that Buck and the others were convicted, for the Act, formulated as emergency legislation during the 1919 Winnipeg General Strike, was both vague and sweeping. As Frank Scott complained, "for permanent restriction of the rights of association, freedom of discussion, printing and distribution of literature, and for severity of punishment, (Section 98) is unequalled in the history of Canada."[42] The court felt that sufficient evidence existed in the declarations of the Comintern, to which the C.P.C. was affiliated and therefore responsible and in the testimony of an undercover agent, to sentence seven of

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[41] The King versus Buck and Others, published by direction of Hon. W. H. Price, Attorney General for Ontario, 1932, p. 1.

[42] Frank Scott, "Trial of the Toronto Communists," Queen's Quarterly, Vol. 39, (1932) p. 512.

the leaders to five year prison terms and the eighth to a two year term. The judgement effectively rescinded the legal status of the party which once again went underground. It was not until June 1936, after William Lyon MacKenzie King had replaced the discredited Bennett government that Section 98 was repealed and the party regained legality.[43]

From the restoration of legality until the fall of 1939, the party's activities met with considerable success. Candidates for public office began to cultivate pockets of support, influence within the trade unions grew and party membership experienced a steady, if unspectacular increase.[44] These advances were abruptly halted however, in August 1939 with the signing of the Soviet-German non-aggression pact.

For years communists had claimed with justification to be the most resolute anti-fascists. Indeed only a few days before the pact the party had issued a statement which reiterated its uncompromising hostility to fascism and its view that:

A war against the fascist powers would be a

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[43]Although the party was formally illegal until 1936, the persecution had effectively ended by 1934. In November of that year Buck was released from Kingston Penitentiary and in the 1935 federal election C.P. candidates were not disqualified.

[44]For membership figures for the period 1934-1939 see Avakumovic, p. 115.

> just war. It would be a war in defence of democracy. It would be a continuation of the glorious struggle of the Spanish people for national freedom....[45]

How could this startling rapproachment be justified, not only to the public but to the party's own members? The Daily Clarion quickly tried to assure its readers that, "The pact does not mark the slightest change in Soviet foreign policy."[46] The party argued that the pact would actually weaken Hitler and strengthen peace because, "The people of Germany will see now... that not only was there never a danger of the Soviet Union's attacking Germany, but that the Soviet Union is powerful enough to halt the fascist warmongers...."[47] Moreover, the pact had prevented anti-communists like Chamberlain from "unleashing the mad-dogs of fascism upon the U.S.S.R."[48] The foreign communist press attempted to bolster this view as Pravda hailed the "strengthening of peace" and L'Humanité referred to the "Peace Pact."[49]

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[45] Keeping Canada Out of War by Keeping War Out of the World, Statement of the C.P.C., August 21, 1939.

[46] Daily Clarion, August 26, 1939, p. 1.

[47] Ibid.

[48] Ibid.

[49] Julius Braunthal, History of the International (2 Vols.; London, Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1967) Vol. 2, p. 493.

Despite these assurances and despite the faith in both Stalin and the International many left the party, not only in Canada but throughout the capitalist west. It is estimated that the British party, as a direct result of the pact lost more than a third of its members. And in France, twenty-one of the seventy-two party deputies severed party ties.[50] In the United States there was a fifteen percent membership drop between 1939 and 1940,[51] while the C.P.U.S.A.'s support among intellectuals and in the Jewish community dropped drastically. A similar effect was felt by the C.P.C. Buck acknowledged that the pact:

> had a very disturbing, in some areas even a demoralizing effect ... a large number of members dropped out of the party .... An even larger number became quiescent and didn't join in the activities of trying to popularize our explanation of the German-Soviet pact.[52]

Morley Callaghan recorded the effect of the pact on party supporters in Toronto's garment district when he described the, "harsh mockery and fist fights on Spadina Ave."[53]

Nonetheless, as difficult as it was to reconcile the pact

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[50]Ibid., p. 526.

[51]Lewis Coner and Irving Howe, The American Communist Party, (Boston, Beacon Press, 1957), p. 404.

[52]Transcript, Max Reynolds Interviews with Tim Buck, p. 645-646.

[53]Morley Callaghan, "Little Marxist, What Now," Saturday Night, September 16,1939, p. 24.

with their anti-fascist beliefs, the majority of party members remained loyal. As J. B. Salsberg put it, "the Stalin pact was horrible but we were carried by a basic faith that we were building a better order."[54]

During the weeks which followed, the party kept reminding its supporters that the pact was a decisive factor in preserving peace in Europe. As evidence it cited Hitler's hesitation to attack Poland. As the September 2, Daily Clarion stated, "Poised to strike a lightening blow at Poland prior to the signing of the Soviet-German pact, today he (Hitler) strives desperately for a settlement by negotiations."[55] It was hardly a persuasive argument. And it was grotesquely ill-timed for by the time the paper was published Hitler had already begun his attack on Poland, thereby launching the second world war.

The Canadian party immediately took the position that an anti-fascist war had begun and urged the government to prosecute the war with determination and courage. As Buck wired King:

In the name of my party I urge full support to

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[54]The Varsity, March 16, 1960, cited; Pelt, p. 156.

[55]Daily Clarion, September 2, 1939, p. 1.

> the Polish people in their resistance to Nazi aggression. The Communist Party of Canada has stood consistently for adequate measures to prevent such aggression and to destroy fascism....[56]

This position was embarrassingly short-lived. Within a month the party completely reversed itself. On September 17, the Soviet Union invaded Poland, the Clarion, still clutching to the view that Soviet foreign policy was unchanged, rationalized the move as being necessary to defend the Poles from Nazi aggression. However, it soon became clear that Stalin's diplomatic efforts to preserve peace for the Soviet Union through neutrality required the abandonment of the anti-fascist arguments and the adoption of the line that the war was exclusively an imperialist one from which the working class had nothing to gain and ought not to support.

On September 28, Molotov and Ribbentrop signed a "German-Soviet Frontier and Friendship Treaty." The process of substituting neutral sentiments for anti-fascist ones had begun. Throughout the month the Soviet press ceased to criticize Germany's conduct and anti-German literature was eliminated from the Soviet book trade. By late September the secretary of the International had sent explicit instructions to the British and French C.P.'s directing them to change their policy to

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[56] Daily Clarion, September 9, 1939, p. 1

conform to the imperialist war line.[57] In November, Dimitrov published the position of the International:

> In its character and essence the present war is, on the part of both warring sides, an imperialist, unjust war ... This war is a direct continuation of the struggle between the imperialist powers for a new repartition of the earth, for world domination... the mobilization of the widest masses for the struggle against the war already being waged, and for bringing the war to an end, is the first task of the movement.[58]

The C.P.C. quickly agreed that its initial anti-fascist position had been incorrect. The war was indeed an imperialist one, and the capitalist countries were not genuinely anti-fascist. It was not long before the Toronto Clarion warned Canadians that, "the principal danger of fascism comes not from Nazi Germany but from the war policies of the King government."[59] Buck characterized the party's initial reaction as "temporary confusion" attributable, at least partly, to the fact that throughout September, the Comintern had provided neither assistance nor guidance.[60]

The party now had nearly two decades of activity behind

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[57]Braunthal, Vol. 2, p. 506.

[58]Degras, Vol. 3, p. 449...455.

[59]Toronto Clarion, May 10, 1940, cited; Avakumovic, p. 141.

[60]Reynolds transcript, p. 655.

it. It had weathered years of harassment, had played a decisive role in the creation of industrial unions and had proved itself to be a willing auxiliary to the International. During the next decade the repression would be no less severe, nor would the party be more independent. Partly for these reasons, partly for others, the party would be unable to link its fights for reforms with the crucial task of building a movement which consciously promoted socialism.

Chapter Two

FROM THE WAR TO THE LABOR PROGRESSIVE PARTY

In November 1939, the secretary of the Executive Committee of the Communist International, George Dimitrov, urged western communists not to falter under the weight of repression and persecution but, "to come forward resolutely and courageously against the war, against the bourgeoisie of their own country."[1] The Communist Party of Canada diligently followed his advice. Campaigning under the slogan, "Withdraw Canada from the Imperialist War," the party involved itself in strikes, anti-war agitation within the military and suggested that anti-conscription leagues be formed. In its view the war was an "excuse" used by the ruling class for, "instituting dictatorship, reducing living standards, cutting relief, preventing strikes and curtailing expenses on education."[2] The party's anti-war literature supported this argument by contrasting the hardships workers experienced during the war with soaring corporate profits. As one leaflet issued by the party's Toronto section, facetiously put it:

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[1] Degras, Vol. 3, p. 458.

[2] J. B. Salsberg, The War Situation and Canadian Labour (Toronto, Publisher unknown, 1940) p. 46.

> Your country calls on you to sacrifice. Canada needs every penny we can squeeze out of you... Remember, your sacrifice is not in vain. Because of it, International Nickel Co. was able to make a profit last year of 35 million. Because of it, exhausted Canadian millionaires are enabled to take their families on nice trips to Bermuda. Because of it, the government can afford to employ R.C.M.P. stool pidgeons....[3]

The party focused its activities on ending the war but certainly did not restrict itself to pacifist concerns. The last congress of the Comintern had urged parties to use a crisis situation created by war to hasten the abolition of class rule. A resolution introduced by Togliatti declared that:

> Should a new imperialist war break out, despite all efforts of the working class to prevent it, the communists will strive to lead the opponents of war, organized in the struggle for peace, to the struggle for the transformation of the imperialist war into civil war, against the bourgeoisie, for the overthrow of capitalism....[4]

The Canadian party shared this perspective. Despite the party's complete isolation Buck was confident that, "objective factors are making toward a revolutionary situation,"[5] and the Toronto Clarion confirmed that, "As Canadian Communists their sacred

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[3] An Appeal to Patriotic Workers. Toronto District Committee, C.P.C., 1941.

[4] Degras, Vol. 3, p. 377-378.

[5] Buck, "The Crisis of Imperialism and The Future of Canada," The Communist, Vol. XIX, No. 12, December, 1940, p. 1111.

duty is to work night and day for the defeat of their 'own' bourgeoisie, and that they are doing and will do."[6]

The party's ability to promote its anti-war views was severly hampered as the government moved quickly to outlaw the party and its press. In November 1939, police arrested the business manager of the Clarion, Douglas Stewart, under the Defence of Canada Regulations. In January he was sentenced to two years in Kingston Penitentiary. By then, not only the Clarion had been raided but also the C.P. headquarters, its bookstore and over fifty private homes across the country. In May, 1940 the Ontario Supreme Court ruled that the C.P.C. was an illegal organization under the War Measures Act. And in June 1940, the federal government confirmed and extended the ruling when it declared, by order-in-council, the Communist Party of Canada, the Young Communist League and nine other organizations, mainly ethnic clubs associated with the party, to be illegal.[7] Its newspapers were banned, the majority of its central committee was arrested and over 100 members were interned. However, Tim Buck, Sam

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[6]Toronto Clarion, September 26, 1940, cited; Avakumovic, p. 143.

[7]The other outlawed organizations were the Canadian Labour Defence League, the League for Peace and Democracy, the Ukrainian Labour Farmer Temple Association, the Finnish Organization in Canada, the Russian Workers and Farmers Club, the Croatian Cultural Association, the Hungarian Workers Club, the Polish People's Association and the Canadian Ukrainian Youth Federation. In addition five fascist organizations were banned.

Carr, Stewart Smith, Stanley Ryerson, J. B. Salsberg, Fred Rose and other leaders avoided arrest and the party continued to function from the underground.

Treatment of the ethnic associations was also harsh, particularly for the Ukrainian Farmer Labour Temple Association. The Ukrainian community had a long history of involvement with the Canadian left. As early as 1905 Ukrainian socialist groups had been established in Winnipeg, Portage la Prairie and Nanaimo. By 1941, they were the fourth largest ethnic group in Canada, after the British, French and Germans.[8] The U.L.F.T.A. was the cultural centre for many of these people. With 108 halls, the association was estimated to have over twenty thousand members who enjoyed the U.L.F.T.A.'s library, concerts and athletic events.[9] Thirty-six of the U.L.F.T.A. leaders were interned,[10] its newspaper was banned, its library of over 60,000 volumes was destroyed and its property was confiscated and sold at prices drastically below their market value.[11]

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[8]There were over 300,000 Ukrainians in Canada in 1941. The total population was 11,300,000. 1941 Census of Canada, Vol. IV Ottawa, 1946, p. 335.

[9]R. A. Davies, This is Our Land: Ukrainian Canadians Against Hitler, (Toronto, Progress Books, 1943) p. 18-19.

[10]Ibid., p. 46.

[11]Fourteen properties which the U.L.F.T.A. claimed had an original construction value of $298,750 were sold for $73,882. Canadian Tribune, May 22, 1943. For example, the Vancouver U.L.F.T.A. building was valued at $22,000; it returned $1,177.04 to its owners. One hall in Saskatchewan valued at $8,000 with liabilities of $400, returned only $55. C.C.F. News, June 15, 1944.

Communists arrested and interned found it impossible to defend themselves. The accused were provided with no particulars about the action which led to his arrest. He was provided with no written accusations, no information about who provided the information nor any idea of when he was alleged to have contravened the law. Party members were effectively denied the right to have an adequate defence. At least on this issue, the party enjoyed the consistent support of the C.C.F. which raised objections to the Defence of Canada Regulations and the treatment of the arrested C.P. members both in the House of Commons and in its press.[12]

However, these efforts by the C.C.F. leadership had no mitigating effect upon the hostility of the C.P. towards the social democrats. As the March 1940, federal election approached the C.C.F. was viciously denounced:

> M. J. Coldwell, David Lewis ... and most of the C.C.F. officials are campaigning in the federal elections exhorting the Canadian people to support the imperialist war. Theirs is the most despicable role of all - that of trying to chloroform the people with pseudo-socialist phrases and to herd them into the imperialistic slaughter.[13]

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[12] See for instance T. C. Douglas' remarks in the House, March 3, 1941, and M. J. Coldwell's discussion of the Sullivan case, February 27, 1941. Also the articles "Civil Liberties" in the Canadian Forum Vol. XX, No. 239 and 240.

[13] The Clarion, March 23, 1940, p. 4.

The party's election platform had two basic concerns. One featured anti-war demands like no conscription and repeal of the War Measures Act. The other focused on very traditional reforms, high wages, the eight hour day, repeal of the sales tax, instituting unemployment and health insurance and slum clearance.[14] The party's complete isolation was underlined by the election manifesto's strident tone and almost hysterical assertions:

> Under the virtual military dictatorship, established by ... the King government and the main capitalist groups ... it is illegal for any candidate in the election to speak or publish the truth. They plan to arrest any honest working class candidate. Their election is no better than one of Hitler's "plebiscites" ....[15]

Ten candidates were nominated by the party, nine of whom opposed C.C.F. candidates. Where no party candidates were

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[14] Federal Election Manifesto, Political Committee of the C.P.C., Ottawa, 1940, p. 15-16.

[15] Ibid., p. 2. These statements together with Buck's earlier unrealistic assessment about the "approaching revolutionary situation" represent the party's collapse into the second of Rosa Luxemburg's "two reefs." In periods of complete isolation the party tended to adopt a particularly sectarian "leftism." Although short-lived it was another instance of the party substituting Comintern positions for a concrete analysis of local conditions.

nominated, supporters were urged to make their ballots "Peace." Among the ten was Tim Buck, Stewart Smith and Leslie Morris. Buck, while remaining underground, was the candidate in Hamilton East, he received only 695 votes from a total vote of 29,654.[16] The ten candidates received a total of 14,616 votes.[17]

The party although illegal was still able to make many of its views public through the publication of an independent newspaper launched in January 1940, the Canadian Tribune. Edited by A. A. MacLeod, who was later to be a L.P.P. provincial member of parliament in Ontario, the paper supported labour struggles, campaigned against the war, against conscription and for lifting the ban on the party. Buck contributed to the paper under fictitious names and he recalled, "there was a certain tacit understanding that he (MacLeod) had contact with the party and, some way or another, the Tribune represented the party point of view."[18] In February, 1941 it too was banned. As the Secretary of State explained, "if it is not actually a communist publication it is pursuing the policy which a communist publication would ... pursue."[19]

State repression certainly damaged the effectiveness of the party's anti-war campaign. It was further weakened by the

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[16] Canadian Parliamentary Guide, (Ottawa, 1941) p. 280.

[17] Avakumovic, p. 144.

[18] Ryan, p. 214.

[19] Hansard, February 27, 1941, p. 1079.

emergence of serious divisions among the party leaders. The underground Toronto officials, led by Steward Smith, resurrected the debate about Canada's status, arguing that a colonial revolution was required to gain national independence. Buck, living in New York, disagreed and unsuccessfully tried to convince the majority of the central committee that the prinicipal enemy was Canada's own bourgeoisie.

Although the dispute was not completely resolved it soon lost its practical significance for both the party's internal disagreements and its anti-war activities abruptly stopped with the German invasion of the Soviet Union in June, 1941. From then until the end of the war, party activity centered almost exclusively on the need for sacrifice and unity in order to defeat Hitler. All other tasks, including the struggle for socialism was seen as devisive and harmful. In the party's view:

> The character of the second world war has been changed fundamentally by Hitler's attack upon the U.S.S.R. ... In place of the previous perspectives of peace through joint action of the anti-war forces in the neutral and belligerent countries, or war fought to an imperialist conclusion, the people ... now face the alternative perspectives of: unity of all who are against Hitler's plan of world conquest ... or a complete Nazi victory and a return of the Dark Ages.[20]

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[20]Buck, A National Front for Victory, Report adopted by the Political Bureau, C.P.C. August 28, 1941, p. 2-3.

Unswayed by the party's reversal however, the Liberal government and particularly Justice Minister St. Laurent, refused to restore the party's right to function legally. Refusing to do anything which he feared would be regarded as a sanction of the party, St. Laurent added, "I hold the view that the real communist doctrine is illegal here regardless of anything contained in the defence of Canada regulations."[21]

Undaunted, party members created several new organizations. In February, 1942, "Tim Buck Plebiscite Committees" were formed to urge Canadians to vote "yes" on the federal government's conscription plebiscite. After the plebiscite these committees were transformed into the Communist Labor Total War Committees. Another party group, the National Council for Democratic Rights under the direction of A. E. Smith fought to have the ban on the party lifted and the interned freed. Aid to Russia Funds were also established. Headed by prominent Canadians like J. S. McLean, the president of Canada Packers Ltd., and Clifford Sifton, the party did much of the footwork to provide clothes and medical supplies for Russia's defence. The Canadian Tribune reported that in just a few weeks over a million dollars was raised in Toronto alone.[22]

Party members and supporters were exhorted to join the armed forces if possible, if not to work in war production. It

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[21] Hansard, July 31, 1942, p. 5056.

[22] Canadian Tribune, February 6, 1943, p. 6 (hereafter referred to as the C.T.).

was not long before the King government was being criticized for not pursuing the war vigorously enough. As one party resolution complained, "So far the war effort has been developed at too slow a rate by the government. The King government's war policy is marred by hesitancy ...."[23] Articles began to appear in the Canadian Tribune urging the opening of the second front and extolling the no-strike pledge. In July, 1942 one leading communist, J. B. Salsberg was arrested when he flew to Vancouver to urge the city's shipyard workers who were on the verge of striking, "to refuse to be provoked."[24]

Salsberg's arrest prompted the party to challenge the government's internment policy. The ban, justified in 1940 by the party's attempts to impede the war effort, was now difficult to defend. As A. E. Smith put it:

> In every industry, in every community the left-wing labour movement, led by the Communists is in the forefront of ... our war struggle against Hitlerism. How inconsistent ... then, that the Communist Party is refused legality.[25]

Editorials began to appear in the major newspaper across the country urging the lifting of the ban, for as the Toronto Star

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[23]Resolutions of the National Party Conference, C.P.C., February, 1942, p. 5.

[24]Buck, Thirty Years, p. 175.

[25]A. E. Smith, Should the Communist Party be Illegal? (Toronto, Issued by the National Council for Democratic Rights, N.D.) p. 4.

said, "Today the Communists are among the most zealous supporters of an all-out war effort."[26] Trade unions, church councils and civic governments agreed. Prominent citizens including Ontario Premier Mitchell Hepburn and his Attorney-General Gordon Conant, pressured the government to legalize the party. Hoping to force St. Laurent to relent, Buck and sixteen other officials living underground surrendered to the R.C.M.P. in late September, 1942.

Hepburn wired St. Laurent reminding him that by detaining Buck and the others he was not only obstructing their assisting the war effort but also ignoring the recommendation of a parliamentary committee. A C.C.F. delegation including M. J. Coldwell and David Lewis visited Justice Department officials and appealed for Buck's release. Held for eleven days the seventeen were released after signing statements promising that they would not interfere with the war effort. The interned party members were also freed. However, St. Laurent reiterated his refusal to lift the ban.

Although individual communists were now free, the maintenance of an underground party was cumbersome and damaging. It hindered the party's efforts to prevent strikes and to continue its work for increased production, bolstering the armed forces and the opening of the second front. Moreover, it prevented the party from demonstrating that it had subordinated all other activities to the war effort. As Buck pointed out when he placed

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[26] Toronto Star, July 16, 1942.

himself in custody, "We have refrained from putting forward socialistic measures which would tend to divide Canadians."[27] The ban prevented the party from presenting this image to the public. Buck expressed his fear that the, "continuance of illegality ... could only strengthen the sinister spectre of Communism."[28] The dilemna was solved at a meeting of party leaders in Toronto, on June 13, 1943 when a decision to form a new party, in an effort to circumvent the ban was made. A declaration of purpose was issued and a national organizing committee was established. The founding convention of the new organization, the Labor Progressive Party, was held August 21-22, 1943 at the Prince Edward Hotel in Toronto. The delegates, between five and six hundred strong, owed their presence there as much to King's order-in-council and St. Laurent's intransigence as they did to the initiative of any of their own leaders.

The launching of the Labor Progressive Party was preceeded by a seemingly innocuous debate over the name of the new party. In reality, the question was profoundly symbolic. The name "Labor Progressive" had no precendent in either Canadian or international socialist politics. It was an ambiguous title,

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[27] C. T. October 3, 1942, p. 2.

[28] Buck, Canada Needs a Party of Communists, (Toronto, Issued by the Initiative Committee to Convene a Communist Constituent Convention, 1943) p. 30.

slightly reminiscent of the Progressive Party, a coalition of agrarian populists which disintegrated in 1926, largely into the ranks of the Liberal Party. This confusion was increased as Manitoba Liberals ran candidates under the label Liberal-Progressive and in 1943 the Conservative party changed its name to the Progressive Conservative party.

Important individuals and sections within the new party opposed the new label. An editorial in the Canadian Tribune suggested that the new party be called the Socialist Commonwealth Party.[29] Supporters recommended names like, the Communist Labor Party, the People's Communist Party and the United Communist Farmer Labor Party. As one member tersely put it, "I believe a party of communists should call itself communist."[30] Another supporter lamented that, "the name should express what a party is ... the name of the party must describe the aim of the party, the social order towards which it is striving."[31] These views enjoyed a certain orthodoxy as they reflected a tradition which went back to the formation of the Comintern. As one of the points in the Twenty-One Conditions of Admission into the C.I. stated:

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[29] C. T. July 31, 1943, p. 6.

[30] C. T. August 14, 1943, p. 10

[31] C. T. July 31, 1943, p. 6.

> Every party that wishes to join the Communist International must bear the name: Communist Party of such and such country. This question as to name is not merely a formal one, but a political one of great importance. The Communist International has declared a decisive war against the entire bourgeois world and all the yellow social democratic parties. Every rank and file worker must clearly understand the difference between the communist parties and the old official "social democratic" or "socialist" parties which have betrayed the cause of the working class.[32]

The party leadership, however, anxious to avoid any contentious issue and determined to bury what Buck called "the sinister spectre of communism," was not persuaded by these arguments. In its view, the immediate task was to circumvent rather than challenge the Defence of Canada order-in-council. Others, like the twelve B. C. delegates to the convention voted to retain the old name. These delegates, aware that St. Laurent's uncompromising hostility to the party no longer enjoyed public support, felt that they could force repeal of the repressive legislation. Some even felt that the legal problem associated with the order-in-council could have been overcome. A. E. Smith, a prominent communist and secretary of the Canadian Labor Defence League and later the National Council for Democratic Rights, argued that the new party should be called simply, the Communist Party. Smith who had overseen most of the party's legal defence work since the thirties explained:

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[32]Helmut Gruber, International Communism in the Era of Lenin (New York, Doubleday and Co., 1972) p. 245.

> The name I propose is not illegal. The illegal term appears in 39 C of the Defence of Canada Regulations. It reads thus: "The Communist Party of Canada." That association of words is illegal. No other. Hence, the association of words, "The Communist Party," is quite lawful.[33]

Buck was later to suggest that the choice had been influenced by the elections of A. A. MacLeod and J. B. Salsberg to the Ontario Legislature and Fred Rose to the federal house under the L.P.P. banner. However, Buck's claim explains little. Both the Ontario provincial election and the federal-by-elector in which Rose was elected were in August 1943, just prior to the founding convention. Clearly, the name had already been adopted by party leaders and then used by those candidates. What Buck does not explain is how the name was chosen and why. Closer to the truth was the comment by Al Parkin in the Pacific Advocate who stated that the leaders expected that, "The name Labor Progressive would appeal to broader circles, that it would bring us votes in the parliamentary field, that it would reassure those liberals 'frightened' by the term Communist."[34]

The selection of the new name symbolized something far more important than was recognized at the time. The L.P.P. was born in the midst of a dramatic change in the policies of the international socialist movement. The deletion of the term

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[33]C. T. August 14, 1943, p. 9.

[34]Pacific Advocate, July 28, 1945, p. 2.

socialist or communist represented the conscious relegation of the socialist component in the movement to the distant future. In many ways the new name was an authentic and genuine description of the party. Just as the socialist ingredient was excluded from the title, so too, would it be excluded from the goals of the movement.

Canadian communists prior to May, 1943 belonged to and supported the Communist International. Disgusted by the capitulation of the socialist parties during the first world war and inspired by the tremdous, popular enthusiasm for the Bolshevik Revolution, the C.I. was designed to be, "the International of revolutionary realization, the International of action."[35] As the twenty-one conditions for admission stated, "The parties which wish to join the Communist International are obliged to recognize the necessity of a complete and absolute rupture with reformism...."[36] With the outbreak of the second war, Canadian radicals could not help but recall the directives of the last Comintern Congress, held in 1935, which declared:

> If nevertheless war breaks out, it is their (the communists) duties to work for its speedy termination and to strive with all their might to utilize the economic and political crisis produced by the war to rouse the masses of the people and thereby hasten the downfall of capitalist class

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[35]Manifesto of the C.I., cited; Gruber, p. 93.

[36]Degras, Vol. I, p. 170.

rule.[37]

But these revolutionary directives were not applicable to the Labor Progressive Party. For on May 15, 1943, three months before the formation of the L.P.P. the Presidium of the Communist International recommended that:

> The Communist International, as the directing centre of the international working class movement, is to be dissolved, thus freeing the sections of the C.I. from their obligations arising from the statutes and resolutions of the congresses of the C.I.[38]

On June 8, 1943 only five days from the date when communist leaders met in Toronto to initiate the formation of the L.P.P., the Presidium declared that from June 10, the International would be dissolved. The Communist Party of Canada accepted the decision without challenge. Along with thirty other sections it approved the proposal, none of the existing parties sent in any objections.

The reasons for the Comintern's dissolution went far beyond the resolution's assertion that the International had outgrown its usefulness and that, "any sort of international centre would encounter insuperable obstacles."[39] It is

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[37]Fernando Claudin, The Communist Movement (2 Vols., New York, Month by Review Press, 1975) p. 17.

[38]Degras, Vol. III, p. 479.

[39]Ibid., p. 477.

generally acknowledged that the basic factor responsible for the break-up of the Comintern can be found in the exigencies of Soviet foreign policy. Once again Soviet concerns dominated the life of the international movement. In an effort to reinforce anti-fascist unity, Stalin was attempting to cultivate the appearance of a single, pervasive concern among the anti-fascist allies. The dissolution was intended to cement the anti-fascist coalition and facilitate negotiations with Roosevelt and Churchill by allaying their fears that the C.I. was still a revolutionary instrument. It was a final assurance to the capitalist west that the International's revolutionary goals had vanished just as the organization itself had disappeared. Isaac Deutscher has referred to this concession as Stalin's, "political contribution to the coherence of the Grand Alliance."[40]

The dissolution was accompanied by a fundamental shift in the policy of the communist movement. As the resolution instructed the Comintern sections:

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[40]Isaac Deutscher, Stalin (rev. ed., Harmondswerth, Middlesex, Penguin Books, 1974) p. 464. The dissolution was accomplished with relative ease not only because of the influence of the C.P.S.U. over the other parties, but also because the C.I. had been dormant for years. Its last congress was in 1935, since then it had held few meetings, issued few statements and members of the E.C.C.I. tended to be figures of secondary importance.

> In the countries of the anti-Hitler coalition, the sacred duty of the widest masses of the people, and in the first place of the foremost workers, consists in aiding in every means the military efforts of the Governments of these countries aimed at the speediest defeat of the Hitlerite bloc and the assurance of the friendship of nations based on their equality.[41]

Implicit in the resolution was the understanding that communist parties would accept the leadership of their governments and confine their activities to the anti-fascist struggle. The prospect of transforming this struggle into an anti-capitalist one was tacitly dropped. At a packed meeting in Toronto's Massey Hall, Buck explained the significance of the dissolution. He welcomed the move because it would facilitate anti-fascist unity and would put an end to the, "lie that Communists have no allegiance except to the U.S.S.R." Buck was explicit where the Comintern resolution had been implicit, "we say again, as we have in the past, that we do not advance our Socialist proposals at this stage... that we subordinate our Socialist program to the needs of the people's war."[42]

Three days after the Comintern was formally dissolved party leaders, at Buck's invitation, met in Toronto's Carlsrite

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[41]Degras, Vol. III, p. 478.

[42]C.T. June 5, 1943, p. 4.

Hotel.[43] Stressing that the dissolution of the International had removed the last obstacle to the establishment of a new party and conscious of the need to, "achieve a higher role for the working class in the national war effort,"[44] a proposal was adopted to form a new organization.

The tone and perspective of the meeting was reflected in Buck's address. He hailed the dissolution of the Comintern for, "already having a profound influence upon all political relationships .... As Stalin pointed out, 'It facilitates the work of the patriots in freedom loving countries for uniting the progressive forces of their respective countries regardless of party or religious faith, into a single camp....'"[45] Buck pledged the co-operation of communists in strengthening the government's war effort and emphasized that this support was the primary task of all communists. He called for the negotiation of a twenty year friendship treaty between Canada and the Soviet Union and he urged party supporters in the labour movement

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[43]Present were Tim Buck, Stanley Ryerson, T. C. Sims, J. B. Salsberg, Stewart Smith, Sam Carr, Leslie Morris, Norman Freed, A. E. Smith, Becky Buhay, John Weir, W. Kashtan, Beatrice Ferneyhough, Fred Collins, Jean Bourget, Evariste Dube, Fred Rose, Oscar Kane, Helen Anderson, C. McClure, H. Procter, A. T. Hill, Florence Theodore, James MacPherson, and William Kardash. No delegates from B. C. or the Maritimes attended. C. T. June 19, 1943, p. 3.

[44]Buck, Thirty Years, p. 179.

[45]Buck, Canada Needs a Party of Communists, p. 12.

to fight for a policy of no strikes. He included in the report his earlier assurances that the new movement recognized the need to postpone any socialist agitation. He repeated that, "in the interests of national unity to win the war we do not put forward proposals for socialism at this time,"[46] and proceeded to discuss the need to, "destroy the fake issue of 'Communism.'"[47]

The Liberal government, influenced by the Comintern's dissolution, had already indicated that it would not prevent the party from being reorganized. On May 24, 1943, St. Laurent, replying to a question from Angus MacInnis told the House that if:

> The group in Canada which formed part of it (the Comintern) follows the recommendations which the newspapers have reported as having been made by the Comintern there would no longer be any useful purpose in referring to the matter. It would be any organization that had disappeared... if any other party or group should be made up of men who formerly belonged to this organization, it would depend upon the attitudes they adopted as to whether or not any further action should be taken with respect to them.[48]

After Buck announced the plans to convene a national convention the Justice Minister was again asked his intentions.

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[46]Ibid., p. 23.

[47]Ibid., p. 14.

[48]Hansard, May 24, 1943, p. 2937.

Even his relentless antagonism to the party had been subdued. He responded, "If those who formerly belonged to the communist party, recognizing that the Canadian communist party is banned, now wish to form another group whose constitution, object and actions are not contrary to the provisions of the law, it does not concern the Minister of Justice."[49]

With the effective approval of the government now secured, preparations for launching the new party were made as Buck toured the country. Holding rallies in most major cities the tour was quite successful. The secretary of the B. C. organizing committee, Fergus McKean, reported that in the week following Buck's visit to Vancouver, eight hundred people had applied to join the new party.[50] Buck confidently predicted that fifty thousand Canadians would join the new movement, "to fight for complete victory in this war and for a post-war policy of greater friendship between the people of Canada, the U.S.S.R. and other great nations."[51]

St. Laurent's tolerance of the new party and Buck's confidence in it, were both rooted in the complete transformation of public sentiment about the Soviet Union. The bitterness and hostility which followed the German-Soviet pact had developed into admiration and respect. By January, 1943 the decisive

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[49]Ibid., June 21, 1943, p. 3827.

[50]C.T. August 7, 1943, p. 5.

[51]C. T. July 31, 1943.

battle of Stalingrad was over. By the summer of 1943 the Soviet army had gone from victory to victory while the western powers still had not launched a second front. Now the Comintern had been dissolved. The prestige of the Soviet Union soared. Stalin's name was cheered by thousands at rallies in Toronto. This euphoria culminated in the formation of the National Council for Canadian-Soviet Friendship in June, 1943. The council, formed at a rally in Maple Leaf Gardens which MacKenzie King chaired and which fifteen thousand attended, enjoyed unprecedented popular support. The list of sponsors included Prime Minister King; the Chief Justice of Canada, Lyman Poore Duff; the Lieutenant Governor of every province; the Chief Justice of every province; the Premiers of six provinces; the senior representatives of the three armed forces; the leaders of the three main political parties and included organizations like the Canadian Legion, the Canadian Jewish Congress, the Imperial Order of Daughters of the Empire and notables like E. J. Pratt and A. Y. Jackson.[52] Rarely had such an impressive list of sponsors been collected. Never had Canadian communists, if only by association, been so respectable.

This atmosphere contributed to the political successes which the party experienced in August, 1943 as J. B. Salsberg and A. A. MacLeod were elected to the Ontario legislature and

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[52] Why We Need $15,000, (Toronto, National Council for Canadian-Soviet Friendship, N.D.) For an account of the founding rally see C.T. July 3, 1943.

Fred Rose was elected to the House of Commons. The election of Fred Rose in the Cartier by-election is particularly interesting for two reasons. On the one hand it was the first and only time a communist has been elected to the federal government. On the other, his election campaign was the first indication that a complete absence of socialist proposals would dominate the life of the L.P.P.

There were three important candidates in the by-election other than Rose. Lazarus Phillips, a lawyer, ran for the Liberals. The C.C.F. candidate was David Lewis, then the party's national secretary. And a French-Canadian nationalist, Paul Massé, ran for the Bloc Populaire. The Cartier riding was almost entirely working class and was one of the only ridings in Canada which was predominantly Jewish. Since 1917 it had been represented by members of the Jewish faith. In 1943, approximately fifty-five percent of the constituents were Jewish, mainly of Eastern European origin and the next largest ethnic group were French-Canadians who composed thirty-five percent of the electorate.[53]

It was generally felt that David Lewis, the articulate Rhodes scholar, would win the by-election. Although Lewis had not lived in the riding for years, he had been raised in the district. He received both the endorsement and financial support of

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[53] Canadian Forum, Vol. 23, No. 272, September, 1943, p. 126.

influential trade union leaders like David Dubinsky, president of the International Ladies' Garment Workers Union, and was able to spend considerably more in the campaign than Rose.[54] As he was told when he was invited to run by a local C.C.Y.M. leader, "The chances are excellent, especially if you play up the record of the government towards the question of Jewish immigration...."[55] While the Montreal Gazette supported the Liberal candidate, it conceded that the election was a close battle between Phillips and Lewis.[56] Moreover, the C.C.F. was at the peak of its popularity. Its membership and finances were growing and for a brief period in 1943 a gallup poll reported that the C.C.F.'s support had overtaken both the Liberals and Conservatives.[57] Only a week before in the Ontario election the party had jumped from no seats to an astonishing thirty-four. The leader of the Ontario party, E. B. Joliffe, visited Cartier to bolster Lewis' campaign. Even MacKenzie King confided to his

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[54]According to the report filed by the candidates official agents Rose's expenses amounted to $7,298.73, while Lewis spent $9,046.76. Public Archives of Canada, C.C.F. Files, Vol. 38.

[55]Letter from H. C. Shanton to David Lewis, C.C.F. Files, Vol. 38.

[56]Montreal Gazette, August 4, 1943.

[57]Leo Zakuta, A Protest Movement Becalmed (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1964) p. 58-59.

diary that he believed the C.C.F. would win Cartier.[58]

Yet Rose emerged the victor. Many factors contributed to his upset. There was widespread dissatisfaction with the Liberal government which lost the four by-elections held on August 9, all of which, including Cartier, were formly held by Liberals. Lewis' campaign was seriously weakened by two issues. The pro-Soviet atmosphere and the prestige of the Red Army made it very difficult for Lewis, a staunch anti-communist, to employ his usual criticisms of both Russia and communism. As an indication of how constrained he felt, one need only look at the book he and Frank Scott co-authored in 1943, Make This Your Canada. In it, there is unfamiliar praise not only for the Red Army but also the Soviet economy.[59] Moreover, Lewis' campaign was plagued from the very beginning by lack of support from the Jewish community. For instance, at his nominating meeting a motion which would have declared the meeting in favor of Palestine

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[58]J. W. Pickersgill, The MacKenzie King Record, (Toronto and Chicago, University of Chicago and University of Toronto Press, 1960) Vol. I, p. 570.

[59]David Lewis and Frank Scott, Make This Your Canada, (Toronto, Central Canada Publishing, 1943). They stated for example; "This war has demonstrated beyond question that Soviet economic planning has built a powerful economy in a short space of time, and has won the enthusiastic support of the millions of people who inhabit the vast land." (p. 84) "The whole democratic world has been filled with admiration of the victorious struggles of the Red Army." (p. 24) This point was confirmed in an interview with Lewis (Burnaby, July, 1976).

being established as the national home of the Jewish people was ruled out of order by Frank Scott on the grounds that the meetings sole purpose was to nominate Lewis. Lewis interjected to point out that he was not personally a Zionist but that if the C.C.F. officially adopted a Zionist position as part of its national program, he would loyally carry out party policy. He added, "Cartier is not merely a Jewish district, it is also a working class district."[60] However, Lewis' position was not acceptable to nearly one-quarter of the delegates at the meeting, members of the Action Committee of the Labor Zionist Movement, who walked out.[61]

Rose captured much of this support. The Soviet Union's military victories were persuasive anti-fascist credentials for Rose, one of whose central campaign promises was to introduce a bill in parliament making anti-semitism a criminal offence. In effect, Rose had deflected interest in the controversial Zionist issue which had proved so damaging to Lewis, by generating enthusiasm for his more popular commitment to fighting anti-semitism. This commitment won him the support of influential members of the Jewish community like Max Bailey, past president of the B'Nail Brith and a member of the Canadian Jewish Congress.[62] Moreover, it was a particularly timely promise as Paul Massé, the Bloc Populaire candidate, made anti-semitic

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[60] C.C.F. Files, Vol. 38.

[61] Ibid. Lewis had been advised to avoid the question of Zionism. One letter suggested, "I believe we shouldn't let them drag us into a polemic at this stage, all the issues in the campaign will be clouded and Zionism will become the issue. That's what they want."

comments throughout the campaign.[63]

Rose also benefitted from his personal background in the riding. He had been a resident of Cartier since childhood, had worked as a union organizer in the district and had run in previous campaigns. In the process he had built up an effective electoral machine. When the votes were counted Rose, a nondescript, balding electrician, only five feet tall, an able but uninspiring speaker emerged a narrow winner with a majority of only 150 votes. Rose received 5,789 votes, Massé 5,639, Phillips 4,180 and Lewis trailed with 3,314.[64] In the estimation of the Canadian Tribune Rose's support came almost exclusively from European and Jewish votes, of the 2,500 votes of European-born non Jewish voters, 1,500 voted for Fred Rose in addition another 3,400 votes came from Jewish supporters.[65]

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[62]Montreal Gazette, July 31, 1943, p. 6

[63]For example one Bloc Populaire circular contained the following passage; "The Liberal candidate, Lazarus Phillips is a conscriptionist Jew. The C.C.F. candidate, David Lewis, is a conscriptionist and centralizing Jew. The Progressive Labor candidate, Fred Rose, by his real name Rosenberg, is a conscriptionist and Communist Jew. You have nothing to expect of them," cited; Jim Wright, "Why a Communist Represents Montreal-Cartier" Saturday Night, August 28, 1943, p. 15.

[64]Canadian Parliamentary Guide, 1945, p. 349.

[65]C.T. August 28, 1943, p. 2.

This result contrasts with Rose's previous campaign when without the benefit of the Red Army victories he trailed the Liberal candidate by more than ten thousand votes.[66]

Rose did not win the seat merely because of the pro-Soviet atmosphere, nor merely because of his support in the Jewish community although both were pivotal ingredients. The weaknesses of the other candidates, together with his personal skills were also factors. However there is no doubt that Rose won the election with a campaign in which socialist proposals played no part. In addition to his promise to outlaw anti-semitism, Rose promised to work for slum clearance, health insurance and wage increases. His literature promoted him as a, "common man, the candidate of labour and of the simple, patriotic men and women who want to win the war."[67] At one point he even asked Lewis to withdraw and pledged to run on, "a program with which you will not quarrel."[68] Ironically, without whispering a syllable about socialism, Canada's first federal communist member of parliament was elected.

With Rose's election on August 9, 1943 the founding convention of the Labor Progressive Party was only two weeks away.

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[66]In the 1935 federal election Jacobs received 13,574 while Rosenburg received 3,385. Canadian Parliamentary Guide 1936, p. 257.

[67]Montreal Star, August 7, 1943, p. 2.

[68]Letter from M. Buhay to F. R. Scott, June 22, 1973, C.C.F. Files, Vol. 125.

For the first time in years the party was completely legal. The Comintern had been dissolved, the Soviet Union and Canada were now official allies, and in a dramatic upset, the uncharismatic Fred Rose had routed David Lewis. As the delegates prepared to assemble in Toronto they must have been confident that the future held many successes for them. Little did they realize how fleeting these would be.

Chapter Three

FROM THE BIRTH OF THE L.P.P. TO BROWDERISM

The founding convention of the Labor Progressive Party in August 1943 elected Tim Buck national leader and established a sixty-two person national committee which in turn elected from its ranks the more important seventeen member national executive committee.[1] There was no question that the L.P.P. was the direct successor of the C.P.C. Indeed, many of the newly elected leaders had been active since the birth of the communist movement. Buck had been a founding member of the C.P.C. Annie Buller, Tom McEwen, Michael and Becky Buhay were leaders of the Workers' Party when it was formed in February, 1922. A. T. Hill became secretary of the Young Workers' Party in 1922. A. E. Smith had joined the party in 1925 and his son, Stewart Smith had been sent to the Lenin School in Moscow in 1926 and had been a leading member since his return in 1928. T. C. Sims and Leslie Morris were also graduates of the Lenin School. Others like Stanley Ryerson, Sam Carr, and J. B. Salsberg were prominent party veterans.

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[1]The national executive consisted of: Tim Buck, national leader; Evariste Dube, national chairman; Sam Carr, national organizer, Stanley Ryerson, director of education and publicity; J. B. Salsberg, director of industrial work; T. C. Sims, executive secretary; A. A. MacLeod, Stewart Smith, Norman Freed, Fred Rose, Jean Bourget, Dorise Nielsen, Leslie Morris, Harry Hunter, Annie Buller, Helen Anderson and William Cornwall, treasurer. C. T. August 28, 1943.

Buck, a machinist by trade, was one of the many British born workers who played an important role in organizing the Canadian left. Deeply influenced by Keir Hardie and Tom Mann, he joined the Socialist Party of Canada in 1912 and had led the C.P.C. from 1929. He was the obvious choice as leader and assumed the post without challenge. A benign looking man, only five feet, six inches tall, he was the party's best known and most effective public figure. Imprisoned from 1931 to 1934, leading his own defence at the celebrated, "Trial of Toronto Communists," he had survived an assassination attempt and emerged as a popular hero. While in prison the mining town of Blairmore, Alberta had renamed its main avenue, Tim Buck Boulevard. A decade before he was elected to the leadership of the L.P.P., Frank Scott had predicted that some day a monument would be erected in Buck's memory in Toronto.[2] Within the party his prestige was enormous and almost bordered on a personality cult. Sam Carr referred to him as "the incorruptible champion of scientific socialism."[3] In the early thirities the party produced a pamphlet entitled, Tim Buck, Dauntless Leader of the Canadian Working Class and in 1939 when Leslie Morris produced a short history of the C.P.C. it was called The Story of Tim Buck's Party.

One contribution to Buck's ability to retain the party

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[2]Frank Scott, "Trial," p. 527.

[3]Pacific Advocate, January 13, 1945, p. 9.

leadership for over three decades was probably the high regard in which the international movement held him. In 1935, he was elected to the executive committee of the Comintern upon which he remained until its dissolution. His emergence as leader following the crisis with Spector and MacDonald reflected his refusal to countenance any deviation from the position of the Soviet party. There is no more succinct expression of this than his comment to J. B. Salsberg, "What is good for the central committee of the C.P.S.U. is good enough for me."[4] Certainly, Buck's leadership facilitated the domination of Soviet orthodoxy over the life of the C.P.C.-L.P.P.

Invoking the memories of the pre-Confederation reformers, portraits of William Lyon MacKenzie and Louis Joseph Papineau stared at the delegates attending the founding convention. Buck delivered the keynote address. He stressed the urgency of opening the second front and advocated combined military operations with the Red Army. He left no doubt that victory over fascism transcended all other tasks, declaring that, "we place all our emphasis upon the supreme need to win the war."[5]

The party, in "the traditions of the great Reformers of 1837"[6] dedicated itself to, "the building of national unity,

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[4]N.A.M., February, 1957, p. 3.

[5]Buck, Victory Through Unity (Toronto, L.P.P., 1943), p. 12.

[6]Constitution of the Labor Progressive Party (Toronto, 1943) p. 1.

winning of the war, democratic reforms for victory and post-war security, unification of the labour movement, building of a single, united party of the working class in the Dominion and the ultimate achievement of a socialist Canada."[7] Uninterrupted war production and the no-strike pledge were recommended. A fourteen point program was adopted which included the call for the immediate invasion of Europe and increased Canadian participation in the United Nations. It called for guaranteed jobs for armed forces members upon demobilization and urged improvements in social security legislation and the labour code. Old age pensions were to begin at sixty, the minimum wage was to be twenty-five dollars a week and ahousing program was demanded. The government was asked to maintain ownership of wartime plants built with public funds, and legislation which would repatriate the constitution, abolish the senate and make anti-semitism a punishable offence was requested.

While the convention acknowledged the necessity for the "ultimate achievement" of socialism, the acknowledgement was little more than lip-service. The declaration was formal and ritualistic. There was no attempt to integrate their anti-fascist activity with the requirements for building a movement capable of sweeping and fundamental changes. The struggle for socialism had, in reality, been postponed. Leslie Morris, the Ontario leader of the party explained, "While the ideological struggle about the

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[7]C. T. August 28, 1943.

means for attaining socialism will continue ... it is not on ideological matters that unity at this time will be achieved, but on the all-pervading issues of the moment: national unity, the conduct of the war, domestic issues such as labour policy...."[8]

Morris was not alone. Party leaders and press repeated this view until it became a pervasive theme. The veteran militant A. E. Smith stated the position clearly, "... the issue of the day before the Canadian people is not socialism... the issue ... is unity, how to develop and maintain unity against fascism and fascist tendencies ... Socialism can wait."[9] Of course, this did not mean that the L.P.P. leaders had suddenly stopped being socialists. But it did mean that their socialist convictions were private and personal. The political thrust of the movement and the energies of its members did little to promote socialist consciousness.

Membership in the party was open to anyone who was eighteen years old or older, accepted the party programme, attended meetings regularly, paid their dues and participated in the party work. The prospective member also had to exhibit, "unquestionable devotion to the cause of the people."[10] The dues structure varied with income and ranged from twenty-five cents to two dollars per

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[8]C. T. August 21, 1943.

[9]C. T. January 1, 1944.

[10]L.P.P. Constitution, p. 3.

month. In addition to this there were monthly collections of between fifty cents and a dollar to pay for national convention expenses and there were constant pleas for donations to meet the costs incurred by election campaigns and the party press.

The basic organization of the party was in branches or clubs based on geographical territory. There were also clubs based on language or occupation. A minimum of five people were required in order to receive a charter from the party's provincial committee. Club officers, the chairman, secretary, treasurer, educational director and literature director held terms for one year. The national convention was the highest authority in the party. The convention elected the national leader and the national committee which was the highest authority between conventions. From the ranks of the national committee a national executive was selected which oversaw the daily functioning of the party. Officials could be recalled by a simple majority vote by the membership of the body from which the official had been elected. "Conduct or action detrimental to the party's prestige"[11] could result in either disciplinary action or expulsion. In either case this could be appealed to the national convention.

The constitution added that it was the responsibility of members to "study and explain to all Canadians the program and policies of the Party and the principles of Scientific Socialism."[12]

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[11] Ibid., p. 13.

[12] Ibid., p. 6.

This was a hollow declaration. In reality, the party had no such expectations. Prospective members who lacked the most cursory understanding of "Scientific Socialism" were warmly accepted by the party. As one recruiting pamphlet explained:

> Who can join a club of the L.P.P.? Do you have to be a finished Socialist, one who has read the classics of Marxism and thoroughly understands them? Of course not. We are not a party which accepts only professors and advanced students. We are a worker's party above all, and workers ... cannot be expected to devote a great deal of time to study .... The party is where you get your education.[13]

From the very beginning the party tried to dislodge the persistent suspicion that it was either a seditious or an insurrectionary movement interested in overthrowing the bourgeois state. As Leslie Morris explained, "the L.P.P. categorically denounces force and violence as a means of imposing any form of government or economic system upon the Canadian people ... the L.P.P. defends the democratically evolved institutions of the Canadian people."[14] Despite the party's self-perceived role as heir to the Bolshevik Revolution, it had little in common with Leninism. It was neither a vanguard organization leading the

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[13]Leslie Morris, You Are Invited (Toronto, L.P.P., 1944) p. 19.

[14]Ibid., p. 10. This of course is a sharp departure from the Marxist view that, "the working class cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made state machinery and wield it for its own purposes." See K. Marx, The Civil War in France and V. Lenin State and Revolution. I discuss this in chapter four.

Canadian working class nor did it consist of a core of disciplined and professional revolutionaries. The complexion of the new party began to emerge. It was patriotic and staunchly anti-fascist. It favored reforms as long as they did not interfere with the war effort. It desired a mass membership and "categorically" opposed violence. Its socialism was neither dogmatic nor doctrinaire. Its leaders, no longer the youthful militants who had formed the C.P.C. decades before, had mellowed with age and years of full-time party employment, to become professional functionairies. Not surprisingly, the hammer and sickle was abandoned as the party emblem and a less offensive one adopted. The new emblem was a "Gear and Pinion flanked by ears of wheat, on the background of a maple leaf."[15] The new party's resemblence to classical social democracy was unmistakable.

This impression was confirmed when the founding convention proposed affiliation with the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation. In a gesture far removed from the days when the left regarded social democracy as the "twin brother of fascism," the party promised to accept the C.C.F. program and constitution and proposed the building of a single, all inclusive labor-farmer movement.[16] Assuring the C.C.F. of its good intentions, the Ontario executive of the L.P.P. stated that, "the L.P.P. has no intention of entering into competition with the C.C.F., but is

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[15] L.P.P. Constitution (1943) p. 3.

[16] C. T. September 11, 1943, p. 1.

rather determined to assist the forward march of labour .... The L.P.P. has no intention of either poaching on the C.C.F. membership or usurping the leadership of the C.C.F."[17]

The C.C.F. leaders were not impressed by the offer. They had not forgotten that only weeks before the Canadian Tribune had described their program as, "a peculiar brand of petit bourgeois capitalism,"[18] or that David Lewis had just been defeated by Fred Rose in the bitter Cartier by-election. The C.C.F. national council rejected the proposal by a vote of twenty-three to four and issued a statement which said that, "the basic reason ... why the C.C.F. rejects the application for affiliation now, is that the C.C.F. believes in democracy and democratic methods .... By contrast, the Communist party ... has constantly demonstrated ... its belief in the use of violent methods."[19] C.C.F. affilitates in the trade union movement purchased ads in major papers denouncing the L.P.P. for attempting to split the labour movement. The day following the L.P.P.'s founding, a half-page ad appeared in the Toronto Star signed by scores of union locals. Its message was clear:

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[17]C. T. September 4, 1943, p. 13.

[18]C. T. July 31, 1943, p. 6.

[19]C. T. September 11, 1943, p. 2.

> The Communists are now organizing what they term a "labour progressive party" ... we protest against the Communists unauthorized use of the name labour .... For twenty-three years the Communist party has tried and failed to represent labour .... Labour in Canada recognizes the C.C.F. as its political party. The C.C.F. is Canada's labour party.[20]

In the C.C.F.'s view the L.P.P. was promoting disunity by creating a "dual party" which was attempting to "duplicate the work and organization of the C.C.F."[21]

Although the C.C.F. leaders accused Buck and his comrades of advocating revolutionary violence, there was little substance to their charge. In fact, the allegation obscured the issue at the root of the two movement's irreconcilability. The essential distinction had nothing to do with violence. Nor indeed were their domestic policies fundamentally different. Here the C.C.F.'s charge of a "dual party" is authentic and the L.P.P.'s support for the C.C.F. program genuine.

But a pervasive difference did exist. Essentially, this involved the L.P.P.'s unswerving loyalty to the Soviet Union. There was nothing sinister or conspiratorial about this. It stemmed from the completely justifiable enthusiasm of Canadian Marxists for the Bolshevik Revolution. The understandable but regrettable dependency which followed would ultimately be an

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[20] Toronto Star, August 23, 1943, p. 18.

[21] C. T. September 1, 1943, p. 2.

important factor in the party's decline. However, within months of the L.P.P.'s formation this distinction would be responsible for a sharp change in the party's attitude toward the C.C.F. The point of departure was the Teheran conference.

In late November, early December of 1943, Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin met in Teheran. Agreements were reached on the opening of the second front and on the Russian Polish frontier. After four days of discussion an atmosphere of mutual respect and continuing cooperation was established. Stalin toasted Churchill as his "great friend"[23] and the three assured the world that, "We came here with hope and determination. We leave here friends in fact, in spirit and in purpose."[23] Solemn, if vague, promises were also made about future cooperation to eliminate, "tyranny and slavery, oppression and intolerance" and in order to facilitate the birth of a "world family of democratic nations."[24]

Communist parties throughout the world hailed the pact. None more so than the L.P.P. and its fraternal party the C.P.U.S.A. After years of campaigning for a second front the Teheran agreements were seen as a decisive step toward the defeat of fascism. However, both the L.P.P. and the C.P.U.S.A.'s appreciation of the accord

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[22]Deutscher, p. 497.

[23]Ibid.

[24]Claudin, p. 407.

went far beyond this understanding. For them something far more fundamental had occured. In Buck's opinion an entirely new historical epoch had emerged. The Teheran agreement, he claimed, "had opened up a new perspective for the whole world.... It opens up the prospect that for the first time in history, the nations would cooperate in making good the devastation of a great war ... (it) opens up the prospect for a period of tremendous economic and political progress."[25]

In Buck's view this prospect of post-war progress excluded the prospect of agitating for socialism. Not only would capitalist class relationships continue but capitalism based on the Teheran agreements would be, "able to avoid a crisis of the sort which followed the first war."[26] He repeated that socialism was not an immediate issue and insisted that those who saw socialism as an alternative to the progress of the Teheran era were inviting catastrophe. The only real alternative to the advances signified by Teheran were, "economic crisis and chaos, resulting in spreading civil wars, the resurgence of pro-fascist forces and a drive to the third world war."[27]

Just as in the war period when a multi-class national unity was forged to defeat Hitler, so now in the post-war period this

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[25]N.A.M., Vol. 1, No. 1, 1944, p. 3.

[26]Ibid., p. 5.

[27]Ibid., p. 4.

unity was to be extended. The L.P.P. envisaged an "extended period of orderly social advance and progressive reform in a world at peace."[28] A new common goal had emerged among all classes which superceded political activity which saw socialism as its goal. Socialism had become redundant.

There was no clearer exponent of this view than Earl Browder, leader of the C.P.U.S.A.:

> I have been an advocate of socialism during all my adult life, of socialism for America. The Communist Party is the only party of socialism in this country. But I have not the slightest hesitation in declaring that any plans for American post-war reconstruction which are based upon the introduction of socialism are in effect a repudiation of the aim to unite the majority of the nation behind the Teheran policies .... If the national unity of the war period is to be extended and even strengthened in the post-war period, then we must recognize that in the United States this requires from Marxists the reaffirmation of our wartime policy that we will not raise the issue of socialism in such a form and manner as to endanger or weaken the national unity.[29]

The L.P.P. concurred completely. National Affairs Monthly, its theoretical journal, published Browder's views on Teheran. The party's theoretical leader and director of education and publicity, Stanley Ryerson, praised Browder as, "the outstanding Marxist in

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[28] C. T. February 19, 1944, p. 6.

[29] Earl Browder, Teheran and America (New York, Workers' Library, (1944) p. 14, cited; Joseph Starobin, American Communism in Crisis, (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1972) p. 56-57.

America,"[30] and a review of Browder's book Teheran was lauded in National Affairs Monthly as a, "concise, luminous, and authoritative statement of the position of Marxism on the problems of the post-war period ... essential (emphasis in original) for every political worker in the Canadian labour movement ... by the leading Marxist in the America's."[31]

Some people in the party were hesitant about the new policy. Buck criticized those who, "oppose policies in accord with the Teheran agreement and try to justify their opposition by comparing the limited gains such policy will bring with the fundamental changes that could be achieved under socialism. That attitude ignores realities."[32] No organized or concrete challenge occurred. To do so would have meant challenging not only Buck but also Browder and the international movement. This tendency to acquiesce was reinforced by the leadership's policy of concealing disagreements from the rank and file. No one in the Canadian party was aware, for instance, that in January, 1944, W. Z. Foster, chairman of the C.P.U.S.A. had unsuccessfully challenged Browder's views within the American national committee.[33] Hence, an appearance of universal agreement was maintained.

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[30] C. T. March 11, 1944.

[31] N.A.M., Vol. 1, No. 6, p. 189.

[32] N.A.M., Vol. 1, No. 1, p. 4.

[33] Starobin, p. 65-70.

Long before Teheran, Rosa Luxemburg had warned that, "The danger begins only when they (the Bolsheviks) make a virtue of necessity and want to freeze into a complete theoretical system all the tactics forced upon them by these fatal circumstances and want to recommend them to the international proletariat as a model of socialist tactics."[34] The attempt by the Soviet leaders to cement the "grand alliance" at Teheran was mechanically translated by the L.P.P. into a new era of peace and progress. Soviet necessity had been transformed into a Canadian virtue.

The implications of the Teheran accords were immediate. They were responsible for radical changes in the L.P.P.'s relationship with other political parties. In the L.P.P.'s view the strategy of creating a camp of all classes to ensure progress and oppose reaction was endangered by the C.C.F. leadership's lack of enthusiasm for the accords. The C.C.F. News labelled the Teheran declaration, "that unimpressive document,"[35] while the Canadian Forum ridiculed the L.P.P., "we cannot see what Mr. Buck and his friends hope to achieve by going around shouting 'Teheran' as if it were an incantation capable of solving the world's problems."[36] The party was particularly incensed by editorials in the Canadian Forum which claimed that Teheran represented Stalin's final

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[34]Rosa Luxemburg, Selected Political Writings ed. Robert Looker (London, Jonathan Cape, 1972) p. 250.

[35]C.C.F. News, January 6, 1944, p. 6.

[36]Canadian Forum, Vol. XXIII, No. 278, March, 1944, p. 268.

abandonment of the idea of socialist revolution in the capitalist west and accused the L.P.P. of betraying the left in an effort to "save capitalism."[37]

The L.P.P. retaliated by accusing the C.C.F. leaders not only of misrepresenting Teheran but also of jeopardizing post-war advances. The Canadian Tribune warned the labour movement against being, "rushed onto the fake paths of pseudo-socialist demagogy."[38] The policy of affiliating with the C.C.F. was repudiated. Sam Carr, the national organizer explained that, "For a brief interval ... influenced by the growth of C.C.F. sentiment among the masses, the Party advanced the slogan of a 'Labor-Farmer Government' - a slogan which would have excluded the whole bourgeoisie from the national unity camp and helped reaction to consolidate its forces."[39] Buck proposed an alternative strategy reminiscent of the "united front from below" policy. Arguing that, "most of the people who support the C.C.F. want the things we are fighting for," he identified the new task of L.P.P. supporters as being, "to show the members and supporters of the C.C.F. the basis of unity between us and them in the perspective raised by the Teheran conference."[40]

The attempt to forge unity from below proved to be as unsuccessful as the L.P.P.'s first proposal for affiliation. At an

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[37]Ibid., Vol. XXIII, No. 277, February, 1944, p. 244-245.

[38]C. T. February 19, 1944, p. 6.

[39]N.A.M., Vol. 1, No. 6, p. 173.

[40]N.A.M., Vol. 1, No. 1, p. 5.

April 1944, Ontario C.C.F. convention a proposal to "investigate the possibilities" of future cooperation with the L.P.P. was resoundingly defeated 470 to 2.[41]

The Teheran agreements also resulted in a re-appraisal of the Liberal government. Throughout the fall of 1943, the C.P.C. had attacked King's policies. In October, the Canadian Tribune stated that, "Mr. King's attitude on domestic issues places his government and the Liberal Party squarely on the side of banks and monopolies which are hindering the fullest war effort ... his government is rapidly becoming an obstacle to national unity."[42] Recalling that it was his government which had outlawed the Communist Party and outraged at his anti-labour policies, his resignation was called for more than once.[43]

Teheran changed this. Just as Browder, fearing a Republican victory in the 1944 U.S. presidential election had supported Roosevelt, the L.P.P. endorsed the policies of the King government. At an L.P.P. national conference in late May, 1944, Buck proposed the election of a Liberal-Labor coalition government. Fearing a resurgence of right-wing strength, possibly a return to the repressive R. B. Bennett policies of the thirties, the party denounced in exaggerated terms the prospect of a

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[41] C. T. April 15, 1944.

[42] C. T. October 9, 1943, p. 6.

[43] C. T. October 30, 1943, p. 4.

"sinister Tory-Duplessis conspiracy against Canadian democracy."[44] Citing the dangers of the unfolding "Tory plot" the party began to praise the King government. Readers of the Canadian Tribune were told that, "The Liberals ... have worked to maintain the unity of Canada ... Canada owes a debt to Mr. King for his repudiation of the ultra-imperialist, jingoist line of the backward looking Tories."[45] Despite his past, the King government now represented, "those interests in the capitalist class which are moving towards the implementation of the Teheran policies of international post-war collaboration and far reaching domestic reforum."[46] Buck explained in an article entitled "Why I Support MacKenzie King"[47] that since neither the Conservatives nor the C.C.F. had endorsed the Teheran agreement, only support for the Liberals could ensure progress although he conceded that this "will not bring the millenium."

As startling as this reversal may appear, it was a logical and understandable extension of the Teheran accords. It must be remembered that the party saw itself in a completely new epoch. Buck believed that, "Everything has been changed by the war. The

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[44] N.A.M., Vol. 1, No. 4, p. 102.

[45] C. T. June 3, 1944, p. 6.

[46] C. T. September 2, 1944, p. 1

[47] Buck, "Why I Support MacKenzie King," New World, August, 1944.

pre-war world has been swept away. The main political characteristics of the world today are new."[48] For the L.P.P. it was a period without historical precedent. From its perspective supporting King was not a departure from Marxism but rather the creative application of Marxism in a totally new era. As always, Marxism was synonymous with whatever policy the Comintern or C.P.S.U. promoted.

The party's willingness to endorse the Liberal-Labor alliance was encouraged by successes which had been achieved in the trade union movement by pursuing a similar policy. This was highlighted by the election of Pat Sullivan, head of the Canadian Seamen's Union and an L.P.P. member, to the post of vice-president of the Trades and Labour Congress in 1942. This success was a consequence of cooperation with the conservative leadership of the T.L.C. The L.P.P.'s influence extended far beyond its numerical strength as the party led only four of the seventy-six T.L.C. unions. These four unions had a membership of under 16,000 compared to the Congress' 284,000 members.[49] The L.P.P.'s insistence that "trade unions remain true to their voluntary no-strike pledge,"[50] was reflected in the no-strike policies adopted at T.L.C. conventions. Much to the chagrin of the C.C.F., the T.L.C. in 1944, established very cordial relations with the King

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[48] N.A.M., Vol. 1, No. 1, p. 3.

[49] Horowitz, p. 102 n.

[50] L.P.P. Program (Toronto, 1943) p. 22.

government and in the 1945 federal election endorsed his re-election.

The policy of the T.L.C. contrasted with the activities of the industrially-based Canadian Congress of Labour, in which the C.C.F. was far more powerful. In the 1943 C.C.L. convention the C.C.F. was officially endorsed, this was re-affirmed a year later. This disappointed the Canadian Tribune in whose estimation, "the main weakness of the (C.C.L.) convention was that this great body of labour was ... anchored to the unrealistic and therefore harmful policies of the C.C.F. party."[51]

What is particularly significant about the L.P.P. trade union activity is its exclusively reformist nature. With the exeption of the no-strike pledge, which was pursued far more enthusiastically than the C.C.F., there is little to distinguish the two. Both C.C.F. and communist organizers had fought and sacrificed to build the industrial unions. Among themselves they had fought bitterly for influence and control within the movement. Both built effective trade union machines and both conducted the affairs of their unions in an efficient and dedicated manner. However, both confined their activities to very traditional and pragmatic ends.

Despite the sincerity of the socialist beliefs of the L.P.P. trade union leaders, these beliefs found no reflection in their union activity. There was certainly no hint of the

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[51]C. T. October 22, 1944, p. 6.

early Comintern stand:

> Communists must explain to the proletarians that salvation is to be found not in leaving the old trade unions and in remaining unorganized, but in revolutionizing the trade unions, ridding them of the spirit of reformism and of the treacherous reformist leaders and so transforming the unions into real mainstays of the revolutionary proletariat.[52]

The individual leaders however, the J. B. Salsbergs, the C. S. Jacksons, the Harvey Murpheys and the Harold Pritchetts could not be held responsible for this. As individuals they could hardly be expected to go beyond the policies which their party promoted.

The adoption of the Liberal-Labor slogan did not prevent the L.P.P. from continuing to pursue cooperation with the C.C.F. In its view, the C.C.F. too, ought to support the proposed coalition in order to stop the "Tory menace." As the C.C.F. leaders were completely opposed to such cooperation, the party appealed to rank and file members. This culminated in an unsuccessful appeal by Buck to the 1944 national C.C.F. convention. On November 29, he telegramed the convention delegates. Pleading with them to recognize that they were in the midst of, "the most dangerous crisis in Canadian political history," he urged the delegates, "to reject the false and partisan policy of Coldwell and the C.C.F.

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[52] Degras, Vol. 1, p. 277.

leadership."[53]

Far from winning over the rank and file of the C.C.F., the endorsement of the Liberal party reinforced hostilities between the two groups. Sam Carr complained that the Saskatchewan C.C.F. leaders had, "denounced us a 'Liberal stooges.'"[54] This view echoed the earlier assessment of Colin Cameron that no co-operation was possible with the communists because, "they are now completely in the hands of the MacKenzie King government."[55]

One of the few areas in which the L.P.P. call for a coalition had a major effect upon the C.C.F. was in Windsor, Ontario. There both powerful United Auto Worker Locals 195 and 200 were led by L.P.P. supporters. The party made intense efforts to pressure the three provincial M.P.P.'s, Alles, Bennett and Riggs, all C.C.F. members, to support the coalition. On September 25, 1944 a large ad was purchased in the Windsor Star. In the form of an open letter[56] addressed to the three representatives, the ad reminded them that the labor movement had demanded that the Tory Drew government must be defeated, asked them to publically state whether they were for, or against, Drew and

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[53]N.A.M. Vol. II, No. 1, January, 1945, p. 10. In later years Buck recalled this differently. He claimed that in a discussion with Coldwell he was told, "Look, Tim, we both have the same aims, we are both after the same goal, but its too soon to talk about that sort of a deal .... No, its too soon. Our people would never stand for it." cited; Ryan, p. 231.

[54]N.A.M. Vol. 1, No. 6, September, 1944, p. 174.

[55]Young, p. 279.

[56]This letter is reproduced in the C. T. September, 1944.

urged them to speak out in favor of a coalition of the C.C.F., the Liberal party and the L.P.P. The letter was signed by sixty-six labour officials in Windsor including George Burt, Canadian director of the U.A.W., Roy England, president of local 200 and Alex Parent, president of local 195.

In response to the ad, E. B. Joliffe the Ontario leader of the C.C.F. wrote to the three M.P.P.'s and assured them that the L.P.P. campaign had not been particularly successful. "It may have had some impression in Windsor" he said "but such is not the case throughout Ontario as a whole."[57] Joliffe advised the men to issue a joint statement replying to the ad and rejecting the proposal. He wrote, "I am convinced that you must be firm, that your reply must be clear-cut and that you must show you are not going to be pushed around by a smart manoeuvre of this kind which was undoubtedly inspired by the L.P.P."[58]

But his advice was not accepted. One of the M.P.P.'s Nelson Alles (Essex-North) endorsed the coalition and resigned from the C.C.F. caucus in December. A month later another member, Leslie Hancock (Wellington-South) also expressed his approval of the coalition idea and was expelled from the party.[59] Electorally the effects upon the Windsor C.C.F. were devastating. In the 1945 provincial election all three seats were lost.[60]

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[57]C. T. October 7, 1944, p. 2.

[58]Ibid.

[59]C. T. January 13, 1945, p. 6.

[60]For a more comprehensive discussion see; Ian MacPherson, "The 1945 Collapse of the C.C.F. in Windsor," Ontario History, Vol. 61 (1969) p. 197-212.

Elsewhere, the coalition invitation had little impact upon the C.C.F. Although in Manitoba two members of the legislature, B. D. Richards and D. L. Johnson were suspended from the party for supporting the coalition attempt. And in B. C., H. W. Herridge, the M.L.A. for Rossland-Trail and the proposed candidate for the federal riding of West Kootenay, was expelled for similar views. (Herridge ran as an independent against the official C.C.F. candidate, was elected and joined the C.C.F. caucus.)

Within the L.P.P. members began to express doubts about the Liberal alliance although the policy was never openly challenged. Buck was compelled to spend a great deal of time meeting party members, attending club meetings and party meetings and explaining the issue. He recalled that, "many of the best fighters of our party tended to think that, by God, the C.C.F. were right when they accused Tim Buck and other leaders of our party, of betraying the ideals of socialism and trying to sell-out to capitalism through the Liberal Party."[61] There is no doubt that confusion existed. This could only have been aggravated by the Canadian Tribune's description of King's liberal views as resembling, "what used to be known as Communism."[62] In many cases the confusion led to demoralization and in some instances members switched their support to the C.C.F. One

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[61]Reynolds transcript, p. 765.

[62]C. T. August 31, 1944; cited, Young, p. 276.

party member in Alberta described the atmosphere in his local club:

> There has been considerable falling off in club attendance .... There does not seem to be a very clear vision of why our party is now asking for a democratic coalition of the progressive forces .... They haven't a clear picture of the need for this arrangement and believe that the C.C.F. "revolutionary" talk is more compatable than our present policy.[63]

At least one prominent party member, Malcolm Bruce, was unable to accept the party's support for King, left the L.P.P. in 1944 and joined the C.C.F. Bruce, a carpenter born in P.E.I., was one of the few native born Canadians to hold a leadership position in the early communist movement. In November, 1922 he became editor of the party newspaper, The Worker, in the early thirties he was one of the handful of leaders imprisoned with Tim Buck in Kingston. During the war's early years he was editor of the party's west coast paper until he was removed for following a too militant course. According to Buck, "the main difference was that Malcolm who had this tendency towards an academic approach denounced capitalism and showed the workers how they're exploited...."[64] The party's provincial committee, which removed Bruce, felt that the paper ought to be promoting the Teheran perspectives, not "denouncing capitalism." Shortly afterwards he joined the C.C.F. and was subsequently exposed to vicious attacks

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[63] Club Life, Vol. 2, No. 4, March 15, 1945, p. 15.

[64] Reynolds transcript, p. 264.

in the L.P.P. press.[65]

The L.P.P.'s support for King was so uncritical during this period, and its support for the war so total that the party approved the federal government's policy of interning the Japanese. At the outbreak of the war there was 23,886 Japanese in Canada, 17,980 of whom were Canadian citizens and over 14,000 of these were born in Canada.[66] Nearly all lived on the west coast. The federal government removed over 15,000 from the coast and confined them to camps in the B. C. interior while another four thousand were relocated to provide labor for sugar beet growers in Alberta and Manitoba. Their property, vehicles and fishing vessels were seized and they were disenfranchised. In the L.P.P.'s view this was a sound policy, necessary because, "Not all the Japanese in B. C. were fascists, but all of them were to some extent under the influence of their fascist leaders."[67] At the B. C. party's provincial convention in 1944, the provincial leader Fergus McKean not only endorsed the government's stand but proposed that it be extended so that, "all persons of Japanese extraction be barred from the coastal defence zone of B. C. in the post war period."[68] Moreover, the C.C.F. was

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[65]See Bill Bennett's column in the December 7, 1945 Pacific Advocate and Bruce's reply C.C.F. News, December 20, 1945.

[66]Canadian Forum, Vol. XXV, No. 294, July, 1945, p. 87.

[67]The People, May 20, 1944, p. 4.

[68]C.C.F. News, January 4, 1945, p. 1.

attacked for suggesting that the interned should be given back their vote.

The L.P.P.'s embrace of King's liberalism was not merely an ideological concession. It soon had a very practical application in a series of electoral contests; the February, 1945 Grey-North by-election, the Ontario provincial election and the federal election, both held in June, 1945. By December, 1944 it had become clear that the C.C.F. would not support the anti-Tory coalition. Consequently, a call for the "resounding defeat of the C.C.F. at the polls,"[69] was issued, and the national executive decided to nominate candidates in ridings held by the C.C.F., reversing a previous decision to refrain from doing so. As McKean explained, "the L.P.P. must oppose every C.C.F. candidate in the Dominion."[70]

The Grey-North by-election was held to provide a Commons seat for King's newly appointed Minister of Defence, General Andrew McNaughton. Ironically, McNaughton had been a lifelong Conservative before entering the cabinet. Nonetheless, it was the first opportunity outside the trade union movement to prove that the L.P.P. and the Liberal party could work together. While the C.C.F. and the Conservatives ran candidates against McNaughton, the L.P.P. mobilized its forces on his behalf. A front page

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[69]C. T. December 16, 1944, cited; Young, p. 276.

[70]News Herald, February 9, 1945.

editorial in the Canadian Tribune supported his election and L.P.P. trade union leaders throughout the country urged the workers of Grey-North to support the Liberal candidate. Some communist union leaders like George Harris, secretary-treasurer of the United Electrical Workers and Cyril Lenton, secretary of the Canadian Seamen's Union, travelled to the riding to do radio broadcasts on his behalf.

Despite the L.P.P.'s efforts the election resulted in a Tory victory. The Conservative candidate received over seven thousand votes, McNaughton barely six thousand and the C.C.F. candidate polled a surprisingly low three thousand votes. The party immediately attributed McNaughton's defeat to the C.C.F.'s refusal to support the anti-Tory coalition, for the combined Liberal and C.C.F. votes would have elected McNaughton. Attacks on the C.C.F. began to intensify. In the party's view, the social democrats, by splitting the progressive vote, had effectively impeded the war effort. The C.C.F. was considered to be both reckless and partisan. In the Canadian Tribune's view "It is hard to say where Social Democracy starts in Ontario and where Toryism ends."[71] Tory treason had now been matched by the C.C.F. The party reminded its supporters that the German Social Democratic Party upon which the C.C.F. modelled itself, had "paved the way for Hitler."[72]

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[71]C. T. February 10, 1945, p. 11.

[72]Ibid.

As a consequence of the party's perception of the threat posed by a Tory victory, great emphasis was placed on the upcoming Ontario and federal elections. The party felt that they were, "The most crucial in this country's history."[73] Definite electoral arrangements were made with the Liberal party. In April, Liberal leader Hepburn and Ontario L.P.P. leader Leslie Morris agreed that neither party would run candidates in areas like Windsor where "U.A.W.-Liberal-Labor" candidates would be nominated.[74] Paul Martin, Minister of Health in the King government, "placed the whole Liberal organization at work for the U.A.W.," he in turn, was personally supported by the L.P.P.[75] And Sam Carr, L.P.P. national organizer travelled to Ottawa many times to confer with Allan McNeil of the Liberal Federation and Martin, whom Carr acknowledged, "had a lot of L.P.P. supporters in his riding."[76] Nonetheless, Leslie Morris was later to deny

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[73] N.A.M., Vol. 2, No. 5, May, 1945, p. 150.

[74] C. T. April 21, 1945, p. 8.

[75] C. T. September 1, 1945, cited Horowitz, p. 113.

[76] Globe and Mail, April 8, 1949, p. 2.

that any alliance with the Liberals had taken place.[77]

In both elections the party ran on a platform based on the one adopted at the 1943 convention. It featured calls for improved social legislation such as pension plans and health insurance and improvements to the labour code coupled with state intervention in the economy to create marketing boards for agricultural products or to build subsidized housing. National issues included a proposal to establish a National Library and Museum, promises to adopt an official flag and anthem, and to outlaw anti-semitism. The equality of French and English Canada was to be guaranteed. An immigration policy would be designed which would offer help to refugees from fascism but would also stop the, "reckless pressure campaigns to persuade huge numbers of people to abandon their homes and emigrate to Canada regardless of conditions here."[78] In the L.P.P.'s view the platform promised "complete social security for every Canadian, from the cradle to the grave."[79] It was a platform which few social democrats could not support. Indeed, at the center of the

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[77]Morris in his introduction to Tim Buck's, Our Fight For Canada (Toronto, Progess Books, 1959) p. 11 refers to the party's slogan "Make Labor a Partner in the Government." The slogan he claims, "was widely and wilfully misinterpreted, especially by the leaders of the C.C.F., as meaning that the communists 'advocated' a political alliance with Liberals. Of course, nothing of the sort was ever proposed by the communists...."

[78]A Better Canada, L.P.P. Election Program, 1945.

[79]Club Life, Vol. 2, No. 4, March, 1945, p. 1.

party's campaign was a belief in the merits of state intervention in the economy which was an issue that not only social democrats but also large sections of the bourgeoisie already supported. As Buck recalled, "We put forward ... an economic program which included a tremendous lot of the thinking of Maynard Keynes, along with a great deal of some of the new possibilities that had been revealed by the New Deal in the U.S."[80]

In the Ontario election the Conservatives were re-elected. The votes for both the Liberal and Conservative parties soared. The Liberals increased their 1943 total by 65,000 votes and the Conservatives by an overwhelming 305,000.[81] The C.C.F. suffered a crushing setback as they were reduced from thirty-four seats to a mere eight. Although the L.P.P.'s dream of defeating Drew was completely shattered, it did comparatively well in the elections. Both of its members in the legislature, J. B. Salsberg (St. Andrews) and A. A. MacLeod (Bellwoods) were re-elected with slightly increased majorities. While MacLeod's victory was a narrow one, Salsberg enjoyed a majority of nearly six thousand votes.[82] Another L.P.P. member, Alex Parent, was elected as a U.A.W. candidate in Windsor. He joined the Liberal caucus.[83] The party's thirty

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[80]Reynolds transcript, p. 761.

[81]G. Caplan, "The Failure of Socialism in Ontario 1932-45," Canadian Historical Review, Vol. 44, (1963) p. 117.

[82]MacLeod's majority was 816 votes, Salsberg's 5,985. Canadian Parliamentary Guide 1946, p. 560 and 561.

[83]C. T. September 1, 1945.

candidates received 44,654 votes.[84]

In the federal election, King was re-elected as the L.P.P. desired. The party's sixty-seven candidates received 110,000 votes. Fred Rose was re-elected in Cartier, almost doubling his vote. He benefitted from the absence of a C.C.F. candidate and from an extensive electoral organization. With nine hundred party members in Cartier, Rose was able to hold scores of election meetings, speak frequently on the radio and distribute eighteen different pieces of election material.[85] While the party failed to elect Tim Buck, and Dorise Nielsen who had joined the party after her election as a Unity candidate was defeated, the total vote both in relative and absolute terms was a remarkable achievement. It represented far more support than the communists had gathered ever before.[86]

Two factors contributed significantly to the party's electoral successes. On the one hand, the L.P.P. shared in the prestige of the Soviet Union and the victorious Red Army. On the other, the party benefitted from a traditional and enduring core of ethnic support. The party's strength was most pronounced in ridings like Cartier which had a high concentration of Eastern

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[84]Howard Scarrow, Canada Votes (New Orleans Press, 1962) p. 213.

[85]Club Life, Vol. 2, No. 4, March, 1945.

[86]In the 1930 federal election the party's eight candidates polled 7,034 votes (Scarrow p. 76),; in 1935 thirteen candidates received 31,151 votes (Scarrow p. 91); in 1940 ten candidates polled 14,616 votes (Scarrow p. 105).

European and Jewish voters. In Winnipeg North, another party stronghold, it was estimated that, "Slavic Ukrainians, Poles and Russians comprise 37 percent of the vote, Anglo-Saxons 23 percent and Jewish 20 percent."[87] The Toronto ridings of Trinity and Spadina had similar compositions. These four ridings alone accounted for more than a third of the party's total vote in 1945.[88]

Municipal politics provided another source of electoral support for the L.P.P. In the late thirties the party began to pay much more attention to municipal affairs. As Sam Carr complained to the C.P.C.'s eighth convention in 1937, "Our comrades for a long time have failed to understand that the municipal governments ... are very close to the masses of the people."[89] It did not take the party long to realize both how important and profitable municipal politics could be. By the mid-forties the party could declare that, "There is no more immediate task which requires greater emphasis than the importance of greater participation ... in the municipal field ... our party must plunge into municipal affairs."[90] While the nucleus of municipal strength

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[87] Club Life, Vol. 2, No. 7, August 1945.

[88] Cartier - 10,413 votes; Trinity - 7,488; Spadina - 10,050; Winnipeg North - 9,116; (total - 37,067 votes) source: Canadian Parliamentary Guide 1946.

[89] Sam Carr, Communists at Work (Toronto, New Era Publishers, 1937).

[90] Proceedings of the Fourth B. C. L.P.P. Convention, 1946.

was in Toronto, party member's sat on civic governments in most of Canada's major cities. Although prominent C.P.C. and L.P.P. members often ran for civic office, they were rarely nominated as official party candidates. In this way the party hoped, as Stewart Smith stated, "to avoid competition between candidates of progressive, trade union and C.C.F. groups."[91] Of course, party members who ran for municipal office did not deny their political affiliation but neither did they parade it. There was no attempt to integrate their personal commitment to socialism with their tasks as municipal politicians.

During the early forties the party's civic fortunes parallelled national developments. In the 1940 civic election in Toronto, while the C.P.'s anti-war position had isolated it nationally, its civic candidates did poorly. Stewart Smith, an ex-alderman, ran a distant sixth for one of the four positions as controller in the city, and J. B. Salsberg and Fred Collins were both badly beaten as aldermanic candidates in Wards four and five. In the following two years the party was outlawed and ran no candidates, Smith went underground and Salsberg was arrested. In 1943 with the change in the party's position on the war, their civic record also changed. Salsberg and Smith were both elected aldermen with substantial majorities in Wards four and five. For the rest of the decade Smith would be the party

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[91] Club Life, Vol. 1, No. 2, December, 1943, p. 6.

spokesman in civic affairs, while Salsberg proceeded to become a popular provincial member of parliament. Both men were considered to be exceedingly talented. Smith, the Manitoba born son of Methodist minister and veteran communist A. E. Smith, was the first Canadian student at the Lenin School in Moscow and upon his return enjoyed considerable authority within the party. Salsberg, a rabbinical student for a short time, came to the party through experiences in the Poole Zion organization.[92] When the L.P.P. was formed he had been appointed director of trade union work.

Following the 1943 civic successes, party strength continued to grow. In the 1944 Toronto elections, Smith again ran for controller and was again defeated. However, he ran a strong sixth and received over 41,000 votes.[93] Again, wards four and five returned L.P.P. aldermen, Norman Freed and Charles Sims. This contrasts with the record of the C.C.F. which ran a slate of twenty-three candidates in the 1944 election, all of whom were defeated. In 1945, Smith was finally elected controller again receiving over 41,000 votes. Sims and Freed were re-elected and joined by two board of education members from the same wards, Margaret Gray and Edna Blois.[94] In 1946 the party reached its height of influence in Toronto's politics as Smith

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[92]Avakumovic, p. 226.

[93]Toronto Municipal Handbook, 1944, p. 70.

[94]Ibid., 1945, p. 74-77.

was easily re-elected, the L.P.P. not only re-elected their two aldermen but added a third, Dewar Ferguson from ward six, and re-elected Edna Blois.

Just as the L.P.P. was convinced that socialist proposals ought not to be raised nationally, their municipal candidates also focused on immediate reforms to the exclusion of socialist measures. During the war years civic unity and war time reforms were emphasized. Stewart Smith promised to, "bring Roosevelt's Four Freedoms and the Atlantic Charter into city hall."[95] Basic issues involved the need for low rental housing, the construction of new homes in the post-war period, the equitable distribution of rationed items like coal and tax assessment reforms. There was a great emphasis on community issues as elected officials and party clubs worked to stop evictions, have playgrounds and nurseries built, public transit improved and during the war to help recruit blood donors. Party clubs were urged to begin community newspapers like the North Trinity News which would focus on general issues like tax reform and specific ones like putting a traffic light at a particularly busy intersection. The emphasis on these local issues had two effects; it helped to build up a reliable party organization with which to fight elections and it bolstered the credibility of party candidates who were regarded as champions of the common people first and socialists second. Nowhere was this more apparent than in wards four and

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[95] Toronto Star, December 26, 1942, p. 5.

five. These working class wards, part of the Spadina and Trinity ridings had large immigrant populations, high population density, houses were built on narrow lots, there were few parks, traffic was congested and factories and warehouses were built in the midst of residential areas. The type of reforms the party promised had obvious application here. By the late thirties there was almost 1,500 party members in these wards,[96] which as Professor Avakumovic stated, "possessed some of the heaviest concentration of party members in any metropolitan centre in Canada."[97]

Similar policies were pursued in Winnipeg and Montreal. In Winnipeg's north end the party club established a community information service which offerred aid to people with problems involving old-age pensions, mother's allowances, housing, taxation, or citizenship and immigration. Working in a community in which many people had lost contact with relatives in Eastern Europe, the club also undertook to help locate them.[98] During the early forties communists Jacob Penner and M. J. Forkin were elected aldermen and Joseph Zuken was elected to the school board. Penner was the epitome of the party's municipal official. A union organizer, born in the Ukraine of Jewish parents, he had

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[96] A Democratic Front For Canada, (Toronto, New Era Publishers, 1938) p. 64.

[97] Avakumovic, p. 136.

[98] Club Life, Vol. 1, No. 10, p. 9.

been a member of the Social Democratic Party until the formation of the C.P. First elected to civic office in 1934 he was noted for the consistent and conscientious service which he gave to his constituents and in return received the support of the entire community. As one the city's citizens recalled:

> ... the people from St. Vladimir Cathedral, from St. Nicholas Church from all these places, they go and vote Penner because he is their friend; he helps them. Not anybody else ... he was elected by these people ... and he put all his time and effort to help them as much as it was possible for one alderman to do it. And the people ... they're Catholics, and they're Orthodox and they're Protestants and of every different religion and of different political views, they support him as an alderman because he gave them service. He was their man ... He just helped a man because he needed help.[99]

In 1942 Michael Buhay was elected to the Montreal city council. Born in London, Buhay emigrated to Canada in 1913 and became a union organizer in Montreal's garment industry. He had been a founding member of the C.P.C. and one of the most prominent party members in French Canada but he had supported MacDonald in the 1929 party crisis and was subsequently expelled only to return in the early forties to begin his career in municipal politics.

As with the party's success in the federal and provincial elections the L.P.P.'s civic popularity cannot be attributed to

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[99]Brian McKillop, "A Communist in City Hall," Canadian Dimension, Vol. 10, No. 1, April, 1974, p. 49.

the advocacy of socialist politics. The party's municipal officials cultivated and earned reputations as conscientious and capable representatives. They became popular figures who championed the interests of their constituents. Their personal commitment to socialism was a completely incidental factor having little to do with either their popularity or performance. Like Penner, they often received the support of the entire community, including that of staunch anti-communists. At various times the editors of the Toronto Star recommended the election of Stewart Smith, Norman Freed, Charles Sims and Dewar Ferguson. The Star noted for example that although Stewart Smith was a "Labor Progressive in politics," he attended the United Church,[100] and deserved re-election because he "has the welfare of the masses at heart."[101]

The party's electoral advances were complemented by its growing influence within the trade union movement. Among the affilitates of the Canadian Congress of Labour the L.P.P. led the United Electrical Workers, the Fur and Leather Workers, the Shipyard and General Workers' Federation of B. C. and the International Woodworkers of America. Its influence was formidable in the U.A.W. and the Mine-Mill Smelter Workers Union. These unions represented about a third of the C.C.L. membership.[102]

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[100] Toronto Star, January 2, 1945, p. 2.

[101] Toronto Star, December 23, 1944, p. 6.

[102] Horowitz, p. 85.

Within the Trades and Labour Congress the Canadian Seamen's Union, the United Textile Workers, the United Garment Workers and the International Chemical Workers were considered centers of L.P.P. strength. However, these unions represented only 15,700 members out of the T.L.C.'s total membership of 284,000.[103]

Geographically, within the labour movement, the party's greatest impact was in B. C. The province's three major unions, the I.W.A., Mine-Mill and the Shipyard Workers were all led by party members, Harold Pritchett, Harvey Murphy and Gary Culhane respectively. In the estimation of one historian, "The British Columbia labour movement was, at least until 1948, almost a personal fiefdom of the Communist party."[104] This influence was a reflection of the enthusiasm, commitment and ability which party members brought to their trade union tasks.

While these achievements may appear to be relatively unspectacular, the party recognized that never before had it wielded so much electoral or labour influence. Certainly, the L.P.P. remained a long distance from challenging the authority of the C.C.F. which had received over 800,000 votes in the 1945 federal election and was officially endorsed by the C.C.L. Nonetheless, even these modest gains had hitherto eluded Canadian communists. Within the party it must have been seen as

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[103]Ibid., p. 102.

[104]Abella, p. 111.

verification that the formation of the L.L.P., the Teheran policies, and the Liberal-Labor alliance had been correct. Any doubts which might have surfaced about these issues were dispelled by success. As Alf Dewhurst, a west coast organizer for the L.P.P., observed:

> The critics make quite a fuss about the election policy of a "Liberal-labor" coalition. But do not the results of the election justify this proposal? ... our critics ... forget the magnificent vote our party received in the recent elections.[105]

Just as Lincoln Steffens remarked when he first visited Russia, "I have seen the future and it works," the veteran leaders of the Canadian movement, based on the past performance of this still young party could approach the future with boldness and confidence. Soon however, activities within the international movement would open the party's actions, however successsful, to question and thrust the L.P.P. into its first significant crisis.

In April, 1945 the leader of the French Communist Party, Jacques Duclos, writing in his party's theoretical organ Cahiers du Communisme, launched an unexpected and sweeping assault on the policies and course of the American communist movement and its leader Earl Browder. Since the activities of the American and Canadian party's had been very similar, the L.P.P. and its

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[105] Pacific Advocate, September 1, 1945, p. 2.

leadership was, by association if not directly, also challenged.

In Duclos' view, "Browder had declared in effect, that at Teheran capitalism and socialism had begun to find the means of peaceful co-existence and collaboration in the framework of one and the same world."[106] Duclos judged this view to be completely wrong:

> By transforming the Teheran declaration of the Allied government, which is a document of a diplomatic character into a political platform of class peace in the U.S. in the post-war period, the American Communists are deforming in a radical way the meaning of the Teheran declaration and are sowing dangerous opportunist illusions which will exercise a negative influence on the American labour movement if they are not met with the necessary reply.[107]

The Duclos article signaled a repudiation of the Teheran agreements. Browder had erred by insisting upon the prospects for lasting stability and cooperation. For he had failed to recognize the short term nature of the Teheran strategy, a strategy which had been necessitated only by the war against fascism, and which was inappropriate to a post-war period in which the Soviet Union and the United States would be rivals for zones of influence.

The focus of much of Duclos' criticism was the decision of the C.P.U.S.A. at its May 20, 1944 Congress to change the name and structure of the party into the Communist Political Associa-

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[106] N.A.M., Vol. 2, No. 6, p. 196.

[107] Ibid., p. 205.

tion. In Duclos' judgement American communists had not simply given their organization another name but had in practice dissolved their party. The independent political role of Marxism, he charged, had been abandoned. "Nothing," he wrote, "justifies the dissolution of the American Communist Party."[108] Duclos concluded his article with the unrestrained statement that, "Despite declarations regarding recognition of the principles of Marxism, one is witnessing a notorious revision of Marxism on the part of Browder and his supporters."[109]

Browder, shocked yet defiant, refused to recant and unsuccessfully attempted to defend his views. By mid-June, 1945 he had been removed from the leadership. In late July, at an emergency session of the National Convention of the Communist Political Association, the C.P.U.S.A. was reconstituted. A new heresy "Browderism" had emerged.[110]

Duclos' criticism, which was generally regarded as having been initiated by the C.P.S.U., had direct and dramatic implications for the Canadian party. For years Browder had maintained close contact with the C.P.C. He had been instrumental in forming the trade union policy of the W.P.C. in 1922 when he participated in its founding convention. During the early forties when

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[108]Ibid., p. 206.

[109]Ibid., p. 205.

[110]For a discussion of the Duclos letter and its effect upon the CPUSA see Starobin, chapter four.

the C.P.C. was banned, Tim Buck lived secretly in New York where he met frequently with Browder and established a close friendship. As Browder once declared, "I feel a sort of proprietary interest in the Canadian, as well as that of the United States Party."[111] Had not the L.P.P. enthusiastically embraced Browder's views? Were Buck, Sam Carr and Stanley Ryerson also "notorious revisionists"? More importantly, was not Duclos demanding that the L.P.P. abandon those policies which had just begun to bear fruit? Must the party return to more militant policies which had previously resulted in repression and isolation?

The party did not react very swiftly. Although the Duclos article had appeared in April, the Canadian Tribune did not mention it until June and a full public discussion did not occur until it was reproduced in the July-August issue of National Affairs Monthly. From August 10th to the 15th, the National Committee of the party met to gauge the influence of Browder's revisionism upon the L.P.P.'s work. These activities occurred only after it had become clear that Duclos' criticism had been widely accepted and Browder had been repudiated.

The party's National Committee wholeheartedly endorsed Duclos' view, declaring that, "The Marxists of the western hemisphere owe a debt to Jacques Duclos."[112] Buck admitted that the

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[111] Avakumovic, p. 28.

[112] C. T. September 15, 1945, p. 10.

party had not challenged the validity of Browder's views and that some expressions of Browderism had been manifest. "It must be recognized frankly" he explained, "that we identified ourselves with the C.P.A. in support of comrade Browder's 'new course' and our evaluation of the bearing that comrade Duclos' article has upon our own party work must start with this fact."[113] Browder's influence was particularly apparent, Buck maintained, in the L.P.P.'s view that cyclical crises in capitalism could now be avoided, and in the view that imperialist rivalries would cease as Britain and the U.S. would voluntarily divide the world's markets among themselves. In addition, the party had allowed revisionism to affect relations with the C.C.F.

Nonetheless, Buck argued that the policies of the L.P.P. had not generally been wrong. He contended that in establishing the L.P.P. exactly the opposite of Browder's dissolution of the C.P.U.S.A. had occurred. In reality, the C.P.U.S.A. had never been dissolved. A reorganization, a change in form had taken place, a new name had been adopted and the party had decided not to contest elections but American communists had remained an organized force. Significantly, the C.P.A.'s name change had retained the world 'Communist' unlike the L.P.P. and although the L.P.P. ran its own candidates it had also uncritically supported the Liberal Party. However, Buck insisted that on the whole the L.P.P. had not misinterpreted the Teheran accords. But

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[113] N.A.M., Vol. 2, No. 6, p. 193.

how could it be claimed that the party's actions had been correct when it had not uttered a single objection to Browder's theories? Buck's rather specious reply was that, "The extent to which we avoided repeating comrade Browder's errors in our own practical work was due solely to our closer contact with the workers and the greater sensitivity of our party to working class opinion."[114]

Not surprisingly critics of Buck and the party policy began to appear. Unlike periods of normal party stability, the party press now carried critical letters. Charges went back to the formation of the party. One member wrote that, "The dropping of the name Communist from our party banner ... (was) essentially revisionist in nature. That is why I voted, along with the other eleven B. C. delegates to the first national convention, against changing the name."[115] Another observed:

> ... Duclos' criticism also applies in general to our Canadian party ... we received it (the Teheran accords) with the same fervour and exaltation as the Biblical prophets received divine revelation, and like them, we have preached it as the only path to salvation for suffering humanity. Teheran was to be our lodestar .... To me this appears not only a revision of Marxism. It amounts almost to

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[114]Ibid., p. 195.

[115]Pacific Advocate, July 28, 1945, p. 2.

abandonment.[116]

Buck complained that party members were beginning to criticize almost everything the party had done, as revisionist.[117]

The only prominent member to challenge Buck was the B. C. leader, Fergus McKean, a Nova Scotia born, millwright who had joined the party during the depression. He charged that the formation of the L.P.P. was comparable to Browder's formation of the Communist Political Association, for in each case the native Communist Party had been dissolved. In his estimation the L.P.P. was little more than a "petty-bourgeois, social democratic, parliamentary election machine."[118] The no-strike pledge and support for MacKenzie King were seen as confirmation of Buck's opportunism.

McKean was unable to generate any substantial support for his views. On July 30, 1945 he was suspended from the B. C. leadership. At the party's National Committee meeting in August, McKean made his final attempt to challenge Buck. Reportedly, he not only repeated his views about revisionism in the party, but alleged in a conversation with William Kardash, the Manitoba party leader, that Buck, Sam Carr, Tom McEwen and Tom Hill had become "agents provacteurs" in return for their release from

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[116] Club Life, Vol. 2, No. 9, November, 1945, p. 2.

[117] Avakumovic, p. 164.

[118] Fergus McKean, Communism versus Opportunism, (Vancouver, Published by the Organizing Committee, Communist Party of Canada, 1946) p.134.

Kingston Penitentiary in 1935.[119] A party committee met with McKean to investigate the charges, it decided they were groundless. On August 12, the National Committee in a unanimous vote expelled McKean and warned party members that he was an "unprincipled traitor and disruptionist."[120] Two weeks later the B. C. provincial executive expelled McKean's wife and five other supporters from the party.[121]

Outside of McKean's rather dubious efforts, neither Buck's leadership nor the direction of the party was seriously challenged. While Browder was deposed, Buck's position remained secure. There were a number of reasons for this. Duclos' article had been addressed to the important American party and Browder in particular. Buck and the L.P.P. were not directly tarnished by his criticism. It is likely that the Canadian party was not considered important enough to warrant international attention. Moreover, Buck unlike Browder, had not attempted to refute Duclos. On the contrary, Buck welcomed and led the investigation into revisionism within the party. Most importantly, within the American Communist Party, Browder had

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[119] C. T. August 18, 1945, p. 3. There is no other evidence to substantiate that McKean actually made the allegation. It was not repeated in any of his subsequent publications. In an interview in July, 1976 his widow expressed doubt that he had ever made the charges. If so, he had not repeated them to her.

[120] C. T. August 18, 1945, p. 3.

[121] Pacific Advocate, September 1, 1945, p. 3.

been staunchly opposed prior to the Duclos article by the prestigious party chairman, W. Z. Foster. Buck faced no comparable opponent. Within the L.P.P. McKean's attack lacked credibility. He not only lacked Foster's authority, but his own personal leadership was under examination. And McKean's criticisms, unlike Foster's, were retrospective.

With McKean's expulsion in August, 1945 the L.P.P. had survived its first two years. The examination of Browderism had been stormy and yet half-hearted. The Duclos article had effectively ended the discussion of Teheran's significance, the Liberal-Labor coalition, and the prospects for class peace. The second world war was over and the prestige of the Soviet Union as a military ally began to wane. The prospect of a socialist revolution remained dim. The L.P.P. leaders perhaps temporarily disoriented, continued to rely upon the Soviet Union, continued to avoid the task of promoting socialism in Canada and continued along the futureless path of day to day struggle.

Chapter Four

THE POST WAR : CRISIS AND DECLINE

During the war years the L.P.P. had adopted the view that "socialism must wait," presumably until fascism had been defeated. However, the post-war period witnessed an extension of this practise as the party continued to promote other, more immediate goals and diligently continued to avoid raising the public spectre of a socialist transformation in Canada.

The resolution of the Browder controversy was accompanied by a brief return to orthodoxy. The party leadership, perhaps responding to McKean's charges of revisionism and sensitive to the fact that they had never challenged Browder's views, called on the party membership to begin a broad campaign of Marxist educational work within the party. In the estimation of the National Committee there was a, "drastic need for improvement in the work of helping the members of the L.P.P. to master Marxist-Leninist theory .... Above all our party must study the priceless teachings of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin."[1] Articles designed to explain elementary socialist concepts began to appear in the Canadian Tribune, lectures were planned and party schools were convened. In Toronto, for example, the party held two courses;

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[1] N.A.M., Vol. 2, No. 8, October, 1945, p. 288.

members would meet one night a week for a six week period to study either the Philosophy of Marxism or Marxism and Canadian politics. Members were encouraged to read the Marxist classics and study in particular, the History of the C.P.S.U.[2] In January 1946 this was facilitated by the establishment of a book club which promoted and selected titles and sold them at a discount to members. Later in the year, Stanley Ryerson published a booklet which was designed to be an introduction to socialism, A World To Win. In it Ryerson described basic Marxist concepts such as the class composition of society, the source of profit, the development of monopolies a the role of the state. He also discussed some of the differences between a capitalist and socialist society, provided a reading list and a quiz which could be used either individually or in party study groups. It is important to remember that these efforts were largely internal. They were intended to ideologically reinforce a party membership shaken by the Duclos-Browder debate, as such they were limited to the party's private life and did not extend into its public activities.

The damage inflicted by the dispute over Browderism was soon forgotten as the party was hurled into a far more significant crisis. In early 1946, Fred Rose and Sam Carr, the party's national organizer were both accused of espionage activity. The subsequent investigation was distinguished less by striking spy revelations than by the extraordinary harshness of the government's

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[2] Club Life, Vol. 2, No. 8, October, 1945, p. 5.

reaction.

The government's investigation and the subsequent criminal charges were largely based on evidence provided by Igor Gouzenko, a cipher clerk in the Soviet Embassy in Ottawa who defected in September, 1945 taking with him Embassy documents to support his assertions. The government's Royal Commission investigation stated that Gouzenko had, "revealed to us the existence of a conspiratorial organization in Canada,"[3] and that, "the Communist movement was the principal base within which the espionage network was recruited."[4]

Appointed on February 5, 1946, the Royal Commission identified more than a score of people as agents but Carr and Rose were considered to be the "main cogs." In mid-March, 1946 Rose was arrested and charged with having violated the Official Secrets Act. In June he was convicted and given a six year sentence. Carr avoided arrest by leaving the country. In April the national executive of the L.P.P. announced that Carr had been removed from all party positions because he had not contacted the party since his disappearance in February. The executive noted that Carr had not appeared before the Royal Commission even

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[3]Report of the Royal Commission, Appointed under Order in Council P.C. 411 of February 5, 1946 To Investigate The Facts Relating To and The Circumstances Surrounding The Communication, By Public Officials and Other Persons In Positions of Trust of Secret and Confidential Information To Agents of a Foreign Power. (Ottawa, King's Printer, 1946) p. 11. Hereafter referred to as Report.

[4]Ibid., p. 44.

though he had been subpoenaed to do so, and added gratuitously that it, "cannot countenance failure to appear upon command by subpoena."[5]

There is little doubt that some violations of the Official Secrets Act did occur, but the Royal Commission's charge that an extensive espionage conspiracy existed is another question. The Soviet government quickly acknowledged that it had received classified information but insisted that only trivial matters had been communicated to it:

> The Soviet military attaché in Canada received from acquaintances among Canadian citizens certain information of a secret character, which, however did not present a special interest to Soviet authorities. These matters had already been published ... it would be ridiculous to assert that the communication of such insignificant secret data could create any danger whatsoever for the security of Canada.[6]

The Soviet claim was a credible one, for the spies whom Gouzenko exposed were generally not people in positions of great trust, the value of any information which they could give to the Soviet was highly questionable. In the view of the science editor of the New York Herald Tribune, it was "a spy scare in Canada so ludicrous that it is a laugh to all but the most gullible."[7]

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[5]C. T. April 27, 1946, p. 13.

[6]C. T. March 2, 1946.

[7]William Reuben, The Atom Spy Hoax, (New York, Action Books, 1955) p. 16.

The main evidence against Rose concerned his contact with a chemist and party supporter, Dr. Raymond Boyer. Boyer, working at McGill University under the auspices of the National Research Council, was involved in research on an explosive known as RDX. Boyer admitted that he had transmitted classified information about the production of the explosive to Rose,[8] who, in turn, was accused of delivering the information to the Soviet military attaché. (It must be remembered that at the time of the offence Canada and the Soviet Union were military allies.) Boyer's admission conforms to the Soviet statement that while it had received secret information, it was not considered to be significant data. For as Boyer testified:

> I should like the Commission to take under consideration, if it will, that the chemicals which went into the process were fairly well known ...
> Q: That is to the ingredients, but the formula is still secret?
> A: That formula is not, my no: the formula was published, the formula for RDX was known in 1904 ....[9]

Other chemists testified that the RDX development method had, indeed, already been published.[10] Moreover, in 1944 Russian scientists had been given an official inspection of the RDX manufacturing plant.[11] Boyer by talking to Rose about the formula had

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[8]Report, p. 398-409.

[9]Report, p. 401.

[10]Reuben, p. 55.

[11]Ibid.

technically violated his oath of secrecy, but this could hardly justify a sensational spy scandal.

Questions about the legitimacy of Rose's conviction were raised not only because of the substance of the charges but also because of the procedure employed by the Royal Commission. Rose was arrested and held for the first two weeks without access to his family or lawyers. In the Commission's view, "we considered it expedient, in the exercise of the discretion given us by the statute, not to accede immediately to the request of a witness for representation."[12] This was not the only area in which normal judicial procedure was discarded. The sweeping provision of the Official Secrets Act facilitated the conviction. As the Act declared:

> It shall not be necessary to show that the accused person was guilty of any particular act tending to show a purpose prejudicial to the safety or interests of the State, ... he may be convicted if ... he has ... obtained or attempted to obtain information which is calculated to be or might be or is intended to be directly or indirectly useful to a foreign power.[13]

Moreover, the Act also placed the burden of proof on the accused rather than the prosecution. As the Commission observed, "it is for the person, against whom an offence under the statute is

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[12]Report, p. 676. For a discussion of the procedure see Reuben, chapter III.

[13]Report, p. 651-652.

alleged, to establish his innocence to the reasonable satisfaction of the tribunal ...."[14]

Justifiably, this procedure produced considerable criticism from communists and non-communists, alike. John Diefenbaker, for instance, charged that the proceedings were employing the "star chamber method" which "sweep aside Magna Carta, habeas corpus and the Bill of Rights."[15] One Liberal member of parliament stated:

> I cannot by my silence appear to approve even tacitly what I believe to have been a great mistake on the part of the government. If this is to be the funeral of liberalism, I do not desire to be even an honorary pall-bearer.[16]

And the Canadian Forum pointed out that:

> It is preposterous for the government to claim that the business is so tremendously serious as to justify this startling departure from the methods of British justice for so prolonged a period. If the police agents in charge of the government's case were anyone else but the R.C.M.P., public opinion might be able to give the government the benefit of the doubt. But the psychopathic addiction of the Ottawa headquarters of the R.C.M.P. to anti-communist

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[14]Report, p. 651.

[15]Hansard, March 21, 1946, p. 137.

[16]Ibid., p. 173.

> mania is so notorious that any statements from them are suspect....[17]

Not only were the Commission's procedure and the Act's provisions open to question but the actual establishment of the commission itself raised objections, for its inquiry and judgements preceeded the legal trial. Consequently, the accused were declared guilty by the Commission prior to their actual trial. Yet only eleven of the twenty-one named in the report were convicted, eight were acquitted and the other two had the charges withdrawn. Rose was convicted in June, 1946 after a sixteen day trial, the jury deliberated for thirty-four minutes.

The party supported Rose's defence. Its press attacked the procedures and insisted upon his innocence while a defence committee raised funds for the legal expenses. Yet there was an unmistakably half-hearted tone to the defence campaign. It lacked the enthusiasm and prominence which previous incidents such as Buck's conviction in 1931 had aroused. The party was quick to point out that while it accepted Rose's claim of innocence, it did not condone any acts of espionage. Its support was conditional, "Nothing will move it from this position (support for Rose)," National Affairs reported, "except satisfactory proof of guilt."[18] Buck recalled later that serious doubts had

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[17] Canadian Forum, Vol. XXVI, No. 303, April 1946, p. 3.

[18] N.A.M., April 1946, p. 102.

been raised within the party about Rose's denial. "The R.C.M.P. brought out evidence to the effect that ... Fred had been extremely friendly with an officer of the Soviet Embassy .... Now, Fred hadn't told us this."[19] Consequently, the party's response to the spy allegations attempted to overlook Rose's indiscretions and focus instead on what it felt was transparent anti-Sovietism. To the L.P.P., the spy trials were a prelude to an imperialist offensive against the Soviet Union.

The effect on the party was considerable, damage to both the party's membership and reputation was at least as serious as the Hitler-Stalin pact had been. Buck acknowledged that, "Thousands of members of the Party believed the newspapers and the radio .... I suppose that several thousand people left the party because of it."[20] Moreover, public support for the party quickly began to shrink. This was apparent in the by-election held to fill the Cartier seat which had been declared vacant following Rose's conviction. In 1945 Rose had won the seat with over ten thousand votes and a majority of nearly fifteen hundred. In the by-election, less than two years later in March 1947, Mike Buhay the L.P.P. candidate ran a distant third, more than three thousand votes behind the Liberal victor and with nearly four thousand votes fewer than Rose's total.

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[19]Reynolds, p. 803.

[20]Reynolds, p. 816.

The impact of this feeble spy case was far more significent than the damage to either the people implicated or to the L.P.P. It signalled the beginning of the cold war and introduced an era in which hysterical spy trials had a tragic prominence. For the L.P.P. it sparked the return of isolation and repression. While the party was not outlawed, a motion to that effect was introduced in the Commons.[21] The Quebec government banned the distribution of the party's French language paper Le Combat, and Premier Duplessis even announced that the Montreal Police had uncovered a communist conspiracy to seize power complete with a secret radio station.[22] The Canadian Chamber of Commerce issued alarming pamphlets like The Communist Threat to Canada which warned that Canadian revolutionaries were "feverishly active." In at least one city Windsor, Ontario, the L.P.P.'s offices were broken into and vandalized.[23] Party radio broadcasts were banned. Often the use of public schools was prohibited, and even public meeting halls were denied to the party. Even communist cultural activities were muzzled. When Paul Robeson visited Toronto in 1947 for a concert the Toronto Telegram complained that he had, "a penchant for

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[21]Hansard, April 15, 1947, p. 2071. See LaCroix motion.

[22]Stewart Smith, Red Bogey (N.P., L.P.P. N.D.) p. 4.

[23]N.A.M., Vol. 5, No. 5, May 1948, p. 147.

interrupting his concerts to orate Communist ideology."[24] The Toronto police commission, never reluctant to fight communism, as a condition for permitting the concert to be held insisted upon an assurance from Robeson that he would not speak.[25]

The L.P.P.'s influence in the trade union movement was also sharply reduced.[26] Friction had existed throughout the decade, particularly in the C.C.L., between C.C.F. and party supporters. By 1948, C.C.L. president Aaron Mosher was publicly urging the labour movement to leave, "nothing undone to awaken the people to the menace of Communism."[27] And by 1950 the C.C.L. constitution permitted the expulsion of any union which, "followed the principles and policies of the C.P."[28] In important unions like the Steelworkers, the U.A.W., and the I.W.A. the party was unable to retain its influence and its leaders were routed from office. And in those unions in which the party was able to retain its executive positions, like the United Electrical Workers, Mine-Mill, the International Leather

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[24] Toronto Telegram, May 13, 1947.

[25] Daily Tribune, May 17, 1947 (Hereafter, the D.T.).

[26] See Abella, Nationalism, Communism and Canadian Labour, and Avakumovic, p. 186-199.

[27] Abella, p. 149.

[28] Abella, p. 161.

and Fur Workers Union, the Fishermen and the Canadian Seamen's Union, the entire union was expelled from its respective congress.

The victory over fascism did not free the L.P.P. from its promise to subordinate socialist goals to other more immediate issues. For while the Rose case indicated that the "grand alliance" engineered at Teheran was beginning to dissolve, it did not alter the basic post-war reality that new zones of influence, established through the collaboration of Russia, Britain and the U.S., had emerged in Europe with Soviet influence expanded through the creation of people's democracies in Bulgaria, Hungary, Rumania and Poland. Moreover, the American bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki had ushered in a new and threatening atomic era. The post-war thrust of both the international communist movement and the L.P.P. was designed to deal with these new factors rather than the prospect of socialist revolution. The post-war orientation of communists involved an appeal for peace, a peace which would ratify Soviet gains in Europe and simultaneously prevent the creation of anti-Soviet bloc, especially one with atomic capacity.

From the Hilter-Stalin pact to the euphoria surrounding the Teheran agreement, and now in the post-war period Canadian communists had demonstrated their willingness to subordinate socialist issues for ones designed to bolster the security of the Soviet Union. Shortly after the war, it had become apparent that foreign communist parties shared this perspective when the large French and Italian parties behaved, as Deutscher put it,

"with extraordinary, selfless moderation," thereby tacitly recognizing that western Europe was ceded to the British and American zones of influence and that the restoration of capitalism was to occur unchallenged. Russia's lack of either sympathy or support for the communist-led Greek partisan's resistance to British intervention and Stalin's silence about the continued maintenance of a fascist regime in Franco's Spain was further evidence that no revolutionary offensive was going to be encouraged by either the C.P.S.U. or its fraternal parties in the western nations. In Canada the struggle for socialism was again postponed as the L.P.P. launched a campaign against "war mongering monopolists." The preservation of peace through the maintanence of the grand alliance combined with proposals to reduce the influence of certain industrial monopolies became the basis of the L.P.P.'s post-war program.

This program was formally adopted at the L.P.P.'s second national convention held in June, 1946. The fight for peace was the most immediate and central of the party's demands. As Buck warned in his opening address:

> We must strive to arouse the entire nation to the realization that our country is already in danger again .... Sinister imperialist interests are plotting a third world war, this time with Canada as the base and probable scene of their military operations.[29]

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[29] For Peace, Progress and Socialism, Speeches and Main Resolutions of the 2nd National Convention of the L.P.P., Toronto, June 1-5, 1946, p. 6.

The method of preserving peace involved strengthening "Big Three Unity" by carrying out the Teheran, Yalta and Potsdam agreements, sharing nuclear technology with the Soviet Union and the control of the atom bomb by the United Nation's Security Council.

Domestically, the cornerstone of the party's program rested on its anti-monopoly view:

> A small but immensely powerful group of monopolists own and control Canada .... In order to maintain their profits and to perpetuate their imperialist system, these monopolists seek to abrogate democracy in Canada and are striving toward fascism - the destruction of the trade union movement, and the negation of parliamentary democracy by the open dictatorial rule of Big Business.[30]

The party's solution to this danger was not a revolutionary one but was rather a proposal to, "Curb the monopolies by limiting their profits. Nationalize key industries such as coal."[31] Even this proposal was not particularly radical. In fact, two years earlier the C.C.F.'s national convention had called for the nationalization of industries which, "are monopolistic in character or are being operated to the detriment of the Canadian people."[32]

By the second convention the party must have realized how painfully fleeting the successes of the war years would be.

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[30]Ibid., p. 54-55.

[31]Ibid., p. 56.

[32]Zakuta, p. 61.

The grand alliance was becoming increasingly tenuous, Fred Rose was in prison, the anti-communist campaign in the trade unions had begun, and Buhay's performance in the Cartier by-election would soon prove to be disappointing. Within months of the convention the party would be rocked by the defection of Pat Sullivan, president of the Canadian Seamen's Union, secretary-treasurer of the Trades and Labour Congress and one of the party's most prominent trade unionists. Sullivan's well publicized resignation came amid mutual accusations, he charged that his union was completely dominated by the L.P.P., which in turn labelled him a "vile turncoat." Sullivan proceeded to help organize a rival union the Canadian Lake Seamen's Union. He recommended that his former associates in the C.S.U., "Take my advice; follow my example; resign from the C.S.U.; do not pay your union dues; throw away your C.S.U. button; it is the communist badge of shame."[33] This further tarnished the L.P.P.'s image and increased its isolation.

The party responded to these set backs by launching two ambitious campaigns. The June convention decided to start a massive recruitment for ten thousand new members. In late 1946 an even more ambitious proposal was made to raise $250,000 to enable the Canadian Tribune to begin publishing on a daily basis. The L.P.P. promised its "unstinted support" for the plans to publish the new Daily Tribune which it hoped would be

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[33]C. T. March 29, 1947, p. 1.

effective enough to "completely replace the 'news' organs of big business ... and win thousands of new adherents to the cause of peace and Socialism."[34]

Raising a quarter of a million dollars was a formidable task but one which the party pursued with both zeal and considerable success. Each member and supporter of the party was urged to make a substantial pledge of fifty dollars. "Every individual, every organization, every club or group, valuing freedom, democracy and peace, fighting for better living standards and against the rise of fascism in this country,"[35] was invited to contribute. Supporters were urged to sacrifice, cash bonds, even borrow the money if necessary, in order to raise the required amount. Week after week the party press exhorted readers to contribute. The fund raising proceeded with such fervor that an exaggerated and distorted perspective of the paper's importance developed. A. E. Amith claimed, for instance, that the launching of the Daily Tribune, "may be the turning point in the history of the labour movement in Canada."[36]

Although barely half the money had been raised by April 1947, the first issue appeared as scheduled on May Day. The week day edition of the daily had twelve pages, the weekend six-

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[34] N.A.M., January 1947, Vol. 4, No. 1, p. 7-8.

[35] C. T. January 11, 1947, p. 16.

[36] C. T. January 25, 1947, p. 14.

teen. Regular features included a large sports section complete with horse racing selections, reviews of books, theatres and films, recipes, fashions, photographs of models and beauty queens, a health column and a full page of comics. These included "Cynthia," "the adventures of a young and beautiful woman who fights for the love of her husband - a gripping and intensely emotional comic strip," and "Ayer Lane," "the thrilling-adventure strip." One reader congratulated the Daily Tribune on its excellent racing selections, which he felt would help the paper to, "reap a big harvest when racing fans like myself get to know it."[37] Another letter which the editors printed complimented Toronto for its fine burlesque shows.[38]

Within weeks it became apparent that the Daily Tribune in an effort to reach a mass base kept social and political commentary to a minimum. Socialist content was sacrificed to popularity and circulation. Party members who had been led to believe that the paper marked an historic turning point, who had sacrificed and made generous donations were disappointed. Complaints began to appear. As one reader explained:

> While I appreciate ... human interest features, I must query the propriety of devoting the front page of your May 7 issue to Barbara Ann Scott's car, particularly with developments in the French

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[37] D. T. May 19, 1947, p. 5.

[38] D. T. May 12, 1947.

> political crisis receiving such scanty and inadequate coverage in the everyday press. May I hope that your front page will in future be reserved for developments of greater import.[39]

The party's dream of maintaining a daily which could successfully compete with the capitalist press was shortlived. The goal of $250,000 was never reached although $222,234 was raised,[40] which was a considerable achievement. The paper also faced a number of other obstacles. In September, the Toronto Board of Control attempted to block its sale on Toronto streets by passing a special by-law which prohibited the placing of newspaper boxes on city streets unless the paper had a circulation of at least 150,000 copies. Although a public outcry resulted in the by-law being lifted, the paper's circulation remained low with only an average of seven thousand copies per issue being sold.[41] The party complained about the rising cost of newsprint and a boycott by large advertising agencies and in early November, 1947 the Daily Tribune reverted to the weekly Canadian Tribune. In the six months before the daily's publication was suspended the paper had spent not only all the money raised but had accrued a deficit of over $10,000.[42] It was clear that the party had seriously overestimated its possibilities, particularly as weekly party

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[39] D. T. May 12, 1947.

[40] D. T. November 1, 1947, p. 3.

[41] D. T. November 3, 1947, cited Avakumovic, p. 175.

[42] C. T. October 31, 1947.

papers continued to be published in Montreal and Vancouver.

It was difficult for the party to admit another failure. As late as March 1949 it still preferred to call the collapse of the Daily Tribune only a "temporary retreat."[43] The experiment with a daily paper was a failure not only because the paper had survived for just six months, but more importantly because the party in its eagerness to regain popularity had produced a newspaper which did nothing to enhance the prestige of the communist movement or to persuade Canadians that capitalism ought to be replaced by socialism. The Daily Tribune proved to be another demoralizing and expensive setback which the party faithful had to endure. It further reduced the party's credibility.

The suspension of the daily coincided with important developments abroad which resulted in a clarification of the policies of both the L.P.P. and the international communist movement. On October 6, 1947 the Daily Tribune announced the formation in Poland of the Communist Information Bureau or Cominform. The bureau was composed of two members of the central committee of the communist parties in the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Romania, Hungary, Poland, Czechoslovakia, France and Italy. The L.P.P., although not invited to participate, nonetheless welcomed the bureau's formation. The Cominform, largely a response to growing anti-Soviet activities by the U.S. and the launching of the Marshall Plan, was designed to strengthen the Soviet Union's position in Eastern and Central Europe and help

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[43] N.A.M., March 1949, Vol. 6, No. 2, p. 95.

prevent the construction of an anti-Soviet bloc. It signaled a shift from earlier efforts to accommodate British and American interests, to more emphasis on the necessity to defend the socialist camp.

The main report to the conference was delivered by the Soviet delegate, Andrei Zhdanov and was reproduced in the L.P.P.'s theoretical journal, National Affairs Monthly. His report confirmed that the grand alliance was dead and offered a new analysis of world forces in which, "two main camps - the imperialist and the anti-democratic on the one hand and the anti-imperialist and the democratic on the other,"[44] now faced one another. The imperialist camp was led by the U.S. and supported by France and Britain. While "the U.S.S.R. and the countries of the new democracy constitute the mainstay" of the anti-imperialist camp, it also relied on, "the fraternal Communist Parties of all countries."[45] The Cominform's initial meeting also declared that the fundamental task of all communist parties was to, "place themselves in the vanguard of the opposition against the imperialist plans of expansion and aggression."[46] Policies were established which would be followed until Stalin's death. For the remainder of the decade and well into the next the

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[44]N.A.M., January 1948, Vol. 5, No. 1, p. 15.

[45]Ibid., p. 16.

[46]N.A.M., November 1947, p. 348.

Canadian party focused on two issues identified by the Cominform. The peace campaign was intensified and the question of national independence was raised. Fernando Claudin states in his study, The Communist Movement: From Comintern to Cominform, that neither in Zhdanov's report nor in the manifesto issued by the founding meeting was there any mention of the struggle for socialism in the capitalist countries, even as a distant prospect. As he suggests, "The political line he (Stalin) laid down for the Communist movement in 1947 continued to give priority to the exploitation of inter-imperialist and inter-capitalist contradictions rather than between bourgeoisie and proletariat."[47]

Although the L.P.P.'s 1946 convention had decided that Canada had emerged from the second world was as an imperialist power, in early 1948 this concern with Canadian imperialism was replaced with the conviction that American domination was a far more significant issue. The party's growing awareness of the threat posed to Canada by the U.S., harmonized with the Cominform's strategy of emphasizing, "inter-imperialist and inter-capitalist contradictions." At a national executive meeting in January, 1948 the party announced that Canada faced the imminent danger of becoming an economic colony of the U.S. Adopting the Cominform's "two camp" analysis it warned that Canada, "had been taken into the camp of the imperialist warmongers by the King government."[48] In Buck's opinion the policies of the Liberal

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[47]Claudin, Vol. 2, p. 471.

[48]N.A.M., February 1948, Vol. 5, No. 2, p. 35.

government had been pursued, "in abject surrender to U.S. monopoly capital and almost servile efforts to satisfy the directors of U.S. imperialism."[49] In the L.P.P.'s view Canada was now, "threatened with complete national enslavement to a foreign power."[50]

The party's immediate concern was the announcement by Finance Minister Abbott that he intended to modify certain trade policies in order to reduce Canadian purchases of U. S. goods. By prohibiting the importation of certain items and imposing a twenty-five percent special tax on others, his proposals were designed to correct a trade imbalance and bolster Canadian exchange reserves while permitting, "a maximum degree of economic cooperation between the two countries."[51] But in Buck's view the "Abbott Plan" had far more sinister intentions. It would result in Canada being able to export manufactured goods only with the prior approval of the U. S., would force Canada's foreign policy to conform to the American's, and would "involve Canada in U. S. plans to provoke a third world war."[52] In essence, Abbott's proposals amounted to, "a plan to wipe out Canadian sovereignty."[53] As a result of the party's belief that Canada's sovereignty was being undermined, a campaign to preserve

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[49]Ibid., p. 36.

[50]Buck, Thirty Years, p. 211.

[51]Hansard, December 16, 1947, p. 329.

[52]N.A.M., February, 1948, Vol. 5, No. 2, p. 36.

[53]Ibid., p. 43.

Canadian independence was launched. The L.P.P. rallied around the slogan, "Keep Canada Independent."

The party's commitment to national independence became a pervasive theme. Soon the party began to take positions on U. S. cultural domination in films, the theatre, literature and sports. The party decided to, "revive Sir John A. MacDonald's and Darcy McGee's famous slogan 'Canada First.'"[54] In addition to the publication of the pamphlet, Keep Canada Independent in 1948, the following years saw the party print, The Yankee Occupation of Canada (1950), We Fight For Canada (1951), and Put Canada First (1953). The L.P.P.'s involvement in the independence issue confirmed two aspects of the party's history. On the one hand it was a mechanical response to international developments, an adoption of the strategy provided by the Cominform and indeed Stalin personally who had exhorted western communist leaders to, "raise the banner of national independence and national sovereignty, of bourgeois democratic freedoms and peace."[55] On the other hand, it demonstrated the party's inability to integrate reformist with revolutionary demands. The revival of the "Canada First" slogan and "Keep Canada Independent" had little class content. It subordinated the prospect of a socialist Canada to anti-imperialism.

The L.P.P.'s sudden infatuation with nationalism occurred

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[54]Ibid., p. 63.

[55]Claudin, Vol. 2, p. 597.

while the party was still staggering from the spy trials, setbacks in the trade unions and the collapse of the Daily Tribune. If party leaders believed that the independence issue would be a popular question from which they could profit, they were mistaken. In fact, Buck recalled that many supporters were hostile to the party's position:

> I received the shock of my life when I went out on a tour in 1948 and '49 ... where we had for years received massive support, the workers didn't like my position. Their attitude was, "What difference does it make to me if the company that exploits me is a Canadian company or an American company? If I've got to be exploited, I don't care who it is. I just want to get the most I can for my labour." ... Workers who had always been very close admirers or friends of mine and supporters were accusing me of bourgeois nationalism.[56]

Eventually, opposition surfaced among more prominent party members. A few years after the "Keep Canada Independent" campaign had been launched, Harry Fistell, a veteran party journalist who had been a staff member of the Young Worker and Daily Clarion and had been an assistant editor of both the Canadian Tribune and the Daily Tribune, bitterly denounced the L.P.P.'s approach to independence:

> Today the Party applauds everything - or almost everything - to which the label "Canadian" is attached ... this helpless trailing behind the bourgeoisie is the final pathetic outcome ... this phoney, uncritical, unhealthy worship of Canadianism for its own sake ... is becoming the main tendency of the Party position.[57]

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[56]Reynolds, p. 834.

[57]N.A.M., Vol. XI, No. 4, Mid-March, 1954, p. 60-61.

The L.P.P. accorded only one issue greater prominence than that of independence, this was the peace campaign. Fearing that the U. S. was preparing to launch an atomic war against the Soviet Union, National Affairs Monthly suggested in October, 1948 that, "The No. 1 task of the L.P.P. today is to unite peace loving Canadians in the fight to prevent a world atomic war."[58] Buck agreed, pledging that the party, "subordinates all other questions ... to stop the insane drive to war."[59] Once again the L.P.P. was dutifully endorsing the Cominform's policies. As the bureau's meeting in November, 1949 had declared, "The Communist and Workers' Parties must use every means in the struggle to ensure stable and prolonged peace; they must subordinate all other activities to this paramount task of the day."[60]

Week after week the Canadian Tribune carried article upon article dealing with the peace movement. Reports of the meetings and resolutions of the World Peace Congress and its affiliates were carried. The paper reprinted Soviet speeches at the United Nations dealing with nuclear disarmament, articles from Pravda and quotations from Stalin concerning the prospects for peace. Anti-war motions passed at union meetings or endorsed by youth groups or women's organizations were reported.

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[58]N.A.M., Vol. 5, No. 9, October-November, 1948, p. 299.

[59]Buck, Thirty Years, p. 217.

[60]Claudin, Vol. 2, p. 580.

Incidents like the L.P.P.'s peace rally in October, 1948 at which Buck spoke, and the April 1949 Scientific and Cultural Conference for World Peace were front page items.

In early December 1948, with the party's support, a Toronto Peace Council was established. It was chaired by Dr. James G. Endicott, a former United Church missionary to China, who helped form the Canadian Peace Congress in May, 1949 and who became the spokesman for the Canadian peace movement. One of the Congress' principal functions and one which the L.P.P. supported wholeheartedly was the circulation of "Ban the Bomb" petitions. The party's enthusiasm for the peace rallies, resolutions, marches and petitions was inexhaustible. A new slogan, "Stand on Guard for Canada Against the Warmongers," was adopted. Stalin now became the "Titan of Peace," his life, party members were assured, had been, "devoted to the struggle for peace."[61] It was argued repeatedly that Soviet foreign policy was designed to uphold the cause of peace, while "the only dangers of war in the world comes from U. S. imperialism."[62]

A suggestion of imminent doom dominated much of the peace campaign. As the first paragraph to the draft resolution for the L.P.P.'s 1949 convention read, "Canada is in danger. The threat of horrible atomic war hangs over our country."[63] St.

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[61] N.A.M., December, 1949, Vol. 6, No. 11, p. 372.

[62] N.A.M., Vol. 5, No. 9, October-November, 1948, p. 315.

[63] Ibid., p. 294.

Laurent and Lester Pearson, then his undersecretary for external affairs, were frequently attacked. Buck claimed that St. Laurent was, "preparing to plunge the Canadian people into a disasterous, reactionary war,"[64] while it was reported that Pearson's "pet project" was the creation of a war alliance.[65] The leaders of the C.C.F., as well, were criticized for their support of the Marshall Plan and their unwillingness to endorse the Peace Congress and its activities.

Although the party was convinced that the threat of war was imminent, it was not considered inevitable. The possibilities existed to hold American imperialism in check, presumably if enough petitions were signed and resolutions passed. In many ways this option of peaceful co-existence, although not emphasized, made Earl Browder's war-time conception of "lasting peace" seem less heretical. And in fact, Browder unsuccessfully applied for readmission into the C.P.U.S.A. in August, 1948. There was also a certain irony in the fact that the international communist movement was committed to the preservation of world peace at the very moment when Chinese communists were engaged in a revolutionary war.

The L.P.P.'s anti-war strategy attempted to construct a broad base in support of minimal demands. Consequently, socialist aims were regarded as an obstacle and excluded. Recruiting

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[64] C. T. September 20, 1948, p. 1

[65] C. T. June 19, 1948.

campaigns urged people to join the, "Party of Peace" as the L.P.P. began to develop a distinctly pacifist complexion. The criteria for membership in the party continued to avoid ideological concerns, as one membership application in the Canadian Tribune read:

> I am opposed to war. I am interested in the L.P.P.'s fight to preserve peace, to keep Canada independent, to win security and happiness for the people of our country. Kindly send me further information.[66]

There is no doubt that the L.P.P.'s voluntary relegation of socialist issues, its view that the struggle for peace and the promotion of socialism were mutually exclusive, coincided with the views of the Soviet leaders. Stalin's own description of the peace movement established very conscious and precise limitations, he explained:

> The current peace movement has the aim of drawing the popular masses into the struggle to preserve peace and overt a new world war. It does not therefore seek to overthrow capitalism and establish socialism; it limits itself to democratic aims in the struggle for peace. In this respect, the present movement to preserve peace differs from the one which existed during the First World War....[67]

The willingness of the L.P.P. to fling itself into the peace and independence campaigns reflected its endorsement of the

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[66] C. T. May 2, 1949.

[67] Claudin, Vol. 2, p. 580.

general strategy outlined by the Cominform. But the party also faithfully echoed the Cominform's position on more specific issues. The outstanding example is the Stalin-Tito breach. The Communist Party of Yugoslavia's unwillingness to sacrifice its own autonomy culminated in a Cominform resolution in June, 1948 which bitterly criticized the leadership of the Yugoslavia party and effectively ostracized it from the international communist movement, although only a year earlier it had been one of the Cominform's founding parties. Apparently unable to empathize with or perhaps even understand the Yugoslav's desire for autonomy, the L.P.P. unhesitatingly supported the Cominform. Buck explained that, "every communist must agree that the position taken by the Information Bureau in its resolution is correct."[68] Both the Canadian Tribune and National Affairs Monthly reprinted Cominform statements on Yugoslavia. As the split became more pronounced and the accusations more vicious, the party press loyally reported that Tito had joined the imperialist camp, was a "trotskyite despot," dealt with -"Wall St. spies," and was finally a fascist. It was not until May 1956, after the Stalin revelations at the 20th Congress of the C.P.S.U., that the L.P.P. admitted that it had been "wrong in accepting uncritically" the Cominform position.[69]

The policies of the late forties were accompanied by attempts to build vast, progressive but non-communist movements

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[68] N.A.M., Vol. 5, No. 7, July-August, 1948, p. 214-215.

[69] N.A.M., Vol. 13, No. 5, May-June, 1956, p. 22.

dedicated to peace and independence. In the U. S., for example, the C.P.U.S.A. was instrumental in building support for the third party candidacy of Henry Wallace. Unlike the United States where communists were faced with the task of popularizing the formation of a third party movement, the L.P.P. realized that the C.C.F. provided a ready-made alternative to the Liberals and Conservatives. Although years of criticism of social democracy had preceded the decision, in January 1948 the L.P.P. called for the election of a C.C.F. government. Support for the C.C.F. was justified because social democrats constitute, "the biggest body of Canadians who are opposed to fascism and the attempt to provoke a new world war."[70] The national committee directed party members to work for the election of C.C.F. candidates and decided that L.P.P. candidates would be nominated only in those few ridings in which their support was stronger than the C.C.F.'s. Moreover, within the trade union movement the party decided that it would generally support motions of affiliation to the C.C.F. Some party members even proposed that the L.P.P. itself, affiliate to the C.C.F.

In the party's view the major drawback to the new proposal was the C.C.F. leadership who, like the leaders of European social democracy, were "striving to subordinate the socialist and social democratic parties to the aims of U. S. imperialism."[71]

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[70] N.A.M., Vol. 5, No. 2, February 1948, p. 54.

[71] Ibid., P. 46.

Despite the attitude of Coldwell, Lewis and Scott the C.C.F. deserved support because it was thought that these leaders could be prevented from introducing reactionary measures through the pressure of their progressive following. Of course, support for the C.C.F. was justified partly by default, for the Liberals whom the party had previously supported were now regarded as being completely behind the imperialist camp. Moreover, many party members realized that the programs of the two parties had much in common. As A. A. MacLeod, the party's Ontario M.P.P. observed, the platform of the C.C.F. and the L.P.P., "are significant not for the differences between them, but for their striking similarity ... you find a substantial agreement differing in only some details."[72] However, the C.C.F. consistently rejected the L.P.P.'s offers. The C.C.F.'s national convention in 1948 not only refused to sanction any electoral arrangments with the L.P.P. but reaffirmed the party's hostility to communism. Undetered the L.P.P. adopted the slogan, "Unite at the Polls: Elect the C.C.F."

The party had an opportunity to apply its new pro-C.C.F. policy in two upcoming provincial elections, one held in Ontario on June 7, 1948, the other in Saskatchewan on June 24. In Ontario the party was particularly anxious to help defeat the Conservative government of George Drew whom the L.P.P. regarded with justification to be a vicious anti-communist. Leslie Morris described the

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[72]N.A.M., Vol. 5, No. 4, April, 1948, p. 123.

election as little more than, "a scheme to bring about a putsch in the national Tory party, with Drew as the feuhrer and 'Communism' the fake issue."[73] Fueled by the party's hatred of Drew, National Affairs Monthly declared, "it is the categorical duty of all progressive citizens in Ontario, who want an alternative to Drew, to back to the utmost without stint or reservation, the election of a C.C.F. government."[74] Throughout the province L.P.P. members worked for the election of C.C.F. candidates. Only two L.P.P. candidates, the party's sitting members, J. B. Salsberg and A. A. MacLeod, ran. Both faced C.C.F. opponents.

Both Salsberg and MacLeod emphasized their personal records and accomplishments in the campaign. Salsberg's literature for example referred to him as, "Your Fighting Champion For Twenty-Five Years." His campaign featured attacks on Drew, "Colonel Drew preaches war. He wants to regiment the unemployed .... His police smash picket lines. They act as strikebreakers ...,"[75] coupled with an account of his own efforts to fight for better housing, bigger pensions, lower prices and for laws directed against racial discrimination. Ideological questions were not raised, socialism was not mentioned. Salsberg, like the party's municipal politicians, had earned the trust of his

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[73]N.A.M., Vol. 5, No. 7, July-August, 1948, p. 224.

[74]N.A.M., Vol. 5, No. 3, March, 1948, p. 106.

[75]Why Is She Afraid? Pamplet issued by Norman Freed, official agent of J. B. Salsberg, Toronto, 1948, situated, Voaden Papers, York University Archives, Box 1, File 5.

constituents. He was an able parliamentarian, had lived in the riding, had helped to organize unions there and had carried through on his pledges to fight for reforms. As he promised, "I never wavered and never hesitated in the good fight for a better life for the common people. If re-elected I shall continue the battle."[76] The election resulted in Drew's re-election, with a reduced majority however. Both Salsberg and MacLeod were re-elected by substantial margins. Their victories were personal triumphs, not expressions of support for either the L.P.P. or socialism.

In Saskatchewan the party endorsed the Douglas government. Only a single L.P.P. candidate, W. M. Berezowski in Pelly constituency, ran. He ran a poor third receiving 1,300 votes, which however had they gone to the C.C.F. candidate who was narrowly defeated, would have added one more member to the Douglas government. Elsewhere in the province the L.P.P. supported C.C.F. candidates.

By late 1948 it had become clear to the L.P.P. leaders that their support for the C.C.F. had not produced the desired results. Rather than helping to construct a broad movement for peace and independence, the action had confused the party membership, obscured differences between the two groups and tended to reduce the party's membership to a parliamentary adjunct of the C.C.F. The L.P.P.'s third national convention in February, 1949 frankly admitted the policy had been a mistake. As Buck's report to the

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[76] Ibid.

convention lamented:

> The slogan, "Unite at the Polls, Elect a C.C.F. Government" encouraged an uncritical attitude towards the policies and ideology of right-wing social democracy. The slogan and the tactic that it expressed opened the door to opportunist effacement of the Party as an independent political fighting force.[77]

Various explanations emerged to account for the initial decision Buck argued that the party was, "so absorbed in the study of short-term tactical questions that we neglected the broad long-term factors."[78] Maurice Rush felt that the slogan was, "an attempt to find a short cut to the masses, particularly the C.C.F. masses,"[79] and Stanley Ryerson argued that the main reason was, "ideological political weakness."[80]

If the "Elect a C.C.F. Government" slogan had produced a type of political schizophrenia as a result of which the L.P.P. membership could not clearly distinguish between the two parties, it was at least partly, as A. A. MacLeod had explained, because the two parties pursued similar domestic reforms. At the 1949 convention, the party emphasized that major differences did however exist, particularly in foreign policy matters. Buck

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[77] N.A.M., Vol. 6, No. 2, March, 1949, p. 63.

[78] Ibid.

[79] C. T. January 3, 1949, p. 6.

[80] C. T. February 21, 1949, cited Avakumovic, p. 179.

stated that even within the last year, the C.C.F. leadership had moved further into the anti-Soviet camp. The party reverted to a conventional but dogmatic characterization of the social democrats, who as Jacob Penner explained, "were playing the role of the agents of the bourgeoisie in the ranks of labour."[81] The convention decided that in future, the only C.C.F. candidates they would support were those who would commit themselves to the L.P.P.'s position on peace, independence and a return to "Big Three" unity.

The ease with which L.P.P. supporters had swung behind the C.C.F. was facilitated by the L.P.P.'s domestic policies. As with the party's proposals during the war period, its post-war program featured reforms which most social democrats could support. Economic measures included proposals to provide subsidies for necessary consumer goods, establish price controls and an excess profit tax, abolish the sales tax, provide minimum market prices for agricultural products and nationalize certain economic sectors like the banking system and the steel industry. Social reforms included a call for increases in pension and unemployment insurance benefits, low rental housing was proposed as was a national minimum wage, a national health program, a labour code and a Bill of Rights. Canadian independence would be safeguarded through measures which would exempt Canadian made goods from excise tax and trade arrangements would be encouraged with Commonwealth countries as well as the Soviet Union

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[81] C. T. December 13, 1948, p. 8.

and the new democracies. Peace was to be encouraged through proposals to withdraw U. S. troops from Canada, sell Canadian uranium only for peaceful purposes and have the Canadian representative at the United Nations support Soviet proposals to outlaw the atomic bomb.

Just as Salsberg and MacLeod were able to retain their support during the late forties, the party's municipal strongholds proved to be impenetrable. In Toronto in the 1947, 1948 and 1949 elections Wards four and five remained loyal to L.P.P. candidates as Norman Freed and Charles Sims were re-elected aldermen each year and Edna Ryerson was returned to the board of education. Stewart Smith continued his municipal activities by running for controller each year and just as surely running fifth for an office in which only the top four candidates were elected. Nonetheless his support was both consistent and impressive as he received 42,232, 49,319 and 43,337 votes respectively.[82] Similarly, in Winnipeg the party's veteran politician Jacob Penner retained his aldermanic position. And in Vancouver, although the party was unable to elect anyone, it ran a particularly strong campaign in 1947 when its mayoralty candidate, Effie Jones, polled 19,000 votes. Running under the label, Civic Reform Committee, her campaign profited from public displeasure with recently increased street car fares which she promised to reduce.

Like the L.P.P.'s civic activities in the first half of

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[82] Toronto Municipal Handbook, 1947 p. 87; 1948 p. 92; 1949 p. 76.

the decade, its post-war municipal actions remained remarkably impervious to ideological questions. There was a renewed emphasis on community work while housing problems, transit issues and tax reform were favorite issues. Candidates focused on immediate concerns, never mentioned socialism and were largely indistinguishable from other reformers. Stewart Smith, for instance, was asked what he felt the single, most important question in the 1947 civic election to be, "Milk" he replied, "the threat of a further increase in the price of milk."[83]

The absence of ideological concerns was facilitated by the refusal of civic candidates to run openly as L.P.P. candidates. Instead they ran simply as individuals, as they did in Toronto, or under the auspices of ambiguous reform committees, as in Vancouver. This practice annoyed opponents who were convinced that if enough publicity was given to Smith's, Freed's and Sim's political affiliations they would be defeated. One editorial in the Globe and Mail complained bitterly that few voters knew who the communists were. In a survey it conducted in Toronto's ward five which consistently elected communists, it found that the "overwhelming majority did not know which office-seekers were communists and which were not."[84] In an effort to enlighten the voters the paper regularly ran editorials before elections denouncing the communist candidates and prominent red-baiting ads appeared in all the Toronto papers urging voters not to elect communists. In ward five, for

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[83]C. T. November 8, 1947, p. 14.

[84]Globe and Mail, December 29, 1947.

instance, Sim's opponents organized into the, "Ward Five Citizen's Anti-Communist Committee."

Despite these efforts to raise the spectre of a "communist menace," the L.P.P. candidates received wide and loyal support. The Toronto Star continued to endorse Smith, Freed, Sims and Ferguson. Stewart Smith was able to gather over 40,000 votes in every Toronto election from the birth of the L.P.P. to the end of the decade indicating that the crises, reversals, defections and theoretical confusion within the L.P.P. were largely irrelevant to his civic supporters. As with the other municipal candidates, his victories were personal ones. As the Toronto Star stated after the 1947 election:

> Stewart Smith was not able to regain a place on board of control. The fact that 48,000 voters supported him is not to be interpreted as meaning that there are that many communists in Toronto or anything like that many. The majority of his votes were polled for him on his very considerable merits as a municipal public man; not because he is a communist, but in spite of that fact. Mr. Freed, too, has been a useful member of city council and on that basis received the votes of many people who do not share his political beliefs.[85]

The party's municipal successes provided a small amount of consolation for the troubled party. Other events were less favorable. One incident which helped to keep the spy scare alive and continue to tarnish the party's reputation was the arrest of Sam

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[85] Toronto Star, January 2, 1947.

Carr in February, 1949. Carr was the party's national organizer until April, 1946 when he disappeared and was removed from his party position following the Gouzenko accusations. Discovered in the United States and deported to Canada, Carr was sentenced to six years in prison on charges of conspiring to obtain a false passport, a charge he categorically denied. Although the party complained about the harshness of his sentence, it neither organized a defence campaign nor pleaded his innocence. The party seemed content simply to report that he was no longer a member of the party and hoped that this disclaimer would save it from further damage.

Carr's conviction occurred only two months before the June, 1949 federal election. This election provided final proof that the party had been reduced to a mere shadow of its former strength. Unlike the previous federal election when the party had supported the Liberals, the L.P.P. now recognized that there were, "no fundamental differences between the two capitalist parties." And unlike the 1948 provincial elections the C.C.F. was labelled a "fake alternative" which, "operates in the labour movement as the carrier of bourgeois ideology."[86] The party introduced few new policies during the election. Its platform featured the familiar demands for peace and independence coupled with the standard domestic reforms. The campaign slogan was, "Vote for Peace, Democracy, Jobs and Homes." Once again, ideological questions were avoided.

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[86]N.A.M., Vol. 6, No. 5, June 1949, p. 180.

The party employed different electoral tactics than in the 1945 election when sixty-five candidates had been nominated. In 1949 only eighteen candidates were nominated and of these, three constituencies, Winnipeg North, Trinity and Cartier were selected for special concentrated electoral efforts. Of the three, Trinity where Tim Buck was the candidate, received particular attention. The election was an opportunity for the party to begin to reverse the series of setbacks which had plagued it from 1945. A modicum of success was desperately required to bolster the party's image and to rally and invigorate the party's disheartened membership. As the 1949 national convention had recognized:

> The election of Tim Buck in Trinity and a group of L.P.P. members to the next House of Commons is an imperative necessity for our party.... All inferiority complexes, conscious or unconscious succumbing to the vicious red baiting attacks upon us, all tendencies to fall into the rut of mere "educational," minority-conscious protest methods must be avoided.[87]

The strategy of concentrating all of the party's resources and talents in the three ridings in which it had enjoyed traditional support was intended to produce, not a miracle but some modest advance. In particular, party supporters were promised substantial gains in Trinity. As Buck told his nominating meeting,

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[87] Directives for the Federal Election Campaign, Issued at the National Convention, February 4-8, 1949, Toronto. Private holding, Mr. R. Kenny.

"if there is any one constituency in Canada in which we can win it is Trinity."[88] Pre-election articles in the Canadian Tribune reported that surveys in all three ridings showed that victory was possible. The paper reported that, "there is a very good chance we will elect at least three members,"[89] and a week later it repeated that victory in all three constituencies was "within our grasp." The party insisted that Buck would improve upon his 1945 showing in Trinity when without the benefit of concentration he had received nearly 7,500 votes and was defeated by fewer than 1,500 ballots. For those in the party who had grown pessimistic the Canadian Tribune reported that even the Financial Post conceded that, "with the election but three weeks away, Buck's chances of winning look rosy red."[90]

The results however were bitterly disappointing. The eighteen L.P.P. candidates received fewer than thirty-three thousand votes. None were elected. None came close to being elected. In Trinity Buck ran a distant third. He received 6,438 votes,[91] nearly four thousand votes behind the Liberal

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[88] N.A.M., Vol. 5, No. 3, March 1948, p. 98

[89] C. T. June 13, 1949.

[90] C. T. June 13, 1949, p. 4.

[91] Canadian Parliamentary Guide (1950) p. 389.

winner and more than a thousand votes fewer than his 1945 total. In Winnipeg North, J. Zuken received 5,406 votes[92] to run third, more than seven thousand votes behind the C.C.F. victor and thirty-seven hundred votes behind the 1945 total. In Cartier, Harry Binder received 4,868 votes,[93] he too was seven thousand votes behind the Liberal victor and had more than five thousand votes fewer than Rose's 1945 total.

The national executive issued a statement which attempted to explain the defeat, "Our party shared in the general setback received by the labour movement.... The combination of illusions in capitalist prosperity, the hesitation to vote for policies of progressive change, the paralyzing, splitting role of the C.C.F. national council - all had their effects."[94] Buck tried to console the battered membership by arguing that the party's positions remained correct and cited quotations from Lenin about the necessity to, "swim against the current."[95] Neither explanation was very persuasive. The 1949 election was yet another defeat for a dwindling membership to endure. One unavoidable, grim reality faced the party. In the three ridings alone in which the party had previously enjoyed its greatest support and

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[92]Ibid., p. 399.

[93]Ibid., p. 290.

[94]N.A.M., Vol. 6, No. 7, August 1949, p. 266-267.

[95]Ibid., p. 249.

despite concentrated efforts, its total strength had declined by more than ten thousand votes. The pre-election assurances of success made the results all the more unpalatable and the party's credibility all the more dubious.

The election results confirmed the party's isolation. In its isolation the L.P.P. continued to legitimize itself by identifying wholeheartedly with the U.S.S.R. The knowledge that socialism was being built there, even as Rose was being jailed, the Daily Tribune collapsing, Tito spying for Wall Street and Buck was being repudiated at the polls would enable a dedicated party core to carry on. That same belief simultaneously justified the party's failure to promote socialist changes at home.

The emphasis which the party placed on electoral activity was connected to its commitment to a distant but peaceful transition to socialism. Soon after the formation of the L.P.P. Leslie Morris had insisted that, "the L.P.P. categorically denounces force and violence ... (and) defends the democratically evolved institutions of the Canadian people."[96] The 1949 convention enclosed a similar pledge in its amended constitution. Buck stated the position more precisely, "We have declared categorically scores of time ... our aim does not include the abolition of Parliament or the parliamentary form of government ... the people of Canada can advance to socialism utilizing the

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[96]Morris, You Are Invited, p. 10.

parliamentary form of government...."[97] Of course, these views constituted a radical departure from both Marx and Lenin's view of the state. Both had been absolutely unambiguous. "The point" said Lenin in State and Revolution, "is whether the old state machine shall remain or be destroyed." Marx's view was equally clear, "The working class cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made state machinery and wield it for its own purposes."[98] The party, of course, was under no obligation to remain loyal to Marxist orthodoxy. However, even when departures occurred, the party did not openly dispute Marx's view. It preferred to simply overlook it.

The party also largely discarded the Leninist concept of party organization. The L.P.P. scarcely resembled the highly centralized and disciplined core of professional revolutionaries functioning as a devoted revolutionary vanguard, as outlined in What Is To Be Done. On the contrary, the L.P.P. like the C.C.F., attempted to be a mass party, had minimal membership requirements and tolerated a largely passive membership which although mobilized during elections was neither politically nor ideologically equipped to prepare Canadians for a socialist transformation.

One major and constant organizational worry for the L.P.P.

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[97]Buck, Thirty Years, p. 222.

[98]Karl Marx, Civil War in France, (New York, International Publishers, 1940) p. 54.

was its size. Membership recruiting targets were rarely met and the attrition rate was high. As Stanley Ryerson frankly admitted in 1948, "We are compelled to face the fact: our Party has one deadly serious weakness: its size. We need more communists."[99] From its inception the L.P.P. was far smaller than the party leaders had hoped. Buck had predicted in the summer of 1943 more than fifty thousand people would join the party. In June, 1946 he claimed that, "23,000 workers carry L.P.P. membership cards."[100] Both his prediction and his claim were highly inflated. Actually, the L.P.P.'s membership, at its peak, was closer to eleven thousand. Although the party issued no public membership figures, this can be calculated from the organization statement issued to delegates at the party's second national convention in June, 1946.[101] This statement listed by province the total number of initiation stamps issued by the party from the L.P.P.'s formation. Since every person upon joining the party was issued an initiation stamp which was affixed to his or her membership card, the list provides an accurate count of the party's membership. During the L.P.P.'s first year ending in August, 1944, 6,797 stamps were issued. During the second year a further 2,103 were issued,

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[99] N.A.M., Vol. 5, No. 7, July-August, 1948, p. 221.

[100] For Peace, Progress and Socialism, p. 36.

[101] The following data is from the Organization Statement, 2nd National L.P.P. Convention, June 1-5, 1946, Private holding Mr. R. Kenny, Toronto.

and in the following eight months ending in April, 1946 another 2,560 were issued. In the first thirty-two months of the L.P.P.'s existence, its most popular period, the years of military alliance with the Soviet Union and before the spy trials, only 11,460 people joined the party. Of course, this does not mean that there was eleven thousand members of the L.P.P. in 1946 because some people who joined in 1944 or 1945 would not have renewed their membership. It was immediately following this period that the major setbacks occurred and with each setback some members left while others became less active.

At the party's second convention in June, 1946 a major recruiting campaign was initiated, as Buck commented, "We must build a mass Marxist party .... This convention should set themselves the task of recruiting at least 10,000 new members into our party during the coming year."[102] Yet over a year later William Kashtan reported that only, "close to 2,000 members"[103] had been recruited, and even if his report was accurate it is unlikely that the new members compensated for those who left following the Rose arrest and trial. As the cold war intensified and a series of party activities floundered; the Daily Tribune, the independence campaign, the uncritical support for the C.C.F. and finally the disappointing 1949 election, membership continued to dwindle. The effects were devastating. As Maurice Rush admitted in the

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[102] For Peace, Progress and Socialism, p. 36.

[103] N.A.M., Vol. 4, No. 7, August 1947, p. 216.

spring of 1950, "The vast majority of party clubs in B. C. did not enroll a single new member last year."[104] And compared with the strength of the C.C.F. which at its peak in 1944 had an estimated 90,000 members,[105] the L.P.P.'s membership appeared even more meagre. During the late forties while the L.P.P.'s size continued to shrink, the C.C.F. remained relatively stable with a membership ranging from 29,820 in 1947 to 32,330 in 1949.[106]

Aside from the party's own shortcomings, a number of factors contributed to checking its growth. Consistent state repression and the cold war played an important role. Professor Avakumovic has noted the erosion of the party's ethnic support after 1945 when thousands of European supporters returned to the new People's Democracies. The simultaneous massive immigration of anti-communist eastern Europeans scarcely helped the party's position. The existence of a successful social democratic party whose possibilities of actually implementing reforms and which occasionally took more radical positions than the L.P.P., further drained party support.

The effectiveness of the party was hampered by a number of other organizational factors. The geographical distribution of the party's forces was a serious problem. By mid-1946 2,725

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[104] United Action For Peace, (Report and Proceedings, 7th Convention, B. C. and Yukon L.P.P. Vancouver, March 24, 25 and 26, 1950) p. 42.

[105] Young, p. 320.

[106] Ibid.

people had joined the party in B. C., 956 in Alberta, 700 in Saskatchewan, 455 in Manitoba, 4,850 in Ontario, 1,625 in Quebec and 140 in the Maritimes.[107] Of the thirty-three party clubs in Quebec all but two were in the Montreal area. In Toronto the party membership was estimated to be 2,400.[108] These two cities alone represented close to one third of the party's total membership. In other areas, notably the rest of Quebec and the Maritimes, the party's strength was negligible.

A more damaging problem was the passivity of the bulk of the party's members. Letters in the L.P.P.'s internal bulletin, Club Life, indicate that the membership's lethargy was a widespread and recurring concern. As one of the party's Toronto members complained, "We have a paper membership of 92. Approximately 25 are at all active, at the most 10 are very active. The 25 carry the load of the other 67 plus their own."[109] Another letter from Kamloops, referring to the 1945 federal election lamented, "only around ten percent of our members participated in the election campaign."[110]

The party's inability to stir its inactive members was reflected in the reluctance of party members to read their own

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[107] Organizational Statement, 2nd National L.P.P. Convention.

[108] Club Life, Vol. 3, No. 9, October, 1946 p. 6.

[109] Ibid., Vol. 2, No. 3, February, 1945, p. 5.

[110] Ibid., Vol. 2, No. 8, October, 1945, p. 7.

party's press. One Saskatchewan club reported in March, 1945 that of twenty-two members only two read National Affairs Monthly and only six or seven, Club Life. The report at the party's 1946 convention recorded that National Affairs Monthly had 1,668 subscribers and a further 1,707 issues were sold at newsstands.[112] Even if all the subscribers were L.P.P. members, then barely fifteen percent of the party's membership subscribed to their own theoretical journal. By December 1947, the journal's circulation had dwindled to 2,323 copies per issue and within a year it had been reduced to only 1,827.[113] The fate of the press seemed to parallel party life. In 1949 Stanley Ryerson observing that the great majority of members never read National Affairs Monthly appealed for proposals and suggestions to either change the journal or stimulate interest. Only one club bothered to respond to his appeal.[114]

The inertia among the party membership was associated with the L.P.P.'s attempt to form a mass party by maintaining

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[111] Ibid., Vol. 2, No. 4, March, 1945, p. 11.

[112] National Affairs Monthly Circulation Report, Documents of the 2nd L.P.P. National Convention. Private holding, Mr. R. Kenny. The circulation of the Canadian Tribune was far better. The convention reported an average weekly circulation of 19,000 in the first six months of 1945 and 21,000 for the last six.

[113] N.A.M., Vol. 5, No. 10, December, 1948, p. 338.

[114] C. T. November 28, 1949.

minimal membership requirements and a low dues structure. In the war period the criterion for membership was essentially reduced to staunch anti-fascism, in the post war it involved a commitment to peace. In neither case were the standards or obligations very rigorous. As Sam Carr commented:

> Let us make clear to all that the work one will be expected to do in the Party will depend in the main on what one is himself or herself prepared to do .... Let us break with the false notion many have that joining our Party entails a total reorganization of one's private life, a total break with one's connections and way of life. Let us make clear that ours is not a party of the selected few, but one in which every advanced thinking person can find a place.[115]

Carr's ambiguous "every advanced thinking person" standard was shared by Tim Buck who instructed members, "I must emphasize the fact that membership in our party is open to every man or woman who wants to join it and help strengthen the struggle for a better life."[116]

Ideological commitments were casually dismissed. As one protestant minister told a party convention in the Maritimes, "No one is asked to accept the materialism of Marx before he can join the L.P.P. Our party welcomes people of all philosophies and all religions."[117] This view was reaffirmed at the 1946

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[115] Club Life, Vol. 2, No. 10, December, 1945, p. 7.

[116] Ibid., Vol. 1, No. 6, April, 1944, p. 2.

[117] Ibid., Vol. 1, No. 4, February, 1944.

convention. When the campaign to recruit ten thousand new members was launched, it was explained that the party was, "wide open to all honest progressive elements."[118]

One direct consequence of the open door recruiting policy was the theoretical impoverishment of the party's membership. Both Buck and Ryerson repeatedly urged members to acquire a grasp of fundamental socialist principles. After the denouncciation of Browder and the accusations of revisionism, there was a particular emphasis on theoretical upgrading. At that time Buck urged:

> Our entire party membership must be aroused to help us raise the standard of Marxist-Lenist study ... our party must develop systematic, organized study of the historical works of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin ....[119]

Almost a year later he conceded that the, "level of theoretical understandings" in the party was still too low.[120] The lack of enthusiasm displayed by members for theoretical matters was revealed by the level of literature sales. A literature director was available in each club to sell party members the socialist classics and the latest party pamphlets. In early 1946, Ryerson

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[118] Ibid., Vol. 3, No. 6, June, 1946.

[119] For Peace, Progress and Socialism, p. 39.

[120] N.A.M., February, 1947, Vol. 4, No. 2, p. 38.

calculated that the sale of pamphlets in B. C. stood at, "the low figure of 16 cents per member per month."[121] Ryerson should not have been discouraged with the B. C. party's performance for a later report in Club Life indicated that similar sales in Alberta averaged only eight cents per member per month.[122]

In September, 1948 Ryerson described an imaginary but typical L.P.P. meeting:

> You arrive at the meeting (a bit late, and why not, do the others come on time?) not having any clear idea of what'll be taken up, because there isn't any very clear continuity from one meeting to the next. Or if there is continuity it is only in the sameness, in the overloaded agenda, (drives, tickets etc.) and the undernourished political content of it.
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> The meeting finally starts ... and there are a lot of items of business, communications, directives etc. Since the club executive didn't get around to meeting, nothing has been prepared in the way of suggestions regarding each item so it all has to start from scratch ....
>
> After struggling through the business part of the agenda, it turns out that it is ten to eleven, as the educational will have to be dispensed with, (to the relief of the comrade who wasn't really ready to present it anyway, and the literature director who hadn't brought the pamphlets that were needed for it.)[123]

Ryerson's imaginary meeting epitomized many of the L.P.P.'s

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[121] Club Life, Vol. 3, No. 5, May, 1946, p. 3.

[122] Ibid., Vol. 4, No. 1, January 1947, p. 8.

[123] C. T. September 11, 1948, p. 7.

organizational weaknesses most of which were rooted in the party's willingness to tolerate a membership with meagre ideological commitments. The L.P.P.'s resemblance to Lenin's vanguard of single-minded revolutionaries appeared to be slim.

The L.P.P.'s inability to build a dynamic, mass, socialist party, as well as many of its other failures, cannot be attributed to either the flaws or virtues of Marxism. Rodney's reference to "obsolete tools" and Horowitz's to "other-worldliness" explain little. For those activities, despite the party's formal commitment to Marxism which led to the discreding and self-destruction of the party were not linked to ideological questions. Rather they reflected the party's clumsy and uncritical subordination to Soviet foreign policy needs. The defence of the Stalin-Hitler pact, the Teheran euphoria, the Liberal-Labor coalition, Fred Rose's indiscretions and the nationalist fervour were all self-inflicted wounds facilitated by the party's inability to distinguish between Comintern and Cominform orthodoxies and the requirements of the Canadian socialist movement.

By the end of 1949 the party could take little comfort or pride in its post-war achievements. Costly mistakes, state repression and repeated setbacks had followed the L.P.P.'s first years of growth and influence. Unprecedented victories had been followed by equally unprecedented failures. Domestic problems were accompanied by ruptures in the international movement as first Browder and then Tito and the entire Yugoslav party had been ostracized. Nonetheless the party had survived. Continuity and stability had been provided from two sources. The party

leadership, men like Buck, Salsberg and Smith had retained their positions throughout the decade and along with them a network of full-time functionaries helped to sustain the party. Moreover, with each setback the party was able to seek refuge in what Annie Kriegel has called, "the one reliable criterion that was based on the internal logic of the communist movement: the interests of the international socialist revolution as defined at the historic moment of October, 1917 and embodied in the Soviet Union."[124]

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[124]Annie Kriegel, The French Communists (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1972) p. 131.

CONCLUSION

It is an understandable but ironical phenomenon that the resounding success of the Bolshevik Revolution eventually impeded the development of a socialist movement in Canada. For the policies of both the Comintern and Cominform, at least in the years of Stalin's stewardship, were pre-occupied with the survival and defence of the Soviet Union. The same concerns dominated the life of the international left. A sketch of both the practical and theoretical positions of the C.P.C.-L.P.P. is coherent only if it is understood that national realities and requirements were valued less by the party than international orthodoxies. The early party's emphasis on trade union work, the creation and abrupt dissolution of the Workers' Unity Leaque, the defence of the Stalin-Hitler pact, the initial characterization of the second war as an imperialist one and the subsequent anti-fascist fervour, the Liberal-Labour alliance and the campaigns for peace and independence were all inspired by international developments, none were concerned with promoting socialism in Canada. The party's refusal or inability to critically analyze its own performance was rooted in the conviction that the interests of the world's only socialist state superceded all tasks. At times this was explicit, as it was during the war when the party insisted, "socialism must wait." At others, it was more subtle, for instance during the classless nationalism of the late forties. It was not until Stalin's death, Kruschev's

revelations and the turmoil which followed the twentieth congress of the C.P.S.U., that a critical minority within the party faced this reality. As J. B. Salsberg then said, "In my opinion, it is necessary for us to realize and to state so clearly that we have been ideologically and politically subservient to the C.P. S.U. This crippled our ability to think independently and to act independently."[1]

This basic flaw, the distorted conception of internationalism shared equally by the Comintern and the national parties, had been identified decades before the L.P.P., by Rosa Luxemburg. In the L.P.P.'s case this flaw manifested itself in the substitution of attainable reforms for the struggle for socialism. This task, as Weinstein put it, was relegated to, "the backrooms of party headquarters." The conscious deletion of the term socialist or communist from the party's name, the abandonment of the hammer and sickle as the party's emblem, the praise for the King government, the publication of a daily newspaper more interested in racing selections and cartoons than political analysis and election platforms based on what Buck acknowledged was "a tremendous lot of the thinking of Maynard Keynes" were all symptoms of the party's conviction that pressing day to day issues take precedence over the "final goal of socialism." This emphasis on immediate issues resembled the classical social democratic view. As Bernstein said, "I cannot believe in the final aim of socialism. But I believe strongly in the socialist movement, in the

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[1]N.A.M., Vol. 14, No. 2, February, 1957, p. 3.

march forward of the working classes ...."[2] This resemblance was reinforced by the L.P.P.'s electoral orientation and attempts to form a mass party.

By 1949 the party could list a number of accomplishments. These included the decisive role it had played in organizing the industrial unions, its unparalled anti-fascist commitment, Fred Rose's upset victory in Cartier, the unprecedented one hundred thousand votes in the 1945 election and the performance of elected officials like Salsberg, Smith and Penner. These achievements were most pronounced when the party integrated its work with community needs. The efforts of the Winnipeg North Club to help locate lost relatives in Eastern Europe, Rose and Salsberg's efforts to fight anti-semitism, and Stewart Smith's struggle to ensure the equitable distribution of rationed items, to promote tax reform or to solve housing problems resulted in the creation of communist pockets in Montreal, Toronto and Winnipeg. This support was largely impervious to anti-communist pressure because it was basically unconcerned with ideological questions.

The party's weaknesses were more apparent. State repression was a constant factor which substantially damaged the party. The mere existence of the C.C.F., a party which had a consistent ideology and program and which could convincingly claim to have a greater prospect of achieving its reforms than did the L.P.P.,

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[2]Carl Schorske, German Social Democracy, 1905-1917, (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1955) p. 19.

further limited the party's appeal. This was aggravated by the C.C.F. leadership which was composed of implacable and effective opponents of the party. Finally, there was the party's self-inflicted wounds. Its pathetic excesses, the Daily Tribune, the unattainable membership targets and unrealistic goals led to the creation of false expectations, frustration and disappointment. The party's practice of mass recruitment not only failed to produce a mass organization but also facilitated the widespread passivity and high attrition as recent recruits often lacked the commitment necessary to endure the inevitable crises. Most importantly, the party's own theoretical contortions, compromises and reversals were major factors in the party's subsequent isolation and shattered credibility.

Yet the failures of the party occurred despite the intentions of its members. The sacrifice and courage of party militants was undeniable. Scores of party members were interned during the early war years while an equal number were compelled to live underground. The post-war period treated communists with scorn and suspicion. Party functionaries worked at subsistence wages and a generous membership assumed responsibility for financing the party press, national organization and election campaigns. The material rewards were scarce. But Canadian communists did not see their actions as a departure from Marxism. Rather, they were simply unable to distinguish between the task of promoting socialism in Canada, particularly during non-revolutionary periods, and the formulas of the international movement.

This study supports the conventional view that Canadian

communists were willing auxiliaries of the international movement. In addition, it attempts to provide a less conventional assessment of the political content of the Canadian movement. Those historians who have attributed the failure of Canadian communism to Marxism have seriously erred. For ideological questions were largely overlooked by the party. Similarly, the claims of both the party's "official" historians and the conspiracy theorists have been invalidated by the actual performance of the communist movement. The C.P.C.-L.P.P. diligently preferred to pursue concrete reforms and immediate goals rather than promote more fundamental socialist changes. From the party's point of view these tasks were mutually exclusive for the strategies designed by the Comintern-Cominform were intended to leave western capitalism unchallenged. By the end of the decade Canadian communism had been reduced to a marginal political force. Its contribution to the future of socialism in Canada was, however, even more negligible. As a group of party critics conceded in 1957, "We have tended to forget that we believe in socialism as an economic system."[3] It was a profound self-criticism for these dissidents were acknowledging that the Canadian communist movement had been a victim of its own myopia.

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[3]N.A.M., Vol. 14, No. 5, May, 1957, p. 23.

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