

STATE CONTROL AND SOCIAL RESISTANCE:
THE CASE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL DEFENCE
RELIEF CAMP SCHEME IN B.C.

By

LOUISE GWENYTH GORMAN

B.A., University of British Columbia, 1982

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL
FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIRE-
MENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS

in

THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES

Department of Anthropology and
Sociology, University of British Columbia

We accept this thesis as conforming
to the required standard

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

July 1985

© Louise Gwenyth Gorman, 1985

In presenting this thesis in partial fulfilment of the requirements for an advanced degree at the University of British Columbia, I agree that the Library shall make it freely available for reference and study. I further agree that permission for extensive copying of this thesis for scholarly purposes may be granted by the head of my department or by his or her representatives. It is understood that copying or publication of this thesis for financial gain shall not be allowed without my written permission.

Department of Anthropology and Sociology

The University of British Columbia
1956 Main Mall
Vancouver, Canada
V6T 1Y3

Date July 5, 1985

Abstract

This thesis constitutes a sociological analysis of the establishment and operation of the Department of National Defence Relief Camp Scheme in British Columbia. During the Great Depression of the 1930s, unemployment reached unsurpassed levels, when the dependent Canadian economy could not export its primary resources. Faced with a fiscal crisis, the Canadian state was unable to support the dramatically increased number of destitute. The position of B.C. was particularly serious due to its economic dependence upon the export of raw resources. Thousands of single unemployed men who had been employed in resource industries, and for whom no adequate relief provisions were available, congregated on the west coast and became increasingly militant in their demands for 'work and wages'. The radicalization of this group was perceived as a threat that was beyond the capacity of usual state social control mechanisms. As a result, the Canadian state was obliged to undertake exceptional, repressive measures to contain these unemployed. This was accomplished through the Department of National Defence Relief Camp Scheme. Despite this extended state action, the dissident unemployed were not adequately suppressed, and the B.C. camps were characterized by a high level of militancy. The violent Regina Riot of July 1, 1935 served to break the momentum of the radical, single unemployed relief camp inmates. In 1936 the DND relief camp scheme was dismantled, and the single unemployed were dispersed.

The DND relief camp scheme is examined in light of theories of the capitalist state and its role in society. It is concluded that the fiscal crisis of the 1930s rendered the Canadian state unable to mediate between the demands of the unemployed and the requirements of capital. The ensuing social crisis necessitated exceptional state coercion -- the Department of National Defence Relief Camp Scheme.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|--|-----|
| ABSTRACT | ii |
| TABLE OF CONTENTS | iv |
| ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS | vi |
| CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION | 1 |
| CHAPTER TWO: THE GREAT DEPRESSION IN CANADA | |
| INTRODUCTION | 8 |
| COLONIAL DEPENDENCY | 9 |
| UNEVEN CANADIAN DEVELOPMENT | 13 |
| GROWTH OF AMERICAN DEPENDENCY | 16 |
| PRELUDE TO THE GREAT DEPRESSION | 20 |
| BRITISH COLUMBIA AND THE GREAT DEPRESSION..... | 28 |
| SOCIAL SERVICES FOR THE UNEMPLOYED IN B.C. | 32 |
| FISCAL CRISIS OF THE STATE | 34 |
| SUMMARY | 40 |
| CHAPTER THREE: UNEMPLOYMENT IN BRITISH COLUMBIA | |
| INTRODUCTION | 42 |
| TRANSIENT MEN AND LOCAL CONTROL | 45 |
| UNEMPLOYED 'JUNGLES' | 51 |
| POLITICALIZATION OF THE UNEMPLOYED | 55 |
| POLICING OF THE UNEMPLOYED | 59 |
| FRAGMENTED POLITICAL CONTROL AND THE RELIEF ACTS OF 1931 | 66 |
| THE RISE AND FALL OF B.C.'S RELIEF CAMPS | 74 |
| SUMMARY | 81 |
| CHAPTER FOUR: THE DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL DEFENCE RELIEF CAMP SCHEME | |
| INTRODUCTION | 83 |
| THE MILITARY AND THE RELIEF CAMP SCHEME | 85 |
| THE OPERATION OF SOCIAL CONTROL | 89 |
| THE ESTABLISHMENT OF DND RELIEF CAMPS IN B.C. | 97 |
| LABOUR AND DISCIPLINE IN B.C.'S DND RELIEF CAMPS | 99 |
| SOCIAL RESISTANCE IN B.C. CAMPS | 103 |
| SUMMARY | 109 |

CHAPTER FIVE: MILITANCY, THE ON TO OTTAWA MARCH AND VIOLENT REPRESSION

| | |
|---|-----|
| INTRODUCTION | 112 |
| ORGANIZATION OF THE RELIEF CAMP WORKERS | 114 |
| MILITANCY IN B.C. RELIEF CAMPS | 117 |
| POLICE CONTROL IN DND RELIEF CAMPS | 121 |
| FEDERAL - PROVINCIAL DISPUTES | 123 |
| STRIKES, RIOTS, AND STATE INTERVENTION | 128 |
| THE ON TO OTTAWA MARCH | 139 |
| STATE COERCION | 148 |
| SUMMARY | 153 |

CHAPTER SIX: THE END OF THE DND RELIEF CAMP SCHEME

| | |
|---|-----|
| INTRODUCTION | 157 |
| THE END OF THE RELIEF CAMP STRATEGY | 158 |
| JOB CREATION FOR THE INMATES | 159 |
| RENEWED MILITANCY | 161 |
| THE UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE ACT | 163 |
| SUMMARY | 165 |

CHAPTER SEVEN: THEORETICAL ANALYSIS

| | |
|---|-----|
| INTRODUCTION | 167 |
| THREAT POSED BY THE UNEMPLOYED | 169 |
| INVOLVEMENT OF THE CANADIAN STATE | 172 |
| CHARACTER OF THE CAPITALIST STATE | 175 |
| GRAMSCI'S THESIS OF THE CAPITALIST STATE | 176 |
| MILIBAND - POULANTZAS DEBATE | 179 |
| SUBSEQUENT CONTRIBUTIONS - OFFE | 190 |
| THEORETICAL ANALYSIS OF THE DND RELIEF CAMP SCHEME | 196 |
| BREAKDOWN OF THE NEGATIVE SELECTIVE MECHANISM | 199 |
| STRUCTURE | 200 |
| IDEOLOGY | 204 |
| PROCESS | 207 |
| REPRESSION | 210 |
| RESORT TO REPRESSION | 212 |
| CESSATION OF EXCEPTIONAL REPRESSION | 213 |
| SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS | 216 |

| | |
|--------------------|-----|
| BIBLIOGRAPHY | 219 |
|--------------------|-----|

| | |
|--------------------|-----|
| APPENDIX ONE | 235 |
|--------------------|-----|

| | |
|--------------------|-----|
| APPENDIX TWO | 237 |
|--------------------|-----|

| | |
|----------------------|-----|
| APPENDIX THREE | 245 |
|----------------------|-----|

Acknowledgements

The successful completion of this thesis may be traced to a variety of people whose support and encouragement made the task possible. John McMullan initiated the research and supervised the project from beginning to end. His consistent, excellent guidance and assistance was sincerely appreciated. Bob Ratner and Neil Guppy supplied timely, helpful comments and directives, for which I am very grateful. Brian Burtch, Sabrina Freeman, and Jan Plecash lent sympathetic ears and provided support throughout the months of toil, which made the accomplishment of the task seem possible. Sandy Luedtke 'came through in the crunch', and her hours of word processing allowed me to meet deadlines. The Vancouver City Archivist permitted access to valuable data, without which this analysis would not have been possible. Raymond Woods, Ted White, Robert (Doc) Savage, and Bob Jackson, former relief camp inmates, gave their time to speak with me about the DND camps and the 'dirty 30s'. These conversations were most enjoyable, and as a result of them I was able to gain a deeper understanding of the issues I was studying. My greatest debt is to Nick, whose love, patience, and support helped me to carry on, and keep my life in rational perspective through all the good and bad times.

Chapter One
Introduction

During the 1930s, a decade commonly known as the Great Depression, Canada experienced exceptionally severe conditions in virtually all spheres of its economic life. The effects of the economic crisis were particularly bad in western Canada as the dominant, export oriented resource extracting industries and the prairie agriculture producing enterprises were unable to sell their products in the depressed international markets. The result was the highest level of unemployment known to date in Canada with millions of workers unable to support themselves or their dependents. Ultimately, extraordinary action was taken by the Canadian state to deal with the situation created by the economic conditions. This thesis constitutes a sociological analysis of the action taken by the Canadian state during the Great Depression years.

While numerous studies have been done on the social and economic conditions that prevailed during the Great Depression, few of these discussions have focussed on the role of the state. This thesis will extend the body of historical information that has already been accumulated on the Great Depression by contributing previously undisclosed data, but further, it will provide a sociological analysis of the role of the state during a fiscal crisis which precipitated a widespread challenge of the legitimacy of the capitalist social order. By examining the actions that were taken to deal with the large group of single,

transient unemployed men, who were perceived as a threat to social order during the Depression years, this thesis will enhance the body of theoretical knowledge on the structure and role of the state in capitalist society.

In this thesis I examine the connections between the economy, social unrest, and state social control in Canada during the Great Depression era. First, I discuss the character of the export oriented, resource dependent western Canadian economy, and the effect that the economic crisis of the 1930s had on the various levels of the Canadian state. Second, I describe the social impact of the high levels of unemployment that were a result of the economic depression of the 1930s. Particular attention is given to British Columbia and to the thousands of homeless, transient, unemployed men who congregated there. The threat posed by this vast population of unemployed workers as they demanded changes in the existing socio-economic order and the various attempts by the state to control these unemployed is discussed. Thirdly, I examine the Department of National Defence (DND) relief camp scheme as an attempt by the state to contain the dissident single unemployed men while ensuring the maintenance of the dominant work ethic. I then describe the events of 1936 to 1938, from the closure of the relief camp scheme to the end of the Great Depression decade. Finally, I analyze this state involvement in controlling the protesting unemployed.

I conclude that the attempts by the state to deal with the threat posed by the unemployed prior to the relief camp scheme were insufficient to contain the dissent. The Department of National Defence relief camps were an exceptional, repressive measure used by the state to suppress the growing protests of the unemployed, after the usual state actions failed to do so. Faced with a growing number of dissident, militant, unemployed men who were gaining widespread support and operating in the context of a fiscal crisis, the Canadian capitalist state failed to adequately fulfill its mandate of maintaining social order, ensuring private capital accumulation, and legitimating that process. As a result it undertook extensive coercion to control the radical unemployed segment of the working class. This present study of the DND relief camp scheme will, therefore, provide an analysis of the Canadian state and the methods it used to control the dissidents, in order to ensure the continuation of the existing socio-economic order.

Involved in the administration and execution of social control during the Depression were clearly identifiable institutions: the three levels of government and their various administrative branches; municipal, provincial and federal police; the judicial system; and the military. These and other such public institutions together constitute the state. The state institutions interact to create the state system (Miliband, 1969: 46). Theorists in the structuralist school of thought, such as Poulantzas (1971) argue that the unit of analysis for an examination of the state is more appropriately

the objective structure of the relationship between the relatively autonomous state system and general capitalist interests. The Hegelian-Marxist school, presented by Gramsci (1971) argues that all facets of the social formation mutually interrelate to maintain the capitalist social structure. The empirical data upon which this thesis is based lend themselves more readily to an analysis that delineates the institutions of the state that were visibly active in maintaining the existing economic structure. As Panitch (1977) argues, however, a fully developed theory of the state in capitalist society must include not only the complex of institutions that compose the state, it must demonstrate the links between the state system and social structure, and it must specify the role of the state under the capitalist economy in the context of a given social formation (1977: 5-6). Throughout this discussion, therefore, I have referred to the state as being composed of a number of identifiable institutions that interact to address the specific social and economic tensions of the Great Depression.¹

To obtain the data examined in this thesis, historical research was undertaken into the social, political and economic climate of the nation during the 1930s. I gathered the data from a wide variety of sources: academic historical accounts, official government documents, newspaper articles, undated

¹ A discussion and analysis of these theoretical perspectives is provided in Chapter Seven. The strengths of each school of thought, and a presentation of the rationale behind the formulation of the theoretical framework constructed for this thesis is provided.

pamphlets and bulletins published by the unemployed, informal inter-departmental memos of government officials, and original, confidential police reports. By this means I obtained insights into interactions among the unemployed and state authorities, and I have been able to relate the particular political and economic circumstances of the era, to the specifics of the social atmosphere of the Great Depression.

In this thesis I have concentrated on the province of British Columbia where the export-oriented, labour intensive industries experienced the most severe effects of the Depression. The thousands of single men who sought work in the primary industries of B.C. constituted the largest group of unemployed in Canada. These transient men who drifted in and out of the province created peculiar difficulties for the state. As a result, they were set apart as a special group and were dealt with in a unique way.

To set the stage for the analysis of the unemployment situation and social conditions that prevailed during the 1930s, chapter two outlines the character of the Canadian economy prior to the Great Depression. The stunning effects that the economic crisis of the 1930s had on the primary export dependent economy, and the resultant fiscal crisis of the state is outlined. The severe economic and social conditions that developed in the resource dependent province of B.C. during this crisis are presented to illustrate the dire circumstances of the vast numbers of single unemployed, and provide a background for the

analysis of the actions taken by the state to deal with this group.

Chapter three brings the reader from the macro-level and portrays a vivid account of the plight of the thousands of single, unemployed men as they sought to eke out an existence in British Columbia, without money or homes. The discontent with the capitalist social structure vocalized by these men, is presented to illustrate the growing misgivings they and many Canadians had about the legitimacy of the existing social order. The unsuccessful attempts made by governments and the police to deal with the thousands of these single unemployed men who were demanding significant changes in the social order is also discussed in this chapter. This discussion will illustrate various methods of social control utilized by the state; but it becomes clear that ultimately, these attempts were unsuccessful, and the state was unable to contain the dissenting group through usual procedures.

The central focus of this study relates the eventual, exceptional action taken by the state to deal with these single, unemployed men, the Department of National Defence Relief Camp Scheme. Chapters four and five reveal the state's resort to coercion, and the repression of the dissident unemployed. Through the severe, unprecedented, extra-parliamentary measures taken to maintain "peace, order, and good government" in Canada, a nation-wide scheme was undertaken to contain the dissenting group. The DND relief camp scheme was established and operated

in the context of a fiscal crisis within the state; but this social expense was deemed necessary if the existing socio-economic order was to be preserved.

The relief camp scheme was dismantled in 1936. In chapter six, I relate the events from 1936 to the end of the decade. The outbreak of World War Two during 1939, marked the end of the Great Depression, as the thousands of unemployed were absorbed into the flourishing war economy and the armed forces. Nevertheless, the struggles of the unemployed during the decade of the Great Depression were a significant factor in the ultimate establishment of the 1940 Unemployment Insurance Act.

After the discussion of the state social control that was exercised to deal with the single unemployed men during the early part of the 1930s, chapter seven extends this analysis to a broader theoretical framework to provide a comprehensive explanation of this state action. To accomplish this, I present a discussion of theoretical analyses of the character and structure of the state and its role in capitalist society. This framework permits an understanding of the actions taken by the Canadian state when it was faced with serious threat posed by the radical, dissenting single unemployed men. This sociological analysis of the state and the exceptional social control it exercised during the Great Depression through the DND relief camp scheme will contribute to the ongoing debate of the character of the Canadian state and its role in capitalist society.

Chapter Two

The Great Depression in Canada

Introduction

In this chapter, I outline the development of the persistently dependent character of the Canadian resource economy, and present the factors that contributed to the severe economic depression in western Canada during the 1930s. The severity of the impact of the Great Depression in British Columbia, and the exceptionally high level of unemployment that resulted in this province are discussed. I then show that the state was not equipped to meet the demand for social assistance created by the thousands of unemployed. The government's attempt to deal with the severe social conditions precipitated by the economic depression, resulted in an increase in state expenditures. The significant reduction in state revenues due to the decline in taxation and resource rents, and the increase in social expenses, created a fiscal crisis for the state. This chapter will reveal that, due to its dependent character, the reduced demand for primary resources on the international market plunged the Canadian economy into a severe depression. Unemployment rose drastically, but few social assistance provisions were available to supply relief for those without jobs.

Colonial Dependency

The development of the economic structure of Canada has been shaped predominately by this country's dependence upon the export of its primary resources and staple products. From the initial fishing resource that Europeans harvested off the east coast, to the fur trade era that dominated economic activity for decades, up to the present exportation of timber, mineral resources and wheat, Canada's economy has been dependent upon its primary resource industries.

The overthrow of the political and mercantile elite of New France in 1760 heralded a new and significant social and economic structure in Lower Canada. The domination of the British economic and political elite over the French permitted the establishment of a British colonial mercantile system, whereby English merchants were able to profit by establishing a monopoly on fur and timber exported to the home market, and control the supply of manufactured goods from Britain to the consumers in the colonies of Upper and Lower Canada. Since the establishment of any manufacturing bases in the New World would be a threat to Britain's industrial wealth, bans were established to control the export of machinery that could be used for secondary industries, and skilled artisans were not permitted to emigrate to the Canadas (Willox, 1980: 40). Thus, from the defeat of New France to the mid-1800s, British mercantilism flourished, and as a consequence, early in its history Canada developed into a resource hinterland dependent

upon the British metropolis for its required manufactured goods.

The Rebellions of 1840 were an expression by the Canadian petite bourgeoisie of their dissatisfaction with the enforced restrictions on industrial development in the colonies. Although these rebels were quickly crushed, the mercantilists' respite was short-lived, for the displacement of the merchants by the growing British industrialists had a disruptive effect on the economic relationship and balance of power in Canada.

Lacking its own manufacturing base, the decline of mercantilism resulted in Canada turning to the United States for its supply of manufactured goods. The Reciprocity Treaty of 1854 provided that Canada's raw materials and the United State's manufactured goods be granted reciprocal terms of entry at lower tariff rates into each other's country. Britain supported the agreement, and thus Canada's dependency for manufactured goods began to shift to the developing American metropolis. However, hostility between Britain and the United States during the American Civil War, and the increase in tariffs on U.S. goods, established by Canada in order to pay off railway building debts, resulted in the U.S. abrogation of the Reciprocity Treaty in 1866 (Laxer, J., 1973: 30; Willox, 1980: 41).

Concurrently however, the balance of British economic power was once again shifting, this time in favour of financiers; and British portfolio investors were searching for places of investment (Willox, 1980: 41). One criterion for favourable foreign investment however, is a strong state

structure through which loans may be defended. Thus both the Canadian mercantilist debtors and the British financial creditors favoured the proposal that Upper and Lower Canada be given the rest of British North America to establish a nation state, and develop an east-west commerce. Subsequently, in 1867 through the B.N.A. Act of the British Parliament, Dominion status was given to Canada and the British-financed Canadian mercantilists were provided with the ability to control an expanded and potentially profitable system of trade, with the Canadian state serving as a guarantor of the loans provided by British investors and financiers (Willox, 1980: 41).

The early development of the Dominion of Canada was shaped primarily by the National Policy. The intent of this Policy, as anticipated by the B.N.A. Act, was the expansion westward, thus augmenting the commercial operations of the British Empire. The National Policy had three basic purposes: the building of a trans-continental railway to link the potential wheat exports of the Canadian west to Montreal and the St. Lawrence Seaway; the promotion of immigration to the new internal colony in the Canadian west; and as will be discussed below, the suppression of the development of secondary industry in the west through the erection of a tariff that forced westerners to depend upon central Canada for manufactured goods.

The tariff established through the National Policy was not intended primarily to protect Canadian industrialists, but rather to ensure the maintenance of the monopoly trading held by

the Canadian merchants, and to force the American industrialists desiring access to the Canadian market to establish factories in Canada. As a result, although Canadian-owned secondary industries did grow throughout the duration of the National Policy, American direct investment in Canada grew rapidly, reaching \$520 million by 1913 (Laxer, J., 1973: 31). British presence was still apparent, and during that same year 14 percent of all British foreign investment was located in Canada - a heavier per capita concentration than any other country (Levitt, 1970: 52). While other staples, principally wheat, continued to be exported overseas, the new export products such as timber and minerals began to move to the United States (Levitt, 1970: 54).

Following the Great War, British currency became devalued and that country's predominance as a financial power began to wane rapidly (Naylor, 1972: 32). At the same time however, the United States was emerging as a dominant world economic power, and monopoly capitalism had established a strong foothold in that country by the early 1900s (Clement, 1977: 55 and 65). As a result, during the post World War One period Canada experienced both a drop in British portfolio investment and a substantial growth in American direct investment. Encouraged by access to the Commonwealth markets through the establishment of an Imperial preferential tariff for British dominions, the number of U.S. branch plants in Canada tripled between 1913 and 1934 (Willox, 1980: 43). While the U.S. foreign investment expanded into various regions, Canada was its single

most important country. Canada was an attractive place for business to locate. By 1914, Canada had more American based manufacturing plants than any other nation (Clement, 1977: 64). During the years surrounding the turn of the century, of the thirty six American companies that built branch plants, thirty four located their factories in Canada (Clement, 1977: 53). Levitt (1970) records that overall U.S. investment in Canada rose from 15.5 percent of foreign investment in 1900, to 53 percent of the total foreign investment in 1926 (1970: 66).

Canada was drifting away from the satellitic orbit of Britain, into the stronger gravitational field of the rising American superstar. (1970: 54)

Uneven Canadian Development

As American direct investment was consolidated in Canada, the resource extraction industries of the west became locked into a dependent relationship with the United States. The impact of the rapid economic expansion in resource extraction and manufacturing during the early part of the twentieth century served to entrench the uneven character of the Canadian economy. Just as Canada developed as a resource hinterland supplying Europe with raw materials, the Canadian west had consistently provided an internal resource hinterland for the industrial heartland of central Canada.

The National Policy was designed to link the resource rich regions across Canada to Ontario and Quebec, and promote the industrialization and economic domination of central Canada, and it set the stage for the development and maintenance of regionalized economies in Canada (Hunter, 1981: 156). The completion of the railway and the wheat boom of 1896-1913 brought unprecedented economic activity in Canada and encouraged settlement in the prairie provinces and British Columbia (Conway, 1983: 29; Struthers, 1983: 13). During 1900, 76 percent of B.C.'s lumber exports left the province by sea, but by 1913, 90 percent of this export went east by rail (Conway, 1983: 29). The railway rate policy established in the 1897 Crow's Nest Pass Agreement never favoured industry in the west. Rather, it encouraged the expansion of prairie agriculture and resource extraction, and the westward movement of farm machinery consumer goods from the factories of central Canada. By lowering the costs of exporting wheat from the west and reducing the cost of importing eastern manufactured goods, the National Policy discouraged investment in regionally based manufacturing (Phillips, 1982: 71).

The National Policy facilitated the eastward movement of raw resources, and its protective tariffs captured westerners as a dependent market of the manufactures of central Canada. By the end of the wheat boom, the uneven pattern of the Canadian economy had been firmly established. Although western expansion constituted 80 percent of the national economic growth between 1880 and 1910, this expansion was limited to resource

exploitation. As early as 1910 approximately four fifths of all Canadian manufacturing was located in Ontario and Quebec (Clement, 1977: 62). Westerners were

at the mercy of a legislated monopoly which charged excessive freight rates, and they were forced to buy all their manufactured necessities at prices mercilessly inflated by the tariff. (Conway, 1983: 32).

The result was a general absence of secondary manufacturing in the west, and heavy western dependence upon the extraction of resources for export to the manufacturing metropoli upon which it depended for finished products.

When the lower Crow's Nest Pass rates were introduced during 1925, and the lower rates for west-bound goods were abandoned, central Canada had acquired such an advantage in manufacturing that the increase in east-bound freight had little affect (Phillips, 1982: 71). Furthermore, as Phillips (1982) points out,

The extension of Crow's Nest Pass rates to east- and west-bound grains ... means it is much cheaper to ship out raw prouducts than it is to ship out processed or manufactured products.... The statutory rates have come to be a cosy tariff barrier protecting eastern processors against western competition, thus increasing the dependency of the region on primary production. ... the transcontinental railways opened the western region to eastern Canada, but did not open eastern Canada to the West. (Phillips, 1982: 71)

The altered freight rate only indirectly affected British Columbia's resource economy. While British Columbians were obliged to buy their Canadian manufactured goods on a high cost, tariff protected market, their resources were sold

predominately on an unstable, unprotected world market (Phillips, 1982: 72). By the 1920s B.C. had become almost totally dependent upon predominately American foreign markets and capital (Phillips, 1982: 79). Not only was the Canadian economy characterized by reliance upon U.S. investment, British Columbia depended upon American investment for the development of its resources, and upon American markets for the export of its raw materials.

Growth of American Dependency

Unlike previous British investment, American capital was directed toward industrial development usually as direct investment. As the traditional exports of fish, fur, and timber to Europe declined, the American demand for raw resources such as pulp and paper, minerals, and fuel needed for industrial expansion increased, and the economic pull from north to south became stronger than the national east-west ties.

While most European countries were struggling to recover from the effects of the First World War, during the 1920s, the United States experienced a period of substantial economic growth. Extensive use of automobiles began in the U.S. at that time, and the production of vehicles became the backbone of the American prosperity of the 'roaring 20's' (Sweezy, 1980: 4). The automobile industry spawned the development and expansion of a variety of related industries such as oil, rubber, glass, plastics and synthetics, and initiated road building, gas

stations and motels. Furthermore, suburbanization, with the accompanying demand for housing and appliances increased (Sweezy, 1980: 4; Erickson, 1972: 4). These industries contributed to an growth of 87 percent in manufacturing productivity between 1921 and 1929 (Erickson, 1972: 3).

This significant expansion in the above mentioned industries in the United States had an immediate and direct impact upon the Canadian economy. Central Canadian carriage manufactures encouraged and supported Ford, General Motors, and Chrysler Corporation to produce automobiles in Canada early in the twentieth century, and during the automobile boom all three of the major auto manufacturers became firmly entrenched in Canada through the establishment of branch plants (Clement, 1977: 67-70). Canadian producers of raw material capitalized on the opportunity to export staple products to supply the ever-expanding U.S. markets, and during the 1920s the new staple industries that developed in Canada, all gained increased importance and expanded to meet the American markets. Although the Canadian economy experienced substantial growth at this time, it was overshadowed by the expansion of the U.S. (Fearon, 1979: 28-29), and the American tradition of direct foreign investment in Canada was further consolidated. The advancing American industries were encouraged by Canadian financiers and governments to fill the vacuum in the Canadian manufacturing sector through the establishment of branch plants.

By 1924, over 70 percent of U.S. direct investment in Canada was located in industrial raw materials, and secondary manufacturing compared to half in 1914

(Clement, 1977: 69).

The ever-increasing American direct investment in Canada and the absence of national venture capital crippled the establishment of large-scale indigenous secondary manufacturing.

The subsidiaries and branch plants of large American-based multinational corporations ... replaced the operations of the earlier European-based mercantile venture companies in extracting the staple and organizing the supply of manufactured goods. (Levitt, 1970: 23)

These factors combined during the 1920s to shift Canada economic dependence upon Britain to the creation of an economy inextricably tied to the monopoly capitalism of the United States. As Clement (1983) points out,

Direct investment as expressed in the branch plants ... involves an entire 'package' consisting of technology, access to markets, access to capital and management. ... over time direct investment expands and widens the scope of control for its owners. (1983: 57).

During the 1920s, American demand for newsprint increased dramatically. By 1929 Canada produced 65 percent of world exports of newsprint. That year 90% of the total output of Canadian pulp and paper was exported, and 90% of the total export went to the U.S. Half of the total Canadian pulp and paper output was produced by three American built pulp and paper mills, every one with U.S. capital interests (one American controlled). These mills had been encouraged into Canada by assistance from the Canadian government (Clement, 1977: 71).

American presence in mining resources, much of which was being extracted for the U.S. automobile industries was substantial, but varied according to the mineral. Oil, for example, an integral part of the automobile industry was dominated by U.S. companies (Clement, 1977: 72).

The American economic expansion during the 1920s had a direct impact on B.C.'s resource economy. The expanding automobile and electrical appliance manufacturing industries of the United States had encouraged extensive mining of British Columbia's lead and copper resources, and drove lead production in the province up from approximately 40 million pounds in the early part of the 1920s to 320 million pounds by 1930 (Caves et al., 1976: 158). The B.C. Minister of Finance reported in the 1929 Budget Address that,

"Basic production during the last year attained new high levels. Much higher copper levels and also a slightly higher average price of lead bringing the total basic mining production from \$65,372,583 in 1928 to \$70,030,000 in 1929." (Budget Address, British Columbia Legislative Assembly, 1929: 50).

An increase in the volume of timber cut, and a rise in lumber prices, made 1928 a record year in volume and gross value of production in that industry (Budget Address, 1929: 76). Government royalties on timber rose from \$981,558 in 1920-21 to \$1,846,007 during 1927-28, and revenue from the sale of timber licences increased \$313,124 over the same period (Budget Address, 1929: 72). The gross total income for the pulp and paper industry was \$94,334,000 in 1929, up somewhat from the 1928 total of \$93,787,000 (Budget Address, 1929: 50). As well,

the province's growing fishing industry realized higher prices for its increased harvest during the 1927-28 fiscal year (Budget Address, 1929: 76). During the years 1927 to 1931, the prairie provinces exported 800 million bushels of wheat annually (Fowke, 1957: 179). British Columbia directly benefitted from the western wheat economy through the west coast ports. The wheat shipping capacity of the Port of Vancouver increased from one and one quarter million bushels to six and one half million bushels in eighteen months during 1923-1924 (Stevens, 1936: 63). In addition, the value of basic agriculture production in British Columbia rose from \$58,664,243 in 1928, to \$62,632,890 in 1929. (Budget Address, 1932, Schedule 5). The general effect of the rapid development of the resource industries due to the expansion of lucrative U.S. markets, and the resultant prosperity of the 1920s, permitted unusually high levels of employment during the latter part of the 'roaring 20s', and recessions were short-lived (Fearon, 1979: 28; Struthers, 1983: 42).

Prelude to the Great Depression

The rapid economic expansion of the inter-war period created a spirit of optimism during the 'roaring twenties'. Profits rose, and technology advanced, but the prosperous 1920s were characterized by significant underlying problems. One weakness was the tendency for investment to outpace consumption. As Baran and Sweezy (1966) argue, the economic surplus tends to rise both absolutely and relatively as the system of monopoly

capitalism develops, for as continued expansion permits nearly full-capacity production, the surplus swells (Baran and Sweezy, 1966: 72 and 88). Due to the lag between the appropriation of surplus and its distribution through dividend payments, the dispersal of surplus falls relative to the actual surplus, and thus:

It is characteristic of monopoly capitalism ... that there is a persistent tendency for the surplus to rise as a proportion of total output, and this creates more and more acute problems absorbing it. (Bleaney, 1976: 227)

Yet, within monopoly capitalism, while ever more surplus is generated, consumption and investment outlets required to absorb the surplus are not provided (Baran and Sweezy, 1966: 108). Eventually excess capacity grows so large it discourages further investment. When investment declines, so do incomes and employment, and hence also surplus itself (1966: 81).

While technological advances brought economic productivity to 94 percent of the total capacity in 1923 (Carlo, 1975: 174), and economic surplus rose in the United States, there is clear evidence that this expansion was not complemented by an equivalent increase in wages or employment, and the subsequent purchasing power of the workers. In order for surplus value, or profit, to be created, the workers who produce a commodity must be paid less than the exchange value of that commodity. As a result, the purchasing power of the workers falls relative to the availability of goods on the market (Taylor, 1983: 130). Thus, a situation of underconsumption relative to production develops.

This pattern developed in the U.S. during the 1920s, for whereas industrial output increased by 43 percent between 1919 and 1929, wages increased by only 11 percent during the same period (Erickson, 1972: 11; Taylor, 1983: 174). The profits from expanded production were distributed as shareholders' profits or business accruals (Heilbroner, 1980: 147). Hence, a gulf between the income of the worker and the investor widened. While there was an increase in the number of consumer goods available, due to the maldistribution of income, profits arising from production were not distributed to those who would spend them. By 1929 American consumers' debts reached 30.3 percent of personal income (Carlo, 1975: 174), and the rate of consumer spending slowed significantly (Erickson, 1972: 6). During 1930, personal consumption in the U.S. dropped 6 percent, and there was a 20 percent decrease in the purchase of durable goods (Fearon, 1979: 34). Without the purchasing power to appropriate the goods available, consumption fell short of the total productive capacity, and a surplus of goods was created. Hence, the high profits were not being circulated in the economy, and spending for capital formation was sluggish (Heilbroner, 1980: 149). Consequently, industrial production was required to cut back, and after 1925 there was a steady decline of capacity utilization (Baran and Sweezy, 1966: 237). Between 1929 and 1933 the American output of consumer's durables decreased by 50 percent, and the manufacturer of producer's equipment fell by 75 percent (Fearon, 1979: 35). A decline that began in the ten months of 1929 with a \$1 billion drop in the construction of

residential buildings, increased to an 85 percent reduction in building during the subsequent five years (Erickson, 1972: 6; Fearon, 1979: 35). As industrial production decreased, there was a consequent rise in unemployment. Even those who continued to work experienced a 36 percent drop in real income between 1929 and 1933 (Fearon, 1979: 35). The economic expansion of the 1920s had led to a surplus of goods, but owing to the maldistribution of income, indebted consumers drew back significantly on spending. As a result, capital formation ground to a halt (Heilbroner, 1980: 150).

The decline in consumer spending initiated a multiplicity of effects. In an effort to reduce costs, manufacturers dumped their surplus production on the market. To decrease the amount of goods on the bloated market, rapid price declines ensued (Fearon, 1979: 34 and 49). Thus, as demand and production decreased, unemployment rose, opportunities for investment declined, and as Baran and Sweezy (1966) argue, the surplus shrank, resulting in the investment-seeking part of it decreasing more than in proportion (Baran and Sweezy, 1966: 88).

This decline in investment was clearly reflected in the Great Crash of the New York Stock Exchange in October, 1929. The economic prosperity of the early 1920s had encouraged widespread speculation in the stock market, and increased investment drove share prices up. The decline of share values during the latter part of that decade, due to falling prices and wages, resulted in the value of shareholders' collateral decreasing. A

consequent increase in trading occurred as investors sought to withdraw from unprofitable investments. The resultant depressed market eventually induced the panic of October 29, 1929 (Fearon, 1979: 33-34; Erickson, 1972: 9-10). When the stock market crashed, the immense but flimsy structure of credit fell too (Heilbroner, 1980: 143).

While the crash of the New York Stock Exchange occurred in 1929, the foregoing makes it apparent that this was not the only, nor the root cause of the subsequent Great Depression. The widening gap between the rich and the poor due to the maldistribution of income, and the consequent underconsumption and decline in capital formation, contributed to the economic devastation of the 1930s.

The economic expansion of the 1920s was characterized by another crucial factor -- technological advancement (Heilbroner, 1980: 146). New inventions served to reduce the man hours required in a factory and improve productivity, but they did not create any new demand. Rather, technological change displaced both jobs and industries. Between 1920 and 1929 production soared, and manufacturing output per man hour rose 60 percent. Nevertheless, despite higher profits, wage increases did not result (Heilbroner, 1980: 146-147).

The impact of technological innovations affected another significant sector of the American economy as well. Throughout the 1920s independent farmers consistently fell behind the standard of living their urban counterparts maintained, and many

farmers were being forced into tenantry (Heilbroner, 1980: 144,146). It is clear that the American economy was already on the brink of disaster when the Great Crash occurred, but since investors lost approximately \$40 billion during the first weeks subsequent to the Crash, it encouraged a rapid contraction of further investment. While the Crash of 1929 had a psychological impact, it did not affect the majority of Americans in a personal financial way, for only eight percent of the population held stocks, (the majority of whom were wealthy), and furthermore, by 1929 the stock market financed only six percent of gross private investment (Fearon, 1979: 34). Thus, while the Great Crash was not the cause of the economic crisis, it was a factor that perhaps accelerated the exposure of the imbalance in the American economic structure (Carlo, 1975: 175). I have argued above that the roots of the Great Depression may be traced to a number of related factors; the widening gap between rich shareholders and working class consumers, the resultant underconsumption and absence of reinvestment of the production surplus, and technological innovations that served to reduce the number of jobs and squeeze out independent farm operators.

The insufficient demand for consumer goods, and cutbacks in industrial production in the U.S., had a direct negative effect on the dependent Canadian economy. Independent Canadian farmers, like their American counterparts, were being forced out of business due to technological innovations. During the first decades of the twentieth century, the number of Canadian farms and the percentage of the labour force in farm labour decreased;

but agricultural output increased and farm sizes expanded (Hunter, 1981: 82). Mechanization reduced the number of jobs in Canadian manufacturing as well, and many Canadian industries became dominated by a few large firms (Hunter, 1981: 82). While technological advances resulted in an increase in productivity in Canada, during the 1920s, as they were in the U.S., the higher profits were distributed to investors as shareholders' dividends, not as wages to Canadian workers who would reinvest the money into the local economy through the purchase of consumer goods. Hence, the gap between rich financiers and Canadian workers expanded. Since foreign investment was prevalent throughout the economy, this industrial expansion resulted in capital being siphoned out of Canada by American investors. As in the U.S., capital formation stagnated.

The economic depression of the 1930s had its most severe impact on foreign controlled, primary resource industries in Canada.

The position that many primary producing countries found themselves in in 1929 was worrying, because they depended for much of their export earnings upon commodities which were declining in price; this problem was that, however cheap their products became, consumption often remained static. (Carlo, 1975: 27).

When the American boom broke, the collapse of the Canadian economy was inevitable. As a result of the 1930 Hawley-Smoot Act imposing tariffs on goods entering the U.S., Canada's exports to the United States were cut in half (Clement, 1977: 73). By mid-1930 average price for all Canadian exports was 27 percent lower than their mid-1929 level (McGinnis, 1980: 48; Morton and Copp,

1980: 139). By 1932 the prices for Canada's seventeen major exports had fallen 53 percent (Conway, 1983: 98). Overall, between 1928-29 and 1932-33, Canada's volume of exports fell by 60-70 percent. The impact of this drop was compounded by the fact that during the same time period world prices of non-food raw materials fell by 60 percent (Fearon, 1979: 50-51). Canada's industrial production dropped by 48 percent between 1929 and 1932, and by 1933 commodity exports were 45 percent of their 1929 level. Foreign investment, which had permitted Canada to maintain a favourable balance of international payment through 1930, ceased completely (McGinnis, 1980: 50). Employment levels fell 33 percent between 1929 and 1932, and the national per capital income dropped 48 percent (Conway, 1983: 98). Even those employed in protected manufacturing industries experienced a 37 percent decline in their net money incomes (Conway, 1983: 99). It is clear, therefore that the origins of Canada's economic experience during the Great Depression can be traced largely to its dependence upon the American staples market. The booming, dependent resource hinterland economy suffered severely when its exports could no longer be absorbed within the faltering U.S. metropolis.

British Columbia and the Great Depression

As the foregoing indicates, the economy of British Columbia was set up for disaster. The withdrawal of demand for staple products due to the cutbacks of production in the American manufacturing industries sent the economy of British Columbia crashing down from its heady prosperity and expansion. Between 1929 and 1933 the total value of production in the province fell 53 percent (Conway, 1983: 101). By 1929 the rapid growth of the city of Vancouver began to be curtailed, and although building in the city had absorbed 21 million board feet of the province's lumber per year, construction came to a virtual standstill. Vancouver's shipping industry suffered as well, as the export of wheat from the city's ports fell by 17,500,000 bushels during 1930 (Ormsby, 1958: 442). Lumber exports not only faced competition from the Soviet Union and the Baltic countries, the 1930 Hawley-Smoot tariff resulted in lumber exports to the U.S. experiencing a 70 percent decline in successive years (Lane, 1966: 4). Between 1929 and 1933 the value of British Columbia's timber production fell 62 percent (Conway, 1983: 101). The 1931 price for British Columbia's fish was 45 percent less than that of the 1929 market, and coastal canneries were left with two million cases of salmon that they could not sell (Lane, 1966: 4). Between 1929 and 1933 B.C. fisheries experienced a 72 percent drop in net money income (Conway, 1983: 99). By 1931 Canadian export of copper declined by 60 percent, and lead exports dropped by 83 percent (Lane, 1966: 4). The value of mineral production fell 59 percent to

\$30,600,000 between 1929 and 1933 (Budget Address, 1936: 26, Conway, 1983: 101). The pulp and paper industry operated at just over half its capacity, and by 1933 pulp and paper sold for 40 percent less than it had in 1929. In 1930 the province's lumber industry reduced its payroll output by \$11 million having experienced a drop in the value of basic production from \$93,787,000 in 1928-29, to \$69,737,000 in 1930-31 (1932 Budget Address, Schedule 5). Mining and smelting payroll reductions equalled \$3.5 million, in the value of basic production having been reduced from \$65,372,583 (1928-29) to \$55,391,993 (1930-31) (1932 Budget Address, Schedule 5). By 1933 the value of forestry production in B.C. fell to a stunning \$39,000,000 (1936 Budget Address: 26).

The Depression struck the western resource workers the hardest. Salaries and wages of those in sheltered industries and occupations such as transportation, communication, education, banking, and professional occupations, experienced a marked improvement in their relative income standing, rising from 29 percent of the national income in 1929 to 35 percent in 1935. Those in tariff protected industries rose from 14 to 15 percent of the national income over the same period. Western workers, on the other hand, suffered the greatest decline in per capita income over the same period (Conway, 1983: 99). By 1933, the per capita income of British Columbia had fallen by 47 percent from the 1929 level (Conway, 1983: 99; Lane, 1966: 4).

Peak season resource production during 1931 was 40 percent of the 1929 level, creating widespread unemployment throughout the province (Lane, 1966: 6). By June of 1931 British Columbia had the highest unemployment of any province in Canada, with nearly 28 percent of the wage earners out of work (Conway, 1983: 101). That year the city of Vancouver had twice the number of unemployed than at any time during the 1920s, but in resource industry towns such as Cranbrook, 50 percent of the workers were unemployed, and the coal mining town of Fernie had a 40 percent unemployment rate (Lane, 1966: 6).

The economic depression intensified throughout the first three years of the 1930s. British Columbia's primary resource industries, forestry, fisheries and mining, contributed to approximately 90 percent of Canada's export commodities, and between 1929 and 1933 export prices for these products were cut by 40 percent (Conway, 1983: 101). In addition, the net value of production of these commodities fell consistently from \$1,368 million in 1928; to \$1,120 million during 1929; \$799 million in 1930; \$600 million in 1931; reaching a low of \$538 million during 1932 (Saunders, 1939: 49). 1934 saw the beginning of limited economic improvement. British Columbia's basic industries advanced \$202,435,361 by November 1936 (1936 Budget Address: 27). During those years, forestry production made an estimated recovery of \$27 million, with production reaching a value of approximately \$66 million. The value of mineral production also rose from a low of \$30.6 million in 1933, to \$50,085,361 in 1936; but still much below the 1929 \$70 million

level. By 1936 fishing, too, witnessed a significant improvement. The basic production value was up 45 percent between 1933 and 1936, from \$11 million to \$16 million (1936 Budget Address: 27). Despite this improvement, in B.C. the per capita income fell from \$595 in 1929 to \$240 in 1937 (Conway, 1983: 104).

Due to its dependence upon primary resource industries and export trade, British Columbia's economy suffered the worst effects of the Great Depression of the 1930s. The Great Depression was experienced on an international scale, but

"... the collapse of the western resource industries, the very heart of the western economy created a much higher level of western unemployment. ... the scars in the west went deeper than elsewhere (Conway, 1983: 100).

Many were obliged to accept a lower standard of living and the level of poverty increased. The group that was the most seriously affected by the economic conditions was the single men, ranging from twenty to thirty years of age, who were dependent upon the province's seasonal resource industries (Brown, 1978: 191; Lane, 1966: 18; Cassidy, 1939: 177). The significant curtailment of production throughout B.C. left these men without an income, and generally without a home. They were obliged to seek assistance in order to survive.

Social Services for the Unemployed in B.C.

Under section 92 of the B.N.A. Act which states:

In each province the Legislature may make laws in relation to ... The Establishment, Maintenance, and Management of Hospitals, Asylums, Charities, and Eleemosynary Institutions in and for the Province (Great Britain. 30 Victoria, c.3, Section 92),

The Fathers of Confederation designated the provinces with the full responsibility of providing funds or housing to maintain the destitute. The province of British Columbia, in turn delegated this responsibility to the city or town through the 1871 Municipal Act (Hill, 1951: 6; King, 1939: 77). If a municipality was bankrupt and unable to provide for its destitute citizens, or if those in need of relief lived in 'unorganized areas' outside municipal boundaries, aid was administered directly by the province through the "Destitute and Sick Fund". This provincial aid was administered under the Unemployment Relief Branch of the Department of Labour, and disbursements were generally made through a government agent. During the fifty years the provincial fund had existed, only minimal amounts of assistance had been paid out (Lautard, 1965: 56).

Few cities had established social services for the impoverished prior to the 1930s, and until the social problems created by unemployment reached severe levels during the mid-1930s, Vancouver was the only municipality in British Columbia with a relief department. This was established in the early 1920s to provide assistance to resident single men, and only

emergency provisions for non-residents (Lane, 1966: 5; Lautard, 1965: 56). Widowed mothers could appropriate funds from the provincial Mothers' Pension, established in 1920 (Crawford et als., 1959: 16; Hill, 1951: 7); and the elderly could receive assistance from the federal Old Age Pension programme, initiated in 1927 (Crawford et als., 1959: 16).

It is clear that responsibility for the unemployed was not a priority to the state. The B.N.A. Act relegated this task to the secondary levels of government, and in turn, the provinces shunted the burden to local councils. As indicated by the general absence of institutions to provide relief for those without work, this duty was seldom carried out by the state. In the pioneer, expanding economy of B.C., unemployment was not perceived as a significant issue that demanded state involvement, and was left to private charities.

While some public welfare did exist within the province prior to the onset of the Great Depression, those in need were obliged to rely primarily upon private charity. Apart from the Vancouver Council of Social Agencies, established in 1930, the burden of responsibility rested primarily on the family and the church. In this land of opportunity dependence upon the 'dole' was often perceived to be indicative of lack of initiative, and the state was loath to support such individuals fearing this would encourage idleness (Struthers, 1983: 6).

With the onset of the Great Depression there was a phenomenal increase in the demand for unemployment relief benefits. During June of 1929 the total number of unemployed in B.C. was 44,000, or 1.7 percent of the total number of wage earners; but the increase in unemployment that began that year, continued, and by January 1933 there were 718,000 or 30.4 percent of the population of the province out of work (Saunders, 1939: 16). During 1929, the City of Vancouver spent more than \$52,000 per month to relieve unemployment (Lane, 1966: 24; Ormsby, 1958: 444). In that city alone, by the first month of 1930 the number of unemployed had risen by 300 percent over the previous year (Ormsby, 1958: 443). Private charities and churches contributed extensively toward relief provisions, however, and donations for the unemployed during 1930 amounted to \$200,000 (Lane, 1966: 24). Bread lines at the First United Church in Vancouver extended to over 1,250 single, homeless, unemployed men (Roddan, 1931: 9).

Fiscal Crisis of the State

As the preceeding shows, the increase in the number of unemployed resulted in an unprecedented and growing demand for relief provisions. This demand for payments was reflected in the finances of both the municipalities and the province who were legally responsible to provide assistance. As the number requiring relief increased the municipalities became unable to bear the burden and began to petition the provincial government for financial assistance. Municipalities obtained revenue from

the provincial government through profits from liquor sales, motor-vehicle licence fees, and taxation, and by December, 1932 they had financed a total of \$2,320,607.54 in relief payments (Budget Address, 1933: 17). For the first time in its history, B.C. contributed additional provincial grants to the municipalities. That year these grants amounted to 24.1 percent of the total gross annual revenues anticipated by the government (Budget Address, 1932: 28). During the 1930-31 fiscal year, funds advanced to the municipalities above the usual provincial contribution reached \$604,490.40 (Budget Address, 1932: 77), and by December 31, 1933, municipal grants for direct relief equalled an unprecedented \$948,694.21 (Budget Address, 1934: 13). By June 1931, relief payments had resulted in Prince Rupert accumulating an overdraft of \$200,000, whereas Grand Forks and Coquitlam had completely exhausted their cities' relief funds and had an increased level of unemployment. Revelstoke, Salmon Arm, and Kelowna had all exhausted relief provisions, and required additional money in order to maintain relief payment (Letters and telegrams to S.F. Tolmie, June 12 and 13, 1931). In addition, provincial assistance to municipalities for the creation of relief work projects increased from \$13,622.38 in 1930-31 (Budget Address, 1932, Schedule G), to \$28,352.00 during the 1931-32 fiscal year (Budget Address, 1933, Schedule F2).

Realizing that municipalities were incapable of financing relief payments, the provincial government became directly involved and after 1928-29, direct provincial relief expenditures rose consistently. The population of the province

grew 13 percent between 1925 and 1931, yet relief expenditures increased by 31.8 percent (Budget Address, 1931: 30). At the end of 1933, \$948,694 was loaned by Victoria to municipalities for relief expenditures, and by March, 1934 the province's total unfinanced deficit borrowing for relief to municipalities equalled \$38,275 (Budget Address, 1934: 9 and 13). Whereas during the 1928-29 fiscal year the province spent \$555,034.73 on direct relief provisions (Budget Address, 1932, Schedule G); by 1931-32 direct relief expenditures totalled \$1,117,990.71 (Budget Address, 1932, Schedule G). By December 1933, provincial contribution to direct relief had reached an unprecedented \$9,979,826.13.²

The vast increase in expenditures for unemployment relief in British Columbia created a severe fiscal crisis for the provincial level of the state. The economic depression resulted in a drastic decrease in provincial revenues, which severely affected the province's finances as early as 1929-30. While expenditures exceeded anticipated limits primarily as a result of relief payments, revenues stemming from primary industries fell unexpectedly. Although a consistent increase in revenue was realized from provincial sales of timber leases, licences, and royalties, up to 1927-28 when a total of \$2,970,004.50 was collected; revenues from these sources were below estimated amounts in 1929-30 (Budget Address, 1930: 36),

² Provincial Direct Expenditure: Pensions and Relief 1929-30: \$555,034.73 1930-31: \$693,490.30 1931-32: \$727,161.01 1932-33: \$1,117,990.71 Total as at Dec. 1933: \$9,979,826.31

and fell consistently from \$2,908,322.58 in 1928-29, to an all time low of \$1,956,751.84 during 1931-32. In addition, timber sales fell from \$603,363.03 in 1928-29, to a dismal \$443,694.43 in 1931-32 (Budget Address, 1932, Schedule C; Budget Address, 1934, Schedule E1). Over the same time period, capital from coke and coal taxation decreased from \$210,559.69 to \$138,969.76; mineral taxation from \$390,811.23 to \$77,524.25 (Budget Address, 1932, Schedule C; Budget Address, 1934, Schedule E1); and revenues from direct and 'other' taxation fell from \$26,083,727.08 in 1929-30 to an estimated \$20,497,591.46 in 1933-34 (Budget Address, 1933, Schedule G). The value of basic production in the lumber industry fell from \$93,787,000.00 in 1928-29 to \$44,447,000.00 during 1932-33; mining saw a reduction from \$65,372,583.00 to \$34,883,181.00; and fisheries from \$26,562,691.00 to only \$11,109,822.00 (Budget Address, 1932, Schedule 5).

The drastic drop in provincial revenues resulted in a 60 percent increase in the gross debt between 1928 and March of 1934 (Budget Address, 1934: 9). Throughout the period from 1929 to 1934 the falling-off in provincial revenues was predominately in a reduction in money anticipated from liquor profits, motor-vehicle licences (which were main sources of municipal revenues), as well as mineral taxes, land taxes, timber licences, royalties, and sales. As of November 15, 1933, the total unfinanced deficit of the province stood at an unprecedented \$7,497,128.33, and \$314,952.89 worth of cheques, mostly for unemployment relief payments, could not be sent out

due to lack of funds at the bank (Budget Address, 1934: 6). For the first time in its history, in 1933, B.C.'s credit was exhausted (Conway, 1983: 102). In the 1931 Address, a Loan Bill for \$2,000,000 was presented to the Legislative Assembly to recoup for unemployment relief, and to offset industrial revenue drop (Budget Address, 1931: 43); and again, in 1932, borrowing from the federal government was required to cover funds needed to finance unemployment relief (Budget Address, 1932: 13). In addition, increases in personal taxes were invoked after March 5, 1931, and again in March 1932 and March 1933 (Budget Address, 1931: 41; 1932: 36; 1933: 19), in an attempt to augment provincial revenues. Nevertheless, whereas the provincial public debt was \$84,231,344 in 1928-29, by 1934 it had reached its worst level in history -- \$129,163,236 (Budget Address, 1934: 4). While British Columbia had defaulted on its payments to the federal government for its share of relief costs, after 1933 Ottawa had become the province's only source of credit providing loans to avoid default on payments to B.C.'s only remaining agent, the Bank of Commerce. (Struthers, 1983: 112-113).

The foregoing clearly illustrates that during the Great Depression of the 1930s, British Columbia experienced its most severe fiscal crisis to date. All Canadian export prices fell during the Depression, but the revenues from western resources fell further, faster. The reduction in state revenues due to the drastic cutbacks in production and resultant high unemployment, as well as the greatly increased demand for expenditure on relief provisions, resulted in state expenditures outstripping

revenues by a wide margin.

The fiscal crisis experienced in British Columbia existed throughout the Canadian state and was experienced by all levels of government. In an attempt to deal with the fiscal crisis at the federal level, income tax laws were changed in 1930, reducing the amount for personal tax exemption, thus increasing the number of taxpayers (House of Commons Debates, March 31, 1929); and corporate taxes were raised (Struthers, 1983: 92). As well, federal expenditures were drastically reduced. Nevertheless, increased relief expenditures and reduced revenues still created a similar fiscal crisis at the federal level. Between 1929 and 1933, Canada experienced a 29 percent drop in the Gross National Product (Struthers, 1984: 8). The rapid economic expansion of the wheat boom and the 'roaring 20s', had been financed through heavy borrowing of foreign capital at boom time interest rates (Conway, 1983: 101). Since the Canadian dollar was tied to British sterling, Britain's departure from the Gold Standard in 1931 devalued the Canadian dollar, thus raising the cost of payments to foreign creditors (Struthers, 1983: 59). During the 1931-32 fiscal year, Canada had a \$160 million national deficit as a result of declining revenues and increased costs in relief payments (Struthers, 1983: 60).

Summary

In this chapter, I have argued that the economic difficulties experienced during the Great Depression years may be traced to Canada's economic dependence on resource export to the United States.

The impact of the Depression was ... much greater in the west as a result of the west's overdependence on those industries that were most immediately and hardest hit. (Conway, 1983: 100).

The ill-effects of overproduction resulting from technical innovations, a reduction in manpower, and industrial rationalization, without concurrent increases wages in consumers' purchasing power or investment spending, along with the demise of the small, independent farm producer, created a surplus of goods which could not be absorbed. The subsequent curtailment of industrial activities, the resultant rise in unemployment and the decrease in demand for Canadian products, had immediate repercussions in the western resource hinterland. British Columbia accumulated its greatest debt as provincial taxation on natural resources plummeted, revenue from personal taxation, and tax on consumer goods fell drastically, but state expenditures on social assistance consistently rose. These factors combined to incur a severe fiscal crisis at all levels of the Canadian state. The severe curtailment of economic activity led to a dramatic increase in unemployment and the demand for social assistance rose to unprecedented levels. However, the ability for the state to meet these expenditures persistently diminished.

In search of employment or relief, large numbers of unemployed men migrated west to B.C. While they hoped to obtain employment in the primary industries which traditionally supplied work, B.C. was one of the least likely places to obtain a job.

In the next chapter, I shall illustrate the dire plight of the thousands of single, homeless, unemployed in British Columbia. These transients were not eligible for state relief, and formed a large and conspicuous group. As they were organized by the Communist Party of Canada, these men became increasingly militant in their demands for state assistance. This group was segregated from the rest of the unemployed population and dealt with in a special way. Various state institutions were active in an attempt to control them, but ultimately, these efforts were ineffective in stifling the demands of the unemployed.

Chapter Three

Unemployment in British Columbia

Introduction

The resource industries predominate in British Columbia characteristically employed a specific group of workers during the early 1900s. Since the job sites were often located in remote regions of the province -- thereby requiring bunkhouse living -- and the labour was needed only seasonally, those attracted to this sort of employment were overwhelmingly young, mobile, single men. These labourers would travel from job to job according to the season and during the balance of the year, they were able to live off their savings in the cities. Traditionally, large numbers of workers could be absorbed in forestry, mining, fishing and agriculture industries in this province and an able-bodied man was almost certain to find employment in this province.

Due to the decline in American demand for B.C.'s primary resources during the latter part of 1929 and the first half of the 1930s, the increase in unemployment revealed an increasingly significant number of single, homeless, unemployed men. Officially this group was set apart as;

... men who, having no settled place of abode within the Province of British Columbia, are living within the said Province without employment or other visible means of maintaining themselves.... (City Clerk's Operational File;s, Correspondence Inward, 1888-1946: Vol. 177, Loc 16-A-5, File; Relief Officer; Dominion - Provincial Agreement, May 1, 1933).

These unemployed did not form a monolithic group, but they were the migrating seasonal workers who had expected to find employment in the primary resource industries. Some of these single men were veterans of the Great War, some were immigrants who had been encouraged to come to Canada to make their fortune, and many were Canadian-born men, often as young as fourteen years of age, who had recently left school, were no longer eligible to be supported by family relief, and who had no job experience. With no dependents, these unemployed were ineligible for municipal relief work programmes. As any savings from previous employment ran out these men had no money, and sometimes went days without a meal. Often they did not have adequate clothing or shoes. When they were able to afford the accommodation, they stayed in 'flop houses', but invariably they slept in any temporary shelter they could find. (Bourke Collection, File; 1: Interview, Toppings with Cross, Smeale, Henderson).

In addition to the absence of seasonal employment in the primary industries of B.C. during the Depression years, the annual employment for harvesting in the prairie provinces was not available. Whereas during 1926, 57,000 workers were required for harvesting in the prairies, in 1929 only 7,000 harvesters were needed (Lane, 1966: 15). Consequently, men who had expected to find work in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta continued westward in search of employment in B. C., thus augmenting the number who annually came expecting work in the resource industries. (Archives of British Columbia: Loc. 75 F1, File; 8;

Correspondence between Chief Constable and Mayor of Vancouver and Police Commission, January 21, 1931). Single men, however, were less likely to get the few jobs that were available, as preference was given to married men with dependents (Bliss, M., Grayson, L.M., 1971: 20-21).

Single, migrant, resource workers, who were once the mainstay of the frontier economy, became a segment of the population for whom no unemployment relief provision was made. Responsibility for this group was shunned by all levels of government. The plight of these single, unemployed, homeless men initially brought little response from organized labour -- which was too busy maintaining the conditions for its members (Phillips, 1967: 104). One group that did take an interest in these men was the Communist Party of Canada (CPC). Acting upon instructions from the Communist International, the CPC abandoned its attempt to influence the trade union movement by 'boring from within' and in 1929, established the Trade Union Unity League (Phillips, 1967: 102; Palmer, 1983: 216-217). Eager to gain members, this League began to organize the unemployed. As a result of this organization, single unemployed men came to be perceived as a serious threat by state authorities, and the Canadian state undertook a variety of measures to deal with these communist-led unemployed.

In this chapter, the plight of the thousands of single unemployed transients who congregated in Vancouver is presented. This group became organized and unified under the leadership of

communist agitators, and these men began to stridently demand 'work and 'wages'. As these unemployed persisted in publicizing their demands for significant changes in the socio-economic order, and gained growing support from the general public, they began to be perceived by the state as a threat to the status quo. Consequently, the state institutions were obliged to respond to this group of unemployed in a unique way. Regardless of these efforts, by 1933, the demands of the single, homeless unemployed men, and the threat this group posed to the peace, order, and good government of Canada, persisted.

Transient Men and Local Control

In search of employment, thousands of these single unemployed began to jump freight trains and 'ride the rods' across the country. Initially the railway authorities did little to stop the multitude of transients - although the Canadian National Railway encouraged the men to ride the Canadian Pacific, and CPR similarly shunted them to the CNR. The men soon discovered that employment opportunities were essentially non-existent, but constant mobility was necessary, as transients were often arrested for vagrancy or theft in the municipalities' efforts to expell these men.³ As the previous chapter has shown, municipalities in B.C. did not have the finances to support the

³ Transients were officially defined as those persons who had resided in the province or municipality for less than one year, and consequently, were not eligible for any form of social service (Cassidy, 1939: 173).

unemployed, and in order to avoid providing them with either relief or shelter in the city jail, they speedily chased these men out of the town limits. Thousands of men were thus unable to establish any residence, and were obliged to become transitory migrants. One transient who lost his apprenticeship job in Winnipeg and rode the rods west, expected to never be able to find full time work, but to spend his life as a railway hobo (White, Interview).

Many of the single, unemployed transient men began to congregate in large Canadian cities. Partly in search of employment in the primary industries, and partly due to the relatively mild coastal climate, British Columbia's largest city received a substantial number of these transients. Although Vancouver provided relief only for its residents, it was cynically reported that the mild coastal climate permitted the men to starve more comfortably there (Bourke Collection, Toppings-McEwan). Vancouver became known as 'the unemployment capital of Canada'. During 1932, approximately two hundred transients were reported to be arriving daily into Vancouver, with up to seventy men on one train (Vancouver City Archives, Public Records, Mayor: Vol. 9, File; Relief 1; April 30, 1932, May 3, 1932). Between 1931 and 1936, the population level in the prairie provinces remained static or declined, but due to the influx of transients, the population of British Columbia grew at a higher than usual rate during those years - increasing 8.1 percent from 694,000 to 750,000 (Cassidy, 1939: 463).

The concentration of transients in British Columbia was reflected in relief roles. As of January 11, 1930, of the 937 single men applying for relief in Vancouver, 768, or 81.9 percent, had been in the city for periods ranging from a few days to less than one year (City Clerk's, Vol. 141, File; Relief; July-Dec., 1930). By 1931, virtually every municipality in B.C. required that those for whom it provided relief had resided within its boundaries for at least six months. The province, too, altered its definition of transients ineligible for social relief to include anyone who had entered the province destitute after May 31, 1931, and who was unable to prove self support from earnings for eight of twelve subsequent, consecutive months (Cassidy, 1939: 179 and 190).

By February of 1931 the number of registered unemployed in the province had reached 67,128, and complaints about the presence of the transients began to be readily vocalized (Ormsby, 1958: 446). In Vancouver between January 22 and February 4, 1931, the number of single men applying for relief had increased by 1,061, to 4,857 applicants (City Clerk's, Vol. 166, File; Relief Officer April-June; Public Welfare and Relief Office Report: June 29, 1932). During that period the majority of single unemployed men had been in the city for less than six months, and in many cases they had not been there for six weeks (City Clerk's, Vol. 166, Relief Office Report: June 29, 1932). In August, 1931, 6,500 inter-provincial transients had registered for relief in British Columbia. Six months later however, transient registration had reached 11,421 (Lane, 1966:

11), and Vancouver was supporting 3,558 of these single unemployed men -- two and one half times the number supported during that period in 1930 (City Clerk's, Vol. 155, File; Relief Officer 1931, Jan. - June; Public Welfare and Relief Office Report: Dec. 28, 1931). In February, 1932, Vancouver had 3,373 active relief cases of eligible single, unemployed men (City Clerk's, Vol 166, File; Relief Officer, Jan.-Mar.; Public Welfare and Relief Office Report: Feb. 22, 1932). This number continued to increase, and by December 28, 1933, Vancouver had 4,400 registered transients (Matthews, J.S., Add. Mss. 54, Vol. 8, No. 2: 47). No doubt expressing the sentiments of other civic administrators, the mayor of Kamloops complained that his city was being "overrun by beggars and panhandlers" (Ormsby, 1958: 445).

The high percentage of single unemployed transients in B.C., and Vancouver in particular, brought strong protestations from both civic and provincial authorities. The local governments could not provide for the thousands of unemployed and urgent requests were put to both the provincial and federal governments that action be taken to deal with these single men. In March, 1929, a Special Committee on Unemployment wrote the Member of the B.C. Legislative Assembly who occupied the Chair of a Select Committee on Unemployment, asking that the provincial government request the dominion authorities to commence work projects for these unemployed as soon as possible, and stating that "the urgency of this request cannot be too strongly set out...." (Vancouver City Archives, City Records,

File; 1932, Provincial Government).

In an attempt to curb the movement of the unemployed, the Vancouver City Council instructed the City Solicitor to advise whether it had any power to prevent indigents entering this province from other provinces (Vancouver City Archives, Administrative History: Vol. V, City Council Minutes: March 2, 1931). City officials even considered putting advertisements in prairie newspapers informing readers that Vancouver had sufficient residents to take care of all work, and warning that the city would extend no assistance to those with less than twelve months residence in Vancouver; but they concluded that there was no practical method of discouraging the single men from coming to the coast (City Clerk's, Vol. 141, File; Relief July-Dec.).

To monitor the number of transients entering Vancouver, the city made arrangements with a constable of the CNR to report the number of men arriving on each train. While the railway constable responded that he "would be only too glad to cooperate", the length of the freight trains, and the fact that some transients jumped off before the trains entered the yard, made it impossible for him to carry out this task accurately (Public Records, Mayor, Vol. 9, File; Relief 1: June 27, 1932). Nevertheless, the movement of transients began to be closely watched by local authorities. The Vancouver City Police, the Railway Police, and the Investigations Branch of the Vancouver Relief Department, monitored the movement of transients closely,

keeping a record of the number entering and leaving the city on each train (Public Records, Mayor, Vol. 9, File; Relief 1: June 27, 1932).

The control of the transients was perceived by authorities to be the most puzzling aspect of dealing with the unemployed. While British Columbia had no Constitutional or legal authority to dictate who could enter the province, consistent pressure by the provincial government to federal authorities eventually resulted in some action being taken against the entering transients. During April 1932 the provincial Minister of Public Works received tacit permission from Ottawa to prevent the annual autumn influx of unemployed men (Matthews, Vol. 8, No. 1, April 19, 1932: 147), and in June, 1932, the provincial government issued an edict to the effect that non-resident unemployed must return to their own provinces (Matthews, Vol. 8, No. 1, June 23, 1932: 167). The wave of transients returning east in response to this order brought a reaction from authorities in the prairie provinces, and the freight trains carrying these transients were stopped at the B.C.- Alberta border by police who sent the men back to British Columbia (Matthews, Vol. 8, No. 1, July 24, 1932: 167). Outraged, Vancouver and provincial officials sent telegrams to Prime Minister R.B. Bennett, stressing the urgency of making immediate arrangements to prevent the movement of transients into B.C. (Public Records, Mayor, Vol. 9, File; Relief 2). Federal authorities responded to this consistent pressure, and as of October 1, 1932, railway police, the British Columbia

Provincial Police, and the RCMP blockaded the movement of all transients coming west into British Columbia. A marked increase in the number of unemployed entering the province was witnessed in the days immediately prior to the ban, but strong police detachments with efforts concentrated at the Alberta - British Columbia border, and at points along the CNR and CPR rail lines, temporarily stopped transients coming into B.C. While this effort curtailed the influx of unemployed for 1932, the respite was short-lived, and by the next autumn the annual westward migration of transient unemployed occurred as usual. Despite the efforts by various authorities, thousands of single unemployed continued to traverse the country, drawing the attention and sympathy of Canadians.

Unemployed 'Jungles'

The poverty of the transient unemployed in Vancouver made it impossible for most to live in even the cheap rooming houses. Consequently, it was necessary for these men to seek refuge in any shelter they could find, to stay dry and to sleep under at night. To accomplish this, the men constructed makeshift homes in various parts of Vancouver. These settlements were the beginning of what became known as the unemployed 'jungles'. Three main jungles sprang up in Vancouver, one at the Hastings Mill Site in Kitsilano, another under the Georgia Street viaduct, and a third behind the CNR Station, adjacent to the city dump. As well, many shelters and lean-tos were strung along beside the rail tracks. While the Harbours Board police

had been given instructions to clear out the men living on this property in Kitsilano, an official at the Hastings Mill encouraged the men to stay at the site by helping them to construct better shelters, and arranging for food to be brought to them. The Harbours Board reversed its intended eviction, and the settlements were established (Matthews, Vol. 8, No. 1: 1-10).

The makeshift shelters that became the homes for these unemployed were built from a variety of materials that they were able to scrounge. Shelters and lean-tos were constructed from scrap wood, old cardboard boxes, packing barrels, scrap metal, and even grain doors taken from the rail cars (Matthews, Vol. 8, No. 1: 12). Just as the transient population fluctuated with the seasons, the number of inhabitants in these jungles varied. The largest jungle at the Georgia St. viaduct housed approximately 450 men, while the other two usually had between 200 and 250 men (City Clerk's Vol. 155, File; Relief Officer 1931, July-Sept.; Public Welfare and Relief Office Report: September 3, 1931). The jungles were usually located near a rail siding that provided easy access to the freight trains, and thereby served as a headquarters for transients riding the rods (White, Interview). The population of the jungles was composed of many different ethnic groups -- Swedes, Finns, Scots, and Chinese. Roddan, a Vancouver cleric who assisted these men, reported that there was a 'spirit of comradeship' among the men. When a transient arrived at a jungle

"he... tells of his experiences. Anything of his past

life is given voluntarily and, so long as he plays the game he is allowed to stay" (Roddan, 1931: 12).

Nevertheless, the minister recorded that the enforced idleness of these men resulted in a general demoralized spirit among them (1931: 29).

One observer noted;

... the men of the Jungle were not 'roughs' nor 'toughs' but a body of well behaved, earnest men who desired nothing more than to be good citizens, support themselves, and find work, but who were penniless, and unable to find work (Matthews, Vol. 8, No. 1: 13).

The city made no provision for the men in the jungles, the Kitsilano settlement received some minor attention. The Harbours Board watchman made rounds of that jungle approximately once a week, and reported on the activities and general situation existing there (City Clerk's, Vol. 155, File; Relief Officer 1931, July-Sept.). His reports would include the number of inhabitants, and sometimes their names; and in addition, he kept a close watch on the 'red element' in the jungles, and notified his superiors if any propaganda had been distributed by the Communists.

The jungles provided a haven for the unemployed transients. These enclaves received only minor attention from the authorities, hence, the men existed there unmolested. Congregated with hundreds of others in similar circumstances, these settlements provided protection for the unemployed, and fertile ground for Communist organization.

While the city of Vancouver accepted no responsibility for the unemployed in these jungles, various charitable groups ensured that the men were provided with food. Fishermen from nearby wharfs gave what they could spare from their catch, a packing plant donated meat, a steady supply of potatoes was provided, and excess bread, rolls, and buns were available. In addition, charities organized a daily supply of soup, and cigarettes (Matthews, Vol. 8, No.1: 11).

In the late summer of 1931 a case of typhoid and a death in one of the jungles resulted in the City Relief Department sending a medical doctor to investigate. He reported;

[the] grounds are filthy and covered with decaying garbage, and with open toilets. Flies swarm over everything and then on all the open food. I consider that with the rainy season approaching we are in grave danger of an epidemic of Typhoid or other diseases. Many of these men are lying on the ground, which is becoming damp, and they are sure to suffer from Bronchial and Rheumatic troubles. (City Clerk's, Vol 155, File; Relief Officer 1931, July-Sept., Public Welfare and Relief Office Report: September 3, 1931).

In response to the doctor's account, the City Council ordered that all the jungles be destroyed. Within two days, on September 5, 1931, the makeshift homes of nearly one thousand unemployed were destroyed by city crews using sledgehammers and fire.

Upon the destruction of their makeshift homes, these unemployed men were provided with a few days supply of meal and housing tickets by the city Relief Office (City Clerk's,

Vol. 156: September 8, 1931). City officials anticipated immediate assistance from the provincial or federal authorities for these evicted unemployed. Consequently the city was not prepared for the resultant long-term increase in its relief roles, when neither level of government was prepared to assist the jungle inhabitants.

The Politicization of the Unemployed

Neither the city of Vancouver, nor the provincial and federal governments was at all inclined to accept responsibility for the thousands of transient unemployed. As well, the established union movement which was struggling to maintain the gains its members had achieved, was initially aloof to the needs of the unemployed. In sharp contrast, the Communist Party, eager to increase membership in the Trade Union Unity League and raise support for its revolutionary cause, took a most active interest in the plight of these homeless, single, unemployed men. Numerous organizations of the unemployed were founded throughout the Depression beginning as early as 1929, when the Communist Party established the Vancouver and District Unemployed Workers' Association (Phillips, 1967: 104; Lane, 1966: 25). (See Appendix One for list of Organizations of the Unemployed). The unemployed were eager to seek help; and according to one communist leader, within two days of its existence, two thousand unemployed had joined this association (Bennett, 1937: 104). The organizational drive was intense, and even as the transients arrived in Vancouver on the freight trains, delegations from various

unemployed groups were at the trains to meet the newcomers and to bring them into the associations (Public Records, Mayor, Vol. 9, File; Relief 1: May 2, 1932).

Through the various organizations of the unemployed, rallies and meetings were planned and carried out, and often thousands of single unemployed men were in attendance. These gatherings made the single, homeless, unemployed aware of their common plight. No evidence indicates that the unemployed individually petitioned the government, but numerous letters and petitions originating in their meetings, deploring the economic situation, the inadequacy of relief provisions, and demanding 'work and wages', were consistently submitted to the civic authorities.⁴ To assist in the development of cohesion among the thousands of single unemployed men in Vancouver, the various associations of the unemployed distributed weekly publications. "The Unemployed Worker" was the 'Organ of the Workers' Unity League of Canada' -- one of the most prominent organizations, the B.C. Workers' News was published regularly, and as well, various posters and pamphlets calling for mass action by the unemployed, notifying them of meetings and demonstrations, or protesting specific actions taken by the authorities were

⁴ (City Clerk's, Vol. 128, File; 1929 Relief Officer; Vol. 144, File; Unemployment; Vol. 179, File; Unemployed Organizations; Vol. 188, File; Unemployed Organizations; City Records, Loc. 75, C6; Vol. 17, File; 2,13; Loc. 75, D1, Vol. 19, File; 2,7; Public Records, Mayor, Vol. 9, File; 2)

⁵ (City Records, Loc. 75 F2, File; 1,14; Loc. 75, F1, File; 6,11; Public Records, Mayor, Vol. 9, File; 2).

consistently available.⁵

The unity toward a common cause displayed in the various organizations, enabled the unemployed to keep their demands for jobs or relief before the authorities. Their plight was made highly visible through well organized activities. One form of action that attracted widespread publicity was the 'hunger march'. Typically, over a thousand men in Vancouver would assemble on the grounds where a mass meeting was taking place, and parade through the city carrying banners displaying slogans calling for job creation or relief provision. In order for such a parade to be legal, the Canadian flag or the Union Jack had to be carried, and initially, these marches were permitted by the authorities. While the men did not always display either of these flags, thus raising the ire of officials, very often the 'Red Flag' was carried (City Clerk's, Vol. 140, File; Police Department 1930, February 7, 1930). Usually the marchers were only the unemployed living in Vancouver, but on February 18, 1932, a hunger march was organized to include those from all surrounding municipalities, and thousands of marchers paraded through the streets of Vancouver. Generally, a large number of spectators witnessed the marches. In addition to drawing attention to their plight through such mass demonstrations, at this and similar marches, delegations were appointed to present demands to either provincial or civic authorities. Often a crowd of over a thousand would march to the appropriate office and a delegation would seek an audience with the officials. Sometimes government officials were confronted with specific demands

concerning particular unemployed, but invariably the protests were against inadequate relief, and the demands were for work and wages (Public Records, Mayor, Vol. 9, File; Relief 1).

In various other cities and towns in B.C. similar action by the unemployed often took place. On July 30, 1932, Premier Tolmie received a telegram informing him that during recent days the Kamloops police were unable to handle the 'unemployed army' there, in Prince George one hundred men raided a grocery store and intended to hold a mass demonstration. On Vancouver Island, at Sidney, the police broke up a 'disturbance' of the unemployed. (Papers of S.F. Tolmie, Box 12, File; 24: July 30, 1932).

Another tactic used by the unemployed was termed 'tin-canning'. This involved groups of men going out onto street corners with cans that identified them as unemployed through such markings as the insignia of the unemployed union. They would simply stand on the street corners, often jingling a few coins in the can, waiting for passers-by to contribute some change. This generally brought a favourable response and some financial assistance from the people of Vancouver. The plight of the unemployed was recognized by the general public, sympathy was widespread and support for the men's demands grew.

Policing the Unemployed

As public support grew and the unemployed became more organized, the police and other officials believed that,

... these agitators are simply desirous of fermenting trouble and not to aid in any way improvement by evolution. They demand revolution. Their demands for the unemployed have at all times been beyond reason. ... They have offered no constructive advice as to how to handle the present situation, they merely ridicule all efforts that are made (Provincial Archives, Loc. 75 F1 File; 8, Correspondence from Vancouver Police Chief Constable to Mayor and Police Commission: January 21, 1931).

Police officers were always present at the meetings of the unemployed, and they submitted detailed reports of events. Violent clashes with the unemployed became increasingly common, especially when meetings were broken up by mounted police using billy clubs. In anticipation of clashes with the unemployed, the British Columbia Provincial Police obtained two dozen gas grenades to be held for special emergencies (Tolmie Papers, Box 6, File; 12); and on at least one occasion, (August 5, 1931), a Vancouver city alderman condemned the police for striking the first blow during a battle with the unemployed (Matthews, Vol. 8, No. 1: 54). In another incident, charges were laid against a police officer for roughing a man who was on the ground (City Records, Loc. 33 B 1, File; Police 1932: June 3, 15, 24, 1932; Public Records, Mayor, Vol. 8, File; 1932 Police: June 15, 24, 1932). The Canadian Labour Defence League protested "police terrorism", claiming that citizens

... peacefully congregating ... were wrongfully,

unlawfully and brutally ridden-down and beaten and clubbed into unconsciousness by uniformed police and their assistants (City Records, Loc. 75 D2, File; 5, Sept., 1932).

Similarly, the Co-Operative Commonwealth Federation Unemployment Council emphatically protested against the ruthlessness of the police force in clubbing and riding down citizens for "no good reason" (City Clerk's, Vol. 188, File; 1934 Unemployment Organizations July-Dec.). Nevertheless, the Chief of the Vancouver City Police claimed to have never witnessed unnecessary violence on the part of the police. (City Clerk's, Vol. 154, Vol. 140, File; Police Dep't. 1930).

The activities of the unemployed in Vancouver kept the police constantly busy in their effort to suppress the demonstrations and demands for 'work and wages'. The Chief Constable of the Vancouver Police reported;

... the men are doing many hours overtime; ... and the City beats are not covered during demonstrations of the Unemployed. ... The B.C. Police have stood by on many occasions during recent demonstrations, so, also, has the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.... It will be necessary to obtain the assistance of at least fifty men of the B.C. Police, with a few men, say 20 from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. (City Records, Loc 75 F1, File; 8).

Police forces were augmented for the task of repressing the unemployed. In 1929, the Vancouver City Police force increased its number to include fifty men to fill temporary positions. On January 4, 1930, twenty five extra men were put on the Vancouver Police Force (City Clerk's, Vol. 129, File; Police Department 1930). The expanded efforts of the Provincial Police Department are reflected in a \$29,000 increase in operating costs during

1930 (Budget Address, 1931: 52). On December 20, 1930, the RCMP, the B.C. Provincial Police, and the Vancouver City Police, cooperated to have two hundred officers ready in anticipation of trouble with an unemployed demonstration at which they expected at least two thousand (City Records, Loc. 75, F1). In early August 1931, a squad of fifty special riot police was sworn in (Matthews, Vol. 8, No.1: 53); and as of November, 1935, the Vancouver Police force had a special temporary force of forty seven men, whose operational account was charged to 'unemployment demonstrations'.

In addition to the various police forces consistently expanding their forces in an effort to suppress the demonstrations, in the spring of 1932, the City of Vancouver banned all hunger marches and tag days. This action brought vigorous protests from organizations of the unemployed. A great number of petitions were sent from various unemployed groups and 'free speech' associations, protesting the ban, and delegations of various organizations came before city officials protesting this action (City Clerk's, Op. cit. : Vol. 179, File; Unemployment Organizations; City Records, Loc. 75 C6 Vol. 17, Files; 2,13). When subsequent meetings were held without permission, the police moved in and arrested the speakers, along with other active participants. When arrested, the unemployed were generally imprisoned for a few days on charges ranging from; inciting to riot, engaging in riot, member of an unlawful assembly, assulting a police officer, and obstructing an officer in the course of duty, threats and intimidation, causing an

affray, and vagrancy (Public Records, Mayor, Vol. 8, File; Police Commission). However, when known communist leaders were arrested they were often sentenced to longer prison terms (for example; Matthews, Vol. 8, No. 1: 55, August 11, 1931; "Communist Herndel Starts To Serve Okalla Term"). Such arrests were protested, and often, as a consequence, more arrests were made. If the unemployed held a meeting, the police promptly dispersed the crowd. Violence would often ensue, and arrests and subsequent protests would be made.

The legality of the police interference with assembly and speech was not publicly discussed, but as one former police officer pointed out to the Crown Prosecutor of Vancouver, Section 98 of the Criminal Code stated;

. Any man may advocate whatever type of government he thinks is most desirable; he may attack all existing institutions; he may argue for any, even the most radical changes; it is only when the use of force, violence or physical injury to person or property is threatened, advised or defended, that an offence is committed (City Clerk's, Vol. 179, File; Unemployed Organizations: November 9, 1933).

The police continued to disperse the various gatherings of the unemployed, however, and were consistently prepared to do so because invariably they were forewarned of the impending meetings. In addition to uniformed officers who were visible near the gatherings of the unemployed, the police began to infiltrate the organizations of these single homeless men, and hire informants. An undercover officer or informant lived with the unemployed men, ostensibly collected relief, and

participated in their activities; but in addition, he provided detailed reports to the police. These reports were often submitted twice a day by an informant, and were generally very detailed. After attending a meeting of the unemployed, the undercover agent reported the speakers' names, appearances, a precis of the speeches, the participation of others along with copies of the songs sung, and even 'passing comments' of those in attendance.

Events such as the election of committees were carefully recorded. Furthermore, the chairman, the number in attendance, the plans that were made at the meeting, the amount collected if a donation was taken, the duration of the gathering were all reported as well as advance warning of proposed meetings and even recreational activities. On at least one occasion an informant was able to obtain information from a delegate to the central planning committee, thus securing 'inside' information. To complete the reports, any pamphlets that were distributed to the unemployed were forwarded to the Police Department, and sometimes the undercover agent would trail the speaker to obtain information concerning his activities, supporters and place of residence (Public Records, Loc. 75 F1, Files; 6,7,8,9,13,14). With this information the police were able to prepare for demonstrations carried out by the unemployed by dispatching officers to the location of the meeting. As well, they compiled extensive files not only on the general organization of the unemployed, but documentation of the Communist Party, its activities and associations. In addition, data was gathered on

specific high profile leaders among both the CPC and the unemployed. (Public Records, Loc. 75 F2, Files; 1,2,9,12,23). The police maintained records of the leaders of the CPC and the unemployed, along with the assumed names they adopted. By 1935, information on these organizations was so extensive, and police control of the communist party was such a priority, that the Vancouver Police had established a 'Communist Activities Branch'. Through this department the police maintained close surveillance of the Communist Party and its leaders.

The police were actively supported by other state institutions in their effort to repress the Communist-led unemployed. The civic authorities in Vancouver were convinced that the demonstrations of the unemployed were a serious threat, great enough to warrant the dispatching of a destroyer with troops aboard, from Esquimalt to the Vancouver Harbour, on the date of the 1932 May Day Parade (Lane, 1966: 56). On at least one other occasion, the military promised assistance in dealing with the unemployed (Tolmie Papers, Correspondence between Tolmie and Federal Minister of Defence, N/D).

In addition to maintaining vigilance on the single unemployed through the overtly coercive institutions of the state such as the police and the military, substantial information was gathered by the Vancouver Relief Department through its detailed reports on any who registered for city relief. Each applicant was required to provide not only his age, birthplace, next of kin, etc., the unemployed were obliged to

provide information on matters such as; last place of residence, most recent employer, and a complete description of his past and current financial situation. As well, the City Relief Department maintained five investigators to control the distribution of relief payments, and to carry out 'intensive investigations' on relief recipients (City Records, Mayor, Vol. 9, File; Relief 1).

In a further attempt to hinder the organization of the unemployed and crippling the Communist Party, the Canadian state deported undesirable, alien Communist leaders of the unemployed. Under Canadian law, the federal government had the authority to deport an individual without first securing a criminal conviction. If immigrants did "... not appear likely to become good citizens" they were invariably deported to the country of nativity (Matthews, Vol. 8, No.1: 53). In 1930, 83 persons from Vancouver were deported for being public charges, but in 1931 the City deported 206 for this cause. (Matthews, Vol. 8, No. 1: Feb. 9, 1932). In addition however, any known Communist was generally deported, contributing to the seven thousand individuals deported during 1933 (Matthews, Vol. 8, No. 2: 72). It is apparent that this tactic was favoured in B.C., for in December, 1932, the Board of Police Commissioners of the City of Vancouver took it upon itself to

"... strongly recommend to the Prime Minister of Canada that the Immigration Act be ammended ... and provision be made for the immediate deportation of such undesirable aliens (viz. Communist agitators). Also that the process of deportation be speeded up (Public Records, Mayor, Vol. 8, File; Police 1932).

Fragmented Political Control and the Relief Acts of 1931

While the Vancouver City Council and the city police were clearly very concerned about the unrest and growing militancy among the thousands of unemployed, and the provincial authorities recognized the problems created, the federal government resisted becoming actively involved. Prime Minister McKenzie King referred to the 'alleged unemployment' during his bid for re-election in 1930, and economic experts advising the government were arguing that the economy was simply going through a period of readjustment, and therefore it was not necessary to undertake extensive programmes to alleviate the problems created by unemployment. Although the financial burden brought on by the unemployed went far beyond the capacity of the city of Vancouver and "... threatened the whole financial structure of the City (Matthews, Vol. 8, No. 2: October 11, 1934); the provincial and federal governments both insisted, on legal grounds, that the problem of dealing with the unemployed was primarily a municipal issue.

During the first month of 1930, Vancouver held a conference for mayors of western Canadian cities, for the purpose of discussing the problems created by the high level of unemployment. Although formally invited to attend, neither the provincial nor federal governments sent representatives. The federal government argued that Constitutional jurisdiction dictated that municipalities were to turn to their provincial legislature for assistance if they were unable to deal with the

costs created by unemployment, and the B.C. authorities insisted that unemployment was so widespread that it constituted a national problem to be dealt with by the dominion government. Although neither of these governments acknowledged responsibility in the matter of unemployment, the various municipal representatives unanimously claimed that these governments were accountable (City Clerk's, Vol. 141, File; Relief Officer Jan.-June 1930). Again, in February of 1930, at a meeting of the Union of Canadian Municipalities; it was resolved that the federal and provincial governments must assume their share of the cost of unemployment relief (Public Records, Mayor, Vol. 5, File; 1930 Unemployment).

On May 22, 1930, Vancouver's mayor sent a telegram to Prime Minister McKenzie King claiming that not only could Vancouver not deal with the responsibility for the unemployed, but public opinion placed this responsibility with the dominion. McKenzie King's reply was to instruct Mayor Malkin to make application to the provincial government for assistance (City Clerk's, Vol. 141, File; Relief July-December).

Whereas McKenzie King refused to acknowledge either the scope of the problem, or his responsibility in the matter, Conservative leader R.B. Bennett made the problem a major issue in the 1930 election campaign. Bennett recognized that unemployment had become a national problem, and promised that if elected, his government would "... find work for all who are willing to work, or perish in the attempt." (House of Commons

Debates, Official Report of Debates, September 9, 1930: 25). Upon assuming office as Prime Minister, Bennett called a special session of Parliament in the fall of 1930. Nevertheless, as subsequent events revealed, Bennett had no intention of expanding the responsibilities of the Dominion government to deal with the question of unemployment, and Ottawa was becoming only indirectly involved in relieving the problem.

Despite Prime Minister R.B. Bennett's 1930 election promise to create a definite plan for permanent relief and to give the unemployed 'work rather than the doles', his government's initial unemployment packages did little to solve the problem. The first attempt in 1930 was the implementation of a time-worn, traditional response -- general tariff increases. This remedy was expected to provide 25,000 jobs, but well over 200,000 wage earners were out of work (Struthers, 1983: 46-47). The 1931 Unemployment Relief Act, was brought down within three days of the special session of Parliament called after the 1930 election. This Act appropriated ten times the amount of money spent throughout the previous decade -- \$20 million -- to be expended by March 31, 1931, to deal with the perceived 'temporary unemployment crisis', but entrenched in the Act was the insistence that unemployment was "primarily a provincial and municipal responsibility", and the federal government was not assuming any new constitutional obligations in relation to this matter (Struthers, 1983: 47). The burden of unemployment remained squarely with a 'ramshackle collection' of private charities and local state institutions (Struthers, 1983: 48).

Under this Act the federal government contributed twenty five percent of the cost of relief works initiated by the provinces or municipalities, with the municipalities contributing fifty percent, and the provinces paying the remaining balance of 25 percent (Lane, 1966: 22; Struthers, 1983: 47). Due to the significant municipal contribution, the amount of work provided often depended upon the municipality's debt rather than the need of the unemployed. In addition, the relief work programmes established by local authorities gave preference to married men over single men, regardless of the relative poverty (Struthers, 1983: 48).

At a meeting between the federal Minister of Labour and municipal and provincial authorities in June, 1931, Vancouver still demanded greater federal action. Municipalities in B.C. insisted that transients were a national problem, and requested that Ottawa take full responsibility for single, unemployed men (Lane, 1966: 29). Upon the expiry of the 1931 Relief Act, single transient unemployed were denied any form of civic relief (Struthers, 1983: 51). To avoid making relief payments that they could not afford, the municipalities strictly enforced residential requirements for relief recipients. In Vancouver nearly six hundred relief workers were laid off with no other means of support (Matthews, Vol. 8, No. 1: 150, May 2, 1932). On September 3, 1931, the Vancouver Alderman in charge of the Committee on Employment and Relief, Mr. Atherton, sent a telegram to the federal Minister of Labour, Gideon Robertson, informing him that Vancouver had reached a condition of crisis,

and the inertness of the dominion government in failing to control the transients had paralysed the municipalities. He claimed that immediate definite action was imperative (City Clerk's, Vol. 155, File; Relief Officer 1931 July-Sept.).

The lack of cooperation between all three levels of government over how to deal with the problems created by unemployment, is revealed in a letter addressed to the Vancouver City Clerk, from a member of the B.C. Legislative Assembly. He wrote;

Might I suggest that your Council, instead of voicing a protest, might indicate what, in your opinion, would be adequate relief, and where this money should be obtained.

As you are no doubt aware, prominent public bodies in Vancouver, backed by the newspapers and a large section of the public, demand reduced expenditure by the Government, while other public bodies demand increased expenditure.

Less condemnation and more cooperation would, I think, enable us to solve our present serious difficulties.... (City Clerk's, Vol. 167, File; Provincial Government).

Labour organizations were active, pressing for federal action, and in October, 1931, three thousand individuals at a labour meeting voted that the dominion government resign for incompetence, ruthlessness, and arrogance in failing to address the unemployment issue (Matthews, Vol. 8, No. 1: 94, October 13, 1931). In addition to consistently submitting demands to the provincial and municipal authorities, the Workers' Unity League organized a national day of protest against unemployment on

February 23, 1931, and two months later, this organization presented Prime Minister Bennett with a petition carrying 94,169 signatures of individuals protesting against unemployment and calling for a programme of non-contributory unemployment insurance (Cuneo, 1980: 41; Struthers, 1983: 61).⁶ British Columbia's Premier Tolmie stated in January 1932, that the pressure on the government to put the unemployed to work was increasing every day (Tolmie Papers, Box 12, File; 19). The CCF Unemployment Conference expressed the opinion that the federal and provincial levels of government should actively participate in the care of the unemployed, and numerous letters were submitted from the unemployed themselves, demanding work and wages, unemployment insurance, and government action (City Records, Loc. 75 C6, Vol. 17, Files; 2,13; Loc. 75 D1, Vol. 19, Files; 2,7). One citizen claimed that;

"... It's a serious calamity for any nation to sit still and grow prosperous and say that they have no responsibilities as to unemployment and poverty in this wonderful country of Canada; there is an idle class both rich and poor; weak, wicked and miserable.... Therefore it is the Governing Provincial and Federal government's (sic) to do follow up the problem of work and Protection to all unemployed in Canada. (sic) (City Clerk's, Vol. 144, File; Unemployment).

The Vancouver Sun's editorial (July 2, 1932) also criticized the humiliation that the unemployed underwent in order to collect their relief provisions.

⁶ The Workers' Unity League was the voice of the Communist Party of Canada within the labour movement, and was perhaps the most active organizer of the unemployed. It created affiliates such as the National Unemployed Workers' Association in cities throughout Canada.

The cessation of municipal relief programmes due to the expiry of the 1930 Act resulted in an increased number of married, resident relief recipients, as well as single, transient unemployed who were denied relief. During a trip to the west, the federal minister of labour, Senator Gideon Robertson, became aware of the severity of the problems created by the single men in urban centres, without any relief provisions. Robertson suggested that these men be put into camps along the proposed Trans-Canada highway route, where they could be kept under supervision similar to semi-military control, away from the cities, until they could be put to work in the fall harvest. Refusal to go would result in forfeiting any relief provisions (Struthers, 1983: 53). As he travelled back to Ottawa, however, Robertson saw the devastation of the drought in southern Saskatchewan, and realized that there would be no autumn harvest to absorb thousands of unemployed. The dustbowl altered Robertson's priorities, and subsequently, on July 1, 1931, the federal government introduced a new Unemployment and Farm Relief Act of 1931. It was designed to assist general unemployment through the establishment of employment in public works, but aimed primarily to relieve the drought-stricken areas of southern Saskatchewan (Struthers, 1983: 53). The federal Opposition opposed this Act on three specific grounds. First, it combined two distinct problems -- farm relief and unemployment relief, indicating the federal government's resistance to accepting direct responsibility for the unemployed; second, it gave the government unlimited resources to allocate without

specific parliamentary authority; and third, it included a 'peace, order and good government' clause which gave the federal government full authority to act without any regard to parliament (Lane, 1966: 23). Although this expanded federal action, justified under Section 91 of the BNA Act, on the grounds of the maintenance of 'peace, order, and good government', indicated a significant response by the senior level of government, like its predecessor, the 1931 Act stipulated that the municipalities and provinces were primarily responsible for the care of the unemployed. The preamble stated:

Whereas Unemployment, which is primarily a municipal and provincial responsibility has become so general throughout Canada as to constitute a matter of national concern..." (P.C. 2043; Tuesday, 18 August, 1931; City Clerk's, Vol. 156, File; Relief Officer).

Defending the Act in the House of Commons, the government maintained that;

It is not proposed that this Dominion government would in any sense deal with these problems directly. These are primarily problems of provinces and municipalities and apart from national undertakings. ... That is the position.... (Canada, House of Commons, Official Report of Debates, 8 September, 1930: 64-65).

Under the Unemployment and Farm Relief Act the Dominion paid 50 percent of the cost of the work undertaken, excluding all costs of administration and overhead charges. The province contributed 25 percent of the labour cost, and the municipalities assumed the remaining 25 percent of labour cost and 50 percent of the cost of materials, as well as the total cost of administration and any overhead charges (City Clerk's,

Vol. 157, Letter to all municipalities, from Provincial Department of Public Works; September 29, 1931).

The Rise and Fall of B.C.'s Relief Camps

The enactment of the 1931 Unemployment and Farm Relief Act led the British Columbia government to establish relief work camps for the single unemployed men in the province. British Columbia made an immediate agreement with Gideon Robertson, the federal Minister of Labour, and started its programme before other provinces had even concluded their agreements with the federal government. The first relief camps began operation in September of 1931, the same month that Vancouver's Chief of Police requested that Ottawa establish internment camps at the B.C. - Alberta border (Struthers, 1983: 55). By October, 2,000 men had left Vancouver for the provincial camps. (See Appendix 2 for locations of provincial camps.)

One purpose of these provincial camps was to remove many of the single men who became relief camp inmates, from the urban centres. Premier Tolmie stated;

The City of Vancouver was constantly urging the Provincial Government to take the transients ... together with the unemployed men without dependents, into camp. Immediately after negotiations with Ottawa ... it was decided to rush the men out of the cities in order to prevent, what the Chief of Police was afraid might happen, wholesale damage to property. (Tolmie Papers, Box 9, File; 16: February 1, 1932)

By February, 1932, B.C. operated 126 permanent relief work camps, with capacity for 12,721 men, 92 semi-permanent camps, with capacity for 4,061 occupants, and 19 rented camps that could hold 18,340 inmates (Tolmie Papers, Box 9, File; 16). The camps were established primarily in remote areas of the province, and the men were regularly engaged in road building and highway improvement projects. A typical camp would be made up of three bunkhouses, each containing 320 bunks providing each man with 30 inches of sleeping space, a dining room, kitchen and stores, two latrines and washroom, a drying room for clothes, disinfector room, and an office block (City Records, Vol. 154 File; Provincial Government, Jan.-June, 1931).

The unemployed were not very enthusiastic about going to the camps, and their organizations protested against the provincial 'slave camps'. However, under the Act, refusing to go made one liable to a fine of up to \$1,000, or imprisonment for a maximum period of three months. Generally, refusal to go to the camps meant being cut off of any form of relief (City Clerk's, Vol. 166, File; Relief Officer Jan.-March, 1932). The only exceptions permitted were men able to prove they would obtain other employment soon, or those who were under medical care (Matthews, Vol. 8, No. 1: Jan. 19, 1932). One tactic sometimes used by the single men to avoid going to camps, was to put advertisements in the "Personal" column of the newspapers, expressing a wish to meet people with the object of matrimony. Realizing this objective rendered one ineligible for the camps for single men, thus avoiding assignment to a 'slave camp' (City

Clerk's Op. cit.: Vol. 177, File; Relief Officer, July-Sept.: July 24, 1933).

Many who were not exempted, refused to comply. In February, 1932, at least 326 single men, with less than one year's residence in Vancouver, refused to leave the city for the provincial camps, and were cut off relief entirely. The next month, the City Relief Officer stated that 55 percent of the single men in the City refused to go to the camps (Matthews, Vol. 8, No. 1: March 31, 1932). The relief workers complained about the wage of 30 cents per hour, or \$2.40 per day, demanding 50 cents per hour (Matthews, Vol. 8, No. 1: 151). In the camps, men were often ejected for refusal to work in protest against insufficient food and clothing, and unpleasant working conditions (The Vancouver Province, Letter to the Editor: December 2, 1932). Criticism of the camp scheme increased from all quarters. As early as November 1931, British Columbia had spent most of its yearly federal funding for relief, due in part to the rapid building of the camps, and reported patronage and excessive extravagance in supplies.⁷ The cost of construction of the camps was more than \$689,000 and between \$500,000 and \$600,000 per month, or a total of \$6,677,000, was required to continue the programme until the Relief Act was due to expire in

⁷ In February 1932 an enquiry was made into these allegations by the provincially appointed Twigg Commission. After hearing charges of gross diversion of federal funds, incompetent administration, and extravagance, the Committee concluded that these charges were unfounded. Nevertheless, this Inquiry did reveal the intense antagonism that characterized federal - provincial relations.

March, 1932 (Lane, 1966: 36-37; Struthers, 1983: 57; Tolmie Papers, Box 9, File; 16). The federal government insisted this expenditure was excessive, and despite the provincial government's reduction of the original estimate of expenditures in the camps, Ottawa limited B.C.'s funding in relief allocations to \$3,250,000 (Lane, 1966: 40-41). When the federal government rejected the proposed estimates of expenditure and reduced funding, Tolmie ordered relief camp work to cease, and the men were given direct relief in the camps. For three months, the men were idle in these camps. In February, 1932 relief work was again provided, but for urban transients only on a daily basis, with an allowance of \$7.50 per month, or 40 cents a day (Lane, 1966: 40-41).

The four months of negotiations over funding of the camps scheme manifested the poor cooperation between the province and the dominion during the winter of 1931-32, and furthered deterioration in inter-governmental relations. Indeed, 'scores of telegrams' were exchanged between the two Conservative governments in Ottawa and and Victoria, to solve what the province described as "temporary financing difficulties...." (Matthews, Vol. 8, No. 1: February 7, 1932); but what the Dominion government called a gross diversion of federal funds (Lane, 1966: 47). The Prime Minister perceived the provincial camp scheme to be excessive expenditure, and Bennett appointed Senator Robertson to screen each relief payment made to British Columbia (Struthers, 1983: 57). The subsequent antagonism between Ottawa and Victoria became very intense, and

even the routine distribution of relief payments from the federal government, which the province sent to municipalities, occasioned the two higher levels of government to squabble and blame one another for delays and inefficiency.

Not only did federal - provincial cooperation break down, the inactivity of higher levels of government in relation to the problem of unemployment, resulted in municipalities becoming increasingly antagonistic toward both the federal and provincial government (Lane, 1966: 44). In June of 1931, at a conference of municipalities in B.C. the delegates demanded that the federal government accept full responsibility for single unemployed transients (Lane, 1966: 28). Ottawa did not respond to these demands, and in September a Vancouver alderman warned the federal minister of Labour that the conditions in Vancouver had reached a crisis point, and that;

"Inertness of Dominion government in failing to control transients and in delaying decision has paralysed municipalities" (City Clerk's, Vol. 155, File; Relief Officer 1931, July-Sept.).

Newspaper headlines in January 1933, revealed that the dispute over the maintenance of single unemployed men had not been solved, when they reported that; "Ottawa throws 800 cases back to the city" (Matthews, Vol. 8, No. 2: January 12, 1933). Municipalities across the country joined the federal Opposition, labour groups, and the unemployed organized by the Workers' Unity League calling for the implementation of a federal programme of unemployment insurance. The WUL, a CPC affiliate, had lobbied for non-contributory unemployment insurance for a

number of years. In 1931, the federal Department of Labour had intercepted pamphlets being distributed by this group in its effort to gather support for unemployment insurance, and Gideon Robertson informed the Prime Minister that the campaign was "the culmination of communistic propaganda..." (Cuneo, 1980: 48). Bennett's initial response to these demands was to vow that a policy of non-contributory unemployment insurance would never be enacted under his administration (Cuneo, 1980: 52; Struthers, 1983: 61). The following week, however, Bennett promised that the government would introduce contributory unemployment insurance legislation "at the earliest possible moment" (Struthers, 1983: 61). Some months later, however, Bennett withdrew from the promise of action, citing Constitutional restrictions and growing national deficits (Struthers, 1983: 62). Despite the demands led by the unemployed and numerous municipalities, unemployment insurance was never introduced by the Bennett government.

Municipalities in British Columbia were similarly unable to receive satisfactory cooperation from the provincial government. When a Vancouver alderman called a conference to discuss the problems associated with the high level of unemployment in January 1930, the Vancouver Unemployed Workers' Organization sent five delegates and the Communist Party of Canada sent one representative, but the three members of the provincial government who were invited (the provincial secretary, the minister of finance and a minister without portfolio), as well as three other members of the legislative

assembly who were asked to come, declined the invitation without providing a reason (City Clerk's, Vol. 141. File; Relief Officer, Jan.-June). The delegates at the conference passed a resolution deploring the attitude manifested by the higher governments by not sending representatives (City Clerk's, Vol. 141, File; Relief Officer, Jan.-June).

In July of that year, Vancouver requested provincial assistance "... due to the urgency of the situation" (City Clerk's, Vol. 141, File; Relief, July-Dec.). The repetition of this request one month later indicates that provincial assistance was not forthcoming (Public Records, Mayor, Vol. 5, File; Unemployment, Aug., 1930). At conferences of municipal authorities held in August, 1930 and June, 1931, officials from the towns and cities throughout the province requested that the provincial government take some action to assist them in their responsibility for the unemployed (Public Records, Mayor, Vol. 5, File; Unemployment, Aug., 1930; Tolmie Papers, Box 12, File; 23). Disputes over care for the unemployed continued. As one man recalled;

... we were always told by the Federal government it was a Provincial matter and the Provincial authorities said it was a Federal matter and when they couldn't agree they said it was a municipal matter... (Bourke Collection, Toppings-Smeale: 5).

On November 1, 1932, under the authority of the Fordham Commission, the federal government took responsibility for B.C.'s work camps for single, homeless men, and limited the cost

of operation to 40 cents per man per day. Under the jurisdiction of the Commission, relief was administered to 4,430 single men in the relief camps, and to 8,863 men in Vancouver, Victoria, and New Westminster (Lane, 1966: 52-53). In February 1933, 5,500 men who did not qualify for provincial residence were obtaining relief in the camps, and 11,500 in the urban centres (Lane, 1966: 52-53). However, in March of 1933, ninety of British Columbia's camps were closed. As a consequence of this reduction of the federal programme, hundreds of single, transient, unemployed men were once again required to fend for themselves.

Summary

By the beginning of 1933, despite a variety of efforts, the Canadian state had not solved the problems created by the high levels of unemployment. Although transient, single, unemployed men began entering the province as early as 1929, and numerous attempts had been made to repress the organized unemployed, at the close of a dominion - provincial conference government officials were still "... stumped to find a solution for the constitutional difficulties in the way of a Dominion-wide scheme and also at loggerheads over the broad question of (unemployment) insurance jurisdiction" (Matthews, Vol. 8, No. 2: 4).

While federal, provincial, and municipal police participated in controlling the organized, militant unemployed, and the municipalities maintained strict vigilance on relief

recipients, the state was still unable to adequately control the vocal, dissenting unemployed. Although Prime Minister Bennett informed Premier Tolmie in March, 1933, that "... your proposal that ... (the) Dominion should assume whole burden of unemployment relief costs is, we believe unreasonable and cannot even be considered" (Tolmie Papers, Box 12, File; 19), the incapacity of the local and provincial state institutions to finance any programmes to alleviate the problem, the inability of the police to suppress the communist organized, dissatisfied, militant unemployed, and the growing public outcry and general support of the unemployed, created a crisis that forced the Canadian state to take exceptional measures to deal with the single unemployed men in Canada. Previous state action within the boundaries of jurisdictional responsibility proved unsuccessful in controlling the unemployed movement. The perceived threat of the unemployed who demanded extended state action through job creation or social insurance, required unprecedented state repression, if the existing socio-economic order was to be maintained. Hence, as chapters four and five shall show, the Department of National Defence relief camp scheme was established to contain these potential dissidents.

Chapter Four

The Department of National Defence Relief Camp Scheme

Introduction

Despite attempts by the Canadian state to deal with the increasingly severe problems created by the thousands of militant, single, unemployed men, by the end of 1932, it had consistently failed to successfully address the situation. The expiry of the 1931 Unemployment and Farm Relief Act resulted in many of the transient unemployed in B.C. returning to the urban centres from the camps, and expecting direct relief. To curtail the mobility of the unemployed, the RCMP began to enforce the Railways Act thus prohibiting the unemployed from riding the freight trains, leaving the men stranded inside the municipalities. Outraged, civic authorities refused to care for the unemployed, and consistently demanded that Ottawa assume entire responsibility for the administration of direct relief. In the autumn of 1932, Prime Minister R.B. Bennett was warned that 100,000 transient unemployed who resented being forced to accept 'the dole', were "bitter and ready for action" (Struthers, 1983: 80). Faced with the growing threat, the Prime Minister, who had perpetually insisted that unemployment was strictly a local and provincial matter, conceded in October of that year, that the federal government was obliged to "take some steps to deal with unemployed homeless men so that discipline may be enforced" (Bennett Papers, Vol. 798: 21 October, 1932, cited in; Struthers, 1983: 80). The perceived menace that the

unemployed presented to the peace, order and good government of Canada, ultimately resulted in unusual state action -- the Department of National Defence relief camp scheme.

The establishment of nation-wide relief work camps as a method of dealing with the single unemployed men, had been suggested to the Prime Minister by various advisors. Bennett, however, maintained that the federal government had no Constitutional power in the administration of unemployment relief. To retain this position, yet deal with the increasing threat posed by the thousands of frustrated, organized single unemployed, a compromise was reached. At the opening session of Parliament on the sixth of October 1932, an unprecedented federal programme was initiated. The Department of National Defence Relief Camp scheme was to act as a way to control and provide food and shelter for approximately 19,000 single, homeless, unemployed, transient men during the next four years.

Although the DND relief camp scheme provided a solution for the government's problem, it did not satisfy the single unemployed men. Sequestered into remote work camps that provided virtually no amenities and no wages, these men expected to leave the camps no better off than when they arrived. The bitterness and frustration that was evident among the unemployed in the cities could only ferment and increase in the camps.

In this chapter I shall discuss the implementation and operation of the DND relief camp scheme. As chapter three above has shown, the usual state control mechanisms failed to stifle

the demands and suppress the threat posed by the unemployed. The relief camp scheme enabled the Canadian state to maintain these dissidents under strict control, while at the same time, ensure that the labour they were occupied with in the camps guaranteed that they could eventually be reabsorbed into the work force. The threat posed by the single unemployed was great enough for this scheme to be operated in the context of a severe fiscal crisis of the state. Nevertheless, despite this exceptional state social control, the discontent with the existing socio-economic system expressed by the men while they were in the cities, was simply transferred to the camps.

The Military and the Relief Camp Scheme

The provinces and many municipalities had called for the federal government to establish work camps for the single unemployed, and a prominent advisor to the Prime Minister, Dr. Charlotte Whitton of the Canadian Welfare Council, had also suggested such a scheme. Whitton, a pioneer Canadian social worker, was hired by the federal government during May, 1932, to study unemployment relief in western Canada. The following September Whitton submitted a report in which she argued that approximately 40 percent of western relief recipients did not need the assistance (Struthers, 1983: 77-78). She suggested that trained professionals be placed in charge of relief distribution for single women and families, and that the federal government place an "'experienced military advisor' in charge of a system of 'concentration camps'" for the single unemployed (Struthers,

1983: 79). Bennett, however, maintained that such action was outside the federal government's jurisdiction. (House of Commons Debates 10 October, 1932: 50). Major General A.G.L. McNaughton, Chief of the General Staff and the government's senior military advisor, subsequently came up with an alternative, and suggested that the military direct a scheme of relief camps for single unemployed men.⁸

During a tour of Canada in the summer and early fall of 1932, McNaughton became aware of the general condition of the thousands of single unemployed men. Fearing that they could become violent, and seriously threaten the social order, he conceived of a plan to control these men by putting them to work in camps under the authority of the military. McNaughton suggested his idea to the Minister of Labour, but he heard nothing more of this proposal until the opening of parliament on October 6, 1932 when Bennett informally told McNaughton that Cabinet was interested in his idea. The Prime Minister requested that a detailed proposal be submitted to the his office by 9:30 the following morning. That same afternoon, McNaughton summoned a meeting with an official from the Engineer Services of the Canadian army and a representative of the Director of Service and Transport, and outlined his proposal to them. The initial plan was to put two thousand unemployed to work immediately, at a cost not exceeding \$1.00 per man per day. Not less than 40

⁸ The following account of the implementation and administration of the Department of National Defence relief camp scheme is drawn primarily from LeFresne, 1962.

percent of the total was to be expended for labour, and 20 cents was to be paid to the men. By working throughout the night, within nineteen hours the military staff drew up the skeleton of the scheme, and submitted it to the Prime Minister the following morning. It was accepted, and in October 1932, the federal government, through the DND, assumed responsibility for single, transient, homeless men across Canada.⁹

The Department of National Defence Relief Camp Scheme was implemented on October 8 1932, when parliamentary approval was given to Order in Council P.C. 2248, permitting the allocation of \$300,000 to begin the operation of the scheme. The Relief Acts of 1932, 1933, 1934, and 1935 provided the financing for a total of twenty three orders in council, which served to give the Ministry of National Defence authority to administer the scheme and allocate the funds. P.C. 2248 specified how the money was to be distributed, but subsequent orders in council were much less rigid, and the DND was permitted uninhibited direction of the financial administration of the scheme. Orders in council do not require parliamentary debate, and while the Minister of National Defence and the Minister of Labour were officially in charge of the scheme - for it was they who gave final approval to measures taken by the DND - the actual arrangements and responsibility for the operation of the relief

⁹ Prince Edward Island was unable to supply enough men eligible for the establishment of a relief camp, and consequently, single, unemployed men from this province were assigned to camps in New Brunswick.

camp programme were taken over by the DND. Although Major General McNaughton never received any official, written authority to assume responsibility for the administration of the programme, as Chief of the General Staff of the DND he was responsible for all matters related to the scheme.¹⁰ Under his authority supervisory and administrative responsibility was distributed among various branches of the nation-wide infrastructure of the armed forces. While the relief camps were operated by the Department of National Defence, they were not military camps.¹¹ No military discipline or training was enforced, and the inmates maintained their civilian status. To emphasize this, officers in charge of the relief projects refrained from wearing military uniforms when in contact with the relief camp inmates (Eayers, 1964: 135).

Subordinate to the directorates of various branches of the army, each of Canada's twelve military district headquarters was in charge of a civilian staff which ran the relief camps in a specific locale.¹² The officer commanding each of the military district headquarters reported to Ottawa in matters relating to

¹⁰ McNaughton's authority included financial administration, with the exception of certain contracts that were dealt with through the Deputy Minister of Defence.

¹¹ The Point Grey camp in B.C. was an exception, and housed unemployed militia men (Lane, 1966: 65).

¹² Sometimes a number of camps situated on a large project would have a group headquarters, which would report to the military district headquarters. If suitable civilians were not available, military officers took responsibility for the administrative tasks.

the relief camps, and he was required to submit financial reports to Ottawa on the projects under his supervision.¹³

The Operation of Social Control

The official, publicized purpose behind the establishment of the DND relief camp scheme was the alleviation of the severe effects of unemployment among the single homeless men. This aim was outlined in the dominion - provincial agreement.

The Dominion will assume responsibility for personnel eligible under its regulations for acceptance on relief projects which in the opinion of the Dominion, can usefully be organized for the execution of works to the general advantage of Canada and which otherwise would not be undertaken at this time. (cited in; LeFresne, 1961: 17)

The relief camp scheme was the first and only national policy implemented by the federal government, and despite some charges that the make-work projects were a waste of public money, initially, the programme received 'almost universal' praise from governments, the press, social workers, and trade unions. A Winnipeg newspaper reported that "the camps provide just such an outing as a young man's heart should long for.... (Forcese, 1975: 118; Struthers, 1983: 96).

¹³ While initially expenditure under each classification was investigated and spending in excess of authorized funds required approval, during 1933 these stipulations were relaxed, and the officer commanding simply informed the National Defence Headquarters of any transfer of expenditure.

A second, vitally important purpose underlay the DND relief camps. As agreed upon by the two higher levels of government, a primary object of the scheme was;

the preservation of the morale of the youth of Canada by keeping them in such physical and mental health that they would be re-employable when economic conditions improved and they could be absorbed by industry (LeFresne, 1961: 17).

The state established work camps to ensure that eventually, these men would once again provide labour power for the revitalized capitalist system of production.

In addition to the fear that prolonged subsistence on relief would ultimately result in the destruction of the work ethic, a less obvious purpose, but one of crucial importance lay behind the establishment of the camps. The spectre of a violent revolution staged by the communist-led, militant unemployed was considered as a serious possibility by many state officials. General McNaughton expressed what was, from the very beginning the "most important feature" of the scheme.

By taking the men out of ... the Cities ... we were removing the active elements on which the 'Red' agitators could play. ... If we had not taken this preventative work and did not continue ... it was only a matter of time until we had to resort to arms to maintain order. (McNaughton Papers, cited in Eayers, 1964: 129; Struthers, 1983: 99)

Clearly, the threat of a communist-led revolution was considered as a serious possibility. State officials acted on this, and through the implementation of the DND relief camp scheme, the state became actively involved in ensuring that the single unemployed men did not attempt to overthrow the established economic system that required their labour power, but whose

legitimacy they had begun to question.

Enrollment in a Department of National Defence Relief Camp was ostensibly voluntary. Single, homeless, unemployed men, who passed a medical examination that classified them as physically fit and free from any communicable diseases, were eligible for the camps. The applicant was supposed to be a British subject, but this stipulation was not consistently enforced. Single, homeless, unemployed men were expected to apply for admission at a Canadian Employment and Welfare office, and if they met the prerequisites they were provided with transportation to a nearby camp.¹⁴ Those who were not admitted to a relief camp remained the responsibility of the province or municipality.

Accommodation, clothing, food, medical and dental care, and by 1935, a tobacco ration, were provided for the relief camp inmates. In exchange, they were required to work eight hour days, five and one half days per week, with Sundays and

¹⁴ The railways charged the government \$0.015 per mile for every man taken to a relief camp. If an inmate obtained employment while he was enrolled in a camp, he was provided with transportation to the nearest town, and upon proof that he was from a relief camp, the railways charged him a reduced fare of \$0.02 per mile. However, if a relief camp worker was discharged 'for cause' he was given no transportation from the camp, was required to return the clothing issued by the camp (as it belonged to the DND), and he was ineligible for readmission to any relief camp.

statutory holidays off.¹⁵ The food allotment was the standard army ration, although initially provisions were ten percent more generous to build up the strength of the malnourished men.

The standard allowance received by relief camp inmates was twenty cents per day. Cooks and junior supervisory staff who were usually camp inmates, received slightly more according to their occupation, but they still received much less than the standard wages of the day.¹⁶ Senior supervisors were paid one hundred dollars per month until May 1935, at which time their salary was increased to one hundred fifty dollars per month. If a skilled tradesman was a relief camp inmate, efforts were made to permit him to practise his trade, but he still received the standard 20 cents a day.¹⁷

Since civilian supervisory staff was employed by the DND, it was contended by the Civil Service Commission that these personnel should be hired according to its standards. Furthermore, the Workmen's Compensation Board argued that the men in the camps were federal government employees, and therefore had the right to be covered under the Provincial

¹⁵ The clothing allotment consisted of; trousers, shirt, socks, boots. As well, towels, a shaving kit and a sewing kit were issued, and after November 1935, \$0.013 supply of tobacco was available to each man. Medical and dental care was provided by the Royal Canadian Medical Corps, or, as in B.C., the DND contracted local doctors to visit the camps on a regular basis.

¹⁶ Employed men were earning at least 25 cents an hour, and some occupied with relief work received as much as 40 cents per hour. (Debates, House of Commons, March 29, 1935; Vol. 3: 2257

¹⁷ If a local tradesman, or the owner of a team of horses, who was not a camp inmate, was employed to work on the project, the DND paid such contractors at the union, or standard wage rate.

Workmen's Compensation Act.¹⁸ In addition, if the relief camp inmates were federal employees, the Treasury claimed that as civil servants, ten percent of the twenty cents a day allowance was to go to the government, as stipulated under the terms of the Salary Deductions Act of 1932. Furthermore, if the men were federal government employees, and they were paid 20 cents a day as a wage, then the government was violating the minimum wage legislation. To end this controversy, in January 1933, the Department of Justice ruled that the DND relief camp scheme was an emergency project, and the cash payment was deemed an allowance. Therefore, the scheme was exempt from the provisions of other federal legislation. (LeFresne, 1961: 65).¹⁹ It could thus be carried on under the authority of the orders in council and by regulations established by officers of the Department of National Defence.

Housing conditions varied between camps, but generally the men lived in wood and tarpaper bunkhouses that were heated by coal or wood stoves, and equipped with electric, coal oil, or gasoline lighting -- whichever was the most economical source -- and provided with hot and cold showers.²⁰ All supplies were sent

¹⁸ Injuries where the Workmen's Compensation Act normally applied were reviewed, and up to December 1936, there were 75 known claims. Of these, 61 were disposed and 14 were considered for compensation (LeFresne, 1961: 63).

¹⁹ The question has been raised; if 20 cents a day was an allowance, why did the men receive this allowance only for the days worked?

²⁰ Finished, heated accommodation was sometimes not provided until the winter.

to the camps from the Department of National Defence Central Ordnance Depot in Ottawa and distributed through the regional military district headquarters.²¹ Initially laundry was cleaned at the central depot, but as the number of inmates expanded this became expensive and inefficient, so the camps were supplied with hand operated washers and the men did their own laundry. At regular intervals, provincial health authorities inspected the camps for sanitary conditions.

Throughout the duration of the relief camp scheme 237 deaths occurred in the camps from a variety of causes.²² If the next of kin was outside of Canada, or unable to be located, the DND obtained the services of an undertaker and provided a burial, having 'due regard for economy'.

While enrollment in the camps was officially voluntary, municipalities began to refuse to provide relief to any applicant unless he was able to prove that he was ineligible for the DND camps. To avoid being thus obliged to enter the camps, men sometimes paid doctors to classify them as unfit for entry into the camps (Broadfoot, 1973: 98-99; LeFresne, 1961: 50). Consequently, officials in the scheme ordered that only Department of National Defence doctors' certificates

²¹ All financial accounting was also centralized at this depot in Ottawa.

²² Two died from horse kicks, two from lightning strikes, and nine men committed suicide. It may be assumed that the remainder were deaths that occurred during labour on the projects.

disqualifying men were eligible.²³

To supply men with goods that they could not obtain at a local store - if there was one nearby - canteens were established in the camps. Funds for these outlets were not provided, so the camp inmates contributed the initial cash outlay for the canteen, operated the outlet, and put any profits toward the purchase of mutually beneficial camp supplies. Shaving soap, toothpaste, tobacco, cigarettes, confectionary, and soft drinks were typically sold in these canteens, but as they became widespread throughout the camps, the DND stepped in to "supervise and ensure that the men were not cheated" (LeFresne, 1961: 72).

Efficiency and economy were primary objectives in the operation of the scheme. Hence, as indicated above, in all matters ranging from the projects undertaken to the provisions for the inmates, every possible cost saving measure was taken. The cost of rations between 1932 and 1936, including ice, fuel for cooking, and freight charges, as well as the food portion of the subsistence allowance, amounted to only \$0.2611 per man per day (LeFresne, 1961: 58).

The cost-saving priorities were, in the long run, detrimental to the well-being of the inmates. Although Saturday afternoon was a time set aside for recreational pursuits, no

²³ Doctors in the DND objected to this on the grounds of medical etiquette, so General Ashton ordered the dismissal of any doctor in the DND who would not examine a relief applicant (LeFresne, 1961: 50).

sports or other recreational facilities were provided for the camps by the Department of National Defence. As reported by a memo within the DND, "... not one cent of public money has been spent ... on reading material and recreational equipment" (Struthers, 1983: 100).²⁴ Churches and charitable groups were solicited for sports equipment, radios, playing cards, books and magazines, although near the end of 1935 a small proportion of relief funds were allocated, permitting every camp to obtain a radio (LeFresne, 1961: 75). Books and magazines contributed to the relief camps were circulated between some camps, but this system eventually broke down, when inmates had read most of the available material.

The DND did not establish any educational facilities for the camp inmates. However, Frontier College sent a limited number of instructors to some of the camps,²⁵ and Vancouver Technical School, in cooperation with the provincial government, made arrangements with the British Columbia military district to provide correspondence courses for interested inmates. Five hundred dollars was provided by the British Columbian government to cover the cost of postage for this programme that existed from January 8 to April 30, 1934, during which time over 900 men enrolled, of which 25 percent obtained a variety of

²⁴ See LeFresne, 1961: 75-79, for report of recreational activities engaged in by the inmates.

²⁵ For information of Frontier College see; Cook, G.L. "Alfred Fitzpatrick and the Foundation of Frontier College (1899 - 1922)" Canada An Historical Magazine Vol. 3, No. 4, June 1976: 15-39.

gualification certificates (LeFresne, 1961: 82).

The Establishment of DND Relief Camps in B.C.

Upon completion of the initial trial period of the Department of National Defence Relief Camp Scheme, additional camps were put into operation throughout the country. Between June 1 and June 15 1933, the relief camps established by the British Columbia government were transferred from the jurisdiction of the Fordham Commission to the Department of National Defence,²⁶ and the complete administration of unemployment relief for the physically fit, unmarried men in the province was assumed by the federal authorities.²⁷ Ultimately, 101 camps in B.C. housed approximately one third of the national relief camp population (Cassidy, 1939: 189; Eayers, 1964: 137). The administration of the camps by the DND brought some significant changes to B.C.'s relief camps. General Ashton took over as the officer commanding Military District Number 11, and

²⁶ See Appendix Two for locations of British Columbia's DND relief camps.

²⁷ In accordance with the regulations established nation-wide, the federal government agreed to share equally with the western provinces the costs of relief for the physically unfit homeless men, at a total cost of not more than 40 cents per man per day. This was discontinued in 1934 (Cassidy, 1939: 182-3; Winch Papers: 4). Single, homeless women in British Columbia were included in this category (Provincial Archives of B.C. GR 429, Box 21, File 1: March 16, 1934). The Chinese, Doukhobors, and 'aliens' in British Columbia were provided with direct relief only. This was distributed to the Chinese through Chinese hostels, and the amount provided for a single man was 15 cents per day, and 25 cents per day for married men. All pensions were deducted from the relief allowance. (Winch Papers: 4).

the rules established nation-wide at the inception of the scheme were strictly enforced in all the camps, and B.C.'s camps. The work camps that had previously employed men for minimal wages, were transformed into what were to become known as the 'royal twenty centres'.

The initial federal - provincial agreement put 17,000 jobless men to work on road construction projects. Most of the subsequent projects were provincial road building (Matthews, Vol. 8, No. 2: 21). Through its agreement with the federal government, the province of British Columbia gave the DND charge of all its road camps, as well as any machinery, equipment and supplies related to the work undertaken in these camps. Since road construction would normally be carried out by the provincial government, the province supplied skilled labour required and funded supplementary wages to the personnel engaged in this work, in order to bring their allowance up to the prevailing wage for that occupation (Relief Act 1934, cited in LeFresne, 1961: Appendix 1). While the province recommended work to be done, the Royal Canadian Engineers were required to approve all projects, and the DND directed all works that were undertaken.

Labour and Discipline in B.C.'s DND Relief Camps

The projects undertaken through the Department of National Defence relief camp scheme were strategically located throughout the province. While the purpose of road construction or other work projects engaged in by the unemployed under the scheme was, as stipulated in the dominion - provincial agreement, for the benefit of Canada, the congregation of the radicalized unemployed in the Greater Vancouver area, where public support was increasingly widespread, augmented the perceived threat to the status quo. Hence, work projects were not undertaken in the municipalities and urban centres. On the contrary, the projects were situated in remote, poorly accessible regions of the province. One former relief camp worker recalled,

What they wanted to do was get me out of Vancouver, working in a camp out in the sticks. The reason (for the camps) was not for what they accomplished. Rather than have trouble in the cities -- shove them out to the country. (Woods, Interview)

The response of the unemployed men to the establishment of B.C.'s DND relief camps was very negative. When registration for these camps began on June 7, 1933, only 1200 men enrolled for the 3,000 available placements (Vancouver Province: June 7, 1933). A former relief camp inmate recalled that the only reason he went to a camp was, he had "no where else to go" (Jackson, Interview). By June 28 of that year, 2,500 single, unemployed men in Vancouver were unable to collect any relief because they

had refused to go to the camps (Matthews, Vol. 8, No. 2: 26). By October, only 11,400 of the 18,500 relief camp vacancies were filled (Matthews, Vol. 8, No. 2: 42). The antipathy toward the scheme is revealed in the duration of inmates' time in the camps. Sixty percent of B.C.'s relief camp residents remained in the camps for less than one year, and only five percent of the inmates stayed longer than three years (Lane, 1966: 65).

The obvious purpose of removing the men from visibility in the centres of population, through the creation of 'make work' projects, contributed to the lack of enthusiasm toward the camp scheme. Many unemployed men, who had been expelled from municipality after municipality and forced to subsist on 'the dole' for years previous, were cynical of the relief camp scheme. As many of the men saw it, the attitude of the government was;

"... to get rid of the youth of the country. Put 'em out in the woods so that nobody would see 'em and they wouldn't be any trouble in town." (Walsh, R., cited in; Montero, 1979: 30)

Or to

"... get these dogs off the street before they offend the people." (Broadfoot, 1973: 97).

In the camps the single unemployed were "out of sight -- out of mind" (Jackson, Interview).

The projects undertaken were initiated primarily to provide relief, not to put the men to constructive public works that had a clear objective. The camp work was often repetitive, and little more than fatigue work to keep the men busy

(Liversedge, 1973: 35). For the men, the camps were a 'dead end'. One former inmate recalled that there was "no future, no way out" (Woods, Interview). Another inmate commented;

... you come in broke, work all winter and still you are broke. It looks like they want to keep us bums all our lives. (Struthers, 1983: 100).

The relief camps were not established to create employment, but to ensure that the men did not adopt a 'dole mentality', By working for their 20 cents a day allowance, officials believed the work ethic would be preserved and the men would be re-employable when economic conditions improved. Although inmates were permitted to leave the camps if they secured a job, employment of men coming directly from the relief camps was rare, for inmates located in remote parts of the province did not hear about the available work (Struthers, 1983: 99). Furthermore,

... the camps were designed to serve the economic function of removing single men from the urban labour market and thus reserving existing jobs for married men with dependents. (McNaughton Papers, cited in; Struthers: 98).

As Struthers (1983) points out, even the economic rationale of the camps was a negative one. They were not designed to create employment, but rather, to restrict competition for the few jobs that were available. The inmates became acutely aware of their dismal situation, believing that;

... we are getting no place in the plan of life - we are truly a lost legion of youth - rotting away for want of being offered an outlet for our energies. Something to do and something for that doing." (1983: 100-101).

Yet another commented;

There's no wages, no future; the men have nothing to look forward to. (Matthews, Vol. 8, No. 3: April 18, 1935).

Fifty years later, one camp inmate recalled "there was no social existence whatever (Jackson, Interview).

McNaughton stipulated that, in the operation of the camps, the most labour intensive methods were to be utilized and as much manual labour as possible was to be undertaken in order to avoid expenditures on machinery and to maximize the number of man-days of relief (Swettenham, 1963: 7). The effect of such economic restrictions was recalled by one inmate;

Another way was to let the machinery stand idle. Let the men do it, for their 20 cents a day, so you had the crazy situation of a \$3,000 bulldozer and a steam roller sitting by the side of the road while 50 men went at the dirt and rock with shovels and picks. (Broadfoot, 1973: 97)

The hard, manual labour that had no apparent purpose, and the absence of any wages for the work accomplished, resulted in a negative attitude among the men that was reflected in their work performance. The average nation-wide efficiency of the relief camp workers in the Canadian camps was found to be not more than 35 percent of the efficiency of ordinary labour employed at prevailing rates (Cassidy, 1939: 185). Most of the camps in B.C. were below the national relief camp average. The camp of Nelway, British Columbia reported the lowest efficiency, achieving an overall rate of only 20 percent of the standard

level; and during January 1934, the camp at Spence's Bridge had an average efficiency rate of only 31 percent (LeFresne, 1961: 180).

Social Resistance in British Columbia's Camps

The inefficiency of the labour in the relief camps gives some indication of the morale of the men in the relief camps. Widespread dissatisfaction vented itself in various ways, but one consistent grievance in many camps throughout the province was the food. Because it was distributed from Ottawa, men in B.C. complained that they were eating dried apples from Ontario while fruit was rotting in orchards across the road; and although local farmers received 2 to 3 cents for their beef, the men ate meat from Alberta sold to the DND at 3.5 cents per pound (Howard, 1974: 10, MacInnis, 1935: 34-37). Although there was always plenty of food;

... the meat is always the cheapest beef, so tough that chewing is impossible, eggs are always storage eggs, milk is always dried, pickles such as beets which should be red, may be as brown as oak, the same stewed fruit may appear at eight or nine consecutive meals, bread may be sour and coffee is known not by any aroma or flavour of its own, but by the difference between it and tea. (A camp inmate) ... can hardly forget for long there is no future ... he is a failure, that in no sense whatever is he master of his destiny. Even his hours of rising and retiring are regulated, his comings and goings are marked and noted. (Dew, H., "The Relief Camp Bane" Matthews, Vol. 8, No. 3: May 18, 1935).

The McDonald Commission, later established to investigate B.C.'s DND camps, found that bad cooking may have spoiled good food, but in many camps the milk was unsatisfactory, the meat did not

reach the standards established by the DND, and the lack of variety in the meals provided just cause for complaints about the food provided (MacDonald Commission, 1935: 9-10).

Another significant grievance was related to voting. The majority of inmates in relief camps were, in effect disenfranchised because they had not lived in the camps for a sufficient time period to qualify as residents and thus obtain voting privileges. Despite criticism by the Opposition and the demands of the unemployed, the government of R.B. Bennett would not extend right of absentee voting to relief camp inmates (Brown, 1978: 210). Thus, the perception of being an insignificant segment of the population intensified among the unemployed relief camp workers.

The relentless monotony of the camps aggravated issues of seemingly minor significance. One particular bone of contention was the clothing issued to the inmates. The men did not appreciate having to accept previously used clothing, and then be required to turn it in upon leaving the camp (MacDonald Commission, 1935: 10). Furthermore, the DND stamp served as a reminder that they were destitute dependents of the state, and even their clothing belonged to the crown. The stamp served further to reinforce the contention that the DND camps were 'militarized'.

A further issue that displeased the inmates of B.C.'s camps was the contracted doctors who periodically visited the camps. The men complained that these practitioners were not

interested in the workers' maladies, and thus they did not offer adequate care (MacDonald Commission, 1935: 77).

Complaints over matters relating to the camps could be made only by one individual, and organizations such as grievance committees were not permitted in the camps. The DND stipulated that;

... camp grievance committees or other organizations of like character will not be permitted, nor will complaints by groups, either verbally or in writing be entertained. (LeFresne, 1961: 99).

If an inmate had a complaint the procedure by which he could make this grievance known was to speak to his foreman who was to "... impartially and fully ... investigate the matter and take such remedial action within his authority, as may be required." (LeFresne, 1961: 99) If the inmate was not satisfied with the foreman's response, or if the issue was outside the jurisdiction of the foreman, the relief camp worker was required to sign a complaint, that, along with a report by the foreman, would be submitted either to the group superintendent or the district headquarters (LeFresne, 1961: 99). If an inmate lodged a grievance, his supervisor was instructed to advise him not to take action outside the established procedures by alerting friends, the media, or uninvolved DND officials about his problem. Thus, although complaints were evidently rampant, they were seldom presented to the camp foreman the only one authorized to hear complaints, and the one who had the authority to dismiss any inmate 'for cause'. Furthermore, a spokesman presenting a grievance ran a very high risk of being labelled as

an agitator, expelled from camp, and inelligible for re-admission (Woods, Interview).

The grievances that were put forward by the relief camp inmates were often ignored by the supervisors, and hence complaints accumulated. While frequent and consistent complaints were supposed to initiate an investigation by an authority outside the specific camp, contrary to DND stipulation, the men began to make their grievances known to the public and the press. As one inmate complained in a letter to the federal minister of Labour;

It is no use to send it (the complaint) to the headquarters in Nelson B.C. because Mr. Foster will not take any notice of it. (LeFresne, 1961: 105)

The issues voiced by this inmate expressed concerns that were not unique in the B.C. relief camps. He went on to point out that;

The walls in the huts are full of cracks so you can see right throug (sic). One-half to one inch cracks between the board in the floor. When it is worm (sic) weather we are not able too sleep for bedbugs. Now when it is cold we have to sleep with our cloths (sic) on during the night. Still we are not able to keep ourselves worm (sic). ... It is thick ice in the water-pail in the morning.

We have to burn old water-soaked wood full of ice...

... the subforeman He thrice has gone so far as to come into this hut, closed the damper on the stove scolded us, thoug (sic) we have lain in our beds quivering by cold. Can you expect us to go out to work, when we do not have any rest and sleep during the night? Still we haveto (sic) do it, if not we are discharged, cut of (sic) relief....

It is any wonder we are displeased and radical opinions come in our heads?

The washroom is so cold so several taps and pipes have cracked (from; Salmo, B.C. Project 24, March 12, 1935; cited in LeFresne, 1961: 105-6).²⁸

The above quotation illustrates some of the varied grievances from inmates at Salmo B.C. While it cannot be assumed that these particular conditions existed in every camp;

... at the Rock Creek Camp...(t)he men lived in tents without sufficient blankets, meagre washing facilities, and in blankets which were never washed. Camp authorities did not supply stoves (Matthews, Vol. 8, No. 3: April 17, 1935).

One inmate recalled that the cracks in the walls of his shiplap and tar paper shack were so big "you could throw a cat right through them" (Savage, Interview). The MacDonald Commission found rats at the Point Grey camp, as well as very unsanitary conditions, described as 'disgraceful, crude, unsightly, and

²⁸ The foreman of the project replied to the subsequent inquiry as follows; "The huts in this camp are of frame construction, built of dressed but unmatched lumber Like any building of this description built of new lumber, the lumber shrinks leaving cracks between the boards. ...

During the period of very cold weather when the temperature went down to 34 degrees below zero, an extra night watchman was provided to keep the fires going in the sleeping huts all night. This is not the practise at all times....

The wood for the camp is dry cedar ... most of this is very dry and some of it is not so dry. The trouble is the men persist in picking out the dry wood first and then complaining about the wet wood left....

This man ... is not known as an agitator in the camp. Further report on his conduct could be had from the Foreman at project 68, Rock Creek...." (LeFresne, 1961: 106-7).

dirty'. The Commissioners reported that a few camps had vermin in bunkhouses, some had unsanitary conditions, and there had been one case of Typhoid fever (MacDonald Commission, 1935: 10). More generally, the inmates complained of crowded bunkhouses, hard-board beds without mattresses, no sheets, and only blankets (Walsh, in Montero, 1979: 24-25).

The culmination of various grievances and complaints, which, when considered separately may appear trivial (as they apparently did to the camp officials), contributed to a broader, and perhaps more important aspect of the relief camp system. The morale of the inmates of the relief camps steadily declined. While some recreation was organized by the inmates themselves, and charities supplied some reading material, the magazines that dominated the relief camps for single men were; Good Housekeeping, Women's Magazine, and Chatelaine. (Dew, cited in Matthews, Vol. 8, No. 3: May 18, 1935). In addition, the MacDonald Commission found that "some camps are located where mountains rise on all sides, and there is not even sufficient level ground for any form sports" (MacDonald Commission, 1935: 13). As an investigation into the relief camps in B.C. reported, the administration of the relief camps did not take into consideration that;

... food for the mind is as important as food for the body and that healthy recreation in addition to the daily work is so essential.... (correspondence to McNeely, Chairman, Vancouver Council of Social Agencies, from Carey, Chairman, Wilson, Vice Chairman, and Committee: March, 9, 1934; in City Clerk's, Vol. 186).

Summary

Although single unemployed men in some provinces enthusiastically stood in lines to apply for admission to a relief camp, the unemployed in B.C. were notably discontented with the scheme. These relief camp inmates believed they were unpaid, unappreciated labourers in 'slave camps'. The men not only felt forgotten and unwanted, the camp system of hard labour for twenty cents a day was degrading. They saw themselves leaving the camps as destitute as they had entered, as well as carrying the stigma of having been a relief camp inmate unsuitable for employment, and thus being shunned by potential employers. "As the months went by the men drifted into either an attitude of hopeless indifference or of studied rebellion" (MacDonald Commission, 1935: 11). The attitude of the men in the camps is well illustrated in an account given by one inmate. He recalled;

... in the relief camps of the Thirties we weren't treated as humans. We weren't treated as animals, either, and I've always thought we were just statistics written into some big ledger in Ottawa. ... But it was the monotony, the jail of it all. It was jail you know. What else would you call it? ... Everything about those camps was wrong, but the thing most wrong was they treated us like dirt. And we weren't. We were up against it, broke, tired, hungry, but we were farm boys who knew how to work.... We were slaves. What else would you call a man who was given twenty cents a day.... They just wanted us out of sight, as far out of sight as they could manage. (Broadfoot, 1973: 97).

The establishment of the relief camps under the authority of the DND served to remove the threatening, militant unemployed from the urban centres, but failed to create useful employment for these men. The extensive DND relief camp scheme was hastily established, in the severe fiscal crisis of the Canadian state. Usual state procedures, such as careful planning of such a scheme, and even Parliamentary debate, were surpassed to implement this scheme. The federal state apparatus overstepped its Constitutional jurisdiction to undertake for the first time, complete control of the single, homeless, unemployed.

I have argued in this chapter that the overriding purpose in the establishment of the DND relief camp scheme was to develop an effective means of controlling these dissidents. While work was found, employment was not created. The men received no wage, were unable to save money, and seldom saw constructive purposes behind the remote, make-work projects. The relief camps served as a holding tank to remove the radical men from the labour market until the Depression ended, not as a positive state response of job creation. Secondarily, the scheme was intended to ensure that the work ethic was maintained, and a labour supply would be available when economic conditions improved. The relief projects were not a means to an end, but work only for the sake of work (Struthers, 1983: 99). The constraints of the fiscal crisis the state was operating within necessitated the general 'due regard for economy' that characterized the operation of the scheme. Yet, the the state

was willing to undertake this vast project in order to ensure the maintenance of peace, order, and good government, in the context of the growing social unrest. While the camp scheme may have staved off the threat to the established socio-economic order, it did not reduce the disillusionment and frustration of the unemployed.

Chapter Five

Militancy, The On To Ottawa March and the End of the Relief Camp Scheme

Introduction

In the previous chapters I have argued that the widespread unemployment brought on by the economic depression of the 1930s, with the resultant menace that the single, transient, unemployed men presented to the peace, order, and good government of Canada, and the inability of the police to control these men to the satisfaction of the government authorities, resulted in the establishment of the Department of National Defence Relief Camp Scheme. The relief camps served a dual purpose. While they put the men to work, thus attempting to ensure the maintenance of the work ethic, more importantly, they served as an effective way of removing the men from the urban centres where they were gaining an increasing amount of support, and confining these dissidents to camps where they were kept under the authority of the military apparatus of the Canadian state. The state provided food, clothing, housing and an allowance for the men despite its own fiscal crisis, but the unrest and discontent that characterized the men when they were living in the jungles of the city was rampant in the relief camps as well.

In this chapter, I shall first discuss the communist-led organization of the discontented inmates in British Columbia's DND relief camps. Second, I will portray the unrest of these inmates and the police repression of the men. Thirdly, the absence of constructive state action in addressing the persistent demands of the unemployed will be revealed. The lack of satisfactory state response initiated mass action on the part of the unemployed. I shall, therefore, present a discussion of the general camp walkouts of December 1934 and April 1935. Ultimately, the striking inmates began the trek to Ottawa to present their demands before the senior state institution -- the federal government. The On to Ottawa Trek ended in a violent clash with the police in Regina. The Regina Riot of July 1935, was the ultimate exercise of violent state repression, and was successful in breaking the momentum of the dissident relief camp inmates. Within one year of this tragic incident, the repressive DND relief camp scheme was dismantled. While the dismantling of the relief camps did not solve the problem of unemployment, it marked the end of this programme of state intervention to control the radical unemployed who posed a threat to the existing socio-economic order.

Organization of the Relief Camp Workers

The group that had led the mass demonstrations in the urban centres through its organization of the single unemployed men, the Workers' Unity League (WUL), was created in 1930 by the Communist Party of Canada on orders received from the Communist International, (Lane, 1966: 80) It was an active group, and by 1933, 75 percent of the strikes in Canada were the responsibility of WUL unions (Copp and Morton, 1980: 143). The WUL consisted of various industrial unions, it also established the Relief Camp Workers' Union (RCWU). The RCWU was first organized in the relief camps during the fall of 1931. (Shiels and Swanky, 1977: 77). That year, on the basis of Section 98 of the Criminal Code, the Communist Party was outlawed. Thus, the RCWU was illegal by virtue of its association with the WUL. The British Columbia branch of the RCWU was formed at a conference in Kamloops in July 1933. The union headquarters were initially established in Cranbrook, but within a few months it was moved to Vancouver. The Constitution of the RCWU outlined its primary aims:

1. To organize all relief camp workers
"into a militant union" and to lead
struggles for higher living standards,
relying on the strike weapon
to achieve this end.
2. To campaign for social insurance,
adequate old age pensions compensation
for disability and sickness and
non-contributory unemployment insurance.
3. To carry on in the spirit of "international
proletarian solidarity" against
"capitalist exploitation" and to
support trade unions "in the final

struggle for the overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of a workers' government."
(Shiels and Swanky, 1977: 80).

The Relief Camp Workers' Union was never given any official recognition, and the Department of National Defence maintained a blacklist against its active members. If any man was found to be organizing the relief camp inmates or was believed to be an agitator, he was dismissed from the camp. A list of chronic offenders who were ineligible for readmission was circulated among Employment Service offices, and between provinces (LeFresne, 1961: 97).²⁹ Nevertheless, union members paid dues, held meetings, and elected officers. The RCWU sought to build solidarity among the scattered relief camp inmates by focussing on issues that were common to all. One means to accomplish this was the publication of The Agitator, the official organ of the RCWU. Through this newspaper, the union attacked the camp system, the indignity of working for an allowance of 20 cents per day, and demanded work and wages for the inmates (Brown, 1978: 215). Grievances specific to one camp were dealt with by pamphlets published in that camp. The RCWU also began to publish and circulate a mimeographed newspaper, The Relief Camp Worker, which was used to organize the inmates (Shiels and Swanky, 1977: 77). Organization was easy to

²⁹ It is difficult to obtain accurate statistics of the number of blacklisted organizers, as expelled inmates would usually re-enter camps under assumed names.

establish because of the widespread dissatisfaction in the camps. British Columbia's relief camps established more RCWU locals than any other province (Bourke Collection, Toppings-McEwan: 21).

The presence of the Communist affiliated RCWU intensified the fears of members of the government, the police, and other state officials, that the revolutionaries were organizing and influencing the single unemployed men in the camps. Union members on the other hand, argued that the authorities were simply attempting to divert attention away from the genuine dissatisfaction of the men in the camps by claiming that the grumbling was purely a result of communist agitation, and did not stem from genuine grievances. The consistent hunting down of 'reds' in the camps was simply to legitimate this allegation (Winch Papers: Box 55, File; 7).

The clause in the DND regulations that gave a camp foreman authority to expel a man from a relief camp 'for cause', permitted the supervisors to evict inmates for real or alleged RCWU organization in the camps. Upon expulsion, the only recourse available to the inmate was to appeal to the Department of National Defence. There was no independent board to review any disciplinary action taken by camp officials. Upon eviction an inmate's relief camp card was stamped 'evicted from camp', and the man was not eligible for re-admission, nor was he qualified to collect relief from any municipality in the province. As a result, unemployed jungles were established

again. Very often, men were evicted from a camp and had no means of transportation to the nearest town. Thus they were required to walk many miles without food, to the nearest road or town (Provincial Archives, GR 429, Box 21 File; 3: November 10, 1934). Some men failed to return the issued clothing and were arrested and charged with taking government property. At times these men sought food and shelter through incarceration by eating in a restaurant without having the ability to pay.³⁰

Militancy in British Columbia's Relief Camps

The discontent of the men in the camps became increasingly apparent as they began to exercise visible, and sometimes violent means to express their frustration and to draw attention to their plight. Strikes became frequent throughout the camps in British Columbia (City Clerk's, Vol. 195, File; Provincial Government, 1935, Jan.-Dec.). As early as June 1933 approximately 1,000 relief camp inmates went on strike and marched on Vancouver (Matthews, Vol. 8, No. 2: 25). While the petty stinginess of the DND, the food provided in the camps, and

³⁰ During the year of 1934, in January, 19 men evicted from camps could not pay for their meals, in February, 19 men were sentenced to eight days in jail for obtaining a meal under false pretences (Matthews, Vol. 8, No. 2: 59, 71), by March, there were at least 150 men in Vancouver who had been expelled from the camps and had no means of support whatsoever, in April, about thirty men were discharged from the camps (City Clerk's, Vol. 188, File; Unemployed Organizations Jan.-June); and by August, the Mothers' Council was attempting to assist two hundred men who had been evicted from the camps and blacklisted, and thus not permitted to re-enter the camps or collect other relief (Matthews, Vol. 8, No. 3: August 17, 1935).

the inadequate physical facilities were often the sort of specific grievances which would prompt a strike or demonstration, the fundamental reason of unrest and militant action was the indignation of the men toward the relief camp scheme. During major strikes the men presented demands that were primarily for the abolition of the relief camps and the provision of work and wages. (Matthews, Vol. 8, No. 2: 62, 112) A Commission of Inquiry into the relief camps (the MacDonald Commission, 1935) found that;

The chief grounds for discontent and unrest was the absence of an adequate wage for the workers in the camps. ... It was repeatedly stated that an allowance of 3 cents per day per man over and above the prescribed ration would provide the necessary variety in food desired by the men. (1935: 17-18)

In February 1934 there was an unusually large number of striking inmates evicted, and as a result, the government was obliged to modify its position and permit readmission of evicted men (Eayers, 1964: 137-8; Lane, 1966: 79; City Clerk's Vol. 188, File; Telegram Copies).

The DND relief camps in British Columbia were not the only ones where dissatisfaction existed. Indeed, unrest was widespread throughout the camps, such that between June 1933 and April 1934 there were fifty seven disturbances in federal relief camps that were significant enough to be reported to the National Defence Headquarters in Ottawa (Brown, 1978: 294). British Columbia's camps, however, experienced a high number of uprisings with at least two riots erupting (Matthews, Vol. 8,

No. 3: Feb. 11, 1935; May 13, 1935). In this province, of the nearly 62,000 men who were inmates of the relief camps, over 6,500 were disciplined for their misdemeanor by expulsion from the camps (LeFresne, 1961: 177).

The first general strike of the RCWU took place during December, 1934. That month a strike at the Deroche camp, in protest against the dismissal of the camp cook, resulted in the men from this camp invading Vancouver. The Commissioner of the BCPP was kept up to date with the desertions from the camps by officers commanding various police divisions throughout the province (Provincial Archives, GR 429 File; 4). Within one week these men were joined by approximately 600 additional unemployed, and a delegation was immediately sent to present demands to officials in Victoria.³¹ The demands of the unemployed were;

1. Work with wages of 40 cents an hour, a 7 hour day and a 5 day week.
2. That the camps be taken out of the control of the Department of National Defence.
3. Compensation for injuries sustained on the job.
4. The right to vote in elections - provincial and federal. Blacklisting was also protested by the union. (Shiels and Swanky, 1977: 80).

By December 20, a general march on Vancouver by men from the relief camps was ordered, and inmates from approximately forty

³¹ Initially the delegation was to meet with provincial authorities on December 4, but this was postponed to December 7, and then delayed one more day, resulting in the meeting being held on December 8, 1934.

relief camps participated in the strike. Of the multitude of inmates descending on Vancouver, between 750 and 1000 had been evicted from their camps for their participation in a two day work stoppage in support of the delegation meeting with provincial authorities (Howard, 1974: 11.) As they had done previously, during the strike the relief camp workers paraded to bring attention to their cause. On December 23, the men demonstrated in the downtown department stores of Hudson's Bay, Spencer's, and Woodward's, marching up and down the aisles and calling out slogans such as 'when do we eat?', and 'we want work' (Shiels and Swanky, 1977: 81; Provincial Archives, GR 429 File; 4: Dec. 20, 1934). A citizens' committee donated money for a few days' food and shelter for the men, and the Mothers' Committee of the CCF invited the men home for Christmas Dinner. In the spirit of the holiday season, the city of Vancouver acquiesced to the inmates' demands, and in conjunction with the Salvation Army, provided the relief camps strikers with temporary food and lodging.

The strike was called off on December 28, after two concessions had been granted by the authorities. Premier Pattullo promised to recommend to Ottawa that a commission of inquiry be established to investigate the relief camps in B.C., and the blacklisted men were permitted to collect relief in the city of Vancouver (Howard, 1974: 11).³² While the 1,200-1,500

³² Prime Minister Bennett subsequently refused Pattullo's request, arguing that such an enquiry was under provincial jurisdiction (Lane, 1966: 87).

strikers returned to the relief camps after the December strike, they were not satisfied, as will be evident in the discussion of subsequent strikes and walk-outs.

Police Control of the DND Relief Camps

Even with the containment of thousands of unemployed in the DND relief camps the police did not relax their surveillance of the unemployed. When the men were on strike in Vancouver, as when they were at work in the camps, the municipal, provincial, and Royal Canadian Mounted Police maintained their vigilant watch -- especially on those believed to be agitators. The control of the unemployed involved not only infiltration of the RCWU, enabling the authorities to monitor the activities of the strikers. The unemployed were often arrested for begging as they were 'tin-canning'. During demonstrations which sometimes led to riots, the police had a wide variety of charges at their disposal.³³ Those in the relief camps were not the only concern of the authorities. To facilitate the control of the men who left or were expelled from the camps, 'elaborate plans' were devised by the Department of National Defence, the railway police, the RCMP, and the BCPP, in conjunction with the British Columbia government to contain these unemployed. The BCPP

³³ Some charges laid were; assault on officers, malicious damage to property; vagrancy; obstructing an officer in the course of duty; inciting to riot; carrying offensive weapons; engaging in riot; threats and intimidation; causing an affray; assault on a citizen, and member of an unlawful assembly were laid (City Records, Vol. 12, File; Police Commission, August 10, 1935).

requested that camp foremen notify their local detachment as the men left the camps so the police could arrest the unemployed on vagrancy charges (Provincial Archives, GR 429, Box 21, File; 3, BCPP Radiogram 99, November 16, 1934). At the end of August 1934, when the annual autumn westward migration of transients began, the authorities began enforcing the Railways Act, to significantly curtail the influx of unemployed men into British Columbia (Provincial Archives, GR 429, Box 21, File; 1, June 6, 1934; July 10, 1934; July 13, 1934);³⁴ The provincial police established detachments with a greater than usual number of men at all main points along the railways, and the officers actively engaged in keeping transients from riding the trains (Provincial Archives, GR 429, File; 3: Nov. 17, 1934). The B.C. government supported this action, arguing that the transients riding the rods without paying a fare were not only causing the railway companies to lose money, but a large number of mobile unemployed congregating in B.C.'s coast centres would facilitate communist organization (Provincial Archives, GR 429, File; 3: May 30, 1934). The RCMP commissioner, General MacBrien, claimed that;

Several times during the past years we have prevented large gatherings, which were being arranged under the auspices of the Communist Party, through stopping temporarily at any rate, the free travelling on the Railways....(Provincial Archives, GR 429, File; 1: May 30, 1934)

³⁴ A breakdown of communication, such that the RCMP at the Alberta - B.C. border were not informed that the Railways Act was not to be enforced until September 1, in order to permit some eastward migration, resulted in the Golden, Revelstoke, and Kamloops gaols being filled to capacity and necessitating that fourteen arrested transients be held in a temporary jail (Provincial Archives, GR 429, File; 2, July 24, 1934).

In addition to the overt control of the police, the state authorities were able to keep a close watch on the unemployed through covert methods. By posing as relief inmates in numerous camps, police informants kept the authorities up to date with the activities in the camps, identified 'reds', or organizers, and when possible forewarned of impending strikes. Through their consistent contact with the police detachments nearby, the activities among the unemployed and in the relief camps were closely monitored. Camp foremen notified the police about suspicious visitors, strikes, and other irregularities (Provincial Archives, GR 429, Files; 1,2,3,4). On the basis of daily contact with camp superintendents during strikes, the provincial police officers commanding the nearby divisions were able to regularly forward news of any developments to the commissioner of the BCPP, Colonel McMullin. This extensive control system enabled the authorities to 'speedily adjust' trouble in the camps (Matthews, Vol. 8, No. 2: 66).

Federal - Provincial Disputes

As the relief camp workers continued to strike, and evicted inmates were returning to the urban centres, the problems related to the relief camps were increasingly revealed. Once again public opinion rose in support of the unemployed and demands for government action increased. Once again, responsibility for the unemployed was shunned. Cooperation between the Liberal government of Pattullo and Bennett's Conservatives was virtually non-existent. When a reduction in

federal unemployment relief allowances was ordered in Ottawa, the provincial government 'flatly refused' to accept it, while Victoria and Vancouver argued that they could not afford the proposed rearrangement (Matthews, Vol. 8, No. 2: October 19, 1934, 100; Provincial Archives GR 429 Box 21, File; 2: November 16, 1934). The premier of B.C. along with the mayors of municipalities in the province, consistently badgered the federal government to take action by dealing with the unemployed from its relief camps (City Clerk's, Vol. 186). The B.C. Minister of Labour and the supervisor of relief in the city of Vancouver reiterated their former statements that relief was a question that demanded federal action (City Clerk's, Vol. 186: March 5, 1934). The provincial Attorney General Sloan, telegraphed the Prime Minister at Ottawa in February 1934, demanding that the federal government take immediate steps to remove striking relief camp inmates from the urban centres (City Clerk's, Vol. 188, File; Telegram Copies). After consultation with General McNaughton, as he had done before, Bennett replied that "the constitutional duty of maintaining law and order in B.C. rests with your Government" (Eayers, 1964: 137).

Invariably, McNaughton defended the relief camp system, and it was he who prepared most of the replies sent from the Prime Minister to the B.C. authorities (Eayers, 1964: 138). During the strike in December 1934, pressure on the Bennett government to establish an investigation into the relief camps increased, and on Christmas day a message requesting the appointment of an independent commission of inquiry was sent to

Bennett from all members of both the national parliament and the provincial legislature who represent the greater Vancouver area. Once again McNaughton maintained that such an investigation was outside federal jurisdiction, and although General Ashton of the DND informed his senior officer that "it is seldom, if ever that anything besides adverse criticism appears in the press" (Eayers, 1964: 140), a telegram insisting that no investigation was necessary was drafted by McNaughton, signed by Bennett, and sent to Pattullo and all the protesting government members (Eayers, 1964: 138). The premier subsequently sent a telegram to the Acting Prime Minister, Sir George Perley, claiming that with the possibility of riots, bloodshed and loss of property "... it is incomprehensible that your Government will not make provision so that these men can be put to work upon a basis of reasonable wages..." (cited in; Eayers, 1964: 141), but Ottawa disclaimed responsibility arguing that when the relief camp strikers were out of the camps they had passed out of the jurisdiction of the dominion.

The squabbles over responsibility for the unemployed were not confined to inter-governmental disputes. British Columbia's 'elaborate plans' to enforce the Railways Act at the beginning of the autumn when the unemployed migrated west, were disrupted as the federal police force stationed at the B.C. - Alberta border began to stop the movement of transients leaving British Columbia. Jurisdictional disputes erupted between the federal and provincial police concerning authority over the Yoho National Park, and the RCMP refused to permit the BCPP to use

their lock-up to hold the transients arrested. Perturbed BCPP officers reported that "There has, of course, been no attempt on their part to cooperate with us in any respect in so far as the (Railways) Act is concerned" (Provincial Archives, GR 429 File; 2: July 19, 1934). Furthermore, a decision by the DND to transfer twelve hundred relief camp inmates from Alberta into B.C. met severe resistance from B.C. authorities. The BCPP notified Attorney General Sloan of the transfer, claiming that such action "completely defeats our campaign against transients" (Provincial Archives GR 429, File; 2: October 30, 1934). British Columbia officials protested to the Commissioner of the RCMP General MacBrien, General McNaughton, and Prime Minister Bennett, claiming that such action would only add to the existing congestion of transients at the coast. Nevertheless, the higher authorities went ahead with the transfer, regardless of the threatened gravity of the consequences (Provincial Archives, GR 429, File; 2 November 1, 3, 5, 6, 15, 1934).

While the provincial government argued that care for the relief camp inmates was a federal responsibility, the municipalities consistently demanded that the provincial government do something. During February 1934, when a large number of striking relief camp inmates congregated in Vancouver, and 'serious trouble' beyond the ability of the police to handle was believed imminent, the City Council sent a telegram to the premier of B.C., the Minister of Defence in Ottawa and the Prime Minister, requesting that the provincial government authorize relief authorities to issue emergency allowance to the men from

the relief camps, until such time as the Minister of National Defence decide where the single unemployed are to go. On April 11, 1934, the city of Vancouver sent a delegation to see provincial authorities in an attempt to prompt action over men evicted from the camps who were living in Vancouver (Matthews, Vol. 8, No. 2: 70). When the mayor of Vancouver, Gerry McGeer, attempted to bypass the provincial and federal governments, and deal with the DND through the Officer Commanding Military District Number 11, General Ashton, the mayor was informed that the DND could only take instructions from Ottawa (City Records, Loc. 75 F2, January 17, 1935).

Pressure on the government mounted from private groups as well. Criticism was rampant in the newspapers; and at least two organized bodies, the Vancouver Council of Social Agencies and a 'Committee of Citizens' sent a letter of protest to Bennett. (Provincial Archives, GR 429, Box 21, File; 4: December 22, 28, 1934). In March, 1935 the provincial legislature unanimously passed a resolution condemning the maintenance of the DND camps (Vancouver Province, April 27, 1934, cited in; Lane, 1966: 101).

On April 1 1935 during the absence of both the Prime Minister and General McNaughton, the main supporters of the scheme, the federal parliament made a new attempt to deal with the increased demands for action, and established a Commission of Inquiry into the B.C. relief camps (Eayers, 1964: 144). This inquiry was carried out by three men; the Honourable

W.A. McDonald (who had sentenced the communist leader of the unemployed Arthur Evans to one year in prison for organizing miners), C.T. McHattie (the vice-president of the firm that supplied the clothing for the DND relief camps), and Rev. E.D. Braden. The Commission was instructed to carry out hearings in the various camps, and inspect the facilities of the relief camps. While the Commission was not given the power to make recommendations on government policy in the camps, it did draw attention to some of the grounds for discontent among the inmates.

Strikes, Riots, and State Intervention

The Commission of inquiry into the B.C. DND relief camps was too late. Hearings began on April 4, 1935, the same day that the second general strike of the relief camp workers began. During the previous month, delegates from various camps throughout British Columbia held a conference in Kamloops, and drafted seven demands. They were:

1. That work with wages be instituted at a minimum rate of 50 cents per hour for unskilled workers, and trade union rates for all skilled work, on the basis of a six hour day, five day week, with a minimum of 20 days per month.
2. That all workers in relief camps be covered by the Compensation Act, and that adequate first aid supplies be carried on the job at all time.
3. That the National Defence and all military control, with their system of blacklisting where men are cut off from all means of livelihood,

be abolished.

4. That democratically elected committees be recognized in every camp.
5. That there be instituted a system of non-contributory unemployment insurance based on the workers bill of social and unemployment insurance.
6. That all workers be given their democratic right to vote.
7. That Section 98 of the Criminal Code, Section 41-42 of the Immigration Act, vagrancy laws and all anti-working class laws be repealed. (Shiels and Swanky, 1977: 84).

It was decided at the Kamloops meeting that the workers be called out of their camps on the fourth day of April to hold a general strike in Vancouver. Although the plans of the RCWU were not publicized until April 1 (Liversedge, 1973: xv), informants alerted the police as early as March 22, and on March 25 Pattullo notified Acting Prime Minister Perley of the impending walkout (Liversedge, 1973: 147). The appointment of the Inquiry Commission on April 1 failed to avert the strike however, and as early as April 2, sixty unemployed from a Squamish relief camp had arrived in Vancouver (Liversedge, 1973: xv). Although the police arrested sixty four strikers near Nelson B.C. and charged them under the Railways Act, the evacuation of the men from the camps was well organized and proceeded smoothly. The inmates from each camp established a strike committee and were organized into sections of twelve men. Upon arrival in Vancouver several sections from one locality would join to form one of three divisions. A strategy committee

which directed the strikers, was formed by one representative from each division, and numerous divisional food, publicity, and finance committees took care of daily routines. The men slept in hotels and boarding houses, and meal tickets provided by the RCWU permitted them to eat regularly. The ordered division of responsibility resulted in the strikers' days being filled with activities such as parades, demonstrations, and rallies (Howard, 1974: 12; Liversedge, 1973: 68). During the strike of 1935 the relief workers developed a peculiar method of parading which they referred to as the 'snake parade'. The men would march in columns of four, with their arms linked, weaving from one side of the street to the other. As one participant recalled, it looked like a very, very long, Chinese dragon, and it effectively disrupted any traffic (Liversedge, 1973: 68).

The various levels of government, the different police forces, and the DND all desired that the strikers return to their camps, but they could not agree on how to accomplish this. The RCMP Commissioner, General MacBrien, recommended that the men on strike be allowed to return to the camps without fear of punishment or dismissal, but General Ashton of Military District Number Eleven would not comply.³⁵ The police, too, had ideas on how to get the men back to camp. One Vancouver City policeman reported that;

...I could see no reason why we have not taken some

³⁵ MacBrien had been McNaughton's senior officer for many years, and McNaughton was apparently displeased with MacBrien's involvement (Eayers, 1964: 145).

action, with whatever force was necessary, to control the situation. ...I have discussed the strike situation with some of the officers of the RCMP and they are of the same opinion as myself; that is, that the situation should be cleared up. They also, do not understand why the city authorities do not take a firm stand. (Provincial Archives, GR 429, Box 21, File; 4: May 19, 1935).

Through the data gathered by informants, the Vancouver City Police were able to keep mayor McGeer up to date on the activities of the unemployed. On April 10 1935, McGeer sent a telegram to Pattullo claiming that the 1,400 men in Vancouver were "a disturbing element and a menace to peace, order and good government" (City Records, Loc. 33 B 6, File; 1935 Strike Situation). Pattullo answered the same day that the province would provide no relief, and he refused to participate in a conference with Canadian mayors to discuss the situation (City Records, Loc. 33 B 6, File; 1935 Strike Situation). Throughout the month of April caustic telegrams 'flew' back and forth between Pattullo and McGeer -- the latter demanding action by the provincial government and the premier refusing to take it (City Records, Loc. 33 B 6, File; 1935 Strike Situation).

McGeer continued to send telegrams to Ottawa demanding cooperation with the municipal and provincial government to return the men to the camps. By May 28 McGeer wired Bennett that "we cannot hold the situation any further without resorting to force" (City Records, Loc. 33 B 6, File; 1935 Strike Situation). Although H.H. Stevens, the federal minister of trade and commerce sided with McGeer, advocating federal action, Acting

Prime Minister Perley wired McGeer informing him that the blame for the strike situation was not to be placed on the Dominion, but that it was a provincial problem (Struthers, 1983: 128; Provincial Archives, GR 429, Box 21, File; 4: April 30, May 28, 1935). McGeer refused to take responsibility, arguing that the men were transients, and furthermore, the city could not support strikers who repudiated the federal government's administration. Pattullo denied any responsibility for the inmates, claiming that they were federal charges. The government in Ottawa refused to do anything, claiming that once they evacuated the DND relief camps the men were out of its jurisdiction.

The police had been keeping a close watch on the unemployed throughout the strike. Just as before, informants supplied the authorities with information on supporters, meetings, and organizations of the unemployed, to the extent that a daily record of the activities of the strikers was maintained (City Records, Loc. 75 F1, F2).

The presence of the men in Vancouver gained widespread attention, and support for their cause grew. As a 'prominent and conservative business man of Vancouver and former president of the Board of Trade and Manufacturers' Association' stated, the strikers "... are on the average bright, healthy, clean looking young boys, and might be either your sons or mine...." (City Records, Loc. 33 B 6, File; Strike situation; Correspondence to Perley: April 30, 1935). The editorial of the Vancouver Sun claimed on April 16 that, "The only wonder is that these poor

fellows have not made such demonstrations before" (Liversedge, 1973: xvi). On April 7 the RCWU executive called a conference, and invited all trade unions, political parties, and other organizations to attend. Representatives were sent from forty organizations made up of a variety of unions, the Communist Party, the Socialist Party, and the CCF, as well as women's groups and organizations representing specific ethnic groups (Shiels and Swanky, 1977: 87). The demands of the strikers were endorsed at the conference, and delegates were sent to the provincial government on the behalf of the men from the relief camps. As in the past, however, the provincial government would not accept responsibility for the unemployed from the camps, claiming that such action would be outside of provincial jurisdiction.

On two occasions, the strikers attempted to bypass the governments that denied any responsibility for them. On April 9, Matt Shaw, a representative of the unemployed strikers obtained a ten minute meeting with Lord Bessborough, the Canadian Governor General, while the King's representative was waiting for his train. The Governor General promised to relay the message of the problem of the strikers to the authorities in Ottawa. The second attempt was on the occasion of King George V's twenty-fifth Jubilee. The strikers sent a telegram suggesting that His Majesty instruct Bennett to furnish immediate relief for two thousand relief camp workers who were sentenced to starvation in Vancouver (Liversedge, 1973: xvii).

The growing support for the relief camp strikers was demonstrated in a practical way on April 13, 1935 when citizens of Vancouver filled tin cans bearing the slogan 'when do we eat' with approximately \$5,500, during 'the greatest tag day in the history of Vancouver'. The mayor refused to give permission for this tag day, but the futility of arresting the unemployed was recognized when organizers threatened to send hundreds of men to replace fifty who had been arrested in New Westminster.

During the strike of 1935, the men demonstrated in major department stores in the city, as they had done during the strike of December, 1934. One such demonstration, on April 12, passed peacefully, but such was not the case on the twenty third of that month. Through informants the police were able to forewarn three major stores that the men were proceeding to the store to stage a demonstration, but the management at Hudson's Bay did not heed the warning and guard the doors against the men as Spencer's and Woodward's had done (City Records, Loc. 33 B 6, File; Strike Situation: April 26, 1935, Constable's report to Chief). One division of parading relief camp workers marched into the main floor of the store, and for thirty minutes spoke to the shoppers about their demands. During this time the police arrived, and after some words were exchanged the police "went to work with ... clubs" and a battle ensued (City Records, Loc. 33 B 6, File; Strike Situation: April 25, 1935). Relief camp strikers and police both received injuries and a number of the strikers were arrested. Approximately \$5,000 worth of damage was

done as merchandise and showcases were destroyed.³⁶ The strikers marched to Victory Square where they were joined by other strikers as well as sympathetic citizens. A delegation of twelve relief camp strikers went to the City Hall to seek an audience with the mayor. After refusing to grant money to the strikers, McGeer had ten of the delegation arrested for vagrancy (Howard, 1974: 25). A second delegation was dispatched but failed to meet the mayor at City Hall, as he was on his way to Victory Square.

Upon the arrival of the mayor, Victory Square was surrounded by approximately two hundred mounted and foot police from all three forces (Shiels and Swanky, 1977: 90). McGeer mounted the Cenotaph in the Square, and in a voice that was inaudible to most of the crowd he read the Riot Act. In his speech McGeer claimed that;

It is now perfectly clear that Vancouver is being victimized by an organized attempt to capitalize, for revolutionary purposes, on the conditions of the depression which now exist. From information supplied to me, there is a definite organization of Communistic activities which are centering on calling of a general strike in Vancouver. (Cited in Vancouver News Herald, Matthews, Vol. 8, No. 3": April 24, 1935).

The mayor's radio speech the next day furthered this argument.

The men in the camps were also assured that the general strike in Vancouver would be the commencement of a revolution that would sweep the existing system aside and substitute in its place a proletariat dictatorship that would change our system of government into one of communistic authority and

³⁶ Police subsequently stationed officers at all the doors of Hudson's Bay, Spencer's and Woodward's (City Records, Loc. 33 B 6, Constable's Report to Chief: May 23, 1935).

Soviet power. ... The present trouble is by no means confined to a protest against relief camp conditions. The present disturbance is well organized and coldly planned and goes much further than mere relief camp grievances. ... The facts are simply that a group of agitators have decided to make Vancouver the battleground for communist propaganda. ... Similarly with the organization of the Relief Camp Strike, a deliberate attempt has been made to commence a proletariat revolution under the auspices of Communistic leadership. ("A Momentous Declaration" Radio Address by McGeer, Saturday, April 27, 1935; 7:30 p.m., in Matthews, Vol. 13, File; 54).

After McGeer read the Riot Act the police escorted the unemployed from the Square to their places of accommodation. Three strikers who attempted to resist the authority of the Act were arrested. Within four hours of the dispersal of the men the city and provincial police carried out simultaneous raids on headquarters of the relief camp strikers. A protest demonstration was carried out that same evening, and nineteen more arrests were made (Matthews, Vol. 8, No. 3, April 24, 1935). McGeer used the events of April 23 to further his allegations that Ottawa was to blame for the situation created by the strike, and informed Sir George Perley that "This unfortunate incident is due entirely to your government's ineffective policy of administering (the) unemployment situation (City Records, April 23, 1935).

The violence surrounding the strikers' demonstration on the 23rd of April did not diminish the support of the citizens of Vancouver. On the 26th a one hour sympathy strike was held by the Longshoremen's union, and they donated one percent of a month's pay to the unemployed strikers (Shiels and Swanky, 1977: 94), and the same day a number of religious and secular

organizations in Vancouver passed resolutions that condemned the Dominion government's relief camp policy (Matthews, Vol. 8, No. 3: April 26, 1935). While a meeting on April 20 was attended by 5,000 strikers and citizens, five days after the reading of the Riot Act, on April 28 1935, a rally was held in the Vancouver Arena and the largest crowd to ever attend an indoor public meeting in Vancouver (approximately 16,000 people), were present (Howard, 1974: 28, Liversedge, 1973: xvi). On May 1, 1935 the strikers were joined by members of three trade unions, as well as over three thousand students in a May Day Parade and picnic at Stanley Park (Shiels and Swanky, 1977: 94). A few police observed the 14-15,000 participants, but they did not intervene in the activities.

The unemployed strikers kept active, and on May 18 one division paraded into the Vancouver Library and without hesitation, proceeded up the stairs to the Museum. Approximately five hundred men barricaded themselves in the City Museum for twenty four hours, and draped a sign out the window asking 'when do we eat?' A throng of spectators gathered outside. Food was brought by bake shops, stores, delicatessens and cafes, and placed in a basket that was pulled up to the window by a long rope. The occupation of the museum was a success, and the mayor and the police chief conceded to grant \$1,800 from the city police department Emergency Fund to provide the strikers with two meals per day for six days - the only subsidy given to the strikers by the city (Howard, 1974: 30, Liversedge, 1973: 80). McGeer used this opportunity to inform Bennett that;

Never in the history of the Dominion of Canada has blind brutal lawlessness been more in evidence than it has been during the last month in the city. Our funds are therefore exhausted and we cannot do anything more than we have done. We cannot force the relief camp strikers to go back to the camp. We cannot force them to be orderly and peaceful. (Howard, 1974: 30).

As the strike dragged on without any progress being made, enthusiasm among the unemployed relief camp inmates waned. They had not achieved any negotiations from the government on their demands, and support from some organizations diminished. The CCF for example, was low on funds, and in addition, did not want to be identified with the Communists (Howard, 1976: 30; Lane, 1966: 105). Furthermore, the DND relaxed its re-entry provisions to entice strikers to return to the camps, and approximately three hundred applied to return (Lane, 1966: 105). On May 29 a vote was taken to determine the level of support for the continuation of the strike. The outcome was, of 923 votes, 637 supported continuing the strike, and 270 rejected. Four hundred did not vote, and 16 ballots were spoiled (Howard, 1974: 30-31). That same day, at a mass meeting of the unemployed, Arthur Evans, an active Communist leader of the unemployed, put forward the suggestion that the men travel to Ottawa and lay their demands before the authorities there. After listening to Evans outline the need to put pressure on Ottawa to address the demands of the unemployed, the proposal was voted on, immediately, accepted and ratified, and organization of the On to Ottawa Trek began.

The On To Ottawa March

The relief camp strikers were refused permission to hold a tag day on Saturday, June 1, to raise funds for the trek -- McGeer claimed that;

...by their association with communists, nuisance parades and assaults on police they had forfeited any right to the city's assistance (Shiels and Swanky, 1977: 105).

Regardless, the tag day was held; and despite twenty arrests, between seventeen and eighteen hundred dollars was raised (Matthews, Vol. 8, No. 3: June 3, 1935).

Prior to leaving, the organizers ruled that any unemployed with noteworthy jail records were to stay behind. As well, older men were urged to remain in Vancouver, although the final decision was their own. The trekkers were thus predominately young men, the average age being twenty three to twenty four years (MacInnis, 1935: 34-7).³⁷

The authorities in Vancouver were jubilant over the strikers leaving the city, and the Chief Constable informed the mayor that "...my own opinion is that, properly handled, this trek will melt away" (City Records, Loc. 33 B 6: June 1, 1935). The railway sought to avert the departure of the trekkers by sending the freight off an hour and a half early, but the trekkers and supporters were prepared, and the first contingent

³⁷ To publicize the proposed trek, 30,000 leaflets were printed, asking the citizens of Vancouver to show their support by seeing the men off at the CPR station on June 3 at 10:00 p.m.

of men embarked on the 8:30 freight, cheered on by approximately one thousand supporters at the rail station.

The trekkers left Vancouver in two groups. On June 3, approximately seven to eight hundred men jumped a ninety car freight train, and early the next morning another two hundred men left Vancouver.³⁸ A few police were present in the large crowd, but there was no disruption from either railway officials or the police.

Throughout the trek, most of the train engineers and railway officials cooperated with the trekkers. Rather than prohibiting the men from riding the rods, engineers catered to their passengers and gave blasts of the whistle to warn them when the train was about to move, pulled up to loading platforms for the men to disembark, and gave advice on how to avoid breathing in fumes. Empty boxcars were left unsealed to provide storage space for food and packs, and fewer cars were attached to compensate for the added weight of the trekkers (Shiels and Swanky, 1977: 112-113, 118; Regina Riot Inquiry, cited in Liversedge 1973: 281-250). Doc Savage, a trek leader recalled that,

citizens were nearly 100 percent with us. No one can say anything against it or us. We were well disciplined and unified, and no one can say he was on the trek as an individual. (Savage, Interview).

³⁸ Doc Savage, a trek leader, reported that all the trekkers left together on the 10:10 freight, June 3.

The two contingents of trekkers arrived in Kamloops on June 4. Evans' telegram had not reached the designated person, and consequently, adequate preparation was not made for the men. An unauthorized tag day was held, and \$8 was raised. This contributed to the money collected in Vancouver, and permitted the men to eat in local cafes.³⁹ Due to the inadequate preparation, the proposed two day stop over in Kamloops was cancelled, and the trekkers continued their journey.

After a brief stop in Revelstoke for the train to take on water and coal, and a bitterly cold trip over the Rockies, on June 6 the 1,200 trekkers arrived in Golden.⁴⁰ Supporters of the trek were well prepared with stew cooking in pots and bathtubs strung over open fires in the park.⁴¹

While advance teams were making preparations in Calgary for the arrival of the trekkers, the city officials sought to convince the Commissioner of the RCMP, General MacBrien to stop the men at the B.C. - Alberta border. This attempt was futile however, and on June 7 the men arrived in that city. They were

³⁹ Damage amounting to approximately \$5 was done to crockery at one cafe. Those responsible were removed from the trek, and money for repairs was forwarded to the proprietors.

⁴⁰ The Connaught Tunnel took approximately thirty minutes to pass through, and was filled with 'dirty, brown, billowing, gritty, warm smoke' that created an overpowering acrid sulphurous stench and gave the men a choking sensation. The men covered their mouths and noses with handkerchiefs, rags, or blankets. Two or three were overcome by the fumes (Savage, Interview).

⁴¹ In Golden, Arthur Evans left the trekkers to return to Vancouver, but rejoined them in Medicine Hat on June 12.

housed in the Calgary exhibition grand stand building, and during their stay were joined by another 150 unemployed from Edmonton. The reception by Calgary officials was particularly hostile. Civic government members described the trekkers as 'communists, tramps, and hooligans' (Howard, 1980: 40). The Calgary relief agent wired the federal Minister of Labour claiming that the British Columbia single men were;

A dangerous revolutionary army intimidating and defying provincial and municipal governments by threats and actually holding officials as hostage demands met. Their success having far reaching effect that may be difficult to control (A.A. MacKenzie to W.A. Gordon, June 11, 1935; cited in Howard, 1980: 40, 45).

Nevertheless, the trekkers did succeed in obtaining provision for three days' sustenance from the authorities of the city and the Alberta government. Local farmers were generous, and beef, eggs, and other foodstuffs were donated. A tag day netted a further fifteen hundred dollars.

After the stop in Calgary, the trekkers proceeded to Medicine Hat. They remained there for twenty four hours, and were provided with accommodation, cooking facilities, and \$230 to purchase some food.

The next stop was in Swift Current Saskatchewan, and an advance committee had secured two meals for the 1500 men, courtesy of the provincial government. The train officials were instructed by the city to hold the train for forty five minutes until the men had eaten. After the short stop-over the trekkers were on their way again.

The city of Moose Jaw was well prepared for the trekkers. The Chief Constable had predetermined the route the trekkers were to take from the train station to the exhibition grounds, but led by local citizens, the strikers took a different route and raised \$340. Joined by an undercover RCMP officer that day, at midnight on June 13 the trekkers set out for the train, and what was to be the last leg of their journey (Howard, 1980: 39).

On June 14 the unemployed arrived in Regina. It was in this city, with its concentration of RCMP that the authorities had determined to bring an end to the On to Ottawa Trek. Although on June 8, Bennett informed the House of Commons that until some complaint from the local authorities on the line of this march reached his ears, he would do nothing to prevent the men from reaching Ottawa (Matthews, Vol. 8, No. 3: June 8, 1935), a subsequent Inquiry revealed that on June 11 the RCMP Commissioner telephoned the Assistant Commissioner, Colonel Wood, who was the head of the federal force in Saskatchewan, and instructed him to stop the relief camp trekkers in Regina. This telephone call was confirmed by a telegram the following day (Regina Riot Inquiry, cited in; Liversedge, 1973: 178). The decision to stop the trek in Regina was not made after appeals or consultation with local provincial authorities. The day after the order to stop the trekkers was given, Premier Gardiner informed the press that;

Mr. Bennett took the legal position yesterday that he would not interfere with the men unless asked to do so by the province. He has never been asked by this

province to interfere, and we would ask him to keep his hands off the policing of this province (Shiels and Swanky, 1977: 122, June 12, 1935).

Maintaining that the federal - provincial agreement gave Saskatchewan authority over the RCMP in that province, Gardiner sent wires to Bennett protesting the halting of the men in Regina. The premier informed Bennett by wire that;

Provincial government in position to handle situation in its relation to the administration of justice which has developed as a result of the marchers passing through this province. Confusion existing in minds of officers of Royal Mounted Police and Railways re authority as a result of orders issued from Ottawa may result in difficulties which may become serious. Would ask Ottawa to withdraw orders affecting the administration of justice in this province and await a request for action from this government should it be necessary to advance one. (Shiels and Swanky, 1977: 122).

Bennett justified the action of the federal government on the grounds that the RCMP were assisting the railway police in stopping illegal travel on the trains. The letter from the railway requesting such action was dated June 12, a day after the instructions were issued (Shiels and Swanky, 1977: 119). Furthermore, after talking with railway officials, Gardiner informed the Prime Minister that the men could not be considered as trespassers, as the railway had assisted the men by delaying trains, pulling to loading platforms for them, and providing cars for the use of the trekkers.

It is apparent that the decision to stop the trekkers in Regina was made by the federal cabinet, and the task was carried out by the federal police force. The claim that the railways had requested such action to be taken appears to be an after the

fact justification for action taken outside the jurisdiction of the national government and against the wishes of the province. Premier Gardiner later testified that;

...these men were apparently being allowed on freight trains across Canada, and ... I saw no reason why there should be any disturbance while they were in the province of Saskatchewan ... The main objection I made at that time was to instructions being given to the Mounted Police from Ottawa without the government of this province having been informed they were to be given or consulted about it any way whatsoever. In view of the fact that the province was paying \$275,000 for the services of the Mounted Police in this province, and they were supposed to take their instructions from us in connection with matters that had to do with the administration of justice in the province. (Regina Riot Inquiry, cited in Liversedge, 1973: 231-250)⁴²

Unable to continue riding the rods to Ottawa, due to police blockades, some trekkers attempted to proceed eastward along the highways. These men were halted outside of Regina by RCMP acting under the authority of orders in council passed under the Relief Measures Act. Subsequent communication between the Saskatchewan Attorney General and the federal Minister of Justice indicates, however, that;

the 1931 enactment (Relief Measures Act) expired in 1932 and 1934 enactment expired in March this year (1935). I believe further act introduced this session but have no knowledge if it has become law and in any event if it is law as introduced it expressly provides that the governor-general has no authority to pass order-in-council thereunder when House of Commons is in session. You then instructed police authorities without our knowledge or concurrence to proceed under Sec. 98 of the Criminal Code The duty of enforcing

⁴² Clause 16 of the provincial-federal agreement would support Gardiner's position.

criminal law is upon the government of this province but you are instructing police in connection with the enforcement of the Criminal Code.... (cited in; Shiels and Swanky, 1977: 195, July 2, 1935).

Public support for the trekkers was strong in Saskatchewan. At a conference in Saskatoon, a Baptist minister claimed;

There is something wrong with civilization's present system when an army of young men, seeking to put their complaints before their government are stopped by police and arrested as tramps and bums. (Matthews, Vol. 8, No. 3: June 14, 1935)

In Regina, federal police forces were augmented by at least 125 officers, when the RCMP commissioner in Saskatchewan was ordered to put the largest mobilization scheme into effect in his division (Shiels and Swanky, 1977: 154). Railway officials sent more than eighty extra officers to Regina to enforce the instructions from Ottawa. As in other prairie cities, the trekkers were housed in the Regina exhibition grounds, and were "retained there under guard pending final disposition or dispersal of them" (Matthews, Vol. 8, No. 3: June 12, 1935). During their stay in Regina, the trekkers kept active. The first evening they were there, June 14, a rally was held that attracted six thousand people. The audience was addressed by the national secretary of the CCF, religious leaders, labour leaders, members of the Canadian Communist Party, and the trekkers' leader Arthur Evans (Howard, 1980: 40; Shiels and Swanky, 1977: 131). A tag day in the city on June 15

netted \$1,446, as well as donations of clothing, boots and food. The next day the Regina Citizens Emergency Committee sponsored a picnic for the strikers. In the meantime however, plans were drawn by the police, to ensure that the trekkers did not continue their journey (Police records, cited in Shiels and Swanky, 1977: 134).

On Monday, June 17 a meeting took place between the federal Minister of Agriculture, Weir, the Minister of Railways, Manion, and the leaders of the trek. The trek leaders saw no alternative than to accept the government's proposal, and to the surprise of Manion and Weir, it was agreed that the federal government would finance a delegation to travel to Ottawa to present the demands of the strikers before the Bennett government. While the delegation of eight was travelling to Ottawa on federal expense, the main body of trekkers in Regina were instructed not to attempt to continue their journey eastward. They were to be provided with three meals per day by the national government, and additional housing quarters. As well, those in Regina were not to encourage more unemployed to join the trek, and they were not to be intimidated by the authorities.

State Coercion

The delegation arrived in Ottawa on June 21, and met with Bennett and members of his cabinet the following day. The meeting lasted approximately one hour. The tenor of the encounter was uncooperative.⁴³ Evans, the spokesman for the delegation made a lengthy presentation outlining the relief camp strikers' grievances and demands, and others supplied shorter contributions. Bennett's response was that the provinces were responsible for their unemployed, the camps were good enough, and the trek was a communist ploy. A heated exchange followed, with Evans and Bennett exchanging accusations. The demands of the trekkers were not considered, and the meeting was unfruitful. One member of the delegation, Doc Savage, described the meeting as "very abusive, with no dialogue" (Savage, Interview).

After the encounter, Bennett appealed to "all law-abiding Canadians ... to use thier influence against the agitation behind the On to Ottawa march of the unemployed (as it was a) menace to law and order" (Matthews, Vol. 8, No. 3: June 24, 1935). He claimed that;

The present movement of these men toward Ottawa...is an organized effort to effect the overthrow of the constituted authority, in definance of the law of the land, on the part of several communistic societies in Canada. (Matthews, Vol. 8, No. 3: June 24, 1935).

⁴³ See Liversedge, pages 195-216 for a transcription of the interview; and Howard, 1976b, "On to Ottawa" part 2, An Historical Magazine Vol. 3, No. 4, June 1976, for a discussion of the meeting.

Relief for the trekkers in Regina was cut off as of June 25, and it became illegal to contribute money to these strikers. Those who disobeyed were liable for prosecution. On June 27 some of the trekkers attempted to proceed east by highway, and trucks and the appropriate permits were secured. However, the RCMP prevented the strikers from leaving the city, and all those in the vehicles were arrested (Matthews, Vol. 8, No. 3: June 27 1935). After the arrests, Assistant Commissioner Wood telegraphed Commissioner MacBrien for instructions on what charge to lay against the arrested, and asked that the federal government declare the strikers as an unlawful association so the arrests could be justified under Section 98 of the Criminal Code. Using funds surreptitiously donated, the trekkers sought to go east as paying rail passengers. The CPR refused to transport them claiming that it had been so instructed by the authorities (Shiels and Swanky, 1977: 164). The federal government established a camp for the trekkers at Lumsden Saskatchewan and urged the men to enroll. In a few days some dissatisfied trekkers did so.⁴⁴ The RCMP began to gather information about the leaders of the trek. Warrants had been issued for the arrest of the leaders, but a basis for arrest was needed in order that they could be legally arrested and prosecuted.

⁴⁴ Howard states that 161 men applied (Howard; 1976b: 7), whereas Shiels and Swanky account for only 19 applications (Shiels and Swanky, 1977: 164).

On July 1, 1935 a general meeting was held at Market Square, and was attended by approximately 3,000 trekkers and townspeople (Shiels and Swanky, 1977: 180, 184). During the meeting, the RCMP and the Regina City Police proceeded to the Square to arrest eight trek leaders for whom warrants had been issued under the authority of Section 98 of the Criminal Code. The police came well prepared. Three vans transporting twenty five men each, and a mounted troop of thirty eight men were dispatched to the Square. The uniformed officers were armed with batons, steel helmets and side arms, and the trucks contained rounds of ammunition and gas grenades. In addition to these contingents, between twenty and twenty five plainclothes officers, armed with batons, were mingling with those attending the meeting at the Square.

The vans of police surrounded three sides of the Square, and upon a whistle signal, "the big double doors opened", the officers began to converge on the meeting (Savage, Interview). Panic struck the crowd, and a melee broke out. The uniformed and mounted men, along with the plainclothes officers began to swing their batons, presumably to disperse the crowd. The crowd retaliated by swinging sticks, throwing stones, and using any other make-shift weapons available. "It was madness" Savage recalled (Savage, Interview). The skirmishes rapidly became a riot, flooding out of the Square into the streets of the city. Parked cars were overturned to act as barricades for the strikers. The police used gas grenades and their guns. Over 100 civilians required hospitalization due to injuries and forty

trekkers received gunshot wounds (Liversedge, 1973: 116). One trekker, who assisted two friends with bullet wounds, recalled, "you'd be a liar if you said you weren't frightened" (Jackson, Interview). The day was tragically marked by the death of a plainsclothes Regina police officer who was beaten to death. The riot continued late into the night. By the end of that evening, over one hundred arrests had been made (Report in the Regina Press, cited in Liversedge, 1973: 182-184, 195). When it was over, there were hundreds of injuries to strikers, townspeople and police, and damage to property was considerable.^{4 5}

As the riot subsided, most of the trekkers returned to the Stadium where they were being housed. The RCMP, armed with guns surrounded the stadium and erected a barbed wire fence around it. No one was permitted to enter the fair grounds' building, and men were allowed to leave only in twos.

As before, the government of Saskatchewan was not notified in advance about the police action. On the night of July 1, Gardiner telegraphed Bennett, stating that the "... police raided public meeting to arrest leaders, precipitating a riot" (Liversedge, 1973: 45). Bennett, on the other hand; believed that this incident was a result of

subversive attempts by Communists to overthrow Constituted authority in Canada by sowing seeds of disruption and rebellion among relief campers all over the country. (Matthews, Vol. 8, No. 3: July 3, 1935).

^{4 5} Excerpts from the Regina Riot Inquiry, Liversedge, 1973: 231-250; Newspaper and strikers' reports, cited in Shiels and Swanky, 1977: 180-195)

On July 2 a meeting was held between a delegation of the trekkers and Premier Gardiner. In cooperation with the federal government, an agreement was reached whereby the trekkers were offered the provision of railway tickets anywhere in Canada, the injured were to be given medical treatment, and upon discharge from the hospitals, would be transported to their chosen destination as others were.

At noon on July 5, two trains were filled with nearly 1,200 trekkers enroute to various parts of Canada.⁴⁷ Seven to eight hundred of these men went to Vancouver, some of whom had never been to B.C. previously (Matthews, Vol. 8, No. 3: July 10, 1935). Upon returning to the west coast, most of the men registered for re-entry into the relief camps. The grounds used to house the returned strikers was patrolled by the RCMP, as mayor McGeer was afraid that they would join striking longshoremen (Matthews, Vol. 8, No. 3: July 3, 1935). By July 9, however, McGeer informed the provincial Minister of Finance

⁴⁶ In Vancouver, on the day of the riot, the police raided the headquarters of the RCWU and used what they gathered as evidence against the leaders of the trek for whom the arrest warrants had been issued. (Matthews, Vol. 8, No. 3: July 3, 1935). The trekkers who were arrested on July 1 were charged with unlawful and riotous assembly and nine were convicted and given prison terms ranging from seven to eighteen months. Local support for the arrested was high, and those in hospital were visited regularly (Broadfoot, 1973: 42).

⁴⁷ Some unemployed attempted to continue the trek to Ottawa, but after camping there for two weeks they were dispersed due to a shortage of funds (Matthews, Vol. 8, No. 3: July 11, 1935; Eayers, 1964: 148).

that;

I think the relief camp strike is practically broken.... In that event we can look forward to an opportunity to get on with some of the important work of readjusting the financial and taxation problems of our city. (City Records, Loc. 33 B 6, File; 1935 Strike Situation: July 9, 1935, McGeer to Hart).

As before, the BCPP kept a close watch on the activities of the relief camp inmates and communist organizers. On July 10, police informants who had attended a mass meeting of the returned trekkers submitted a forty-four page transcript of the proceedings to the chief. (Public Records, Loc. 75, F2, File; 9) After the men had re-entered the camps the police maintained their previous vigilance and kept a close watch on strikers and camp deserters. Strikes were reported to Commissioner McMullin, and police were called in to control any trouble. The rules were strictly enforced, and expulsions were relatively frequent (Provincial Archives, File GR 429, Box 21, File; 5).

Summary

The violent repression of the unemployed on the occasion of the Regina Riot was the climax of the Canadian state's efforts to destroy the unemployed movement. It is clear that the scheme was a repressive measure undertaken by the Canadian state to control the single, transient unemployed who were calling for radical social change. The camp inmates were held under extensive control in the relief camps. Not only were they sequestered in remote regions of the province, the Relief Camp

Workers' Union was declared illegal, and the state utilized every possible resource to destroy the inmates' organization. In these camps the unemployed were not provided with any viable avenue to express their frustrations and demands, and were denied a wage for their labour. The intensive state control of the DND camp inmates contributes to the evidence that these camps were, in effect, equivalent to prisons for the dissident unemployed. The bitter disputes between the various state institutions reveals the unprecedented character of this unusual repressive scheme. This programme was an extra-ordinary method used by the Canadian state to repress the dissidents, and the established state procedures could not guide state actions. Despite this extensive coercion, the unemployed movement continued to gather momentum and strength.

The strike of 1935 and the On to Ottawa Trek served to intensify the perceived threat posed by the unemployed. As various repressive state actions persistently failed to crush the radical unemployed, state authorities ultimately reached a state of virtual panic. McGeer's reading of the Riot Act illustrates that government authorities were resorting to rare and arbitrary methods in the attempt to control the unemployed. Laws did not permit the extreme repressive action that state officials deemed necessary to suppress the men. Consequently, the government manifested flagrant disregard for the law in its attempt to crush the unemployed -- as witnessed in the halting of the trekkers in Regina.

The violence against the unemployed at the Regina Riot, and the incarceration of the trek leaders, along with the promise of improved conditions in the camps, was ultimately successful in breaking the strength of the growing, threatening, unemployed movement. The defeat of the radical unemployed came only after the brutal exercise of state coercive powers. The movement had persistently expanded, despite increasingly coercive attempts by the Canadian state to suppress the politicization of the unemployed single men. Eventually, jurisdictional limitations were overlooked, and a coercive state institution, the military, attempted to take control of a growing group of dissidents. Nevertheless, this failed to stem the radicalization of the men. The subsequent state action was the decapitation and impairment of the movement, by the removal of the On to Ottawa Trek leaders.

At least one hundred twenty five armed police officers moved to the mass meeting in Regina to arrest eight unarmed men. Although no basis for the arrests had been established, the subsequent riot permitted the state authorities to realize their intentions. The trek leaders, among others, were arrested and charged with riotous assembly, and the injuries of hundreds of trekkers seriously impaired the unemployed movement. The subsequent armed guard that the men were held under in Regina, and the organized dispersal of the unemployed to the relief camps, brought the victory of the state over the unemployed.

The foregoing clearly illustrates that the defeat of the unemployed necessitated excessive, brutal state violence. Usual, legal efforts within jurisdictional responsibility proved incapable of meeting the challenge of the unemployed. Even the exceptional state coercion, the DND relief camp scheme, failed to adequately repress the men. The ultimate success of the state in smashing the movement necessitated the violence exercised in Regina on July 1, 1935.

This incident of violent state repression seriously impaired and demoralized the unemployed. With promises of improved conditions, the unemployed returned passively to the relief camps. The restoration of 'law and order' brought the end of the DND relief camp scheme. Nevertheless, the persistent failure of the capitalist economy to provide work for all who were willing to work, initiated weak, but renewed struggle. The tenacity of the unemployed in their battle for the establishment of a policy to provide a level of subsistence for those who capital could not absorb, gained prominence again during 1938. Once again, violent repression of the demands was utilized by the state, in the eviction of the unemployed from Vancouver's Post Office and Art Gallery. In the next chapter, I shall discuss the end of the repressive relief camp scheme, and the concluding years of the struggle of the unemployed during the Great Depression.

Chapter Six

The End of the DND Relief Camp Strategy

Introduction

The closure of the relief camps in July 1936 was one means used by the state to destroy the "ready-made forum for the propagation of subversive doctrines" (Rogers, "The National Attack on Unemployment" Labour Gazette 36, Jan. 1937: 141). Although some work programmes were established, and there was a limited improvement in the economy, the problem of unemployment was not solved. By the fall of 1936, transients were once again drifting across the country. Despite Premier Pattullo's protests, many stayed in British Columbia, and Vancouver witnessed a recurrence of demonstrations by the unemployed and violent police repression.

In this chapter, I shall conclude the account of the struggle of the unemployed during the Great Depression. Although the Regina Riot broke the momentum of the unemployed movement, their demands had not been met, and hence, they persisted. The outbreak of World War Two during 1939, however, opened up new occupations for thousands. Nevertheless, as the establishment of the 1940 Unemployment Insurance Act indicates, the ten year struggle of the unemployed did, ultimately, affect Canadian state policy.

End of the Relief Camp Strategy

In the autumn of 1935 a federal election brought the defeat of R.B. Bennett, and MacKenzie King continued his lengthy term as Prime Minister. The King government immediately established the Rigg Commission to investigate the camps, and to determine the desirability of continuing them. In its interim report during February of 1936, the Committee recommended that the camps be closed as soon as possible, "in the best interests of the state and for the sound, healthy development of the majority of men now in the camps" (Matthews, Vol. 8, No. 4: Feb. 3, 1936). The Rigg Commission argued that the camps had been established as a temporary measure to relieve an emergency situation. It warned that;

... due to the prolongation of their existence, they constitute a serious danger, since the tendency must inevitably be that they will be accepted as a fixed national institution akin to the Poor Law Work Houses of Europe, if their existence is perpetuated. ("Interior Report on Relief Camps in Canada" Labour Gazette 36, Feb. 1936: 141).

The federal minister of Labour, Norman Rogers, told the Canadian Club in Toronto that the camps were an expensive luxury. He went on to claim that;

For Communist agitators they provided a ready-made forum for the propagation of subversive doctrines where teachers and pupils were given shelter, food and clothing at the expense of the Government. (Hon. Norman Rogers "The National Attack on Unemployment" Labour Gazette 37; Jan. 1937: 26).

The dismantling of the camps began in November 1935, and was supervised by the newly established National Employment Commission. The completion of the closures was to be effected by July 1 1936. Prior to the closure, some recreation facilities were established in the camps, and as of March 1, 1936, the allowances of the inmates was increased to \$15 per month. \$7.50 of this was cash payment, and the balance was set aside to be given to the inmates upon leaving (Matthews, Vol. 8, No. 4: Feb. 26, 1936).

Job Creation for the Relief Camp Inmates

The CPR and the CNR promised to employ 10,000 unemployed from the relief camps as of April 1, 1936, for temporary maintenance work during that summer. The federal government provided each railway with \$1,500,000 for that purpose. As well, other opportunities for employment were made for the relief camp inmates. In the spring of 1935 forestry and placer mining camps were established in B.C., providing jobs for approximately 4,700 men (Lane, 1966: 113). Winter Works Projects created jobs for 2,500 homeless men, with camp work at a rate of 12 cents per hour and 75 cents per day deducted for food and shelter (Winch Papers: 7-8). Many of the relief camp workers went to Spain to fight Franco in the Spanish Civil War. Indeed, relief camp workers comprised approximately half of the 1200 man Canadian contingent, the Mackenzie - Papineau Battalion (Walsh, in Montero, 1979: 45).

These federal programmes cost that government less than direct relief had, and enabled McKenzie King to consistently reduce federal relief payments throughout 1937 (Struthers, 1983: 159). The Prime Minister justified these relief cuts by pointing to the general improvement in the economy. The economic improvement did not, however, directly affect those who were dependent on relief, and hence, the federal reduction in social assistance served to increase the burden of the local governments (Struthers, 1983: 168). As was characteristic of inter-governmental relations in previous years, the provinces were displeased by the federal action. British Columbia, in particular, retaliated to the cutbacks by refusing to provide for any non-resident unemployed.

In the autumn of 1937 a recession hit the recovering economy, and relief numbers climbed once again. By the winter of 1938 the number of non-residents in B.C.'s forestry camps had increased fifty percent from the previous year (Struthers, 1983: 192). Regardless of the rise in relief costs, the federal government froze its payments at the October 1937 level (Struthers, 1983: 188).

Due to the absence of a federal government increase in assistance, Patullo closed the province's Winter Works camps six weeks early in the spring of 1938. Consequently, by May of that year, approximately 1,200 single, homeless unemployed men had once again congregated in Vancouver. Neither the federal nor the provincial level of government would provide for the men, each

one claiming it was the responsibility of the other.

Renewed Militancy

Public sympathy for the single unemployed men was prevalent, and these men took action. The successor of the RCWU, the Relief Project Worker's Union, organized parades and mass meetings, demanding work for the men. On the afternoon of May 20, 1938, these unemployed divided into three contingents. Six hundred men marched into the main Post Office in Vancouver, six hundred occupied the Art Gallery, and the remainder sat down in the lobby of the Georgia Hotel.⁴⁸ The hotel administrators shortly offered the unemployed \$500 for relief provisions. This was accepted by the men and they vacated the hotel immediately. Government officials were not prepared to provide such relief for the unemployed, so the public buildings remained occupied for four weeks. During the occupation, citizen support was high and food was readily donated. The authorities responded differently, however, and the Vancouver City Police maintained two thirds of its force on duty, while the RCMP cancelled all scheduled leaves.

On June 17 the Postmaster General cabled municipal officials in Vancouver asking for immediate police action. On Sunday, June 19, at five o'clock in the morning, the police surrounded the two buildings and ordered the unemployed men to

⁴⁸ The following account is from Lane, 1966: 114-121, and Personal Interview between H.H. Winch and the author.

leave. After conversing with H.H. Winch, a CCF Member of the Provincial Legislature who had been brought to the scene by the police, those occupying the Art Gallery left peacefully. No damage was done. When the men in the Post Office refused to leave immediately, the police threw tear gas bombs through the windows, and expelled the men using their riot quirts. By 6:30 a.m. thirty six unemployed were in hospital; twenty-two had been arrested, and \$30,000 damage had been done to buildings in the area. Public outcry was extensive. The provincial executive of the CCF referred to the incident as a 'ghastly, inhuman course of action'. Thousands demonstrated on the Powell Street Grounds and in front of the police station that day; and at midnight 8,000 supporters saw one hundred unemployed off, as they left for Victoria to present their demands to the Premier. Patullo warned McKenzie King that the march on Victoria was a

highly organized effort on the part of radical and other subversive forces to break down constituted authority and government.... (cited in; Struthers, 1983: 193)

He insisted that the federal government must accept responsibility for these unemployed. The federal government once again refused.

With the memories of the On to Ottawa Trek still fresh, and the increase in the militancy of the unemployed, by mid-July the federal government agreed to supply temporary, emergency relief for these men. For one month the offer stood that Ottawa would pay for the cost of relief for all non-resident transients in B.C., pending an offer of employment or their return home.

The unemployed accepted the proposal, and dispersed.

Unemployment Insurance Act

Although the final report of the National Employment Commission, submitted in December 1937, had reversed the Commission's earlier proposals and recommended that the federal government assume total financial and administrative responsibility for aid to the unemployed, the Prime Minister strongly resisted permanently extending federal authority into a field it had no Constitutional right to occupy. Furthermore, the majority of businessmen who communicated with Bennett were opposed to any form of state unemployment insurance (Cuneo, 1980: 44). However, by the end of 1938, with the spectre of a recurrence of civil disorder led by the unemployed, the government of MacKenzie King tacitly accepted responsibility for this group.

The outbreak of war in September 1939 raised a 'compelling new reason' for federal action. During that year, Ottawa had raised its share of relief costs from 30 percent to 40 percent of the total cost. As the Prime Minister himself stated;

Labour, which was doing so much for the winning of the war, would expect us to make provisions for its needs once the war was over. (cited in, Struthers, 1983: 199)

Furthermore, the prospect of the eventual demobilization of the armed forces, and the cessation of the war-industry, were two additional incentives for the establishment of a national

programme to deal with unemployment. The Minister of Labour argued in the House of Commons that such a course of action "will be of some assistance in maintaining industrial peace" (Labour Gazette, July, 1940: 683). In addition, the government argued that the buoyant war economy would provide money that could be saved in view of an unemployment insurance programme. Consequently, in the first session of parliament after the outbreak of the War, as of August 1, 1940, the Unemployment Insurance Act was implemented.⁴⁹

Entrenched in the UIC Act was the principle of less eligibility. Thus, through this policy the Canadian state ensured that employment was more economically rational than 'the dole', and a ready labour force was, therefore, sure to be available. Moreover, the provision of a subsistence income for those with no employment would serve to contain widespread discontent, and assure a degree of social peace that had not existed during the Great Depression.

The eventual establishment of unemployment insurance indicates that the struggles of the unemployed during the Great Depression did, eventually, have an effect on state policy making. Although Canadian capitalists consistently opposed the implementation of unemployment insurance (Cuneo, 1979: 157-163), and despite the insistence that extensive responsibility for the

⁴⁹ For a detailed discussion of the events leading to the establishment of this Act, see Struthers, 1983. Cuneo, C. (1979) provides an analysis of the establishment of the UIC Act as an effective mechanism of social control.

unemployed was a private matter, outside the realm of state activity, the militancy of the dissident unemployed ultimately resulted in the federal level of the state taking action. The thousands of unemployed initiated widespread criticism of the existing socio-economic order, and called for a 'radical reconstruction of the existing social order'. The growing power of the working class at that specific historical moment led the Canadian state to introduce this new social policy.

Summary

The flagrant repression of the unemployed, that culminated in the Regina Riot, served to temporarily quell the unemployed. The closure of the relief camps marked the end of this programme of exceptional state repression of the unemployed. However, as unemployment increased during 1938, and those affected began to display militancy, overt violent repression was once again utilized.

Despite the repetition of repressive responses to the demands made by the unemployed, the eventual implementation of the UIC Act indicates that the persistent struggle by the unemployed segment of the working class did, eventually, have an effect on state policy.

In the next chapter, I shall evaluate the forms of social control exercised by the state to deal with the unemployed during the Great Depression era. The involvement of the Canadian state in dealing with the single, unemployed

transient men, and the ultimate establishment of a national programme of unemployment insurance can be understood through an examination of the state and its role in capitalist society during a period of economic and social crises.

Chapter Seven
Theoretical Analysis

Introduction

Throughout the previous chapters, I have indicated clearly that DND relief camp scheme served a purpose beyond providing work for the single, homeless unemployed men. The decade of the 1930s was a period characterized by a high degree of social unrest, and the Canadian state implemented new methods for controlling this dissent, since the relief departments, governments, and police were unable to adequately fulfill the greatly increased task of maintaining social order. As I have illustrated above, the communist-led, single unemployed were perceived as a serious threat to the established socio-economic order, and the state undertook exceptional action to control these dissenters. Despite increased state expenditures on relief provisions during the early years of the Great Depression, and the extensive police suppression, the protesting unemployed could not be repressed. Exceptional state action was mandatory if the status quo was to be maintained. This state action came in the form of the Department of National Defence relief camp scheme.

Although the men were not legally obligated to become relief camp inmates, their ineligibility for alternate relief provisions if they refused to go to the camps clearly illustrates the social control purpose behind the scheme.

Through the removal of the men from the urban centres to remote and isolated camps in British Columbia, large numbers of unemployed dissidents were maintained under the strict control of the military in the camps.

The extensive repression of these relief camp inmates, and the infamous Regina Riot that brought the On to Ottawa Trek to a premature halt, stand as a clear instance of unusually harsh state control. In this present chapter, I shall provide an analysis of the social control purpose behind the camps through theoretical considerations of the Canadian state and its role in capitalist society.⁵⁰ After I have established that the unemployed formed a potentially threatening group, I shall provide an analysis of why the state undertook the responsibility to contain the dissent, when the unemployed were protesting primarily against the existing economic order that had created their condition. This analysis will address the character of the state in capitalist society. To fulfill this task adequately, I shall first present three primary theses of the character of the state, as developed by Gramsci (1971), Miliband (1969), and Poulantzas (1972). Subsequently, the contribution of Claus Offe (1972) to these initial positions, will be presented. This theoretical framework will provide a background for a sociological analysis of the actions taken by the state to

⁵⁰ For a discussion of the American Civilian Conservation Corps as a mechanism of social control see "The Crime Control Corps" J.A. Pandiani; British Journal of Sociology, Vol. 33, No. 3; September 1982; pp. 348-358.

control the militant unemployed during the Great Depression. This analysis will shed light on the structure and role of the Canadian state that was manifested in its management of the militant, dissident, unemployed during the Great Depression of the 1930s.

Threat Posed by the Unemployed

The single unemployed men formed a highly visible segment of the population. This group exposed the failure of the capitalist economy to provide work for all those who were willing to work. Through the foregoing discussion of the militancy of the organized, communist-led unemployed, I have demonstrated that these men were perceived by the authorities to be a threat to the peace, order, and good government of Canada. As one leader of the relief camp trekkers recalled,

of course they saw us as a threat.... We meant to be a threat.... If it (the trek) had come to its conclusion we may have changed the system in Canada. (Savage, Interview)

This threat was particularly intense while the men were congregated in the urban centres. Not only were the unemployed a festering reminder to the general public that the capitalist economy had failed to provide them with work, they were becoming increasingly vocal in their demands for changes to the existing social order. The single unemployed men who had traditionally been able to obtain jobs in British Columbia's predominant, primary sector, and for whom there was no state relief available, were being organized by the communists, and openly

challenged the legitimacy of the Canadian capitalist social order. As they demonstrated and protested, public support from a variety of groups grew. Citations from newspapers of the day, indicate that the discontent with the economic conditions and support for these militant, dissident unemployed was prevalent even in the media of the day. Miliband (1969) asserts that the mass media is notably tame in the expression of dissident views, but even this avenue for criticism of the existing social and economic conditions had daily sympathetic reports of the plight of the unemployed, and cited demands for a 'radical reconstruction of the social order' (Matthews, Vol. 8, No. 1: "Rector Speaks for 'Hunger Marchers'", Feb. 25, 1932).

For the thousands of unemployed and their many supporters, the Canadian capitalist system, and the dominant institutions, systems of meanings and values that supported this economic and social order, and the dominant concept of reality that people understood and organized their lives around, began to be seriously questioned. The whole body of practices and expectations which provided a shared understanding of the world for most Canadians - in other words, the dominant ideology which had become generally accepted, or hegemonic - began to be questioned by large segments of the population (Williams, R., 1976).

The concept of hegemony was developed by the Italian theorist, Antonio Gramsci (1971). Hegemony is the consensual rule of one particular predominant group or class. According to

Gramsci, hegemony is attained through the operation of institutions in civil society (such as political parties and churches), as they shape the way men and women perceive and evaluate social reality. Hegemony exists when the intellectual and moral leadership of the dominant group provides the actively accepted perception of the social formation (Gramsci, 1971). The hegemony of the dominant class is created and re-created in social relations and institutions through a 'historical bloc' that thereby constitutes the basis of consent for the capitalist social order.

Despite the pervasiveness of hegemony, the possibility of a 'hegemonic crisis' does exist. Gramsci has discussed such a moment when the consent of the masses to the existing economic structure upon which hegemony is based has been lost, and a large group has "passed suddenly from a state of political passivity to a certain level of activity, and put forward demands which, when taken together add up to revolution", as a crisis of hegemony (1971: 210). As the single unemployed Canadians of the 1930s were organized and were actively putting forward demands for social reconstruction, they constituted a counter-hegemonic group. As such, they posed a threat to the dominant class that upheld the existing socio-economic order.

To analyse the seriousness of the threat posed by the unemployed and their supporters, we must deal with the motives, beliefs, and consciousness that are recorded in the historical records of what people said and what they did. What the

unemployed and their supporters held to be true, and what they said in support of these beliefs, must be considered carefully because they acted upon these beliefs. Correspondingly, the anxiety revealed in the communications between the members of the various levels of government and the police, over the magnitude of the threat that the single, transient unemployed men posed, must too, be carefully analysed, as the state authorities acted upon these beliefs (Whittaker, "Images of the Canadian State" in Panitch, 1977: 30). It is argued, therefore, that the counter-hegemonic demands, and the revolutionary potential that the authorities perceived the unemployed to have, was real. As the establishment of the DND camp scheme reveals, the state took exceptional and repressive action to stifle this protesting group.

Involvement of the Canadian State

The opponents in the struggle that arose due to the economic conditions that existed during the Great Depression were the unemployed and the Canadian state yet the unemployed were in that situation due to an economic crisis, and they were calling for the abolition of the capitalist economic system. Why, then, did the Canadian state become so actively involved in the struggle? Through a discussion of the role of the state in capitalist society, I shall provide an analysis of the involvement of the state in the economic sphere, and apply this

discussion to the crisis that arose during the Great Depression.

The state in capitalist society does not generate its own income, for it is excluded from the private accumulation process. Private control of the means of production does not permit the state to order or control production, but relegates it to an only indirect involvement in the economy. However, the operation of the state system requires money. Consequently, the state must depend upon the capitalist economy for the vast majority of its revenues. Due to the dependence of the state upon the capitalist economic system, it is constrained to ensure the continuation of the capitalist accumulation process. If state policies do not cater to capital interest, investment in the national economy will be withdrawn. Because it depends upon the continuation of production for its own survival and operation, the state must submit to the rationality of the capitalist economy. Due to the conflicting factions within the capitalist class, however, the state cannot serve all the interests of every faction of capital at one time (Gough, 1979: 4). The state, therefore, must maintain a precarious balance, ensuring that the overall purposes of capital are served without initiating severe repercussions to competing factions.

Being dependent upon capitalism for its revenue, the state has two primary, but contradictory functions that it must perform successfully to preserve the economic system (O'Connor, 1978; Offe, 1975). First, it must ensure that satisfactory economic conditions exist to encourage investment and thus

permit the accumulation process to continue. Secondly, the state must legitimate this production process to members of civil society. The democratic capitalist state can operate on behalf of capital only if it can equate the needs of capital with the national interest, and thereby secure popular support for measures that maintain the conditions for private accumulation (Offe, 1975; Offe and Ronge, 1975). Furthermore, the state is constrained to ensure that labour power is available and that it is profitable for capital to employ this labour for the continuation of the accumulation process. Therefore, mass loyalty to the capitalist social system must be created (Keane, 1978: 63). Hence, the maintenance of the domination of capital in capitalist democracies is generally not overtly coercive; but the existing order of society 'makes sense', to the vast majority of the population and is, therefore, hegemonic (Taylor, 1983: 135-136).

If the capitalist social formation is hegemonic, the role of the state in ensuring the survival of capitalism is also uncritically accepted. Yet, to maintain social harmony, the state must also meet the political demands of the working class that arise due to social inequalities. This involves the management or repression of discontent within civil society. Thus, the capitalist democratic state has the responsibility to maintain social order through the mediation of a dialectical relationship between both the interests of capital and the political demands of the working class.

As Jessop (1977) asserts,

state power must be considered as a complex and contradictory effect of class (and popular democratic) struggles, mediated through and conditioned by the institutional system of the state (1977: 370).

The state must fulfill its mandate to ensure the domination of capital, but to maintain the social calm necessary for the capital accumulation process to continue, it must legitimate the capitalist social structure, thereby creating hegemony.

Character of the Capitalist State

To understand how the state is able to fulfill its functions of ensuring both accumulation and legitimation, one must have an understanding of the capitalist state itself. Debate concerning the role and structure of the state in capitalist society was sparked in the early 1970s by the publication of two divergent views (Miliband, 1969; Poulantzas, 1972), and the translation of the work of the Italian theorist, Gramsci (1971). Subsequent contributions based on these initial works submitted by various theorists within the neo-Marxist paradigm have established a body of literature with numerous discussions of the capitalist state.⁵¹ In this section, I shall present an overview of the three main perspectives in this debate as they relate to the present study. First, I shall discuss the thesis put forward by Gramsci (1971). Subsequently,

⁵¹ Jessop, for example, has provided a summary of this debate in "Recent theories of the capitalist state" Cambridge Journal of Economics 1977, 1, 353-373).

the instrumentalist argument, as put forward by Miliband (1969) will be presented, with the response from the French structuralist theorist, Poulantzas (1972). This will provide a basis for a discussion of subsequent contributions. Drawing from this theoretical framework, I shall then analyse the actions taken by the Canadian state in its repression of the unemployed who were calling for a radical reconstruction of the social order.

Gramsci's Thesis of the Capitalist State

Gramsci (1971) perceives the state as an integral state, composed of all aspects of the social formation. Society is divided into two spheres; 1) political society -- the coercive apparatuses that serve to assimilate members of society into a specific production process; and 2) civil society -- the hegemony of a dominant group created and maintained through institutions such as churches, political parties, schools, trade unions, etc. The state, therefore, consists of all social institutions that organically inter-relate to maintain the domination of the capitalist social order. All facets of society penetrate one another, forming an ensemble of relations. Thus, the state is not distinct from the economic, the cultural, or the ideological sphere and all institutions of society work together to create and recreate the hegemonic domination of capital.

Gramsci stresses the active, voluntaristic aspect of the social formation, and focuses on the tensions and struggles which social classes are consistently engaged in. According to Gramsci, thought and actions are mutually inter-related. Thus, the pervasiveness of hegemony results in the working class actively supporting the capitalist social formation. Nevertheless, every institution of the social order is politically laden, and is an arena for class struggle. Social change through class struggle must be based in the popular consensus of the working class. Thus, Gramsci theorizes that to initiate such social change, dissenting intellectuals must group together to create an organic intelligentsia in the working class, thereby, bringing about social change that is rooted in everyday life.⁵²

Gramsci argues that social change must be a gradual, organic process that is dependent upon the growth of counter-hegemony. If the state, composed of every facet of the social formation, has obtained hegemony, the potential for working class intellectuals to stimulate the development of a counter-hegemony that has sufficient support to effectively challenge the established hegemony is not easily come by. Such an event is crucially dependent upon the specific historical, cultural and political atmosphere of the era. The dynamic dialectic between

⁵² Gramsci identifies two types of intellectuals. Organic intellectuals are present in every sphere of society, and espouse the dominant ideology, thereby promoting hegemony. Traditional intellectuals are those who, after reflection, dissent from the dominant world view.

the social order upheld by the dominant class and the social order that working class struggles could establish, contains the potential for social change, given the appropriate historical, cultural, economic, and political circumstances.

In relation to the present analysis of the state social control of the unemployed, Gramsci's position that the specific socio-economic context is crucially important for social change, is well taken, and in previous chapters I have endeavoured to provide this context. The growth of counter-hegemony and the response of the Canadian state during the Great Depression can be seen as an outcome of the specific economic, political, historical, and cultural balance of forces. Gramsci's discussion of the state as being the outcome of the balance of class forces is pertinent to this analysis. While the repressive apparatuses of the state, or political society, clearly worked to suppress the unemployed, political parties, such as the CCF, churches, some local governments, and a variety of other organizations (civil society), clearly supported the counter-hegemonic unemployed. Hence, by incorporating civil society within the state, the hegemonic tensions in the class conflict of the 1930s may be analysed. The specific historical and cultural social formation of the Great Depression initiated a breakdown of hegemony, and social inequalities became manifest. The struggle for the maintenance of hegemony takes place in civil society, but is central to political control -- as demonstrated in the establishment of the relief camp scheme. Gramsci's theory thus permits an awareness of the nuances and tensions of the class

struggle of the Great Depression.

Miliband - Poulantzas Debate

The instrumentalist school of thought, as put forward by Miliband (1969) is radically divergent from Gramsci's analysis.⁵³ While Gramsci perceives of the state as being composed of all aspects of the social formation, ranging from the family to the government, Miliband establishes a clear demarcation between the institutions that compose the state system and those that are outside the state.

Within the instrumentalist framework presented by Miliband, the state is understood to be composed of a number of institutions such as the civil service, the military, police, the judiciary, etc. The operation of these institutions is inter-related, and they create a state system. Those who hold influential positions in the state institutions are referred to as the state elite, and Miliband identifies close, interpersonal social, familial, and business relationships between this group and those individuals who dominate both the economic sphere and ideological institutions such as churches. His evidence indicates that;

"... in terms of social origin, education and class

⁵³ This discussion of Miliband is based on his early (1969) work, for the purpose of comparing the instrumentalist analysis with the structuralist position as presented by Poulantzas (1972). For his more recent retreat from this position see; Miliband, 1983, "State, Power, and Class Interests" New Left Review

situation the men who have manned all command positions in the state system have largely, and in many cases overwhelmingly been drawn from the world of business and property, or from the professional middle class." (Miliband, 1969: 61).

Although the economic and ideological elite are separate from the state elite, Miliband argues that as a consequence of their personal inter-relationships their interests coincide. The activities of the state elite and those who are dominant in economic and ideological institutions of civil society permit the state to be used as an instrument to ensure that capital's interests are satisfied.

Although the dominant class has in effect cornered the state, Miliband does not assert that there is a conspiracy between the economically powerful and the state elite. The ideology held by the elite groups is conservative and purports that the status quo must be maintained. Although the state institutions cannot satisfy all groups of capital at all times, to maintain economic and social stability, the interests of the economically powerful must be satisfied (1969: 69). Furthermore, Miliband argues that even when governments composed of individuals drawn from parties whose objective is the transcendence of the capitalist system gain control, they have consistently made efforts to assure members of the economic elite that reforms are in the interest of the whole nation and that their assumption of government authority implies no threat to business (1969: 90). While this action is often based on a

reluctance to intensify hostility from the economically powerful, it also serves as a means to conciliate the economic and social forces they propose to weaken (1969: 92).

Political legislation is one of the main vehicles that is used by the state to further the interests of capital. In addition, the encroachment of the state into civil society through statization, permits the expansion of the influence of capital, and serves as a mechanism for the legitimation of capitalism. For example, the inclusion of the education system under the auspices of the state permits the political elite to dictate both its operation and the curriculum that is taught. Thus, the institution of education serves as a mechanism through which the members of the elite can train individuals from an early age within an institution that supports capitalism. The ideological indoctrination of members of society is also maintained by institutions outside the state. Since most of the influential members within the ideological elite, such as the clergy and directors of the media, are drawn from the same social background and may share the same financial interests as the economic and political elite, these groups of elite, by virtue of their position, are able to successfully influence attitudes and ideologies through institutions of civil society. Thus, the inter-personal relationships between the various elites ensure that the interests of the dominant group are satisfied.

Capitalist domination is maintained primarily through a rule by consensus or ideological hegemony (1969: 162-165). Miliband identifies three kinds of ideology; dominant ideology, counter ideology, and residual ideology. Upwardly mobile individuals may retain remnants of previous ideologies, but Miliband asserts that such notions are easily forfeited (1969: 42). Whereas counter ideologies may be institutionalized, they are generally weak and ineffective (for example, trade unionism (1969: 40-42). The dominant ideology supersedes the other forms of ideology, however, and contributes to the establishment of ideological hegemony. Miliband argues that the formation of ideological hegemony is due to an effort by the dominant elite group to establish a comprehensive, over-riding attitude which constitutes common sense for most. This ideology supports capitalism, the activities of those within state institutions, and the existing social structure. Thus, by indicating the high degree of cohesion and unity, common interests and motives, and consequent subordination of differences amongst the elite, Miliband argues that the state is primarily an instrument wielded by the state elites to manage the affairs of the capitalists. Miliband asserts that;

the 'ruling class' of capitalist society is that class which owns and controls the means of production and which is able, by virtue of the economic power thus conferred upon it, to use the state as its instrument for the domination of society (1969: 23).

In addition, however, Miliband argues that the significant number of managers in modern capitalist enterprises, who do not own, but do control the means of production, are not

substantially different from large-scale property owners, since they share similar motivations and social backgrounds (1969: 28-37). The ownership and control of important sectors of the economy by the economic elite, which is sustained by the political power and influence of the state elite, and reinforced in civil society by the ideological elite, creates a highly unified and cohesive group with the ability to effectively control the political environment of advanced capitalist societies (1969: 45). These elite groups constitute the ruling class.

The purpose of Miliband's analysis was to undertake an examination of the rule of the dominant class through the institutions of the state. As a result, little attention is given to the other classes that form an important part of western capitalist societies. Miliband argues that while professionals and small businessmen serve to reduce the polarization between the ruling class and the working class, these groups will eventually become part of either of the two predominant classes (1969: 18, 55). As with the upwardly mobile civil servants, some of the middle classes will become part of the ruling class, whereas others will sink into the working class. The working class is characterized by economic and political weakness, and it is unable to address the ruling class adequately, since it cannot articulate common demands or become organized as the elite groups are able to (1969: 140-141). Consequently, the working class is virtually impotent.

The overwhelming domination of the ruling class, both in the state and in the private sphere, and the impotence of the working class, allow virtually no basis for the possibility of class struggle. Antagonism between classes seldom initiates any significant social change (196: 74-75).

Poulantzas (1972) found problems in Miliband's discussion, and provided an alternate approach for the study of the state in capitalist society. Rather than examining the domination by elite groups, according to Poulantzas, the unit of analysis is more correctly the objective structure of the relationship between classes and the state, not the personal motivations of elite groups (Poulantzas, 1972: 242). Thus, for example, the managerial class is not to be analysed according to the motivation of its members, but as a delegate that acts as a result of its objective position in the production process.⁵⁴

A further critique that Poulantzas makes of Miliband's discussion is the analysis given of the state. Poulantzas bases his argument in a structuralist framework, and argues that the state is made up of numerous apparatuses that inter-relate to create a unified system. This objective state system follows its own logic in any form of society (1972: 248). The fundamental contradiction in capitalism, which is the increasing social

⁵⁴ The production process, according to Poulantzas, is not only a certain form of economic organization, but a specific set of relationships, or a matrix of structures, institutions and relations that create a unity between the labour process and the relations of production (Poulantzas, 1982: 104).

character of production and the continuing private appropriation of surplus, gives rise to two inter-related threats to capitalist social relations. First, the working class has the potential to become more unified, and secondly, the competition within the capitalist class for the appropriation of surplus creates a disunity between the various fractions of this class, and negates its ability to control the working class. As a result, therefore, the state system mediates this contradiction within capitalist social relations and operates to maintain capitalism. Therefore, Poulantzas argues that the relation between the institutions or branches of the state and the dominant class is not due to inter-personal connections, but capitalist interests are served as a result of the objective relations of the state system (1972: 245). The state functions according to its own logic, in the best interest of the whole capitalist class.

To serve the whole bourgeoisie, Poulantzas argues that the state system is not tied to specific capital interests, but rather, to maintain cohesion among the competitive sectors of the bourgeoisie, it is relatively autonomous from the various fractions of the capitalist class (1972: 247). If the interests of a fraction of the capitalist class and the function of the state coincide, it is a result of the system itself, not an outcome of the direct manipulation of the ruling class. Thus, Poulantzas argues that within capitalist society, the internal logic of the state system and the relative autonomy of the state from fractions of capital, sets the state apart from the

specific demands of a particular bourgeoisie, and enables it to serve the long-term interests of the whole capitalist class.

A further criticism that Poulantzas made of Miliband's analysis was that Miliband's notion of ideology is truncated (1972: 250). Poulantzas argues that with the support of the repressive apparatus of the state (the police, judiciary, etc.), the ideological apparatuses (composed of both public and private institutions ranging from the family to the media) work to maintain cohesion in society, and ensure the domination of the capitalist class (1972: 251-252). Since an alternate form of society would necessitate a radical change in the ideological apparatus, Poulantzas maintains that ideology must be considered as one of the apparatuses of the state (1972: 251-252).

In the analysis of the state presented by Poulantzas the concept of class must involve not only the relations of production, but classes must be represented in the whole social realm. The reflection of classes within the state system is manifested by the class struggle that the state mediates. Poulantzas argues that the state performs three main functions to ensure the reproduction of capitalism yet maintain cohesion in society (1972: 165-167). First, the state isolates members of society and induces competition between them within the legal and political structures so that they perceive themselves as individuals, not as members of a particular class. The second function of the state is to portray itself as the representative of the mass of isolated individuals through institutions such as

suffrage. Thirdly, through the establishment of a hegemonic bloc, the state unifies the competitive fractions of the bourgeoisie that it initially set in opposition. Consequently, within capitalist society the bourgeoisie is able to represent its interests as political interests and attain hegemonic domination. The state does not unify the subordinate working class, but this class may organize in the party. As a result of the first function of the state however, this class is exhausted by internal conflicts, and thus is unable to govern politically (1972: 166). Nevertheless, this organization enables it to make demands on the state, and the relative autonomy of the objective state structure permits concessions to the subordinate class without threatening the position of the dominant class (1972: 167).

According to Poulantzas, the over-riding purpose of the state is to be a factor of cohesion, and thus maintain equilibrium in society. By setting the individuals of society in opposition, yet unifying the competitive fractions of the bourgeois class and establishing hegemony, the state serves to maintain the domination of the ruling class and the reproduction of the dominant mode of production. Thus, the capitalist state does not necessarily support the bourgeoisie, but it is responsible for the cohesion of a system in which the capitalist class dominates. However, due to its relative autonomy from the fractions of capital and its internal logic, it may make concessions to the working class and in so doing, regulate class struggle and relieve class tension. Therefore, the state is

"... the condensate of the relation of power between struggling classes" (Poulantzas, 1981: 124).

In response to Poulantzas' argument, Miliband argued that Poulantzas seems to substitute the ruling class by the notion of objective structures and objective relations. Consequently, whereas Miliband argues that the ruling class manipulates the state, Poulantzas asserts that the state serves the dominant class autonomously as a result of the objective relations imposed on the state. Therefore, "... since the ruling class is a dominant element of the system, we are in effect back at the point of total subordination of the state elite to that class...." (Miliband, 1972: 258-259). According to Poulantzas, the domination of capitalism ensures that state power corresponds to capitalist interests, and whereas Miliband demonstrates a virtually direct relationship between the state institutions and the ruling class to support his argument, Poulantzas fails to indicate the social mechanisms that operate to ensure that the state will serve the totality of this fractionalized class and yet maintain both its relative autonomy and cohesion within the system (Gold et als., 1975: 38; Giddens, 1982: 217).

Poulantzas' assertion that classes and individuals within classes are simply bearers of the objective functions of the state, effectively eliminating the possibility of conscious collective action. The pervasiveness of the state system, extending to virtually all spheres, and the maintenance of

disunity among the working class and organization of ideological hegemony by the bourgeoisie, creates an apparently unalterable system. Thus, the possibility for the development of a counter ideology outside of the state system, with the potential to change the social relations of production, is virtually non-existent.

This debate between Miliband and Poulantzas initiated a flourish of contributions to the neo-Marxian analysis of the state. Some commented on the debate itself (for example, Lacleau, 1977), and others sought to expand and clarify the discussion. The complexity of western capitalist societies reveals that no one analysis is sufficient. For example, the instrumentalist position does not give the state sufficient autonomy from the demands of capital; nor does it pay adequate attention to the effect that working class organizations (such as the unemployed during the Great Depression) are able to have on the operation of the state. As a result of its emphasis on the simple manipulation of the state by the ruling elite, the instrumentalist perspective does not allow for a dialectical relation between the actions of the working class and the structural constraints of the capitalist state.

While the structuralist position put forward by Poulantzas acknowledges the effect of the state structure on its possible action, it too, fails to permit an ongoing dialectic between structure and action. In this framework, action is somehow determined by the structure of the state, and therefore,

collective, conscious working class action cannot be initiated.

Subsequent Contributions - Offe

The work of Offe stems from these initial arguments and has been a significant contribution to the extent that he seeks to examine the state and its role in capitalism through an analysis of class struggle (Frankel, 1982: 261-262). Offe argues that both the instrumentalist perspective and the structuralist analyses are inadequate, due to the fact that both arguments examine the effects of external influences on the state. Whereas instrumentalists identify the manipulation of the state institutions by the ruling class, and structuralists argue that the constraints imposed by capitalism limit the activities of the state system, Offe argues that to determine what makes the state a capitalist state, thereby constrained by structural imperatives, rather than a state within capitalist society that goes with the capitalist tide, the focus of the analysis must be on the internal mechanisms of the state.

To identify the mechanisms whereby the state maintains the domination of capital, it must be analysed as being composed of identifiable, inter-related institutions that, taken together, are structured to uphold the domination of the capitalist social order upon which they depend. The state is not, however, simply an instrument to be wielded by powerful groups. Rather, the structural mechanisms within the state system mediate a dialectical relationship between the state as

it attempts to respond to both the political demands of members of civil society and the interests of the capitalist class. Offe argues that the state is structured internally such that it can develop a programme that corresponds to the interests of capital in general, and at the same time systematically exclude the demands of anti-capitalist forces and stop them from disturbing policy making (Offe, 1974: 37-48). These internal selective mechanisms are contradictory, and their operation manifests the class character of the state.

It is not possible for the state to serve all the demands of capital at one time, but structural, selective mechanisms within the state ensure that these interests are met. The negative selective mechanism ensures that capitalist interests are satisfied by systematically excluding anti-capitalist interests from state activity. This negative selective mechanism operates at four levels, creating a 'hierarchical filter system'. The first level, structure, sets the parameters of possible state activities through state institutions such as constitutional jurisdiction or law. Through this mechanism the state cannot address certain working class interests, as they are outside of its authority. The level of ideology determines what is articulated and perceived to be problems that must be solved by the state. This mechanism excludes some anti-capitalist interests by rendering them as 'non events'. The third level, process, consists of the decision-making regulations that establish a priority of state action. This mechanism serves to bias state action against anti-

capitalist interests. Finally, the repressive level serves to exclude anti-capitalist interests from being addressed by the institutions of the state through the utilization of direct coercion (Gold et al., 1975: 37-38). By defining the realm of possible state action, the option to create state policies in the interest of the working class seldom arises.

The second selective mechanism within the state is positive selection. This mechanism serves to choose from the policies permitted by the negative selection, those that will serve the interests of specific capitalist groups. This structure permits the state to address issues that will further the interests of capital and ensure the maintenance of capital accumulation.

The disguising mechanism is the third selective mechanism. It operates to enable the institutions of the state to maintain the appearance that the state is acting in the general public interest, not in the interests of capital; and thereby gain popular support for the actions taken (Offe, 1975; Offe & Ronge, 1975).

According to Offe's thesis, the state performs the function of a 'crisis manager', maintaining a delicate balance between ensuring the demands of capital are met so the process of accumulation will continue, and meeting the political demands of the working class, in order to maintain social calm. Under effective operation, these selective mechanisms are able to successfully conceal the class nature of the state. If the state

is faced with political or social crises, however, these selective mechanisms begin to break down. When this 'hierarchical filter system' is operating ineffectively, the state is unable to adequately dispose of the anti-capitalist political demands it is confronted with, and a crisis in the state's role as crisis manager develops. To maintain the existing social order during a crisis of crisis management, Offe argues that the state resorts to direct repression to exclude the demands of the working class from the sphere of state action.

Since it is during a crisis of crisis management that the internal mechanisms, which indicate the capitalist nature of the state are revealed, Offe argues that to analyse the class nature of the state, a situation must exist whereby these mechanisms have broken down. In these circumstances, the internal class character of the state is exposed (Gold et al., *Op. cit.*, 38).

The thesis of the structure of the capitalist state put forward by Offe addresses many of the pertinent points of the initial theses of the character of the state, and extends beyond these analyses, but is, nevertheless, somewhat limited. Central to Offe's position is the premise that an adequate analysis of the state must examine the dialectic between class struggle and the structural limitations of that capitalist state. Despite his call for the necessity of such an examination, much of Offe's work is an abstract discussion of the contradictory character of

the state's selective mechanisms (Gold et al., 1975: 38). Hence, Offe does not examine the historical contingency of class conflict and state policies. The absence of a systematic inclusion of history in Offe's work does not allow for state policies and state structures to be examined in the context of their specific cultural and ideological moorings. This static, ahistorical framework restricts an analysis of the development of state policies. The absence of historical specifications leaves begging the question of why some issues are excluded from the realm of state activity at a certain historical juncture. In addition to the influence of capital and wage labour, as Gramsci argues, class struggles are affected by particular socio-cultural and ideological factors. The absence of historical underpinnings in Offe's work results in a restricted view of the fluidity of class conflict. Structural difficulties in the economy cannot be automatically translated into widespread class consciousness. Such reflection must be analysed in the context of the whole social formation (Keane, 1978: 70).

Offe identifies the processes whereby the state ensures the domination of capital and thereby establishes that the state itself is biased to capital, it is not simply a delegate of the dominant class. The dual responsibility of the democratic capitalist state to address the political demands from civil society, yet ensure the realization of policies that favour capital, permits the state to maintain some autonomy from the dominant class. Yet, the role of the state in both maintaining the conditions amenable to capital accumulation and depending

upon capital for its survival, draws Offe into a functional understanding of the state. The state is defined primarily in terms of "the way it is functionally related and dependent upon the accumulation process" (Offe, 1975: 129).⁵⁵ The state is obligated to ensure the demands of the dominant group upon which it depends, and legitimate the system it is upholding. This conception of the state minimizes conscious human agency, and perceives of the state as acting largely according to structural imperatives. The absence of conscious activity in the context of a state that systematically excludes working class demands through its structure, leaves little chance for social conflict, the implementation of working class demands, and social change. According to Offe, ideological hegemony is necessary for the domination of the capitalist social formation. The requirements for the development of a hegemonic crisis and social change, is the structural inability of the state to address the demands of the working class. As argued above, the formation of a crisis of hegemony must be examined in its specific historical and cultural context.

The above discussion of various theoretical positions indicates that two equally important levels of analysis are required to obtain an adequate understanding of state action.

⁵⁵ More recently, Offe has retreated from this position, and emphasizes the relative autonomy of the state from serving the functions of capital. This contribution raises new problems, however, as the obstacles he identifies in the path of capital leave few avenues for capital accumulation and legitimation (Jessop, 1982: 127).

First, the structural relationship between the state and capital; and secondly, the dynamic relationship of the struggle between opposing classes at a specific historical moment, in the formation of particular social policies. Thus, a dialectical analysis including a structural view of the economy, with a conflict theory of class struggle is required (Gough, 1979: 43).

Theoretical Analysis of the DND Relief Camp Scheme

The foregoing theoretical considerations permit us to analyse and understand the actions that were taken by the Canadian state and the suppression of the unemployed in the relief camps during the Great Depression. As illustrated in chapter two above, the capitalist economy was immersed in a severe economic depression. Although the dominant ideology maintained that in the frontier economy there was employment available to any who sought it, thousands of able-bodied men marched across the country demanding 'work and wages'. Hence, the legitimacy of this social order began to be called into question. Despite the fact that the Canadian state had consistently supplied funds for industrial development during the growth of monopoly capitalism in Canada (Panitch, 1977) during the Great Depression, the state did not receive returns on this social investment. The finances required to cover the social consumption costs assumed by the state to maintain social calm among the surplus labour force (relief payments), were not

available due to the reduction of state revenues.⁵⁶ Nevertheless, the state was obliged to fulfill its responsibility of maintaining social order and ensuring the conditions that guarantee the continuation of the capitalist social system. The severe reduction in state income due to the economic crisis, and the augmented social consumption, resulted in state expenditures exceeding revenues, thus precipitating a fiscal crisis for the Canadian state (O'Connor, 1973: 2).

The advent of the fiscal crisis of the state, however, meant the state could not fulfill its obligation to capital and cover the social cost of maintaining the surplus labour force; as well, it was unable to satisfy the incessant demands of the masses of unemployed. Failing to meet the political demands of the unemployed and their supporters, the state was unable to legitimate the inherent inequalities of capitalism. As a result, mass loyalty to the capitalist social order began to erode. Organized by the Communist Party, thousands of militant unemployed demanded social and economic changes. In the social context of the Great Depression, this group passed from a state of political passivity to one of active presentation of demands for radical changes in the social order, and thus posed a

⁵⁶ O'Connor (1973) identifies two main types of state expenditure; social capital and social expenses. Social capital can be broken down further into two sub-categories, social investment and social consumption. Social consumption expenses are projects and services undertaken by the state to lower the cost of reproducing labour, and consist of projects and services that are required to maintain social harmony, maintain the surplus labour force, and control groups that pose a threat to social stability (1973: 6-7).

challenge to ideological hegemony.

The development of this counter-hegemonic group was precipitated by two events specific to this historical moment. First, the economic depression of the 1930s exposed the incapacity of the capitalist system to maintain the whole working class, and forged this conspicuous group of unemployed workers. Secondly, while the presence of these men in the 'unemployed jungles' and on the roofs of the freight trains brought some criticism of the economic situation and initiated a social crisis, the Communist Party was at the apex of its fledgling life, and its members unified and organized the unemployed so that they formed a counter-hegemonic force. These communist leaders may be seen as 'traditional intellectuals' in the Gramscian sense, for they constituted a group of dissenters who organized mass action within the working class.

The organization of the counter-hegemonic unemployed, whose demands the Canadian state could not satisfy, resulted in the Canadian state facing a crisis in its mediation between the political demands of the working class and capital. As these political demands persisted, the negative selective mechanism of the state that works to exclude anti-capitalist interests from gaining access to the realm of state policy making, broke down, precipitating a crisis in the state's mediation of working class demands and capitalist interests. An examination of the actions taken by the Canadian state during the crisis of crisis management that developed during the Great Depression, reveals

the failure of the usual internal, structural processes that restrict anti-capitalist interests from becoming political issues to be dealt with by the state. This resulted in the repression of the dissident unemployed through the establishment of the DND relief camp scheme. To fulfill its mandate of ensuring the maintenance of the status quo the Canadian state exercised coercion to repress the counter-hegemonic unemployed.

Breakdown of the Negative Selective Mechanism

To demonstrate the crisis of crisis management experienced by the Canadian state due to the struggle of the militant unemployed, I shall illustrate the breakdown of the selective mechanism in the state that operates to ensure that such anti-capitalist demands do not enter the political sphere. This section will demonstrate that in the social context of the Great Depression, the state was eventually unable to ignore the incessant, intense demands made by the unemployed segment of the working class. As a result, of the class struggle, the negative selective mechanism that serves to exclude these interests from the state could not operate. The negative selective mechanism broke down at all four levels; structure, ideology, process, and repression; and to maintain the social order, the Canadian state resorted to exceptional repression -- the DND relief camp scheme. Offe's analysis will also be extended through a short discussion of the outcome of this breakdown process. It will become clear that the struggles of the unemployed during the Great Depression, that initiated the breakdown of the internal

negative selective mechanism of the state, were crucial factors in the extension of state activity and the creation of the Canadian welfare state.

Structure

The structure of the Canadian state sets the parameters for state activities through constitutionally defined realms of jurisdiction for the various state apparatuses. Through the Constitution and the body of Canadian law, the realm of authority for state institutions is delimited. The effective operation of the Canadian state necessitates cooperation between the various state institutions as they fulfill their legislated responsibilities. Jurisdictional responsibilities must be met, and these boundaries cannot be over-stepped. By means of the legal circumscription of state activity, the structure of the Canadian state ensures that demands that are not in keeping with its interests cannot be addressed by the state. It is important to extend Offe's analysis, however, and recognize that the structure of the state is not static, but transforms over time to address specific economic, political, social, and cultural changes.

The first indication that structural limitations restricted the capacity of the state to address the demands of the unemployed segment of the working class, is revealed in chapter three, through the inability of the local governments to provide adequate relief. The Constitutional delegation of

responsibility for the destitute in Canada was established to ensure that the demands of the surplus labour force, if they could not be addressed by private institutions, never extended beyond the peripheral, local state institutions. The B.N.A. Act relegated this responsibility to the provinces, and B.C., in turn, legislated it to the municipalities. Between 1867 and the late 1920s, this structural restriction posed little problem. During the Great Depression, however, the fiscal crisis experienced by all levels of the Canadian state rendered local governments completely unable to meet this jurisdictional obligation. The level of structure of the negative selective mechanism, which relegated the responsibility for ensuring that the surplus labour force was mollified by local state apparatuses, eventually broke down in the face of the persistent political demands of the organized unemployed. On the basis of the 1867 law, the federal government had consistently denied responsibility for the unemployed, and inter-governmental disputes were rampant due to the limitations of activity imposed by the Constitution. The absence of cooperation between state institutions virtually eliminated the potential of effective state exclusion of the working class demands. In the face of growing demands, the state made an unprecedented move toward social assistance during 1931. These federal policies were within the jurisdictional realm of federal activity, yet they constituted an unprecedented expansion of state action. Thus, while they did not indicate a breakdown of the level of structure, structural limitations did not exclude their

implementation. Nevertheless, even the Constitutionally justifiable Relief Acts were not sufficient to meet the demands of the unemployed. More extensive action was perceived to be necessary to successfully answer the demands of the unemployed and maintain the capitalist social order. The strident demands of the unemployed had to be addressed by the federal level of the state if capitalism was to be preserved. Thus, despite the somewhat limited attempts by the state to address the working class demands, the level of structure in the negative selective mechanism restricted state activity too extensively, and hence, it became ineffective.

Ultimately, the federal level of the state accepted total responsibility for the single unemployed through the establishment of the DND relief camps. Furthermore, the military took control of a large number of civilians. The DND control of the single unemployed indicates that the structural limitations imposed on state action vis-a-vis the demands of the unemployed segment of the working class necessitated the alteration of jurisdictional responsibility. A federal institution accepted responsibility for a group outside its mandate of authority, and the national military took control of civilians who were under provincial and local jurisdiction. The limitations on state activity had to be bypassed to address the counter-hegemonic, struggling unemployed.

Events during the operation of the DND relief camp scheme provide further evidence that the level of structure of the negative selective mechanism had become inoperative. The jurisdictional disputes between the British Columbia government and the federal government over responsibility for the unemployed during the relief camp strikes of December 1934 and April 1935, indicate the ineffectiveness of structural determinants of state authority. Furthermore, the antagonism between the government of Saskatchewan and the federal government over the illegal halting of the trekkers in Regina, indicates that these state institutions could not operate in concert to suppress the unemployed. Whereas the Saskatchewan authorities and railway officials intended to permit the trekkers to proceed to Ottawa unhindered, the federal government flagrantly overstepped its jurisdictional authority, and independently ordered the RCMP to halt the trekkers. Despite the fact that Ottawa had denied any jurisdictional responsibility for the striking relief camp workers when they were congregated in Vancouver, (regardless of Pattullo's pleas for federal action), when the trekkers arrived in Regina, Ottawa assumed (unauthorized) authority over the men, despite Saskatchewan's protests. As I have argued in chapter five, not only did the Bennett government act unconstitutionally in halting the men, the subsequent containment of the unemployed in Regina by the federal police force was both beyond federal jurisdiction, and based on a law that had, apparently, expired. These examples serve to indicate that the level of structure of the negative

selective mechanism, which determines state legal and jurisdictional authority in order to ensure effective elimination of some political demands, had broken down and was not operating effectively during the crisis of crisis management. The laws established in 1867 were archaic by the 1930s. To suppress the radical unemployed, the state was required to bypass the jurisdictional and legal restraints imposed by the structure of the Canadian state. The eventual extension of federal responsibility in the establishment of unemployment insurance, indicates that the outcome of the struggle that initiated the breakdown of the level of structure was the implementation of policies intended to benefit the working class.

Ideology

Prior to the state's resort to direct repression, the next level of the negative selective mechanism identified by Offe, also broke down. Through the level of ideology the negative selective mechanism is able to exclude anti-capitalist demands from entering the political sphere by defining them as being outside of the realm of problems perceived and articulated as issues the state need to address. To examine the breakdown of ideology, we must extend beyond a static concept of ideology as simply a filter working in the interests of capital, and trace the historical and cultural development of this level of the negative selective mechanism.

Canada's welfare policy was based on Elizabethan Poor Laws, and relegated care for the poor primarily to the family and private charities. State involvement was minimal. Private and religious organizations were active in instilling the 'habit of economy' in the poor, and the work ethic entrenched in the dominant ideology promoted individual self-reliance. Hence, in the seasonal, but expanding Canadian economy, there was perceived to be no legitimate reason for able-bodied men to be unemployed. As the general absence of municipal and provincial facilities to provide relief indicate, extensive provision for the unemployed was not considered to be a matter to be dealt with by the state. This ideology was imbedded in the Constitution by the relegation of care for the poor to scattered, local state institutions. Widespread destitution created by severe unemployment was not an issue perceived to be a problem that was to be addressed by extensive state action, and state job creation programmes were not even considered.

Evidence of the breakdown of the level of ideology in the negative selective mechanism is revealed through the demands made to the federal government by organized members of the working class, during the 1930s. Although the dominant ideology promoted the belief that any able-bodied person was capable of self-sufficiency, the high unemployment level of the Great Depression initiated incessant demands from numerous groups for extensive state assistance for the unemployed. The organized, counter-hegemonic unemployed were increasingly vocal, demanding federal action through the provision of relief for the

unemployed. It is important to note that, structural limitations of the state did not render all state authorities as simply objective bearers of structural imperatives, but even members of the local and provincial governments were insisting that the realm of state action be augmented to include federal provision for the unemployed.

As the militancy of the unemployed increased, so did the calls for extended state action. The threat posed by the thousands of militant unemployed, initially precipitated the federal government to include in its mandate the responsibility to deal with the Relief Acts of 1931. These Acts were, however, intended to deal with the 'temporary' unemployment problem, and were perceived to be exceptional state action. However, the temporary solutions were inadequate to contain the demands for extended state action. The establishment of the DND camp scheme indicates that the ideological exclusion of extensive state maintenance of the destitute unemployed could not persist. The negative selective mechanism level of ideology was repudiated, and exceptional state involvement through the federal state apparatus came to be perceived as necessary if the capitalist social order was to be maintained.

The control of civilian unemployed men by the national military is evidence of an expanded conception of the realm of state action. This altered understanding of permissible state action was sudden, and not clearly delineated, however. Although Ottawa assumed complete responsibility for these unemployed, it

denied this duty when the B.C. inmates went on strike -- despite the fact that they were still officially relief camp inmates. This confusion that occurred within the state as the negative selective mechanism broke down, demonstrates the nuances of the social formation that Offe's general theoretical outline cannot satisfactorily address. The breakdown of the negative selective mechanism is not linear, but fraught with intricate tensions specific to the socio-historical context.

Nevertheless, it is apparent that during the exceptional state repression utilized to control the dissident unemployed, the realm of state action was not clearly defined, indicating the breakdown of the negative selective mechanism at the level of ideology. The calls for extensive federal involvement in providing for the destitute, precipitated the breakdown of the ideological circumscription of state activity. The eventual growth of the Canadian welfare state indicates that this struggle initiated an expanded perception of state responsibility.

Process

The third level of the negative selective mechanism that works to ensure that anti-capitalist interests are not addressed by the state, is process, and is constituted by the rules that govern decision-making. These rules relegate working class demands to low priority for state attention. In the Canadian state, process involves, for example, parliamentary debate.

Prior to the establishment of the DND relief camp scheme, the Canadian state attempted to control the unemployed within its legal parameters of action. Consequently, the usual rules that govern the decision-making process were adhered to. It is important to note, however, that the Unemployment and Farm Relief Act of 1931, was the last attempt by the state to address the issues raised by the unemployment situation prior to the establishment of the relief camp scheme, and as shown in chapter three, this Act was not implemented through the established parliamentary procedures. It was legitimated on the basis of the perceived threat the unemployed posed to the peace, order, and good government of Canada, and was introduced through an Order in Council. The growing urgency of the situation created by the militant, counter-hegemonic unemployed required hasty state action. Hence, the usual parliamentary process was not sufficient, and this policy was implemented by government decree rather than parliamentary debate. A close examination of the historical and ideological context the state was operating in, is embeleshed through a consideration of the social formation at a given historical moment.

The evidence of the breakdown of the selective mechanism process is most clearly manifest in the actions taken by the state at the time of the operation of the relief camp scheme during the 1930s. The urgency of the crisis of crisis management of the state in the social context of the Great Depression, made it imperative that the demands of the unemployed be addressed immediately, and consequently, the usual decision-making

processes that serve to put anti-capitalist demands at a disadvantage, proved to be ineffective.

The breakdown of the level of process in the negative selective mechanism was manifest in a variety of ways during the relief camp scheme. Contrary to the usual state procedures undertaken prior to the establishment of a national programme such as the DND relief camp scheme, no studies, Royal Commissions, or task forces were established. Rather, as chapter four reveals, the DND plan was drawn up within nineteen hours of an informal request made by the Prime Minister. Upon the implementation of this scheme, in all matters concerning its operation, usual parliamentary procedures were surpassed. The DND relief camp scheme was administered through twenty three consecutive Orders in Council that did not require parliamentary debate, but constituted executive decrees.

The level of the negative selective mechanism established to ensure that anti-capitalist demands are not given priority in the decision-making process were not sufficient to permit the state to attend to the urgent situation created by the demands of the unemployed working class. When the state was forced to deal with the threat posed by the militant unemployed by direct repression, this selective mechanism that relegated such demands to low priority had to be superseded if the state was to fulfill its mandate to maintain social calm. The effect of the breakdown of this level may be seen to have contributed to the timely implementation of the 1940 Unemployment Insurance

Act. Rather than waiting until soldiers returned from the Second World War, the government had overcome the Constitutional limitations that restricted state activity, and this welfare policy was firmly in place upon the demobilization of troops.

Repression

As revealed in chapter three, prior to the establishment of the DND relief camp scheme, extensive repression of the unemployed was practiced by the coercive apparatus of the Canadian state. However, even this failed to effectively suppress the radicalized, militant, struggling, unemployed segment of the working class.

The initial attempt by state authorities to monitor the unemployed who arrived in Vancouver on the freight trains proved to be an impossible task for the railway constable. Depending upon the municipal relief departments to maintain a record of the unemployed relief recipients, was also insufficient. Despite the efforts of the B.C. government and the police, the state could not stem the flow of unemployed transients entering the province. The extensive police infiltration of the unemployed permitted surveillance and some control of the unemployed, but as the numerous, violent clashes with police in Vancouver indicate, and the chief of the police affirmed, even this overt police repression was inadequate to stifle the demands of the unemployed. Although hunger marches and tag days were banned, the unemployed continued to draw public attention to their

plight.

In an attempt to curtail active organization of the unemployed the state authorities focussed their repression on the communists. Despite the arrest of leaders of the unemployed, declaration of the Communist Party as an illegal association, and the deportation of communist organizers, the unemployed movement continued to grow. Even this extensive repression of leaders of the unemployed was not sufficient to stifle the counter-hegemonic movement.

It is clear that in the socio-historical context of the Great Depression, the Canadian state was unable to adequately suppress the demands made by the unemployed segment of the working class and its supporters through usual state procedures. Each level of the negative selective mechanism; structure, ideology, process, and repression, proved to be insufficient to exclude the demands of the unemployed from the realm of state activity. Despite the full utilization of each of these 'filters', the unemployed movement continued to gather support. The political demands of the counter-hegemonic unemployed persisted, and the struggle of the unemployed segment of the working class presented a growing challenge to the capitalist social order. The breakdown of the negative selective mechanism ultimately resulted in the Canadian state resorting to repression through the establishment of the Department of National Defence Relief Camp Scheme, in order to deal with the threat posed by the unemployed.

Resort to Repression

The breakdown of the negative selective mechanism due to the fiscal crisis that rendered the state unable to meet its social consumption expenses, and the threat the counter-hegemonic unemployed posed to the capitalist social order, resulted in the state resorting to overt, unusual repression. The sequestering of the militant, dissident unemployed who were presenting a serious threat to the existing capitalist social organization by means of the military-controlled relief camps, constituted a repressive means of containing the dissent. As Gough states, "ultimately, the rule of any class rests on force" (Gough, 1979: 41).

The unemployed formed a counter-hegemonic group, and persisted in demanding radical social change. Unable to exclude their demands from its realm of action, and perceiving the threat the unemployed posed to the interests of capital, the state resorted to the incarceration of these men into camps operated by the military. The stringent budget the camps operated on, that resulted in the absence of amenities for the inmates, indicates that this social expense was perceived to be of such importance it was operated even in the context of a severe fiscal crisis.

Even the coercion exercised through the camps, and the extensive police infiltration of the ranks of the unemployed, was not sufficient to silence their discontent. Despite the outlawings of the RCWU and the eviction of union members, the

counter-hegemonic movement of the unemployed relief camp workers flourished in the camps. Police control through infiltration and arrests was not successful in suppressing the unemployed. Despite Mayor McGeer's attempt to break the strike by implementing the Riot Act, and the violent dispersal and arrest of strikers on that occasion, the dissident movement persisted.

The violent repression of the counter-hegemonic unemployed in Regina on July 1, 1935, the cutting off of all relief provisions in Regina, the decapitation of the movement by the arrest of eight leaders, and the declaration of the unemployed as an illegal association, ultimately served to effectively break the counter-hegemonic movement of the unemployed, and did succeed in stifling the dissent. When the unemployed returned to the B.C. camps improved conditions and a greater amount of social assistance, served to pacify their immediate demands.

Cessation of Exceptional Repression

The closure of the DND camps in 1936 marked the end of the repression utilized by the state to control the counter-hegemonic unemployed during the Great Depression; and with the subsequent improvement in the economy, the Canadian state resumed its usual structural procedures in maintaining the balance between capital and the working class. Militancy among the unemployed erupted again in Vancouver during 1938; and once again, the state violently repressed the unemployed. However,

similar to actions taken by the police prior to the establishment of the relief camp scheme, this repression was carried out with due regard for jurisdictional authority and legality. The federal government's provision of temporary, emergency relief in July 1938, indicates that the negative selective mechanism was operating successfully.

The threat posed by the unemployed during 1938 was short-lived, however, as the expanding war economy absorbed thousands of workers. Nevertheless, the class struggle led by the unemployed, that resulted in their incarceration within the DND camps, ultimately had an impact on the policies of the Canadian state. The introduction of new state policies that created employment for these men may be seen as an outcome of the class struggle. It is important to note, however, that these laws were established within the structural constraints of the state, and did not threaten the existing socio-economic order.

The eventual establishment of the Unemployment Insurance Act of 1940 can be seen as one outcome of the struggle led by the unemployed during the Great Depression.⁵⁷ Some groups had been calling for the establishment of a national unemployment scheme for years, and unemployment insurance was prevalent throughout the western world, yet Canadian business largely opposed the Act. Nevertheless, 1940 witnessed the introduction of this legislation. It is important to note that the specific

⁵⁷ For a discussion of the development of the Canadian welfare state, and this Act see; Struthers, 1983; Cuneo, 1979).

cultural, historical, and social context of 1940 was crucial to the eventual introduction of this Act. Canada was emerging from an era of severe economic depression and unusually radical social unrest among a large segment of the working class. At the same time, the country was immersed in its second World War, and the war-economy was booming. The recent struggles of those most severely affected by the economic depression, and the memory of the unemployment that resulted from the demobilization of World War One troops just twenty five years previous, were significant factors leading to the implementation of this policy. Thus, the struggles of the unemployed during periods of economic downturn and high unemployment -- the time when the Canadian working class reacted strongly to its disadvantaged position and a crisis of hegemony developed -- resulted in the Canadian state implementing policies for the benefit of the working class. It is important to note, however, that this policy is subject to the structural constraints of the capitalist state. By ensuring that social assistance provisions are less appealing than the lowest level of employment, the UIC Act serves to ensure the necessary, ready labour force for capital, and the centralized state distribution of this policy allows the state to maintain extensive surveillance of this potentially counter-hegemonic segment of the working class.

Summary and Conclusions

In this chapter I have discussed the role of the state in capitalist society, in order to provide an analysis of the actions taken by the Canadian state in the establishment of the Department of National Defence relief camp scheme. I have argued that the single unemployed men formed a counter-hegemonic group, thus posing a serious threat to the capitalist social order. To fulfill its mandate to ensure the maintenance of capitalism, the Canadian state was obligated to control this dissenting group. Due to the fiscal crisis it was immersed in, however, the state was unable to pacify the unemployed through social assistance. As the demands for a radical reconstruction of the social order intensified, the state was obliged to address the issues raised by the unemployed.

Despite increased state expenditures on relief provisions, even in the context of a fiscal crisis, and the extensive police control, the counter-hegemonic unemployed could not be suppressed. The structural limitations of the Canadian capitalist state could not permit such anti-capitalist demands to be addressed by it. The persistent struggle of the unemployed and the rising crisis of hegemony, however, made exceptional state action mandatory. The state faced a crisis in its management of the tenuous relationship between capital and the working class. Consequently, the structural mechanism that restricted the state's sphere of action to the exclusion of such working class demands, became useless. The state experienced a

crisis in its administrative rationality.

As I have argued above, the state was obliged to overstep every level of the negative selective mechanism that excludes anti-capitalist interests from its sphere of action, in the attempt to control the unemployed and thereby meet its obligation to capital. The unmanageable threat posed by the unemployed resulted in the Canadian state's recourse to overt, unprecedented repression. The establishment of the DND relief camp scheme served to ultimately repress this threatening, counter-hegemonic group. Wolfe (1971) states that "... repression exists because there is struggle; without political movement there need not be any repression" (Wolfe, 1971: 34). Kellough et al., (1980) point out that; "conflict theories of social control suggest that political and economic conditions rather than crime per se are principle factors influencing state control efforts" (Kellough et al., 1980; 253). The organized unemployed who posed a very real threat to the existing socio-economic order during the fiscal crisis of the Great Depression were ultimately sequestered into tightly controlled camps operated by the military.

Despite extensive efforts of the state to control the dissident militant relief camp inmates, discontent was only augmented in the camps. Contained in remote areas to undertake projects with no apparent purpose, for which they received no wage, frustrated and angered the unemployed. Even the coercion utilized in the camp scheme was not sufficient to contain them.

Determined to affect state policy, this segment of the working class set off to Ottawa to present its demands to the state's highest level of authority.

The magnification of the threat posed by the Communist-organized, counter-hegemonic unemployed as they travelled toward Ottawa, precipitated extreme state repression -- the Regina Riot. This violent repression, the incarceration of the trek leaders, along with the promise of improved state provisions was successful in breaking the growing, threatening, counter-hegemonic movement. Nevertheless, the struggles of the unemployed segment of the working class during the Great Depression were successful in ultimately affecting state policy, and the development of the Canadian welfare state was underway.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Abella, Irving M.

1973 Nationalism, Communism and Canadian Labour: The CIO, the Communist Party, and the Canadian Congress of Labour 1935-1956 University of Toronto Press; Toronto.

Aghai, M. Ahmad

1959 "The Community Chest and Council" Unpublished Master of Social Work Thesis; School of Social Work; University of British Columbia.

Archives of British Columbia, Victoria, British Columbia.

Archive G.R. 429, Vox 21, Files 1,2,3.
Archive 75 F1, Files 5,8.

Avakumovic, Ivan

1975 The Communist Party in Canada McClelland and Stewart; Toronto.

Baird, Irene

1939 Waste Heritage Macmillan of Canada; Toronto.

Baran, P. and P. Sweezy

1966 Monopoly Capital: An Essay on the American Economic and Social Order Modern Reader Paperbacks; New York.

Bennett, William

1935 Builders of British Columbia Broadway Printers; Vancouver.

Bennett, William

N/D William Bennett Collection Special Collections, Library, University of British Columbia; Vancouver.

Bleany, M.F.

1976 Under-Consumption Theories: A History and Critical Analysis Laurence and Wishart; London.

- Bliss, M. and L.M. Grayson (Eds.)
 1971 The Wretched of Canada: Letters to R.B. Bennett 1930-1935 University of Toronto Press; Toronto.
- Bourke Collection
 N/D Interviews for CBC Saturday Night; Special Collections Division, Library, University of British Columbia; Vancouver.
- Bradwin, E.W., R.A. Rigg, H. Mitchell
 1936 "Interim Report of the Unemployment Relief Camps" Royal Commission on Labour Gazette xxxvi, February, 1936. pp. 141-148.
- Bridges, Amy Beth
 1974 "Nicos Poulantzas and the Marxist Theory of the State" Politics and Society Winter, 1974. pp. 161-190.
- British Columbia Department of the Attorney-General
 1924-1937 Report of the Superintendent of Provincial Police King's Printer; Victoria.
- British Columbia Department of Labour
 1930-1938 Annual Report King's Printer; Victoria.
- British Columbia Legislative Assembly
 1932 Report of the Select Committee of the Legislative Assembly on Unemployment King's Printer; Victoria.
- British Columbia Legislative Assembly
 1929-34 Finance Department, Budget Address King's Printer, Victoria.
- Broadfoot, Barry
 1973 Ten Lost Years: Memories of Canadians who survived the Depression Doubleday Books; Toronto.
- Brown, L.
 1978 "Unemployment Relief Camps in Saskatchewan 1933-1936" in W.K. Greenaway, S.L. Brickey (Eds.) Law and Social Control in Canada Prentice Hall; Scarborough, Ont., pp. 190-218.

- Brown, L., C. Brown
1973 An Unauthorized History of the RCMP James and Samuel;
Toronto.
- Buck, Tim
1975 Thirty Years: The Story of the Communist Movement in
Canada 1922-1952 Progress Books; Toronto.
- Campbell, Allen
N/D The Frame Up on Allan Campbell Canadian Labour Defense
League; Toronto.
- Canada, Department of Labour
1930-1935 Labour Organizations in Canada King's Printer;
Ottawa.
- Canada, Department of Labour
1936 Unemployment and Relief in Canada King's Printer;
Ottawa.
- Canada
1930-1937 The Dominion Director of Unemployment Relief
Annual Reports King's Printer; Ottawa.
- Canada Department of National Defence
1932-1937 Annual Report King's Printer; Ottawa.
- Canada, Parliament, House of Commons
1930-1938 Official Report of Debates King's Printer;
Ottawa.
- Carlo, A.
1975 "Review of C.P. Kindelberger The World in Depression"
University of California Press, Berkley and Los
Angeles, in Telos No. 24; Summer, 1975. pp. 173-176.
- Cassidy, H.M.
1939 "Relief and Other Social Services for Transients" L.
Richter (Ed.) Canada's Unemployment Problem MacMillan
(Studies of Institute of Public Affairs at Dalhousie
University).

Caves, R.E., R.H. Holton

- 1976 "An Outline of the Economic History of British Columbia 1881-1951" J. Friesen, H.K. Ralston (Eds.) Historical Essays on British Columbia McClelland & Stewart Ltd.; Toronto, pp. 25-53.

Chorney, H., P. Hansen

- 1980 "The Falling Rate of Legitimation: The Problem of the Contemporary Capitalist State in Canada" Studies in Political Economy No. 4, Autumn 1980. p. 65-98.

Clement, W.

- 1977 Continental Corporate Power: Economic Linkages Between Canada and the United States McClelland & Stewart; Toronto.

Clement, W.

- 1983 Class Power and Property Essays on Canadian Society Methuen Publications; Toronto.

Conway, J.F.

- 1983 The West: The History of a Region in Confederation James Lorimer and Company, Publishers; Toronto.

Crawford, R.N., L.W. Dewalt, E.E. Isobelle, G.G. Gentleman

- 1959 "A Research Inventory of Community Welfare Services (British Columbia and Greater Vancouver)" Unpublished Master of Social Work Thesis; School of Social Work; University of British Columbia; Vancouver.

Cuneo, Carl

- 1979 "State, class and reserve labour: the case of the 1941 Canadian Unemployment Insurance Act" Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology 16 (2). pp. 147-170.

Cuneo, Carl

- 1980 "The Canadian State and Unemployment Insurance" Studies in Political Economy A Socialist Review No. 3, Spring, 1980. p. 37-66.

Deaton, R.

- 1973 "The Fiscal Crisis of the State in Canada" D. Roussopoulos, (Ed.) The Political Economy of the State Black Rose Books; Montreal. p. 18-58.

Dominion-Provincial Conference

1935 Memoranda on Unemployment and Relief King's Printer;
Ottawa.

Eayers, James

1964 In Defence of Canada: From the Great War to the Great
Depression University of Toronto Press; Toronto.

Elgee, W.H.

1939 "What Price Relief?" Canadian Forum 19: January,
1939. p. 83-84.

Erickson, E.A.

1972 "The Great Crash of October 1929" H. van der Wee (Ed.)
The Great Depression Revisited: Essays on the
Economics of the Thirties Martinus Nijhoff: The
Hague. p. 3-12.

Fearon, P.

1979 The Origins and Nature of the Great Slump 1929-1932
The Economic History of Society; Macmillan Press Ltd.;
London.

Femia, Joseph, V.

1981 Gramsci's Political Thought Hegemony, Consciousness,
and the Revolutionary Process Clarndon Press; Oxford.

Finkel, Alvin

1977 "Origins of the welfare state in Canada" Leo Panitch
(Ed.) The Canadian State: Political Economy and
Political Power University of Toronto Press;
Toronto. pp. 344-370.

Forsey, E.A.

1939 "Unemployment and Relief" Canadian Forum 19: May,
1939. p. 42.

Foster, J.B.

1983 "Understanding the Significance of the Great
Depression" Studies in Political Economy No. 11,
Summer 1983. pp. 177-196.

Fowke, Vernon C.

- 1957 The National Policy and the Wheat Economy University of Toronto Press; Toronto.

Frankel, B.

- 1982 "On the State of the State: Marxist Theories of the State after Leninism" A. Giddens, D. Held (Eds.) Classes, Power and Conflict: Classical and Contemporary Debates University of California Press, Berkley. pp. 257 273.

Giddens, A.

- 1982 "The State: Class Conflict and Political Order" A. Giddens, (Ed.) A Contemporary Critique of Historical Materialism University of California Press; Berkeley.

Gold, David

- 1975 "James O'Connor's The Fiscal Crisis of the State : An Overview" The Economic Crisis Reader D. Mermelstein, (Ed.) Vintage Books, A Division of Random House Publishers; New York.

Gold, D.A., C.Y.H. Lo, E.O. Wright

- 1975 "Recent Developments in Marxist Theories of the Capitalist State" Part Two Monthly Review November, 1975; p. 36-51.

Gough, Ian

- 1979 The Political Economy of the Welfare State The Macmillan Press Ltd.; London.

Gramsci, Antonio

- 1971 Selections from Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci Trans. and ed. Q. Hoare and G. Nowell Smith; International Publishers; New York.

Habermas, Jurgen

- 1975 Legitimation Crisis Translated by T. McCarthy; Beacon Press; Boston.

Haas, Gordon

- 1979 "Claus Offe and the Capitalist State A Critique" Alternate Routes Vol. 3; p. 26-48.

- Heilbroner, Robert L.
 1980 The Making of Economic Society (Sixth Edition)
 Prentice - Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey.
- Hill, E.D.
 1951 "The Regional Administration of Public Welfare in British Columbia: A Survey of the Present Administration in Light of its Historical Development" Unpublished M.S.W. Thesis; School of Social Work, University of British Columbia
- Horn, Michael (Ed.)
 1972 The Dirty Thirties, Canadians in the Great Depression
 Copp Clark; Toronto.
- Howard, Victor
 1974 "The Vancouver Relief Camp Strike of 1935: A Narrative of the Great Depression" Canada An Historical Magazine Vol. 1, No. 3. Holt, Rinehart and Winston of Canada Ltd.; Toronto. p. 9-33.
- Howard, Victor
 1980 "Citizen Support of the On-To-Ottawa Trek" The Dirty Thirties in Prairie Canada 11th Western Canada Studies Conference; R.D. Francis, H. Ganzervoort, Eds. B.C. Geographical Series No. 26. Department of History, University of Calgary; Tantalus Research Ltd., Vancouver.
- Howard, Victor
 1976 "The On to Ottawa Trek" Parts one and two. Canada: An Historical Magazine Vol. 3, No. 3, Vol. 3, No. 4, Holt, Rinehart and Winston of Canada Ltd.; Toronto. p. 34-47, p. 2-14.
- Hunter, A.A.
 1981 Class Tells On Social Inequality in Canada Butterworth and Company; Toronto.
- Ignatieff, Michael
 1981 "State, Civil Society, and Total Institutions: A Critique of Recent Social Histories of Punishment" Michael Tonry and Norvac Morris (Eds.) Crime and Justice: An Annual Review of Research Vol. III
 University of Chicago Press; Chicago.

- Jackson, Bob
1985 Personal Interview, June 1, 1985; Vancouver.
- Jamieson, Stuart
1968 Times of Trouble: Labour Unrest and Industrial Conflict in Canada 1900-1966 Prepared for and received by the Federal Task force on Labour Relations, October 15, 1968.
- Jessop, Bob
1982 The Capitalist State: Marxist Theories and Methods Martin Robertson and Co. Ltd.; Oxford.
- Jessop, Bob
1977 "Recent theories of the capitalist state" Cambridge Journal of Economics 1977: 1. pp. 353-373.
- Jessop, Bob
1978 "Capitalism and Democracy: The Best Possible Political Shell?" Power and the State G. Littlejohn, B. Smart, J. Wakeford, N. Yuval-Davis (Eds.) Croon-Helm; London. p. 10-51.
- Keane, John
1978 "The Legacy of Political Economy: Thinking with and against Claus Offe" Canadian Journal of Political and Social Theory Vol. 2, No. 3, Fall 1978. p. 49-92.
- Kellough, D.G., S.L. Brickey, W.K. Greenaway
1980 "The Politics of Incarceration: Manitoba 1918-1939" Canadian Journal of Sociology 5 (3). pp. 253-270.
- King, D.
1939 "Unemployment and (Direct) Relief" L. Richter (Ed.) Canada's Unemployment Problem Macmillan (Studies of Institute of Public Affairs at Dalhousie University).
- Laclau, E.
1977 "The Specificity of the Political" E. Laclau, (Ed.) Politics and Ideology in Marxist Theory N.L.B.; London.

- Lane, M.
1966 "Unemployment During the Depression: The Problem of the Single Unemployed Transient in British Columbia" Unpublished Bachelor of Arts Honours Essay, History Department University of British Columbia; Vancouver.
- Lautard, E.E.J.
1965 "An Evaluation of a Municipal Work-for-Relief Project" Unpublished Master of Social Work Thesis, School of Social Work, University of British Columbia; Vancouver.
- Laxer, J.
1973 "Introduction to the Political Economy of Canada" in R. Laxer (Ed.) (Canada) Ltd. The Political Economy of Dependency McClelland and Stewart Ltd.; Toronto, pp. 26-34.
- Lefresne, G.M.
1961 "The Royal Twenty Centres: The Department of National Defence and Federal Unemployment Relief 1932-1936" Unpublished Bachelor of Arts Thesis, Royal Military College; Kingston.
- Levitt, K.
1970 Silent Surrender: the multinational corporation in Canada Gage Publishing Ltd.; Toronto.
- Lipton, Charles
1967 The Trade Union Movement of Canada 1927-1957 New Canada Publications, a division of NC Press; Toronto.
- Liversedge, Ronald
1973 Recollections of the On-to-Ottawa Trek Victor Hoar, (Ed.) McClelland and Stewart Ltd.; Toronto.
- MacDonald, W.A., C.T. McHattie, E. Branden
1935 Report of the Royal Commission to Enquire into Conditions in Relief Camps in B.C. King's Printer; Ottawa.
- MacInnis, Angus
1935 Papers; Memorial Collection Special Collections, Library, University of British Columbia; Vancouver.

McCandless, R.

1974 "Vancouver's Red Menace of 1935: the waterfront situation" B.C. Studies No. 22 (Summer 1974). p. 56-70.

McEwan, T.

1951 He Wrote For Us. The Story of Bill Bennett Tribune Publishing Co.; Vancouver.

McGeer, Gerald Grattan

1913-1947 Original Papers Provincial Archives of British Columbia; Victoria.

McGeer, Gerald Grattan

1935 The Police Situation in Vancouver Additional Manuscripts 54, Volume 8, Number 1, Vancouver City Archives; Vancouver.

McGinnis, D.P.

1980 "The 'Keynesian Revolution' in Canada, 1929-1945" in R.D. Francis, H. Ganzevoort, (Eds), The Dirty Thirties in Prairie Canada 11th Western Canada Studies Conference; B.C. Geographical Series #26; Department of History, University of Calgary. pp. 48-57.

Matthews, James Skitt

1931-1932 "Unemployment and Relief" Additional Manuscripts 54, Volume 8, Number 1; Vancouver City Archives.

Matthews, James Skitt

1933-1934 "Unemployment and Relief" Additional Manuscripts 54, Volume 8, Number 2; Vancouver City Archives.

Matthews, James Skitt

1935 "Unemployment and Relief" Additional Manuscripts 54, Volume 8, Number 3; Vancouver City Archives.

Matthews, James Skitt

1936-1937 "Unemployment and Relief" Additional Manuscripts 54, Volume 8, Number 4; Vancouver City Archives.

- Matthews, James Skitt
1935 Additional Manuscripts 54, Volume 13; Vancouver City Archives.
- Miliband, R.
1969 The State in Capitalist Society: The Analysis of the Western System of Power Quartet Books Ltd. , London.
- Montero, G.
1979 We Stood Together First Hand Accounts of Dramatic Events in Canada's Labour Past James Lorimer and Co., Publishers; Toronto.
- Morton, Desmond, Terry Copp
1980 Working People An Illustrated History of Canadian Labour Deneau and Greenberg Publishers Ltd.; Ottawa.
- Moscovitch, A., G. Drover (Eds).
1972 Inequality and Essays on the Political Economy of Social Welfare University of Toronto Press; Toronto.
- Mosely, H.
1978 "Is There A Fiscal Crisis of the State?" Monthly Review Vol. 30, No. 1, May 1978. p. 34-45.
- National Film Board of Canada
N/D "For Twenty Cents a Day"
- O'Connor, J.
1973 The Fiscal Crisis of the State St. Martin's Press; New York.
- Offe, C.
1972a "Political Authority and Class Structures - An Analysis of Late Capitalist Societies" International Journal of Sociology 1972. pp. 73-107.
- Offe, C.
1972b "Advanced Capitalism and the Welfare State" Politics and Society Summer, 1972. pp. 479-488.

- Offe, C.
1975 "The Theory of the Capitalist State and the Problem of Policy Formation" Stress and Contradiction in Modern Capitalism L.N. Lindberg et. al. (Eds.) Lexington Books, D.C. Heath and Co.; Toronto.
- Offe, C.
1980 "The Separation of Form and Content in Liberal Democratic Politics" Studies in Political Economy A. Moscovitch, R. Whitaker (Eds.) No. 3, Spring, 1980. p. 5-15.
- Offe, C.
1984 Contradictions of the Welfare State John Keane, (Ed.) Hutchinson and Co. (Publishers) Ltd.; London.
- Offe, C., H. Wiesensthal
1980 "Two Logics of Collective Action: Theoretical Notes on Social Class and Organizational Form" Political Power and Social Theory Vol. 1. JAI Press Inc.; Greenwich Conn. pp. 67-115.
- Offe, C., V. Ronge
1982 "Theses on the Theory of the State" Classes, Power and Conflict: Contemporary Debates A. Giddens, D. Held, (Eds.) University of California Press; Berkely. pp. 224-248.
- Ormsby, M.
1958 British Columbia: A History The MacMillans in Canada; Vancouver.
- Palmer, Bryan D.
1983 Working-Class Experience The Rise and Reconstitution of Canadian Labour, 1800-1980 Butterworth and Co. (Canada) Ltd.; Toronto.
- Pamphlet Collection
N/D Special Collections, Library, University of British Columbia; Vancouver.
- Pandiani, John
1982 "The Crime Control Corps" British Journal of Sociology Vol. 33, No. 3; September 1982. pp. 348-358.

- Panitch, L. (Ed.)
1977 The Canadian State: Political Economy and Political Power University of Toronto Press; Toronto.
- Pattullo, Dufferin
1931-1938 Pattullo Papers Provincial Archives of British Columbia; Victoria.
- Paul, H.
1939 "I am a Transient" Canadian Forum Volume XII, Number 19, May 1939. pp. 47-50
- Penner, N.
1977 The Canadian Left - a critical analysis Prentice-Hall of Canada; Scarborough, Ontario.
- Phillips, Paul
1967 No Power Greater: A Century of Labour in B.C. B.C. Federation of Labour, Boag Foundation; Vancouver.
- Phillips, Paul
1982 Regional Disparities James Lorimer and Company Publishers, Toronto.
- Poulantzas, N.
1972 "The Problem of the Capitalist State" in R. Blackburn (Ed.) Ideology in Social Science pp. 238-253.
- Poulantzas, N.
1981 "The Capitalist State: An Anti-Structuralist Structural Method" French Sociology C. Lemart (Ed.) pp. 111-135.
- Richter, Lothar (Ed.)
1939 Canada's Unemployment Problem MacMillan, Studies of Institute of Public Affairs; Dalhousie University.
- Robin, M.
1968 Radical Politics and Canadian Labour 1880-1930 Institute of Industrial Relations, Queen's University; Kingston.

- Roddan, A.
1931 God in the Jungles: The Story of the Man Without a Home Superintendent of the First United Church; Vancouver, B.C.
- Roddan, A.
1932 Canada's Untouchables Clarke and Stewart; Vancouver.
- Rodney, W.
1969 Soldiers of the International - A History of the Communist Party of Canada 1919-1929 University of Toronto Press; Toronto.
- Roussopoulos, N.
1973 The Political Economy of the State Black Rose Books; Montreal.
- Saunders, S.A.
1939 "Nature and Extent of Unemployment in Canada" in L.Richter, (Ed.) Canada's Unemployment Problem MacMillan, Canada. pp. 1-58.
- Savage, Robert
1985 Personal Interview, May 31, 1985; Vancouver.
- Sheils, Jean and B. Swanky
1977 Work and Wages: semi-documentary account of the life and times of Arthur H. (Slim) Evans Trade Union Research Bureau; Vancouver.
- Stajner, R.
1976 Crisis: Anatomy of Contemporary crises and (a) theory of crises in the neo-imperialist stage of capitalism Socialist Thought and Practise; Beograd.
- Stevens, L.
1936 "Rise and Fall of the Port of Vancouver British Columbia" Economic Geography Vol. 12, N. 1, January, 1936. Clark University; Worcester, Mass. p. 61-70.
- Stevenson, G.
1977 "Federalism and the political economy of the Canadian state" in L. Panitch (Ed.) The Canadian State: political economy and political power University of Toronto Press; Toronto. pp. 71-100.

Studies in Political Economy A Socialist Review

- 1981 "Rethinking Canadian Political Economy" Special Issue; Number 6, Autumn 1981.

Struthers, J.

- 1983 No Fault of Their Own: Unemployment and the Canadian Welfare State 1914-1941 University of Toronto Press; Toronto.

Struthers, J.

- 1984 "The '30s: The '80s" Canadian Forum May, 1984. pp. 8-12.

Sutherland, D.M.

- 1935 "Education and Welfare in Department of National Defence Unemployment Relief Camps" Labour Gazette xxxv, April, 1935. p. 324.

Swettenham, John

- 1968 McNaughton Ryerson Press; Toronto.

Sweezy, P.

- 1980 "The Crisis of American Capitalism" Monthly Review October, 1980; Vol. 32, No. 5. pp. 3-5.

Tanner, T.W.

- 1965 "Microcosms of Misfortune: Canada's Unemployment Relief Camps Administered by the Department of National Defence 1932-1936" Unpublished Master of Arts Thesis; University of Western Ontario; London.

Taylor, Ian

- 1983 Crime Capitalism and Community: Three Essays in Socialist Criminology Butterworth and Co. Ltd.; Toronto.

Taylor, J.

- 1975 "The Urban West Public Welfare and A Theory of Urban Development" in H.R. McCormack, J. MacPherson, (Eds.) Cities in the West: Papers of the Western Canada Urban History Conference University of Winnipeg; National Museum of Canada; Ottawa.

Tolmie, S.F.

1931 Papers of S.F. Tolmie Special Collections Division,
Library, University of British Columbia; Vancouver.

Vancouver City Archives

"Administrative History" Volumes 28,30,31,32,33.

"City Clerk's Series One Operational Files, Correspondence
Inward, 1888-1946.

"City Records" Location Numbers 33,75.

"Public Records, Mayor" Volumes 5,8,9.

White, Edward

1985 Personal Interview, May 30, 1985; Kelowna, B.C.

Williams, Raymond

1976 "Base and Superstructure in Marxist Cultural Theory"
Schooling and Capitalism Roger Dale et. als. (Eds.)
Routledge/Open University Press; London.

Willox, P.

1980 "The Capital Crisis and Labour: Perspectives on the
Dynamics of Working Class Consciousness in Canada"
PhD. Thesis, Uppsala University; Distributor; Almqvist
and Wiksell International; Stockholm, Sweden.

Winch, E.E.

1930-1940 Winch Papers in MacInnis, Angus, Papers; Memorial
Collection Special Collections, Library, University of
British Columbia; Vancouver.

Wolfe, Alan

1971 "Political Repression and the Liberal Democratic
State" Monthly Review An Independent Socialist
Magazine Vol. 2, No. 7, December 1971. p. 18-38.

Woods, Raymond

1985 Personal Interview, May 23, 1985; Westbank, B.C.

APPENDIX ONE

British Columbia Relief Camp Workers Union

Canadian Labour Defence League

Central Committee of Unemployed Councils

CCF Unemployed Councils

Chinese Protective Association

Free Speech Committee

Finnish Workers' Club

Friends of the Soviet Union

German Workers' Club

National Unemployed Workers' Association

Provincial Committee of Unemployed Councils

Provincial Workers' Council

Scandinavian Workers's Club

Single Unemployed Protective Association

Ukranian Workers' Club

Unemployed Block Committees - Neighbourhood Councils

Unemployed Councils of Canada

Vancouver Direct Relief Association

Women's Labour League

Workers' Ex-Servicemen's League

Workers' International Relief

Workers' Protective Association

Workers' Unity League

Workers' Youth Committee

Young Communist League

Appendix TwoBritish Columbia Provincial Relief Camps - 1934

Group A: Six Projects; Sixteen Camps.

Projects: Hope-Princeton Highway; Hope-Rosedale Highway;
Deroche-Aggassiz Highway; Hope-Boston Bar Highway.

Group B: Four Projects; Ten Camps.

Projects: Spences Bridge-Lytton Highway; Spences Bridge-Merritt Highway; Boston Bar Airport.

Group C: Three Projects; Eight Camps.

Hope-Princeton Highway; Princeton-Merritt Highway.

Group D: Three Projects; Seven Camps.

Salmon Arm-Sorrento Highway; Salmon Arm-Sicamous Highway;
Grindrod-Mara Lake Highway.

Group E: Summer Camps only; Three Projects; Four Camps.

North Thompson River; Kamloops Lake Road.

Group F: Three Projects; Six Camps.

Big Bend Highway; Revelstoke-Sicamous Highway.

Group F: Summer Camps. One Project; Nine Camps

Big Bend Highway.

Group G: Six Projects; Seven Camps.

Point Grey; White Rock International Highway; Pender
Harbour; Sechelt Road; Squamish; Brittania Beach;
Blair Rifle Range.

Group H: Four Projects; Seven Camps.

West Coast Road, Vancouver Island; Sooke-Jordan River Road;
Jordan River-Port Renfrew; Macaulay Fort.

Group K: Three Projects; Two Camps.

Oyama Highway; Wilson's Landing.

Group K: Summer Camps. One Project; One Camp.
Rock Creek Airport.

In Addition:

One Project; Nine Camps in Revelstoke intended to be opened
in Spring, 1935.

Five Projects; Seven Camps operated at one time, but closed
permanently by 1934. Deroche-Agassiz; Spences Bridge-Cache Creek
Road; Aldergrove; Naramata.

Department of National Defence Relief Camps in British Columbia

Project Number 22; Yahk, B.C., Intermediate Landing Field.

Project Number 23; Kitchner, B.C., Intermediate Landing Field.

Project Number 24; Salmo, B.C., Intermediate Landing Field.

Project Number 25; Princeton, B.C., Intermediate Landing Field.

Project Number 26; Hope, B.C., Intermediate Landing Field.

Project Number 34; Cranbrook, B.C., Rifle Range.

Project Number 48; Victoria, B.C., District Headquarters,
Military District 11, Administration.

Project Number 55; Hope, B.C., Hope - Princeton Highway
Construction.

Project Number 56; Princeton, B.C., Hope - Princeton Highway
Construction.

Project Number 57; Vancouver Island, West Coast Road
Highway Construction.

Project Number 60; Kingsgate, Eastport, Yahk, B.C., Highway
Construction.

Project Number 61; Crow's Nest, Michel, B.C., Highway
Construction.

Project Number 62; Kimberly - Wasa, B.C., Highway Construction.

Project Number 63; Long Beach, Nelson - Fraser's Landing, B.C.,
Highway Construction.

Project Number 64; Goatfell, Creston - Goatfell, B.C., Highway Construction.

Project Number 65; Nelway, Nelway - Nelson, B.C., Highway Construction.

Project Number 66; China Creek - Castlegar - Trail, B.C., Highway Construction.

Project Number 67; Shoreacres - Nelson - Castlegar, B.C., Highway Construction.

Project Number 68; Rockcreek - Tadana, B.C., Highway Construction.

Project Number 69; Sheepcreek - Rossland - Cascade, B.C., Highway Construction.

Project Number 70; Yahk - Kootenay, B.C., Group Headquarters, Highway Construction.

Project Number 71; Long Beach - West Kootenay, B.C., Group Headquarters, Highway Construction.

Project Number 72; Niskonlinth Forest Reserve, Forestry.

Project Number 73; Rosedale - Hope, B.C., Highway Construction.

Project Number 74; Agassiz - Harrison Mills B.C., Highway Construction.

Project Number 75; Work Point, Rodd Hill and Heal's Rifle Range Fort McCauley, Esquimalt, B.C., Rifle Range.

Project Number 76; Boston Bar, Hope - Bar, B.C., Highway Construction.

Project Number 77; Hope, B.C., Group Headquarters, Highway Construction.

Project Number 78; Princeton, B.C., Group Headquarters, Highway Construction.

Project Number 79; Sooke, B.C., Group Headquarters, Highway Construction.

Project Number 80; Cranbrook, B.C., Municipal Airport.

Project Number 82; Merritt - Princeton, B.C., Highway Construction.

Project Number 83; Trail - Fruitvale, B.C., Highway Construction.

Project Number 84; Balfour - Kaslo - New Denver, B.C., Highway Construction.

Project Number 85; Mount Oldfield, B.C., Highway Construction.

Project Number 86; Spence's Bridge B.C., Group Headquarters, Highway Construction.

Project Number 87; Spence's Bridge - Lytton, B.C., Highway Construction.

Project Number 88; Spence's Bridge - Cache Creek, B.C., Highway Construction.

Project Number 89; Spence's Bridge - Merritt, B.C., Highway Construction.

Project Number 95; Salmon Arm, B.C., Group Headquarters, Highway Construction.

Project Number 96; Salmon Arm - Sorrento, B.C., Highway Construction.

Project Number 97; Salmon Arm - Sicamous - Grindrod, B.C., Highway Construction.

Project Number 98; Newgate - Roosville - Cutoff, B.C., Highway Construction.

Project Number 99; East Thurlow Island, B.C., Forestry.

Project Number 100; Revelstoke, B.C., Group Headquarters, Highway Construction.

Project Number 101; Revelstoke North - Big Bend, B.C., Highway Construction.

Project Number 102; Revelstoke - Sicamous, B.C., Highway Construction.

Project Number 105; Point Grey, B.C., Highway Construction.

Project Number 108; Boston Bar, B.C., Intermediate Landing Field.

Project Number 111; Point Grey, B.C., Group Headquarters, Highway Construction.

Project Number 114; White Rock, B.C., Highway Construction.

Project Number 115; Aldergrove, B.C., Highway Construction.

Project Number 116; Pender Harbour - Half Moon Bay, B.C., Highway Construction.

Project Number 117; Squamish, B.C., Highway Construction.

Project Number 118; Boston Bar, B.C., Warehouse.

Project Number 124; Taghum, B.C., Highway Construction.

Project Number 125; Alridge, B.C., Highway Construction.

Project Number 126; Kamloops, B.C., Group Headquarters,
Highway Construction.

Project Number 127; North Thompson River, Highway Construction.

Project Number 128; Dead Man Creek - Kamloops Lake, B.C.,
Highway Construction.

Project Number 129; Kelowna, B.C., Group Headquarters,
Highway Construction.

Project Number 130; Oyama, B.C., Highway Construction.

Project Number 131; Nahum, B.C., Highway Construction.

Project Number 132; Naramata, B.C., Highway Construction.

Project Number 134; North Vancouver, B.C., Blair Rifle Range.

Project Number 135; Yahk, B.C., Highway Construction.

Project Number 136; Kitchner, B.C., Highway Construction.

Project Number 149; Rock Creek, B.C., Intermediate Landing
Field.

Project Number 154; Canal Flats, B.C., Highway Construction.

Project Number 157; Oliver, B.C., Intermediate Landing Field.

Project Number 158; Lytton, B.C.

Project Number 159; Midway, B.C., Intermediate Landing Field.

Project Number 160; Pendleton, B.C., Intermediate Landing Field.⁵⁸

⁵⁸ Source; LeFresne, 1961: Appendix B

Appendix 3
Methodology

The research methods employed in this present sociological analysis of the DND relief camp scheme involved the extensive collection of both macro-historical quantitative data and macro-economic qualitative data. I approached this study with the belief that sociological insights into the phenomenon of state control could be enhanced through an examination of state action during a period of fiscal and social crises.

The quantitative economic data collected served to illustrate that the Canadian state experienced a fiscal crisis during the 1930s, due to the severe reduction in revenue from taxation, resource rents, and industrial production. I have supplied a great deal of qualitative historical data in order to give sufficient evidence that a rapidly expanding crisis of legitimation was precipitated by the thousands of unemployed for whom no means of subsistence existed; and to demonstrate that it was beyond the ability of the state to control this group through the usual channels. Furthermore, to establish satisfactory evidence that the DND relief camps were not an adequate solution to the dire conditions that unemployment had created for the dissidents, but served as a mechanism of state coercion, a detailed account of the relief camp scheme and the prevalence of unrest that characterized their operation has been presented.

The qualitative data gathered for this present study were collected primarily through archival research. The Special Collections Division of the Library at the University of British Columbia was the source of a variety of oral histories and memoirs of the unemployed, and of those who assisted these men. As well, the papers of Premier Tolmie who headed the provincial government throughout the early part of the Depression years, are contained there. During July, 1984, I spent five days sifting through this data preserved in the Special Collections Division, and obtained some valuable information.

The British Columbia Provincial Archives are a repository for, among other provincial records, the files of the defunct British Columbia Provincial Police and the papers of Premier Pattullo. Between July 30 and August 3, 1984, I was occupied reviewing the data gathered from these Archives. These data revealed the extensive state control of the unemployed that was undertaken by the Provincial Police. As well, the apprehension felt by the members of the provincial government vis a vis the organized, militant unemployed, is evident in the Premier's correspondence files.

The Vancouver City Archives provided enough data for eleven full days of research. There, an excellent collection of documents provided detailed information on virtually every facet of the social context of the Great Depression in Vancouver. The daily operational files of the Vancouver City Police contained in these Archives, record every activity of this police force in

its efforts to control the unemployed in the City. The files of the mayors who were in power during the Depression years, reveal the concerns, beliefs, and activities of City authorities in relation to the unemployed. These records are complemented by the files of the City Clerk and the Vancouver Relief Department, that serve to provide extensive information about the relief provisions for the unemployed who congregated in the city. Accounts of the plight of the unemployed, single, homeless men in the jungles, and their activities during the relief camp strikes of 1934 and 1935 are recorded; and these are complemented by numerous photographs that are vivid portrayals of the situation that existed. The preservation of pamphlets distributed to the unemployed, which were submitted to the police by their informants, provide valuable insight into the concerns of this segment of the population. An extensive collection of newspaper articles, organized by the City's first archivist, Major Matthews, provides a comprehensive overview of the activities of the unemployed, and citizens' response to the social situation. Letters from residents of Vancouver to various city officials interspersed throughout the above mentioned files, serve to illustrate the widespread protest against the existing socio-economic conditions. This wealth of information preserved by the City of Vancouver allowed me to obtain a vast amount of data through which I could analyse the social and legitimization crises that led to the state's social control of the unemployed in the DND relief camps.

To supplement the data gathered from the three Archives, I sought out any accounts of the Great Depression and the DND relief camp scheme that are available. These sources supplied valuable memoirs of those involved in the events discussed in this study, detailed accounts of events and programmes initiated by the state, and some analyses of the events that occurred during that era.

In addition, I had the privilege of interviewing four former relief camp inmates, two of whom were leading participants in the On To Ottawa Trek. Robert Savage, with whom I spoke for over an hour on May 31, 1985, is the only living member of the delegation that met with Prime Minister Bennett in June, 1935. These former inmates gave me vivid accounts of their experiences and attitudes during the Great Depression and the operation of the relief camp scheme.

In the process of gathering the data used for this sociological analysis of the DND relief camp scheme, some technical difficulties arose. Although the Vancouver City archivist of the 1930s, Matthews, preserved a large collection of newspaper articles covering a period of a number of years in a very orderly fashion, he failed to identify the source of these articles. Hence, the newspapers from which an article is derived is unknown. As a result, throughout this study I have been obliged to cite Matthews as the reference for most of the newspaper accounts.

Depending upon memoirs and oral histories creates one important problem. Memoirs may be biased and inaccurate. The collection of a great deal of data permitted me to control for this bias. As I was able to gather a number of accounts of the same incident, information that was suspected to be spurious, after careful consideration, was not included in the text. This discretion was very seldom necessary, and any information that was discarded or relegated to the status of a footnote, was not in any way crucial to the sociological analysis of the problem.

After I had amassed a great deal of data illustrating the fiscal and social crises of the Canadian state during the Great Depression, and the apparently repressive character of the DND relief camp scheme, I endeavored to analyse these social phenomena in light of the role of the state in capitalist economy. It became clear that the DND scheme was the state's response to the growing crisis of legitimation, and the inability of the state to control the counter-hegemonic unemployed through the usual operation of its coercive apparatuses. Hence, a sociological analysis of the actions taken by the state during the crisis it was obliged to manage during the 1930s, is presented in the hope that this thesis will contribute to the discussion of the Canadian state and its role of maintaining and legitimating the capitalist socio-economic order.