RESPONSE TO THE DEPRESSION:
THREE REPRESENTATIVE WOMEN'S
GROUPS IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

by

MARY PATRICIA POWELL
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Department of History
The University of British Columbia
Vancouver 8, Canada
Date Sept., 1967
ABSTRACT

The aim of this thesis was to investigate the response of representative women in British Columbia to the Depression in Canada during the 1930's. Canadian women had had the vote for only eleven years before the economic crash in 1929. The crisis of the Depression provided an opportunity for women to use their new found political power to effect much needed reforms in the social and economic system. Women had argued that they were especially interested in the sphere of social reforms and welfare and that their vote would ensure the passage of many social reforms. During the 1920's, women in British Columbia did indeed help to secure the passage of many reforms. The Depression, however, was by far the most serious crisis faced by the enfranchised women. Three women's groups were investigated as representative of British Columbia women. These three organizations were chosen for their character and interest in social welfare. The Local Council of Women of Vancouver was not only the local branch of the most important women's group in Canada, but it also attempted, through its numerous affiliated societies, to speak for women as a whole. The Y.W.C.A. was the largest and most important women's organization specifically concerned with welfare work. The B.C. Conference Branch of the Woman's Missionary Society of the largest Protestant denomination in Vancouver, the United Church, was also interested in social welfare through its home Mission work.

The major sources of information were the respective Minute Books of each group. This source was supplemented by histories of each organization; newspapers and journal articles, particularly on the work of women during the Depression; and various printed
material on aspects of the Depression.

The conclusions reached in the thesis was that the women of the three groups investigated did not rise to the challenge of the Depression by proposing or endorsing any important reforms or by seriously questioning the social and economic system which had produced the Depression. Although examination of other groups would be necessary to warrant broader generalization, the evidence here presented indicates that the hopes of those who believed that women as a group would prove to be a distinctive and compelling force in social and political life were not justified by the experience of the depression decade in British Columbia.
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INTRODUCTION
When the Great Depression struck Canada in 1929, women were given a dramatic opportunity to demonstrate the validity of their promises to improve the condition of the nation, and to prove that they would be more humane in organizing a social order. Although women were not organized in a political party, they had formed a number of influential organizations to make their views known, and lobby for their policies. The purpose of this paper is to investigate the activities of certain representative women's groups in British Columbia during the Depression with a view to discovering whether or not women took action to alleviate the effects of the crisis and used their political power in doing so.

The battle for women's suffrage in Canada had been oddly apathetic particularly when contrasted with the bitter contests in Great Britain and the United States. However, although feminism was never the active cause in Canada that it was elsewhere, there were strong feelings on both sides about the consequences of giving women the vote. Those in favor of women's suffrage insisted that women were purer of heart and mind than men. Women would vote in clean government and end corruption in public life. They would swing the vote for prohibition and other reforms. Once women had the vote, the era of back-room politics in smoke filled rooms would be over. Those who were fighting for various social reforms, were usually pro women's suffrage, on the grounds that women were more understanding and charitable than men and thus would be more likely to vote for reform bills. Clean government and a more humane society would be the results of women's suffrage.

Those who opposed the measure had done so for a variety of
reasons. Many women refused to endorse women's suffrage because they believed the idea of women voting was unfeminine and degrading. Some men opposed it for almost the same reasons. Women were too delicate and innocent to become involved in the foul game of politics. They should not have to soil themselves with such involvement. There were also those men who classified women with small children and the retarded. There also existed a number of men who believed that women were positively evil, a creature of the devil, who should certainly not be given the opportunity to vote. Even after women had been given the vote, some of these beliefs continued. Mr. William Tait argued in the *Dalhousie Review*:

> Feminism has two general tendencies. In the first place, it softens the national fibre. It encourages the view that we must spend our lives looking after other people. It may tend to lack of self-reliance, and the consequence that many people are shirking personal responsibility as social beings. Next, it has a definite tendency to harden the female, to remove those gentle motherly qualities which are of high survival value to us as a race and civilization.¹

Mr. Tait blamed the problems of Canada in 1930 on feminism and women's suffrage, saying that soon "life will not be worth living for any but abnormal females and their male counterparts.⁵²

Canada was on the way to breeding a race of neurotics, a consequence revealed by the presence of crime, dancing and jazz in Canadian society.

In spite of opposition and the apathy of many women, women's suffrage was eventually granted by the Canadian government. The contribution of women to Canada during World War I made it ridiculous to keep the vote from them any longer. The War Time Election Act gave female relatives of soldiers the right to vote. This act was completed in the Dominion Franchise Act of 1920. The prairie
provinces had conceded the vote to women in 1916, with British Columbia and Ontario following suit in 1917, Nova Scotia in 1918, New Brunswick in 1919, and Prince Edward Island in 1922. Quebec did not extend the franchise to women until 1940.

After women had the vote, there were cries from some of them that a Women's Party should be formed. According to the biographer of Emily Murphy, The movement gained much momentum in 1918-1919. Mrs. Emily Murphy herself, one of the leading advocates of women in politics and not one to downplay the rights of women, squelched the movement by stating that "there could be no future in a Woman's Party . . . what was needed was a Woman's Platform. If Women were able to set out a clear-cut and comprehensive statement of what they believed essential they could then measure the claims of contending political parties against it." The movements for a Woman's Party never achieved much success in Canada. The difficulties involved were manifold. Women did not have an ideology upon which they could have agreed and which would have enabled them to form a coherent political party. When they had the vote, they simply entered whichever one of the already existing political parties they found most congenial to their own beliefs (or voted as their husbands did). There have been many complaints then and since, that the "woman voter as she allows herself to exist within the party organization is only a negligible factor politically." The political parties usually relegated women to unimportant positions in the political decision-making apparatus. Also, women were not apt to block vote except on a very narrow range of subjects in which they had a special interest, for example, laws directly concerning women and children. A woman's party would have had to
encompass all political views and philosophies in one group with no basis of agreement except the legal status of women. Such a task was not feasible.

The women of British Columbia had been very active during the years prior to the Depression in pressing for reforms. Their efforts had been crowned with a large measure of success. A Deserted Wives Maintenance Act was passed. A variety of educational improvements were introduced; the compulsory school age was raised from fourteen to sixteen; children in isolated areas could take correspondence courses to continue their schooling. Two of the most important statutes enacted were the Mothers Pensions Act, which provided allowances for the mothers of dependent children, and the Testator's Family Maintenance Act, which prevented a wife from being left destitute by the will of the deceased spouse. All of this legislation was enacted between 1917 and 1920. British Columbia had become the Dominion leader in social legislation.

The flow of social legislation continued and British Columbia women's organizations petitioned for many of the new statutes. The Provincial Home for Incurables and the Boys' Subnormal School were set up. The function of other acts was revealed by their titles--The Maternity Protection Act, The Protection of Children of Unmarried Mothers Act, The Legitimation (of children) Act, The Medical Association Act, The Superannuation Act (for civil servants). By 1928, amendments to the Administration Act gave women a more equitable share of the property of a husband who died intestate. The age limit for employed children was raised and their hours of work limited. The Minimum Wage Act for Women was passed, as was
a similar act for men. In the federal field, the Old Age Pensions Act was established. British Columbia was the first province to pay pensions. Some commentators gave a great deal of the credit for such reforms to women:

As an instigator of social reform the exclusively male democracy, like its predecessor the oligarchy, had reached the limits set by its own restricted nature. The Common Man solely male had shot his bolt, consequently the ten years following 1917 had been the decade of the Common Woman behind whose skirt now, wisely and well, the battle for the whole community was being fought. The drive for social legislation was now so steady and continuing a force that it and the other benefits due to the women's voting potential were accepted as natural features of the social landscape.

Although one may argue that this statement was overly optimistic in its assessment of the influence of women upon legislation, many women's groups did endorse much of the social legislation which was passed in British Columbia between 1917 and 1929. There were a few outstanding women in this period who were especially active in the field of social reform. Helen MacGill was a juvenile court judge and an authority on the legal status of women and children in British Columbia; Mary Ellen Smith was the first woman M.L.A. in British Columbia; Helena Gutteridge was the Secretary of the Vancouver Trades and Labour Council. It would be impossible, however, to estimate accurately the influence women had on social legislation, because a statistical analysis of the women's vote is not possible.

When the Great Depression struck Canada in 1929, women were given their first real chance to carry out their promises to clean up the mess which the men had made of the nation, and to prove that they would be more humane in organizing a social order. Although women were not organized in a political party, they had
formed a number of influential organizations to make their views known, and lobby for their policies. The purpose of this paper is to investigate the activities of certain representative women's groups in British Columbia during the Depression with a view to discovering whether or not women took action to alleviate the effects of the crisis and used their political power in doing so.

British Columbia felt the impact of the financial crisis of October, 1929, immediately. The province was at the height of the post-war boom when the crash came. The prosperity of British Columbia depended on its primary industries—mining, fishing, and lumbering. Fluctuation of the world market affected all of these products drastically. The bottom fell out of the world market for grain and the Vancouver waterfront became idle as "shipments to the coastal elevators fell by 17,500,000 bushels."6 The economic situation in British Columbia worsened as 1930 progressed. The canners found themselves saddled with over 2,000,000 cases of salmon which they were unable to sell. According to M. A. Ormsby:

Lumber exporters were in almost worse straits: sales to Australia, New Zealand and south-east Asia had fallen sharply, and the British market was almost completely cut off by the decision of the leading importers in the United Kingdom to purchase the entire exportable timber supply of the Soviet Union. The dwindling foreign and domestic demand for coal forced the Crow's Nest Pass Coal Company to lay off miners at Coal Creek and Fernie, and a fall in the price of lead and other metals soon caused the Consolidated Mining and Smelting Company to cut wages. In the Okanagan Valley, the fruit growers had long been in difficulties . . .7

The city of Vancouver was particularly hard hit by the Depression as the unemployed from all over Canada flocked to its mild climate. On November 1, 1930, the city had more than 7,000 men on relief
and many more arrived on every train from the prairies. The city could not cope with the costs of relief alone, but the provincial government would only agree to provide road work for the men. Finally, in the autumn of 1930, the federal government set up relief projects to distribute direct financial assistance to the provinces. Even with the aid furnished by the federal government, the relief programs organized in British Columbia were always inadequate. Here was an open field for women's organizations. Here was an opportunity for women to demonstrate their ability to cope with a crisis and their willingness to do so.

Some outstanding women were active during the Depression: Laura Jamieson, an M.L.A. in British Columbia and an agitator for a variety of reforms, Helen MacGill, now a member of the B. C. Board of Industrial Relations, Dorothy Steeves, a lawyer and one of the charter members of the C.C.F. These women were unusual, however, because they were so active. A more complete picture of the response of women to the Depression may be obtained by a study of women's organizations. The three groups investigated here were chosen for their character and their interest in social welfare. The Local Council of Women of Vancouver was not only the local branch of the most important women's organization in Canada, but it also attempted, through its numerous affiliated societies, to speak for women as a whole. The Y.W.C.A. was the largest and most important women's group specifically concerned with welfare work. The B. C. Conference Branch of the Woman's Missionary Society of the largest Protestant denomination in Vancouver, the United Church, was also interested in social welfare through its Home Mission work.
CHAPTER I

THE VANCOUVER Y.W.C.A.
The Young Women's Christian Association was originally founded in England in 1870's. The Association was to afford girls coming to the cities to work a comfortable and inexpensive home where they would be given Christian guidance. The movement was interdenomenational locally self-governing, and "designed to secure the fullest spiritual and physical well-being of young women."¹ From its inception, the Y.W.C.A. was always interested in the temporal welfare of employed women and girls, as well as their spiritual lives.

The first Canadian Y.W.C.A. was founded in St. Johns, New Brunswick in 1870. It soon disbanded because of financial problems, but 1873 saw the founding of a permanent Y.W.C.A. in Toronto. The Vancouver Association was the result of the 1897 merger of a group from St. Andrews Presbyterian Church, called the Women's Improvement League, and the Anglican Girls' Friendly Society.² This group immediately opened a boarding house for women and girls and within a year was accommodating one hundred persons.³

For the first few years of their existence, the Associations were local organizations only. There was no national Y.W.C.A. and thus each local association was self-governing and formed its own policies. The first Conference of Canadian Y.W.C.A.'s was held in December, 1893, and the first Annual Meeting in Ottawa, January 23, 1895.⁴ The constitution presented at this first meeting stated the object of the national organization "shall be to unite in one central body all organizations existing and those to be formed in the future for the purpose of Y.W.C.A. work which is to promote the spiritual, intellectual
physical and social conditions of all young women; believing that the more intimate knowledge of one another's work will result in larger mutual sympathy, greater unity of purpose and plan and therefore in more efficient action.\textsuperscript{5}

The Association always took an interest in social conditions. It emphasized relief work, specifically for unemployed women and girls as one of its major functions. The Toronto Y.W.C.A. had done relief work among immigrants soon after it was founded. The work was eventually taken over by the city of Toronto. The Vancouver branch set up an Employment Bureau for women and in 1910 alone, received nearly 3,000 requests from employers seeking woman workers.\textsuperscript{6} "Y.W.C.A.'s in those beginning years did evangelical and relief work, held prayer meetings, visited women in prison, collected clothing and food. They ran soup kitchens and kindergartens; taught girls how to make their clothes and hats."\textsuperscript{7} The Vancouver Y.W.C.A. expanded its activities rapidly. It soon moved into a larger building and opened lunch rooms for business girls and meeting rooms for the various clubs being organized to assist women and girls in occupying their leisure time. Traveller's Aid work was taken over from the British Women's Immigration Society. The pattern of Association work in Vancouver was well established within twenty years after its founding.\textsuperscript{8}

Although the Y.W.C.A. in Canada had a Dominion organization, the local organizations retained their self-government and freedom to formulate their own policies. The local group consisted of the board of directors, a number of standing and
special committees, the staff and members of various clubs and activities. All of the Y.W.C.A. members gathered together to decide on general policy and to elect the board of directors once a year at an Annual Meeting. At this meeting, the members of the Y.W.C.A. elected a Nominating Committee and a Board of Directors. The Nominating Committee recommended the names of candidates to be voted upon by the electorate. The Board of Directors was elected from the list of names presented by the Nominating Committee. If the local Y.W.C.A. was making a real attempt to see to it that a democratic method of government was followed, it would take care in electing its Nominating Committee and insist that more than one person would run for each place on the Board. The Board of Directors elected its own officers and the President of the Board was responsible for appointing the various committees. Responsibility for carrying out the work of the Y.W.C.A. had to be delegated to a small group. The Board of Directors had the authority to fulfill the functions of the Y. and decide "changes in function to meet the changing needs within the community." It drew up and passed upon all of the resolutions which the Association sent to the government. It was to define the response of the Y.W.C.A. to changes in the community. It had "definite responsibility concerning the total welfare structure of the community."  

The Board carried on most of its work through committees. The Vancouver Y. had nine standing committees throughout the 1930's and occasionally set up a special committee to deal with a specific problem which had arisen. The committees initiated
the various programs which the Y.W.C.A. was to carry on and
directed the paid staff in their duties. The abundance of
committees in the Y.W.C.A. did tend to retard action. This
was not unusual among women's organizations but it accounted
for a certain slowness in response to problems.

The Y.W.C.A. was financed by membership and service
fees, and by grants from the Community Chest and the Council
of Social Agencies. In Vancouver, the city government had
given the Y.W.C.A. grants prior to the Depression, in
recognition of the welfare work which the Association carried
out. On a national scale, the Association was a wealthy
organization in 1932, although it had a $250,000 debt. Across
Canada, Y.W.C.A.'s held $2,000,000 worth of property, Trustee
Bond investments of $125,000 and furnishings valued at over
$250,000. In spite of this wealth, it was badly affected by
the Depression. At the National Convention in Banff in 1929,
a $40,000 budget had been approved, but the financial crisis
necessitated a cut to $20,000. "Staff had to be cut down,
salaries were reduced 15% and every possible economy was
canvassed."11 A campaign launched by the National Council of
the Y.W.C.A. of Canada in 1933 to raise $40,000 failed because
of the Depression. According to Mary Quayle Innis, the historian
of the Y.W.C.A. in Canada: "Until 1932 there was great expansion
of buildings and facilities; after 1930 there was intensive
search for the causes of the depression which has occurred . . . "12
The 1932 National Convention had recommended more emphasis on aid
for unemployed women and girls. In 1931, Miss Mildred Gordon,
secretary of Case Work for the National Board of the Canadian
Y.W.C.A., stated that "the effect of the depression on the business girl is so distressing and so unique that it had forced us to alter our long established program of character building activities in order to include direct relief."\textsuperscript{13}

The Vancouver Y.W.C.A. felt the financial pressure of the Depression only months after the October crash of the stock market. At the May 7, 1930 meeting of the Executive Committee, the conveners of the various standing committees were asked "to carefully consider the financial statement of their Departments with a view to reducing all possible expenditures."\textsuperscript{14} In the annual message by the president in 1932, Mrs. Blee stressed the difficulties encountered by the Association because of the Depression:

> During 1931, in common with every other social agency in Vancouver, we have had to face the effect of unemployment in every department of our work. The house has been affected by reductions in the number of girls who can pay their way, and the increasing number of those out of work and funds. Registration in all activities with fees . . . has materially decreased. This has, of course, meant financial loss . . . .\textsuperscript{15}

The Vancouver Association attempted to overcome these financial problems by joining the Vancouver Welfare Federation. The Federation provided almost half of the Y.W.C.A. budget, after 1932. The Welfare Federation had felt the pinch of the Depression too, however, and in 1933, it requested a 7\% cut in the budget presented by the Y.W.C.A. for the year 1934. The Y.W.C.A. replied that this was impossible, but it appointed a committee to investigate the matter and finally decided to comply with the request by cutting the staff. The Association
had little choice in the matter, because the Welfare Federation was already making up the $1500 cut in the Y.W.C.A.'s grant from the provincial and city governments. Eventually, the city grant would be cut to nothing. Although the Y.W.C.A. managed to balance its 1933 budget, by 1934, it had a $12,000 deficit for the years 1932-1934. In order to make up this sum, it decided to "canvas without publicity about 1,000 individuals who had not yet contributed or who had contributed all cash." The campaign was not a success, although the Y.W.C.A. did garner some contributions. By 1935, its finances were in better shape, in spite of the fact that the city had finally completely cut off the grant to the Y.W.C.A. The Welfare Federation made up the city grant. The Association had two main problems which made the budget cuts hard to bear. One was its desperate need for a new building. The Vancouver Y.W.C.A. had been discussing the possibilities of a new building during the late 1920's. The depression put a damper on the idea, although the Y.W.C.A. did not abandon its plans. In 1936, it pointed out once again to the Welfare Federation its need of a new building and asked that the Federation "give the Y.W.C.A. consideration equal to that given the Y.M.C.A. in regard to a new building." At the end of the 1930's, the Y.W.C.A. still had no new building and the advent of World War II further delayed its plans.

The other expense faced by the Association during the 1930's was the sudden and drastic increase in social welfare work. As late as 1938, Mrs. J. Thompson reported that "we are
being swamped this year with appeals from women and girls in
difficult circumstances . . . as the policy is never to turn
anyone away this has drained our finances."\textsuperscript{18} The burden fell
mainly upon the Service Department, and the Annual Report for
1934 noted that "this department was spending more for relief
than it had budgeted for."\textsuperscript{19} This complaint continued to be
made throughout the Depression.

The Y.W.C.A. could not have been unscathed by the
Depression, depending as it did upon government grants and
activity fees for its budget. Not only did the amount of
money coming into the Y.W.C.A. coffers dwindle during the
1930's but its welfare activities necessarily increased. As
the number of unemployed women and girls mounted, the work
of the Y.W.C.A. became heavier. In October, 1930, the \textit{Daily
Province} noted that "the Y.W.C.A. is the only one of the
major social welfare agencies of the city to which girls whose
families do not live in the city can turn for help. The
association is . . . equipped to meet just the sort of problems
the present depression is throwing upon it."\textsuperscript{20} The character
of the Association and its past history of welfare work among
women and girls may have equipped it for relief work during
the Depression of the 1930's, but its financial arrangements
did not.

The Vancouver Y.W.C.A. felt the effects of the Depression
upon its work almost immediately. By November, 1929, the
General Secretary reported that desk and office work had
increased because of unemployment among girls. Problems with
unemployment among women became confused almost at once, because this was a new phenomenon and there was no provision for relief for women. The Y.W.C.A. had been running an employment office for women almost since it was first organized in Vancouver. In September, 1930, the Provincial Government Employment Bureau asked the Y.W.C.A. to cease carrying on such work. The Y.W.C.A. although appreciating the argument of the Provincial Bureau that Y.W.C.A. work was interfering with the work of the Provincial Government, felt that it could not refuse the requests made by the girls and women. The Y.W.C.A. continued to run an employment bureau with moderate success throughout the 1930's although it officially ceased this operation in 1933.

The Y.W.C.A. urged the city to make some provisions for the registration of unemployed girls and women. It was represented at a group of women's organizations who met to discuss relief for unemployed women in December, 1930. The recommendations of this group were endorsed by the Y.W.C.A. in January, 1931:

1. Not to encourage women to contribute to the Million Days Work Campaign because of the attitude of the latter toward unemployed women.
2. To establish a work room.
3. To open a central office for interviewing unemployed women.

Although the Y.W.C.A. had taken care of unemployed girls from the beginnings of the Depression, it had done this on an informal basis, simply as a continuation of its long-standing policy of not turning anyone away who needed a meal and bed. This policy soon proved to be inadequate. A special meeting
of the Executive was called in August, 1932, "to consider the problem of unemployed girls on provincial or city relief, who are, at present, housed in a downtown hotel under somewhat unfavorable conditions." The Y.W.C.A. decided to undertake the care of these girls itself as an emergency relief measure. After a discussion of the expenditures involved it was moved that the Y.W.C.A. "undertake relief for girls under 25 years of age." The Y.W.C.A. Annex, a small building separated from the main Y.W.C.A., was used for this purpose. The Y.W.C.A. provided rooms and meals for the girls, who were expected to clean the annex in return for their rooms. The Y.W.C.A. asked $3.25 a week from the girls, based upon the relief rate. The Annex was opened for this purpose in September, 1932.

In December, 1932, the Y.W.C.A. protested a change in city relief rates. The city relief rate for single, unemployed women, was to be 40¢ a day "upon instruction from the Committee of the Executive Council of Unemployment in Victoria." The Y.W.C.A. requested that the matter be taken up with Victoria again and that the rate of $3.10 a week be continued. The Y.W.C.A. continued to plead for increased relief rates for single women during the 1930's. It also attempted to change the process by which unemployed women applied for relief. The Annual Report of the Service Department in 1933 gave an account of the difficulties of women applying for relief, difficulties brought on by the lengthy process of investigations and delays. An interesting note included in the same report throws some light upon the fate of some unemployed girls during the 1930's.
The Report mentioned that many of the unemployed girls who ended up staying at the Y.W.C.A. eventually had to be sent on to the Essondale Mental Hospital because of "present financial strain causing overwrought nerves in young girls... often persons committed are transients who register at the 'Y'."26

The Reports of the Service Department reflected most closely the problems and work of the Y.W.C.A. during the Depression. The 1933 Report noted that the Department's work "has been closely bound up with the unemployment situation and with the economic distress it has brought."27 The administration of relief for single women had been a constant source of irritation between the provincial, city and federal governments, and was still not satisfactory in 1933. The Y.W.C.A. had felt it necessary to take some responsibility in the matter and to open its Annex to single women. The Service Department had been working for several improvements in relief arrangements:

1. Raising the relief rate. The $2.80 a week allowed in Vancouver is the lowest rate in Canada. We feel that the community is storing up trouble for itself, as no girl can get proper food on $1.40 a week, and that rooms for $1.40 a week are only available in the worst sections of the city. Lowered physical vitality and constant proximity to the worst kind of life both tend to break down morale.

2. Proper investigation when relief applications are taken but not over investigation. There has been duplication of investigation, by the employment office, the Provincial relief department, and the City relief department. We feel that single women feel the 'humiliation' of being asked questions a number of times.
3. A much greater emphasis on follow-up work particularly by trained workers. There has been a tendency in an under-staffed relief office to let a girl do as she pleased after the original investigation had been made. This has meant that no great effort has been made to encourage girls to become self-supporting. We have hoped that a girl would have to go for her relief weekly instead of every two weeks. This would mean that the girl would have to report to the employment office for work every week at least. If home visit could be made, we feel that a great deal could be done in establishing friendly relations, and in helping to make adjustments.

The Report also dealt extensively with the problems which had arisen when the Y.W.C.A. had opened its Annex to unemployed women, both those sent from the City relief office and those who came directly to the Y.W.C.A. for help. The Annex had been opened in September, 1932, and closed in May, 1933. During that time 140 girls had taken advantage of the opportunity to live in the Annex. By April, 1933, however, there had been many complaints from the girls in the Annex and the newspapers had picked up the story. According to an article in The Sun on April 6, 1933:

Girls living on relief in the Y.W.C.A. institution resent what they term the 'military discipline' enforced in these homes and ask the privilege of being permitted to live elsewhere, the Unemployment Committee of the Cabinet was told. . . . This concession met with considerable favor and may be granted.

The Y.W.C.A. in Vancouver replied that the only complaint that it had received from the girls was that they did not want to do the work of the Annex in which they lived. Officials at the Y.W.C.A. explained that "the discipline as to hours is the same for relief residents as for boarders, the only
difference being that no maid service is provided in the annex.\textsuperscript{30} The criticism, however, was connected with the closing of the Y.W.C.A. Annex. The Report of the Service department was sympathetic to the girls and gave a number of reasons to explain the closing of the Annex in May:

1. Financial. Every month this department was spending more for relief than it had budgeted for. This was mainly because of the long time that we had to carry girls until they got relief.

2. There were many difficulties connected with housing a group of girls. It was extremely difficult to keep the tone of the Annex good. Any girl who was coarse or bad could do so much harm. Then, too, in some respects it was hurting the other departments of the Y.W.C.A., particularly the residence, as the public seemed to get the idea that everyone who came from the Y.W.C.A. was in need.

3. There seemed to be a growing feeling amongst the girls that they did not approve of what was called "mass housing". This comes from the fear that they might be drafted in camps as the men have been. It also seems very natural that girls should choose their rooms, and by so doing be to some extent independent, and not be labelled as unemployed and on relief.\textsuperscript{31}

The Report ended by stating that the Y.W.C.A. was not in favor of hostels for housing unemployed girls. The women housed in the Y.W.C.A. Annex obviously resented the fact that they had to accept relief, and that they were forced to live in a place where the freedom which they had over their own personal lives was curtailed, and where they could be easily identified as unemployed. This problem is easy to understand and the officials at the Y.W.C.A. in Vancouver appear to have held no grudge against the girls under their care for not
accepting their situation without complaint. The financial problems encountered by the Y.W.C.A. were also easily understood. These problems had been noted before. It is less easy to understand the pressure to close the Annex evidently exerted upon the Y.W.C.A. by its permanent boarders. Evidently their middle class souls cringed before the possibility of being mistaken for one of the unfortunate unemployed. The Y.W.C.A. could not afford to ignore such a complaint, although there were few permanent boarders housed at the main building of the Y.W.C.A. (most reports of the House Committee mention figures between 8 and 15 during any one period for the decade of the Depression.)

At the beginning of 1933, the Y.W.C.A. had yielded to the pressure of requests from the Government Employment Bureau and the increasing burden of the work by closing its own employment desk for women and girls. It found though, that it could not drop the work entirely. It was an important part of helping girls to become self-supporting, and the Y.W.C.A. had connections with employers all over Vancouver. Its own members frequently hired their domestics by using the Y.W.C.A.'s Employment Bureau. Also people had become used to the Y.W.C.A. doing employment work, and potential employers and employees continued to come to the Y.W.C.A. seeking help. The Association continued to do some employment work, but it confined the work to those girls and women actually living at the Y.W.C.A. and young girls in whom the Y.W.C.A. had taken an interest.

In November, 1933, the Y.W.C.A. was approached by the City
of Vancouver and asked to take over the supervision of government relief for single women in the city. The city offered to pay one-third of the cost of administration, and the provincial and federal governments would be asked to provide the remaining two-thirds of the cost. The work was not to be administered from the Y.W.C.A. building itself, nor would the girls be housed in the Y.W.C.A. Two trained social workers and one secretary would be provided. The Y.W.C.A. decided to try out the idea for six months as an experiment. At the end of the six months, the Y.W.C.A. Board of Directors decided that the Association should continue this work. The Association became the leading authority in Vancouver on unemployed single women and the problems they faced. During the Depression, Minute Books of the Y.W.C.A. did not mention the plight unemployed single men in relief camps, nor of families with one or two members unemployed. But it returned again and again to the single unemployed woman, and the resources of the Y.W.C.A. were directed to easing the situation of such women.

Much of the work done by the Y.W.C.A. in 1934 was aimed at alleviating the situation of these women. The Social Service Department, in its annual report for 1934, stated that "during the year of 1934, our service worker had 5,422 office interviews, made 520 visits." A great deal of time was spent with girls needing only temporary help or advice. If the girl was out of funds, the Y.W.C.A. would put her up in its building and feed her. "We find that most secure work within a week and their difficulty is past." The Y.W.C.A.
did not appear to be having much difficulty finding employment for these girls. The question of single women's relief was investigated by the Y.W.C.A., which was less than pleased with the relief efforts made by the government. In the spring of 1934, the Y.W.C.A. social worker and the General Secretary, Miss Edna Pearce, sat on an advisory committee to help the two social workers concerned with single women's relief make an investigation of the conditions for the Provincial Government. This committee failed to attract much attention and so the Y.W.C.A. set up a special committee of its own to deal with the question and to try to make an impression upon the government. The Committee drew up a resolution dealing with single women's relief rates and sent it on to the Local Council of Women of Vancouver:

Whereas from our observation and knowledge we are of the opinion that the present scale of relief for single women is inadequate
And whereas we believe the present food allowance is too small to provide a sufficiently nourishing diet unless the recipient has a room which includes facilities for cooking
And whereas we believe that proper accommodation cannot be secured for less than $2.00 a week,
We hereby resolve that representation be made to the Local Council of Women urging them to make recommendations to the Government of the Province of British Columbia to the effect that relief for single women be increased to a rate which will permit recipients to secure proper accommodation and a health maintaining diet,
And be it further resolved that relief for food shall be paid in cash instead of in script as at present.

The Local Council had endorsed the resolution and sent it on to the Provincial Government. The Government did not leap into immediate action upon receiving the resolution and the Y.W.C.A. was still hoping for some results at the time of the
Annual Meeting in 1935.

In addition to urging that higher rates of relief should be paid to single women, the Y.W.C.A. also did a study of the administration of relief and listed a number of points in its Annual Report which it believed should be improved. The Y.W.C.A. complained:

(a) that the investigation of single women was sometimes done by men;
(b) the taking of a record three times;
(c) that girls had no appeal from the decision of the Government Employment Office refusing them relief.

In spite of its realistic attitude towards relief and the realization that relief was necessary, the Y.W.C.A. went to almost any lengths to keep girls off relief. If a girl went to the Y.W.C.A. seeking help, she would be provided with a free bed and meal and occasionally a small amount of money to tide her over until she could find employment. The Y.W.C.A. continued to aid girls in finding work also. The Y.W.C.A. considered this work one of its most important services. Its attitude towards relief was evident in a report of the Social Service Department on girls who needed only temporary help, and were loaned money by the Y.W.C.A.:

They usually pay back the small amount, and they have not had the stigma of applying for relief. These small services are not often mentioned, but they constitute one of the real services of the Y.W.C.A.

If the Y.W.C.A. itself had the attitude that taking relief was a stigma, it is no wonder that it had such troubles with the single women who lived in the Annex during the winter of 1932-1933. The Association was not unrealistic, however,
and its members understood the problems which the Depression had brought. The Y.W.C.A. had never argued that relief was unnecessary, and it had consistently offered help to the single unemployed women of Vancouver. It was not able to rid itself of the long-standing attitude towards the dole system.

The Social Service Department which carried out the Y.W.C.A.'s relief program, insisted that its relief was of a temporary nature only, designed to help tide normally employed women over the problems of economic difficulties and "to aid in personal adjustments to environment with constructive advice and sympathetic understanding."36 The 1936 Annual Report of this Department noted that there had been much "actual need" and many women in the building during the first three months of 1935. Then, times were better, but the Y.W.C.A. had "a large influx of girls and women from the prairies, who had risked their all on excursion tickets to the coast in hope of better jobs."37 During the spring and summer, there were some jobs available in the fields picking fruit and vegetables or in the fish canneries. In 1935, the Y.W.C.A. insisted that until Christmas time, "there was work for anyone who was competent, and in fact, we could sometimes not fill the demand."38 The Report also noted that "there were still a great many people who needed assistance, who could not find a niche, and we felt that soon we would have to face the problem of the unemployables--the incompetent, the sick, the lazy--the great mass of 'misfits', who have been formed by the Depression and who must be helped into a
useful life with normal times. The Y.W.C.A. evidently believed that more normal times were coming. Its assessment of those who were chronically unemployed was not the most sympathetic. It failed to comprehend sense of complete despair in many of these people which helped to make them sick and which discouraged them from seeking employment after years of rejection.

The Department continued to make studies of relief rates for single women and once again, in 1935, it made recommendations that the allowance for room rentals should be raised from $1.40 to $1.75 a week. The Y.W.C.A. had not prompted any action by its earlier recommendations. This time, it had advertised for rooms at $1.40 a week, and investigated a whole list of such rooms. It was able to find only a half dozen at the relief rate, and most of these were double rooms, and in the worst part of town. The Y.W.C.A. continued without any notable success to plead for increased relief rates for single women.

After 1935, and the early part of 1936, the Y.W.C.A. became less concerned with single women's relief and turned its attention to its usual interests. It continued with its traditional policy of giving free room and board for a limited period of time to any woman who might be in need. It also gave its annual Christmas dinner for its own members and for needy women. But, as far as the Y.W.C.A. was concerned, the worst of the Depression was over and it could afford to return to its pre-Depression programs.

The Y.W.C.A. carried on two other programs for unemployed
women during the 1930's. In a joint effort with several other womens groups, primarily the Business and Professional Womens Club, the Y.W.C.A. established a club for unemployed girls in October, 1932. The new venture was run along co-operative lines. The Y.W.C.A. allowed the girls to use its clubrooms rent free. The purpose of the club was to preserve "the morale, independence, and health of women deprived of employ­ment."\(^{140}\) The club operated from September to May each year. The girls were offered classes in a variety of subjects, including typing, sewing, and stenography. They made various objects and sold them to the public. The Y.W.C.A. offered free gym classes to unemployed girls and invited them to use any of the facilities of the Y.W.C.A. The Y.W.C.A. had been organizing clubs for girls and women for many years, so the idea was nothing new. Its reasons for co-operating in this venture proved to be interesting. Besides providing a place for these girls to go during the day, and a way for them to earn a little money and perhaps acquire some extra training that would stand them in good stead if there was a chance for employment, a report by Miss Edna Pearce, General Secretary of the Y.W.C.A., noted that the success of the club was a good sign "in view of the spread of C.C.F. propaganda."\(^{41}\) The Y.W.C.A. was not socialist minded and apparently viewed the C.C.F. as a force which had to be met and defeated, if life were to continue as the Y.W.C.A. wanted it to. The Y.W.C.A. supported the Co-operative Girls Club with clothes, money, the use of the Hastings and Dunsmuir Street lunchroom rent­free. In the fall of 1936, the Y.W.C.A. closed this lunchroom
because of decreasing returns. The Co-operative Club had to rent its own rooms after this, and soon found that it could not afford to do so. In February, 1937, the Club closed because of lack of funds. The newspapers in Vancouver made a great fuss about this event, and the Club, because of the publicity afforded it by the news media, was offered space in St. Andrew's-Wesley Church Community Centre to carry on its work. The Y.W.C.A. ceased to be connected with the Club after closing the lunchroom.

Because the Y.W.C.A. handled all the relief for single women in Vancouver, and because it was primarily concerned with girls and young women, it could not fail to see that many girls left home early and went looking for a job without being trained to do anything. The Y.W.C.A. made another attempt to combat the problem of unemployment by providing job training for some of these girls. In January, 1934, the Board of Directors passed a resolution proposed by the Social Welfare Committee dealing with job training:

> That there is felt to be a great need for training of young girls for household helpers, and that this committee feels that a course of training will be a justifiable experiment for the Y.W.C.A. to undertake, and that the course should be repeated and continued, if successful.\(^{42}\)

The Board set up a committee to investigate the possibilities of organizing such a course. Within a month, the Y.W.C.A. had recruited 25 girls from various welfare agencies, secured a teacher and provided accommodation for the school. The Provincial Department of Education paid the teacher's salary. The program was for girls from 16 to 20 years of age and
covered "instruction, one day a week of practical work in an actual home, demonstration of the use of electrical equipment by the B.C. Electric and talks on health, etiquette, etiquette, etcetera." The first Household Helper Course was a success, but the Y.W.C.A. decided to do its own recruiting and investigation of students after noting that "whereas the attendance of girls of independent registration had been 100% that of the nominees of organizations had not been so good." Once more, the Y.W.C.A. had had trouble with girls from the welfare agencies. In this case, the girls probably had been pressured by the relief agencies to take the course, without reference to their own interest in becoming domestic workers. That, and the Y.W.C.A.'s negative attitude towards relief must have been enough to ensure that these girls were not as enthusiastic as those who had come to take the course voluntarily. The Y.W.C.A. was able to place all of the girls who graduated from the first course at an average wage of $12.00 a month. Frequently, the girls were hired by members of the Y.W.C.A. who had offered their homes for the girls to practice and were so impressed with the students that they hired them.

The National Council of Women had sent to all of its members, including the Vancouver Y.W.C.A., a proposal to endorse a Domestic Workers Code, which embodied resolutions for minimum wages and maximum hours for domestic workers. The Vancouver Y.W.C.A. appointed a joint committee of Board members and girls living at the Y.W.C.A. or participating in Y.W.C.A. activities to consider the matter and prepare to publicly
endorse it. The Y.W.C.A. did promote the Houseworker's Code and worked toward establishing regular hours of work and a minimum wage for Canada's 134,000 domestics. The Association held a conference with employers, who approved the code and thanked the Y.W.C.A. for undertaking the training of domestic workers.45

By May, 1935, the experiment was over and the Y.W.C.A. decided that the work was successful and worthwhile and budgeted an amount to carry on the courses during 1936. The Y.W.C.A. formed a club for girls who had graduated from the course and who were employed in the city.

At the 1936 Annual Meeting, the Household Helpers Course was emphasized as a successful attempt to combat unemployment among girls. Various improvements had been made in the course:

1. In increasing the training from 5 to 12 weeks;
2. In having secured the use of the Fresh Air School, and in having excellent equipment provided by the Department of Education;
3. A better type of girl taking the training and a better trained graduate;
4. Extensive interest in the course.46

The Vancouver Y.W.C.A. had performed a number of necessary tasks during the Depression. It was undoubtedly the most important single agency working with unemployed single women. It had administered relief for these women during the 1930's, and agitated on their behalf for a raise in their relief rates and a change in the unnecessarily annoying administrative procedures of the relief office. On its own, the Y.W.C.A. had taken in, fed, and cared for many of the unemployed women in Vancouver. It ran an employment bureau, albeit an informal one, and set up courses to train young girls in domestic work.
In spite of this work, the Y.W.C.A. retained the attitude that having to go on relief was a disgrace, and there remained a faint suspicion that the unemployed were lazy or incompetent. The Y.W.C.A. did not attempt to investigate or understand the causes of the Depression, nor did it question the economic system which had helped to produce the catastrophe. The Y.W.C.A. in Vancouver did not change its favorable opinion about the social and economic system in Canada during the Depression.
CHAPTER II

THE B.C. CONFERENCE BRANCH OF THE
WOMAN'S MISSIONARY SOCIETY
OF THE UNITED CHURCH
OF CANADA
The United Church of Canada responded to the nation's depression on two distinct levels. The majority of the church members channelled their response through the National Emergency Relief Committee. This Committee was organized in 1929 by the Committee on Evangelism and Social Service of the United Church, in co-operation with the Board of Home Missions and the Woman's Missionary Society. Its purpose was to aid those in Canada who had been badly affected by the Depression. Within a year of its founding, it had sent 200 tons of clothing and 159 carloads of fruit and vegetables to the prairie provinces. The church continued this relief work throughout the depression decade, supplying countless carloads of food and bales of clothing and literature to the unemployed all over Canada.

However, the United Church was not only concerned with the practical problems of administering direct relief. On another level, certain churchmen were concerned with the causes and cures of the vast upheaval which had stricken Canada. In 1932, the General Council of the church appointed a Commission on Christianizing the Social Order. The Depression had made the leading members of the church sceptical about the type of social order and economic system which could produce such a catastrophe as the Depression. In 1934, the Report of this commission was endorsed by the General Council and recommended to the church for study. The Report noted that the heaviest burden of the Depression had fallen on the urban wage earners and the farmers, many of whom had been forced to accept relief. The Commission had aimed "not merely with finding a way out of the present emergency, but also with discovering better ways of life, and
the permanent elements in a social order which will make improbable the recurrence of such a crisis."¹ Puzzled by the presence of want in a supposedly well endowed nation, the Church Commission made a concerted and honest study of the conditions which had led to the Depression. The Commission blamed the diversion of industry from its primary purpose of human service for the growth of several major disorders:

(a) Fear and Insecurity;
(b) Recurrent and Widespread Unemployment;
(c) Inequitable Distribution of National Income;
(d) Spiritual Deprivation;
(e) Social Conflict.²

The inclusion of "inequitable distribution of national income" and "social conflict" in this list seemed to point to the capitalist system as the culprit. The Commission stated that its emphasis had been "on the adoption of a new attitude to possessions and power."³ It demanded that all people have access to the means of a full life, and an assured minimum provision of income. It called for nationalization of industry, arguing that almost every service which had become a public utility had at one time been conducted for private profit and it might be that "extensions of this into fresh fields will bring the solution of many problems ... steps already taken in the curbing of the use of power and wealth for selfish ends point the direction of further needed progress."⁴ The Report found fault with the profit motive, and in so doing, criticized the whole capitalistic system. Without ever openly prescribing socialism as the answer to the long term problems of the economic system, the Report urged nationalization of industry, a minimum income for every man, and the end of profit as the
motivating force in the economic system. In 1936, the Board of Evangelism and Social Service moved "that the United Church assert the responsibility of society as a whole for such measures of social control as will provide for all the opportunities for economic security, creative work and efficient leisure." The church also stated that it would give such assistance as it could "in the difficult but imperative task of rebuilding our social structure on a basis compatible with Christian principles." The United Church continued to make pronouncements critical of the prevailing social and economic system throughout the 1930's. In 1938, the Report on Social and Economic Research stated "that the greatest threat to the preservation of the rights of the ordinary man lies in the fact that undue economic power is possessed by a few individuals, who feel little responsibility to society." The church recommended state unemployment insurance, social security, and a rehabilitation program to train those who were unemployed.

The United Church was very active in its response to the Depression on both of these levels. It not only carried on an immense relief program, but made an honest attempt to discover the causes of the social and economic disorder and to make some recommendations which would make such a catastrophe avoidable in the future. Not all of the members of the United Church, however, followed the lead of the General Council during the 1930's. The Woman's Missionary Society, the largest group of women in the United Church, acted as if it did not quite realize that a depression had occurred at all.

The Woman's Missionary Society had been formed from an
amalgamation of the women's groups of the three churches participating in church union in 1935. The object of the group was "to inspire a spirit of prayer and service among its members; to develop a Missionary spirit in the women and children of the Church and to secure the means for the carrying on of the work of the Society at home and abroad." The Society was represented on the Mission Boards of the church but was not under the control of these boards. The Society consisted of a Dominion Board, Conference Branches, and Presbyterial Societies. The Dominion Board decided matters of general policy; gave instructions to the Conference Branches and Presbyterial Societies for each year; and received the yearly Reports from these last two groups. The Executive of the Dominion Board carried on any necessary business of the Board between the annual meetings. This Board was elected at the Annual Meeting by the representatives from the Conference Branches. The Conference Branch was the provincial body of the Women's Missionary Society. The purpose of this group was to further the Society's work in its own territory, to organize Presbyterial Societies, and to carry out the instructions of the Dominion Board. The Conference Branch could frame its own by-laws, although they had to be approved by the Dominion Board. Although it could not initiate any projects, it could make recommendations to the Dominion Board about mission work. The Executive Committee of the Conference Branch, which was elected by the Presbyterial Societies, carried on the work of the Branch between the annual meetings. This group could, and, in the case of the B.C. Conference Branch did, pass resolutions on any number of topics and forward them to the Dominion
Board for action.

There is no record in the Minute Books of the B.C. Provincial Branch of the Woman's Missionary Society for the early years of the 1930's, that the group even acknowledged that an economic and social crisis had occurred. The Dominion Board had joined the Church in calling for a study of the social orders in 1932:

In view of the serious crisis through which the world is passing, which is throwing out an unprecedented challenge to the Church of Christ in its great missionary enterprise, the realization of the knowledge of God throughout the world, the only hope of our civilization,

Resolved that . . . we, the members of the Dominion Board of the Women's Missionary Society of the United Church of Canada, pledge ourselves to an earnest study of the implication of Christianity in relation to present economic and social problems and stand ready to support all efforts towards the bringing of a Christian social order. . . .

The B.C. Conference Branch itself made no reference to any attempt to study the causes of the crisis, nor any complaint against the economic and social order which had precipitated such a crisis until 1935. Even then, the call of the group to "study the Social, Economic and political conditions in Canada and throughout the World," was apparently in part a response to the revelations of the Royal Commission on Price Spreads. At the 10th Anniversary of Church Union, Mrs. A.A. Lamb, an officer of the Executive stated that:

With the last few years experiences and the recent revelations in the business world, it would seem as if some special thought on this subject was a duty not to be lightly set aside. While studying the point it is hoped that every member will seriously consider her economic responsibility to God.

This pronouncement, while calling for a study of the social
order, could also be interpreted as a request for more funds from the members. Thus, the B.C. Conference Branch made no policy statement on the Depression at all. It made no comment whatever on the General Council's views on the social order, nor on the call to study of its own Dominion Board. The Depression was not considered to be a worthwhile topic for a speech at one of the monthly meetings, or the subject of a special committee. Theoretically, the missionary and social work of the group was divided equally between Home and Foreign Missions. In practice, there could be no doubt that the main interest of the B.C. Conference Branch was in Foreign Missions. If there was a speech given at the monthly meeting, it was invariably on the work of the missionaries in China, India, or Japan. A list of the speeches heard by the B.C. Conference Branch during the year 1939 illustrated this interest:


Only one topic could be construed to have had anything to do with the conditions produced by the Depression. Time and again, the group displayed its interest in Foreign Missions, thereby implying a downgrading of its work in Canada. Perhaps the interest in Foreign Missions may be explained as a natural interest in far away and exotic places. Problems at home were too mundane to arouse much excitement; the work, or sometimes the plight, of a missionary in China was not only exciting, but far enough removed to ensure that there was no chance of personal
involvement in awkward social and political issues. The strong emphasis in the work of the Woman's Missionary Society on foreign missions may have been in part a form of escapism.

The group could not completely ignore the problems of the Depression. It was affected financially and the Supply Committee was constantly being called upon by individuals or by the Church to contribute to the National Emergency Relief Fund or to send clothes, bedding and various other objects to churches all over B.C.

Financially, the Society felt the effects of the crisis almost immediately. The Dominion Board was forced to cut all salaries by 15% in 1930, and this cut continued for most of the 1930's. The Conference Board collected the allotments from all the Presbyterial Societies and passed the total amount on to the Dominion Board, which then allocated certain sums to each of the Conference Branches. The members of the Presbyterial Societies organized sales of homemade goods, teas, and programs to raise their allotments. It was not so easy to do this during the 1930's. The Corresponding Secretary of the B.C. Conference Branch reported in 1930 that the "Vancouver Presbyterial with almost one-half the W.M.S. strength of the province, reports inability to reach the objective of $22,037." Reports of this type continued to come in from all the Presbyterial Societies during the Depression. The B.C. group had sent $40,500 to Toronto in 1930, but the amount was down to $38,000 in 1931, and $32,000 in 1932. In 1932, the Finance Committee reported on the finances of the W.M.S. as a whole:

While the finances of the W.M.S. are in remarkably good condition as compared with other industries
and enterprises in these difficult days, we find our 1931 income to be below that of 1930 by $57,807. The total receipts for 1931 were $882,166.73. The expenditures for 1931 were $136,605.30 in excess of the receipts, and the capital account has been decreased by that amount.

Because of this decrease in funds, no new work was begun in 1932 or 1933, and all co-operative work with the boards of the church was cut by 10%, as were all annual grants. In 1933, the B.C. Branch sent only $30,807 to the Dominion Board, and the same amount was sent in 1935, 1936, and 1937. By 1939, the group was still only sending about $31,000 to the Dominion Board in Toronto. The lack of funds did not at first darken the spirits of the B.C. group. In 1932, the Treasurer stated "though there was a decrease in financial returns, all reported a deepening of Spiritual life." The B.C. Conference Branch cancelled its annual meeting in 1932, much to the disapproval of the Dominion Board. This was done because "of the necessity for the most rigid economy in order to meet existing obligations." The group defended itself against the objections of the Dominion Board by arguing that this was an emergency measure and would not have been considered in normal times.

Another emergency measure passed as a resolution by the B.C. Conference Branch and forwarded to the Dominion Board requested that organizations which, because of circumstances, could not make a money contribution for the year 1933, should be included in the statistics for that year anyway. These groups should still be considered affiliates of the Conference Branch and Dominion Board.

In February, 1931, the group was asked to join the Unemploy-
Homicide Relief Committee of the Ministerial Association of Vancouver. The W.M.S. agreed to be represented on the Committee and endorsed the resolution which the Committee had sent, asking:

That the Government of the Province of British Columbia be urged to make provision at the next session of the Legislature for a full enquiry into the fluctuations of employment in the various industries of the province, and with a view to recommending a permanent policy with regard to unemployment; and, that concurrently with this enquiry, the co-operation of the Governments of the other Western Provinces and of the Dominion be sought.\(^1\)

The W.M.S. delegate to the Committee, Mrs. H. Coleman, attended the meetings faithfully and gave full accounts of these meetings to the W.M.S. She pointed out some of the problems peculiar to British Columbia, the seasonal labor and the influx of unemployed from other parts of Canada. The Committee had not advocated any definite policy in its discussions of possible cures for the Depression, and was still in the process of organization in September, 1931, when the W.M.S. decided to withdraw, "although in fullest sympathy with its aims."\(^1\)

The W.M.S. felt that the Committee was well started on its way and there was no longer any need for W.M.S. support. This was the only organization dealing with Depression problems with which the W.M.S. ever affiliated, and that affiliation lasted for only a few months. The W.M.S. did its own relief work, of course, as a normal part of the work of the Supply Committee. This Committee was one of the most active and popular groups in the Society. The Annual Report of 1936 explained this popularity:

Not only does it satisfy the desire for a tangible
result to show our work, but it satisfies the desire to help, which is inherent in most people.19

This Committee worked throughout the Depression, as it had done before the 1930's, collecting used and new clothing, quilts, baby layettes, and food to send to missionaries in both Home and Foreign Missions. It also contributed funds to the National Emergency Relief Fund of the United Church. In 1932, the committee reported that "the need has been greater this year than ever before . . . many emergency bales of clothing and bedding were sent to needy settlers in the interior and remote parts of our Coast line."20 It sent out books and magazines, to individuals, to missionaries, and to relief camps. It contributed money to the First United Church in downtown Vancouver, feeling that this church "did more to keep the red element in check than any other influence."21 This Committee has some idea of the problems of the Depression. On two occasions, it refused to send supplies to the prairies, explaining that:

Regarding Prairie Relief, it was decided that, in view of the great need at home, we follow the same policy as last year, viz, that we do not as a Conference Branch take any action, but that it be left to individual responsibility.22

It reported regularly to the W.M.S. on the emergency calls for clothing or money which had been answered, and on the conditions which had been described by those who wrote to thank the W.M.S. for its help. These reports did not elicit a large or enthusiastic response from the rest of the membership of the W.M.S. By 1934, the chairman of the Committee had been given permission to distribute the goods as she saw fit, since she
was in a position to judge the need. The majority of the Society appeared to take a minimal interest in the Depression and in the work of this Committee to combat the crisis. On the other hand, the work of the Supply Committee in the Foreign Mission was met by a vigorous response from the rest of the W.M.S., illustrating once again the direction in which the interest of the Society was focused.

On the whole, the W.M.S. was surprisingly unaware of the conditions which prevailed in B.C. during the 1930's, and failed even to renew its interest in supply work in the Home Missions. Considering the attitude of the General Council of the United Church and the work done by the church as a whole among the unemployed and in the drought stricken regions of the prairie provinces, the W.M.S. seems to have been cut off from the main stream of opinion within the church and uninterested in its work.

The Society did take some interest in legislation and social reform during the Depression. It passed many resolutions during the 1930's, all of which were forwarded to the Dominion Board and many of them to the Provincial or city government. The vast majority of these resolutions dealt with temperance. The interest of the Society in ending the sale and consumption of liquor never flagged. Perhaps that accounts for the resolution endorsed by the Society in 1938:

Whereas, many of our efforts to effect social and moral reforms are greatly handicapped from lack of a unified church voice, we hereby request that the Ministerial Association committee for the formation of a Council of Churches for Vancouver receive our strongest support and interest, and that a delegation
from this organization be appointed to confer with them. 23

The only social or moral reforms ever proposed by the W.M.S. dealt exclusively with temperance. It certainly had the machinery and experience for legislative pressure, yet did not use it to endorse any sort of social or economic reform during the 1930's, with the exception of temperance.

It is interesting to note that the Society suffered from a large decrease in membership during the 1930's. In 1928, the Society in B.C. had a membership of 4,274, whereas in 1938, the figure had declined to 3,673—a decrease of 601 in 10 years. 24 The Corresponding Secretary concluded that the Society "cannot go back to fifty years ago, when the W.M.S. was the only organization in most women's lives, and when there was a greater 'oneness of purpose' among all the women of the Church." 25 The W.M.S. during the 1930's could only claim the membership of about 11% of women members of the United Church. The interests of the Society had not changed much in fifty years which may have been part of the reason why it could not attract new members. Foreign missions and temperance at home constituted the most important projects carried on by the Society. Perhaps Canadian women had opportunities in broader fields and no longer had to escape by supplying bales of clothing to missions in China, or Japan, or India.
CHAPTER III

THE LOCAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN
OF VANCOUVER
The National Council of Women of Canada was founded in 1893 to represent all women in Canada who were interested in organized work in any field. The Council began with three Nationally Organized Societies (the Women's Art Association, the Girls' Friendly Society, and the Dominion Woman Enfranchise-ment Association), and seven Local Councils, including a Council in Vancouver.¹ By 1924, the Council had 400,000 members.² By 1937, it claimed affiliation with sixteen Nationally Organized Societies and 49 Local Councils. It was credited with 500,000 members, making it far and away the largest women's organization in Canada.³

The Council had been recognized soon after its founding as the most influential group of women in Canada. This recognition was aided, no doubt, by the fact that the wife of the Governor-General had founded the Council and became the first President. In a 1934 address, the Governor-General acknowledged the primacy of the Council's position by remarking that whenever he spoke to the Council, he felt that he was speaking to "the whole great body of Canadian women who are devoting themselves to public service all over this immense country."¹⁴ Over the years, the Council was always able to secure a hearing for its deputations before the Dominion, Provincial or Local Government. There cannot be much doubt that the Council was justified in claiming that it was the most important women's organization in Canada.

The Council considered itself non-political in the party sense, but it aimed to act as a political pressure group for women. Lady Aberdeen stated that the Council "does not deal
with politics, nor ask for the right to vote, nor does it urge the modern dress reform; but nevertheless the scope of the Council is unlimited, for it includes every branch of moral reform and can take up any question pertaining to women's work and aims in life.5 The Council was to serve as a forum for discussion of topics in which women were interested and make known to the government on all levels the legislation which women wanted. If women were fragmented into many different clubs and societies, they would not be effective in any way. The Council would enable women to speak with one unified voice.

When the Council was founded in 1893, women did not yet have the vote. Because of this, the Council used resolutions and deputations to the government to get its opinions heard. The process was slow and tedious. Lady Aberdeen commented on its effectiveness and stated that one of the outstanding features of the Council was "the attitude of trust and confidence evidenced by the Provincial Legislatures towards the Local Council by their granting various requests."

There were disputes within the Council about its function and nature. As late as 1930, the Convener of the Committee on Child Welfare devoted the majority of her report to a discussion of the nature of the National Council, "in order to explain what might otherwise appear to be a rather academic interest, and a lack of practical activity in the Child Welfare programme of the Councils."7 She saw the National Council as primarily a conference and not an operative body.

The National Council of Women seeks to afford a medium through which the considered opinions
and conclusions of the various bodies of Canadian women associated therein may be discussed by a body fully representative of all the participating groups, to the end that judgments, tempered and affected by this interchange of widely different bodies, may be issued, with the full weight of this corporate authority behind them. According to this interpretation of the Council, it could act only if, after studying the situation, it found that it was better equipped than any other group to initiate action. Although the Council was definitely a forum for discussion, it acted on a variety of subjects. This was especially true during the early years of the Council's history.

When questions arose about the efficiency of the Council's use of resolutions and deputations, these methods were defended on the grounds that they had proved to be very successful in the past. Certainly many of the reforms which the Council endorsed were passed by the government. It was difficult to say, however, whether the influence of the Council had effected the passage of legislation.

The Council campaigned actively for many progressive reforms. After 1901, it supported women's suffrage. The group worked for world peace, eventually endorsing the League of Nations, and, in the 1930's the World Disarmament Conference. The legal status of women was perhaps the primary concern of the Council. It was eminently successful in effecting many reforms in this area. At the Council's urging, the government amended the Naturalization Act so that a woman could retain her nationality in the event of her marriage to a foreigner. The group was concerned with governmental regulation of the working conditions of women, and with minimum wages and maximum
hours for women and children in industry. It demanded equal pay for equal work long before the cry became popular in many circles. Supervised playgrounds for children, day nurseries for the children of working mothers, special classes in the public school system for retarded and handicapped children were all endorsed by the Council at a time when support for such reforms was not widespread. The Council often instituted such programs on the local scale to demonstrate that they were indeed practical and workable.

The Council was active in the fields of public health and mental health, and demanded that the government take a great deal of responsibility in these areas. It was instrumental in the founding of the Victorian Order of Nurses and continued to give funds and support to the Order. As early as 1896, the Council urged that the Provinces found special institutions to care for the insane, instead of lodging them indefinitely in jail.

The National Council had first concerned itself with the question of unemployment in 1894, when a temporary employment bureau was opened by civic authorities in Toronto at the behest of the Local Council. The Council carried out all relief and social welfare work on the local level. The Council also suggested the formation of a committee to administer relief. The action was on the local level, setting a precedent from which the National Council never departed. The Montreal Local Council organized the many philanthropic groups into a co-operative charity organization in 1899, and Local Councils continued to act as co-ordinators for groups involved in relief
schemes during later depressions. By 1895, the Council urged that women be appointed to any boards concerned with charities where the interests of women were involved. In 1924, it supported governmental unemployment relief and set forth more permanent measures to deal with the problem:

1. Construction of necessary public works;
2. A permanent non-partisan advisory committee on employment, comprising Dominion, Provincial and civic authorities, to work with the Employment Service of Canada;
3. An unemployment insurance scheme, to be undertaken by the Dominion Government.

The Council was concerned that women as consumers should be well educated as to the merits of various products. One of its earliest efforts involved urging women to buy in a particular order of preference, first local and provincial goods, then Canadian products, and the products of the Empire. The "Made-in-Canada" program had many faithful supporters in the women of the Council.

The reforms urged by the Council in its early years were relatively progressive. As a critic of the Council commented in the 1930's:

Forty or more years ago in its youthful zeal to be the "voice" through which Canadian women might make themselves heard . . . this Council turned its energies to one crusade after another. It achieved scores of reforms which are now an accepted part of our social, economic, and political life.

By the start of the 1930's, the National Council had a long history of interest in social welfare legislation. Unemployment and relief programs were not new topics. The Council was experienced in welfare work and had proposed many reforms to
lessen unemployment. On a national level the Council never attempted any large scale welfare project. The Local Council's carried all such programs through and often one Local Council originated a plan which the National Council then recommended to all of the Local Council's in Canada. The Vancouver Council was the first to make some response to the Depression and was used by the National Council to exemplify what other Local Councils could do during the Depression.

The Councils of Women of Canada were organized on three levels—local, provincial, and national. The Council was a federation of many women's organizations and organizations with both men and women members. According to the Constitution of the N.C.W., it had "no power over the organizations which constitute it, beyond that of suggestion and sympathy."

The National Council was originally composed of representatives of Local Councils and of Nationally Organized Societies. The Provincial Councils were not organized until after World War I, when it was discovered that much of the legislation the Council was endorsing came under the jurisdiction of the Provincial, rather than the Dominion Government. The Provincial Councils were composed of a minimum of three Local Councils, together with any provincially organized association. Local Councils consisted of at least five societies of women in any locality, "federated for the purpose of carrying out the objects of the National Council." Provincial Councils, Local Councils and Nationally Organized Societies were known as Federated Associations.

The real power of the N.C.W. resided in the Executive
Committee. The members of this Committee carried on the business of the Council between the Annual Meetings. They decided when and where the Annual Meeting would occur and the Agenda of the meeting. The Federated Associations might send in resolutions or topics for discussion, but they had to be in the hands of the Corresponding Secretary four months before the Annual Meeting took place. Furthermore, "if a two-thirds majority of the members of the Executive Committee deem any resolution sent up by the Federated Associations unsuitable or unadvisable for presentation to the National Council, it shall not be placed on the Agenda." The Executive Committee could ensure that any controversial topic did not make it onto the N.C.W. Agenda for discussion. It was true that an Annual Meeting could discuss and act upon "an Emergency resolution of national importance," even if it had not been placed on the Agenda by the Executive Committee, but this could only be done by a two-thirds vote of those registered in attendance and entitled to vote. In this way, the Local Councils were able to propose emergency resolutions if they were unified. The Executive Committee approved all reports and resolutions sent to the International Council of Women. In spite of the importance of the work of the Executive, fifteen per cent of the members constituted a quorum.

In the Local Council's the Sub-Executive Committee composed of a few members of the Executive Committee, held the real power of the Council. The Sub-Executive met when the Executive was not in session and handled day-to-day business. It also received all the correspondence from the Affiliated Societies
and was responsible for making up the Agenda of the Executive Committee. The Vancouver Sub-Executive frequently previewed potential speakers before allowing them to address the General Meeting. However, the Sub-Executive had no power to withhold any resolutions or requests from the Executive Committee. All information from the Federated Associations had to be passed on to the Executive Committee.

The National Committee contained the most important officers of the N.C.W. The members of this Committee were able to tailor the work of the Council. It was their image of the organization and their opinions which were important in the decision-making apparatus. They represented the N.C.W. to the Canadian Government. They also represented the Council to the world of organized women, because they selected the delegates to the International Council of Women, as well as the reports and resolutions to be sent on to the international body.

The Standing Committees of the Council were formed "for the purpose of studying, gathering information and creating interest in problems relating to the welfare of the country." These Committees were made up of a National Convener, who was elected at the Annual Meeting, and one member from each Federated Association. Thus, each Provincial and Local Council duplicates the committees of the National Council on a lower level. It was the responsibility of the National Convener to outline the work to be done that year and forward the outline to members of her Committee. The Local members were responsible to the Convener of the National Committee for interesting their Association in the work as outlined each year. The National Convener
made the important decisions concerning the work of the Committee on all levels. Although the Constitution assured each Federated Association its dependence, the work of the Local Councils in particular was directed firmly from above. By 1938, the study programs of these Committees, which had formerly been only recommendations to the Local Councils, were mandatory. The Local Councils had to follow the course of action and discuss the topics decided upon by the National Council. If the N.C.W. had no definite policy on a subject, however, the Local Council's were free to initiate their own policy. This was true in the case of relief work. The National Council passed a resolution stating that no National policy re relief work would be set and each Local Council, because it was familiar with local conditions, could organize its own relief work.

The National President, Winnifred Kydd made a policy statement on the Depression in November, 1932. She mentioned practical relief as being one of the three basic policies of the Council at the time:

Practical relief resolves itself today into the study of unemployment and its remedies, and that is receiving the greatest share of the attention of Local Councils throughout the Dominion.16

As illustration, Miss Kydd quoted the effort of various Councils, e.g., "the canning and preserving of fruits and vegetables, to be donated later to the unemployed; medical work in conjunction with the V.O.N. by assuming responsibility for expensive medical bills and providing medical comforts; providing boots and shoes and stockings for children and working in co-operation with civic
authorities in opening clothes depots, etc." Miss Kydd stated that because only the Local Councils knew the local needs, relief programs would have to be handled locally. This was the extent of policy direction given to the Local Councils by their national organization during the 1930's. The Vancouver Council was free to shape its own depression policy.

Unlike most of the other Local Councils in Canada, the Council of Women in Vancouver noted the effects of the Depression soon after the beginning of the crisis. It did not consider the situation to be a real emergency, however, and so its first resolution concerning the Depression simply called for information from the Committee on Trades and Professions for Women:

Whereas the question of unemployment with its attending evils is one of the gravest problems facing the people today and Whereas the Committee on Trades and Professions constantly meets with this problem more particularly in connection with its workers in Trades and unskilled occupations, be it resolved that the Local Council of Women of Vancouver seriously consider this question and that the Committee on Trades and Professions be the medium for gathering the necessary information for the benefit of the Council.

Mrs. J.A. Clarke, the Convener of the Committee on Trades and Professions for Women in 1930, took her job very seriously and seemed to have had a reasonable idea of the gravity of the Depression in the lives of many business women. When the Mayor held a city conference on unemployment, Mrs. Clarke attended, representing the Council. In February, 1930, she reported to the Council in detail about the discussions held at the Conference. Mrs. Clarke made the first concrete suggestion of possible Council response to the Depression. She recommended that the
societies affiliated with the Council "consider the matter of unemployment carefully at their own meetings and invite speakers to explain the subject to them." Mrs. Clarke then moved that the following resolution be passed by the Local Council and forwarded to the National Council:

> As unemployment affects women just as much as it does men, any conference, commission or board that may be organized for this matter official or otherwise, include women as members on the same terms as men.

There are two noteworthy aspects of this resolution. The Local Council in Vancouver had taken some action on unemployment, small though it was, without any directives from the National Council. It was the first Local Council to direct the attention of its members to the matter of unemployment and the depression. The resolution however, must not be seen simply as a response to the Depression by the Local Council, but rather in the larger context of their continuing struggle to secure seats for women on government boards and committees of all kinds.

At the Annual Meeting in March, 1931, there were complaints, albeit tactful ones, that the National Council was not following up the resolutions it received and endorsed. Mrs. J.A. Clarke complained that the resolution sent from the Vancouver Council, dealing with equal consideration for women on any boards or committees on unemployment or any aspects of the depression had not been given consideration. The national president, Mrs. Wilson, was present at the meeting and insisted that this was not true and that she had "received information from the best authority at Ottawa and she was sure it would become so."
In 1933, the National Council finally got around to passing an "emergency" resolution, dealing with the dearth of women on relief boards. (The Vancouver Council had done this in 1931, and sent the resolution on to the National Council). The Council protested "against the deplorable tendency throughout Canada to entrust the planning, administration and distribution of relief even for families to the administration solely of male officials and the supervision of committees and commissions made up entirely of male members." The Committee on Trades and Professions for Women was instructed to report on this resolution in May. It was certainly not a new idea to the Council. Moreover, it reflected the Council's long-standing interest in the status of women. The Committee on Trades and Professions for Women proferred a gloomy report on this resolution at the May meeting. Mrs. Rex Eaton stated that "There are no women on any relief boards or committee either in this city or in the province. The City Relief Committee is made up of members of the City Council. The Fordham Commission works between the provincial and federal governments. The latter looking after single unemployed persons do not consider that women come under that category. The former through indirect channels assist some 600 of the unemployed single women, but this class as a whole is not a direct charge on them. As this Council can only deal with conditions in Vancouver, Mrs. Eaton recommended that we report to the City Relief Committee the advisability of appointing an advisory board of women to act along with them." By the beginning of 1934, the Council had still not been
able to place a woman on the Relief Board, even in an advisory capacity. A new resolution, dealing with this problem was passed in April:

Whereas we believe that women, by reason of their steadily increasing concern and knowledge of economic and governmental affairs have a valuable contribution to make in all matters pertaining to the welfare of the people of their province and whereas new commissions and boards are being set up to deal with the situation arising out of the present economic emergencies; be it resolved that the Vancouver Local Council of Women reiterate the request that women be named in all bodies appointed by the provincial government such as the Economic Council, committees dealing with direct relief, etc."24

This appeared to be a simple request, but the Local Council had no success with it. The status of women did not appear to be very high in 1934 in the province of British Columbia. The Council decided at the May meeting to set up a special committee to "consider matters relating to the City Relief Board and to attend it regularly."25 The women planned that "after showing interest in and sympathy with the work of the Board for some time, the Council will press once more for women representatives on it in an advisory capacity and thus obtain power to bring about desirable improvements in method of relief distribution."26

This struggle continued throughout the Depression. At the General Meeting in September, 1934, this same committee proposed the following resolution, which was endorsed and forwarded to the National Council:

Whereas it is necessary for the preservation of a nation that the high standard of its womanhood must be maintained, and as the present economic crisis affects the Welfare of Women as well as that of men,
Be it resolved,
That in the opinion of the Local Council of
Women of Greater Vancouver, that in all conferences for the consideration of this economic problem, women as well as men be invited to participate in the deliverances, and wherever boards or committees are appointed to carry out the necessary work of adjustment, women as well as men compose such Boards or Commissions and this Council of Women convey this resolution to all authorities concerned.

Once again the emphasis in the resolution was on the equal representation of women on boards or civic committees.

Although it was interested in many aspects of the Depression, the Local Council of Women devoted the majority of its attention to the problems of unemployed women. Women on relief were a new phenomena during the depression of the 1930's. When the crisis began, no provision had been made for them. After many thousands of domestics, secretaries, and clerks were discharged from their positions, it became obvious that some provision for unemployed women had to be made by the authorities. The Vancouver Local Council of Women was very active throughout the Depression in dealing with the problem of unemployed women and bringing it to the attention of the government authorities.

The Council's interest in this matter dated from very early in the decade. In September, 1930, a resolution urging relief for women was endorsed by the Council and forwarded to the City Council, the Provincial and Dominion Governments:

Whereas women have always done a great share of the World's Work, and as evolution of the present industrial system has forced women out of the home into a competitive labor market, and Whereas, the recent voters census compiled for the recent election, show more women over twenty-one than men in the City of Vancouver, and as all relief and work schemes so far formulated by groups or Government, do not take cognizance of the needs of women. Be it resolved
That the Local Council of Women of Greater Vancouver believe that equal consideration and opportunity for work be given to unemployed women, as well as to unemployed men, and further be it resolved

That this Council of Women be the medium for conveying this resolution to the various authorities concerned.28

The Local Council had been advised about the situation of unemployed women through the reports of Mrs. J.A. Clarke, the Convener of the Committee on Trades and Professions for Women, and the first hand information given by some unemployed women, who were members of the Local Council of its affiliated societies. Mrs. Clarke's committees had drawn up the first resolution on unemployed women which the Council endorsed. In November, 1930, Mrs. Clarke again proposed a resolution to the Council:

Whereas on account of the world-wide depression which is causing lack of business and employment, thus bringing distress to the people generally--Whereas--the Government of the Dominion of Canada taking cognizance of this condition has granted the sum of twenty million dollars to assist in relieving the situation existing particularly among the workers, and as the City of Vancouver is at the present time carrying registration for men in order to bring into effect part of the Dominion Government's scheme of relief, and as the Local Council of Vancouver are of the opinion that women should have the same consideration as men--

Be it resolved--That we the Local Council of Women of Vancouver ask the City Council to give consideration to the needs of women and that immediate registration similar to that now under way for men be proceeded with for women.29

The main concern of the Local Council during the year 1930 was the care of unemployed women. In addition to urging the government to set up registration offices for these women,
the Council itself tried to find jobs, housing and meals for unemployed women and girls. In November, 1930, the Council began a campaign in the newspapers, urging people to give unemployed women jobs. The "who will give a woman a job campaign" was carried on for several months, with the cooperation of the press. The president asked the members to "take this matter to their association and treat it very seriously as the conditions existing needed a great deal of help."30

Mrs. Paul Smith, also a member of Committee on Trades and Professions for Women, was the most active member for the Council in investigating the effects of the Depression. In December, 1930, she gave a short speech on the housing of unemployed girls, who had no families to live with. The Council decided to ask the Million Days Work Fund31 to help these girls and offered the cooperation of the Council with the Fund. It also passed a resolution asking for definite information on what the Fund intended to do for unemployed women.

The president, Mrs. Kirk, investigated the Million Days Work Campaign, and on December 5, 1930, called a meeting of the Sub-Executive to discuss the Million Days Work Campaign and its reference to unemployed women. Mrs. Kirk had interviewed Mr. Frank Parsons, manager of the campaign, and was told that there was no provision for these women, and that there were very few in any case. At this meeting, the Sub-Executive passed the resolution asking that all relief schemes include provisions for women as well as men. Apparently the Local Council was able to exert some pressure on the Million Days
Work Campaign. By December 11, Mr. Parsons assured the Sub-Executive that unemployed women would be taken care of under the same rules as those governing single, unemployed men, even though married men would still be given primary consideration by the Campaign.

Mrs. Kirk had also approached the city relief officer, Col. Cooper, about city relief for unemployed women. He had assured her that "relief was there if asked for—relief for everyone." 32 A resolution was then moved and carried, which embodied the position of the Local Council on relief during the depression. The L.C.W. decided to continue the policy of co-operation with existing agencies for relief and urged its affiliated societies to do all they could in the emergency and the Council would assist individual cases brought to its attention and if necessary, would be trustees of funds entrusted to it towards relief and employment for women. This motion was sent out in the form of a letter to all affiliated societies. Each society should do as it thought best with regard to possible unemployment relief. The Local Council itself would not set up a special relief organization, even for unemployed women. This was in line with the policy of the National Council for Women.

At the first general meeting in 1931, Mrs. Labsik gave a verbal report on work of the informal committee on unemployment which the Council had appointed. She stated that the committee had placed fifty women in positions of some sort. Most of the jobs had been found either through the individual efforts of members of the committee acting on their own initiative, or through the co-operation of the Million Days Work Fund and other
existing mediums for finding employment. The president again asked for the co-operation of the affiliated societies. Although the work of this committee was certainly commendable, it was only a temporary measure and not very effective in the long run. The committee had also found an eating place for women who were completely destitute. The city relief officer, Col. Cooper, had co-operated with the Council and had issued meal tickets to a number of women who had applied to the committee. The committee had also aided the Y.W.C.A. in setting up a workroom for unemployed women, where they could earn some money. This was intended particularly to help those women who were not eligible for relief through the regular channels. The committee asked the council to donate furniture to help set up a hostel for unemployed women. The hostel, "Dunromin," was to become a very important part of the relief program of the Local Council. Appeals were made for clothes for women living in the hostel and for any articles which might make the hostel more comfortable.

In February, 1931, the Special Committee of the Local Council tabled its report. The report was then sent in to the National Council and eventually printed in the Yearbook of the National Council in 1931, as an outstanding example of what local councils all over Canada could do to offset the effects of the depression in their own communities. The report stated that the question of unemployment had been before the local council since the winter of 1929-1930. The report enumerated the various resolutions passed by the council during this time and the work done by the committee to help the unemployed in the city. The Establishment of the workroom was noted:
"We found many women, some young, others middle aged, absolutely dependent on their own earnings, anxious to work, but not able to obtain employment. To cope with this a Committee from a group composed of Women's Organizations was named "The Central Committee on Unemployment of Women . . . and it was decided that a work room be established."33

The report mentioned the great problem which faced Vancouver in the form of the transient who drifted into the city in the winter months, but added that the Council had concentrated on aiding unemployed single women.

By February, 1931, the Vancouver Local Council had proven itself to be the most outstanding Local Council in Canada. The National Council had not, as yet, given the Local Councils any directions concerning possible relief projects or set down any definite policy of its own concerning the depression. Yet the Vancouver Council had acted on its own initiative, and done a very impressive job of working to alleviate the depression conditions, particularly in its aid to the unemployed women—a group too often neglected by relief authorities. Considering the restrictive nature of a group like the Local Council, and the lack of any directions from their national organization, the Vancouver women could take pride in their work and in the plaudits which they received from the National Council in 1931. The reason behind the work of the Vancouver Local Council is not easy to ascertain. Perhaps the presence of such outstanding women as Mrs. Dorothy Steeves, Mrs. Laura Jamieson, and Judge Helen McGill made the Local Council as a whole more active than others in Canada. The depression situation in Vancouver, aggravated by transients moving in from all over Canada may also have brought home to the Local Council the
gravity of the crisis.

The emphasis placed by the women of the Local Council on their work in unemployment relief became evident in the interviews given by various officers to the Vancouver newspapers. Mrs. T.H. Kirk, the president, stated that "new possibilities have opened for the energies of the members, inasmuch as we have done considerable work in coping with the situation of the unemployed women in this city during the past few months." The report on unemployment was presented by Mrs. Allack, who stated that "she found the unemployment situation still very serious ... a special campaign for working women had been carried on during the past few months with beneficial results but the Council still desired that women should be placed on all boards and commissions which had economic conditions under consideration."

The Committee on Trades and Professions for Women continued to be the most active of the Councils' numerous committees when it came to dealing with the depression and unemployment. In October, 1931, this Committee presented a broad resolution which was obviously well thought out:

Whereas on account of world-wide conditions governments are providing work for their citizens, and the Dominion of Canada in cooperation with its provinces and municipal governments is providing work for men; Whereas there are many wage-earning and dependent women unemployed who do not wish to take direct relief; Be it resolved that we, the Vancouver Local Council of Women ask:

(a) that work be provided for women as well as men.
(b) that the female earner in a family is just as entitled to relief work as the male members of the family.
(c) that where a woman becomes the head of the family, through the loss of the natural bread-winner, that she receive the same consideration re wages, work or relief as men in the category as head of the family.

(d) that this Council, through it executive and seventy affiliated societies offers co-operation (sic) many suitable schemes initiated by the authorities.

The resolution was carried and the Council also suggested that as many affiliated societies as possible should send representatives to the City Council with helpful suggestions for women's relief work programmes. This resolution was one of the most constructive pieces of work done by the Council during the Depression. Women on relief were a new phenomena during the 1930's depression. At first, no provision was made for them. After it became obvious that many thousands of women were unemployed and had to be cared for, the government set up a registration system and allowed them to apply for direct relief. There had been no previous attempt to set up any sort of work project for women, however. The resolution of the Vancouver Council pointed up a definite need in the community and brought it to the attention of the civic authorities. No doubt it reflected the work of the chairman, Mrs. J.A. Clarke, in particular, but the Council endorsed it and congratulated Mrs. Clarke on her work. However, the Council rejected a proposal by Mrs. Clarke that a committee for the purpose of investigating the possibilities of relief work for women be formed from the Council to gather data from as wide an area as possible, apparently feeling that such work was beyond the scope of the Council. It was still conservative, and it could not bring
itself to follow up a proposal like this resolution with more positive action. This tendency made much of the Council's work during the Depression seem like mere talk with no work behind it. Even so, its influence as the largest and most representative women's organization made even its words important enough to be noted by those in authority. In this case, the Relief Officer in the city offered to follow up any suggestion given to him by those in authority dealing with possible schemes for relief projects for women. Mrs. Clarke, was prepared for just such a reaction as this, and she was ready with a work program which she presented to the Council as soon as the reaction from the City had been received:

That a workroom be established along lines similar to that established by clubs last winter.
That there be three hour shifts per day for 5 days a week.
That the pay be 35¢ to 40¢ per hour. In order to avoid rush and confusion that those women who have already registered be just placed.

Divisions

The women who registered came practically under three categories:
(1) Women who through loss of breadwinner, have become the heads of families.
(2) Single women living at home.
(3) Single women without home ties.

Class I

Heads of families to be given direct relief same as men heads of families. If family conditions permit, their women might supplement relief with some work.

Class II

Women living in homes where relief is given or who are not the immediate relative, be given 3 shifts per week.
Class III

Women without homes be given shift work five days per week. This should be sufficient to provide room and food. These women might be placed in homes where they could do a certain amount of work for board and room and have say three shifts of work per week.37

The report was presented at a meeting of the Sub-Executive and endorsed by them and recommended to the general meeting to be sent in to the Mayor and council. The November General Meeting followed the recommendations of the Sub-Executive and work scheme was sent in. The plan was acknowledged by the City Council within the month. The Relief Committee put some of the plan into effect almost at once. It proved to be a boon for the previously ignored unemployed woman. The Council had enough influence to see to it that their plan received the respectful attention of those who had the power to see that it would be carried out or at least given a chance. Mrs. Clarke was not satisfied with the reply from the Mayor's office. She moved "that the Council write to the Acting-Mayor stating that the necessity of providing relief work for women is very urgent and that it be taken up at once."38 A Council delegation accompanied the letter to ensure that the city officials understood the gravity of the problem and would do more than acknowledge receipt of the Council's letter. This delegation did not accomplish much. The city relief office claimed, that it could attempt no new programs without the direction and permission of the Provincial Relief Office in Victoria. The women were asked to support the City Relief Committee in its direct appeal to Victoria. The city committee was prepared to put Council's work scheme into practice if only Victoria agreed
to the proposal. The Council decided to support the Committee. It had gone as far as it could go without sending its plan on to the Provincial Council. Alderman Atherton and the Relief officers decided to go directly to Victoria to take up with the Provincial Government the question of relief work for unemployed women.

In February, 1932, Mrs. J.A. Clarke spoke again on the scheme of work for unemployed women which the Council had submitted to the proper authorities recently. She complained that nothing had yet been done to implement this scheme and suggested that the Council write to the authorities in Ottawa and Victoria pressing the claims of unemployed women for a scheme of relief work. Her resolution was passed unanimously.

The organization which was to occupy a good deal of the Council's time and energy for the next year or so and embodied much of its hope for a workable plan to aid the unemployed was first mentioned at the November, 1932 meeting of the Sub-Executive. The Council had received a letter and pamphlet from the Vancouver Board of Trade, explaining the Employment Service Plan. This was a voluntary organization of 22 associations, and its objective was to put people gainfully to work. The method utilized would afford the Council an opportunity to put all the members of its various affiliated societies to work to fight unemployment. Every home, apartment block, retail store, and manufacturer was to be canvassed and asked to pledge a certain sum of money. The money would be spent on the donor's own property or home, to create employment. Those pledging the money could also decide how it was to be spent. This was another
make-work campaign, but a very well organized one. The plan called for a Follow-up Committee to see that the pledges were kept after the campaign was over. Membership was by association, and each association was allowed one member on the executive. The Local Council was definitely interested and invited Mr. J.N. Harvey, the chairman of the executive committee, and Mr. Oliver Phillips, the secretary, to speak at the General Meeting on November 7. Mr. Phillips explained that the plan had been tried successfully in several other places, notably Winnipeg and Portland, Oregon. The Council believed that the work would overlap that being done by the Welfare Federation, but the men made it clear that this was not merely an employment committee, but an attempt to create work. It would cost approximately $8,000 to initiate the campaign, but the chairman believed that it would be best to wait until after the New Year had begun so as not to interfere with the Welfare Drive and the Christmas holidays. The Council finally decided to become a member of the group and to send a delegate, President Labsik. Mr. Phillips spoke twice more to the Sub-Executive. At the Sub-Executive Meeting, on November 24, Phillips indicated that he wanted the Local Council to "take charge of the Women's Division and to be responsible for directing the women's part in the scheme." Flattered by this request, the Council moved that it would cooperate with the promoters of the organization. This was interpreted to mean though "that we co-operate sympathetically in a general sense, i.e., ask affiliations to help in canvassing, etc . . . But as we have not yet permission to make the matter public, it cannot be brought forward at the general meeting."
It sent a number of representatives to the organization. One of the representatives, Mrs. Rex Eaton, reported in late December, 1932, that "matters were still in a state of flux." The organization had formed an advisory committee to make practical arrangements for starting the campaign. Mrs. Eaton had been appointed to this committee and "was being pressed hard to state definitely what part the women were prepared to play." Once again, it was suggested that the Local Council might take over the women's part of the campaign. The Council decided that if it was officially asked to do this, it would comply. It also decided to request that the campaign should open in mid-February and "that limitation in canvassing be made in certain districts—that the women's part of the Campaign be as small as possible, and largely educational, as this is a man's job." This was not a remark often heard in the Local Council of Women. In this case, the Council felt that such door-to-door canvassing was not very ladylike, nor always safe, and it would do more good by contacting its many Affiliated Societies and requesting their co-operation and help, rather than by canvassing. In January, the Employment Service Plan finally officially requested the help of the Local Council. At the January 9, 1933, Sub-Executive meeting, the members decided to put the plan before the general meeting, recommending that "the Sub-Executive, with the president as convener, take charge of the Women's Division of the Employment Service Plan." The account of the Council's interest in this organization provides an excellent view of the real power within the Council. The Sub-Executive had carried on negotiations with
the Employment Service Plan, sent representatives, and finally agreed to take over the whole women's division—all without mentioning the plan to the General Meeting. By the time the majority of the members heard about the organization, all the important decisions had been made and were already being carried out. At the February, 1933, General Meeting, the Employment Service Plan was introduced to the Council members. Speakers explained the program and urged the members to help, saying:

The widespread influence of the Council could be most usefully employed to fight the fear complex growing up in our midst in which both the morale and psychological effect of the Employment Service Plan—the incentive to do something instead of doing nothing—is of very great value.46

The decision of the Sub-Executive to take part in this program was endorsed by the General Meeting and letters were sent to the Affiliated Societies concerning the matter.

During 1933, the Council continued to be besieged by many organizations with different plans for aiding the unemployed. The Community Garden League asked for contributions towards providing seeds, so that the unemployed could have their own gardens. This would not only provide food, but would "maintain morale, and physical and mental stamina in the face of hardships and discouragement."47 The Council did contribute to this group, although on an individual basis, but the President refused to endorse the Common Good Co-operative Association, which was being organized to raise funds for self-help. Apparently, she felt that the Employment Service Plan would absorb the Council's energy and money.

The Council adjourned after the June meeting for the summer,
but a Sub-Executive meeting was held in August, 1933, to discuss the latest report on the work done by the Employment Service Plan. The report was optimistic. The comparative figures on unemployment in 1929 and 1932 were given, along with figures on the decline in the value of construction. The organization had already garnered 2,861 pledges, valued at $860,198.00. Yet the total cost of the campaign was approximately $5,700.00, or less than three quarters of 1% of the value of the signed pledges. Unfortunately, the organization had only received $3,950.00 so far, but this did not dismay the Council. The news from other programs for the unemployed was not so cheerful. The Soroptimist Club, which had been operating a hostel for unemployed women, was "on the point of having to close down for lack of patronage and may still have to change from catering to unemployed women to providing suitable board and room at low prices for poorly paid employees. The problem was how to induce women to live happily together in these hostels." The Club had had trouble with women of different age groups. It suggested that hostels be established on the basis of age groups. The Y.W.C.A., which had also been running a hostel for unemployed women, had decided definitely to shut it down. It had been closed in May, 1933, supposedly for the summer, but the Y.W.C.A. had decided not to re-open it in the fall. The Y.W.C.A. dealt only with girls under 30, and was not very pleased with its success. Miss Hudson, the representative of the Y.W.C.A. on the Local Council, stated that "if the girls came voluntarily they were quite appreciative but if sent by relief authorities they seemed to resent it."
The representative of the Business and Professional Women's Club, Miss Peder, stated that this group did not intend to carry on its day club for unemployed girls because it could not afford the expense. The consensus of opinion as related by these representatives of leading women's clubs was that neither the hostels for unemployed girls and women nor the clubs for employing leisure time usefully had been quite successful.

Although the Council did not seem to be able to do much for unemployed single women, mothers of families on relief were receiving some aid from a new program organized by one of the Council's members, Mrs. Mildred Cunningham. Mrs. Cunningham attempted to get in touch with the mothers through the schools in outlying districts, so that they could be organized into groups for work and recreation. The work was sewing, knitting, or quilting with the materials provided by the Local Council. The object of the plan was "the prevention of spiritual tragedies through fear and suffering." Mrs. Cunningham had already started one such group in South Vancouver and it appeared to be quite successful. Gradually "a sort of combined mother's meeting and work party has evolved from which much useful work and social intercourse has resulted." The philosophy involved in this plan was to help the people help themselves. The women in the Local Council and other women's groups who were involved in relief work of any kind endorsed the self-help philosophy. The dole in any form was not popular with these women, who believed it was humiliating to the recipient. In discussing her plan, Mrs. Cunningham made it
clear that there was "no suggestion of charity or giving something for nothing." Self help was the motto of the organization. Upon hearing of Mrs. Cunningham's organization, the Business and Professional Women's Club decided to initiate a similar programme for unemployed business girls.

The problem of aid for unemployed single women was brought to the attention of the Local Council once more by a letter from the Vancouver District Council of the Socialist Party. The letter was read at the Sub-Executive meeting in September, 1933. The Party listed the new relief schedule for single women, which had been adopted by the City Council on August 15, 1933. The Socialist Party believed that the new schedule was "one in which it is not possible to keep up the standards of decency," and urged the Local Council to send a protest to the City Council. The District Council (of the Socialist Party) believed that such a protest, "emanating from such a body of women as the Local Council of Women would have a great influence."55

Another matter involving relief for women arose at the same time. No relief was being given to any woman who refused a job. The Council passed a resolution "that we recommend to the general meeting that this Council send a delegation to the Relief Committee to press for the privilege of appointing two women to the Advisory Committee; and that it be further urged that women who refuse an offer of work may be given some means of stating their reasons by way of an appeal." The Sub-Executive did not send in the protest which the District Council of the Socialist Party had urged, but it did decide to read the
letter at the general meeting.

The president of the Provincial Council of Women replied to a Vancouver Council request for a conference on "Unemployment As It Afflicts Women". The Provincial Executive pointed out that it had kept this subject consistently before its members for the last four years and the president agreed to place the topic on the agenda of the next provincial meeting for further discussion.

The Self-Help Groups initiated by Mrs. Mildred Cunningham had grown until they now enrolled 103 women in a number of groups. Mrs. Cunningham's idea had proven to be very fruitful. According to her: "The greatest tonic in time of trouble was interesting work and it was proving so in this case." Of course, the very reason why there was a time of trouble at all was partly a lack of work, interesting or not. Mrs. Cunningham's plan, however, worked well within its limited horizons.

The Committee on Trades and Professions for Women remained active in dealing with the Council's work in the Depression. At the General Meeting in February, 1934, the Committee proposed a resolution dealing with single unemployed women:

In consideration of the lengthening period of the Depression and the conditions of unemployment particularly for women, showing little or no improvement, your Committee on Trades and Professions for Women submit the following for your consideration:

Whereas, the Relief Allowance for single unemployed women has thus far been set too low for decent living conditions, and Whereas, many unemployed single women have been on prolonged relief, their resources being at this time much depleted; Be it therefore resolved that this Local Council of Women does not approve of the
present low scale of relief for single unemployed women and goes on record as recommending an upward revision in the scale of relief to these recipients.\textsuperscript{58}

This appears to be a direct result of the letter sent by the District Council of the Socialist Party of Canada, even though the Local Council did not acknowledge this debt. It is precisely the protest that the District Council had requested that the Local Council make to the civic authorities. The Local Council was willing to make such a protest after study by one of its own committees, but it was not willing to be associated with the Socialist Party of Canada. The Council continued to stress the work done to help single unemployed women:

With 500 single women on Vancouver's relief role, a major portion of the Council's time has been given to the problems connected with this situation. It has repeatedly asked that women be placed on all boards dealing with relief but without success as yet. It has been asked that the present relief scale of $2.80 per week be increased to the point where a woman might hope to live without paying too great a physical and spiritual price during the years of depression. A room must be found for $1.20 a week and food for 20¢ a day. Week after week and month after month of living on this scale is intolerable to health and morals and the grave social problems which inevitably arise should be the concern, not only of the Council, but of every group of right thinking people in Vancouver.\textsuperscript{59}

This was one of the most compassionate pleas on behalf of the unemployed women voiced by any member of the Council of Women during the Depression. The report mentioned in particular the work done by the Local Council to help the Employment Service Plan, the special committee on the situation of mothers who receive pensions, and the Community Self-Help Project sponsored
by the Local Council. This project by this time had organized 257 mothers of needy families into groups of eight.

A delegation from the Women's Labor League spoke at the general meeting in May, 1934, and asked the support of the Council in protesting certain arrangements made by the Relief Office. They requested specifically: that the relief authorities: (1) make facilities for obtaining authorized supplies of relief clothes more easily obtained; (2) issue two sets of garments twice a year, instead of one, four times a year; (3) provide complete dental service, instead of extractions only. These requests were all to be made on behalf of children's relief. The Council endorsed all of these requests by the Women's Labor League.

The Council received two resolutions dealing with the raising of relief rates, one from the British Columbia Joint Committee on Unemployment, and the other from the Y.W.C.A. The Council combined the two resolutions into one and endorsed it:

Resolved:
1. That the Local Council of Women gain record its conviction that the only sound policy to be followed in the solution of the relief problem is to create employment by public works, or other means of remuneration based on standard rate of wages and the assurance that sufficient income will be forthcoming to a home to maintain a proper standard of living for the family.

2. Whereas from our observations and knowledge we are of the opinion that the present scale of relief for single women is inadequate; and whereas, we believe the present food allowance is too small to provide a sufficiently nourishing diet when the recipient has a room which includes facilities for cooking, and whereas we believe that proper accommodation cannot be secured for less than $2.00 per week; we hereby Resolve that the government of the
Province of British Columbia be urged to raise the rate of relief for single women to such a rate which will permit recipients to secure proper accommodation and a health maintaining diet, and be it further resolved that relief for food shall be paid in cash instead of in script as at present.

3. We reiterate our stand that we deplore the fact that conditions are such that single men are forced to go to camps and urge that they be absorbed as quickly as possible into the normal life of the community. Further, we draw to the attention of the government that single unemployed young men, when they reach the age of twenty-one, are not granted relief at home.

4. We also reiterate our stand that medical attention and hospitalization, maternity and prenatal care should be provided for those unable to pay. In connection with the other matters referred to in the resolution sent to us for endorsation, the executive committee recommends that they be handed over to the special committee on relief.

The Council was still concerned about the inadequate relief rates. It realized, far more than the National Council did, that the Depression was by no means over, and it did not turn its attention to other, less frustrating topics. It was only too easy during the later years of the Depression, for those who were not directly affected to become tired of the unemployed and their problems. The Vancouver Council of Women however, persevered in its attempts to alleviate the situation in any way possible. The plight of unemployed women or the men in relief camps did not bore them, even though they had been dwelling on the same problems with meagre success for five years.

The Council received a letter from the Minister of Labour, the Honorable George Pearson, regarding its resolution and proposals on unemployment relief scales. The letter simply acknowledged receipt of the resolution, expressed sympathy with
it, and assured the Council that the Department of Labour was working to similar ends. This was not a very encouraging reply, and not one which demonstrated about the influence of the Council. It was always acknowledged as the most representative and most influential women's group in Vancouver, but its efforts did not seem to have met with much success in the government, nor did it arouse much response in the politicians and Cabinet Ministers it contacted. The women's vote either was not important, or was not affected by organizations such as the Council of Women. As the Council always stated that it was nonpolitical, presumably the latter was the case.

At the General Meeting in February, 1935, the special committee on methods of distributing relief finally made a report. The committee, after much study, had decided to propose a resolution calling for the establishment of a Public Welfare Portfolio. The original impetus for this move had come from the New Era League. The resolution asked the government of British Columbia to establish a Portfolio of Public Welfare to coordinate all the various phases of social welfare work, such as Mother's Pension, Old Age Pensions, Child Welfare, health and mental institutions, homes for delinquents, and unemployment relief. The resolution had no apparent success, at the time, but a Portfolio of Health and Welfare was eventually established by the government of British Columbia.

In May, 1935, the Self-Help Committee Group asked permission to form an independent organization with hope of eventually affiliating with the Local Council. It was given this permission at the General Meeting in May. The outstanding success of
this program was reassuring and partially made up for the council's many failings.

In January, 1937, the Council endorsed the brief presented by the Women's Protective Association on the situation of unemployed women in Vancouver. The brief outlines six points for consideration. One called for lowering of the eligibility age for pensions, since many of the women on relief were over 50 and there was little hope of them ever finding a job again, even when the Depression was completely over. Another called for vocational training for unemployed women in various types of domestic services. The Council of Women endorsed this brief. The resolutions were practical and might have done a good deal for those women still unemployed.

The work of the Council for the unemployed, especially unemployed women, was its most important interest during the Depression. It was not, however, the only interest. There were several other issues which drew the attention of the Council during the Depression. One of these was the problem of mother's allowances.

The year 1932 began with a controversy over the amount and administration of Mother's Pensions. In February, the Sub-Executive heard Mrs. R.F. Murray of the Civilian Pensioned Mother's Association, speak on the subject of the two resolutions which this organization had sent to the Local Council. The Council had discussed the resolutions before Mrs. Murray was called in. Resolution I protested the rumoured government interference in the name of economy with certain social legislation, particularly with the Mother's Assistance Act.
Resolution II dealt with the "need for legislation at this time to bring about a moratorium on mortgages, thus preventing thousands of B.C. citizens from losing their property in such a period of distress." The Sub-Executive did not wish to endorse the first resolution, fearing "to bother the government with rumoured actions, thus lessening the effectiveness of any future protest on the part of the Council when there was an actual cause." It also balked at resolution II, feeling "that there were two sides to this question, that of those whose income was derived from property investments, to whom such a moratorium would cause great hardship, and that of the many honorable mortgagees men mentioned in the resolution."

Mrs. Murray spoke in favor of both resolutions. The Council finally amended Resolution I to make it acceptable and passed it. The amended resolution read "that the L.C. of Women of Vancouver wishes to reiterate their support of the Mothers Assistance Act and deplore the rumoured proposal that allowances under its provisions may be reduced." Eventually, the Council endorsed Resolution II also, although it undoubtedly would be anathema to many members. The discussion over Resolution I is not included in the Minutes, nor the reasons why the Sub-Executive finally decided to endorse the resolution after their earlier reluctance to do so. It is interesting that a Council which contained many of the wealthiest women in Vancouver, who may have been making their living off investment properties, saw fit to endorse a moratorium on mortgages.

The special committee on the Mother's Pension Act finally made its report in August, 1933, and recommended that three
resolutions be passed by the Local Council:

1. The restoration of Mother's Pensions completely according to the Act.
2. The taking over again by the Provincial Government of the full financial responsibility for the Act and of full control of its administration.
3. The clear statement by this Council of Women of its position re the Mother's Pensions Act at the coming provincial elections.

The Local Council Committee had found that some irregularities had occurred without explanation. No more was heard of the matter at Council meetings. Presumably, the complaints were investigated by the government and the matter settled to the satisfaction of the Council and the Civilian Mother's Pensions Board.

The Council had taken an interest in the relief camps organized for unemployed single men, almost as soon as they were set up. Col. A.G.L. McNaughton, the director of the camps, had asked the National Council of Women to sponsor a fund to provide "comforts" for the men in such camps. The National Council had agreed and had passed the resolution to the Local Councils. In June, 1933, the Vancouver Council endorsed this resolution and made a donation of $5.00 to the "Comforts Fund." The Sub-Executive formed a committee to organize and administer the fund. The Vancouver Council was responsible for those camps nearest to the city i.e., West Point Gray, Salmon Arm, and Hope, B.C. The committee provided magazines, books, and games for the men.

By April, 1934, the Council was aware that all was not as it should be in the relief camps. A vague resolution was passed, urging "that conditions in relief camps be made as healthful in
every sense as possible, with the hope that in the near future the need for these camps may cease and the men be returned to normal life." The Relief Camp Workers Union began corresponding with the Council in 1934. The Union asked permission to address the Council, but the Sub-Executive decided that this would not be advisable. The Council assured the Union members however, that it was closely following their programme and would continue to work in their interests. There was much discussion about this decision of the Sub-Executive when the matter was raised at the General Meeting in January, 1935. The members acquiesced in the decision, but discussed the grievances of the men in the camps. The Council passed a resolution, which was forwarded to the National Council:

Whereas we believe that the voluntary efforts of women's organizations to provide recreational facilities and physical training in unemployment relief camps should be continued, the Local Council of Women of Vancouver is of the opinion that this situation is not adequately met and would petition the Department of National Defense to establish an organized department of physical education in all camps under their administration.

The Council was cognizant of some of the facts of the situation, and it did not ignore the problem. Why it would not listen to the representatives of the men speak is another matter. It may have believed that the speech would be too inflammatory for the Local Council of Women. The Sub-Executive certainly underestimated the interest in this topic and the Council's knowledge of the relief camps. The members were sympathetic to the problems of the unemployed in such camps and were able to propose a concrete resolution. An organized department of physical education would not have to solve the grievances of
the relief campers, but it was a beginning, and far better than the previous resolution endorsed by the Council, which simply deplored the conditions in the camps. This proposal was reasonable, and within the means of the Department of National Defense.

The Sub-Executive eventually reversed its decision not to allow a speech by the relief campers. At the fortieth Annual Meeting of the Vancouver Council, in March, 1935, Mr. Shaw and Mr. Cameron, two agents from the men who had been expelled from the relief camps, addressed the Council. They spoke for some time on the problems of life in the relief camps. The men proposed resolutions asking "for relief of all black-listed men and the release of E. Kimber, the secretary, and the men in Okalla." These resolutions were filed by the Council and it discussed various plans for immediate action. According to the report in the Minute Book: "the inhumanity of this is more than the women can stand." The two men were very effective representatives, indeed. An emergency resolution was proposed at the same meeting. The resolution asked "immediate remedial action from the Hon. George Pearson (Minister of Labor) and the Attorney-General and stated emphatically that the women cannot tolerate these conditions any longer." The Council sent two representatives to the Cabinet for an interview concerning the situation, and they were instructed to "put the women's stand very firmly before its members." Rarely had the Council taken such quick action or such a firm stand as it did in the relief camp situation. This is surprising in view of the original decision of the Sub-Executive not to allow the men to speak at
a Council meeting. The members may have been worried about possible retaliation by the relief campers in the city of Vancouver if their demands were not met, or the Council may have been sympathetic to the campers after their case had been presented to the Council. In any event, the relief campers had succeeded in arousing the fighting spirit of the Vancouver Council of Women.

Throughout 1935, the Council continued to be very concerned with the problems of the relief campers. The President reported to the Council at the General Meeting in May, 1935, that she had represented it at a public meeting in connection with the strike of the relief campers. She had expressed sympathy of the Council for the situation in which the campers found themselves.

In December, 1935, the Sub-Executive again heard from a representative of the relief campers. Mr. Cumber, who was speaking for the "Blacklisted Men", that is, those men who had some part in organizing the men in the camps to protest their conditions and were for this reason blacklisted from entering a relief camp again or from receiving city or provincial relief. Mr. Cumber urged the Council to help in obtaining immediate relief for these men. The Welfare Foundation in Vancouver had set up a Homeless Men Committee, and Mr. Carey, the chairman of this committee, also spoke to the Council Sub-Executive and urged the reorganization of the whole camp system. The Sub-Executive referred the entire matter to the Unemployment Relief Committee, under the chairmanship of Mrs. David Hall, and requested the committee to bring in a report to the General
Meeting. Mrs. Hall was prepared for this request and the Unemployment Relief Committee brought the following resolution in at the General Meeting on the same day (December 2, 1935):

Whereas the Vancouver Council of Women from time to time had declared itself strongly in favour of the abolition of relief camps,

Be it resolved that we express our agreement with the policy outlined, according to the press, in the statement of the Minister of Labour, Honourable Rogers, in which he declares the intention of the Federal Government to take immediate steps in order that the single unemployed men in relief camps may be absorbed in normal community life within the coming year.

2. We also recommend that in any new scheme of dealing with unemployment measures as a whole, proper representation on such a committee be accorded to the single homeless men committee of the Vancouver Council of Social Agencies, who have made an exhaustive study of the whole problem of single unemployment relief both in camp and city over the past three years.

3. We also express concern to have the emergent situation of need of "blacklisted men" from relief camps given immediate attention and action.

Although the Council does express sympathy for the "blacklisted men" in this resolution, it did not make any more concrete proposals about any action to be taken on their behalf. Furthermore, its belief that the men in relief camps can be "absorbed into normal community life" at this time, seems to demonstrate that it had not looked very closely at the problem or did not realize what would be involved in such a solution. The Depression was not over, and the men in relief camps could not simply be absorbed back into community life. This answer was not feasible.

By January, 1936, the Council Sub-Executive had received a letter re the arrested men of the Unemployed Trek. The Sub-Executive decided not to read the letter at the General Meeting,
presumably on the grounds that it was too inflammatory. Mrs. David Hall of the Unemployment Relief Committee continued to appeal for books, games, and musical instruments for the relief camps. She was also appointed to meet with the commission which was investigating the relief camps when it met in Vancouver. In spite of this activity the Council in the latter half of 1935 seemed to be succumbing to the same feeling of boredom with Depression problems which the National Council had displayed a year earlier. The Local Council manifested a rapidly decreasing interest in the unemployed. The subject of unemployment relief, or even the Depression itself, was not mentioned at the Annual Meeting in March, 1936.

At the Sub-Executive meeting in April, 1936, the members heard a speaker who represented the rejected relief campers. He outlined the situation of the men and appealed for the support of the Council "in effecting some form of immediate relief from the City Council since at present their only means of relief is collecting on street corners."75 The Sub-Executive sent a letter to the Honourable Norman Rogers, deploiring the fact that these boys were in Vancouver without means of support. The Council was not willing to go further but at least it heard the complaints of the men and urged that something be done for these people, rather than ignoring them as "rabble-rousers" or "Communists" who should be allowed to starve for the trouble they had caused. The question of the transient unemployed came up at the November, 1936 meeting of the Sub-Executive and a delegation of three was appointed to arrange a meeting with the Honourable Norman Rogers while he was in Vancouver investigating
the question. The Sub-Executive had shunted Depression subjects aside for the past year. The majority of the members of the Council of Women did not realize that anything at all was being done, except for the continuing appeals for clothes and money for the Relief Fund. The progress of the Self-Help Group was mentioned occasionally, but the Sub-Executive apparently believed that the subject was either not interesting to the majority of members or that some topics were too controversial and would divide the Council so badly that it would not be wise to bring them up at the General Meeting. This was especially true of the relief campers.

At the Annual Meeting in March, 1937, the Council endorsed a resolution "that the special Committee set up for providing comforts for the boys at Relief Camps be now dismissed." The Council obviously had no idea of the conditions at the relief camps, nor did it foresee the trouble to come during June of 1938 when the men from the provincial forestry projects and some from the camps would stage a sitdown strike in the Vancouver Post Office and Art Gallery.

In October, 1937, the Sub-Executive again heard speakers from the single unemployed men, and also from the Ex-Service Veterans. Mr. Harvey, of the Ex-Service Veterans organization spoke first, and asked that the Local Council request the British Columbia government to institute a works programme or relief, preferably a works programme. He complained that all ex-service men had been cut off relief, if they were under the age of 50 and could not get a reason for being so treated: they had been put up in lodgings "unfit for humans." He stated that "at
present, ninety men were so billeted for which the billet was being paid for at the rate of forty-three cents per day whereas if the men were getting the relief allowance of forty-three cents they could keep themselves clean." Mr. March then spoke, represening the Relief Projects Workers Union for single unemployed men. He explained that these men, including the ex-service men, had co-operated to the best of their ability but wanted some work scheme so that they could support themselves. The Sub-Executive listened, but passed no resolution. The situation was turned over to a special committee for study, a normal procedure for the Sub-Executive. At the General Meeting in October, 1937, the President spoke of a resolution regarding the works scheme sent in by the New Era League. This was still left to the special committee in spite of the fact that several women spoke on the gravity of the situation. Miss Gutteridge had studied the serious position of the single unemployed men in the city and urging the importance of haste. Mrs. Dorothy Steeves moved that "the Local Council instruct its Sub-Executive to appeal to the Provincial Government to take immediate steps to provide food for the single unemployed men." The resolution was carried, but the proposal of a works scheme for the men was left to the special committee. Finally, the General Meeting decided that in view of the urgency of the situation they would wire Victoria. The Sub-Executive did so, telling the Honourable Mr. Rogers that the situation in Vancouver was very acute, with more unemployed men drifting into the city daily and many being sent to jail. It urged immediate action.

In January, 1938, the Council endorsed a resolution from
Mrs. J.A. Clarke:

Resolved that any works scheme, either now existing or arranged in the future, by civic or legislative bodies shall provide for the payment of wages, sufficient to maintain a standard of living based upon the government figures as contained and published in the Labour Gazette.80

The Council had continued to press for higher relief scales, so the resolution was not a new policy but at least, it was some indication that it was still aware of the Depression and its problems. At the Annual Meeting in 1938, the presidential address of Mrs. Bingham "outlined the years work of the Council and its accomplishments, its aim for further work re housing and helping the unemployed girls and the coming national Convention."81 Mrs. Bingham also believed that the Council had been working for the unemployed during the year of 1937, although the evidence to support such a claim is not available.

The Depression was brought home again to the Council by the sitdown strike in the Vancouver Post Office and Art Gallery by unemployed men from the relief camps and the provincial government forestry projects. The Council chastized both the Provincial and City governments for doing nothing to relieve the situation. An emergency resolution was brought forward at the General Meeting in June:

There is existing at the present time in the City of Vancouver a very serious situation in regard to the single unemployed men and Whereas on several occasions the Vancouver Local Council of Women has asked the Dominion Government to provide a works scheme which would absorb these single men and thus build character, Be it resolved: That pending the implementing of such a scheme the Dominion Government provide shelter and sustenance for the men and that a night letter be sent to the proper authority.82
This was quick and drastic action by the Council, but that is the last mention made of the situation or the fate of the men involved in the strike. In September, 1938, the Council received a letter from the Mother's Council asking that the Council "consider the boys who were convicted during the Post Office trouble, by attending the Assizes."\textsuperscript{83} The Council decided "that we as a Council cannot be represented but we go on record as re-iterating our stand for a works programme."\textsuperscript{84} There must have been some dispute about this resolution, because another was drawn up and read to the General Meeting:

As a Council we have every sympathy with the young men but cannot represent the Council as a whole, but in the matter of attending the trials we suggest any Council Woman can attend and get information.\textsuperscript{85}

There must have been members of the Council who believed that the men were getting just what they deserved, and others who were more sympathetic to the predicament of the strikers. The resolution was a compromise between the two, but it certainly did not commit the Council to any action or principle.

The attitude of the Council towards the underlying causes of the Depression was demonstrated by the measures it advocated as possible cures for the economic crisis.

In August, 1930, the Council Sub-Executive discussed and endorsed a project which was to become one of its most important campaigns during the Depression. The group issued "Where-From" slogan cards to their members. Shoppers were to buy B.C., Canadian or Empire goods only. Half of the card was to be kept as a pledge, and the other half was to be deposited in a box during the Pacific National Exhibition. This was not a new
idea for the Council. They had always supported such campaigns to buy only provincial, Canadian or Empire products, but now the reasoning behind their endorsement of the campaign had changed. The "Where-From" project would help unemployment in Canada and in the Empire. This fitted in very well with the emphasis being placed by the National Council on the results of the Imperial Conference in lessening the depression in Canada. The Council continued to endorse such plans as the "Where-From" campaign throughout the Depression.

In March, 1931, the Ministerial Association of Vancouver formed a committee to investigate the causes and possible cures of unemployment. It requested the Local Council to endorse its resolution "that the government of B.C. be urged to make provision at the present session of the Legislature for a full enquiry into the fluctuation of unemployment in the various industries of the province with a view to recommending a permanent policy with regard to unemployment, and that concurrently with this enquiry the cooperation of the government of the other western provinces and the Dominion be sought." This resolution was endorsed by the Council. At least, it had more potential for possible action on a broad front against the Depression. The President was appointed to become the representative of the Local Council on the Committee set up by the Ministerial Association to study the situation and make recommendations of their own. The Local Council was apparently quite interested in the findings of this committee. It refused to endorse a New Era League resolution dealing with various proposed solutions for unemployment, preferring to wait for the
Ministerial Association committee to table its report.

Although the Local Council was deeply concerned about the effects of the depression, it was not ready to endorse any resolutions which might be controversial. A resolution containing a request that the legislature be petitioned by the Provincial Council to consider the reduction of all salaries of cabinet ministers and members of the legislature in conformity with the pressure of economic conditions outside of the House was defeated on the grounds that "we, as a local Council, do not consider it judicious to deal with this resolution, deeming it outside Council business."\(^87\)

In spite of its refusal to endorse any scheme like state unemployment insurance, the Local Council was not unsympathetic to the plight of the unemployed. The Council refused to endorse a resolution from the Outlook Circle of the Women's Association of Ryerson Church:

Whereas our attention has been repeatedly drawn to the number of people selling small wares on our streets and from house to house, causing annoyance and in many instances fear to the women and children, therefore and whereas while many of these may be unfortunates trying to make a living, nevertheless we believe considerable numbers are really begging in disguises; and whereas, we feel that to allow this to continue is not in the best interests of our city either in appearance to visitors or to our citizens; therefore be it resolved that we ask our city authorities to investigate these individuals and if it is found that they can be stopped and if found they are in want that they be cared for by the government or other proper authorities; and that this resolution be forwarded to our city council.\(^88\)

The Circle asked that the resolution be brought before the general meeting to be discussed. The Sub-Executive decided not to do this, as it "might not be wise in these times."\(^89\)
This move on the part of the Council demonstrated some feeling for those who were hardest hit by the economic crisis, as well as a good deal of diplomacy. The resolution undoubtedly would have caused a considerable stir in a general meeting and a bitter disagreement could have been the result. The Sub-Executive was willing to kill the resolution in order to prevent any sort of breach in the Council. Unity prevailed.

The caution displayed by the Council in making a policy statement dealing with the Depression was evident once again in its action on the resolution put forward by the New Era League which embodied several proposed solutions for unemployment. The Minutes were not specific about the solutions advocated by the resolution but the Council was reluctant to endorse it. Finally, it was decided that the president "should ask how many affiliations are prepared to vote on this, emphasizing the tremendous extent of the resolution and the difficulty in grasping without prolonged and intimate study of conditions all that its passing would imply." The Council had not grasped just what the situation was, nor how quickly solutions were needed.

The fact that the Council continued to have speakers dealing with the economic crisis in its various manifestations demonstrates that it was sincere in its fear that it did not know enough to take action. It is impossible to estimate how much influence these speakers had on the Council and its policies. The continued emphasis on buying B.C., Canadian, and Empire products was encouraged by any number of speakers, particularly by those from the B.C. Board of Trade. In thanking one of these
speakers, Mrs. Rex Eaton said that "if every country's resources were pooled internationally, the greatest era of prosperity the world has ever seen would result," and "it is up to the women of the world to see that the principle of separatism, racialism, and nationalism, be overcome."91 This sentiment directly opposed the idea that buying local products would end the Depression, but the Council did not seem to realize this. Certainly, vague and nebulous as it was, it was more radical than a number of the Council's pronouncements, but it does not seem to have had any lasting effect.

In December, 1937, the General Meeting endorsed a very specific resolution from the Vancouver East Women's Conservative Association:

Whereas the above Association being deeply concerned at the continued prevalence of unemployment—

Therefore Be it resolved that the Local Council of Women be asked to consider the increased circulation of the Canadian silver dollar with the object of creating more work for the mining and other industries.92

The Sub-Executive recommended that during the Christmas rush women ask for silver dollars in change thereby putting them in circulation. It is doubtful whether such methods could have much effect on the unemployment in the mining industry, but this was a "safe" resolution, one to which no one could object.

The Council was exposed to some radical proposals for dealing with the Depression. At the General Meeting in November, 1933, a most interesting offer was made by the president. She had received a manifesto from the International Women's Congress
and she offered it to any affiliation for its use. The same manifesto had been received by the National Council and printed in its annual *Yearbook*, but there had been no discussion of the matter. The manifesto was a radical pronouncement, particularly in comparison with the policies of the National Council during the Depression. Certainly the National body had not recommended the manifesto to its affiliates even for discussion. The manifesto asked women to undertake a crusade "directed towards the winning of security and opportunity for all mankind," stating:

> We recognize that, beneath the perplexities and dislocations of the present period, there has occurred a shift from the problems of production and of the mastery of the material forces to the problems of social control. To build a social order providing security and opportunity for all we accept as the task of our time. In it there is no place for complacent reliance upon fixed concepts and specific measures of reform.

It called for certain immediate steps to be taken to deal with the Depression:

> The present crisis demands that government plan comprehensively for the public welfare, exercising on a broad scale its powers to regulate industry and agriculture.

The Manifesto apparently struck a responsive chord in the Vancouver Local Council, although it was much more radical than any of the Council's resolutions or actions ever were. It would appear that the Vancouver Council were more liberal than the National Council and probably more so than most of its counterparts in other parts of Canada.

The Council was not hostile to radical or socialistic solutions for the Depression, but it did not initiate any such solutions, nor did it ever fully endorse one. Its view of the
crisis was basically conservative, although the Council, or certain members did have some doubts about the economic system. The plans initiated or endorsed by the Council were cautious temporary measures, and at times it descended to the ridiculous. In spite of its own attitudes, the Council did not shut its mind to other, more liberal reformers.

During 1938 and 1939, the Council became more and more concerned with the international situation, and correspondingly, less and less concerned with the Depression and unemployment. These domestic problems seemed to pale before the possibility of a world war. Still some time was given to domestic concerns. The President, Mrs. Harriette Porter, was invited to sit on the committee investigating the scheme for a co-operative plan for relief workers, in March, 1939. The speaker at the General Meeting in April, 1939, was a Mr. Robertson, "who wished to bring before the Local Council of Women the scheme of 'a man and woman a block.'" The idea was hardly new. A man and woman were to be employed in odd jobs, and the objective was to average a man and a woman per block, and to create work for those on relief. The Council did not endorse the plan. It did not differ much from the earlier Employment Service Plan, on which the Council had spent much time and effort. Times had changed and the Council was no longer interested.

A special Committee on Unemployment Relief still existed in the Council. Pleas to help the unemployed elicited the same response from the Council:

That we the Vancouver Local Council of Women reiterate our stand taken on several occasions that a works' programme with fair wages be
provided for unemployed men, and until such work is provided, that relief be given with no discrimination. 97

This resolution was passed again on June 5, 1939, at the General Meeting. From this time on, all the attention of the Council was caught up by other topics, particularly the war effort. The Depression was brought to a halt by World War II, or at least the unemployed were absorbed into the armed forces, the war industries, or forgotten.
CONCLUSION
An interesting sidelight on the investigation may be found in the class composition of the three women's organizations which were investigated. Not a single non Anglo-Saxon name could be found among the members of the Executive or Board of Directors of these three groups. The Y.W.C.A. and the Woman's Missionary Society were Protestant organizations, and the vast majority of the members of the Local Council of Women in Vancouver were also Protestants. Most of the officers of the organizations were the wives of successful, relatively well to do men. The Y.W.C.A. Board of Directors for the years 1930 to 1931 counted among its members the wives of eleven officials or presidents in various manufacturing or insurance firms, three physicians, two high school teachers, and the head of a Vancouver business school. The Local Council of Women followed the same pattern. Many ministers' wives were members of the Woman's Missionary Society, but were not to be found among the officers of the Y.W.C.A. or the Local Council of Women. These women were members of the middle class in British Columbia. They themselves were not as badly affected by the Depression as many members of the community. Their husbands were not numbered among the unemployed or those standing in bread lines. They were not callous or uncharitable. They simply did not comprehend the extent or depth of the Depression and its affects. Although the majority of women were married to educated men, they themselves probably had not gone beyond high school. This may partially account for their reluctance to take a stand on the causes or cures of the Depression. Moreover, women were especially busy with their own homes and families, since domestic servants became a rarity during the 1930's. They tended to rely
on a few outstanding women for political representation. The majority of women lacked any sort of political experience.

The women of the three groups investigated did not use their political power as a group to advocate any dramatic legislation or reforms during the Depression. Although examination of other groups would be necessary to warrant broader generalizations, the evidence here presented indicates that the hopes of those who believed that women as a group would prove to be a distinctive and compelling force in social and political life were not justified by the experience of the depression decade in British Columbia.
FOOTNOTES

Introduction


2 Ibid.


7 Ibid., p.443.

Chapter I


2 Ibid., p.42.

3 Ibid., p.100.

4 Ibid., p.39.

5 Ibid.

6 Ibid., p.43.

7 The Y.W.C.A. In The 60's...Insights and Outlook Y.W.C.A. of Canada, 571 Jarvis St., Toronto, Canada), 1962 p.XXV.


10 Ibid., Chapter 3, p.6.

11 Op. cit., Innis, p.120.

12 Ibid., p.116.


15  The Daily Province, February, 1932.
16  Minute Book of The Vancouver Y.W.C.A., 1933-1936, p.120.
17  Ibid., p.282.
18  The Vancouver Sun, October 1, 1938.
20  The Daily Province, October 2, 1930.
21  Minute Book of The Vancouver Y.W.C.A., 1929-1933, p.75.
22  Ibid., p.102.
23  Ibid., p.227.
24  Ibid.
25  Ibid., p.255.
28  Ibid., p.2.
29  The Vancouver Sun, April 6, 1933.
30  Ibid.
39  Ibid.
Chapter II

1 The United Church of Canada, Record of Proceedings of the 5th General Council, (Toronto: The United Church of Canada, 1939, p. 235.

2 Ibid., p. 24.

3 Ibid., p. 244.

4 Ibid., p. 247.

5 The United Church of Canada, Record of Proceedings of the 6th General Council, (Toronto: The United Church of Canada, 1937, p. 84.

6 Ibid., p. 83.

7 The United Church of Canada, Record of Proceedings of the 7th General Council, (Toronto: The United Church of Canada, 1939), p. 165.


9 8th Annual Report, 1932-1933, p. 44.


11 Ibid.

Chapter III

1 The seven Local Councils were located in Montreal, Ottawa, Hamilton, London, Toronto, Winnipeg, and Quebec.


4 Shaw, p.185.

5 National Council of Women of Canada, Yearbook, 1933, p.29.


8 Ibid.

9 Shaw, p.109.

National Council of Women of Canada, Yearbook, 1933, p. 244.

Ibid.

Ibid., p. 251.

Ibid., p. 247.

Ibid., p. 252.

Local Council of Women of Vancouver, Minute Book (1932-1933), p. 112.

Ibid.

Ibid., 1929-1930, p. 75.

Ibid., p. 121.

Ibid.

Ibid., p. 133.

Ibid., 1933-1934, p. 11.

Ibid., p. 29.


Ibid., p. 17.

Ibid.

Ibid., p. 74.

Ibid., 1930-1931, p. 58.

Ibid., p. 74.

Ibid., p. 73.

The Million Days Work Fund was a volunteer "make work" organization. Individuals were asked to hire the unemployed to do a certain amount of work. These individuals were donating so many days of work to the Fund.

The Local Council of Women of Vancouver, Minute Book, 1930-1931, p. 91.

34 *The Vancouver Sun*, March 3, 1931, Woman's Page.


36 Ibid., 1931-1932, p.84.

37 Ibid., p.96.

38 Ibid., p.155.

39 Ibid., 1932-1933, p.91.

40 Ibid., p.106.

41 Ibid., p.107.

42 Ibid., p.114.

43 Ibid.

44 Ibid., p.115.


46 Ibid., p.155.

47 Ibid., 1933-1934, p.3.

48 Ibid., p.67-68.

49 Ibid.

50 Ibid., p.70.

51 Ibid., p.73.

52 Ibid., p.74.

53 Ibid.

54 Ibid., p.78.

55 Ibid., p.79.

56 Ibid., p.80.

57 Ibid., p.98.

58 Ibid., p.181.

59 Ibid., p.200.

60 Ibid., 1934-1935, p.16.
61 Ibid., pp. 88, 92.
63 Ibid., 1931-1932, p.147.
64 Ibid.
65 Ibid.
66 Ibid., p.148.
67 Ibid., 1933-1934, p.97.
68 Ibid., p.200.
69 Ibid., 1934-1935, p.102.
70 Ibid., p.135.
71 Ibid.
72 Ibid., p.136.
73 Ibid.
74 Ibid., 1935-1937, p.69.
75 Ibid., p.110.
77 Ibid., p.53.
78 Ibid., p.58.
79 Ibid.
80 Ibid., p.89.
81 Ibid., p.113.
82 Ibid., 1938-1939, p.27.
83 Ibid., p.35.
84 Ibid.
85 Ibid., p.36.
86 Ibid., 1931-1932, p.2.
87 Ibid., p.34.
88 Ibid., p.70.
Conclusion

1 All information on members of the three groups was garnered from the 1934 and 1938 editions of The British Columbia and Yukon Directories, published by Sun Directories Ltd. in Vancouver.
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APPENDIX 1: AFFILIATED SOCIETIES OF THE
LOCAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN OF VANCOUVER, 1935

Altar Society of Our Lady Of Perpetual Help
Altar Society Of Holy Rosary Cathedral
Alexandra Orphanage
Business and Professional Women's Club
Canadian Daughters' League No. 1
Canadian Daughters' League No. 4
Canadian Daughters' League No. 8
Canadian Daughters' League No. 9
Canadian Daughters' League No. 16
Canadian Daughters' League No. 22
Catholic Women's League
Canadian Memorial U. Church Ladies' Aid
Chalmers United Church Women's Guild
Chown United Church Ladies' Aid
Canadian Federation For The Blind
Civilian Widows and Orphans Association
Crippled Children's Hospital
Dunbar Heights United Church Women's Association
Daughters of England Queen Of The West Lodge No. 33
Daughters Of England Glazier Lodge No. 96
Daughters of Scotia Heather Lodge No. 84
District King's Daughters
King's Daughters Van. Mizpah Circle
King's Daughters Inasmuch Circle
District W.C.T.U.
Kerrisdale W.C.T.U.
Fairview W.C.T.U.
Mary Forbes W.C.T.U.
West End W.C.T.U.
Kitsilano W.C.T.U.
1st United Church Ladies' Aid
1st Baptist Womens' Society
Girl Guides of Greater Vancouver
Kerrisdale Baptist Womens' Auxiliary
Ladies' Guild British Sailors Society
League of Women Voters
L.O.B.A. No Surrender Lodge No.90
New Era League
Ryerson United Church Womens' Association
St. Andrews-Wesley United Church Women's Association
St. John's United Church Women's Guild
St. Paul's Anglican Church Women's Guild
St. Paul's Hospital Auxiliary
Soldiers, Sailors, Mothers and Wives Association
Soroptimist Club
Vancouver Graduate Nurses' Association
Vancouver Horticultural Society
Vancouver Women's Liberal Association
Victorian Order of Nurses
Women's Alliance Unitarian Church
Women's Missionary Auxiliary To Church Of England
Women's Educational Auxiliary To United Church
Women's Auxiliary To The Hellenic Community
Women's Building Limited
Women's Institute, Point Grey
Women's Institute, The Delta, Ladner
Women's International League of Peace and Freedom