THE POLITICS OF WELFARE:
CANADA'S ROAD TO INCOME SECURITY, 1914-1939

By

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The watershed in this century's politics of welfare is the transformation in income security away from charitable towards governmental support. But in the Canadian case its origins still remain obscure. Although the shift is often pinpointed as occurring during and after World War II, the decisive battles over the propriety of a more active state role were fought between 1914 and 1939. The aims of this study are to demonstrate their significance in pioneering acceptance of the principle of social collectivism, and to shed light on the range of forces shaping the complex process of social policymaking.

The case-study method is used to investigate the legacy of interwar welfare politics, viz., the development of emergency and statutory aid for select groups among the very poor. This technique has the advantage of capturing the historical dimension of the policymaking process, and filling the much-needed gaps in Canadian welfare research. Moreover, it provides an opportunity to test propositions concerning social policy innovations and developments. The existing literature identifies several factors as important: the nature of the economy, the cultural context, the structure of political institutions, and four sets of participants—militant workers, interest groups, politicians and bureaucrats. The analysis focuses upon the interaction between these determinants in shaping all the major interwar policy decisions in means-tested income maintenance.

The evidence reveals that a myriad of forces shaped the origins of the Canadian welfare state, but their influence varied. Socio-economic change played a mediating role by creating the social problems requiring resolution, and generating the revenues to finance innovations. The general framework of ideas and the institutional structure also exerted a mainly indirect impact, with the former defining the values and the latter guiding the behaviour of the participants. In contrast, all the active political forces played the pivotal role of interpreting the problems and deciding the timing and content of the policy decisions. Interest group power overshadowed working-class militancy as the effective societal spur, with farmers rather than businessmen qualifying as the arch opponents of the collectivist cause. Inside government, elected, not appointed, officials dominated the social policymaking process.
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As in other western democracies, Canada's watershed in the development of collective provision against loss of income was the replacement of the stigma of public charity with the principle that state aid is granted as a matter of right. This dramatic shift is often claimed as a political achievement of the 1940-70 period when the cornerstones of the contemporary income security system were put into place. But, in fact, the interwar politics of welfare was more decisive in facilitating acceptance of the principle of social collectivism. Its legacy included various federal and provincial measures for the very poor that set significant precedents for granting state aid 'as of right, not charity.' The purpose of this study is to elucidate the political origins of these historic innovations in Canadian income security.

The onset of the trend away from charitable support began effectively during World War I and gained momentum throughout the 1920s and 1930s. The emergence of welfare as a major political issue during these years prompted the senior levels of government to take the initial, hesitant steps on the road to income support, as of right. Although their intervention aided only a minority of the poor, it represented the first, major assault upon the colonial poor relief inheritance and its inherent stigma of public charity. While the ideological break with the past came in a series of small-scale innovations rather than in a single, legislative landmark like the American New Deal, in combination they established the principle of social collectivism. Once governments accepted that they had a duty to compensate the elderly, some
disabled groups, sole-support mothers and unemployed workers for their loss of income, the seed of extensive state intervention was sown and came to fruition during and after World War II when transfer benefits, as of right, were implemented for all citizens.

While representing a significant advance over the existing system of poor relief, the package of measures involved only a refinement, not a replacement, of the assistance technique of income support. Public assistance, irrespective of whether it is granted to select or all categories of the destitute, is characterized by means-tested, non-contributory benefits financed entirely by the state. It is given either in cash or kind by a governmental authority only to individuals who are unable to provide for themselves the basic necessities of life. In contrast to public assistance, other techniques of income support do not require lack of financial resources as the criterion of eligibility. Instead, social insurance demands contributions as the main condition of cash benefits; and non-contributory demogrants such as family allowances apply to everyone in a major group, regardless of need.

Although the three techniques emerged during World War I to challenge the monopoly of the traditional poor relief system, categoric public assistance soon gained the upper hand. During the 1920s and 1930s, all effective federal and provincial intervention in the field of income maintenance depended on the means test. Despite its restricted coverage, this development of public aid represented a radical new departure. It approximated the establishment of a "social service state," characterized by the provision of services at minimum standards to the poor, that laid the foundations for the advent of the "welfare state" in which services are provided at optimum standards for the whole population.
In the transition to the Canadian welfare state during the 1940s, social insurance and demogrants replaced public assistance as the dominant components of income support. Their ascendancy has tended to monopolize the attention of researchers because their methods and scope vary so widely from assistance as to suggest "differences in kind." However:

...[t]here is no absolute difference between social welfare before the Second World War and after it. No new principles were invoked..., if the state was writing with a wide pen it was not on a blank page.4

A failure to appreciate this element of continuity among contemporary investigators has resulted in the neglect of the role of public assistance in pioneering acceptance of the principle of social collectivism.5 Moreover, this technique still remains an important component of the existing income security system. Indeed, Canada seems to rely more heavily on means-tested benefits than many other countries.6

The evolution of categoric public assistance in Canada followed a similar route to that of other western federations. It involved a transfer of the income-maintenance function from local, private and public agencies to senior levels of government. But the Canadian case is distinctive because this shift was semi-involuntary. In contrast to Australia, the process of centralization was accompanied by "constant disavowals of responsibility" at the highest levels and "continuous efforts" to force lower governments to undertake what was considered to be their duty to the people of their area.7 The shift towards the centre was also only partial, as provision of means-tested benefits has not become the exclusive prerogative of the federal government but remains shared with the provinces and, in certain instances, with the municipalities.
The break-up of the poor relief system began during World War I. Up until 1914 the relief of destitution was handled in English Canada by municipalities and private charities, and in Quebec by religious institutions. By the outbreak of the Second World War their role in relieving the poor was no longer paramount. Dupré describes the transformation in the case of Ontario during the 1921-41 period as:

...two decades of constant change in the welfare field, two decades at whose dawn local government shouldered the traditional responsibility of centuries of English practice and at whose close the scene was unrecognizable. What had begun as 'poor relief' had become aid to unemployables and employables.8

A similar process of differentiation among the destitute occurred in the other provinces.

Acting together, the senior levels of government provided emergency aid for unemployed workers in select winters of the 1920s and throughout the 1930s. Besides sponsoring joint schemes of direct relief and relief works in both decades, they participated in a relief camps policy for single, homeless men and a land settlement scheme for selected families during the Great Depression. They also singled out some categories of the dependent poor for special treatment. Spurred by Manitoba's 1916 experiment, the provinces sponsored their own statutory programs providing means-tested benefits for widows and other sole-support mothers. Ottawa took similar, independent action concerning prematurely senile veterans in 1930. Jointly, the federal and provincial governments financed means-tested pensions for the aged in 1927 and the blind in 1937.

Although these various initiatives represented significant advances over traditional methods of relieving the poor, existing research is sparse and
largely apolitical. Only the 1927 old age pensions initiative and the development of unemployment relief provision have been subject to detailed analysis, by Bryden (1974) and Struthers (1983) respectively. Furthermore, despite the obvious political salience of the various initiatives in determining who gets what, when and how outside the market place, little attention has been paid to the range of forces shaping their origins. Instead, the traditional focus of the literature is on the administration of income maintenance measures reflecting the authors' backgrounds in accountancy, law and social work. Even in contemporary welfare research political scientists are mainly conspicuous by their absence, leaving analysis of the semi-virgin territory of pre-1939 initiatives to their colleagues in history and social work.

This study is designed to remedy the neglect of Canadian welfare politics during the 1914-39 period. It involves the hitherto unexplored task of examining the circumstances under which the selective, means-tested measures were developed and identifying the effective political forces shaping their timing and content. The case-study method is selected as the appropriate technique of analysis because it illustrates the historical character of the policy-making process and meets the pressing need for information on Canadian public policy, pinpointed by Bryden and Simeon. Moreover, when case studies are firmly grounded in major theoretical debates, they possess an explanatory potential lacking in descriptive studies. Although "theoretical" case studies still fail to meet the rigid test of predictive ability, they are useful tools for testing and refining propositions, provided that certain conditions are met. These prerequisites comprise a set of similar cases, investigation of policymaking through time, and a conceptual framework. The measures,
selected for analysis, satisfy the first criterion because they are all dependent upon the means test. Moreover, the bulk represent innovations that facilitated acceptance of the principle of social collectivism. As these major policy decisions were taken on an ad hoc, unplanned basis between 1914 and 1939, the choice of subject involves investigation of policymaking through time. The remaining prerequisite requires more extended discussion, as a conceptual framework provides the means of structuring the mass of data accumulated through use of the case study method.

Conceptual Framework of the Study

Social policy researchers have formulated a number of propositions that can be tested in the context of Canadian welfare politics during the 1914-39 period. As they are primarily interested in accounting for innovations, the bulk of their hypotheses suggest possible spurs to governmental action; but a few scholars recognize that, like all other types of public policy, social policy also embraces governmental inaction, and they identify constraints on its development. Their collective research findings suggest that socio-economic, cultural and political determinants are important factors influencing how social policies are raised, debated and shaped. This trilogy of forces, however, is often not incorporated into individual analyses. Instead, the tendency in the literature is to concentrate upon establishing the primacy of economics or culture or politics. In contrast, this study adopts a multi-rather than a uni-dimensional approach, as all these factors assist us in understanding the complex process of social policymaking.

Socio-economic determinants:

The importance of socio-economic change is stressed in two distinct schools of literature: quantitative analyses and historical studies. Systematic
research at the cross-national level pinpoints economic growth as the key variable related to the global development of social security. In line with the findings of statistical analyses by Cutright (1965) and Pryor (1968), a recent 64-nation study identifies economic growth and its demographic and bureaucratic outcomes as "the root cause of welfare state development." The salience of economic development, though, diminishes when the units of comparison shift either to nations at similar levels of affluence or, of more relevance for this study, to regions within federations. American scholars, the pioneers of quantitative analyses at the sub-national level, remain divided over the relative merits of economic development and political factors in accounting for different levels of welfare expenditure between states. Although slim, Canadian research of this type suggests that political variables are more relevant. For example, Chandler identifies the threat of socialist opposition as the salient factor in explaining post-World War II variations in welfare spending among provinces. Regardless of the units of comparison, however, studies of this type share a common major weakness, i.e., an inability to explain the social policy-making process. Positing a relationship of statistical significance between, say, regional economic disparities and varying levels of welfare spending tells us nothing about how social problems become political issues and are converted into programs.

Less rigorous surveys of historical evidence also provide a guide to the relationship between socio-economic variables and social security development. After investigating the cases of Germany, the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R., Rimlinger concluded that, irrespective of the nature of the socio-economic order, the need for a highly organized form of income protection increases as
society becomes industrialized and urbanized. His finding is corroborated by Heclo (1974) for the cases of Britain and Sweden, and in many single-nation studies of welfare-state development. Wallace claims that it sparked a similar development in Canada by breaking down the self-sufficiency of the pioneer family and creating social problems requiring collective action. Moreover, one historical feature of the industrialization process, the Great Depression of the 1930s, is often singled out as playing a catalyst role in the development of North American income security.

Although they attribute a primary role to the spur of socio-economic change, these researchers do not subscribe to a crude determinism. Instead, they suggest that it plays only a facilitating and not a direct role in the development of income maintenance. Sustained economic growth provides governments with the means of financing state aid but does not guarantee action on their part. The other key variables of industrialization and urbanization have a similar, limited impact. The creation of a wage-earning class in cities adds the new dimension of unemployment to the causes of poverty, yet does not, ipso facto, guarantee a collective response. The break-up of the extended family removes a mainstay of support for the aged and other groups among the dependent poor, but does not necessarily usher in public substitutes.

However, by focusing their attention on the impact of industrial growth, and the emerging urban society, scholars have tended to conceive of the socio-economic context much too narrowly, neglecting the critical balance between old and new sectors of economies in transition. In particular, they tend to overlook the importance of the agricultural sector. Although they may note in passing that the structure and values of agrarian society militate
against developments in income maintenance, they tend to treat welfare politics
as the exclusive battleground of capital and labour, the key interest groups in
the industrial sector. But, in the Canadian case, rural-urban conflict cannot
be so easily discounted, because the nation was in a process of transition from
an agrarian to an industrial society when the issue of state aid for the
destitute came to the fore. Indeed, the evidence of this study indicates that
organized farmers and their elected spokesmen were leading actors, rather than
minor players, in the evolution of collectivism. Furthermore, their role as
arch opponents was more consistent than that of businessmen.

Cultural determinants:

In addition to socio-economic factors, cultural variables also shape the
making of social policy. A major theme in cross-national research is that the
latter are most salient in explaining national differences in income security
coverage. For example, King (1973) identifies ideas concerning the role of the
state as the key factors in explaining why the U.S. is a welfare-state 'lagger'
compared with Canada and other European nations. While agreeing that national
political goals and values account for variations concerning the scope and
level of benefits, Woodsworth suggests that the borrowing of ideas among
nations also influences the way countries develop their social benefit
programs. 18

Single-nation studies also stress the importance of cultural determinants.
Both Marshall (1965) and Romanyshyn (1971) identify changes in concepts of
citizenship rights as spurs to the development of collectivism in Britain and
the U.S., respectively. Herman pinpoints a similar shift of opinion in the
Canadian case. Her content analysis of the debates of the federal Parliament
between 1875 and 1960 illustrates the link between the drive towards equality in social rights and developments in health, welfare and social security; and a less rigorous but broader review of secondary sources also traces the connection between changes in public opinion and the advent of the Canadian welfare state. A general consensus exists that these broad shifts, often triggered by national crises such as depressions or wars, made the idea of state intervention more acceptable.

The precise impact of mass attitudes, though, is difficult to pinpoint, especially in historical analysis where evidence is, of necessity, impressionistic owing to the absence of public opinion surveys. Compared with their elusive quality in the society at large, cultural factors in this type of research are more easily identifiable in the political process in the form of values and prejudices of decision-makers. Nonetheless, prevailing ideas about the causes of poverty and its treatment did influence the course of Canadian welfare politics during the 1914-1939 period. The general framework of ideas is sketched in chapter 2 because it provides an essential guide to what Canadians comprehended as social problems, considered as alternative approaches to resolving these problems, and accepted as the proper extent of governmental intervention.

Like all major influences on public policy, cultural variables act as constraints upon, as well as spurs to, governmental action. Bryden suggests that the individualistic "market ethos" of Canadian society not only delayed the introduction of mens-tested benefits for the aged until 1927 but also shaped the subsequent development of pensions policy; and Taylor indicates that it had a similar effect on the evolution of health insurance. But the
concept of "market ethos" is an overly elastic one, embracing all values that militate against collectivism, and so is imprecise about the specific beliefs that resist developments in income maintenance. Brecher provides a firmer guide by singling out a conservative fiscal orthodoxy as a primary constraint during the interwar years.22 Besides confirming his finding that it militated against welfare spending at the federal level, the evidence from the case studies also establishes that it was an equally powerful impediment to governmental action in the provinces.

Political determinants:

Although socio-economic and cultural factors raise and define the problems to be resolved, on their own they cannot account for their conversion into social policy outcomes. Instead, political determinants provide the key to understanding the origins and content of specific decisions concerning income maintenance. Bryden acknowledges their relative supremacy over the other types of variables. Even though he views Canadian pensions policy as a clash between underlying socio-economic and ideological forces, he points out that the conflict between the two is resolved in the political system and that political processes are themselves significant determinants of policy design.23 Institutional factors and participants are both crucial because their interaction characterizes the decisionmaking process.

Institutional factors have a dual impact on the development of social policy. According to Leman (1980), they set the rules of the game within which the different players contend and also shape the terms of political debates. For example, in federal systems the relative distribution of legislative powers plays the crucial role in defining the political context(s) within which issues
are raised and resolved. However, it does not directly affect the substance of social policy decisions. Leman suggests that another institutional variable, "the historic configuration of programs," influences both the cause and outcomes of political debates on issues of income maintenance. The policy inheritance and other relevant factors, such as the competitiveness of the party system and the size and nature of bureaucracy, are described in chapter 2, with attention focusing here on the federal structure of government, "the institutional factor that has had the greatest impact on income security in Canada." The existing evidence is ambiguous as to whether a federal structure of government facilitates or inhibits developments in income maintenance. On the one hand, there are cases to support the contention that it creates more opportunity for experimentation than a unitary system. For example, the Australian image of a "social laboratory" stems from state experiments in statutory assistance programs for the aged and invalids undertaken in the early years of this century. Similarly, the American states qualify as the pioneers of means-tested pensions for widows, the aged and the blind. On the other hand, the record of the Canadian provinces lends support to the centralists' case that regional governments are impediments to developments in income support. Theirs is a record characterized more by inaction than innovation, despite the contention of Trudeau that the seed of social reform is planted more easily in certain regions than at the national level. Apart from mothers' pensions, all other selective, means-tested measures were sponsored by Ottawa. Why?
Recent research by Banting identifies two important constraints upon income security developments at the sub-national level in the interwar period: the imbalance between the provinces' legislative powers and their fiscal capability, and their governments' preoccupation with economic development, manifest in a desire to avoid imposing restrictions upon the mobility of capital and labour. As the provinces were unable and/or unwilling to sponsor costly initiatives, a system of federal subsidies developed to finance welfare innovations, including the bulk of means-tested benefits introduced during the 1914-39 period. Birch contends that the conflicts arising over this method of financing precluded the "successful operation" of conditional grants and obstructed all attempts at "comprehensive social reform." In addition to confirming both these scholars' propositions, the evidence of this study suggests that the fiscal conservatism of provincial politicians was the underlying motive behind their reluctance to sponsor independent initiatives.

Besides institutional factors, political actors, i.e., active participants in the social policymaking process, also shape developments in income maintenance. They play the crucial role of defining the social problems and deciding the timing and content of legislation. However, considerable controversy exists among students of social policy over whether forces located outside or inside government play the dominant role. Further disagreement arises over which are the relevant societal or governmental participants. A review of the literature results in the culling of four interpretations that are not mutually exclusive but differ in emphasis and comprehensiveness concerning the effective political forces. Each interpretation depicts a different set of actors as playing the primary role in shaping decisions concerning income maintenance.
The first interpretation is the social control model of welfare politics. While the model incorporates various meanings of social control, its major variant postulates that in situations of intense social unrest, working-class militancy is the effective spur because it forces welfare concessions from the state.

Proponents of the social control model, however, are divided over its precise prerequisites. On the one hand, various scholars, including non-Marxists, claim that in situations of intense class conflict, radicals in the labour movement are the effective societal actors because their activities arouse fears of revolution among the ruling class. For example, Rhys argues that Bismarck pioneered social insurance in Germany "out of fear that the prevailing social order might be overthrown by revolutionary agitation of the working class;" and Gilbert and Fraser identify a similar motive behind British politicians' decisions to sponsor income maintenance measures in 1911 and 1920, respectively. On the other hand, investigators of the recent U.S. urban crisis suggest a different set of preconditions for state provision of welfare concessions. Piven and Cloward, for example, identify unemployed workers rather than labour radicals as the key actors. They contend that in times of depression civic turmoil in the form of protests and riots by the jobless results in initiation or expansion of relief caseloads, and that once disorder lessens contraction occurs to reinforce restrictive work norms. But they dismiss fear of revolution as a redundant motive and suggest instead that the threat of popular discontent motivates national politicians to offer concessions in order to win the allegiance of disaffected voting blocs.

The disagreement over the effective actors (labour radicals/mobilized unemployed) and the politicians' motives (fear of revolution/electoral
calculations) is not the only imprecise feature of the model that this study seeks to rectify. As a perceptive critic points out, most theorists also tend to rely too heavily on assertion rather than empirical data, with the result that "motives, intents and purposes are often assumed from the effects of action, rather than elicited through careful research." More fundamentally, however, they tend to overlook the critical fact that public assistance measures are "always devised" to reflect distinctions between those able to work and those deemed incapable. Given this dichotomy, their tendency to treat all innovations as examples of overt repression is suspect because the physically fit obviously pose more of a threat to the established order than, say, the unemployable blind. In order to test whether the salience of the social control model varies according to the category of recipient, this study examines initiatives for destitute employables separately from the benefits extended to select categories of the dependent poor in Parts II and III, respectively. The findings indicate that this distinction is an important one in the Canadian case, for the only two innovations satisfying the prerequisites of the social control model involved able-bodied wage-earners.

The second general interpretation emphasizes interest group power as the decisive force. In this pressure group model of welfare politics, associations in the private sector attempt to promote their interests and values within the decision-making process, and it is the conflicts and accommodations among these groups that shape income maintenance policy.

Some proponents attribute a central role to economic interest groups, particularly capital and labour, in the social policymaking process. For example, Lowi argues that leaders of the peak economic associations
representing the "haves" and the "have nots" in conjunction with forces inside government are "the makers of the principles of redistribution." His general contention is supported by individual case studies. Brown (1971) investigated the origins of the first British initiative to aid unemployed workmen and found that the 1905 legislation was shaped by a clash between interests espousing the traditional conservative ideology and the rising forces of collectivism represented by the labour movement. Bryden (1974) also discovered that the original Canadian initiative in public pensions was molded by a similar conflict involving established business associations and the emerging trade unions. However, other investigators cast doubt on the consistency of the roles of capital and labour over time. Finkel (1979), for example, found that during the interwar period Canadian businessmen acted not only as influential opponents but also, on occasion, as equally effective advocates of social reforms, a finding that is confirmed in this study. A comparative study by Heclo (1974) indicates that organized labour in Britain and Sweden also adopted divergent positions on the issue of income support. Canadian trade unions, as we shall see, were consistent advocates like their Swedish counterparts, even though their claim to be the champions of the cause of collectivism was only incontestable in the case of the old age pensions movement.

The group model does not designate the social policy-making process as the exclusive battleground for economic interests. Some researchers suggest that spokesmen of private charities also play an influential role. Hall and her colleagues contend that British social service agencies have often acted as pressure groups, and Gilbert attributes a similar creative role to U.S. voluntary agencies, describing the charity organization societies and the
settlement house movements as "the social progenitors of modern welfare policy." However, in the Canadian case, established charities have apparently obstructed developments in income maintenance. Albinski suggests that the values of the major religious institutions delayed the introduction of state-directed welfare programs prior to 1914. In fact, the evidence of this study indicates that the beliefs of Catholics and Protestants acted as constraints well beyond this watershed, even though the monopoly of denominational charities was increasingly challenged by new, non-sectarian welfare agencies during and after the war which, far from opposing state intervention, initially welcomed it. The case study on the mothers pensions movement reveals this conflict within the charity establishment most clearly.

Besides organized charities, client groups, composed of actual or potential beneficiaries of income maintenance measures, are also important participants in the social policymaking process. But, with the important exception of militant action by unemployed workers, existing evidence is scant on the influence exerted by moderate segments of the jobless. It is also scarce concerning the behaviour of the dependent poor, with studies by Baker (1963) and Bryden (1974) documenting that the Canadian blind took up their own cause, whereas the elderly did not become active until after the introduction of means-tested benefits. Concerning sole-support mothers and disabled veterans, the other categories aided, the findings of the relevant case studies reveal that they were spectators and participants in the politics of welfare.

The third interpretation places greater stress on forces inside government. This "representative model" postulates that independent choices of politicians are the crucial determinants of social policy. It attributes an
autonomous role to elected officials in contrast to the two preceding interpretations that imply that these actors resemble "automatons" merely acting in response to forces outside government.

Public choice theorists claim that politicians' decisions to establish new social programs are motivated primarily by electoral calculations. For example, Downs, in his pioneering analysis, contends that the "major force shaping a party's policies is competition with other parties for votes"; and the authors of a recent study on the Canadian decision-making process also assume that vote maximization is the "proximate objective" of politicians.40 Outside of this group, there exist supporters of the less extreme notion that electoral calculations play a part in politicians' decisions to redistribute income. Bird, for example, postulates that these perceptions were more significant in the past when non-taxpaying voters first entered the Canadian electorate.41 Although electoral calculations were important factors influencing Canadian politicians' decisions to finance statutory means-tested benefits, the evidence suggests that expansion of welfare expenditure was not the only route open to these actors to enhance their chances of re-election. Their decisions to delay legislative action were, on more than one occasion, based upon calculations of what the public would stand for.

Other proponents of the representative model suggest that the ideology of power-holders is also an important spur to developments in social security. Beer argues that a distinctive system of political ideas influenced the social policy decisions of British politicians and guided the behaviour of their parties from 1918 onwards.42 His finding is duplicated in the Australian case by Mendelsohn, who concedes "that Labour has been the pacemaker, and that in
periods of Labour rule, social welfare legislation was more likely to be pushed ahead. In contrast, the impact of changes in Canadian party government is often dismissed as negligible. Redekop, for example, asserts that the social policies of both Liberals and Conservatives during the 1930s "were shaped more by the times than those policies shaped the times"; and Saltsman contends that during the interwar period western protest movements, not established parties, were the vehicle for ideas concerning social policy initiatives. In particular, the national leadership of the emergent Labour group is credited with a pioneering role. Without denigrating J.S. Woodsworth's role as "the conscience of Parliament," the political leaders of the two major national parties also espoused humanitarian values. Lloyd claims that it was a "natural impulse" for Prime Minister King and Liberal politicians elsewhere in the English-speaking world to sponsor innovations in income maintenance because they "were sorry for the poor and wanted to do something to help." The Liberal Prime Minister, however, did not monopolize the social policymaking process in the 1914-39 period. Conservative administrations pioneered the major initiatives in state aid for destitute employables, and their decisions contained shades of the Tory value of collectivism, as the case studies in Part II reveal.

Recent research by Heidenheimer and his colleagues suggests that politicians have greater influence on reforms involving cash transfers to citizens rather than over the use of public services because they have less impact on the "vital interests" of service suppliers. According to these scholars, the evidence in the cases of several European nations and the U.S. is so overwhelming as to suggest "a general rule" that parties can effectively
sponsor social insurance programs, provided that their leaders do not accept implicitly assumptions that favour the status quo. They also imply that the method of financing programmes is a key factor influencing a party's reform capability. Their suggestion is elaborated upon by Bird who proposes that reformist politicians encounter more resistance from taxpayers in sponsoring initiatives financed entirely by general revenues than measures based upon the contributory principle.

The fourth interpretation views civil servants as the primary political actors. This "bureaucratic model" postulates that administrative leadership is the spur to social policy decisions. It assumes that officials possess separate interests and resources separate from those of private pressure groups and politicians.

Proponents of this viewpoint suggest that bureaucrats generate and champion issues as well as design particular schemes. For example, Roberts identifies the inspectorate in various government departments as the creative force behind the development of social legislation in nineteenth century Britain; and another British scholar, MacDonagh, also argues that the impetus for the extension of the role of government in the area of emigrant protection came from professional administrators, not politicians. After comparing the development of income maintenance policies in Britain and Sweden, Heclo concludes that bureaucrats were "the most consistently important of all political factors." "In both expansionary and restrictive directions, administrative actors have been crucial in giving concrete substance to new policy initiatives and in elaborating established approaches."

In the Canadian case, existing research supports the notion of an activist civil service. At the provincial level the strong leadership of
Ontario's Inspector of Asylums and Prisons is identified as "the key" to the vigorous pace of social welfare development during the early post-Confederation era; and another Ontario civil servant is also designated as the precipitant of the mothers' pensions initiative. However, as the resources for this study precluded a review of archival material in all of the then nine provinces, the precise role played by administrators in shaping developments in categoric public assistance remains an open question, even though the available evidence suggests that it was relatively minor. At the federal level bureaucrats were apparently inactive during the interwar period, or at least played no part in the development of public pension policy analyzed by Bryden (1974). But they are credited with playing a creative role after World War II. Armitage contends that since 1945 an elite corps of senior officials, aided by some of their provincial counterparts, provided "an enduring and consistent force for social welfare reform"; and his argument is supported by the recollections of a self-confessed "reformist bureaucrat" employed by the Department of Health and Welfare during the 1952-72 period. The findings of the case studies, though, suggest that the role of their prewar counterparts was much less creative, with senior administrators blocking welfare innovations more often than promoting them.

Each of the four interpretations depicts a different set of political actors as dominant within the social policymaking process: militant workers, interest groups, party politicians and civil servants. These participants are likely to be partners, rather than rivals, in shaping specific initiatives because social policy decisions are "too complex to be explained simply as the predicate of some maker." Consequently, the analysis involves an examination
of the way the various political actors interact over time and an evaluation of their relative influence in shaping the timing and content of the selective, means-tested measures introduced during the 1914-39 period.

In order to facilitate the task of assessing the precise form of their interaction and their respective influence, the assumption is made that the effective political forces are likely to vary according to the different type of social policy under investigation. Two types relevant for this study are innovations that represent entirely new departures for the state and developments, i.e., expansions of programs that contain novel features. This relationship is tested mainly in Part III, where mothers' pensions and old age pensions are treated as innovations, and statutory benefits for veterans and the blind as developments of the latter. Within the same type, the effective actors are likely to differ between the phase when the issue develops and provokes controversy and the phase when the policy decision is made. The material is organized around this simple distinction in each of the case studies in the form of attaching the labels of advocates, opponents and precipitants to the relevant participants. Advocates and opponents depict the political forces urging or resisting expansion of state activity. Precipitants represent the forces which push the issue of public welfare higher up the government's list of priorities as well as shape the final form and structure of the policy. They, therefore, can be either advocates or opponents in the earlier phase:

As the preceding review indicates, the forces shaping social policy decisions are complex, comprising socio-economic, cultural and political determinants. Sustained economic growth provides governments with the means of
financing innovations, and its concomitants, industrialization and urbanization, create the social problems requiring resolution in the political process. The general framework of ideas determines how these problems are to be defined and acted upon. Institutional factors, especially the relative distribution of legislative powers in federal systems, shape the behaviour of the political actors. As socio-economic, cultural and institutional factors set the context within which the players in the politics of welfare participate and exert a minimal direct impact upon the content of social policies, they are treated as environmental variables in this analysis (see figure 1). Four types of political actors, militant workers and interest groups in the society at large plus party politicians and civil servants inside government, are identified as the major shapers of decisions. The next task then, is to determine the way in which they interacted with the broader environment to produce the first milestones along Canada's road to income security.

Figure 1. Possible determinants of social policy decisions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Environmental Factors</th>
<th>Political Actors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Socio-economic setting</td>
<td>Militant workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural context</td>
<td>Interest groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional framework</td>
<td>Party politicians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Civil servants</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The social policy environment out of which demands arose for special treatment of certain types of paupers is sketched in chapter 2. Detailed analyses of the initiatives for destitute employables are then undertaken in chapters 3-6, and investigation of benefits for the dependent poor follows in chapters 7-10. Chapter 11 presents a summary of the evidence on how the various determinants shaped the development of categoric public assistance provision.
It also discusses broader questions raised by the analysis concerning their inter-relationship in the social policy-making process.

The information for this study is collected from a wide range of sources, owing to the fact that Canadian welfare politics is a sorely neglected area of research. Among secondary works, biographies and memoirs of politicians, social and political histories of the period, as well as the recent, valuable crop of studies in feminist and labour history, are the major sources. Information in yearbooks of various sorts and newspaper cuttings is also used. The bulk of evidence, however, is drawn from published and unpublished government documents. The latter, housed in the Public Archives of Canada, Ottawa, comprise departmental files and private papers of politicians, but not cabinet documents, as no formal records of Privy Council meetings were kept until 1940.
PART I

THE ENVIRONMENT OF SOCIAL POLICY DEVELOPMENT
CHAPTER 2

THE CANADIAN BACKGROUND FOR WELFARE INNOVATIONS

Canada was a society in transition between 1914 and 1939, the era when the innovations in public assistance were introduced. The Canadian economy was being transformed from an agrarian to an industrial one and the dominant, individualistic ethic was increasingly challenged by a new welfare ethos. The established framework of political institutions was also altered by the advent of competitive mass politics and the expansion of the public sector, developments that were precipitated by World War I. As the changing environment moulded partly the behaviour and motives of the participants in the politics of welfare, the specific socio-economic setting, the cultural context and the institutional framework are outlined below.

Socio-economic Setting

In Canada the socio-economic preconditions for developments in income maintenance began to be laid in the late nineteenth century. Although industrial-urban growth was not an unfamiliar feature of the post-Confederation economy, it accelerated after the 1890-96 depression. In contrast to Britain, where an industrial revolution ushered in developments in income maintenance, Canada's initial steps were sparked by changes in the agricultural sector. The developing wheat economy of the prairie provinces was the "dynamic element" of the country's economic growth during the 1896-21 period. The potential of the plains attracted capital and labour in unprecedented amounts and the results filtered through the entire economy. Paradoxically, though, the wheat boom also fostered developments in secondary industry that hastened the decline of
agriculture as the dominant mode of production in the national economy. The soaring production and export of Canada's new staple during the Laurier years (1896-1911) attracted increasing amounts of foreign capital that funded the development of minerals and energy in northern regions of British Columbia, Ontario and Quebec. The wheat boom also financed great expansion of manufacturing, particularly in central Canada. This growth was further stimulated by the needs of a wartime economy, so that by 1920, the time of the first federal survey of overall production, manufacturing was already slightly ahead of agriculture, contributing 43.7 percent compared with 41.3 percent to total output.

This unparalleled economic development was accompanied by significant demographic changes. In contrast to the disappointing, slow growth in population during the 1871-1900 period, a rapid increase characterized the first three decades of this century, with its size almost doubling from 5,371,315 in 1901 to 10,376,786 in 1931. While this expansion in part reflected trends common to other developing nations, such as increases in birth rates and life expectancy, its major source was the influx of immigrants attracted by the developing wheat economy of the prairies. Population growth in this new region was the most dramatic prior to 1921 (see table 1).

The settlement of the prairie west by outsiders altered the social structure in a dramatic manner by shifting the existing population balance between the two founding ethnic groups. At least one-third of the more than two million new settlers came from countries outside the English- and French-speaking worlds. As they were too numerous to be absorbed rapidly into any melting pot, they forged a new society with its own distinctive blend of ethnic identities. Following its creation, sectional conflict was added to the
list of existing linguistic and religious cleavages. This new division was manifest initially in prewar disputes over eastern control of churches and trade unions, and after 1918 in conflicts over the issue of state aid for the destitute.

Table 1. Population of Canada, by province, census dates 1901-31.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1901</th>
<th>1911</th>
<th>1921</th>
<th>1931</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>5,371,315</td>
<td>7,206,643</td>
<td>8,787,949</td>
<td>10,376,786</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P.E.I.</td>
<td>103,259</td>
<td>93,728</td>
<td>88,615</td>
<td>88,038</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nova Scotia</td>
<td>459,574</td>
<td>492,338</td>
<td>523,837</td>
<td>512,846</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Bruns.</td>
<td>331,120</td>
<td>351,889</td>
<td>387,876</td>
<td>408,219</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quebec</td>
<td>1,648,898</td>
<td>2,005,776</td>
<td>2,360,510</td>
<td>2,874,662</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ontario</td>
<td>2,182,947</td>
<td>2,527,292</td>
<td>2,933,662</td>
<td>3,431,683</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manitoba</td>
<td>255,211</td>
<td>461,394</td>
<td>610,118</td>
<td>700,139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sask.</td>
<td>91,279</td>
<td>492,432</td>
<td>757,510</td>
<td>921,785</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alberta</td>
<td>73,022</td>
<td>374,295</td>
<td>588,454</td>
<td>731,605</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.C.</td>
<td>178,657</td>
<td>392,480</td>
<td>524,582</td>
<td>694,263</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yukon</td>
<td>27,219</td>
<td>8,512</td>
<td>4,157</td>
<td>4,230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N.W.T.</td>
<td>20,129</td>
<td>6,507</td>
<td>8,143</td>
<td>9,316</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The rapid influx of newcomers also underlined the need for a new approach towards poor relief by exacerbating social problems in urban centres. Although they were recruited as settlers, substantial numbers of immigrants remained in cities or drifted in after failing on the land. In Winnipeg and Toronto they were often forced to live in the most slum-ridden sections, where disease and
crime were the predictable products of ignorance and poverty. Their presence in the ranks of the destitute unemployed in Toronto prompted spokesmen of private charities to complain publicly in the 1890s about the "hordes of 'paupers and criminals' from Great Britain and Europe every year lured out to Canada by optimistic and misleading representations of the prosperity of our 'lower classes,' only to swell this already overwhelming tide of misery from lack of winter work." No provision for public welfare, however, was made in response to the pre-war deluge of settlers. Instead, social work became largely the responsibility of churches. While welcoming the new opportunities for social service, Catholics and Protestants alike were alarmed about the threat posed by immigration and urbanism to the rural values they had so painstakingly cultivated.

Besides western settlement, another demographic change occurring from the turn of the century onwards also laid the groundwork for innovations in income support. The altering balance between city- and country-dweller was equally "striking and more significant in its long-run effects." The start of the process of urbanization preceded the period of rapid economic growth. After the 1890-96 depression the shift to cities and towns accelerated, because people's livelihoods depended increasingly on industry, natural resources and service occupations. The dividing line was reached in 1921, when the rural-urban balance was roughly equal, but British Columbia and Ontario reached this threshold prior to the war (see table 2).

The advancing industrial and urban growth had a profound effect on the character of Canada, creating a new and unfamiliar kind of society. The most significant organizational change in the private sector was the emergence of broadly based, hierarchical organizations of business and labour.
Table 2. Urban population as percentage of total population, Canada and provinces, census years 1901-41

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1901</th>
<th>1911</th>
<th>1921</th>
<th>1931</th>
<th>1941</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>34.9</td>
<td>41.8</td>
<td>47.4</td>
<td>52.5</td>
<td>55.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prince Edward Island</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>16.0</td>
<td>18.8</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>22.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nova Scotia</td>
<td>27.7</td>
<td>36.7</td>
<td>44.8</td>
<td>46.6</td>
<td>52.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Brunswick</td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>35.2</td>
<td>35.4</td>
<td>38.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quebec</td>
<td>36.1</td>
<td>44.5</td>
<td>51.8</td>
<td>59.5</td>
<td>61.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ontario</td>
<td>40.3</td>
<td>49.5</td>
<td>58.8</td>
<td>63.1</td>
<td>67.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manitoba</td>
<td>24.9</td>
<td>39.3</td>
<td>41.5</td>
<td>45.2</td>
<td>45.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saskatchewan</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>16.8</td>
<td>20.3</td>
<td>21.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alberta</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>29.4</td>
<td>30.7</td>
<td>31.8</td>
<td>31.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British Columbia</td>
<td>46.4</td>
<td>50.9</td>
<td>50.9</td>
<td>62.3</td>
<td>64.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The Canadian Manufacturers' Association was reorganized in 1900, nearly thirty years after its founding, to centralize its trade affiliates and to cope with the growing variety of problems confronting the corporate sector; new national organizations of bankers, retail merchants and other entrepreneurs were also formed between 1890 and 1918. Labour also organized for the protection and benefit of industrial wage-earners and the growth of unions paralleled the expansion in commerce during the first decades of this century. In 1886 the Ontario-based Trades and Labour Congress of Canada was formed, and by 1918 it represented the bulk of locals. Furthermore, the early phase of industrialization also prompted collective action among farmers. Various organizations devoted to defending agrarian interests were established in
Ontario and the prairie provinces during the first decades of this century, a
development which culminated in a "full-blown revolt" in the 1921 federal
election. Conflicts between agriculture, capital and labour over the issue
of public welfare emerged soon after the onset of rapid growth and intensified
after World War I.

The industrialization process also hastened developments in income
maintenance by creating a new category of employable indigents arising from
wage dependency. Industrial employment was much more uncertain than subsistence
farming because self-support was dependent upon cash earned outside the family
environment. So long as economic growth provided jobs in factories, mines
and pulp mills, the vulnerability of wage-earners was masked. However, with
downturns in the economy, their economic and social insecurity became exposed.
Although unemployment and poverty were not novel problems, their scope
broadened considerably as a result of ongoing industrialization, and their
effects prompted demands for state remedies.

The growth of cities had equally important consequences because it
increased the dependency of the traditional poor. As urban living accommodation
was less spacious than on the farm, the care of elderly or disabled relatives
became more difficult for their families, the traditional mainstay of social
security. As a result, these groups became more susceptible to poverty, especially when they lacked the resources to make even minimum savings and
public pensions were non-existent. The effects of socio-economic change,
therefore, were clearly providing the stimulus for an era of innovative social
policy.
The Cultural Context

Despite the changing nature of their society, the majority of Canadians took time to be persuaded that the challenge posed by the emergent industrial society required new approaches to the causes of poverty and its treatment. Until the 1930s, poverty was considered "by most people as the just reward of the improvident or lazy, as a reflection of a deplorable lack of character and of inherent defects which constituted a reproach to the owner."\(^{14}\) Besides these deeply held prejudices, a general attitude of complacency also militated against developments in income maintenance:

> It was part of the folklore of Canadian life in the nineteenth and well into the twentieth century that Canada was a land of opportunity for all who were willing to work. The social security measures which other industrialized nations were undertaking at this time were, it was claimed, not required in Canada. The amount of unavoidable poverty...was relatively negligible and could be handled by the existing philanthropic agencies.\(^{15}\)

These prevailing views reflected in part traditional religious beliefs. The religious and social ideas shaping the Catholic Church's operation of charitable institutions and services in Quebec had their roots in the seventeenth century. Inspired by "a Christian spirit of humanity and charity," the French Canadian idea of social assistance also reflected a popular preference for private enterprise based on the threefold foundation of the family, mutual benefit society and church.\(^{16}\) This preference persisted well into the twentieth century and shaped reactions in the province to state initiatives by identifying them as 'encroachments.' It was cultivated by the Catholic hierarchy who were anxious to protect both their theological principles and institutional monopoly.\(^{17}\)

The traditional Protestant ethic was equally hostile to developments in social security. It rooted poverty in improvidence and individual moral
failure, with the 'fall from God's grace' more marked in the cases of rogues and vagabonds than the aged, sick and widows; and designated its relief as a proper sphere of the church not the state. Although it was challenged by reform-minded clerics during the 1890-1921 period, a sizeable segment of the Protestant community continued to believe that state aid, even for the 'more deserving' poor, represented pauperism, viz., dependence on public charity by people who should be independent. "It was not until the industrial revolution was in full swing that they gradually came to realize that their responsibility for human welfare must lead them into a prophetic witness in the arenas of politics and economics."

The secular ideology of North American liberalism was also a powerful constraint, providing intellectual justification for the lack of social security in the pre-1914 era, even though it had not impeded the state playing an aggressive role in promoting economic development. Its individualistic values and laissez-faire philosophy stressed self-reliance, the duty incumbent upon families to care for their own, and the threat to freedom inherent in the extension of government activities, especially when these directly affected the lives of individuals and families. Like other ideologies, the strength of classical liberalism resided in the socio-economic background of its followers. Individualism had most appeal for upper- and middle-class Canadians who lived well above the poverty line and were not affected by the relative absence of public welfare. These crusaders of individualism opposed the idea of state subsidies for the poor on the grounds that it would stifle their initiative, rob them of their sense of self-responsibility, help to create parasites, destroy the moral fibre of society and erode cherished values like thrift. Their beliefs, however, began to be challenged from the turn of the century onwards by other liberals who "were slowly coming to realize that the state,
whether it helped the rich or not, could help the poor by schemes of...social insurance."22

From the 1880s onwards a small but influential minority of the urban middle class began to question the prevailing notion that poverty was due to individual moral failure and its amelioration essentially a matter for private philanthropy. Instead, these Canadians identified the source of deprivation in national economic and societal shortcomings and argued that only state intervention could meet the growing social needs of the new, urban society. Although they were hampered by a dearth of information on social indicators, socially conscious journalists, individual reformers and groups of concerned citizens advanced the cause of collectivism. Through their efforts, "the causes of poverty were redefined, prejudicial attitudes towards the poor were challenged, and the groundwork was laid for public action."23

The ensuing debate sparked by this challenge was not peculiar to Canada. In all industrial societies the early years of the twentieth century were "years of ferment over the role of the state as promoter of social welfare and protector of industrial stability under capitalism."24 However, Wallace suggests that public discussion was at its height in Canada in the 1870-1900 period and declined in intensity thereafter, at least up until the 1940s. Her analysis of Toronto-based newspapers and periodicals indicates that as early as the 1880s there was a growing disinclination to accept the laissez-faire theory of government. Some commentators argued then that the state should intervene to prevent people from dying of hunger in the streets, whether or not their destitution was their own fault. In the next decade doubts were increasingly expressed over the notion that the poor were the chief authors of their own plight. The author of an article in the Week (12 April 1895), written in the
midst of depression conditions, rejected the idea that the bulk of the able-bodied unemployed receiving aid from private charities were lazy and work-shy on the grounds that hundreds of thousands of Canadians were utterly unable to find employment even of the most menial kind. Other journalists condemned the trend towards institutional care for neglected children while no provision was being made to enable the aged and needy to live without begging. Although the need for governmental action was not widely recognized, by the turn of the century there was, according to Wallace, "ample evidence that such a conviction was fairly widespread and was growing."25

The increasing strength of the challenge to the doctrine of laissez-faire individualism from 1900 onwards was manifest in the concerted effort made by concerned city-dwellers to remedy a wide range of social problems, including the incidence of poverty among industrial workers and dependent groups. The divisive issue of prohibition was the specific trigger. It stimulated the development of "a generous reform impulse, which sought ways of ameliorating the injustices, inequalities and sufferings of a society undergoing rapid change."26 This "impulse" was multi-faceted both in terms of issues and participants. Concerning the plight of the destitute, it was expressed most keenly by individual urban reformers and Protestant churchmen.

The research work of Sir Herbert Ames, a well-to-do Montreal manufacturer, was a notable example of pioneering, individual effort, ranking with the contributions made by the British investigators, Booth and Rowntree. The results of his house-to-house survey of a working-class district, published in *The City Below The Hill* in 1897, allowed him to challenge some of the
conventional attitudes towards poverty and its causes. Ames identified insufficient employment as a chief cause and then demonstrated that saving for the proverbial rainy day was impossible, thus repudiating the standard argument that the effects of irregular work could be met by the worker practising thrift while employed. His intensive investigation of the circumstances of the poorest families also challenged the conventional wisdom by revealing that the 'undeserving' category formed a far smaller proportion than was generally imagined. Although Ames demonstrated that the problem of poverty was largely rooted in economic and social arrangements, his proposals for reform did not extend to extensive state intervention. Other than advocating winter works programs for employables, the rest of his suggestions were dependent on private initiative, including the care of the dependent poor unable to work.

Protestant churchmen also challenged prevailing ideas concerning the causes and treatment of poverty. From the 1890s onwards they were increasingly influenced by the social gospel that sought to apply the teachings of Christ to the economic and social problems of the day. While the new movement had both conservative and radical elements, the majority of social gospellers "took a middle road, favouring a broad programme of liberal reform measures, leading ultimately to the welfare state." Their participation in the crusade for prohibition altered its character by focusing attention on the social consequences of alcohol consumption. The 'demon rum' was not merely a matter of personal sin. As a major cause of poverty and other social ills, it could only be excised in a more general reform of society. Although prohibition was their major goal, social gospellers also urged state intervention on other national
questions in order to give effect to Christ's teachings. Their "broad program of social reform was unveiled at the first, national congress on social problems held in 1914; and it recommended state pensions for widows with young children and comprehensive social insurance to protect Canadians against work injury, old age and unemployment. The proponents of these reforms displayed a knowledge of American and European developments and refuted conventional objections to providing an income to people in need. Social reformers, however, faced a formidable task in persuading the majority of Canadians to endorse the new cause of collectivism, as individualism remained the dominant social value well into the interwar years.

Institutional Framework

The structure of Canadian political institutions also had a significant impact upon developments in income maintenance. Canada's original constitution, the British North America (BNA) Act of 1867, made only scant reference to the subject of public aid and other welfare services for the poor, a neglect that has prompted considerable discussion. At the time of Confederation, Canada was primarily a pioneer rural society, and income security as we know it, was regarded primarily as a matter for the extended family, with religious charities and local governments filling in the gaps. "Not surprisingly, such a minor function of government did not attract much attention either in the debates that preceded Confederation or the BNA Act itself...."

The 1867 constitution identified the provinces as the 'centres of gravity' for initiatives in income support, because it allocated them most of the powers concerning health and welfare. In section 92 they were given exclusive authority to pass laws pertaining to the "establishment,
maintenance and management of hospitals, asylums, charities, and eleemosynary institutions." Their position of advantage was further strengthened by other exclusive powers concerning municipal institutions, the principal agencies of public relief at that time. Their jurisdiction over matters pertaining to property and civil rights was also to have an important impact on the future development of the social insurance technique of income support.

In contrast, the national government was assigned a very limited role, with its relevant enumerated powers confined to two types of institutions, marine hospitals and prisons, and select groups comprising aliens, Indians and veterans. However, its possession of the residual power to make laws for the "peace, order and good government of Canada" and its power to raise money by "any mode or system of taxation" were potent levers for initiating and funding developments in income support. But prior to 1914 judicial interpretation confirmed provincial dominance. Both the original decisions of the Judicial Committee of the British Privy Council and its subsequent interpretations in the early decades of this century reaffirmed that advances in social security depended upon provincial not national action, and the federal government was "quite content to accept provincial responsibility for welfare."  

Although they had free rein to initiate and fund developments in income support, the provinces played a passive role prior to 1914. After delegating the function of relieving the poor along with most of its costs to the municipalities and/or private charities, they confined their own involvement to occasional aid in the form of small grants. Their inertia concerning public assistance contrasted sharply with their aggressive role in developing health services and educational facilities, and fulfilled in part the belief of the framers of the BNA Act that development of income maintenance measures would
occur at the local level, "where colonial tradition dictated they belonged." Moreover, the original members of Confederation apparently had "no desire to challenge the dominant position of churches over welfare services." Their reluctance to disturb the existing colonial pattern of relief arrangements resulted in the development of a decentralized and haphazard system that endured well into the twentieth century.

The two maritime provinces of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia were the only ones to adopt a specific poor law based on Elizabethan principles of local responsibility and less eligibility, which stated that the amount of assistance provided must be less than the earnings of the lowest-paid labourer. Under their respective statutes of 1786 and 1763, municipalities were required to levy property taxes to relieve destitution among the dependent poor. This system persisted intact after their entry into Confederation, with provincial involvement confined to the occasional grant to meet emergencies. In contrast, the English poor law model was not copied in Prince Edward Island. In view of the island's small size and population and the relative absence of municipal government, the province administered poor relief both in the pre- and post-colonial period.

In Ontario the system of poor relief was similar to that of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, even though the Legislature of Upper Canada had explicitly rejected the British Poor Law in 1792. By 1867 the province already had an established system of municipal government experienced in administering institutional care and outdoor relief to the resident poor. These local authorities shared the function with private philanthropies run along denominational lines, with Protestants dominant. A provincial inspectorate also existed at the time of Confederation, charged with the task of supervising
institutions such as asylums and prisons, and its leadership played an important role in developing social welfare programs during the 1868-81 period. These initiatives plus the province's passage of Canada's first social insurance scheme in 1914 made Ontario the 'pacemaker' among the provincial governments prior to World War I.

The Quebec system was distinctive, with religious institutions organized along denominational lines acting as the major relief agencies. However, it was equally decentralized, with the parish or diocese comprising the local unit of administration. This structure was bequeathed from the seventeenth-century French pattern and remained unchanged after the province's entry into Confederation. As the dominant religious charity, the Catholic Church, stressed private initiative in remedying social ills, the provincial government played a very marginal role until the 1920s. Its intervention was confined for nearly three centuries to legal acknowledgement of private charitable institutions and societies and to financial encouragement by means of subsidies to organizations requesting them. Quebec municipalities were even more inactive. Although their charters gave them the power to aid indigents in their own homes, this obligation remained a moral one up until 1921, when the provincial Public Charities Act required them to contribute towards their care.

The entry of the western provinces into Confederation did not alter the established pattern of relief arrangements. Instead, they followed colonial tradition by delegating responsibility for the poor to their municipalities. In those areas where local government was rudimentary or non-existent, the provinces paid the costs of institutional and emergency poor relief, but provincial involvement was only voluntary prior to World War I. For example, the operation of B.C.'s Destitute, Poor and Sick Fund, created in 1880 for
residents of unorganized areas, had no statutory basis and provincial grants to municipalities were equally ad hoc.\textsuperscript{43}

Despite the differences in administration, the destitute, whether they lived in Charlottetown or Victoria, received a similar form of public aid. Until World War I it was provided only on an emergency basis by municipalities or by private charities acting as their agents, and was generally referred to as 'outdoor relief.' Relief was usually given in kind in the form of groceries, fuel orders and second-hand clothing. Both its amount - meagre, subsistence-level handouts - and form - workhouse or work tests - were "conditioned by the famous (or infamous) English poor law principle of less eligibility."\textsuperscript{44} This minimal, residual and rudimentary form of public assistance formed the springboard for all future developments in income maintenance. In this sense, "poor relief was the seed from which came the root, branch and flower of social security."\textsuperscript{45}

In addition to the structure of federalism and the colonial policy inheritance, the character of other political institutions shaped the evolution of categoric public assistance. Although representative assemblies and responsible cabinets were established in the pre-Confederation era, Canada did not qualify as a full-fledged democracy prior to World War I since competitive party politics was not mass-based. The franchise was restricted to men who owned property until 1888, when Manitoba and Ontario adopted manhood suffrage at the age of 21. Their example was copied by the other provinces, with Quebec holding out until 1936. Nationally, the principle of universal suffrage for both men and women was established in the 1920 Dominion Elections Act, but Indians and certain aliens were excluded. Women did not gain the right to vote provincially until the war years, with Manitoba's initiative prompting seven
other provinces to take similar action during the 1916-22 period, leaving Quebec women disenfranchised until 1940. Despite these variations, the creation of a mass franchise had a significant impact because it ushered in the formative era for innovations in public assistance.

The absence of a mass electorate was not the only noticeable feature of the institutional framework in the pre-1914 era. The federal bureaucracy hardly qualified as 'modern.' A patronage system of appointment was the norm until 1908, when a non-partisan commission was created to apply the principle of selection by merit, a goal that was applied generally throughout the service in 1918. In 1908 there were fewer than 10,000 employees and no specialized agency engaged in health and welfare activities. Although the Department of Labour, founded in 1900, contained officials interested in social problems, including a future Liberal Prime Minister, its small staff and low position in the administrative hierarchy restricted its activities mainly to a policing function. Indeed, Ottawa had to sponsor investigations such as the 1887 Royal Commission on the Relations of Labour and Capital to compensate for its relative administrative impoverishment. With the possible exception of Ontario, this characteristic also applied to the provincial capitals.

World War I, however, had a dramatic impact on both the scope and size of the federal bureaucracy. It prompted the establishment of temporary regulatory agencies to meet the unprecedented emergency and, of more relevance for this study, the creation of permanent departments for veterans' affairs in 1918 and public health a year later. Ottawa's wartime intervention also recruited a new army of civil servants, with their number almost doubling from 25,101 in 1914 to 47,133 in 1920, a peak that was not matched until 1940. Their ranks included a few of the bureaucrats who were to oversee the laying of the foundations of the Canadian welfare state.
A Review

This sketch of the environment indicates the presence of both spurs and constraints on innovations in income maintenance from 1914 onwards. The socio-economic preconditions for initiatives in categoric public assistance existed on the eve of World War I. Canada had reached an unprecedented level of affluence, with the expansion of secondary industry posing an increasing threat to the established agricultural sector. It was a nation in "an emulsive stage of development part way between an agrarian and an industrial economy...." 49 The spurt of economic growth from 1896 onwards provided the senior levels of government with the resources to finance collective provision against loss of income. Two of its demographic effects, the rapid growth of the prairie west and of urban, industrial areas, altered the social structure by adding both sectional and class conflicts to the existing list of cleavages, and creating the economic interest groups who would clash over the state's role in welfare. They also hastened innovations in income maintenance by exacerbating problems of urban poverty, creating a new category of employable indigents and enhancing the prospect of public dependency for those unable to work. These innovations, in fact, date from World War I, when provincial programmes in workmen's compensation and mothers' pensions were launched in 1914 and 1916 respectively. This very short time lag between the onset of unprecedented economic growth in the late nineteenth century and provincial experiments in social insurance and categoric public assistance provides strong evidence to refute the contention that Canada was a welfare state 'lagger' compared with other western nations. Even when a later starting point is used, namely, the federally-sponsored initiative in old age pensions, her progress was "typical, or even a little early."50
However, entrenched ideas about the causes and treatment of poverty acted as powerful constraints upon advances in income security. They reflected both traditional religious beliefs and the dominant secular ideology of North America, laissez-faire liberalism. Their hegemony, though, began to be challenged from the 1880s onwards. Individual reformers discovered that poverty was largely involuntary, and expressions of dissatisfaction with the minimal role of the state were voiced in the press and by Protestant social gospellers.

Although the growing band of urban social reformers appeared to be confused about their lobbying targets, the division of legislative powers provided a clear guide. Both the terms of the 1867 constitution and judicial interpretation clearly identified the provincial governments as the 'centres of gravity' for initiatives. But, apart from Ontario, the other provinces were inactive in the pre-1914 era, leaving the colonial tradition of local poor relief virtually intact. While the federal system was to complicate Canada's response to the new social problems of an emerging urban society, other aspects of its political evolution were to heighten its responsiveness. The distinctive features of twentieth-century politics - mass democracy and a professional bureaucracy - were to generate important pressures for innovations in income support. As shown above, World War I provided the impetus for their development, and it ushered in, among other things, special treatment for destitute unemployed workers, a category previously deemed ineligible for public assistance.
PART II

EMERGENCY STATE AID FOR DESTITUTE EMPLOYABLES
The development of emergency state aid occurred during a period when recession was more prevalent than prosperity. This trend was reflected in unemployment statistics, compiled from 1921 onwards (see appendix A). The 1913-15 depression represented a small blot on the record of industrial growth in the first decades of this century. It was short-lived as the outbreak of World War I fuelled an unprecedented demand for labour both in the agricultural and industrial sectors. The effects of wartime expansion lasted until the fall of 1920, when a softening of prices, especially for farm products, marked the onset of recession. From 1925 onwards, Canada shared in a major boom originating in the United States, with all the main economic indexes showing the same broad pattern of development. At the end of 1929 came a financial collapse that ushered in the Great Depression, during which production and employment reached their lowest levels ever in 1933, and only recovered slowly thereafter until the stimulus of war took hold.

One major consequence of these economic downturns was the creation of a new social category, destitute employables. The 1931 census provided the first accurate data on their demographic origins. It defined unemployed workers as wage-earners in stated occupations whose earnings were reduced by loss of time resulting from lay-offs and loss of jobs, thus distinguishing them from other segments of the gainfully occupied population such as farmers, employers, and others working on their own account. However, only a minority of wage-earners were affected by unemployment even during the unprecedented economic decline of the 1930s (see figure 2). In his pathbreaking study, Marsh identified casual, seasonal, and industrial workers as the most vulnerable to unemployment because their work was chronically unstable and their incomes lower than other wage-or
Figure 2. Estimated numbers of employed and unemployed wage earners in relation to the total working population, 1921-38.

salary-earners. "In total numbers, whether measured by lay-offs, losses of jobs, or casual workers, the unskilled manual class carries by far the greatest burden."³

Among unemployed wage-earners, only those completely devoid of any financial resources were eligible for emergency state aid during the interwar period. No figures are available on the incidence of destitution among the working population until the mid-1930s. But investigators suggest that its impact was even more unequal than that of unemployment, with the unskilled sector comprising the entire client group. Cassidy speculates that until 1932, public dependency was "a monopoly of . . . the lowest social and economic groups in the community."⁴ Despite the levelling effects of mass unemployment, Marsh established that it remained nearly synonymous with the unskilled class as indigence was still the criterion of eligibility.⁵

Throughout the 1914-30 period destitute, unskilled workers received aid only on an emergency basis, as unemployment was perceived to be mainly a winter problem. World War I marked a threshold in the development of emergency aid as it spurred the involvement of both senior levels of government. Prior to 1914, the municipalities were the only public authorities to provide occasional relief. During the 1913-15 depression the four western provinces contributed towards municipal relief costs for the first time.⁶ Although a significant departure from previous policy, their independent efforts fell clearly within their jurisdiction. Ottawa's involvement, however, in subsequent joint initiatives during the postwar depression posed a direct challenge to the existing division of powers. The federal policy of intervention between 1919 and 1921, and retreat during the rest of the decade is analyzed in chapters 3 and 4.
The Great Depression spurred Ottawa to renew its partnership with the traditional relief-giving authorities. Despite the unprecedented scale of unemployment and poverty, relief provision during the 1930s cannot qualify as a social experiment. Instead, it represented an extension of policies and practices developed in the preceding decade. The Conservative administration of R.B. Bennett, though, did not rely solely on past precedents in its attempt to solve the problem of depression. Apart from its abortive attempts to introduce unemployment insurance, it sponsored two novel forms of emergency state aid: relief camps for single, homeless men and a land settlement scheme for selected families. Although these measures aided only minor segments of the relief population, they represent further opportunities to test propositions concerning welfare innovations. The political forces shaping their introduction are analyzed in chapters 5 and 6 respectively.
CHAPTER 3

FEDERAL POLICY OF INTERVENTION, 1919-1921

Between December 1919 and October 1921 Ottawa sponsored no less than four separate measures for destitute, unemployed workers. The Unionist government extended aid first to veterans, financing the entire costs of their relief during the 1920 winter. Although this was a unique expedient, it set an important precedent for the extension of emergency aid to civilians. Following the onset of the postwar depression, the governing coalition then offered cash contributions, i.e., doles, towards municipal relief costs in the 1921 winter. This initiative was significant as no previous federal administration had financed aid for able-bodied civilian wage-earners. Moreover, it established Canada as the North American pioneer in unemployment relief. Although partially disabled veterans were eligible for civilian relief, Ottawa decided in January 1921 to assume on a temporary basis the entire costs of their maintenance. Its commitment, in fact, turned out to be an ongoing one as these marginal members of the labour force received aid in successive winters of the interwar period. Unionist action concerning physically fit civilians was not confined to pioneering a doles policy. In the fall of 1921 federal contributions were offered towards municipal relief works as well as direct relief. Their payment was contingent upon matching provincial grants, a requirement imposed in future interwar schemes.

Individually, these various measures could be dismissed as merely ad hoc responses to postwar conditions. Taken together, however, they amounted to an unprecedented policy of federal intervention often involving forays into
territory hitherto regarded as the exclusive terrain of the municipalities and provinces. The purpose of this chapter is to elucidate the political forces behind this policy.

The chapter begins with an outline of the background, against which the various initiatives were taken. It then identifies the various advocates, opponents and precipitants of federal action. It concludes with a review of the findings in order to highlight the relevant factors shaping the policy of intervention.

Background

In contrast to previous depressions, Ottawa anticipated that abnormal unemployment would result from the sudden reconversion of war-time industries and the demobilization of 500,000 soldiers. The Unionist government, therefore, took various steps to minimize these dislocations. In February 1918 it offered conditional subsidies for the expansion of provincial labour exchanges that spurred the development of a nationwide system by 1919. It also created a temporary Department of Soldiers' Civil Re-establishment (DSCR) to handle re-employment and other problems of the disabled veteran. In January 1919 its activities were expanded to handle the job placement of the physically fit soldier. The government also secured approval in the 1919 session for a scheme to encourage soldiers to take up farming and for a package of special measures to provide work in the cities. However, in spite of these various measures of foresight, a minority of veterans faced a difficult task in securing re-entry into the workforce.

The problem of unemployment among veterans did not become acute until the fall of 1919. Although 70 percent of the 350,000 men still overseas were released between March and June of that year, the impact of this flood of
disbanded soldiers was not felt immediately. Like their 73,000 colleagues discharged in Canada, the newly returned soldiers received war service gratuities to cushion their initial re-adjustment to civilian life. Their period of independence, though, was short-lived as these cash grants were soon eroded by the spiralling cost of living which rose over 13 percent in 1918. They were then faced with the prospect of finding employment at a time when factory jobs were becoming scarcer and seasonal work was over for the year.

Unemployment among veterans in the fall of 1919 was most acute in the cities of British Columbia, Manitoba, Ontario, and Nova Scotia, the areas attracting the greatest number of newly demobilized men. A DSCR official estimated that two-thirds of the 30,328 unemployed ex-servicemen were concentrated in urban areas: his partial breakdown of figures identified 3,497 in Winnipeg, 5,750 in Toronto, Hamilton and Brantford, and 4,900 in Kingston. As they were not legally residents of these cities, they were not eligible for relief under the poor law inheritance that still governed charitable assistance.

Ottawa, however, had not anticipated this when it decided to pay the fares of discharged soldiers to any destination of their choice. Its program of re-establishment contained no provision for emergency aid. Moreover, the Canadian Patriotic Fund, the major voluntary agency engaged in post-discharge relief work, was unable to tackle the problem of their destitution. Its revised charter of 1919 explicitly excluded the granting of assistance to families where unemployment was the only cause of dependency "so long as the ex-soldier was physically fit." Relief for the able-bodied veteran ran counter to the dominant ethic guiding the agency's activities: "Self-reliance must be encouraged to the fullest extent possible, otherwise there is a grave danger of
creating a class that will always tend to relax personal effort and lean on public benevolence."\(^7\)

The problem of relieving veterans was soon overshadowed by more widespread destitution among civilian wage-earners. In the fall of 1920 the brief postwar boom faded and the economy began a steep slide towards depression.\(^8\) The primary cause of the 1920-25 depression was a severe decline in agricultural prices, especially of the principal crop - wheat - resulting from a sharp drop in demand in Europe.\(^9\) This decline was accompanied by a less rapid fall in prices generally. The depression affected practically every province, but its impact was especially severe on the prairies where both rural and urban areas were hit hard.\(^10\) In other provinces the slump initially had a more selective impact affecting the logging industry in British Columbia, and manufacturing in Ontario and Quebec. The slowdown in these industries coincided with the seasonal closure of camps and ports. Together they produced mounting unemployment in urban centres, primarily among unskilled, casual labour. Although its precise extent across Canada was unknown, the Deputy Minister of Labour estimated that 200,000 were jobless in October 1920, compared with a normal seasonal total of 40,000-50,000 in the cities.\(^11\)

The abnormal conditions in Quebec, Ontario and British Columbia imposed severe strains on the existing relief machinery. In Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver, both private and public agencies were overwhelmed by demands for emergency aid from the destitute unemployed.\(^12\) The religious charities in Quebec were experiencing a severe financial crisis in 1920 because the demands placed upon them were not matched by an increase in private revenues. Their functions could not be transferred easily to the public sector as Montreal and other municipal governments were facing bankruptcy.\(^13\) Cities in English Canada
also faced financial problems arising from their dependence upon the property tax, because its revenue-raising ability could not keep pace with demand.\textsuperscript{14} Their revenue constraints, though, were not the only impediments. Faced with spiralling relief costs for their own permanent residents, civic politicians were reluctant to finance aid for transients and veterans because local ratepayers objected to any outlay from city coffers for the able-bodied unemployed. Property-owners voiced their opposition in Vancouver by "...grumbling about giving relief to men who, no doubt, wasted their earnings in riotous living"; and Toronto ratepayers were equally perturbed about having to support "loafers."\textsuperscript{15} Ever mindful of their constituents' wishes as they faced annual re-election, spokesmen of these and other cities lobbied for provincial aid.

The revenues of the provincial governments, however, were also squeezed by the postwar depression. Taxation of income was their major source of funds at that time, as other forms such as the gasoline tax or income from liquor control were insignificant.\textsuperscript{16} Besides lack of resources, there was another, more powerful constraint upon provincial intervention. The prevalent fiscal orthodoxy identified retrenchment, not increased expenditures, as the appropriate course of action in times of recession. Consequently, the two provinces that took independent steps in the fall of 1920 to aid the unemployed refused to pay any contribution towards direct relief costs. Instead, the Liberal government of British Columbia offered to lend money to cities for the starting of relief works; and the new Farmer-Labour government of Ontario earmarked funds in November for road construction to meet the unemployment crisis.\textsuperscript{17} In contrast, Ottawa was more receptive to demands for emergency aid for destitute, unemployed workers.
The Agitation for Federal Intervention, 1919-21

Despite its brevity, the agitation for federal intervention was complex, incorporating elements of both the social control and interest-group models of welfare politics. On the one hand, it was linked with the emergence of leftist-inspired dissent in the immediate postwar period. On the other hand, it represented a more or less orthodox struggle between competing interests representing a client group and the major sectors of the economy. While the boundary between the two interpretations is blurred by the fact that veterans were the key societal actors in both cases, it is possible to distinguish concurrent separate class and group pressures shaping Ottawa's intervention.

The onset of the agitation coincided with an unprecedented surge of labour radicalism. Although working-class radicals were seeking fundamental social and political change, rather than temporary palliatives, their activities alarmed the public, as well as both the civil and military authorities, and underlined the need for remedial action of some kind. Against this backdrop of widespread unrest, spokesmen of interest groups clashed openly over the issue of state aid for unemployed workers. Representatives of mainly moderate veterans and unionists voiced separate demands for a national remedy for postwar unemployment with the former engaging in more intense lobbying. Spokesmen of capital and farmers, on the other hand, were not convinced of the necessity of state-financed ventures to alleviate unemployment. Although they represented the major federal taxpayers, their sporadic protests were disregarded because businessmen lacked a powerful bloc inside the Unionist cabinet to speak on their behalf and farmers represented only an embryonic political force during the agitation, except in Ontario, where they scored an upset victory in 1919.
Inside government, cabinet politicians rather than bureaucrats qualify as the precipitants of the federal policy of intervention. They made the major decisions because the policy involved a new departure requiring a government decision on principle. Their motives were mixed, reflecting the simultaneous conflicting external pressures, and included fear of revolution, perceived legitimacy of veterans' claims, electoral and cost considerations.

Advocates:

The agitation developed initially outside the Canadian Parliament. It was directed mainly at Ottawa rather than the provincial governments, because under the division of legislative powers the former was assigned jurisdiction over the category of veterans, as well as the residual power of peace, order and good government. It was conducted by two sets of societal actors: labour radicals and orthodox interest groups representing ex-soldiers and trade unionists. Their pleas were to attract support from other segments of Canadian society, and federal legislators.

In 1919 working-class militancy in the form of union membership and strike activity reached a peak that was not equalled until 1943. The level of leftist-inspired dissent in the immediate postwar years was also unprecedented. It represented the emergence of a new form of class conflict at a time when the climate was receptive to demands for a new political and social order. "The growing strength of socialist ideas, the encouragement offered by the Russian revolution, resentment of the alleged power of the 'bosses' over parties and governments, as well as of such particular evils as conscription, unemployment and the high cost of living, all gave an impetus to labour radicalism which excited hope in the breasts of many and terror in the hearts of others."
The active participants in radical labour causes represented only a small minority of industrial workers. They included not only civilians but also disaffected veterans who were bitter over the contrast between 'a land fit for heroes to live in' and the conditions of inflation, poor housing and unemployment they encountered after demobilization. Although their alliance was not formalized, it was manifest in a variety of forms soon after the war. Some ex-soldiers attended the labour churches in Winnipeg and other western cities that were under RCMP surveillance because of their "seditious preaching." Others made common cause with more extreme elements of the labour movement. In March 1919 an anonymous "Manifesto of the Provisional Council of Soldier and Workers Deputies of Canada" was distributed in Toronto urging the organization of secret councils along the soviet model. In the same month, the spectre of a similar alliance was raised in Calgary, where delegates attending the founding convention of the One Big Union (OBU) passed a resolution calling for the formation of joint councils of soldiers and labour. This new radical labour organization sought "fundamental and revolutionary change in society and the creation of a system of trade unions that would greatly increase the economic and political power of the workers."

The activities of revolutionary socialists during the 1919 winter created widespread alarm that came close to duplicating the state of national hysteria reached in the American 'Red Scare.' "Many of the fears . . . centred on the thousands of returned soldiers demobilized after the armistice." Unlike civilians, these men were trained killers and their potential for violence had already been demonstrated in sporadic attacks upon alien workmen in Winnipeg and Halifax.
Tension mounted across Canada during the spring of 1919 as a result of veterans' participation in the Winnipeg General Strike, "the explosive culmination of the [postwar] labour unrest." Although the strike was dominated by issues such as the right to collective bargaining and a living wage, it was not simply a civilian class struggle. It also involved "the cluster of problems associated with soldier rehabilitation." In Winnipeg, unemployed veterans resented those who had stayed at home with jobs, made profits on war contracts, or increased their land holdings. While estimates vary, a majority of the 16,000 ex-soldiers in the city were apparently behind the strike, many of whom had a labour background.

From the onset of the strike (May 15), these veterans played an active part. Their participation troubled the federal authorities as it enhanced the possibility of violence on either or both sides. In response to their involvement and the perceived threat of Bolshevism, the contingent of 3,000 troops at the Winnipeg barracks was strengthened, detachments of the RNWMP force were moved into the city, and machine guns were secretly shipped in. These steps, however, increased tensions and created an attitude of militancy among the returned-soldier strikers. This was voiced in an article that appeared in the Strike Bulletin of 6 June 1919:

The absolute unscrupulousness of the employing class is seen clearly by the soldier. He knows what machine guns mean in a mob and he has found out that he - the returned soldier with the other strikers - is the mob, so once again he issues a warning and says once again quite plainly, if you call out the soldiers, you will find that two can play that game.

Although the ex-soldier strikers did not resort to armed combat, they fought with 'Loyalist' veterans for control of the streets. They also precipitated the only serious incidence of violence, 'Bloody Saturday,' when their silent
protest against the arrest of strike leaders ended in the noise of machine guns fired by the RNWMP.

Their new-found radicalism did not dissipate in the aftermath of the strike. An Ex-Soldiers' and Sailors' Labour Party was formed in Winnipeg in late June. It was most active in its birthplace, but had other branches in Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia. Its platform contained Progressive planks such as abolition of tariffs and direct legislation, but at the time the party was regarded as a front for the radical OBU because of its advocacy of extensive public ownership.

Besides labour radicalism, orthodox group pressure also spurred federal intervention. Organized veterans during the summer and early fall of 1919 exerted intense pressure upon Ottawa to remedy their grievances concerning inflation, profiteering and unemployment, and their demand for additional war service gratuities was "the most pressing issue of the politics of re-establishment." Although this issue provided a focal point for their general discontent, there was no united effort to secure further cash bonuses. Instead, the agitation was conducted by a divided soldiers' movement marked by turbulent rivalry that reflected the social unrest prevalent throughout the Dominion.

The combined total membership of the soldiers' movement represented a powerful force. At least 75 percent of the 500,000 men who returned from World War I enrolled in such organizations upon demobilization. However, the movement was split between ten national associations formed before or soon after the armistice. Moreover, the internal structure of these organizations was also characterized by division reflecting status differences between the officers, who were drawn mainly from the middle and upper classes, and the
lower ranks composed of workers. The assumption of leadership roles by officers in the major associations intensified the resentment felt by the mass membership since the end of the war. "It is a matter of record that following the Armistice and pending demobilization, propaganda of an insidious and persistent type, seeking to discredit the officers, was prevalent among the 'other ranks.'"36

Among the plethora of returned-soldier organizations, the Great War Veterans' Association (GWVA) was the largest, most active and most influential. It was founded in April 1917 and experienced rapid growth in membership, so that by mid-1919 it represented the majority of returned men.37 Like other major ex-servicemen's organizations outside Canada,38 the GWVA rejected the idea of independent political action, opting instead to be a non-partisan pressure group. The leadership also adopted moderate and constitutional goals, including commitments to respect law and order and to oppose Bolshevism, because it was "anxious that its members be thought neither grasping nor radical in their approach to reconstruction."39 As a result of its moderation and size, the GWVA soon acquired a position of privileged access in the decision-making process. Its representatives were appointed to serve on an advisory committee to the federal cabinet and most of their suggestions to facilitate re-establishment were adopted.40

The moderation of the GWVA executive was manifest in its stance on the gratuities issue. Its officers refused to endorse the demand of their Calgary branch for additional cash grants of between $1,000 and $2,000, and voiced their opposition in the Veteran (May 1919), arguing that the cost of the proposal, $1,000 million, was prohibitive, a sentiment shared by the Finance Minister. Their reaction proved to be unpopular with segments of the mass
membership. At the GWVA annual convention in June 1919, the 'Calgary Resolution' was the chief subject of debate. It was backed by all branches in Alberta and others across the country. Confronted with a divided convention, the executive hastily drew up a compromise resolution that was more moderate than the Calgary one because it avoided mention of specific sums and recognized the financial constraints facing the Unionist government.41

When even this request was rejected by the cabinet in the name of "rigid economy,"42 some rank-and-file GWVA members defected to a more radical alternative. They joined a new Returned Soldiers' Gratuity League founded at a mass meeting of 5,000 veterans in Toronto in September 1919 by John Harry Flynn, an ex-sergeant and a controversial figure in the soldiers' movement. The men represented only a small minority of returned soldiers, but they created "a good deal of turmoil for the time."43 Flynn's new League attracted support from veterans in Ottawa, Montreal and Halifax, as well as Toronto. Mass meetings were held in these cities and resolutions were passed demanding immediate implementation of the 'Calgary Resolution'. The League also received the backing of another radical group, the 16,000-strong Grand Army of Canada, founded by S.J. Brown of Toronto in 1918. Its list of principles included the declaration "that a serving class is a disgrace to our civilization;" and its 1919 platform advocated not only Calgary-type bonuses but also extensive public ownership.44

The tactics adopted by Flynn to secure additional bonuses were unorthodox. His attacks upon the Unionist government and its "lackey," the GWVA, were so vigorous that they inspired unruly behaviour and minor disturbances. According to the Minister of Soldiers' Civil Re-establishment in 1920-21, Flynn's invective attracted attention because "he was a glib speaker of the demagogic type." The full force of his oratory became evident after an emergency
parliamentary debate in September 1919 on the League's demand for Calgary-type bonuses. According to the minister, "Flynn had some of the unthinking men so excited in the support of his idea, that threats of physical violence and of burning homes poured in upon some of us by telegram, and one of the Members who appeared before his returned-soldier organization was manhandled."45

The Unionist government's decision to reject the League's demand for cash bonuses was overwhelmingly endorsed in the emergency debate. However, Flynn's bitter agitation was likely to continue unabated unless action of some kind was taken to dampen discontent among veterans and to aid the officers of the moderate associations stem the defections of their members to the more extreme League. Recognizing this, the cabinet agreed to the GWVA demand for an inquiry into the problems of veterans and appointed a House of Commons special committee on September 18th. Its broad terms of reference included making some provision for unemployed returned men. However, although its 21 members included eight ex-soldiers and two fathers of veterans, they were unlikely to recommend a further cash bonus as the majority "supported a Government several times on record as opposed to it."46

Despite this omen, the veterans' spokesmen used the hearings of the special committee to press the case for additional gratuities. On October 1st the controversial Flynn, now head of a new United Veterans' League, threatened political action if his 25,000 supporters' demand for Calgary-type bonuses was not met. "We will dictate to representatives of any party their platform, and if they are not in accord with the views of this political power, then we will use our franchise to prevent them getting into office."47 Although the spokesmen of the three major moderate associations publicly disassociated themselves from Flynn's tactics, they were not averse to issuing threats of
their own. A Calgary representative of the GWVA raised the spectre of "trouble" among their combined membership of 340,000 if the committee rejected their own gratuity proposal in favour of other "half-hearted or cheese-paring" options:

We have been sitting on a safety valve....If, by any incomplete or insufficient measures which this Parliament may adopt, you unceremoniously throw us off that safety valve, our control is gone, and you may call upon us to assist you at a time when our control can no longer be of service to you....48

His warning, however, was not heeded. According to a senior minister, the cabinet discussed the issue on October 11th and concluded: "We are up against a very grave situation but shall disappoint the gratuity grabbers."49

The cabinet's decision failed to quell the agitation. The split in the ranks of veterans showed no signs of healing during 1920, and Flynn still posed a challenge to the moderate associations.50 But the Unionist government remained firm in its stance. Borden's successor, Meighen, told a mass meeting of veterans in Vancouver in the fall that he was "against any further cash bonuses [b]ut if we can still further help the men to help themselves, we are ready to do it."51

Although slim, the evidence suggests that the community at large was somewhat ambivalent towards Ottawa's stance on the gratuities question. Letters received by Prime Minister Borden from individuals in Toronto commended his firmness in resisting the "selfish" and "unreasonable" demands of Flynn.52 Among interest groups, only moderate trade unionists endorsed the 'Calgary Resolution.'53 However, the more general plea of veterans for special treatment attracted widespread sympathy, because the public perceived them as a culturally deserving group owing to their patriotic service. Some Protestant social gospellers even went so far as to ascribe a special moral claim to veterans' demands for remedy of their grievances.54
This dual reaction to the ex-soldiers' agitation was reflected inside the federal House. The Liberal opposition was the only party to endorse their demand for additional cash grants. It pledged to adopt them at its first convention in 1919 because "so easy an opportunity of winning the support of returned soldiers could not be resisted." In contrast, Unionist backbenchers by and large supported their leadership's stance on gratuities, but were not averse to some other form of remedial action to alleviate hardship among ex-soldiers. Major D.L. Redmond, for example, urged the creation of federal public works on the grounds that unemployed veterans were still "wards of the state" until their re-absorption into the civilian labour market.

As well as organized veterans, trade unionists actively sought a national remedy for postwar unemployment. Although their ranks grew rapidly during the war, jumping from 143,000 in 1915 to 378,000 in 1919, they were deeply divided along ethnic, ideological and sectional lines. The Ontario-based Trades and Labour Congress (TLC) was the dominant national organization. It represented Canadian locals of American international unions, and its leaders were greatly influenced by the philosophy of their U.S. parent, Samuel Gompers, who rejected socialism and independent political action. Their efforts to block the development of an autonomous Canadian movement prompted the growth of a separate, rival Catholic labour organization in Quebec. Their conservatism also precipitated another schism with western labour leaders that resulted in the founding of the radical OBU. In the immediate postwar period, these divisions seriously undermined the credibility of the TLC's claim to be the national voice of organized labour.

The TLC pressed for implementation of a state-administered unemployment insurance fund in the immediate postwar period. It proposed that assessments be
levied on industry along similar lines to provincial workmen's compensation programs, and that Ottawa operate the scheme with the provinces contributing towards the cost of administration. As well as including this proposal in its annual briefs to the cabinet, TLC spokesmen on various federal advisory bodies also advocated action. They signed the majority report of the Royal Commission on Industrial Relations in July 1919, recommending immediate investigation of unemployment insurance. Representatives of the TLC and railway brotherhoods on the Canadian Employment Service Council subsequently endorsed this recommendation. However, there is little evidence to suggest that their demands were followed up by a concerted campaign to secure federal action until the 1922 session.

Other sectors of Canadian society supported the claims of moderate unionists. The major Protestant churches and the GWVA passed resolutions at their respective postwar conventions endorsing the concept of contributory unemployment insurance. The federal Liberals also recognized its growing appeal. At their 1919 convention they pledged to implement a joint scheme of social insurance, once financial conditions permitted. Their new leader, W.L.M. King, who sponsored this resolution, had earlier endorsed this technique of income support in his book *Industry and Humanity*, published in 1918.

Individual members of the Unionist coalition also pressed the case for a statutory initiative. Both Newton Rowell, the leading spokesman of the Liberal wing, and Senator Robertson, a senior Conservative, recognized that unemployment was an involuntary consequence of industrialization, and urged their colleagues to develop a contributory insurance scheme. Their advocacy was encouraged by a Justice Department ruling in April 1920, suggesting that
Ottawa could sponsor a joint scheme under its residual power of peace, order and good government. Thus, inside as well as outside government the cause of collectivism had growing appeal.

Opponents:

Businessmen and farmers, however, refrained from adding their voices to the rising chorus of demands for federal intervention. Premier Drury of Ontario, the head of the new Farmer-Labour coalition, also protested against the policy, but his counterparts in other provinces remained silent on the issue during the agitation.

Businessmen's opposition to federal intervention represented in part a 'taxpayers' revolt.' Besides levying a business profits tax from 1916 onwards, the Unionist government also introduced an income tax in 1917 that "fell most heavily, if not exclusively, upon the professional and managerial classes... those whose incomes had probably been most enhanced by war prosperity." These new taxpayers were hit with additional tax increases on their personal incomes in 1918. They received no relief once peace came because of "the belief of the Minister of Finance, Sir Thomas White, that 1919 was a 'war year' and that heavy taxation was necessary to meet the costs of demobilization and reconstruction...." Confronted with further tax hikes on levels already perceived as onerous, individual spokesmen of the Toronto business community such as Sir Clifford Sifton called for "a halt in reckless expenditure." He was sharply critical of the shipbuilding contract signed by the Unionist government in December 1919 to relieve unemployment among veterans, denouncing it as an "utterly indefensible proceeding."
Apart from their low tax tolerance, Canadian businessmen subscribed to the dominant ideology of laissez-faire liberalism. Unlike their American counterparts, they were not in favour of any permanent changes in government functions based on wartime precedents but wanted a return to prewar normalcy - with government aid only for economic development. Even individuals who had played a key role in the war effort shared this preference. For example, Joseph Flavelle, the successful Toronto financier who headed the Munitions Board was opposed to government intervention in labour matters. At the end of the war his views were characterized as those of "a reactionary free-enterpriser," and he opposed state remedies for unemployment because "they would rob the individual of opportunities to do what he should do for himself." Similar views were expressed by two of the three employers' representatives on the 1919 Royal Commission on Industrial Relations. Senator Smeaton White and F. Parzee, spokesman of the 'Montreal interests,' submitted a thoroughly reactionary minority report, playing down unemployment...and condemning social insurance as a threat to the thrift and initiative of labour.

The Canadian Manufacturers' Association (CMA) supported these individual protests. Its Committee on Industrial Relations reported to delegates attending the 1921 CMA convention that unemployment insurance schemes in operation in Britain and Europe had "conspicuously failed," resulting in enormous government burdens and pauperization of insured workers. The manufacturers' opposition did not represent merely taxpayers' resistance. It also reflected a perception of unemployment as a temporary aberration rather than as an involuntary consequence of industrialization: "Generally speaking, except in periods of abnormal depression such as the last 18 months, there is work for all to do in a new country like this."
Although businessmen's opposition may well have influenced the Unionist government's decision not to take action concerning unemployment insurance, it failed to block initiatives concerning unemployment relief. Their views were disregarded partly because the 'Montreal interests' lacked representation in the Borden and Meighen cabinets, the conscription election of 1917 having created a solid Liberal Quebec for the first time since Confederation. Although spokesmen of Bay Street had more influence inside the cabinet, they were unable to dictate Unionist fiscal policy, if the decision to levy an income tax is any guide.

Farmers also rejected the idea that involuntary unemployment was a characteristic of the Canadian economy. They identified its cause in the drift from farm to city that accelerated during the war, and sought to return surplus labour 'back to the land.' Although this view was prevalent in the immediate postwar period, a concerted protest against state maintenance of unemployed city workers was not mounted until 1922. Agrarian opposition was muted before that because the Progressive movement represented then only an incipient revolt of farmers in the West and its initial reformist orientation obscured its individualist philosophy.

In Ontario, however, organized farmers scored an upset victory in the 1919 provincial election. Drury, a prominent member of the United Farmers of Ontario, was chosen to head the new Farmer-Labour coalition. His government's attitude towards unemployment and its relief clearly reflected the views of its agrarian not its industrial supporters. Ontario's Labour Minister told his federal counterpart that it was doubtful "whether the Farmer branch...will look kindly upon emergency aid for unemployed city workers, in view of their contention that labour is difficult or impossible to obtain for farm purposes and that men should leave the cities and go to the farms."
Spokesmen of rural Canada inside the federal House also voiced objections to the federal policy of intervention. Nesbitt (Lib., Oxford), himself a farmer, objected to a 'doles' policy because it fostered indolence among its recipients; and he also questioned the necessity for either relief or unemployment insurance when work was available on the farms. His sentiments were echoed during an emergency debate on unemployment by backbenchers representing rural ridings in Ontario and Quebec. The new Progressive leader, Crerar, was also not convinced that unemployment was a serious problem, as the next chapter will show. His party's views carried little weight, however, for "[w]ith their protectionist outlook, Conservatives were generally willing to sacrifice the farm vote in the West for gains in the industrial heartland of Ontario and Quebec."

Despite their industrial-urban electoral base, most members of the Unionist cabinet were opposed to financing costly remedies for postwar unemployment. They were acutely conscious of the "extravagance" of the war years, and of the widespread criticism of their deficit budgets and tax increases. They were particularly alarmed at the size of the national debt, estimated to be $2 billion, and wanted to balance the budget and lower taxes. From April 1919 onwards, Prime Minister Borden and his successor, Meighen, pursued a policy of "rigid economy and careful retrenchment" that effectively ruled out action concerning gratuities because the costs of this one-shot funding exercise were estimated to fall between $400 million and $1 billion, depending upon the scope. Their fiscal policy also militated against the assumption of an ongoing obligation to alleviate unemployment, for the long-term costs of a joint insurance scheme were unpredictable, even though Ottawa's initial contribution was estimated to be only $2 million per annum, so long as unemployment did not rise above 6 percent.
Precipitants:

The attempt to restore fiscal orthodoxy, however, did not prevent members of the Unionist cabinet from sanctioning the much cheaper option of emergency state aid for destitute employables. On four separate occasions in the immediate postwar years, they approved the payment of cash grants for veterans and civilians (see table 3). While cabinet ministers qualify as the chief architects of the federal policy of intervention, their decisions concerning specific initiatives were influenced by bureaucrats - both civil and military - as well as politicians representing the other levels of government.

Table 3. Federal expenditure on unemployment relief under orders-in-council by category aided, 1919-21

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Administration</th>
<th>Order-in-Council</th>
<th>Expenditure</th>
<th>Category Aided</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unionist</td>
<td>NA*</td>
<td>$4,146,625</td>
<td>Physically fit and partially disabled veterans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PC 43 (10/01/21)</td>
<td>$1,510,164</td>
<td>Partially disabled veterans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PC 139 (24/01/21)</td>
<td>$595,486</td>
<td>Civilians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PC3831 (07/10/21)</td>
<td>$247,514</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SOURCES: Figures concerning emergency aid for veterans are from Reports of the Work of the DSCR, 1920, 1922, pp. 84, 46 respectively. Data on civilians are from unsigned memo, attached to a letter from Deputy Minister to Thomas, 25 April 1923, Ottawa, Public Archives of Canada, Department of Labour, Lacelle Files, Record Group 27, vol. 208, file no. 617:98.

*Federal expenditure was authorized by the House of Commons Committee of Supply on 8 November 1919.

Fear of revolution was real and shaped the original decision. From the start of the demobilization process, the cabinet had been aware of the veterans' propensity for violence and "were in dread of what might happen...when the majority of returned soldiers would experience their first taste of unemployment throughout a Canadian winter."80 The Winnipeg General
Strike in the spring of 1919 provided a foretaste of what they dreaded. Although historians such as Masters (1973) and Bercuson (1978) have established that its aims were non-revolutionary, the political leadership of the time had a different reaction. Prime Minister Borden, for example, regarded the conflict as "a deliberate attempt to overthrow the existing organization of the government, and to supersede it by crude, fantastic methods founded upon absurd conceptions of what had been accomplished in Russia." Both Meighen, then acting Minister of Justice, and Robertson, Minister of Labour, had witnessed first-hand the events in Winnipeg, and shared their leader's perception of the revolutionary potential of the strike. With the military confrontation of 'Bloody Saturday' fresh in their minds, they could not overlook the prospect of further clashes during the first winter following mass demobilization. They sensed that the informal revolutionary soldier-worker alliance forged in cities of Ontario and the west resembled the coalition of forces that had toppled the czar in Russia in 1917 and the democratic government of Hungary in 1919. "Canada in 1919 (so its leaders believed) was not far from revolution." The cabinet's decision was probably influenced by a warning it received in September 1919 from a Department of Labour official based in Winnipeg:

The radical labour element and the extreme socialists, together with the Soldiers' and Sailors' League, are endeavouring to get hold of the returned soldiers here in the West, especially in Winnipeg and in Alberta. They want the returned men who are trying to get the Government to give them a further bonus to link up with them, promising that if they unite they will form a party that will be strong enough to force the Government to accede to their demands, or, failing this, to form a Government of their own. The movement is, in my mind, a very dangerous one, and should be counter-acted in some way.
A similar theme was echoed by two Ottawa-based bureaucrats a month later in their testimony to the 1919 Special Committee on Soldiers' Re-establishment, the body chosen by the cabinet to devise some remedy for unemployment. The director of the civilian Employment Service of Canada anticipated "a normal seasonal unemployment" for the 1920 winter. But, he continued, "there is a temperamental feeling that we have now about the unrest, and from our present point of view the unemployment of 10,000 men is much more serious than the unemployment of 25,000 five or six years ago." The official in charge of job placement for the physically fit soldier agreed, describing conditions in Winnipeg as "really abnormal today, because we still have the aftermath of the strike, the country is in what you might call a nervous condition in the large centres, and it is hard to estimate how they are going to settle down."85

Their testimony had an important impact. According to H.B. Morphy, a Conservative MP, the "discentered nervous condition" of the country was an "ever-present image" in the minds of the committee members. He recalled how they:

...sat down daily...to consider where this country would be, if in the absence of some provision being made to take care of that unemployment, insurrection, crime, disorder should break out in Canada. This does not necessarily come from the returned soldier. No one thought of such a thing, but we know that in the winter time there are periods when men are out of their ordinary employment and into idleness when the very worst passions are engendered.86

The committee members, however, received no concrete suggestions from the officials concerning remedial action to alleviate unemployment. They were left to devise a remedy and opted to offer aid only to needy jobless veterans.87 Their recommendation was clearly a response to a perceived crisis, for they later admitted their collective inability to arrive at any precise estimate of
costs or to decide upon the method of administration prior to its submission to
the cabinet.88

Besides being a major spur of veterans' relief during the 1920 winter, the
fear of revolution also shaped Ottawa's subsequent decision to extend aid to
destitute, physically fit civilians. Throughout 1920, the General Staff were
alarmed at "the prospect of Bolshevist insurrection...."89 Federal politicians
shared their apprehension. In August, the cabinet approved the publication of a
pamphlet prepared by the Department of Labour. Senator Robertson informed the
new Prime Minister Meighen that it was designed to demonstrate the connection
of the Soviet ambassador in the United States "...with the One Big Union, and
other socialistic movements in Canada, the idea being to bring home to the
minds of the Canadian people the fact that the revolutionary socialistic
propaganda is today being carried on in this country at the direct suggestion
of the representatives of the Soviet Government, and that evidence exists of
substantial financial assistance to accomplish that purpose."90

Winnipeg was the stronghold of the various organizations identified as
spreading "socialistic propaganda," i.e., the OBU, Ex-Soldiers' and Ex-Sailors'
Labour Party and the Labour Church movement, a fact which served to reinforce
its post-strike reputation as a radical and unsafe community. But it was not
the only major city regarded as a trouble spot. Vancouver was branded as "a
hotbed of Socialism" because of its history of labour radicalism; and Toronto
was regarded by the military authorities as a focal point of revolution, owing
to labour unrest, unemployment and Soviet activities.91

In the fall of 1920, the activities of revolutionary socialists in these
centres prompted both individuals and municipal spokesmen to lobby Ottawa for
further aid. A Toronto lawyer was perturbed about the formation of "Soviets" in
many cities, and perceived their exploitation of unemployment conditions and accompanying distress as a prelude to insurrection. "I do not think they will succeed," he wrote to the Prime Minister, "but I am quite certain that unless adequate precautions are taken, they will do great damage and cause much misery, and probably considerable loss of life." Municipal politicians were also alarmed. "Telegrams poured into Ottawa...from the nation's largest cities, warning of dangerous levels of unrest among returned soldiers." The Prime Minister informed a political confidant in early December that the "government is being pressed very incessantly now...particularly [by] Victoria, Vancouver, Winnipeg and Toronto to provide employment and relief on a vast scale." Shortly after these representations were received, Meighen and his cabinet colleagues decided to grant civilian emergency relief. As no records exist of their deliberations, it cannot be conclusively demonstrated that fear of revolution motivated their decision, but the indirect evidence strongly suggests that this was the case.

Even if social stability had prevailed in the immediate postwar years, federal politicians would have found it difficult to resist the demands of unemployed veterans, because they perceived their claims in a special light. They regarded this category as more deserving of state aid than the civilian jobless, as their unemployment derived from war service rather than from personal failure. Moreover, they believed that intervention was popular, for the community at large thought that veterans, because of services rendered and privations suffered, were entitled to special treatment. The decision to extend emergency relief to veterans during the 1920 winter reflected these perceptions. Meighen, then Interior Minister, recounted to the House his own reaction to the intense lobbying of the client group:
Unemployment, when suffered by men returning from a terrific conflict, differs from other unemployment. The demand then must be met; public opinion will permit nothing but that it be met to the full power of the government. The pressure for these ends I can, of course, very easily recall; I was in the midst of it. I ask, Hon. gentlemen, to keep in mind that pressure of that kind was a just pressure, and what is more, it is an irresistible pressure.

Another senior minister shared his sentiments, claiming that the "application of needed relief to those actually in need will approve itself to the people of Canada, and to the majority of returned soldiers." Prime Minister Meighen's subsequent decision to extend state aid to destitute civilians was also influenced by the fact that this category included 'deserving' jobless veterans. During his western tour in the fall of 1920, he met spokesmen of the GWVA and other moderate associations in Vancouver and Victoria, and promised federal aid to assist the province and municipalities to relieve unemployment among their rank-and-file.

The legitimacy and popularity of veterans' claims also led the government to assume the entire cost of relieving partially disabled ex-soldiers from 1921 onwards. Their commitment was not simply a response to representations from the Liberal Premier of British Columbia and a persuasive plea from the mayor of Winnipeg. Prime Minister Meighen also perceived that the public at large were in favour of Ottawa aiding this 'deserving' category, but not their physically fit comrades:

I believe that the spirit of the Canadian people demands that we do not, in any sense whatever, abandon the care of the [disabled] returned men. I know it is in their interests, as well as in the interests of the country, that the well and able man, who has no particular disability, ceases to regard himself in a class apart. But as respects him...who is in a more or less degree disabled...it is the spirit of this country that we walk by his side from year to year.
Unionist cabinet ministers were also receptive to veterans' demands because soldiers and their dependents had been a key element in their 1917 victory. For a variety of reasons, retention of their votes was crucial. As the coalition government was formed in the emergency of war, it had no traditional constituency to fall back upon if veterans defected en masse from Unionist ranks. The government had already lost sizeable segments of its 1917 support base. It had alienated its prairie supporters by breaking its election pledge not to conscript farmers' sons, and was perceived as anti-labour as a result of its handling of the Winnipeg strike. Moreover, political opponents of Unionism were actively competing for the votes of veterans. The reinvigorated Liberal opposition adopted a costly soldiers' policy at its 1919 convention; and the new farmers' movement pledged to implement various measures of re-establishment. Clearly, the government was under considerable pressure to retain the loyalty of the troops.

Electoral calculations also appear to have shaped the decisions of Unionist politicians to extend emergency aid to destitute civilians during the fall and winter of 1921. Their introduction of universal manhood suffrage in 1920 created a sizeable new voting bloc of labourers and mechanics who numbered over 1,200,000. The Minister of Labour recognized their potential political power, at least in Ontario where urban labour was concentrated. He suggested to Prime Minister Meighen that provincial participation should not be made mandatory in the federal 'doles' policy for the 1921 winter because of doubts over whether the Farmer branch of the Ontario government would agree to participate. He then pointed out that if it refused to co-operate, "the tactical advantage to us will be considerable."
Unionist initiatives concerning destitute wage-earners were also shaped by the conflicting strands of Conservative Party ideology. Senator Robertson was clearly influenced by a commitment made by Prime Minister Borden in 1919 to treat unemployed labour as "something more than a commodity." Over a decade later he pointed out to his new political chief, R.B. Bennett, that Borden had played an important part in drafting part 13 of the Treaty of Versailles concerning the welfare of industrial wage-earners and had then "...solemnly signed...a Treaty in which Canada was pledged to certain principles intended to promote the welfare of humanity as from that time." These "lofty principles" were:

- that the country's resources and wealth should be available to guarantee our people, as far as possible, an opportunity to work, or failing this, with food and warmth until employment opportunities were available. Only by so doing we fulfil our pledge to regard men's rights as superior to those of goods or gold.  

Besides being incorporated into the Unionist platform in the form of a vague endorsement of unemployment insurance, these diluted principles of the treaty were implemented in the Unionist policy of unemployment relief. These new principles of collectivism, however, were tempered by traditional beliefs concerning the nature of the budgetary process. Although their adherence was not rigid, Unionist politicians respected the canons of the prevalent conservative fiscal orthodoxy that called for balanced budgets and minimal taxation. They were also aware that their financing of relief was regarded as 'wasteful' and 'unnecessary' by businessmen, the major federal taxpayers. Consequently, they were highly conscious of the costs of their various initiatives.
The decision to extend emergency aid to civilians during the 1921 winter provides the clearest example of their cost calculations. This category, in fact, contained both partially disabled and physically fit veterans, because the cabinet had decided in the previous winter to follow the British example, to treat them as civilians and phase out special services for them. Prime Minister Meighen realized that as veterans were no longer eligible for special federal treatment, their presence in the ranks of the civilian destitute could set a dangerous precedent. "Now that there are among the unemployed and always will, of course, be a proportion of returned soldiers, it gives the local authorities a chance to load the whole thing on the Dominion." Meighen was reluctant to take over the relief function basically because of the expense involved. He pointed out to a confidant that "...we further from the scene, have to put in organizations and necessarily the cost is much greater, and the extent of imposition in cases of relief very much greater also."106 In order to avoid saddling Ottawa with burdensome relief costs, Meighen decided on a "clever strategy" justifying federal aid by linking the current depression to the extraordinary circumstance of war:

There would always be unemployed veterans and cyclical depressions. There would only be one war-related unemployment crisis. When it passed, so too would Ottawa's responsibility for direct relief.107

This rationale shaped all initiatives for civilians in the immediate postwar period. It was designed with one aim in mind: to offload the costs of supporting jobless veterans upon the other levels of government.108
The federal policy of intervention during the 1919-21 period was significant because it established the precedent for Ottawa's subsequent incursions into the territory of the traditional relief-giving authorities. Moreover, it became a model for the treatment of unemployment relief for the rest of the interwar years. The policy represented an improvised, unplanned response to events, a process of devising expedients as the need arose. It involved the system of 'doles,' the option perceived to be the cheapest means of coping with practical problems of unemployment, which effectively ruled out adoption of the insurance principle. This form of aid was both non-contributory and at subsistence level, but its payment established the principle that the state had a duty to prevent the unemployed from starving. In all these respects, Ottawa's sponsorship of emergency aid was strikingly similar to the postwar provision made by the British authorities.¹⁰⁹

All the environmental factors identified in chapter 1, shaped the agitation for federal intervention. The dislocations caused by the timing of mass demobilization and deflation created conditions of abnormal unemployment that stretched the resources of both private and public agencies. The war had a significant impact in altering operative attitudes toward state involvement to relieve unemployment because it created the new category of jobless veterans whose plight aroused widespread sympathy owing to their patriotic service. The war also promoted a radical change in government spending patterns that paved the way for intervention. This effect confirms the proposition of Peacock
and Wiseman that national crises remove, temporarily, the existing "socio-cultural limits" on expenditure.\textsuperscript{110} Ottawa's initial sponsorship of emergency state aid was not challenged by the provinces, because it had jurisdiction over the category of veterans and it made no attempt to evade responsibility for their unemployment. However, its later efforts to off-load most of the costs of relieving physically fit veterans were resisted by Ontario, whose lone protests echoed in the silence of other provinces.

The social control model of welfare politics is clearly visible in the working-class militancy, leftist-inspired dissent and politicians' fears of revolution. Labour radicals were among the primary societal actors spurring action. They comprised a small band of civilian revolutionary socialists and disaffected veterans drawn from the ranks of both employed and unemployed workers. Their informal alliance proved to be a potent combination because the involvement of ex-servicemen trained to kill enhanced the prospect of successful insurrection. Their joint participation in radical labour causes in the cities of Ontario and the West, and in the Winnipeg General Strike, plus the formation of a veterans' labour party, created widespread alarm both inside and outside the federal capital. Cabinet politicians' fears of revolution were shared by individuals, municipal spokesmen, MPs and officials in both the civil and military bureaucracies, who all advocated remedial action to avert the prospect of Bolshevist-inspired disorder.

Social control politics, however, was not the only feature of the agitation. The group model of welfare politics is also relevant to understanding the federal policy of intervention. Organized veterans were the most influential, with the unorthodox tactics of Flynn's small extremist fringe proving to be more effective in 1919 than the more moderate representations of
the major associations. However, their roles were reversed in the following year, with the latter succeeding in securing a pledge from Meighen to extend aid to civilians. Economic interest groups were also active, and their spokesmen clashed along mainly occupational lines rather than sectional or urban-rural cleavages. Moderate trade unionists stood alone in pressing the case for a concerted remedy for involuntary unemployment. Arrayed against them were spokesmen of the two major sectors of the economy, who, despite their conflicting views over the tariff during the period under review, shared similar perceptions concerning the cause of unemployment and its remedy that reflected the prevalent individualistic ethos shaping Canadian society. Businessmen actively opposed the federal policy, partly because they resented their new role as federal taxpayers, and partly because they subscribed to the dominant ideology of laissez-faire liberalism. Organized farmers voiced protests as well through their spokesmen in the Ontario government and the federal House that reflected their resentment of the ascendancy of cities. But, like businessmen, they lacked the political influence to block intervention.

Inside government, the representative rather than the bureaucratic model of welfare politics is confirmed by the case study. Federal politicians dictated both the timing and content of the policy of intervention because unemployment relief was "a highly political matter...." Their decisions to act were taken in response to perceived crises as well as group pressures reflecting the dual nature of the agitation. The members of the Unionist coalition were not motivated solely by fear of revolution to sponsor emergency aid. They also perceived the claims of the patriotic group of veterans to be legitimate and popular. Moreover, they depended upon the ex-soldiers' vote for their future political survival. The extension of relief to destitute civilians
also reflected electoral calculations as well as a new Conservative Party commitment and fiscal conservatism. Their Liberal successors were prompted by a similar set of motives to expand federal involvement but, as the next chapter reveals, their intervention turned out to be short-lived.
The change in government following the federal election of December 1921 was not immediately accompanied by the withdrawal of national funds for unemployment relief. Having inherited the depression that contributed in part to the Unionists' downfall, the Liberal victors decided to continue the payment of emergency aid during the 1922 winter. They, in fact, expanded federal involvement by paying slightly more generous subsidies to residents of municipalities and agreeing to share with the provinces the costs of alleviating distress among inhabitants of unorganized areas.

The Liberal relief arrangements were designed mainly to redeem promises made during the campaign. Although agrarian issues dominated the 1921 election, the concerns of urban labour were not totally ignored. W.L.M. King, the new Prime Minister, had committed his party to improving the lot of civilian wage-earners in 1919, and had made social insurance a central plank in his own bid for power, especially in urban Ontario. His cabinet colleagues had chosen instead to focus on the Unionist relief policy. They had apparently condemned it "vociferously before the election...," and attacked its sponsors on the hustings across Canada for their "parsimony." Their increased subsidies, approved a month after gaining office, rewarded both civilians and veterans for their support at the polls. They also probably represented substitutes for more costly promises to develop a joint scheme of social insurance and to pay additional gratuities. Although Liberal expenditure on civilian relief matched that of the preceding administration, it was a 'one-shot' funding
exercise leaving the Unionists to qualify as the major sponsors of the federal policy of intervention.

From the spring of 1922 onwards, the new Liberal administration sought to withdraw from financing emergency state aid for destitute employables. Although it failed to off-load the relief costs of partially disabled veterans, it succeeded in shifting the burden of relieving physically fit civilians back to the traditional authorities. Its policy of withdrawal was thwarted only once, in the 1926 winter, when extenuating parliamentary circumstances, arising out of the 1925 election, spurred a temporary reversal. For the rest of Prime Minister King's third term of office, federal aid was conspicuous by its absence. However, despite its significance in shedding light on the sources of opposition to public welfare, Ottawa's retreat during the 1920s has received only cursory attention. To remedy its neglect, this chapter seeks to pinpoint the effective political forces shaping the federal policy of withdrawal.

The chapter begins with an outline of the background against which Ottawa's original decision to retreat was made. It then identifies the various actors resisting, supporting and sponsoring non-intervention. It concludes with a review of the findings in order to highlight the relevant factors shaping the policy of withdrawal.

Background

Improving economic conditions were used to justify Ottawa's initial withdrawal from the field of civilian relief. Beginning in the spring of 1922 unemployment steadily declined, and by the end of August, only 3.6 percent of trade unionists were unemployed, whereas in 1921 the comparable figure was 8.7 percent. The chief statistician in the Dominion Bureau of Statistics (DBS) reported that returns from employers in 1922 showed that "a decidedly buoyant
tendency was in evidence and that all provinces shared in the recovery with the Quebec-Ontario district experiencing the most marked improvement. But the economic recovery did not last. The revival petered out in late 1923, and unemployment remained heavy in both 1924 and 1925.

A boom in the second half of the decade provided a more powerful rationale to sustain the federal policy of withdrawal. By the fall of 1926 economic recovery was under way in both the agricultural and industrial sectors. In October, unemployment among trade unionists reached its lowest point, 2.6 percent, since 1920. The improvement in employment conditions persisted until nearly the end of the decade. The boom, though, did not eliminate the problem of abnormal seasonal unemployment. According to DBS estimates, even in the peak prosperity years of 1927 and 1928, between 12 and 16 percent of the work force were idle in the 'off' season. These totals rose dramatically following the stock market crash of 1929, but even they did not spur a reversal during the first winter of the Great Depression.

Although the cyclical and seasonal fluctuations during the 1920s prompted sporadic demands for federal aid, the Liberal Prime Minister succeeded in resisting them on all occasions except two, 1922 and 1926. At the start of his first term of office he personally sought the approval of his cabinet colleagues for the more generous relief subsidies offered during the 1922 winter. He also agreed to convene a federal-provincial conference on unemployment later in the year. When announcing this to the House, King ruled out the prospect of any radical challenge to the existing division of powers, but hinted that his government would adopt a more concerted approach. "I would like to make it perfectly plain that so far as the government is concerned, we regard all these matters of unemployment and the like as questions primarily of
concern to municipalities and provinces, but insofar as the national interest may be concerned, we are prepared to co-operate with the municipalities and the provinces in seeking a solution.⁷

During the summer of 1922 the Minister of Labour laid the groundwork for the forthcoming conference with provincial Premiers. In August he asked spokesmen of the major cities to submit their views concerning winter relief arrangements. In response, B.C. municipalities held a meeting where they expressed unanimous condemnation of the doles policy.⁸ At a conference in Calgary, delegates from all prairie cities and the governments of Alberta and Saskatchewan passed a resolution approving the adoption of a joint scheme of unemployment insurance, and until its establishment, they urged the continuation of joint relief provision along "more adequate lines"; and officials representing New Brunswick, Ontario, Saskatchewan, Alberta and western cities met the Labour Minister in Ottawa to discuss winter employment prospects.⁹

The Dominion-Provincial Conference was held in Ottawa in early September of 1922. It was the first occasion on which federal and provincial Premiers had met to discuss the unemployment problem. In attendance were representatives from all provinces except Prince Edward Island. Although municipal spokesmen were not invited, delegates from western cities invaded the proceedings to argue the case for a permanent sharing of relief costs, and were permitted to present their views. Prime Minister King's opening speech "recommended that in finding a solution to the unemployment problem, the conference should, as far as possible, encourage the traditional Anglo-Saxon reliance upon self-help in preference to governmental action." It was left to Murdock to spell out the Liberal policy. He announced that emergency aid would not be provided in the
coming winter as the unemployment situation was "not serious enough" to warrant federal intervention. The delegates accepted his explanation for withdrawal. They passed a resolution endorsing his assessment of both existing and winter unemployment conditions. Their resolution, however, contained contingency plans in case of abnormal seasonal unemployment, amounting to federal and provincial aid for municipal costs of direct relief and relief works.¹⁰

Confronted with rising relief caseloads later in the year, the mayor of Winnipeg and the Premiers of both British Columbia and Manitoba lobbied Ottawa to implement the contingency plans formulated at the 1922 conference. The provincial representations were considered by the federal cabinet in December, but not approved. Subsequent pleas for aid were also turned down. Why?

The Agitation For Federal Withdrawal, 1922-30

At first sight, the social control model of welfare politics appears to have limited relevance in the case of withdrawal because working-class militancy, leftist-inspired dissent and concomitant fears of revolution declined in scope and intensity soon after the new Liberal administration came into office. However, the absence of these prerequisites does not negate entirely the influence of social control politics, for Ottawa's retreat lends support to the proposition of Piven and Cloward (1971) that contraction of relief rolls occurs once civil disorder lessens, in order to reinforce restrictive work norms. Their hypothesis, though, is not confirmed consistently at the federal level due to the 1926 temporary reversal. Moreover, it cannot account for the behaviour of provincial governments, as these authorities were much less successful than Ottawa in their attempts at withdrawal.

In contrast to the shadowy presence of social control, group welfare politics is clearly visible in the agitation. The same constellation of
social forces that shaped the earlier interventionist policy were involved, but the balance between them shifted decisively. Representatives of agriculture and capital maintained their steadfast opposition to expanded relief, and their political influence increased dramatically after the 1921 election. On the other hand, the involvement of organized labour was muted until the latter stages, as the TLC and other moderate unionists concentrated their energies on securing unemployment insurance, rather than protesting against withdrawal. Among client groups, unemployed workers replaced veterans as the leading protagonists, because the ex-soldiers' agitation for gratuities subsided and their subsequent lobbying efforts focused more upon securing improvements in pensions legislation.

Unlike the previous struggle, the traditional relief-giving authorities participated actively in the agitation for federal withdrawal. Their entry reflected belated recognition of the fact that their interests were affected by Ottawa's brief involvement with relief-giving. Western cities, the major beneficiaries of the federal policy of intervention, protested against withdrawal, whereas the majority of provincial Premiers welcomed it, because it conformed to their fiscal predispositions.

Among politicians inside the federal government, Prime Minister King played the pre-eminent role in deciding the timing and content of the policy. As in the previous case study, the apparently limited role of bureaucrats can be explained in part by the nature of the policy under investigation. Decisions in the realm of emergency relief-giving, especially those concerning inaction, are essentially political, having minimal consequences for administrators. King's decisions to retreat reflected distinct ideological beliefs concerning the role of the state, the nature of federalism, and fiscal policy. Even though
the ranks of critics of his policy increased rapidly soon after the onset of the Great Depression, he remained impervious to demands for a reversal, a posture that contributed to his defeat in the 1930 election.

Advocates:

Protests against Ottawa's policy of withdrawal were voiced more or less simultaneously outside and inside the Canadian Parliament. Until the end of the decade, spokesmen of the new client group of unemployed workers were the only societal actors to advocate a continuing federal role. Politicians representing western cities and provinces as well as a few opposition MPs also registered their approval of withdrawal, but failed to secure any change in the policy during King's first term of office.

In contrast to their militancy in the immediate postwar years, unemployed workers resorted to more orthodox lobbying after 1922, when local organizations sprang up to secure work and to better their conditions. By 1925 the Toronto-based National Council of the Unemployed had branches in most major cities. Evidence is scant on its activities and the size of its membership, but its leadership was apparently radical. A.E. Smith, a spokesman for the "Toronto Unemployment Association" submitted a memorial to the federal Labour Minister in early 1925, urging the adoption of a positive public policy concerning unemployment and identifying the cause of this "social disease" as "the possession of a private interest in the machinery of production on the part of a very small class who exercise it wholly at the impulse of their own advantage or caprice...." The 900 members of the Edmonton branch, the Unemployed

*The term "advocates" refers throughout the thesis to proponents of expanded state activity in income maintenance rather than to supporters of the particular policy under investigation.
Workers of Canada, also sought some remedy for their plight. In the winter of 1925 they issued a manifesto protesting against "the campaign of slander and misrepresentation" conducted by the press, with the support of "many of our public and official men," that played down the extent of unemployment and distress so as not to deter prospective immigrants. They threatened to forward the relevant cuttings "to our class-conscious brethren in the Old Countries from which we came," unless their demands for "sympathetic consideration of the problems of the unemployed workers" were heeded. However, such protests received short shrift in Ottawa. The federal cabinet dismissed the organized jobless as the 'loafer class.' According to Murdock, their membership comprised mainly "men who would not accept employment, no matter how plentiful jobs were...some of whom, I think, to be as kindly as possible, cannot work, cannot steady themselves down to accepting a job and working at that job as their employer would like to have them work." 

Elected spokesmen of cities also voiced opposition to the federal policy of withdrawal. They protested particularly against having to maintain destitute immigrants brought in under Ottawa's 'open-door' policy for agricultural labour. Their case was presented initially by the mayor of Winnipeg, who urged Ottawa during the 1923 winter to take over the entire maintenance of indigents with short residence and veterans, arguing that these relief applicants were "citizens of Canada at large." At the federally sponsored 1924 Conference on Winter Employment the mayors of Vancouver, Edmonton, Toronto and Ottawa, and other officials representing industrial centres across Canada, voiced objections to current immigration policy because it aggravated their relief problems.

Besides registering their protests directly with cabinet ministers, some cities also lobbied federal legislators for their support during the 1925
winter. In response, J.S. Woodsworth (Lab., Winnipeg) sponsored an emergency debate urging federal maintenance of unemployed, destitute immigrants during their first two years of residence. When pressing the claims of his own riding and of Calgary, he cited an editorial from the Calgary press supporting Mayor Webster's refusal to grant aid to non-resident and non-taxpaying foreign families:

Their real need is apparent, but the executive of the city are faced with the more serious problem of making Calgary the mecca for the unemployed of the entire province, if the relief policy laid by the council is not adhered to in the strictest manner. The voluntary creation of a class which yearly subsists on public charity is a dangerous precedent for any city.15

T.L. Church (Con., Toronto) suggested that the Ontario capital had already fallen victim to this trend by becoming "a dumping ground" for unemployed harvesters recruited from Britain and recent arrivals from the Old Country. "Toronto's reputation for not letting any man go hungry appears to be a magnet to many of these men...." He protested that their maintenance was "unfair" to local residents who contributed over $100 million to the federal treasury.16 Ottawa, however, resisted cities' claims concerning destitute immigrants, insisting that their support fell under provincial jurisdiction, while most provinces denied this, arguing that their relief was a national problem. The development of this practice of buck-passing during the 1920s was to have dire consequences in the next decade.

Only Premier Bracken of Manitoba and Premier Oliver of B.C. protested against Ottawa's initial decision to withdraw. Denied federal aid, they took independent steps to assist the municipalities during the 1923 winter, and their intervention was repeated on subsequent occasions during the rest of the decade. Their initiatives, however, represented the standard response to distress arising from unemployment. They were reluctant to sponsor new methods
of maintaining unemployed workers because they feared that their provinces would become magnets for the unemployed across Canada. Premier Bracken voiced his apprehension to Prime Minister King in 1928. "If any city or province singly adopted plans to solve seasonal unemployment, that city or province would become the mecca to which unemployed in other cities and provinces would drift; for this reason and many others which might be advanced, the assistance of the federal government is respectfully urged."17

A few federal MPs also opposed the policy of withdrawal during King's first administration (1922-1925). Among the depleted ranks of the Conservative opposition only Ladner (Vancouver) and Church (Toronto) championed the cause of unemployed workers.18 A more sustained attack upon federal inaction came from the two-man Labour group comprising Woodsworth (Winnipeg) and Irvine (Calgary). Their efforts were supported by the ten radical Progressives who split over their party's alliance with the Liberals in the summer of 1924, and formed with Woodsworth and Irvine a 'Ginger Group' in the House. The Labour leader spearheaded the attack upon federal inaction. Woodsworth challenged the prevailing ideas about the causes of unemployment and suggested that its remedy could no longer rest with the individual worker and his family. "There are admittedly shiftless individuals, lazy individuals, and drunken individuals, but the great part of unemployment today is involuntary, and hence the state in some form cannot divest itself of certain responsibilities."19 However, the pleas of Woodsworth and his few supporters for federal aid towards relief, pending implementation of a joint unemployment insurance scheme, were ineffectual in a chamber where representatives of agrarian interests held the balance of power.
Opponents:

Organized farmers and businessmen shared an antipathy to state maintenance of unemployed workers, and their spokesmen constituted powerful blocs in the federal House and cabinet during Prime Minister King's first term of office. Most provincial Premiers also favoured withdrawal, as they were reluctant to spend revenues on unemployment relief.

The Liberal victory in the December 1921 election was hardly overwhelming. In the House of Commons the new government had a minority of one on a strictly party vote: the voters returned 117 Liberals, 65 Progressives, 50 Conservatives and 3 others. Its political survival in the House, therefore, depended upon the new farmers' party, which comprised the second largest bloc. Struthers contends that withdrawal from the field of unemployment relief was the price King paid for the support of the Progressives. The farmers demanded withdrawal because state maintenance of the urban unemployed made it difficult for them to hire unskilled labour cheaply. As Canada's largest employers of unskilled labour, farmers, once organized as a political force, had a powerful voice. "By electing 65 Progressive MPs to office they ensured...that federal unemployment relief policy would conform to their economic interests."20

The farmers' opposition to the federal policy stemmed in part from their widespread concern about rural depopulation. For them, unemployment was not involuntary but a result of the maldistribution of labour between rural and urban Canada. T.A. Crerar,21 the Progressive leader, for example, argued that "...this Canada of ours provides opportunity enough for labour to those who were willing to work...", and his sentiments were shared by his supporters.22 The farmers' problems of hiring workers cheaply began with the rural exodus
during the war and were exacerbated in the immediate postwar period by Ottawa's relief initiatives. "Alarmed over rural depopulation and angry with the high price and short supply of agricultural labour, Canadian farmers and their Progressive representatives vigorously opposed the previous federal flirtation with unemployment...relief which made it easier for surplus labour to remain in the cities." Federal intervention also violated the Progressive demand for "strict economy in government." Crerar urged the Prime Minister to impress upon the public the need for retrenchment and the necessity of balanced budgets by sound methods, not by financing new schemes of taxation but by reducing expenditures.

Prime Minister King complied with Crerar's demand for reduction in expenditure because it was virtually the only concession available to him during the 1922-24 period. His offer of cabinet posts was resisted by the Progressive leader in December 1921 and the summer of 1922. Implementing the major demand of Progressives for tariff reform would spark strong opposition in industrial Canada, and so reduction in expenditure was the price of Progressive support. Consequently, in November 1922, he issued a call to his colleagues to bear economy and reduction in expenditure in mind in preparing their estimates. Among the limited items of public expenditure suitable for cuts, unemployment relief measures were ready targets as they were funded on an emergency rather than a permanent basis. The Minister of Labour, therefore, reported back that his department had "...a substantial reduction in all charges which are not more or less of a fixed nature." The 1923-24 departmental estimates, in fact, showed a reduction of $1,300,000 due to the lack of unemployment relief provision. Other services concerning employment suffered a similar fate. Between 1922 and 1924 Ottawa cut its funding for the Employment Service almost by one-half, resulting in the departure of its disillusioned director.
The cutbacks aroused little protest in the House. The majority of Liberal MPs were from Quebec. Besides being "highly conservative in their social outlook,"28 most members of this bloc regarded maintenance of the unemployed as a provincial concern.29 Their silence indicated deafening approval of the federal policy of withdrawal. The tacit approval of the bulk of the Progressive caucus was even more significant in the short run because these representatives of agrarian interests held the balance of power.

Organized farmers, though, were not the only sectional economic interests Prime Minister King had to placate during his first term of office. Businessmen also demanded his attention. Concentrated in Ontario and Quebec, where industry and ancillary services were most developed, their geographical base and their financial contributions during elections ensured that their views would be heeded in Ottawa. Both individually and collectively, members of the business community were already on record as opposed to government intervention in labour matters and especially to state support of unemployed workers.30

During King's first term of office, the political climate was so favourably disposed towards the business community as to warrant the Liberal Party being described as "largely in the grip of eastern business."31 The influence exerted by corporate interests over Liberal economic policy during the 1922-23 period has been well-documented.32 In contrast, little is known about the extent of their influence over social policy. In fact, the Liberal policy of withdrawal was also a concession to business interests. Businessmen favoured retreat because federal maintenance of the unemployed imposed additional taxes upon industry and themselves. As the major federal taxpayers,33 their complaints about "too much government" and "onerous taxation" carried considerable weight. Through their spokesmen in the Liberal
cabinet they ensured that federal unemployment relief policy conformed to their economic interests.

Of all corporate interests, Prime Minister King was most anxious to please the 'Montreal group' composed of powerful transport and financial concerns such as the Canadian Pacific Railway and the Bank of Montreal. Their support was crucial because they had backed his campaign in Quebec in 1921. As his victory depended mainly on Quebec votes, King's political survival required conciliation of that province's economic elite. In March 1924 he recorded in his diary his motives for wooing the 'Montreal group':

...to lose that group is to consolidate the Conservative party, give it new life and financial support. I do not want to lose Quebec support, much less incur active opposition of powerful financial and mfgs interests, they are against us anyway at heart.... 34

Conciliation of the Montreal interests involved not only acquiescing in their major demand for high tariffs, but also heeding their views on the unemployment problem.

The major spokesman of the Montreal interests in the Cabinet was Sir Lomer Gouin, Minister of Justice. His influence over federal economic policy was considerable until his resignation in June 1924, and he had little sympathy for the unemployed. While Premier of Quebec (1905-20) he had sponsored only one initiative benefiting labour, the creation of provincial employment bureaus, opting instead to leave the operation of his province's system of institutional charity in the hands of the Catholic church. W.S. Fielding, the Finance Minister, was also known to be sympathetic to the corporate point of view. His age and distinguished political career as Premier of Nova Scotia, and as Minister of Finance in Laurier's Cabinet, ensured that his approach to fiscal policy was traditional rather than innovative. He was more concerned with balancing the budget than with taking up new ideas in fiscal policy, 35 and
under his stewardship, cuts in expenditure were the order of the day. In December 1923 illness forced Fielding to retire. J.A. Robb, the new Finance Minister, continued to pursue orthodox fiscal policy even though Fielding's efforts had succeeded in producing, by 1924, the first revenue surplus since 1913. He too had little sympathy for the unemployed, because he subscribed to the Presbyterian credo that "work and thrift are the only sure roads to success."36 His views on unemployment also reflected the attitudes of both financiers and his rural Quebec constituents. In March 1925 Robb rejected Woodsworth's pleas for federal maintenance of destitute, new immigrants on the grounds that, according to bankers, the problems of unemployment were exaggerated. Finally, he insisted, relief simply rewarded indolence. "If it means anything at all it means that we are offering a premium to those who do not desire to work, and the men who are spoiled by doles in the Old Country would come here and expect the government to board them."37

Besides Gouin, Fielding and Robb, other ministers such as Beland, Graham, J.H. King and Low were all supporters of protection.38 Eastern business interests, therefore, had a formidable bloc in the cabinet to speak on their behalf. Their spokesmen were influential in ensuring that the federal policy of withdrawal was sustained up to the end of King's first term of office.

Most provincial Premiers also backed the federal policy of withdrawal because it provided them with a convenient excuse to transfer the costs of emergency aid back to the municipalities. Like Ottawa, they began their retreat in the midst of the postwar depression, with only British Columbia and Manitoba resisting the trend. Their subsequent record of non-intervention was only partially successful because most of the Premiers were compelled to give sporadic contributions after the winter of 1923 (see table 4).
Table 4. Provincial expenditure on unemployment relief, 1921-1930

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SOURCES: Figures relating to B.C., Sask., Ont., N.B. and N.S. are taken from "Amounts expended by provinces as shown in public accounts under the heading "Unemployment Relief," Public Archives of Canada (PAC), W.L.M. King Papers, Manuscript Group 26, J4, reel C2622, p. 52701. The Quebec figures only represent subsidies matching the federal contributions to municipalities and so may be under-estimates. The Alberta figures are from "Comparative Statement of Expenditures made by the Provincial Government of Alberta for Relief," PAC, Department of Labour, Lacelle Files, Record Group 27, vol. 210, file no. 617:24.2. The Manitoba figures are cited in Labour Gazette, 1929, 1931, pp. 1342, 563, respectively.

The eastern provinces were instrumental in spurring Ottawa's initial retreat. Their half-hearted participation in the federal policy of intervention did not escape the notice of the new Liberal administration. In the summer of 1922 Murdock sent the Prime Minister a review of civilian relief schemes. With regard to the Liberal venture during the past winter, he pointed out erroneously that none of the four eastern provinces had participated. "This is a point of significance with respect to any proposition looking to any Dominion-wide measure to meet unemployment."39 Eastern reaction to federal
initiatives was voiced at the 1922 Dominion-Provincial Conference. The region's protests about federal aid to the unemployed in the western provinces were attributed by B.C.'s Deputy Minister of Labour to the fact that the eastern provinces were older, more established societies where private charity played a larger part than public agencies. More voluntary bodies, in fact, were available to aid the unemployed in the East than the West and levels of unemployment were also lower in most older provinces during the 1922 winter. However, eastern opposition to federal intervention was also rooted elsewhere in the attitudes of its Premiers towards relief costs.

Among the maritime provinces, Nova Scotia certainly approved of the federal policy of withdrawal. Its Liberal Premier, Murray, had actively opposed Ottawa's relief arrangements during the 1922 winter because he regarded them - potentially at least - as exacerbating his government's financial problems of limited revenues and recurring deficits. His Conservative successor, Armstrong, was equally insistent that unemployment fell into the sphere of provincial, not federal, jurisdiction. He told the 1924 Conference that "the province of Nova Scotia can settle its own unemployment problems." Subsequent events, however, were to cast doubt on his claim. Armstrong appeared impervious to demands for aid from unemployed coal miners and steel workers in Sydney and Glace Bay, and his eventual offer of provincial assistance came too late to prevent bloodshed and the use of the military in June 1925.

Quebec also welcomed the federal withdrawal. Premier Taschereau had only grudgingly contributed towards relief of the unemployed in Montreal. At the time of the 1922 Dominion-Provincial Conference he was involved in a bitter dispute with the Catholic hierarchy over the passage of his Public Charities Act that provided provincial subsidies to private charities and municipalities.
In addition, he was apprehensive about the financial consequences of his 1921 initiative. "Taschereau feared a drain on the Provincial Treasury which his government would be powerless to plug once grants became 'automatic' and costs rose." Thus, Ottawa's withdrawal provided his Liberal government with the opportunity to curtail its own involvement in an area of potentially spiralling expenditure and to hand relief back to the traditional agencies.

Ontario had received the bulk of federal aid, but the funds were not welcomed. Premier Drury never succeeded in reconciling his agrarian philosophy with the idea of state support for the urban unemployed, especially when it involved cash grants. His government's representatives at the 1922 Dominion-Provincial conference complained that tripartite schemes "brought men into our cities from the country looking for relief rather than working for board wages or a little better on the farms." It was not surprising, therefore, that provincial funds were withheld during the 1923 winter. The defeat of Drury's Farmer-Labour coalition at the polls in June 1923 did not augur well for the province's destitute residents. Ferguson, the new Conservative Premier, was "cautious about welfare programmes because he was imbued with the ethic of his day, which regarded governmental economy as the greatest blessing any administration could bestow on a people...." Ferguson also believed in the primacy of local responsibility, maintaining that relief of poverty was inherently a matter for private charity or for municipal action, if private action failed. For example, in October 1924 he rejected a request from the mayor of Toronto on the following grounds: "Having profited by the labour of the workman, surely your municipality has some direct responsibility when it is found...the workman has no longer an opportunity of earning a livelihood for himself and his family." However, pressure from organized labour and cities persuaded the Ontario cabinet to contribute towards costs of
municipal relief works and other forms of aid, except cash doles, during the 1925 winter.

Among the prairie provinces, the heads of the respective Liberal and Farmers' governments in Saskatchewan and Alberta also supported the federal policy of withdrawal. Both Premiers Dunning and Greenfield subscribed to the agrarian philosophy of their constituents that stressed individualism and economy, and perceived unemployment as a consequence of rural depopulation. For example, Greenfield believed that there were "as good opportunities today for the man who wants to work as there were at the time he came." His optimism was put to the test in late 1924, when an influx of immigrants into southern Alberta produced serious unemployment in urban centres. In response to pleas for aid from various mayors and spokesmen of organized labour, the head of the Farmers' government wired Ottawa asking for contributions. Faced with a denial of federal aid, Greenfield authorized provincial funds towards municipal relief costs during the 1925 winter.

The majority of provincial Premiers overwhelmingly endorsed the federal policy of withdrawal at the 1927 Dominion-Provincial Conference. For them, relief on any fixed basis was simply an encouragement to unemployment. However, Ontario and Alberta could not avoid taking action of a sporadic type during the second half of the 1920s. These provincial initiatives were limited because their Premiers took seriously their pledges of balanced budgets and economy in government. Like their colleagues in other provinces and the federal Prime Minister, they subscribed to an ideology of economic liberalism that equated prosperity with reduction of public expenditure. "In this sense, the Fergusons, the Kings, and their kind had more in common with the nineteenth century than with their successors of a more indulgent age."
Precipitants:

Among federal cabinet politicians, Prime Minister King qualifies as the architect of withdrawal because he made the final judgments concerning what was politically feasible. His summary of 'the sense' of Cabinet meetings was "unquestionably" government policy. In addition to external pressures, his decisions to retreat were shaped by distinct ideological beliefs.

King accepted the existing balance of forces in Canadian society that reflected the power of corporate capital and a focus on agrarian, not labour, issues. Whitaker points out that King's acceptance of the status quo in the 1920s was not merely a response of "a political automaton" to external pressures. "The very acceptance of the balance itself imparts an ideological colouring to King's range of choices...." King's decisions not to act, therefore, reflected a personal ideology that was "closely in harmony with the dominant forces of North American capitalism."  

King's position also reflected a belief in provincial rights, an aspect overlooked by social reformers during the 1920s, who tended to be centralists and interpreted his policy as "masterful inactivity." During the 1922-25 period King consistently maintained that unemployment relief was a provincial, not a federal, matter. In February 1925 he told an Ontario labour delegation requesting emergency aid that unemployment was a purely local concern in which Ottawa could not participate without violating the BNA Act. He was then reported as saying to the delegates that "...if they were all Indians they [i.e. the government] would be responsible for their welfare and could adopt any measures to protect them and give relief, but seeing that they are all white citizens and soldiers of industry they must be left to the tender mercies of the provincial and municipal governments." His stance was reinforced by a
judicial decision of the British Privy Council in 1925 that circumscribed the rights of the federal government in labour matters.

King's concept of federalism was mingled with his fiscal conservatism. According to Jack Pickersgill, a loyal member of his staff, King's "proper" constitutional view towards unemployment and its relief was based on the premise that federal treasury funds were expendable only if contributions to other levels of government were not involved. He was opposed in principle to all forms of conditional subsidies because they violated a basic canon of fiscal orthodoxy: economy. Withdrawal of federal contributions for relief, therefore, was one means of arresting the slide towards 'extravagance and waste' inherent in a method of financing where revenue collected by one government was spent by others.

The results of the 1925 election suggested that King's fiscal priorities were not popular with all segments of the electorate. The Liberals were reduced to the position of runner-up, securing only 101 seats, 69 of which were in Quebec, and 35.8 percent of the popular vote. King and four of his cabinet colleagues were defeated in Ontario. They had campaigned on their record of "sound" finance and promised more of the same, but after four years in office the government had "no conspicuous achievement of which to boast." Moreover, Liberal fiscal policy had not succeeded in ending the postwar depression, a failing that was identified by Liberal candidates as contributing to their poor showing in Ontario. According to his Conservative opponent, Murdock, the Labour Minister, was defeated in Toronto because Liberal fiscal policy was identified as producing the conditions of unemployment in High Park and extensive distress and hardship.
As his major rivals failed to win a majority, securing only 117 seats, King did not relinquish the reins of power. His political survival depended on the 24 Progressives and the two Labour MPs, and the latter exploited their sudden rise to prominence to full advantage, precipitating the temporary reversal in the policy of withdrawal during the 1926 winter, as well as the more significant concession of old age pensions, as chapter 8 documents. By improvising measures intending to satisfy Progressive and Labour demands, the government withstood for five months of the 1926 session "a sustained onslaught" by the Conservatives.\textsuperscript{63} It was ultimately brought down by the customs scandal and, following Meighen's abortive attempt to govern, Parliament was dissolved. Having secured re-election and a working majority, Prime Minister King basked for the rest of the decade in the novelty of economic prosperity and political stability. These two conditions provided him with a convenient rationale to refrain from repeating the 1926 lapse in official policy. Economic recovery, however, turned out to be a fleeting phenomenon. The effects of the stock market crash in October 1929 combined with prairie drought produced abnormal unemployment.

Accompanying the onset of the Great Depression, there were renewed demands for federal intervention. The agitation developed in western Canada. Following a series of conferences in Regina (October 1929) and Winnipeg (December 1929, January 1930), spokesmen of organized labour, cities and provinces made joint pleas for federal aid towards relief and a national conference on unemployment.\textsuperscript{64} They presented their case directly to the Liberal Prime Minister in late February of 1930.\textsuperscript{65} A similar set of forces in Ontario also made separate representations. These various demands for renewed federal involvement in unemployment relief were not the only pleas:
The Dominion was also bombarded with appeals of a similar nature...from various church, fraternal, labour and trade organizations. At the same time national action to stem the mounting tide of unemployment was called for in resolutions adopted by many societies and associations, in newspaper editorials, and in addresses by leaders of public opinion.

Besides this popular agitation, the question of unemployment was discussed by the federal House on several occasions during the spring of 1930, with criticism of official policy voiced from all sides.66

Despite this rising chorus of demands for federal action, the Liberal Prime Minister refused, at first, to admit that there was an unemployment problem. "Then the furthest he would go was to announce that if by any chance there was a problem it wasn't serious enough to warrant intervention by the Dominion."67 An editorial in a labour publication suggested that electoral calculations shaped King's decision not to act:

It is not difficult to understand the Government's viewpoint. The interests of the Canadian people are subservient to the interests of the Liberal party, and in view of the likelihood of an election this year, the Government is making a valiant effort to soft-pedal the situation. Let the unemployed tighten their belts and suffer in silence; let them keep off the streets, and avoid registering at the employment bureaus....68

King was also reluctant to intervene because he felt that the claims of provincial Premiers represented "politics not public welfare." He regarded it as more than a coincidence that all requests for aid came from either Conservative or Farmers' administrations and not from the two Liberal Premiers of Quebec and Prince Edward Island. His reaction to provincial demands became crystal-clear during the debate on the motion of A. Heaps (Lab., Winnipeg) urging the Liberal government to take immediate action to assist the provinces and municipalities. Baited by a question from Woodsworth, King tossed his customary caution to the wind:
With respect to giving monies out of the federal treasury to any Tory government in this country for these alleged unemployment purposes, with these governments situated as they are today, with policies diametrically opposed to those of this government, I would not give them a five-cent piece.

His 'five-cent' speech was probably the "most costly mistake" of his whole political career. "King was soon in the midst of the election, listening to those awful, irretrievable words played back to him from all quarters and from every manner of mankind."69

The issue of unemployment played a prominent part in the 1930 campaign. Conservatives denounced the Liberal government for its failure to undertake measures of relief and Liberals retaliated with accounts of the prosperity which had favoured the land during their years of office.70 Bennett, the opposition leader, promised in cities across Canada that a Conservative victory would be followed immediately by remedial action. His aggressive approach contrasted sharply with the defensive posture of the chief architect of the federal policy of withdrawal, and Bennett won a clear majority. Upon assuming office, he kept his promise by calling a special session in September 1930 to deal with the problems of the jobless. The stage was therefore set for another activist era in emergency state aid for destitute employables.

A Review

Of all the policies examined here, the federal policy of withdrawal reveals most clearly the major sources of opposition to public welfare during the 1914 to 1939 period. The hostility of interests representing the dominant sectors of the economy and the fiscal conservatism of provincial and federal politicians proved to be a potent combination in blocking governmental action concerning state initiatives for destitute employables. Prior to assessing their respective roles, the impact of environmental factors is assessed.
The socio-economic setting exerted less impact upon the agitation for withdrawal than on the preceding struggle. Although the postwar depression persisted until 1925, it did not prevent Ottawa's retreat, presumably because widespread labour unrest subsided soon after the Liberals came to power. Moreover, the general prosperity in the rest of the decade did not spur a reversal, even though it provided the revenue for a joint initiative by filling the federal treasury and provincial coffers in all regions except the maritimes. Unlike the socio-economic environment, the cultural context directly shaped the agitation, but in a less positive way than previously, for the prevailing climate of opinion acted as a constraint upon governmental action. The decline in sympathy at both the mass and elite levels for the plight of the destitute jobless resulted from the absorption of the culturally deserving group of veterans into the civilian labour force. The remaining environmental variable, the institutional framework, exerted much more influence upon the federal policy of withdrawal than it had on intervention. Ottawa was able to take advantage of the division of legislative powers to off-load the costs of relieving physically fit civilians upon the traditional authorities, and the 1922 Dominion-Provincial Conference provided an ideal forum to announce its intention. Furthermore, the dual targets of pressure built into the federal structure fostered the development of the practice of buck-passing between the senior levels of government.

As discussed above, social control politics had some relevance in the case study for, even though working-class militancy and fears of revolution were absent, Ottawa's retreat can be seen as a means of reinforcing restrictive work norms. But it was overshadowed by group politics, with agriculture and capital qualifying as the dominant societal actors. The evidence suggests that
far from acting together to secure withdrawal, circumstances combined to enhance their respective political influence after the 1921 election. Progressive MPs representing organized farmers in the West and Ontario held the balance of power in the fourteenth Parliament, outnumbering the few opponents of withdrawal. Eastern business interests had influential spokesmen inside the Liberal cabinet, including the two Finance Ministers. Thus, withdrawal was the price Prime Minister King paid for Progressive support and the concession made to accommodate corporate capital, especially the 'Montreal group.' Arrayed against these powerful forces was the newly organized client group of urban unemployed workers, but their isolated demands for a reversal of official policy were discounted by the political elite as representing only the claims of 'loafers.' As decisions concerning emergency aid can be reversed more easily than for statutory benefits, a more concerted protest was mounted against Ottawa's withdrawal at the onset of the Great Depression, but it was equally ineffective.

Among politicians, opinion was more divided over the desirability of the federal policy of withdrawal. Elected spokesmen of western and other cities urged Ottawa to take over the maintenance of destitute immigrants, but their demands were merely deflected to the provinces. Most provincial Premiers, however, were equally reluctant to spend their taxpayers' money on relief because they took seriously their pledges of economy. Their fiscal conservatism was a more significant constraint than their agrarian or business ethics. These opponents of action also probably shared the concern of their colleagues in British Columbia and Manitoba, who protested against Ottawa's retreat, but were not themselves prepared to take independent, concerted action in case their provinces became isolated 'meccas' for destitute employables across
Canada. Both of these underlying motives, fiscal conservatism and concern about the mobility of capital and labour, are pinpointed by Brecher (1957) and Banting (1982) as important constraints upon action.

Inside the federal capital, Prime Minister King qualifies as the architect of the policy. He decided to withdraw because he subscribed to the same classical liberal values as the dominant classes and respected provincial autonomy, and the canons of fiscal orthodoxy. All these motives confirm the proposition, advanced by Heidenheimer et. al. (1975), that a leader's implicit acceptance of assumptions that favour the status quo acts as a major constraint on a party's reform capability. Among them, King's fiscal conservatism was the major constraint upon intervention. As his top priority during the 1920s was 'economy,' he recoiled with horror at offering conditional subsidies to 'spendthrift' provinces, except when his very political survival was at stake, as in the 1926 session. His orthodox fiscal policy, however, was instrumental in contributing to his downfall and paving the way for renewed federal involvement in relief territory, as the next chapter reveals.

Before examining Conservative-sponsored innovations in emergency aid, the policies, analyzed to date, are compared. The cases of intervention and withdrawal reveal interesting differences and similarities in the behaviour of advocates, opponents and precipitants. Social control politics was much more salient in the agitation for expansion of state activity than contraction. Moreover, even in the case of intervention, labour radicals were not the dominant societal actors, as they shared the stage with interest groups representing trade unions and veterans. Compared with the limited relevance of social control, interest group power was decisive in both agitations. A striking feature of group politics was the consistency displayed by agrarian
and corporate interests over time to the issue of state aid. Farmers and businessmen were the major societal opponents throughout, whereas organized labour and client groups vacillated in their support for federal involvement. Inside government, cabinet politicians played the pre-eminent role in deciding the timing and content of the policies.
In the fall of 1930 the federal authorities appeared to be adopting a bolder approach to the problem of dependency among wage-earners. The new Conservative government had won in July "the first modern federal election in which the issue of unemployment proved decisive." Its leader, Bennett, then took swift action to redeem his pledges to provide "work and wages" and "to blast his way into the world's markets." In September he summoned a special session of the new Parliament to approve a $20 million grant for public works - ten times more than Ottawa spent on civilian relief during the 1920s - and a stiff across-the-board tariff increase. But neither initiative succeeded in stemming the tide of severe and prolonged depression. Between 1930 and 1933 the scale of unemployment and poverty reached unprecedented levels. As a result, the political salience of relief also increased dramatically. By 1932 it had become, according to two prominent businessmen of the time, "one of the most vexed questions of public welfare."

Ottawa's response, however, to the problem of unparalleled poverty cannot qualify as a novel experiment in state aid. Instead, as Struthers (1977) first emphasized, it represented an extension of policies and practices developed in the previous decade. It involved the resumption of payment of conditional subsidies to the traditional relief-giving authorities, not a brand new pattern of intervention. Moreover, both the Conservative administration (1930-35) and its Liberal successor (1935-40) adopted the 'tried and true' methods of doles and relief works, spending unprecedented funds on these orthodox projects (see appendix A, table 37). They also revived the past practice of granting aid only
on an emergency basis. Their policies were formulated from year to year with each of the ten successive relief acts stressing that federal intervention was a temporary incursion into provincial jurisdiction to meet circumstances of "extreme and unusual gravity." This strategy was designed with a familiar objective in mind: to avoid the permanent burden of spiralling relief costs. The inherited method of policymaking, though, was flexible enough to afford opportunities for experimentation. Realizing this early in its term of office, the Conservative government decided to sponsor a novel form of aiding transients, a category of wage-earners not previously singled out for special treatment.

Relief camps to provide work and maintenance for single, homeless men were operated by the federal Departments of National Defence and the Interior between 1932 and 1937. Their establishment was unprecedented, representing the first occasion that Ottawa bore the full costs of assisting a segment of the civilian unemployed. It also marked the culmination of federal involvement with single, homeless men, superseding an arrangement made in the summer of 1931 in which the Conservative government agreed to share the costs of maintaining these men in camps with the western provinces and Ontario. This trend of increasing participation by Ottawa, however, is neglected in existing studies of Canadian relief camps. The purpose of this chapter is to elucidate the political forces behind the evolution of camp relief for single, homeless men.

Background

The impact of the Great Depression was most severe during the first three years of the Conservative government's term of office. According to DBS estimates the jobless rate among wage-earners rose from 12.8 percent in 1930 to a record level of 26.5 percent in 1933. The incidence of unemployment, though,
was not shared equally by all regions, partly because economic conditions in the prairie provinces, especially Saskatchewan, were exacerbated by the persistence of severe drought. Consequently, although wage-earners in communities over 5,000 were distributed 23.1 percent in the West and 76.9 percent in the East, 1931 census data revealed that the proportions unemployed were 31.1 percent and 68.9 percent, respectively. 

The ranks of destitute, unemployed workers in western cities included single, homeless men who emerged as a distinct group among relief applicants during the 1930s. The majority had been previously employed as transient workers, a mobile segment of the labour force that played a crucial role in the development of Canada's natural resources. These workers followed seeding, harvesting, homesteading, lumber camps, sawmills, mines, and the city or town boarding-house in the 'off' season, in a regular cycle. But when the depression struck, their mobility became a liability because it deprived them of residency, an essential qualification for either municipal or provincial relief. Even unemployed, single men with established community ties found themselves in the ranks of the homeless, as they were often denied work or shelter allowances. From 1929 onwards they joined the ranks of destitute transients 'riding the rods' from coast to coast in search of food and shelter.

There are no precise figures of the size of this group. Official estimates made in the 1930s ranged from a minimum of 20,000 to a maximum of 70,000. But this range is probably conservative, since a reliable independent investigator estimated the number of destitute transients to be at least 100,000 in 1932. More reliable data are available on their occupations and age groups (see table 5).
Table 5. Estimates of occupational and age distribution of the unemployed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupational Distribution</th>
<th>Married Men</th>
<th>Single Men</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unskilled labour</td>
<td>40-45 %</td>
<td>40-42 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural workers</td>
<td>5-6</td>
<td>28-50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Railway men</td>
<td>7-10</td>
<td>6-7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building and construction</td>
<td>12-15</td>
<td>6-7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office and clerical</td>
<td>3-4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (shop assistants, salesmen, etc.)</td>
<td>25-30</td>
<td>15-20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Distribution</th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19-25 years</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-40 years</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-50 years</td>
<td>20-25</td>
<td>12-15</td>
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Destitute transients were concentrated in western Canada mainly as a result of the completion of many capital construction projects. The mechanization of western agriculture, however, restricted their chances of finding alternative employment. The rapid spread in the use of the combine dramatically curtailed the demand for harvest workers, and shortened the working time of those who were employed in harvesting. Furthermore, the disappearance of free homesteading land close to areas of settlement meant that these men were no longer able to support themselves during the 'off' season. While these developments were occurring, agricultural immigrants continued to be recruited from abroad. According to the federal Labour Minister, out of the
221,566 immigrants who entered Canada between February and July of 1930, 99,367 were males aged 18 years and over. Their entry into a shrinking labour market contributed further to the problem of group transiency in the West.

Although all cities and most towns of western Canada attracted unemployed transients, Winnipeg and Vancouver were the magnets. As the only large centre of population within a 1,000-mile stretch of territory, Winnipeg offered a refuge for seasonal workers laid off in the winter months. As 'the gateway' to the western provinces, it also attracted a constant traffic of labourers seeking work in the harvest fields or in the developing northern hinterland. If no work was available, the population from the rural areas flocked into Greater Winnipeg, and "the westward movement stopped there." Vancouver was also a 'mecca' for transients. Besides being "the logging headquarters" every winter, its mild climate attracted seasonal workers from elsewhere. During the depression Vancouver became a haven for unemployed transients from all over Canada who went where "the weather fitted their clothes...."

The influx of single, homeless men into these and other cities of western Canada posed special problems for relief officials. Hard-pressed to meet the demands of their own unemployed residents, some municipalities refused to aid them. Others, especially the larger centres, provided the occasional meal and a bed and then told the drifter to "move on":

Subjected to constant movement, jungle living, and disappointment after disappointment, the single, homeless, unemployed man soon became a transient, a tramp, a hobo, or perhaps a thief. He was the grey figure begging on the street, sleeping in the doorway, standing on the corner, pricking your conscience or offending your sensibilities. Slowly Canadians became aware of the problem.

Once aware, they demanded swift action to remedy the problem of group transiency.
The Agitation for Federal Relief Camps, 1930-32

Of all the campaigns for initiatives in the field of unemployment relief during the interwar period, the agitation for relief camps for single, homeless men offers the most graphic illustration of the social control model. Virtually all the advocates perceived this group as potentially violent and susceptible to revolutionary propaganda. They explicitly demanded federal action in order to quell the prospect of Communist-inspired disorder. Although some commentators question both the accuracy and sincerity of these perceptions, the evidence overwhelmingly suggests that politicians and the public regarded the threat posed by destitute transients as a serious one.

Unlike the previous struggles, the dominant economic interests were not visible opponents of camp relief for destitute transients. Instead, during the agitation most spokesmen of capital concentrated their energies upon pressing Prime Minister Bennett to drop his costly public works program, arguing that it was endangering the nation's credit and violating canons of fiscal orthodoxy. A few businessmen, in fact, lobbied Ottawa to establish camps because they feared revolution and regarded this form of relief as economical. Organized farmers also refrained from voicing objections as survival became a more pressing priority, especially in the West, where most became destitute as a result of depression and drought.

The void in opponents' ranks created by the silence of agrarian and corporate interests was filled by previous supporters of public welfare initiatives, viz., unemployed and employed wage-earners. The Communist-led unemployed, representing the bulk of the nation's organized jobless, were the major opponents of the principle of camp relief work. More moderate elements of the Canadian labour movement, outside and inside Parliament, voiced qualified
protests against military administration of camps. Prime Minister Bennett was also reluctant, at first, to involve the army, and his opposition was significant, as he purportedly ran a one-man show during his term of office. But he later reversed his stance after the 1932 winter demonstrated the failure of a joint camps policy.

Advocates:

The agitation for federal camps to house destitute transients was conducted by two sets of political forces. Alarmed by the activities of labour radicals, municipal and provincial politicians in Ontario and the West exerted intense pressure upon Ottawa to establish camps. Individuals and groups, representing mainly non-economic interests across Canada echoed their pleas. The various advocates' demands attracted little attention in the federal House, but individual Conservative backbenchers and ministers were active behind the scenes pressing the case for action.

The campaign coincided with a resurgence of leftist-inspired dissent that was more intense and much wider in scope than the postwar unrest. Among the various socialist groups involved in the process of mobilizing workers, the Communist Party of Canada (CPC) was the most successful in the first years of the depression. After its founding in 1921 it remained a moribund organization for the rest of that decade, with only 1,900 members in November 1929. It grew rapidly thereafter because the unprecedented scale of unemployment and poverty created a fertile breeding ground for radical doctrines among disaffected wage-earners and some hard-pressed farmers. At the peak of its strength in 1931, the CPC was outlawed and its leaders arrested, but its various fronts were still legal and remained active.
Among CPC affiliates, the Workers' Unity League, created in 1929 by Tom McEwen, was the party's "most effective arm." Its first major task was to forge a national mass movement out of the hundreds of local groups of unemployed workers which sprang up soon after the depression struck. To this end, it created the National Unemployed Workers' Association (NUWA) in the spring of 1931 to press for non-contributory unemployment insurance and to unite "the struggles of every section of the working-class" in the fight for the overthrow of capitalism. The NUWA leadership played an active part in organizing the various marches, parades and minor riots - often involving clashes with the police - that took place in many cities of Ontario and elsewhere. Thus, across Canada "many municipal and provincial governments and much of the press shared Bennett's view that protest groups and mass meetings of the unemployed were, by definition, revolutionary in intent."

Politicians representing western cities and the provinces of British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba and Ontario were particularly alarmed about transients' susceptibility to the propaganda of Communist agitators. From 1931 onwards they waged an aggressive campaign to persuade Ottawa to establish relief camps for them. Besides individual, written representations, they lobbied Senator Robertson, the federal Minister of Labour, directly during his visit to western Canada in the summer of 1931. His fact-finding tour began on the coast, and so the demands of B.C. municipal and provincial politicians were received first.

During the 1931 winter the influx of single men from all parts of Canada into Vancouver imposed severe strains on the local relief machinery. Their maintenance was resented by civic officials because it had to be financed partly by their ratepayers. Vancouver aldermen, however, were not prepared to
build their own camps to house destitute transients, and they lobbied both senior levels of government to do so. According to the chairman of the city's relief committee, "[t]hroughout the winter we have been constantly urging upon the Provincial Government the advisability of establishing work camps at a distance from the cities...." Frustrated by the lack of provincial response, Mayor Taylor went to Ottawa in April 1931 to press for the provision of camps in each province, and he repeated this demand for national action when civic politicians met Senator Robertson in Victoria in mid-June.

The Conservative Premier of B.C. reinforced the pressure on Robertson. Conditions, he insisted, were "grave":

...especially in the city of Vancouver, where huge crowds of unemployed men were having parades, marching to various points and holding meetings. There were several clashes between the police and the unemployed and a distinctly communistic spirit was evident. Premier Tolmie's suggested remedy, joint funding of relief camp work on the Trans-Canada Highway, was designed to relieve married as well as single men. Indeed, as he was not prepared to pay the costs of transporting the unemployed from urban centres to these camps, residents of the unorganized areas of the province would have benefited the most from road camp work. The B.C. Premier, however, presented his proposal as a remedy for the transient "menace" in Vancouver, warning the Minister that "...the unemployment situation is becoming daily more acute, and with communistic agitation, it is a much more serious question than when it was discussed some time ago...."

Civic politicians in Alberta also pressed the case for federal action on Senator Robertson. They too favoured road-construction projects in order to remove "the transient non-resident menace" from the large cities, and their demands were subsequently endorsed by all municipalities, both urban and rural, in the province. A resolution passed by the Union of Alberta Municipalities
contended that the care of unemployed transients was the sole duty of the senior levels of government and suggested that this group be placed in camps and employed on useful public works. Premier Brownlee, the head of the United Farmers government, was prepared to participate with Ottawa in special relief works to absorb transients but not to act independently. He suggested construction of the Banff-Jasper highway in the national parks as a suitable project for relieving "a large number" of transients. "In any event, we think in the interests of maintenance of social standards and to get away from Communistic influences these men should be moved out of cities."  

Among the remaining prairie provinces, only Manitoba faced a serious transient problem. Although Winnipeg was subject to recurrent seasonal unemployment, the city was unprepared for the constant influx of transients requiring relief from 1929 onwards. In the first winter of the depression officials attempted to restrict aid to resident single men, offering direct relief in return for a work test in day camps. However, their efforts to deny food and shelter to outsiders were short-lived because citizens complained about the extensive panhandling that developed. By the spring of 1931, 5,000 single unemployed men were being fed at the civic soup kitchen, comprising one-third of the estimated total of unemployed in Winnipeg. The prospect of reducing their numbers was remote because very few farmers were hiring labour and other industries were affected by the slump. Once again, tension was heightened by the threat of continued Communist-inspired disorder.

Both municipal and provincial politicians pressed for federal action in the summer of 1931. Two Winnipeg aldermen presented the case for a national, uniform policy to Robertson on June 26th, describing the destitution of both resident and transient single men as "pitiable in the extreme," and making it clear "that Winnipeg cannot act alone in the matter of giving relief to
transients...."32 One councillor spelled out the reason: "If we were to attempt to feed these men at this time without similar provision being made in all other parts of Canada, our city would be overwhelmed by the migration of hungry men from East to West who would flock here for food."33 Following their meeting with Robertson, provincial officials in Manitoba submitted specific proposals for relief camp work in the national parks in order to remove several thousand single men from the urban centres.34 While their demands were being considered in the federal capital, unrest intensified across Canada, resulting in the arrest of "bolshevistic" agitators in Manitoba's capital and elsewhere. These disturbances prompted the mayor of Winnipeg to wire Ottawa suggesting that "...the greatest remedy for countering communistic propaganda is to provide work now and the most suitable job would be the immediate starting of Trans-Canada Highway east and west, where many thousands could be handled under semi-military organization and conditions."35

Cities and towns in Ontario also joined the growing chorus. The Conservative provincial administration had decided not to contribute towards either direct relief or local works during the summer of 1931, and municipalities in northern Ontario were hard-pressed to relieve their own unemployed residents, let alone aid incoming transients. The Clerk of Cochrane, a town of 3,000, wired Ottawa asking for the immediate removal of 1,000 starving and homeless men "who intimate disturbances will arise if action not taken."36 Aldermen of Port Arthur and Fort William, along with local business and labour organizations, made similar pleas to the federal and provincial capitals.37 These individual appeals were buttressed by a joint demand. In early July a delegation representing 50 municipalities throughout Ontario asked Premier Henry to urge Ottawa to establish centres for the care of unemployed transients.38 In response, the Conservative Premier endorsed the idea of a
joint federal-provincial initiative to form "labour battalions" of unemployed single men to build links in the Trans-Canada Highway and other roads in northern Ontario. Finlayson, the minister in charge of relief administration in this area, urged the Prime Minister to sanction this suggestion as "...we very much fear [an] outbreak in northern towns." He later made a personal plea to the federal Minister of Railways for action to avert Communist-inspired disorder:

The situation in some parts of Northern Ontario is becoming desperate and I am afraid we may have an outbreak at a few of the places where it is particularly bad and where there is a red element. This is particularly true on the head of the Lakes, Sault Sainte Marie and Sudbury. Our police reports from these localities are very bad and the situation...is getting very difficult and I am really afraid from a civil standpoint.

Elected officials in Ontario and the West were not the only advocates of federal action concerning transients. Individuals and various interest groups also lobbied Ottawa. They were even more explicit in demanding military involvement in relief camp work. The following sample of their views is illustrative not exhaustive, as the Prime Minister's Office was "inundated by people sending us good, bad and indifferent schemes.... A Montreal resident urged Ottawa to enrol single, homeless men as auxiliaries of the Department of National Defence in order to prevent looting of food stores. The Chief Constable of Vancouver suggested the creation of "Internment Camps" at the borders of Alberta and B.C. "...in order to relieve the situation which is distinctly serious." C.W. Frederick, who owned several newspapers in northern Alberta, sent Prime Minister Bennett an article suggesting that Canada follow the example of France and Germany and mobilize her single, unemployed men in an "industrial army" under military administration in order to "rid...ourselves once and for all of the bolshevist element with which the
ranks of our unemployed are so thoroughly sprinkled." Groups representing churches, businessmen and veterans concurred. Anglicans in the Kootenay diocese petitioned both the B.C. government and Ottawa to establish "moveable camps" under the auspices of the Employment Service to provide relief work and then to enforce rigidly the vagrancy laws. English-speaking Catholics in Montreal advocated housing the foreign-born in work camps. The Calgary Board of Trade sent a resolution to Ottawa suggesting that all homeless men be housed in relief camps run along disciplinary lines. Veterans belonging to the Edmonton branch of the Crusaders of the British Empire demanded military-controlled camps to undercut the threat posed by "...those whose aim is sedition, revolution and disregard for law and order." 

Federal legislators also demanded special treatment for single, homeless men. Behind the scenes a few Conservative MPs pressed the case for federal action. A.U.G. Bury (Edmonton) suggested special projects for transients, while two Ontario Conservatives made separate representations for the establishment of military-controlled relief work camps. V.C. Porteous (Grey North) advocated this remedy to counteract existing conditions "which border on revolution," and Brigadier-General Ross (Kingston) argued that housing single homeless men in the armouries of cities would have "the most soothing effect on the reds...." Members of the Conservative cabinet also favoured the establishment of military-controlled relief camps. The Minister of Railways advocated this remedy in order to reduce unrest. "My own great fear is that we may hesitate too long and have serious riots verging on revolution in which life may be taken which would be, to my mind, a terrible catastrophe as hungry men can hardly be blamed for refusing to starve quietly." The Minister of Labour shared his concern. Senator Robertson, "still frightened by the memories
of the Winnipeg General Strike, ...[was] convinced that these men were potential revolutionaries and that many of them were already communists."54 He was clearly disturbed by the conditions he found in western Canada, perceiving the situation in Manitoba to be the most threatening:

"Undoubtedly the situation in the City of Winnipeg is more acute than at any other point, due not only to the large number of men unemployed, but also because of the fact that so large a proportion of them are of alien origin and communist sympathies, thereby making the city a prolific breeding ground for communistic doctrines. This is evident because of the recurring disturbances, some four of which have happened within the past month."

Robertson was also fearful that similar outbreaks would occur in northern Ontario, where the bulk of the unemployed were also foreign-born. In order to minimize the threat of Communist-inspired disorder in Ontario and Manitoba as well as Alberta and British Columbia, he suggested that Ottawa should cooperate with these governments in extensive road-works on the Trans-Canada Highway to remove transient and resident single men from cities. He advocated that these men "be put at work promptly under supervision equivalent to semi-military control; with employment available, with ample food and reasonable shelter tended, idle unemployed men should be prepared to accept same or forfeit their right to State assistance."

Opponents:

Robertson's remedy for the transient "menace," however, was not condoned by all segments of Canadian society. Although the scale of opposition was muted compared with the barrage of criticism that developed after the Department of National Defence camps were established, protests against both the principle and method of administration of camp relief were voiced by radical and moderate segments of the divided labour movement. Inside government, Prime Minister Bennett was also reluctant to sanction federally-operated relief camps.
Following its founding in 1931, the Communist-sponsored NUWA grew rapidly because neither established unions nor labour parties showed much interest in organizing the nation's jobless. Although independent estimates of its strength are not available, its Secretary claimed a mass membership of 300,000 by the fall of 1933. The NUWA leadership was basically opposed to the idea of housing transients in relief camps, as it sought a permanent national remedy for unemployment rather than innovations in emergency state aid. Its initial strategy, however, was not to condemn the camps outright but to demand that Ottawa meet an extensive set of conditions concerning hours of work, wages, living conditions and method of administration (civil, not military) prior to sanctioning this form of relief for their members. Local affiliates of the NUWA were more openly hostile. The B.C. Premier recalled that in the summer of 1931 in Vancouver:

...the unemployed, especially the Communists, were using the expression 'prison camps.' They were enlisting public sympathy when they stated that the government were preparing camps not fit to live in.

They also lodged a formal protest with Ottawa. In September a mass meeting organized by the Burnaby branch of the NUWA approved a resolution protesting against "the inauguration of a system of Slave Camps" as it represented "a curtailment of liberty and a lowering of the standard of living."

Among employed workers, members of non-international unions also opposed the establishment of camps. The leadership of the National Labour Council of Toronto, an offshoot of the All-Canadian Congress of Labour, and delegates attending the 1931 convention of the Calgary-based Mine Workers Union of Canada condemned "the system of forced labour" that coerced single, unemployed men to accept camp relief work or else face starvation. In contrast, members of international unions' affiliated to the Canadian TLC were more cautious in
their criticism. They were not opposed initially to the principle of work camps. However, they did not sanction military involvement in this form of relief. For example, the Calgary Trades and Labour Council impressed upon the Prime Minister the necessity for civil administration of work camps for the single unemployed, if this procedure was carried out.

Members of western Labour parties adopted a similar stance to moderate unionists. At their conference in July 1931 they approved a resolution condoning only civilian administration of camps for single men and protesting strongly against proposals "to militarize or dragoon our unemployed or to exploit their misfortune by semi-forced labour on a mere relief basis."

Inside Parliament no overt opposition to the principle of relief camps for single, homeless men was voiced prior to their establishment. Among the few MPs concerned about the plight of transients in the 1931 session, only Woodsworth brought up the subject. Like other western labour representatives, he was not opposed to camp work per se. In fact, he later urged the creation of a "peace army" to provide board and wages for the unemployed in return for undertaking "constructive works" in the North. However, Woodsworth did condemn press demands for "detention camps" under military control, contending that their establishment in peacetime represented a "dangerous precedent" and unfair treatment of the unemployed. He warned the Conservative government that military camps might develop into "schools of bolshevism" and even provide "...the means by which capitalism itself will be done to death."

The Prime Minister was also opposed to placing relief camps under army administration because he was not prepared to stir up public animosity, especially in Quebec:

The legal difficulties could be overcome by the exercise of the authority of the Government in a manner that would create
such feeling throughout the country as would not warrant the effort. In some parts of Canada the feeling in connection with the use of the word 'conscription' is very strong.67 He later told a Conservative MP that any initiative likely to provoke a backlash in Quebec would provide powerful ammunition to his "political enemies."68 Bennett's refusal, however, to sanction military relief camps did not obviate the necessity for action during the 1932 winter. His cabinet decided on a two-pronged strategy to deal with the problem of single, homeless men: deportation of alien agitators and special relief arrangements including camp work. In early July of 1931 the cabinet ordered the RCMP to round up Communists throughout Canada, especially known agitators in the West, for deportation. Later in the month it sought approval from Parliament for special powers under the 1931 Relief Act to maintain peace, order and good government throughout the Dominion. The Prime Minister justified the insertion of this clause on the grounds "...that riots might not be possible, that unfed men might not congregate in corners to be inspired with the thought that their lot was such that they should prefer Russia to Canada."69

The Conservative government also decided to select single, homeless men for special treatment. Under the 1930 Relief Act direct relief costs had been split three ways for all categories of the unemployed but while in Edmonton in June 1931, the federal Minister of Labour had agreed to share with the western provinces the costs of maintaining transients on direct relief up to a maximum of 40 cents a day. The Cabinet decided to continue this new cost-sharing arrangement during the forthcoming winter. It also endorsed his suggestion that, where possible, destitute single men would be employed on highway and other works projects located away from cities, but it shied away from sanctioning the use of the army. The Prime Minister announced to the House that
these special projects would be undertaken in British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba and Ontario.

Although details of this joint relief camps policy varied between the respective provinces, there were common features governing the treatment of single, homeless men. Only token cash allowances not wages were paid so as to make camp relief work less attractive than private employment.\(^{71}\) Organization and administration of the camps was left to the provinces as Ottawa wanted to avoid the creation of any costly, permanent machinery.\(^{72}\)

A joint relief camps policy was not the only initiative taken in 1931 to aid single, homeless men. Under the arrangements made with Manitoba and Saskatchewan, Ottawa also agreed to share the costs of placing these men on farms during the winter. However, neither of these initiatives achieved their common objective of removing destitute transients from urban centres during the 1932 winter. The bulk of them, in fact, remained in the cities of western Canada and Ontario receiving direct relief, as table 6 illustrates:

Table 6: Numbers of single, homeless men aided by various federal-provincial projects during the 1932 winter

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Direct Relief in Cities</th>
<th>Road Camps</th>
<th>National Park Camps</th>
<th>Farm Placement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B.C.</td>
<td>20,238</td>
<td>11,421</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alberta</td>
<td>8,081</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1,003</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saskatchewan</td>
<td>5,000*</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>7,937</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manitoba</td>
<td>7,541*</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1,300</td>
<td>1,602</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ontario</td>
<td>56,000*</td>
<td>14,000</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


*These totals include single, unemployed residents as well as transients.
Precipitants:

As the joint relief camps policy failed to remove the transient "menace" from urban centres during the 1932 winter, political pressures soon surfaced for wholesale federal action. Elected officials in the West stepped up their campaign to persuade Ottawa to assume the full costs of relieving single, homeless men, and they received support from expert sources close to the government.

At the Dominion-Provincial Conference in April 1932 the original participants in the joint relief camps policy were successful in securing its continuation during the summer. Elected officials in the West then intensified their efforts to secure wholesale federal involvement. A meeting of western mayors passed a resolution asking Ottawa to relieve cities of any cost for the care of single men lacking bona fide residence. This was followed up by a joint plea from municipal and provincial politicians. At an unemployment conference in early August they approved a memorial pointing out that variations in their methods of administering relief were contributing to "unrest and agitation" and encouraging "the constant movement to and fro of the unemployed, particularly single men and women, that is proving disastrous to our national welfare and public morals." As a remedy, they suggested that, following a national registration of all single men and a ban on railway travel, destitute transients "be concentrated in camps...." This remedy was also advocated by Charlotte Whitton, the Executive Director of the Canadian Council on Child and Family Welfare. Besides being "the most influential Canadian social worker of her era," she was a supporter of the Conservative government. Outraged by the "flagrant patronage," inefficiency and waste in public welfare agencies, she suggested to the Prime
Minister that her profession could assist Ottawa to bring relief costs under control. Her offer was irresistible, as it came at a time when Bennett was "gravely worried that the ballooning cost of relief might bankrupt the country." In May she was hired to investigate conditions in western Canada, and her report was the only detailed study on unemployment relief Bennett ever commissioned.75

Whitton's investigation was guided by two major constraints, one implicit and the other explicit. Its recommendations would have to be consistent with the shift in general policy away from relief works towards direct relief agreed upon at the 1932 Dominion-Provincial Conference. They would also retain provincial control of relief projects because "the federal power desires to avoid as far as possible any assumption of direct administrative responsibility." Despite this, however, both guidelines were broken in the case of single, homeless men as Whitton recommended that Ottawa take over their care and provide relief camp work. The special problems posed by group transiency, she argued, could only be handled by Ottawa as western cities and provinces lacked the means of controlling a "huge," mobile, floating population. In contrast to families and single women receiving relief, the "single man, unattached with his labour to sell, and the spirit of adventure beckoning him, sets out upon the road, and nothing less than a common policy of nation-wide control can exercise any restraint upon him."76

Centralized control was necessary as the piecemeal treatment of destitute transients was "threatening to create a real menace to our social system." It was destroying the self-respect of thousands of young men and possibly creating a permanent "hobo" class. It was also spurring collective action by local groups of transients. "The movement is organizing itself, comparing treatment
in different centres, demanding conferences with public bodies, putting forward
demands for service and standards and generally becoming a grave menace to law,
order, property and security in the Dominion." As its potential membership was
estimated to be at least 100,000, Whitton urged Ottawa to "organize the
movement before it gets further out of hand." She also stressed that a federal
initiative would be less costly than the existing patchwork of policies for
transients. "Because of its susceptibility to large-scale treatment, and the
work possibilities of those assisted, properly organized, the provision of
relief and shelter to homeless men should enable handling at a lower cost than
any other class of relief; as a matter of fact, however, the cost has been
scandalously high...in some of the provinces."77 Whitton then singled out the
lax and extravagant administration of relief camps in B.C. for special
criticism.78

To curb the transient "menace" and to reduce costs, Whitton recommended
that Ottawa establish semi-military camps for physically fit transients aged 25
years and over. She suggested that the Department of Labour and an experienced
military administrator operate these "concentration camps" in areas where
constructive works could be undertaken. However, her proposal did not involve
wholesale federal financing but joint sharing of costs with the provinces.79

The cabinet received Whitton's confidential report sometime in September
1932 and the Prime Minister described it as "of great value."80 With the
events of a recent demonstration in Ottawa fresh in their minds, they were
receptive to her suggestions concerning single, homeless men because the winter
was fast approaching and the threat of renewed disorder loomed large. As the
transient problem was most acute in western Canada, the cabinet initially
formulated plans exclusively for this region. Its members accepted in a
modified form the major thrust of Whitton's recommendations concerning the need
centralized control, but stopped short of utilizing the military in its
relief camps policy. To forestall the increased movement of transients once the
harvest ended, they announced a ban on riding freight trains after September
30th. Moreover, they decided "...to take necessary steps to insure that all
single, homeless men in urban centres be sent to camps...[and] be given no
relief by cities."81 The object was to remove all transients from urban
centres as "[a]ny significant number remaining perpetuated the situation, and
continued the potential threat to social order."82

Another significant departure occurred in the method of financing camp
relief. Instead of sharing costs, Ottawa decided to pay the full costs of
maintenance for single, homeless men up to a monthly maximum of $12 per man.
The Cabinet's decision to take this unprecedented step ran counter to Whitton's
proposal of joint financing. It was motivated by a desire to achieve "the
utmost economy and efficiency."83 Direct funding would allow Ottawa to exert
stricter controls over expenditure than the cost-sharing formula used
previously. However, this new arrangement did not apply in the case of camps
operated by the federal Parks Branch in Manitoba and Saskatchewan. Here the
method of joint financing was continued during the 1932-33 fall and winter.84
As these provinces relied on Parks Branch camps to house transients, Ottawa's
decision to take over maintenance of single, homeless men in provincial camps
smacked of an attempt to remedy the "impossible situation" in British Columbia.

Despite this expansion, cabinet ministers refused to take over the
organization and administration of camp relief presumably because they were
fearful of being saddled with the continued maintenance of transients. Instead,
they insisted that the western provinces supply their camps and equipment free
of charge and pay administrative costs. However, they were not prepared to let these provinces establish their own administrative machinery. They proposed that "public-spirited men," chosen by the federal cabinet, serve on honorary, provincial commissions to manage camp relief.  

In early October, Dr. J.W. Black, Director of Colonization for the Canadian National Railway, was chosen by the Minister of Labour to implement the comprehensive plan for the care of single, homeless men. His visit to British Columbia, the first province contacted, produced a modification in Ottawa's original plan to house all transients from cities in camps. In response to a request from members of the newly appointed commission, Black agreed to allow well-organized relief organizations to continue feeding single men in urban centres. This change in the original plan also applied in the prairie provinces (see table 7). Besides camp and direct relief, Ottawa agreed to pay the full costs of monthly payments to transients placed on farms.

Table 7. Numbers of single, homeless men assisted by relief commissions in the western provinces in December 1932

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>B.C.</th>
<th>Alberta</th>
<th>Saskatchewan</th>
<th>Manitoba</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relief camps</td>
<td>5,180</td>
<td>363</td>
<td>1,869</td>
<td>362</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban relief</td>
<td>9,690</td>
<td>6,146</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>4,112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farm placement</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2,192</td>
<td>1,228</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Wholesale federal involvement, however, could not be confined to western Canada. News of the federal plan provoked a reaction from the other regions. According to the Minister of Labour, "Ontario, the provinces of Quebec and the Maritimes made representations concerning similar men within their boundaries." As the Bennett administration was already vulnerable to charges that its general unemployment relief policy discriminated against central and
eastern Canada, these demands were difficult to resist. But the cabinet faced problems in implementing quickly a uniform relief camps policy. As only Ontario had an existing system of camps, federal machinery would have to be utilized. Yet, since most of the 18 national parks were concentrated in the West, Ottawa could not use the Department of the Interior to provide relief camp work for eastern transients. Other federal agencies catering to civilians lacked the resources to organize and operate camps in time for the forthcoming winter. This left the Department of National Defence (DND). Although the cabinet had previously resisted the idea of using the army, its members could not reject the logic behind this department running the camps, - "here was convenient machinery ready to be adopted, while to have any other department would be a lengthy job and costly."88

The persuasive powers of the Chief of the General Staff also contributed to Ottawa's choice of the DND. Major-General McNaughton had already submitted an unsolicited plan to house unemployed transients in army camps. His remedy was "a natural one" for a professional soldier.89 But it was not a novel idea, and so the DND camps hardly qualify as "his brainchild."90 Nonetheless, McNaughton's close relationship with the Prime Minister plus his reputation and known ability placed him in a strategic position. "There was probably no one in government service who could have lent greater authority, prestige, or dedication to the unemployment relief proposal."91

McNaughton had formulated his scheme after seeing firsthand the bread-lines across Canada while on a tour of inspection in August 1932, and he presented it "primarily as an alternative to the use of force in the suppression of disorders in the larger centres...."92 His initial efforts to persuade the Minister of Labour of its merits had been unsuccessful. Consequently, when he attended the opening of the 1932 session on October 6th,
"McNaughton was surprised when the Prime Minister...leaned over to him and whispered that 'the Cabinet was very much interested in his scheme and asked him if he could have a detailed proposal in the Prime Minister's office by 9:30 a.m. the next day.'"93

Pressure from provinces in central and eastern Canada had been the spur to this renewal of interest in the general's plan. Without it the cabinet would have remained reluctant to sponsor anything resembling conscription, especially in Quebec. McNaughton's suggested projects (repair of citadels at Quebec City and Halifax, and completion of the Trans-Canada Airway)94 would provide jobs for transients outside the western provinces and so satisfy demands for equal treatment. The low cost of military camp relief also appealed to the cabinet: $1.00 per day per man, including 20 cents for personal spending. The latter amount was chosen to make the cost of the scheme appear low enough to be accepted by taxpayers "who desired frugality in everything."95 The McNaughton plan received formal approval the next day. Its rapid implementation was almost without precedent, even in national emergencies.96

Thus, federal camp relief for single, homeless men during the 1933 winter encompassed two separate plans in the East and the West. Although these plans were administered by different agencies: the DND and "provincial" commissions, both involved wholesale federal intervention to relieve this category of the destitute unemployed. Designed as a temporary expedient, the dual relief camp system was soon rationalized by General McNaughton, who exerted an "almost mesmeric influence on the members of Bennett's government."97 In August 1933 the DND took over administration of relief camps from the four "provincial" commissions in the West. But its poor civilian relation, the Department of the Interior, prevented a military monopoly developing, because it assumed the full costs of maintenance and operation of the camps in the national parks. In
tandem, these two federal departments ran relief camps for physically fit transients during the 1933-36 period (see table 8). Their procedures for admitting and releasing inmates were identical in that men were free to enter or leave the camps at any time. They also offered a similar form of relief, subsistence and 20 cents per day in return for work, even though conditions in the camps were not identical. However, according to the Commissioner of the National Parks, there was a fundamental psychological difference in the atmosphere between the two sets of camps arising from the civilian and military methods of administration. 

Ottawa's relief camps policy, however, failed to achieve its goal of removing most transients from Canadian cities. Moreover, it "did not relieve government concern for the threat posed to social stability by the single, unemployed men, instead it focused concern on the camps themselves." Discontent and unrest was concentrated in the DND camps and proved to be their death-knell. Their closure in 1936 was un lamented as Ottawa's "pioneering social experiment" represented "a paternalistic approach to the problem of suffering proposed and implemented as a measure to protect the established order, [and]...shaped and operated in a climate of fear and frugality." The irony was that a more palatable model of federal camp relief was tried out in the national parks, but both politicians and scholars, captivated by the personality of a forceful general, failed to appreciate its presence.
Table 8. Numbers of single, homeless men housed in DND camps and Parks Branch camps, by province, and authorized or total expenditures for fiscal years 1932/33 - 1935/36

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number, by province(a)</th>
<th>DND Camps</th>
<th>Parks Branch Camps</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1932/33</td>
<td>1933/34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.C.</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>6,726</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alta.</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>1,099</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sask.</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>1,083</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Man.</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>447</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ont.</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>5,444</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Que.</td>
<td>325</td>
<td>2,215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N.B.</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>548</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N.S.</td>
<td>314</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total No.</strong></td>
<td>1,393</td>
<td>17,702</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Auth'd. Exp. (in 000s)</strong></td>
<td>$ 496</td>
<td>8,875</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Sources:** "Final Report on the Unemployment Relief Scheme for the Care of Single Homeless Men Administered by the DND, 1932-36," vol. 1, app. 12 (re number) and pp. 53-54 (re amounts), Public Archives of Canada, DND Files, Record Group 24, vol. 157: Relief Act, 1932; and Canada, Department of the Interior, Annual Reports for Fiscal Years Ending 1932/33 - 1935/36.

(a) In the case of DND camps, figures refer to numbers housed in December of each fiscal year.

(b) Ottawa's contribution in the 1932/33 fiscal year was matched by the participating provinces.
The environmental factors identified in chapter 1 exerted a varying impact upon the agitation for camp relief. The Great Depression directly shaped it by creating a new distinct category of destitute, unemployed workers, viz., single, homeless men. Although it is often credited with also altering mass attitudes towards the plight of the jobless, this shift in opinion was not visible in the case of transients, who were regarded as the least deserving of all relief recipients owing to their lack of communal and family ties. Besides the cultural context, the institutional framework also acted as a constraint, delaying the timing of concerted governmental action. Despite the increased scale of unemployment and dependency, the joint relief camps policy formulated by Ottawa and the provinces represented the same type of ad hoc improvised response to crisis used in the previous decade. The subsequent expansion of federal involvement occurred within the existing division of powers, mainly because Ottawa wished to avoid ongoing, costly commitments for the maintenance of destitute transients. Once again, the federal structure provided a rationale for cost-conscious national politicians to limit the extent of state intervention.

Of all innovations for destitute employables, the relief camps policy provides the clearest example of the social control model of welfare politics. Unlike the case of unemployment relief where labour radicalism vied with semi-orthodox interest group activity, the agitation consisted almost exclusively of leftist-inspired dissent and concomitant fears of revolution. The dominance of these prerequisites represents an almost classic version of the model preferred mainly by Marxist scholars.
An interesting feature of the case study is that largely unorganized bands of single, homeless men roaming the country, not the Communist-sponsored national movement of the unemployed, were identified as the effective working-class militants. Virtually all the advocates perceived their life-style, propensity for violence and susceptibility to revolutionary propaganda as posing the greatest threat to established order, and demanded action to prevent outbreaks of Communist-inspired disorder. Fear of revolution, however, was not the only spur to federal involvement in camp relief. Fiscal conservatism also exercised a powerful influence. It accounted both for the reluctance of elected officials in local and regional governments to sponsor their own costly, independent initiatives, and for Ottawa's unprecedented decision to take over the entire care of transients.

Municipal and provincial politicians in Ontario and western Canada qualify as the major advocates in the agitation. Unlike previous struggles where they were divided over the desirability of federal intervention, they agreed on the necessity for a nationwide system of camps to house single, homeless men. Their intense lobbying efforts overshadowed the sporadic pleas of individuals and various interest groups, including capital. The small band of opponents contained unfamiliar faces in the guise of mobilized, unemployed workers and moderate labour unions and parties. Their collective views represented voices from the emerging industrial society, but were discounted by politicians who regarded them as representing the "Red element."

Inside government, the representative rather than the bureaucratic model of welfare politics is again confirmed in the case study - a finding that is hardly surprising, given the salience of the politics of relief in the early years of the depression. Like his predecessors, Prime Minister Bennett
qualifies as the main architect of the camps policy. His initial opposition to
the idea of using the military effectively delayed wholesale federal action for
a year. In making this decision, he, in effect, dictated both the timing and
content of the joint initiative during the 1932 winter. Although his leadership
was reputed to be dictatorial, Bennett's subsequent change of mind was not
arrived at independently. Instead, his decision was influenced by concerted
pressure from western elected officials and uncoordinated protests from
provincial politicians in central and eastern Canada, as well as by the advice
of prominent individuals inside the governing party and the military
bureaucracy. It was dictated mainly by cost considerations, a recurring motive
in the development of emergency state aid.

The overt presence of social control politics is a striking feature of the
cases analyzed to date. Although the relief camps policy provides the clearest
example, the original innovation in relief also represented in part a welfare
concession extracted from cost-conscious national politicians who feared
revolution. Group politics, though, also shaped the policy of intervention and
dominated the subsequent agitation for withdrawal. While a similar
constellation of group forces participated to varying degrees in all the
struggles, their roles as advocates and opponents varied over time, with the
notable exception of farmers. Their disputes were resolved in all cases by
cabinet politicians with Prime Ministers Meighen, King and Bennett playing the
dominant role in deciding the timing and content of the policies. The
inactivity of bureaucrats in the process, however, was more apparent than real,
as the next chapter reveals.
Besides single, homeless men, the Bennett administration singled out for special treatment another category of destitute employables: city families with agricultural backgrounds. In April 1932 the Minister of Labour announced that Ottawa would participate with the provinces and municipalities in a relief land settlement plan for these families. Essentially, this plan involved capitalizing direct relief expenditures to enable city families to return to the land and engage in subsistence farming. While representing a minor departure in relief policy, its adoption represented the first instance of publicly-subsidized land settlement of settlers without capital. Also, the long-forgotten struggle preceding its introduction involved a pattern of urban-rural conflict, not visible before in the politics of relief. The purpose of this chapter is to pinpoint the political forces behind the implementation of this novel measure of unemployment relief.

Background

In contrast to social welfare policy, land settlement was defined by the framers of the 1867 constitution as an area of joint concern. Section 95 of the BNA Act made immigration and agriculture shared jurisdictions of the federal government and the provinces. For the first sixty years of Confederation these two subjects were inextricably linked as immigrants, not Canadian residents, were recruited for settlement on publicly- and privately-owned land.

Although both senior levels of government could take initiatives in the area of immigration and colonization, Ontario was the only province prior to
the First World War to display any interest in promoting land settlement by immigrants. The federal government played the dominant role as immigration was central to the nation-building process, and to develop the West, it retained control of the lands and other natural resources of the two new prairie provinces until 1930. As the major beneficiary of federal land grants, the Canadian Pacific Railway played the key role in western settlement. Its aggressive promotion of immigration and colonization in the first decades of this century had considerable economic benefits. Apart from the profit it could make by settling land, the railway company stood to benefit enormously from the increase in traffic which settlement brought. Thus, the aim of its colonization work was to induce immigrants to settle on lands adjacent to their lines.2

The First World War represented a watershed in the evolution of Canadian immigration policy as it marked the end of the rapid, substantial influx of newcomers. Immigration in 1913 reached a peak that was not matched subsequently (see table 9). The flow fell to a trickle during the war years and, following a brief revival once peace came, slackened again because of the postwar recession. While the increase in western settlement during the 1920s resembled "the Laurier era of rapid advance," it never matched the prewar scale. The supply of prairie farms was diminishing and mechanization was reducing employment opportunities. Moreover, the development of the new northern frontier in western and central Canada was not conducive to large-scale settlement because access was restricted and its resource base comprised base metals and pulpwood rather than farmland. "[T]he old Canada of farms and frontier settlement was passing away."3

World War I had also produced a more interventionist phase in federal colonization policy. In 1917 Ottawa entered the field of land settlement for
Table 9. Immigration to Canada, 1901-40

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>1901</th>
<th>1911</th>
<th>1921</th>
<th>1931</th>
<th>1940</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>55,747</td>
<td>331,288</td>
<td>91,728</td>
<td>27,530</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>89,102</td>
<td>375,756</td>
<td>64,224</td>
<td>20,591</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>138,660</td>
<td>400,870</td>
<td>133,729</td>
<td>14,382</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>131,252</td>
<td>150,484</td>
<td>124,165</td>
<td>12,476</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>141,465</td>
<td>36,665</td>
<td>84,907</td>
<td>11,277</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>211,653</td>
<td>55,914</td>
<td>135,982</td>
<td>11,643</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>272,409</td>
<td>72,910</td>
<td>158,556</td>
<td>15,101</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>143,326</td>
<td>41,845</td>
<td>166,783</td>
<td>17,244</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>173,694</td>
<td>107,698</td>
<td>164,993</td>
<td>16,994</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>286,839</td>
<td>138,824</td>
<td>104,807</td>
<td>11,324</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SOURCE: Freda Hawkins, Canada and Immigration: Public Policy and Public Concern (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 1972), app. 1, table B.

the first time by financing a scheme for Canadian veterans. In the postwar period it joined with the British and provincial governments in various plans designed to induce British immigration. These included the Empire Land Settlement Scheme launched in 1922 and the 3,000 British Families Scheme begun two years later, as well as agreements with specific provinces concerning families and boy settlers. Under these various plans, immigrants with limited capital received assisted passage and government loans to facilitate their settlement. This expansion of the federal role was reflected inside the bureaucracy. In 1917 a Soldier Settlement Board was established in the Department of Immigration and Colonization to supervise the placement of returned men. A civilian Land Settlement Branch was set up in 1924 to ensure that new settlers would be directed to locations where they would have the best opportunity of success and be safeguarded from exploitation.
Despite these developments, the railways remained the major colonization agencies. In 1925 the Liberal government gave the Canadian Pacific Railway and its new rival, the publicly-owned Canadian National Railway, more or less exclusive authority to bring in and settle immigrants from eastern Europe in agricultural employment in the West.6 Although the majority of newcomers entering Canada under the railway agreements of 1925-27 and 1927-30 were single men, families with little or no capital were also settled upon privately-owned vacant farms on the prairies. In 1925 the colonization departments of both railway companies set up new subsidiary organizations in Winnipeg to oversee their settlement. Their work was to set an important precedent when the issue of aiding destitute Canadian families came to the fore.

Demands for domestic colonization began to surface in the late 1920s. Organized labour was the first advocate of a policy of "intensive, internal colonization" instead of "indiscriminate, outside immigration." In an interview with the Vancouver Province in 1927, the TLC president suggested that instead of combing the cities of Europe for agricultural workers, the proper method was to start at home and get the unemployed farmers' sons currently in Canadian cities back on the land.7 Similar views were voiced by the official in charge of immigration work for the Anglican Council of Social Service and by organized farmers in Saskatchewan.8 However, none of these suggestions explicitly embraced the concept of land settlement as a relief measure.

The impetus behind the idea was the 'back to the land movement.' Flight from the cities was a standard response to downturns in the economy but its scale was greatly intensified in the Great Depression. From 1929 onwards refugees from urban unemployment and drought joined the trek to frontiers in the North and West. Confronted with this spectacle, certain provinces and
Ottawa were quick to realize its potential as a remedy for unemployment. Initially, they were only prepared to assist unemployed families with capital to return to the land. Their independent efforts, however, paved the way for the birth of a joint agreement in 1932 to divert direct relief expenditure towards settlement of destitute families with farm backgrounds.

The Agitation For Relief Land Settlement, 1930-32

A striking feature of the agitation for relief land settlement is the minimal presence of social control politics. Although it took place against the same backdrop of developing unrest as the preceding struggle, most advocates were not motivated by fear of revolution. They viewed destitute urban families as a potentially stabilizing rather than disruptive force because of their previous exposure to the agrarian ethic of self-help. Certain advocates, in fact, urged their removal from industrial centres in order to shore up the defences of rural Canada against the challenge of increasing urbanization.

Despite its brevity, the agitation was complex, incorporating elements of both the group and bureaucratic models of welfare politics. Outside the Canadian Parliament, it took the form of an urban-rural conflict involving businessmen and farmers, a division not manifest in previous struggles, where the dominant economic interests had been on the same side. Municipal and provincial politicians also divided along urban-rural lines over the issue of relief land settlement. Inside the federal government, bureaucrats played a creative role in spurring the federally-sponsored initiative. Their participation represented the first occasion on which officials had participated actively in the politics of relief. These bureaucratic actors, however, did not act independently. They had close ties with officials representing the two major railways, and together the colonization interests
pressed the case for action. Their alliance illustrated a relationship of dependency between the state and private interests not normally visible in the social policy arena.

The constitutional framework shaped the agitation for relief land settlement. As jurisdiction over land settlement policy was shared, separate but concurrent campaigns were waged in the provincial and federal capitals to secure either independent or joint action, with the latter being urged more often because at the time the senior levels of government were collaborating on the issue of relief. Although there was some overlap, especially in the ranks of opponents, the participants were distinct enough to warrant separate treatment. Consequently, the various advocates and opponents are identified according to whether their major target was the provincial or federal level of government.

**Provincial Struggles**

At the provincial level the idea of relief land settlement had a limited appeal. It attracted minimal attention in Ontario and Nova Scotia, even though the former had implemented a scheme for the unemployed with capital in 1930, and the latter sponsored a loan scheme for jobless miners without capital in 1932. It was apparently a dormant issue in New Brunswick and British Columbia until the inauguration of the federal plan. In contrast, relief land settlement became a salient political issue in the three prairie provinces and Quebec. Although the agitation took different forms within their boundaries, common themes are discernible. Advocates representing various urban interests were almost always pitted against mainly agrarian opponents; and all provincial governments were reluctant to take independent action, even Quebec and Saskatchewan which had sponsored initiatives for the unemployed with capital.
Advocates:

The business community and professional class in Winnipeg were the major advocates in Manitoba. According to a local MP, J.P. Seimens, a prominent businessman and farmer, was "the instigator" of the campaign, which he advanced in an article written in 1931 mainly on grounds of cost:

It seems absurd...to spend by labour $1,100,000 for a ditch that can be made by steam shovel for $150,000. This saving of $950,000 would place 1,000 families, representing 5,000 people at least, on the land. This is what our governments must do and quit borrowing money and spending it to feed the people on a system which we could not afford in prosperous times.9

His views were shared by members of the established professions. Senator Forke identified the "most enthusiastic advocates" of relief land settlement in Winnipeg as ministers, doctors and lawyers, "men without agricultural experience."10 Among these proponents, a Reverend Kerr actively sought to secure a joint initiative. Impressed by the moderation shown by "large bodies" of unemployed workers in pressing their case for municipal and provincial aid to help them return to the land, he became their self-appointed lobbyist with the authorities in Ottawa. Acting in his capacity as president of the Canadian Club in Winnipeg, he arranged for a deputation to meet the federal Labour Minister during his visit to that city in the fall. Kerr then pressed their case upon the Minister of Immigration: "These men have absolutely refrained from linking up with the Communists of our city, have remained patient in the face of every discouragement, and are asking for the most moderate assistance, and if we are discouraged by the authorities it will have a damaging effect upon their morale."11

Relief land settlement was also advocated by civic politicians, as family aid was the largest item of relief expenditure. Aware that spiralling costs were unpopular with their taxpayers, they sought to induce families with farm
backgrounds to return to the land. Montreal aldermen and ratepayers belonging to the nationalist Societe St. Jean Baptiste stressed in their representations that relief land settlement would be a cheaper option than civic relief; and their sentiments were echoed by the mayors of the five cities in Alberta, who made a united plea for a joint initiative "thereby saving all governments a considerable sum of money." Municipal politicians in Saskatoon and Moose Jaw were more impatient than their colleagues elsewhere. During the 1932 winter they sent a limited number of families to northern areas after their appeals for federal-provincial aid had been turned down. In the case of Saskatoon, this initiative was taken to discourage unemployed workers from relying on civic institutions to supply jobs. According to the mayor, his council decided "that those who agree to take up land will be given a greater portion of relief work provided we are empowered to hold back a portion of their earnings for the purpose of enabling them to get on a homestead." In contrast, dissenters would receive only "the barest subsistence." Cities in Saskatchewan also continued to press for a joint initiative. Councillors from Saskatoon, Regina and Moose Jaw met during the 1932 winter and formulated a relief land settlement plan that was subsequently endorsed by the provincial government. Acting upon their behalf, a Saskatoon MP, F.R. MacMillan, asked the federal government to participate in their scheme to relocate 2,000 families by matching their contributions.

Opponents:

The advocates' pleas, however, were resisted by rural politicians on the prairies and in Quebec, who objected to the idea of becoming dumping grounds for the urban unemployed; and in Quebec the Catholic Church was also opposed to state involvement in domestic colonization. These various opponents had powerful allies in the guise of cost-conscious provincial Premiers.
Councillors in western rural municipalities actively opposed resettlement proposals because they feared that relocated families would become public charges for, unlike other settlers, destitute unemployed workers had no capital to tide them over.\textsuperscript{16} In Manitoba, rural districts circulated a resolution in the spring of 1932 opposing any effort on the part of the city of Winnipeg to settle its relief families on farms in their areas.\textsuperscript{17} In Saskatchewan the United Farmers of Canada, the organization in charge of relief distribution in the northern half of the province, voiced the "only constant source of criticism" about resettlement. As well as representing potential welfare cases, the influx of settler families - even those with capital - represented added competition at a time when farm prices were at an all-time low. Protests of farmers living in the Kenville district of Saskatchewan were "purely economic" in that more production would lower grain prices further and so reduce their already depressed standard of living.\textsuperscript{18} Agrarian hostility was not confined to the prairie provinces. Farmers in Quebec were apparently unenthusiastic about the provincial colonization scheme for the unemployed with capital for similar reasons.\textsuperscript{19}

In the case of Quebec, another powerful opponent was the Catholic Church. According to a senior cleric, Monsignor Courchesne, government intervention in colonization matters should only be "exceptional," leaving the tasks of selection and maintenance of settlers to "family initiative, intelligent cooperation and organized charity."\textsuperscript{20} The Catholic Church had been the major colonization agency in Quebec since the 1880s, when the first government-sponsored repatriation scheme was instituted. It was determined to prevent direct intervention by "patronage-hungry" provincial politicians.\textsuperscript{21} Consequently, following the inauguration of the colonization plan for the
unemployed with capital, it took steps to guard its monopoly by creating a colonization company in 1931 to further the movement of the unemployed back to the land.22

The Liberal Premier of Quebec heeded the negative reaction of the Catholic hierarchy and farmers. Although he was an enthusiastic supporter of subsidized colonization for the unemployed with capital,23 Taschereau was well aware of the risks involved in a larger state role. With an election imminent in the summer of 1931, he could not afford to alienate rural voters, the mainstay of Liberal support. He was also conscious of the fact that any venture in subsidized colonization ran a high risk of failure. Although his government's request for federal aid toward settlement of the unemployed with capital was turned down, his ministers went out of their way to create the illusion that Ottawa was participating.24

The political response on the prairies was similar. Dr. Anderson, the head of the Saskatchewan Cooperative government had won power in part on a pledge to promote domestic colonization.25 But he, too, shied away from the idea of resettling families on urban relief. Instead, he was initially only prepared to sponsor a loan scheme for unemployed young men with farming experience and limited capital to move from the dustbowl and cities on newly-acquired Crown lands. As his numerous appeals for federal contributions were ignored,26 he went ahead on his own during the 1931 winter. Faced with the subsequent ire of northern farmers, his government delayed endorsing cities' demands for a joint initiative until the latter stages of the agitation.

Premier Bracken of Manitoba was also reluctant. His Farmers' government was due to go to the polls in 1932 and was conscious of the attitude of rural voters toward relief land settlement. Its members were also pledged to continue a policy of economy and so wanted to avoid costly drains on the public
purse. State-aided settlement enterprises, therefore, were to be avoided as they "have been failures to a considerable extent and have involved the loss of large sums of money." Premier Brownlee of Alberta also resisted the idea, even though his government was lobbied by an aggressive group of disabled ex-servicemen, based in Edmonton. As head of a Farmers' administration in a period when agricultural prices were at an all-time low, he was not prepared to antagonize his rural constituents by sanctioning resettlement of urban dwellers. Even after Alberta became a participant in the relief land settlement plan, Premier Brownlee remained unenthusiastic. He told participants at the 1933 Dominion-Provincial Conference that he was "less sanguine" about the prospects of the 'back to the farm movement' than other Premiers because it was difficult to assist new settlers when pioneers in the Peace River region were experiencing difficulties.

The Federal Campaign

Accompanying the various provincial struggles, there was a more concerted campaign for relief land settlement waged inside the federal capital. It resembled a bureaucratic model of welfare politics rather than a group one, with officials involved in colonization work championing the cause. There were also some supporters of the 'back to the land movement' inside the Canadian Parliament. But their pleas were resisted by a cluster of opponents similar to those operating at the provincial level: spokesmen of agriculture in the federal House, and cabinet politicians who knew that previous state ventures had been costly and embarrassing failures.

Advocates:

Unlike all previous agitations for initiatives in emergency state aid, the federal campaign for relief land settlement originated inside rather than
outside government. Officials employed by the chief colonization agencies in Canada, the Department of Immigration and Colonization (DIC), the Canadian National Railway (CNR) and the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR), were the major advocates at the federal level. Within the space of a year after the depression struck, their activities were drastically curtailed. The outgoing Liberal administration discontinued the immigration scheme for British families and assisted passage for British adult immigrants, administered by DIC, as well as the railways agreement, thus cutting off the supply of European settlers. The new Conservative Minister of Immigration, Gordon, went even further in imposing restrictions on the flow of immigrants. Partly as a gesture of compensation, he suggested to the railways that they join with his department in a new policy of domestic colonization of the urban unemployed with capital.

Personnel of agencies which lose their original functions quickly search for new ones, and the national colonization interests were no exception to this general rule. From the fall of 1930 onwards, they devoted their energies to placing both single men and families with capital and farm backgrounds from cities in agricultural employment. In contrast to the provincial schemes, no financial aid in the form of indirect subsidies or loans was offered. Instead, officials in the Land Settlement Branch of DIC and the railway colonization departments merely proffered advice and supervision. Initially, they worked independently. However, following discussions in the spring of 1931 they decided to establish a central committee to direct a new, coordinated effort and to acquaint their own field representatives and provincial officials with details of their scheme through a series of conferences.

The first conference was held in Winnipeg. At this gathering two Manitoba officials broached the subject of broadening the federal scheme to include
destitute unemployed breadwinners. This suggestion was approved by Dr. W.J. Black, Director of Colonization of the CNR and his counterpart in the CPR, J.N.K. Macalister. Their endorsement partly reflected economic motives. Both railway companies had a strong vested interest in promoting land settlement for, according to their presidents, each household was worth on average $746 per year in traffic earnings. Black of the CNR explained that relief land settlement "would create actual and potential freight revenues for Canada's transportation system." As freight traffic generated 70 percent of the income of both railways, additional settlement was essential during the depression years to compensate for the drop in their earnings that had resulted from the drastic decline in purchasing power of existing settlers on the prairies. An added imperative to increasing the traffic was the need to settle surplus lines built in the 1920s.

Colonization officials in the railway companies and in DIC were also spurred on by more mundane fears of redundancy. Depression and restricted immigration made their jobs highly vulnerable unless some alternative supply of settlers could be found. According to Gordon, the Immigration Minister, his scheme for the unemployed with capital was instituted "rather than see the colonization establishments of the railways and of the Department dissolved...." C.A. Van Scroy, a CPR official, realized that this scheme offered a defence against the question: "What is there to do for our particular departments?" As the Chief Commissioner of Colonization in DIC "appropriately said - 'This is a challenge.'" In late August of 1931 the colonization officials met to pool their experiences and to prepare a memorandum for the Minister. They suggested two new plans: farm placement of 5,000-10,000 single men and settlement of selected
families on farms. Although both plans were recommended as an "antidote to the forces of unrest," these officials regarded single men, not families, as posing the greater threat. But they also advocated this remedy as the least expensive way of relieving single men,38 and its relative cheapness probably influenced Prime Minister Bennett to reverse his original stance and endorse farm placement for transients in Manitoba and Saskatchewan during the winter of 1932.39 From its small beginnings, this scheme gradually expanded and became the motif of Liberal relief policy for transients in 1936.40

Concerning families, the officials suggested that the $360 per year required to maintain these people on urban relief be diverted instead towards re-establishing them on the land. They stressed that funds would be spent under supervision and that families would be subject to a rigid selection procedure by experienced colonization officials. The latter would also choose suitable farms requiring no outlay on the part of governments. The spokesmen of the national colonization interests concluded by describing relief land settlement as "a measure of sound business in the interests of the individual family and the State."41

The merits of relief land settlement were also recognized inside the federal Parliament. Although only a few MPs and one lone Senator qualify as champions of the cause, the idea was endorsed by legislators from all parties with the notable exception of the UFA (see table 10). In contrast to advocates outside Ottawa, supporters inside the House and Senate were not, by and large, spokesmen of urban Canada. Instead they represented mainly mixed or rural ridings. However, most proponents were not directly employed in agriculture and so they could afford to extol the virtues of rural life. Their idealized view of life on the farm was apparently shared by many citizens, but it was carried
Table 10. Supporters* of relief land settlement inside Parliament, 1930-34

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Affiliation</th>
<th>Prov.</th>
<th>Riding</th>
<th>Type of Constituency</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
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<td>Acadie</td>
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*Supporters comprise legislators who spoke in favour of resettlement of families on civic relief.
to extremes by French Canadians as "[f]or them, there were no shadings of grey between the morality of the country and the depravity of the city." 42

It was not surprising, therefore, that the original champions of relief land settlement inside the House represented Quebec. During the 1931 session two Liberal backbenchers, L. Dubois and O.L. Boulanger, pressed the case for federal involvement. They both represented settler ridings and were convinced that without state subsidies the efforts of new colonists were doomed to failure. They also espoused the ideology of agrarianism, defined by Brunet as "a rejection, based on a static view of society, of the contemporary industrial age." 43 During the interwar period proponents of this ideology were reacting to the strains of Quebec's industrial revolution that was "transforming the old rural world of New France into a region of crowded cities and factories." 44

Dubois (Lib., Nicolet) was an archetypal proponent of the ideology of agrarianism. A self-styled spokesman of the "tillers of the soil," he depicted the farmer as "the Unknown Soldier who guides the plough." In his advocacy of a joint relief land settlement initiative, he eulogized the virtues of a rural environment claiming that "the land breeds morality" and was "the most favourable environment for the development of civic virtues that are the warp and woof of strong races." 45 His colleague Boulanger (Lib., Bellechasse), voiced similar sentiments. He compared agriculture to the "roots of the tree," whereas industry and trade were merely the respective "braches" and "leaves." 46 An active supporter of state-aided domestic colonization since the late 1920s, he introduced a resolution urging the reinstatement of reduced railway fares for colonists to establish a better equilibrium between the rural and urban population, reduce federal relief expenditure and aid national development. 47

In the Senate the cause was also championed by a French-Canadian spokesman from
northern Ontario, Dr. A. Lacasse, who was convinced that the religious ideals and patriotism of the early settlers still ran in "the veins of young Canada today...."48 To develop these qualities, he urged that some means be found "of enabling the unemployed in our cities to move from the cold and dry pavements where carrots and turnips cannot be grown, to the soil that gave a living to their ancestors."49

These demands for federal action elicited a sympathetic response from W.A. Gordon, the Minister of Immigration and Colonization, who also represented a settler riding in northern Ontario. Among members of the Conservative government, he was the only active proponent of state-aided land settlement, earning him the press label of "the great colonizer."50 Upon assuming office he inaugurated a policy of domestic colonization for the unemployed with capital. In addition to compensating the national colonization interests for immigration restrictions, the scheme reflected Gordon's own views on the "indiscriminate" immigration policies practised by his predecessors. He suggested to MPs that these policies were promoted simply in order to provide revenues to pay for unnecessary railway expansion. He opposed them because immigrants had not been absorbed into agriculture but had sought jobs in industry thus creating "...our present disproportionate city population." In order to remedy this "excessive urbanization," Gordon decided that any federal expenditure on colonization during his tenure as Minister "should be devoted to replacing on the land our own people who had departed from the farms and found themselves without jobs in the cities."51 For Gordon, settlement for the unemployed also offered a corrective to the trend towards social collectivism. The land offered "the best prospect" for the independence and maintenance of the urban unemployed,52 and agriculture was the foundation of national economic
prosperity. When announcing the relief land settlement plan he rejected the slogan "go back to the farm" as a misnomer, suggesting instead "go forward on the farm." Canada's survival, after all, depended largely upon "the products of the first six inches of her soil."53

Opponents:

Gordon, however, faced a difficult task in converting others to the cause of relief land settlement. Spokesmen of agrarian interests from the major opposition parties and half of the Labour group voiced their disapproval in the House of Commons (see table 11). Their protests fell on sympathetic ears as Prime Minister Bennett and most of his cabinet were reluctant to endorse any form of state-aided land settlement.

MPs from both Liberal and UFA ranks acted as spokesmen for their agrarian constituents. A Saskatchewan Liberal argued that relief land settlement would exacerbate the existing depression in agriculture in western Canada, as "the farmer will have additional competition and have his prices lowered still further." The UFA leader voiced similar sentiments, contending that any expenditure promoting further settlement was unwarranted "...until the people now on the land are in a position to make a profit from their operation." A colleague dismissed the concept of relief land settlement as "absurd" and "ill thought out" on the grounds that modern scientific agriculture had made farming an expensive venture and had displaced the traditional model of the self-sufficient homestead. He also voiced doubts about the quality of relief settlers, suggesting that the average unemployed man - even from a farm background - was temperamentally unsuited for farming.54

Labour MPs were divided over the issue. H. Mitchell (Hamilton) questioned the soundness of a policy that used the land as "the scrap heap of industry;"55
Table 11. Opponents* of relief land settlement inside the House of Commons, 1930-34

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<tr>
<th>Affiliation</th>
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<th>Type of Constituency</th>
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*Opponents comprise MPs who voiced disapproval of the idea of resettling civic relief cases.
and his colleague, A. MacInnis (Vancouver), developed this argument in a more
ideological vein:

Such a movement...tends towards the creation of a peasantry in
Canada, a peasantry which will eke out a precarious living
from the land when there is nothing to be done in the city. That
peasantry will form a labour reserve to be called upon at a time
when working conditions in the cities improve. Such a condition
will be dangerous to the people affected and dangerous to workers
in the cities.\textsuperscript{56}

Woodsworth, the Labour leader, however, found himself on the opposite side.
While doubting the effectiveness of relief land settlement as a remedy for
urban unemployment, he was to urge federal involvement in the Manitoba plan.

Doubts existed within the Conservative Party as well. A Quebec
backbencher, wrote to the Prime Minister urging him not to participate in the
Quebec colonization scheme for the unemployed with capital. "I hold that this
movement will be a complete disaster, for the unemployed themselves and the
country as well; ...from a party standpoint participating to [sic] it only
means suicide."\textsuperscript{57} Most of the cabinet shared his sentiments. On numerous
occasions in 1931 they resisted Gordon's pleas to promote land settlement as a
relief measure. In October Gordon reminded Bennett that:

...as early as April last, I brought a rather modest scheme
before Council having in view the return to the land of a limited
number of families...and I also suggested...some contribution
towards a scheme of colonization in [Saskatchewan]. Council
definitely decided against the idea. Since then I have brought
it up a number of times with the same result.\textsuperscript{58}

The Conservative government's opposition reflected painful memories. The
ill-fated Soldier Settlement Scheme, initiated by the Unionists, had left
Ottawa with a legacy of abandoned farms and unpaid debts. The British Families
Scheme, sponsored by the Liberals, was also unsuccessful. Less than half of the
original loans had been recovered by the end of the 1930-31 fiscal year, and
over a quarter of the families had withdrawn altogether.\textsuperscript{59}
The fear that 'history would repeat itself' lay behind the cabinet's refusal to endorse proposals submitted from the provinces. The Minister of Labour rejected one Manitoba plan because it "suggested that some $800 per family be advanced to settle them on farms whether the settlers had capital or not, or whether they had farm experience or not...." Even Gordon, the lone advocate in the Cabinet, shied away from endorsing another Manitoban proposal which involved administration by his own department, thus placing the onus for the success or failure of the scheme directly upon Ottawa. Another drawback of both schemes was that they involved loans which the cabinet opposed:

...our ventures into that field have not been crowned with the success that was hoped for. It is, I am afraid, only too true that if you start a person out on a farm loaded with any debt at all, in a large number of cases that will spell his ultimate disaster.

In an era when all governments subscribed to a conservative fiscal orthodoxy, previous costly failures represented blots on their records of sound administrations and provided powerful ammunition for their political opponents. As the Conservative government was already vulnerable in 1931 to charges of extravagance because of spiralling relief costs, its members were very reluctant to finance further drains on the treasury in the guise of land settlement schemes for the unemployed. Their resistance intensified following Britain's decision to go off the gold standard in the fall. To minimize its impact, Bennett appointed a small cabinet committee to consider every expenditure made on unemployment relief. He stressed that "[t]o maintain our credit, we must practice the most rigid economy and not needlessly spend a single cent."

Precipitants:

Although the prospects of a federal initiative concerning relief land settlement looked bleak in late 1931, developments during the 1932 winter
precipitated action. The status of the lone advocate in the cabinet increased. Pressure from the prairie provinces and a concerted lobby by Manitoba MPs prompted the Conservative government to endorse a joint plan in April 1932.

In February 1932 Gordon assumed a more strategic position, taking over as acting Minister of Labour upon Robertson's resignation. This new post included the chairmanship of a cabinet subcommittee that vetted unemployment relief proposals submitted by the provinces and, more significantly, recommended new federal ventures. Moreover, the 1931 Relief Act was due to expire at the end of the fiscal year. The time, therefore, was ripe to consider new proposals.

Gordon had earlier consulted the national colonization interests about broadening their efforts to include the destitute unemployed. Their interest in this category of settlers intensified in the 1932 winter as there were ominous signs that the pool of unemployed with capital was drying up. In the preceding fall the colonization agencies had temporarily discontinued their advertising campaign because of the poor response. Some other outlet was needed to prevent the demise of their organizations. This new outlet would, of political necessity, have to be found inside Canada, given the Minister's views on outside immigration, which had been further reinforced by the negative public reaction resulting from his decision in early March to permit the Ontario government to bring in 500 British boys. This concession was apparently made in order to rescue immigration societies in Ontario.

Towards the end of the fiscal year, senior colonization officials formulated a proposal. They took pains to point out that it was not a colonization scheme but essentially an unemployment relief measure based on the principle of helping people to help themselves, and that it would not involve any additional expenditure. Their proposal satisfied their own vested interests
in job survival, because the suggested method of administration was by provincial colonization departments augmented by assistance from railway officials in the selection of families and inspection of lands. Its authors advocated tripartite participation in the consolidation of relief expenditures for land settlement in order to conform to existing federal policy, and suggested a non-recoverable grant of $200 to cover subsistence for two years with the balance of $400 to be advanced by way of loans from the three levels of government.66

Faced with mounting pressure from urban interests, the prairie provinces also took advantage of the renewal of relief arrangements to press for a joint initiative. They apparently made "strong representations" for relief expenditure towards land settlement,67 and support from the other provincial Premiers was forthcoming at the Dominion-Provincial Conference in April 1932.68 Although debate and passage of the 1932 Relief Act was scheduled for late April, the various methods of federal-provincial cooperation were often not agreed upon until winter approached. In the case of the land settlement plan, however, the timing of its announcement was spurred in part by further lobbying from Manitoba, applied this time to local MPs. In response, Woodsworth (Lab., Winnipeg) took up his province's cause and urged immediate action.69 Gordon's initial response was not encouraging and implied that the cabinet had vetoed his latest proposal presumably because it involved loans. However, later in the debate on the DIC's estimates he admitted that Woodsworth's suggestion to divert existing federal expenditure from direct relief to land settlement had "a good deal of merit" and that Ottawa's participation was a distinct possibility.70

The task of devising a suitable scheme fell upon a three-man committee comprising two DIC officials and the Dominion Commissioner of Unemployment
Relief from the Department of Labour. In two respects - tripartite participation and method of administration - their plan was similar to that recommended by the colonization interests. However, they proposed a different method of financing, involving non-recoverable expenditure rather than a grant-loan combination. They pointed out that the federal contribution of $200 would free Ottawa from any further relief payments to recipients for two years. Both the size of the federal share and the aggregate amount recommended were larger than the "minister originally had in mind," but the officials insisted that the total sum must be able to meet minimum requirements of families across Canada. "Otherwise the relief proposal will be open to criticism or even to ridicule."71

The officials' plan won swift approval. On April 28th, their Minister, Gordon, formally announced that Ottawa would participate with the other governments in re-establishing the urban unemployed on the land.72 All provinces except New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island implemented the plan, but their level of participation did not match the expectations of federal officials (see table 12). Despite its limited appeal, further agreements were negotiated in 1934 with all the original participants except British Columbia, and in 1936 with four provinces: Alberta, Manitoba, Quebec and Nova Scotia. The plan lapsed during the Second World War as the improvement in economic conditions reversed the drift back to the land. Out of the total intake (10,802), 7,485 families were still registered as settlers in 1942.73 Although the scheme offered them more hope than the miserable conditions of urban relief, it was a "stop-gap," not a remedy, representing "more a confession of despair than a bold new departure in relief policy."74
Table 12. Actual and estimated proportions of eligible applicants (including dependents) and federal contributions under the 1932 relief land settlement plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>% of Eligible Applicants</th>
<th>Federal Contributions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Actual</td>
<td>Estimated*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.C.</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alberta</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sask.</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manitoba</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ontario</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quebec</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N.B.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nova Scotia</td>
<td>0.37</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P.E.I.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


*Federal bureaucrats used estimates prepared by officials in Saskatchewan, the only province to submit a definite proposal.
A Review

All the various environmental factors identified in chapter 1 directly shaped the agitation for relief land settlement. The combined impact of depression and drought created the drift back to the land that sparked the initial interest of the senior levels of government in resettlement as a remedy for unemployment. The prevalent self-help ethic also fostered acceptance of the then novel idea of subsidizing resident families without capital. Its influence was identifiable in the political process, with federal legislators and bureaucrats qualifying as its most fervent subscribers. The institutional framework too exerted a considerable influence. As jurisdiction over land settlement was shared, the participants lobbied both targets for governmental action. Their preference for a joint rather than an independent initiative was reinforced by the practice of federal-provincial collaboration on relief matters that developed in the early years of the Great Depression. Together, the formal division of legislative powers and the convention governing relief arrangements exerted a much more direct impact upon the timing and content of the plan than on the relief camps policy. However, in the case of the former, national politicians were not explicitly motivated by fear of revolution to sponsor the initiative, and so could afford the luxury of time to secure provincial consent before taking action.

Urban-rural conflict dominated the agitation for state aid to assist city families to return to the land. This clash of interests and values occurred at a time when the ascendancy of urban society could no longer be seriously challenged. Moreover, it marked the first occasion on which businessmen and farmers were on opposing sides, and this shift in the position of capital is consistent with the findings of Finkel (1979) concerning other issues of social
reform during the 1930s. In the ensuing battle the forces from urban Canada clearly won out over their country cousins.

This variant of group politics was most visible in the provincial struggles. Taxpayers and elected officials in cities of Quebec and the prairie provinces perceived destitute families with farm backgrounds as costly drains on the public purse. However, their attempts to transfer the costs of their maintenance to rural municipalities were resisted by hard-pressed farmers concerned about the threat of added economic competition as well as the potential increase in relief expenditure. In Quebec the Catholic Church, a stout defender of rural values, also resisted government intervention in domestic colonization, fearing that it would become an instrument of patronage. These various opponents had powerful allies in the guise of provincial Premiers whose decisions not to act were motivated by electoral pressures and their ever-present fiscal conservatism.

The federal campaign resembled the bureaucratic model of welfare politics more than the group one. Unlike social welfare, colonization had occupied a prominent place on Ottawa's political agenda since the early years of Confederation, with the result that a relatively sophisticated administrative apparatus was firmly in place when the issue of domestic land settlement came to the fore. The national colonization interests qualify as the major advocates at the federal level, and their involvement was spurred primarily by self-interest. Once aware that city families represented potential freight users and a pool of clients to keep their jobs intact, they pressed the case upon their sympathetic minister. In contrast, the few federal legislators from central Canada who championed the cause inside Parliament were motivated by the ideology of agrarianism, perceiving the client group as potential purveyors of
the traditional cultural heritage that was threatened by the advance of cities. Their beliefs, however, were not shared by either spokesmen of western farmers or the majority of the Labour group. The presence of these traditional foes in the ranks of opponents is noteworthy, for their interests were usually conflicting. However, in the case of relief land settlement, they shared a common hostility to a category of the unemployed that represented a potential threat to the interests of their respective memberships.

Federal cabinet politicians once again played a decisive role in shaping the timing and content of the policy. Their fiscal conservatism initially imposed a powerful constraint upon governmental action and reflected painful memories associated with previous, costly ventures in state-aided land settlement. But, in the end, resettlement was sold as the cheapest means of relieving select, destitute families in the short term with the added advantage of offering the prospect of permanent self-support. Among the precipitants, Gordon, the Minister of Immigration, played the pre-eminent role in the sudden rise to prominence of the issue. Once armed with the support of the provinces, he was well-placed in his new capacity as acting Minister of Labour to define the requirements of an acceptable proposal, leaving the details to his sympathetic officials in the DIC. Unlike previous innovations for destitute employables, bureaucrats played an apparently more active role in formulating the land settlement proposal. Apart from reflecting the different nature of the source material, their involvement illustrated the expansion of Ottawa's role in relief-giving.

From being a unique expedient in 1919, state aid for the unemployed had become by 1932 the most salient issue of interwar welfare politics. This development was shaped by a myriad of forces. The timing of mass demobilization
of World War I veterans and the postwar slump prompted the emergence of the issue into the political arena; and the Great Depression pushed it to the top of the agenda. Confronted with these downturns, supporters of the new cause of social collectivism began to mount an increasingly effective challenge against the hegemony of individualism and its influential champions. Their disputes were decisively shaped by the institutional framework, because the dual targets of influence inherent in the federal structure provided alternative lobbying targets and, more significantly, a rationale for cost-conscious politicians to deflect demands for aid.

Opposing forces outside and inside government dictated the state's response to the problem of unemployment-related dependency. Both labour radicals and interest groups were effective societal actors but their influence varied over time. Social control politics vied with interest group power in the case of Ottawa's original intervention and dominated the agitation for relief camps. In contrast, groups representing the major sectors of the economy and clients clashed over the issue of state aid in all four policies, with the struggle for withdrawal revealing their influence most clearly. They were divided along various lines, but occupational and urban-rural cleavages were the most salient. Inside government, cabinet politicians overshadowed bureaucrats in the social policymaking process. Their decisions were shaped by a mixture of motives, with fiscal conservatism qualifying as the ever-present one. It was equally powerful in shaping statutory benefits for the dependent poor, as the next section of this study reveals.
PART III

STATUTORY BENEFITS FOR THE DEPENDENT POOR
Introduction

Unlike destitute employables, the dependent poor were perceived as incapable of self-support, and so as a 'more deserving' category. Their composition was heterogeneous, covering those "who were too young, old, crippled, sick or stupid to look after themselves...." These members of the community required assistance in times of prosperity as well as in times of depression, primarily for reasons other than involuntary unemployment. Their dependency derived from age- or disability-related incapacity and was aggravated by death, drunkenness, illness, imprisonment or irregular earnings of their relatives, the mainstay of their income support.

Denominational, private charities played the major role in relieving the dependent poor up until World War I. Although their work included the visiting of clients in their own homes, they displayed a marked preference for institutional care. The Catholic Church had a "venerable tradition" of organized charity dating back to the settlement of New France so that by 1900 it had a network of orphanages and various homes for the adult poor established in Quebec and elsewhere (see table 13). In response to the increase in poverty and other 'social evils' arising from rapid urban growth, the major Protestant denominations also created special institutions of rescue that multiplied in the early years of this century.

Canadian women, representing mainly the middle class, played the pre-eminent role in developing the plethora of voluntary organizations for the relief of distress. By the turn of the century they operated either wholly or partly all the various charitable institutions and societies. Religious communities of nuns in conjunction with organized lay women ran the numerous Catholic benevolent institutions. The presence of women was equally noticeable in Protestant charities, with orders of deaconesses performing social work in
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Catholic</th>
<th>Protestant</th>
<th>Non-sectarian</th>
<th>Municipal</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Halifax</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. John</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montreal</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toronto</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winnipeg</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vancouver</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SOURCE: This table is based upon original material listed in Madame Thibaudoueau, "Charities and Reform," in Women of Canada: Their Life and Work, a handbook compiled by the National Council of Women of Canada for distribution at the Paris International Exhibition, 1900; reprint ed., 1975, pp. 324-92, passim.

*Medical and penal institutions are not included because indigency was not a formal criterion for entry.
slum areas and rural-based national missionary societies along with local "ladies' aids" raising the bulk of funds. Urban female volunteers also monopolized both the interdenominational Protestant organizations and the non-sectarian social service agencies that proliferated after the 1880s. Concerning the latter, the National Council of Women of Canada spearheaded the organization of associated charities in major cities; and its local affiliates created the bulk of civic day-care facilities for dependent children, as well as sponsoring other philanthropic endeavours for aged and infirm women.

Compared with the voluntary charity establishment, the public welfare sector was relatively underdeveloped prior to 1914. The traditional relief-giving authorities opted to subsidize the maintenance of destitute inmates in private institutions rather than develop their own facilities, except in the maritimes, where they operated the various almshouses themselves. Public aid for the poor in their own homes was also limited because of the prevalent belief that it should be the "last resort" after private philanthropy had failed.

World War I marked the onset of the process of singling out select categories of the dependent poor for specialized relief. In 1916 Manitoba pioneered the payment of statutory benefits for sole-support mothers, an initiative that was eventually copied by the other provinces. Acting together, the senior levels of government financed the payment of means-tested pensions for the elderly from 1927 onwards. In 1930 Ottawa, on its own initiative, made similar provision for prematurely senile veterans, a new category of the dependent poor. It subsequently joined with the provinces in 1937 in financing means-tested benefits for the unemployable blind. As all these welfare innovations represented milestones along Canada's road to comprehensive income security, the politics surrounding their introduction are analyzed in chapters 7-10, respectively.
CHAPTER 7

MOTHERS' PENSIONS,¹ 1916-1937

The provinces sponsored the first statutory innovations in categoric public assistance. Manitoba pioneered the payment of pensions for needy mothers with dependent children and its example was soon copied by Saskatchewan in 1917, Alberta in 1919, and British Columbia and Ontario in 1920. The movement then lost its impetus and the remaining provinces did not implement schemes until the following decades, with Nova Scotia capitulating in 1930, Quebec in 1937, New Brunswick in 1944 and Prince Edward Island in 1949. Besides marking the first major break with the colonial tradition of poor relief, the original mothers' pensions plans "were the true precursor and even progenitor of present-day social assistance programs...."²

Despite their precedent-setting influence, the provincial innovations have received limited treatment. Recent studies by Guest (1980), Hepworth (1980) and Strong-Boag (1979) have all dealt with individual provinces: British Columbia, Saskatchewan and Manitoba respectively. In the absence of comparative research, the precise identity of the participants in the provinces pioneering the payment of mothers' pensions remains somewhat ambiguous. Moreover, the question of why the 'laggers' resisted has received little attention, a surprising oversight in view of its implications concerning the general issue of provincial inaction in welfare state development. Consequently, the purposes of this chapter are to elucidate the effective political forces shaping the introduction of mothers' pensions in the five provinces west of Quebec, and to suggest reasons for the delay of implementation of similar legislation by eastern Canada.

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Background

Widows comprised the largest group of sole-support mothers, representing around 5 percent of the female population during the period when the issue of mothers' pensions was first under active consideration. Their relative distribution varied by region, with the maritime provinces and Ontario having higher averages than other provinces. Although these proportions did not increase dramatically as a result of World War I, an upward trend in all provinces is detectable in the 1921 census, as the following table reveals.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>1911 Total</th>
<th>1911 Number</th>
<th>1911 Percent</th>
<th>1921 Total</th>
<th>1921 Number</th>
<th>1921 Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Canada*</td>
<td>3,384,648</td>
<td>179,656</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>4,258,538</td>
<td>236,522</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P.E.I.</td>
<td>46,659</td>
<td>3,279</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>43,728</td>
<td>3,358</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N.S.</td>
<td>241,319</td>
<td>16,440</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>257,365</td>
<td>18,752</td>
<td>7.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N.B.</td>
<td>172,022</td>
<td>10,380</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>190,525</td>
<td>11,676</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quebec</td>
<td>992,961</td>
<td>46,764</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>1,181,171</td>
<td>57,809</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ontario</td>
<td>1,226,020</td>
<td>78,654</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>1,451,772</td>
<td>99,259</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manitoba</td>
<td>208,440</td>
<td>7,541</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>289,551</td>
<td>12,349</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sask.</td>
<td>200,702</td>
<td>5,556</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>343,810</td>
<td>10,567</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alta.</td>
<td>150,503</td>
<td>4,498</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>264,246</td>
<td>9,607</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.C.</td>
<td>140,861</td>
<td>6,178</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>231,173</td>
<td>12,846</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


*Figures for Canada include Yukon and N.W.T.
Widows were widely regarded as the most deserving category of sole-support mothers because their destitution was due to misfortune rather than perceived moral failure. Nonetheless, special recognition of their plight was slow to develop. At the time of Confederation, widows in the cities of English Canada faced a precarious existence as there were few 'harbours of refuge' for themselves or their children, in contrast to the specialized institutional provision offered by religious orders in Quebec. Often they were forced to rely on the earnings of their children, as Victorian society frowned upon the notion of married women working outside the home. If their children were too young to peddle wares or take in sewing, the options facing poverty-stricken mothers were bleak. Their maintenance depended upon sporadic assistance from relatives, friends or private charities, supplemented by occasional handouts from municipal coffers. In the absence of such supports, they had little choice but to seek employment as charwomen and leave their children unsupervised or in unlicensed baby farms. In their struggle to survive, some women were forced to desert their families, or worse, resort to infanticide.

An "alarming increase" in child desertion and infanticide during the 1870s prompted the establishment of institutions like the Protestant Infants' Home of Toronto. Similar facilities were developed by private philanthropy in cities of other provinces. Shelters also sprang up in towns serving agricultural communities across Canada to cater to widows and orphans left destitute as a result of periodic epidemics. The spread of orphanages, however, began to be questioned towards the end of the century by "...more advanced social thinkers and those in the new profession of social work [who] condemned such large aggregations of children as injurious to youth and harmful, in the long run, to the community."
Dissatisfaction with institutional care was not confined to middle-class reformers. In order to avoid the break-up of their families, sole-support mothers increasingly sought employment outside the home, a trend copied by women generally (see table 15). Their entry into the unskilled labour market was facilitated by the growth of factories in central Canada and the increasing demand for domestic workers in the West. However, neither earnings in 'sweatshops' nor rates for day labour were sufficient for independent support. In some cases older children were forced to work to keep the family afloat. 

Exploitation of child labour was not the only problem facing working mothers. With the rapid growth of cities early in the century, the sight of their 'latch key' children running wild in the streets, begging and appearing in increasing numbers before the courts, led to juvenile protection legislation. Infants of working mothers were also identified as at risk by "public spirited," female volunteers. However, despite their work for nurseries, the latter "never lost sight of the preferable alternative: full-time motherhood." 

Table 15. Employment of women in Canada, 1891-1931

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total No. of Females</th>
<th>Total No. &amp; Percentage of Females Gainfully Employed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Aged 10 Years &amp; Over</td>
<td>Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1891</td>
<td>1,770,877</td>
<td>195,990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>1,981,790</td>
<td>237,949</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>2,548,743</td>
<td>364,821</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>3,209,998</td>
<td>490,150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>3,906,522</td>
<td>665,991*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SOURCE: Labour Gazette, 1936, p. 1125, table III.

*A breakdown by occupation for 1931 reveals that 220,000 (33%) were employed in domestic and personal service, 118,000 (18%) in the professions, 116,500 (17%) as clerical workers and 85,000 (13%) in manufacturing.
A belief in the virtues of maternal care was also the central tenet of the burgeoning child welfare movement in the United States. It dominated discussions at the 1909 White House Conference on the Care of Dependent Children, prompting delegates to endorse the idea of public aid for needy, 'deserving' mothers. This remedy was soon adopted. In 1911 Illinois passed the first state-wide Mothers' Pensions Act and by 1913 similar legislation was on the statute books of 17 other states. The rapid success of the U.S. mothers' pensions movement outpaced developments within the Empire because, apart from New Zealand's pre-war widows' pension, Australia was the only other dominion to react to the politics of motherhood by paying maternity allowances from 1912.

Besides these precedents, the Canadian mothers' pensions movement was also boosted by a pre-war domestic initiative. The passage of the Ontario Workmen's Compensation Act in 1914 represented the first step towards acknowledging that certain categories of female-headed families were deserving of special assistance outside the prevailing system of poor relief. The provision of statutory cash benefits to widows and children of workers killed in industrial accidents and dependents of men with temporary or permanent disability set an important precedent. It "...served to strengthen the case for pensions to all mothers who were deprived of the financial means of caring for their children." The First World War also hastened public acceptance of the idea of state aid for fatherless families. Federal pensions for dependents of soldiers killed or disabled on active service underlined the need for state aid for civilian widows or wives of incapacitated men. Ottawa's sponsorship of the payment of privately-funded cash allowances to dependents of enlisted men also demonstrated the benefits of regular support for destitute, fatherless
families, increased volunteers' awareness of their problems while at the same

time it exposed the limitations of their "paternalistic" approach. Another
effect of the conflict was renewed interest in child welfare, that prompted,
among other things, the onset of a concerted campaign to secure province-wide
mothers' pensions.

The Mothers' Pensions Movement

Of all the campaigns for statutory benefits, the mothers' pensions
movement was the most prolonged, spanning over three decades. It was also the
only struggle waged mainly at the provincial rather than the federal level. As
the movement was complex, analysis is broken down into two stages, covering the
successful campaigns waged in the provinces west of Quebec and the protracted
struggles in eastern Canada.

Successful Provincial Campaigns, 1910-20

In contrast to the original struggle for aid for destitute employables,
the provincial campaigns for mothers' pensions contain little evidence of the
social control model, even though in Alberta, British Columbia and Ontario they
were conducted against the same backdrop of postwar unrest. Instead, they
resembled a group model of welfare politics, with spokesmen of various
interests dividing along occupational, secular-religious and urban-rural lines.
Among economic interest groups, organized labour stood alone in endorsing the
then novel idea of state aid for destitute, fatherless families, whereas
businessmen and organized farmers were passive opponents. A similar division of
opinion was visible within the social service establishment, a cluster of
interests which was not visible in the struggles for emergency aid, presumably
because services for destitute employables were relatively embryonic prior to
World War I. Female volunteers and employees of non-sectarian agencies in both the private and public sectors favoured state intervention, whereas their counterparts in the major denominational charities resisted it. The cleavage between volunteers also reflected a conflict between city and countryside.

Among forces inside government, cabinet politicians rather than bureaucrats once again played the pre-eminent role in deciding the timing and content of the various schemes. Despite their varying party labels, provincial Premiers shared a common hostility to funding pensions for needy mothers until overwhelming electoral pressures precipitated legislative action. But the original statutes still bore the same stamp of fiscal conservatism that marked the innovations for destitute employables.

Advocates:

The demands for state aid for destitute mothers sprang from an urban-based, loose coalition of trade unionists, female volunteers, individual social workers and municipal politicians, and their cause attracted the support of a few reformist politicians inside the provincial legislatures.

The Canadian TLC, representing the major and moderate arm of organized labour, was the first national interest group to endorse the concept of mothers' pensions. From 1912 onwards delegates to its annual conventions approved resolutions urging governments to pay working mothers to remain at home. Their motives, though, were not purely humanitarian. As with their efforts to eliminate the "scourge" of child and female labour, trade unionists were motivated in part by fears of low-wage competition. They were also unwilling to unionize female workers "whose primary functions, they believed, ought to have been in the home."
Confusion over the target of pressure, however, characterized the unionists' early advocacy and undermined their spokesmen's claims to be the champions of the mothers' pensions movements. Initial representations were made by the Saskatchewan and Ontario TLC executives to their respective provincial governments in 1913 and repeated by the former in the following year. After the outbreak of World War I unionists selected Ottawa as their target because the issue of mothers' pensions became entwined with the campaign to secure federal old age pensions. Consequently, they played only a subsidiary role in the concurrent campaigns to secure province-wide mothers' pensions.

Notable women of the day active in social-service volunteer work and/or the suffrage movement in Winnipeg, Regina, Calgary, Vancouver and Toronto qualify as the real champions of the cause. Like other social reformers of the period, their energies were not concentrated on securing a single reform but dissipated among a wide variety of causes. They all held executive positions in a variety of non-sectarian women's organizations reflecting their overlapping interests in the child-welfare, prohibition, suffrage, public health and urban reform movements. A biographical analysis reveals that the prime movers in the provincial campaigns were mainly drawn from White Anglo-Saxon Protestant ranks, with a majority born in Ontario and the remainder either American or British immigrants (see table 16, columns 1-2). They represented the urban middle class, as all but one or two were wives of businessmen and professionals. They also belonged to the 'leisure class' among organized women, because only a few had worked either before or after marriage. The dominance of housewives in the mothers' pensions movement contrasted with the professionally dominated suffrage elite but was not unusual at a time when the idea of a married woman working outside the home was still frowned upon.
Table 16. Prime movers in provincial campaigns, by city.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Birthplace</th>
<th>Religion</th>
<th>Paid Occupation</th>
<th>Husband's Occ.</th>
<th>No. of Children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Pre/Post Marriage</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
<td>(4)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Winnipeg:**
- Deacon: Ontario | Cong. | ? | -- | Civil engr. | 4
- Dick: " | Baptist | Teacher | -- | Lumber merch. | 6

**Regina:**
- Peverett: " | Anglican | ? | -- | Realtor | 4

**Calgary:**
- Kerby: Ontario | Methodist | ? | -- | " " | 2
- Riley: " | Anglican | ? | -- | Stockbroker | 3

**Vancouver:**
- Clark: U.S. | ? | Teacher | Union Agent | Printer | 4

**Toronto:**
- Hamilton: G.B. | Anglican | ? | -- | Surveyor | 0
- Huestis: Ontario | Methodist | -- | -- | Relig. Publ. | 4

Table 16 continued.
Table 16. Prime movers in provincial campaigns, continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Volunteer Work</th>
<th>Suffrage Movement</th>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Public office</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ex. Office Member</td>
<td>Ex. Office/Supporter</td>
<td>(6)</td>
<td>(7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deacon</td>
<td>LCW*, NCWC*, Missionary Soc., Mothers' Assn.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Lib.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dick</td>
<td>Mothers' Assn., IODE, Playg'd Assn., CPF*</td>
<td>Civic League</td>
<td>Lib.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peverett</td>
<td>LCW</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Con.?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stapleford</td>
<td>LCW, Wm. Educ.'l. Club</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Lib.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kerby</td>
<td>LCW, WCTU</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riley</td>
<td>LCW, PCW* Rotary Club</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Fem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Macken</td>
<td>Wom. Rate-payers</td>
<td>NEL, WSRCC, WWWVI*</td>
<td>Fem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamilton</td>
<td>NCWC, YWCA LCW</td>
<td>EFL*, OEFA*, OWCA*, US*, UVL*</td>
<td>Fem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huestis</td>
<td>LCW, NCWC, CNIB CPHA*, Big Sis-Red Cross ters, Wm. Hosp., Wm. Emer. Corps, Wm. Emer. Leag.</td>
<td>UVL</td>
<td>Fem.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SOURCES: Canadian Men and Women of the Time, 1912; National Reference Book, 1940; and Who's Who and Why in Western Canada, 1913.

The champions of the cause of mothers' pensions subscribed to the dominant ideology of maternal feminism. Like their counterparts in the prohibition and suffrage movements, they viewed female suffrage as "an enabling tool of pet social reforms" rather than as an equal rights measure, and so represented "a conservative brand of women's social activism." Although protective legislation for women and children was their common goal, they disagreed over the issue of partisanship, with the majority favouring ties with established parties, while a minority advocated the formation of independent alliances of women voters, as table 16, column 8 reveals.

The motives underlying the volunteers' advocacy of mothers' pensions were mixed, reflecting both humanitarian and class concerns. Philanthropic notions of women's work and mothering prompted them to start day nurseries for working-class children. Their contact with the hardships experienced by sole-support mothers led them to endorse pensions as a remedy. The advocacy of middle-class volunteers also reflected a concern for order and a more disciplined society. This was visible in their arguments, stressing the contribution made by "suitable" family life to social stability and their appeals based on social efficiency, i.e., the costs of maternal care were cheaper than upkeep in publicly-subsidized institutions.

Lily Deacon and Harriet Dick of Winnipeg spearheaded the campaign to secure province-wide pensions in Manitoba. They founded the Mothers' Association in 1909 "...to build a more 'enlightened motherhood' and to see to the welfare of children - with a program aimed at preventing juvenile delinquency." Although its active membership was small, numbering around twenty, they set up supervised playgrounds and established a day nursery where "they saw mothers simply wearing their lives out in the struggle to keep the
family together." Acting upon Dick's suggestion, the Mothers' Association began an experiment in 1910 to demonstrate that maternal care for dependent children was cheaper than maintenance in publicly-subsidized institutions. During the 1910-16 period a total of five widows with 16 children were supported by allowances paid by the association. Faced with declining donations during the 1915 winter, Dick decided to organize a delegation to press the case for provincial action during the current session. She secured the support of other 'progressive' forces in the city, including the Local Council of Women and the Associated Charities, arranged favourable press publicity that appeared under the by-line, "Mothers Pensions Prove An Economic Gain To State," and cited the Pennsylvanian scheme as well as the local experiment.

Urban, middle-class volunteers in Saskatchewan also took up the cause of mothers pensions. They belonged to the Local Council of Women (LCW) of Regina, a federation of local clubs founded in 1895 that had 39 affiliates representing 1,000 members by 1917. Although they operated a rescue home for unmarried mothers and a shelter for deprived infants, their involvement was not prompted by exposure to the problems faced by single working mothers in caring for their children. Instead, it was triggered by a request from the local mayor, whose ulterior motive was probably to forestall increased relief expenditure, as he had recently been elected on a policy of economy and "less extravagance." In response, the LCW investigated the subject, reviewed developments in Manitoba and approached the Minister of Municipalities, who was sympathetic but suggested legislative action should be delayed until after the war.

The agitation for province-wide mothers' pensions in Alberta had similar roots. It was championed by the LCW of Calgary, a federation founded in late 1912 that grew rapidly, attracting 54 affiliates with 3,000 members in just over one year. Until the fall of 1915 these volunteers devoted their time
and energy to the campaign to secure a provincial franchise, initiated by organized farm women. Once promises concerning women's suffrage and the related goal of prohibition were extracted, their executive focused their attention upon securing mothers' pensions: "Prompted by the idea that the children being the state's biggest asset, the women are of the opinion that a better step could not be taken."  

An ideal vehicle for concerted action by LCWs in cities and towns throughout Alberta was provided by the formation of a provincial laws committee in 1916 to secure reforms for women and children. However, the Calgary group had difficulty convincing their colleagues that mothers' pensions was a top priority. Under the committee's constitution a majority of affiliates of each LCW had to endorse the package of reforms prior to submission to the legislature. As approval was slow in coming in Calgary, two impatient and influential members of the Edmonton LCW, Emily Murphy and Mrs. C. Gainor, approached Premier Sifton in the fall of 1916 and secured promises concerning a dower law and equal parental rights. Their pre-emptive strike effectively ruled out legislative action concerning pensions in the 1917 session and did not meet with the approval of Calgary volunteers.  

The prime movers in the Calgary LCW were also caught off guard by the Liberal Premier's decision to call a surprise election in June 1917. They made no effort to capitalize on the opportunity presented by the first exercise of the provincial women's franchise as they were divided over the question of women's role in politics. Other feminists, however, participated actively in the campaign on behalf of the government that had granted prohibition and suffrage. They included Nellie McClung of Edmonton, the nationally known suffragette, who was "a great platform attraction for the Liberals." Although she was on record as favouring mothers' pensions, her address in
Calgary avoided mention of specific subjects. Instead, she successfully urged the new women voters "to exercise love, charity and kind-thinking" and vote for Sifton.31

In contrast to the prairie campaigns, the champions of the B.C. agitation, Susie Clark and Mrs. J.K. Macken were prominent suffragettes as well as social service volunteers.32 They founded the New Era League (NEL) in Vancouver following the passage of the suffrage and prohibition referenda in the 1916 provincial election. Although their class background and their religious and political affiliations did not fit the standard mold of the prime mover,33 they espoused the dominant ideology of maternal feminism. According to Clark, the aim of the new League was to promote female political participation in order "to gain justice through legislation."34 Although all women voters in the city were eligible to join, its active membership reached only 40.35

Macken suggested the cause of mothers' pensions to NEL members in the 1917 winter, after reviewing developments in Australia, New Zealand, Denmark, the American states and Manitoba.36 The League executive then secured the support of the LCW, an organization that had already investigated the subject and petitioned Ottawa,37 and lobbied both the municipal and provincial governments. Their overtures to Vancouver aldermen secured backing only for a provincially funded plan,38 and their reception in the provincial capital was also discouraging. Clark of the NEL headed the contingent of mothers' pensions supporters from Vancouver and Victoria, who represented various women's organizations, charities, local churches, organized labour and civic officials. The various speakers pressed upon the Premier the immediate necessity of legislative action to provide for widows and deserted women "forced through poverty to leave their homes and earn a livelihood for their little flock."39
Undeterred by their failure to secure legislation in the 1918 session, the NEL decided to broaden its base by securing the support of other urban 'progressive' forces representing prominent Liberal women, child welfare workers, veterans and civic officials, as well as of members of the rural Women's Institutes. Consequently, a more impressive delegation, headed again by Clark, presented the case for a provincial-municipal pensions scheme to the cabinet shortly before the 1919 session.40

In common with the B.C. campaign, both female volunteers and prominent suffragettes were active in the agitation to secure mothers' pensions in Ontario. Their roles, however, were reversed with the volunteers taking the lead. Florence Huestis, President of the Toronto LCW, spearheaded the Ontario campaign. Her initial efforts were concentrated on securing the backing of the National Council of Women of Canada (NCWC), the major non-sectarian volunteer organization and leading voice of maternal feminism during the war years. At its 1913 annual meeting her suggestion that provinces should follow the example of Australia, New Zealand, Illinois and Missouri was approved,41 but not unanimously, as suffragettes like Dr. Elizabeth Shortt of Ottawa and Carrie Derick of Montreal were "worried about the debilitating effects of such 'handouts,'...."42 To appease these critics, a committee which included Huestis and Shortt was appointed to investigate the subject. Their favourable report was endorsed by the rank and file in October 1915. However, their recommendation concerning provincial campaigns was undermined by the decision of the national leadership to direct their own lobbying at Ottawa during the war years.43

Huestis was also active at the local level. After discovering that many women with infants in Toronto were forced to work to avoid starvation, she
decided to create a pensions fund along the lines of similar experiments in other cities, presumably Chicago and Winnipeg. In March 1914, she headed a deputation of female volunteers and needy mothers which succeeded in persuading the civic social service commission to sanction the experiment. After a lapse of four years, the LCW, in cooperation with the social service commission and church and labour organizations, established a committee to press the Ontario government to introduce mothers' allowance legislation.

Prominent suffragettes also participated in the Ontario agitation. Under the leadership of their founder, Constance Hamilton, the United Suffragists of Toronto, an organization of five local societies founded in the fall of 1914, took up the cause. Their initial efforts, however, were short-lived, and following the disbanding of the United Suffragists, its affiliates reverted to their original mission, the securing of the vote. Once this was achieved in the 1917 session, the leaders of the suffrage movement showed renewed interest in the issue of mothers' pensions. Harriet Prenter, the President of the newly formed Political Education League described it as a legislative priority "for patriotic reasons"; and her colleague, Mrs. Campbell MacIver, echoed her sentiments claiming that mothers' pensions "...would be better for the soldiers' wives than the present system."

Social workers employed by non-sectarian voluntary agencies and public bodies also sanctioned the idea of state aid for needy mothers. Like female volunteers, they were drawn mainly from the urban middle class. They also represented conservative forces of social service activism, regarding mothers' pensions as a cheaper method than institutional care as well as a means of preventing the disintegration of bourgeois family life, "the best guarantor of social order." The bulk of sympathizers within the service professions
espoused the secular notion that social work represented the application of scientific methods to the problem of poverty, and the remainder were Protestant social gospellers who regarded social work as a divine vocation. Both types endorsed the concept of mothers' pensions at the first national social service congress held in March, 1914. However, their stamp of approval was diluted by the fact that the subject was not included in the list of demands presented to Borden's cabinet at the end of the congress.49

Social workers in both the private and public sectors also participated in provincial campaigns. At the inaugural meeting of the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies in 1912, employees of these new non-sectarian agencies, along with volunteers of both sexes, passed a resolution urging the payment of widows' allowances; and at the 1918 convention of the newly formed B.C. Child Welfare Association, a similar combination of professionals and volunteers did likewise.50 Employees of civic organized charities, the forerunners of family casework agencies, were equally sympathetic, regarding the provision of pensions as an essential step in modernizing the whole process of relief assistance in the Dominion.51 J.H.T. Falk, the secretary of the Associated Charities of Winnipeg, readily agreed to participate in the experiment of the Mothers' Association by supplying coal to the recipients and to join the 1915 delegation. Woodsworth, the then full-time secretary of the Canadian Welfare League, was another active supporter of the Manitoba movement, and the Edmonton Board of Public Welfare supported efforts in Alberta.52 The leadership of the Neighbourhood Workers' Association of Toronto, a pioneer family casework agency, also participated. Its founder and first president, Rev. Peter Bryce, was a prominent Methodist social gospeller who believed that government intervention represented "the coordinated action of good citizens in which the strong support the weak."53
Members of the new profession of social work in the public sector were equally active. They included the well-known feminist Rose Henderson, a provincial probation officer employed in the Montreal Juvenile Court. She was an effective speaker, impressing the chairman of the federal House of Commons (Special) Committee on Old Age Pensions in 1913 with her plea for state aid for needy mothers as well as the destitute aged.54 A prominent Ontario female reformer, Dr. Helen MacMurchy, also endorsed the cause. While serving as provincial inspector for the feeble-minded, she was asked by the Whitney Government to investigate the subject of infant mortality in 1910, and her recommendations included a province-wide mothers' pensions plan.55 Another Ontario official, J.J. Kelso, Superintendent of Dependent and Neglected Children from 1893, qualifies as the original Canadian advocate of mothers' pensions because his involvement dates from the mid-1890s. His annual reports of 1895 and 1896 suggested mothers' pensions and, as a result of his long-time advocacy, Kelso was asked in 1918 to chair the special committee created by the Toronto LCW to press for provincial action. He served in this capacity for a few weeks, writing articles for the press in which he criticized the Hearst government for its tardiness in introducing mothers' pensions legislation. His public criticism, however, prompted his political superior to ban Kelso's further participation in the Ontario campaign.56 A.M. McDonald, Alberta's second Superintendent of Neglected Children, was also a vocal proponent of mothers' pensions. He was disturbed about the increasing number of indigent children becoming wards of his department, believing that their removal from their families "was not right to do if the mothers' sole crime is poverty." He brought this trend to the attention of the 1917 convention of Alberta Women's Institutes, urging the farm women to campaign for a satisfactory solution.57
Municipal politicians in Toronto and western cities also endorsed province-wide mothers' pensions as a means of reducing civic relief expenditure. Reluctant to provide regular support even for resident widows, they balked at maintaining increasing numbers of destitute women who flocked into the cities in search of employment or relief during the first decades of this century. Their policy towards both resident widows and newcomers was bluntly described by Regina's Relief Inspector as "[t]o get rid of them; that is the only method." The Social Service Commission of Toronto, the advisory body to the city council on relief matters, cooperated with the prime movers in their experiment and subsequent lobbying activities, because they perceived mothers' pensions to be a cheaper option than the existing system of municipally-subsidized institutional care. Elected officials in Winnipeg too supported the efforts of female volunteers, because they realized that a system of province-wide pensions would reduce the influx of cases of dependency from the rural districts. Their spokesmen on the 1915 delegation, Hunt, the city's solicitor, was already investigating existing schemes in Australia, New Zealand and certain American states. Elsewhere in the West, the economy-minded mayor of Regina provided the initial impetus to the Saskatchewan agitation; civic officials on the west coast openly supported the cause; and aldermen of Alberta's major cities eventually endorsed the movement.

A few politicians inside the provincial legislatures also promoted the cause of mothers' pensions. They were drawn almost exclusively from the ranks of Liberals. As their parties represented the official Opposition in the immediate pre-war period in all provinces except Alberta, their experience in the political wilderness probably heightened their sensitivity to the growing demand for reform among the electorate. Their advocacy also reflected the
influence of new ideas in their party's ideology, with one proponent claiming that "the old liberal struggle was for freedom, the new was for the proper application of that freedom." 62

N.W. Rowell, leader of the Ontario Liberal opposition between 1911 and 1917, and an active Methodist layman, was one of the first to grasp the electoral significance of the issue of social reform. In his 1911 address to the electors he ranked "the promotion of the social, moral, and industrial welfare of the people" as a higher priority than material development. 63 Mothers' pensions were subsequently incorporated into his party's platform in the fall of 1916. 64 In Manitoba only Edward Brown, the Liberal leader in 1906 and unsuccessful candidate in the 1910 and 1914 provincial elections, openly associated himself with the prime movers by agreeing to join the 1915 delegation. However, his successor, T.C. Norris, had allied the Liberal opposition with the general cause of social reform since 1910 in order to capitalize on the discontent of a number of groups dissatisfied with the Roblin government. Liberal pledges concerning direct legislation, equal suffrage, prohibition and "progressive" legislation for wage-earners attracted the support of organized farmers, Protestant clerics, Orangemen and feminists in the 1914 election. 65 Although the Norris Liberals made significant gains, they failed to unseat the Conservative government, suggesting "that in a head-to-head confrontation with 'the forces of reaction' reform ideas did not enjoy the support of a clear majority of the electorate." 66

In contrast to Manitoba, the results of the first electoral contest in B.C. between a similar reformist Liberal coalition and a traditional Conservative administration augured well for the progressive cause. The victors of the 1916 election included John W. DeB. Farris, a Vancouver lawyer who
became Attorney-General and the new Minister of Labour in May 1917. He was a "prominent Baptist" and an adherent of the new school of lawmaking that viewed the law as "a tool of social justice."\(^{67}\) He was familiar with the concerns of female reformers as his wife Evelyn was a leading feminist. Farris was also aware of the political benefits of protective legislation. According to the Conservative opposition leader, by 1918 the Attorney-General had "established a record for chasing after women...not in the properly accepted or offensive sense of the term, but more as a means of catering to the vote of the fair sex...."\(^{68}\) Mary Ellen Smith was another influential ally of the prime movers in the B.C. Legislature. She won a by-election in Vancouver in January 1918, as an Independent on a platform of women's and children's rights, capitalizing on the anti-party sentiment of new female voters. Her "brand new style" of election program included pensions for widowed and dependent mothers, "and the women, now well-versed in the multifarious business of canvassing, electioneering and platform speaking, supported it vigorously."\(^{69}\)

Individual reformist Liberals were also visible on the government benches of the Alberta Legislature. William Davidson, the publisher of the independent *Morning Albertan*, won a Calgary seat in the 1917 election, the first occasion on which women voted. His wife was an active volunteer and on record as favouring province-wide mothers' pensions, and he was perceived to be sympathetic to welfare legislation. Besides his general sympathy with the underprivileged, Davidson's subsequent advocacy of mothers' pensions also reflected cost considerations manifest in his claims that their provision was "a straight case of business" and "the most economical way" of caring for dependent children.\(^{70}\) Although the relative cheapness of pensions was a recurring theme advanced by the broadly-based, loosely-knit coalition of urban
reformers promoting the cause, not all segments of Canadian society accepted the argument that state aid would reduce costs.

Opponents:

Spokesmen of capital and agriculture were not convinced. As major taxpayers, they were unsympathetic to any new ventures financed out of general revenues. Moreover, female relatives of organized farmers were also opposed to publicly-funded pensions, and these taciturn opponents in Canadian society had powerful allies in the guise of provincial Premiers.

Apart from the participation of a lone board of trade in a 1920 delegation, the Ontario business community refrained from endorsing the mothers' pensions movement. Instead of registering its disapproval in the provincial capital, its wealthier members voiced isolated protests. In the course of recounting their experiences during the influenza epidemic, social service volunteers in Toronto countered businessmen's objections. They "declared that their work had been to them a revelation of how the poor help the poor...and would have made salutary reading for people who dogmatized on the shiftlessness of the poor from the centre of a luxurious home." The secretary of the local Neighbourhood Workers' Association also referred to protests voiced against public pensions by a "reactionary group which feared the growing up of a paternalistic state."71

Winnipeg businessmen voiced similar anonymous sentiments. A female journalist, sympathetic to the cause of mothers' pensions, suggested that there were "...people who fear increased taxation as a result of such legislation"; and she later rebuffed another argument of wealthy opponents to the effect that hardship experienced by children of poorer families was a positive factor in character-building.72 Fears were also expressed among the Winnipeg middle class that mothers receiving state aid "will lose their sense of independence
and become, perhaps too frivolous on their $25 per month, and take to going to picture shows, forgetting the serious business of life."73

Unlike businessmen in Manitoba and Ontario, representatives of B.C. capital applied overt pressure upon the new Liberal government to balance its books, a move that effectively blocked legislative action concerning mothers' pensions prior to 1920. Premier Oliver recalled that, in response to demands from the large banking institutions for government expenditure to conform to its revenue, taxation had been increased in 1917. "Mining companies had [then] come to the government with the threat of closing their operations if additional imposts were persisted in...."74

Organized farmers, the other dominant economic interests, were also passive opponents of mothers' pensions. Alarmed about the trend towards rural de-population, they reacted defensively, dismissing social welfare measures as "unjustifiably extravagant and likely to benefit the urban at the expense of the rural population."75 Although the prairie farm organizations had actively supported the cause of women's suffrage, they refrained from endorsing mothers' pensions during the war. The United Farmers of Ontario was equally silent on the issue, and the reaction of their mouthpiece, the Farmers Sun, to the 1919 reform package of its Liberal rivals suggested that the costs of mothers' pensions and other social welfare proposals were of paramount concern. "The platform adopted by Mr. Dewart's convention contains a complete statement of the Socialistic program, the enactment of which would ruin the country and reduce the farmers to a distress which they have not yet experienced."76

Newly organized farm women in all provinces except B.C. were also reluctant to sanction the idea of state aid for needy mothers. Even though they shared a common desire for voting power with city feminists, they were divided by economic interests, with the former representing a group of primary
producers and the latter an entrepreneurial and professional elite. As a result, they had different legislative priorities, reflecting "the incompatibility of agrarian and urban middle class values."77

Although the alliance forged between the United Farm Women of Alberta and urban volunteers persisted after the suffrage campaign, the presence of its president, Irene Parlby, on the provincial LCW committee was only token because she represented a mere 924 farm women compared with the 8,000 strong Women's Institutes.78 The Institutes, representing the voice of more conservative rural elements, resisted an isolated plea from the province's senior child welfare official at their 1917 convention (see page 178). The women's auxiliary of the Saskatchewan Grain Growers also championed the provincial suffrage movement. Its founder, Violet McNaughton, was certainly concerned about the exploitation of women forced by economic circumstances into the labour market.79 But during her tenure as president the issue of mothers' pensions was not brought before the rank-and-file membership. Its absence from convention agendas probably reflected the same concerns which surfaced at a Saskatoon LCW meeting, where objections were raised concerning the costs of a system of paid investigators and fears voiced that pensions might encourage propagation of undesirables as well as desertion and divorce.80 The more sizable, government-sponsored Homemakers' Clubs also avoided discussion of the issue at their war-time conventions. In contrast to Alberta and Saskatchewan, the women's suffrage movements in Manitoba and Ontario were directed by urban middle-class feminists rather than by farm and small-town women. As the divisions between city and countryside were sharp in these provinces, contact between the two sets of female reformers was minimal, with the prime movers in the mothers' pensions campaigns confining their proselytizing efforts within urban boundaries.
Rural women also comprised the bulk of the membership of the Protestant missionary societies, the first national agencies of female volunteers to develop in Canada. Representing the most sizable women's organization, with an estimated membership of 200,000 in 1916, their endorsement of the concept of mothers' pensions would have added considerable weight to the movement. However, perceiving their sole purpose to be home and foreign missionary work, the various Protestant societies "consistently refused to express an opinion on public or social questions." 81 Male-dominated official Protestant bodies such as the provincial and national conferences of Methodists and Presbyterians were equally reluctant to sanction the idea of state aid for needy mothers despite the ascendancy of the social gospel during the war. Even the interdenominational social service councils of reform-minded clerics withheld their approval during the early stages of the provincial campaigns. The general secretary of the Ontario Social Service Council, Rev. Gilbert Agar, pinpointed the underlying reason for their reticence when presenting the case for legislative action to Premier Hearst in 1919. "'Even if adequate cash provision is made by the Government, we shall need the church in the work,' he concluded, evidently fearing that the pension might be opposed by those who considered that private charity might be chilled if the State interfered." 82

Administrators of Catholic charities outside Quebec were also passive opponents. Their disapproval probably reflected fears of the official church hierarchy that state involvement would supplant their work and become another instrument of patronage. It was manifest in the non-response of Catholic religious orders operating orphanages in Manitoba to a request for information concerning the proportion of children of widows. 83

The various interests opposed to publicly-financed pensions for sole-support mothers had supporters inside government. Despite their different
party labels, the Premiers of Ontario and the four western provinces shared a common reluctance to sanction pensions that reflected ideological, electoral and cost considerations. Both Hearst and Roblin, the heads of Conservative governments in Ontario and Manitoba respectively, were implacable foes of suffragettes and other reformers. Prepared only to sanction state intervention for economic development purposes, neither were believers in "the awakening ideas of governmental responsibility for the correction or amelioration of social inequities." Of the two, Premier Roblin was the more outspoken critic of collectivism, perceiving the demand for mothers' pensions as alien to the Canadian political tradition. A "[h]ard-headed businessman," he regarded the reform spirit as a fad inspired by subversive American republican principles.

The Liberal Premiers of Saskatchewan and Alberta were also reluctant to endorse mothers' pensions, even though they were receptive to demands for prohibition and suffrage. They could safely ignore the pleas for province-wide pensions as these emanated from the cities rather than the countryside, their major support base. Their apathy also reflected cost considerations as both their administrations were confronting war-time deficits (see table 17). British Columbia Liberal politicians were equally unprepared to sponsor a provincial initiative during their tenure of office. Brewster, the first head of the reformist administration, confronted serious financial problems upon gaining power in 1916, as revenues were inadequate to meet the heavy expenditure on roads and other capital-intensive projects. His successor, Oliver, inherited not only the problem of meagre revenue flow but also the backlash arising from the remedy of increased taxation. He ruled out legislative action in the 1918 session on the grounds that "the administration
could not go any faster than the people who paid the taxes would allow it to travel."\(^{86}\)

Table 17. Provincial deficits in Ontario and the western provinces, 1914-20 fiscal years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fiscal year</th>
<th>Ontario</th>
<th>Manitoba</th>
<th>Saskatchewan</th>
<th>Alberta</th>
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SOURCE: Calculated from figures showing ordinary revenues and expenditures in the relevant fiscal years in Canada Year Book, 1931, pp. 861-3, table 24.

Precipitants:

Even though the circumstances resulting in legislative action varied in each of the five provinces, there were common underlying themes precipitating the payment of mothers' pensions. In all cases the granting of equal suffrage during the war pushed the issue of protective legislation higher up the political agenda because women represented sizable blocs of new voters. In this respect, province-wide mothers' pensions represented "political concessions to women's interests." However, politicians' electoral calculations were also tempered by cost considerations, with the result that the original schemes fell far short of the prime movers' expectations. While representing symbolic recognition of the family's role in rearing children, their "concessions" restricted the extent of financial liability and only provided support for 'deserving' conventional family units.\(^{87}\)

As Premier Roblin of Manitoba, "the 'bete noire' of western reformers,"\(^{88}\) had won re-election in 1914, the prospect of a wartime initiative concerning
mothers pensions was remote. His government, however, was short-lived, resigning after the parliament buildings scandal brought the 1915 session to a stormy ending. Norris, the leader of the Liberal opposition, was asked to take over the reins of power. In the summer, he sought a mandate to implement prohibition and suffrage and other pledges made in 1914, and was elected on a reform ticket with feminist support. No promises concerning pensions were made during the campaign. But the champions of the cause had actively campaigned on behalf of the Liberals, and had an influential ally, Edward Brown, the new provincial Treasurer. However, the unprecedented package of reforms, announced in the throne speech opening the new Parliament, contained no mention of financial aid for needy mothers. This omission probably reflected reluctance on the government's part to fund a costly new program when a deficit of $500,000 was already anticipated, arising from implementation of election pledges. Moreover, Premier Norris' support base included the powerful Manitoba Grain Growers, "...and all farm governments are essentially conservative in their approach."

Winnipeg social workers played an influential role in precipitating legislative action during the 1916 session. Shortly after the Liberals had taken office in May 1915, the 40-member Social Service Workers Club appointed a committee to investigate the subject of mothers' pensions. It was chaired by G.B. Clarke, an employee of the Associated Charities, and included two known advocates, Falk and Dick, as well as a representative of the city's Ministerial Association. They examined relevant legislation in Denmark and the American states, adopting wholesale the principles governing the administration of mothers' pensions in New York. They also compiled statistics on the extent of widowhood in Manitoba. Despite the surprising finding that the proportion of children of widows in orphanages represented only 5 percent of inmates, they
concluded that state aid was still the "most economical way" of caring for fatherless children because in the long term it would reduce the number of adult dependents in provincial institutions.91

The committee's report was completed in the same month as the opening of the 1916 session. According to the *Manitoba Free Press* (29 January 1916), it was "in reality, the substance of the bill on 'Widows' Pensions'...." Copies were sent to all the MPPs prior to publication. The report-cum-bill was then presented formally two days after the passage of the women's suffrage bill by a delegation headed by Dick and comprising representatives of the Mothers' Association and the LCW, with Woodsworth acting as the social workers' spokesman. Outright rejection of their demand was risky as the new government gained office at a time when, in the Premier's words, "...a great wave of public opinion [was] passing over the U.S. and Canada demanding that politicians keep their promises."92 As Liberal pledges included implementation of an initiative mechanism, the cabinet could hardly afford to ignore their supporters' demands for mothers' pensions. But the three ministers who met the deputation were not prepared to commit themselves to legislative action without some indication of the costs of the proposal. The authors of the report responded quickly and suggested $30,000 as the provincial contribution for the first year, to be matched by a similar grant from the municipalities.93

The Liberal government, however, reduced their share by one-half, presumably because of its concern over the forecasted deficit. In mid-February of 1916 the provincial Treasurer asked the legislature to approve an item of $15,000 to cover the provincial contribution toward mothers' pensions, and when replying to a lone dissenter, he stressed the reductions in provincial subsidies to orphanages that would result from the proposed measure. The passage of the legislation was swift. The bill was introduced on February 28th
by Premier Norris, given unanimous approval at the second reading stage two days later, and royal assent on March 16th. The legislation was clearly viewed as an experiment because no provision was made for fixed funding. However, with its passage "Manitoba...was to pioneer the concept of the social service state in Canada." 

The 1916 Mothers' Allowance Act was little more than a skeleton, reflecting its experimental character and hasty passage. Its restricted scope clearly reflected the influence of the advocates. Their report on "State salaries for mothers" recommended that only widows and wives of men in insane asylums should be eligible, presumably because their poverty was involuntary. Families of physically disabled men were excluded, as were other categories of sole-support mothers considered 'unworthy' because their destitution was of a voluntary and 'blameworthy' character. The advocates' suggestions concerning character, citizenship and residency requirements, and the chosen method of administration were also adopted. But provincial politicians determined the size and the method of raising provincial and municipal contributions (see appendix B).

In a province where agrarian interests predominated, the likelihood of Saskatchewan taking an early cue from its eastern neighbour and implementing mothers' pensions legislation was remote. However, its new Liberal Premier, W.M. Martin, in the fall of 1916, inherited an administration with less than a year to run. He displayed an early awareness of the fact that 284,000 women, representing around 40 percent of the total population, would vote for the first time in the forthcoming election. In his inaugural address in November Martin stated that "the women of the province will now yield an ever-increasing influence for good in the making of all our laws, but more particularly will they influence laws that affect the home and family."
Although prohibition and other measures designed to appeal to the new women voters were implemented during the 1917 session, mothers' pensions were not considered. Female delegates, including volunteers from the Regina LCW, took steps to rectify this omission at the provincial Liberal convention in March. In response to their lobbying, the party incorporated into its platform an explicit pledge to inaugurate a pensions scheme for all destitute, fatherless families. Not to be outdone, the Conservative opposition revised their January manifesto to include mothers' pensions.

During the election campaign in June 1917, the governing Liberal party clearly had the advantage over its major rival, as it had granted equal franchise and temperance legislation. But "the Woman vote was an unknown element which refused to take sides...." Both parties made special efforts to win it. Liberal platform speakers, for example, at meetings in Regina cited mothers' pensions as an example of the "progressiveness" of the government. Their sentiments were endorsed at the polls, with women voting "in large numbers...for the government, and for cleanliness."

The throne speech opening the new Parliament promised legislation to establish a pension system for deserving and indigent mothers. This measure was anticipated by the press as a redemption of the election pledge. On November 27th the Attorney-General introduced a resolution providing pensions only for widows with children. He pointed out that the measure was "a beginning" and acknowledged that it was "not perfect." In the ensuing discussion the only critic of the narrow scope of the scheme was a farmer and retired clergyman, M.L. Leitch (Lib, Morse). The Liberal government's decision to finance aid only for widows reflected cost considerations. Its members took seriously their pledges of sound administration and economy made to their mainly agrarian supporters, and so were disturbed about the sizeable deficit appearing at the
end of the 1916 fiscal year. In order to reduce it, Premier Martin decided to retain direct taxation as a method of raising revenue. Although it was originally introduced in the first session of 1917 on the pretext of raising funds for the Canadian Patriotic Fund, he made the provincial levy permanent in the second session of 1917. The passage of the legislation was non-controversial, and went unreported in the press. Like the other wartime precedent, Saskatchewan's 1917 Mothers' Pension Act was distinguished by its brevity. However, in contrast to Manitoba, its terms reflected the stamp of cost-conscious politicians rather than external political forces. In addition to providing benefits to impoverished widows only, the scale of the pension and the methods of financing and administration were so niggardly that Saskatchewan qualified for the dubious distinction of having the most restrictive scheme among the provinces pioneering the payment of mothers pensions (see appendix B).

In contrast to Saskatchewan, the Liberal government of Alberta survived its first encounter with the newly enfranchised women without having to make costly pledges concerning mothers' pensions. The new Premier, Charles Stewart, was a farmer who was dependent upon agrarian interests for his political survival, a relationship that did not augur well for the urban-based mothers' pensions campaign. The new Premier's rural support base included the Women's Institutes which, according to the president of the rival UFWA, comprised merely "another political machine, bought and paid for by the Government." Representatives of these "conservative" women's societies, however, precipitated an important development at their 1918 convention. In response to a resolution submitted by the newly formed Calgary Institute, they "heartily" endorsed the petition to be presented by the prime movers in the forthcoming session. They were then given details of the Manitoba scheme by Nellie McClung,
a guest speaker, who urged the farm women to write their provincial legislators on the subject.104

The endorsement of the influential Institutes proved to be an effective spur. It assured urban maternal feminists of a more sympathetic hearing than they had received in the past. In response to their petition for a mothers' pensions act, submitted in the 1918 session, Premier Stewart promised a sum of $20,000 that year to aid families in the chief cities of the province, and a bill at the next session to provide for mothers' pensions and the means of financing them.105 The Premier's response was influenced mainly by the existing state of provincial finances. The budget had been presented the day before he met the delegation, and contained a proposal to impose direct taxation upon municipalities, ostensibly to raise the province's share of the Canadian Patriotic Fund. However, the main purpose was to reduce the estimated deficit stemming from uncollected municipal taxes and increased expenditures.

In the fall of 1918 the promised funds for needy mothers were made available on the understanding that each city would match the provincial contribution of $5,000.106 Fearful that the Premier might forget his promise to introduce legislation, the Calgary LCW organized a special meeting between the Premier and female social service volunteers, trade unionists, civic representatives and local Calgary MLAs. The concept of mothers' pensions was widely endorsed, and suggestions concerning the terms of the scheme were offered. Several speakers urged the Premier not to incorporate the stigma of charity in the legislation by leaving administration of funds to voluntary agencies which gave relief in kind only, once applicants qualified as 'deserving' cases. They included a labour spokesman who argued that "...the pensioning of mothers was in no sense charity but their just right." Premier Stewart, however, was very reluctant to endorse cash grants:
...It is all right to say turn over the cheque to the mother and let her do her own managing, but you all know as well as I do that there are some mothers who can make $70 go farther than others will stretch $150. There is no social legislation that will teach a mother how to manage. We realize this and that is exactly the stumbling-block in our way.

Nonetheless, he assured the meeting that the government was going to take legislative action.107

In the month preceding the opening of the 1919 session the movement for mothers' pensions gained increased support. The Alberta Federation of Labour passed a resolution endorsing the idea.108 More crucial was the approval of delegates attending the convention of the United Farmers of Alberta. Its spokesmen presented their legislative request to the cabinet on January 28th and a further conference was held on February 15th. Their demand for mothers' pensions effectively ruled out further procrastination as Stewart's government was "entirely dependent on farmers for power."109

On February 18, 1919, the long-awaited legislation was introduced in the House. It stipulated that allowances would be paid only to widows and wives with husbands in insane asylums. These benefits were to be financed jointly by the province and municipalities and limited to $3.00 per week per child. The terms of the resolution produced protests outside the Legislature. The mayors of Calgary, Edmonton, Lethbridge and Medicine Hat registered their disapproval of the cost-sharing formula by sending a joint telegram of protest to the Premier. "Whilst the initial amount may not be heavy, it entails a precedent which is undesirable where the cities are concerned." The Calgary LCW organized a special meeting to voice their discontent with the cost-sharing formula and other provisions, including the narrow scope of the act.110

Debate on the second reading of the mothers' allowance bill occurred on February 27, 1919. The two female legislators elected in 1917, Louise McKinney,
a Non-Partisan League member, and Roberta McAdams, a Soldiers' representative, attacked the narrow scope of the bill. The latter also described the maximum of $3.00 per week per child as "absurd" in view of the high cost of living, and the terms of the application as "so modifying and humiliating" as to deter the very women who should receive assistance from applying. These criticisms had some impact on the Liberal government. In early March the Premier met groups of citizens from Calgary, representing the LCW and local unionists, and from Edmonton, representing the Board of Public Welfare, the Anglican Union Association and women volunteers. Stewart informed them that his government had decided to reword the bill, "eliminating as far as possible the taint of charity," and to remove the meagre maximum of $3.00. But he flatly refused to broaden its scope. His reluctance reflected cost considerations, as the public accounts revealed a cash deficit of $643,000 at the end of the 1918-19 fiscal year.

The Premier's adamance, however, was not accepted passively. During the committee stage A.F. Ewing (Con., Edmonton) introduced an amendment broadening the scope to include wives of prisoners and physically incapacitated men. His plea for equal treatment of all needy children was echoed by other MLAs, including the Conservative opposition leader, George Hoadley, who suggested that the extra money could be found somewhere. "We have dallied with the subject too long and advise that they now take time by the forelock rather than go slowly, as the Premier advised." This provoked an outburst from Stewart, who declared that "the Government refused to be stampeded into going any further than the Act stated." The vote on Ewing's amendment was subsequently lost by a small majority. A suggestion that the province could assume a larger share than 50 percent of the payments, if the system of direct taxation inaugurated in 1918 was retained, was also rejected. The provincial contribution of
$50,000 was subsequently approved and the Mothers' Allowance Act received royal assent on April 17th. Despite the controversy over the content of the scheme, the politicians clearly won the margin of victory. They made the crucial decisions concerning the scope and the method of financing, whereas advocates inside and outside Parliament influenced only more minor provisions relating to residency, the scale of allowances and the method of administration.

The progress of the British Columbia agitation for province-wide pensions stemmed less from intensified lobbying than from a combination of circumstances that developed in the fall of 1919. In late September the provincial Conservative convention adopted a resolution approving the principle of mothers' pensions. As an election was imminent, action was required from the Liberal government to undercut the reformist appeal of its major rival. Around the same time, demands intensified for the appointment of a commission to study social problems. The pressure emanated from the Returned Soldiers' Party in the Legislature, but there was also "a broad public sentiment" in favour of such an inquiry, particularly with regard to health insurance. Individual members of Oliver's cabinet were swayed by these pressures. W. Sloan, Minister of Mines, and a key official in the B.C. Liberal Association, wrote to the Provincial Secretary expressing the hope that a commission would be appointed "as soon as possible" to inquire into pensions for widows, state health insurance and expansion of the Workmen's Compensation Act. In response, the Provincial Secretary consulted E.S.H. Winn, chairman of the Workmen's Compensation Board, who suggested a three-member commission to investigate health insurance, mothers' pensions, maternity benefits, public health nursing and possibly old age pensions.

Prior to the final decision, Ottawa was consulted for clarification concerning the appropriate level of jurisdiction. The federal Minister of
Labour agreed with B.C.'s Attorney-General that mothers' pensions and minimum wage legislation fell under provincial jurisdiction. A "social welfare" commission was subsequently appointed on November 19th to investigate mothers' pensions, health insurance and maternity benefits. Winn was named chairman and the other members were: Cecilia Spofford, a Victoria volunteer, prominent in the prohibition and suffrage movements; T.B. Green, a New Westminster physician chosen to represent doctors, employers and veterans; and D. MacCallum, past president of the B.C. Labour Federation and an official in the new provincial Department of Labour. They were instructed to complete their investigation into mothers' pensions "as early as possible" in order that legislative action could be taken during the 1920 session. Their report was completed in the following March. It reviewed developments in the American states, the prairie provinces and Ontario, as well as presenting the reasons for action. The commissioners pointed out that at the public hearings held throughout the province "widespread demand for the immediate crystallizing of mothers' pensions legislation" had been evident. State aid for indigent mothers had been endorsed by 77 women's groups, 24 fraternal societies, 34 labour organizations, 10 ministers of the gospel, 13 doctors and 50 individuals, including employers, mayors and school trustees.

As women comprised a sizable bloc of new voters, representing around 40 percent of the electorate, the Liberal government had little choice but to accept the recommendations of the report and enact such a popular piece of legislation. Details of the mothers' pension bill were announced by the Provincial Secretary. The legislation was based on the suggestions of the commissioners but contained one significant novel feature. The cabinet rejected their recommendation that the scheme should be financed jointly with the municipalities, and opted instead to assume the full costs of the plan. Their
rejection was not a reaction to apparent pressure from the municipalities. Presumably, the increased expense of this method of financing was traded off against the electoral advantages of a purely provincial scheme. In the subsequent campaign the initiation of mothers' pensions was the basis of appeals made by the Premier and Attorney-General Farris for the votes of veterans, women and workers.120

The bill was introduced in the House by the Provincial Secretary on April 7th. The Liberal Government then invited a deputation of "ladies" from Vancouver and other cities to attend the debate on the second reading. On April 9th the invited guests heard their representative, Mary Ellen Smith (Ind., Vancouver), describe the occasion as a "red letter day" in the history of the women's movement in B.C., because they "...would now realize their dream in placing motherhood where it belonged." The sentiments expressed by the lone woman of the Assembly were endorsed by the leaders of the Conservative and Soldiers' parties and many others. The only critic was J.W. Weart (Lib., Vancouver), who favoured a federal rather than a provincial scheme, and argued that the bill did not go far enough because it excluded old age pensions. When closing the debate, Premier Oliver lived up to his reputation for honesty by pointing out that the members should realize that "someone would have to pay the costs."121 The committee stage was a formality and the bill received royal assent at the close of the 1920 session.

Unlike the prairie legislation, the British Columbia Mothers' Pension Act was based upon the recommendations of a government commission. By and large, its members' suggestions concerning scope, citizenship and residency requirements, scale of allowances and method of administration were accepted by the government. However, the imprint of politicians was not negligible, as they
determined the crucial method of financing, a choice that distinguished B.C. from the other 'leaders' (see appendix B).

In contrast to its western counterparts, the Ontario labour movement was a catalyst in pushing the issue of mothers' pensions higher up the provincial agenda. After a lapse of nearly six years, the Ontario TLC executive saw fit to include a request for widows of civilians and sailors in its 1919 legislative program. Their inclusion was, in part, a response to the decision taken by the national congress in September 1918 to switch the target of pressure from Ottawa to the provinces. It was also prompted by a desire to remove working mothers from factory jobs at a time of abnormal unemployment in the province, a motive admitted by J.T. Gunn after presenting labour's demand for mothers' pensions to the provincial cabinet. The Premier then met a small delegation representing the forces active in the Toronto committee pressing for province-wide pensions. In response to pleas for state aid from representatives of female volunteers, social gospellers and trade unionists, he agreed to consider the matter carefully.¹²²

In February 1919 Premier Hearst duly honoured his promise to organized labour by appointing Dr. W.T. Riddell, the province's first Deputy Minister of Labour, to study the subject of mothers' pensions and prepare a report on the operation of schemes elsewhere, as well as estimates of costs. Hearings of the one-man commission were held in Toronto, Ottawa, Kingston and Hamilton. In all, 93 witnesses, including feminists, clerics, doctors, social workers, volunteers and unionists were heard. They endorsed the general principle of public aid for dependent mothers and urged immediate legislative action. They also emphasized the "necessity of divorcing the proposed assistance...from any taint of charity."¹²³
Electoral pressures, however, played havoc with the response of the government. It was anticipated by the press that Dr. Riddell's report would be completed in time for implementation of his recommendations during the 1919 session, but an interim report was not published until well after the end of the session. The Conservative government had decided to postpone enactment of a scheme until the final session of the fourteenth Parliament just before the next election. This would be the first occasion for the nearly 1,500,000 women of Ontario to exercise their right to vote, and mothers' pensions would be a powerful drawing-card. The Hearst government was also anxious to cultivate industrial workers in order to undercut the appeal of the new Labour coalition. State aid for needy mothers would also be popular with churchmen who represented sizable congregations. The collective support of these urban forces active in the pensions movement would represent a formidable challenge to the ascendant United Farmers of Ontario (UFO). But the Premier's strategy changed. In the fall of 1919 Hearst called a 'snap' election on the same day as the prohibition referendum. A major factor in his decision to hold the two together was the women's vote. "Inasmuch as they were the backbone of the temperance movement, could he not, therefore, reasonably expect most women to support him in the next election?"124

When announcing the date of the election, Premier Hearst promised a pension fund for sole-support mothers.125 The Liberal opposition was already on record as pledging to implement mothers' pensions, and the new Independent Labour Party manifesto also included pensions for mothers with dependent children as well as for the aged.126 In contrast, the UFO platform contained no mention of social welfare measures except a pledge to provide equal educational opportunities.127
The upset victory scored by the UFO, therefore, introduced an element of uncertainty concerning the early enactment of a mothers' pension scheme. Their agrarian philosophy was "fundamentally antagonistic" to such programs,\textsuperscript{128} and their first priority was "to cut out all expenditures that are not absolutely essential."\textsuperscript{129} On the other hand, their new leader, E.C. Drury, was opposed to 'group government' and was a Methodist lay preacher of social gospel persuasion. Moreover, the survival of his administration depended upon the support of the eleven Labour members, so policy concessions were necessary, as well as cabinet positions for their representatives, Mills and Rollo.

Early in 1920 a deputation presented the case for mothers' pensions to the new Premier on behalf of all denominations, most social service agencies, philanthropic and education societies in the province, as well as the TLC and the GWVA.\textsuperscript{130} But the final spur to legislative action came from the Labour group in the Legislature. At a caucus meeting the eleven MPPs decided to press for implementation of mothers' pensions as well as two other reforms in the forthcoming session. Shortly after the caucus meeting the cabinet agreed to their demands. On February 19 Rollo, Minister of Labour, announced at Elora that the three measures would be put through at the coming session. The timing of the announcement was significant, as Rollo was accompanying Attorney-General Raney in his bid to secure endorsement there as a member of the government.\textsuperscript{131}

On the same day as the Elora announcement the report of Dr. Riddell was published. It was "a comprehensive document" reviewing similar legislation in Denmark, New Zealand, 39 U.S. states, Alaska, Hawaii and the prairie provinces, and containing statistics on the extent of widowhood in Ontario.\textsuperscript{132} Its author recommended a three-year development of assistance for over 3,000 dependent
mothers at an estimated cost of $895,533, to be shared jointly by the province and the municipalities. A Globe editorial (21 February 1920) endorsed the plan and stressed the need for urgent action to meet "...an obligation that the Province should no longer evade."

The release of Dr. Riddell's report, however, was not followed by swift legislative action. Although a mothers' pension scheme was promised in the throne speech of March 1920, it was not until May that legislation was introduced in the House. Apparently the Labour members encountered considerable resistance from their farmer colleagues over its passage. George Halcrow, their house leader, complained publicly that "it had been like pulling teeth to get the government to place the Mothers' Allowance Act and minimum wage legislation for women on the books."133

Eventually, on May 10th, Rollo introduced a bill to provide for payment of allowances in certain cases to mothers of dependent children. The subsequent debate on the bill was brief.134 A few Liberal MPPs attempted to persuade the government to include families of men sent to jail, deserted wives and unmarried mothers. But their amendments were opposed by government ministers, mainly out of a "desire to keep down the costs of the scheme," and voted down.135 The bill was passed without major changes and came into effect in July 1920.

In common with British Columbia, a government-sponsored investigation had preceded the passage of the 1920 Ontario Mothers' Allowance Act. Consequently, the legislation incorporated the suggestions made by Dr. Riddell concerning scope, citizenship and residency requirements, methods of financing and administration. However, his recommendations met financial constraints decided upon by politicians and so their influence was not negligible.
Protracted Struggles, 1920-37

By the summer of 1920 Ontario westward comprised a solid block of territory where mothers' pensions schemes were operative. Its eastern neighbours, however, resisted implementation of similar plans for years. Nova Scotia was the first to capitulate in 1930. New Brunswick enacted legislation in the same year, but made no payments until 1944. Quebec eventually conceded in 1937. Prince Edward Island was the last stronghold to fall, but its late entry in 1949 probably reflected its persistent rural character rather than outright resistance. What, then, explains the tardiness of the other maritime provinces and Quebec in sanctioning the payment of statutory benefits for sole-support mothers?

The question of why the 'laggers' resisted has received limited attention. Anne Perry, a pioneer western feminist, identifies the relative lack of influence of eastern women voters as the major reason for the delay. She contends that maritime women failed to take advantage of the franchise they acquired in 1918 in Nova Scotia and 1919 in New Brunswick, whereas Quebec women lacked a provincial suffrage until 1940, so their influence was dismissed as "utterly negligible" by politicians.136 A social historian, Strong-Boag, attributes the tardiness of the eastern provinces to two other factors. "Their delay reflected the greater weight of progressive sentiment in the more western provinces and the more sophisticated welfare tradition which had already grown up by 1914."137

The remote prospect of a federal scheme also accounts for the loss of momentum of the movement to secure province-wide mothers' pensions after World War I. Despite the clear lead given by the western provinces and Ontario, some advocates continued to favour a federal scheme over the patchwork nature of
provincial provision. Moore, the TLC president, regarded the issue of state aid for fatherless families as "a national question" and regretted that the division of powers had resulted in provincial initiatives. His organization, however, concentrated its energies in the interwar period upon lobbying the 'laggers' to take legislative action rather than pressing Ottawa. In contrast, Canadian Methodists and Presbyterians advocated implementation of federal legislation during the immediate postwar years. Their expectations were raised by the incorporation of mothers' pensions into the reformist platform of the federal Liberals in 1919, and kept alive during the 1920s as the subject became entwined with the agitation to secure a nation-wide system of old age pensions.

Apart from the ambiguity surrounding the target of interwar pressure, another, more powerful obstacle hindered the eastern progress of the mothers' pensions movement: the spiralling costs of the programs in territory west of Quebec. Expenditures on mothers' pensions exceeded estimates and increased throughout successive years of the 1920s (see table 18). Moreover, if the Saskatchewan example is any guide, they consumed a larger proportion of provincial funds during this decade than general relief.

Cost considerations were of more pressing concern in the maritime provinces than in Quebec, as they had higher proportions of widows. During the 1920s successive governments in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia were plagued with inadequate revenues and recurring deficits (see table 19). Their top priority was to secure a better deal from Confederation and this was not achieved until 1927, when the Duncan report proposed an increase in unconditional subsidies to the maritime provinces. Its recommendation was accepted by Prime Minister King, and increased federal funds were forthcoming before the end of the decade.
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1926-27</td>
<td>413,924</td>
<td>322,066</td>
<td>340,000</td>
<td>598,020</td>
<td>2,017,614</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1927-28</td>
<td>470,445</td>
<td>355,610</td>
<td>364,604</td>
<td>612,645</td>
<td>2,205,877</td>
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<tr>
<td>1928-29</td>
<td>543,507</td>
<td>521,880</td>
<td>374,377</td>
<td>719,967</td>
<td>2,324,388</td>
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<tr>
<td>1929-30</td>
<td>485,060</td>
<td>467,575</td>
<td>396,755</td>
<td>759,698</td>
<td>2,478,205</td>
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<tr>
<td>1930-31</td>
<td>465,739</td>
<td>544,250</td>
<td>466,536</td>
<td>816,272</td>
<td>2,582,221</td>
<td>333,346</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931-32</td>
<td>483,618</td>
<td>479,607</td>
<td>482,977</td>
<td>642,797</td>
<td>2,698,789</td>
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<tr>
<td>1932-33</td>
<td>403,915</td>
<td>439,139</td>
<td>779,640</td>
<td>2,806,239</td>
<td>358,158</td>
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<tr>
<td>1933-34</td>
<td>407,993</td>
<td>439,983</td>
<td>621,502</td>
<td>3,030,415</td>
<td>356,074</td>
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<tr>
<td>1934-35</td>
<td>440,580</td>
<td>462,393</td>
<td>589,622</td>
<td>1,390,621</td>
<td>413,997</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1935-36</td>
<td>444,874</td>
<td>474,120</td>
<td>507,502</td>
<td>616,555</td>
<td>3,946,816</td>
<td>363,981</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1936-37</td>
<td>445,550</td>
<td>484,068</td>
<td>613,564</td>
<td>682,588</td>
<td>4,582,525</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1937-38</td>
<td>433,384</td>
<td>495,988</td>
<td>748,272</td>
<td>4,851,641</td>
<td>426,448</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1938-39</td>
<td>427,782</td>
<td>498,048</td>
<td>620,299</td>
<td>790,101</td>
<td>5,000,041</td>
<td>424,615</td>
<td>2,064,733</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 19. Provincial deficits in the maritime provinces and Quebec, 1914-37 fiscal years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fiscal Year</th>
<th>P.E.I.</th>
<th>N.S.</th>
<th>N.B.</th>
<th>Quebec</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1914</td>
<td>$213,435</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1915</td>
<td>$39,615</td>
<td>120,370</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>1916</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1917</td>
<td>225,389</td>
<td></td>
<td>$594,090</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1918</td>
<td>241,163</td>
<td>41,153</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1919</td>
<td>153,494</td>
<td>413,517</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td></td>
<td>115,832</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>91,306</td>
<td>539,607</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1922</td>
<td>790</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1923</td>
<td>235,743</td>
<td></td>
<td>168,540</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1924</td>
<td></td>
<td>118,142</td>
<td></td>
<td>110,236</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1925</td>
<td>5,262</td>
<td>1,502,060</td>
<td>556,239</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1926</td>
<td></td>
<td>582,468</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1927</td>
<td>33,679</td>
<td>49,070</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1928</td>
<td></td>
<td>609,448</td>
<td>103,686</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1929</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>530,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td></td>
<td>218,921</td>
<td>843,735</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>303,621</td>
<td>89,990</td>
<td>780,506</td>
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<tr>
<td>1932</td>
<td>71,375</td>
<td>163,104</td>
<td>402,690</td>
<td>$594,708</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1933</td>
<td>129,213</td>
<td>1,618,884</td>
<td>79,069</td>
<td>6,840,908</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1934</td>
<td>271,147</td>
<td>1,292,332</td>
<td>624,060</td>
<td>5,594,473</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1935</td>
<td>376,297</td>
<td>807,601</td>
<td>703,117</td>
<td>4,939,235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1936</td>
<td>24,654</td>
<td>424,969</td>
<td>1,923,176</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1937</td>
<td>120,774</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SOURCE: Calculated from figures showing ordinary values and expenditures in the relevant fiscal years in Canada Year Book, 1931, 1941, pp. 861-3, table 24 and pp. 784-5, table 46, respectively.
Throughout the 1920s the impoverished state of provincial finances was the major reason for the delay in implementation of mothers' pensions in Nova Scotia. It prevented the Liberal government enacting the recommendations of a 1921 report of the Royal Commission on Mothers' Allowances before its defeat at the polls in 1925. It remained the main obstacle for the new Conservative administration of Premier Rhodes until near the end of the decade. Once increased funds from federal coffers began to flow into the province, there were renewed demands for implementation of mothers' pensions. In 1929 participants at a public meeting organized by the Halifax Children's Aid Society called for legislative action; and their demand was subsequently endorsed by the Provincial Director of Child Welfare. However, it was electoral considerations that tipped the scales. The Conservative government had been returned to office in 1928 with a small majority of three seats, and in January 1930 it contested a "crucial" by-election arising from the death of a cabinet minister. At the onset of the campaign Premier Rhodes promised to introduce allowances for needy mothers and other reforms, namely minimum wages for women and old age pensions. His three-point pledge was the main theme of the subsequent electioneering and contributed to the victory of the government candidate. The Conservative Premier then redeemed his pledges concerning mothers' allowances and minimum wages during the 1930 session.

Similar circumstances beset the advocates of province-wide mothers' pensions in New Brunswick. The financial problems facing the Liberal government in the first half of the 1920s effectively precluded implementation of the recommendations of a commission that reported in 1925. As in Nova Scotia, Liberal rule ended in 1925 with victory for the Conservatives. Like its predecessor, the new administration turned down labour demands for mothers'
pensions and other reforms on the plea that the province was financially unable to meet the requests.\textsuperscript{143}

Anticipating an increased federal subsidy, the New Brunswick Federation of Labour renewed its efforts from 1927 onwards to secure provincial aid for sole-support mothers and participation in Ottawa's scheme for the destitute aged. In 1929 its requests for an investigation into old age pensions was acceded to by the government. Once the inquiry began, labour spokesmen persuaded Premier Baxter to broaden its scope to include mothers pensions. The commissioners reported favourably on the mothers' pensions proposal,\textsuperscript{144} and electoral pressures once again prompted enactment of a scheme. Premier Baxter's first term of office was due to expire after the 1930 session, so legislation was passed concerning mothers' allowances, old age pensions, minimum wages for women and child protection. Although the 1930 Mothers' Allowance Act was not proclaimed until 1943 because of politicians' fears about increasing the tax burden, it and the other statutes "served to get the government through the election."\textsuperscript{145}

In contrast to the maritimes, financial constraints were not the primary factors delaying the enactment of mothers pensions legislation in Quebec as that province enjoyed relative prosperity up until the early 1930s. Instead, the opposition of the Roman Catholic clergy to state intervention in social welfare imposed a powerful curb on action. They resisted it partly because they perceived it as a consequence of industrialization, a process they deplored because of its secularizing influence.\textsuperscript{146} The clergy also feared that state aid for needy mothers would supplant their own charitable work. Their fears were heightened by the passage of the 1921 Public Charities Act, which established a cost-sharing formula for the care of indigents within charitable
institutions. This legislation provoked a "violent" reaction from the Catholic Church because the clergy feared that it "would create another instrument of patronage for the state." 147

Despite this, the new Liberal Premier, Taschereau, was not impervious to demands for assistance for needy mothers. In 1922 he authorized limited funding in response to a request from a delegation representing the Family Welfare Association of Montreal, a Protestant voluntary organization, for an annual appropriation of $200,000 for five years to support needy sole-support mothers. 148 However, his response fell far short of a provincial scheme, and further demands from volunteers and trade unionists were resisted, partly because of Taschereau's concern about the spiralling costs of his 1921 initiative. Towards the end of the 1920s the Premier faced mounting pressures to enact mothers pensions from opposition members and from organized labour. In response, his government commissioned a survey by Charlotte Whitton on child and family welfare, and her 1931 report recommended adoption of mothers' pensions. It also appointed a commission in September 1930 to investigate social insurance and its second report came out in favour of publicly-funded pensions for needy mothers. These semi-official endorsements provided ammunition for reform-minded legislators, and the proposals were incorporated into Conservative policy by the party's new leader, Duplessis, "who was nothing but an astute politician...." Depression conditions, however, made it difficult for Taschereau to silence critics of his "inadequate social policy" by legislative action. His government survived the 1935 election, but the new coalition of reformist Conservatives and Liberals made an impressive showing. Following the stormy session of 1936, Taschereau resigned and dissolved the new Parliament. The Union Nationale won an easy victory in the subsequent election.
The new Premier, Duplessis, called a special session to deal with "urgent" legislation, and mothers' allowances were enacted in the 1937 session.\textsuperscript{149}

A Review

The socio-economic setting exerted a relatively limited impact upon the long struggle to achieve payment of province-wide mothers' pensions across Canada. The wartime boom coincided with the onset of concerted campaigns in the western provinces and Ontario, but it only generated surplus revenues in central Canada. In the two new prairie provinces the emergency of war acted as more of a catalyst by exposing the inadequacies of existing revenues, and prompting their leaders to impose an income tax, an effect pinpointed by Peacock and Wiseman (1967). With the reversion to conservative fiscal orthodoxy once peace came, the depressions of the 1920s and 1930s made it difficult for the maritime 'laggers' to follow the 'leaders.'

Prevailing cultural attitudes towards the dependent poor also shaped the mothers' pensions movement. Among sole-support mothers, widows with dependent children were perceived to be the most 'deserving' because their poverty was clearly involuntary, with families of inmates of mental hospitals ranking second in the hierarchy. War relief work heightened awareness of their plight and underlined the importance of child welfare generally. Foreign precedents, especially the American state experiments, also acted as a stimulus to the successful provincial campaigns. Their influence was much more pronounced than in the previous case studies, presumably because statutory benefits rather than emergency aid were under investigation. It confirms the proposition of Woodsworth (1977) that the flow of ideas across national boundaries influences the timing and content of social benefit programs. However, the negative effect of diffusion is also evident in the case study. Awareness of the spiralling
costs of existing domestic programs acted as a powerful deterrent for eastern provincial Premiers. Besides delaying the development of Canada-wide mothers' pensions, it was also to curb the introduction of further welfare innovations at the provincial level in the remainder of the interwar period, as Willard anticipated.150

The federal structure of government influenced both the successful provincial campaigns and the protracted struggles. The provincial governments were selected as the major targets because of their jurisdiction over social welfare and the example set by the American states, but the wartime lobbying of Ottawa by national organizations of organized labour and women volunteers indicated an element of uncertainty concerning the appropriate level of sponsorship of a perceived new technique of income support. Provincial politicians made no apparent attempts to deflect demands to the federal government except in the case of British Columbia. However, despite their sponsorship of statutory benefits for needy mothers during the 1916-20 period, the dual targets of influence built into the federal structure served to fragment the subsequent efforts of advocates to secure uniformity.

Concerning societal actors, the case study represents another variant of group politics, with the various interests dividing along urban-rural, secular-religious and occupational lines. The successful provincial campaigns were offshoots of the broader child-saving and suffrage movements that developed in Canadian cities in the first decades of this century. As trade unionists numbered among the advocates, they cannot qualify as class-based agitations, but the bulk of proponents represented the Anglophone middle class and espoused bourgeois values that stressed order, stability and the potential savings accruing from maternal care.
Female volunteers in Toronto, Winnipeg, Regina, Calgary and Vancouver were the prime movers. Their promotion or support of the suffrage cause was based on the realization that 'enlightened' legislation for women and children could only be secured through voting power. Among these maternal feminists, the supporters of traditional parties were much more successful than independents in furthering the cause of province-wide mothers' pensions. Their efforts were supported by employees of non-sectarian welfare agencies in both the private and public sectors. The collective participation of both volunteers and professionals represented a novel form of pressure group activity in this study and challenges the contention of Guest (1980) that the Canadian voluntary charity establishment opposed the development of state aid for needy mothers. In fact, only representatives of denominational charities resisted it. Among Protestants, female volunteers in the rural-based national missionary societies were more consistent opponents than male clerics in the official church bodies. The Catholic clergy refrained from sanctioning the idea, perceiving state aid to be a possible instrument of patronage, and a threat to its own charitable work and to the rural values it espoused. Businessmen and farmers were also mainly passive opponents, with their sporadic protests drowned out by the wartime spirit of reform. Other familiar group actors representing clients, however, were not participants in the movement. Besides the common constraints imposed by conditions of poverty upon collective action, needy sole-support mothers faced special problems in promoting their own cause. Female political participation was then a very novel idea, and more established interest groups like organized labour and women volunteers showed little interest in organizing them.

Inside government the pre-eminent role of politicians was once again confirmed, even though some reform-minded provincial bureaucrats played an
advocacy role in the early stages of the successful campaigns. Initially, the Premiers of the five provinces west of Quebec resisted the pleas voiced by group actors, economy-minded civic politicians and a few reformist Liberal legislators. Despite their varying party labels, they shared a common hostility to the idea of financing pensions that reflected ideological beliefs, electoral calculations and fiscal conservatism. However, once aware of the electoral salience of the politics of motherhood, they were prepared to take legislative action. Their motives confirm the hypothesis of Bird (1970) that the entry of sizable blocks of non-taxpaying voters into the electorate induced Canadian politicians to expand welfare spending. Their "concessions" to new female voters, though, were tempered by the same fiscal conservatism that had branded innovations in emergency state aid. Electoral pressures were equally effective in spurring the reluctant politicians in eastern Canada to enact mothers' pensions schemes. By 1937 all provincial governments, except Prince Edward Island, had made commitments to pay statutory benefits.

Unlike the original innovation in emergency state aid, the pioneering venture in statutory benefits was not shaped by social control politics. Instead, both the successful campaigns and protracted struggles for province-wide mothers' pensions were dominated by interest group conflicts. While the constellation of forces included familiar participants representing the major sectors of the economy, it also incorporated the Canadian charity establishment, a pressure group previously inactive in the politics of welfare. Cabinet politicians once more dominated the social policymaking process. Their decisions concerning the timing of the schemes were motivated primarily by electoral calculations, motives which were much less apparent in their decisions to sponsor initiatives for destitute employables. Their ever-present
fiscal conservatism, though, shaped the content of the pensions plans. Moreover, it was a key factor in explaining why subsequent programs for the dependent poor lacked the purely provincial label, as the next chapters reveal.
CHAPTER 8

OLD AGE PENSIONS, 1927

In 1927 the Canadian Parliament passed legislation providing for a federal-provincial scheme of means-tested old age pensions. The statute represented a landmark in the development of public assistance because it marked "the dominion government's first major entry into the field...on other than an emergency basis."¹ It was also significant because it established a precedent for future provision in the interwar period for unemployable veterans and the civilian blind.

Unlike the statutory innovations for these disabled groups, the introduction of means-tested old age pensions has already been investigated. Bryden, in his pioneering study, views the origins and evolution of Canadian public pensions policy as essentially a product of a conflict between the emerging "environmental want" and the dominant "market ethos."² Reaction to his novel interpretation, however, has been mixed, with some critics confused over whether the conflict represents a clash of values or of interest groups, and others perturbed by the vagueness of his key concepts.³ Bryden's historical analysis of the forces shaping Ottawa's 1927 initiative can also be questioned on the grounds of incompleteness. It focuses mainly on the advocates of federal action, identifying organized labour and a few MPs as the major champions of the cause. Consequently, it neglects non-labour pressures directed at Ottawa; opponents outside the corporate sector resisting federal action; and both advocates and opponents operating at the provincial level. The purpose of this chapter is to rectify these omissions by elucidating the range of political forces shaping the introduction of Canada's first public pensions plan for the aged.

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Background

In Canada, as elsewhere, the aging of the population was an important demographic change, accounting for the emergence of the issue of public pensions from the turn of the century onwards. From 1871 onwards the proportion of older age groups in the total population increased in all census years except 1911 and 1921, when substantial immigration of young adult males temporarily halted the trend. During the agitation for old age pensions their relative distribution varied by region, with the maritime provinces and Ontario consistently having a higher ratio of adults aged 70 years and over than the national average, whereas Quebec's ratio was just under and the western provinces' well below it (see table 20). These regional variations reflected different patterns of migration in eastern and western Canada, as well as varying birth rates between provinces.4

Table 20. Population 70 years and over as percentage of total population, Canada and provinces, 1901-41 census years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1901</th>
<th>1911</th>
<th>1921</th>
<th>1931</th>
<th>1941</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PEI</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nova SC</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>5.2</td>
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<td>3.5</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quebec</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ontario</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manitoba</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sask</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alberta</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BC</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The growth of industry and the shift of population to urban areas from the late 1890s onwards also increased the problem of dependency among the elderly. Their emergence was accompanied by a decline in the importance of occupations, such as farming and small business, that enabled individuals to remain self-supporting beyond the age of 65. The twin processes of industrialization and urbanization also undermined the viability of the extended family, a major source of protection for the dependent aged. As the medical health officer for Toronto pointed out in 1924, "[h]igh rents, overcrowding in houses, make it difficult for the poor to provide for their aged parents."5

Although no precise data on the extent of poverty among the older age groups was available until the 1950s, a memorandum published by the federal House of Commons Special Committee on Old Age Pensions in 1913 provides some guide. It concluded that if the proportions in Canada were the same as in other, unspecified countries, the number of persons eligible for means-tested pensions would be between 100,000 and 150,000.6 This estimate represented between 50 and 75 percent of all adults aged 70 and over, or 30 to 45 percent of the 65 plus age group in 1911.7

Unskilled, seasonal workers and their wives constituted the bulk of this group. Their low and intermittent earnings precluded saving for their retirement, and so they were effectively excluded from participation in the private plans offered by insurance companies, fraternal societies and trade unions, or the low-cost federal old age annuity scheme introduced in 1908. The other available options were bleak and carried the stigma of pauperism. Outdoor relief was provided by private charities and municipalities, but usually only on an emergency basis because the applicant’s poverty was widely perceived to reflect individual failure rather than socio-economic causes. Indoor relief was
also available in both private and public institutions for the destitute elderly. Provision of institutional care, however, was patchy at the turn of the century, with facilities concentrated in central and eastern Canada (see table 21). It was also inadequate, for even in Ontario, with its relatively comprehensive network of institutions, demand for shelter outstripped supply, forcing aged indigents to seek shelter in prisons.

Table 21. Number of homes for aged poor and institutions for adult poor with number of inmates in parentheses, Canada and provinces, 1900

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Aged Poor Homes</th>
<th>Adult Poor Institutions^a</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>9(815)</td>
<td>14(273)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P.E.I.</td>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N.S.</td>
<td>2( 38)</td>
<td>2( 38)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N.B.</td>
<td>1(11)</td>
<td>1(109)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quebec</td>
<td>5(94)</td>
<td>19(1534)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ontario</td>
<td>8(761)</td>
<td>4(57)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manitoba</td>
<td>1(19)</td>
<td>1(19)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N.W.T.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.C.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SOURCES: Figures on homes are compiled mainly from Women of Canada: Their Life and Work, a handbook compiled by the National Council of Women of Canada for distribution at the Paris International Exhibition, 1900; reprint ed., 1975, ch. 11. Data on institutions are taken from Census of Canada, 1901, vol. IV, pp. 357-60, table 18.

^aThis category includes specialized homes for aged poor and other types of paupers, as well as asylums, hospitals, infirmaries, convents, monasteries, mission houses, houses of industry, refuge and providence, and prisons.

^bThis total is an underestimate because the listing of inmates is incomplete in the NCWC survey and represents only 2 percent of the 70+ age group.
The traditional methods of relieving destitution began to be questioned from 1890 onwards. The ensuing public discussion on other options reflected the influence of developments outside Canada. Initial interest was sparked by a positive reference in the 1889 report of the Royal Commission on the Relations of Labour and Capital to the French scheme of annuities for elderly workmen and their families. Passing attention was also paid in the Toronto press to other European innovations, such as the German 1889 old age insurance scheme and the Danish 1891 non-contributory plan. More sustained interest, however, was shown in developments within the Empire, namely the adoption of means-tested old age pensions in New Zealand in 1898, New South Wales and Victoria in 1901, and Britain in 1908. It was translated into concrete demands for similar provision within Canada in the first decade of this century.9

The Old Age Pensions Movement

Like the mothers pensions agitation, the movement to secure old age pensions was dominated by group rather than social control politics. Its participants, however, divided over the issue of state aid along mainly occupational lines, with secular-religious and urban-rural cleavages being much less clear-cut than in the previous case study. Trade unionists rather than maternal feminists championed the cause, and their choice of Ottawa as the initial target set the pattern for subsequent lobbying by other participants. They had a more direct vested interest in retirement schemes for aging industrial workers than in income maintenance measures for working mothers, whom they perceived as marginal members of the labour force. The elderly themselves were not participants in the movement as their age-related dependency combined with their lack of resources impeded organization. Instead, labour's cause was supported mainly by non-economic interest groups.
representing Protestant clerics and veterans. It was opposed by familiar opponents of welfare innovations, agriculture and capital. Besides competing interests, their struggle represented a clash of values concerning the respective merits of annuities and social insurance vis-a-vis state-financed, means-tested benefits.

The old age pensions movement was more protracted than the successful campaigns for province-wide mothers' pensions and spanned over a quarter of a century. It was a slower process, partly because the agitation was promoted by representatives of the emergent working class rather than middle class reformers, and more significantly, because their major demand required unprecedented government expenditure, a development resisted by powerful opponents. Consequently, analysis is broken down into two stages covering the pre-war agitation and the concerted campaign waged between 1914 and 1927.

The Pre-War Agitation, 1905-14

In the decade preceding World War I demands for and against state aid for the aged were voiced both outside and inside Parliament, and were directed mainly at Ottawa rather than the provincial governments. The divisions among the original participants affected the campaign in the following ways. On the one hand, the advocates' isolated demands for old age pensions helped to remove the concept from "...the category of an unthinkable thought." On the other hand, the opponents' defence of traditional welfare methods and values impeded the progress of the pre-war agitation by providing politicians with a rationale for inaction.

Trade unionists qualify as the pioneers of the old age pensions movement. The Canadian TLC, the major voice of organized labour representing international business unionism, and the smaller, nationalist Canadian
Federation of Labour were the only national interest groups to endorse the cause in the pre-war period. They campaigned persistently for the adoption of a federal scheme for destitute aged workers from 1905 onwards. Concurrent with their uncoordinated agitation, organized miners in Nova Scotia lobbied for a provincial initiative and succeeded in securing legislative action in 1908, but the contributory plan was never implemented. Organized labour's pioneering efforts reflected not only vested interest, but also an altruistic concern for the plight of the aged poor generally. "As working class organizations,...trade unions were peculiarly sensitive to the changing wants of the emerging urban-industrial society."  

Prior to the First World War, however, unionists represented only an embryonic political force. The majority of industrial workers remained unorganized, even though the proportion belonging to unions increased from 6.5 percent to 28 percent in the first decade of this century. In their efforts to increase their membership, Canadian unions faced numerous obstacles arising from the mobility of labour, its heterogeneous nature and the active resistance of employers. Moreover, the lack of unity among the minority of workers who were organized undermined their effectiveness in the pre-war period. "In the face of divisions,...governments could move at their own chosen speed in introducing legislation to improve working conditions and to remove the danger of serious conflict in a society rapidly moving into an industrialized state."  

Organized workers were much too feeble to force the pensions issue on their own, against "the resistance of the market ethos and the economic interests justified by it." These barriers were manifest in overt pressure applied by mine owners to block implementation of the Nova Scotia scheme.
Other spokesmen of capital remained silent, even though their fiscal conservatism and hostility to unions would suggest resistance to the concept of non-contributory old age pensions. They were passive rather than active opponents because their interests were not challenged directly by any pre-war legislative initiative. Ottawa's intervention was limited to sponsorship of an old age annuities scheme based on voluntary contributions, a plan that posed no threat to private insurance companies because few were involved in the sale of annuities for old age. Another reason for the passive stance of corporate interests was the minimal level of public discussion on the pensions issue which reflected, according to a Labour MP, "...the opposition of a very strong element which is all-powerful with the press."!

Organized farmers, the other dominant economic interest group, were also passive opponents. In the pre-war period they vigorously defended agrarian values of rugged individualism and self-reliance in response to challenges posed by industrial growth and rural de-population. Farmers in Ontario and Quebec - where the flight from the farm was most pronounced - were the most vocal opponents of the emerging urban-industrial society and resisted labour demands for minimum wages and the eight-hour day. Their spokesmen, however, who appeared before the federal House of Commons Special Committee on Old Age Pensions in 1913, were divided over the desirability of pensions for the aged. According to a committee member, the consensus of opinion among Ontario farmers was that an old age pensions scheme was "a very desirable thing," whereas representatives of Quebec farmers were opposed to such a plan for themselves but recognized the need for it in large industrial centres. Despite this mixed reaction, federal politicians perceived rural interests to be opponents. W.T. White, the Finance Minister in Borden's cabinet, rejected the 1913
committees's recommendations on the following grounds: "We all know that the people in the cities approve a system of old age pensions, but we want to hear from the farmers." 19

The division of opinion among economic interest groups was also reflected in other sectors of the community. Within the Canadian charity establishment only individual social workers actively supported the idea of state aid for the aged poor. In common with the mothers' pensions movement, they represented professionals in both the public and private welfare sectors. The witnesses who presented the case for public pensions before the 1913 committee included two provincial bureaucrats active in the struggle for mothers' pensions, J.J. Kelso and Rose Henderson, as well as the Chief Inspector of Industrial Establishments and Public Buildings in Quebec, the officer in charge of Associated Charities and the Children's Aid Society in Ottawa, and the secretary of a private home for the aged near Winnipeg. Despite their diverse occupations, they stressed common themes concerning the inadequacy of wages, the inability of the private sector to cope with the extent of poverty among the aged, and the stigma attached to institutional care. 20

In contrast to the relative unanimity of opinion among salaried welfare workers, middle-class female volunteers were divided over the desirability of old age pensions. Supporters on the NCWC executive included Agnes Machar of Kingston, an author and a "benevolent conservative" with an interest in labour problems who championed the cause of the aged poor both in her novels and in her volunteer work. However, her pleas for state aid attracted little attention, because the NCWC Standing Committee on the Care of the Aged Poor was "never very active." 21 At the local level, organized women displayed varying degrees of interest in the pensions issue. Representatives of a Montreal women's club were apparently the only volunteers to endorse the idea of a
federal scheme for the aged deserving poor in the prewar period. Their preference, however, was not shared by members of the Kingston branch of the Protestant King’s Daughters, an affiliate of the LCW, who lobbied for a federal old age annuities scheme, or by other volunteers in Toronto and Calgary, who confined their efforts to improving the traditional methods of relieving the aged poor.

Churchgoers were equally divided over the desirability of public pensions in the prewar period. Support was concentrated in the Protestant denominations, since the Catholic hierarchy opposed state intervention partly on ideological grounds and partly out of fears that welfare could be used as an instrument of patronage, as chapter 7 revealed. However, even among Protestants, proponents of public pensions were drawn from the minority ranks of reform-minded clerics. Initially, their lobbying was conducted by individuals such as the Rev. R.W. Dickie, a Presbyterian pastor, who sponsored a resolution at a public meeting in Montreal requesting federal legislation “granting under wise conditions old age pensions to the deserving poor....” In March 1914 more widespread endorsement was forthcoming. Delegates to the first national social service congress, representing all wings of the social gospel movement and the major denominations, approved a resolution requesting Ottawa to initiate a system of old age insurance. However, their stamp of approval was diluted by the fact that this demand, like mothers' pensions, was not included in the list of legislative requests subsequently presented to the federal cabinet. Among the official Protestant bodies, only the Methodist conference gave formal - albeit vague - endorsement to the idea of state aid in the pre-war period. Delegates attending its 1914 annual convention passed a resolution urging suitable provision for workers if incapacitated by old age, injury or sickness.
Spokesmen of the other denominations, however, shied away from giving their official blessing for, despite the ascendancy of the social gospel, "[p]ublic charity was still looked upon with distrust in the Protestant ethic of individualism."26

Intellectuals also disagreed over the issue. Sympathizers included W.A. Sherwood, a well-known Toronto artist and community activist, who, in an address to the local Progressive Club, urged Canadians to follow New Zealand's example and adopt a federal scheme in order to stop the exodus of people from the Maritimes and to retain white labourers in B.C.27 The Toronto intellectual community, however, included a vehement opponent, Goldwin Smith, the noted historian and active volunteer. He was "a perennial laissez-faire liberal" who used the medium of his journal the Week to attack the concept, contending that public pensions for the aged poor would place a premium on laziness and would tax the "industrious and thrifty" for the benefit of the "less deserving."28 Political economists in Ontario also disagreed over the merits of pensions. James Cappon, a faculty member at Queen's, was sympathetic to the idea, and his views were shared by Professor Mavor at the University of Toronto, but opposed by his Queen's colleague, Adam Shortt.29

Inside the Canadian Parliament there was a similar controversy over the desirability of public pensions. A few individual MPs championed the cause of the aged poor and attracted some support. But opponents of state aid were equally numerous and vocal, and their views proved to be more influential in the prewar period. They succeeded in confining legislative action to the passage of the 1908 Annuities Act, a measure designed to solve the problem of old age dependency by encouraging self-help and thrift among industrial workers.
A small group of MPs comprising three Conservatives (Porter, Pringle, Burnham) and three Liberals (Macdonald, Kyte, Carroll) were the "leading protagonists of public pensions" inside Parliament. These proponents were all backbenchers who acted as individuals, not as party spokesmen, because old age pensions were not endorsed by either major federal party until after the First World War. Their activities included sponsorship of resolutions urging federal provision for the aged and deserving poor in the sessions of 1906-7 and 1914; and securing the appointment of special committees to investigate the subject in the sessions of 1907-8 and 1911-13. Although no decisive action resulted from their efforts, they succeeded in drawing the attention of successive governments to the need for public pensions.

In order to ascertain why certain federal legislators supported the cause of the aged poor, a biographical analysis of MPs and senators who sponsored resolutions and spoke in favour of pensions during the pre-war period was undertaken. It reveals that the average age of proponents in the House of Commons was 43 years (see table 22). This was slightly lower than that of the opponents in the House (48 years), and much lower than that of hostile senators (66 years). The supporters' relative youth could account for their endorsement of state intervention in social welfare. W.F. Nickle (Con., Kingston), one of the younger advocates, presented the case for government involvement to promote equality of opportunity. "We have got beyond the days of mere individualism and have come to the days of so-called socialism...which gives every man a chance, which says that the man who is down shall not necessarily be kept down all his life for want of a fair opportunity." But table 22 also reveals that the supporters of public pensions in the House of Commons represented mainly urban ridings located, with one exception, in central and eastern Canada. On its own, representation of urban-industrial interests cannot
Table 22. Supporters of pensions inside the Canadian Parliament, 1907-14

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Prov.</th>
<th>Riding</th>
<th>Age (1907)</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Directorships</th>
<th>Public Office</th>
<th>Mun/Prov</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>House of Commons:</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burnham</td>
<td>Con</td>
<td>Ont</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>Lawyer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MacDonnell</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nickle</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Porter</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pringle</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carroll</td>
<td>Lib</td>
<td>N.S.</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emmerson</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>N.B.</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graham</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>Ont</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>Publisher</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Johnstone</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>N.S.</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyte</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>Lawyer</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Logan</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MacDonald</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smith</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>B.C.</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>Union agent</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bourassa</td>
<td>Ind/Lib</td>
<td>Que</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>Journalist</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verville</td>
<td>Lab</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>Union agent</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Ave:</td>
<td>43</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Senate:

| Ferguson | Con | PEI | Urban | 68 | Farmer | X |


1Supporters comprise sponsors of resolutions and speakers who argued in favour of public pensions.

2Ridings are classified as urban if they contain cities and/or towns of over 7,000. This classification is adopted from House of Commons, Returns of the Thirteenth General Election (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1917).
account for their involvement as other MPs with similar constituencies were either in the camp of opponents or apathetic to the cause. According to a Liberal advocate, W.F. Carroll, what set the supporters apart was the fact that old age pensions was "a lively and burning question" in their ridings that stretched from the coal-mining regions of eastern Nova Scotia through the industrial centres of Ontario and Quebec, to the mining community of Nanaimo, B.C.32 The salience of the issue in these areas prompted five other supporters (Pringle, Smith, Verville, Macdonald and Emmerson) to respond to labour representations.33

Information contained in table 22 shows as well that a majority of the supporters had served as either appointed or elected municipal officials. Their experience in local administration exposed them to the operation of poor relief machinery and its inadequacies. Again, according to Nickle, "[t]here is not one of us who has taken any active part in the charitable work of our cities who has not been moved by the many cases of men and women who have been industrious, thrifty and hard-working through a long period of life but who are by necessity forced on their children for support or else into our almshouses or houses of industry in their old age."34

D. Ferguson, the lone advocate in the Senate, was also keenly aware of the stigma attached to existing provision, presumably as a result of his experience as a commissioner of the provincial poorhouse in Prince Edward Island. But he was the only proponent to suggest that the absence of proper provision for the aged at a time when rapid accumulation of wealth was exacerbating disparities between rich and poor could be used by extremists to destroy the political equilibrium.35

The arguments advanced by the supporters of public pensions did not go unchallenged in the pre-war sessions of Parliament. Certain MPs and Senators
spoke forcibly against state aid for the destitute aged (see table 23). An analysis of their speeches and backgrounds suggests that the vocal opponents, drawn from both the back and front benches, can be divided into two groups. The first group consisted of 'hard-liners,' i.e., individuals who saw no need for any form of old age pension. Its membership comprised four Conservatives (Alguire, Currie, Foster, White) and two Liberals (Clark and Senator McMullen). The other group of vocal opponents accepted the need for a state-sponsored annuity scheme based on the principle of voluntary contributions but were opposed to publicly financed, non-contributory pensions, believing that they would destroy "habits of thrift" and contribute to pauperism. Its membership was predominantly Liberal (Fielding, Laurier, Lemieux, Pardee, Robitaille and Senators Cartwright, Cloren, Ross, Sullivan) but included some Conservatives (Fowler, Lefurgey, Maclean).

The higher average age of senators (66 years), mentioned above, suggests that as members of a generation reared in a pioneer society where agrarian values predominated, they subscribed to the classical liberal tenet of limited government. Senator Ross, for example, referred approvingly to the maxim prevalent when he entered public life that government should not be paternal.36 Table 23 also reveals that the opponents were drawn mainly from central Canada and represented both urban and rural ridings. It is significant that three of the backbenchers representing agrarian interests were in the camp of 'hard-liners' (Clark, Alguire, Currie). Their viewpoint was voiced clearly by M. Clark (Lib., Red Deer), who was a rancher and a self-styled individualist. "What I feel on the general principle is that if you go indefinitely along the lines of helping men to do what they should do for themselves you will inevitably, in the end, undermine the virility and strength of your people."37
Table 23. Opponents* of pensions inside the Canadian Parliament, 1907-14

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Prov.</th>
<th>Riding</th>
<th>Age (1907)</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Director-</th>
<th>Public</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mun/Pro/Fed</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

House of Commons:

- **Alguire**: Con Que Rural 72 Doctor X
- **Currie**: " " " 39 Mftr. X
- **Foster, G.E.**: " " Urban 60 Academic X X
- **Fowler**: " N.B. Rural 48 Lawyer X X
- **Lefurget**: " PEI " 36 " X
- **Maclean**: " Ont Urban 53 Journalist
- **White**: " " Rural 41 Financier X X
- **Clark**: Lib Alta " 46 Farmer
- **Fielding**: " N.S. " 59 Publisher X
- **Laurier**: " Que Urban 66 Lawyer X
- **Lemieux**: " " Rural 41 " X
- **Nesbitt**: " Ont Urban 48 General agent
- **Pardee**: " " " 40 Lawyer X X
- **Robitaille**: Ind/Lib Que Rural 24 Businessman

Senate:

- **Sullivan**: Con Ont Urban 69 Doctor X
- **Cartwright**: Lib " " 72 Financier X X
- **Cloren**: " Que " 52 Lawyer X
- **McMullen**: " Ont " 74 Merchant X X
- **Ross**: " " " 66 Teacher X X

Ave. 48

Ave. 66


*Opponents comprise legislators who spoke against publicly-funded pensions.
Other opponents were not simply mouthpieces of business interests. As table 23 shows, only a few had direct links with the corporate world. Indeed, by itself, the holding of directorships is not a reliable indicator of opposition to public pensions as five supporters were also on corporate boards. However, three opponents (Foster, Senators Ross and McMullen) were directors of insurance companies. G.E. Foster was the only one to act as a spokesman of insurance interests by registering his disapproval of federal involvement in the sale of old age annuities.38

In contrast to the supporters, the ranks of opponents included six past and present Finance Ministers (Foster, White, Fielding and Senators Cartwright, Cloran, Ross) who had controlled the purse-strings of either provincial coffers or the federal treasury. This suggests that their opposition to public pensions reflected fiscal conservatism. Both Foster and Senator Cartwright had inaugurated regimes of economy while serving as federal Finance Ministers in the late nineteenth century. Their fiscal conservatism was shared by Fielding, Laurier's Finance Minister, and White, his Conservative successor, who both regarded the costs of public pensions as the major obstacle to legislative action.39 They were successful in limiting legislative action to an old age annuities plan. This scheme, however, was not an effective substitute for public pensions and so the agitation continued after 1914.

The Concerted Campaign, 1914-27

The outbreak of war in August 1914 temporarily halted the agitation for old age pensions. But its overall impact added momentum to the campaign by contributing to "the further decline" of the laissez-faire philosophy of government.40 Although the war made the idea of state aid for the destitute aged more acceptable, it only modified the dominant ideological framework of
classical liberalism. Individualism was still visible because the concept of old age insurance, incorporating the values of self-help and thrift, gained currency rather than the idea of non-contributory old age pensions.41

In the immediate postwar period there was an increase in demands for legislative action. Outside Parliament, the efforts of organized labour were endorsed by the major Protestant churches and newly organized veterans. Their pleas were mainly directed at Ottawa, and elicited responses from the major federal parties because an election was imminent. The victory of a number of sympathizers in 1921 ensured that the case for legislative action would be pressed inside the federal House. They faced an uphill battle, though, as the new Liberal minority government was dependent upon western Progressive support and receptive to the views of eastern businessmen. Moreover, neither Ottawa nor the provinces were prepared to sponsor costly initiatives until electoral pressures precipitated federal action.

Advocates:

During the 1914-27 period, organized labour continued to be the major pressure group outside Parliament pressing for legislative action concerning old age pensions. Its campaign was aided by international and domestic developments. The Labour Convention of the Treaty of Versailles stressed the need for ameliorative programs such as old age pensions. Inside Canada semi-official bodies in 1919 also endorsed early action. In June a federal Royal Commission on Industrial Relations, after investigating the causes of postwar labour unrest, recommended immediate inquiry by expert boards into state insurance against old age and unemployment. In September, a follow-up National Industrial Conference repeated the demand for an early investigation by the civil service. Spurred by these developments, persistent demands for federal action were voiced by national labour organizations and isolated
requests were made by provincial associations such as the Nova Scotia miners' 1923 deputation.

The Canadian TLC spearheaded labour's agitation during World War I and afterwards. As the question of jurisdiction was not settled until 1925, it sought to take advantage of the federal structure of government by lobbying both targets. In September 1920 delegates at the TLC convention passed a resolution urging enactment of old age pension laws in the various provinces. In response, their executives in Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia included pensions for the needy aged in their legislative programs, and requests for inquiries into the subject were made by unionists in Alberta and Manitoba.

Frustrated by the lack of response at the provincial level, the TLC concentrated on securing federal legislative action from 1924 onwards. Its demand for a universal, non-contributory scheme for the 65-plus age group, however, was not endorsed by other moderate unionists representing the railway brotherhoods and miners in Nova Scotia, who respectively favoured aid only for the aged, deserving poor and a contributory plan. Even if these divisions had not developed, unionists were still not powerful enough by themselves to secure decisive action. Despite the spectacular growth in the proportion of wage-earners who were organized from 28 to 64 percent between 1910 and 1919, they still represented a minority voting bloc. Moreover, their own efforts to broaden the base of the old age pensions movement had limited success.

Besides standard lobbying, organized labour also endorsed partisan political action to secure old age pensions and other demands. In 1917 the Canadian Independent Labour Party (ILP) was created upon the suggestion of the TLC and with its blessing. It failed to develop into a national party, but its affiliates in Manitoba and Ontario included old age pensions in their platforms.
of 1917 and 1919, respectively. At the federal level the electoral success of the ILP was limited to securing 2 seats in both the 1921 and 1925 elections. In contrast, the performance of its provincial affiliates was more noteworthy. Labour spokesmen were elected in all provinces except Prince Edward Island in the immediate post-war period, and in Ontario they comprised the junior partner in a Farmer-Labour coalition government. The election of these federal and provincial labour candidates aided the campaign because it occurred at "a critical period in the development of public opinion on the pension issue." The two ILP representatives in the Ontario cabinet made an explicit attempt to secure action. They sponsored a 1921 resolution suggesting that a federal conference be held to consider old age pensions and other labour matters, and that if it decided that any of the questions were provincial in scope, the provincial Labour Department should investigate and report to the House with a view to enacting legislation. A Labour MLA in British Columbia also sponsored a resolution in December 1925, urging the adoption of a "sound" plan of old age pensions for Canada.

Organized labour, however, was no longer alone. The major Protestant churches also joined the old age pension movement. Their formal endorsement was a direct result of the impact of war which precipitated a challenge to the tenets of Protestant individualism and produced a marked shift in the position of churches towards questions of social reform. The social service department of the Methodist Church was the first agency to shed its conservatism. In 1917 its committee on industrial relations stressed the need for social insurance, and a year later it recommended an all-inclusive system covering contingencies like old age. Although this recommendation was not accepted wholesale by the 1918 General Conference of the Methodist Church, the proposal that the nation should provide old age insurance was included in its social declaration. This
stamp of approval was significant as the number of Methodists at the end of the war totalled one million.\textsuperscript{49} The Presbyterian Church, the largest Protestant denomination with over one million members, also endorsed old age insurance. In 1920 delegates to its General Assembly passed a resolution "warmly commending movements now afoot in many of our industries," including those seeking to secure the state's cooperation in providing pensions for old age.\textsuperscript{50} The endorsement of federal action was not confined to individual churches. In 1918 the Social Service Council of Canada, "the reforming arm of Protestantism," commenced publication of \textit{Social Welfare}, and its first issues elaborated its principles and programs, including social insurance against old age.\textsuperscript{51} The Alberta branch of the council was the first to take up the cause, and soon after delegates to its national conference approved a resolution urging enactment of federal legislation.\textsuperscript{52}

The forthright demands of Protestants for old age insurance were not reiterated after 1921 because the influence of the social gospel waned. Nonetheless, their formal endorsement in the immediate postwar period added momentum to the campaign. It established old age pensions as a salient political issue by removing it from the confines of a labour-sponsored agitation. The views of sizeable congregations endowed the movement with legitimacy by "...pricking the conscience of the middle class and stiffening the backs of political leaders."\textsuperscript{53} Newly organized veterans also endorsed the cause. In 1919 the GWVA passed a resolution urging enactment of old age insurance.\textsuperscript{54} As the most powerful returned men's organization, representing the majority of veterans, its opinions carried weight inside government circles, as chapter 3 revealed.

The rising chorus of demands for old age pensions legislation did not go unnoticed by the traditional political parties. As Ottawa, not the provinces,
was the major target, more interest in the subject was shown by the federal parties, with only the governing Liberals in British Columbia including old age pensions in their postwar platforms. The federal Liberal Party was the first major national party to recognize the electoral appeal of old age insurance, by including the subject in its 1919 platform. This pledge sprang from a policy review initiated by Laurier during his wartime years in opposition. In July 1916 a subcommittee on social welfare chaired by Joseph Atkinson proposed early action on old age pensions and the eventual establishment of a comprehensive social insurance program. These recommendations were swiftly endorsed by Laurier. However, after the war, the suggestion that priority be given to old age insurance was not incorporated into official party policy. In August 1919 delegates to the Liberal leadership convention approved without debate a resolution endorsing only the development of a federal-provincial scheme of social insurance. This resolution was drafted by a committee headed by King, the new Liberal leader, who was equivocal about the effects of income security upon the self-help ethic. Despite the lack of a firm commitment to take early action concerning old age insurance, its passage was significant. "For the first time, a national party found it expedient to appeal for public support on a program of social reform." 

The governing Unionist coalition was also responsive to changing public opinion with regard to old age pensions. At least one prominent Liberal member, Rowell, was sympathetic and attempted to include pensions in postwar programs of reconstruction. His bid, however, was unsuccessful. The 1920 Unionist manifesto contained only a vague endorsement of social insurance in its pledge to enact laws to carry into effect the ideas and principles in the peace treaty. Although the Unionists stopped short of explicit approval of old age pensions, they took steps to rectify their failure to act upon the suggestion
of the 1919 National Industrial Conference that the subject should be investigated by the civil service. "After a lapse of eighteen months and with the time for a federal election drawing nigh, it was announced in the 1921 Speech from the Throne that the Labour Department was investigating 'systems of unemployment insurance and old age pensions.'"61

The Unionist investigation and vague pledge, however, were not enough to overcome its anti-labour reputation and to win votes from industrial workers in the 1921 election. In contrast, the Liberal pledge concerning social insurance was a central plank in King's own campaign in Ontario and probably attracted the votes of urban labour and other sympathizers. Other prominent Liberals in their speeches throughout Canada apparently "proclaimed themselves the champions of old age pensions...."62

The election of a Liberal government - albeit a minority one - in 1921 augured well for the progress of the old age pensions movement. In contrast to the moribund years from 1914 to 1921,63 a concerted effort was made to secure legislative action from 1922 onwards. Inside the federal Parliament the agitation was conducted by a small nucleus of MPs representing all parties except the Progressives. The advocates comprised two Conservatives (Church, Stevens), two Liberals (Fontaine, Martell), the two Labour spokesmen (Irvine, Woodsworth) and the Independent (Neill). They represented urban-industrial ridings in all provinces except Saskatchewan, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island. Their involvement was spurred by similar motives to those prompting their pre-war counterparts: ideological beliefs and labour representations; but three advocates also acted as spokesmen for the province of British Columbia, a spur not visible in the pre-war Parliaments.64

Despite their limited numbers, the advocates were finally able in 1923 to secure a commitment from the government, which agreed to have a committee go
The work of the 1924 Commons special committee turned out to be crucial because for "the first time an attempt was made to work out a concrete plan...." Three advocates (Fontaine, Irvine, Niell) served on this committee, and endorsed the final report recommending the establishment of a non-contributory scheme for the destitute aged of 70 years and over, to be financed jointly by the federal and provincial governments.

A year later, however, the advocates disagreed openly over the question of jurisdiction and the means of financing means-tested old age pensions. This split developed as a result of the lukewarm reaction of the provinces to the notion of cost-sharing. Their lack of enthusiasm prompted the re-appointment of the special committee in the 1925 session. Its members then sought a ruling from the Department of Justice, that according to A.W. Neill, confirmed their original convictions that unlike old age insurance, financial aid towards non-contributory old age pensions was within the competence of the federal Parliament. Although the 1925 committee again recommended a joint non-contributory plan, two members disagreed. W. Irvine, the spokesman for the two-man Labour group, rejected the proposal as "unrealistic" and moved that the report be referred back with instructions to consider a purely federal scheme. His motion was supported by T.L. Church (Con., Toronto), but opposed by Neill (Ind.) on the grounds that a federal scheme would be too costly.

This division of opinion among parliamentary advocates was significant, reflecting a cleavage between "cost-conscious" and "welfare-conscious" actors. It is doubtful, though, whether their disagreement stalled legislative action in the 1925 session, as there is little evidence that the Liberal government was seriously contemplating federal legislation at that time. It made no effort to arrange a conference with the provinces prior to the 1925 election and avoided the issue in its own campaign. Its reluctance to take
legislative action stemmed in part from its dependence upon the support of the Progressives, who represented "the disenchanted votes of Canadian farmers."71

Opponents:

During the 1914-27 period organized farmers were, by and large, opposed to legislative action concerning old age pensions, and their political influence increased dramatically after the war. Besides securing 65 seats in the federal Parliament in 1921, they also captured the provincial governments of Ontario, Alberta and Manitoba in the immediate postwar period. Elsewhere, rural interests wielded considerable influence. In Saskatchewan successive Liberal governments were, in reality, farmers' governments because of their close dependency upon the Grain Growers, and in the remaining provinces agrarian spokesmen were well-represented in the legislatures.

Overt support for legislative action was confined to farmers' organizations in Alberta and Saskatchewan, which, in association with the socialist Non-Partisan League, included in their 1917 platforms a plank advocating national compulsory social insurance covering old age and other disabilities.72 In the postwar period, however, only branches of the United Farmers of Alberta remained sympathetic to labour demands.73 In contrast, Ontario farmers were openly hostile to public pensions of any kind. In the 1920 session Premier Drury introduced a bill to give pensions to employees of the provincial government. However, "the UFO clubs took such strong ground against it that many of the farmer members declared that they would vote against it or any like measure, even if it was brought up by their party."74 Their vehement reaction effectively blocked any further provincial initiatives in the field of pensions by the Farmer-Labour government (1919-23). The UFO rank and file membership was also strongly against federal old age pensions legislation. Its
mouthpiece, the Farmers' Sun, urged rejection of the 1927 bill, contending "...that the country is now so overburdened with debt and taxes that it cannot support a new levy." 75

The majority of the farmers' representatives in the federal Parliament were equally hostile. In the vote on Irvine's 1925 motion to secure a purely federal scheme, the Progressive caucus split along the following lines, with the majority opposing:

Table 24. Distribution of Progressive votes on Irvine's motion, 1925

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>UFA</th>
<th>SGGA</th>
<th>UFM</th>
<th>UFO</th>
<th>OTHERS</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yeas</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nays</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Absent</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The ranks of opponents from Manitoba included Crerar, the Progressive leader until November 1922, who regarded old age pensions as unnecessary extravagance, 76 and his successor, R. Forke, shared his view that "rigid economy in government" was essential at all times. 77

Besides farmers, businessmen also became vocal opponents of old age pensions legislation after the war. Two of the three employers' representatives on the 1919 Royal Commission on Industrial Relations, Senator Smeaton White, owner of the Montreal Gazette, and F. Pauze, a Montreal lumber merchant, wrote a minority report condemning social insurance. Their major objection to contributory old age pensions concerned their effect on the worker's productivity. They argued that establishment of a national scheme "might seriously affect the ambition of the worker when he had the full enjoyment of his physical and mental capacity." 78
Organized manufacturers in Ontario also resisted the idea. They lodged a protest with Premier Drury in April 1920 concerning the proposed increase in workmen's compensation benefits on the grounds that it would encourage "malingering," adding that their contributions should not be used to finance either old age or unemployment insurance.79 Besides taxpayers' resistance, a concern about the mobility of capital lay behind the manufacturers' opposition. This was manifest in the attitude of delegates representing the Alberta CMA branch, who told Premier Greenfield in 1925 that the "association was not opposed to an old age pension, but considered it a matter for cooperation between all provinces and the federal government."80

Unlike its provincial affiliates, the CMA apparently lodged no formal objections with Ottawa prior to the passage of the 1927 act. However, its leadership was openly critical. In his presidential address to the 1925 CMA convention, Colonel Hatch, a Hamilton manufacturer, dismissed measures such as old age pensions as "of little use if industry can scarcely pay operating expenses" and complained about the potential tax burden. His views on federal fiscal policy were prevalent in other sectors of the business community. E.W. Beatty, President of the Canadian Pacific Railway, the largest federal taxpayer, complained to his shareholders about "serious taxation burdens" and stressed the need for more rigid economy in public expenditures if prosperity was to return; and similar sentiments were voiced by prominent bankers and members of boards of trade.81 During King's first term of office (1922-25) the views of corporate capital were voiced by influential members of the federal Cabinet, as chapter 4 documented. Consequently, business interests were in a powerful position to curb legislative action on old age pensions.

The prevailing fiscal attitudes of both federal and provincial politicians were another constraint. They have been ably summarized as devotion to the
concept of the balanced budget in order to keep public debt down to a minimum. The fiscal conservatism of provincial politicians explains why their governments took no independent action during and after the war. It also accounts for British Columbia's active campaigning for a purely federal scheme between 1921 and 1924 - a preference later endorsed by all other provinces, except Quebec, when confronted with the prospect of financing a joint plan.

Provincial politicians were reluctant to develop their own schemes or participate in a cooperative venture because old age pensions would involve heavy additional expenditure that would require a substantial increase in taxation. As sources of provincial tax revenues before and after the war (corporation taxes, succession duties, property taxes) were more regressive than federal tax revenues (income taxes), their sponsorship of new programs would have "more depressing effects" on private spending than corresponding action on the part of the federal government.

Provincial politicians were also hesitant to pursue a policy of fiscal expansion to finance old age pensions because they feared its electoral consequences. They were well aware that even tax levies to solve orthodox fiscal problems such as recurring deficits were unpopular. The defeat of Liberal governments in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick in 1925, after long periods in power, was attributed directly to a taxpayers' revolt against fiscal mismanagement. Although politicians in other provinces in English Canada were not confronted with such serious financial problems, they were fearful of the voters' reaction to tax increases. Consequently, throughout the 1920s they competed to "outdo the other in the advocacy of tax reduction.... Of all the provinces, Quebec had the most buoyant treasury. Despite its surplus of funds, however, its government was the most reluctant to endorse old age
pensions legislation. In 1926, Premier Taschereau wrote personally to Prime Minister King opposing participation in a joint plan on the ground that it "...would leave us with a huge deficit." 87

In the five provinces west of Quebec the spiralling costs of mothers' pensions acted as a further deterrent to other independent initiatives with the technique of categoric public assistance. Senator McMeans of Winnipeg referred directly to Manitoba's experience with mothers' pensions in the course of questioning the reliability of estimates concerning the costs of old age pensions. He pointed out that the initial sum of $52,000, voted by the province, had escalated to $750,000 by 1925, forcing a reduction in the next year's appropriation to $450,000, "which is no small sum for a province with a small population where we have much difficulty in financing...." 88 The deterrent effect of mothers' pensions 'experiments' also probably accounts for the non-participation of municipalities in the old age pensions movement, especially in Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta, the provinces adopting a joint method of financing. In contrast to their aggressive advocacy of state aid for the destitute unemployed, and their support of the cause of mothers' pensions, elected spokesmen of cities in Ontario and the West were silent on the issue of state aid for the aged. 89

The fiscal conservatism of federal politicians also militated against legislative action during the 1914-25 period. Even though the imposition of a federal income tax in wartime provided Ottawa with the means to finance old age pensions, its significance was not appreciated in the national capital. In the postwar period the emphasis of fiscal policy was on retrenchment and economy. "In those pre-Keynesian days, the federal government, faced with heavy debt charges incurred by the war as well as a hitherto unprecedented bill for
veterans' pensions and allowances, was reluctant to commit itself to any new expensive programs.90

From 1918 onwards national politicians were preoccupied with fiscal problems stemming from wartime mobilization. Meighen suggested that the burden of debt in 1921 prevented his government from making "false promises" concerning old age pensions.91 His rival King was also disturbed by the fiscal situation. In 1921, when leader of the opposition, he expressed doubts about the willingness of the people to accept the expenditure required for a pension program in view of the high taxes and public debt resulting from the war.92 Once Prime Minister, he adopted orthodox remedies: reduction of controllable public expenditures in order to halt the emerging pattern of annual deficits, and diversion of revenues to reduce the size of the debt. New social policy initiatives, therefore, were precluded until the federal budget was balanced and the debt burden lessened. In 1923 King informed a labour delegation from Nova Scotia that old age pensions "...would have to wait until the country's financial position had improved."93 A year later Heenan, Minister of Labour, made it clear that fiscal problems, not doubts about jurisdiction, remained the major constraints upon federal legislative action during the 1922-25 period.94

Precipitants:

The prospects of the old age pensions movement looked bleak at the close of the fourteenth Parliament. Prior to the 1925 election Ottawa made no effort to persuade the provinces to endorse the cooperative plan recommended by the 1924 special committee. In their bid for re-election the Liberals avoided references to their 1919 pledge concerning social insurance. Their lack of action was not attacked by the Conservative opposition, even though the main issue of the campaign was the record of the government. In local campaigns the issue of old age pensions appears to have been salient only in the British
Columbia interior and the federal territory of the Yukon. However, the re-election of another Liberal minority government in 1925 turned out to be crucial for the future progress of the pensions movement. Prime Minister King was dependent upon the support of minor parties for his own political survival and so was susceptible to their demands for concessions. These extenuating parliamentary circumstances "...brought the pension issue to the top of the agenda."96

Woodsworth and Heaps, the two Labour MPs, were "the precipitants" of legislative action in the 1926 session. Realizing that they had a unique opportunity to influence policy-making, they decided to take advantage of "the peculiar combination of circumstances" to secure two "very urgent measures": old age pensions and unemployment relief. On the opening day of the session they sent a joint letter to King, Meighen and Forke, asking them to explain their parties' position on these issues.97

The Conservative and Liberal leaders' reactions to these Labour demands revealed that "the patrician" was no match for the former arbitrator. In contrast to Meighen's lukewarm response, King was conciliatory. He told an intermediary acting for the Labour group that "if the United Farmers would support an old age pensions measure, he would undertake to bring it down to the House."99 Once an assurance was received from the Whip of the eight-man UFA group, King decided to enlist the support of the Labour MPs in persuading his cabinet colleagues that old age pensions was the necessary price of staying in power:

"I had the members of the Cabinet meet Woodsworth & Heaps, & discuss old age pension legstn. tho some members of the Cabinet, Lapointe in conversat'n and Robb by memo from Finlayson opposed attempting anything, when they were confronted in discussion, all agreed on a bill which would apply to the Dominion as a whole, letting each province come under, on a 50-50 basis, for non-contributory scheme applicable to persons over 70 years of age.... It was agreed to have a bill immediately drafted."100
Although political survival was the dominant motive underlying cabinet approval, it is doubtful whether the 'coup' staged by the Labour MPs would have been successful if it had not coincided with an improvement in federal finances. However, even with a more buoyant treasury than many of the provinces, the Liberal government was not prepared to fund a purely federal scheme. Dr. King, the sponsor of the 1926 bill, stated that if no province opted to enter the cooperative plan, Ottawa would not assume the full costs of old age pensions.101

The 1926 Old Age Pension Bill was based upon the recommendations of the 1924 special committee. During the lively debate in the House differences of opinion surfaced among the official opposition over its desirability. Although eight Conservatives voiced support for the measure, ten of their colleagues registered protests. Their ranks included a few 'hard-liners' who opposed the principle of non-contributory pensions because, according to R.B. Bennett, it would discourage economy and thrift as well as breed a "dole mentality." The majority of Conservative opponents, though, adopted a different tack and argued that the initiative represented an unwelcome intrusion into provincial jurisdiction and would be unworkable without their consent. For example, Meighen, the opposition leader, observed wryly after reviewing the lacklustre response of provincial Premiers, "that there is not much sunshine to be got out of these cucumbers...." Despite Conservative reservations, the bill was passed unanimously by the House.102

The Conservative-dominated Senate, however, turned out to be a more effective 'sounding-board' for provincialism than the lower chamber. Its members rejected the bill at the second reading stage after objections were voiced by two renegade Liberals and twelve Conservatives, who represented mainly the maritimes and Ontario. These vocal opponents viewed the plan as imposing an
unnecessary, costly burden upon their provinces and as constituting a dangerous precedent with unpredictable financial consequences. Their rejection of the old age pension bill and another event in the turbulent session of 1926, the Governor-General's refusal to grant King a dissolution, provided the Liberal minority government with an "irresistible basis on which to appeal to the electorate." 

The issue of old age pensions was prominent in the 1926 election. In his own campaign King linked the subject with the need for Senate reform. In Calgary he promised to re-introduce the 1926 bill until it was forced past the Conservative opposition in the Senate. Liberal strategy also involved branding all Conservatives as opponents of old age pensions, even though the bill had secured unanimous approval in the House of Commons. According to the temporary leader of the opposition, "[d]uring the course of the election last fall, I think I am safe in saying that in every quarter of Canada, Conservative candidates in the various ridings were charged with opposition to the Old Age Pension Bill"; and other Conservative MPs confirmed his charge. Refutation of Liberal accusations, however, put Conservative candidates on the defensive during the campaign, and their formal position of cooperation with the provinces prior to legislative action was not understood.

Despite the political salience of old age pensions in the 1926 campaign, it was probably not the decisive factor behind the Liberal victory. "Many of the politicians themselves, however, attributed major significance to the pensions issue," and this assessment undercut subsequent opposition. For example, Heenan, the new Minister of Labour, when introducing the 1927 Old Age Pensions Bill, argued that "...there can be no question that the principle adopted in this Bill was endorsed by the people of Canada"; and in the ensuing debate backbenchers representing all parties and all regions also stressed the
electoral salience of the issue. Members of the Senate were also prompted by the electorate's endorsement to reverse their 1927 position and vote for the bill.

Perceived electoral support was also the spur to provincial participation in the federal scheme. Premier Oliver of British Columbia was the first to recognize the popular appeal of the pensions issue and to pass enabling legislation in 1927. His example was soon followed by the Premiers of the four western provinces and Ontario. In Quebec and the maritimes, however, participation was delayed until the 1930s, when overwhelming electoral pressures forced their reluctant Premiers to enter the plan.

Although the timing of the implementation of the 1927 Old Age Pensions Act was dependent upon the provinces, its content was dictated by political forces inside the Canadian Parliament. The major features of the original plan were devised by members of the 1924 Special Committee. Working within the confines of a joint means-tested initiative suggested by the Liberal government, the views of "cost-conscious" advocates such as Neill (Ind.) prevailed over the preferences of Irvine, Labour's spokesman, with regard to the minimum age requirement and the scale of pension, but they agreed on the citizenship and residency qualifications. However, the committee chairman, presumably acting upon instructions from the cabinet, suggested the methods of financing and administration. Although these MPs were apparently the major formulators of the scheme, their choices may have been guided by the advice of bureaucrats in the Department of Labour. Despite the attempts of a few Conservative and Labour backbenchers to secure a lower age requirement and an increase in the federal contribution, there were no significant changes made in the course of the passage of the 1927 Bill. In all important respects, the original Old Age
Pension Act was identical to the 1924 plan formulated by economy-minded parliamentary advocates and cabinet politicians.

A Review

The movement to secure old age pensions was shaped by the socio-economic setting, as industrial-urban growth was exacerbating the problem of dependency among the aged poor. It also took place in a period marked by a recurring cycle of boom and slump. Of these fluctuations, the economic prosperity in the second half of the 1920s was the most significant because it provided the financial resources for all governments, except those in the maritimes, to contemplate seriously taking legislative action. However, in and of itself it was no guarantee of action, for a joint statutory initiative concerning unemployment was not acted upon during the same period.

The cultural context also exerted some influence. Sympathy for the plight of the aged dependent poor was confined to the loosely-defined 'deserving' category, presumably comprising those whose destitution was not due primarily to criminal behaviour or drunkenness. During the prewar period it was not translated into concrete mass demands for state-financed pensions. Instead, the belief was prevalent that remedies should incorporate the dominant self-help ethic in the form of either annuities or contributory benefits, whereas demands for means-tested pensions represented only the proverbial 'straws in the wind.' However, the increased state intervention to cope with the emergency of war hastened the erosion of this ethic and made the latter concept more acceptable, even though the insurance principle also gained currency. Like the successful mothers' pensions campaign, the influence of foreign precedents was also detectable in the initial stage of the old age pensions movement, with the
innovations within the British Empire sparking more interest than European developments.

The influence of the federal structure of government varied according to the stage of the movement. Organized labour's choice of Ottawa as the initial target of pressure was decisive in the sense that it influenced the behaviour of other advocates, and their collective lobbying hastened the introduction of Canada-wide pensions. The TLC's postwar decision to conduct concurrent lobbying in the provincial capitals may have been influenced by the adoption of province-wide mothers' pensions. During the concerted campaign Ottawa engaged in minimal buck-passing, but made it plain that it was only prepared to act with the provinces, not independently. Its stance was not simply a delaying tactic, subsequently reinforced by the Justice Department ruling. It also reflected a reluctance to finance the full costs of such a major initiative, a sentiment shared by all provinces, especially those already financing pensions for needy mothers. Prime Minister King, however, made only token attempts to secure provincial consent during his first term of office. The ensuing stalemate was only resolved when extenuating parliamentary circumstances arising out of the 1925 election prompted him to sponsor an abortive scheme that was subsequently ratified in the 1927 session. As the original Old Age Pension Act depended upon provincial participation for effective implementation, federalism exerted "a sizeable influence" - albeit a delaying one - upon its timing, even though it afforded the provinces "little influence" over the choice of the design.112

In line with the findings of Bryden (1974), the case study confirms a group model of welfare politics. However, it builds on his interpretation by emphasizing that the 1927 initiative was a product of a conflict between competing economic interests which espoused different sets of values
representing an emerging welfare ethos and the dominant "market ethos." This stress on a clash of values avoids the confusion of reviewers like Baum (1975) and Simeon (1975) over his key concepts, arising from his tendency to treat "environmental want" as more of a structural variable than a cultural one. In fact, both concepts had roots in distinct political ideologies of reform liberalism or democratic socialism on the one hand, and classical liberalism on the other.

Moreover, the ensuing struggle was not fought exclusively along occupational lines. Organized labour, the vanguard of the emerging industrial-urban society, spearheaded the agitation during its two stages, but other groups in Canadian society also espoused the cause of social collectivism - albeit with less tenacity. In the prewar period members of the new profession of social work and reform-minded Protestant clerics also advocated adoption of public pensions and after World War I the major Protestant denominations and the most influential veterans' association formally endorsed the concept. Their support broadened the movement beyond its working-class base and enhanced the legitimacy of the issue in the eyes of politicians, especially the federal Liberals. Arrayed against these various advocates were the dominant economic interests. Although spokesmen of capital and agriculture were the most fervent subscribers to the "market ethos," they did not possess a monopoly of this cluster of values. Urban, middle-class female volunteers, the champions of the mothers' pensions movement, most Catholics and Protestants, and a few prominent academics also espoused the dominant self-help ethic prior to the war. But as a result of their increased political influence after 1921, organized businessmen and farmers qualify as the most effective opponents.

A similar clash of values was visible inside Parliament. The original proponents of the new welfare ethos were drawn from the ranks of all parties,
except the Progressives, and represented mainly urban ridings. They were spurred by a variety of motives: party ideology reflecting generational values, labour and provincial representations, and local community work to champion the cause of the aged poor. They were more effective in the postwar period, securing the appointment of the 1924 Special Committee that devised the original plan. Their involvement in the process of formulation, though, provoked a division between "cost-conscious" and "welfare-conscious" parliamentary advocates. However, not all federal legislators were convinced of the desirability of state-financed old age pensions. The original defenders of the traditional "market ethos" comprised opponents of any form of public pension, and more moderate adversaries who favoured the contributory principle over state-financed benefits. Collectively, they were older and represented more rural ridings than the advocates inside Parliament. Their protests reflected beliefs in limited government and fiscal conservatism and were successful in limiting legislative action to an old age annuities plan. After the war parliamentary opponents appeared in the guise of defenders of provincial interests, as the 1926 debate in the House and Senate demonstrated. This development contrasts sharply with Splane's description of the post-1945 Parliament as "not...a sounding-board for the assertion of provincialism in social welfare."113

Concerning forces inside government, the case study resembles a representative rather than a bureaucratic model of welfare politics. The decisions of cabinet politicians at both levels of government were motivated primarily by electoral calculations. Initially, they were reluctant to sanction legislative action because of fears of the electoral consequences of tax levies to finance old age pensions. Their fears of a taxpayers' revolt rather than
doubts about jurisdiction were the major obstacles to governmental action in the first half of the 1920s. Prime Minister King's subsequent change of heart only occurred because his very political survival was at stake. After conceding old age pensions in return for the support of Labour and UFA MPs and witnessing its rejection by the Senate, he then realized the electoral potential of the issue. Following the 1926 election, politicians' perceptions of popular support provided an incentive at both levels to take legislative action to assist the aged poor.

A striking feature of the two movements for statutory benefits, analyzed to date, is the virtual absence of social control politics. Instead, in both cases, interest group power was decisive in spurring the introduction of means-tested pensions for sole-support mothers and the dependent elderly. A similar constellation of forces participated in both movements comprising economic interest groups and charities. Their disputes were resolved once again by cost-conscious cabinet politicians facing electoral pressures. This mixture of motives was equally powerful in shaping Ottawa's decision to pay benefits to some disabled veterans, as the next chapter reveals.
CHAPTER 9

WAR VETERANS' ALLOWANCES, 1930

In 1930 the Canadian Parliament passed legislation providing for the payment of federal allowances to non-pensionable veterans who, because of premature senility or other handicaps, were unemployable and in distressed circumstances. Ottawa's sponsorship of this "discretionary form of social security" represented a new method of compensating World War I veterans for war-related injury because, unlike the disability pension, it took into account earning capacity. It was also a novel experiment within the British Empire, spurring Australia and New Zealand to offer similar aid subsequently. Despite its pioneering significance, however, Ottawa's 1930 initiative has been virtually ignored by students of social policy. To remedy this neglect, this chapter aims to pinpoint the effective political forces shaping the introduction of the legislation.

Background

The client group of destitute unemployable veterans emerged from the ranks of the 450,000 men who were discharged as physically fit. Their handicaps developed after their return to civilian life and fell outside the range of physical and mental causes of war-related unemployability recognized at the time by the medical profession. They were mainly psychological, resulting from the traumas of trench warfare, and included premature senility, shell-shock and other, "abnormal" nervous diseases. Collectively, men with these disabilities were labelled as 'broken down,' 'burnt out' or 'prematurely aged' cases. Although no precise data exists on their numbers, officials in the Department of Soldiers' Civil Re-establishment (DSCR) estimated that the bulk of the 6,000
unemployed veterans who received relief for periods of ten weeks or longer during the 1920 winter were "men who have lost their grip." Assuming that 5,000 fell into this category at the onset of the decade, this figure was likely to increase over time because the aging process exacerbated the mental toll exacted by war service for veterans on the borderline between job fitness and incapacity. By region, they were concentrated in the provinces bearing the brunt of the "returned soldier problem," viz., Quebec, Ontario, Manitoba and British Columbia.

Unlike their 50,000 comrades severely or partially disabled during the war, 'burnt out' veterans were ineligible for federal disability pensions or special services such as sheltered employment. Instead, their destitution was relieved by specialized voluntary organizations in the immediate postwar period. The Canadian Patriotic Fund (CPF) was the major relief-giving agency for ex-soldiers not provided for by federal regulations. Its postwar charter defined the following as eligible for regular monthly assistance: cases of chronic or extended illness of the breadwinner, including insanity, not eligible for pension and not due to post-discharge intemperance or improper conduct, rendering him wholly or partially incapable of supporting his family. Although the charter stipulated that only their dependents were eligible for maintenance, this regulation was not watertight, as CPF volunteers were given discretionary authority to assist disabled veterans directly under certain circumstances. However, another regulation precluding the granting of assistance to men without dependents, whether pensioned or not, was applied rigidly and imposed considerable hardship on the single incapacitated veteran, as alternative sources of aid were few and sporadic.

Only one other fund existed for the handicapped ex-soldier. The Disablement Fund was a private trust created by James Carruthers of Montreal.
during the war for the express purpose of looking after cases of severe disability which did not fall technically under federal regulations. But, the scope of its work was limited by its trustee, the Assistant Deputy Minister of the DSCR, to making small loans to pensioners and others in need of assistance known to the Department. According to the Minister of Soldiers' Civil Re-establishment, $15,000 was the sum total of money loaned up until 1925. Other sources of private aid for the single disabled veteran were equally limited. Voluntary agencies serving ex-soldiers, such as the Red Cross, lacked the resources to provide regular support. The ex-soldiers' own organizations, such as the adjustment bureau of the GWVA, were only able to extend emergency assistance to needy comrades in distress. Although their funds were on occasion supplemented by profits from the federally-administered Canteen Fund, their resources were inadequate to meet the demands for aid.

Public provision for non-pensionable disabled veterans was also intermittent. They were eligible for federal unemployment relief for returned soldiers during the 1920 winter, but as they were non-pensioners, they did not qualify for federal aid for partially disabled veterans in subsequent winters (see chapter 3, page 75.) Instead, their destitution was relieved by municipalities or provincial returned soldiers' commissions, which only granted occasional emergency relief. Their demotion into the ranks of the civilian needy, however, was not universally condoned and prompted demands for special treatment of 'burnt out' cases soon after the war.

The Agitation for War Veterans Allowances, 1920-30

In sharp contrast to the original struggle for emergency state aid where physically fit veterans were perceived as a threat to the established order, the agitation to secure allowances for disabled ex-soldiers contains little
evidence of social control politics, a finding that highlights the importance of the distinction between the employable and the incapacitated poor. Instead, like the preceding movements for statutory benefits, the agitation approximates a group model of welfare politics. But, there are significant differences. The key societal advocates were spokesmen of organized veterans rather than social service activists or trade unionists. They represented associations of both able-bodied and disabled men, with the former championing the cause of the 'burnt out' veteran. Even though the various disability organizations were not formed primarily to defend the interests of the client group, their participation remains noteworthy, marking the first time potential beneficiaries of statutory benefits engaged in pressure group activity. Unlike the other movements, the advocates' activities aroused little opposition in Canadian society because veterans were widely perceived to have special claims as a result of their patriotic service. Even organized businessmen and farmers, the major opponents of public welfare for the civilian needy, numbered among the supporters of the cause. As the public generally was sympathetic, the advocates concentrated their energies for most of the agitation upon lobbying forces inside government. They selected Ottawa as the target because it was assigned jurisdiction over the category of veterans, but they faced an uphill battle in persuading the national decision-makers that they, rather than the provinces, should finance special benefits for the client group.

The agitation to secure war veterans' allowances was shorter than the movements to secure mothers' pensions and old age pensions. Yet, despite its relative brevity, it evolved through two distinct stages requiring separate analyses, covering the initial struggle to secure recognition of the plight of 'burnt out' cases in the first half of the decade and the concerted campaign to secure legislative action waged between 1926 and 1930.
The Initial Struggle, 1920-25

As the issue of special treatment for 'burnt out' cases was linked with the politics of veterans' relief during the 1920-25 depression, certain advocates engaged in direct lobbying of the federal cabinet, the agency that decided upon the distribution of emergency aid. They comprised a local group of unemployed veterans and relief officials in Toronto and Vancouver, the two cities with the highest concentrations of disabled ex-soldiers.6

In the summer of 1922 a group of unemployed veterans in Toronto, the "soldier city," marched to Ottawa to demand that the employment and relief section of the DSCR aid all ex-members of the Canadian Expeditionary Force, regardless of their physical condition. On June 5th representatives of the 247 hikers met the Prime Minister and members of his cabinet. Their leader, F. Riley, demanded immediate action to alleviate the "rampant" distress in Toronto. In reply, King requested the names and regimental numbers of individual cases of hardship. Riley, however, refused to supply this information, dismissing the Prime Minister's method as inadequate. He contended that Ottawa had a duty to alleviate this distress because war experience had produced physical disability among 95 percent of his group, whose members were "all first-line trenchmen." Riley ended his submission with a warning of even greater pressure in the event of no concrete action being taken:

[T]his little army...is only the precursor of a greater army that is coming. This is only a caution, not a threat. I am not a Red, nor a Bolshevist, nor a Sinn Feiner.

In response to this "caution," Prime Minister King offered only the standard promise to consider the veterans' representations.7

However, following the departure of "Riley's Army" from Ottawa, the cabinet decided to grant emergency relief to the permanently disabled veteran. The timing of the Toronto hikers' march coincided with a decision of the CPF to
concentrate on existing cases requiring continuous assistance and to stop granting emergency relief, because its funds were declining. This cutback was prevented by Ottawa's intervention. The Cabinet decided to grant $900,000 to the Fund to enable it to carry on its emergency relief work for at least another winter. During the 1923 winter the CPF expended $700,000. In April its officials requested permission to use up the outstanding balance for the further relief of destitute, permanently disabled veterans not on their caseload at the end of July 1922, when the list of beneficiaries entitled to continuous assistance had been closed. The federal government agreed to their request and the CPF was able to assist "some extremely hard cases" for another winter, with the final grants being paid in May 1924.8

During the 1923 winter a delegation from a relief agency serving ex-soldiers in Toronto attempted to secure additional federal aid for their disabled unemployed clients. It was headed by an ex-officer, Rev. T.C. Brown, and included representatives of churches, veterans, manufacturers, the City of Toronto, the Ontario Soldiers' Aid Commission and an official from the local branch of the DSCR. Brown informed the Prime Minister that these various organizations had united to coordinate relief activities among unemployed veterans, including 'burnt out' cases. He requested a federal contribution of 50 percent towards their maintenance, claiming that the "worthy ex-serviceman should be regarded as a special ward of the country...." In his reply, Prime Minister King pointed out that requests for federal relief must come from the provincial, not the local authorities, and that Ottawa's policy could not be selective. "You ask us for what seems like a small amount, but we cannot do for Toronto what we are not prepared to do for other places."9
The representations from the Toronto delegation, though, were successful in eliciting a limited federal response. In early February of 1923 the cabinet approved an order-in-council authorizing payment of one-third of the expenditure made by specialized agencies to ex-soldiers "suffering from disabilities which, although not attributable to war service, and therefore not pensionable, place the men concerned in most cases under a handicap in competing in the general labour market." Federal contributions were subsequently paid to organizations assisting such cases in Montreal, Toronto and Wallaceberg, but withheld from Winnipeg because it lacked the requisite organizational structure combining civic officials and volunteers.

By the fall of 1924 Ottawa's reluctance to take over the relief of 'burnt out' cases was exhausting the patience of officials in British Columbia, who were confronted with a steady influx of disabled ex-soldiers at a time when employment conditions were depressed. Their frustrations surfaced at the annual meeting of the advisory council of the Employment Service of Canada (ESC). J. D. McNiven, B.C.'s Deputy Minister of Labour, explained their source:

Now you know what occurs with a body of men out of work - cannot get work - they are dissatisfied, discontented, and they are going to embarrass the government that is closest to it.... We know that from experience it is not a question of money at all, it is a question of who is going to get embarrassed....

His plea for federal action was supported by J.W. Ward, the Canadian Council of Agriculture representative on the ESC, who argued that there was no more deserving applicant than the disabled soldier, and nobody "who begrudges what it will cost...." The federal Minister of Labour, however, refused to give McNiven a guarantee that Ottawa would make provision for unemployable veterans. He was well aware of his cabinet colleagues' hostility towards relief expenditures of any type, as chapter 4 documented. Moreover, the recent
precedent of funding emergency aid for unemployed pensioners with minor
disabilities acted as a deterrent to further expansion of a federal role in
veterans' relief because of the political repercussions involved in
withdrawing. Ottawa's refusal to aid 'burnt out' cases also probably reflected
doubts over whether their disabilities were genuine.

Accompanying the struggle to secure special relief, there was sporadic
lobbying of federal legislators during the 1920-25 period. Demands for
legislative action were voiced by the CPF and veterans' associations. But their
uncoordinated pleas received only token attention from the Liberal government,
because it was determined to avoid new costly obligations for a category of
veterans it perceived as 'undeserving.'

W.F. Nickle, the honorary secretary of the CPF, brought up the problem of
premature senility among veterans during the hearings of the 1921 Special House
of Commons Special Committee on Pensions, Insurance and Re-establishment. He
cited cases of men in the 40-50 age group who went overseas, returned
apparently sound, but were unable to settle back into their pre-war
occupations, adding that "the country must consider doing something for these
men...." The committee members, however, only made passing reference to
these cases in their final report.

Organized veterans also took up the cause of 'broken down' cases. Although
they were divided into 14 separate national organizations during the first half
of the decade, the GWVA and the other major associations, representing both
able-bodied and disabled veterans, attempted to achieve a measure of unity in
their legislative lobbying. They formed a Dominion Veterans' Alliance in 1922,
primarily in order to seek improvements in federal re-establishment policy. Its
combined membership represented the bulk of veterans still enrolled in
But this attempt at coordination failed because of internal divisions among the partners over the appropriate strategy. The conservative GWVA favoured a non-partisan approach, while the more radical Grand Army of United Veterans advocated the drafting of a "soldiers' platform," including the right of recall. "[W]hen the wishes of the veteran seemed at such cross-purposes...one can readily see why the Government was confused, why the public did not know just what the veteran wanted, and why the veteran himself was not sure what was happening and why."15

Table 25. Organizations joining the Dominion Veterans' Alliance, 1922-25

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Date of formation</th>
<th>Headquarters</th>
<th>Number of members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1919</td>
<td>1922</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GWVA</td>
<td>1917</td>
<td>Ottawa</td>
<td>200,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Army &amp; Navy Vets</td>
<td>1919</td>
<td>Winnipeg</td>
<td>40,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imperial Vets</td>
<td>1919</td>
<td></td>
<td>50,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Army</td>
<td>1920</td>
<td>Toronto</td>
<td>80,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canadian Legion</td>
<td>1921</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amputations Ass'n</td>
<td>1919</td>
<td></td>
<td>1,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T.B. Vets Ass'n</td>
<td>1921</td>
<td></td>
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SOURCE: 1919 membership figures are cited in Minutes of Evidence, Special Committee on Soldiers' Civil Re-establishment, House of Commons Journals, 1919, app. no. 1, p. 747; 1922 figures are taken from Canadian Annual Review, 1922, pp. 873, 877; and 1925 figures are cited by Manion, House of Commons Debates, 1925, p. 1502.
The new Alliance drew attention to 'burnt-out' cases during hearings of the 1922 House of Commons Special Committee on Pensions, Soldiers' Insurance and Re-establishment. Its spokesmen stressed that in the community at large "the general impression is that they have been rendered unemployable because of war service." In response to the Alliance's demand for federal action, the committee members recommended that existing sheltered employment facilities be made accessible to both elderly and prematurely aged veterans on the grounds that the provision of work was more desirable than "enforced idleness." But as the vetcraft shops operated by the DSCR and the Red Cross were already full, these cases were denied entry.

The Alliance also brought the plight of 'burnt out' veterans to the attention of the 1924 Royal Commission on Pensions and Re-establishment. In response to their advocacy, the commissioners proposed that Ottawa establish special homes to house the indigent, prematurely aged veteran. They pointed out that their suggestion was hardly novel as such institutions had been operated successfully for many years in England and elsewhere. Their recommendation, however, was rejected by the Liberal government, and extra help was confined to pensioned veterans without dependents. The exclusion of their non-pensioned counterparts condemned them to continued dependence upon private and public charity, or the streets, for their existence.

Handicapped veterans also made an isolated attempt to secure legislative action during Prime Minister King's first term of office. A majority of the various national disability-oriented organizations decided not to participate in the Alliance, including the Vancouver-based Federated Disabled Veterans of Canada, a coalition formed in 1921. This federation took the initiative to link the cause of 'burnt out' veterans with the civilian old age pensions movement. In the summer preceding the 1925 election the Disabled Veterans, with
"a voting power of 6,000," approached S.F. Tolmie, then Conservative MP for Victoria. Their demands included a pension for destitute veterans in the 50-plus age group, who enlisted in middle age and who were broken down in health as a result of their war service. In response to their request for official party approval of their demands, Tolmie wrote to his leader seeking a commitment. But neither the official opposition nor the governing Liberals took up the cause of veterans during the subsequent campaign. Instead, they focused upon the more pressing issues of tariff policy, transportation, immigration and Senate reform, upon which the electorate returned a "hung jury" verdict.

The Liberal government's persistent refusal during its first term of office to recognize the claims of veterans suffering from premature senility reflected mainly cost considerations. Disability pensions were the costliest item of re-establishment, with $336,810,000 expended up to the end of the 1923-24 fiscal year, so containment of the scheme, not expansion, was the order of the day. By refusing to accept that the handicaps of 'burnt out' veterans were related to war service, the cabinet were able to literally pass the buck for their maintenance to the traditional relieving authorities.

The Concerted Campaign, 1926-30

The campaign to secure legislative action for 'burnt out' cases intensified during the second half of the decade mainly because of the unification of the ex-soldiers' movement. Following the creation of the Legion in November 1925, organized veterans engaged in concerted lobbying to secure federal provision for their non-pensionable disabled comrades, and their efforts attracted support from Conservative MPs. These advocates, though, faced
an uphill battle since some members of the governing Liberal Party and senior administrators were not convinced of the merits of the claims of non-pensioners.

Advocates:

In November 1925 the sizeable GWVA merged with five smaller groups, the Grand Army of United Veterans, Imperial Veterans, the existing Legion, TB Veterans and Disabled Veterans, to form the Canadian Legion of the British Empire Service League. Although the 60,000-strong Army and Navy Veterans and the majority of the disability-oriented organizations decided not to join, the new Legion could claim to represent majority opinion among the 225,000 discharged men still enrolled in associations, as its combined membership totalled 160,000. This development represented a significant advance over the previous fragmentation; and the new Legion soon became "a powerful voice that could not be stifled or ignored."

Local branches of the new unity movement in British Columbia pressed the claims of the prematurely aged veterans during the turbulent 1926 parliamentary session, when the political survival of the minority Liberal government was at stake. Their separate representations illustrated the teething problems involved in the process of merger. On March 17th the Victoria branch of the Legion forwarded a resolution to the federal cabinet suggesting that its initiative for the civilian elderly should allow certain preferences in age, residence and allowable income for unemployable veterans; and on the following day members of the Victoria GWVA passed a similar resolution. Their demands were subsequently voiced in the federal House by B.C. Conservative backbenchers, but were resisted by the Liberal government.

The Legion's subsequent efforts to secure legislative action were waged in concert with their spokesmen inside the House of Commons. These MPs all made
direct references to Legion demands in the course of the advocacy, and were members of the Conservative opposition following the 1926 election (see table 26). Only two had direct links with organized veterans: J.A. Clark, a GWVA founder, and L.J. Ladner, an honorary GWVA member. Their involvement reflected a mixture of motives. Clark and R.J. Manion were ex-officers who felt the same sense of obligation for the welfare of their comrades as had existed on the front lines. The remainder represented constituencies with relatively high proportions of veterans. Besides Legion spokesmen, there were other supporters of the veterans' cause inside the House who avoided mention of specific group representations. These MPs were drawn from all parties, except the two-man Labour group, and all regions, with the noticeable exception of Quebec. As table 26 reveals, most sympathizers were not ex-soldiers. Their involvement was presumably motivated by humanitarianism, because they all shared the popular perception that veterans were a culturally deserving group.

While agreeing that something had to be done for unemployable non-pensioners, the advocates in the House were divided over the questions of eligibility and jurisdiction. Their differences of opinion surfaced during the debate on the 1927 old age pensions bill. Captain R.J. Manion and Brigadier-General Clark sponsored an amendment incorporating the Legion's suggestion to lower the age requirement for shell-shock cases to 65 from the stipulated age of 70. Other Conservatives, however, questioned its suitability. Dr. P. McGibbon suggested substituting unemployability for the lower age requirement; and another physician, J.W. Edwards, rejected the proposed joint method of financing arguing that Ottawa should assume the full costs of maintenance for men handicapped as a result of war service.26

Following the government's rejection of the amendment, the proponents agreed to press for inclusion of 'burnt-out' cases under the federal war
Table 26. Legion spokesmen and sympathizers in the House of Commons, 1926-29

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<tr>
<td>Clark</td>
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<td>Gen. Infy.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Manion</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ont</td>
<td>Doctor</td>
<td>Capt. Medic. MC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Price</td>
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<td>N.B.</td>
<td>Dentist</td>
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<td>Lt-Col. Infy.</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<td>Major Infy. MC</td>
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<td>Capt.</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Farmer</td>
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<td>Sask</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sanderson</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ont</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>Capt. ?</td>
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<td>Vallance</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sask</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>&quot;</td>
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<td>UFO</td>
<td>Ont</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
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disability pensions plan. In reply to a question from O.B. Price (Con., Westmoreland), the Minister of Soldiers' Civil Re-establishment made it clear that the Liberal cabinet had no intention of amending the Pension Act to include those whose disabilities were not related to war service. His announcement sparked a stormy protest from the Dominion Command of the Legion which sent a letter to all MPs asking that they remain in session long enough to consider their legislative proposals. Branch members across Canada joined in the protest and made their wishes known to their local MPs. "Public indignation was aroused, newspapers attacked the Government's stand, and finally events came to a head during a 6-hour debate in the House." Although the purpose of the debate was to discuss changes in the composition of the pensions appeal board, it was dominated by discussion of cases of hardship among non-pensioners. Speakers from all parties, except the Labour group, urged the government not to forget "...the claims of men who came back maimed for life." They included two prominent members of the medical profession, Manion and McGibbon, who stressed the novelty of these veterans' handicaps, especially their mental and nervous disorders that defied diagnosis beyond comparing the patient to "a battery which was discharged." The new Minister of Defence, however, was not convinced that these disabilities were "incurred through service." His cabinet colleague, Dr. J. King, was equally sceptical, promising only to consolidate the Pension Act next year after an investigation.

In response to a reminder from Bennett, the new leader of the Conservative opposition, Prime Minister King appointed a special committee early in the 1928 session to consider new legislation and amendments to existing laws. The chairman was Major C.J. Power, who had served overseas with the 14th Royal Montreal Battalion and, after being twice wounded, was invalided out in 1918.
Eight of the other 15 committee members had served overseas during World War I, and their ranks included three known proponents, Clark, McGibbon and Sanderson. Among the remainder, only Adshead and Speakman were on record as sympathizers.

Representatives of various veterans' associations presented the case for special provision for 'broken-down' cases. Although they agreed on the necessity for legislative action, they presented conflicting remedies and so lost an opportunity to present a united front. W.S. Dobbs and J.F. Marsh of the Canadian Pensioners' Association (CPA) told the committee members that out of 1,100 applicants to the Toronto office of the Canadian Employment Service, 238 were 'burnt-out' veterans not in receipt of pensions, and that many had been employed since the war until their sudden breakdowns. For these sufferers of war neurosis, Marsh proposed that "an allowance be made, instead of arranging it in the relief department." But this remedy was not incorporated into the CPA's written brief that recommended instead the creation of a federal rehabilitation board in Toronto and other larger centres to deal exclusively with cases referred by the Employment Service. A CPA spokesman at the hearings urged the committee to sanction its establishment, as it would go a long way to help those men who have no confidence in themselves, and who have reached that stage as described by some writer not long ago, 'To dig I am not able and to beg I am ashamed.'

But the major associations of able-bodied veterans disagreed over the merits of the board proposal. The Army and Navy Veterans favoured making provision for cases of premature senility by amendment of the civilian Old Age Pension Act. In contrast, Legion officials endorsed the idea of a federal board in their submission. Furthermore, they suggested that for the utterly disabled with dependents, one of its functions would be to determine "...some form of allowances without having recourse to charity."
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The members of the 1928 special committee, however, rejected the idea of an allowance to remedy the plight of 'broken down' destitute veterans. In their final report they pleaded lack of time and resources for their failure to define any policy to deal with "the most serious problem which has arisen in connection with our ex-soldiers." To meet pressing cases of need, they recommended a number of temporary expedients, such as expansion of vetcraft shops. At the same time the committee members stressed the need for an immediate investigation in order to frame a policy that, they were convinced, "must eventually be adopted by the Department."37

Opponents:

The rationale used by the 1928 committee members to justify their failure to recommend a concrete remedy masked internal divisions of opinion concerning the desirability of aiding 'burnt-out' cases. The reluctance of a few Liberal backbenchers was also shared by senior administrators and cost-conscious members of the Liberal cabinet.

Not all the ex-officer members of the 1928 special committee were sympathetic to the idea of special federal treatment for 'burnt-out' cases. Their opposition reflected the belief prevalent among senior members of the political elite that the war-disabled soldiers earned their right to a pension, whereas other categories received aid merely as a gratuity or as a gift.38 For example, Sir Eugene Fiset (Lib., Rimouski), a Boer War veteran and ex-Deputy Minister of Militia and Defence, objected to a Legion suggestion that non-pensioned, single men should receive free institutional care in special soldiers' homes while their counterparts receiving pensions for minor disabilities should contribute towards their costs of maintenance. He clearly perceived the former as less 'deserving' than their war-disabled comrades. Another Liberal committee member, Captain Thorson, a World War I veteran and
former Dean of Manitoba Law School, shared his perception. He opposed the idea of the 'broken down' non-pensioner with dependents receiving a federal allowance on the grounds that such aid would be "tantamount to pensioning him."  

Civilian Liberal MPs on the 1928 special committee were also opposed. They were sceptical of the claim made by CPA spokesmen that cases of premature senility fell under federal jurisdiction because their condition was traceable to war service. M. McLean (Melfort) suggested instead that their neuroses could be due to "industrial strain;" and he later objected to the idea that non-pensionable unemployables with dependents who never saw overseas service on account of their age could qualify for special treatment, arguing that their maintenance was "purely a provincial responsibility." A colleague from Manitoba, E.A. McPherson, also doubted whether the handicaps of elderly veterans were war-related, when arguing that "there will be a lot of cases where the moral liability of the Dominion, I think, is very far-fetched."  

The reservations voiced by Liberal backbenchers were shared by senior bureaucrats in the DSCR. Although the latter were not averse to making further provision for unemployable pensioners receiving federal relief, they balked at the idea of statutory benefits for 'burnt out' cases. Their resistance reflected a desire to protect the special status of their war-disabled clients from contamination by a group with questionable handicaps, as well as cost considerations.  

The initial investigation of the issue by the bureaucracy was prompted by the decision of the federal cabinet to include the question of employment of war-disabled pensioners on the agenda of the 1927 Dominion-Provincial Conference. E. Flexman, Director of Administration in the DSCR, was assigned the task of inquiry, and his recommendations were forwarded to the Deputy
Minister of Labour on October 31st. He pointed out that the unemployment situation among disabled pensioners was "a great deal better" than for civilians. In February 1927 the respective proportions were 4.4 percent and 6.5 percent, with the bulk of unemployed pensioners concentrated in cities of Ontario, Quebec and British Columbia. But Flexman estimated that at least 75 percent of pensioners on the DSCR relief rolls were "practically unemployable" owing to their age, and most only received pensions for disabilities rated below 50 percent. He presented two options to deal with these cases: continuation of federal relief or creation of new machinery to train 'burnt out' cases, and came down in favour of the former on grounds of cost. "The amount expended at the present time on relief is not large, and whilst it is probably not the most satisfactory, is probably the least expensive way of taking care of the situation." Flexman then proposed changes in the method of relieving unemployable pensioners. He suggested that either their pensions should be augmented to current relief rates or that Ottawa should transfer these cases to their municipalities and contribute 50 percent towards their relief. If the latter alternative was chosen, he advocated similar aid for non-pensioned 'burnt out' cases in order to ensure uniform treatment of indigent ex-servicemen and to satisfy community expectations. "There is a feeling among the public generally that the condition among these men is due in large measure to the stress of active service, and that the Federal Government should assume responsibility for their care." 42

For Flexman, the advantages of the proposed federal-municipal method of financing were twofold: relief administration would be simplified and Ottawa's costs would be no higher than the present system. He, however, anticipated objections to his proposal, viz., differences in treatment accorded to pensioners by various municipalities, and the "strong possibility" that the
local authorities would refuse to assume responsibility for pensioners. If these obstacles proved insurmountable, Fleksman suggested that Ottawa reimburse the province or municipality currently maintaining unemployable non-pensioners 50 percent of the costs of caring for these permanent charges. His suggestions, however, were not acted upon, probably because of protests voiced by provincial Premiers at the 1927 Conference, which are discussed below.

The next investigation by senior bureaucrats was undertaken at the time of the hearings of the 1928 Special Committee. An eight-man committee was established in the new Department of Pensions and National Health (DPNH) under the chairmanship of E.H. Scammell, the Assistant Deputy Minister, to prepare the Department's position on the question of care and treatment of problem cases. At their March 23rd meeting the chairman discussed at some length the question of extending relief to the bona fide non-pensioner because he was often "in even more desperate circumstances than the pensioner, and remedial measures were urgently required." The other participants, however, were unable to resolve the question of jurisdiction, even though they agreed "that action along those lines is really necessary at the present time." The subject was discussed again on April 5th. The only outsider on the committee, R.A. Rigg, Superintendent of the civilian ESC, explained very fully the attitudes of Ottawa and the provinces towards unemployment relief, citing Premier Ferguson's recent rejection of a request for aid from the township of York as evidence that relief was purely a municipal responsibility. "It was finally agreed that this Committee could not see its way clear to recommend expansion of the scope of relief to include non-pensioners." 

The bureaucrats' political superiors were equally reluctant to sanction the idea of special federal treatment for 'burnt out' cases. Although the
federal treasury reaped the benefits of general economic prosperity during the second half of the decade, the Liberal government was not prepared to undertake new, costly obligations. When rejecting MPs' pleas for extension of the Pension Act to cover cases of premature senility in 1927, the Minister of Soldiers' Civil Re-establishment bluntly told the House that the cabinet was not prepared to entertain any proposal that "...would entail a very large addition to our pension bill."45

The Liberal cabinet's desire to cut costs was manifest in its abortive attempt to persuade the provincial Premiers to contribute towards the maintenance of unemployable pensioners. They placed the subject of "unemployment insurance for handicapped veterans" on the agenda of the 1927 Dominion-Provincial Conference. But only B.C.'s Attorney-General showed any interest in this item.46 Spokesmen of the other provinces were opposed to discussing relief matters with Ottawa at that time, especially when they involved new, costly commitments, as chapter 4 documented. The fiscal conservatism of provincial politicians, therefore, effectively ruled out the prospect of a joint remedy for the problem of 'burnt out' cases.

Precipitants:

Although the prospects of a federal initiative appeared remote on the eve of the Great Depression, a renewed agitation by the champions of the cause, combined with electoral pressures, pushed the issue of federal aid for 'burnt out' cases higher up the political agenda, where the recommendations of sympathetic bureaucrats smoothed the way for legislative action.

The opposition of the Liberal government did not deter the major advocates from continuing to press the case for legislative action. At their 1928 convention Legion delegates instructed their Dominion Command to continue its study of injustices and to pay particular attention to the needs of prematurely
aged men. In the following year they endorsed their executive's suggestion to lobby for institutional care for non-pensionable single men and for the payment of "living" allowances to non-pensionable veterans with dependents who sustained disability or injury in a theatre of war. Their promotion of the cause of the non-pensioner was not motivated solely by humanitarianism. It also reflected vested interest, because Legion officials perceived the presence of unemployables in the labour market as deterring prospective employers from hiring returned men. According to Colonel LaFleche, its 1930 President, a legislative initiative "would remove from the labour market - and I want to be charitable here - what I term the lower strata, so far as capacity for work is concerned."47

The Legion's renewed agitation attracted the support of elected officials of western cities and provinces. At their conference on unemployment held in Winnipeg in January 1930, they discussed the plight of amputees and 'burnt out' ex-servicemen, and passed a resolution urging Ottawa to provide institutional care for unmarried men and to pay a "living" allowance for married men with dependents. All the delegates regarded these categories of veterans as "deserving the sympathetic consideration" of the federal authorities and employers.48

The subsequent development of the campaign, however, owed less to the efforts of interest groups than to electoral pressures. After the close of the 1929 session rumours of a federal election were widespread, and both the Prime Minister and the leader of the opposition went on speaking tours across the country. Although the state of the economy was the major issue, King did not ignore veterans' concerns. During his western tour in the fall of 1929 he made direct appeals for ex-soldiers' votes. While in Vancouver in mid-November he repeated his 1922 pledge of generous treatment for veterans and their
dependents. His theme was echoed by J. Ralston, the Defence Minister, in his address to delegates attending the Legion convention in late November. Their retiring President, General Sir Arthur Currie, also made an "eloquent plea" for sympathetic understanding of the veterans' position: "Our aim must be to see that no man who went to the service of his country must be permitted by that country to suffer want because of war disability." Currie was a towering figure in the ex-soldiers' movement, having been Commander of the Canadian Corps during the war, and so his message received widespread publicity. One week later the Prime Minister replied to Currie at a public meeting in London, Ontario. King repeated his 1922 pledge and promised a review of pension legislation. His response was motivated primarily by electoral considerations, but there was another spur to federal action. The onset of the depression "...emphasized the need of remedial measures."

A review of the Pension Act was already underway. In the fall of 1929 Dr. J. King, the Minister of Pensions and National Health, had appointed a three-man committee to review existing provision for unemployable pensioners, and to investigate the feasibility of implementing his own preference for maintenance of this category by a statutory allowance similar to the civilian old age pension precedent rather than by expansion of the Pension Act. It was chaired by Major A.M. Wright, the chief administrative assistant in the Department, and the other members were Major F.S. Burke, a doctor employed in its Medical Services Division, and W.S. Woods, a member of the Soldiers' Settlement Board, who was summoned to Ottawa to serve on the committee. These officials had all served overseas and their exposure to the pressure of trench warfare made them sympathetic to the plight of all 'burnt out' cases with front-line service. After extensive consultation with chiefly Legion spokesmen, they concluded that the indigent, prematurely aged veteran, partially or wholly
non-pensionable, should be relieved by a statutory "economic allowance" similar in form to the civilian old age pension. The DPNH officials' choice of means-tested benefits for relieving unemployable veterans was dictated primarily by cost considerations, rather than by a desire to achieve uniformity of treatment with the civilian elderly. They opted for the payment of statutory benefits over extension of federal unemployment relief on the grounds that the costs of relief "would be as great and probably greater" because "drifters," i.e., seasonally unemployed veterans, as well as unemployables would apply for aid. Their choice was also a cheaper option than the Legion's 1929 proposal to provide specialized institutional care for non-pensioned, single men, because the latter would involve heavy capital expenditure. Moreover, the proposed monthly allowance of $20 represented a less costly means of relieving both the 200 single, wholly unemployable pensioners currently maintained in veterans' hospitals at a per diem cost of $3 and the problem cases on the DPNH relief rolls, because the officials anticipated, erroneously, that the removal of the latter would obviate the need for federal relief machinery. The imposition of a means test was also a method of controlling spiralling future costs, for, according to Major Burke, the departmental committee members were struck by the "astonishing" revelation that all front-line ex-soldiers, totalling 280,000 in 1930, would become unemployable as a result of the aging process.

The Liberal cabinet readily accepted their bureaucrats' recommendations presumably because it combined both manageable costs and electoral payoffs. But they were not prepared to endorse the proposed minimum age limit of 60, and altered it to 65 in order to save an estimated $700,000 per annum. They left intact, though, the officials' suggestion that younger, permanently unemployable cases should also be eligible for federal aid because of the
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electoral payoff involved. According to the Deputy Minister of Pensions, these were "the type of men that the public generally believe were injured by their military service. They say, 'I knew this young man before he went to war; he has come back now and is a wreck.'"56

Early in the 1930 session the Prime Minister announced that the veterans' bill would be referred to a special committee similar in composition to the 1928 inquiry, and suggested to the House that the question of war veterans' allowances "should be kept altogether out of party politics."57 On March 4th the Minister of Pensions introduced the resolution, echoing his leader's plea for non-partisanship and enthusing that: "In making provision for the non-pensionable man, Canada will be a pioneer."58

It was difficult, however, for the Conservative opposition to endorse the concept of war veterans' allowances in a spirit of non-partisanship, because its members disapproved of the proposed remedy. Much of the debate on the resolution was dominated by Conservative protests over the principle of means-tested allowances, because they regarded unemployable war veterans as deserving better provision than a mere "old age dole." Dr. McGibbon led the attack, arguing that provision for unemployables should be made via changes in pension legislation rather than a separate scheme of allowances, because the latter deprived ex-servicemen of their rights. Other veterans' sympathizers in the House, such as J. Arthurs and Ross, also opposed discriminatory treatment. Their leader, Bennett, argued forcibly as well that the veteran should not have to meet the criterion of "pauperism" imposed upon the civilian applicant for an old age pension. In the case of "men who have offered their lives for the state...our duty is to see that the sacrifice of these men is not in vain."59

Bennett's speech prompted the Prime Minister to remind his political opponents not "to make party capital out of this question." He justified his
government's choice of a separate measure for 'burnt out' cases over amending the Pension Act on the following ground: "Rightly or wrongly, there has grown up a certain prejudice against the Pension Board." He then rejected Bennett's charge that the measure would pauperize veterans, as it was based on old age pension legislation. He drew a distinction between "pauperism" and "honourable penury," and contended that neither old age pensions nor war veterans' allowances were "acts of charity" on the part of government, but rights of needy citizens.60

But the Conservatives continued their attack. In the second reading stage the vast majority of the 14 speakers from the opposition benches favoured provision through amendment to pension legislation over the proposed system of allowances.61 The method of administration was also attacked during the passage of the bill. Members of the Conservative opposition registered a loud protest against administration by the DPNH, because they trusted neither its officials nor its Minister to make impartial decisions. Clark, a Legion spokesman, argued that "[s]uch a procedure would call for favouritism."62 His plea for administration by an independent body was supported by his leader and other backbenchers. But Dr. King rejected their demands, arguing that his officials were more competent to decide on the eligibility of unemployables and that veterans favoured administration by his department over administration by the Pension Board.63

The proposed method of administration, however, was not universally approved by influential spokesmen of ex-soldiers. During the committee stage General Currie, Grand President of the Legion, opposed it on the grounds that officials would be subject to the orders of the minister, "and we know that ministers have no rest from those who want something." He suggested instead the appointment of a Legion representative and other honorary members in order to
save the Minister and his successors "a great deal of embarrassment." McGibbon, a sympathizer of the veterans' cause, was also opposed to leaving determination of the eligibility of cases under the age of 60 in the hands of a departmental committee. "I think no political committee should have that power, and it is absolutely a political committee when it is under the control of a minister, no matter what party is in power." He suggested administration by an independent board and his suggestion was endorsed subsequently in an in camera discussion. This change was reluctantly accepted by Dr. King.

Another term of the resolution, concerning the minimum age requirement, was also altered by the 1930 committee members charged with the task of amendment. In his testimony Major Burke implied that he and his colleagues in the DPNH who drafted the original bill were unhappy with their political superiors' decision to increase the minimum age requirement from 60 to 65. He suggested that, as the immediate costs of aiding the older age group were "not in excess," a lower age requirement was still feasible, amounting to $2,000,000, an estimate that turned out to be on the high side (see table 27). His plea was accepted by the committee chairman, who decided to "amend the bill right now to 60." The officials' suggestion, though, regarding residency was rejected. Their recommendation of a minimum of five years continuous residence in Canada, to conform with the requirement for civilian old age pensioners, was reduced initially by cabinet politicians to three years because, according to Major Wright, their choice was considered "unfair." During the committee stage Arthurs, a Conservative veterans' sympathizer, suggested that no residency requirement should be imposed upon Canadian citizens, because it discriminated against men forced to leave Canada to earn a livelihood. Other members, as well as the committee chairman, Major Power, disagreed, favouring some safeguard
along the lines of six months or one year. They were supported by LaFleche, the President of the Legion, and his plea for a reduction voiced later in the hearings spurred the Special Committee to accept one year after an in camera discussion of the subject.66

Table 27. Actual and estimated federal expenditure on war veterans' allowances, 1930/31 - 1938/39 fiscal years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total No.</th>
<th>Expenditure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Actual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930/1</td>
<td>2,219</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$ 318,029</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931/2</td>
<td>3,825</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1,039,551</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1932/3</td>
<td>4,867</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1,646,314</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1933/4</td>
<td>5,837</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2,017,075</td>
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<tr>
<td>1934/5</td>
<td>7,186</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2,017,075</td>
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<tr>
<td>1935/6</td>
<td>8,820</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2,530,396</td>
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<tr>
<td>1936/7</td>
<td>11,306</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3,178,616b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1937/8</td>
<td>13,244</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3,898,769</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1938/9</td>
<td>20,010</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SOURCES: Figures relating to actual numbers and expenditures are taken from Canada, Reports of the Work of the Department of Pensions and National Health, 1930/31-1938/39, passim. Estimated figures are cited in appendix no. 7, of the Special Committee on Pensions and Returned Soldiers' Problems, House of Commons Journals, 1930, app. 1, p. 298.

aEstimates were based on the assumption that 40 percent of veterans aged 60 and over would require aid.

bAmendments to the original act in 1936 and 1938 increased the scope of the scheme and hence its cost.
The officials' recommendations to incorporate financial eligibility requirements identical to those relating to the civilian elderly were also altered during the bill's passage. Their suggestion to disqualify veterans who disposed of their property in the five years preceding their application was criticized for its harshness by two Conservatives. After pointing out that such disposal could occur in order to provide for dependents, these MPs attacked the drafter of the clause for suggesting that "the veterans were perpetuating a fraud upon the people of this country." Their charges stung officials in the DPNH, who explained during the committee stage that the clause was never intended "to affect the case of a man who was right up against it." An amendment to allow exclusion only if fraud was suspected was accepted subsequently by the committee members. Another recommendation of the officials, limiting deductions from casual earnings or gifts to $120, was also rejected. The committee chairman accepted the argument of McGibbon, the chief opponent, that veterans would not keep track of their earnings and so the costs of checking would be "excessive."

The various amendments made by the special committee were approved unanimously at the third reading stage on May 1, 1930. The bill passed smoothly throughly the Senate and received royal assent at the close of the session. Although the legislation did not become operative until after the election, credit for its passage was claimed by the Liberal government during the campaign.

The 1930 War Veterans' Allowance Act was not drafted hastily. It was "probably the most carefully prepared statute" pertaining to ex-soldiers enacted by the Canadian Parliament. Moreover, its drafting reflected a pattern of interaction between groups and bureaucrats, more common in modern policymaking. The involvement of Legion officials in the process of policy
formulation contrasts with the non-participation of their Australian counterparts, who were "never" involved in the drafting stage, at least prior to 1966.72 Legion spokesmen, in conjunction with DPNH officials, determined the scope of the scheme, with the former securing inclusion of non-pensionable veterans with front-line service and the latter incorporating pensioners with partial disabilities. Bureaucrats also chose the minimum age requirement, but their wishes only prevailed when they persuaded backbenchers serving on the 1930 Special Committee to overturn the decision of cabinet ministers. However, the wishes of both appointed and elected officials concerning the residency requirement were disregarded by veterans' sympathizers on the committee. DPNH officials, presumably acting upon instructions from the cabinet, devised the scale of benefits, income limits and the method of financing, but once again backbenchers were instrumental in securing changes concerning property ownership and casual earnings. All these provisions relating to finance, except the method of raising revenue, reflected the precedent of old age pensions legislation (see appendix B). The method of administration represented a major concession, extracted by Legion spokesmen and their allies on opposition benches from a reluctant minister.

A Review

The socio-economic setting had a limited impact on the agitation to secure statutory allowances for non-pensioned, unemployable veterans. The 1920-25 depression created abnormal unemployment that gave rise to the initial struggle. But it was not used by decision-makers as a rationale for delaying action, because they received only sporadic, uncoordinated demands in the first half of the decade. Like the old age pensions movement, the subsequent prosperity provided the Liberal government with a means of financing allowances, but it offered no guarantee that action would, in fact, take place.
The cultural context exerted a more direct influence than the economic environment. Widespread public sympathy for veterans' claims persisted after demobilization, a trend that ran counter to the Australian experience. Its presence partly accounts for the relative brevity of the agitation, because, spared the necessity of converting others outside Parliament to their cause, the advocates could focus their attention upon convincing reluctant cabinet politicians and their senior advisors that 'burnt out' cases were worthy of special treatment. The attitudes of the opponents inside government shed light on the distinctions made at the time between different categories among the culturally deserving group of veterans. They perceived the ex-soldier with major disabilities as the most deserving because he had earned his right to a state-financed pension, whereas aid for his non-pensioned comrade, especially if his disability was psychological rather than physical, carried the same stigma of charity attached to public provision for the civilian needy. Unlike the preceding movements for statutory benefits, foreign precedents were rarely mentioned in the course of the veterans' agitation. Instead, Canada qualified as a 'leader' in making provision for destitute, prematurely aged World War I veterans.

The institutional framework also had a more direct impact than one might anticipate. Although the original Canadian constitution assigned Ottawa jurisdiction over the category of veterans, it attempted to avoid taking over the care and maintenance of ex-soldiers suffering from premature senility and other nervous diseases. As chapter 3 documented, its 1920 decision to follow the British example and treat all, except those with major disabilities, as civilians was motivated primarily by cost considerations. Faced with an increasing pensions bill during King's first term of office, the Liberal government stiffened its resolve to resist demands for expansion. The
traditional relief-giving authorities, however, were equally determined to avoid being saddled with the continued support of unemployable ex-soldiers. The ensuing stalemate stemmed from the blurring of the distinction between veteran and civilian, a merger that was not anticipated by the framers of the original division of legislative powers. It also confirms the proposition of Birch (1955) that conflicts over the method of financing delayed the introduction of social welfare legislation.

Concerning societal actors, the case study represents essentially another variant of group politics, even though social control politics was visible in the initial struggle when the issue of veterans' relief involved both physically fit and disabled men. However, the threat of disorder soon disappeared, to be replaced by more orthodox pressure applied by organized veterans. Following the unification of their major associations in late 1925, they began a concerted campaign to secure federal provision for their non-pensionable, disabled comrades. Although the new Legion represented mainly able-bodied veterans, their efforts were supported by the various disability-oriented organizations representing segments of the client group. The active cooperation of the latter represented a novel form of participation, contrasting sharply with the apathy of the civilian elderly and sole-support mothers. The Legion's cause was actively promoted inside the federal House by a small group of MPs, drawn exclusively from the Conservative opposition, who acted as its spokesmen. Other sympathetic MPs, representing all parties except the Labour group, also endorsed the veterans' cause, but their differences of opinion over the appropriate level of jurisdiction provided ammunition for a cost-conscious Liberal government to resist demands for inclusion of 'burnt out' cases under the civilian old age pensions scheme. The subsequent efforts of Legion spokesmen inside and outside the House to secure inclusion of such
cases via expansion of the Pension Act also faltered on the issue of jurisdiction.

Inside government, both bureaucrats and politicians participated, a combination of forces not as visible in the preceding movements for statutory benefits. In common with the agitation for relief land settlement, the active participation of bureaucrats in the concerted campaign partly reflects the type of source material used. In both cases it was also a direct result of their experience in administering schemes for segments of the population who shared some common characteristics with the potential beneficiaries of the policy under investigation. Unlike DIC bureaucrats, though, officials in the DSCR, far from playing a creative role, initially opposed demands for special treatment of 'burnt out' cases. Their divergent positions on the issue of welfare innovations confirmed the findings of Heclo (1974) concerning the ambivalent roles played by civil servants in Britain and Sweden in income maintenance developments. The advice offered by senior bureaucrats in the DSCR and its successor, the DPNH, reinforced cabinet politicians' reluctance to assume new, costly obligations.

As in the preceding movements, the cabinet's subsequent decision to take action was motivated primarily by electoral calculations. With an election due in 1930, the Legion's 1929 demand for some statutory remedy for 'burnt out' cases became politically salient because both politicians and bureaucrats perceived widespread popular support for them. In response, Prime Minister King promised a review of war pensions legislation and, acting upon the instructions of their political superior, the sympathetic officials assigned to this task recommended payment of statutory allowances for unemployable veterans in distressed circumstances. Their recommendation was accepted by the Liberal government because it provided an inexpensive means of redeeming past pledges
of generous treatment for Canada's war-disabled. Even though the Conservative opposition expressed dissatisfaction with the choice of the assistance technique of income support, they endorsed the legislation, thus revealing their own sensitivity to electoral pressures. But they succeeded in securing important amendments during the bill's passage, at the expense mainly of bureaucrats.

Unlike all previous struggles, the agitation to secure allowances for destitute casualties of World War I was not marked by a clash between economic interests, an omission indicating the extent of public support that existed for the claims of disabled veterans. Nonetheless, it illustrated once more the decisive influence of pressure groups in interwar welfare politics. Veterans' promotion of the cause of their handicapped comrades was, in fact, more successful than their previous intense lobbying on behalf of fit ex-soldiers, as the Legion not only stimulated serious consideration of the issue but also shaped the content of the statutory initiative. Cost-conscious cabinet politicians, though, retained control over the choice of design as well as the timing of its introduction, as in all previous cases. Their remedy for 'burnt-out' veterans reflected the influence of the 1927 pensions initiative for the civilian elderly, a precedent that also marked the remaining interwar innovation in public assistance, as the next chapter reveals.
CHAPTER 10

PENSIONS FOR THE BLIND, 1937

In 1937 the federal government amended the 1927 Old Age Pension Act to provide pensions for the unemployable blind aged 40 and over, a category of the dependent poor not previously singled out for special treatment. At first glance, this legislative initiative appears to be merely a minor offshoot of the original plan involving a reduction in its minimum age requirement for a small, select segment of the civilian disabled population. This impression is also bolstered by the fact that from the outset the cause of pensions for the needy blind was inextricably linked with the old age pensions movement. However, there are crucial differences between the two campaigns that are overlooked in existing studies. Apart from the unique configuration of circumstances surrounding any policy departure, the major advocates outside Parliament represented political forces distinct from the participants in the struggle for old age pensions. This difference, as well as the linkages between the two movements, are illustrated in the course of analyzing the political forces shaping the 1937 initiative.

Background

It was only after World War I that the issue of state aid for the destitute blind became salient in Canada. Prior to 1918 the options facing this category were restricted mainly to institutional care or vagrancy. The proportion of the dependent poor among the total blind population is not known, as census data from 1901 onwards recorded only numbers in non-productive or unspecified occupations and gave no information as to their means of support (see table 28). However, impressionistic evidence suggests that it was very
high. In the 1880s an estimated two-thirds of the blind in Nova Scotia either resided in poorhouses or begged for a living. Their situation was probably not atypical because the blind were generally shunned by Victorian society owing to the fact that syphilis was a primary cause of blindness in the nineteenth century. Besides the taboo of venereal disease, individuals blind from birth or early childhood suffered an additional handicap. They were treated as mental defectives, wholly incapable of doing anything, and kept "out of sight" by their families.

Table 28. Total blind population and numbers in non-productive and unspecified occupations, 1901-21 census years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>1901 Total</th>
<th>1901 Non-Prod.</th>
<th>1901 Unsp.</th>
<th>1911 Total</th>
<th>1911 Non-Prod.</th>
<th>1911 Unsp.</th>
<th>1921 Total</th>
<th>1921 Non-Prod.</th>
<th>1921 Unsp.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>3279</td>
<td>590</td>
<td>644</td>
<td>3238</td>
<td>364</td>
<td>1258</td>
<td>4072</td>
<td>3033b</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P.E.I.</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N.S.</td>
<td>485</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>332</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>514</td>
<td>370</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N.B.</td>
<td>283</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>232</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>242</td>
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<td>Quebec</td>
<td>1063</td>
<td>264</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>1117</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>499</td>
<td>1160</td>
<td>936</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ont.</td>
<td>1035</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>242</td>
<td>1077</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>331</td>
<td>1468</td>
<td>1051</td>
<td>32</td>
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<tr>
<td>Man.</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sask.</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alta.</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.C.</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


\(^a\)Figures for Canada include the territories.

\(^b\)This sharp increase probably reflects the decline in the number of blind persons employed in agriculture either on a wage basis or in return for board.
The absence of special welfare programs for the needy adult blind in Canada contrasted sharply with developments in the United States. Starting with Indiana in 1840, state legislatures enacted public assistance schemes to aid blind persons who could not work, so that by the end of the century the principle of special welfare programs for the blind financed by public funds was firmly established. Among countries in the British Empire, however, only Australia implemented a pensions scheme for the blind prior to 1920.

Although these initiatives were not copied in Canada, the welfare of blind children was not ignored. By 1918 residential schools provided academic and vocational education in all provinces. The Nazareth Institute (1861) in Montreal educated the young French-speaking blind from Quebec and elsewhere. In English Canada the Halifax School for the Blind (1871) served children in the three maritime provinces and the colony of Newfoundland; and the Ontario School for the Blind (1872) took pupils from the prairie provinces. In British Columbia no schooling was available until 1917, when Mrs. C.E. Burke started a small school in Vancouver that was later taken over by the provincial government.

Graduates of these institutions, however, had few opportunities to become self-supporting. They faced considerable prejudice in securing employment in the open labour market because their blindness was associated by the general public with "weakness of mind and complete physical incompetence." Moreover, they were deprived of alternative outlets, since prior to 1908 there were no facilities offering sheltered employment for the blind to work at trades learned in school, such as basket- and broom-making. In most cases their only recourse was to work at home and to supplement their irregular earnings with limited municipal relief. Individuals who became blind as adults, though, had even fewer options as there were no occupational training programs to
rehabilitate them. They were often reduced to being "poor mendicants, dependent upon the charity of strangers."\textsuperscript{8}

To remedy their plight, the blind themselves began to establish local organizations to provide employment, training and recreation. This development was triggered in part by their small numbers and scattered distribution, demographic traits that accounted for the original public indifference to their needs. It was also fostered by the spread of industry, because the simple tasks of an assembly line provided openings for groups not previously considered as sources of labour, and the increase in mechanization underlined the need for specialized training to enable the blind to operate machinery. Self-help was related as well to the growth of cities, because their concentration in urban areas and the availability of financial resources made organization feasible. Moreover, the impersonal social relations of urban life and the decline of the extended family eroded both the traditional ethic and methods of caring for sightless dependents, prompting them to develop their own facilities.\textsuperscript{9}

In 1908 the Montreal Association for the Blind was founded by Philip E. Layton, a blind Englishman who qualified as an organist before emigrating to Canada, where he became a successful manufacturer of musical instruments.\textsuperscript{10} Its goal was to ameliorate the conditions of the English-speaking blind in Quebec, and its facilities included workshops, a residential school and a small hostel for the elderly. Its founder was also instrumental in opening a broom factory in Ottawa which was taken over in 1914, when a local association was established to provide employment and training for the adult blind. The only other self-help groups established prior to World War I were the Associated Blind of Toronto (1890), the Vancouver-based Western Association of the Blind (1914) and two organizations in Halifax formed by graduates of the local school, the Home Teaching Society (1893) and the Maritime Association (1914).
If this local network was embryonic compared with both Britain and the U.S., nationwide voluntary provision qualifies as virtually dormant. The Canadian Free Library for the Blind was the only national organization serving blind adults until 1918. Its establishment in 1906 by Rev. E.B.F. Robinson of Markham, Ontario, was made possible by the granting of free postage on braille literature. After his death his wife moved the small library to Toronto. In 1913 she was succeeded by Dr. S.C. Swift, a blind graduate of McGill who was fluent in several languages. He and the library's president, Dr. C.R. Dickson, a physician who lost his sight as a result of X-ray experiments in 1917, played a crucial role in furthering the cause of the adult blind.

The First World War aided the efforts of Dickson and Swift because the return of the first blinded veterans focused national attention and sympathy on the newly blind and the problems of their rehabilitation. The total lack of after-care and training facilities in Canada contrasted sharply with British provision and provoked press comment. To remedy this situation, Swift advised federal officials to send the war-blinded still in Europe to St. Dunstan's Hostel in London, England, an institution founded by Sir Arthur Pearson to implement his new concept of rehabilitation stressing self help and independence. Upon their return to Canada, its graduates became the most vocal proponents of better treatment for a group, whose dependency had previously been regarded as illegitimate. They comprised a unique group among the sightless: they were young, they were war heroes, and they were bound by the service spirit of togetherness. Although they were only "a select few," their demands for regular work and sheltered employment attracted the publicity previously denied the invisible mass of civilian blind scattered across Canada. Besides the pleas of blinded veterans, the national appeal for funds to provide
care and training for the 43 civilians blinded in the Halifax explosion of December 1917 also contributed to greater public awareness.16

World War I also spurred the development of organized work for the adult blind at the national level. In the fall of 1916 Dickson and Swift asked two blinded veterans to join the library board to help with the expansion of its services. Faced with a financial crisis and the prospect of eviction, they also approached members of the Toronto Women's Musical Association to raise funds for a new building. Following their move in January 1917, they changed their name to the Canadian National Library for the Blind. This newly-formed group was asked by the federal government to take on the training of the war-blinded in return for funding. Its board members also drafted a constitution for a new, comprehensive service organization for blind civilians, and their application for a charter was approved in March 1918. "Thus the Canadian National Institute for the Blind took shape, a unique mixture of soldiers, civilians, sighted and blind - a cooperating body of staff, volunteers and government."17

Among the seven charter members of the Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB), Captain E.A. Baker played the pre-eminent role in its development. "A born leader," he formulated and implemented a national program for the blind that earned worldwide respect.18 Baker was brought up on a farm near Kingston and graduated in engineering from Queen's University. He was the first Canadian officer to be blinded in military action in the war. He was also one of the first Canadian graduates of St. Dunstan's Hostel in England, an experience that made Baker a lifelong admirer of its founder, Pearson. Upon his return to Ontario, Baker secured employment as a typist and joined the library board. In July 1918 he was asked to take charge of the training and after-care of the war-blinded. Two years later he turned his attention to the cause of the civilian blind. In September 1920 Baker joined the staff of the CNIB as General
Secretary, a post he held until 1931, when he became Managing Director. Acting in his former capacity, he pioneered the movement to secure pensions for the blind.

The Pensions for the Blind Movement

Like the other statutory initiatives for the dependent poor, the case study of pensions for the blind resembles a group model of welfare politics. But it is distinctive because it represents the first occasion on which a civilian client group championed their own cause. The key role played by the organized blind contrasts sharply with the minimal participation of the elderly and sole-support mothers in the preceding movements. It remains noteworthy even when measured against the major involvement of organized veterans, because the sightless lacked not only the numbers but also the special status accorded to veterans' claims. The influential role played by the organized blind reflects the tradition of self-help that originated in the prewar period. As they represented a tiny voting bloc compared with the other categories selected for special treatment in the interwar period, their effectiveness as an interest group depended upon securing popular backing for their demands for special treatment, as well as developing contacts inside government. Provided that they could persuade decision-makers that their claims were special, their small numbers could be used to their own advantage, because the costs of aiding the blind were less than for other segments of the civilian disabled population.

Although the movement to secure pensions for the blind was not as prolonged as the old age pensions campaign, it was described by one observer as "the most difficult and time-consuming effort to obtain legislative enactment." Consequently, analysis is broken down into two stages, covering the initial struggle during the 1920s and the concerted campaign waged between 1930 and 1937.
Both the onset and subsequent development of the initial struggle were influenced by developments within the British Empire, namely the passage of the British Blind Persons Act in 1920, that granted the civilian blind an old age pension at the age of 50, and a 1924 initiative in New Zealand that paid similar benefits to unemployables at the age of 21. Soon after the passage of the former, the CNIB voiced demands for similar provision within Canada. Divisions within the blind community, however, delayed the progress of the movement. In the second half of the decade representatives of a new, rival national organization of the blind, and of local clubs in cities of eastern and western Canada, also joined in the cause. The result was uncoordinated activities, competing demands and leadership rivalry, which provided decision-makers with a rationale for inaction. Internal divisions also hindered their efforts to overcome popular prejudice, an obstacle exacerbated by their small size and scattered distribution. Inside the federal Parliament a small group of backbenchers pressed the claims of the needy blind, but the Liberal government resisted the idea of funding pensions, perceiving them to represent a costly, dangerous precedent.

The CNIB spearheaded the initial struggle outside Parliament. As it was a service organization for the blind, its influence did not depend primarily upon effective representation of their clients' interests. Instead, its status derived from its contacts with influential, sighted Canadians, including some of the "most prominent businessmen of Canada," who recognized the merits of treating blindness "on lines similar to those which had made of these men competent, self-respecting and prosperous members of the community." The Institute's first president was Lewis M. Wood, a prominent Toronto financier.
His prestige among the city's financial establishment enabled the CNIB to tap the fund-raising potential of Toronto's exclusive 400 Club and middle-class women's groups. Outside of Ontario the other provincial divisions also relied on private philanthropy for half of their funds, with the remainder coming from government grants. Their patrons included "many of the more prominent people in the public and social life of this country...."

The CNIB's first attempt to secure pensions for the blind was made in the fall of 1921. After securing information about the new British scheme, its general secretary discussed the issue with the Deputy Minister of Education for Ontario, but nothing concrete resulted from their meeting. At that time Baker did not regard state aid as a top priority because he was convinced that, with appropriate training, the majority of blind citizens could become self-supporting. But in the next two years the workshops of the Institute became crowded with individuals over 50 years of age who were unemployable even in conditions of sheltered employment. As a result, Baker became convinced that provincial provision was necessary. Otherwise the Institute would soon have to use the bulk of its fund to support "the unemployable people to the exclusion and detriment of young, industrially capable, and ambitious blind individuals deserving opportunity."

Although Baker was aware that pensions for the civilian blind fell under provincial jurisdiction, he selected Ottawa, not the provinces, as the major target of CNIB representations. Partly because of his limited success in pressing the case for pensions for the blind in Ontario, he became convinced that provincial participation without "the stimulus of Federal initiative will be difficult to secure and require expensive educational propaganda throughout." Baker also concluded that federally-initiated legislation, once adopted, would avoid the lack of uniformity characterizing the U.S. scheme of
statewide provision. The CNIB rejected as well the American practice of separate statutes for the needy blind. Instead, it opted to follow the British precedent, i.e., payment of pensions under an old age pension act for the blind at 50 not 70 years of age. Baker was convinced that the blind stood more chance of receiving state aid if their cause was associated with sighted unemployables than if special treatment was sought. He was also opposed to singling out the unemployable blind as it would make them a conspicuous class of dependents.  

The CNIB campaign to secure nationwide provision commenced in 1923. Initially it was a low-key affair consisting of "mild suggestions" made to federal cabinet ministers in the course of meetings held to discuss grant applications. It was only after the surprise introduction of the 1926 old age pensions bill that requests were made for special meetings with elected and appointed officials to discuss inclusion of the blind under this legislation. Although the Institute's campaign in the 1920s focused mainly on cultivating contacts in Ottawa, it made a half-hearted attempt to broaden the base of the movement. In 1926 its National Council formally endorsed cooperation with other groups seeking public pensions. But there is no evidence of any direct approaches made by the CNIB to organized labour, the champions of the cause of the destitute elderly. Instead, unsuccessful efforts were made to enlist the support of welfare organizations, especially those representing "the aged or disabled sighted in order that the movement might be removed from the realm of class legislation...."  

Following the passage of the 1927 Old Age Pension Act, the Institute's interest in securing inclusion of blind unemployables waned during the rest of the decade. Other priorities occupied the centre stage. In the late 1920s new service centres were built in Halifax and Vancouver, and a program of industrial placement started. Besides these diversions, Baker was reluctant to
press the case for pensions until the CNIB was a viable organization throughout Canada. During the 1920s, however, his efforts to establish a Quebec division were persistently thwarted by Philip Layton, the President of the Montreal Association for the Blind (see page 304). Personal tensions between them developed soon after the war as Layton was resentful of the new Institute's monopoly of work with the war-blinded and the rapid ascendancy of Baker, "the young whipper-snapper," as the major spokesman of the blind inside government circles. His bitterness partly motivated his decision to establish an alternative, parallel structure to the CNIB.

The Canadian Federation of the Blind (CFB) was founded by Layton in Montreal in June 1926 as a national union. It was essentially "a fraternal, protective, reformist association" with three objectives: "...to unite the blind in a brotherhood, to promote in every lawful way their social and economic welfare, [and] to urge upon all municipal, provincial and federal governments the necessity of state aid." The CFB was modelled on the National League of the Blind in England, the precipitant of the 1920 scheme. For Layton, the pensions movement was doomed to failure unless the Canadian blind were organized on a fraternal basis following the British example. But there was a significant difference between the Canadian and British unions. Layton favoured state aid only for the unemployable blind and was not opposed in principle to the voluntary sector providing other services. In contrast, the English League was founded in 1899 to press for complete state facilities for the blind, as its founders opposed voluntarism because of its complacency.

Membership in the new fraternal organization was not confined to the blind alone. By December 1931 the CFB claimed 1,000 members throughout Canada. Although the Federation lacked the prominent contacts of the CNIB, its patrons were not without influence. Its first Honorary President (1926-27) was Mayor
Beaubien of Outremont. His successor, Lord Atholstan, was a Montreal tycoon who owned several newspapers, including the Star, a Conservative daily. Besides being known for his philanthropy, he "aspired to play a dominating role in politics from behind the scenes, as a puppet-maker manipulating the politicians." CFB activities to secure pensions were financed by dues, $1 for those who could afford to pay, and by the Layton family's own funds. The Federation never received federal funding, but as its headquarters were based in the offices of its parent, CFB services were paid for by the Montreal Association, an agency that secured a federal grant from 1927 onwards, as well as provincial subsidies.

Prior to establishing the CFB, Layton had sought to cooperate with the CNIB in securing pensions for the blind. As his approaches elicited little interest in joint action, he went ahead and circulated petitions among blind citizens of Montreal and Ottawa, requesting that needy unemployables aged 40 or over be eligible under old age pensions legislation. Following the Liberal government's refusal to include the blind in its 1926 old age pension bill, Layton decided to press for a separate statute in the next session. This switch was apparently a response to the advice of MPs. Separate legislation was also favoured by certain segments of the blind community. Realizing that the CNIB was on record as favouring provision for the blind via expansion of old age pension legislation, Layton invited Institute officials in April to attend a conference in June to "thoroughly thrash this matter out," but the latter refused to attend, partly out of pique at receiving a last-minute invitation.

The CFB founding convention attracted 30 delegates, a majority from the Montreal club. Representatives of the Ottawa Welfare Club, Ontario Association for the Blind, Winnipeg Lux-in-Tenebris Club and the Western Association for the Blind also attended and decided to affiliate. The conference adopted a
petition requesting a purely federal scheme granting pensions of $40 a month for all blind citizens in the 40-plus age group. To present this document, Layton decided to emulate the efforts of blind unionists in Britain, where a march of 250 members of the National League of the Blind from Manchester to London had resulted in the passage of the 1920 statute. On June 22, 1926, the conference delegates travelled to Ottawa and marched up Parliament Hill, where they were joined by the local blind. This group of 100 presented the petition to the Prime Minister. Although they failed to secure immediate legislative action, Layton was pleased with their performance. "The effects of this demonstration were far-reaching, bringing the Cause of the Blind most forcibly, not only before the MPs, but also before the public at large as full accounts were published in the newspapers all over the Dominion, and much sympathy was expressed." But King's response to the blind marchers' demand was ambiguous and later became a subject of controversy. Although he avoided giving any firm pledge, he apparently assured them "that he would do all in his power to put through the desired legislation." This vague commitment was misinterpreted by Layton as a definite promise to take legislative action in the next session, and became a local issue in Montreal in the 1926 federal election campaign, as later discussion will show.

Unlike the CNIB, the CFB agitation did not lapse after the passage of old age pensions legislation. Its leaders presented their original petition to the federal cabinet annually after 1927, and lobbied individual ministers towards the end of King's third term of office. They were also active outside government circles. Layton's address to the Ottawa Lions Club in January 1930 resulted in 27 other branches engaged in charitable work for the blind subsequently endorsing the concept of pensions for the blind, and his overtures to the executive of the Canadian TLC also elicited a sympathetic response.
However, the CFB President was unable to devote all his attention to securing his major goal because the Federation's branches outside Montreal faced competition for members from an expanding CNIB.

The struggle during the 1920s was not confined to the two national organizations. Local clubs of the blind also took up the cause. Despite their numbers (see table 29), the organized blind of Quebec and Ontario were relatively inactive, relying on the Montreal-based CFB and the Toronto-based CNIB to lobby on their behalf. In contrast, local clubs in the maritimes were "actively supporting the movement for old age pensions," and their efforts presumably prompted the New Brunswick Federation of Labour to urge the provincial government in 1927 to provide support for the non-institutionalized blind. Their active participation was duplicated out on the west coast by the Vancouver-based Western Association of the Blind. Prior to becoming a CFB affiliate, it sought to enlist the support of B.C. MPs for a measure granting pensions to all blind adults, and it also circulated a petition among sightless citizens of the province. Its campaign, however, was overshadowed by the efforts of the organized blind in Manitoba.

The Lux-in-Tenebris Club for the Blind (LTCB) in Winnipeg was the most active local organization in the entire pensions movement. It was formed in 1923 upon the initiative of the CNIB, and by 1925 its membership included nearly all the 166 blind adults in Manitoba. Unlike other affiliates, its members took independent steps to secure pensions and in September 1925 the LTCB embarked upon an extensive campaign. A petition among the blind of Manitoba, requesting a federal scheme for destitute unemployables, secured 144 signatures, and a mass meeting of the blind was held in Winnipeg in January 1926 to endorse it. The meeting was attended by two local Labour MLAs, W. Ivens
Table 29. Local clubs of the civilian blind in Canada, 1921-29

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>CFB Affiliates</th>
<th>CNIB Affiliates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Halifax</td>
<td></td>
<td>Maritime Ass'n, 1914-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Home Teaching Soc., 1893</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montreal</td>
<td>Montreal Ass'n, 1908-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ass'n. Canadienne-Francaise, 1928</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quebec</td>
<td></td>
<td>Quebec Ass'n, 1927-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toronto*</td>
<td>Comrades Club, 1921-</td>
<td>Excelsior Club, 1923?-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ottawa</td>
<td>Ontario Ass'n, 1917-</td>
<td>Ottawa Ass'n., 1914</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brantford</td>
<td>Welfare Club, ?</td>
<td>Ontario School Alumni, 1917-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winnipeg</td>
<td></td>
<td>Lux-in-Tenebris Club, 1923-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vancouver</td>
<td>Western Ass'n., 1912-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SOURCE: This table is compiled from scattered references in mainly unpublished material.

*The Associated Blind of Toronto (1890) is not included, as its affiliation is unknown.

and J. Queen, who suggested that the club's pensions committee be enlarged to include prominent sighted members of the audience and that a second petition be circulated among citizens at large "to give the blind weight in their efforts."51 They succeeded in securing 23,000 signatures to a petition requesting a federal scheme for unemployables aged 50 and over.52 The LTCB also enlisted the support of provincial legislators. From 1926 onwards Ivens (Lab., Winnipeg), its spokesman in the Manitoba Legislature, persuaded his colleagues to send annual memorials to Ottawa requesting pensions for the blind. According to its Vice-President, the LTCB also secured a commitment from Premier Bracken that he would "write to the Premiers of Saskatchewan and Alberta telling them what the Manitoba movement has done in regards to pensions.
so that when we write...they will...understand better what we are asking them to do."53

Manitoba's example, however, was not followed by the other prairie provinces in the 1920s. Their indifference stemmed partly from the fact that organized work for the blind was not well developed in either Saskatchewan or Alberta. Until the early 1930s CNIB activities were coordinated in these provinces by the Winnipeg-based central western division and the Vancouver-based western division, respectively. This organizational vacuum was not filled by the CFB as its branches in Regina, Saskatoon, Edmonton and Calgary were not established until after 1929. Progress in Alberta was also impeded by the political controversy in the 1927 and 1928 sessions arising out of the Premier's refusal to adopt the federal old age pensions plan until better financial terms were extracted from Ottawa.54

Despite the various petitions and marches, the divisions of opinion among the organized blind delayed their progress in the 1920s. Not all members were in favour of state aid. A small and "very tolerant" segment believed that "pensions will foster indolence and dampen the initiative of many employable blind people."55 These 'hard-liners' included the CNIB's chief placement officer in Montreal, who was quoted in the local press as contending that "pensions were not justifiable."56 While the majority of the organized blind agreed on the principle of public pensions, they disagreed on the extent of state aid. These differences were ideological, reflecting conflicting notions of the role of voluntarism in blind welfare. The CNIB regarded pensions as a last resort for unemployables, whereas the CFB's Winnipeg branch and its affiliate in Vancouver favoured pensions for all blind adults, subject to a simple means test. Such conflicting demands created "confusion both among the blind and their sighted friends..."57 and provided governments with a valid
excuse for delay. The Superintendent of the Ontario School for the Blind recalled that his contacts with MPs and Ontario MLAs brought home to him "how the tendency of certain organizations of the blind to criticize each other has reacted seriously to their disadvantage." 58

Although the conflict between the CFB and the CNIB centred on details of pensions policy such as age limits and the scale of benefits, it was exacerbated by the personal rivalry at the national leadership level between Layton and Baker, who distrusted each other's motives. From 1926 onwards Layton used the press as a medium to attack the credibility of the CNIB, criticizing its pensions policy as "stingy" and implying that blind workers were exploited in its workshops. 59 Although Baker shied away from answering these charges publicly, he was not averse to refuting them inside political circles. 60 The 'sharp-shooting' tactics used by both sides discredited the cause outside and inside government, and prevented joint efforts to resolve divided opinion among the organized blind.

Besides disunity, the persistence of the old prejudice towards blindness among the public at large was another obstacle. The blind were still perceived as totally disabled members of the community rather than an emergent political force with special needs. The general secretary of the CNIB recalled that in "the early days of our work, the general public was inclined to pity the blind and regard them as helpless and afflicted." 61 The Institute's own activities, though, helped to perpetuate this popular stereotype. As late as 1940 it remained "a rather conservative organization" assisting the blind on a charitable basis. Its divisional boards were composed of influential and wealthy people who shunned publicity for their philanthropy. "Consequently, the Institute was not too well known by the general public." 62 In contrast, the CFB and LTCB were more conscious of the value of publicity. But their efforts
to familiarize the public with the cause of the blind received only intermittent, local coverage. Their failure to focus attention on the plight of needy unemployables stemmed in part from the distribution of the blind population. As a small group scattered over an immense territory, their problems were not obtrusive enough in any one area to make "a great impression" on the public conscience. Thus, the blind "suffered, like a losing hand at bridge, from too general a distribution."63

Nonetheless, the major advocates succeeded in persuading a few federal legislators that their claims were special. Inside the federal House the cause of the needy blind was championed by a small group of backbenchers representing all parties except again the Progressives. Among these MPs only Raymond, a Liberal backbencher, had formal links with the organized blind; the remainder responded to their representations because of electoral pressures, party commitments or personal empathy. As the issue was intertwined with the old age pensions movement in the 1920s, their activities focused on securing inclusion of the blind at an earlier age under the 1926 and 1927 initiatives. Although they failed in their mission, they brought the cause of the blind to the attention of the House and laid the groundwork for the future development of the campaign.

W.G. Raymond (Lib., Brantford) took the initial steps. Despite the fact that he was a sufferer of defective eyesight and a graduate of the Ontario School for the Blind, he did not participate upon his own initiative. Instead, representations from the CNIB were the spur to his involvement. Baker discussed the subject informally with Raymond in 1923, and a year later sent him details of a comprehensive legislative program including old age allowances for the needy unemployable blind in the 50-plus age group. At the time of these initial contacts Raymond had no official links with the Institute, but in June 1924, he
was elected to its National Council. The timing of this appointment was opportune as Raymond was then chairman of the 1924 Special Committee investigating old age pensions. He agreed to present the Institute's case for inclusion of blind unemployables before this committee and was optimistic "that a provision will be made similar to that in force in the old country." His optimism, however, turned out to be short-lived as no special treatment for the blind was recommended in the final report of the 1924 committee. His defeat in the 1925 federal election possibly hurt the cause of the blind, as Raymond had built up during his short parliamentary career (1921-25) a reputation as "a brilliant and eloquent speaker" whose oratory attracted a large attendance of MPs and visitors. T.L. Church (Con., Toronto) was the only other MP contacted formally by the CNIB in the 1920s. Besides being a friend of Baker's father-in-law, he was also personally impressed by the Institute's work with blinded veterans, and he readily agreed to voice the claims of the civilian blind when asked by Baker in June 1924.

C.H. Cahan (Con., Montreal) was the only CFB spokesman in the House. He was an odd choice of spokesman for blind unionists because, apart from being a wealthy corporate lawyer, he was ambivalent towards voicing only the claims of the blind, as he believed that other categories of disabled were equally deserving. However, electoral pressures prompted him to support the inclusion of the blind in the 1927 old age pensions bill. According to Cahan, his Liberal opponent gained votes in the 1926 federal election as a result of "...certain promises made by the P.M. of this country to a delegation, partly from my constituency, to the effect that all those who suffer from blindness would this year receive by federal measure relief on the scale suggested in this bill for old age pensions."
Three representatives of the city of Winnipeg were all spokesmen for the LTCB. Unlike the Conservative sympathizer, W.W. Kennedy, the involvement of Heaps and Woodsworth was prompted by party policy. The Manitoba ILP was committed "lock, stock and barrel" to the cause of the blind, and enlisted the support of its two federal members for the LCTB. Woodsworth presented the petitions signed by the blind and sighted citizens of Manitoba to the House on April 13, 1926, and upon his request the plea from the blind was read by the Speaker on the following day. He also sought unsuccessfully to introduce an amendment to include the blind under the 1926 old age pensions bill.

W.K. Esling (Con., Kootenay) was the only advocate in the House who was not clearly labelled as a spokesman of the organized blind. Although he had been lobbied by the Vancouver-based Western Association, he made no mention of group representations throughout his participation in the movement, which began in 1927. His involvement presumably stemmed from personal empathy, because he was forced to retire from active newspaper work in 1915 owing to failing eyesight and later lost his ability to read.

The advocates' pleas for pensions for the blind, however, were challenged in the 1920s. Their opponents were few in number, at least in public. Only two backbenchers and two members of the Liberal government spoke against inclusion of the sightless under old age pensions legislation. Their opposition reflected fears about the costs of the precedent. If the principle of state aid for the needy blind was admitted, it would be difficult to resist the claims of other equally deserving disabled groups in the community. Thus, although the blind comprised a smaller group among the various classes of the infirm (see table 30), the costs of implementation of their demands for publicly financed pensions could not be considered in isolation from the general category of physically and mentally disabled.
Table 30. Disabled classes by totals and per 10,000 of the population, 1921-31 census years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Blind</th>
<th></th>
<th>Deaf and Dumb</th>
<th></th>
<th>Insane &amp; Feeble-minded</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Per 10,000</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Per 10,000</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Per 10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>4,396</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>5,334</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>21,496</td>
<td>24.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>7,347</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>6,767</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>31,686*</td>
<td>31.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


*This figure represents institutionalized cases only. Out of the total, 2,201 were "dependent," i.e., receiving aid from public funds, and 12,734 were "marginal," i.e., living on daily earnings but accumulating little or nothing. Census of Canada, 1931, Vol. IX, p. 195.

Neill (Ind., Comox-Alberni), was a particularly vehement opponent. He argued forcibly against the inclusion of the blind and cripples in the 1927 bill on the grounds that other aspects of disability would "tend to becloud the issue, [and] increase enormously the expense...." His views were shared by a Liberal backbencher who favoured a "limited start in social legislation" because costs had to be manageable in order not to prejudice future schemes.  

The Liberal government also resisted demands to consider the claims of the blind. Dr. King, the sponsor of the 1926 old age pension bill, was adamant about their exclusion, claiming that their maintenance was a purely municipal concern. The Prime Minister agreed, arguing that "if we burden it unduly by adding to old age other features, we may have difficulty in getting the general support we would like to have for this legislation."  

Despite its public denials of the claims of the blind, the cabinet did contemplate taking action during King's third term of office. Heenan, the Minister of Labour, admitted later to the House that the costs of including the blind in the old age pensions scheme had been investigated and upon "casual
survey, we found that it would cost about a million and a half dollars.\textsuperscript{76} The federal share, of course, would have amounted to only $750,000 at that time, but its payment would open the floodgates to other categories of unemployables, both civilian and military. The spiral effect of pensions for the blind, therefore, was a powerful constraint on legislative action.

\textbf{The Concerted Campaign, 1930-37}

During the 1930-37 period representatives of the organized blind continued to be the major advocates outside Parliament. Their agitation gained momentum in spite of the severe depression, because their newly-coordinated efforts allowed them to mount a concerted attack upon both levels of government and to attract increased public support. The advocates' pleas, however, fell on deaf ears during the first half of the Depression decade, as the majority of provincial Premiers and the federal cabinet had more important fiscal priorities dictated by the conservative orthodoxy of the day. This impasse was resolved in 1935 when electoral pressures once again proved to be the catalyst of legislative action.

\textbf{Advocates:}

The initial efforts to secure unity among the organized blind were made at the provincial, not the national, level. In January 1930 the LTCB joined forces with the Winnipeg branches of the CFB and CNIB and representatives of sighted citizens to form a 12-member United Blind Pensions Committee of Manitoba (UBPCM). The initial demand of the committee members was for a joint scheme of pensions for the needy blind aged 21 and over.\textsuperscript{77} It was modified later, in response to worsening economic conditions, to a milder request for old age pensions for the blind at an earlier age and in a "more liberal" amount, resulting in a protest resignation of the CFB delegates from the new committee.\textsuperscript{78}
The efforts of the UBPCM to broaden the base of the movement succeeded in enlisting the support of trade unionists in prairie cities, female volunteers belonging to the Imperial Order of the Daughters of the Empire and the NCWC, spokesmen of western municipalities and representatives of western labour parties. But the committee's overtures to legislators made little progress inside Manitoba. Their lobbying succeeded in adding one new recruit, Bancroft (Lib-Prog., Selkirk), to the ranks of local spokesmen in the federal House. Inside the Manitoba legislature Ivens, a long-time sympathizer, ensured that UBPCM petitions were endorsed by his fellow MLAs. Memorials were sent to Ottawa in the 1930 and 1931 sessions. Like their predecessors, however, they contained no firm statement of intent to take legislative action.

Outside Manitoba the UBPCM helped to secure the support of the other prairie Premiers. Alberta formally endorsed the cause in a 1932 memorial that was similar to the UBPCM's modified demand. In Saskatchewan the efforts of the Manitoba blind prompted representatives of the CNIB advisory board to urge the new Conservative Premier in November 1930 to support their demand for pensions for the blind in the 50-plus age group via old age pensions legislation. In response, Premier Anderson forwarded their petition to the federal Prime Minister. But another resolution sponsored by two Liberal MLAs, endorsing the conflicting CFB demand, was also forwarded to Ottawa.

The UBPCM also lobbied successfully for a joint investigation into the welfare of the blind population in the provinces of Manitoba and Saskatchewan. A royal commission, headed by Olin Burritt, principal of the Pennsylvania Institution for the Instruction of the Blind, was appointed in August 1930 and reported in March 1931. It recommended, among other things, that both provinces enact pensions legislation similar to relief laws in states.
such as New York, where aid was given to all necessitous blind. Presumably because the Manitoba government was neither able nor willing to finance a purely provincial initiative, a follow-up inquiry into the Burritt report was undertaken. It recommended the creation of yet another committee, comprising representatives of the provincial government, municipalities, organized charity, the CFB and CNIB, to make suggestions in the next session. Although members of this Special Committee on the Blind considered implementation of a purely provincial pensions scheme, they came out strongly in favour of a federal plan, describing its adoption as "the outstanding and most needful provision that could be made for the blind." Their report urged Manitoba legislators to reaffirm their support for federal participation. This suggestion was acted upon and a memorial was sent to Ottawa in April 1932. Similar action was taken by the Saskatchewan Legislature in its 1932 session, suggesting that the Anderson government also balked at the idea of a purely provincial scheme suggested by Burritt.

Outside the prairie provinces, however, the UBPCM failed to stimulate interest prior to 1933. Its campaign was not copied in British Columbia, where conflicting demands of the CFB and CNIB were met with a studied silence. Attempts by the Manitoba blind to persuade the CNIB to form a similar committee in Ontario to secure the support of federal and provincial legislators were ignored. Instead, the Institute sought unsuccessfully to cultivate contacts inside the Ontario government. Its disdain for publicity prompted the UBPCM to seek the support of Ontario sympathizers "outside the Institute." Quebec and the maritime provinces were still holding out against implementation of old age pensions and so remained impervious to demands for inclusion of the blind.

Attempts to achieve a united front at the national level were made after the futility of continued independent lobbying was demonstrated in the early
days of the new Conservative administration. Although Bennett's 1930 election pledge to provide dominion-wide old age pensions provided another opportunity to secure a federal initiative, only the CFB recognized its potential. Prior to the 1931 session its leadership made direct representations to the Prime Minister urging him to sponsor a special bill granting pensions to all blind people at the age of 40 and to younger, needy unemployables; and CFB branches and affiliates succeeded in securing the support of elected officials in Montreal, Toronto, Calgary and other, smaller cities in Ontario and Saskatchewan, as well as of sympathetic male unionists and female activists in the labour movement.\textsuperscript{88} Their efforts, however, failed to secure statutory benefits for the blind at the same time as the 1931 old age pensions amendment, which increased the federal share of costs from 50 to 75 percent. Prime Minister Bennett rejected CFB requests, arguing that until the provinces "indicate a determination to discharge an obligation which constitutionally is theirs, action will have to wait."\textsuperscript{89}

The severe depression provided another impetus to unity because it exposed the limitations of voluntarism. The increase in demands for relief and sheltered employment strained CNIB finances to breaking point and forced the Institute to apply for a special federal grant of $50,000.\textsuperscript{90} The resources of the CFB's parent, the Montreal Association, were also stretched because sales from its workshop declined by $3,000 in one year.\textsuperscript{91} This decline was not solely attributable to general conditions of depression. Following the establishment of the CNIB's Quebec division in July 1930, it had duplicated the association's work and engaged in price-cutting of brooms. According to Baker, these activities were the "real motives" behind the readiness of the CFB to cooperate with the Institute.\textsuperscript{92}
In the summer of 1931 the first attempt to secure united action was made. At their initial meeting representatives of the CFB and CNIB agreed to press for a separate federal statute providing "adequate" pensions for the needy blind aged 40 and over, as well as younger unemployables. These talks, however, stalled on the issue of the extent of joint action as the CNIB wanted cooperation on all matters of general service work for the blind, whereas the CFB sought agreement on pensions only. To resolve this impasse, a national liaison committee was formed. Participants at its first meeting in July made little progress. After a protracted delay, a second meeting was held in December, but it was unable to resolve the impasse, and the negotiations were broken off.

There was little contact between the two national organizations for the next year and a half. Soon after the breakdown of talks, Layton met the Prime Minister and, as a result, reversed his position on the type of statute. He informed Baker "that Mr. Bennett and he thought it would be preferable to seek an amendment to the Old Age Pensions Act and that the Government would entertain the idea after the majority of provinces...had indicated a desire for pensions for the blind." In April 1932 the CFB executive endorsed Layton's reversal of position. However, the Federation's rank and file were less charitable and ousted Layton from the presidency at their convention in May. His successor, A.B. Howe, headed the Winnipeg and Manitoba branch. He represented a group which favoured pensions for all needy blind adults and felt strongly that "disability caused by old age or other infirmities should not be coupled with or used as an argument to secure pensions for people who are blind and destitute." For the rest of the year Layton campaigned throughout the CFB and succeeded in recapturing the presidency at the Regina convention in the spring of 1933.
Layton regained control of the CFB at a time when the depression was reaching its peak. The situation among blind residents of Montreal was becoming critical. The resources of voluntary agencies were stretched to the limit because of a blanket 10 percent cut in federal grants initiated in the 1932-33 fiscal year. Spurred by the urgent necessity for government action, Layton requested a meeting with Wood, the CNIB President. They met in Toronto in early July 1933 and agreed to set up a committee to draft a statement on pensions policy for ratification by their affiliates. The CNIB representatives insisted that the document to be sent to the senior levels of government should indicate agreement among the blind on the general principle of public pensions rather than focus on the character of legislation or specific terms. Their rivals accepted the force of this argument because they were equally aware that representations from various organizations of and for the blind were being discounted by governments on the grounds of lack of agreement.

The united memorial was endorsed by 40 organizations of and for the blind (see table 31), representing an estimated one-fifth of the total blind population. All affiliates of the CFB signed the document, but its Winnipeg and Manitoba branches deleted references coupling blindness with age and other infirmities. Among CNIB affiliates, only the Ottawa Association for the Blind refused to endorse the document for reasons of conscience.

The 1933 memorial was sent to the federal government on October 28th, but remained unacknowledged after the lapse of a month. The CFB-CNIB coalition, therefore, set in motion the second stage of their campaign. They had agreed to send a small delegation to meet the Prime Minister in December, a time when estimates were being prepared. The new Secretary of the CFB suggested that as blind spokesmen would have "better appeal," its membership should be confined to Layton and Baker, with himself and Myers acting as guides. The leaders
Table 31. Organizations endorsing memorials, 1933 and 1936

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Branches</th>
<th>CFB Affiliates</th>
<th>CNIB Divisions, etc. Affiliates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>St. John</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Halifax</td>
<td></td>
<td>Maritime Div.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&quot; School</td>
<td>Nazareth Institute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>L'Aide aux Aveugles</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>French Canadian Assoc.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Societe Amicale*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quebec City</td>
<td></td>
<td>Quebec Assoc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toronto</td>
<td>Comrades Club</td>
<td>Ontario Div.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ontario Assoc.</td>
<td>Excelsior Club</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ottawa</td>
<td></td>
<td>Alumni Assoc.,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ont Sch for Blind*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>London Assoc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Star of Hope Club*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamilton</td>
<td></td>
<td>Unity Club*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windsor+</td>
<td></td>
<td>Fort William Advisory Board*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Port Arthur Advisory Board*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winnipeg</td>
<td>Central Western Div.</td>
<td>UBPCM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Manitoba League</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>White Stick Club</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Women's Aux.*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saskatoon</td>
<td>North Alta. Com. Reliance Club</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calgary*</td>
<td>Western Div.</td>
<td>B.C. School Nil Desperandum Club</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vancouver</td>
<td></td>
<td>Women's Aux.*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


*1936 additions  +1936 omissions
of the CFB-CNIB coalition met Bennett on December 12th. Layton described the "bondage of poverty" facing the blind and dealt with the general need for pensions. He pointed out that many blind people were denied relief on the grounds that they were unemployables. Bennett, however, challenged this contention, citing as proof the situation in Winnipeg. Baker then discussed the memorial and presented statistics. In response, the Prime Minister tried to pass the buck for legislative action to the provinces, while accepting that their involvement would require a federal stimulus. He discounted the resolutions from the three prairie provinces on the grounds that none had passed enabling legislation. He then referred to the difficult financial position the four western provinces were facing and the "extraordinary" federal expenditures on unemployment relief. While suggesting that the financial situation was "the factor to be overcome," Bennett promised to bring the matter up in cabinet the next day.

The advocates' hopes were boosted further by an announcement in the Montreal Gazette (26 December 1933) indicating that the pensions issue would be discussed at the forthcoming federal-provincial conference in Ottawa. Although time was short, they redoubled their lobbying efforts vis-à-vis the provincial governments, contacting all Premiers before their arrival in Ottawa. The CFB-CNIB coalition eagerly awaited the outcome of the first formal discussion of pensions for the blind by the two senior levels of government. However, a rumour circulated on the eve of the 1934 Dominion-Provincial Conference that the subject had not been included on the agenda. During the first two days there was no mention of pensions for the blind. Consequently, coalition spokesmen were dispatched to Ottawa on January 16th. They made "strenuous efforts" to have the matter discussed. Premier Taschereau told them that the question would not be raised due to pressure of other matters. His view was confirmed by several other sources. Eventually they reached the Prime
Minister's private secretary and the matter was presented to Bennett, who agreed to discuss the question that day. The conference participants decided that while financial conditions did not warrant the granting of pensions on a generous scale, "some action will be taken...at an early date." In addition to this vague commitment, the impromptu discussion revealed growing provincial support. At the end of the conference, Ontario's Attorney-General announced that his government was "ready at any moment to implement any move Ottawa might make with regard to further aid for blind pensioners." The prairie provinces were already on record as supporting a joint venture. The past reactions of the Premiers of Quebec, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island were not unfavourable. Although the new Liberal government of British Columbia had not made any public pronouncements in support of pensions for the blind, its Provincial Secretary at least was sympathetic.

Only Premier Tilley of New Brunswick was against the movement because of the financial conditions of his and other provinces.

Besides evidence of increasing support among provincial Premiers, the national pensions coalition received another boost in 1934. In the fall CNIB representatives were encouraged by rumours of work in progress on a new, "quite radical," federal scheme of social legislation, and so contacted officials in "the right quarters." Their representations, however, were unsuccessful in securing inclusion of the needy blind under Bennett's 'New Deal' because the Prime Minister was opposed to the principle of non-contributory pensions.

Despite this setback, the major advocates were encouraged by developments in the federal House. Dr. I.D. Cotnam (Con., N. Renfrew) had informed them in February 1934 of his intention to sponsor a resolution seeking inclusion of the needy blind via amendment of the old Age Pension Act. When notice of his
resolution appeared on the order paper for the 1935 session, the CFB responded swiftly. In late January it instructed its branches to wire the Prime Minister and local MPs urging their support of the Cotnam resolution, and to contact the local press in a bid to launch a national newspaper campaign in support of the pensions. Its executive was convinced that publicity was the appropriate tactic, because several sources in both levels of government indicated "that the Government is at present vote hunting to quite an extent and that numerous communications to those in power will tend to bring out the importance of the question." Baker of the CNIB, however, shied away from asking his divisions to take similar action, opting "to reserve our representations until they are needed to give the necessary final push."110

On January 30, 1935, Cotnam sponsored the first formal debate on the subject. He urged the federal government to expand the old age pension scheme to cover the needy blind aged 40 years and over. After reviewing the evolution of blind welfare in other countries, he outlined the position of the blind in Canada. He concluded with an urgent appeal for action, arguing that the time has come when "as a Christian nation we should give this deserving class of our citizens the benefit of state assistance." Cotnam's resolution aroused no overt opposition. It was supported by 17 MPs representing all parties and every province except New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island (see table 32). In response to their pleas, Gordon, the Minister of Labour, suggested that the resolution be referred to the Standing Committee on Industrial and International Relations.111

The CFB and CNIB made separate contacts with the 35 committee members. Only nine were known supporters of the cause.112 This small group, however, contained an influential spokesman in F.W. Turnbull (Con., Regina), the chairman of the standing committee. He suggested to CNIB officials that the
Table 32. Supporters of Cotnam's resolution on pensions for the blind, 1935

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Riding</th>
<th>Interest Group Connections</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Blair</td>
<td>Con. Wellington</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Johnstone</td>
<td>Cape Breton</td>
<td>Unspecified contacts with blind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Macmillan</td>
<td>Saskatoon</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robinson</td>
<td>Essex</td>
<td>Rep'ns from unnamed delegation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stanley</td>
<td>Calgary</td>
<td>Rep'ns from Joint Committee of Alberta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turnbull</td>
<td>Regina</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>Montreal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casgrain</td>
<td>Lib.</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chevrier</td>
<td>Ottawa</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Euler</td>
<td>Waterloo</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gershaw</td>
<td>Medicine Hat</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marcil</td>
<td>Montreal</td>
<td>Spokesman of Montreal Ass'n and Nazareth Institute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rinfret</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>Rep'ns from unnamed delegations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stewart</td>
<td>Edmonton</td>
<td>Contact w/blind when member of Alta gov't</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heaps</td>
<td>Lab. Winnipeg</td>
<td>Long-time advocate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McInnis</td>
<td>&quot; Vancouver</td>
<td>CFB spokesman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irvine</td>
<td>UFA Calgary</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


presentation of briefs should be made by a small delegation; and Cotnam too advised them, stressing "the necessity of all organizations appearing as one" and avoiding any statement about cost that might embarrass the Conservative administration, "especially references to the Government being able to find money for other projects."113 The CFB executive was in favour of participating
in a joint delegation, but its Secretary also arranged with Turnbull for CFB
deleogates to meet separately with his committee after their annual convention
in Montreal. Although this arrangement threatened the relationship of "close
cooperation" with the Institute, a united front was maintained before the
committee.114

A delegation representing the CFB, CNIB and the UBPCM appeared before the
standing committee on February 21st. While outlining the pressing need for
pensions, Layton played on the members' fears of blindness: "You gentlemen only
have to shut your eyes and think you are never going to open them again to get
some idea of the position of one who goes blind. You see, his vocation is
gone...." He also appealed to their desire for re-election by stressing the
popularity of the cause among the public at large. Baker, the next witness,
pointed out that the unemployable blind were "a definite problem" and required
aid because they were mainly "victims of circumstances." Jessie MacLennan, the
UBPCM representative, reviewed the extensive activities of the Manitoba blind
to secure state aid and cited the precedents of pensions for mothers and the
elderly to support her case.115 In response, the acting chairman suggested the
appointment of a small subcommittee to examine the various written submissions
from the organized blind. Prior to drafting a report, the Standing Committee
met 15 CFB delegates.116 After hearing their case for pensions, R.S. White, a
Conservative committee member, assured "the blind people that we are with them
heart and soul. Our problem now...is to iron out these little things that are
in the way." One stumbling-block was the type of statute, because the federal
old age pensions plan was not yet implemented in New Brunswick and Quebec.
Esling (Con.), a long-time sympathizer, favoured a separate statute to overcome
this problem. The chairman agreed, but pointed out that a special act was
outside the terms of reference of the Cotnam resolution. His position was supported by Macphail (UFO) and Woodsworth (Lab.).

In early April Turnbull reported the Standing Committee's decision to the House. While regretting that the Cotnam resolution would only apply to the blind in seven out of the nine provinces, he recommended its approval. Upon hearing this, Cotnam rejected his original motion as totally inadequate because it would exclude an estimated 166 in New Brunswick and 720 in Quebec. He moved, therefore, that the report be referred back to the committee for amendment, so as to permit the House to pass a special statute, applicable to all provinces and providing pensions for the needy blind aged 40 years and over, on the same basis as the Old Age Pension Act.

This development was a setback for the movement as the report was referred back shortly before the House was due to adjourn for Easter. The committee chairman was clearly worried about the "danger that nothing will be done this session;" and the CNIB's managing director was also concerned about the reaction of the blind, especially in his home province of Ontario, because if pensions were not granted that session, "we stand to be criticized by them since they have been depending so largely on us to make representations on their behalf." Consequently, he instructed all divisions to arrange meetings with the blind to explain the reasons for the delay, and to send resolutions to MPs, sighted organizations and the press to drum up support for the adoption of pensions in the 1935 session. The CFB also sent similar orders to its branches. During the recess (April 17 to May 20) special meetings of the blind and sighted sympathizers were held in every major city throughout Canada.

The organized blind's demand for legislative action was endorsed by "a practically unanimous press across Canada." Special efforts were then made
to broaden the base of the movement, especially by advocates in Manitoba and Ontario, the two provinces where contingent legislation had recently been passed. Expressions of support poured into the Prime Minister's office from Lions Clubs in Ontario and elsewhere; organized workers, including members of over 20 locals of Ontario international unions; female volunteers representing both rural and urban organizations in Ontario and Saskatchewan; and elected officials of the cities of St. John and Verdun. Both the Canadian TLC and the All-Canadian Congress also formally endorsed the movement in 1935.

Following the recess the members of the Standing Committee decided that their original report should be re-submitted to the House because there was not enough time left in the session to study the many factors involved in a special act. They formulated, though, a special proposal to cover the blind of New Brunswick and Quebec until such time as the old age pensions plan was adopted there. Turnbull reported their decision to the House on June 13, 1935. His report was not accepted, but left in abeyance while the government formulated its response, a delay that boded ill for any statutory initiative under the Bennett administration.

Opponents:

The persistence of acute depression during the 1930-35 period rendered legislative action concerning pensions for the blind a remote prospect. Indeed, a CNIB spokesman went so far as to identify "the adverse financial outlook" from 1929 onwards as "the only thing" preventing Ottawa from enacting pensions legislation. The devastating impact of the depression upon public finance, in fact, gave powerful reinforcement to the fiscal attitudes of certain provincial Premiers and federal cabinet ministers.

Among the provinces participating in the federally sponsored old age pensions plan, only Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia and Ontario were able to
finance additional expenditures, because the four western provinces were largely dependent upon Ottawa's largesse in the first half of the 1930s. However, despite their varying balance sheets, all the participants expressed support for the cause of the needy blind. Only Ontario and Manitoba, though, passed enabling legislation prior to 1935. British Columbia demonstrated a willingness to participate in a federal initiative by making provision under a new Special Powers Act, but its Liberal government was not prepared to enact contingent legislation in 1935 because "its chief concern" was apparently a balanced budget. This goal was presumably a priority of the other provincial supporters of the cause who avoided making a legislative commitment.

The two Premiers resisting implementation of old age pensions also opposed benefits for the blind. According to the CFB leadership, Premier Taschereau of Quebec was "prejudiced against the principle of pensions." In fact, so extreme was his resistance to the idea of income security that it has been described as a "study in political self-destruction." Tilley, the Conservative Premier of New Brunswick, was another 'hard-liner' on the issue. While en route to the 1934 Dominion-Provincial Conference he told the Laytons that he was opposed because "...such legislation would open the way for all other handicapped classes to seek state aid and under present conditions, governments could not stand such expense." Premier Tilley reiterated his views at the in camera discussion of the issue at the conference. When challenged by Weir, B.C.'s Provincial Secretary, Tilley remained adamant, and Weir thought that if he continued to press the matter, "a dog fight might ensue." E.N. Rhodes, the federal Minister of Finance, also regarded the spiral effect of pensions for the blind as the major deterrent. On the eve of the 1934 Conference he informed the Prime Minister that, besides the question of cost, "it would be well to bear in mind that the moment pensions for the blind are
established, there will be an immediate demand on the part of the deaf and dumb and those responsible for the care of the indigent feeble-minded." His views were shared by two other colleagues. Shortly before the House of Commons reconvened in May 1935 the cabinet discussed the subject. A report in the Toronto Star (23 April 1935) indicated that there was increasing support for the notion that "a dangerous and costly precedent" was being set: "Why pensions for the blind more than for the tubercular, the victims of cancer? was the reply of three cabinet members when asked about the government's intention, and they implied that nothing will be done...after Parliament reconvenes." Besides Rhodes, the other two opponents were identified by CNIB officials as Maclaren, Minister of Pensions and National Health, and Cahan, the Secretary of State.

Prime Minister Bennett was an even more powerful opponent. He was reluctant to finance pensions for the blind because corporate interests, the major federal taxpayers, were resisting the idea of financing even emergency state aid. He turned down a request to include the blind in the 1931 old age pension amendment on the grounds that "these things cost money," and then admitted he was haunted constantly by the question of how the money was to be raised. As the depression worsened his preoccupation with raising funds intensified. Bennett apparently told Layton in December 1933 that the CNIB estimate of $500,000 required to fund the federal share of a joint scheme would be difficult to find under present conditions owing to the "heavy burden" taxpayers were already facing for national services, unemployment relief and soldiers' pensions.

Bennett was also opposed to the concept of publicly-financed pensions on ideological grounds, favouring the contributory principle based on compulsory thrift. During the debate on the 1937 bill to provide pensions for the blind he made his position clear:
I am satisfied that if the state is to carry on the social services...without contribution on the part of those who will receive the benefits, we might as well make up our minds that the future of the country is the past....We cannot give everything, expect the taxpayers to undertake the whole provision, and administer successfully.133

He omitted to mention that when in power he had toyed with the idea of replacing the existing system of means-tested old age pensions with a tripartite contributory scheme of annuities as part of his 'New Deal' package.134 This initiative complied with manufacturers' demands to do away with "unsound" and "deserving poor" types of schemes.135 Bennett's contributory plan, however, never reached the floor of the House, presumably because it fell outside the realm of practical welfare politics.

Bennett, though, succeeded in blocking the introduction of state-financed benefits for the blind. In his absence, the cabinet discussed on June 21, 1935, the report of the House standing committee favouring coverage by amendment of the Old Age Pension Act, with a special proviso to cover the blind of New Brunswick and Quebec. Six days later Bennett announced that no legislative action would be taken in that session.136 Instead, his government decided to pay a special grant of $50,000 to the CNIB, a request made originally in 1932. This decision not only stalled the progress of the movement, but also strained the developing tensions between the two partners in the national pensions coalition to breaking point. Although the Institute was innocent of the charge of accepting a special grant in lieu of pensions for the blind, the damage was done in the eyes of the CFB. The closing days of the 1935 session marked a resurgence of the 'sharp-shooting' tactics that had heralded the opening of the seventeenth Parliament.137
Precipitants:

Although the future of the movement looked bleak in the summer of 1935, its prospects soon brightened, as an election was imminent. During the campaign pensions for the blind emerged as a visible, national issue for the first time. The CFB can claim credit for its appearance, an activity that was not condoned by the other champions of the cause. Its President contacted the four parliamentary party leaders and received favourable replies from all but Bennett, and Layton also asked the Federation's branches and affiliates to lobby as many candidates as possible and to secure written pledges of support. Its Manitoba branch was, presumably, the anonymous source which asked King to state his views on the subject during the last speech of his campaign made in Winnipeg. The Liberal leader's response was heard by a live audience of 4,400 and radio listeners throughout the country. He stated that "[n]o one was more sympathetic than himself, for his own father had suffered from blindness." Legislative action, however, was dependent upon implementation of Liberal policies because then "there would be money in the Treasury to effect such reforms."

The results of the 1935 federal election boded well for the future progress. The Liberals won a resounding majority. Besides King's pledge, both Robb and Heenan, ministers in the previous Liberal administration, had apparently made "promises" to the CFB that legislative action would be forthcoming once the old age pensions plan became operative in a few provinces. Their immediate implementation, however, was unlikely as the new Prime Minister inherited the problems of mass unemployment and wanted to avoid "any precipitous moves, not wishing to alienate his Quebec supporters by either tinkering with the constitution or launching conditional-grant schemes." Once the Liberals made the crucial decision to act, all the minor parties could
be counted upon to support it. An outsider, the Social Credit movement, had outstripped the other reformist groups at the polls. One of its federal representatives, J.C. Landeryon, assured the organized blind in Alberta that all his colleagues were in favour of granting pensions; "in fact, we believe adequate pensions should be given to all the blind irrespective of age."143

Electoral pressures also precipitated the entry of New Brunswick and Quebec into the federal old age pensions plan. Their participation removed a major obstacle to cooperative action, even though it would cost the federal treasury an additional $8 million and so might cause some delay in the adoption of pensions for the blind.144 In June 1935 Premier Tilley and his Conservative administration were defeated at the polls in New Brunswick. His Liberal successor, Dysart, had promised to implement old age pensions during the campaign. He kept his pledge and proclaimed the 1930 provincial act shortly after the election. In the Quebec election of November 1935 Premier Taschereau managed to survive a powerful challenge from the newly-formed Union Nationale. He had promised to implement the federal old age pensions plan in the next session, and the 1936 throne speech included this reform.145

These developments encouraged the two partners in the national pensions coalition to patch up their differences and re-unite. They succeeded in placing the subject of pensions on the agenda of the 1935 Dominion-Provincial Conference. Prospects of increased provincial support were enhanced by the fact that the new Premier of New Brunswick was "a very close friend of the family" of the Superintendent of the CNIB's Quebec division; and another new face, Premier Aberhart of Alberta was also apparently "very favourably inclined." Premier Bracken of Manitoba broached the subject at the conference and discussion was referred to the Committee on Unemployment Relief and Social Services. Its chairman, the Labour Minister, reported that "...no dissenting
opinion was expressed and, in fact, there was general sympathy with the
principle of pensions for the blind.\textsuperscript{146}

Besides bringing the issue before provincial Premiers, the CFB-CNIB
collection also decided to focus the attention of the federal government upon
its request for legislative action in the 1936 session. Upon the suggestion of
the CNIB, they forwarded a new memorial to the Prime Minister prior to the
opening of the new Parliament. This 1936 memorial contained all signatories of
the 1933 document except two, and ten new organizations (see table 31, p. 328).

In response, King referred the advocates to the Minister of Finance, who was
responsible for pensions policy. Although he was impressed with the CNIB's
presentation of the case, C.A. Dunning was not keen on the idea of taking
immediate legislative action. He gave Institute officials the impression that
he would like to see it done but was worried about balancing the budget during
the next fiscal year.\textsuperscript{147} Dunning held orthodox views on finance and was not
prepared to sanction any type of social reform "without regard to how it is to
be paid for."\textsuperscript{148}

Despite this omen, "another rung of the pensions ladder" was climbed
during the 1936 session because the Liberal government accepted the principle
of a federal scheme, and so the "need for further argument as to
constitutionality or merit was definitely disposed of."\textsuperscript{149} Dr. Donnelly (Lib.,
Willow Bunch, Sask.) introduced a resolution concerning pensions for the needy
blind, and presented the case for extension of the provisions of the Old Age
Pension Act to include the needy blind aged 40 years and over. His resolution
was endorsed by all the 22 speakers in the debate, who represented every party
and included several spokesmen of the organized blind.\textsuperscript{150} Nonetheless, the
government's reaction was not favourable. Dunning informed the House that
although his colleagues were sympathetic, the "practicality" of legislative action at that session was "very doubtful."\textsuperscript{151}

CNIB officials, though, were not totally disheartened, realizing that other pre-election pledges prompted the Liberal government to resist demands for new expenditure for "...a section of the population concerning whose patience they had ample proof."\textsuperscript{152} One consolation for their long-suffering clients was the entry of Canadian mayors into the ranks of supporters in March 1936.\textsuperscript{153} Around the same time the old age pension bill was introduced in the Quebec National Assembly. Concerted efforts were then made by the CFB and CNIB to secure inclusion of the needy blind under this legislation. They succeeded in persuading the bill's sponsor, Bouchard, to add a clause to this effect, and both organizations received copies of the proposed amendment.\textsuperscript{154} However, the tactics of the Union Nationale (UN) opposition during May and June brought the regular business of the Assembly to a standstill. Faced with this deadlock, Premier Taschereau decided to apply for a dissolution once certain private bills were approved. M. Duplessis, the UN leader, also succeeded in securing the passage of the old age pension bill in the closing stages of the session. Its rapid enactment left the advocates confused about the fate of the pensions for the blind clause.\textsuperscript{155} Their confusion, however, was only temporary as the Liberal government, in a last-gasp bid to retain power, began payment of means-tested pensions for the elderly but not for the blind.

The UN victory at the polls in August 1936 had more than passing interest for the coalition partners because its successful candidates included Gilbert Layton, the CFB Secretary, who was appointed Minister Without Portfolio in Duplessis' new cabinet. He publicly announced that one of his first priorities when the legislature convened would be to introduce a bill providing for pensions for the blind in Quebec.\textsuperscript{156} But he failed to secure passage of enabling legislation during the special session called by the new Premier to
deal with urgent legislation, including amendments to Taschereau's Old Age Pension Act. Frustrated by this omission, the CFB began to lobby provincial Premiers for their support of discussion of benefits for the blind at the forthcoming Dominion-Provincial Conference. Although CNIB officials were caught off guard by news of CFB lobbying, they managed to contact all Premiers at the conference, who "agreed to support the early enactment of the necessary legislation should the opportunity arise." The subject cropped up in the discussion on old age pensions. The president of the CFB reported that his son had precipitated the brief debate and "not one dissenting voice" had been raised.157

Dunning, the federal Finance Minister, played a pivotal role in the final stages. Having come close to achieving his objective of "sound finance" in his first budget, he was not averse to funding new modest proposals in subsequent fiscal years. As he made plain at a lunch in late March of 1936 with R. Myers and H. Turner of the CNIB, "it was not a question of waiting until the budget had been balanced."158 In the fall of 1936 he asked the CNIB to submit up-to-date statistics and the CFB to send a brief. After these separate submissions had been supplemented with information from the DBS, the Deputy Minister of Finance, W.C. Clark, instructed his officials to prepare an estimate of the costs of Ottawa's participation in a joint scheme providing pensions for the needy blind between 40 and 69 who met the same citizenship and residency requirements as sighted old age pensioners.159

It became clear at a meeting between Dunning and Myers of the CNIB in early December that the sudden rise to prominence of pensions for the blind on the government's agenda stemmed from the fact that they were the least costly item of new proposals. The Finance Minister pointed out that besides the agitation for pensions for the blind, there was "recent considerable pressure"
from an organization representing old age pensioners in British Columbia for an increase in rates and agitation from "another quarter," i.e., organized labour, to lower the age of eligibility for old age pensions. "Of these three, Mr. Dunning expressed the opinion that pensions for the blind most appealed to him." Their relative cheapness ($500,000) versus the estimated cost of paying old age pensions at the age of 65 ($38.5 million) was a sufficient imperative for legislative action.

The throne speech opening the 1937 session contained the long-awaited announcement. During the drafting stage the government's choice of format was questioned by the chairmen of the War Veterans Allowances Commission and the Pensions Commission. According to the Deputy Minister of Finance, these bureaucrats preferred a separate statute over amendment via old age pensions legislation because "[t]hey fear opening up the latter Act will lead to pressure for a lot of other amendments." Clark, however, informed the Minister that he had "an iron-clad defence on this point...as you can point out that amendments require the consent of all provinces...."

Clark and the Solicitor to the Treasury, in conjunction with Baker and Myers of the CNIB, were the major authors of the scheme. Working within the limits of the old age pensions precedent set by the Minister, they applied the final touches. Baker was instrumental in enshrining the preferences of the coalition partners for the British definition of blindness and a minimum age of 40, but failed to alter the Minister's decision not to include younger unemployables. Both coalition partners also persuaded Finance officials to grant the blind a higher earnings limit than sighted recipients of old age pensions or war veterans allowances (see appendix B). However, their demand for double the permissible earnings ($250) was pared down by the Deputy Minister. Acting purely on their own initiative, CNIB officials managed to secure
inclusion of a clause granting blind couples who married after the passage of
the legislation the equivalent of one pension only. They were "strong
believers" in penalizing such unions because of the hardships imposed upon
children, but were not keen on the Minister publicizing their views in the
House.163

Baker and Myers of the CNIB also precipitated the timing of the passage of
the bill, pressing for its enactment prior to the imminent recess so that all
the provinces could act upon the federal initiative while their legislatures
were still in session. Although Clark doubted that this was feasible,164 his
political superior thought otherwise. On March 16th, Dunning initiated the
second reading of the bill to amend the Old Age Pension Act to include the
needy blind aged 40 and over. The debate was dominated by charges of partisan
administration of old age pensions in British Columbia and Ontario. In the
discussion on the amendment CCF MPs were critical of certain terms of the
legislative proposal, with Heaps arguing for an increase in the earnings
allowance, and his British Columbia colleagues, MacInnis and Taylor, attacking
the "unfairness" of the "unnatural, inhuman" clause penalizing the blind who
married after the scheme became operative.165 Debate, however, was not
prolonged and the bill was passed swiftly by the House. On March 18th, it was
approved by the Senate with only one amendment, clarifying the earnings limit
for married couples.

Except for Alberta, all other provinces passed enabling legislation making
pensions for the blind payable from the fall of 1937 onwards (see table 33).
Their swift entry into the federal pensions plan for the blind contrasted
sharply with their delay in endorsing the old age pensions scheme. It was
spurred in part by lobbying from the CNIB. But the CFB and the UBPCM also
deserve credit for their persistent efforts to bring the cause of the blind to the attention of provincial legislators. The eventual success of all the major advocates demonstrated clearly the truism that unity is strength.

Table 33. Number of pensioners and federal contributions towards pensions for blind persons, 1937/38 - 1938/39 fiscal years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>No. of Pensioners</th>
<th>Federal Contributions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alberta</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>$19,290</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British Columbia</td>
<td>232</td>
<td>37,324</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manitoba</td>
<td>206</td>
<td>33,507</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Brunswick</td>
<td>510</td>
<td>86,517</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nova Scotia</td>
<td>493</td>
<td>74,418</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ontario</td>
<td>1154</td>
<td>199,163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prince Edward Island</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>10,518</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quebec</td>
<td>1453</td>
<td>263,452</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saskatchewan</td>
<td>214</td>
<td>36,167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total:</strong></td>
<td><strong>4512</strong></td>
<td><strong>$760,354</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


A Review

The socio-economic setting shaped the movement to secure pensions for the blind. Industrial urban growth had a similar impact for the blind as it had for the aged poor by exacerbating their dependency. However, for the blind it also prompted the growth of self-help organizations in the prewar period, a development not copied by other civilian client groups until after the introduction of means-tested benefits. While the lack of success of the initial
struggle owed less to economic conditions than to the advocates' own failure to convince decision-makers that the issue of state aid was a pressing one, the economy exerted much more influence upon their concerted campaign. The Great Depression delayed its progress because the adverse financial outlook combined with politicians' preoccupation with the relief of destitution arising from mass unemployment militated against welfare innovations. The onset of economic recovery mid-way through the 1930s provided Ottawa and provincial governments in central Canada with the means of financing statutory benefits, but offered no guarantee of legislative action.

Prevailing cultural attitudes also exerted a critical impact upon the movement. Among the various categories of the dependent poor, the client group of blind adults was unique because their affliction was tainted by the taboo of venereal disease as well as being associated with mental deficiency. Popular prejudice, therefore, was a major obstacle during the initial struggle. Like the other pensions movements, the influence of foreign precedents was visible in the early stages, with the British scheme chosen over the U.S. experience as the example to follow. However, the domestic precedent of old age pensions soon became dominant, shaping the advocates' initial choice of target as well as the character of legislation.

As the 1927 joint initiative for the civilian elderly was sponsored by Ottawa, CNIB officials, the pioneers of the cause, conducted their initial lobbying in the federal capital. But their example was not followed either by their affiliate, the LTCB in Winnipeg, or by their rivals, the CFB, who both showed greater appreciation of the flexibility afforded by the federal structure of government. The advocates' subsequent coordinated lobbying of both senior levels of government eventually bore fruit because neither Ottawa nor the provinces were prepared to finance independent initiatives, opting instead
to consider only inclusion of the blind via expansion of the old age pensions plan. But federal-provincial conflicts arising over its implementation delayed the introduction of pensions for the blind. Consequently, in line with the findings of Birch (1955), the method of joint financing influenced not only the content but also the timing of the scheme.

Concerning societal actors, the case study represents another variant of group politics, with the organized blind qualifying as the champions of the movement. Their sponsorship and development of the agitation contrasts sharply with the minimal role played by other civilian client groups, and even outmatches the participation of disabled veterans. Their promotion of their own cause stems mainly from the fact that their small and scattered potential membership represented only a weak voting bloc compared with, say, the elderly, and so their effectiveness as a pressure group depended upon other resources such as a unified organization, a coordinated strategy and access to decision-makers. Initially the internal conflicts between the CFB and the CNIB over the role of the state in blind welfare and appropriate tactics seriously undermined their efforts, because disunity provided politicians with the rationale for inaction and impeded the process of converting others to their cause. Their agitation only gained momentum once their efforts became coordinated, allowing the partners in the national pensions coalition and the UBPCM to mount a concerted attack upon both levels of government and to broaden the base of the movement. Outside Parliament they concentrated their proselytizing efforts within urban boundaries and managed to secure the active support of trade unionists, middle-class volunteers and civic politicians. Inside the federal Parliament, their cause was championed by a few sympathetic MPs. During the 1920s their spokesmen were motivated by electoral pressures,
party commitments or personal empathy to respond to interest group pressure. In subsequent Parliaments, advocates advanced the cause upon their own initiative and succeeded in bringing the subject to the attention of other legislators.

Inside government, politicians rather than bureaucrats played the dominant role in contrast to their more equal participation in the preceding agitation for war veterans' allowances. The politicians' initial opposition reflected their ever-present fiscal conservatism. Although provincial Premiers displayed varying degrees of interest in the issue, they were united in their common determination not to sponsor new, costly independent initiatives for the needy blind. King and Bennett, when in power, were equally determined to resist demands for action until unanimous provincial consent was forthcoming. Underlying their resistance were fears that pensions would set a costly dangerous precedent. They did not perceive the claims of the blind to be more deserving than those of other categories of the civilian disabled. This spiral effect, combined probably with the relative insignificance of blind voters, were the major impediments to governmental action. However, in the end their small numbers helped them because decision-makers realized that aid for the blind was the cheapest means of satisfying demands for social reform.

Electoral pressures once again played a catalyst role. Prime Minister King's pledge, extracted by the CFB during the 1935 campaign, and the promises of provincial Premiers in New Brunswick and Quebec to implement the federal old age pensions plan, pushed the issue higher up the political agenda. A sympathetic Finance Minister holding office during a period of economic recovery finally launched the federal initiative. After assessing the relative costs of aid for the blind vis-à-vis changes to the old age pensions plan, Dunning yielded to the advocates' demands. He sketched the broad outlines of
the scheme, with his officials and representatives of the organized blind applying the finishing touches.

Although all four statutory innovations for the dependent poor were products of group politics, the campaigns preceding their introduction were far from being identical. Instead, comparison of the cases reveals an interesting variation in pressure group activity related to the two types of social policy distinguished in chapter 1: innovations and developments. Economic interests participated in the mothers' and old age pensions movements when the conflicts over the principle of state-financed benefits, as of right, were urged. In contrast, client groups virtually single-handedly championed the claims of disabled veterans and the civilian blind for benefits similar to those granted to the elderly. All four struggles, however, contained one common, striking feature: the virtual absence of social control politics. The threat of disorder made only a fleeting appearance in the initial struggle for war veterans' allowances when, significantly, the cause of disabled non-pensioners was linked with the issue of relief for able-bodied veterans.

Relative to societal actors, cabinet politicians played a remarkably consistent role. They dominated the social policymaking process in all cases, in line with their pre-eminence in the development of emergency aid. While fiscal conservatism was ever-present, electoral pressures replaced fears of revolution as the effective spur to governmental action. On the other hand, bureaucrats played a minor and usually negative role in developing the statutory legacy of interwar welfare politics.
PART IV

CONCLUSIONS
As the foregoing analysis reveals, the interwar struggles over the issue of public welfare were critical in fostering acceptance of the principle that state aid to compensate for loss of income is granted as a matter of right. Their significance, though, in pioneering the development of the welfare state is not generally recognized by students of Canadian social policy. After evaluating the current state of the literature in 1979, Jones admits that he is still in the dark about precisely when the elements of a social welfare system were established during the first four decades of this century, and is sceptical that its achievement "was a step-by-step process with no apparent setbacks."¹ This study sheds light on both matters by suggesting that the pattern of categoric public assistance, developed during the 1916-37 period, laid the foundations and that its construction was shaped not only by promoters of the cause of collectivism but also by forces of individualism.

It was the series of small-scale measures rather than any one single initiative that paved the way for the introduction of comprehensive income security. The development of emergency state aid for destitute employables after 1918 heralded the onset of federal involvement in the field of public welfare that had "tremendous future significance...."² Prior to World War II, however, the payment of statutory benefits for select categories of the dependent poor signified more clearly that state aid was being granted 'as of right, not charity.' Rubinow, a pioneer authority on the social insurance technique, recognized that innovations such as mothers pensions represented forms of specialized relief, "[b]ut as an admission of public provision, of its
preference to private charity, these Acts mark a very important step forward.

A variety of forces shaped the evolution of the Canadian pattern of categoric public assistance. All types of determinants, identified in chapter 1, exerted an impact, but their influence was not of equal importance in shaping the origins of the welfare state, as the following summary reveals.

The evidence, accumulated from the study of comparable cases, confirms that socio-economic change played an indirect, mediating role. The effects of the ongoing shift from an agrarian to an industrial society included developments in income maintenance, but as Heclo and Rimlinger stress, initiatives of this type are not automatic by-products. Rapid industrialization and urbanization created the new category of destitute employables and exacerbated the vulnerability of the dependent poor. However, on their own, these processes do not explain why the Canadian state decided to take action. In fact, its intervention may well reflect more the absence of an entrenched system of denominational charity in western Canada, than any industrial-urban imperative. In similar fashion, the increased revenues accruing from the sporadic periods of economic prosperity during the interwar years afforded no guarantee that governments would use their newly acquired surpluses to finance welfare innovations.

Although rapid economic growth had similar demographic consequences in Canada as elsewhere, the Canadian case is distinctive because it was triggered more by a boom in the agricultural sector than by technological change in industry. The wheat boom in the first two decades of this century had far-reaching consequences for developments in income maintenance because it altered the group pattern of society by creating, among other things, a new power structure of organized farmers in western Canada. These sectional
interests, together with their rural counterparts in other provinces, vied with business and labour organizations for a position of dominance throughout the interwar period. But the implications of this conflict are overlooked by Canadian scholars engaged in social policy research, who tend to confine their analyses to struggles waged within the boundaries of the rising industrial-urban sector. For example, both Bryden and Guest discount the reaction of farmers in their analyses of forces resisting interwar developments in income maintenance.\textsuperscript{5} Authors of comparative and other single-nation studies of social policy innovations also tend to relegate the rural sector to the proverbial scrap heap of history and in so doing they overlook a potentially formidable source of opposition to the cause of collectivism.\textsuperscript{6}

Compared with socio-economic factors, cultural determinants had a more direct impact upon shaping the timing and content of the various means-tested measures. World War I and the Great Depression accelerated rather than created the shifts in mass attitudes towards the causes of poverty and the role of the state in ameliorating distress. The reform spirit, developing in the first decades of this century, intensified during the war years partly as a result of the expansion of government involvement into community affairs. The return of veterans, though, was more of a catalyst for developments in public welfare, because their claims for special treatment overcame conventional objections to income support, as the case studies on Ottawa's original relief policy, war veterans' allowances and pensions for the blind reveal. Their re-establishment also temporarily removed the existing socio-cultural limits on revenues, an effect pinpointed by Peacock and Wiseman (1967), by allowing both the federal government and new prairie provinces to introduce income taxes, a means of financing innovations. Of the two major slumps during the interwar years, the Great Depression is often identified as the peace time trigger for shifts in
mass opinion because the unprecedented levels of unemployment and corresponding dependency increased awareness that their causes resided in the socio-economic structure and made the idea of public welfare more acceptable. However, in the case of public assistance provision, its impact was minimized by the fact that the bulk of innovations were in place before mass dependency reached crisis proportions.

Despite the fact that Canadians became more receptive to the idea of state involvement, the persistence of traditional attitudes towards the causes of poverty and its treatment well into the 1930s was an important constraint. Among churchgoers an influential minority of Protestants continued to view indigence as a sign of individual moral failure rather than being involuntary, and to prefer private over public charity; and the Catholic clergy never became reconciled to the idea of state intervention during the interwar years, as their reaction to relief land settlement and old age pensions illustrates. The crusaders of individualism, the dominant secular social value, were equally hostile to the idea of state-financed aid, perceiving it as a device for encouraging pauperism and a threat to cherished values, especially thrift. Their sentiments coalesced in the shape of a taxpayers' resistance. Although the existence of widespread popular prejudice against taxation is widely recognized as an obstacle in the case of Quebec, its importance as a constraint in English Canada is not appreciated by all social historians. Its presence confirms the hypothesis of Bird (1970) that measures involving wholesale state financing are likely to provoke resistance from taxpayers.

The prevailing individualistic ethos contained subtle, perceived distinctions concerning the worthiness of the various categories of both the new and old poor. Among destitute employables, World War I veterans initially avoided the stigma of pauperism owing to their patriotic service, but once they
became absorbed into the civilian labour force they became victims of the same prejudice that branded the able-bodied as work-shy and 'loafers.' Even within the category of physically fit civilians, distinctions on the 'deserving' spectrum were made between married residents with dependents and unmarried unemployed men, with non-resident single men qualifying for the dubious status of 'least deserving.' Although the plight of the traditional dependent poor elicited more sympathy, only those categories where poverty was clearly due to misfortune, such as widows with dependent children and wives of inmates of mental hospitals, qualified for the 'deserving' label. Below them on the hierarchy were the industrious elderly, with the unemployable blind trailing far behind owing to the perceived causes of their affliction. Similar distinctions were made even among the new dependent group, with physically handicapped veterans outranking their 'burnt-out' comrades suffering from new, psychological disorders.

The Canadian cultural context though, was not immune to outside influences. Foreign precedents exerted more impact upon the development of statutory benefits than upon emergency aid, a finding confirming the proposition of Woodsworth (1977) that the international diffusion of ideas shapes the content of social benefit programs. Although developments in a variety of countries were followed, the American and British experiences attracted most attention with the latter acting as more of a role model than the neighbouring federation, except in the case of the mothers' pensions movement. The flow of ideas, however, did not only cross national boundaries. Domestic precedents also exerted both a positive and negative influence. Ottawa's first major statutory initiative acted as an important precedent for the extension of means-tested benefits to prematurely senile veterans and the
unemployable blind. In contrast, the pioneering provincial mothers' pensions schemes acted as constraints once the movement lost momentum, by not only deterring eastern Premiers from sponsoring similar plans, but also blocking future, purely provincial welfare innovations.

Like cultural factors, the institutional framework decisively shaped the interwar politics of Canadian welfare by acting as a filter for the issues and channelling the behaviour of the political actors. In contrast to the findings of Leman concerning the politics of Canadian welfare reform during the 1970s, the evidence from this study suggests that the structure of political institutions fostered "inductive" rather than "deductive" policymaking in the sense that new ideas had to fight their way to the top rather than being imposed from above. This difference in style is revealed most clearly in the pre-parliamentary phase. In the interwar period the statutory innovations were products of vigorous conflicts and bargaining among interest groups and cabinet politicians, whereas in the 1970s reform proposals were formulated in high-level negotiations between competing bureaucrats and federal and provincial authorities. Two features of the interwar structure, the novelty of competitive, mass-based party politics and the simpler, grassroots-type administration, encouraged closer contact between private citizens and political elites. Moreover, the special barriers, imposed by the contemporary framework of federal-provincial politics, to participation by societal actors were only beginning to be erected between the wars. Consequently, federal and provincial cabinet politicians were more exposed to external political pressures than their postwar successors and were deprived of the relative luxury of settling their disputes in the isolated conclaves of executive federalism.
The formal division of legislative powers laid the groundwork for the entire development of the pattern of categoric public assistance. Specifically, provincial legislative authority and federal jurisdiction over veterans, combined with Ottawa's residual and spending powers, were the relevant terms. The 1867 constitution and a series of judicial decisions identified the provincial governments as the 'centres of gravity' for welfare innovations, but it was Ottawa's assigned jurisdiction over veterans and its power to make laws for "peace, order and good government" that prompted the original policy of intervention to aid destitute employables. Ottawa's control over the major sources of taxation paved the way for its direct involvement in statutory schemes for civilians through the mechanism of cost-sharing.

The dual targets of influence inherent in the federal structure of government served to fragment the efforts of advocates rather than to facilitate the introduction of welfare innovations. For example, during the first phase of the mothers' pensions movement the decisions of nationally-organized women volunteers and trade unionists to lobby in the federal capital retarded the progress of the cause; and in the early struggle for old age pensions, organized labour was beset by similar uncertainty concerning the choice of target. Their confusion confirms the observation made by Simeon that demands of citizens do not necessarily respect constitutional lines of authority, and was understandable given the fact that the idea of state intervention in the field of public welfare was then very novel.

More significantly, the presence of an alternative target provided the senior levels of government with the opportunity to develop the practice of buck-passing to a fine art during the interwar years. This "form of statecraft" did not develop simply because "the makers of the Constitution failed to anticipate that social reforms would require some special arrangements for
cooperative working."\(^{12}\) Instead, its root cause lay in the mutual unwillingness of the senior levels of government to finance on their own the development of the welfare state. This calculus rather than the often-cited imbalance between their legislative powers and financial capacity was the major factor conditioning their conflicts - at least until the Depression decade. Despite their constitutional power and surplus revenues, the provinces persistently refused in the 1920s to sponsor any new measures for the civilian jobless outside the ordinary relief system, and their reluctance reflected concerns about the mobility of capital and labour, as Banting (1982) and Birch (1955) foresaw. Although Ottawa adopted a more positive approach to unemployment and dependency, its choice of the cost-sharing formula and stress on the emergency character of aid indicated its determination to avoid being saddled with the entire cost of maintaining destitute wage-earners, a vow broken only in the case of transients. The practice of collaboration also marked the major initiative in statutory benefits. As old age pensions involved unprecedented and indefinite expenditures, the idea of a purely federal plan was never seriously entertained. Instead, conditional grants were offered as inducements to the provinces, which voiced their resentment by delaying implementation of Ottawa's costly plan for over a decade. Their reaction was conditioned by their own financial experience with mothers' pensions, experiments that effectively blocked the development of the welfare state as a purely provincial enterprise.

Unlike the federal structure, the colonial policy inheritance exerted a very direct impact on the substance of the measures. The emergency character and relative low cost of poor relief, the only form of public aid available at the onset of the activist era, acted as a consistent frame of reference for policymakers. These features became the hallmarks of state aid for destitute employables in the interwar period. The policy inheritance was equally visible
in the statutory schemes adopted, which represented specialized forms of public assistance. But as Leman points out, the content of new proposals also shapes the terms of political debate. While a number of options were discussed and discarded, the then novel idea of cash payments was incorporated into the original federal initiatives for destitute employables and all the statutory programs, a significant development in fostering the trend towards granting state aid as 'of right, not charity.'

Another institutional variable, the advent of competitive, mass-based politics was an important trigger for developments in income maintenance, particularly of the statutory kind. The decisions of the leaders of the traditional major parties to finance mothers' pensions and old age pensions were clearly designed to attract the sizeable new voting blocs of women and urban labourers, which mainly represented nontaxpayers. But counteracting the trend towards expansion of welfare spending during the 1920s was the entry into party politics of organized farmers, to be discussed below. Although the Great Depression created another period of political uncertainty, the emergence of new, western protest movements in the 1935 federal election had minimal consequences for the policies examined here, because it developed after the bulk of innovations were in place.

Besides the introduction of universal suffrage, World War I also prompted a rapid increase in the size of the federal bureaucracy. The expansion of the public sector during the war years involved, among other things, the establishment of separate departments for veterans and health that were merged in 1928. The evidence of this study, however, suggests that the creation of these new structures did not attract a core of reform-minded bureaucrats comparable to the personnel entering the public service after World War II.
Moreover, activist civil servants in the older Department of Labour departed in 1924 as a result of the regime of economy introduced during Prime Minister King's first term of office. The wartime expansion of activities of government, though, had a greater impact upon the political activity of interest groups. It acted as an incentive in the case of organized labour and client groups whose efforts were directed towards ever-increasing government intervention, whereas it provoked a backlash among the dominant economic interests that was to reverberate throughout the interwar years.

Like the environmental factors, the active participants in the politics of Canadian welfare exerted varying degrees of influence. But, as anticipated, their collective contribution was far greater for they performed the crucial tasks of defining the social problems and deciding the timing and content of the income-support measures. Concerning societal actors, militant workers were overshadowed by interest groups. Out of the eight case studies, only two satisfied the prerequisites of the social control model, and even then the original policy of federal intervention was blurred by intense group pressure. Both involved initiatives for destitute employables, a finding that confirms that the distinction made by Rein (1971) concerning the employability of the client group is, indeed, critical in the development of income support. This benchmark, though, is often overlooked by proponents of the social control model who tend to identify working-class militancy rather than interest group pressure as the effective spur for all welfare innovations. Far from confirming their sweeping generalization, this study indicates that the literary competition between social control and group politics is a non-contest, as the welfare state is a product of both.

The evidence from the case studies on Ottawa's initial sponsorship of emergency aid and its relief camps policy indicates that in situations of
widespread discontent the agitation of working-class militants was an effective spur to extracting concessions from the decision makers. But, their findings also suggest that this category of actors is imprecise, even though it encompasses two types of "objects" of control identified in the social policy literature, viz., radicals in the organized labour movement and mobilized unemployed workers. Instead, the effective actors, i.e., those perceived to pose the greatest threat to established order, possessed special characteristics that set them apart from other segments of the working class. In the context of postwar unrest, newly returned veterans were perceived as the most dangerous because they were trained killers; and in the midst of the Great Depression single, homeless men were singled out because of their lifestyle, propensity for violence and susceptibility to revolutionary propaganda. In sharp contrast, other groups including 'burnt-out' veterans and families with male and female breadwinners posed no such threat to the social order. The evidence sheds light as well on the identity of the powerholders by establishing that the reaction of cabinet politicians to the perceived threat of revolution was the crucial stimulus. Concerning their motives, fear of revolution overshadowed electoral calculations, thus confirming the propositions of most social control theorists over those of Piven and Cloward (1971).

Relative to the limited influence of social control politics, interest group power was a much more decisive force, dominating all the agitations except the struggle for relief camps. Among economic interest groups, only organized labour, particularly its moderate arm, played a consistent advocacy role. However, its championship of the cause of old age pensions stands out as a singular achievement in the interwar politics of Canadian welfare, an accomplishment that has formed the basis of the exaggerated claim that the
Canadian labour movement pioneered the welfare state. With regard to the other movements for statutory benefits, trade unionists qualify as supporters rather than effective advocates. They played an equally secondary role in developing emergency aid for destitute employables, because unskilled labour was not perceived as part of their potential membership and their lobbying efforts focused upon securing insurance against unemployment.

Among the dominant economic interests, organized farmers qualify as the arch opponents of the cause of collectivism. Disturbed about rural depopulation from the turn of the century onwards, and their own declining political influence vis-a-vis urban-dwellers, their decision to move beyond orthodox pressure group activity into the area of party politics had significant consequences. Their capture of provincial governments in Ontario and the prairie provinces in the immediate postwar period and their displacement of the Conservatives as the second largest group in the federal House after the 1921 election gave them privileged positions in the governmental decision making process to block developments in emergency state aid during the 1920s, and to delay the introduction of public pensions for the elderly. Their new-found political influence was enhanced by their concentration in the developing agricultural frontier which counteracted the challenge posed by the emerging industrial sector. Even when western settlement and the growth of wheat exports came to an abrupt end at the end of the decade, farmers' control of the governments of the prairie provinces ensured that their individualistic and conservative fiscal values had effective representation in the political system. But the Canadian Progressive movement is not generally depicted as representing a reactionary force. On the contrary, its ties with the general reform movement are often stressed and Progressives are usually credited with advancing the development of mass democracy by promoting the cause of women's
suffrage and other electoral reforms designed to enhance the influence of the ordinary voter. The implementation of these reforms, though, required minimal public expenditure in contrast to developments in income maintenance that threatened their pocketbooks as well as their individualistic values.

The farmers' hostility to state-financed initiatives in income support were shared by Canadian businessmen. The latter voiced their opposition by sponsoring taxpayers' revolts against federal and provincial 'extravagance' as well as via their spokesmen in the federal cabinet. Capital, however, was not as consistent a veto group as agriculture, as the case study on relief land settlement reveals. Although this example of their advocacy role is not investigated by Finkel (1979), it reinforces his own finding concerning their behaviour in the 1930s when they pressed for the adoption of unemployment insurance and other reforms. In this respect, the conduct of Canadian corporate interests conforms to that of their Australian counterparts in the period immediately prior to World War I.15

Unlike economic interest groups, Canadian charities during the interwar period were not prominent group actors. Their representatives entered the political arena in only one instance, the mothers' pensions movement, to promote the cause of their clients. This case study reveals that the rapid industrial-urban growth during the first two decades of this century created a division between the new, non-sectarian agencies and the established, denominational charities, a cleavage overlooked by previous investigators of the mothers' pensions movement. While public-spirited female volunteers and employees of both private and public welfare agencies worked in tandem to secure the adoption of province-wide pensions, they did not display the same degree of concern for other categories of the dependent poor. Their minimal participation in subsequent movements can be explained partly by the fact that
once the goal of equal suffrage was achieved, most maternal feminists were absorbed into the traditional parties. In similar fashion, once the status of social workers increased, their conservatism came to the fore. For example, Charlotte Whitton, Canada's most well-known social worker of the time, was a "highly cost-conscious" advocate, as shown in her report to Prime Minister Bennett that precipitated wholesale federal sponsorship of relief camps.

Relative to charities, select client groups played a more creative role in promoting developments in income maintenance. As shown above, militant unemployed workers were effective in extracting two welfare concessions. By contrast, moderate segments of the civilian jobless were less successful, as the case of Ottawa's withdrawal reveals. But this conclusion needs to be tempered by the fact that their activities remain largely unrecorded. Among the various categories of the dependent poor, client groups representing veterans and blind adults successfully promoted their own causes for statutory aid, with sole-support mothers and the elderly qualifying as spectators. The non-participation of the latter two groups can be explained partly by the fact that they both represented more sizeable segments of the population, so that once mass enfranchisement was introduced they were perceived by policymakers to be significant voting blocs which could be attracted by the issue of public pensions. Furthermore, the participation of both needy mothers and destitute aged was inhibited by cultural constraints relating to their gender and advanced age, respectively.

Veterans qualified as the more successful client group because, unlike the civilian blind, they succeeded in promoting two innovations in categoric public assistance. The intense pressure exerted by the new ex-soldiers' movement in the immediate postwar period was as effective in triggering federal involvement with destitute employables as the militancy of their disaffected comrades.
Their subsequent demands for the extension of the old age pensions scheme to cover 'burnt out' cases were even more effective because, in addition to sponsoring their cause, the new Legion shaped the content of the policy, as the case study on war veterans' allowances reveals. Like their Australian and British counterparts, the Canadian veterans' effectiveness as a pressure group derived from the prestige, not the size, of their membership. Their patriotic connections combined with their moderation and non-partisanship ensured general sympathy among both the public and federal legislators. The relative lack of hostility and a clearly identifiable federal target allowed the leaders of the GWVA, who had direct access to the cabinet, and its successor, the Legion, to concentrate their energies upon lobbying forces inside government, where the only real source of opposition existed.

Unlike veterans, blind civilians lacked both size and status. They were forced to concentrate their initial energies upon converting others outside Parliament to their cause, a process prolonged mainly by their own internal divisions. As chapter 10 reveals, the internal conflicts between the CFB and CNIB were exacerbated by the rivalry between their leaders, a clash which illustrates the role played by personality in politics. More than any other set of group actors, the blind's effectiveness as a pressure group depended upon unity, and once this was achieved their campaign gained momentum. But the eventual success of their concerted campaign was dependent upon persuading the decision-makers that their claims were distinct from other, larger categories of the civilian disabled population.

In addition to client groups, urban municipal politicians also benefited directly from interwar developments in income maintenance. Their active support of the efforts of societal advocates in most campaigns was motivated by a mixture of cost and electoral considerations. Civic politicians were eager to
offload their relief costs upon the senior levels of government in order to satisfy the desires of their ratepaying constituents. Their objective during the interwar years was "to give as little as possible and encourage even less." As the case study on relief land settlement indicates, its achievement, on occasion, depended upon using organized areas in rural Canada as the dumping grounds for cases of dependency.

A small band of federal and provincial legislators also promoted the cause of collectivism during the interwar years. Their participation at the provincial level was most visible in the case study on the mothers' pensions movement, with reform-minded liberals pressing the case for province-wide pensions and labour representatives precipitating the entry of Ontario. Inside the Canadian Parliament, MPs drawn from all parties, with the notable exception of the Progressives, pressed the case for governmental action. Their involvement was prompted by a variety of motives, including electoral and interest group pressures, humanitarianism and party commitments. Concerning the latter, the tiny Labour group was the first to incorporate state-financed income maintenance into its party policy, with the Liberals and Conservatives following its example in 1919 and 1927, respectively. The participation of certain backbenchers, however, reflected the influence of political ideology before social insurance became the official policy of their parties. For example, W.F. Carroll, G.W. Kyte and E.M. Macdonald, the Liberal champions of old age pensions in the prewar period, voiced ideas of the new reform liberalism, a finding challenging Bryden's speculation that their advocacy was not ideologically motivated. Also, T.L. Church's advocacy of public pensions reflected the Tory value of collectivism, a motive overlooked by Neatby, who describes Church as "not an orthodox Conservative" but "an independent in fact, if not name."
Inside government, cabinet politicians overshadowed bureaucrats as the key players in the politics of welfare. Despite their different party labels and constituencies, provincial and federal cabinet politicians shared the same conservative fiscal attitudes that acted as powerful constraints on Canadian welfare state development. As the case studies in Parts II and III document, cost considerations shaped the bulk of their decisions to resist demands for action. Furthermore, on at least three occasions - relief camps policy, relief land settlement and mothers' pensions - their decisions to sponsor innovations were motivated by a desire to achieve economy, a motive not commonly identified as spurring welfare spending. While Brecher (1957) recognizes that the conservative fiscal orthodoxy of the interwar years was a powerful impediment to national innovations in public welfare, its equally powerful role in blocking regional experiments has not been stressed in the secondary literature. Yet, on the basis of the evidence of this study, one might go so far as to argue that the system of conditional grants-in-aid evolved by Ottawa to coerce the provinces into action concerning the jobless, the aged and the blind was only necessary, because provincial Premiers felt bound by pledges of economy to resist demands for expansion of relief beyond the minimum required to curb unrest and prevent starvation.

As the bulk of the developments were sponsored by Ottawa, members of the federal cabinet played the pre-eminent role in shaping them. Among these actors, successive Prime Ministers were the most influential decisionmakers, a finding confirmed by Redekop (1978) in his study of a later period of Canadian social policy-making. Besides fear of revolution, their decisions to take action also reflected electoral calculations and ideological beliefs. Of the two, the former were much more influential, as the case studies on old age
pensions, war veterans' allowances and pensions for the blind reveal. In this respect, the evidence lends support to the contention of Trebilcock (1982) and other public choice theorists that vote maximization is "the proximate objective" of politicians. However, their failure to appreciate that on occasion fear of revolution, ideological orientation and cost considerations also shaped decisions to intervene reduces the effectiveness of their decision making models.

Compared with cabinet politicians, civil servants played a relatively minor role in the interwar politics of Canadian welfare. The evidence is not conclusive, because the limits of the study precluded review of provincial archival material. Nonetheless, it does suggest that federal bureaucrats refrained from playing a creative role, except in the case of relief land settlement. Their inactivity concerning statutory developments can be explained in part by the fact that senior administrators shared the same fiscal predispositions and perceptions concerning client groups as their political superiors. Leman suggests that the parliamentary system also militates against bureaucratic activism by encouraging deference among Canadian civil servants. These officials were more active in the drafting stage, shaping the content of the two plans extending old age pensions, a finding suggesting that bureaucratic involvement is more pronounced in social policy developments than innovations.

Although long-forgotten, the struggles waged by the various political actors during the 1916-37 period remain significant. They resulted in the construction of the first milestones along Canada's road to comprehensive income security. The establishment of these landmarks was a product of sporadic working-class militancy; competing pressures from economic interest groups, charities, select client groups and civic politicians; the efforts of a few
reform-minded legislators; and cabinet politicians' fear of revolution, electoral calculations, fiscal conservatism and ideological beliefs. During their various conflicts these Canadians were influenced by the trails blazed by other societies, especially the British, the first industrialized people. But their choices were also conditioned by indigenous socio-economic, cultural and institutional features that shed light on the politics of the welfare state.
FOOTNOTES

Chapter 1

1This term is selected over the contemporary nomenclature of 'social assistance' and its colloquial equivalent 'welfare' because its usage was standard in the period under review and it stresses state involvement. For a discussion of the evolution of this technique in the Canadian context, see Canadian Welfare Council, Public Welfare Division, Public Assistance in Canada, Ottawa, 1952.

2Social insurance and categoric public assistance appeared at the provincial level in the respective guises of workmen's compensation (1914-) and mothers' pensions (1916-). An embryonic form of demogrants was visible in the federal scheme of war disability pensions launched in 1916.


5For example, Finkel contends that the debate over unemployment insurance and other economic reforms during the 1930s laid "[t]he groundwork for the Canadian transition to the welfare state...." (Alvin Finkel, Business and Social Reform in the Thirties [Toronto: James Lorimer & Co., 1979], p. 1.) McInnis, an investigator of family allowances, identifies the take-off point for developments in income security even later as dating from 1943 onwards. (Simon McInnis, "Canadian Social Policy Studies: A Classificatory Exercise," paper prepared for the 49th annual meeting of the Canadian Political Science Association, Fredericton, N.B., June 1977, pp. 6, 31, n.3.) The first Deputy Minister of the federal Department of Health and Welfare also suggests that the "great" income-maintenance programs introduced during the 1940s and 1950s represented a "brand new" pattern. (George F. Davidson, "Social Welfare in Canada, 1930-1955," in Social Welfare and the Preservation of Human Values, ed. William G. Dixon [Vancouver: J.M. Dent & Sons, 1957], pp. 28-29.)


13Their ongoing debate and research findings are ably summarized in Thomas R. Dye and Virginia Grey, eds., The Determinants of Public Policy (Lexington, Mass.: D.C. Heath & Conway, 1980), Pt. I.


Bryden, Old Age Pensions, p. 3


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38See Hall et al., Change, Choice and Conflict, p. 92; and Gilbert, "Welfare Policy," p. 38.


Chapter 2


2Ibid., pp. 83-86.


4Between 1871 and 1901, the overall growth had been less than 50% increasing from 3,700,000 to 5,400,000. Kathleen Herman, "The Emerging Welfare State: Changing Perspectives in Canadian Welfare Policies and Programs," in Social Space: Canadian Perspectives, ed. D.I. Davies and K. Herman (Toronto: New Press, 1971), p. 133.

5Brown and Cook, Canada 1867-1921, pp. 1-2.

6Ibid., p. 71.


9Brown and Cook, Canada 1896-1921, p. 2.


11Brown and Cook, Canada 1896-1921, p. 2.

12Bryden, Old Age Pensions, pp. 10-11.

13Ibid., pp. 27-29.


18 Attitudes of Protestant churches towards social reform in the 1870-1900 period are described in Wallace, "Changing Canadian State," pp. 92-96.

19 Crysdale, Industrial Struggle, p. 16.

20 Guest, Emergence of Social Security, p. 4.


23 Guest, Emergence of Social Security, p. 4.


26 Brown and Cook, Canada 1896-1921, p. 25.


28 Guest, Emergence of Social Security, p. 32.

29 Brown and Cook, Canada 1896-1921, pp. 24-25.

30 Guest, Emergence of Social Security, p. 33.


Splane suggests that this phraseology reflected the "officially expressed preference" of Upper Canada for institutional programs, and speculates that if the author had been from the Maritime Provinces, "one might have found some reference to responsibility for the poor...described in terms of persons in need...[not] institutions." Splane, Social Welfare in Ontario, pp. 41-42.

Guest, Emergence of Social Security, p. 7.


Guest, Emergence of Social Security, pp. 13-14. He suggests that the municipalities were to develop as the principal agencies. However, another scholar cites John A. Macdonald's hope that "a time would come when private charity would relieve the governments of their existing commitments for public welfare...." Herman, "Emerging Welfare State," p. 133.

Lloyd, "Introduction," p. 44.


Guest, Emergence of Social Security, p. 12.

Splane, Social Welfare in Ontario, p. 68.


Guest, Emergence of Social Security, p. 36.


49 Crysdale, Industrial Struggle, p. 3.


Part 2


3 Marsh, Canadians In and Out of Work, p. 308.


5 Marsh, Canadians In and Out of Work, p. 351.


Chapter 3

1 Struthers also stresses the importance of this initiative in triggering federal involvement with the civilian jobless. See James Struthers, 'No Fault of Their Own': Unemployment and the Canadian Welfare State, 1914-1941 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1983), pp. 22-29.

3 Ibid., p. 278.


5 Minutes of Evidence, Special Committee on Soldiers' Civil Re-establishment, Canada, House of Commons (HC) Journals, 2nd sess., 1919, app. No. 1, p. 331.


8 Struthers, "Prelude to Depression," p. 282.


10 For example, in Alberta, the prices of agricultural commodities fell by 42% while prices of other goods and services purchased by farmers in Western Canada fell by only 15%. Eric J. Hanson, Local Government in Alberta (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1956), p. 34.

11 Memo. to Minister, 30 December 1921, PAC, Department of Labour, Lacelle Files, RG 27, vol. 208, file no. 617:9A.


15 See Canadian Forum, April 1920, p. 200; and Bator, "Struggle to Raise the Lower Classes," p. 43, respectively.


17 See Province of B.C. Annual Report of the Department of Labour for the year ending 31 December 1921, p. 5; and Canadian Annual Review (CAR), 1920, p. 54, respectively.
18 Struthers, No Fault of Their Own, p. 22. For details of postwar industrial unrest, see Stuart M. Jamieson, Task Force on Labour Relations, study no. 22 (Ottawa: Privy Council Office, 1968).


21 Ibid., p. 108


24 Ibid., p. 90.

25 For details of these disorders, see Penner, Winnipeg 1919, p. 20; and CAR 1919, p. 705, respectively.


30 Ibid., p. 62

31 Cited in Penner, Winnipeg 1919, p. 95.


33 CAR, 1919, pp. 329, 491.


35 My own estimate based on 1919 membership figures of key veterans' associations: the Great War Veterans Association (250,000), the Imperial Veterans of Canada (50,000), and the Army and Navy Veterans (40,000).

37 On 31 July 1919 the GWVA had 250,000 members and 525 branches; a year previously the respective figures were 16,000 and 125. Cited in CAR, 1919, p. 619.


39 Eayrs, In Defence of Canada, p. 44.

40 Bowering, Service, p. 6.

41 CAR, 1919, p. 619.


43 CAR, 1919, p. 620.

44 Ibid., p. 619.

45 R.J. Manion, Life is an Adventure (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1936), pp. 259-60.


48 Ibid., p. 984.


50 See Eayrs, In Defence of Canada, pp. 57-58.

51 Quoted in CAR, 1920, p. 416.


53 See CAR, 1919, p. 489.

54 See Allen, Social Passion, p. 4.

55 Eayrs, In Defence of Canada, p. 52.

56 HC Debates, 2nd sess., 1919, p. 332.


59 *Labour Gazette*, 1921, p. 50.

60 See Good, *HC Debates*, 1922, p. 3526.


68 Ibid., p. 22.


74 *HC Debates*, 1921, p. 61.

75 See Bryce, Sutherland and Robb, ibid., pp. 1363, 1370.


80 Eayrs, In Defence of Canada, pp. 48-49.


83 Eayrs, In Defence of Canada, p. 68.


85 Bryce Stewart, Major Anthes, Minutes of Evidence, HC Journals, 2nd sess., 1919, pp. 319, 331.

86 HC Debates, 2nd sess., 1919, p. 1863.


88 See Arthurs and Calder, HC Debates, 2nd sess., 1919, pp. 1859, 1962 respectively.

89 Eayrs, In Defence of Canada, p. 63.


91 See Round Table, September 1919, p. 793, and Eayrs, In Defence of Canada, p. 63, respectively.


93 Struthers, "Prelude to Depression," p. 283.

94 Meighen to Jennings, 4 December 1920, PAC, Meighen Papers, MG 26I, vol. 43, file no. 166, p. 24935.

95 HC Debates, 1923, p. 3828.

All members of the service were given the vote under the Military Voters Act of 1917 and their female relatives enfranchised under the War-time Elections Act. "Of their 153 seats, no one can say precisely how many the Unionists won because of the War-time Elections Act, but certainly they owed 14 to the Military Voters Act...." J. Murray Beck, Pendulum of Power: Canada's Federal Elections (Scarborough, Ont.: Prentice-Hall, 1968), p. 145.

See Eayrs, In Defence of Canada, p. 52.


CAR, 1919, p. 382.


Memo. for Hon. Mr. Bennett, n.d., R.B. Bennett Papers, MG 26K, University of New Brunswick reel 393, p. 493279.

Meighen to Jennings, 4 December 1920, Meighen Papers, MG 26I, vol. 43, file no. 166, p. 24935.

Struthers, "Prelude to Depression," p. 284.

Struthers, No Fault of Their Own, p. 30.


Chapter 4

The Liberals spent $1,181,381 in the 1921-22 fiscal year, compared with their predecessors' $843,000. Figures cited in unsigned memo., n.d. [25 April 1923], Ottawa, Public Archives of Canada (PAC), Department of Labour, Lacelle Files, Record Group (RG) 27, vol. 208, file no. 617:9B.


Struthers points out that, contrary to conventional historical wisdom, the postwar depression did not end in 1923 but extended to 1925. He cites as evidence estimates of unemployment done by a DBS statistician showing that unemployment rose from a low of 3% in July 1923 to 16.5% by December of the same year; and that it never fell below 8% until September 1925. Struthers, "Prelude to Depression: The Federal Government and Unemployment, 1918-1929," Canadian Historical Review 58 (September 1977):277.

Cited in ibid., p. 277, n.2.

See Privy Council Order 191, 25 January 1922.

HC Debates, 1922, p. 1074.


For details of conferences in Calgary and Ottawa, see Labour Gazette, 1922, p. 982; and Canadian Annual Review (CAR), 1922, p. 296, respectively.

Labour Gazette, 1922, p. 979.

Cited by Church, HC Debates, 1925, p. 1449.

Cited by Woodsworth, ibid., p. 1413.

Ibid., p. 1438.

This paragraph is based on Woodsworth's speech, ibid., pp. 1411-13.


Ibid., pp. 1451-52.


See HC Debates, 1925, pp. 1431-36, 1448-52, respectively.

Ibid., p. 1415.

Crerar hailed from Manitoba and was President of the United Grain Growers. In 1917 he was appointed Minister of Agriculture by Borden. In June 1919 he resigned over the decision of his colleagues not to reduce the tariff and subsequently led the parliamentary group of western farmers. The latter declared themselves as representatives of the Progressives in February 1920, one month after the formation of the national party.


Murdock to King, 28 November 1922, PAC, W.L.M. King Papers, MG 26, J1, vol. 79.


Struthers, "Prelude to Depression," p. 287.


See Denis, HC Debates, 1925, pp. 1452-53.

See chapter 3, pp. 66-67.


Over 50% of federal income tax collected in the 1926-27 fiscal year was paid by corporations. Of this sum ($29 million), over 80% was collected from head offices in Toronto ($14 million) and Montreal ($9 million) of railways, banks, and insurance companies. "Copy of Speech of Mr. Robb at Dominion-Provincial Conference, 9 November 1927," PAC, King Papers, MG 26, J4, reel C2622, p. 52667.


Ferguson, W.S. Fielding, p. 251.

Neatby, W.L.M. King, p. 245.
37HC Debates, 1925, p. 1431.

38Support for protection does not automatically connote opposition to federal expenditure on unemployment relief. Beland, for example, a member of the Gouin bloc of protectionist Liberals, was not insensitive to the problems of urban labour in times of depression. He admitted at the 1922 Dominion-Provincial Conference that he was not "an out and out advocate of the doles system but I resent any man reproaching public bodies...for having resorted to measures of direct relief of unemployment during the last two years." Quoted in Labour Gazette, 1922, p. 979.

39Murdock to King, 18 July 1922, PAC, King Papers, MG26, J1, vol. 79, p. 66510.


41See Labour Gazette, 1926, p. 125.

42Prince Edward Island was not a participant in any federal scheme as unemployment was not a problem in the small, rural province. There is no evidence of New Brunswick's reaction to the federal policy of withdrawal, but its participation had been minimal and the lack of response of its Liberal Premier (Veniot) to federal overtures suggests disapproval.


44Proceedings, National Conference Regarding Winter Employment in Canada, Ottawa, 3-4 September 1924 (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1924), p. 58.


46For Drury's reaction to the federal doles policy, see PAC, Dept. of Labour, Lacelle Files, RG 27, vol. 208, file no. 617:9.1, vol. 3.


49Bryden, Old Age Pensions, p. 83.

50Toronto Globe, 28 October 1924.

51Quoted by Robb, HC Debates, 1925, p. 1431.

52Précis of Discussions, Dominion-Provincial Conference, Ottawa, 3-10 November 1927 (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1928), p. 32.

53Oliver, Ferguson, p. 150.

54Bruce Hutchison, The Incredible Canadian: A Candid Portrait of Mackenzie King: His Work, His Times and His Nation (Toronto: Longmans Green, 1952), pp. 75-76.


57 *Toronto Daily Star*, 3 March 1925.

58 Interview with author, Victoria, B.C., 25 March 1978.


60 Neatby, *W.L.M. King*, p. 53.

61 See Circular letter to all candidates, 18 November 1925, PAC, King Papers, MG 26, J4, reel C2623, p. 54198.


63 Roger Graham, *Arthur Meighen*, booklet no.16 (Ottawa: Canadian Historical Association, 1965), p. II.


65 See *ibid.*, file no. 617:24.2.


70 Cassidy, *Unemployment and Relief in Ontario*, p. 55.

Chapter 5

1 James Struthers, 'No Fault of Their Own': Unemployment and the Canadian Welfare State, 1914-1941 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1983), p.44.

2 Figures illustrating the magnitude of unemployment and dependency are cited in appendix A, tables 35-36.

The importance of past precedents is overlooked by Neatby who describes the 1930 Relief Act as "a major development" and "a radical measure because up to that time no federal government had accepted responsibility for supporting the unemployed." H.B. Neatby, The Politics of Chaos: Canada in the Thirties (Toronto: Macmillan, 1972), p.56.

For a discussion of the conflicts arising out of Ottawa's relief arrangements, see Struthers, No Fault of Their Own, chaps. 2-3.


Unemployed, single women were also denied civic relief "but in...the prevailing social climate women were far less likely to be riding the rods..." M. Horn, ed., The Dirty Thirties: Canadians in the Great Depression (Canada: Copp Clark, 1972), p. 132, n.1.


In western Canada in 1922 there were 2 combines displacing approximately 28 farm labourers. By 1929, 7,255 combines were in use displacing around 101,000 workers. Ibid., p. 478084.

Gordon to Provincial Premiers, 14 February 1931, Bennett Papers, MG 26K, UNB reel 200, pp. 241109-10.


16For example, Broadfoot contends that "Communism never was any threat - although for theatrical and political reasons the government sometimes treated it so." Barry Broadfoot, Ten Lost Years, 1929-1939: Memories of Canadians who Survived the Depression (Toronto: Doubleday, 1973), p. 361.


20Unemployed Worker, Ottawa, 19 June 1931.


Concerning urban protests in Ontario and western Canada, see H.M. Cassidy, Unemployment and Relief in Ontario, p. 256; and Gray, Winter Years, pp. 70, 146-7.

22Atherton to Taylor, 30 April 1931, Bennett Papers, MG 26K, UNB reel 381, p. 477066.

23Tolmie to B.C. Conservative MPs and Senators, 2 February 1932, ibid., p. 477940.

24Tolmie to Robertson, 19 June 1931, ibid., p. 477013.

25"Report of the Minister of Labour in connection with Western Enquiry on Unemployment," 1 July 1931, ibid., p. 477204.

26See Fraser to Bennett, 6 July 1931, Bennett Papers, MG 26K, UNB reel 391, p. 4904467.

27Brownlee to Bennett, 15 July 1931, ibid., UNB reel 381, p. 477147.

28For details of these camps, see "Confidential Report," ibid., pp. 478152, 478155.

29Gray, Winter Years, p. 21.

30For details of disturbances in Winnipeg, see Senate Debates, special sess., 1930, p. 59; and HC Debates, 1931, pp. 71, 1981.

31Prior to the visit of the federal Labour Minister, an unemployment conference was convened by Premier Bracken on June 17th and the 200 delegates decided to pressure Ottawa to take over the entire care of transients. See Bennett Papers, MG 26K, UNB reel 381, p. 477240.
32 "A Statement concerning Unemployment in the City of Winnipeg, for presentation to the Hon. Senator G.D. Robertson during his visit to Winnipeg," n.d., ibid., p. 476955.


35 Webb to Robertson, 9 July 1931, ibid., p. 477107.

36 MacVity to Bennett, 25 June 1931, Bennett Papers, MG 26K, UNB reel 387, pp. 485016-17.

37 See Milne to Bennett, 15 June 1931, ibid., p. 484978.

38 Cassidy, Unemployment and Relief, pp. 63-64.

39 See ibid., pp. 69, 105.

40 Finlayson to Bennett, 1 June 1931, Bennett Papers, MG 26K, UNB reel 387, p. 484959.

41 Finlayson to Manion, 17 June 1931, ibid., UNB reel 394, p. 493575.

42 Maclean to St. Clair, 23 June, 1932, ibid., UNB reel 393, p. 492228.

43 Timmis to Bennett, 23 August 1930, ibid., UNB reel 385, p. 482048.

44 Bingham to Bennett, 4 September 1931, ibid., UNB reel 392, p. 491930.


47 See Federation of Catholic Charities, Montreal to Bennett, 6 July 1931, ibid., UNB reel 385, p. 482294.

48 Calgary Board of Trade to Bennett, 3 July 1931, ibid., UNB eel 391, pp. 490437-38.


50 "MPs Submissions Unemployment Relief (Constituencies) under 1931 Act," n.d., ibid., UNB reel 381, p. 477355.

51 Porteous to Bennett, 8 July 1931, ibid., p. 493318.

52 Ross to Bennett, 30 June 1931, ibid., p. 493314.
53 Manion to Bennett, 1 July 1931, ibid., UNB reel 381, p. 477098.

54 Neatby, Politics of Chaos, p. 34.


56 See Sula to Bennett, 5 September 1933, ibid., UNB reel 322, p. 402377.


58 Tolmie to B.C. Conservative MPs and Senators, 2 February 1932, Bennett Papers, MG 26K, UNB reel 381, p. 477942.

59 "Resolution", 6 September 1931, ibid., UNB reel 392, p. 491931.

60 See Hyslop to Bennett, 6 October 1931, ibid., UNB reel 391, p. 490596; and McPherson to Bennett, 3 August 1931, ibid., UNB reel 387, p. 485155.

61 Eayrs, In Defence of Canada, p. 128.

62 Secretary, Calgary TLC to Bennett, 17 July 1931, Bennett Papers, MG 26K, UNB reel 391, p. 490488.

63 Manitoba Free Press, 18 July 1931.

64 Apart from Woodsworth, this small group comprised the other 2 Labour MPs (Heaps, MacInnis), 2 Liberals from northern Ontario (Heenan, Bradette), the UFA leader (Garland), and a Quebec Independent (Bourassa).


66 HC Debates, 1931, pp. 4293-94.

67 Bennett to Frederick, 19 August 1931, Bennett Papers, MG 26K, UNB reel 391, p. 490491.

68 See Bennett to Sauve, 14 October 1931, ibid., UNB reel 385, p. 482575.

69 HC Debates, 1931, p. 4471.

70 Ibid., p. 4280.

71 This suggestion was made by the B.C. and Alberta governments. See "Report of the Minister of Labour," Bennett Papers, MG 26K, UNB reel 381, p. 477205.
In the case of camps operated by the Parks Branch of the Department of the Interior, these tasks were undertaken by federal officials, but the selection of transients was done in conjunction with the provincial Employment Service. See Robertson to Murphy, 10 October 1931, PAC, National Parks Branch Files, RG 84, vol. 42, file no. J121-3 pt. 3.


Struthers, No Fault of Their Own, pp. 75-77.

Carbon Copy of "Confidential Report re Unemployment and Relief in Western Canada," Summer 1932, Bennett Papers, MG 26K, UNB reel 382, pp. 478850, 478863. This copy contains material not available in the main report and so is treated as a separate reference.


See ibid., p. 478126; and UNB reel 382, p. 478291.

See ibid., UNB reel 381, pp. 478111-13.

Privy Council Order 2161, 30 September 1932.

Black to Tolmie, 21 October 1932, Bennett Papers, MG 26K, UNB reel 382, p. 479030.


Stevens to Hereford, 23 October 1932, Bennett Papers, MG 26K, UNB reel 382, p. 479037.

See Murphy to Clubb, 23 September 1932; and Clubb's reply, 27 September 1932, PAC, National Parks Branch Files, RG 84, vol. 149, file no. B60-23 (vol. 11).

See Bennett to Stevens, 13 October 1932; and Stevens to Hereford, 23 October 1932, Bennett Papers, MG 26K, UNB reel 382, pp. 479010, 479037.

Black to Tolmie, 21 October 1932, ibid., p. 479031. As the commission chairman, Major Fordham, had operated a home for unemployed veterans in Vancouver since 1930, he obviously had a vested interest in this arrangement.

Gordon, HC Debates, 1934, p. 1736.

Swettenham, McNaughton, p. 278.

Ibid., p. 274.
Eayrs, In Defence of Canada, p. 136. Lefresne also contends that the military relief camp scheme was "originally conceived by General McNaughton...." Lefresne, "The Royal Twenty Centers", p. 199.

Tanner, "Microcosms of Misfortune," p. 29.

Cited in Eayrs, In Defence of Canada, p. 130.

Ibid., p. 125.

Although a DND official (Major Turner) vetted the suitability of these projects for unskilled labour, he did not exercise any influence over their selection. See Lefresne, "The Royal Twenty Centers", pp. 12-15.

Tanner, "Microcosms of Misfortune," p. 130.


Examples of variations in relief provision include free tobacco, and a holiday on Saturday afternoon in the DND camps, workmen's compensation coverage and better quality food in the Parks Branch camps. Although trivial on the surface, these differences became sources of conflict between the respective officials with DND personnel usually emerging as victors. See Wardle to Harkin, 15 November 1933; Memo, to Harkin, 30 November 1933; and Memo, to Rowatt, 16 February, 1934; PAC, National Parks Branch Files, RG 84, vol. 149, file no. B60-23 (vol. II).

Memo. to Gibson, 7 January 1935, ibid., vol. 412 file no. GR 60 (vol. II).

Tanner, "Microcosms of Misfortune," p. 100.

See ibid., pp. 73-78, 100; Ronald Liversedge, Recollections of the On To Ottawa Trek ed. V. Hoar (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1973), passim; and "Final Report on the Unemployment Relief Scheme for the Care of Single, Homeless Men administered by the DND, 1932-36," pp. 24-26 and app. 22, PAC, Department of National Defence Files, RG 24, vol. 157 Relief Act, 1932.


Chapter 6

Canadian social historians have paid scant attention to this conflict. Struthers, for example, in his brief analysis of the forces shaping this "stop-gap" measure, makes no mention of agrarian reaction to the issue of land settlement. See James Struthers, 'No Fault of Their Own': Unemployment and the Canadian Welfare State (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1983), pp. 68-69.
Special schemes for land settlement of British families were negotiated in 1927 with New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. Other plans concerning British boys were operative in Alberta from 1924 onwards and New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Ontario, Manitoba and Saskatchewan from 1928.

5 Canadian Annual Review (CAR), 1924-25, p. 186.
6 Corbett, Canada's Immigration Policy, p. 14.

See Minutes of Evidence and Productions of the Select Standing Committee on Agriculture and Colonization, House of Commons (HC) Journals, 1928, app. 8, pp. 365, 822.

Cited by Howden, HC Debates, 1932-33, p. 1507.

11 Kerr to Gordon, 8 October 1931, R.B. Bennett Papers, Manuscript Group (MG) 26K, University of New Brunswick (UNB) reel 200, p. 241238.

12 See ibid., UNB reel 200, pp. 264695, 264698, and 264852-53.

13 "Statement sent to Premier Brownlee by the Mayors of Calgary, Lethbridge, Medicine Hat, Edmonton and Drumheller," 15 March 1932, ibid., UNB reel 392, p. 490722.

14 Hair to Bennett, 17 August 1931, ibid., UNB reel 391, p. 490518.


17 See Memo. to Jones, 6 April 1932, Public Archives of Canada (PAC), Department of Immigration Files, Record Group (RG) 27, vol. 370, file no. 499212, pt. 2, reel no. C-10, 270.


19 Their views were voiced by a Quebec Liberal MP. See Dubois, HC Debates, 1931, p. 569.
20 Cited in Copy of Quebec Colonization Scheme, trans. 30 October 1934, p. 15, PAC, Department of Labour, National Employment Commission Files, RG 27, vol. 3388, file no. 2.


22 Labour Gazette, 1932, p. 53.

23 According to Senator Lacasse, the scheme was still in its early stages when Taschereau became convinced that "a back-to-the-land movement is the only remedy." Senate Debates, 1932, p. 224.

24 See Copy of The Montreal Gazette, 18 September 1931; and Gobeil to Bennett, 26 October 1931, Bennett Papers, MG 26K, UNB reel 385, p. 482507-8, 482608, respectively.


26 See Bennett Papers, MG 26K, UNB reel 200, pp. 241113-15, 241129.

27 Manitoba Free Press, 19 September 1931.


30 See CAR, 1929-30, pp. 180-1.

31 For details of this policy, see Labour Gazette, 1932, p. 965.

32 For details of their meetings, see Memo. for File: History and Organization, 4 August 1931; and Memo. by Director of Publicity, 29 May 1931, PAC, Department of Immigration Files, RG 76, vol. 370, file no. 499212, pt. 1, Reel No. C-10, 270.

34 Beatty and Thornton to Gordon, 1 October 1930, Bennett Papers, MG 26K, UNB reel 200, p. 241019.

35 Memorandum of Proceedings of a Meeting of the Minister's Advisory Committee on Relief Settlement, 26 March 1936, p. 1, PAC, Department of Labour, National Employment Commission Files, RG 27, vol. 3373, file no. 3.

36 HC Debates, 1932, p. 2284.


39 See Bennett to Gordon, 21 September 1931, Bennett Papers, MG 26K, UNB reel 200, p. 241073.

40 See PAC, Department of Labour, National Employment Commission Files, RG 27, vol. 3353, file nos. 6, 15.


44 Careless, Canada, pp. 362-63.

45 See HC Debates, 1931, 1932, pp. 565, 1236-37, respectively.

46 HC Debates, 1932, p. 1439.

47 HC Debates, 1931, pp. 871-72.

48 Senate Debates, 1932, p. 41.

49 Ibid., p. 224.

50 HC Debates, 1932, p. 2286.

51 HC Debates, 1932-33, p. 3202.

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53HC Debates, 1932, p. 2457.

54See Donnelly, Gardiner, Garland, HC Debates, 1932-33, 1931, 1932, pp. 2695, 872-3, 2275, respectively.

55HC Debates, 1932-33, p. 2643.

56Ibid., p. 2657.

57Gobeil to Bennett, 26 October 1931, Bennett Papers, MG 26K, UNB reel 385, p. 482608.

58Gordon to Bennett, 14 October 1931, ibid., UNB reel 200, p. 241237.

59CAR, 1930-31, p. 572.

60Robertson to Gordon, 5 November 1931, Bennett Papers, MG 26K, UNB reel 381, p. 477697.

61See Gordon to Bennett, 14 October 1931, ibid., UNB reel 200, p. 241237.


63Bennett to Hanson, 22 October 1931, Bennett Papers, MG 26K, UNB reel 394, p. 493597.

64Between 1930-31 and 1931-32 the number of full-time employees in DIC declined from 883 to 766 and immigration service expenditure was cut from $2,199,142 to $1,681,153. Figures cited in Freda Hawkins, Canada and Immigration: Public Policy and Public Concern (Montreal: McGill-Queen's Press, 1972), p. 81.

65See Lacasse, Senate Debates, 1932, p. 223.


67See Memo.: Hon. W.A. Gordon. Re Relief Settlement Scheme, 26 April 1932, p. 2, PAC, Department of Labour, General Services Files of F.M. Hereford, RG 27, vol. 3193, file no. 146.

68See Gordon, HC Debates, 1932, p. 510.

69Ibid., p. 2267.
Ibid., p. 2282.

Memo. and Enc.: Hon. W.A. Gordon Re Relief Settlement Scheme, 26 April 1932, pp. 1-2, PAC, Department of Labour, General Services Files of F.M. Hereford, RG 27, vol. 3193, file no. 146.

See HC Debates, 1932, pp. 2453-54.


Struthers, No Fault of Their Own, p. 69.

Part III


Grant, Church in the Canadian Era, pp. 57-58.


Provincial grants towards charitable institutions other than hospitals ranged from $63,500 in New Brunswick, $44,676 in Quebec to $13,543 in British Columbia. Figures cited in Madame Thibaudeau, "Charities and Reform," ibid., pp. 318-22.
The term "pensions" is chosen over "allowances" as the former constituted the original demand of proponents of state aid. In their usage, pensions did not connote benefits for life but remuneration for services rendered by sole-support mothers to the state in bringing up their children. They also signified cash grants, a method of payment designed to foster a spirit of independence and to avoid the taint of charity associated with relief in kind.


11This clash is overlooked by Guest and Hepworth, who assume that the Canadian charitable sector followed its American counterpart in opposing the development of public aid for sole-support mothers. See Dennis Guest, The Emergence of Social Security in Canada (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1980), pp. 51-52; and Hepworth, "Family Policy," p. 35.

13 See, for example, the boast made by Tom Moore, TLC president, in the Preface of J.L. Cohen, *Mothers' Allowance Legislation in Canada* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1927), p. 6.

14 Concerning provincial representations, see *Labour Gazette*, 1912-13, pp. 358, 881; and ibid., 1913-14, p. 650. With regard to federal pleas, see ibid., 1914-15, pp. 475, 883; 1915-16, pp. 405, 458; and 1917, p. 1671.


20 This paragraph is based upon information in ibid., 26 February; 6 March, 1915.

21 *Regina Leader*, 17 October 1917.

22 See ibid., 4, 7 December 1915.

23 The Regina volunteers' initial efforts are documented in ibid., 6 December 1916; 9, 10 January 1917.

24 *Calgary Herald*, 24 January 1914.

25 Ibid., 20 November 1915.

26 For details of their initial meetings see ibid., 16 March; 14 June 1916.

27 For details of protests voiced by the local Consumers' league and other women's groups, see *Calgary Herald*, 20 January 1917.

28 See ibid., 30 November 1916.


31 *Calgary Herald*, 3 June 1917.
32B.C. feminist historians identify the leadership of the University Women's Club of Vancouver as the original sponsors of the cause. However, their research contains no evidence of direct lobbying for province-wide pensions prior to 1917. See Tami Adilman, "Evelyn Farris and the University Women's Club," in In Her Own Right: Selected Essays on Women's History in B.C., ed. Barbara Latham and Cathy Kess (Victoria, B.C.: Camosun College, 1980), pp. 156, 160; and Susan Wade, "Helena Gutteridge: Votes for Women and Trade Unions," ibid., p. 197.

33See pp.182-83, table 16, cols. 2-4, 8.
34Vancouver Sun, 4 February 1919.
35Ibid., 16 May 1917.
36Vancouver Province, 21 March 1917.
38See Vancouver Province, 16 January 1918.
39Victoria Times, 21 March 1918.
40Vancouver Sun, 15 January 1919.
41Toronto Globe, 8 May 1913.
42Strong-Boag, Parliament of Women, p. 252.
43See ibid., pp. 297, 434.
44Guest interprets the stringent conditions laid down by the Commission as a sign of implicit opposition that contributed to the dropping of the demonstration project "a few months after its inception." Guest, Emergence of Social Security, pp. 51-52. However, the experiment operated throughout the 1914-17 period during which the LCW paid allowances to six mothers with 22 children. See Toronto Council of Women, Nothing New Under the Sun: A History of the Toronto Council of Women (Toronto: Local Council of Women, 1978), p. 38.
46Toronto Globe, 18 September 1914.
47Regina Leader, 17 March 1917.
48Strong-Boag, "'Wages for Housework'," p. 25.
50See Jones and Rutman, Children's Aid, p. 143; and Sutherland, Children in English-Canadian Society, p. 229, respectively.


52According to A. Maude Riley, it adopted "a similar stand on 'The Rights of Motherhood' and the service that the mothers render to the state." Quoted in Calgary Herald, 5 May 1917.

53Toronto Globe, 10 December 1918.

54See Burnham, House of Commons Debates, 1914, p. 1341.


56Jones and Rutman, Children's Aid, pp. 152-54.

57See Calgary Herald, 24 January 1919; 16 March 1917, respectively.

58Regina Leader, 7 November 1912.

59See Toronto Globe, 19 December 1916.

60See Manitoba Free Press, 26 February 1915.

61See pp. 185, 187 and 207 of the text, respectively.

62W. Davidson quoted in Calgary Herald, 4 June 1917.

63Canadian Annual Review (CAR), 1911, pp. 462-64.

64See Toronto Globe, 18 October 1916.


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69 MacGill, My Mother, p. 159.

70 This section of the paragraph is based on information in Calgary Herald, 2 March 1916, 4 June 1917; and 20 December 1918.

71 Toronto Globe, 10 December 1918; 5 January 1920, respectively.

72 See articles by Alison Craig in Manitoba Free Press, 6 March 1915; 12 February 1916.

73 McClung, "What Will They Do?" p. 37.

74 Victoria Times, 15 January 1919.


76 Cited in CAR, 1919, p. 657.


78 CAR, 1918, pp. 726, 727.


80 Regina Leader, 18 October 1917.


82 Toronto Globe, 4 January 1919.

83 See Manitoba Free Press, 29 January 1916.


85 Orlikow, "Reform Movement," p. 216.

86 Vancouver Sun, 22 March 1918.


88 Thompson, Harvests of War, p. 96.


90 Jackson, Centennial History, p. 193.
This paragraph is based on information in *Manitoba Free Press*, 31 May 1915 and 29 January 1916.

Quoted in Orlikow, "Reform Movement," p. 224.


This section of the paragraph is based upon ibid., 16, 29 February; 2 March 1916.

Jackson, *Centennial History*, p. 189.

See *Calgary Herald*, 16 January 1919.


See ibid., 30 March; 28 April 1917, respectively.

*CAR*, 1917, p. 793.

See *Regina Leader*, 8, 26 June 1917.

Ibid., 3 July 1917.

Ibid., 28 November 1917.


*Calgary Herald*, 9 March 1918.

Ibid., 22 March 1918.

*Vancouver Province*, 24 October 1918.

*Calgary Herald*, 20 December 1918.

Ibid., 9 January 1919.

*CAR*, 1919, p. 752.

See *Calgary Herald*, 22, 25 February 1919, respectively.

Ibid., 28 February 1915.

Ibid., 7 March 1919.

This section of the paragraph is based on material in ibid., 12, 13 March 1919.

*CAR*, 1919, p. 792.

116 Sloan to Maclean, 30 September 1919, Provincial Archives of British Columbia (PABC), Box 27, Commission on Health Insurance, 1919.


118 Cited in Maclean to Winn, 18 November 1919, ibid.


121 Vancouver Sun, 10 April 1920.

122 Information concerning these delegations is taken from Toronto Globe, 17 December 1918; 4 January 1919.

123 Ibid., 20 February 1920.


125 Toronto Globe, 24 September 1919.

126 See CAR, 1919, p. 658.

127 Ibid., p. 40.


129 CAR, 1919, p. 399.

130 Toronto Globe, 8 January 1920.

131 This paragraph is based on material in ibid., 9, 21 February 1920.


133 Quoted in Oliver, Ferguson, p. 94.

134 See Toronto Globe, 19 May 1920.

135 Jones and Rutman, Children's Aid, p. 155.


139 See Allen, Social Passion, p. 73; and Stewart Crystale, The Industrial Struggle and Protestant Ethics in Canada (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1961), p. 82.

140 See Province of Saskatchewan, Report of Committee on Provincial-Municipal Relations (Regina: King's Printer, 1951), pp. 36-37.

141 See Labour Gazette, 1929, 1930, pp. 367, 485, respectively.


143 Labour Gazette, 1927, p. 408.

144 See ibid., 1931, pp. 308-9.

145 Bryden, Old Age Pensions, p. 86.


149 Bryden, Old Age Pensions, pp. 89-91.


Chapter 8


4 Bryden, Old Age Pensions, pp. 31-32.

5 Cited in ibid., p. 36.

6 Canadian Annual Review (CAR), 1913, p. 725.
The respective totals were 202,614 and 333,763 and are cited in Census of Canada, 1921, vol. II, p. 7, table 4.

According to the convenor of the NCWC Standing Committee on the Care of the Aged Poor, 5 out of 7 aged inmates of Ontario's prisons were paupers, not criminals. CAR, 1902, p. 394.


Bryden, Old Age Pensions, p. 185.

Ibid., p. 187.

The percentages are calculated from figures on unionists (20,000, 133,132) and wage-earners (308,482, 471,126). The former are cited in Robert Craig Brown and Ramsay Cook, Canada 1896-1921: A Nation Transformed, The Canadian Centenary Series, no. 14 (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1974; paperback ed., 1978), pp. 109-10, and CAR, 1913, p. 727, respectively; and the latter in Canada Year Book, 1912, p. 82.

Guest, Emergence of Social Security, p. 27.

Brown and Cook, Canada, p. 114.

Bryden, Old Age Pensions, pp. 185, 51.

According to Fielding, the sponsor of the 1908 Annuities Bill, insurance companies carried only 1,321 annuities for old age and made no effort "to press that business." House of Commons (HC) Debates, 1907-8, col. 10852.

Verville, HC Debates, 1911-12, p. 1376.

HC Debates, 1914, p. 1435.

Cited by Burnham, ibid., p. 1341.

Bryden, Old Age Pensions, pp. 42-43.


See Labour Gazette, 1912-13, p. 826.

See Sullivan, Senate Debates, 1906-7, p. 788

See CAR, 1902, p. 394; and Calgary Herald, 24 January 1914.

Labour Gazette, 1912-13, p. 826.

27 *Toronto Globe*, 25 March 1908.


29 Re Cappon's advocacy, see ibid., p. 106. The other two academics voiced their views before the 1913 HC Special Committee but, as its proceedings have proved difficult to locate, this information is based on the recollections of two committee members. See Kyte and Carroll, *HC Debates*, 1914, pp. 1336, 1344, respectively.

30 Bryden, *Old Age Pensions*, pp. 185-86.

31 *HC Debates*, 1911-12, p. 1379.

32 Ibid., p. 1831.

33 See *HC Debates*, 1906-7, col. 3376; ibid., 1907-8, col. 2419; and ibid., 1911-12, pp. 1376, 1828, 1839, respectively.

34 *HC Debates*, 1911-12, p. 1378.

35 *Senate Debates*, 1906-7, p. 712.

36 *Senate Debates*, 1906-7, p. 669.

37 *HC Debates*, 1911-12, p. 1380.

38 See *HC Debates*, 1907-8, col. 10851-52. Foster was first vice-president and general manager of the Union Trust Company, Toronto, from 1900 until 1906. It was the investment agency for the International Order of Foresters, a fraternal society engaged in the sale of old age annuities. Foster's handling of its investment funds caused controversy. See W. S. Wallace, *The Memoirs of The Rt. Hon. Sir George Foster* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1933), pp. 134-36.

39 See *HC Debates*, 1907-8, col. 2433, 4690; and ibid., 1914, p. 1341, respectively.


41 This preference for old age insurance is overlooked by Guest who contends that a non-contributory scheme was more acceptable in 1925 than the concept of social insurance as the latter was "alien to many." Ibid., p. 75.

42 Although TLC lobbying was directed at both levels, Bryden focuses mainly on its campaign directed at Ottawa. See Bryden, *Old Age Pensions*, p. 66.
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43 See Labour Gazette, 1921, 1924, 1925, pp. 207 and 1133, 276, 283, respectively.

44 See Evidence, Special Committee on Old Age Pensions, HC Journals, 1924, app. 4, pp. 59, 65.

45 Out of 594,118 wage-earners in 1919, the number of unionists totalled 378,047, a peak that was not matched in subsequent years of the interwar period. Figures are cited in Canada Year Book, 1921, p. 389, and Labour Gazette, 1927, p. 722, respectively.

46 Ontario trade unionists formed the Old Age Pension Association of Canada in 1924, but it failed to develop into a national movement. See Bryden, Old Age Pensions, p. 83.

47 Ibid., p. 64.

48 See Ontario Journals, 1921, pp. 380-1; and CAR, 1925-26, p. 518.


50 Crysdale, Industrial Struggle, p. 84.

51 Allen, Social Passion, p. 73.

52 See Labour Gazette, 1920, pp. 190, 293, respectively.

53 Crysdale, Industrial Struggle, p. 134.


55 The 1919 manifest of the governing Liberal Party in Alberta included a resolution urging the senior levels of government to provide proper care of the aged and infirm. See CAR, 1919, p. 755.

56 As the ILP and NPL in Manitoba, the SGGA and the UFA had all included pensions in their 1917 platforms, it was not, as Bryden asserts, "the first political party to take a stand on old age pensions." Bryden, Old Age Pensions, p. 66.

57 At a labour rally in Montreal in September 1916, he announced that new Liberal policy would include old age insurance and promised legislative action, once war ended, to remedy the neglect of the problems of old age and destitution. Montreal Star, 27 September 1916.

58 Guest, Emergence of Social Security, p. 66.


61 Bryden, Old Age Pensions, p. 65.


63 During the war years and the immediate postwar period only isolated references were made to the subject. See Guest, Emergence of Social Security, p. 74; HC Debates, 1919, p. 157; and ibid., 1921, pp. 9, 231-2, 237, 263, 285, 395.

64 See Neill, Church, HC Debates, 1922, pp. 185, 1375, respectively; and Stevens, ibid., 1925, p. 647.


66 Bryden, Old Age Pensions, p. 67.

67 HC Debates, 1926-27, p. 344.

68 Church, however, had two years previously argued that old age pensions should be a provincial-municipal matter along the lines of the mothers' pensions scheme in Ontario, because the financial problems of the federal government "have made it impossible for many years to come to extend aid towards...the advancement of humanitarian work." HC Debates, 1923, p. 2827.

69 HC Debates, 1925, p. 4427.

70 Bryden, Old Age Pensions, p. 190.


73 In 1924 its Douglas local petitioned Ottawa to provide old age pensions to all adults aged 65 years and over whose annual income was below $500 by levying a special income tax. Labour Gazette, 1924, pp. 358-59.

74 Woman's Century, July 120, p. 23.

75 Cited by Foster, Senate Debates, 1927, p. 148.

76 See HC Debates, 1921, p. 263.

77 Ibid., 1925, p. 1580.

78 Minority Report, Royal Commission on Industrial Relations (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1919), p. 25.

79 CAR, 1920, pp. 536-37.
80 Labour Gazette, 1925, p. 283, my emphasis.

81 This section of the paragraph is based upon material in Labour Gazette, 1925, pp. 783-84; and CAR, 1925-26, pp. 626-29, 697, 706-9, 726-28.


83 Bryden overlooks the constraint of prevailing fiscal orthodoxy, suggesting instead that the anglophone provinces lobbied Ottawa because they "...regarded a pension plan as fulfilling a national purpose." Bryden, Old Age Pensions, p. 201.

84 Brecher, Monetary and Fiscal Thought, p. 49.

85 See Ross, Blackville, Senate Debates, 1926, pp. 156, 163-64, respectively.

86 Brecher, Monetary and Fiscal Thought, p. 57.

87 Cited in Bryden, Old Age Pensions, p. 73.

88 Senate Debates, 1926, p. 169.

89 Elsewhere, the only evidence of independent municipal lobbying prior to 1926 was a petition submitted by the township of Marchand, P.Q., requesting federal legislation. See Fortier, ibid., 1925, p. 2521. However, the views of 135 mayors across Canada were solicited by the 1924 special committee with a majority of the 39 respondents indicating support for a federal scheme. See Labour Gazette, 1924, pp. 580-82, 665-66.

90 Guest, Emergence of Social Security, p. 74.

91 HC Debates, 1924, p. 2314.

92 Cited in Bryden, Old Age Pensions, p. 66.


94 See HC Debates, 1924, p. 2313.

95 See Esling, Black, H.C. Debates, 1926, pp. 939, 2555, respectively.

96 Bryden, Old Age Pensions, p. 69.

97 See Woodsworth, HC Debates, 1926, p. 560.


100 Cited in Bryden, *Old Age Pensions*, p. 69.

101 HC Debates, 1926, p. 3815.

102 Ibid., pp. 1972, 2473.

103 See Senate Debates, 1926, pp. 156-81.


106 See Guthrie, Geary, Ryerson, Steward, Barker, Esling, Bennett, HC Debates, 1926-27, pp. 331, 337, 348, 445, 456, 477, respectively.


109 For details of complementary provincial action, see Bryden, *Old Age Pensions*, pp. 81-92.

110 See Minutes of Proceedings, HC Journals, 1924, app. 4, pp. 7-9.

111 Re the lower age requirement, see Ryerson, Barker, Esling, HC Debates, 1926-27, pp. 341, 446, 456, respectively; and concerning the increase in the federal contribution, see Woodsworth, Heaps, ibid., pp. 448, 463.


Chapter 9


5 This fund comprised profits from canteens operated on behalf of Canadian Expeditionary Force members serving overseas. In October 1921 the federal cabinet authorized its trustee, the Receiver General, to pay $120,000 to the GWVA and 21 other veterans' associations for emergency relief purposes. See Third Report of the Special Committee on the Administration of the Canteen Fund, Senate Journals, 1925, p. 353.

6 According to a DSCR official, Toronto had 3.4% and Vancouver 6.7% of all disability cases in 1921. "Verbatim Report of Proceedings of the 6th Annual Meeting of the Employment Service Council (ESC)," 2 and 5 September 1925, p. F-27, PAC, Department of Labour, Lacelle Files, RG 27, vol. 114, file no. 600.02-82.

7 "Toronto Unemployed Veterans' Interview with the P.M. and Members of the Cabinet," 5 June 1922, PAC, W.L.M. King Papers, Manuscript Group (MG) 26, J4, reel C2576, pp. 51936-55.


10 Privy Council Order 220, 5 February 1923.


13 Minutes of Evidence, Special Committee on Pensions, Insurance and Re-establishment, HC Journals, 1921, app. 2, p. 460.

14 Final Report, ibid., p. xiv.


16 Minutes of Evidence, Special Committee on Pensions, Soldiers' Insurance and Re-establishment, HC Journals, 1922, app. 2, p. 140.

17 Final Report, ibid., p. xiii.

18 Final Report, Royal Commission on Pensions and Re-establishment (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1924), p. ?
19 See Privy Council Order 1653 18 September 1924.

20 Other non-participants included two small groups based in Toronto, the Canadian Pensioners' Association and the Sir Arthur Pearson Club for Blinded Soldiers and Sailors. No membership figures on the former have been uncovered, but the latter had 228 members in 1922, including all soldiers blinded in World War I. See Lynes, Minutes of Evidence, HC Journals, 1922, p. 315.


23 Bowering, Service, p. 67.

24 See Ladner, McQuarrie HC Debates, 1926, pp. 2444-45, 3814, respectively.

25 See Dr. J. King, HC Debates, 1926-27, p. 878.

26 Ibid., pp. 874-79.

27 This question was most likely a response to a cable from the secretary of the Riverdale TB Branch of the Legion urging Price to seek amendments to the Pension Act in order "to assist in relieving distress amongst sick and disabled." Price informed the House later that Riverdale was a TB sanatorium for soldiers gassed at the front who received no pensions under the existing legislation. Ibid., pp. 2092-93.

28 Ibid., p. 1696.

29 Bowering, Service, p. 67.


31 HC Debates, 1928, p. 25.

32 Minutes of Evidence, Special Committee on Pensions and Returned Soldiers' Problems, HC Journals, 1928, app. 2, pp. 1505-1.

33 Ibid., p. 208.

34 Ibid., p. 201.


36 Ibid., p. 270-73.

37 Final Report, ibid., p. xvii.

38 See Aylesworth, Senate Debates, 1926-27, p. 167.

Ibid., pp. 157, 271, 274.

See PAC, Dept. of Secretary of State Files, RG 47, vol. 57, general file: Dominion-Provincial Conference, 1927.


Ibid., p. 9.


Dr. King, HC Debates, 1926-27, p. 2433.

"Official Precis (14)," p. 37, PAC, Dept. of Secretary of State Files, RG 47, vol. 58: Precis of Discussions, Dominion-Provincial Conference, 3 to 10 November, 1927.

Minutes of Evidence, Special Committee on Pensions and Returned Soldiers' Problems, HC Journals, 1930, app. 1, p. 276.

Manitoba Free Press, 31 January 1930.

Canadian Annual Review, 1929-30, p. 608.


Memo to the Minister, 22 January 1930, pp. 1-2, ibid.

Memo to the Minister, 11 December 1929, p. 3, ibid.

See Minutes of Evidence, HC Journals, 1930, app. 1, p. 259.

Ibid., p. 253.

HC Debates, 1930, p. 43.

Dr. King, ibid., p. 249.

McGibbon, Bennett, ibid., pp. 253, 261, respectively.

W.L.M. King, ibid., pp. 263, 269.

Ibid., pp. 779-808.
Clark, ibid., p. 251.

Dr. King, ibid., p. 812.

See testimony of Currie, McGibbon, Minutes of Evidence, HC Journals, 1930, app. 1, pp. 77, 274, respectively; and Final Report cited by Dr. King, HC Debates, 1930, p. 1716.

Minutes of Evidence, ibid., p. 264.

Ibid., pp. 269, 344.

Cowan, Lennox, HC Debates, 1930, p. 782.

Major Wright, Minutes of Evidence, HC Journals, 1930, app. 1, p. 277.

Ibid., pp. 344-45.

A pamphlet was prepared entitled "Eight Years' Treatment of the Soldier" which outlined the Liberals' "generous and sympathetic" treatment of veterans during the 1922-30 period. Reference was made to the recent passage of the War Veterans' Allowance Act as proof of this. See PAC, King Papers, MG 26, J4, reel C2731, p. 10732.

Report of the Committee Appointed to carry out an Investigation into the Existing Facilities in connection with Unemployment of Ex-Servicemen and Care and Maintenance while Unemployed (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1935), p. II.


Ibid., p. 25.

Chapter 10

Bryden, for example, implies that the 1937 initiative was a minor adjunct of the old age pension scheme and pays scant attention to the political forces shaping its introduction. See Kenneth Bryden, Old Age Pensions and Policy-making in Canada (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1974), p. 79.


4The authors of the 1911 Census suggested that the actual number of any class of defectives was difficult to secure "owing to a natural aversion on the part of parents to, as they think, advertise the presence of a defective in the family, especially if the infirmity dates from childhood..." Census of Canada, 1911, Vol. II, p. xiv.


13See Regina Leader, 17 April 1917.

14See Arthur Pearson, Victory Over Blindness: How It Was Won by the Men of St. Dunstan's and How Others May Win It (New York: George H. Doran, 1919), chap. 1, passim.

152,285 ex-servicemen were afflicted by total or partial blindness, but only 158 received 100% disability pensions. Figures cited by Beland, House of Commons (HC) Debates, 1923, p. 693.


17CNIB, 50 Years, n.p. [1].


These notes were kindly lent by the author who has had a long association with the Institute working first as a secretary to E.A. Baker (1920-42), and then as his personal assistant until 1964. Miss Worts allowed me access to the documents compiled by Baker on the movement prior to their despatch to the Public Archives of Canada, Ottawa. Her courtesy and interest enhanced both my visits to the CNIB headquarters in Toronto (June and September 1978).

20 Pearson, Victory over Blindness, p. 209.

21 See Campbell, No Compromise, pp. 43-44.


23 See Baker to Stainsby, 18 March 1921; and Baker to Colquhoun, 26 November 1921, CNIB file no. 1: Pensions (1921-27) Legislative.


25 In early 1924 the Ontario Mothers' Allowances Commission responded to appeals, and decided to consider cases of families in which fathers had become blind on condition that the latter took CNIB training to become self-supporting. Labour Gazette, 1924, p. 472.

26 See Baker to Raymond, 24 March 1924, CNIB file no. 1.

27 Interview with Grace Worts, Toronto, 15 June 1978.


29 "Minutes of Meeting of National Council of CNIB, Toronto, Ont.," 17 February 1926, p. 2.

30 Baker to Donkin, 23 March 1926, CNIB file no. 1. Although these organizations were not identified, the Ontario-based OAP Association of Canada was presumably contacted. See chap. 8, p. 246, n. 46.

31 Campbell, No Compromise, p. 68.


Philip Layton to Baker, 19 April 1926, CNIB file no. 1.

Rose, Changing Focus, p. 57.

"[CFB] Notes of Minutes of Meeting of National Liaison Committee held at Windsor Hotel, Montreal, 4 December 1931," p. 8, CNIB file no. 3: Pensions (1931) Legislative.


For details of Layton's first meeting with Baker in October 1925, see Baker to Church, 24 February 1927, CNIB file no. 1; and Extract of a Memo Describing the Activities of the CFB, 1928, CNIB file: CFB. Concerning his second contact, see Philip Layton to Baker, 19 February 1926, CNIB file no. 1.

See Copy of a Petition, Montreal, Que., 11 March 1926, CNIB file no. 1; and HC Journals, 1926, p. 222, respectively.

See Philip Layton to Baker, 19 April 1926; and Baker to Church, 24 February 1927, CNIB file no. 1.

The decision of the Winnipeg delegates, however, was overturned later by the club membership which decided to retain its close links with the CNIB. See "Lux-in-Tenebris (LTCB) Club for the Blind Third Annual Report," September 1925-26, p. 3, ibid.


Quoted in Johnson to Baker, 12 February 1927, CNIB file no. 1.

Besides lobbying federal MPs, Layton also made direct representations to the Finance Minister to secure inclusion of the blind in the 1927 old age pension bill. See P.E. Layton to Robb, 11 February 1927, Public Archives of Canada (PAC), Dept. of Finance Files, Record Group (RG) 19, vol. 98, file no. 109-29-29A.


Ottawa Evening Journal, 5 March 1930; and Labour Gazette, 1930, p. 1160, respectively.

Only the Alumni Association of the Ontario School for the Blind and the CFB affiliate in Ottawa attempted to persuade federal legislators to include blind unemployables under the old age pension scheme. See HC Journals, 1924, 1926, apps. 4, pp. 85, 222.

Baker to Donkin, 23 March 1926, CNIB file no. 1; and Labour Gazette, 1927, p. 408, respectively.
49 See *Vancouver Sun*, 5 January 1926; and *Manitoba Free Press*, 19 January 1926.


51 *Manitoba Free Press*, 19 January 1926. Besides Ivens and Queen, the leaders of the Winnipeg General Strike, the expanded committee included Sir J.M. Aikins, ex-Lieutenant-Governor of Manitoba, and Alex Macdonald, ex-Premier of the province and the LTCB's Honorary President.

52 Copy of a Petition Re: Pensions for the Blind, 18 January 1926, CNIB file no. 1.

53 Johnson to Baker, 12 February 1927, ibid.

54 See Bryden, *Old Age Pensions*, pp. 82-83.


56 See "Minutes of the National Liaison Committee of the CFB and the CNIB Meeting," Toronto, 27 July 1931, p. 3, CNIB file no. 2.

57 CNIB Statement, "Allowances," CNIB file no. 3.


59 See *Montreal La Presse*, 23, 26 June 1927; *Toronto Globe*, 8, 9 April 1927; and *Montreal Gazette*, 14 October 1931.

60 See Baker to Brown, Assistant D.M. of Labour, 21 April 1927; and Baker to Church, MP, 24 February 1927, CNIB file no. 1.


64 This section is based upon letters from Baker to Church, 24 February 1927, Baker to Raymond, 24 March 1924; and Raymond to Baker, 13 June 1924, CNIB file no. 1.


66 Reference to his friendship is made in Campbell, *No Compromise*, p. 97. His admiration for the CNIB is voiced in *HC Debates*, 1922, p. 3457.
In June 1926 Church also agreed to introduce the first CFB delegation to Prime Minister King as its founder led him to believe that the CNIB "were with them on all fours." Upon learning that this was not the case, he contacted Baker to re-affirm his support for "your organization and yours only." Church to Baker, 8 April 1927, CNIB file: CFB.

See HC Debates, 1926, p. 2471.


Manitoba Free Press, 19 January 1926.

See HC Debates, 1926, p. 2415.

Ibid., p. 2549.


See Neill, Thorson, HC Debates, 1926-27, pp. 472, 865, respectively.

See Dr. King, W.L.M. King, HC Debates, 1926, pp. 2473, 2549, respectively.

HC Debates, 1930, p. 3948.

Maclennan to Baker, December 1931, CNIB file no. 3.

See Flexman to Baker, 14 May 1932, CNIB file no. 4: Pensions for the Blind, 1932-1933.


See Manitoba Free Press, 20 February 1930.

See Myers to Martin, 27 January 1932, CNIB file no. 4. Presumably in response to CNIB representations, the Saskatchewan Government amended the Child Welfare Act in 1931 to provide for payment of mothers' allowances to families where the fathers were permanently incapacitated by blindness. See Labour Gazette, 1931, p. 436.

See Anderson to Bennett, 13 January 1931, Bennett Papers, UNB reel 268, p. 335125; and Saskatchewan Journals, 1931, p. 98, respectively.

Its request for an inquiry was made in February 1930 in a petition presented to the Manitoba Legislature. See Copy of Memorial, 3 April 1930, CNIB file no. 3.
84Canadian Annual Review, 1930-31, p. 236.

85See Copy of Memo dealing with an Act to provide for payment of cash allowances to necessitous blind persons in Manitoba, attached to a letter from Flexman to Baker, 25 July 1931; and "Report of the Special Committee on the Blind," 29 February 1932, p. 2, CNIB file no. 3.

86See Maclennan to Baker, December 1931, ibid.; Maclennan to Excelsior Club, Central Council of CNIB, September 1932; Myers to Martin, Minister of Public Welfare, 27 January 1932; and Memo. on Pensions for the Blind, prepared by the CNIB, 10 December 1932, CNIB file no. 4.

87Re Quebec, the Montreal Association lobbied the provincial government to implement pensions for the blind. See Montreal Gazette, 14 October 1931.

88For details of CFB lobbying and pledges of support, see Bennett Papers, MG 26K, UNB reel 268, pp. 335107-23, 335150, 335156-61, 335180-85, 335210, 335220-8.

89HC Debates, 1931, p. 3949.


91Montreal Gazette, 14 October 1931.

92See Baker to Scammell, 12 August 1931, CNIB file no. 3.

93See Memo. written by R. Myers, 31 December 1931; and "Amended Minutes of Conference," 30 June 1931, ibid.

94The CNIB's demand for all-in cooperation was motivated partly by aggrandisement and also by a sincere desire for united action. See Scammell to Baker, 25 August 1931; and Baker to Robinson, 14 November 1931, ibid.

95Quoted in Baker to Allen, 2 October 1933, CNIB file no. 5: Pensions for the Blind, June-October 1933.

96See Peters to Gilbert Layton, 5 October 1933, ibid.

97By the following winter the superintendent of CNIB's Quebec Division estimated that 50% of the 1,000 blind residents of the city were in dire need. Quoted in Montreal Gazette, 13 January 1934.

98This paragraph is based on material in letters from Baker to Flexman, 28 September 1933; and Baker to Allen, 2 October 1933, CNIB file no. 5.

99This is my own estimate and a rough one at that as membership figures are difficult to find. It is based on the CFB claim of 1,000 members in December 1931, and a 'guestimate' of a maximum combined membership of CNIB affiliates at around 700.
See Peters to Gilbert Layton, 5 October 1933; and Payne to Baker, 19 October 1933, CNIB file no. 5.


Winnipeg was a special case as its municipal unemployment relief committee recognized the special needs of the blind and paid them extra allowances. See "Report of Special Committee," 29 February 1932, p. 26, CNIB file no. 2.

Baker to Campbell, 18 December 1933, CNIB file no. 6.


Toronto Mail and Empire, 20 January 1934.

The Superintendent of CNIB's Western Division described Weir as "very socially minded" and thought him "most dependable." Robinson to Baker, 2 December 1935, CNIB file no. 11: Pensions for the Blind, July-Dec. 1935.


Myers to Robinson, 10 October 1934, CNIB file no. 8: Pensions for the Blind (Legislative) Sept.-Dec. 1934.

This paragraph is based upon copy of letters to CFB Branches, 2 February 1935; Gilbert Layton to Baker, 16 February 1935; and Baker to Robinson, 4 February 1935, CNIB file no. 9.


These included three long-time sympathizers (Church, Kennedy, Woodsworth) and one known CFB convert since 1930, Cowan (Con.). See Myers to Cowan, 6 May 1932, CNIB file no. 4. Cotnam's 1935 resolution had prompted independent pledges of support from MacNiccol (Con.) and Reid (Lib.). See MacNicol to Baker, 24 January 1935, and Reid to Baker, 1 February 1935, CNIB file no. 9. It was also endorsed in the House by 3 other committee members (Johnston, Stanley, Turnbull), as table 32, p. 332 reveals.

See Baker to Gilbert Layton, 8 and 14 February 1935, CNIB file no. 9.

See Baker to Flexman, 10 July 1935, CNIB file no. 11.

They included a maverick, Myer Hambourg, an employee of the CNIB broom factory and a member of the Toronto branch of the CFB. He had recently formed the Dominion Protective Association of Civilian Blind and he was apparently "upset" about his exclusion from the initial delegation to the Standing Committee. As this new organization posed a potential threat to the united efforts of the CFB-CNIB coalition, steps were taken by the CFB to co-opt him. See Baker to Gilbert Layton, 26 February 1935, ibid.

Minutes of Evidence, 1 March 1935, pp. 44, 32-33, ibid.


See Turnbull to Baker, 15 April 1935; and Baker to Beath, 26 April 1935, CNIB file no. 10: Pensions for the Blind, April-June 1935.


See O'Brien to President of the Privy Council, 15 May 1935, Bennett Papers, MG 26K, UNB reel 268, p. 33590.

See ibid., p. 33571; and UNB reel 269, pp. 335616-755, passim.

See Labour Gazette, 1935, pp. 158, 551, respectively.


See Robinson to Baker, 18 February and 22 March 1935, CNIB file no. 9.

Gilbert Layton to Baker, 3 January 1934, CNIB file no. 7.


See Gilbert Layton to Baker, 15 January 1934; and Robinson to Baker, 30 January 1934, respectively. CNIB file no. 7.

Rhodes to Bennett, 3 January 1934, Bennett Papers, MG 26K, UNB reel 268, p. 335143.

See Robinson to Baker, 30 January 1934, CNIB file no. 7; and Baker to Robinson, 30 April 1935, CNIB file no. 10, respectively.

HC Debates, 1931, p. 4196.

Memo. on Pensions for the Blind for Signatories to United Memorial, 15 December 1933, CNIB file no. 6.

HC Debates, 1937, p. 1837.


Re CFB protests lodged with MB, see Neill, Woodsworth, Heaps, ibid., pp. 3991, 4111-12, 4196-97, respectively.

The CNIB deliberately avoided any action which might be construed as "political." The UBPCM was also against making "a political issue" out of the cause. See Baker to Culligan, 27 December 1935; and Maclennan to Baker, 23 July 1935 respectively, CNIB file no. 11.

See Woodsworth to Phillip Layton, 2 August 1935; replies of Bett [for H.H. Steven], King, Bennett, 6 August 1935; and copy of CFB letter to Signatories, n.d., ibid.

Toronto Globe, 3 October 1935.


Pensions for the Blind - Memo. of Information to date, 11 December 1935, CNIB file no. 11.

See Bryden, Old Age Pensions, p. 86-87, 91-92, respectively.

This paragraph is based on material in Gilbert Layton to Baker, 25 September 1935; Pensions for the Blind - Memo., 11 December 1935; Macdonald to Baker, 9 December 1935; Baker to Robinson, 23 December 1935; and Baker to Philip Layton, 16 December 1935, CNIB file no. 11.

Baker to Gilbert Layton, 5 March 1936, CNIB file no. 12.


See ibid.

Dunning, HC Debates, 1936, p. 895.


154 See Macdonald to Baker, 20 April 1936; Bouchard to Philip Layton, 23 April 1936; and Macdonald to Bouchard, 4 May 1936, CNIB file no. 13: Pensions for the Blind, April-Dec. 1936.

155 CNIB officials thought "that the bill went through as originally drafted"; whereas Philip Layton of the CFB apparently "...heard the clause pertaining to the blind passed with the other provisions." See Macdonald to Myers, 12 June 1936; and Gilbert Layton to Myer, 15 June 1936, ibid.


157 This section of the paragraph is based upon information in Robinson to Myers, 14 November 1936; Baker to Turner, 28 November 1936; CNIB Memo., Ottawa Trip, 11 December 1936, CNIB file no. 13; and Philip Layton to Baker, 15 January 1937, CNIB file no. 14: Pensions for the Blind, Jan.-March 1937.


160 CNIB Memo., Ottawa Trip, 4 December 1936, CNIB file no. 13.

161 The latter estimate is contained in Memo. to the Minister of Finance from G.H. Brown, 12 December 1935, PAC, Dept. of Labour, Lacelle Files, RG 27, vol. 167, file no. 612.3:6, vol. 1.


165 HC Debates, 1937, pp. 1851, 1695, 1857-59, respectively.

Chapter 11


9 Struthers, for example, does not pinpoint it as an explicit source of capital's resistance. See James Struthers, 'No Fault of Their Own': Unemployment and the Canadian Welfare State, 1914-1941 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1983), pp. 27-28, 41, 88.


12 Canadian Forum, August 1922, p. 711.


18 Bryden, Old Age Pensions, p. 186.


20 Leman, Collapse of Welfare Reform, p. 150.
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Montreal Gazette, 14 October 1931. 13 January 1934.

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Regina Leader, 7 November 1912. 4, 7 December 1915. 6 December 1916. 9, 10 January; 15, 28 February; 17, 30 March; 17, 28 April; 8, 26 June; 3 July; 17-18, 28 October 1917.

Toronto Globe, 25 March 1908. 8 May 1913. 18 September 1914. 18 October; 19 December 1916. 10, 17 December 1918. 4 January; 24 September; 15 October 1919. 5, 8 January; 9, 20-21 February; 19 May 1920. 28 October 1924. 8, 9 April 1927. 3 October 1937.

Toronto Mail and Empire, 20 January 1934.

Toronto Star, 3 March 1925. 12 January 1934.

Vancouver Province, 10 November 1916. 21 March 1917. 16 January; 28 October 1918.

Vancouver Sun, 16 May; 21 November 1917. 22 March 1918. 4, 15 February 1919. 10 April 1920. 5 January 1926.

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4. Theses and Unpublished Papers


5. Interviews


Interview with Grace Worts, Toronto, 15 June 1978.
APPENDIX A: Statistics on unemployment and dependency in Canada, 1921-38

Table 34. Measures of unemployment used by governments during the 1921-29 period

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Employer's Index Number</th>
<th>% Trade Unionists Unemployed</th>
<th>Unplaced applicants registered at employment offices</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Oct. 31</td>
<td>Dec. 31</td>
<td>Oct. 31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>91.3</td>
<td>78.8</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1922</td>
<td>97.0</td>
<td>87.3</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1923</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>89.8</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1924</td>
<td>94.1</td>
<td>84.9</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1925</td>
<td>98.3</td>
<td>90.7</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1926</td>
<td>104.0</td>
<td>95.9</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1927</td>
<td>108.8</td>
<td>100.7</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1928</td>
<td>118.9</td>
<td>109.1</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1929</td>
<td>124.6</td>
<td>111.2</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These figures were compiled initially by the Employment Service of Canada (ESC), a new branch of the Department of Labour created in 1918, and by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics (DBS) from 1922 onwards. Their sources all underestimated the extent of unemployment. The employers' index numbers were the most representative, covering 75 percent of non-agricultural workers, whereas the trade union returns represented only a small proportion of industrial wage-earners. The ESC's own figures were also unreliable indicators as non-registrants were excluded.

APPENDIX A, cont'd.

Table 35. DBS estimates of the total numbers of wage-earners, of wage-earners in employment, and of wage-earners unemployed, and the percentage of unemployed in the years 1930-38

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total wage-earners (000s)</th>
<th>Wage-earners in employment (000s)</th>
<th>Wage-earners unemployed (000s)</th>
<th>% of unemployed among total wage-earners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>2,654</td>
<td>2,313</td>
<td>341</td>
<td>12.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>2,537</td>
<td>2,095</td>
<td>442</td>
<td>17.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1932</td>
<td>2,459</td>
<td>1,820</td>
<td>639</td>
<td>26.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1933</td>
<td>2,434</td>
<td>1,788</td>
<td>646</td>
<td>26.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1934</td>
<td>2,574</td>
<td>2,045</td>
<td>529</td>
<td>20.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1935</td>
<td>2,626</td>
<td>2,126</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>19.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1936</td>
<td>2,671</td>
<td>2,225</td>
<td>447</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1937</td>
<td>2,706</td>
<td>2,369</td>
<td>337</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1938</td>
<td>2,704</td>
<td>2,297</td>
<td>407</td>
<td>15.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 36. Proportion of unemployed wage-earners on direct relief, 1932-36

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dec.</th>
<th>Employable Persons on Relief (000s)</th>
<th>Wage-earners Unemployed (000s)</th>
<th>% of Unemployed on Relief</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1932</td>
<td>328</td>
<td>675</td>
<td>48.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>1933</td>
<td>623</td>
<td>47.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>1934</td>
<td>571</td>
<td>47.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>1935</td>
<td>546</td>
<td>53.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>1936</td>
<td>415</td>
<td>64.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SOURCE: The figures are cited in Labour Gazette, 1937, p. 36, table 3.
APPENDIX A, cont'd.

Table 37. Classification of dominion disbursements under relief legislation, September 1930 to 31 March 1939

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Direct relief (urban and agricultural) and grant-in-aid</th>
<th>Public works</th>
<th>Agricultural aid other than direct relief</th>
<th>Farm employment plan</th>
<th>Relief settlement</th>
<th>Youth training and rehabilitation</th>
<th>Total paid provinces</th>
<th>Federal departments and railways</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>3,431,557</td>
<td>11,887,216</td>
<td>2,001</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>15,320,774</td>
<td>2,364,604</td>
<td>17,685,378</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>10,135,088</td>
<td>25,004,290</td>
<td>1,746,725</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>37,025,951</td>
<td>5,315,739</td>
<td>42,341,690</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1932</td>
<td>19,579,670</td>
<td>1,139,045</td>
<td>3,603,527</td>
<td>104,873</td>
<td></td>
<td>519,370</td>
<td>24,946,485</td>
<td>981,088</td>
<td>25,927,573</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1933</td>
<td>29,326,462</td>
<td>3,376,906</td>
<td>288,512</td>
<td>276,055</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>33,267,935</td>
<td>7,648,537</td>
<td>40,916,472</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1934</td>
<td>26,414,649</td>
<td>3,071,397</td>
<td>2,244,048</td>
<td>167,964</td>
<td></td>
<td>242,651</td>
<td>32,140,709</td>
<td>8,398,280</td>
<td>40,538,989</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1935</td>
<td>29,606,181</td>
<td>10,511,167</td>
<td>2,376,072</td>
<td>222,601</td>
<td></td>
<td>2,496</td>
<td>42,718,517</td>
<td>8,283,813</td>
<td>51,002,330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1936</td>
<td>34,062,935</td>
<td>11,220,851</td>
<td>257,262</td>
<td>1,375,969</td>
<td></td>
<td>480,609</td>
<td>47,397,626</td>
<td>608,942</td>
<td>48,006,568</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1937</td>
<td>31,424,586</td>
<td>6,077,904</td>
<td>12,267,981</td>
<td>1,360,463</td>
<td>8,931</td>
<td>584,353</td>
<td>51,724,218</td>
<td>1,430,355</td>
<td>53,154,573</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1938</td>
<td>25,853,059</td>
<td>2,196,182</td>
<td>360,000</td>
<td>561,983</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>874,382</td>
<td>29,845,606</td>
<td>32,579,578</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>209,834,187</td>
<td>74,484,958</td>
<td>23,146,128</td>
<td>4,209,756</td>
<td>1,254,057</td>
<td>1,458,735</td>
<td>314,387,821</td>
<td>37,765,330</td>
<td>352,153,151</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Administration, Sept. 1930–31 March 1939
Grand total

APPENDIX B: Statutory initiatives in public assistance, 1916-37

### TABULAR SUMMARY OF MOTHERS' PENSIONS LEGISLATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scope</strong></td>
<td>widows, wives of inmates in asylums</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Character</strong></td>
<td>&quot;fit &amp; proper&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;proper&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;fit &amp; proper&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;proper&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;fit &amp; proper&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;fit &amp; proper&quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;proper&quot;</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>1+ under 14 years</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>1+ under 16 years</td>
<td>2+ under 14 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong># of children</strong></td>
<td>2+ under 14 years</td>
<td>1+ under 14 years</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>1+ under 16 years</td>
<td>2+ under 14 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Citizenship</strong></td>
<td>Brit. Sub. both parents</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>Brit. sub. (mother)</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Residency</strong></td>
<td>2+ yrs in province</td>
<td>1+ yrs in municip.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>18 months in province</td>
<td>3+ yrs/Can. 2+ in prov 1+ in mun.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Income limits</strong></td>
<td>$200 cash + $2000 equity, or $1200 cash w/out equity</td>
<td>not specified</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>$500 cash + $1500 equity</td>
<td>$500 cash + $2000 equity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scale of Pension</strong></td>
<td>not fixed weekly max. of $3 per child</td>
<td>not fixed</td>
<td>monthly max. of $42.50 for mother &amp; child, $7.50 for each add'l child</td>
<td>not fixed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Method of financing</strong></td>
<td>Joint</td>
<td>Joint</td>
<td>Joint</td>
<td>Provincial</td>
<td>Joint</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Method of admin.</strong></td>
<td>Voluntary commission</td>
<td>A-G</td>
<td>A-G</td>
<td>A-G</td>
<td>Voluntary commission</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### TABULAR SUMMARY OF STATUTORY, MEANS-TESTED BENEFITS FOR AGED, VETERANS & BLIND

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benefits</th>
<th>Old Age Pensions, 1927</th>
<th>War Veterans Allowances, 1930</th>
<th>Pensions for the Blind, 1937</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scope</strong></td>
<td>indigents of 70+</td>
<td>destitute, prematurely aged WWI veterans of 60+ and younger, permanently unemployable cases</td>
<td>destitute, unemployable blind of 40+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Citizenship</strong></td>
<td>British subject</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>British subject</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Residency</strong></td>
<td>20+ yrs in Canada</td>
<td>domicile in Canada on 4/8/14 (non-pensioners only)</td>
<td>20+ yrs in Canada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5+ yrs in prov.</td>
<td></td>
<td>5+ yrs in prov.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Income limits</strong></td>
<td>$125 p.a., single</td>
<td>$125 p.a., single</td>
<td>$200 p.a., single</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$250 p.a., married</td>
<td>$250 p.a., married</td>
<td>$400 p.a., married</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scale of Pension</strong></td>
<td>$240 &quot; single</td>
<td>$240 &quot; single</td>
<td>$240 &quot; single, (or blind couples marrying after act)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$480 &quot; married</td>
<td>$480 &quot; married</td>
<td>$480 p.a., married</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Method of financing</strong></td>
<td>Joint</td>
<td>Federal</td>
<td>Joint</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Method of adminis.</strong></td>
<td>Provincial</td>
<td>WVA Board comprising 3 paid and 2 hon. members</td>
<td>Provincial</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CFB: Canadian Federation of the Blind
CMA: Canadian Manufacturers' Association
CNIB: Canadian National Institute for the Blind
CPA: Canadian Pensioners' Association
CPF: Canadian Patriotic Fund
GWVA: Great War Veterans' Association
LCW: Local Council of Women
LTCB: Lux-in-Tenebris Club for the Blind
NCWC: National Council of Women of Canada
NEL: New Era League
NUWA: National Unemployed Workers' Association
OBU: One Big Union
TLC: Trades and Labour Congress
UBPCM: United Blind Pensions' Committee of Manitoba